

21st International Migration Conference: «Border Thinking»

Call for Papers on the conference theme “Border Thinking” and on “Current challenges arising in the context of migration”

21st International Migration Conference / 21ICM

Thursday and Friday, 17-18 June, 2021

Alpen Adria University (AAU)

Klagenfurt, Austria

“Border Thinking” is the focal topic of the International Migration Conference 2021. The program consists of two core sections: one centered on the conference theme “Border Thinking” and another more general focus on “Current challenges in the context of migration.” Submissions by speakers are welcome for both sections. The conference languages are German and English. Lectures and discussions will not be translated.

CFP centered on the conference theme “Border Thinking”

In migration, borders are historically and currently a central focus. In its geographical dimension, the concept of “border” points to migration movements as such: migrants leave their previous central place of living and livelihood, departing for somewhere else. They do so in order to begin a new life there, although it does not by any means have to be the final destination of their migration. However, bound up with this is a venture, experienced in very different ways subjectively, into a more or less new transnational (life)world. And in traversing the geographical border, at the same time they must grapple, come to terms with – and successfully surmount – political, social, linguistic and socio-cultural borders as well.

Border research in migration deals principally with political questions in the framework of confronting and dealing with border regimes. The interest there looks at complex, national and supra-national activities and policies of the respective states concerned, the securing of existing borders and the constituting of new national-state borders, as well as the political and populist discourses accompanying these developments in regard to the control and supervision of migration. The main topic of previous investigation has been the border regimes along the external boundaries of the EU and the border between the United States and Mexico. Going beyond such political questions and closely associated with them are the broad palette of borderland topics, extending from political-geographical practices to social and,

cultural practices, and to practices transcending what is cultural, such as in connection with social practices of “bordering” and “border making.” Here the prime focus is on questions of the genesis and treatment of group-related differences, historical, political, social and cultural forms of border making *within* societies, which can be bound up with structural and personal processes of exclusion and discrimination. The central key words here in the context of migration are *racism*, *ethnicization* and *culturalization*. Examples of criticism of and resistance to the various forms of exclusion and marginalization are the Black Lives Matter Movement, postmigrant discourse and also the new, post-colonial debates such as those within Critical Whiteness Studies. Forms of negative exclusion are countered by forms of self-determined boundary making, such as in the framework and creation of forms of cultural, ethnic or religious self-determination by migrants. Central to these forms of boundary making are in particular the development and establishing of forms of joint action grounded in solidarity and oriented to reciprocity, mutuality, modes of mutual aid. A further form of dealing with borders involves practices in life, work and the economy extending over and beyond borders, where – beyond political and media discourses on crisis – border regions harbor a wealth of experience for the shaping of transnational exchange and convivial strategies for multi-, inter- and trans-cultural forms of living together, synergy and collaboration. However, in regard to positively experienced and tangible forms of border making, it is necessary to keep in mind that they are variable and mutable. This means that modes of border making in social practices are also subject to changes; they can alter their significance and character. Thus, for example, a positive attitude toward regional contexts can give rise to narrow-mindedness, dissociation and distancing in regard to neighboring regions or persons who have fled or who are in need of protection and care.

Thus, in respect to migration very different forms of borders and border-making develop their impact. In the dynamic process, social, political and cultural factors and contextual situations become visible, within which societal and social structures and specific social practices are manifest. In the context of these practices, very individual and diverse forms of dealing with migration – and also with borders – arise and crystallize. The conference seeks to investigate these aspects, inter alia with reference to the debates on decolonizing, utilizing the method of “*border thinking*,” a “critical thinking about borders” anchored in “epistemic disobedience” (Mignolo). In this connection, the dominance of Western thinking regarding “universality” – which shapes and pervades Western imperial modernity – will be countered and contrasted with concepts grounded on “pluriversality.”

CFP open section: “Current challenges in the context of migration”

The open section of this International Migration Conference will present, explore and discuss current challenges in the context of migration. Of special interest are thematic focal areas connected with questions relating to education, marginalization, communication, and also the visualization of processes of migration. The focus here can also be on questions connected with (new) minorities, and thus involving persons and groups that have no immediate migration experience but who in public discourses are often still stigmatized as ‘migrants.’ The conference welcomes theoretical and empirical presentations based on current, international and international-comparative studies, particularly from countries in the Global South.

Include your presentation under one of the following key sub-topical areas (please indicate which area in your proposal):

Sub-topical Areas on the Conference Theme “Border Thinking”

1. Theory
2. Decoloniality
3. Pluriversality
4. Border regimes

Sub-Topical Areas for the Open Section/CFP: “Current Challenges”

5. Education
6. Participation
7. Marginalization
8. Cultures of memory

Submission and Format of the Proposal

1. Potential presenters are requested to submit a proposal online under: www.migrationskonferenz.ch
2. Please submit a proposal (300 words max., including title of the presentation, short CV) and contact details (email, telephone number, postal address).
3. Please indicate the sub-topic under which your presentation proposal should best be classified in terms of the above areas 1 – 8.
4. Please indicate whether you are presenting and discussing in only one of the two conference languages (German and English) and which – or whether you would like to present and discuss in both.

Deadlines

Proposal submission deadline:	15 January 2021
Notification to applicants on their proposals by:	February 2021
Conference languages:	German and English
For general information, please consult:	www.migrationskonferenz.ch

Organizers

- Institute for Educational Science, Alpen Adria University (Klagenfurt, Austria)
- Institute Integration and Participation, School of Social Work, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland FHNW (Olten, Switzerland)
- Centre de Documentation sur les Migrations Humaines CDMH (Dudelange, Luxembourg)
- Competence Platform for Migration, Intercultural Education and Development (KOPF) of the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, Technical University of Cologne (Germany)
- Institute for Regional and Migration Research IRM (Trier, Germany)

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