

Call for papers:

Please mind the gap?! Transfer between research and practice, North and South

Panel at the IASFM18 Conference on “Disrupting Theory, Unsettling Practice: Towards Transformative Forced Migration Scholarship and Policy”, 27th – 30th July 2020, in Accra, Ghana

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Research on (forced) migration is often characterized as having a close relationship to the political practice, with researchers being particularly prone to using their expertise and standing for shaping policies (Bommes 2011). Nonetheless, practice is often not based on scientific evidence and, even if utilized by practitioners, research results are not always used in the ways intended by the researchers (Boswell 2009). Consequently, gaps can be observed between migration scholarship and political practice. Moreover, there is a gap between large shares of research activities (and funds) being concentrated in the global North, whereas most migration takes place among states in the global South. Research from scholars working in the South is often not taken up by scholars in the North, leading to isolated scientific debates. Also, it is usually not heard by policy makers in the North when trying to address alleged root causes of migration.

With our panel, we seek to address these gaps and start building bridges. Therefore, we would like to bring together researchers and practitioners from different fields who are involved in transfer activities between research and practice, North and South. We shall start to identify the conditions for a stronger exchange and build a basis for further co-operation. In order to focus our debate and establish a common ground, we will focus on the relationship between forced migration and inequality. This topic has been selected because it offers various potential connecting points. Firstly, manifestations of the relationship between migration and social inequality become manifest at various scales – e.g. global inequalities between countries in the North and South as well as socio-spatial inequalities within cities – thus providing a common topic for speakers from different geographical regions. Secondly, research on inequality is interdisciplinary, touching upon fields such as economics, sociology and political science. Thirdly, questions regarding that relationship are closely connected to political practice, thereby enabling a participation of both researchers and practitioners with their respective expertise.

We invite contributions from various actors and seek to achieve a most heterogeneous composition of the panel in terms of the sector of speakers (research and practice), their geographical focus and working area (North and South, East and West), as well as disciplinary background. Depending on the selection of speakers, we will decide on the format of the panel. We are envisaging a format that allows us to enter into dialogue, such as a discussion, potentially preceded by brief presentations of the main argument. Please send a short summary of your background and main argument to danielle.gluns@uni-hildesheim.de as well as sandra.mueller@uni-hildesheim.de until 21 October 2019.

Publication bibliography

Bommes, Michael (2011): Vorwort. In Michael Bommes (Ed.): Migration und Migrationsforschung in der modernen Gesellschaft. Eine Aufsatzsammlung (IMIS-Beiträge, 38), pp. 11–13.

Boswell, Christina (2009): The political uses of expert knowledge. Immigration policy and social research. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.