

## Call for Papers

### **‘Agency within mobility: Exploring the multiple dimensions of agency in migration governance’**

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The global movement of people continues to have a major impact on global, national and local governance, with much scholarship on these questions revolving around the contested issues of agency and mobility. Research on the governance and securitisation of migration often focuses on the agency of bureaucrats and ‘security professionals’ (vis-à-vis ‘the state’, but also in relation to migrants), in order to explore the processes behind policy-making, and the extent to which those within state bureaucracies can utilise their situated agency to disturb and resist such policies. Research on migrant populations, by contrast, often views the agency of mobile persons as a positive resource possessed by those who claim their rights of mobility in the face of attempts to limit or constrain this. In the first account, agency is seen as the preserve of policy-makers integrated in attempts to control, manage or direct the prior mobility of persons on the move; in the second account, agency is located within mobile individuals.

This workshop will explore the productive avenues for research that can be opened up by interrogating the inter-face between these two visions of agency and mobility. In particular, we are interested in the multiple forms of agency that clash, coalesce and come together in and through migration governance. Understanding migration requires moving beyond simplistic renderings of migrant policies being directed and enforced by state agents, in order to direct, limit or constrain the prior mobility of persons on the move.

We therefore invite contributions from those researching the multiple and diverse manners in which migration policy elicits or produces certain types of agency, and the strategies employed by persons to negotiate, subvert or resist attempts to manage mobility. We welcome papers engaging with diverse empirical areas and employing various theoretical lenses, but united in their exploration of one or more of the following, or related, questions:

- What is the role of agency in the production of rumours, legal practice and knowledge, within (often highly illegible) migration governance regimes?
- How can ideas such as the structure-agency debate and the knowledge-power nexus help us understand contemporary migration governance?
- How is agency produced in the context of formal and informal bureaucratic practices? How does this influence debates around migrant integration, and the extent to which such attempts succeed or fail?
- What political and economic strategies are employed to produce and manage a sphere of ‘legitimate’, ‘regular’ or ‘privileged’ mobility? How are these strategies gendered, racialised and classed?
- What physical, legal or socio-cultural barriers are constructed in order to disrupt or prevent mobility considered ‘irregular’ or ‘illegal’? How are these policed and contested?
- How can we situate the political activism of migrant and refugee groups within the migrant and refugee experience? How does this activism relate to the wider political and social movements of the left and right?