



Annual Report 2023

CENTRE FOR GLOBAL MIGRATION STUDIES
University of Göttingen

Centre for Global Migration Studies, University of Göttingen

Migration is one of the most pressing and complex issues of the twenty-first century. The Centre for Global Migration Studies (CeMig) brings together scholars of the Göttingen Campus from six different colleges, known as “faculties” in the German context, plus the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity (MPI-MMG). CeMig examines the complex challenges of migration under different thematic and regional foci, that by engaging in interdisciplinary collaboration and by pooling together diverse methodological approaches. The result is a deep, multilayered understanding of migration and the provision of innovative policy approaches to deal with this supremely important issue.

CeMig establishes innovative forms of knowledge transfer in addition to strengthening research and teaching in the field of Migration Studies. It contributes to public debates, and facilitates the inclusion in the discussion of stakeholders from civil society, politics, industry and business.

CeMig offers:

- International Conferences
- Interdisciplinary Working Groups
- Joint Research in the Field of Migration Studies
- Teaching Activities Related to Migration Studies
- Support to Early-Career Academics
- Support for Research Projects Externally Funded
- Collaboration with Stakeholders from Civil Society, Politics, Industry and Business

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INTRODUCTION

In 2023 CeMig entered its fifth year of existence, thereby approaching the end of its first six-year term. While in the background the board and the coordinator made preparations for evaluation by an external review commission, CeMig at large focused on realising future long-term and large-scale research and networking projects with intense interdisciplinary cooperation on the Göttingen Campus as well as on the regional and European level. These activities not only cover three key areas of global migration research (rights, health, education) but also various geographic regions:

With its **application for a Research Training Group (RTG)** funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), CeMig aims to establish itself as the first platform in Germany offering interdisciplinary doctoral training between Legal Studies, Social Sciences and Cultural Sciences on matters of migration and mobility rights.

With the **initiative for an inter-university science space on “Futures of Migration”**, CeMig intends to further strengthen and extend collaboration between Lower Saxony’s migration-research institutions and museums. The science space furthermore helps develop the thematic focus on migration and education – as one of CeMig’s core cross-disciplinary areas of research.

With a summer school on the European Union migration and border regimes, and together with the Migration Studies centres at the Universities of Ghent and Groningen, CeMig started to **build a network of migration researchers – and especially doctoral candidates – within the European university alliance ENLIGHT**.

Scholarly work underway as part of the existing **research group “Public Health and Migration”** and in the ongoing individual projects of its members continued apace.

This Annual Report summarises newly funded research projects involving CeMig members as well as the numerous activities in terms of education and outreach arising from the Centre’s work.

RESEARCH

- ➔ 3 ongoing (initiatives for) joint research projects***
- ➔ 21 ongoing research projects by individual CeMig members; including 7 newly funded projects in 2023
- ➔ 44 publications by CeMig members
- ➔ 1 affiliation (guest researcher)

Ongoing (Initiatives for) Joint Research Projects

Legal and Policy Regimes, as well as Migration Governance

In April 2023, the DFG recommended **CeMig apply for funding for the RTG “Mobility Rights in the Global Context of Multiple Crises”**, namely the preparation of a full establishment proposal.

Taking as its starting point the observation that hardly any other issue of such global scale is so tightly interwoven with notions of “crisis” as migration, the RTG aims to study how mobility rights in their given codified form are currently increasingly being challenged. Twelve PhD projects were developed to study how mobility rights are formulated, contested and reshaped with regards to a variety of thematic aspects and to a broad range of regional foci. By engaging in interdisciplinary exchange, the RTG will be able to focus on the co-constitutive nature of law and society and to ask how human mobilities – be they internal or cross-border – are conceptualised, (un)regulated by law and how rights are practised, contested, claimed and hence develop over time. The crafting of such a socio-legal approach – one which transcends Legal and Migration Studies, in the sense of an interdisciplinary dialogue taking place as part of the training of doctoral students – is unique in Germany.

All four reviewers of the draft proposal highlighted the importance of CeMig to the RTG, and emphasised how the Centre is a “nationally and internationally visible platform of interdisciplinary migration research” (translated by author). The participating researchers’ existing cooperation within the

framework of CeMig's activities was also positively evaluated.

In the endeavour to draw up the full establishment proposal, two colleagues new to the University of Göttingen joined CeMig and the RTG application consortium. They enrich and complement the interdisciplinary exchange occurring with their unique expertise and insights:

Alexander Baur was appointed Professor of Penal Law and Criminology at the University in 2022. As a lawyer, psychologist and criminologist, he has vast experience with the outlined socio-legal approach. He has sound knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods of empirical and law-related social research. In 2021 and 2022, he was a scientific advisor to the Canton of Zurich in a project establishing a prison system dealing with the needs of migrants who are obliged to leave Switzerland ("Rückkehrorientierter Vollzug"). In the ongoing evaluation of the Resocialisation Act of the State of Hamburg (HmbResOG), he is focusing, among other things, on the impact of unresolved residence status on further resocialisation and (re)integration after release from prison.

Friederike Faust was appointed Junior Professor of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology at the University in 2023, with her work focusing on Legal Anthropology. She has extensive experience in Cultural Anthropology research on criminal justice, rights and citizenship as well as in Legal Anthropology and Ethnography studies working with criminalised people and in criminal-justice institutions. Specifically, and within the framework of interdisciplinary and international research projects, she has conducted research with HIV+ and drug-using (former) prisoners and their advocates, as well as in a women's prison in Germany.

Baur and Faust suggested they supervise two doctoral research projects helping add to the RTG's thematic scope: one on crime and the criminalisation of people smuggling as well as one on the negotiation of the right to stay within criminal-justice institutions.

The on-site review of the application took place in May 2024. The reviewers recommended the RTG for funding; a positive decision was gratefully received in November 2024.

Public Health and Migration

The interdisciplinary research group "Public Health and Migration from a Global and Interdisciplinary

Perspective" started its activities in 2022, as supported by the University's Structural and Innovation Fund. It began from the observation that migration and health have only been marginally addressed in both Public Health and Migration Studies to date. Refugees and migrants were either overlooked in research on health or viewed from a culturalist perspective as people with a different perception of illness or pain. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that migration is an important factor in healthcare: Migrant populations in Germany and elsewhere were, for example, more affected by SARS-CoV-2 in terms of infection and mortality rates. Moreover, recent studies indicate that migration should be examined in combination with other socio-economic factors such as resident status, employment and housing conditions, and gender when it comes to healthcare issues. These studies call for more empirical, multiperspective and interdisciplinary research in this key field.

Access to GP care for Migrants and Refugees in Göttingen

Against this backdrop, "Public Health and Migration from a Global and Interdisciplinary Perspective" examines the extent to which healthcare services are accessible to different groups of migrant populations in Germany. Research focuses on general practitioner (GP) care as an important yet under-researched area of health care. It is considered to be one of the first and most direct points of contact for people navigating the intricate healthcare system existing in Germany. Research-group member Reza Bayat therefore set up a local study to investigate the access of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to GP care in Göttingen in seeking answers to the following pertinent questions:

- How accessible is GP care for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Göttingen and how do different actors characterise its makeup? What challenges and gaps exist in GP care and how do the relevant parties deal with these challenges?
- What are the institutional and structural practices, norms, laws and discourses informing the current framework of GP care in Göttingen? How have factors such as citizenship, refugee status, ethnicity/race, "migration background" and national belonging shaped the system and its health policy in relation to facilitating access to GP care in Göttingen?

Based on these core issues, the following steps were taken in finalising the research design:

1. **Interviews with GPs in Göttingen:** To better understand the everyday practices of GPs as well as their respective takes on challenges and gaps in the healthcare system, 11 interviews were conducted with such individuals.
2. **Interviews with organisations and state institutions:** GP care in Göttingen is shaped and developed by several state and non-state actors. Nine expert interviews therefore focused on their role in healthcare provision for refugees and migrants as well as their analysis of challenges and gaps in the current system underpinning that.
3. **Online survey:** To capture the perspectives of refugees and migrants themselves, an online survey was developed. It is available in 14 languages and includes questions about own experiences with GP care in Göttingen, including what deficiencies therein the respondent sees and whether/how they are effected by discrimination and racism in this context.
4. **Demographic distribution:** Data from across the city of Göttingen were analysed in striving to identify the spatial distribution of its healthcare facilities.

Education and Outreach

The research group's activities were accompanied by **further networking and exchange within the framework of two online lecture series**, one per semester.

After having addressed a variety of issues and questions in the field of public health and migration in the previous year – including legal and structural barriers to accessing healthcare or challenges of data collection and health monitoring –, the online lecture series in Summer Term 2023 aimed to examine these findings within the broader context of the economisation of the healthcare system.

Professor Dr Dr Thomas Gerlinger from the School of Public Health at the University of Bielefeld started, with his focus being on structural deficits in the German healthcare system and inadequate healthcare-policy reform. His talk ["Healthcare for Migrants: Between Exclusion, Integration and Economisation"](#) (in German, 11 May 2023) outlined a variety of obstacles for migrants and asylum seekers in Germany to accessing healthcare services even if they have the same formal access rights as people

with statutory health insurance. He pointed out that general deficits in the German healthcare system have a particular impact on refugees and migrants. For example: 1) inherent structural inequalities due to undersupplies in specific parts of Germany or in certain key medical fields like Psychotherapy; 2) a lack of orientation towards the needs of vulnerable groups in providing information and knowledge about prevention, illness and healthcare; or, 3) insufficient mechanisms in place to overcome language barriers.

Dr phil. Nadja Rakowitz and Karen Spannenkrebs, both from Verein Demokratischer Ärzt*innen, picked up on this expert assessment in their talk

["Economisation in the German Healthcare System and Effects on the Care of Migrants"](#) (in German, 1 June 2023). They argued that the right to health still does not apply to many people, or when so only to a very limited extent, as care is made more difficult for certain demographics – including different groups of migrants who face various barriers to access. Many of these obstacles are directly or indirectly related to the economisation of the healthcare system over the last 30 years, with effects across all areas of the healthcare system – from hospitals, to the outpatient sector to the funding of solidarity-based statutory health insurance.

The talk by Dr Sidra Khan-Gökkaya, representative for migration, integration and anti-racism at Universitätsklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf on ["Diversity and Anti-Racism in the Healthcare Sector. Structural Measures and Institutional Approaches"](#) (in German, planned for 6 July 2023) had to be cancelled at short notice but will be included in a future lecture series.

In Winter Term 2023/2024, respective talks were dedicated to illustrating how two specific projects attempt to meet the challenges of structural inequality in the German healthcare system and to develop solutions here.

Prof. Dr Theda Borde and Tuğba Yalçinkaya, both from Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, introduced their project ["Empowerment for Diversity – Alliance for Equity in Health Care"](#) (in German, 30 November 2023). They addressed the urgent need for action to achieve greater equality in health and healthcare in Germany. The project's core aim is to implement strategies and tools helping transform existing structures of institutional discrimination and racism within hospitals by introducing diversity-oriented organisational-development processes. Simultaneously, focus is on healthcare professionals' qualification in diversity competencies (including students, apprentices and trainees).

["We Need More Solidary Infrastructures – the Example of the Veddel Polyclinic in Hamburg"](#) (in German, 14 December 2023) was presented by Lukas Waidhas and Milli Schroeder. At the Veddel Polyclinic in Hamburg, various professional groups have joined forces to break new ground in outpatient care. In addition to the traditional formats provided by the respective healthcare professions, treatment is supplemented by community work and research to also address the underlying conditions causing illness in the first place. Among the patients at the polyclinic are many migrants or racialised groups, 10 per cent of whom do not have health insurance.

Migration and Education

To facilitate further collaboration between Lower Saxony's migration-research institutions, CeMig participated in an **initiative on establishing an inter-university "science space"** – a funding line announced by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony. Under the lead of the University of Osnabrück, and together with the University of Hildesheim, the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media and the Museum Friedland, the science space "Futures of Migration" intends to introduce reflexive scholarship on migration futures into research and practice – especially in contexts of education and training. The application also serves as start-up funding for the development of a joint proposal for a DFG Priority Programme taking a longer-term research perspective. From CeMig's point of view, the planned science space underpins: 1) the further intra-university institutionalisation of interwoven migration and education research, as a core focus of the Centre's work; 2) the consolidation of cooperation throughout Lower Saxony, with CeMig contributing its perspectives on the meshing of global and local dynamics; and, 3) the further development of existing transdisciplinary dialogue spaces and innovative knowledge-transfer formats, with a focus on the field of education.

In July 2024 the application was approved; the project is expected to start in the second quarter of 2025.

Research Projects by Individual CeMig Members

Among the **21 ongoing research projects** by individual CeMig members, seven were newly funded in 2023.

Legal and Policy Regimes as well as Migration Governance

ZiF Research Group ["Internalizing Borders: The Social and Normative Consequences of the European Border Regime"](#) (2023–2024) (convenor: Sabine Hess and others; funded by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF) at the University of Bielefeld). State borders and their protection have resurfaced as highly controversial public and political issues in the past two decades. Hopes for a unified Europe and the stability of liberal states appear to presuppose the grim reality of the enforcement of repressive border controls against unwanted migrants. However, the return to borders as alleged safeguards of liberal sovereignty implies their material fortification, the employment of biometric databases, militarised border police, forced immobilisation in camps and the criminalisation of humanitarian activities and organisations.

Against this backdrop, the proposed research group will explore the normative and social consequences of the fortification and closing of borders for the states and societies engaging in these practices. How do hardened borders and border violence perpetrated by state and non-state actors eat away at the legal, moral and social fabric of democratic societies, undermining the very norms on which the latter rest? How can we conceptualise the normative and social consequences of violent bordering practices?

While the transformation of Europe's border zones and the externalisation of the EU border regime deep into other continents have been thoroughly studied, the social and normative implications of violent bordering and its consequences for societies at large – which the research group conceptualises as "border internalisation" – have not yet been systematically explored. The ZiF Research Group aims to, first, analyse the meaning and consequences of border fortification for the societies upholding such practices; and, second, to develop an interdisciplinary framework for conceptualising processes of border internalisation.

EU Research Project MORE: ["Motivations, Experiences, and Consequences of Returns and Readmission Policy: Revealing and Developing Effective Alternatives"](#) (2023–2026) (Principal Investigators (PI): Sabine Hess and others; funded by Horizon 2020). In a research network made up of various universities and civil society organisations in Europe and the United Kingdom, MORE will analyse the development, implementation and effects of

return-oriented policies. Based on cooperation with people who are threatened with deportation and their advocacy groups, the project will also examine solidarity-based alternatives to such return-oriented policies. It has long been known to all actors involved – from refugees, to government officials to politicians – that policies focusing on deportation and return are inefficient and do not address the realities of people's lived experiences in Europe. We become part of the societies in which we live beyond our legal residence status. Forced-return policies, deportations, policies of deterrence and return assistance fail to achieve their goals time and again for a variety of reasons and that at multiple levels. In three project phases taking place over the next three years, the first step will be to examine the rationalities and contexts underlying the design and justification of European return-oriented policies at the respective national levels. In a second step, their concrete implementation will then be examined. Finding alternative pathways beyond return-oriented policies will constitute the third and final step.

“Is Civil Sea Rescue a ‘Pull Factor’ for Irregular Migration?” (8/2023–12/2023) (Sarah Langlotz and others; funded by ECONtribute Selten Seeding Grant and Joachim Herz Fellowship). This project combines secondary data from the Central Mediterranean Sea Passage with primary data from a survey carried out in Nigeria. For the first part, the project members gathered data vis-à-vis daily observations on irregular migration attempts, the presence of civil sea rescue missions and administrative and political blockades of non-governmental organisation vessels in the Central Mediterranean from 2016 to 2021. The planned survey for the second part will include an information experiment on sea rescue and initial migration decisions.

Economic, Political and Social Integration of Migrants and Refugees

“Immigrants with Vocational Qualifications: How Education Systems of Countries of Origin and Occupations Influence Employment Opportunities in Germany” (2023–2026) (PI: Janina Söhn; funded by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony). This research project is located at the interface of migration and integration research, the sociology of labour markets and of vocational training; it embraces international comparative dimensions as well. The core research interest here is the following: How do immigrants who have learned a non-academic profession in their country of origin fare in terms of

labour-market integration and positioning in Germany?

Focus is on possible structural-institutional influences: First, what role does the degree of institutional (dis)similarity between the vocational-training system in the country of origin compared to the one in Germany play for labour-market integration in the latter? Second, the role played by the specific occupations in question – in particular, the career paths which immigrants want to and/or are able to pursue in Germany. Special focus is on people from the newer (South)East European EU member states, who make up the majority of immigrants with vocational qualifications in Germany and whose home countries follow a dual vocational-training structure to varying degrees.

This raises the politically explosive question of the extent of and the reasons for immigrants' disadvantages on the labour market despite the EU's legal guarantee of and political support for the free movement of workers, its supposed mutual recognition of vocational qualifications and the enshrined norm of non-discrimination against EU citizens.

“Evaluating and Improving Support for Female Refugee Integration into the German Labour Market” (Sarah Langlotz, Adriana Cardozo da Silva and others). While the literature has increasingly focused on the economic integration of women, isolating the latter from the well-being of their family systems creates an inability to understand why conservative gender roles restraining women's economic independence persist. When moving to a new setting where economic opportunity is expected to improve and cultural norms are presumably supportive of women's integration into the workforce, why do refugee women's participation rates in European countries' labour markets remain lower than for natives? We plan to submit an additional question to the SOEP Refugee Panel, which would enhance the existing data collected and help indicate whether more could be done to improve and further support refugee women's employment and well-being.

Migrants' Perspectives and Voices

“Expertise on the Establishment of a Documentation Centre for the Victims of the NSU” (2023) (PI: Sabine Hess; commissioned by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)). As a first planning step towards establishing a possible place of remembrance and a documentation centre for the victims of the National Socialist Underground (NSU) –

as envisaged in the coalition agreement of the current federal government –, expertise is required to qualitatively classify the nationwide reappraisal occurring regarding the NSU complex. Also to be discussed are the orientation, content and structure of such a place with the victims and their relatives as well as with support groups, victim-counselling services and lawyers. The aim is to find out how the victims (where possible) and their relatives would like to see such a place (or places) take shape against the backdrop of their struggle for transparency and remembrance. In doing so, various structural, methodological and content-related considerations – for example, with regards to the location, the tasks, the prerequisites for participation and co-design, or the requirements for legal support structures – are to be reflected upon. A recommendation is to be drafted as to how the perspectives of the victims and their relatives can be made central at each and every step in the centre’s realisation. This expertise is one of three clusters which will serve as the basis for the preparation of a feasibility study by the bpb. Therein, fundamental questions regarding the concept of a documentation centre for the victims of the NSU are to be discussed.

“Urban Lab: Paths to a Colonial-Critical City” (2023–2024) (PI: Sabine Hess; funded by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony). This cooperation project between researchers, cultural institutions and civil society groups offers a space to bring together different perspectives and knowledge from the Global South, East and North, to shape local commemoration on colonial continuities (for a more detailed description, see below: Outreach).

Campus Collaboration

To strengthen migration research’s place as a cross-cutting topic, CeMig continues to welcome and initiate joint events or other forms of collaboration with University centres and departments, or in the context of individual research projects.

CeMig co-hosted, for example, a lecture as part of the colloquium at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS). Salah Punathil from Hyderabad University, India, DAAD Guest Professor at CeMIS from November 2023 to January 2024, spoke on **“National Borders among Families: Detection, Detention and Deportability”** (11 January 2023).

In cooperation with the Erasmus Mundus Programme Euroculture, CeMig also invited Michael Snodgrass, Professor of Latin American History at Indiana University Indianapolis, to give a lecture. In **“Dreams**

of Development” (4 May 2024, he compared two guest-worker programmes emblematic of Cold War era migration policy which saw several million Mexican and Spanish migrants recruited to work in the United States and Germany, respectively. Proponents of the bilateral accords defended them as diplomatic achievements which secured contractual labour rights, improved foreign relations and saw migrants return home with savings and skills enabling them to achieve the diverse development goals of the sending states. Snodgrass traced the programmes’ historical and ideological roots, juxtaposed these different guest workers’ experiences and used the cases of Mexican *braceros* and Spanish *Gastarbeiter* to explore the contested nexus between migration and development.

Regarding current times, CeMig and the Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology in cooperation with Kollektiv ohne Namen gave the floor to Shahram Khosravi, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Stockholm. In his public lecture **“Reclaiming Life: The Poetics and Politics of Streets in Iran”** (20 January 2023), he contextualised the protests which spread across Iran after the killing of Mahsa (Zhina) Amini by the police to the broader struggle for justice in the Middle Eastern country. He argued that the practices of (new) political actors both in and outside of Iran crystallised in a specific type of street politics, as informing the vast mobilisation seen. Amini’s tragic death was the most recent case of Iran’s decades-long, state-sanctioned and systemic sexist and misogynistic politics. It was a breaking point revealing how law-enforcement officials not only do not protect women, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities, or dispossessed citizens, but actively expose them to violence and even death indeed.

In cooperation with the Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology and the Centre for Modern East Asian Studies (CeMEAS), CeMig held a public film screening of **“Songs of Abdul”** (4 July 2023), followed by discussion between director Anna Moiseenko and Mark Simon (research fellow at CeMig and the Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology). The captivating documentary portrays the life and experiences of Abdulmamad Bekmamadov, also known as Abdul, unfolding against the backdrop of his journey from the Pamir Mountains in Tajikistan to Moscow in search of work. Over the course of four years, the film-makers chronicled Abdul’s multifaceted existence as a labour migrant, artist, father and husband separated from his family for over a decade. With each episode, the film weaves the intricate threads of Abdul’s real-life experiences into poetic

texts, effortlessly melding them with the rhythmic melodies of traditional Pamir songs.

EDUCATION

- ➔ 3 international Migration Research Labs
- ➔ 52 doctoral candidates supervised by CeMig members (3 of whom are co-supervised by two or more members)
- ➔ 22 seminars or lectures on the subject of migration given by CeMig members at their institutes

The diversity to migration research conducted at the University of Göttingen is also reflected in individual CeMig members' teaching subjects. In Summer Term 2023 and Winter Term 2023/2024, CeMig members gave 22 seminars or lectures related to the topic of migration.

Migration Research Labs

To connect and support the 52 doctoral candidates at CeMig or under the supervision of CeMig members, the Centre continued its successful **Migration Research Labs**. Taking up different thematic foci, the Labs offer doctoral and postdoctoral researchers a forum in which they can discuss current migration research or their own approaches and results with leading international scholars. They are designed to allow also for peer-to-peer exchange and guidance on work in progress in a safe space.

The **9th Migration Research Lab “[Displacement, Expulsion and Deportation](#)”** (19 January 2023) was overseen by Khosravi. As an expert on these matters, he initiated a discussion about the current transformation of the European border regime and how its regulations affect people's bodies and lives. A focus on the European deportation regime highlighted issues of precarity and the fragile forms of life created by such bordering practices. Participants shared their own ethnographic insights, methodological questions and analytical challenges regarding current shifts and continuities in the border regime.

The **10th Migration Research Lab “[Transnational Perspectives on the Research on Labour Migration](#)”** (2 May 2023) brought into dialogue two distinguished researchers in the field of labour

migration. Snodgrass focuses in his work, as noted earlier, on twentieth-century Mexico and the history of immigration / emigration / return migration as well as comparative labour and working-class history. He presented his recent study which compares the recruitment policies and labour regimes of Mexico's first guest-worker accord with the US and Germany's recruitment of *Gastarbeiter* from Spain, respectively. Peter Birke, postdoctoral researcher at the Sociological Research Institute (SOFI) Göttingen and expert on the intersection of labour relations, racism and migration struggles, shared the context to and results from his most recent research projects focusing on companies' integration of refugee staff members as well as contemporary labour struggles in the mail-order and meat industries.

The **11th Migration Research Lab “[Cultural Diversity](#), ‘[Minorities](#)’ and ‘[Integration](#)’ as [Categories of Practice and Analysis in Countries with a Soviet Past](#)”** (29 June 2023) was initiated by Mark Simon. He held a discussion on cultural diversity in Estonia, Ukraine and Russia with the two other speakers involved: Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, Associate Professor of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu and DAAD Guest Professor at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology, and Akif Tahiev, Research and Teaching Assistant in the Department of Private International Law and Comparative Law at Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Ukraine, and Visiting Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Germany. The discussion built around the following three thematic areas: 1) the major shifts in the political accommodation of cultural diversity in Estonia, Ukraine and Russia during the past three decades; 2) the rendering of certain individuals as belonging to “minorities” through legislative regulation, social organisation and symbolic policies; 3) “integration” as a category both of analysis and of practice in relation to those who are referred to as “minorities” in Estonia, Ukraine and Russia.

Building a Network for PhD Researchers from the ENLIGHT Universities

With the Summer School “[EU Border Regime\(s\) and the Shrinking Spaces of Solidarity](#)” (19–22 September 2023), CeMig started to build a network between early-career researchers of the Migration Studies centres involved in the ENLIGHT network. It took place in Göttingen and was organised and hosted together with the Centre for the Social Study of Migration and Refugees (CESSMIR) at the University

of Ghent and the Human Mobility and Migration Lab (HuMM) at the University of Groningen.

Through a combination of lectures by ten renowned speakers, group work and discussion of their own research projects, 16 doctoral candidates from the Universities of Ghent, Groningen, Tartu, Bern, Coventry and Göttingen gained in-depth insight into contemporary trends in European migration governance and learned how to untangle and question the violent and discriminatory nature of the continent's current border regime(s). Namely, with regards to three themes: 1) the increasing contestation or suspension of the rule of law at the border, for example via the systematic use of pushbacks or the introduction and enforcement of non-legal tools to repress unwanted migration; 2) the multiple forms of violence inflicted on migrants and asylum seekers; and, 3) practices of resistance – including humanitarian interventions, alternative forms of knowledge production, strategic litigation as well as art – alongside the criminalisation of those helping people on the move.

The productive exchange kicked off conversations for the further intensification of future collaboration and network-building between the participating Migration Studies centres.



Figure 1. Participants of the ENLIGHT Summer School. Göttingen, September 2023.

Outreach

- ➔ 12 academic and public CeMig events
- ➔ 14 consultation or outreach activities (policy briefs, non-academic publications etc.) by individual CeMig members
- Individual CeMig members' collaborative activities
- ➔ 12 academic and public CeMig events
- ➔ 14 consultation or outreach activities (policy briefs, non-academic publications etc.) by individual CeMig members
- ➔ Individual CeMig members' collaborative activities

Public Events

In addition to the numerous academic events taking place, which are primarily aimed at scholarly exchange, CeMig also organises public events. The purpose here, for example, is to communicate findings from research projects to the broader public or to engage with interested parties on socially relevant questions connected with migration.

As part of the summer school “EU Border Regime(s) and the Shrinking Spaces of Solidarity” (see above), CeMig organised two public events. Khosravi gave a keynote lecture titled “[Combat Breathing](#)” (19 September 2023). In it, he argued that what divides the world today is the right (or lack thereof) to breathe, in which some people are not allowed to respire. The illegalised people on the move who die of an oxygen shortage in crowded trucks; travellers without papers who drown in the Mediterranean Sea; African-Americans who are suffocated to death under the knees of a brutal racism. Furthermore, growth-dependent fossil capitalism has caused environmental degradation and air pollution in major cities in the Global South, where breathing has become a struggle. The talk shed light on movements such as Black Lives Matter or Migrant Lives Matter which reclaim life and the right to breathe.

A public screening in cooperation with the local cinema Lumière addressed the issue of the increasing criminalisation of migrants and their supporters. The documentary “[Sara Mardini – Gegen den Strom](#)” (21 September 2023) turns to the human rights activist Sara Mardini, who crossed the Mediterranean in fleeing Syria in 2015. After helping to save her own life as well as those of other refugees when their boat was in danger of sinking, she has been accused of serious crimes such as participating in a criminal organisation for which she would face over 20 years in prison. The film has followed her in her fight for justice, volunteering on Lesbos in Greece while awaiting trial. Valeria Hänsel (PhD student, Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology, University of Göttingen and medico international) and Sabine Hess (CeMig) contextualised the film to the frequent and deliberate intimidation of activists alongside the criminalisation of humanitarian aid as part of European migration policy.

Collaborative Research

Knowledge transfer and joint knowledge production with local experts from cultural institutions and civil society are key pillars of CeMig's work. From 2019–2020, the Centre initiated the “[Urban Lab: Migration Moves Göttingen](#)” as an innovative format of science communication. Together with over 20 groups – cultural institutions, migrant self-organisations, civil society initiatives and professional bodies –, CeMig researchers opened up a physical and social space beyond the University's campus to discuss local and best practices on how to design a city in which all people – regardless of place of origin, nationality or residence status – have the right to live, reside and work.

In 2023, the format found a follow-up in a second project, “[Urban Lab: Paths to the Colonial-Critical City](#)” (2023–2024). Over the course of 12 months, a location on the central Wilhelmsplatz has provided space for exchange and collaborative exploration of pathways towards Göttingen becoming a colonial-critical city. The project aims to gather perspectives, network knowledge and shape commemoration. In addition to the research on and reappraisal of local colonial history, the project also aims to make anti-colonial resistance and colonial continuities through the present day more visible. It experiments with new formats such as a digital city tour or an “Open Archive” inviting Göttingen's residents to get involved. They can participate by contributing objects, documents and other material evidence of the city's colonial past. It also brings on-board the Department

of Teacher Education and the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media in developing, together with secondary schools, workshops which see students articulate their critical perceptions and reappraisals of the city's colonial both past and present. The Lab has already succeeded in securing specific additional funding to further develop a transnational research



Figure 2 Open search for objects, documents and other contemporary evidence of Göttingen's colonial past.

and art project with Herero artists and museums in Namibia on building a translocal memorial space in remembrance of the genocide of the Over-Hereros and Nama – both of whose descendants' are struggling with continued silencing and erasure.

Impressum

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