Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars

CONFÉRENCE UNIVERSITAIRE DE SUISSE OCCIDENTALE

CALL FOR PAPERS

Interdisciplinary Colloquium:

«Between Autonomy and Vulnerability: Perspectives on Migration»

20th May 2016, University of Neuchâtel

What is vulnerability? Who is considered vulnerable and why? What are the risks associated with the concept of vulnerability? These and further issues are particularly pressing in the context of migration studies, where vulnerability is frequently invoked and sometimes instrumentalised in order to achieve what may be considered heightened standards of protection for individual groups. The colloquium "Between Autonomy and Vulnerability: Perspectives on Migration" attempts to bring together researchers and doctoral students from various disciplines (e.g. social and political sciences, anthropology, history, geography, philosophy, law and psychology) working on the issue of vulnerability in the field of migration studies. The aim is to create an exchange on the significance and role of vulnerability as well as looking at the uses and effects of the concept of vulnerability in the context of migration. Various experts working on the issue of vulnerability have been invited to give presentations and to chair the different thematic panels. Thomas Spijkerboer, Professor of Migration Law at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, will be one of the keynote speakers attending the colloquium.

Contributions submitted in response to this Call for Papers should focus on – but do not have to be limited to – the following questions:

- **Definition:** How is vulnerability conceptualised in the context of migration? How have different definitions and perspectives on vulnerability in the context of migration evolved over time? What is the perceived relationship between vulnerability and autonomy?
- **Usages:** How are individuals and groups of people categorised as vulnerable? Which actors hold the power to make and/or to challenge such categorisations? What role do migration laws and policies play in the (de)construction of vulnerability and/or autonomy?
- **Effects:** What effect does the attribution of vulnerability, or lack thereof, have on migrant subjectivities? How do representations of vulnerability and/or autonomy influence the outcome of legal proceedings regarding immigration status? What are the social or legal risks associated with the concept of vulnerability? What effect do the notions of vulnerability and autonomy have on the legal or social conception of migration, for instance in the field of forced migration?

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Submission of abstracts and further information:

Doctoral students and researchers wishing to participate in the colloquium are invited to submit an abstract (between 3000 and 3500 characters, including spaces) in French or English by 11th March 2016 to: nesa.zimmermann@unige.ch.

The accepted participants will be required to hand in a working paper of maximum 10 pages by 2nd May 2016. An optional publication of the contributions to the colloquium is planned.

Convenors:

Nesa Zimmermann (University of Geneva), Nula Frei (University of Berne), Stephanie Motz (University of Lucerne), Laura Affolter (University of Berne), Raphaël Rey (University of Neuchâtel), Gabriela Medici (University of Zurich), Teresia Gordzielik (University of Fribourg)

The colloquium is organised by the Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars (SNyMS) and financed by the Conférence universitaire de Suisse occidentale (CUSO).