



Conclusions and follow-up to the international symposium:

**"Global Migration/Asylum Governance:  
Advancing the International Agenda"**

10th and 11th October 2016

<http://www.unige.ch/migrationsymposium2016/>

To tackle some of the increasingly complex contemporary challenges, deeper access to knowledge is mandatory. Data collection, analysis and management is necessary so that innovative evidence-based policies may be designed and implemented. This must go along with a diversification of the sources of knowledge and its active communication in society.

This requires the development of proactive and continuous interfaces between institutions in charge of formulating and implementing public policies and those responsible for scientific production and innovative research. A strong working interdisciplinary partnership between members of International Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and academic institutions must be established in order to identify relevant priorities, provide evidence and contribute to policy elaboration.

Universities can act as neutral facilitators in such a process. Together, they constitute a global, multicultural, multidisciplinary and non-partisan network, where much knowledge is uncovered and transmitted. They should take advantage of their convening capacity to develop ad-hoc networks with international and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders including private sector experts. The University of Geneva is determined, in collaboration with its partners in Switzerland, in the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and oversees to actively develop this role. For this purpose it has launched the programme "Geneva Trialogue" for which the Global Migration/Asylum Governance symposium co-organized with the LERU and UC Davis has acted as pilot.

Convening inter alia ten thematic workshops composed of experts from universities, international organizations and civil society the Global Migration / Asylum Governance symposium was designed to strengthen bridges between partners, but also to use these bridges to identify some priorities for future research and political action. Each workshop has been asked to propose three major knowledge gaps and/or policy propositions that should be addressed by coordinated follow-up.

The conclusions of these workshops are presented below. The next steps will be to select, among the proposed themes, those where it will be possible to continue co-defining the problem, co-investigating its roots and reasons, and co-designing potential approaches to resolving the difficulties. In the coming months, the organizers of the symposium will strive to assemble groups of interested partners, and to catalyze further work. The goal will be to present, in a variety of formats (targeted research projects, meetings with relevant stakeholders, policy papers,...), relevant information and possible solutions so as to contribute to the elaboration and communication of innovative and evidence-based public policies. The University of Geneva is willing to coordinate and give logistic support to such initiatives. Five workshops have already proposed concrete follow-up actions that are included in the conclusions below, we invite and encourage the participants to the symposium to submit further propositions. Please contact Pierre Willa, Head of the International Relations Office at [pierre.willa@unige.ch](mailto:pierre.willa@unige.ch) with questions and suggestions.

## Conclusions workshop 1

### Categorization & mixed flows

#### Categories...

- Necessary political and legal tool, but they do not have always a necessary and fixed content;
- Historically produced, politically legitimized and legally enforced; they frame reality and are subjected to change and contestation;
- Entail problematic hierarchies and temporalities in the treatment of migrants (i.e. the migrants/refugees distinction);

--> In the respect of human rights, they should be considered flexible in order to be congruent with new migration and mobility processes and allow to address them in (legal and moral) legitimate and efficient ways.

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## Conclusions workshop 2

### Regional approaches

- Deepening knowledge: Establish a systematic comparative mapping and typology of regional migration governance
- Drawing on experience: Identify the conditions under which regional policies succeed and/or fail
- Changing the narrative: Provide fora for the articulation and communication of innovative initiatives at the local, subnational or regional levels

**Proposed follow-up:** (1) Consolidation of a network of scholars and practitioners working on regional migration/refugee governance in view of defining and realizing (2) a research project targeted at mapping and analysing regional migration/refugee policies with a view to their potential contribution to global initiatives and (3) contributing to the realization of the Summer School on Global and Regional Migration Governance at Unige from 19 to 30 June 2017.

**Lead Responsibility:** Sandra Lavenex, Unige and Nicola Piper, University of Sydney

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## Conclusions workshop 3

### Comparative Perspectives across the Atlantic

#### Convergences across the Atlantic

- Need to find a new balance between the protection of refugees/migrants and the care for the domestic population, since growing inequalities and anti-immigration discourses demand a new legitimacy for immigration and immigrant policies
- Securitization and externalization of border control
- Policy tensions between central vs. sub-state units of Federal entities

#### Divergences across the Atlantic

- Insecure status in the US more accepted than in Europe (thousand shades of grey vs black/white)
- Different welfare and labor market regulation
  - ➔ consequences for stay after the admission
  - ➔ Integration
- Voting power of migrants in the US

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#### Conclusions workshop 4

##### Gender, Migration and Protection

- Not focus on women, take seriously interlinkages between migration, gender and other social categories (race, age, sexual orientation, etc.)
- Avoid: victimhood, competition traps, instrumentalization of gender
- Address data gaps (Sex-, age-, sexuality, class-, educational level-, religion-disaggregated data on migration, etc.) and comparative data (historically, cross-culturally, cross-regionally, cross-economic sector, etc.)
- Devise gender-responsive integration policies: labour market, health services, skills recognition, education and training, etc.
- Need for awareness raising and training on diversity issues for policy-makers, support groups, academics, etc.

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#### Conclusions workshop 5

##### Higher Education and Protection

- University of Geneva / InZone to advocate for quality higher education for refugees within the framework of humanitarian principles.
- Global collaboration of higher education institutions to develop a mobility tool to aid in refugee access to higher education opportunities.
- Develop policies and procedures on inclusion of refugee learners in higher education.

**Proposed follow-up:** Convening a network of university representatives and develop a mobility tool giving refugees facilitated access to higher education. This will be an online repository and tool that could help refugees to upload and save information about their education, as well as copies of their certificates and transcripts, and to submit these for evaluation with a view to ensuring learning pathways in higher education. This tool could then be coordinated with LERU partners in view of implementation.

**Lead Responsibility:** Barbara Moser Mercer, Unige

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#### Conclusions workshop 6

##### Climate change & disaster displacement

- Given current political realities, how can we make legal & policy frameworks more responsive to migration, displacement, and planned relocation related to environmental change?
- How are societal and environmental tipping points likely to change the manner in which we think about migration & asylum governance?
- What indicators can we design for better understanding of mobility in the context of climate change?

**Proposed follow-up:** Targeted Conference/Workshop on defining indicators that would enable subtle, but often indirect, causal mechanisms linking climate and environmental change to out-migration of populations. Such a workshop would need to integrate other drivers of migration – politics, conflicts,

economic hardships, etc. –into the meeting’s objectives in order to assess how to disaggregate the different causal mechanisms of migration and isolate climate/environmental drivers

**Lead Responsibility:** Martin Beniston, Unige

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### Conclusions workshop 7

#### Responsibility-sharing for protection

- Need to leverage states' own interest in relocation and resettlement schemes as contributions to better managed and less irregular refugee flows
- Think about multiple and articulated scales of governance and additional pathways to protection in responsibility-sharing (private, local, state, national, regional and multilateral)
- Ensure adequate frameworks and local capacity when introducing new relocation and resettlement schemes

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### Conclusions workshop 8

#### The role of Knowledge in Refugee & Migration Policy

- Knowledge production on migration should be linked to creating a better evidence-base to monitor the SDGs: better quality data, more timely analysis, reporting relevant findings for the needs of policy makers at national, regional and international level.
- Need for policy coherence between areas such as migration, education, labour & other policies → Migration should be mainstreamed across policies taking into account its socio-economic dimensions. This also implies that there is not solely a need for better data on migration, but also in the other policy areas.
- The conditions of production of data & the conditions of its reception should be carefully examined. Aim: create conditions for data to be well-received and used “despite” power relations and political preferences.

**Proposed follow-up:** Explore how new, technology-driven learning processes (including social learning and crowdsourcing) developed within the Geneva Triologue programme on SDGs may become key drivers to achieve the SDGs related to migration.

**Lead Responsibility:** TBA

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### Conclusions workshop 9

#### Access to work & The migration compact

- Migrant worker protection concerns labor migrants as much as refugees
- Regional agreements are superposing global ones (TTIP vs. WTO)
- Regional consultation have to be taken into account in the global compact in order to gain legitimacy
- Situation of local actors have to be better understood, in tandem with larger social actors

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## Conclusions workshop 10

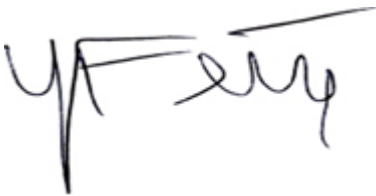
### Vulnerable Migrants & Children's Rights

- Conduct and promote evidence-based evaluations of rights based best practices which are participatory in nature, generate co-production of knowledge, and achieve positive outcomes
- Elaborate with various stakeholders a consolidated strategic policy that makes a difference with regard to the rights of children in the migration context.
- Examine pathways to reduce the tensions between international children's rights standards (migrants are children) and national perceptions which tend to focus more on the migrant narrative, the determination of a legal status, and do not place the long term protection and needs of individual children at the fore

**Proposed follow-up:** National conference in Switzerland with policy-makers in view of discussing concrete policy proposals in June/July 2017

**Lead Responsibility:** Jean Zermatten, Unige and Institut International des Droits de l'Enfant, Sion

With many thanks for your participation



Prof. Yves Flückiger  
Rector



Prof. Sandra Lavenex  
Vice-Dean, School of Social Sciences