

## IMISCOE Joint Programme of Research

The consortium's domain of research encompasses two broad areas of study.

The first is **international migration**—the spatial movement, voluntary or forced, of persons across political borders—as a process, together with its causes and consequences. Central questions include the following:

- Under what conditions does international migration arise, continue and possibly develop into migration systems? To what extent are such systems demand or supply-driven? What is the role of old and new 'intermediary agents' (including smugglers and traffickers)?
- Has a European migration area developed and, if so, how does it relate to other (demographic, economic, political or cultural) aspects of the development towards a unified Europe? How does 'internal' migration within such a system relate to immigration from outside?
- What factors operating in the regions of origin, what characteristics of migrants, and what factors in the destination countries play a part in this migration? How do such factors influence one another? Which of these factors can be influenced by policies?
- How selective is the process of international migration—who actually moves, who does not move, and
- what are the consequences of such selectivity for the process of settlement and integration at the new destinations? What kinds of interventions have been attempted aimed at steering migration processes, and what effects have these had? Which factors in migration processes can be influenced by policies and how?

The second area of study pertains to the **process of settlement and integration of immigrants and their descendants in the society of destination and the consequences this has for the receiving society**. Within this broad domain, several distinctions can be made. One basic consideration is that the process involves two sets of actors: the individuals, organisations and institutions in the immigrant groups themselves; and the actors at the corresponding levels in the receiving society. These two categories of actors can be studied separately, resulting on the one hand in systematic analyses of the process of political, socioeconomic and cultural integration of individual newcomers and groups of immigrants, and, on the other hand, in analyses of the reactions at all levels of the receiving society, including migration and integration policies. Ultimately, however, it is the interaction between these two sets of actors that determines the direction of the process and the ultimate outcomes. Central questions include the following:

- What are the decisive factors that govern the process of integration at the individual level, the level of organisations and the institutional level in the different spheres within the political, socioeconomic, ethnocultural and religious domains? How can differences

between groups within one (national or city) context be explained, and how can differing integration patterns of groups with a common origin in different (national or city) contexts be explained?

- How do mechanisms and factors of integration processes vary for the different domains, and what are the policy implications of these differences?
- How do the children of immigrants integrate into society at large and how do they combine their membership of an immigrant group with that of the larger society? What are the key institutional channels for the integration and social mobility of second and third generations?
- What overall consequences does immigration have for the receiving society? What are its consequences for the labour market, the economy and the welfare system? How does society mobilise socially and politically around immigrants: the anti-immigrant movements, the mobilisation and organisation of immigrants themselves, and the anti-racism movements? How do such movements influence one another?

The two areas outlined separately above are closely related, and they are interconnected in many ways. Migrations precede the process of settlement, and the characteristics of migration movements, for example their selectivity, often have immediate and long-term consequences for the process of integration. Conversely, the speed, scope and quality of the integration of immigrants and their descendants may have consequences for the continuation of migration flows consisting of family members, marriage partners or other compatriots. Moreover, recent debates on the growing significance of transnationalism (the maintenance of intense linkages between people in places of origin and settlement) have raised the claim that the nature of both migration and integration has been fundamentally transformed in recent years.

The approach taken by the IMISCOE Programme is characterised by the following methodological principles:

- **Comparison** is used as a systematic methodology. Hitherto, the predominant mode of comparison within national-level programmes of the IMISCOE member institutes has been focused on different groups within a single context. Historical comparisons within one national context have also been included in some cases. In the future IMISCOE programme, this will be complemented by a range of cross-national comparisons, including studies of groups of the same origin in different national or city contexts. Historical comparisons will also be made cross-nationally.
- **Multidisciplinary**. Issues central to the domain of the Network of Excellence will be studied from all relevant angles within a single common framework.
- The special expertise of each member will be put to strategic use in developing the international research programme, in order to benefit from the existing **complementarity** of expertise within the group.
- The programme will have an explicit **policy orientation**, in two distinct ways: strategic topics and research questions will be chosen within the overall domain; and, within individual projects, there will be a specific focus on variables that might potentially be influenceable by policy instruments. Initial and ongoing consultations with a wide range of policymakers in government, NGO and community sectors, and at local, national and European levels, will ensure that realistic and up-to-date policy concerns are built into IMISCOE research and dissemination activities. All IMISCOE members already maintain significant numbers of close contacts with relevant policymakers in the sectors and levels involved.

In developing the common research programme, three consecutive steps will be taken:

- The current research activities of all IMISCOE members will be brought together into one **programme of current research**, supported by a framework that clusters the research projects (and researchers) according to the content of their work.
- A **system of deliverables** will be developed to apply to all clusters—concrete integrative activities to achieve the coherence of the programme by ensuring international comparability, a common theoretical basis and common methodological instruments, and by maximising the programme's scope in terms of disciplines, geography and new members.
- **Two new, strategic lines of common research** will be developed to involve most or all of the present members as well as new members (particularly in the South and East).

As a starting point for meaningful integrative activities, certain basic conditions must be fulfilled:

- researchers should work within the same domain;
- they should be able to work together in relatively small-scale groups on the same topics; and
- the overall research programme should be manageable.

In regard to the first condition, the member institutes have agreed to define their input into IMISCOE (research and researchers) in accordance with the domain described above. This will ensure the homogeneity of the research programme as a whole. With regard to the second and third conditions, the IMISCOE Network has considered how to create added value by integrating and further developing its research capacity. Bringing together 300 researchers (including PhD candidates) into one organisation could lead to tensions between two central aims: reaping the fruits of the overall programme, and integrating so many researchers. This can be resolved through two measures. First, relatively small groups of researchers will be created who work on similar topics (homogeneity) and become well acquainted through regular workshops, correspondence and other means. Gradually, new initiatives will develop from such interactions, including common theoretical frameworks, rigorous cross-national comparative research and joint dissemination of findings. To achieve this aim, *Clusters* will be formed throughout the programme, each managed by a *Cluster Leader* (or leaders). They will ensure the relative homogeneity of the researchers brought together in such a cluster. Cluster leaders should be senior researchers, authorities in the domain of that particular cluster, and they should also have organisational abilities. Second, an overarching organisational structure will be needed that will launch cross-cluster initiatives and link together the cluster topics by recommending studies that transcend the cluster level. A Board of Programme Leaders, comprised of all cluster leaders within the programme, will oversee both the fulfilment of this task and the overall development of the IMISCOE programme.

On the basis of these principles the current research of all IMISCOE members has been brought together into one programme consisting of nine clusters. The basic criteria for creating such clusters are content and size.

**Part A:** The domain of **International Migration** as spatial movements across political borders is subdivided into two clusters.

- A1 focuses on processes and mechanisms of international migration and its regulation;

- A2 studies the causes and consequences of migration, mainly in the longer term, for both sending and receiving countries, including the phenomenon of transnationalism.

**Part B:** The domain of **Integration and Social Cohesion: Processes and Interventions**. It is subdivided into four clusters, addressing the basic dimensions of the integration process.

- B3 covers the political dimension—legal status, citizenship and political mobilisation (including policies in this area);
- B4 focuses on the economic dimension—work, entrepreneurship and economic integration;
- B5 concentrates on social integration in a broad sense—education, housing (including segregation), health and other public domains;
- B6 examines the cultural dimension—linguistic, cultural and religious diversity and the related policies.

**Part C:** Three **Cross-Cutting Topics or Perspectives** serve as a central focus.

- C7 focuses on the interaction between immigrants and the native population as well as the receiving society at large: interethnic relations, identity, representation and discrimination.
- C8 examines the time dimension of processes as well as several cross-cutting categorisations: gender and changing family structures, age and generations.

C9 primarily adopts a comparative perspective of politics and policies: states and cities, and their politics and policies relating to migration and integration.