

Call for Papers
PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN MIGRATION RESEARCH
SPECIAL ISSUE IN MIGRATION LETTERS
DEADLINE: 15 DECEMBER 2018

Human mobility is an interdisciplinary and highly complex issue which has been approached from diverse national academic traditions and methodologies of investigation (De Tona et al. 2010). Although the study of migration was initially dominated by empiricist-positivist approaches, by now there is a well-established tradition of qualitative studies (Iosifides and Sporton 2009). More recently, within the realm of feminist, critical and experimental scholarship, there has been an upsurge of new and creative methodological developments. These include a diversity of participatory approaches, ranging from social action-research to research involving different types of participation (Arnstein 1969). This is particularly relevant at a time when not only scholars but also different institutions are currently promoting participation and societal involvement in research. This work questions well-established dichotomies such as those between researcher and research participants, or between academia, activism and social work (Pereira et al. 2016). So far, though, these studies have not received systematized attention and to a large extent remain as isolated small case studies. Trying to redress this situation, this special issue aims to showcase overall connections and developments by providing an updated account of participatory approaches in migration studies, and to provide a forum to reflect on the possibilities, limits and challenges of making use of participatory methods in migration research.

We particularly welcome reflection on one or more of the following topics:

- The nature of scientific knowledge and participatory methods:
Given that participatory projects often imply the use of artistic or non-textual elements, they compel us to (re)consider the nature of scientific research, and how to accommodate other forms of knowledge production and dissemination. These include, but are not limited to, considerations about how to account for the inclusion of the body and the senses into this type of research. We welcome papers looking at how participatory methods transform ways of doing research, especially considering affects/emotions/personal relations/personal distance between researchers and participants in the research process.
- Gender dimensions of participatory research:
We are particularly interested in work that reflects on the possible existence of a gendered aspect of participatory methodologies. Some elements found in many participatory projects (e.g. nurturing in research, carrying projects in personal time, non-conventional publication venues) may even contribute to the gender productivity gap in Academia and therefore work against already disadvantaged scholars (peripheral, female or early career researchers). In particular, we welcome considerations about if, and how, these

- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). 'A ladder of citizen participation', in *Journal of the American Institute of planners*, 35(4): 216-224.
- De Tona, C., Frisina, A. & Ganga, D. (2010) 'Research methods in ethnic and migration studies', in *Migration Letters*, 7(1): 1-6.
- Iosifides, T. & Sporton, D. (2009) 'Biographical methods in migration research', in *Migration Letters*, 6(2): 101-108.
- Pereira, S., Maiztegi, C. & Mata-Codesal, D. (2016) 'Transformative Looks. Practicing citizenship through photography', in *Journal of Social Science Education*, 15(4): 14-21.

methodologies may link, contribute and interpellate the postulates of the Slow Academia and feminist approaches to academic life and purpose.

- Participation and power:

Participatory research is an umbrella term under which covers a wide-ranging variety of projects. Therefore, there is a need for studies on definitions and core features of participatory research and methodologies. These may take the form of review articles that report on the appearance and development of participatory projects in different disciplines (as long as they have any relation with migration), or work that attempts to advance conceptual clarity by mapping participatory projects. We are particularly interested in the power dynamics between different parties taking part in participatory projects, and in particular in the power dynamics that lead to defining who participates in research and what participation actually means.

- Structural obstacles:

Finally, we welcome accounts of the limiting and enabling forces around the possibility and sustainability of these type projects over time. Reflections on how to address the issue of problematic access to funding particularly when involving open research agendas are needed. We foresee that comparative studies or projects carried out outside Europe or the Anglo-Saxon world may provide insights on how different scholarly traditions hinder or facilitate the possibility of carrying out participatory projects.

Ideally, we envisage articles that present specific participatory projects from any discipline and covering any geographical scope and migrant group, but which go beyond the case-study at hand and provide broader theoretical reflections.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

Contributors are invited to submit **500-words abstracts** which address any of the topics above or is coherent with the broad theoretical conceptualization of the Special Issue by **December 15th, 2018**. All submitted proposals should not have previously been published or be currently under review for publication. Proposals need to be submitted by email to all the SI editors:

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Authors will be informed about the outcome of the pre-selection process by **15th January 2019**. Full drafts of **3,500-4,000 words** excluding references, tables and graphs will need to be submitted by **1st April 2019**. Please note that full articles will have to undergo double blind peer review in order to be accepted into the final publication.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL:

Migration Letters is abstracted and indexed widely, including by SCOPUS and Web of Science. It is ranked as a Q1 journal in ScImago. It is the first ever letter-type journal in migration studies following a strict double blind peer review policy for research articles. It is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. For more information please see the journal webpage: <https://journals.tplondon.com/index.php/ml/about/submissions>