



Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars

Annual Report 2017/2018

Summary

This year, the association has reached a stage of maturity. The projects – both existing and newly initiated – have set the pace and frame of the activities, while the Committee focused on providing support to the members and consolidating the strategy.

Members decided to start a new project - *Tandem* - which perfectly fits with the goals of the Swiss Network of Young Migration Scholars (SNYMS), namely to be a platform of exchange and networking for our members. As for existing projects : *Facts instead of Myths* still contributes to the public debate about migration by providing a bimonthly blog entry in partnership with the Swiss Refugee Council ; *Asylum*, a project that is part of the genesis of the association, made a major step forward ; and finally *Ciné-Migration* had a successful series of screenings supported by the NCCR On the Move throughout 2017 and will be launched for a new season of on the day of the General Assembly.

The Committee could concentrate on the day-to-day management of the association and develop strategic partnerships to reinforce its visibility. Thanks to the diversity of activities undertaken within the framework of the projects, the association could expand its connexions with different actors in the field of migration.

As said, the association has obviously reached a stage of maturity and the projects have created a momentum of their own. We look forward to the promising upcoming developments.

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1. Activities

1.1. Association

The administrative year started on October 9, 2017 with the general assembly at Restaurant Beaulieu in Bern. It was followed by an aperitif, during which “old” and “new” members had the chance to get to know each other.

During the year, the executive committee committed to keep the members updated about ongoing projects and current events via its regular newsletter (“News from the board”).

1.2. Working Groups and Activities

1.2.1. Collective inter-disciplinary publication on « Asylum abuse »

This year brought important developments to the project *Abus*. First, The Working Group managed to secure funding and a publisher for the collective inter-disciplinary publication addressing the notion and role of abuse in the sphere of asylum in Switzerland. We are very proud and glad about the collaborations triggered. Second, we could compile all finalized

contributions, meaning that a first draft of the manuscript is about to be sent to the publisher. This major step forward entailed a lot of work and substantial back and forth with the contributors, who have always responded positively.

While the road until the publication is out is still long and tedious, the coming year looks very promising to the project *Abus*.

1.2.2. Fakten statt Mythen – Des faits plutôt que des mythes

The blog project “Fakten statt Mythen – Des faits plutôt que des mythes” is already in its third year of existence. Since beginning of 2018, the articles are now appearing on a biweekly basis. Authors from the Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars and the Swiss Refugee Council (SFH/OSAR) write short and simple articles with the ambition to deconstruct and rectify public myths about asylum. The articles are published on the website of the Swiss Refugee Council (www.fluechtlingshilfe.ch/fakten-statt-mythen). As of the end of July 2018, about 130 articles have been published. Besides the 13 authors from the Swiss Refugee Council and some guest authors from doctrine and practice, about 20 members of the Swiss Network of Young Migration Scholars already contributed to this project and wrote an article. The feedback on social media and among the public has been very positive and promising. Several authors have been contacted by journalists after their articles appeared.

1.2.3. Ciné-Migration / On the mov(i)e

After a successful series of screenings at the CineMatte, Bern, supported by the NCCR On the Move throughout 2017, including expert discussions on the respective movies and their topics, the CineMigration Group will reconvene after the General Assembly 2018 in order to plan further events. For 2018, an open screening of two awarded short-movies (Facing Mecca and Bon Voyage), embedded in a Swiss context will happen after the General Assembly. Further, we invited Hessam Pirqadam, an Afghani animation filmmaker/graphic designer, who will not only present two short animated movies on the experiences of flight, but also talk about his own experiences.

1.2.4. Tandem

In February 2018 SNyMS launched a new project – the SNyMS Tandem – a peer-mentoring programme for SNyMS members. The idea is that SNyMS members organize themselves in pairs and regularly meet in order to exchange ideas, discuss progress and questions, to give each other feedback and support. While it is primarily addressing PhDs it is also open to members at a more advanced stage of their careers. As SNyMS has members from different disciplines, working on different topics, in different



places the goal is to provide a good match for interested members, as well as more opportunities to build professional ties and exchange across disciplines and Universities.

The Tandem project was launched with a call for participants in February 2018. Currently there are two active Tandem teams. The aim is to increase the number of participants in the following year.

1.3. Executive Committee

The executive committee is responsible for organisational and formal aspects regarding the association.

The executive committee is currently composed of the following persons:

- Nula Frei, Fribourg (chairperson)
- Sascha Finger, Bern
- Anne Kneer, St. Gallen
- Robin Stünzi, Neuchâtel
- Barbara von Rütte, Bern
- Anne-Cécile Leyvraz, Geneva
- Lisa Borrelli, Bern
- Nesa Zimmermann, Geneva
- Laure Sandoz, Basel

During the last reporting year, the frequency and place of executive committee meetings were adjusted. It was decided that the committee would meet four times per year (as opposed to six times in the years before). Meetings have been held exclusively in Bern (as opposed to the rotating meeting places before). As a compensation, it was decided that the train tickets of executive committee members who do not live in Bern could be reimbursed.

2. Some Facts and Figures on...

2.1. ... Members

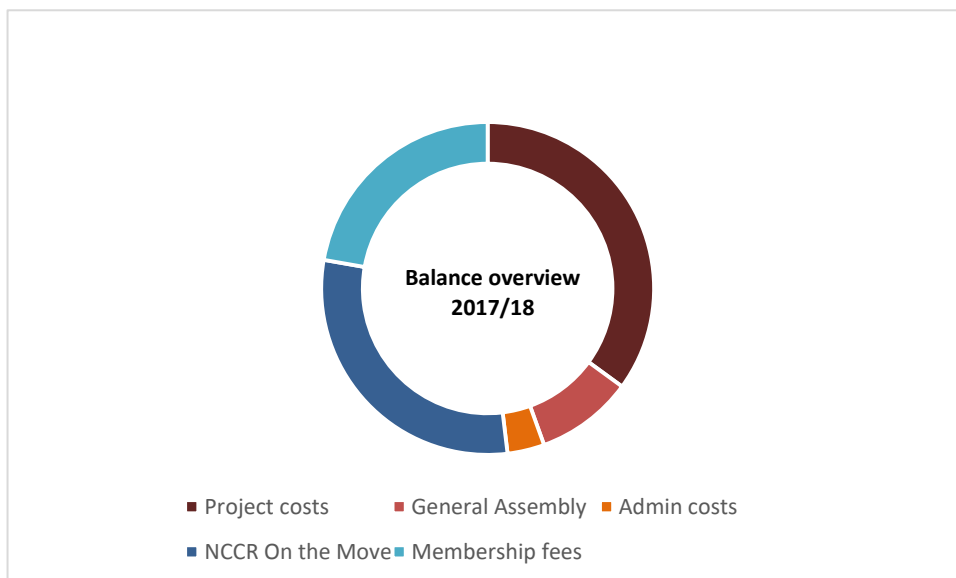
The association has about the same size as the past year with 41 members as of 31 July 2017. Members are PhD students, post-doc researchers and one associate professor. They come from different Universities such as Geneva, Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Lucerne, Berne, Zurich, Basel or St. Gallen, as well as different disciplines such as law, anthropology, sociology, geography or history. Further, an international atmosphere is created, as members come from three different language regions of Switzerland and other European Member States.

A number of members are organized in the working groups with members participating in the project “Abuse”, ciné-Migration, in the blog project “Fakten statt Mythen” and in the new project “Tandem”.

With the new newsletter “News from the board” the members are informed about the ongoing projects and activities of the association. In addition, the mailing-list, the website and the yammer group, the association can provide diverse possibilities to communicate.

2.2. ... Finances (1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018)

in CHF	expenses	revenues
Balance at 1. July 2017		6476.10
NCCR On the Move Contribution		1000.00
Membership Fees		750.00
Project costs (CineMig, workshops, etc.)	-1180.95	
Aperitif General Assembly (2017)	-319.00	
Admin costs (website, bank account)	-121.20	
Total Revenues and Expenses	-1621.15	1750.00
Balance at 1. July 2018		6604.95





3. Outlook

In the coming year, the association will continue to support the members in the development of ongoing projects and collaborations as well as to encourage the launch of new projects and initiatives. We will stay committed to our aim of providing a platform for exchange and networking for our members. While the projects of the working groups are at the core of our activities we will continue to organize social events for our members to get engaged personally. From an academic perspective, we hope to be able to contribute to the public debate on asylum policy and migration control with the publication of the interdisciplinary edited volume on «Asylum abuse» in the near future.

Moreover, we are hoping to expand our international contacts and outreach with a delegation of members participating in the annual Doctoral Colloquium of the German «Netzwerk Migrationsrecht» in October 2018 in Speyer (Germany).

Financially, we were able to further accumulate reserves and are in a position to support members in their activities and in the development of new projects within the association. The board is still working on the funding strategy and the framework for collaborating with our strategic partners.

The five-year anniversary of the Swiss Network of Young Migration Scholars in August 2019 will provide a good opportunity to look back at the association's five years of existence and to evaluate the impact it has had on the academic landscape of migration research in Switzerland. We are looking forward to that and will stay committed to further advancing the association's goals and projects in the coming year.

Bern, September 2018