

Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars

Annual Report 2019/2020

Summary

In its fifth year of existence, the Swiss Network of young Migration Scholars organised and/or supported several events for its members. The second half of the administrative year was marked by the Coronavirus outbreak and the need to interrupt or postpone various projects. The number of members as well as the financial balance remaining stable, the association is looking back to a successful year and looking forward to new, interesting projects and events.

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1. Activities

1.1. Association

The administrative year started on October 26, 2019, with the general assembly held in Grindelwald.

Throughout the year, the executive committee was committed to keep the members updated about ongoing projects and to organize new activities, such as the writing retreat, Ciné-Migration and the Doctoral Seminar.

Generally, the association has brainstormed on how to activate members and offer support for projects, ideas and events, which are organised by members of the association. The inclusion and activation of members was a key priority for the year, while the board also set out to co-organise the doctoral seminar with the CDM, look for publication possibilities and public events.

1.2. Working Groups and Activities

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

The collective publication “Asylum and Abuse” is now finalized and should be released in September 2020. Achieving it entailed significant work from the editing team, as well as for the authors, throughout 2019/2020.

Among the tasks undertaken: the chapters had to be reviewed several times; thorough editing work was done; the introduction and conclusion have been translated into German to ensure the coherence of this bi-lingual publication; an artist was contacted to draw the cover. This meant many hours of tidy work, a lot of emails and a few visio-conferences.

The team is now thinking (and looking) forward about the book launch and events that will be held in relation to the publication of the book in 2020/2021.

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

The Ciné-Migration series has been launched again for another row of events, which were hosted by the Reitschul-Cinema in Bern. This project was financially supported by the nccr – on the move.

Two of the three events (30.01.2020 and 12.03.2020) could be hosted and were not entirely affected by the pandemic, yet the third event (12.05.2020) needed to be postponed to fall/winter 2020.

Our first screening on 30.01.2020 was held under the theme of ‘Encampment’ and screened three short movies, which spoke well to each other. The following discussion by the directors of two movies, Anne-Claire

Adet, Stanley Edwards and Markus Fiedler resulted in a blog contribution on the nccr – on the move blog webpage¹.

The second screening on 12.03.2020 was aired under the theme ‘We need to talk about racism’, showing ‘Perro Bomba’. As guests, we hosted Eva van Belle, a post-doctoral research at the nccr – on the move and the film team of ‘No Apologies’.

The third screening (date to be announced) will focus on Asylum and shows the movie ‘Stranger in Paradise’. Again, we will have two experts, who will contribute to a rich discussion.

The events were moderated and organised by Christina Mittmasser, a member of the association and Lisa Marie Borrelli, who is a board member. As such, it opened up and included new and interested members of the association.

1.2.3. Doctoral Seminar/Journées des Doctorant.e.s

This year for the first time SNyMS collaborated with the Center for Migration Law (Universities of Bern, Neuchâtel and Fribourg) in the organization of the 9th Doctoral Seminar. The seminar would have included several presentations by SNyMS members. Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the seminar had to be postponed to a date not yet set.

1.2.4. Tandem

The SNyMS Tandem, a peer-mentoring programme for SNyMS members that was launched in February 2018 has been continued. 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 PhD students, it is also open to members at a more advanced stage of their academic careers. As the SNyMS has members from different disciplines, working on different topics and 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.

Currently, there are two active Tandem teams. A new call will be published soon in order to include more SNyMS members in the programme.

¹ <https://blog.nccr-onthemove.ch/movies-of-encampment-a-dialogue-on-confined-spaces/?lang=de>.

1.2.5. Writing Retreat Grindelwald

For the first time SNyMS organised a Writing Retreat for its members in Grindelwald. The costs for food and housing were covered by SNyMS. The event was fully booked within one morning and was carried out from 25-28 October 2019. It gave the 8 participants the possibility to focus on the personal writing project and push this project in two days and 10 writing slots as much as possible in a supportive and constructive atmosphere with other researchers in the migration field. The retreat was a full success, participants were very satisfied, both with the personal progress and the atmosphere.



1.2.6. Supported projects

SNyMS offered financial support to the conference on *Comparative Migration Law: Methodological Challenges and Future Horizon* with Fr. 1500.-. The conference was held on 4 December 2019 in Lausanne with more than 50

participants. Members of the SNyMS benefitted from a preferential fee. The conference looked at the uses and purposes of comparison in migration law and discussed different methodological approaches. It brought together scholars in migration law, including refugee law, as well as scholars in comparative law and from other disciplines, to provide insights on how legal scholars can best add value to the type of work they are undertaking.

SNyMS flyers were placed at the entrance of the conference room. Its logo and name was on the conference program distributed and available on the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law's website.

1.3. Executive Committee Responsibilities and Activities

The executive committee is currently composed of the following members:

- Lisa Borelli, Sion
- Nula Frei, Fribourg (chairperson)
- Anne Kneer, St. Gallen
- Anne-Cécile Leyvraz, Vevey (chairperson)
- Irina Sille, Neuchâtel
- Robin Stünzi, Neuchâtel
- Barbara von Rütte, Göttingen
- Nesa Zimmermann, Genève

During the reporting period, the executive committee met 5 times. Due to the Coronavirus, but also due to board members staying abroad, the meetings were held virtually which allowed for more frequent meetings. The board regularly updates the members on its work by email.

2. Some Facts and Figures on...

2.1. ... Members

As of 30 June 2020, the association had 45 members. In the last year, 4 members joined, and 1 member left the association.

Overall, the profiles of the members are very diverse: there are PhD students and post docs, there are members from different Universities, disciplines and regions in Switzerland.

A number of members continue to be organized in the working groups with members participating namely in the project ciné-Migration and in the project "Tandem". The writing retreat in Grindelwald was another successful opportunity for members to meet and interact.

However, a considerable number of members rarely interacts with the association or other members. Moreover, expressions of interest in the

association via the online form on our website are often not followed by an actual commitment to membership.

2.2. ... Finances²

The financial situation of the association continues to be very good. SNyMS is funded through the NCCR – on the move contribution and contributions from the university of Neuchâtel. Besides that, all members are required to pay an annual fee of 30 CHF. There are still some difficulties regarding the payment behaviour of members.

In 2019/2020 we had quite high project costs with the expenses for the Writing Retreat and the expenses related to the final tasks of the Abus project. Besides that, we are proud to support for the first time a conference in the migration field with 1500.- CHF. Without the contributions of our partners, we would not be able to cover the project cost with the membership fees. So SNyMS is dependent on external fundraising.

in CHF	expenses	revenues
Balance at 1 July 2019		7843.20
NCCR on the move Contribution / Université de Neuchatel		4066.70
Membership Fees		690
CinéMigration	1014	
Book Project Abus	643.05	
Writing Retreat Grindelwald	750.25	
Conference: Comparative Migration Law	1500	
Admin costs	62.05	
Total Revenues and Expenses	3969.35	4756.70
Balance		8660.55

3. Outlook

In the coming year, we are looking forward to the continuation of various projects – even though it is yet difficult to predict how much the work of the association will be influenced by the ongoing public health crisis.

² Covering the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.



We are looking forward to the publication of the interdisciplinary, collective book “Asylum and Abuse” in early fall 2020 and the activities surrounding this book launch.

We are also enthusiastically looking forward to the second edition of the successful Writing Retreat, which is planned for autumn 2020. More information and possibilities to register will follow shortly.

Ciné-Migration / on the mov(i)e will continue, the first movie on the list will be ‘Stranger in Paradise’ that had to be postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak. There date for the re-screening is not yet determined, however.

The Doctoral Seminar, co-organised with the Centre for Migration law, also had to be postponed. More information about the new date will follow in due time.

And finally, we will launch a new call for the Tandem Project in fall 2020, so as to enable interested members to build peer-coaching pairs that can regularly meet in order to exchange ideas, discuss progress and questions, to give each other feedback and support.

Bern, 21 July 2020