

Geographical migration studies (7,5 hp)

Course organizers

- Charlotta Hedberg, Department of geography, Umeå university
- Karen Haandrikman, Department of human geography, Stockholm university

Course description

Introduction

Migration is a core theme in geography, dealing with human mobility across time and space. This course brings together topical issues on migration through theoretical and methodological entrance points that characterize migration studies within the discipline of human geography, and contributes to a broader understanding of what geographical migration studies implies.

More specifically, the course introduces migration as a topic that is situated in time and place, and how it relates to a wide range of methods. The link between topic, theory and methodological approaches is highlighted, together with discussions about how geographers study migration. The course engages in the definition of migration, including insights to discussions on the relation migration-mobility, transnational accounts, spatial units and assumptions in migration, and the increasing role that time has come to play in migration studies.

The course enters topical focuses of 1) migration, work and non-work, 2) a life course perspective on migration, 3) spatial expressions and consequences of migration. The issue of migration and work relates to labour shortages, individual motives, and labour migration and precarity. The life course perspective emphasizes migration as a part of an individual's life course, impacted by individual and structural factors. Spatial expressions and consequences of migration relates to the consequences that migration is producing in urban and rural settings, such as processes of segregation and globalized countrysides.

Throughout the course, these topics are exemplified by methodological examples, which enable the participants to encounter a wide variety of methodologies and methods that are used in the study of migration and to discuss them in-depth. Methods that will be covered include biographical/life history interviews; regression analysis and sequence analysis, and a discussion of research materials, operationalisations and research ethics.

The course is organized into two meetings, one in Umeå and one in Stockholm. It will be examined with a PM where the participants are encouraged to engage in an empirical analysis of qualitative or quantitative data. Teaching activities consist of a mix of lectures, seminars and workshops. Lectures are typically given as an introduction, with the chance for students to participate in discussions about the topics.

Examination

Examination through active participation in lectures and workshops, presentation and discussion in peer-review seminar, two short reflections and one major assignment. Submission details: 1) a short reflection on literature for days 1-3 (500 words) to be handed in five days after the meeting; 2) a short reflection on literature for days 4-6 (500 words) to be handed in five days after the meeting; 3) a major assignment based on a selection of literature and an empirical analysis of qualitative or quantitative data on a related topic of one's choice (3000 words), to be handed in six weeks after the course has finished.

The major assignment should relate to some or many of the topics covered in the course, and it should include both a literature review and an analysis of data material. If possible, it is desired that the student links the assignment to own data and/or the topic of the PhD studies. However, it is also possible to base the assignment on data provided by the teachers or on official documents. In practice, this means that we want to give the students the opportunity to work with own data materials and issues that are related to their own work, but that it also is possible for students who are not yet familiar with migration studies and who are not in possession of relevant data to follow the course.

Participants should use the course literature in addition to one of the following materials:

- Register data (access to data via home department is required)
- Interview data (own access to data is required)
- Survey data (will be provided)
- Official documents on migration

Planned teachers

Umeå University

- Linn Axelsson
- Marco Eimermann
- Rikard Eriksson
- Emelie Hane-Weijman
- Charlotta Hedberg
- Urban Lindgren
- Emma Lundholm

Stockholm University

- Eva Andersson
- Ida Borg
- Karen Haandrikman
- Jutta Kawalerowicz
- Bo Malmberg

Course events

First meeting: 22-24 October 2025, Umeå university

Day 1: Introduction to the course; migration in space and time

- Time and space in migration studies
 - Defining migration, spatial assumptions and temporal dynamics
 - Time and migration
 - Time geography and migration
- Transnational and translocal perspectives
- Going through the examination task
- Overview: methods, research ethics and data in geographical migration research

Literature:

- Axelsson, Linn and Hedberg, Charlotta (2025) Placing migration: Towards more-than-relational geographical migration studies. *Population, Space and Place*
- Cwerner, Saulo B. (2001) The times of migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, 7–36
- De Haas, Hein (2021) A theory of migration: the aspirations-capabilities framework. *Comparative Migration Studies* 9(8), 1-35.
- Hägerstrand, Torsten (1957) Migration and area. Survey of a sample of Swedish migration fields and hypothetical considerations on their genesis. In: Hannerberg David, Hägerstrand Torsten and Odeving, Bruno (Eds), *Migration in Sweden. A Symposium*. Lund: Gleerup, pp. 27–158
- King, Russell (2012) Geography and migration studies: Retrospect and prospect. *Population, Space and Place* 18(2), 134-153
- Paul, Anyu Mary and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. (2020) Studying multinational migrations, speaking back to migration theory. *Global Networks – A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 21(1), 3-17
- Yeoh, Brenda S.A. and Ramdas, Kamalini (2014) Gender, migration, mobility and transnationalism. *Gender, Place & Culture* 21(10), 1197–1213

Day 2: Migration, work and non-work

- Labour shortages and regional development
- Post-redundancy labour mobilities
- International labour migration, migrant precarity and migration intermediaries
- Method: Biographical/life history interviews in migration studies
- International guest

Literature:

- Axelsson, Linn, Malmberg, Bo and Zhang, Qian (2017) On waiting, work-time and imagined futures: Theorizing temporal precariousness among Chinese chefs in Sweden’s restaurant industry. *Geoforum* 78, 168-178
- Axelsson, Linn, Hedberg, Charlotta, Pettersson, Nils and Zhang, Qian (2022) Re-visiting the ‘black box’ of migration: State-intermediary co-production of regulatory spaces of labour migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48(3), 594-612
- Erel, Umut (2007) Constructing meaningful lives: Biographical methods in research on migrant women. *Sociological Research Online* 12, 1-16
- Hane-Weijman, Emelie (2021) Skill matching and mismatching: Labour market trajectories of redundant manufacturing workers. *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 103(1), 21-38
- Ilyés, Virág, Boza, István, Lőrincz, László and Eriksson, Rikard H. (2023) How to enter high-opportunity places? The role of social contacts for residential mobility. *Journal of Economic Geography* 23(2), 371-395
- Kofman, Eleonore and Raghuram, Parvati (2006) Gender and global labour migrations: Incorporating skilled workers. *Antipode* 38(2), 282-303
- Lawson, Victoria A. (2000) Arguments within geographies of movement: The theoretical potential of migrants’ stories. *Progress in Human Geography* 24(2), 173-189
- Strauss, Kendra and McGrath, Siobhan (2017) Temporary migration, precarious employment and unfree labour relations: Exploring the ‘continuum of exploitation’ in Canada’s Temporary Foreign Worker Program. *Geoforum* 78, 199–208

Day 3: Migration: space and methodology

- Rural spaces: globalized countrysides

- Lifestyle migration, privileged mobilities and work
- Methodology workshop: summing up and wider perspectives
 - Which ontologies and spatial assumptions are behind different perspectives of migration research?
 - Spatial and temporal challenges: Single-space and multi-sited research
 - Research materials and research ethics

Literature:

- Haandrikman, Karen, Hedberg, Charlotta and Chihaya, Guilherme K. (2023) New immigration destinations in Sweden: Migrant residential trajectories intersecting rural areas. *Sociologia Ruralis*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12468>
- Benson, Michaela and O'Reilly, Karen (2009) *Lifestyle Migration. Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Hedberg, Charlotta and Haandrikman, Karen (2014) Repopulation of the Swedish countryside: Globalisation by international migration. *Journal of Rural Studies* 34, 128-138

Second meeting: 26-28 November 2025, Stockholm university

Day 4: Individual perspectives on migration

- A life course perspective on migration
- How is internal and international migration interlinked?
- Methods: regression analysis
- International guest

Literature:

- Andersson, Roger (2012) Understanding ethnic minorities' settlement and geographical mobility patterns in Sweden using longitudinal data. In: Finney, Nissa and Catney, Gemma (Eds.), *Minority Internal Migration in Europe*. Ashgate, pp. 263-291
- Coulter, Rory, Van Ham, Maarten and Findlay, Alan M. (2016) Re-thinking residential mobility: Linking lives through space. *Progress in Human Geography* 40(3), 352-374
- Gillespie, Brian J. and Mulder, Clara H. (2020) Nonresident family as a motive for migration. *Demographic Research* 42, 399-410.
- Lundholm, Emma (2007) Are movers still the same? Characteristics of interregional migrants in Sweden 1970-2001. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 98(3), 336-348
- Malmberg, Bo, Andersson, Eva, Nielsen, Michael M. and Haandrikman, Karen (2018) Residential segregation of European and non-European migrants in Sweden: 1990-2012. *European Journal of Population* 34(2), 169-193
- McCollum, David, Keenan, Katherine and Findlay, Allan (2020) The case for a lifecourse perspective on mobility and migration research. In: Falkingham, Jane, Evandrou, Maria & Vlachantoni, Athina (Eds.), *Handbook on Demographic Change and the Lifecourse*. Edward Elgar, pp. 200-212.
- Mulder, Clara H. (2007) The family context and residential choice: A challenge for new research. *Population, Space and Place* 13(4), 265-278
- Mulder, Clara H. and Hooimeijer, Pieter (1999) Residential relocations in the life course. In: Van Wissen, Leo J.G. and Dykstra, Pearl A. (Eds.), *Population Issues. An Interdisciplinary Focus*. Kluwer, pp. 159-173

Day 5: Spatial expressions and consequences of migration

- Segregation and urban settings: How is migration producing residential segregation? How can we measure residential segregation? How can sequence analysis be used to map residential trajectories?
- Methods: segregation indicators, individualized neighbourhoods, sequence analysis

Literature:

- Andersson, Eva. K. and Borg, Ida (2023) Trajectories of latent vulnerability and distress: identifying social and spatial fringes of the Swedish population. *Social Indicators Research* 169, 993-1015
- Andersson, Eva, Janssen, Heleen, Van Ham, Maarten and Malmberg, Bo (2023) Contextual poverty and obtained educational level and income in Sweden and the Netherlands: A multi-scale and longitudinal study. *Urban Studies* 60(5), 885-903
- Chihaya, Guilherme K., Marcińczak, Szymon, Strömngren, Magnus, Lindgren, Urban and Tammaru, Tiit (2022) Trajectories of spatial assimilation or place stratification? A typology of residence and workplace histories of newly arrived migrants in Sweden. *International Migration Review* 56(2), 433-462
- Gabadinho, Alexis, Ritschard, Gilbert, Mueller, Nicolas S. and Studer, Matthias (2011) Analyzing and visualizing state sequences in R with TraMineR. *Journal of Statistical Software* 40(4), 1–37
- Haandrikman, Karen, Rafael Costa, Bo Malmberg, Adrian Farner Rogne and Bart Sleutjes (2023) Socio-economic segregation in European cities. A comparative study of Brussels, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Oslo and Stockholm. *Urban Geography* 44(1), 1-36
- Marcińczak, Szymon and Bernt, Matthias (2021) Immigration, segregation and neighborhood change in Berlin. *Cities* 119, 103417
- Mikolaj, Julia and Amos, Mark (2020) Studying individuals across the lifecourse: A review of longitudinal methods. In: Falkingham, Jane, Evandrou, Maria and Vlachantoni, Athina (Eds.), *Handbook on Demographic Change and the Lifecourse*. Edward Elgar, pp. 40-55
- Musterd, Sako (Eds.) (2020), *Handbook of Urban Segregation*. Edward Elgar
- Raab, Marcel and Struffolino, Emanuela (2022) *Sequence analysis* (Vol. 190). Sage
- Reardon, Sean F., Matthews, Stephen A., O’Sullivan, David, Lee, Barrett A., Firebaugh, Glenn, Farrell, Chad R. and Bischoff, Kendra (2008) The geographic scale of metropolitan racial segregation. *Demography* 45(3), 489–514
- Vogiazides, Louisa and Chihaya, Guilherme K. (2020) Migrants’ long-term residential trajectories in Sweden: Persistent neighbourhood deprivation or spatial assimilation? *Housing Studies* 35(5), 875-902

Day 6: Peer review seminar

- In the seminar, participants will present their ideas for how they will use the course literature in their own PhD studies, and present preliminary ideas for their major assignment, where they will conduct an empirical analysis using qualitative or quantitative data. Other participants and researchers will provide constructive peer review comments.

Expected learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

- To gain broad knowledge about topical issues on migration through theoretical and methodological entrance points that characterize migration studies
- To gain knowledge and understanding about what migration studies within the discipline of human geography implies

Skills and abilities:

- The ability to analyze migration from spatial and temporal perspectives
- The ability to apply a variety of theoretical approaches on geographical migration studies

Judgement and approach:

- To deconstruct spatial assumptions in geographical migration studies
- To critically evaluate the use of quantitative and qualitative methods used in migration studies, including data availability and research ethics

Application process

To apply, send an email to charlotta.hedberg@umu.se by **XX date** expressing your interest in the course and describing the topic of your dissertation. Please also include your methods of interests.