

Migration Graduate Conference 2015



Theme and Introduction

This two-day conference was built on the experience of previous international conferences at Sussex in 2011 and 2012, which focused on the methodological dimensions of doctoral research in the field of Migration Studies. It included presentations on a diverse range of topics related to migration research including: migrants' experiences; student mobility; methodological challenges; migration policy-making; migration and development; social capital and networks. It was held in partnership with an academic conference hosted by the Sussex Centre for Migration Research (SCMR) and the Sussex-based *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (JEMS). The conference attracted the participation of students across different schools and departments at the University of Sussex, as well as other UK and European HE institutions (see attached programme for more details).

Committee

The conference was organised and managed by a six person organising committee composed of Geography/Migration Studies DPhil and Migration MA students: [REDACTED]. Support was provided by Prof Paul

Statham, director of the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, who also took the lead in organising an SCMR/JEMS conference, which took place the day after the graduate conference.

The committee met regularly from October 2014 onwards. These meetings generally lasted an hour.

██████████ will all be at Sussex next year and may be available.

Budget

Having estimated the total spend to be around £2165.00 (detailed opposite), we had to restrict these totals to accommodate a total budget of £2000. This funding was provided by the Doctoral School's RLI-fund (£1000) and Sussex Centre for Migration Research (up to £1000).

Item	£
<u>Catering:</u> (*NB: estimates based on current Sussex catering prices, revision expected Oct 2013)	
Lunch on second day (£5.00 x 40 participants)	200.00
*Coffee/tea & biscuits (£2.10 (+VAT) x 35 = £88.20 x 4 coffee breaks)	403.20
*Water (£2.99/6 1.5ltr bottles) x 4	11.96
Drinks reception (£85.00 first night (with snacks) (£65.00 second night)	150.00
Evening buffet on second night (£15 x 40 participants)	600.00
<u>Travel:</u>	
Participant travel bursaries (5 x £100)	500.00
Keynote speakers (1 UK-based speaker x £100)	100.00
<u>Other:</u>	
Materials (programme, photocopying, stationary, name badges, flyers, etc)	200.00
Total cost of initiative:	£2,165.16
Total amount requested from the RLI fund:	£1,200.00

With £2000 available, we re-worked the budget as below. This new budget, which came to £1900, also allowed for a £100 buffer. This was to cover the cost of any unforeseen or under-budgeted expenses. However, in the end the total cost was just £1401. This amount was almost £300 less than last year's conference (where the total spend was £1,692), despite the fact that we were catering for a higher number of delegates (40 as opposed to 35).

The reduced cost of this year's conference is primarily a result of lower travel costs (only three students received a travel/accommodation bursary). Catering expenses were also lower than last year as we organised drinks and snacks ourselves rather than relying on Sussex Food. This was achieved despite catering for a larger group and providing an evening meal on the first day, something that was not provided last year.

The two keynote speakers also had lower travel expenses than we had allowed for (one drove from Birmingham and the other's expenses were covered by SCMR as part of a centre event on 11th March). A summary of costs is provided below. A full breakdown can be provided (contact [REDACTED]).

Description	Estimate	Spend	Saving	Total
Monday evening buffet	£500.00	£520.00	-£20.00	£520.00
Drinks and snacks	£500.00	£332.60	£167.40	£852.60
Lunch on Tuesday	£200.00	£161.30	£38.70	£1,013.90
Printing	£75.00	£41.60	£33.40	£1,055.50
Keynote travel expenses	£100.00	£77.00	£23.00	£1,132.50
Student travel bursaries	£500.00	£298.40	£201.60	£1,430.90
Materials (bags, pens, badges)	£100.00	£156.80	-£56.80	£1,587.70
Photographer expenses	£20.00	£20.00	£0.00	£1,607.70
	£1,995.00	£1,607.70	£387.30	

Publicity and profile

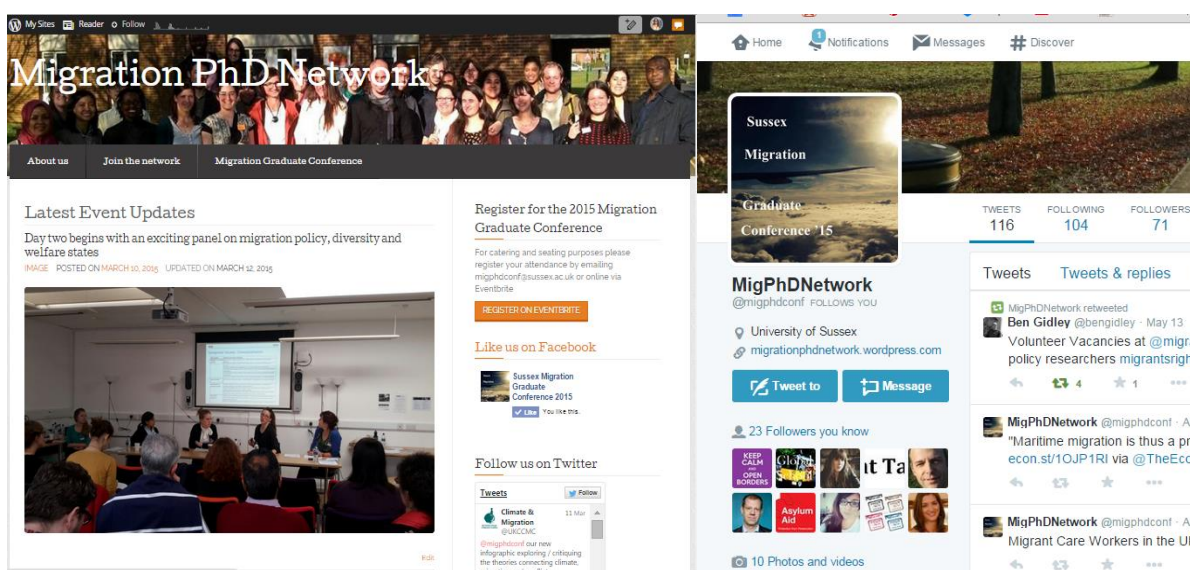
The conference was advertised at Sussex, through other relevant UK institutions, and via research partners in Europe and elsewhere. The conference e-mail address used last year was used to communicate with applicants, speakers and participants. Participants were sought through the circulation of a Call for Papers, circulated from November 2014. The original deadline for applicants was 21st December, although this was subsequently extended to 15th January 2015.

In addition to the Sussex Centre for Migration Research mailing lists, university media platforms and local flyering and promotions, the committee designed and constructed a website for the conference. The website www.migrationphdnetwork.wordpress.com utilised materials and photos from last year's conference and provided a useful way of providing information to applicants and participants and a means of blogging updates and/or changes (see below).

Applicants and participants corresponded with us primarily via email. Registration was also done via email, although delegates could also register on Eventbrite (linked to on the website homepage).

In addition to the new website we set up twitter and facebook profiles at twitter.com/migphdconf and facebook.com/SussexMigrationGraduateConference15. There are links to these on the website. At the time of writing this report we have 62 'likes' on facebook and 73 followers on twitter.

Both the website and twitter page have proved useful ways of building our profile and there is now a link to the website on the Sussex Centre for Migration research homepage. These outlets should make dissemination of materials and/or calls for papers easier in future. The website, twitter and facebook can all be used for future conferences and events.



Speakers and presentations

We received a total of 29 abstracts (8 fewer than last year). Of these we selected 10 papers,¹ which were divided into three panels, suggestive of a range of themes, subject areas and methodologies:

1. (Im)mobility, networks and migrants' (trans)national experiences
2. Diversity, Citizenship, Migration Policies and Welfare States
3. Migration methodologies: implications, creativity and engagement

Three of the speakers were Sussex PhD students. Of the others, 4 came from UK universities and 3 from mainland Europe (Germany and Italy). Each presentation lasted for 20 minutes and the three presentations in each panel were followed by 30 minutes of comments, questions, and feedback.

¹ Unfortunately one speaker had to drop out last minute due to illness so in the end we had 9 speakers.

Two of the three panels were chaired by the organising committee (Sussex students), as were both keynote speeches. The third panel was chaired by a former SCMR PhD student (who organised last year's conference). This gave a sense of continuity and community to the proceedings.

We decided to have fewer panels than the previous year's conference, 3 instead of 6, following feedback from last year's participants that there was a need for more discussion time, particularly during the panels. All sessions ran more or less to time and generated plenty of discussion. Each panel was followed by a break of at least 30 minutes, which allowed for smaller breakout discussions and informal follow up questions.

In addition to the three student panels there were two keynote speakers: Nando Sigona from University of Birmingham and Adrian Favell from Sciences Po. Keynotes lasted 45 minutes with 15 minutes for questions and discussion. Both were chaired by members of the organising committee.

Attendance and participation

Around 50 people attended on the Monday afternoon for the keynote and first panel. A similar number were also present on the Tuesday, with slightly fewer there for the morning panel.

Delegates ranged from Master's level to final year PhD students and alumni. Staff members, from the department of Geography in particular, were also in attendance at various points throughout the conference, adding to the diversity of experience and knowledge in the room.

Participation was encouraged and the Q&A discussions that followed each panelled were well chaired and allowed sufficient time for debate. A lack of space for such discussion was mentioned as a negative feature of last year's conference and we were able to learn from that feedback. For the same reason, we were keen to provide ample opportunities for discussion and networking.

Opportunities for discussion and networking

Building on the feedback from last year's conference we provided more time for individual and group discussion, exchange and networking by scheduling fewer speakers, more time per speaker and plenty of breaks. We allowed considerable time during coffee breaks and lunches for. This included tea/coffee breaks between panels, morning coffee on the second day, a full hour for lunch and events both evenings.

These pauses and breaks provided opportunities for both academic and social conversation and networking. The evening event on the first day was provided following previous feedback (2014

conference) that delegates wanted more time for discussion. The post-conference drinks on the second day were less well attended, mainly because people had to travel home.

Having the SCMR/JEMS Conference the following day also provided an opportunity for networking with more established academics in the field. While this was not taken up by all of the Graduate Conference delegates, it was appreciated by those who stayed the extra day.

Feedback

We have received very positive feedback from participants throughout the conference and afterwards via e-mail. We also sent an online survey to speakers and delegates to receive more feedback about people's experiences of attending the conference.²

According to the nine responses received, the best features of the conference were the papers (positive comments were made about the range, organisation and level of the papers presented), the overall atmosphere, and friendliness. One respondent specifically commented that, unlike some other conferences, the programme did not feel over-crowded (building on last year's feedback).

The most commonly mentioned feedback, which will be useful for next year's committee to know, was that participants would prefer an alternative to instant coffee. This shows the balance that needs to be struck between budget and quality as we saved money on coffee and snacks by buying in provisions but this meant having only instant coffee. While the evening meal was a useful addition to the conference, the food choice did not suit everyone.

Concluding Comments

This conference could not have been prepared without the help and support from the Doctoral School, Global Studies School Office, Sussex Food, Deccan Tiffin, the Sussex Centre for Migration Research and Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. Particular thanks to Sharon Krummel for her support and advice with administrative matters before and after the conference. Encouraged by the experience and feedback, those of us who will be at Sussex hope to organise a similar event next year. Finally, it is hoped that off the back of the conference we can form and maintain a Migration PhD Network at Sussex, but also beyond, which will take the form of a blog and mailing list in the first instance and should increase our future impact (www.migrationphdnetwork.wordpress.com).

² Full details of survey responses can be found in the Appendix.

Appendix

Conference programme



Monday 9th March

Registration from 1:30 pm

Keynote Speech 2:00 — 3:15 pm

Dr Nando Sigona, Lecturer and Fellow in the School of Social Policy, University of Birmingham

Tea Break 3:15 — 3:30 pm

Panel: (Im)mobility, networks and migrants' (trans) national experiences 3:30 — 5:30 pm

Sebastian Prothmann (Goethe University of Frankfurt) Emotions and Immobility – When tiredness and frustration as a day-to-day experience meet exuberant imaginations of the 'Global North' among young men in Pikine, Senegal.

Angelo Martins Jr. (Goldsmiths, University of London) Beyond solidarity: Mobility and Control amongst Brazilians in London.

Jon Sward (University of Sussex) Assessing Migrant Farmer Experiences in Brong Ahafo through the lens of 'Migration Systems' theory (mobility and social networks).

Eleanor Stanforth (Swansea University) Moving on or staying put? The decision-making processes of sub-Saharan African migrants living in France and Spain.

Evening buffet and drinks reception 5:30 — 9:00 pm

Tuesday 10th March

Coffee from 10:00 am

Panel: Diversity, Citizenship, Migration Policies and Welfare States 10:30 am — 12:00 pm

Friderike Roemer. Generous to All or 'Insiders Only': The Policy dimension of immigrant rights and welfare states generosity

Sanne Noyon (European University Institute) United in diversity? The impact of immigration on welfare state attitudes in Europe

Kirat Randhawa (University of Sussex) Illness experiences and healthcare use by recent low-income international migrants in a UK city. (centre on lived experience, and interacts with policy).

Lunch 12:00 — 1:00 pm

Panel: Migration methodologies: implications, creativity and engagement 1:00 — 2:30 pm

Goran Vodicka (University of Sheffield) Using creative participatory methodologies for engaging the lived experience of 'Diversity in the UK' and discusses the methodological implication of engendering a 'critical pedagogy'.

Giorgia Prati (University of Southampton) Gender and adaptation: the implications of migration for women's adaptive capacity in the Mahanadi delta, India. (interesting applications of intersectionality)

Eveline Odematt (University of Sussex, Fulbright Fellow, Swiss National Science Foundation) 'Channelling the Good Spirits': Moldovan Migrants' Perceptions of State and Development Policies of their Engagement (multi-sited ethnography)

Closing Speech 3:00 — 4:00 pm

Dr Adrian Favell, Professor of Sociology at Sciences Po

#MIGPHDCONF2015

Supported by:

Sussex Centre for Migration Research
The Doctoral School

SUSSEX MIGRATION GRADUATE CONFERENCE

9th—10th March 2015

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX, ARTS C333



Reviews and comments

What did you like about the conference?

Showing 9 responses

The interesting range of speakers, the many opportunities for informal networking, the friendly and supportive atmosphere.

3/24/2015 9:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

friendly atmosphere, diverse speakers

3/16/2015 12:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

I liked that there was a wide range of topics.

3/16/2015 10:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Very informative and had wide-ranging topics.

3/15/2015 9:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Atmosphere, scholarliness, friendliness, attention to detail. Selection of papers. Avoidance of crowding out the conference with too many presentations

3/15/2015 7:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

The level and the heterogeneity of the paper

3/15/2015 3:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

The speakers were of a very high quality compared to past years; it was great that Nando Sigona was invited to give the keynote speech. Also, especially on the first day the event was very well attended.

3/15/2015 9:00 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

opportunity to meet other PhD students in my field, interesting panels and Q&A sessions, that it is bundled with the JEMS conference (makes it easier to attend both)

3/15/2015 8:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Great line-up, interesting people (speakers, organisers & delegates) friendliness, overall atmosphere, everything really!

3/15/2015 2:10 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

What did you dislike about conference?

Showing 8 responses

Perhaps the programme could have been sent out a little earlier, but apart from that it all seemed to run smoothly!

3/24/2015 9:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

nothing

3/16/2015 12:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

I would have liked to see more links between migration and development as a topic.

3/16/2015 10:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Nothing :)

3/15/2015 9:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

the classroom that created distance between speaker and listeners

3/15/2015 3:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

The catering was a bit disappointing. One participant told me they had 'curry belly' after the Dhaba reception on the opening night, and I didn't feel so great myself. It also would have been nice to have something other than instant coffee during the breaks.

3/15/2015 9:00 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

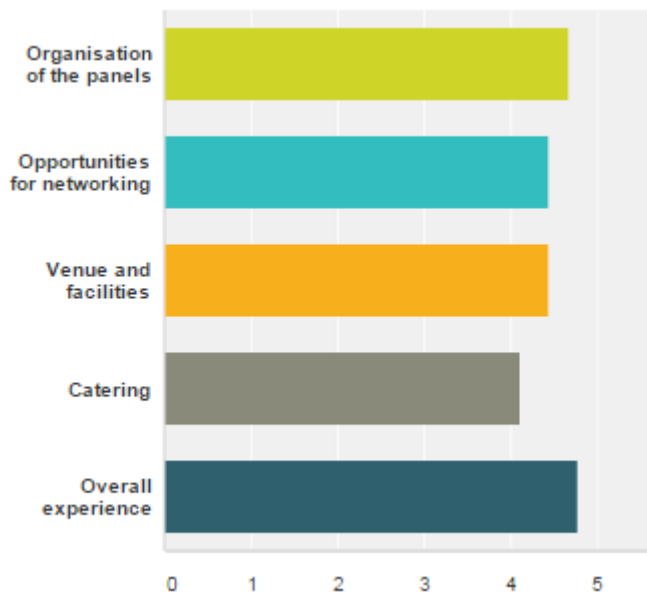
instant coffee (but that's really just a minor detail - everything else was great!)

3/15/2015 8:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

NA

3/15/2015 2:10 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

How would you rate the following out of 5



How likely is it that you would recommend the conference to a friend or colleague?

Unlikely	0%
Neither likely or unlikely	11% (n=1)
Likely	89% (n=8)

If you had contact with the organising committee prior to the conference how did you find the following:

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Total
Promptness	1	0	2	6	9
Usefulness	0	0	4	5	9
Friendliness	0	0	2	7	9
Professionalism	0	0	3	6	9

Do you have any other comments, suggestions, or concerns?

Showing 6 responses

Thanks!

3/16/2015 12:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Thank you!

3/16/2015 10:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

A larger room with more chairs. Otherwise very good.

3/15/2015 9:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Please share the feedback you receive - and other lessons learned from the process of hosting the event this year - with whoever organises the conference next year!

3/15/2015 9:00 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Already looking forward to the next one 2016!

3/15/2015 8:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Congratulations on a great job! And many thanks!

3/15/2015 2:10 AM [View respondent's answers](#)