

SO132-15 Borders, Migration and the State

26/27

Department

Sociology

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Derya Ozkul

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The topic of 'migration' can be a contentious issue. During the Brexit debates, the migration of EU citizens to the UK was one of the main areas of contention. This module examines how policymakers present migration as a problem in specific contexts. By drawing on examples from around the world, this module delves into the distinctions between who is perceived as a migrant and who is perceived as the 'host'. Additionally, it explores the differences between migration and displacement and analyses the creation and use of various categories, such as labour migrants, skilled/unskilled migrants, refugees, and displaced persons, in the media and public policy. The module also examines who is considered risky and who is not when it comes to travel, as well as who is deserving of protection. The key terms used in public policy and the wider media will be introduced, and the various discourses around which they are constructed will be analysed. The module will cover the main themes of migration studies, with a specific focus on the role of migration in broader social transformation processes and how borders are created and recreated in this process. It will examine how borders categorise, differentiate, and prioritise some groups over others. Finally, the module will conclude by analysing recent developments around 'smart borders' and the extent to which they change existing patterns.

Module aims

Drawing on examples around the world, this module aims to facilitate an understanding of how intended policy objectives around migration often lead to unintended consequences unless they seek to understand the social aspect of migration. The module also seeks to analyse how perceptions and lived experiences of borders (re)constitute the differentiation among individuals and groups, identity and areas of contestation. Finally, going beyond a definition of borders as demarcations between nation-states, the module aims to explore what constitutes a border for whom.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Key Concepts and State Created Categories

Week 2: Construction of Migration as a Problem

Week 3: Migration, State and Inequality

Week 4: Transnational Migration

Week 5: Migration and Displacement

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Displacement, Protection and Humanitarianism

Week 8: Borders, State Controls and Securitisation

Week 9: Externalisation of Borders

Week 10: Migration and Digital Technologies

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Have the knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts in migration studies.
- Acquire insight into how the discourses around migration are socially constructed.
- Have the knowledge and ability to analyse the relationship between migration and structures of power, including those based on class, race, gender, and nation.
- Develop the ability to conduct critical analyses of migration policies, assessing their intended aims and social implications.
- Be able to describe and critically participate in political and intellectual discussions on borders, migration, and securitisation.
- Address the aims and objectives of the module demonstrating close engagement with module materials

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Research element

Students will be asked to conduct research as part of the final evaluation. They can choose to investigate a news article or a particular migration policy. They will be responsible for locating and selecting their research material. During seminars, students will have access to guidance and assistance as they work through the research process. Students will then be required to analyse their chosen case study using the themes and concepts presented in the module.

Interdisciplinary

This module covers a wide range of sociological themes, drawing on related fields such as political sociology, political economy, anthropology, political science, international relations, and critical security studies.

International

This module covers migration-related events and policies primarily centred in Europe but also the US/Mexico border, Africa, and the Middle East.

Subject specific skills

- Understanding of migration as part of broader social transformation processes
- Being able to critically analyse news items and specific portrayals of migrants, including refugees, and their long-term implications.
- Being able to critically analyse specific migration policies that facilitate or deter migrants' entry in relation to constructions around race, class and gender.

Transferable skills

- Developing information literacy skills to gather and evaluate information from various sources.
 - Critical reading skills to analyse and interpret complex texts.
 - Critical thinking skills through reflection on existing policies and news and their implications.
 - Communication skills by participating in seminar discussions and writing formative and summative essays.
 - Research skills to conduct independent research and critically evaluate sources.
 - News and/or policy analysis skills to understand the impact of current events on society.
 - Analytical skills to identify and evaluate patterns and connections in data.
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (9%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (9%)
Private study	82 hours (82%)
Total	100 hours

Private study description

- Reading for seminars
- Preparing for seminars, answering set questions
- Research and further reading for assessment
- Preparing and writing summative work

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Summative Assessment	100%	50 hours	Yes (extension)
<p>The summative assessment comprises a 2,000-word research paper, worth 100% of the total mark. Students should conduct thorough research and compose a paper on a particular case study exploring one or several themes introduced in this module. The students will be provided with several questions to guide this assessment, and they will be able to choose the one that aligns best with their research objectives.</p>			

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Students will have the opportunity to receive oral feedback on their ongoing work during seminars and detailed written feedback on their summative assessments upon submission.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of USOA-L301 BA in Sociology