



UNIVERSITÄT
ZU KÖLN



INSTITUT FÜR SOZIOLOGIE
UND SOZIALPSYCHOLOGIE

ISS SEMINAR SERIES

DEMOGRAPHY & SOCIAL INEQUALITY

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Tel-Aviv University

IMAGINED MIGRANTS, CHANGING BORDERS AND NATIONAL COLLECTIVES

A standardized statistical category of international migrant does not always capture popular ideas ascribed to the term. At the same time, popular ideas about migrants, i.e. the “other,” play an important role in the process of drawing and reproducing the boundaries of a national collective. In the ideology of modern nation-states, the boundaries of the national collective are presumed to be neatly aligned with stable territorial borders. In this paper, we ask how changes in geopolitical borders of a nation-state or its entrance to a supra-national union are reflected in the standardized categories and in the meanings that the country’s citizens ascribe to the idea of migrant. We examine this issue, focusing on three postsocialist Baltic nation-states, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, that received their independence following the fall of the Soviet Union and that joined the EU in 2004. The Baltic states provide an excellent opportunity to probe popular meanings of the term “migrant” in the countries that have undergone recent geopolitical changes and enacted different strategies to manage former Soviet citizens, who arrived there before the independence. Using an attitudinal survey, we collected original data on the popular imaginaries of the migrants from national representative samples in the three countries. Based on these data, we examine to what extent aforementioned geopolitical changes are reflected in the public opinions about who is considered a migrant and who is not across the three postsocialist countries with different strategies for managing their population.

MONDAY, 29. April 2024
5:45-7:15 PM

Room S242, Wiso-Building , Universitätsstraße 24

For hybrid participation
via Zoom

Meeting ID:
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