

Call for Papers

Call 5

Methodological Aspects in Migration Research

Migration is an issue that has increasingly moved into the focus of interest and public discourse, both on the overall European level and in individual European states. Apart from internal continental migration on the basis of the extensive free movement of persons, the immigration of persons from non-European countries is a major subject. Social science, and in particular family research, face the challenge of including „migration“ as a criterion for research issues in accordance with the realities.

The pertinent question is how any methods that have proved reliable so far can and must be adapted. Numerous qualitative and quantitative methods and procedures have been firmly established in family research and used for various research questions such as changes in family formation and the change of family forms, in the description of transitions such as cohabitation, marriage or separation/divorce, and for questions concerning income, time use, gainful employment, household chores, changes following the birth of a child, gender relations etc. (cf. Fasang 2016, p. 123).

Along with the questions concerning methods for data collection and analysis, there are further practical problems in connection with the research into migration groups: For example, representative studies are mostly confronted with the difficulty of gathering sufficiently large amounts of data about specific populations such as ethnic groups or persons with a migrant background due to language problems (Fasang 2016, p. 130). But how is it possible to access this field in view of language and cultural barriers? What are the conditions required in order to successfully carry out surveys among migration groups and to overcome obstacles hindering the access to specific population groups? How is it possible to operationalise diverging role models, different conceptualities and differences in the concept of family, kinship and gender?

The focus is in particular on examples for innovative and/or proven practices for research among migration groups that offer answers to the questions raised. Special attention is also paid to the networking of research disciplines and the international and intercontinental networking of research institutions.

References:

Fasang, Anette Eva et al. (2016): Aktuelle Entwicklungen in der deutschen Familiensoziologie: Theorien, Daten, Methoden. In: Zeitschrift für Familienforschung 28 (1), S. 112–143.