



Depoliticising Migration

Mobility & Politics

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Human mobility, whatever its scale, is often controversial. Hence it carries with it the potential for politics. A core feature of mobility politics is the tension between the desire to maximize the social and economic benefits of migration, and pressures to restrict movement. Transnational communities, global instability, advances in transportation and communication, and concepts of 'smart borders' and 'migration management' are just a few of the phenomena transforming the landscape of migration today. The tension between openness and restriction raises important questions about how different types of policies and politics come to life and influence mobility.

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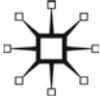
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▶ **Depoliticising
Migration:
Global Governance
and International
Migration Narratives**

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Series Editors' Foreword

Politics and profits nourish the ever-thickening haze of infrastructures and discourses of migration management. *Depoliticizing Migration* showcases a more benign-seeming series of migration-related narratives that do not at first glance seem to capitalise on the hysteria, fear, and politics driving migration industries and policies.

Building on several years of experience as a researcher at UNESCO, Antoine Pécoud goes to the heart of international organisations that produce migration narratives in order to understand why they have turned recently to the treatment of migration as another development issue – a problem in need of a solution. Noting that ‘IOs are institutions that talk and publish massively’, Pécoud analyses 3000 pages, a cottage industry, of reports and statistics crafted to bring order to the chaotic field of human mobility. In exploring how international organisations design narratives to order the world, Pécoud identifies a proliferating series of definitions, typologies, organising principles, and budget lines that characterise contemporary forms of migration management. The presentation of these data inevitably calls for the collection of more data. Pécoud proposes a new term to capture the bread and butter technocratic discourses of these proliferating industries and experts: International Migration Narratives (IMNs). By IMNs, he refers to the shared narratives that have emerged in post-Cold War management discourses created to orient a policy-minded audience to migration as a problem that can be catalogued and then solved.

Pécoud queries the authorship and audiences of these reports, while analysing their content and power to forge shared languages and viewpoints to govern mobility. In so doing, he confronts the simultaneous evasion of and capitalisation on the politics of migration. This depoliticising of migration, in fact, becomes the paradoxical force driving its contemporary governance through bureaucratic infrastructures and discourses. Put another way, Pécoud takes 'global governance' to task for bureaucratising, subsuming, and precluding political debate about mobility through detachment, ambivalence, and technocratic governance.

With the publication of Pécoud's book, the *Mobility & Politics* Series confronts some of the powerful forces driving the institutional migration industry that designs and capitalises on migration narratives. The brilliance of Pécoud's contribution is its exposure of the politics of erasing politics, as though governing migration is something achievable by cutting through the politics of mobility to get to the zone where governance operates through its own seemingly objective logic.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---|
| GCIM | Global Commission on International Migration |
| GFMD | Global Forum on Migration and Development |
| GMG | Global Migration Group |
| HDR | Human Development Reports |
| HLD | High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development |
| IAMM | International Agenda for Migration Management |
| ICMC | International Catholic Migration Commission |
| ICMPD | International Centre for Migration Policy Development |
| IGC | Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum, and Refugees |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMN | International Migration Narratives |
| IO | International Organization |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| ICRMW | International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OHCHR | Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| PICMME | Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe |
| RCPs | Regional Consultative Processes |
| SID | Society for International Development |
| UN | United Nations |

| | |
|--------|--|
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| WESS | World Economic and Social Surveys |

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