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The multilevel governance of migration and integration policies

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One out of several governance challenges to migration and integration policies is the fragmentation of these policies over various levels of government. Competencies that were originally located primarily at the national level have increasingly shifted upwards (EU) as well as downwards toward local and regional authorities. This makes these domains into exemplary cases for a broader development of multi-level governance, which has been drawing a growing interest in political sciences and policy studies. This involves studies of Europeanization of policies (top-down) as well as other forms of vertical interaction such as ‘vertical venue-shopping’ (bottom-up). These studies show the relevance of multi-level governance processes in this area in particular, but also show the governance dilemmas and consequences of failure to establish such multi-level governance processes.

The communitarisation of EU migration and anti-discrimination policies by the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) and the introduction of Community law and policies since the early 2000s represent a major turning point in the politics of migration and integration in Europe. The consequences of this communitarization are only gradually becoming apparent, primarily in the field of migration and anti-discrimination but to some extent also migrant integration policies. Beyond Europeanization, scholarly attention is increasingly drawn to the local and regional dimension of migration and integration and the interaction between these sub-state levels with the state and Europe. Cities throughout Europe have developed their own migrant integration policies and their own pan-european networks of policy learning. Regional authorities have developed immigrant integration and anti-discrimination policies that clearly differ from the state discourse. This is also reflected in a growing academic interest for the urban dimension of migrant integration policies in particular; some even speak of a local turn in migration studies.

This panel starts from the proposition that migration and integration policies are shaped in interactions between policy actors at the local, regional, national and European level. Contributions are invited that focus on the interaction between the local, regional, national, European and international levels (the vertical dimension). We welcome papers that explore these vertical interactions from a theoretical or empirical perspective, as well as comparative studies of whether there is a specifically European, national, regional or local dimension of migration and immigrant integration policymaking (the horizontal dimension).

Please send us your abstract (100-350 words) no later than 28 February 2014.