

# INED WORKSHOP

## MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION



### WHY DOES SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HAVE SO LITTLE IMPACT ON POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING?

WORKSHOP ORGANIZED BY  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS AND MINORITIES (MIM)  
INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES RESEARCH GROUP (PI)

28 MARCH 2017

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The issues of migration and integration have been central to political and social debate in France and Europe for over three decades. Researchers are often solicited to nurture these debates and, above all, in an era of evidence-based policies, to provide support for political decisions. Their activity has developed in response to social demand, resulting in an expansion of research infrastructures, and an abundant literature produced by a growing number of specialists. Yet the gap between knowledge accumulated through research and the priorities defined by political decision-makers has never been wider. The same is true with respect to the media, whose on-the-spot reporting of migration and integration questions gives rise to a situation where the views expressed by media pundits with varying degrees of legitimate expertise are given as much credence as scientific research findings. This paradox, with its variable implications in terms of research strategy, is explained in various ways.

The most frequent explanation is that research findings on migration and integration are not communicated clearly to political decision-makers and civil society. It is argued that this research is not designed to serve public policy, and that in any case, the analyses are too specialized and too critical to be applied in another context; moreover, this disconnection between research and its use outside the academic sphere is aggravated by a lack of effective scientific communication.

A second explanation is linked to the expectations and objectives of public decision-makers. Here, it is argued that the knowledge produced by research into migration and integration is difficult to apply, not because of the format of the results or their incompatibility with political action, but rather because of a lack of real interest on the part of decision-makers who are guided by public opinion, i.e. who are more interested in satisfying the supposed expectations of the public than in producing policies that address the needs and situations identified by research. In this sense, the rift between research and policy is not so much a question of communication and content as of decision-makers' practical needs.

These explanations are not mutually exclusive, but they represent clearly different interpretations of how baseless theories of the cost of migration, the difficulties of integration and the challenges facing multicultural societies have permeated society. Faced with the growing strength of populist parties in several European countries, we must examine the question of how scientific research is received.

In this context, and just a few weeks before the French presidential elections, the "Migration and Minorities" research unit and the "International Perspectives" research group plan to hold a debate on the relations between research and policy, looking at researchers' experience as scientific experts in the political arena, both in France and in several European countries.

# AGENDA

9H00 – 9H30 WELCOME COFFEE

9H30 – 10H00 OPENING

**Magda TOMASINI** (Director of INED) and **Patrick SIMON** (INED)

10H00 – 11H30 TABLE 1

## *THE FRENCH EXPERIENCE*

- **François HÉRAN** (INED),
- **Liora ISRAEL** (CMH),
- **Françoise LORCERIE** (IREMAM)

11H30 – 12H30 DISCUSSION

Discussion opened by: **Cris BEAUCHEMIN** (INED)

12H30 – 14H00 LUNCH

14H00 – 15H30 TABLE 2

## *INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES*

- **Sarah SPENCER** (COMPAS, Oxford),
- **Peter SCHOLTEN** (Erasmus University, Rotterdam),
- **Tiziana CAPIONO** (Università di Torino, Italia)

15H30 – 16H30 DISCUSSION

Discussion opened by: **Patrick SIMON** (INED)

16H30 – 17H00 CONCLUSION

A SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION SERVICE WILL BE AVAILABLE

Required registration on:

[www.ined.fr](http://www.ined.fr)