
NEW FORMS OF HUMAN MOBILITY ON THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL SCALE

MET Globility Special Issue

Editorial

This is the fifth collective publication by the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Global Change and Human Mobility (Globility). One should also mention the even greater amount of written work that has been presented and published in the form of individual contributions to specialist journals, both international and national. The variety and sheer number of publications in national languages add value to the work promoted by the IGU and a significant contribution to the circulation of ideas and to cultural rejuvenation, although this is difficult to evaluate and quantify. The problem of publishing the results of collaboration between networks of researchers constitutes a fundamental element of research and one that cannot be underestimated. Joint publication means giving an account of a process of scientific growth which has been achieved after many years of participation in meetings and conferences where, even if the atmosphere is amicable, discussions and critiques often take on harsher tones in confirmation of the seriousness of participation. Joint publication, however, is becoming increasingly difficult.

Globility has experienced this for the last six years. The research programme proposed by a group of scientists was approved by the IGU Executive Committee in the autumn of 1999 and has been in operation since the IGU Congress of Seoul in August 2000, remaining so at least for the present phase until the IGU Congress of Tunis to be held in August 2008. A project of this dimension and complexity does not represent an easy venture and it is certainly the result of a combined effort which started much before the year 2000, requiring an ever greater number of colleagues and scholars able to carry out this type of research in various parts of the world. Although many contributed to the launch – and we hope that they will continue to contribute to the success of the project – this type of initiative always has a small group of pioneers who silently prepare the methodological and programmatic basis for its development; perhaps it could even be possible to identify the precise moment in which the project lifted off, that is, from an abstract idea, a hypothesis or a dream, the moment it started to transform itself into something more definite and concrete.

After six years in operation, Globility is beginning to reach a phase of maturity and already it is possible to foresee the results of certain methodological approaches. The initial group of pioneers has been joined by a sizeable team of colleagues who have undertaken to collaborate with intensity, enthusiasm and skill in the success of the project. Globility considers it a fundamental and ethical requirement to endeavour to operate within the framework of continuous collaboration between North and South. This aspect, which should form part of every IGU Commission's cultural baggage, has been shown to be an unavoidable element for a Commission whose core scientific ob-

jective is human mobility. However, this is not an easy condition to fulfil. Participation in the Commission's meetings is particularly costly and, with the exception of the universities pertaining to the wealthiest and industrialised countries, the others have great difficulty in funding their own scholars' trips. The IGU Globility Commission has about a hundred members of which approximately half are European and the remainder from the rest of the world. Given that participation is difficult for many colleagues, Globility has endeavoured to organise meetings in as many continents as possible. The location of meetings has ended up determining the nationality of the participants and consequently the cultural approach and issues discussed.

Globility's first meeting was held on 20th–22nd April 2001, in Loreto Aprutino, Italy. Thirty-four papers as well as the two welcome addresses were published in the volume *Human mobility in a borderless world?* edited by A. Montanari.

The second meeting sponsored by the Globility Commission was convened at the annual congress of the Association of American Geographers on 21st March 2002, in Los Angeles, U.S.A. The third meeting was held at the IGU Regional Conference on 8th August 2002, in Durban, South Africa. The fourth meeting was run jointly with the Institute of Geography, Mongolian Academy of Sciences on 10th September 2002, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. A selection of work presented at these three meetings was published in the volume *The new geography of human mobility. Inequality trends?* edited by Y. Ishikawa and A. Montanari. In the meantime, during the course of 2002, a number of colleagues from the University of Brussels prepared and coordinated a research project on "Interregional migrations in Europe" (MIRE), which was funded by the European Commission (research VS/2001/0247) and which involved researchers from the Universities of Brussels, Copenhagen, Duisburg, Madrid, Newcastle, Pescara and Vienna. The final report was produced by C. Vandermotten, G. Van Hamme, P. Medina Lockhart and B. Wuyens and published (2004) in the volume *Migrations in Europe. The four last decades*.

The fifth Globility meeting was held on 3rd–5th April 2003, in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. The local organizer was Pere Salvà-Tomàs (University of the Balearic Islands). Forty-five scholars from seventeen countries attended and twenty-three papers were presented. The sixth meeting was a session organised together with the European Society for Geography (Eugeo) during the RGS-IBG Annual Conference in London in September 2003. The seventh meeting was held on 19th–20th August 2004, in Glasgow during the IGU Congress, and saw the participation of forty-five scholars and the presentation of twenty-five papers. The eighth meeting took place in Pescara, Italy, on the 2nd–4th December 2005, within the framework of the activities promoted by the European Project Equal II Progetto CELINE (cod. IT-G2-ABR-036) and as part of the IGU's Mediterranean Renaissance Programme. Thirty papers were presented and forty-five scholars participated, many of them European and amongst these many Italians, but they also included colleagues from Africa and Asia. The Globility approach was also used for the Pescara meeting: there were no registration costs and we even funded the stays of colleagues from developing countries and young scholars who did not have the means to participate. For this, our thanks go to the Municipality of Pescara and in particular the Councillor for Community Policies, Mr. Luciani.

The Globility Commission has decided to publish the results of its 2004–2005 meetings in *Migracijske i etničke teme* (MET) within the framework of scientific collaboration between the two shores of the Adriatic which we hope will become increasingly successful. The freedom of choice granted by MET has enabled us to select contributions on the basis of their quality, originality and innovation instead of their reputation and school of thought. This is a great opportunity for those who have the possibility of gaining access to the international cultural market but equally so for those readers who will be able to discover other realities and schools of thought, which are of great value even though at times unfamiliar.

This special issue is dedicated to the themes of human mobility and local development seen through the analysis of flows of specific population groups and situations: such as teachers, schools, the elderly, women and shopping tourism, housework and immigrant women. There is a second analysis method which refers to how population flows integrate in or change urban structures, as can be seen in the cases of Thessaloniki, Chieti-Pescara, Leipzig and Moscow.

Globility has created internally a group of scholars who have learned to better know and understand each other and to collaborate together and who are capable of doing this in a climate of friendship and mutual respect. Globility is like all the IGU Commissions – an open entity – and consequently one that is particularly interested in new arrivals and new collaborations (URL: <http://www.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/geo/globility/>).

Rome, June 2006

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