

The Rhetoric of Immigration: Labour, Integration and Exclusion

Immigrants coming to or moving between the Nordic countries encounter communicative difference as one facet of their immigration experience. Understanding and negotiating social expectations, social roles, and identity performance are required of those desiring to reside in a new location and go well beyond the act of learning a new language. Becoming aware of the rules, regulations, expectations, and communicative practices of one's new country demands attention to both internal and external stimuli. Decisions about how far one will go toward adopting new patterns of behavior and interaction may be based upon weighing risks and benefits, assessing probabilities of internal and external conflict, and what the expected outcomes may be as a result of changing one's self.

Examination of the kinds of information immigrants are given before and after migrating, mechanisms incomers use to respond to the information they are presented with, and their feelings of inclusion or exclusion can demonstrate the communicative power of methods that employers, nation-states, local polities, and other actors use to attract and retain foreign workers and their families. The papers in this panel will explore these issues across a number of Nordic countries, including Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. Speakers will offer insights allowing comparison of the communicative methods utilized by the various parties looking for immigrant workers and how various communities of immigrant laborers have responded to the messages they are sent. In all, we expect to open further dialogue across nation-state lines to investigate which communicative methods are commonly used, how well these achieve their goals for employers, polities, and workers, and whether alternative methods ought to be tried.

Presenters:

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