

“SOCIETIES IN MOTION”: A CURRICULUM MODEL FOR TEACHING THE SOCIOLOGY OF MIGRATION

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Abstract: This methodological article presents the significance, structure, and pedagogical peculiarities of the course Sociology of Migration designed for Bachelor-level students of social and humanitarian specialties. Today, migration has emerged as one of the most influential social processes shaping demographic transformations, labor markets, urban development, cultural interactions, political conflicts, and identity formation. In the context of world’s societies complex and even chaotic developments, forced displacement, and increasing transnational mobility, sociology students require systematic theoretical and methodological training to comprehend migration as a multidimensional social phenomenon. Particular attention is devoted to migration-related integration processes. Contemporary societies increasingly encounter challenges associated with social inclusion, intercultural communication, ethnic relations, discrimination, segregation, and the adaptation of migrants within receiving communities. Consequently, the course introduces students to major sociological approaches to integration, assimilation, multiculturalism, transnationalism, and acculturation, enabling them to critically analyze the complex relationships between migrants and societies. The article argues that the incorporation of migration sociology into BA-level sociological education is essential for the development of analytical, critical, and research-oriented competencies. The course combines theoretical lectures with seminar discussions, case-study analysis, comparative perspectives, visual materials, and elements of empirical interpretation. Particular emphasis is placed on establishing connections between sociological theory and contemporary migration realities in both global and local; sending and receiving contexts. The anticipated educational outcomes include the development of sociological imagination, reasoning, the capacity to analyze migration and integration processes, enhanced analytical and communicative competencies, and the preparation of students for further academic research and professional engagement in migration-related fields.

Keywords: *Sociology of Migration, Theories of Migration, Inclusion, Integration, Acculturation, Teaching Methodology.*



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Introduction: Migration as the Axis of Contemporary Societal Existence

Multidimensional spatial mobility is one of the defining characteristics of contemporary humanity. Nearly 4 % of the world's population — more than 305 million people — lives away from its homeland (International Organization for Migration, 2022). Migration movements, together with their derivative effects, are the outcome of social, political, economic, and structural processes within societies. They have undeniable consequences for all levels and spheres of societies' present and future existence, from the everyday life of the individual to social macrostructures and the geopolitical positioning of states (de Haas, & Miller, 2014).

Today, migration is a fundamental factor in population reproduction (Massey et al., 1993). Demographic replenishment in accordance with the labor-market needs of the West is realized through the large-scale movement of populations from the Global East and South (Preston et al., 2001; Poston Jr. & Micklin, 2005). Sending societies are emptied while being relieved of pressure on their local labor markets. Yet the balancing of markets does not protect systems and structures of social reproduction from the crisis of depopulation.

Neoliberal marketization and the imperative of exchange rationality dehumanize the migrant, reducing them to nothing more than a labor resource and a participant in consumer markets (Jones, 2016). The labor market of receiving states is not homogeneous. The local population, though quantitatively insufficient, occupies central, advantageous, promising, stable, and secure positions, leaving the opposite positions to newcomers who have left their homes (Piore, 1970; Wrench, 2019).

The incorporation of migrants into the economy of the receiving society is directed toward the geographical balancing of labor supply and demand. Migrant remittances to low- and middle-income countries amount to approximately 700 billion US dollars (World Bank, 2023).

Migration processes are not only economic. They are decisive for the social structures of both receiving and sending societies. Human movements are embedded in systems of power hierarchy, family, gender, and other role structures, as well as in systems of capital reproduction and redistribution.

Migration's participation in the cultural reproduction of societies and groups is undeniable. Group and ethno-national belongings are disrupted as a result of the migration-driven reconfiguration of place of residence and everyday life (Cohen, 2008). We are witnessing the continuity of conflictual regimes of differentiation, social trust, justice, and morality.

Migration disseminates the civilizational imperative of the present age. Labor mobility is, of course, the leading form, yet higher education and science, once nationally bounded, have also become transnational. Abroad are 7–9 million students and researchers, and more than 45 million highly qualified specialists — an immense mass of the creative class that bridges ideas and dominant cultural forms between societies (International Organization for Migration, 2024).

The focal points of migration-related impacts are the cities of receiving societies, which are responsible for the reproduction of productive, commercial-economic, political, administrative relations and symbolisms (Sassen, 2001; Price & Benton-Short, 2008). The division of labor is itself urbanistic (Castells, 1977). The circulation

of population produces a housing market, a perceptual hierarchy of urban places and spaces, and the resulting institutionalization.

Movements are becoming feminized. Women are massively incorporated into the sectors of service, care, low-technology industry requiring cheap labor, and trade — the peripheral and prospectively insecure segments of receiving economies (Parreñas, 2001). Exploitation, violence, and social restrictions are evident here. Migration changes gender identity, gendered social responsibility, and functionality. In the homeland, the absent man is replaced by the woman (De León, 2024).

Thus, the influential presence of migration in the life of societies allows us to argue that including the study of this phenomenon in the social-science curriculum is more than necessary. Without the necessary academic attention to migration, a multidimensional understanding of modernity loses one of its fundamental axes.

The study of migration provides a rich foundation for the practical — political — application of science (Bauböck, 1994). Without attention to migration-related impacts, strategies and instrumental policies concerning social integration, markets, population reproduction, social services, security, and the planning and governance of urban spaces remain incomplete.

Taking into account the complexity of migration processes and their significance for the existence of societies, we argue that the phenomenon should be studied within the framework of the discipline “**Sociology of Migration**,” where the methodological potential of sociology becomes central. According to É. Durkheim, sociology deals with social cohesion and solidarity, while migration, being constitutive, reconfigures mechanical and organic solidarities, disrupting and reproducing the normative foundations of society (Durkheim, 1893/2014). In the Weberian tradition, migration is responsible for the rationalization of social relations and, subsequently, for the reproduction of status-based and power groups (Weber, 1978).

“Sociology of Migration” is presented at the Bachelor level in its generalized form. At this stage, the purpose of education is not narrowly specialized knowledge or final professionalization. Students must be provided with broad conceptual understandings and trained in a sociological mode of perceiving and interpreting reality (Cabrera & Sweet, 2023). “Sociology of Migration” corresponds precisely to this mission by enabling students to connect the biographies of individuals and groups with macro-structures and macro-processes, to demonstrate theories within empirical reality, and to theorize and place within a coherent cognitive framework phenomena including their own everyday life. Thus, “Sociology of Migration” becomes one of the finest exercises in **Millsian** sociological imagination (Mills, 2000).

“Sociology of Migration” also assumes an integrative mission by bringing together under one conceptual framework distinct domains of sociological knowledge:

- **The reproduction of societies:** students become familiar with (dis)-integrative processes and their contexts.
- **The social structure of societies:** this enables discussion of inequalities between groups.
- **The reproduction of cultural forms and symbolic systems:** students become acquainted with identities and their trajectories.
- **The everyday life of the social subject:** students become familiar with the reproduction of society at the micro-level.

The discipline is normative in character and provides not only essential knowledge, but also contributes to the cultural socialization of students. The transnational essence

of migration directs students toward the diversity of social reality, challenging the cognitive ethnocentrism and stereotypical worldview specific for youth.

“Sociology of Migration”: The Structure of the Course

The course encompasses a wide range of topics whose combination reflects the extensive diversity of the sociological understanding of migration. It shapes students’ sociological perception not only of migration and related processes, but also of broader social reality. The course cultivates professional imagination and critical thinking, while enabling students to uncover the foundations and underlying preconditions of the superficial manifestations of social relations and social developments.

Topic 1. Conceptualizing Migration

The purpose of this section is to conceptualize “**migration**” and to present its sociological definition in a way that reflects the structural specificity of the phenomenon and demonstrates its historical-social, socio-structural, and agential determination. These definitions distinguish migration from other forms of movement, as well as from the overly broad or, conversely, excessively narrow and situational formulations employed in other disciplines and administrative practices (de Haas, 2021).

The lecture aims to replace students’ everyday perceptions and politicized stereotypes concerning migration with scientific objectivity. As P. Berger argues, “*Sociology requires moving beyond what appears self-evident toward the systematic interpretation of reality*” (Berger, 1963). Through the example of migration, such an understanding of phenomena becomes a universal instrument for the objective comprehension of society.

Topic 2. Historical Forms of Migration Movements

The purpose of the lectures included in this section is to present the historical panorama of human mobility, as well as the qualitative preconditions, political, economic, and cultural characteristics, and consequences of particular historical stages (Manning, 2005). The focus of students’ attention includes:

1. **The prehistoric period** (Gamble, 2013):
 - movements of nomadic tribes,
 - the formation of agricultural communities or Neolithic migrations,
 - the emergence of civilizations.
2. **Classical (ancient) and medieval migrations:**
 - the large-scale resettlement of *Greek, Germanic, Turkic, and Slavic* peoples (Pohl, 2018),
 - migration and the expansion and decline of the Roman Empire (Moatti, 2006),
 - migration and the expansion of the Arab Caliphate: *Conquista* and *Re-conquista*.
3. **Early modernity and the origins of capitalism:**
 - the Great Geographical Discoveries,
 - the colonial partition of the New World, Africa, and Asia,
 - spheres of influence in the East and Asia (Manning, 2005).

4. **The industrial era:**
 - the mass resettlement of the Americas (Roger Daniels, 2002),
 - industrial urbanism,
 - internal movements within empires and the redistribution of peoples.
5. **Forced displacements (first half of the twentieth century)** (Gatrell, 2013):
 - the Armenian Genocide,
 - the World Wars,
 - Soviet deportations.
6. **Postwar migrations (second half of the twentieth century):**
 - global economic migration,
 - the decolonization of former empires and the emergence of nation-states.
7. **The post-Soviet period (late twentieth century):**
 - the collapse of the Soviet Union and socio-economic transformations,
 - the emergence of national states or processes of ethnic homogenization.

The study of the history of migration movements is fundamental for Bachelor students of sociology because it enables them to perceive migration not as an exceptional or crisis-related phenomenon, but as a universal and continuous socio-historical process that has accompanied humanity throughout its entire historical existence. The significance of migration for the formation of states, cities, labor markets, cultures, and social structures becomes evident, while the relationship between migration and broader historical transformations — modernization, colonialism, industrialization, and globalization — is also revealed.

The study of these issues develops students' historical thinking and sociological imagination. It provides the foundation for a deeper understanding of population mobility and its underlying dynamics.

Topic 3. Contemporary Developments in Migration Processes

Today, migration movements manifest themselves both through the intensified continuation of previously established processes and through quantitatively and qualitatively new forms of human mobility (Castles, de Haas & Miller, 2019). These developments include:

- the quantitative growth of global cross-border and internal migration,
- the expansion of economic and labor migration,
- the increase in forced displacement and involuntary mobility,
- the diversification of migration flows,
- the feminization of migration flows,
- the growth of inequalities,
- and the emergence of transnational regimes and forms of everyday life.

It is important for students to understand the contemporary qualitative and quantitative manifestations of migration because they provide insight into the structural transformations of modern societies, trends in social mobility, demographic changes, and new forms of global interconnectedness. Such knowledge enables students to understand migration not merely as the mechanical movement of people, but as a central component of the development, transformation, and social processes of contemporary societies.

Topic 4. Migration within the Paradigm of the Social Sciences

Migration is a complex phenomenon, and its comprehensive study within the framework of a single discipline is impossible. The application, combination, and problem-oriented cooperation of methodological achievements from the social sciences produce analytical tools appropriate to contemporary challenges. Within the framework of the proposed course, it is therefore important to familiarize students with the approaches through which various social-science disciplines study migration in a multidimensional manner.

- **According to the historical approach**, migration processes are studied within the chronological dynamics of their existence (Livi-Bacci, 2012; Manning, 2005). Geographical movements are situated within the long-term transformations of socio-political structures. Migration is thus conditioned by such phenomena as the rise and fall of empires, colonization, the formation of nation-states, and similar processes. Migration is not instantaneous. Causal relationships, dependencies, and historical legacies persist across centuries, producing the migration practices of groups, families, and individuals.

- **Economics** conceptualizes migration within the framework of rational choice theory, where the individual — or the collective of social actors — optimizes social existence through mobility under external constraints (Borjas, 2014). At the macro-level, the migrant becomes a resource within productive-economic relations: labor power and a participant in consumer society. Migration therefore carries out the geographically expedient distribution of labor and consumers within local and global economic structures according to market asymmetries.

- **Political science** situates migration within the context of the exercise, regulation, and governance of political power (Guiraudon & Lahav, 2000). Accordingly, migration becomes a sphere of state sovereignty, institutional governance of socio-political relations, and power relations embedded within geopolitical dynamics (Hollifield, 2004). Political-science conceptualizations of migration focus on migration regimes — political ideologies, strategies, and institutional practices aimed at managing population mobility. Migration becomes a field of political struggle, an instrument of electoral competition, and a mechanism shaping the reproduction of state borders and security, civic belonging, social inclusion, and human rights. Migration is a sphere of state control where economic rationality, state and public security, humanitarian norms, and human rights intersect and often conflict.

- **Social anthropology** seeks to understand processes of meaning-making, symbolic systems, and everyday cognitive and pragmatic practices (Brettell, 2003). Migration is significant here as a lived experience of displacement, belonging, identity, choice, and cultural transition. Ultimately, migration becomes a sphere for the reproduction of meanings and the formation of the migrant's transnational life experience.

- **Demography** regards migration, alongside fertility and mortality, as one of the most important preconditions of population reproduction — traditionally understood as the “mechanical movement” of populations, which, together with fertility and mortality, continuously fills and empties states and regions (Poston Jr. & Micklin, 2005).

These lectures enable students to understand migration as a multidimensional phenomenon studied through diverse interdisciplinary approaches. This develops

students' theoretical thinking and contributes to a comprehensive and critical understanding of migration processes.

Topic 5. “Sociology of Migration” within the Conceptual System of Sociological Knowledge

The purpose of this section is to present to students the place of “Sociology of Migration” within the structure of sociological knowledge. According to Mertonian logic, “Sociology of Migration” is a middle-range or specialized sociological theory (Merton, 1949). Like other theories of this type, it seeks within its own substantive domain to connect social macro-structures with the actions of social subjects.

Unlike generalized interpretative systems, the sociology of migration concentrates on concrete social problems. Students thereby overcome one-dimensional and single-level perceptions of social reality and become capable of understanding how the different levels of social analysis relate to and complement one another.

Topic 6. Migration Theories

Migration requires theorization — the construction of coherent systems of logically interconnected concepts and propositions aimed at explaining the regularities of migration and related processes, identifying the relationships and interconnections between phenomena, and providing the foundation for empirical research as well as for forecasting future developments of the phenomenon (Brettell & Hollifield, 2022).

Migration theories constitute one of the most important components of the course. This extensive series of lectures enables students to understand migration not as a mechanical movement, but as a complex social phenomenon whose origins, trajectories, development, and impacts are structured and patterned. Without theorization, there is always the danger of confusing subjectively familiar situations with objective social reality.

The teaching of migration theories develops analytical pluralism in students and protects them from interpretative reductionism — that is, from inappropriate simplification. It is theory that distinguishes scientific knowledge from everyday understanding.

The abstraction of migration is not an end in itself; rather, it cultivates sociological imagination and scientific modes of reasoning.

Migration theories are decisive for the entire research process. They constitute the foundation for the formalization of research — the formulation of hypotheses, research questions, analytical units and variables, methodological approaches, and research techniques.

The systematic study of theories also develops students' critical cognition. Students come to understand that conceptual frameworks are often normatively charged and may reproduce dominant power discourses. Ultimately, Bachelor-level education aims not merely at producing ready-made specialists, but rather intellectually informed individuals capable of multidimensional reflection on social phenomena.

Thus, these lectures provide students with an extensive theoretical foundation, conceptual literacy, and intellectual flexibility.

Lecture 1. The Origins of Scientific Knowledge on Migration

The study of migration theories begins with the classical thinkers. At the forefront stands K. Marx, according to whom migration is not the result of individual decision-

making, but rather an outcome of capital accumulation and the modern logic of labor exploitation. In his view, the modern era is characterized by the existence of an industrial reserve army (Marx, 1867/1976). Capitalism continuously reproduces a surplus population of workers that moves across state borders in various directions. Migration movements provide masses of cheap labor, regulate the working class, and ultimately serve as an effective mechanism for the continuous reduction of wages. Marx also addresses the subordination of migrant labor (Marx, 1867/1976).

F. Engels points to the mass rural-to-urban migrations produced by industrialization, as well as to overcrowded urban lifestyles, poor and unfavorable housing conditions, and class segregation.

M. Weber did not formulate a comprehensive theory of migration. Nevertheless, migration-related issues can be identified within his ideas concerning the rational division of labor, relations of power, and the reproduction of social positions (Weber, 1978). Migration is associated with rational economic organization. It reproduces status distinctions, while migrants themselves belong to subordinate status groups.

É. Durkheim likewise does not directly address migration. Yet his propositions are visible within migration and related fields. The movements characteristic of the industrial era are embedded within the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity. Movement from the village — from the established homeland — to the city disrupts social ties and established moral regulations, producing a condition of normlessness, namely Durkheimian anomie.

In the history of the social sciences, the first systematic study and generalization of human migration movements belongs to E. Ravenstein (Ravenstein, 1889). We consider it necessary to introduce students to Ravenstein's still-relevant twelve laws of migration. Their formulation represented the first attempt at the theoretical generalization of empirical migration material and observed regularities. Students thereby witness the very formation of migration theory — from observation to regularity, and then to generalization.

From this point onward, migration ceases to appear accidental or situational; it becomes ordered and patterned. E. Ravenstein's work demonstrates that not only migration processes themselves possess long historical duration, but that interpretative systems may likewise endure over time. Several of the twelve laws continue to be reflected in contemporary applied theories, including push-pull theory and neoclassical migration theories.

The lecture series also includes contemporary theories of migration studies. Through acquaintance with them, students acquire knowledge concerning the epistemological and methodological qualities of theories, their practical applicability, analytical limitations, and shortcomings, grounded in contemporary approaches to evaluating theoretical effectiveness (Popper, 2002).

Contemporary Theories of Migration Studies

Lecture 2. Neoclassical Economic Theories of Migration

The lecture series begins with the economic approaches to migration — namely, **neoclassical macro- and micro-level theories**. These approaches provide one of the best introductions to the systematic study of migration and contribute not only to theoretical knowledge, but also to the development of students' analytical capacities.

At the macro-level, migration is understood as the result of objective structures — specifically, the geographically uneven distribution of labor supply and demand (Harris & Todaro, 1970).

At the micro-level, students become acquainted with rational choice and decision-making processes, since migration is interpreted as the result of the actor's comparison between the anticipated benefits and costs of movement (Sjaastad, 1962).

These theories address one of sociology's most important questions: the relationship between structure and agency. While macro-level theory emphasizes the structural differences between sending and receiving regions, the micro-level highlights individual behavior. Migration cannot be reduced either to structure alone or to the individual alone, and overcoming such dualism contributes to the formation of sociological thinking.

The teaching of these theories also has a practical purpose. They are embedded within the foundations of migration-management policies, initiatives, and interventions; consequently, future specialists acquire the knowledge necessary for effective professional activity in the field.

These theories, however, possess important limitations. Macro-level theory is narrowly deterministic: it overestimates economic factors and remains insufficiently attentive to the broader social context. Within micro-level theory, the migrant is necessarily rational — possessing the required information, conducting multidimensional analysis, and making productive choices. Both theories remain largely blind to the diversity of social structures, including relations of power, values, and identity-based constraints, and are unable to explain the continuation of migration even after inequalities in material conditions have been reduced (Massey et al., 1993).

A critical approach therefore reveals the limitations of these theories and guides students toward alternative and more effective theoretical frameworks better suited to social reality.

Lecture 3. Push-Pull Theory

The course next turns to factor-based theories. Students are introduced to **Push-Pull Theory**, one of the most widespread methodologies in contemporary migration studies. The natural complexity of migration is reduced to relatively simple analytical categories and framed within the complementary dichotomy of push and pull factors (Lee, 1966).

Students learn to construct multi-causal explanations, which is fundamentally important for sociological reasoning more generally.

The theory also serves as an educational example of one of the most important components of sociological research — analytical operationalization. The operationalization of migration through the terminology of push and pull factors demonstrates the complex interrelationship between structure and agency.

As a framework underlying policy formation, knowledge of Push-Pull Theory brings students closer to the practical application of the knowledge they acquire.

The lecture also includes a discussion of the theory's limitations, particularly its narrowly factor-based determinism and its insufficient attention to historical and social contexts.

The limitations of previous theories are likewise taken into account. The progression of lectures gradually leads students toward more complex, multifactorial, and consequently more flexible theoretical approaches.

Lecture 4. The New Economics of Labor Migration

The series of economic theories concludes with **O. Stark's New Economics of Labor Migration**. According to this approach, migration decisions are not made at the level of the individual. Rather, the group — specifically the household — is responsible for the initiation, organization, and consequences of migration. Migration is therefore associated with the diversification of income sources, the reduction of risks, and redistribution (Stark, 1991).

Students become acquainted with sociological categories and analytical units previously absent from earlier approaches, including social risk, group dynamics, social relations, and related concepts. The lecture provides a broader analytical lens through which migration is transformed from a strategy aimed at increasing individual income into a long-term strategy for family survival. At the center of attention lies the adaptive distribution of economic responsibilities. Remittances are understood as forms of financial credit and future-oriented investment.

Students thereby engage with survival practices at the household level and, through them, become familiar with the broader concept of development. From a methodological perspective, the inclusion of this theory within the lecture series is highly appropriate. It is distinguished by its strong empirical applicability and by its potential for further theoretical enrichment.

The limitations of the theory are nevertheless evident. It overestimates the rationality of the group — the household and the family (Parreñas, 2001). The family is presented as homogeneous, while the assumption that inequalities and conflictual divisions exist within it remains secondary, despite the fact that such divisions reduce the likelihood of purposeful and collectively rational choices. The individual subjectivity of family members disappears. The family itself appears as a narrowly functional apparatus in which the value-normative foundations of self-reproduction are absent.

This methodological weakness is deepened by the theory's gender neutrality, according to which the family appears effectively genderless, despite the obvious gendered dynamics of family relations. At the same time, the family is neither the ultimate determinant nor the sole beneficiary of migration decisions, mobility, and related practices. Migrants belong to powerful extra-familial social networks that may even prevent migration movements considered beneficial for the household.

Macro-structural constraints also remain invisible, including migration policies and border regimes within societies. A number of research-related challenges persist as well: the operationalization of conceptual components is particularly complex and difficult to overcome.

Lecture 5. the Theory of Cumulative Causation

We now turn to theories in which migration becomes self-reproducing. One such framework is the theory of **Cumulative Causation**, according to which an initial migration movement, once emerging within a particular structural context, transforms the social environment of the sending society and thereby increases the probability of future migration movements (Massey, 1990).

Students come to understand that migration is not merely a reaction to a single factor such as poverty. Migration produces new social structures, relations, symbolic

systems, perceptions, and practices that themselves generate demand for further migration and the continuation of existing flows.

Population mobility becomes normative. Migration generates aspirational standards within communities. It therefore becomes understandable why migration inertia persists even when the original conditions that produced migration belong to the past, while migration flows themselves remain continuously active. The theory effectively demonstrates the interrelationship between local social structures and the agency of social actors.

At the same time, the theory overestimates the self-reproductive character of migration, implying that migration should mechanically reproduce itself indefinitely. It struggles to explain return migration and the refusal of other community members to migrate.

The theory also underestimates structural constraints within societies. The migrant appears faceless: the class-based, identity-based, and gendered selectivity of migration escapes the researcher's attention. Finally, one of the principal limitations of the theory concerns the origins of the initial movement itself — namely, where the first step that generated subsequent developments actually came from.

Lecture 5. Migration Network Theory

Contemporary scientific knowledge and analytical tools concerning migration remain incomplete without **Migration Network Theory**. According to this perspective, migration movements occur through the ties connecting current migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants between sending and receiving societies (Massey et al., 1998).

Migration is therefore not solely the result of structural inequalities, but is primarily conditioned and shaped by complex networks of social agency. These networks make migration barriers and restrictions more permeable by reducing the costs of movement, the risks associated with migration and settlement, and the uncertainty of the future.

Migration flows are not aggregates of isolated, mutually disconnected, accidental acts. Rather, they tend toward becoming self-reproducing structures prepared for the continuous incorporation of new members, the normalization of migration itself, and the gradual independence of the process from its original causes and conditions.

Migration represents the transnational formalization of social capital. Members incorporated into migration networks gain access to social resources, legitimized goods, and advantages; consequently, inclusion within such networks becomes desirable. At the same time, the structural character of social inequality also becomes visible, because migration networks, while promising advantages to new members, ultimately function as mechanisms of social filtering.

Network Theory additionally enriches explanations concerning the preference for particular migration destinations. Migrants move not merely according to the geographical imbalance of desirable goods, but rather follow the logic and opportunities generated by the network itself.0 the division between the macro- and micro-levels of scientific understanding. Through multidimensional migration networks, micro-level agency becomes connected to macro-level structures.

The theory is also open to the participation of other social sciences. Through **anthropology**, one may explore the meanings of kinship and other social ties;

economics becomes responsible for questions of market incorporation; and **political science** addresses relations of power and regimes of admission.

The theory furthermore enables students to understand the failures of restrictive and prohibitive migration policies: once migration networks have formed, they often remain relatively indifferent toward formal restrictions.

Future specialists must nevertheless become familiar with the limitations of Network Theory. The theory overestimates microsocial ties, while macro-structural constraints — including migration policies, labor-market characteristics, and geopolitical contexts — remain secondary. It explains the continuity of migration rather than its origins.

At the same time, the agency of the subject tends to disappear. The migrant becomes a passive participant within the social network, deprived of personal strategies and ambitions. Social capital itself may appear romanticized and interpreted exclusively in positive terms, despite the fact that it functions not only as a mechanism of social integration, but also as a source of dependency and exclusion.

Ultimately, students acquire a critical analytical perspective through which they become capable of identifying hidden mechanisms, unintended consequences, and long-term social effects.

Lecture 6. Dual Labor Market Theory

We now turn to structural theories. The first is **Dual Labor Market Theory**. This perspective seeks the explanation of human mobility not in individual decisions or in the push contexts of sending societies, but rather in the structural logic of advanced capitalist economies themselves. The labor market of the receiving society is dual in character: it consists of a primary sector distinguished by stable employment, high wages, and guarantees, and a secondary sector characterized by precisely the opposite conditions. Migrants are incorporated predominantly into this secondary segment. Movement from the secondary to the primary sector remains unlikely, since receiving societies are marked by continuous structural inequality (Piore, 1979).

The lecture introduces students to the idea of the structural heterogeneity of society and explains the origins of social inequality through concepts that are relatively accessible analytically. Students thereby become capable of interpreting social phenomena through macro-structural terminology.

The theory is critical in character and exposes the undesirable contradictions and shortcomings of contemporary capitalism and market relations.

Several methodological limitations nevertheless remain evident. The focus is directed almost exclusively toward the macrostructures of receiving societies, while analogous structures within sending societies disappear from view. Likewise, the migrant's agency — personal life experience and future aspirations — falls outside the methodological focus.

Lecture 7. World-Systems Analysis

The final structural theory is I. Wallerstein's methodological framework of World-Systems Analysis. Migration is understood as a historically conditioned macro-process resulting from the expansion of capitalism from core societies toward the periphery, where local traditional economies, social structures, and relations become destabilized.

The geography of migration reproduces the hierarchy of the capitalist world-system itself. Alongside various resources, local populations — labor power — flow toward core societies, continuously reproducing forms of dependency originating in the colonial period and difficult to overcome. The lecture presents migration as a derivative of global structures and interrelations (Wallerstein, 2004).

Students critically analyze the landscape of global dependencies and worldwide inequalities characteristic of modernity, avoiding voluntaristic, individual-centered, and narrowly factor-based explanations.

Sociological knowledge is historical in essence. World-systems analysis seeks the structural logic of global society through retrospective analysis spanning centuries. Within this analytical lens, migration develops students' tools for understanding reality not only synchronically, but also diachronically.

Among the limitations of the theory is its macro-structural determinism: rigid capitalist structures occupy a central place. Community ties and transnational migration networks remain secondary. The migrant's agency and prospects for shaping one's own life are overshadowed. States themselves — which must ensure security and govern borders — are insufficiently conceptualized.

The theory is also methodologically problematic. Its principal conceptual components are difficult to operationalize empirically. Furthermore, the broad typological diversity of migration flows disappears from view, including return migration and even Wallerstein's own intermediate category of the semi-periphery, which for decades has itself attracted migrants.

Lecture 8. Massey's Synthetic Theory of Migration

The lecture series on migration theories concludes with D. Massey's Synthetic Theory of Migration, introduced in the late 1990s. Taking into account the shortcomings of the previously discussed frameworks — particularly their lack of practical comprehensiveness — Massey concluded that contemporary migration cannot be understood through a single theoretical approach.

Strictly speaking, this is not a theory in the classical sense, but rather a meta-theoretical research framework that brings together under one conceptual umbrella a number of theories, each effective within its own methodological domain.

The theoretical framework situates migration within temporal dynamics, where it develops as a result of structural contradictions and gradually transforms, through normalization, into a self-organizing system independent of its original causal factors.

The analytical framework incorporates:

- Neoclassical macro- and micro-economic theories,
- the New Economics of Labor Migration,
- Cumulative Causation Theory,
- Migration Network Theory,
- Dual Labor Market Theory,
- and I. Wallerstein's World-Systems Theory.

Its analytical focus encompasses three levels of social existence:

- the structural level (macro-level),
- the institutional level (meso-level),
- and the personal level (micro-level).

Consequently, it overcomes the contradictions between separate theories, where there is always the danger of opposing conceptual frameworks to empirical reality or endlessly continuing the search for a supposedly adequate alternative (Massey et al., 1998).

Students thereby acquire sociological imagination, whose significance extends far beyond migration studies themselves. Migration policies frequently fail and remain far removed from fulfilling their declared missions. This is often the consequence of the dominance of narrow theoretical approaches. Massey's framework provides students with a critical perspective for evaluating policy and with the skills necessary for interventions that genuinely take social reality into account.

Topic 8. Social Inclusion in Migration Processes

This section presents theories through which students become acquainted with interpretations of social order, stability, and membership. Among social actors, migrants are those who maintain the most direct relationship with questions of social inclusion in both receiving and sending societies. Accordingly, the lectures introduce a number of theories and approaches aimed at explaining migrant inclusion.

Lecture 1. Theory of Linear Assimilation

We begin with the foundations — namely, the Chicago School of Sociology and its leading figure, R. E. Park's **theory of Linear Assimilation**. This constitutes one of the foundational approaches in the sociology of migration and one of the first empirical attempts to explain social inclusion within intergroup relations. According to Park, newcomers move toward adaptive assimilation into the receiving society, while cultural, social, and behavioral differences gradually disappear over time (Park, 1928).

Migration is therefore not merely a physical relocation, but a process realized through intergroup relations and institutional adaptation. Migration and the subsequent existence of migrants are situated within a broad social context involving urban lifestyles, inter- and intragroup relations, modernization, and the reproduction of social order.

Among the limitations of the theory is its teleological understanding of assimilation, despite the fact that migration processes are in reality multidirectional, unpredictable, contradictory, discontinuous, and reversible. Contrary to the promises of the theory, it is difficult to speak of complete and final assimilation when migrant minorities frequently demonstrate strong cultural resilience.

Through mechanisms of discrimination, the receiving society itself likewise displays resistance that obstructs the newcomer's entry into full social participation.

Through this theory, students become acquainted with the foundations of the sociological understanding of migration and enter into one of the most important problems of contemporary sociology — social inclusion — by confronting the question of what exists beyond mere physical movement. This multidimensional explanatory framework transforms students into critical thinkers and provides the foundation for the effective understanding of other theories concerned with the problem.

Lecture 2. M. Gordon's Classical Assimilation Theory

Scientific understanding is further enriched through a more systematic and influential theory of assimilation — namely, **M. Gordon's Classical Assimilation Theory**, also known as the **Seven-Stage Model of Assimilation**. Gordon rejects the

one-dimensional and one-directional character of previous approaches and argues that the process is multidirectional, temporally uneven, and realized through seven dimensions: **culture, structure, marital status, identity, attitude, behavior, and civic** (Gordon, 1964).

At the same time, the normative character of the theory is also criticized, since it assumes that the “normal” trajectory is the movement of minorities toward the culture of the majority. The theory remains insufficiently attentive to the structural barriers within receiving societies that make movement toward this presumed norm impossible.

On the other hand, global interconnectedness facilitates migrants’ existence in new environments, reduces the imperative of assimilation, and enables migrants’ social existence within dual — transnational — forms of belonging (Vertovec, 2009).

Lecture 3. Neo-Assimilation Theory

The increasing complexity of migration processes and the expansion of empirical data have generated new demands for theories explaining inclusion and assimilation. **R. Alba and V. Nee** propose **Neo-Assimilation Theory**. This approach accepts the long-term convergence of migrants toward the receiving society, yet rejects the linearity of earlier models. Assimilation is not linear, but probabilistic and context-dependent.

The methodological innovation of the theory lies in its attention to social barriers. The receiving society itself is dynamic and constantly changing: over time, it accepts cultural forms that had previously been rejected.

In contrast to one-sided assimilation, the adaptive transformation of the receiving society is also acknowledged. Within macrostructures, priority is given to social institutions that either support or obstruct migrants’ social membership (Alba & Nee, 2003).

The authors likewise do not disregard the agency of the subject. Within external structural constraints, migrants possess purposeful strategies, the capacity for rational orientation, and adaptive behavior.

For students, the theory is significant as an attempt to render the classical approach more flexible. It moves beyond the understanding of migration as mere physical movement and incorporates structural barriers into the analytical toolkit.

Lecture 4. Segmented Assimilation Theory

The narrow dimensionality and one-directionality of assimilation theories are overcome by **A. Portes** within the framework of **Segmented Assimilation Theory**.

Assimilation within societies is neither one-dimensional, uniform, nor irreversible. Rather, it is conditioned by the specific characteristics of the receiving society and displays a diversity of trajectories dependent upon migrants’ belonging, the institutional structures of the receiving society, dominant ideologies, and the logic of resource redistribution.

Newcomers face three principal trajectories: **upward assimilation**, through which they become part of the receiving society’s middle class; **downward assimilation**, through which they are incorporated into the underclass of the receiving society; and **selective acculturation**, through which migrants preserve their identity and group

belonging selectively while simultaneously occupying competitive social positions (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Assimilation is intergenerational. The experience of the first generation is insufficient for comprehensive social membership, and the theory therefore directs attention toward subsequent generations.

The urban environment occupies an important place within this interpretation. The morphological hierarchy of the modern city is an undeniable participant in the social reproduction of migrants.

Among the limitations of the theory is its strong orientation toward Western social contexts. Migrant agency remains secondary. Hybrid identities, circular movements, and transnational practices — all of which reduce the imperative for migrants to identify fully with the receiving society — receive insufficient attention.

Students should become familiar with this theory because it challenges simplified approaches and engages one of sociology's most important categories: inequality. It analyzes inequality multi-dimensionally, through the prism of class, group, and spatial variables. Students thereby come to recognize the participation of the receiving society's social institutions in processes of inclusion. Ultimately, students learn to perceive society structurally and within a broader systemic panorama.

Lecture 5. Acculturation Theory

As early as the late 1970s, **J. Berry** proposed **Acculturation Theory**, whose purpose is to understand how migrants adapt to a new environment. The migrant's acculturation strategy emerges from a fundamental dilemma: what is preferable — preserving one's own culture or becoming an identical part of the receiving society?

Accordingly, four possible trajectories emerge from this dilemma:

- assimilation, in which one's own culture is fully neutralized;
- integration, in which one's own culture is preserved while broad participation in the social relations of the receiving society is also evident;
- separation, in which the migrant preserves their own culture while refusing local participation;
- and marginalization, in which the migrant abandons their own culture while simultaneously lacking meaningful and effective relations with the receiving society.

J. Berry's methodology distinguishes cultural assimilation — acculturation — from inclusion (integration), presupposes adaptive strategies, emphasizes agency, and is applicable to a variety of societies, not solely Western ones (Berry, 1997).

The cognitive model possesses a psychological foundation and prioritizes personal choices and attitudes, while macro-structures and social inequalities remain secondary. Although the transformation of the displaced subject is evident within the model, the reciprocal movement of the receiving society remains insufficiently clear.

For students, the theory is important because it cultivates a multidimensional mode of thinking applicable not only to studies of inclusion, while also providing a relatively simple yet coherent analytical toolkit. Ultimately, the migrant's multi-subjectivity becomes central.

Lecture 6. Communication and Intercultural Adaptation Theory

Within the framework of **Communication and Intercultural Adaptation Theory**, Y. Y. Kim explains migrants' adaptation and inclusion within unfamiliar environments. According to the author, intercultural adaptation is a process realized through continuous interaction, constant stress, and learning. Ultimately, the migrant acquires functional and psychological compatibility with the new cultural environment.

Inclusion is not linear and unfolds across three levels. The migrant passes through stages of

- stress,
- adaptation (learning), and eventually
- growth (development), where effective communication becomes central.

According to Y. Kim, adaptation is bilateral: it requires an open receiving society, access to social networks, and inclusiveness.

Adaptation in its turn encompasses three dimensions of human existence:

- psychological,
- social, and
- structural (Kim, 2001).

The theory is normative in character: it defines an end goal and presupposes movement toward a logical form of assimilation. It is strongly person-centered, while structural constraints remain secondary.

Through this theory, students understand that adaptation is dynamic and multidimensional. The migrant's agency and lived experience become central within the analytical framework. The theory also helps students develop competencies in qualitative research.

Lecture 7. R. Penninx's Theory of Multidimensional Integration

The lectures continue with contemporary theories, particularly **R. Penninx's Theory of Multidimensional Integration**.

Integration, through which immigrants become members of the receiving society, occurs across interconnected dimensions that concern both migrants and the receiving society itself. The author rejects the notion that integration is essentially cultural assimilation. Integration is relational, dynamic, and context-dependent. Migrants' adaptation is impossible without a response from the receiving society.

Comprehensive integration requires the simultaneous presence of three foundations:

- the legal-political dimension (civic status, political rights, and participation),
- the socio-economic dimension (the existence and accessibility of social goods),
- and the cultural dimension (values, norms, beliefs, identities, and practices).

Integration is multi-actor in nature. The relevant actors include migrants with their life strategies, resources, and goals; the receiving population with its pro-migrant and anti-migrant attitudes; and social institutions with their established rules and regulations (Penninx, 2005).

The theory is descriptive and remains relatively weak in explaining causal relationships. It lacks a sufficiently developed conceptualization of power relations and inequalities, which are crucial within migration processes. As a result, the concept of integration itself requires additional clarification.

The theory provides students with the possibility of analyzing integration from the micro-level of personal experience to the institutional and macro-structural levels. It can readily be transformed into an empirical analytical tool and effectively contribute to the formulation of migration-related policies.

Lecture 8. Conceptual Framework of Integration

The next framework introduced is the **conceptual model** of integration developed by A. Ager and A. Strang. It is among the most policy-oriented and clearly operationalizable theoretical models for explaining the integration of migrants and refugees.

Integration is multidimensional, reflecting migrants' connections with and participation in the receiving society. The process of integration becomes visible through employment, the availability of decent housing conditions, access to education and healthcare, as well as intra-group, intergroup, and institutional relations.

The theory proposes an operational model based on analyzable indicators that links migrant agency with the macrostructures of the receiving society. For the same reason, however, the conceptual framework tends to oversimplify social processes and remains insufficiently attentive to contextual complexities (Ager & Strang, 2008).

Lecture 9. Multiculturalism

W. Kymlicka introduces the idea of **Multiculturalism**. This is a normative political theory and a sociological concept concerned with the possibility of mutual recognition, equality, and social coexistence among different ethnic, religious, cultural, and identity groups within heterogeneous receiving societies. (Kymlicka, 1995)

Understanding multiculturalism as a defining characteristic of contemporary societies, this approach advocates for the recognition of minorities, the preservation of cultural identity, and institutional accommodation. Unlike cultural assimilation and other integration theories, it rejects the imperative that individuals must abandon their own cultural forms in order to become members of the receiving society. In other words, integration should occur without cultural cleansing.

Multiculturalism affirms the legitimacy of cultural, linguistic, and religious differences.

According to the theory, social equality is secured not only through formal legislation, but also through symbolic practices. Contemporary society therefore consists not of a single dominant culture, but of cultural communities with equal opportunities. Consequently, migrants, while preserving their distinctiveness, become full members of the receiving society alongside others (Kymlicka, 1995).

Multiculturalism has nevertheless been criticized. It may neglect shared values and collective identity and, instead of promoting social solidarity, may lead toward separation. The overemphasis on ethnicity obscures class belonging and the structural inequalities of society.

The imperative of separate group identity strengthens the internal application of traditional and conservative values within groups and gives rise to conflicts, for example around gender identity and the independent agency of the social subject. Finally, multiculturalism often remains little more than political rhetoric.

This contradictory diversity nevertheless constitutes an alternative to theories that advocate sameness. With a rich conceptual vocabulary, W. Kymlicka addresses the question of inequalities. Students already familiar with classical perspectives and theories are thereby encouraged to reconsider a fundamental question: what ultimately is contemporary society when, at the conceptual level, it becomes possible to move away from the rigid demand for social homogeneity?

Lecture 10. Transnationalism

Transnationalism, which emerged in the 1990s in response to nation-centered approaches, is among the most influential theoretical frameworks in contemporary migration studies. It refers to a process and phenomenon through which migrants' social, economic, political, and cultural ties and belongings are simultaneously formed and maintained within both receiving and sending societies.

Transnationalism categorically rejects the notion of migrants' one-dimensional incorporation into the receiving society. According to the theory, migrants are simultaneously members of several states, geographically separated communities, institutions, groups, and economic, political, and social structures and relations: they are both "here" and "there" at the same time. Transnationalism produces hybrid identities and Life itself becomes de-territorialized (Vertovec, 2009).

It should nevertheless be noted that not all migrants are transnational. Transnational practices may be obstructed by macro-structural constraints such as legal restrictions, border regimes, and migration policies. The theory does not sufficiently address the impossibility of transnational ties, the refusal of such ties, or the fact that, in many cases, integration into the receiving society and becoming its member remain dominant priorities.

The theory should be presented at the Bachelor level because, through its flexibility, it challenges the methodological frameworks of localized integration and incorporates into the analytical focus such contexts of social existence as the global interconnectedness of societies.

Transnationalism brings together under a single methodological framework the three levels of social existence — micro, meso, and macro. As a result, students' attention is directed toward complex sociological questions: What is society? What is belonging? What is identity when stable state borders no longer remain sufficient conceptual foundations?

Topic 11. Emigration and the Sending Society

In its own migration biography, Armenia has historically functioned primarily as a country of emigration. It is therefore appropriate within the framework of the lecture to describe the mutual influence and interrelationship between migratory outflows, the "society of exit," and local communities (Bayadyan et al., 2019; Mkrtchyan, 2016; Tumanyan & Karapetyan, 2023).

The chronological typologization of contemporary migration flows from Armenia presents the causal foundations, qualitative and quantitative structure, geography, and socio-economic and political preconditions and contexts of migration processes developing since the late 1980s and especially throughout the 1990s.

Particular attention is devoted to the consequences of emigration, which are distributed across several major spheres of social life, including:

- **Demographic consequences.** In the absence of adequate population replacement, mass emigration leads to population decline and the depopulation of particular settlements (Preston et al., 2001). In addition, the gender and age structure of the population changes. In communities of outmigration, elderly people and women with children remain behind, while men of active working age leave.

- **Economic consequences.** Within sending societies, the economic consequences of emigration are often viewed as an alternative to economic loss and the absence of opportunities. Emigration reduces social tensions arising from competition over scarce social goods, neutralizes its unpredictable consequences, and remittances become the sole means of subsistence for relatives remaining at home (de Haas, 2010). Money sent by migrants constitutes a significant portion of the gross national product of certain societies and may revitalize local economies.

At the same time, the economic consequences of emigration are not free from negative effects. As a result of brain drain, societies lose their educated population, highly qualified labor becomes scarce, and dependence on remittances emerges as an almost unavoidable condition (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012).

- **Socio-structural consequences.** At the meso-level of social organization, structural, role-related, and functional transformations of communities and families become apparent. A decline in community solidarity is evident (Castles et al., 2019; de Haas, 2010; Massey et al., 1993). In certain cases, intra-familial responsibilities become feminized, shifted toward younger generations, or conversely concentrated among the elderly. Due to the decline or absence of pupils, national schools enter into a condition of functional crisis, while healthcare institutions lose critically important personnel. The situation is further intensified through the normalization of emigration as a life strategy.

- **Cultural consequences.** Through transnational ties and return migration, emigration introduces new and often contradictory values and ideologies from receiving societies into traditional communities, producing corresponding everyday practices (Hall, 1990; Vermishyan, Vartikyan, Gevorgyan, Michikyan, & Ghalamdryan, 2022; Vertovec, 2009; Berry, 1997; Levitt, 2001). Migrants themselves, as well as their family members, become inclined toward reconsidering identity. Narratives of belonging are characterized by uncertainty.

- **Political consequences.** It is often said of migrants that they “vote with their feet.” Emigration challenges the legitimacy of the sending society, its system of political reproduction, and its governing practices (Hirschman, 1970). Through the very act of migration, migrants reject — or at least reconsider — the logic of political participation within their homeland. In some cases, migrants also carry external political perspectives and influences that are not always aligned with those prevailing in the country of origin.

The teaching of these issues enables students to understand the complexity and diversity of the structural transformations occurring within sending societies. Through the critical study of social relations, students compare explanatory concepts, recognize their limitations, and, through synthesis, develop an understanding of the constantly changing reality of the sending society.

It should also be noted that migration policy is most commonly known as an ideological and practical system aimed at overcoming contradictions and conflicts within receiving societies. In this respect, considerably less attention has been devoted to sending societies and local communities. The knowledge acquired through this course opens pathways for future specialists not only toward flexible and objective academic perspectives, but also toward effective public governance.

Methodology of Teaching

The contemporary teaching of Sociology of Migration at the Bachelor level increasingly requires a transition from traditional lecture-centered instruction toward participatory, interactive, and student-oriented pedagogical approaches. The course should not be limited to the transmission of theoretical information concerning migration processes. Rather, it should function as an analytical and reflective space in which students develop the ability to critically interpret migration as a multidimensional social phenomenon connected with inequality, labor relations, globalization, identity formation, integration, and social transformation.

Within this framework, the role of the lecturer extends beyond the simple delivery of knowledge. The lecturer increasingly acts as a moderator of discussion, facilitator of critical thinking, organizer of collaborative learning, and mentor guiding students through sociological interpretation. Effective teaching requires the creation of an intellectually open and democratic educational environment in which students are encouraged to formulate arguments, participate in discussion, and develop independent analytical perspectives (Bain, 2004).

Modern teaching practices emphasize active student participation as a central condition of effective learning. Lectures should therefore incorporate interactive elements rather than rely exclusively on monological presentation (Bean, 2011). Analytical questions, short discussions, interpretation of current migration events, and commentary on visual and statistical materials significantly increase student engagement. Seminars occupy a particularly important role, providing students with opportunities to engage in analytical dialogue, compare perspectives, formulate arguments, and collectively interpret migration-related phenomena such as migration crises, integration challenges, refugee movements, and public representations of migrants (Macrine & Berray, 2024).

Collaborative learning techniques, including group discussions, case-study analysis, and student presentations, further strengthen communicative competencies and sociological reasoning (Barkley et al., 2014). Presentations devoted to migration theories, empirical cases, or comparative migration trends encourage students to move beyond memorization toward analytical interpretation and independent argumentation.

Contemporary teaching additionally benefits from the active use of visual, digital, and empirical tools (Pedersen, 2010). Migration maps, demographic graphics, documentary materials, media texts, and digital migration databases improve students' comprehension of complex migration processes and facilitate analytical discussion. The analysis of media discourse and public representations of migration allows students to critically examine stereotypes, political rhetoric, and symbolic constructions surrounding migrants and migration.

Even at the undergraduate level, migration sociology should include elementary empirical activities such as short interviews, observation tasks, and analysis of migration statistics. These assignments connect sociological theory with empirical inquiry and contribute to the development of methodological thinking and analytical competencies.

Assessment approaches should correspond to these participatory pedagogical principles. Evaluation should focus not only on theoretical knowledge but also on analytical reasoning, sociological interpretation, active participation, and the ability to apply concepts to empirical realities. Effective assessment models therefore combine seminar participation, analytical essays, presentations, case-study analysis, and empirical mini-research.

Course Delivery: Technical Considerations and Requirements

Needless to say, the proposed course Sociology of Migration covers a broad and multifaceted field of inquiry. At the undergraduate level, its primary objective is to provide a comprehensive yet concise sociological understanding of human migration and the diverse social, cultural, economic, political, and demographic contexts within which migration processes unfold. Given the breadth and complexity of the subject matter, the following organizational and technical structure for course delivery is considered appropriate:

	Distribution of Workload (%)	Weeks	Sessions /Contact Hours
Lectures: Employing contemporary pedagogical approaches, the course introduces students to the multidimensional nature of migration and its diverse manifestations, while positioning migration within the broader methodological and conceptual framework of sociological analysis.	60	10	40
Seminars and Discussions: These sessions are designed to foster students' capacity for critical engagement with migration processes, strengthen their ability to apply sociological theories to empirical realities, develop skills in the interpretation of migration-related data, and encourage active participation in evidence-based academic discussions.	40	6	24
	100	16	64

Assessment Framework:

Considering the multidisciplinary nature and extensive scope of the course, together with the academic workload of undergraduate students, it is essential to adopt a balanced, transparent, and comprehensive assessment system. Such an approach should adequately evaluate students' knowledge, analytical capacities, engagement, and practical application of sociological concepts. Accordingly, the following assessment framework is proposed:

Assessment Component:	Contribution to Final Grade (%)
Participation in Lectures, Seminars	10 %
Periodic Assignments	20 %
Individual Research Project	20 %
Midterm Assessment I	15 %
Midterm Assessment II	15 %
Final Examination	20 %

Target Audience of the Course

The course is intended for undergraduate students of **sociology, social work, political science, international relations, geography, anthropology, history, economics**, and other social and humanitarian disciplines. It will be particularly useful for those interested in understanding the causes, dynamics, and consequences of migration in contemporary societies. The course does not require prior specialized knowledge in migration studies. It is designed to offer a broad sociological perspective on human mobility while fostering critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to engage with migration-related issues in an informed and evidence-based manner.

Conclusion

The sociology of migration has become one of the most important and analytically productive domains of contemporary sociological knowledge. In the conditions of globalization, expanding human mobility, forced displacement, transnational interconnectedness, demographic transformations, and growing social inequalities, migration can no longer be understood as a secondary or peripheral phenomenon. It constitutes one of the principal mechanisms through which contemporary societies reproduce themselves, transform their institutional structures, redefine identities, reorganize labor relations, and renegotiate the boundaries of political, cultural, and symbolic belonging.

Migration is simultaneously a demographic, economic, political, cultural, spatial, and existential process. It reshapes cities, labor markets, family structures, educational systems, welfare institutions, political regimes, and everyday social relations. It influences the reproduction of social hierarchies and inequalities while also generating new forms of solidarity, hybridity, mobility, and social imagination. Consequently, migration sociology occupies a unique position within the social sciences because it enables the simultaneous analysis of multiple dimensions of social existence — from global macrostructures to intimate everyday experiences.

The course “Sociology of Migration” therefore possesses not merely disciplinary significance, but broader epistemological, pedagogical, and civic importance. It introduces students to one of the most dynamic and contradictory realities of the contemporary world while simultaneously training them to think sociologically. Through migration, students learn to connect biographies with history, individual decisions with structural constraints, local experiences with global transformations, and everyday practices with systems of power and inequality. In this sense, the discipline becomes one of the most effective environments for developing sociological imagination, critical reflexivity, and multidimensional analytical thinking.

The theoretical diversity incorporated into the course demonstrates that migration cannot be adequately explained through simplified, mono-causal, or reductionist approaches. Economic asymmetries, political regimes, colonial legacies, labor-market structures, social networks, institutional barriers, cultural identities, symbolic boundaries, and transnational relations all participate in the production and reproduction of migration processes. Each theoretical perspective illuminates a particular dimension of migration while simultaneously revealing the limitations of isolated explanatory systems. The comparative and critical study of theories therefore cultivates intellectual flexibility and protects students from deterministic interpretations and ideological simplifications.

The course is especially important because it introduces students to the problem of social inclusion — one of the defining questions of contemporary societies. Theories of assimilation, integration, acculturation, multiculturalism, and transnationalism reveal the complexity of coexistence within socially, culturally, ethnically, and politically heterogeneous environments. Migration thus appears not simply as a physical movement across borders, but as a profound transformation of the meanings of citizenship, identity, solidarity, participation, and social membership. In this respect, migration sociology also contributes to broader sociological debates concerning democracy, social cohesion, recognition, justice, and inequality.

Particular significance belongs to the study of emigration and sending societies. In countries such as Armenia, migration is deeply embedded within the logic of post-Soviet transformation, demographic decline, economic restructuring, labor precarity, regional inequalities, and political uncertainty. Emigration affects not only population size, but also the structural organization of communities, the redistribution of social roles, intergenerational relations, local economies, educational and healthcare institutions, political legitimacy, and cultural narratives of belonging. Migration thereby becomes one of the central mechanisms through which the future trajectories of society itself are shaped. The inclusion of these issues within the course enables students to understand migration not exclusively from the perspective of receiving societies, but also through the realities and contradictions of societies of exit.

At the pedagogical level, the course reflects the broader transformation of contemporary higher education. Modern teaching methodologies increasingly move beyond traditional lecture-centered models toward participatory, dialogical, and student-oriented forms of learning. The sociology of migration is especially suited to such pedagogical innovation because migration itself is multidimensional, controversial, emotionally charged, and empirically visible within contemporary public life.

The effective teaching of migration sociology therefore requires the combination of theoretical instruction with analytical discussion, collaborative learning, empirical interpretation, case-study analysis, visual and digital materials, and research-oriented educational practices. Seminar discussions, group work, presentations, migration-related media analysis, empirical mini-research, interviews, and interpretation of statistical data transform students from passive recipients of information into active participants in sociological inquiry. Such pedagogical approaches cultivate analytical autonomy, methodological literacy, communicative competence, and the ability to critically evaluate public discourses surrounding migration.

The discipline additionally contributes to the formation of democratic academic culture and critical public consciousness. Migration studies expose students to social diversity and challenge ethnocentric assumptions, xenophobic narratives, methodological nationalism, and politically instrumentalized representations of migrants. Through sociological analysis, students become capable of distinguishing empirical reality from ideological simplification and moral panic. Migration sociology therefore possesses not only academic value, but also broader ethical and civic significance.

Ultimately, the sociology of migration demonstrates that contemporary societies can no longer be adequately conceptualized through static territorial frameworks, homogeneous national identities, or isolated social systems. Human mobility destabilizes rigid social boundaries while simultaneously producing new forms of belonging, exclusion, integration, and inequality. Migration transforms not only populations and spaces, but also the conceptual foundations through which societies understand themselves.

For this reason, the inclusion of “Sociology of Migration” within Bachelor-level sociological education is not simply justified but fundamentally necessary. The discipline equips future sociologists and social-science specialists with the theoretical knowledge, methodological competencies, analytical flexibility, and critical imagination required for understanding the contradictions, uncertainties, and transformations of the contemporary world. At the same time, it prepares students for meaningful academic, professional, institutional, and civic engagement within increasingly interconnected, mobile, and socially complex societies.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethics Statement

The author confirms that this study was conducted in accordance with the Journal's Research Ethics and Integrity Statement and that all ethical requirements applicable to the study have been fulfilled.