



**Public Lecture Series Fall 2017**  
**Transnationalities in Migration and Mobility Research**

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**Thursday, 23 November 2017**

**Cross-Border Job Mobility in an Emerging Transnational Labor Market for NGO Staff**

**Prof. Sigrid Quack, University Duisburg-Essen, KHK/Centre for Global Cooperation Research**

**Discussant: Prof. Philip Balsiger, Institute of Sociology, University of Neuchâtel**

18:15 – 19:45 h

University of Neuchâtel, Rue Abram-Louis-Breguet 2, Room R.113.

**Abstract**

There is now a consensus that the rise of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) is an important element of world society. However, despite all the attention they receive in the media and the literature for their role in international politics, INGOs are not yet well understood in their function as employers. While there is anecdotic evidence of career mobility between both, headquarters and national

offices of large INGOs, no systematic study of the emerging transnational labor market in the third sector has been undertaken to our knowledge so far. To contribute to closing this research gap, the lecture examines emerging transnational labor markets for NGO staff through the lens of cross-border careers of individuals working for INGOs. The purpose of the lecture is twofold: At a theoretical level, it draws on the sociology of careers in the Chicago School tradition and combines it with insights from the French sociology of conventions to develop a theoretical framework for the study of transnational labor markets in the making. Both approaches suggest that people's careers are not just an individual phenomenon but unfold in orientation towards reference groups, through which they become socially recognized. Hence, careers are a good starting point to investigate the links between mobility patterns, collectively defined career scripts and labor market institutions in a transnational context where institutions are expected to be fluid and undergoing recurrent negotiation. At the empirical level, the presentation builds on results from a pilot study of careers of staff in INGOs drawn from policy fields such as environment, development and human rights.

### Curriculum Vitae

Sigrid Quack is Professor of Sociology and Managing Director of the KHK/Centre for Global Cooperation at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Prior to moving to the University of Duisburg-Essen she was Head of the Research Group on Institution Building across Borders at the Max Planck Institute for the Studies of Societies in Cologne. She has been a visiting scholar at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University, Stockholm Centre for Organization Research (SCORE), École Normal Supérieure Cachan, Upsalla University, and St. John's College at the University of Cambridge. Sigrid Quack has published widely on globalization and institutions, transnational communities, recursive rule-setting, expertise, social contestation and legitimacy in transnational governance.

### Selected Publications

- Djelic, Marie-Laure/Quack, Sigrid (eds.) (2003): *Globalization and Institutions. Redefining the Rules of the Economic Game*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Quack, Sigrid (2007): "Legal Professionals and Transnational Law-Making: A Case of Distributed Agency." *Organization*, 14(5), 643–666.
- Quack, Sigrid (2009): "'Global' Markets in Theory and History: Towards a Comparative Analysis." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Sonderheft 49, 126–142.
- Djelic, Marie-Laure/Quack, Sigrid (eds.) (2010): *Transnational Communities. Shaping Global Economic Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quack, Sigrid (ed.) (2010): *Socio-Economic Review* 8(1), Special Issue on "Law, Expertise and Legitimacy in Transnational Economic Governance."
- Dobusch, Leonhard/Quack, Sigrid (2013): "Framing Standards, Mobilizing Users: Copyright versus Fair Use in Transnational Regulation." *Review of International Political Economy*, 20(1), 52–88.
- Alfinito Vieira, Ana Carolina/Quack, Sigrid (2016): "Trajectories of Transnational Mobilization for Indigenous Rights in Brazil." *RAE – Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 46(4), 380–394.
- Quack, Sigrid (2016). "How Do Professionals Matter? Uncertainty and Contested Knowledge in Transnational Governance." In: Furusten, Staffan and Werr, Andreas (eds): *The Emergence of the New Expert Society*. London: Routledge, 103–118.
- Malets, Olga/Quack, Sigrid (eds.) (2017): "Varieties of Recursivity in Transnational Governance." Special Section in *Global Policy*.
- Quack, Sigrid/Schulz-Schaeffer, Ingo/Shire, Karen/Weiß, Anja (eds.) (forthcoming): *Transnationale Arbeit*. Wiesbaden: VS Springer.