International Geographical Union
Union Géographique Internationale

Report of the Commission Activities 2016-2020 and reasons for the permanence of the C16.17

IGU Commission on
Global Change and Human Mobility
(GLOBILITY)

http://www.globility.org
1. Membership

**Chairperson**
DOMÍNGUEZ-MUJICA, Prof. Dr. Josefina  
Department of Geography, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; Pérez del Toro, 1, 35003 Las Palmas, Spain  
E-mail: josefina.dominguezmujica@ulpgc.es

**Scientific Secretary**
STANISCIA, Dr. Barbara  
Department of European, American and Intercultural Studies, Sapienza University of Rome; P. le Aldo Moro, 5, 00185 Rome, Italy  
E-Mail: barbara.staniscia@uniroma1.it

**Members of the Renewed Steering Committee**

DRBOHLAV, Prof. Dr. Dušan  
Department of Social Geography and Regional Development. Charles University in Prague; Ovocný trh 560/5, Prague 1, 116 36 Czech Republic  
E-mail: dusan.drbohlav@gmail.com

FONSECA, Prof. Dr. Maria Lucinda  
Centre of Geographical Studies, Institute of Geography and Land Planning (IGOT); University of Lisbon; R. Branca Edmée Marques, 1600-276, Lisbon, Portugal.  
E-mail: lucinda.fonseca@netcabo.pt

GÖLER, Prof. Dr. Daniel  
Department of Geography. University of Bamberg; Am Kranen 12, D-96045 Bamberg, Germany.  
E-mail: daniel.goeler@uni-bamberg.de

KRISJANE, Prof. Dr. Zaiga  
Institute for Urban and Regional Research; University of Latvia; Alberta 10, LV 1215, Riga, Latvia.  
E-mail: zkrisjan@lanet.lv
LI, Dr. Wei
Asian Pacific American Studies Program, Department of Geography; Arizona State University; P O Box 874603, Tempe, AZ 85287-4603, USA.
E-mail: Wei.Li@asu.edu

MENDOZA, Dr. Cristóbal
Department of Sociology; Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa; Av. San Rafael Atlíxco, 186, Colonia Vicentina. Delegación Iztapalapa, CP 09340 México DF.
E-mail: cmp@xanum.uam.mx

MICHALKÓ, Prof. Dr. Gábor
E-mail: michalko@helka.iif.hu

OGUNLEYE-ADETONA, Dr. Comfort Iyabo
Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast; Guest House. P. O. Box 5007, Accra-North Ghana. University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
E-mail: adeogunleye2005@yahoo.com

SASSONE, Dr. Susana María
E-mail: smsassone@gmail.com

SINGER, Dr. Jane
Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies – Kyoto University; Yoshida-Honmachi, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto, 606-8501, Japan.
E-mail: singer.jane.6e@kyoto-u.ac.jp

Honorary members

MONTANARI, Prof. Dr. Armando
Università di Roma "La Sapienza" P. le Aldo Moro 5, I-00185 Roma–Italy.
E-mail: armando.montanari@uniroma1.it

ISHIKAWA, Prof. Dr. Yoshitaka
Teikyō University, Japan. 2 Chome-11-1 Kaga, Itabashi City, Tokyo 173-8605 – Japan.
E-mail: yishikawa@main.teikyo-u.ac.jp
The number of Globility Commission members

The total number of members of the Commission is 191 (as of 7 December 2020) and the number of countries involved is 53. The increase in the number of members since 2012 has been 48% (from 129 to 191 members). In the same period, the number of countries has increased by 5.5% (from 48 to 53).

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TOTAL 191
2. Reasons for the permanence of the IGU C16.17 on Global Change and Human Mobility

2.1. Past actions undertaken during the period 2000-2020:

The Global Change and Human Mobility Commission (Globility) was created in the year 2000 at the summit of a period of economic and social transformations dominated by the phenomenon of globalization, requiring the international collaboration of geographers and other scholars from Social Sciences.

Globility Commission consists of a Chair, a Scientific Secretary, and a Steering Committee of ten members (ensuring the gender balance), each of whom from different countries and continents (Africa, America, Asia, and Europe all being represented).

Globility Commission has favoured the exchange of relevant documents and information, and organized conferences both during International Geographical Congresses and in the periods between Congresses.

Globility Commission has elaborated and implemented an annual (or bi-annual) report since its foundation with information concerning its Membership (expanding every year), Meetings, Networking activities, and its Communication and Dissemination plan. A compendium of papers, books’ chapters, and books published by its members on issues related to Global Change and Human Mobility is included in each report, as well as a photo gallery of the different meetings organized.

Globility Commission has got an annual grant from the Executive Committee for the domain, maintenance, and annual updating of the Globility website. The web page is the main communication and information tool for the members of the Globility Commission and other scholars.

Globility Commission has undertaken publishing contracts on the issue of Global Change and Human Mobility with different publishers: Springer (two books), Migracijske i etničke teme / Migration and Ethnic Themes (one special issue of the journal), and BELGEO (two special issues of the journal).

The past actions, specifically undertaken in the period 2016-2020, are described in detail in the 2017, 2018, and 2019 reports. The Pandemic disrupted the planned actions for 2020.
2.2. Proposed actions to be undertaken during the period 2020-2024

Committee:
Complying with the IGU statute’s rules, the Steering Committee has been renewed: four members have been replaced, and two former members have been appointed as honorary members.

Objectives:

Founding objective of the Commission:
To examine and interpret those forms of human mobility that may be related to the processes of global change, to new forms of investment, local development, and social and cultural behaviour, all of them within the framework of the following processes:

- The internationalisation of economic activities leads to new forms of short-term labour mobility, and a distinctive feature of such forms of mobility in the way they combine economic, social, and cultural functions and the globalisation of information and knowledge.
- New forms of leisure, recreation, free time, and tourism have provided the bases and strategies for the development and restructuring of urban and rural regions.
- Changes in the knowledge, use and valuation of global resources, and the restructuring of industrial activity transforming the patterns of labour mobility.
- Changes in the organisation and flexibility of labour activities, and in the institutional structure of pensions favour the process of internationalisation of consumption, including retailing and retirement.
- Perspectives on increasing forced (refugee) migrations.

New objective of the Commission, following the founding one previously stated:
To elaborate new thoughts and ideas about immobility in a pandemic time disrupting physical mobility; to assess the long-term impacts of the current pandemic on human mobility and inequalities.

Major activities planned:

Meeting: 34th International Geographical Istanbul Congress (2021)
The Globility Commission will host 59 presentations and 10 posters (according to the current number of the accepted abstracts) for the following sessions:
• Human Mobility and Regional Disparities: patterns of migration from a comparative perspective.

• Environmental Risks, Resilience and Human Mobility.

• The Human Mobility Career: circular, onward, and return migrations.

• The Role of Human Mobility dealing with Violence and Conflicts.

• Human Mobility and Identities into Play. Belonging and Transnationalism.

• International Tourism and Residential Mobilities: Global and Local Perspectives (Joint session with the Commission on Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change - C.20.17).

The Commission expects to receive additional abstracts’ proposals in the new period of submission, extended to 2021 January, 11.

Moreover, the Commission has proposed a new own session on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobility/immobility. The proposal has been approved by the Executive Organizing Committee of the 34th IGC and the call for papers is open.

The title of the session is: “Human mobility in times of pandemic is going local?”

Abstract: The concept of human mobility has been very successful in Geography and Social Sciences in recent times. There are many geographers who have adopted this perspective of analysis, named as mobility turn, as it reflects the links between social and spatial mobility and their interdependencies with respect to goods, images, and information, as well as their consequences.

However, in a world where mobility flows have become increasingly important, the rapid spread of SARS-CoV-2 has rendered millions of people immobile. The liquid society has become solid. For this reason, it is worth discussing whether, when contagion will be reduced, we will return to a situation of mobility prior to the pandemic or, on the contrary, the feeling of vulnerability associated with it will generate important changes, not only in population displacements for work reasons, study, or tourism, but also in human relations and citizenship regulations. What will also happen with the mobility of those for whom mobility represents their survival (refugees and other displaced persons)? Will relationships be strengthened through information and communication technologies against interpersonal contacts? The pandemic forces us to rethink the world we live in and the role that mobility plays in it. Therefore, this session will welcome all those theoretical approaches to mobility in times of pandemic, as well as all those case studies on specific experiences of mobility/immobility in times of pandemic.
Meeting: IGU Paris Regional Conference (2022)

The Globility Commission will propose five sessions on:

- An assessment of the effects of immobility during the pandemic: experiences from a local perspective.
- Regional disparities of mobility/immobility after the pandemic.
- The virtual mobility: the role of networks replacing physical mobility.
- New interpretations of the mobility turn in the light of the mobilities’ health risks.
- The strengthen of care and health sector due to international migrations.

The Globility Commission will propose to the Commission Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change (C.20.17), and to the organizers, a joint session on How Lifestyle Migrations and Residential Mobilities will be reconfigured after the Pandemic.

Meeting: IGU Ecuador Regional Conference (2023)

In a potential meeting – result of the collaboration between the IGU and the Association of Latin American Geographers – in Ecuador, the Globility Commission would propose some sessions on the issue of Human Mobility from the point of view of the Latin American regional context.

Publications:

- In compliance with the publishing agreement signed with Springer, a manuscript on “International Residential Mobilities: from Lifestyle Migrations to Tourism Gentrification”, encompassing many chapters authored by Globility members, was finalized on June 30th, 2020. The estimated publication time is the beginning of 2021.
- In compliance with the agreement made with the editor of BELGEO (Christian Vandermotten), a special issue (2021-4, Armando Montanari and Josefina Domínguez-Mujica guest editors) will be published: “Is human mobility in times of pandemic going local?”
- A selection of contributions to the IGU Paris Regional Conference will be made, and a monographic issue on “the COVID pandemic and its effects on mobility” will be proposed to a specialized Journal (decision on the specific Journal to be taken).

Website: The Globility Commission will keep its website (www.globility.org) updated and will use it as a major tool for communication and visibility.
3. Communication and dissemination of research outcomes

3.1. Publications

A list of the publications of some of the Globility members on issues of global change and human mobility in the period 2019 - 2020 is reported here below:


3.2. New accurate URL of the commission’s website.

http://www.globility.org/

The Globility website is run by an IT independent supporter, webmaster, under the supervision of the Chairperson of the Globility Commission, Prof. Josefina Domínguez-Mujica, and under the management of the Scientific Secretary, Dr. Barbara Staniscia. The website has a new domain since 2014; together with the regular e-mails, it represents the major tool for the exchange of information among the members of the Globility Commission.

4. Continuation. Statement of the mission of the Commission

By the one hand, the Commission appeals to scholars interested in the issue of change and mobility across the world. Owing to its ability to connect places and societies, human mobility is receiving an increasing academic attention among scholars. The ‘Globility’ Commission (Global Change and Human Mobility) promotes a new reading and recognition of human mobility in the context of globalization; it favours the exchange of knowledge regarding its different forms such as migration and tourism, namely, the diverse practises in which human mobility is displayed through different countries and societies. The geographical perspective allows researchers to find this common nexus as an important issue in the process of interrelation between global phenomena and local manifestations.

By the other, the unexpected pandemic influences new interpretations and thoughts about the nexus mobility-immobility in times when physical mobility is disrupted at different geographical scales. Consequently, the long-term impacts of this pandemic on human mobility and their uneven effects must be assessed.