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Complex migration trajectories: Conceptual and methodological challenges

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Working Paper No. 2025/18 December
2025



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Working Paper

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Complex migration trajectories: Conceptual and methodological challenges

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ISSN: 1929-9915



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Abstract

This working paper maps the emerging field of complex migration trajectories, encompassing mobility patterns that span multiple locations across different countries and continents. Through a systematic scoping review of approximately 600 peer-reviewed abstracts from the Scopus database, it identifies key conceptual and methodological challenges inherent in studying multi-stage, multi-directional migration processes, often referred to by terms such as transit migration, onward migration, stepwise migration, serial migration, and multinational migration. The paper analyzes the usages of these terminologies, and their theoretical implications. We argue that migration theories, so far structured predominantly around binary origin-destination frameworks, can be enriched by recent empirical insights on migrant decision-making, intermediary migration hubs, and evolving patterns of transnational belonging. Furthermore, the paper examines methodological challenges posed by the complex temporality, spatial dispersion, and shifting subjectivities characterizing contemporary migrant experiences, highlighting promising approaches including mixed methods, digital ethnography, digital trace analysis, and creative participatory mapping. The paper concludes by proposing a research agenda aimed at advancing migration studies through interdisciplinary collaboration, innovative methodologies, and policy analyses attuned to the realities of contemporary complex mobilities.

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Introduction

An emerging research field within migration studies draws attention to complex migration trajectories that span multiple locations across different countries and continents (Paul and Yeoh, 2021; Ahrens & King 2022). Multinational migration, onward migration, stepwise, serial, and transit migration: the terms used to describe these processes are numerous. Underpinning these varied concepts is the premise that tracing complex multinational mobilities can help shift migration studies toward a new paradigm, moving beyond the traditional binary understanding of migration as a movement between one country of origin and one country of destination.

These multi-locational movements do not exclusively involve an elite class of privileged migrants, or, as Ahrens and King (2022) describe, "cosmopolitan businesspeople from the Global North ... moving from country to country at will and without restrictions." Their relevance for migration studies arises precisely because they reflect the lived realities of diverse groups of migrants whose motives, reasons, logics, and outcomes may differ significantly. These include undocumented migrants crossing multiple borders before reaching desired destinations, expatriates accumulating transnational capital through settlement in multiple global cities, low-skilled labor migrants moving through countries with weak labor protections before eventually arriving in places where they can secure better rights, and descendants of migrants who relocate internationally in pursuit of improved life prospects.

The objective of this article is to map this emerging field, identify its key conceptual and methodological challenges, and propose useful analytical and methodological tools to advance research in this area. This paper examines recent scholarship on complex migration trajectories. In particular, it analyzes their theoretical contributions in addressing fundamental questions about the motives, structures, and lived experiences of migration. We also discuss the methodological challenges faced by scholars studying multi-step migration processes, and the solutions they propose to address them.

Our aim is not to provide a general theory of complexity in migration, but rather to map how the literature has employed specific terms to capture non-linear and multi-step migration patterns. Indeed, complexity is a broader conceptual domain, with its own theoretical traditions in the social sciences (Manson, 2001), and with distinct applications in migration studies. Some scholars have approached complexity by examining how migration contributes to the diversification and transformation of societies (Vertovec, 2023, 2024; Scholten, 2019), while others have analyzed complex interactions among migration drivers at micro, meso, and macro levels (Triandafyllidou et al., 2023). While the paper does not propose a comprehensive model of "complex migration," it provides a foundation that can inform and connect with broader reflections on complexity in migration.

This working paper is based on a systematic literature review of approximately 600 peer-reviewed article abstracts retrieved from the Scopus database. We conducted keyword searches using a range of terms commonly used to describe complex migration trajectories, including "multiple migration," "transit migration," "onward migration," "multinational migration," "stepwise migration," and "serial migration." This review allowed us to map conceptual trends, regional patterns, and theoretical framings across the literature. In addition to the abstract-level analysis, we conducted an in-depth reading of a selected subset of articles that exemplify diverse approaches and empirical cases, which informed the theoretical discussion developed in the subsequent sections.

The working paper consists of five sections. The two first sections set the scope and the methodological approach of our study. Then, we analyze and compare a range of terms used to describe complex migration trajectories, such as onward, transit, multiple, stepwise, and serial migration. The fourth section explores how established theoretical frameworks can be enriched in light of recent empirical findings from the emerging literature on multinational migration. We then examine the methodological challenges posed by complex trajectories and identify promising approaches to studying them.

Contextualizing the study: an age of complex migration?

While contemporary scholarship increasingly highlights the complexity and multinational nature of migration trajectories, complex, multi-stage, and multi-sited migration trajectories have long existed. Across historical contexts, we can trace patterns of layered, recursive, and geographically dispersed migration that resonate with present-day forms of mobility while remaining distinct in their political and social configurations (Manning & Trimmer 2020)

Some emblematic examples can be found since Antiquity (Cohen, 2022). The Jewish diaspora was shaped over centuries by successive waves of persecution, expulsion, and resettlement, from Roman-era displacement to medieval expulsions in Europe, and eventual re-migration to the Americas or Israel. These movements, over multiple generations, reflect a long history of diasporic adaptation. The transatlantic slave trade led to the forced relocation of Africans through multiple displacements: from inland regions to coastal forts, across the Atlantic to the Caribbean or Americas, and at times further internal displacements or repatriation attempts (Eltis & Richardson 2013). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many Italians first migrated to Argentina or Brazil, drawn by favorable immigration regimes and labor demand, before later re-migrating to the United States as new prospects emerged (Pérez, 2021). This logic of regionally embedded, stepwise migration can also be seen in the formation of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia. Migrants from coastal provinces like Fujian often followed multi-sited trajectories across Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia, shaped by family strategies, trade networks, and shared linguistic and cultural affinities (Dean, 2022).

These examples reflect the numerous multi-step migration processes that took place throughout history. Nevertheless, a range of contemporary shifts in the global political economy, technological landscape, and governance frameworks have contributed to the enhanced salience of complex migration trajectories.

Globalization and digitalization have significantly reshaped the conditions of mobility (Triandafyllidou, 2024). The increased availability of fast and affordable international travel has not only expanded the spatial scope of migration but enabled iterative, return, and onward movements that previously would have been logistically or financially unfeasible (Ponzanesi, 2019). More importantly, the proliferation of digital technologies has transformed how migrants access information, maintain transnational ties, and evaluate destinations. Digital infrastructures, such as recruitment platforms, social media networks, and real-time communication tools, channel flows, facilitate decision-making, and allow for the simultaneous navigation of multiple locations (McAuliffe, 2021). This information ecology also enables intermediaries, including formal recruiters and informal brokers, to play more dynamic roles in structuring migration at multiple stages, thereby contributing to the recursive nature of complex trajectories (Sánchez-Querubín & Rogers, 2018).

Global conflicts and crises of diverse nature (political, environmental, or economic), have also contributed to the complexification of migration pathways (Triandafyllidou, et al. 2023). Displacement caused by war or disaster often unfolds in stages. Conflict-induced migration is frequently mediated by humanitarian infrastructures, including international organizations and NGOs, which may channel individuals through a series of temporary solutions, camps, or legal processes. These layered displacements blur distinctions between voluntary and forced movement, and between mobility as survival and mobility as strategy (Thiollet et al. 2023). They also underscore how complexity can arise not only from migrant agency but from the institutional architectures that govern displacement.

Migration policy regimes themselves are a central factor in generating complexity (Schwartz, 2020). The tightening of borders and asylum systems in many traditional destination countries has forced migrants to pursue indirect, multi-step routes through a patchwork of jurisdictions, often under precarious conditions (Müller-Funk et al. 2024). But beyond border enforcement, complexity is also produced by the increasing use of temporary and conditional legal statuses, differential access to rights, and segmented pathways to permanent settlement or citizenship. Migrants are thus often compelled to navigate multiple regulatory systems over time. This sequential navigation of restrictive migration regimes transforms what might have once been a direct journey into a fragmented and contingent process.

Finally, global labor market dynamics and the broader stratification of opportunity play a crucial role in structuring complex trajectories (Liu-Farrer et al., 2021). While material inequalities between and within countries remain a foundational driver of migration, the increasing differentiation of symbolic capital, cultural legitimacy, and legal entitlements across space often requires migrants to accumulate resources iteratively across multiple sites (Paul, 2017). A single destination may not offer sufficient opportunities to meet aspirations shaped by education, family expectations, or professional ambitions. Instead, migrants may follow stepwise or serial paths to climb economic, legal, or social hierarchies, moving through intermediary locations to access desired futures.

Complex migration trajectories encompass a striking diversity of experiences. Broadly speaking, they can involve very different types of migrants, whose movements differ not only in direction and duration, but also in terms of the resources available, the degree of agency involved, and the legal, social, and emotional stakes at play.

Some migrants navigate these trajectories under conditions of extreme precarity. Irregular or undocumented migrants may cross multiple borders without legal authorization, relying on smuggling networks and subject to shifting legal statuses (Achilli, 2022). Others move through formal channels but under constrained conditions: low-skilled labor migrants who transit through multiple countries with temporary contracts, limited rights, and little long-term security (Shah, 2013). In contrast, highly skilled professionals may move between global cities as part of corporate or academic career trajectories, leveraging legal pathways and professional capital to access opportunities across multiple jurisdictions (Beaverstock, 2012). Refugees and asylum seekers frequently undertake multi-stage journeys shaped by displacement, international protection regimes, and evolving asylum policies (Collyer, 2010).

These distinct types of mobilities help illustrate the range of trajectories that can be viewed as complex. The same individual may occupy multiple positions different stages of their journey. Multi-step migration is characterized by fluid transitions between roles, overlapping legal regimes, and evolving subject positions. This fragmentation and dynamism make it harder to sustain distinctions between categories such as "forced" and "voluntary," or "economic" and "refugee"

migration. Understanding complex migration trajectories requires attention not only to the diversity of experiences but to the ways migrants move through different roles over time.

A scoping literature review: methods used to analyze the corpus

The development of this working paper has unfolded in two main phases. The first phase began in late 2022 with an exploratory review of the literature using Google Scholar. This early scoping provided preliminary insights into how different terms such as onward migration, multinational migration, and transit migration were being employed, and highlighted the emergence of new analytical frameworks aimed at capturing multi-sited and multi-phased migration processes. We compiled a list of terms recurrently used in scholarly discussions of complex migration trajectories, drawing from recent publications such as Paul and Yeoh (2021) on multinational migration and Ahrens and King (2022) on onward migration. This list initially included a wide array of terms—transit migration, fragmented migration, secondary movement, stepwise migration, post-migration movement, twice migration, triangular migration, sequential migration, third-country migration, and serial migration.

Building on these initial observations, we resumed this work in 2025 with the aim of conducting a more systematic literature analysis. To maintain analytical clarity and focus, we narrowed this list of terms based on the relative frequency and consistency of usage in the scholarly literature. We ultimately concentrated our analysis on five key terms that have generated substantial academic engagement: transit migration, onward migration, stepwise migration, serial migration, and multinational migration. These terms serve as entry points for examining broader shifts in how migration trajectories are conceptualized, theorized, and methodologically studied across different regional and disciplinary contexts.

Scoping literature reviews have been an increasingly used method in social science, especially in areas where the field is multidisciplinary and broad. While a systematic literature review is often narrowed down to address a specific question, a scoping review typically focuses on more general topics where various research designs can be used (Arksey & O'malley, 2005). Given that in migration studies, conceptual, methodological, and theoretical frameworks are significantly diverse across different fields, a scoping literature review is a valuable method to deepen understanding of the various ways that complex migration trajectories are discussed. The method provides opportunities for researchers to bring different insights and perspectives together to examine the evolution of academic discourse across time and context.

Olcese et al. (2024) conducted a scoping literature review to examine migrant community resilience and to understand coping mechanisms with migration-related trauma and adjustment to the new environment, while Moran (2023) uses this method to thematically explore how migrants use digital media at the displacement, arrival, and settlement stages. Building on the scoping review framework proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), Moran follows six steps to conduct the review: specifying the research question, selecting the relevant studies, studying the selection, mapping the data, and reporting the results. These studies show the benefits of the scoping review for identifying key concepts, highlighting gaps in the research, and guiding future research direction.

Our review is informed by the scoping method, by identifying and analyzing studies that focus on complex migration trajectories through diverse terminologies and conceptual frames. In particular, we selected 8 categories that are often used to examine non-linear migration trajectories: Transit

migration, onward migration, secondary migration, multiple migration, multinational migration, stepwise migration, and serial migration. These were used as search words in the Scopus database, and the results were narrowed down to publications within Arts and Humanities and Social Science to maintain disciplinary relevance.

Finally, this work was an opportunity for us to explore the possibilities of using artificial intelligence for quantitative text analysis. Given the fast-evolving nature of AI tools, our approach was exploratory and experimental. We were mindful of the significant limitations of current AI technologies for qualitative content analysis, particularly the risks of opacity and bias. In light of these concerns, we did not use AI to search for articles, nor to summarize or interpret their conceptual content. Such tasks risk producing unverifiable outputs, with insufficient transparency regarding how results are generated or what assumptions and biases may underlie them.

Instead, we focused on a more narrowly defined use of AI for systematic, low-inference tasks in quantitative text analysis, in which outputs could be easily verified and corrected. In particular, we used OpenAI's GPT-4o model to extract basic categorical information from article abstracts, using a structured table we designed in advance. The table included fields such as type of migration discussed, migrant profiles, methodologies employed, countries or regions of focus, and temporal scope. Abstracts were processed in small batches (10 at a time), allowing us to manually verify the accuracy of the AI-generated entries and correct inconsistencies as needed.

Once the table was completed, we conducted basic descriptive statistical analysis in Excel to identify potential patterns. Some dimensions, such as types of migration or methodological approaches, yielded limited differentiation across terms, which likely due to insufficient detail in abstracts. However, one particularly fruitful dimension was geographical scope: the analysis revealed strong regional clustering in the use of certain terms (e.g., transit migration in North Africa and Central America). Based on this finding, we further cleaned and structured the data and used Kepler for geospatial visualization (Fig. 8).

In sum, our use of AI was deliberately narrow. By documenting this modest and transparent use, we aim to clarify both the utility and the limits of current tools. On the one hand, AI can speed up repetitive tasks and assist with organizing large bodies of text; on the other hand, studies in other fields (e.g. López-Otero et al., 2024; Erdem & Pamuk, 2025) show that without close human oversight, such tools risk producing synthetic discourse or lack contextual accuracy. We therefore view AI not as a replacement for researcher-led qualitative analysis, but as a complementary instrument whose value depends on careful design, transparency, and critical engagement. While our study does not make AI a central focus, its inclusion illustrates how exploratory experimentation with these tools can contribute to ongoing debates about their place in migration research. Whether the uses of generative AI in migration research could evolve in the future to encompass to support tasks such as qualitative analysis, comparative case synthesis will remain to be seen. Yet realizing this potential will require transparent documentation, strong ethical safeguards, and sustained human oversight to ensure that the complexity and contextual richness of migration experiences are not lost.

Designating complex migration trajectory: conceptual clarifications

The terminology used to describe complex migration patterns is inconsistent. Terms such as transit migration, onward migration, secondary migration, multiple migration, multinational migration, stepwise migration, and serial migration are used across scholarly and policy literature, but their definitions are rarely standardized or clearly distinguished from one another. In many

cases, these terms are used interchangeably or without attention to their conceptual origins and contextual implications.

This section aims to clarify these terminologies by comparing and analyzing their use. Drawing on a systematic review of peer-reviewed articles, we analyze each term with attention to its intellectual and policy origins, the kinds of migration processes it seeks to describe, and the geography of its uses. The goal is to clarify the scope and meaning of each term based on how it is currently used in the literature, and to assemble a repertoire of concepts that researchers can draw on with greater precision.

Before we dive into an in-depth analysis of each of the main concept used, we can start by introducing some descriptive statistics about the uses of these different terms in time and space. The graphs below (figures 1 to 7) provide an overview of the evolution of academic interest in key terms used to describe complex migration trajectories, based on the number of publications per year indexed in the Scopus database. Overall, they show a marked increase in the use of these terms over the past decade, reflecting growing scholarly engagement with multi-sited and multi-phased forms of mobility. Transit migration and onward migration stand out as the most frequently used and fastest-growing terms, particularly from the mid-2010s onward, suggesting their centrality in current debates on migration governance and migrant agency. Multiple migration, secondary migration, serial migration, and stepwise migration have also gained traction, albeit at a more moderate pace, while multinational migration remains a newer and more specialized term with lower overall frequency. These patterns reflect both a diversification of conceptual approaches and a broader recognition of the inadequacy of binary models to capture contemporary migration processes.

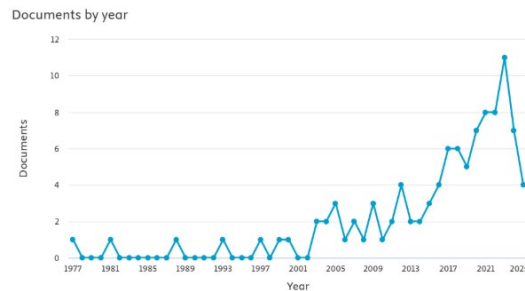
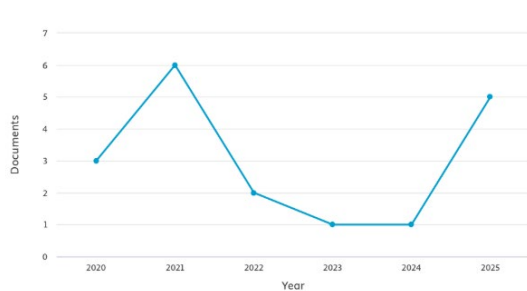


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 1 multinational migration Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2 multiple migration

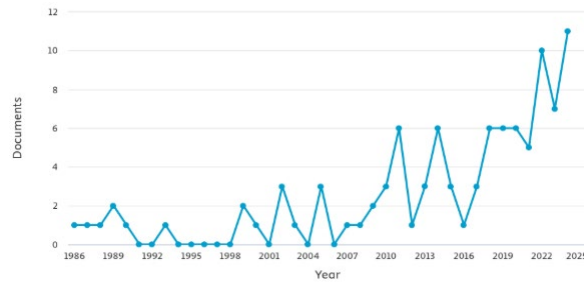
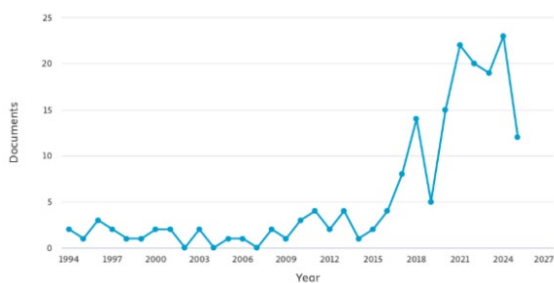


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 4 onward migration Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 3 secondary migration

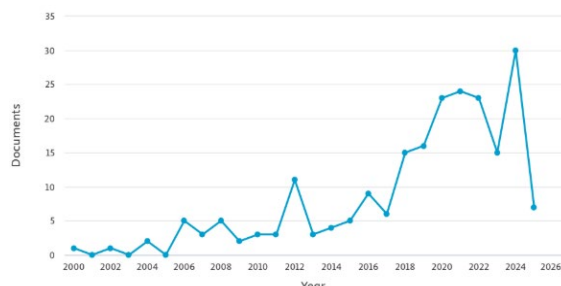


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 6 transit migration

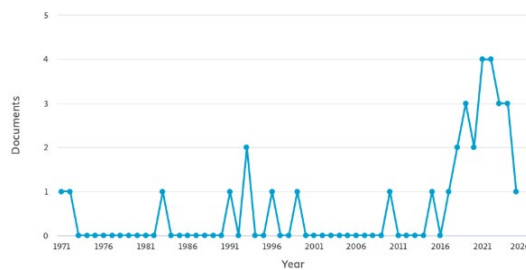


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 5 stepwise migration

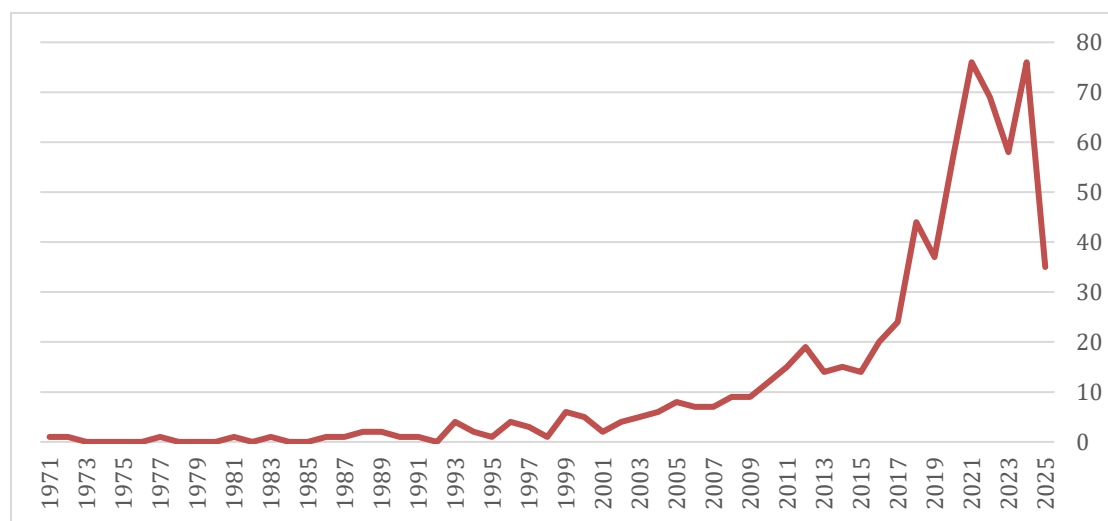


Figure 1 Total of publications per year for all terms

We also created a geographic visualization (fig.8) of the terms as they are used in academic literature¹. The map illustrates that certain terms are regionally clustered, pointing to the situated nature of migration language. For instance, transit migration (orange) appears most prominently in studies focused on the South and Central America–Mexico corridor, as well as North Africa and the Middle East. Onward migration (light blue), by contrast, is heavily concentrated in Europe, especially in the context of intra-EU mobility and asylum policy. Secondary migration (green) is largely associated with North America and Australia, particularly in the context of refugee resettlement.

¹ To examine the geographic distribution of terms, we developed a country–term frequency table derived from our dataset of academic articles. Each article was coded based on the countries mentioned in the abstract. These mentions could refer to sites of fieldwork, as well as countries of origin or destination of the participants. In order to create a structured dataset in which each row linked one specific country to one term describing a complex migration trajectory, we excluded non-specific geographical labels such as Global South.



Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 8 Map of the multi-step migration terminologies in the academic literature.

Transit Migration

Among the various terms used to describe complex migration trajectories, transit migration is perhaps the most contested and scrutinized (Dimitriadi, 2015). Transit migration is strongly associated with policy discourse, primarily in the context of irregular migration and asylum-seeking toward Europe and North America (Düvell 2012). As such, it has been strongly shaped by security concerns, externalization strategies, and state efforts to contain mobility. Since the early 2000s, the term has been associated with countries like Mexico, Libya, or Turkey, which have been framed as temporary stops on the way to a “final” destination (Içduygu & Yüксеker 2012).

What distinguishes transit migration from other complex trajectories is that complexity here is not primarily driven by migrant intentionality, but by structural obstacles (Collyer, 2007; Lønning, 2020). The restriction of direct air access and tightening of asylum systems force migrants onto extended land or sea routes. These trajectories are often marked by fragmented journeys, prolonged periods of waiting, and high levels of risk and exploitation (Vogt, 2018; Villalaver & Schütze 2024). In this sense, transit migration encapsulates both spatial complexity, involving dynamic and shifting corridors governed through multi-scalar policy frameworks, and temporal complexity, characterized by protracted liminality and uncertain futures (Ehrkamp, 2020; Iranzo, 2021).

This policy-driven framing has prompted sustained critique in academic literature. Scholars have noted that the designation of “transit” is often externally imposed, reflecting the priorities of destination states rather than migrants’ own self-understandings (Schapendonk, 2017). Many migrants do not initially see their presence in an “intermediate” country as temporary, only reconsidering onward movement in response to exclusion, insecurity, or lack of opportunity. Moreover, bordering strategies often result in de facto long-term settlement in places originally imagined as waystations. Over time, these so-called transit spaces become destinations in their

own right, albeit ones marked by legal precarity and social marginalization (Heck & Habersky 2025).

Recent scholarship has also emphasized how migrants respond to these constraints with resilience and adaptation (Torre Cantalapiedra 2024). Despite the uncertainty and risks they face, many develop informal livelihoods, form communities, and navigate hostile policy environments through solidarity networks or engagement with civil society (Sunam 2023). Yet the prolonged nature of “transit” often produces what has been called stuckness or permanent temporariness: a state of being suspended in a legal and existential limbo (Faret 2021; Petricevic 2023).

Onward Migration

Onward migration refers to the continuation of migration beyond an initial country of settlement, either shortly after arrival or following a more prolonged stay (Lindley & Van Hear, 2007; Della Puppa et al. 2021; Mas Giralt, 2025). It designates a mobility process that unfolds in stages and recognizes that migrants often reassess their trajectories over time. While most commonly used in the context of Europe, particularly in relation to intra-EU mobility, the term is applied more broadly across global contexts to describe multi-step movements, including those by refugees, labor migrants, and diasporic populations. The onward migration literature unpacks the motivations and meanings behind continued movement. It situates migration as iterative and context-dependent, where decisions to move again often stem from changing conditions and evolving aspirations. Thus, onward migration becomes a conceptual lens through which to explore both migrant agency and policy failures.

Research identifies a wide spectrum of drivers behind onward migration. Some studies portray it as reactive, prompted by negative experiences such as discrimination, economic hardship, or institutional exclusion in the first country of arrival (Ahrens et al. 2016, Ramos, 2018; Morad & Sacchetto, 2021). For instance, Agyeman (2022) shows how experiences of racism in northern Italy influenced Ghanaian migrants’ decisions to move on to the UK. Others emphasize more proactive or aspirational motives, such as changing life goals, access to citizenship, or enhanced employment prospects (Ortensi & Barbiano di Belgiojoso, 2018; Mapril, 2021; McCarthy, 2021). These diverse drivers underline the importance of analyzing onward migration within broader socio-political and legal contexts that structure migrants’ possibilities and constraints.

While much of the literature foregrounds migrant decision-making, studies also reveal how onward migration may reproduce or deepen precarity, particularly for marginalized groups (McIlwaine & Bunge, 2019). Sharma et al. (2024) highlight the restricted healthcare access faced by Afghan women in Serbia following onward migration. Similarly, Neuhauser et al. (2023) show how Latin American migrants within Europe encounter renewed vulnerabilities when moving onward from countries like Spain to Northern Europe. These studies suggest that continued mobility should not be solely interpreted as a form of agency and free movement, as they can stem from exclusion and institutional constraints (Schapendonk, 2021).

Secondary Migration

The notion of secondary migration is most often used to designate internal movements occurring after initial settlement or resettlement, especially in the North American and Australian contexts (Mortland & Ledgerwood, 1987; Simich et al. 2002; Newbold, 2007; Hugo, 2008; Weine et al. 2011). It can also be used in a more general sense, encompassing internal relocation, international onward movement, and return migration (Ortensi & Barbiano di Belgiojoso, 2024). Historically, the term emerged from state-run refugee resettlement programs, where immigrants are initially assigned to specific localities. Within these frameworks, secondary migration studies describe subsequent relocations driven by economic opportunities, social networks, or availability of services such as education and healthcare (Darawsheh et al., 2022; Perzyna & Agrawal, 2024).

A significant strand of research frames secondary migration as indicative of insufficient integration policies (Nelson, & Marston, 2020; Gonzalez Benson, (2021). This perspective is prominent in Canadian, U.S., and Australian debates about immigrant retention in rural or smaller communities, highlighting the challenges posed to spatial planning and local government services when migrants move to larger urban centers with greater co-ethnic communities or economic prospects (Haugen et al., 2024). Such discussions implicitly rest on a demographic mindset, presuming that initial placements should ideally become permanent residences, thus viewing secondary movements as problematic. Some studies critically address the tension inherent in policies seeking to balance immigrant integration with respect for their mobility rights (Boese and Moran 2023).

Multinational Migration

The term multinational migration was intentionally introduced by Anju Mary Paul and Brenda Yeoh (2021) in a special issue in *Global Networks* to describe migration trajectories involving more than two national contexts. This concept explicitly challenges linear migration models and emphasizes the complexity of migrants' paths as they navigate diverse states, institutional contexts, and migration regimes over time. Paul and Yeoh (2021) articulate a programmatic research agenda aiming to rethink migration beyond methodological nationalism, advocating for the study of mobility as a strategic, multinodal, and multi-sited process.

The notion has been mobilized subsequently as a conceptual tool to enrich theoretical understandings of global mobility (Jones, 2025; Maxwell & Schäffer, 2025). A characteristic feature of multinational migration research is that it tends to be less centered on Europe or the global North, as other terms used to designate complex migration trajectories. Jung (2023), for example, studies migration from Senegal to Brazil, contributing to an understanding of migration that goes beyond well-established migration routes toward Europe or the United States.

Studies adopting this framework focus on the strategies employed by migrants to navigate various migration regimes, often emphasizing their adaptability, resourcefulness, and strategic decision-making. For instance, Zhan, Aricat, and Zhou (2020) examine how skilled migrants engage with distinct immigration policies and labor markets, strategically accumulating professional recognition and capital across different national contexts. Similarly, Garvik and Valenta (2025) explore the multinational mobility trajectories of African students, highlighting their strategic responses to institutional constraints and opportunities.

Multiple Migration

The term multiple migration is used to refer to individuals or families who have migrated more than once. It can be used to describe various migration histories, including repeat labor migration, return followed by re-emigration, and multiple internal relocations. The term often appears as an umbrella category alongside more specific terms, such as onward or serial migration (Morad and Sachetto 2020, Valenta 2022)

Due to its descriptive scope, the term multiple migration has been used in works that have advanced empirical knowledge about complex migration trajectories. For instance, Zufferey (2019) examines factors such as education, family composition, and nationality among people in Switzerland who have migrated multiple times, identifying a strong correlation between educational levels and complex migration trajectories. Subsequently, Zufferey et al. (2021) conducted a large-scale analysis of 315,000 migrants in Switzerland, assessing the relative importance of multiple migration within contemporary migration patterns. Other studies have explored the relationship between multiple migration and various factors. Tucci et al. (2021) assessed the relation between multiple migration and migrants' social class, education, language proficiency, and legal status, providing empirical grounding to qualitative assertions about migrants' strategic navigation of constraints.

Serial migration and stepwise migration

The term serial migration has historically carried multiple meanings. Earlier uses, notably in Cervantes et al. (2010) and Rusch and Reyes (2013), refer to the staggered movement of family members over time, a process associated with family separation and subsequent reunification. However, a more recent conceptualization advanced by Parreñas et al. (2019) frames serial migration as constrained, lateral movements of migrants. This notion applies particularly to the situation of labor migrants with temporary and precarious statuses, such as those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, who navigate a series of non-linear, often forced, relocations.

This framing of serial migration contrasts with narratives of mobility as empowerment. For instance, Parreñas (2021), in her study of Filipino domestic workers in the UAE, shows that serial migration reflects not agency, but entrapment in cycles of poverty reproduction. Yeoh et al. (2023) highlight the pressures such mobility places on families, showing how repeated departures and returns generate spiraling aspirations and insecurities. Thus, the analysis of serial migration constitutes often an implicit critique of labor migration regimes that reproduce precarity.

In contrast, stepwise migration refers to planned, upwardly mobile migration trajectories, often moving from less desirable to more desirable destinations through intermediary steps. Valenta (2022) contrasts stepwise with serial migration, emphasizing the strategic and aspirational nature of the former. The concept draws from Anju Mary Paul's (2011, 2017) influential work on Filipino domestic workers who move first to relatively accessible countries (e.g., Singapore, Malaysia) as stepping stones toward higher-status destinations such as Canada or Italy. This "migration ladder" logic is grounded in the idea that migrants accumulate material and symbolic capital en route.

Stepwise migration has also been applied to skilled migration contexts (Francisco-Menchavez, 2020). Zijlstra (2020), for example, analyzes Iranian students in Turkey who pursue education there as a strategic move to later access countries in Europe or North America. Here, the stepwise pattern reflects a calculated response to barriers in global migration regimes, illustrating how migrants navigate unequal access to mobility by sequencing their moves.

From policy frames to analytical concepts?

Our review shows that while terms such as transit, onward, and secondary migration have been central in recent debates, their use is often shaped by policy contexts. For example, “transit migration” is primarily associated with irregular mobility and securitized policy debates, even though the notion of being “in transit” could also apply to skilled professionals, intracompany transferees, or digital nomads whose mobility is similarly marked by temporariness and uncertainty. Likewise, “secondary migration” is strongly tied to refugee resettlement policies, though some studies use it more broadly to describe any post-settlement movement. “Onward migration” and “multinational migration” sometimes overlap, both designating trajectories that go beyond linear models. Rather than treating these terms as interchangeable, we suggest recognizing their specific genealogies while also acknowledging the risk that politicized framings limit their analytical potential. More precise definitions could help sharpen these concepts so that they capture distinct phenomena and reveal the full variety of multi-step mobilities.

Rethinking migration theory through the lens of complex trajectories

Migration theory has long been structured around linear, origin-to-destination models, often influenced by case studies grounded in South–North flows. Foundational frameworks, such as Massey et al.’s (1993) influential synthesis of migration theories, reflect this binary architecture, treating migration as a movement between a sending and a receiving state. However, the growing body of empirical research on complex migration trajectories exposes the limitations of these models (Riosmena, 2024). Such trajectories complicate conventional distinctions, challenge assumptions about temporality and finality in migration, and highlight the role of intermediary hubs, evolving legal statuses, and shifting motivations. They also require attention to the intersectional dimensions of migrant experience and to the transnational ties that now often extend across more than two countries. In sum, complex migration trajectories compel a rethinking and refinement of core theoretical frameworks to better account for the fluidity and multiplicity that characterize contemporary global mobility.

To explore how complex migration trajectories can enrich and refine existing theoretical frameworks, this section proceeds in three parts. First, it revisits micro-level models of migration decision-making, to examine how motivations for onward migration differ from initial migration decisions and how they evolve over time. Second, it considers macro-level approaches, including migration systems theory and world-systems theory, and highlights how the concept of migration hubs and stratified place hierarchies introduced by the multinational migration literature contribute to rethinking the architecture of global migration flows. Finally, it turns to meso-level perspectives on migrants’ lived experiences, engaging with scholarship on transnationalism to consider how complex trajectories shape evolving patterns of belonging, multi-sited identities, and affective attachments across more than two national contexts.

Beyond binary models: rethinking the drivers shaping migration decisions

Traditional micro-level migration theories, such as Lee’s (1966) influential push–pull model, conceptualize migration as a one-time, origin-to-destination decision shaped by contrasting conditions between a sending and a receiving country: economic opportunities, safety, or quality of life. These models have shaped much of the field’s understanding of migration factors and informed a range of policy frameworks. However, they are fundamentally structured around binary

logics that struggle to account for the lived realities of migrants whose trajectories unfold in multiple stages, across diverse settings, and over extended periods of time (Malmberg, 2021).

Empirical research on complex migration trajectories has called attention to the iterative nature of decision-making in migration processes. Migrants navigate a succession of decisions shaped by evolving aspirations, life circumstances, legal constraints, and shifting opportunity structures. Studies on onward migration (Ahrens et al., 2016; Ortensi & Barbiano di Belgiojoso, 2018) reveal that the initial arrival in a country is often not the end point but the beginning of a dynamic trajectory. Migrants may leave a country due to a range of repelling factors, from precarious legal status and limited access to welfare, to discrimination or racism. Onward migration can also be triggered by sudden contextual shifts, such as economic crises, policy changes, or the acquisition of a new citizenship that expands mobility options (de Hoon et al., 2020).

Complex trajectories thus demand a rethinking of how migration factors are conceptualized. Mental hierarchies of place (Paul, 2011; 2017) highlight how decision-making involves subjective evaluations of where one can lead a dignified life, raise children, or feel culturally and socially included. These hierarchies are not fixed but constantly reshaped by experience and information. What may have once been imagined as a final destination may later be re-evaluated as a transitory stop, either because of disillusionment or the emergence of new aspirations (Paul and Yeoh, 2021).

The literature also points to how the experience of discrimination, marginalization, or lack of recognition can act as powerful triggers for further movement (Das Gupta, 2021; Kelly & Heldman, 2016). For instance, studies of Italian-Bangladeshis who relocate to the UK reveal how cultural and religious freedoms can become key motivations, beyond labor market considerations (Morad et al. 2021). Understanding the desire to maintain cultural identity and experience greater social inclusion, requires a more complex understanding of migration decision-making, taking into account the blending of economic, symbolic, and affective dimensions.

Temporality is also crucial, as aspirations, resources, and constraints change. This temporal complexity challenges the notion of a stable cost–benefit calculus and highlights the need for models that allow for change, contingency, and critical life-course events. Scholars such as Carling (2002) and Paul (2017) offer more flexible frameworks that emphasize aspirations and capabilities, aligning with a view of migration as a process shaped by structural constraints and evolving personal goals (Carling & Collins 2020).

In sum, migration motivations unfold and shift in response to the cumulative effects of lived experience. A micro-level perspective on complex migration trajectories must therefore move beyond static models, embracing iterative temporality, subjective geographies, and the interplay of emotional, legal, and material considerations. Research on complex migration trajectories invite to enrich migration studies frameworks with a more dynamic, and lifecourse-informed account of how migrants make decisions under evolving and uncertain conditions.

Expanding migration systems: intermediary hubs, infrastructures, and stratified mobility

Traditional macro-level frameworks, such as world-systems theory (Wallerstein, 1974) and migration systems theory (Kritz et al., 1992) have emphasized the role of structural drivers in international migration. In particular, they put forward the importance of asymmetrical economic, political, or historical relationships between sending states and receiving states. However, contemporary multinational migration processes are increasingly shaped by a web of intermediary

actors, emerging hubs, and decentralized governance mechanisms that challenge state-centric paradigms.

A core insight from the literature on complex migration trajectories is the importance of intermediary hubs that function as strategic nodes within broader mobility networks (Paul & Yeoh, 2021). Global cities such as Singapore, Istanbul, Dubai, Johannesburg are simultaneously sites of departure, destination, and recalibration. Migrants accumulate cultural capital, professional experience, or linguistic skills that can enable onward movement or offer fallback options when plans falter.

The notion of the migration hub thus reconfigures how we think of space in migration theory. Drawing on Hennebry et al. (2014), Paul and Yeoh (2021) emphasize that hubs are characterized by a convergence of migration functions (transit, destination, departure), a culture of migration shaped by constant movement, and a dense ecosystem of actors that enable mobility (Xiang and Lindquist 2014). These include commercial agents (recruiters, smugglers), regulatory regimes (visa systems, labor quotas), technological systems (transport, digital platforms), humanitarian actors (NGOs, UN agencies), and social infrastructures (migrant networks, community associations). States remain powerful actors, particularly in regulating entry and legal status. Yet many forms of governance are exercised through sub-national entities (municipal authorities, universities), supranational regimes, and private or semi-private intermediaries (recruitment agencies, global HR firms).

Multinational migration is embedded in global hierarchies (Paul & Yeoh, 2021). Some cities or countries function as nodes in the circulation of talent, while others remain peripheral. Migrants navigate these hierarchies not simply based on national development indicators, but on field-specific logics: academic recognition, professional networks, or visa flexibility. Migration systems thus need to be understood not only in terms of state-to-state relations, but also as sectoral and field-based networks spanning institutions, professions, and digital platforms. The shift toward temporary migration further intensifies this complexity. Cities invest in sector-specific branding and infrastructure to attract talent while migrants increasingly adopt flexible work arrangements, digital labor, or educational mobility (Yamamura, 2022).

In sum, to analyze complex migration trajectories at the macro level, we must move beyond state-based models and toward a relational understanding of mobility governed by networks, hubs, and infrastructures. Migration is increasingly shaped not by singular national systems but by interconnected assemblages of regulatory regimes, market logics, and cultural hierarchies that organize who can move, where, and under what conditions.

Complex belonging and evolving subjectivities

Traditional models of migrant integration have often assumed a unidirectional process in which migrants progressively adapt to the norms, values, and institutions of a single host society. Yet, as research on complex migration trajectories reveals, such assumptions are increasingly inadequate for capturing the lived experiences of migrants whose movements span multiple locations, social roles, and phases of life.

Studies on serial and onward migration (Parreñas, 2021; Yeoh et al., 2023; Turcatti, 2023; Morad et al., 2020) show how identities are gradually shaped by mobility. Migrants often navigate overlapping social roles (as students, workers, parents, or activists), and the salience of each role

may vary depending on the context in which they reside. Hence migration is embedded in the temporalities of aging, ambition, and care.

While transnationalism theories advanced a significant critique of nation-bound migration models by foregrounding dual affiliations and cross-border practices, they often remained methodologically binational (Ahrens & King 2022). In contrast, multinational and multidirectional migration trajectories call for frameworks that capture plurinational, postnational, or regional affiliations. Migrants today may feel simultaneously connected to multiple communities, languages across disparate geographies. This requires to reimagine transnational social spaces not simply as linkages between origin and destination, but as complex assemblages shaped by affect, recognition, aspiration, and memory (Favell 2017). Migrants' sense of belonging increasingly unfolds across multiple centers, which correspond to affective ties, moments of transformation, or political identification. Belonging, in this view, is not tethered to formal integration or national membership but emerges through interpersonal relationships, symbolic recognition, and the capacity to contribute meaningfully to a place.

This complexity also demands a reconsideration of migrant precarity (Ramos, 2021). Many migrants who move repeatedly face multiple legal uncertainties and economic constraints. Multinational migration, while sometimes associated with elite hypermobility, often reflects a strategic response to insecurity and exclusion. As migrants navigate temporary statuses, waiting periods, and failed integration, onward movements can become both a necessity and a means of regaining control. Yet such mobility comes at a cost: the lack of long-term anchoring can hinder access to social protections, education, or psychological stability. Many migrants face disillusionment when the next destination does not meet their expectations, as Morad et al. (2020) illustrate in their study of Italian-Bangladeshi migrants who experienced symbolic downgrading upon moving to the UK.

In sum, studying complex migration trajectories through a meso-level lens reveals the need for a more human-centered migration theory, attentive to the multiplicity of affiliations that migrants inhabit. It challenges researchers to move beyond static notions of integration or binational transnationalism and toward more relational, temporal, and affective frameworks capable of capturing the complexities of contemporary migration experiences.

Designing methods to capture complex trajectories

The methodological challenges raised by complex migration trajectories have increasingly come into focus as scholars attempt to capture the multiplicity, non-linearity, and temporal fluidity of contemporary mobility patterns. Rather than taking movement as a discrete event or linear path, emerging approaches seek to trace trajectories as processes shaped by shifting contexts, institutional frameworks, and subjective experiences. This section examines how recent research has grappled with these methodological demands. It first explores how traditional methods, such as surveys and qualitative interviews, have been adapted to better account for complex forms of mobility. It then turns to newer methodological developments, including digital data sources and creative, participatory approaches, which offer tools for capturing the intricacies of multi-step migration.

Survey-based methods have been used to examine multi-step migration, shedding light on migrant's decision-making process and intentions across different contexts. For example, Barbiano di Belgiojoso et al. (2024) drew on survey data by Social Condition and Integration of Foreign Citizens in Italy (SCIF) to examine how migration intention changes at the later stages of

migration, depending on factors such as family ties and financial situation. Similarly, Kiriscioglu et al. (2024) conducted online surveys utilizing Facebook and Instagram to assess how border closure and job opportunities shape migration aspirations, highlighting how experimental surveys can unpack the role of individual agency in secondary migration. While surveys provide possibilities for comparative and broader analysis, they may be limited in capturing the non-linear and temporal dimensions of migration experiences, especially when research participants undergo multiple relocations and changes in their status. Challenges such as collecting data for undocumented or irregular migrants and the mobile population further complicate survey-based research. Reinold and Siegel (2024) have used a mixed-method approach, combining a survey and semi-structured interviews with skilled migrants to evaluate the impact of retention policies on their decision to stay in the destination country. Such mixed-method approaches, bringing together broader and structural data with contextualized understanding can represent a fruitful strategy to study complex trajectories.

Qualitative methods to explore complex migration trajectories provide valuable insights into how migration takes place temporally and spatially. These approaches position migrants within unique geographical and institutional situations while examining emerging patterns during transitions. For example, in their study of Government-Assisted refugees in Canada, Perzyna and Agrawal (2024) draw on semi-structured interviews with personnel in the policy sector of the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), highlighting the limitations of the settlement process in considering refugees' individual characteristics and human capital. Similarly, in the case of Estonian returnees, Jauhiainen and Smolander (2025) conduct interviews with migrants with registered residency in Finland to explore the multi-dimensional experience of adaptation and policy navigation in their home countries. Such place-based studies provide important insights into the temporality of migration by focusing on the dynamics between aspiration, mobility, and memory. Maxwell and Schäfer's (2025) study on high-skilled re-migration provides a longitudinal perspective, examining how professional aspirations, family relationships, and social connections shape mobility patterns, while Dinmohamed's ethnographic study focuses on migration patterns by highlighting the temporality of feelings of home and attachment in the Netherlands. An emphasis on emotional ties and social connections offers a deeper understanding of migration as a relational process shaped by individual agencies, past experiences and possible futures.

Research on complex migration trajectories involves various methodological challenges which demand navigating changing context, mobile population, and dispersed data. For example, longitudinal research can be challenging due to logistical issues of staying connected to research participants across different times and places. In his research on the multiple migrations of Nepalese to the Arab Gulf, Valenta (2022, p. 33) reflects on methodological challenges, highlighting that "migrants' self-biographies may be reworked and reinterpreted in light of their present life circumstances and the anticipated future". Besides, migrants' changing legal status from temporary to permanent, and irregular to documented, as policies evolve and geopolitical tensions unfold, presents another difficulty in using consistent analytical categories over an extended period. Such dynamic shifts determine the availability of data, especially in the case of irregular or undocumented migrants. To capture the invisible experiences of migrant lives, in her study of family constitution through serial migration, Phoenix (2023) highlights the utility of retrospective narrative to avoid ethnocentric understanding of family lives. Having access to such experiences necessitates methodologies that enable collecting the informal and relational nature of mobility. Additionally, fieldwork that is carried out across different sites is often associated with administrative barriers for researchers, such as navigating multiple ethical approval processes, maintaining methodological consistency across different institutional settings, and obtaining a visa to conduct field research.

Future research can benefit from novel approaches and methodologies to better account for the complexity of contemporary migration processes. First, traditional methods can be further sophisticated and used creatively, in order to better take into account complex migration trajectories. Mixed methodological perspectives provide opportunities to combine the breadth and depth of complex migration trajectories. Meso-level perspectives that highlight the role of intermediaries and institutional networks provide valuable insights by focusing on structures that shape migration experiences across time and space. To deepen the understanding of multi-step migration, research needs to draw on methodologies that are relational and operate across temporal and spatial scales.

Besides, recent innovations in the fields such as digital ethnography and creative methodology, and in particular participatory mapping, offer promising potential to better understand multi-step migration processes.

Digital data sources open up new possibilities to trace multi-step complex migration processes. Emerging digital technologies and the proliferation of online platforms have opened new methodological possibilities for studying complex migration trajectories, particularly through the analysis of digital traces. These traces, generated through interactions with social media, mobile apps, and online services, can offer unique insights into migration patterns, aspirations, and behaviors, especially among populations who are difficult to reach via traditional surveys or interviews. For instance, researchers have leveraged Facebook Marketing API data (Culora et al., 2021) and LinkedIn data (Coimbra Vieira et al., 2021) to infer international mobility trends, while geolocated Twitter data has been used to analyze real-time migration flows (Armstrong et al., 2021). These tools allow for the analysis of migration processes at different temporal scales, providing both immediate and longitudinal perspectives on movement. However, the use of digital traces requires caution. As Armstrong et al. (2021) highlight, many social media users identified as "migrants" may in fact be frequent travelers or transnationals, leading to misclassification and interpretive ambiguities. Similarly, Sirbu et al. (2021) emphasize the need for robust methodological frameworks when using big data for migration research, proposing multi-level approaches that account for integration, mobility phases, and institutional context.

Digital ethnography provides another promising avenue. It allows researchers to follow how migrants construct and maintain transnational lives through online networks, self-representations, and virtual communities (Schrooten, 2012; Calvo et al. 2024). By engaging with the affective, symbolic, and communicative dimensions of migration across platforms, digital ethnography helps illuminate the shifting identities and relational strategies that shape complex trajectories. It is especially relevant for mobile populations whose lived realities span multiple localities and temporalities, rendering traditional, place-bound ethnographic methods insufficient (Marino, 2020).

Creative and participatory methodologies offer powerful tools for capturing the lived complexity of migration trajectories. Creative mapping, digital storytelling, and collaborative narrative construction enable the co-production of knowledge with migrants, allowing them to visually and narratively articulate the spatial and temporal contours of their journeys (Oliveira & Vearey, 2020). These approaches have attracted increasing interest recently, alongside a growing awareness on the role of the arts in shaping frames, narratives, and potentially counter-narratives of migration (Massari & Molho, 2024). Creative methods are particularly effective at exploring complex temporality, emotional experience, and aspirational life planning (Kumar & Triandafyllidou, 2024). These approaches help surface aspects of migration that are often overlooked in conventional research, such as ambivalence, memory, rupture, and non-linearity. Duxbury and Saper (2019) highlight how artistic methods, such as visual journaling, mapmaking, or performative storytelling,

can “activate imaginaries” and offer alternative epistemologies that resonate with migrants’ lived realities. Particularly fruitful to unfold migration spatial complexities is the use of creative and participatory mapping tools. For example, Cacquard (2017) explores the potential of online narrative cartography tools such as ESRI Story Maps and Google Tour Builder, showing how they can be used to trace personal geographies while performing spatial and temporal analysis. Such tools can be especially valuable in visualizing hypermobile trajectories and illuminating migrants’ subjective perceptions of space and movement. Van Blerk et al. (2021) emphasize the political potential of story mapping in participatory research with youth refugees, showing how digital storytelling can foster agency and impact policy debates.

Such approaches offer researchers opportunities to employ innovative methods in producing knowledge on migration patterns and decision-making processes. With the rapidly changing nature of digital technologies and online mapping tools, these approaches are diverse and evolving. However, ethical considerations should be emphasized in the use of digital technologies, especially when it comes to exposing sensitive data. Regarding such concerns, a cautionary approach needs to be taken when using digital traces of vulnerable populations, such as undocumented migrants and refugees, which may risk revealing their identities.

As opposed to “traditional” data sources, such as surveys and administrative data generated by governments or research institutions, digital trace data are created by private actors who provide services and use these data for advertising purposes (Tjaden, 2021). While researchers may adhere to ethical standards, the lack of transparency by private companies and social media sites can undermine the reliability of research findings about migration trajectories (Dedecek Gertz, 2023). Such considerations are of particular concern when it comes to research that uses digital platforms accessed by precarious, undocumented migrants (Sandberg et al., 2022). Besides the datafication of research as McAuliffe (2021) highlights, create risks in shifting away from rigorous research into scholarship that is socially and politically disconnected and characterized by ‘data points’. In sum, while digital technologies offer valuable tools and creative approaches in collecting and analyzing data, they also pose important challenges in terms of validity, ethics, and access (Tjaden, 2021).

Conclusion

This article has mapped the emerging research field on complex migration trajectories, emphasizing the conceptual and methodological, an challenges associated with this phenomenon. By examining terms such as transit migration, onward migration, multinational migration, stepwise migration, and serial migration, we highlighted how these concepts illustrate the diverse and dynamic processes underpinning migration today, moving away from binary and linear models.

The shift toward understanding migration as iterative, multi-stage, and multi-sited challenges established theoretical frameworks at three levels. At the micro-level, it calls for moving beyond static push-pull models toward complex understandings of migration decisions shaped by evolving aspirations, shifting constraints, and personal life events. Macro-level analyses must account for the critical role of intermediary hubs, migration infrastructures, and the increasingly stratified landscape of mobility rights, recognizing migration as shaped by networked governance rather than exclusively by state-centric policies. At the meso-level, focusing on migrants’ lived experiences reveals complex patterns of belonging and identity that transcend traditional notions of integration. Migrants’ affiliations are often plural and shifting.

The study of complex trajectories invites innovative methodological approaches that transcend conventional qualitative or quantitative methods. While survey methods remain valuable, capturing complexity requires methods attuned to non-linear temporalities and shifting contexts. Qualitative approaches, particularly longitudinal and narrative analyses, effectively illuminate migrants' relational and affective realities. Furthermore, the integration of novel methods like digital ethnography, digital trace analysis, creative mapping and participatory storytelling provides promising avenues to document and analyze the fluid, multi-dimensional, and iterative nature of contemporary migration.

To advance the emerging field of complex migration trajectories, future research should prioritize several key directions. First, there is a need for comparative studies that systematically analyze complex migration trajectories across different regions and institutional contexts. This comparative dimension would allow researchers to uncover both common patterns and distinctive local configurations of multi-step migration, providing a more comprehensive understanding of global mobility dynamics. Second, longitudinal research designs should be encouraged, enabling a deeper examination of how individual trajectories evolve over time, how migrant aspirations shift, and how different stages of migration impact identities and integration outcomes. Third, methodological innovation should continue, particularly through expanded use of digital trace data, digital ethnography, and creative participatory methodologies, to capture multi-dimensional aspects of migrant experiences. Additionally, attention should be directed toward investigating the role and impact of migration intermediaries in shaping complex migration patterns, including recruitment agencies, NGOs, and digital platforms.

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