

Congress of the Swiss Sociological Association 2024
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Call for Papers

Workshop: Urban hospitality: how do cities accommodate vulnerable migrants?

Organizers:

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Although cities have a long history of providing a habitat for “strangers”, minorities and people in vulnerable situations, they have been portrayed as increasingly inhospitable under the dynamics of neoliberalisation, gentrification or defensive urbanism. However, cities remain the main destination for migrants, for example, suggesting a recomposition of forms of hospitality - and inhospitality - rather than a simple decline in the potential of cities to provide hospitality. The boundaries between public and private responses are blurring, as are those between the formal and the informal, the benevolent and the commercial. In this workshop we will discuss a) how cities, as active political and spatial processes of urbanisation and commoning, respond to vulnerability and b) how people in vulnerable situations manage to compose a hospitable milieu in urban environments. Thus, urbanisation will be at the centre of this discussion, whether as the production of a built environment, as a set of institutions and infrastructures, social movements and power relations, or as everyday experiences. We expect papers to focus on issues such as housing or public space, e.g. how do vulnerable people find housing or shelter in conditions of scarcity, and how do cities - public authorities, institutions, market actors along with associations and social movements - politicise and practically respond to their accommodation needs; how do cities deal with the different forms and manifestations of vulnerability in their public space, how do vulnerable people deal with public space. We will give preference to papers based on empirical research, while addressing broad sociological issues at the intersection of politics and space, such as the urban experience of migrants, new repertoires of collective action, the transformation of social welfare, the commodification of urban territories.

Please submit your abstract of maximum 2000 characters by 5 January 2024 to luca.pattaroni@epfl.ch and m.c.felder@uva.nl