# P01 / Policy, Politics, and Political Regime Around Social Integration of Migrants in Urban China

**Topic :** POLICY, POLITICS AND POLITICAL REGIME

**Chair :** PU NIU (institution for China rural studies)

**Second Chair :** Zhen Lu (University of Sheffield)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

**Policy, politics, and political regime around social integration of migrants in urban China**

Pu Niu, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, University of Sheffield
Zhen Lu, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, University of Sheffield

The objective of this panel is to explore the theoretical understandings of policy practices adopted by Chinese governments to deal with the issue of the integration of migrant populations. Following China's large-scale urbanization in the last 4 decades, more than 230 million rural migrants have moved to cities. This has generated considerable challenges for governments at different scalar levels, in particular local governments, to help them integrate into urban society. To cope with these challenges, governments in China have not only issued numerous national policies/programmes such as urban village regeneration, providing access to public schools for migrant children, and household registration reform; but also implemented political instruments at the micro-level such as public deliberation and consultations, community-level self-governance, and authoritarian discretion during implementation of these projects/policies. These political practices have raised abundant discussion about China's complex urban political-administrative system in terms of policy-making, policy implementation, and policy regimes, and what they mean for the (un-)democratic nature of Chinese governance. It is paramount to reflect upon the grounded experiences around policy making, policy implementation, and other everyday practices adopted by different entities, if we want to grasp the trajectory of urbanisation and integration process of migrant groups in urban China.

Current research has provided some angles to review these political practices, for example, He and Warren (2011) proposed the concept of “authoritarian deliberation” to understand the Chinese democratic process and government strategies. Similarly, democratic theorist John Keane’s concept of “phantom democracy” (2017), an authoritarian “post-democratic” system that allows extensive local democratic practices, must be seen as an attempt to gauge the true nature of China’s poltical system. Empirically Beibei Tang (2015), Tang and Dryzek (2014) and Niu and Wagenaar (2018) researched the deliberative system approach to examine the Chinese urban and rural everyday deliberations at grassroot level; and Fulong Wu suggested institutional analysis and developed concept of “urban entrepreneurialism” to understand the policy practices and programmes around rural-urban integration. Meanwhile, in field of social justice, Hyun Bang Shin suggested building alliance between migrants and urban residents as the forward way for all urban inhabitants to achieve “right to the city” in China. Enlightened and encouraged by this research, we believe that the discussions around the integration of migrant populations will make a significant practical and theoretical contribution to an understanding of the policy process in an authoritarian society. More empirical and theoretical discussions are needed, around how do governments, grassroot level regime, and other entities play their roles in integration process of migrants on different levels? Through revisiting and investigating these practices, we can observe how democratic elements, such as public participation, democratic deliberation, and authoritarian discretion, manifest themselves within a political authoritarian setting, such as public participation, democratic deliberation, and authoritarian discretion. This will not only generate more innovative and just urban development policies, but also expand the current theoretical discussion on policy-making and policy implementation in China. In this panel, we invite empirical studies that reveals complexities and challenges in the field of policy making and implementation around migrants' integration; as well as researches about democracy and democratic governance in China, such as rural village/urban communities self-governance, public participation in migrants' issues, and social justice.

**Reference:**

He, B. and Warren, M.E., 2011. Authoritarian deliberation: The deliberative turn in Chinese political development. Perspectives on Politics, 9(2), pp.269-289.

Keane, J., 2017. When Trees Fall, Monkeys Scatter: Rethinking Democracy in China. In When Trees Fall, Monkeys Scatter: Rethinking Democracy in China (pp. i-176).

Niu, P. and Wagenaar, H., 2018. The limits of authoritarian rule: Policy making and deliberation in urban village regeneration in China. Japanese Journal of Political Science. Submitted.

Shin, H.B., 2013. The right to the city and critical reflections on China's property rights activism. Antipode, 45(5), pp.1167-1189.

Tang, B., 2015. “Not rural but not urban”: Community governance in China's urban villages. The China Quarterly, 223, pp.724-744.

Tang, B. and Dryzek, J.S., 2014. Introduction: The continuing search for deliberation and participation in China. Journal of Chinese Political Science, 19(2), pp.109-114.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

**Objective:**
The objective of this panel is to explore the theoretical understandings of policy practices adopted by Chinese governments to deal with the issue of the integration of migrant populations. Following China's large-scale urbanization in the last 4 decades, more than 230 million rural migrants have moved to cities. This has generated considerable challenges for governments at different scalar levels, in particular local governments, to help them integrate into urban society. To cope with these challenges, governments in China have not only issued numerous national policies/programmes such as urban village regeneration, providing access to public schools for migrant children, and household registration reform; but also implemented political instruments at the micro-level such as public deliberation and consultations, community-level self-governance, and authoritarian discretion during implementation of these projects/policies. These political practices have raised abundant discussion about China's complex urban political-administrative system in terms of policy-making, policy implementation, and policy regimes, and what they mean for the (un-)democratic nature of Chinese governance. It is paramount to reflect upon the grounded experiences around policy making, policy implementation, and other everyday practices adopted by different entities, if we want to grasp the trajectory of urbanisation and integration process of migrant groups in urban China.

**Key question:**
This panel focuses on empirical and theoretical studies around

- *What role do governments at different scalar levels and grassroot-level democratic practices, play in the policy process in China, and what do these practices mean for the (un-)democratic quality of the Chinese political system.*

Through revisiting and investigating the existing political practices, we can observe how democratic elements, such as public participation, democratic deliberation, and authoritarian discretion, manifest themselves within a political authoritarian setting. This will not only generate more innovative and just urban development policies, but also expand the current theoretical discussion on policy-making, policy implementation in China and the nature and future of the country’s political system.

**Themes and topics:**
In this panel, we will focus on empirical studies that reveal complexities and challenges in the field of multi-scalar policy making and implementation. We invite the empirical studies from following themes:
· Urban-rural integration/urban village integration
· Rural migrants
· Education policy
· Urban development
· Village/urban communities self-governance
· Local government and grassroot-level regime
· Public participation in migrants' issues

We also welcome the theoretical papers around post-democracy in China, authoritarian deliberation, democratic governance and social justice in China.

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## Session 1First Session

Thursday, June 27th 08:00 to 10:00 (MB 3.255)

**Discussants**

Zhen Lu (University of Sheffield)

PU NIU (institution for China rural studies)

**Transformation of “rural governance system” into regenerated urban village community**

PU NIU (institution for China rural studies)

**Facilitating Public Participation in Contemporary China: Understanding the Roles of Media and Local Governments in Community Self-Governance**

Xiao Liu (The University of Tokyo)

**Research on a typical agricultural county urbanization and the trend of Population Mobility——A Case Study of Huaxian, one large agricultural county in China**

Shaonan Li (School of Economics, Henan University;Academy of Hinterland Development, Henan University)

Sen Chai (School of Economics, Henan University;Academy of Hinterland Development, Henan University)

Mingzhai Geng (School of Economics, Henan University;Academy of Hinterland Development, Henan University)

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## Session 2Second Session

Thursday, June 27th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB 3.255)

**Discussants**

PU NIU (institution for China rural studies)

Zhen Lu (University of Sheffield)

**Taobao villages in Henan Province: how digital economy influence the rural life**

Yu Qie (institut of geography?Université Paris I - Panthéon Sorbonne)

**The migrant population and their attitudes towards social policy in Urban China: Empirical evidence from coastal Guangdong Province**

Alex Jingwei He (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Education Inequality and Integration of Migrants in Urban China**

Zhen Lu (University of Sheffield)