

Unnur Dís Skaptadóttir

University of Iceland

Faculty of Social and Human Sciences

Gimli, Sæmundargata 2

University of Iceland, 101 Reykjavík, Iceland

[unnurd@hi.is](mailto:unnurd@hi.is)

Paper title:

The changing discourses about immigrants in Iceland: Diversity, boundaries and borders

Paper to be included among those in the panel “The Rhetoric of Immigration: Labour, Integration and Exclusion”

## The changing discourses about immigrants in Iceland: Diversity, boundaries and borders

The growing immigration to Iceland in the last two decades has for the most part been employment related. People have primarily arrived to work in production, construction and the service sector. Refugees and asylum seekers are only a small percentage of those arriving even though their number has grown as well. My paper will analyze the changing discourses of immigrants in Iceland from focusing mostly on “work force” to focusing increasingly on “religion and culture”. These changing discourses will be contextualized in relation to the changing economy in Iceland and larger European policy on border crossings and access to the labor market. Gender, religion and ideas of ethnic and racial difference intersect in the construction of the categorization of immigrants in Iceland, as elsewhere (Anthias 2009). With a focus on discourses on the one hand, and people’s mobility and everyday life experiences on the other, the goal is to shed light on boundary making and on processes of social inclusion and exclusion and migrants’ participation in society.