How do queer partner migrants to Sweden and their Swedish partners talk about the migration processes they go through in order to be together? What do these processes feel like, and how do emotions and feelings structure them in different ways?

After her wife Eliza’s migration from the US, Viktoria engages in emotional labour to ‘make’ Eliza Swedish and help her belong in Sweden so that they can both be equal partners in their relationship. Max says he ‘found himself lost’ after his move from an African country to Sweden to be with his partner, and finds it difficult because of his gender identity, race, and class to develop relationships in Sweden to replace those he lost in the migration. Lisa and her Swedish girlfriend Bea don’t really think about Lisa’s move to Sweden from a Western European country as a migration since they never have to consider that Lisa is a migrant.

This study analyzes narratives of queer partner migration through three feelings – love, loss, and belonging. By framing the narratives using theories of homonationalism, intimate citizenship, and entanglement, it shows how emotions and feelings, and what these emotions and feelings ‘do’ to us, are tied to social processes of power such as sexual and gender identities, race, nationality, and class, and the geopolitical stories of privileges, migration, colonialism, and the global north-south divide that we are all written into.

Sara Ahlstedt is a migration researcher at Linköping University. The Feeling of Migration is her doctoral dissertation in Ethnic and Migration Studies.
How do queer partner migrants to Sweden and their Swedish partners talk about the migration processes they go through in order to be together? What do these processes feel like, and how do emotions and feelings structure them in different ways?

After her wife Eliza’s migration from the US, Viktoria engages in emotional labour to ‘make’ Eliza Swedish and help her belong in Sweden so that they can both be equal partners in their relationship. Max says he ‘found himself lost’ after his move from an African country to Sweden to be with his partner, and finds it difficult because of his gender identity, race, and class to develop relationships in Sweden to replace those he lost in the migration. Lisa and her Swedish girlfriend Bea don’t really think about Lisa’s move to Sweden from a Western European country as a migration since they never have to consider that Lisa is a migrant.

This study analyzes narratives of queer partner migration through three feelings – love, loss, and belonging. By framing the narratives using theories of homonationalism, intimate citizenship, and entanglement, it shows how emotions and feelings, and what these emotions and feelings ‘do’ to us, are tied to social processes of power such as sexual and gender identities, race, nationality, and class, and the geopolitical stories of privileges, migration, colonialism, and the global north-south divide that we are all written into.

Sara Ahlstedt is a migration researcher at Linköping University. The Feeling of Migration is her doctoral dissertation in Ethnic and Migration Studies.