

## **IMISCOE Annual Conference 2023 – Call for Papers ‘Standing Committee Reflexivities in Migration Studies’**

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### **Session I Boundary spanners: Reflexive practices that unsettle bordering in migration (studies)**

The IMISCOE Standing Committee “Reflexivities in Migration Studies” calls for contributions which reflect on **the role of boundary spanners in knowledge production** and investigate **practices of unsettling bordering**. The world deals with one human crisis after another, and the dominance of bordering practices results in growing dehumanization of ‘the stranger’. According to Bracha Ettinger, artist, psychoanalyst, and feminist theorist, the border is not a line that separates ‘us’ and ‘them’ but a shared field that joins the ‘self’ and the ‘other’, a densely woven web of connections, movements and interactions. In this alternative visualization of borders we can see the role of individuals and organizations who act as boundary spanners. These are the ones who cross over boundaries of the self and other, of separated nations and academic disciplines and various forms of knowledge, to create innovative connections which acknowledge, rather than erase, humanity. The in-between positionalities of boundary-spanners disrupt dominant bordering practices.

With this visualization in mind, we call for papers which go beyond descriptions of dehumanising bordering discourses and practices, but adopt a broader reflexive lens that engages with societal actors whose actions unsettle the bordering practices. Boundary spanners embrace an in-between position to mediate, bridge and act as brokers who challenge the dichotomies of difference and help reimagine borders as a shared field that includes mobility of people. These are NGO’s and various professionals in the field of migration, who connect the lived experiences of migrants with institutional knowledge and search for solutions in-between the lines of separating structures. Also, migration scholars can use their theoretical knowledge and methodological capabilities to collaborate with engaged actors in the field and/or activate knowledge for bettering the situation at the borders. And migrant and refugee advocates can use their in-between position to connect institutional efforts with firsthand experiences and challenges.

The session’s aim is twofold: (i) to reflect on the character and impact of boundary-spanners in knowledge production (ii) to explore how to include different actors involved in unsettling bordering practices?

We are inviting paper proposals addressing the following questions:

- How do boundary spanners shape and participate in knowledge production?
- How can we critique bordering without excluding all actors affected by and involved in these processes?
- How do we identify bordering practices, including racism, its narratives and excuses?
- What kind of actors do we see invested with different forms of power at the EU borders (e.g. securitisation, criminalisation of civil society by state actors)?
- Who are the boundary spanners in the current reception-crisis in the EU?

Please send your abstract (300 words) and a short biographical note (150 words) to the coordinator of the Standing Committee, Anna-Lisa Müller: [reflexstudies@uni-osnabrueck.de](mailto:reflexstudies@uni-osnabrueck.de).

We particularly welcome proposals from early career stage scholars.

Disclaimer on funding: The Standing Committee "Reflexivities in Migration Studies" encourages participation of colleagues from all backgrounds and career stages. To facilitate this, we can offer co-funding for participation for early career researchers, scholars at risk, colleagues from the Global South or people who have difficulties funding their conference participation for other reasons.

Deadline for application: 18 November 2022

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## **Session II The practice of reflexivities in research**

The IMISCOE Standing Committee "Reflexivities in Migration Studies" calls for contributions which critically reflect on **the practice of reflexivities in research**.

There is a large body of academic work that critically examines the political, ethical and theoretical problems of migration studies. For example, many scholars have highlighted the embeddedness of migration studies in nation-state centred epistemologies or pointed out the danger of migration studies reproducing coloniality. These works do a good job of questioning categorisations, concepts and theories. In contrast, there is less literature that shows the changes in everyday (empirical) research practice when scholars apply a reflexive view. What do we understand by reflexivity and how do we put reflexivity into practice? What does reflexivity change in fieldwork, concepts, collaboration, theories, power relations etc.?

We are inviting paper proposals addressing the following questions:

- How does a reflexive lens change knowledge production in practice?
- How do we put into practice a reflexive lens in our research?
- How do we conceptualize and practice reflexivity in various research, methodological and knowledge production contexts?
- What are the consequences of practicing reflexivities for our research? How can reflexivity change the outcomes, productions, dissemination and application of our research?
- How do these new practices change power relations and impact on forms of collaboration and knowledge production? What is the role of reflexivity in collaborative projects and knowledge production?

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