



BULLETIN #16

The IMISCOE Bulletin serves as a key communication platform connecting IMISCOE's 75 Member Institutes, individual members of our network, and the wider community interested in our research. It is built around contributions from the IMISCOE External Affairs Committee (EAC) and the Network Office based at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM) of the University of Liège.



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Welcome word

We are pleased to share the **16th edition of the IMISCOE Bulletin**, bringing together the latest news, research initiatives, and activities from across the IMISCOE network and the wider migration research community.

The IMISCOE Bulletin serves as a key communication platform connecting IMISCOE's Member Institutes, individual members of the network, and the wider community interested in migration research. Through contributions from the IMISCOE External Affairs Committee (EAC), the Network Office, Standing Committees, and the IMISCOE PhD Network, the **Bulletin** highlights the diversity of scholarship, collaboration, and knowledge exchange that characterises the network.

Among the highlights of this edition is an insightful **editorial** by S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair of the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD), entitled *Ethical Recruitment and Migrant Rights in the UK and the Gulf: The Limits of Soft Law*. The editorial examines the limitations of voluntary frameworks in addressing migrant workers' exploitation, recruitment debt, and employer-tied visas.

This edition also looks ahead to the upcoming **IMISCOE Forum in Agadir**, Morocco, under the theme *Promoting Afro-European Mediterranean Dialogue: Shifting Geographies of Migration*. Hosted by the Faculty of Languages, Arts and Social Sciences at Ibn Zohr University, in collaboration with the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration (GRITIM-UPF) at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, and the Euro-Mediterranean Research Network on Migration (EuroMedMig), the Forum will provide a space for African and European scholars to exchange perspectives and reconsider established approaches to migration. Its programme features keynote lectures, panels, workshops, plenary sessions, and a documentary screening, encouraging dialogue across geographical, disciplinary, and institutional boundaries.

We are also delighted to introduce **two new institutes** that recently joined the IMISCOE community. Pedro Góis presents the **Observatory of Migration in Portugal**, and Anatolie Cosciug introduces the **West University of Timișoara (UVT) in Romania**.

Moreover, this issue brings you updates from our **Standing Committees**, news from the **IMISCOE PhD Network** and **PhD Academy**, the latest episodes of the **Migration Podcast** and the latest **Open Access titles** in the **IMISCOE book series**. In the *"Voices Outside Academia"* section, anthropologist and documentary filmmaker Sine Plambech reflects on the relationship between migration research and visual storytelling through her film *RESCUE*.

Together, these contributions offer a snapshot of the dynamism and diversity of the IMISCOE community. They reflect the importance of connecting research with wider societal debates, strengthening collaboration across regions, and creating opportunities for knowledge exchange between scholars at different career stages and across different research contexts.

On behalf of the IMISCOE Network Office and the External Affairs Committee, we extend our sincere thanks to all contributors to this edition and to everyone whose work and engagement continue to strengthen the network. We hope you enjoy Bulletin 16 and invite you to share it widely, helping to amplify the impact of IMISCOE's research, collaborations, and activities across the globe.

Daniela Vintila and Jean-Michel Lafleur (IMISCOE Coordinators)
Ricard Zapata-Barrero (IMISCOE External Affairs Committee Chair)
Carole Wenger and Valkyria Dantas Rattmann (IMISCOE Communication)

Editorial

Ethical Recruitment and Migrant Rights in the UK and the Gulf: The Limits of Soft Law

S. Irudaya Rajan

International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD)



Every year, millions of workers cross borders through systems built on a convenient fiction: that voluntary guidelines can reform an industry whose business model runs on debt. From Gulf construction sites to British care homes, the pattern repeats. Recruitment agencies levy illegal fees, employers hold the visa, and workers absorb the risk. Soft law cannot dismantle these power dynamics, because it was never designed to.

Consider the United Kingdom's Health and Care Worker visa. Introduced in 2020 to plug a staffing crisis, it drew tens of thousands of workers from Nigeria, India, Ghana, Zimbabwe and the Philippines, many of them paid thousands of pounds in illegal recruitment fees, had passports confiscated, or were forced into unpaid overtime. A 2025-26 Royal College of Nursing review of 383 cases found that in more than half, employers demanded repayments exceeding £3,000, well above the maximum the National Healthcare Service (NHS) Employers recommends, while the visa's tie to an employer-issued Certificate of Sponsorship deepened the imbalance and increased exploitation risk. The government's response, closing new overseas recruitment for adult social care workers in July 2025, did nothing to fix the underlying structure. It merely restricted new entry, leaving workers already caught inside the system unprotected.

The Gulf tells a parallel story at greater scale. Despite reforms since the 2022 Qatar World Cup, low-wage migrant workers across the region remain exposed to passport confiscation, recruitment debt and enforcement gaps amounting to forced labour. Policy has evolved along divided lines. Gulf states have opened golden visas and sponsor-free residency to investors and highly credentialed professionals, while low-wage workers, even where protections have expanded, remain bound to employer-tied visas with restricted mobility. This divergence exposes the underlying logic of the region's migration strategy: mobility and security expand for capital and high-income talent, while precarity is preserved for the essential labour force beneath them.

Where does the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) Standard fit into this picture? IRIS was built through genuine multi-stakeholder effort and articulates the right principles: respect for law, ethical conduct, access to remedy. But it remains, by design, a complaints-driven certification scheme audited through periodic surveillance rather than a binding regulatory instrument. Certification signals compliance to buyers and brands; it does nothing to compel non-certified agencies, which is most of the market, to change behaviour, and it carries no sanction commensurate with debt bondage. Critics of the IOM's approach have observed that such initiatives risk outsourcing enforcement to the private compliance industry, even as migration corridors remain engineered to maximise labour-market access with scant regard for rights protection.

The real drivers of exploitation, recruitment debt and employer-tied status are the diseases. Certification only treats the symptom. Genuine reform demands what voluntary frameworks cannot deliver: employer-pays fee models backed by statutory enforcement, portable visas that sever the link between sponsor and residency, and cross-border liability chains that hold destination-country employers accountable for agency conduct in origin countries. Until governance moves from persuasion to law, "ethical recruitment" will remain little more than a certificate on the wall of the agency that charged the debt. By framing ethical recruitment through the limits of voluntary governance, this discussion connects directly to broader migration studies on the political economy of transnational mobility and recruitment infrastructures. Placing these corridors at the center of inquiry highlights how soft-law frameworks can inadvertently sustain structural precarity under the guise of compliance. On the current research agenda, this calls for empirical scholarship that evaluates statutory cross-border liability mechanisms and interrogates the friction between state-enforced mobility controls and market-driven ethical standards.

S. Irudaya Rajan is Chair of the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD). Since 1998, he has directed the Kerala Migration Survey (KMS), in collaboration with K. C. Zachariah (Founder President, IIMAD) and completed nine rounds. He is the Editor-in-Chief of *Migration and Development* (Sage) and the editor of two Routledge series – *India Migration Report* and *South Asia Migration Report*.

A chat with the hosts of the 2026 IMISCOE Forum in Agadir

Mohammed Ouhemmou
Ricard Zapata-Barrero



The **2026 IMISCOE Forum** is the result of a collaborative effort between IMISCOE, the [Faculty of Languages, Arts and Social Sciences \(FLASH\) at Ibn Zohr University](#), the [Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration \(GRITIM-UPF\) at Universitat Pompeu Fabra](#), and the [Euro-Mediterranean Research Network on Migration \(EuroMedMig\)](#), which provides support.

About the organisers

The Forum will be hosted by the Faculty of Languages, Arts and Social Sciences (FLASH) at Ibn Zohr University in Agadir, southern Morocco. The Faculty has developed a growing research profile in the field of Afro-European migration and mobility and is actively engaged in a range of international and national research initiatives. These include projects supported through Horizon Europe and Erasmus+, nationally funded research projects, as well as individual and collaborative research initiatives addressing migration, mobility, intercultural encounters, and related issues.

GRITIM-UPF is a key partner in the organisation of the Forum. Based within the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) in Barcelona, Catalonia, GRITIM-UPF is an interdisciplinary research group that brings together scholars from diverse academic backgrounds. The group's work focuses on immigration, human mobility, and the social and political transformations associated with migration. A centrepiece of its academic research scope is the Mediterranean region. The Euro-Mediterranean Research Network on Migration (EuroMedMig) was officially launched during the 15th IMISCOE Annual Conference in 2018 and operates as an academically recognised IMISCOE Regional Network. Having initially started as an Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Network, EuroMedMig currently coordinates the prestigious MSCA PhD Network. Through this initiative, it is actively training the first dedicated community of doctoral researchers specialising in migration and Mediterranean studies.

The collaboration between these institutions reflects a broader commitment to fostering dialogue and knowledge exchange across the Afro-European Mediterranean. It also represents an effort to expand the engagement of African institutions and scholars with IMISCOE, yielding greater opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the development of research networks that connect African and European perspectives on migration and mobility.

The conference topic is “*Promoting Afro-European Mediterranean Dialogue: Shifting Geographies of Migration*”. What can you tell us about this theme?

African migration is far more complex and diverse than the arrows on a Frontex map might suggest. Even migration from Africa towards Europe is not as linear or unidirectional as it is often portrayed. The changing geographies of Afro-European migration are reshaping mobility not only across the Mediterranean, but also through new routes, destinations, forms of movement, and spaces of connection across the continent. This complexity and fluidity challenge established theories, paradigms, and assumptions about migration and mobility. Understanding these transformations requires sustained dialogue between African and European scholars, as well as between academia and wider stakeholders, including policymakers, practitioners, and civil society organisations. Guided by the epistemic EuroMedMig principles of avoiding Eurocentrism, reductionism, and generalisation, the Forum seeks to provide precisely such a space for conversation. It represents a dedicated effort to facilitate critical, open, and collaborative knowledge production on the shifting geographies of Afro-European migration. In doing so, it opens up opportunities to question established perspectives, exchange situated knowledge, and develop new ways of understanding mobility between Africa and Europe.

About the conference program

The Forum programme brings together a rich and diverse range of spaces for dialogue, exchange, and collaboration, ensuring a balanced representation of geographies, academic disciplines, and participant profiles. This includes:

PhD Event: A pre-programme event dedicated to PhD candidates from the IMISCOE PhD Network, the EuroMedMig PhD Network, other PhD candidates participating in the Forum, and local PhD candidates. Among the objectives of the event is to connect IMISCOE and local PhD candidates and explore pathways for collaboration.

Keynote Lecture: The Forum will kick off with a lecture by Professor Myriam Cherti, a Moroccan migration scholar at the University of Oxford, UK.

19 panels: The programme includes 19 panels that reflect on a diverse range of migration issues, focusing mainly on (1) power, policy and control; (2) rethinking frameworks and routes; (3) identity, inequality and everyday life; (4) culture, narratives, life stories and policies; and (5) alternative epistemologies and decolonial approaches.

10 workshops: The workshops offer a more focused, participatory space for collaborative thinking, methodological conversations, and engaging in difficult conversations that do not always fit a traditional panel format. The workshops address various issues, including (1) governance and geopolitics; (2) death, loss, harm and accountability; and (3) research methods and ethics.

3 Plenaries: The Forum will also feature three plenary sessions addressing key questions in contemporary migration research and policy. The first will examine research partnerships between Africa and Europe, focusing on collaboration, knowledge production, and the power dynamics that shape international research. The second will explore the relationship between documentaries, cinema, memory, and migration, highlighting how visual storytelling can document experiences of mobility, displacement, and belonging. The closing plenary will bring together African and European institutional perspectives to discuss migration governance, policy priorities, and the evolving relationship between Africa and Europe.

Film Screening: In addition, the Forum will feature a screening of the recent film *RESCUE*, directed by Sine Plambeck. This special event is organised as an ad hoc activity of Plenary Roundtable 2, “Documentaries, Cinema, Memory, and Migrations”, chaired by R. Zapata-Barrero. The film is a research-based documentary project that follows the stories of migrants, militias, and rescuers at sea. It examines the political challenges, everyday practices, human fates, and humanitarian dilemmas in the Mediterranean. **Screening Details:** Evening of 28 October at Cinema Sahara (free admission), central Agadir. Walking from the tourist area to Cinema Sahara offers a chance to experience a different side of Agadir. The route passes through two distinctive neighbourhoods: Cité Suisse—with its white concrete, open spaces, and geometric modernist architecture reflecting the ambition of a city rebuilt after the 1960 earthquake and Talborjt, featuring compact streets, local shops, and vibrant, mixed-use buildings. Together, they beautifully capture Agadir’s unique balance between architectural modernity and lived urban life.

We also want to get to know you as migration scholars/research group and your involvement in IMISCOE.

We are a group of migration scholars based at the Faculty of Languages, Arts and Social Sciences at Ibn Zohr University. The research focuses primarily on South–South mobility, migration and memory, and migration governance and regimes. In recent years, we have developed a particular interest in the implications of EU border externalisation for transit and destination countries such as Morocco, examining how European migration policies interact with local and regional mobility dynamics, governance structures, and migration experiences.

Engagement with IMISCOE began when Ricard Zapata-Barrero, the IMISCOE Chair of External Affairs, participated in the 3rd International Conference, “Mediterranean Crossings: Rotating the Politics of Migration in the Mediterranean Space” (November 2024). This initial encounter opened

the door to broader discussions about academic and institutional collaboration between the host research community and IMISCOE.

Since then, these discussions have developed into a shared interest in strengthening institutional relations with IMISCOE. Such a relationship offers a valuable opportunity to create mutually beneficial connections between researchers and institutions working on migration in Africa and Europe, while also contributing more actively to the development of migration research networks across the African continent.

The participating research group and individual scholars are fully committed to deepening engagement with IMISCOE through joint research, academic events, researcher mobility, PhD and early-career researcher initiatives, and broader exchanges between African and European migration scholars. A stronger institutional connection will provide a durable framework for developing these activities in a sustained and mutually beneficial manner.

Coming back to the IMISCOE Forum that you are organising this year, what do you hope colleagues will appreciate most during the event?

The place: The Forum does not take place in a traditional European conference hub, nor in the country's capital or a conventional institutional centre. Instead, it is hosted by a small institution in southern, peripheral Morocco. This location is significant. Morocco is a key space of transit and settlement for African migrants seeking to reach Europe, while southern Morocco constitutes an important gateway within these wider mobility routes. Holding the Forum here therefore shifts the geographical and intellectual point of reference. Being here changes the conversation: it brings questions of mobility, borders, transit, settlement, and Afro-European relations closer to the spaces and communities in which they are lived and negotiated.

Diversity of Voices: The Forum programme includes a significant number of panels, workshops, roundtables, and other activities. Each brings different theoretical and methodological perspectives to issues of migration and mobility. Therefore, the issues the Forum addresses are highly diverse, ranging from diplomacy, security, death, grief, art, poetry, and football to many others. The hope is that participants will encounter and engage with themes and issues that they would not otherwise encounter in their respective research areas or disciplines. Most importantly, the aim is to do justice to these themes and issues and stimulate future research.

A New Start: The hope is that this Forum will be more than a one-time event. It is seen as the beginning of a longer process, a space from which new ideas, research collaborations, co-authored publications, joint projects, and lasting institutional partnerships can emerge. The ambition is for the conversations initiated here to continue well beyond the Forum itself, generating new forms of cooperation and new directions for migration research across Africa and Europe.

Do you have any tips for conference participants to enjoy their stay in Agadir?

Agadir is the gateway to southern Morocco and a major cultural and economic centre of the Souss-Massa region. It is also located at the heart of the Amazigh cultural landscape, with deep historical and contemporary ties to the Indigenous Amazigh communities of southern Morocco. Much of the city's traditional architecture was destroyed in the devastating 1960 earthquake, which profoundly reshaped Agadir and led to the development of the modern city that exists today. Visitors interested in exploring the region's Amazigh heritage can gain a sense of its cultural and architectural traditions through a visit to the Amazigh Museum in Agadir, as well as by travelling to nearby places such as Tiznit, known for its silver craftsmanship, or exploring the historic Igoudar (collective granaries) found across the surrounding Souss region. Agadir is also known for its relaxed pace of life, mild climate, and beautiful beaches. Visitors can enjoy a leisurely evening along Agadir Beach, taking in the Atlantic atmosphere, or head north to Taghazout to watch surfers and experience the spectacular sunset. The region also offers a distinctive culinary experience, including traditional goat-meat tagine and, when in season, fresh octopus and other locally sourced seafood.





Voices outside Academia

Seeing the political through the eyes of those who cross the sea

By Sine Plambech



Credit: Marie Hald

On a dead-calm morning in the Mediterranean, the migrant rescue ship of Doctors Without Borders spots a deflating rubber boat. Dozens of people are struggling in the water. Among the refugees is Roro, a Yemeni mother travelling with her husband, Hani, their two-month-old baby, and two young sons. This is the opening scene of my film *RESCUE*. As the rescue begins, a Libyan militia intervenes and abducts Roro and the children, dragging them back to Libya. Meanwhile, Hani is rescued and arrives in Europe alone. A family is violently torn apart across the Mediterranean.

While Hani fights from Europe to reunite the family, Roro struggles to survive captivity in Libya and to protect her children. Trapped by a violent system deeply entangled with EU border politics, she relentlessly attempts to cross the sea again. The story of Roro and Hani illustrates how migration policies are experienced not simply as laws and procedures but as forces that shape families, relationships and individual lives, reaching into the most intimate spheres. It is a story of family, loss, resilience, dignity and the struggle to be seen.

I work as a migration researcher and film director, and I often find that documentaries offer something different from research in writing: an immediate and human perspective—a feeling behind the data, making complex political processes visible and accessible to broader audiences.

The European Union's approach to migration increasingly involves the externalisation of border control, with North African countries being paid to prevent migrants from reaching Europe. At the same time, rescue operations in the Mediterranean have become the subject of political conflict and criminalisation. The result is overcrowded boats carrying children and families encountering dangerous conditions, while organisations and individuals attempting to save lives can themselves face political and legal pressure. These are processes that can be complicated to document as a film team, since places, time and access continually change. One powerful tool is self-documentation, which gives migrants greater agency in how their experiences are represented.



In *RESCUE*, Roro decides to secretly record her captivity in Libya, using a phone hidden in her baby's diaper, thereby providing an intimate account of conditions that might otherwise remain unseen. This footage is seen through the eyes of a woman. Such personal footage can provide valuable qualitative evidence for migration research by documenting experiences from the perspective of those who are directly affected. These choices inevitably shape the audience's understanding of events. Researchers and filmmakers must therefore approach such documentary material critically, considering questions of representation, ethics, consent and context.

Nevertheless, documentaries can bridge the gap between research and public understanding. They can translate abstract concepts such as border externalisation, deterrence and asylum policy into stories that audiences can emotionally understand. In doing so, they encourage viewers to consider what European societies are actually funding and producing at their borders. Ultimately, the contribution of documentaries to migration research lies in their ability to connect political structures with human experiences.

Sine Plambech (spl@diis.dk) is a anthropologist, film director and author whose work examines the intersections of migration, gender and transnational mobility. As a researcher, she has conducted extensive fieldwork across Southeast Asia, West Africa and Europe, focusing on women's migration trajectories, human trafficking economies and the social infrastructures that sustain mobility. Her scholarship combines ethnographic depth with a critical analysis of global inequalities, illuminating how migration is shaped by intimate relations, labour markets and geopolitical forces. Plambech is also an accomplished documentary filmmaker, using visual storytelling to expand public understanding of migration beyond policy narratives. Her films explore the lived experiences of migrants and the emotional, economic and political dimensions of their journeys. This dual engagement with academia and film allows her to reach diverse audiences and challenge dominant representations of mobility. Her publications and films have contributed to international debates on gendered migration, humanitarian governance and the politics of return. Through her interdisciplinary work, Plambech has become a leading voice in rethinking how migration is studied, narrated and governed, bridging research, artistic practice and public engagement.

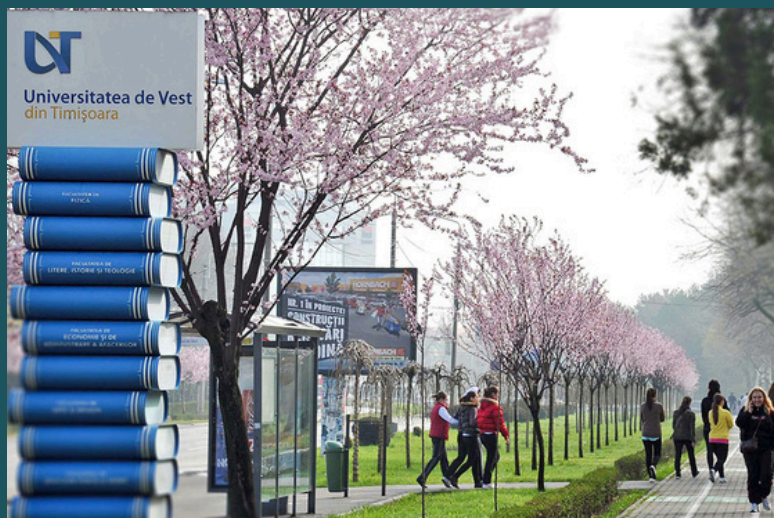


In the spotlight

Meet IMISCOE's new member Institutes

West University of Timișoara (UVT)

Written by: Anatolie Cosciug



West University of Timișoara (UVT) joins IMISCOE as an institution rather than through a single dedicated migration centre. While this configuration may appear fragmented at first glance, it allows migration to be studied in close dialogue with research on discrimination, politics, gender, social policy, education and labour. The membership brings together colleagues from four research units. The Faculty of Sociology and Psychology hosts three of the centres: the Centre of Research and Social Development (CCDS), the Centre for Social Diagnosis (CDS), and the Centre for Action Research on Discrimination and Social Inclusion (CCADIS), while the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies (CISG) is based in the Faculty of Letters, History and Theology. Now based in the Department of Psychology, the CDS also draws upon the expertise of numerous sociologists, reflecting the disciplinary porosity upon which the cluster relies.

UVT joins IMISCOE as an institution rather than through a single dedicated migration centre. While this configuration may appear fragmented at first glance, it allows migration to be studied in close dialogue with research on discrimination, politics, gender, social policy, education and labour. The membership brings together colleagues from four research units. The Faculty of Sociology and Psychology hosts three of the centres: the Centre of Research and Social Development (CCDS), the Centre for Social Diagnosis (CDS), and the Centre for Action Research on Discrimination and Social Inclusion (CCADIS), while the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies (CISG) is based in the Faculty of Letters, History and Theology. Now based in the Department of Psychology, the CDS also draws upon the expertise of numerous sociologists, reflecting the disciplinary porosity upon which the cluster relies.

In the spotlight

Meet IMISCOE's new member Institutes

Our research interests stem from an observation (or a paradox) that is simple to state but consequential for theory. **Romania, long studied as a country of emigration, is gradually becoming a country of immigration.** The conceptual tools developed for Western European destination countries, however, do not always travel well to this context. We ask: what does integration mean in a society that is simultaneously losing and receiving population?

Several connected strands of work address this question. The Interreg Europe project SALAM (2024–2028) examines the sustainable labour market integration of migrants. Within this project, the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology has convened dialogue between the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), employment services and NGOs. PRO-VOCEM (CERV, 2025–2027), coordinated by UVT, draws on oral histories and archival work to examine historical and contemporary racism experienced by Roma people on probation. In doing so, it links legacies of forced mobility with present-day encounters with the criminal justice system. A partnership with UNHCR Romania, which includes an on-campus information point for refugees, facilitates research and training on forced displacement, with a particular focus on the reception of individuals fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Additionally, our researchers investigate political remittances and migrant electoral (dis)engagement (Szulecki et al., 2021; Bivand Erdal et al., 2022), migrant-led political change at the local level (Bortun et al., 2025), and public attitudes toward migrants in Timișoara, assessed via the Quality of Life Barometer of the Municipality of Timișoara (Barometrul calității vieții în Municipiul Timișoara), a comprehensive, large-scale survey administered by the CCDS. This body of work typically employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating survey research with qualitative and participatory methodologies.

Teaching is closely tied to this agenda. Since 2025, UVT has offered the English-language Master's programme International Migration and Global Social Change (IMGSC). It also runs a postgraduate programme in Integrated Assistance for Migrants and Refugees, designed for practitioners in social work, psychology, education and public administration. A growing group of doctoral students also works on migration-related topics. In collaboration with Terre des hommes Romania, cluster members are currently designing and implementing a training programme for social workers and other frontline professionals providing services to third-country nationals, as part of the EU-funded CASTLE 2 project.

In the spotlight

Meet IMISCOE's new member Institutes

How, then, do we see our role within IMISCOE? Primarily, as a link between IMISCOE's comparative agenda and migration research in our region. First, we intend to bring evidence and theoretical questions from a post-socialist borderland into the work of the Standing Committees. These include specialised committees such as those focusing on Forced Migration and Refugees (FMR); Migration, Migrants and Labour Markets (IILME); Race, Racism and Discrimination (RACED); Gender and Sexuality in Migration Research (GenSeM); and Migration Politics and Governance (MigPoG).

Second, we wish to contribute to the network's reflection on de-centring migration studies. Our region has been described at once as a periphery, a transit space and a new destination. We argue that these labels, and the oppositions on which they rest ('transit' versus 'destination', 'migrant' versus 'citizen', 'East' versus 'West'), should be treated as objects of analysis rather than as analytical starting points. The 2026 IMISCOE Forum in Agadir provides an ideal venue for this discourse; much like Romania, Morocco functions simultaneously as a country of origin, a transit hub for migration toward the European Union, and, increasingly, a country of destination.

Third, we aim to extend the network's reach to early-career researchers within our region by encouraging doctoral students to integrate into the IMISCOE PhD Network and PhD Academy. Furthermore, we aspire to host IMISCOE activities in Romania, a milestone that would mark the first time the country has hosted such an event. In this regard, we would be honoured to welcome international colleagues to Timișoara. Beyond event hosting, we invite expressions of interest for joint research initiatives, teaching exchanges, and comparative studies focusing on migration within Central and Eastern Europe.

In the spotlight

Meet IMISCOE's new member Institutes

Observatório das Migrações (OM)

Written by: Pedro Góis



The Observatory of Migration (OM) is Portugal's national centre for research and policy support on migration, integration and diversity. Based within AIMA, the Portuguese Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum, its mandate was reinforced by Decree-Law 41-A/2024. Our role is to connect scientific knowledge, public policy and society. Our mission rests on four pillars: we produce scientific and statistical research on migration; we monitor migration and integration dynamics, nationally and internationally; we support the design and evaluation of evidence-based public policies; and we inform public debate, including efforts to counter misinformation.

What makes the Observatory distinctive is its hybrid model: strong public anchoring combined with scientific, administrative and analytical autonomy. That autonomy gives our evidence credibility, both among policymakers and with the wider public. The Observatory is growing. This year, we are recruiting 19 PhD researchers to work on dedicated thematic research projects. They will join a specialised core team of researchers holding PhDs and master's degrees, supported by a wider applied-knowledge network embedded in the public administration.

Our research covers the core domains of migration studies: governance, integration, labour migration, demographic change, public attitudes and diaspora dynamics. Data infrastructure sits at the heart of what we do. We are building a national migration data infrastructure (BDMIGRA) and a statistical dashboard that gives the scientific community direct access to data on foreign residents in Portugal. We also run a longitudinal panel of immigrants, tracking integration trajectories over time, and monitor media narratives and public attitudes towards migration.

We deliberately invest in topics that remain underexplored. Current lines of work include migration and social protection, comparative nationality laws, homelessness among migrants, and meta-analyses of doctoral research on migration in Portugal.

In the spotlight

Meet IMISCOE's new member Institutes

We want this work to be useful well beyond academic circles. That means combining administrative data, surveys and qualitative research, while also listening to the people and organisations closest to migration in practice. We work with public bodies, municipalities, civil society organisations and migrant communities to ask better questions and make sense of the findings. Bringing these perspectives together helps us identify what national figures can sometimes miss, including important regional and local differences. It also allows us to explain complex evidence more clearly and accessibly. Ultimately, our aim is not simply to document change, but to help shape responses that are timely, informed and inclusive.

Research at the Observatory is closely tied to teaching. We contribute to postgraduate teaching and supervision at the University of Coimbra, ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon and other institutions, and we provide tailored training for policymakers and practitioners. Through AIMA, we are also part of the European Migration Network, with direct access to administrative data.

Joining IMISCOE is a strategic priority for the Observatory, and we intend to be an active member of the network. We see three ways in which we can add value. First, we bring a practice-oriented perspective grounded in the day-to-day realities of migration governance. Our “Building Bridges” workshop, which brings researchers and policymakers together, is one example. Second, we can connect institutions with similar structures across Europe, facilitating the sharing of data and methodologies between research centres and public administrations. Third, we offer a Southern European and Lusophone perspective that enriches comparative research and extends analytical frameworks beyond the traditional core cases of European migration studies.

We look forward to contributing to IMISCOE's work, particularly on data-driven methodologies, and to meeting colleagues at the Forum in Agadir.



Finding Balance in an Unbalanced System: Work and Life During the PhD Journey



Written by: Denis Zeković, Saleh Seid Adem & Sophia Schönthaler

On 12 June 2026, the Training Committee hosted a PhD Academy workshop entitled *Finding Balance in an Unbalanced System: Work and Life During Your PhD Life*. The session brought together doctoral researchers for an open and reflective discussion on one of the most widely shared yet often insufficiently addressed aspects of doctoral training: maintaining well-being and balance while navigating the demands of academic life.

The workshop began with short presentations by Saleh Seid Adem, Denis Zeković, and Sophia Schönthaler, who shared their own experiences and reflections from their PhD journeys. Drawing on different academic and personal trajectories, they discussed challenges such as managing workload, coping with uncertainty, setting boundaries between work and personal life, and dealing with pressure and setbacks.

A central component of the workshop was a guided discussion facilitated by Denis. Participants were invited to raise questions and share concerns related to their own doctoral journeys, creating a dynamic and interactive exchange. The discussion fostered an atmosphere of openness and collegiality, allowing participants to engage with issues that are often experienced individually but widely shared among doctoral researchers. The participants and speakers also reflected on the key themes that had emerged throughout the exchange. A recurring insight was the importance of peer support, self-awareness, and realistic expectations in navigating the complexities of doctoral research. Participants highlighted the value of setting boundaries, recognising personal limits, and accepting that there is no single “correct” way to manage a PhD.

Overall, “balance” looks different for everyone. Some might focus on maintaining balance on a day-to-day basis; others try to maintain balance over a longer period, prioritising their PhDs for a time and taking time off afterwards; and some abandon the idea of balance altogether, instead constantly negotiating between work and personal life.

In general, the conversation underscored the importance of normalising discussions about well-being within academic environments, where such topics can sometimes remain in the background despite their centrality to researchers’ experiences. It is hoped that the workshop encouraged participants to approach their PhD journeys with greater awareness of their own needs and priorities while recognising the importance of building sustainable practices for both academic success and personal well-being.

Keep in touch with the IMISCOE PhD Network

Written by:
**Yowali Kabamba &
Denis Zeković**



Since the last Bulletin, the [PhD Network](#) has worked towards the Annual Conference and through to the end of the academic year, including the summer break. The theme of *Cultivating Curiosity and Community-Engaged Research* has stayed with us through our activities during the 2026 Annual Conference in Girona.

In Girona, we kicked things off with our pizza event on the evening before the conference, an informal way for PhD researchers to meet before the programme began. It was also a way to get to know the city a bit, as the conference team kindly invited us to a community centre that regularly hosts the university's activities. On the first day of the conference, we hosted a panel discussion followed by an interactive workshop, both still circling around *Cultivating Curiosity and Community-Engaged Research*. The setting, an old church, added a certain gravitas to the conversations and gave the sessions an atmosphere we will not forget easily. Many thanks to Iba Planchart and Ana Beatriz Pelicioni for moderating the sessions, as well as to Duha Ceylan, Marta Guarda and Eila Prats-Brugat for taking part as panellists.

The [IMISCOE PhD Blog](#) also has a new contribution. Our very own Tulya Su Güven wrote "*Where Do We Connect – or Where Can't We?*", a reflection on loneliness in PhD life and research, which she connects to her research on third spaces and newcomers. You can read it on the [IMISCOE PhD Blog](#).

With one academic year ending and another beginning, we have also recruited new Board members. We received 55 applications and selected four candidates: Giorgia Cacciotti (University of Bologna), Ioana Dobre (University of Strathclyde), Nate Webb (UNU-MERIT, University of Maastricht) and Lisa Motzig (UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles). Welcome to our new board members! We also want to thank everyone leaving the board, and everyone staying, for their work.

The **Coffee Chats** have resumed as well. Our September edition took place on 24 September, with 25 people joining from all around the globe. The October one took place on 22 October. Feel free to join the ongoing conversation, wherever you are! Regular information is shared through our newsletter.

At the moment, we (Yowali Kabamba and Denis Zeković) are preparing for the Regional Forum, where we will discuss the role of regionality in research, with a particular focus on the Mediterranean. There will also be an online option, so please sign up for either [online registration](#) or [in-person attendance](#).

For the coming year, we have decided to drop the annual theme and instead focus our activities on skills that are important for early-career researchers. We are excited about what's to come and will continue to support early-career researchers throughout their PhD trajectories!

Want to stay more informed about our activities? Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), and don't forget to [become a member](#) to receive our newsletter!



News from IMISCOE Standing Committees

SC Families, Welfare, Care and the Life Course

SC FamWeLC is a relatively new group within IMISCOE (established in 2024). The SC aims to advance a life-course perspective in migration studies and to draw wider attention to the interconnections between families, welfare and care, and their changing contexts. The SC has an active PhD and ECR representation, as well as four thematic working groups:

- Informal care and social support;
- Healthcare and social services;
- Financial welfare and welfare regimes;
- Migration and life-course transitions.

PhD researchers:

The Standing Committee (SC) has created a short online form for PhD members (and those not yet members) to better understand their interests, needs and ideas, with the aim of strengthening the PhD community and organising meaningful activities. Access the form: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/EsbGnFATtN>

Recent Events:

20 May 2026: Webinar. *Decolonization and Critical Intercultural Education: Bridging Practices from the Global South to the Global North*, facilitated by Tatiana Edith Vergara (Universidad Nacional del Chaco Austral, Argentina), Eduardo Andrés Martín (Universidad Católica del Maule, Chile), Julio Cesar Tovar Galvez (Universidad a Distancia de Madrid, Spain), and Martha Montero-Sieburth (UMass-Boston, USA). Co-hosted with Thais França and Jens Schneider, coordinators of the Standing Committee on Education and Social Inequality. [Watch recording [here](#)]

5 October 2026: Webinar showcasing IPUMS, the world's largest accessible database of census microdata and health survey data, co-hosted with the Gerontological Society of America (GSA).

Further information about these events will be posted on the SC FamWeLC webpage: <https://www.imiscoe.org/research/standing-committees/families-welfare-care-and-the-life-course>

Fill in the form [here](#) to join SC FamWeLC and stay updated with their activities.

You can also follow the SC LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/famwelc-imiscoe/>

SC Reflexivities in Migration Studies (Reflexivities)

The [SC Reflexivities](#) is pleased to announce that twelve contributions to our blog series [VISIONS FOR MIGRATION](#) have now been published on the SC Reflexivities website and social media channels (find all contributions in the [Blogs section](#) of the IMISCOE website). The SC warmly invites you to read and share them.

The SC Working Group on Activism, interested in the link between migration research and social justice struggles, has also been engaged in a collaborative process of reflection. What began as a dialogical writing format was further developed during the well-attended and inspiring workshop, Beyond Exceptionalism: Normalizing Engaged Research and Questioning Its 'Non-Engaged' Counterpart, at the 2026 Annual Conference. Building on these exchanges, the working group will continue this endeavour, including through new formats. If you are interested in joining this – or any other – SC working group, please get in touch.

The SC PhD representative, Marina Lazetic, is launching a new autumn series of the PhD Sessions, where early career researchers can present their work, exchange feedback, debate methodological and theoretical challenges, and expand their networks with peers interested in reflexive migration research. Running for a fourth year, these online sessions are a supportive environment for young scholars eager to explore alternative research approaches, mindful of the power dynamics in knowledge production about migration and striving to de-nationalize and de-migrantize studies of mobility and diversity. If interested in joining, please contact mlazetic@bu.edu.

In the coming months, please keep an eye on the SC website and social media accounts. The SC is aiming to release a call for funding which can be applied for to organise an event which aligns with the mission and work areas of the SC Reflexivities. The SC looks forward to welcoming exciting and engaging ideas.

Finally, please remember that you can subscribe to the SC Reflexivities Newsletter via the [following link](#) or apply to become a member via [their website](#).

News from IMISCOE Standing Committees

SC Gender and Sexuality in Migration Research (GenSeM)

The SC GenSeM is delighted to announce its activities taking place over the next few months.

Migration Dialogues

 Oct 23rd, 12- 13:30 (UK time) *Queer Migrants Reclaiming Belonging Through Silence and Voice*. Karine Duplan (University of Geneva) and Sarah Scuzzarello (University of Sussex). Online. Registration https://GenSeM_Queer_belonging.eventbrite.co.uk

 Nov 4th, 2-3.30 (CET). *Men, migration and emotions*. Rik Huizinga (Utrecht University), Mastoureh Fathi (University College Cork) and Francesco Cerchiaro (Radboud University). Online. Registration https://GenSeM_Masculinities.eventbrite.co.uk

 Nov 25th, November 1- 2:30 pm (UK time) *Transits and transivities: trans refugees in/from Brazil*.

Prof. Isadora Lins França, University of Campinas, Brazil. Hybrid, University of Sussex, Arts C, 333 and online. Registration https://GenSeM_trans_Brazil.eventbrite.co.uk

ECR committee

A four-part workshop to demystify the job application process for ECRs and PhD candidates.

1. November 13th, 4 pm (UK time). Preparing CVs for the third sector. Speaker: Careers Adviser for Postgraduate Researchers, Dr Holly Prescott.
2. December 9th 9.30 (UK time). Networking for consultancy jobs. Speaker: Dr Darshan Vigneswaran from Impact Studio.

Additional sessions focused on CV preparation for teaching roles and postdoctoral positions will take place in the Spring Semester.

PhD Students committee

Shut up & Write sessions:

1. October 27, 15:00-17:00 GMT/WET;
2. November 24, 15:00-17:00 GMT/WET;

Upcoming ethics workshops with the Reflexivities Committee (dates to be confirmed)

SC Forced Migration and Refugees (FMR)

An inclusive forum for forced migration research

Established at the IMISCOE Annual Conference in Lisbon in 2024, the SC for Forced Migration and Refugees (SC FMR) provides an interdisciplinary forum for research, debate and knowledge exchange on forced migration and refugee issues. The SC approaches forced migration and refuge broadly, welcoming diverse theoretical, normative and methodological perspectives, as well as research on different forms and experiences of displacement. Its mission is to connect researchers across the Global North, South and East while strengthening engagement with refugee communities and refugee-led organisations.

Throughout 2026, the SC has brought together more than 170 members, colleagues from the wider IMISCOE network and participants from beyond academia through meetings, conference sessions and public events. Particular attention has been given to PhD students and early-career researchers, creating opportunities to exchange ideas, develop collaborations and discuss the challenges of conducting forced migration research.

Recent events

On 15 June 2026, the SC held its first expert panel discussion with refugee-led organisations (RLOs), creating space for dialogue on their perspectives, experiences and roles in responding to forced displacement. The discussion brought together RLOs from across the world, including the South Africa Refugee-led Network (South Africa), the Tafawol Association for Social Needs and Development (Egypt), the Greek Forum of Refugees (Greece), the Refugee Advisory Board (Germany), and CoLaboratory for Innovation and Social Inclusion (CoLibres, Mexico). The event enabled these organisations to discuss their work, operational challenges, community needs and engagement with academic and policy institutions.

At the IMISCOE Annual Conference in Girona, the SC organised two sessions: “Im/Mobility and Immobilisation: Addressing an Under-Explored Phenomenon” and “Forced Displacement and Local Migration Governance: How to Promote Sustainable Policy Solutions?” These sessions addressed contemporary challenges while revisiting the work and legacy of the SC’s predecessor, the IMISCOE Research Group on Refugees in European Localities. They also provided an opportunity to reflect on how earlier research on refugees and local governance can inform the SC’s evolving research agenda

News from IMISCOE Standing Committees

Forthcoming activities

The SC is preparing two guaranteed-slot sessions for the forthcoming IMISCOE Annual Conference in Brussels in July 2027, including through open calls for contributions. The panel “Deportations as Forced Migration” will explore how deportation can be understood within forced migration studies. The workshop *“From Recognition to Representation: Refugees and Refugee-led Organizations in Forced Migration Governance”* will examine the involvement of refugee-led organisations in shaping governance, policy and practice.

The SC also seeks to strengthen collaboration with forced migration scholars beyond the IMISCOE network. As part of this effort, the SC plans to co-organise a panel at the 2027 conference of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) in Yerevan, bringing perspectives from the Global South and Global East into dialogue.

Alongside these conference activities, the SC is developing a series of online seminars, including a PhD student seminar series open to the general public.

Finally, the SC board has been working closely with the Bonn International Center for Conflict Studies (bicc) in Germany to organise the 2028 IMISCOE Spring Conference on “Forced Migration and Refugee Studies”. The conference will provide an opportunity to take stock of existing research, address knowledge gaps and advance perspectives beyond conventional or fashionable approaches. It will create space for research on neglected cases and regions, underrepresented groups and methods, as well as gendered perspectives. It will also facilitate cross-regional and cross-thematic dialogue, including discussions of unequal attention to different displacement contexts, exchanges between the Global South and Global East, and critical postcolonial reflections.

SC Arts, Culture and Migration (DIVCULT)

The SC Arts, Culture and Migration (DIVCULT) has had a particularly active period, with new opportunities for exchange, collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the network. On 25 June, the SC organised its Spring Webinar, “Participatory and Visual Methods”, bringing together six presentations exploring creative, participatory and arts-based approaches to migration research. Researchers working across Europe, Syria, Türkiye and Latin America shared experiences of using photography, filmmaking, digital diaries, theatre, mapping and printmaking. The discussion prompted rich reflections on how visual and participatory methods can offer new ways of understanding mobility, borders, racism and belonging, while also drawing attention to the ethical questions and dilemmas that arise in research practice. With more than 50 participants, the webinar provided a valuable opportunity to exchange experiences and connect researchers working across different contexts and disciplines.

Building on this engagement, the SC’s Autumn Webinar, scheduled for 12 November at 15:00 CET, will focus on “Doing Migration Research Beyond Academia: Collaborating with Artists and through Art”. The presentations will explore the relationships between the different actors involved in research processes, with particular attention to the challenges and opportunities of collaborating with artists and working through art-based practices. The webinar will also consider community-based knowledge co-creation and ways of sharing research beyond academia through artistic means. In doing so, it will continue discussions that were central to the more than 50 DIVCULT contributions at the IMISCOE Annual Conference in Girona, including individual papers, workshops and panels. It will further explore the methodological and theoretical interdisciplinarity emerging in art-based practices while sharing experiences and good practices from the field.

The SC’s activities are also expanding beyond webinars. The DIVCULT Newsletter is currently in preparation and is scheduled for launch after the winter break as a new space for communication and exchange within the SC and with the wider community of migration researchers. The newsletter builds on the SC’s growing online presence, including the recently launched DIVCULT Blog on the IMISCOE website and its [LinkedIn channel](#), which has already attracted more than 500 connections. Together, these platforms reflect the growing community around the SC, which now has more than 150 members, and provide spaces to share activities, research, calls and opportunities. The DIVCULT Blog will also feature research presented through the webinar series and create opportunities for external contributors to engage with and reflect on themes central to the SC’s work.

News from IMISCOE Standing Committees

The SC has also launched DIVCULT Project Incubators, a new initiative designed to help members turn research ideas into collaborative funding proposals. Through regular online sessions, early-career researchers can pitch ideas, meet potential collaborators, supervisors and host institutions, and explore upcoming Horizon Europe and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) opportunities, as well as European Research Council (ERC) and COST Actions. Each session will combine brief member pitches, targeted matchmaking and an “opportunity radar” highlighting forthcoming calls and deadlines. Alongside open incubators, focused sessions will address specific programmes and themes, including how to translate fieldwork into fundable project designs. The sessions will be scheduled around funding deadlines, giving members time to develop partnerships, build consortia and prepare competitive applications.

Finally, the SC is celebrating the funding of JAMM – Justice, Arts, Memory, Migration: Creating Solidarities across Borders, a COST Action that grew directly out of a DIVCULT internal initiative led by Gülay Ugur Goksel. This is a significant achievement for the SC and an illustration of what can emerge when ideas, expertise and collaborations come together within the network. Bringing researchers, artists, practitioners and other stakeholders together across Europe, JAMM will explore the potential of arts-based approaches to migration research while fostering interdisciplinary exchange, co-creation and new forms of knowledge and solidarity. The development of this DIVCULT initiative into a funded COST Action marks an important milestone, and its progress and impact will be of considerable interest to the SC and the wider network.

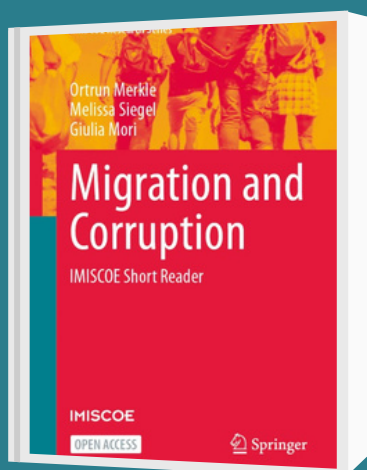
To become a member, visit the [IMISCOE Standing Committees](#) page.

IMISCOE Publications

Updates on the IMISCOE Book Series

Written by: Anna Triandafyllidou and Irina Isaakyan

IMISCOE, the world's largest network focusing on migration and diversity, is proud to have an official book series in **collaboration with Springer**. This collection showcases empirical and theoretical research on diverse facets of international migration. Authored by experts in the field, these publications serve as a comprehensive resource for both researchers and individuals interested in migration studies. The series, consisting of over eighty titles, is meticulously curated under the watchful eye of our **IMISCOE Editorial Committee**, which comprises a diverse group of renowned scholars. The internationally peer-reviewed nature of the series ensures the preservation of exceptional academic standards and high scholarly quality. Most of these invaluable resources are freely accessible to the public. Here you will find a review and recap of the latest publications.



Migration and Corruption IMISCOE Short Reader

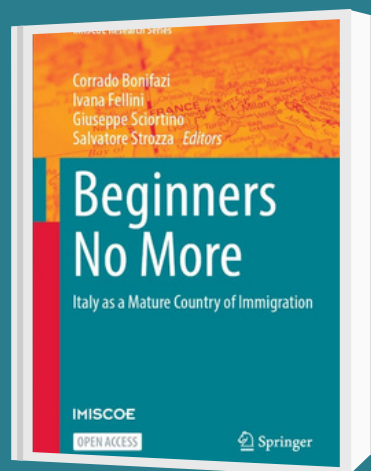
Authors: Ortrun Merkle, Melissa Siegel and Giulia Mori

This open access reader describes the complex relationship between migration and corruption by looking at different forms of migration (voluntary and forced) as well as different forms of corruption. It examines how corruption can influence the decision to migrate, takes a closer look at the direct impact of corruption as a reason for migration, and explores how corruption can act as a reason to not return to the country of origin. It also explores how migrant households face greater risks of corruption, how migrants throughout their journey are targeted by corrupt officials, and how corruption plays a role not only in making the decision to migrate but also in determining the journey itself. The reader explores in more detail how these experiences are gendered, how female migrants frequently face different forms of corruption, and how gender norms in the country of origin, transit and destination play a role in shaping how corruption is encountered throughout the journey. By providing an overview, discussing the different challenges corruption and migration research face and concluding with recommendations for future research on the topic, this short reader is an interesting read for researchers, policy makers and all those working in and beyond the field of migration studies.

Download it [here!](#)

IMISCOE Publications

Updates on the IMISCOE Book Series

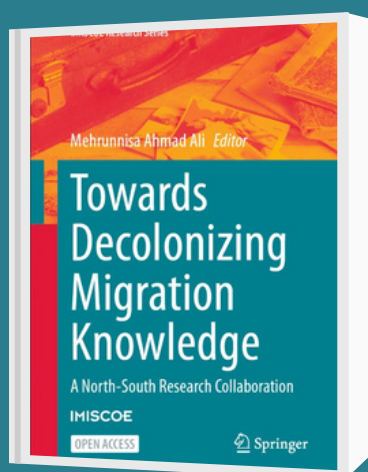


Beginners No More: Italy as a Mature Country of Immigration

Authors: Corrado Bonifazi, Ivana Fellini, Giuseppe Sciortino and Salvatore Strozza | To be released in November 2026

This open access book provides an updated and interdisciplinary account of immigration in Italy, one of the major European immigration countries, and focuses on the process of settlement of immigrants and their descendants. It describes the most relevant trends of Italian migration dynamics to dispel an outdated understanding of Italy as a “new migration country” and some clichés about the “Italian model of migration”. Building on a theoretically informed and evidence-based discussion of structural changes and continuities, the book considers several domains of immigrants’ social and economic integration – settlement patterns, family, employment, sociability, health – and takes into account second generations’ integration. By providing a portrait of a new phase of migration in Italy, this book provides a valuable resource not only for students and scholars in migration and Italian studies, but also for social scientists and policy-makers interested in grounding comparative work in a more detailed knowledge of national cases.

Pre-order it [here!](#)



Towards Decolonizing Migration Knowledge: A North-South Research Collaboration

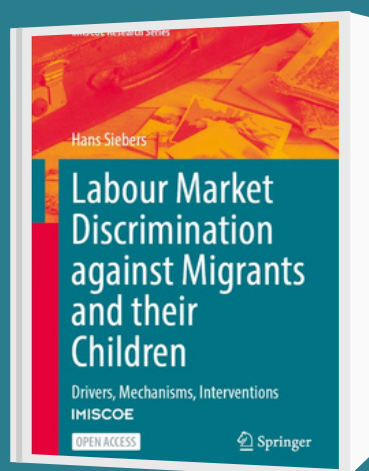
Author: Mehrunnisa Ahmad Ali | To be released in December 2026

This open access book offers new insights on how migration researchers’ work is shaped by their countries’ socio-political histories; their ideological and theoretical orientations; workplace structures and cultures; conceptual and linguistic variation; and their knowledge, skills, and habits of mind. While there is ample agreement on the value of international collaborative research on migration, there are few granular descriptions of how this work is initiated and managed, how roles and relationships are negotiated, and what contextual factors facilitate or impede the collaboration. This book helps scholars in the Global North and the Global South, as well as research administrators and funding agencies, develop a more nuanced understanding of international collaborative research.

Pre-order it [here!](#)

IMISCOE Publications

Updates on the IMISCOE Book Series



Labour Market Discrimination Against Migrants and Their Children: Drivers, Mechanisms, Interventions

Author: Hans Siebers | To be released in December 2026

This open access book investigates the labour market discrimination faced by migrants and their children in hiring and occupational attainment. It explores the drivers and mechanisms behind the discrimination, seeking to answer why applicants and employees with a migration background become the objects of “othering” in the first place, how this is enacted, and what can be done to prevent it. The volume builds on relevant literature on nationalism and racism, presenting findings from six Dutch public organisations to create an explanatory framework on the drivers that produce labour market discrimination. The book uses a triangulation of data and methods, and a comparison of the experiences of applicants, selectors, employees, and supervisors, both with and without a migration background. The book uses an intersectional perspective to discuss secondary and class-based drivers of discrimination based on personal attributes and communicative behaviour selection and assessment that allow nationalist ethnicization to become operational. It argues that experiences of ethnicization undermine the self-confidence of people with a migration background and thus they perform less on these criteria, which limits their hiring and occupational attainment chances in the eyes of selectors and supervisors. Findings reveal that professionalization of assessment and selection criteria and procedures works to counter discrimination. The volume concludes by advocating for reform of migration and integration policies and discourses that feed ethnicization. While empirical findings and recommendations are particularly valid for the Dutch context, they may guide and inspire future research in other contexts.

Pre-order it [here!](#)



What is new on the IMISCOE Migration Podcast?

Written by: Asya Pisarevskaya, podcast PR & engagement

The IMISCOE Migration Podcast continues its **Season 6** with three new episodes that question how migration is defined, represented and experienced: *"Defining 'the migrant': Interrogating assumptions, dichotomies & their implications"*, *"Micro-Influencers in Canada's Immigration Ecosystem"* and *"For Whom Was Syria Never Safe? Queer Futures Beyond Assad"*.



"Micro-Influencers" in Canada's Immigration Ecosystem

Masoud Kianpour

More and more people are creating content on social media about their migration experiences.

listen

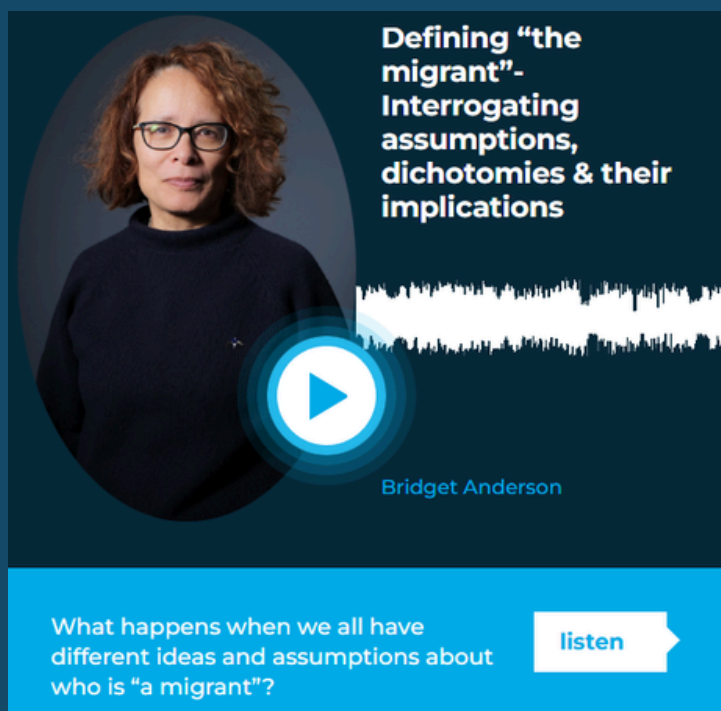
Season 6 Episode 4

In *"Micro-Influencers in Canada's Immigration Ecosystem"*, Silindile Mlilo speaks with Masoud Kianpour, Senior Research Fellow at the Global Migration Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University. Kianpour discusses his research on "migrant micro-influencers": content creators on YouTube, TikTok and other platforms who share advice about cultural adjustment, immigration laws and bureaucratic systems with new and prospective immigrants to Canada. The episode explores how such influencers can become "life coaches" for diasporic communities, while also facing difficult choices when commenting on politics and immigration systems. Listeners also hear clips from Max Medyk, a social media influencer who grew up in Ukraine and now lives in Canada, where he creates content for immigrants.

Season 6 Episode 5

In *"Defining 'the migrant'"*, Asya Pisarevskaya speaks with Bridget Anderson, Director of the new Migrant Futures Institute at Goldsmiths, University of London. The episode asks what happens when people have different assumptions about who is considered "a migrant". Anderson discusses how imaginaries of "migrants" and "nationals" shape distinctions between insiders and outsiders, and how these figures are often misleadingly constructed as opposites. She also reflects on how race, class and other ways of experiencing the world can reveal commonalities across these categories.

The episode connects to her wider work on migration, citizenship, mobility controls and methodological de-nationalism, including findings of the Horizon Europe project PRIME: Protecting Irregular Migrants in Europe.



Defining "the migrant"- Interrogating assumptions, dichotomies & their implications

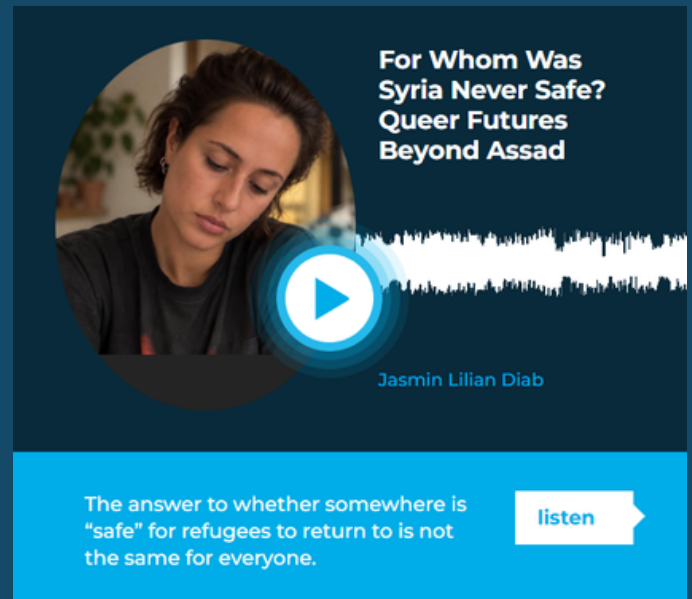
Bridget Anderson

What happens when we all have different ideas and assumptions about who is "a migrant"?

listen

Season 6 Episode 6

In "For Whom Was Syria Never Safe? Queer Futures Beyond Assad", Lena Richter speaks with Jasmin Lilian Diab, the Director of the Institute for Migration Studies at the Lebanese American University. Her recent paper, which also won the 2026 Best Paper Award from IMISCOE's Standing Committee on Gender and Sexuality in Migration Studies ("GenSeM"), is about how questions of return and safety are not the same for all refugees. This recent study is specifically about what return means for LGBTQI+ Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, when, for many, Syria was never a safe home, even before the war. Jasmin talks about the constant calculation that many queer Syrians must make in their everyday lives, even out of the country, where "hypervisibility" can risk violence. She also gives examples from her research about how queer refugees build community and imagine futures of dignity and belonging.



Meet the new member of the IMISCOE Migration Podcast production team!

Also, we are happy to welcome Marloes Van Damme to the **IMISCOE Migration Podcast** team as Communication & Programming Coordinator. Marloes works as a research and communication manager at the University of Antwerp, focusing on ethnographic research and the interdisciplinary network on Migration and Global Mobility (MIGLOBA). With a background in project coordination, science communication and international relations, she is passionate about making migration research accessible to diverse audiences. Through the podcast, she hopes to support knowledge exchange and help build meaningful connections between researchers across different networks and fields of expertise.

Stay tuned for more episodes coming up soon!

[Check out all episodes here!](#)

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IMISCOE Bulletin #16!**

Keep in touch with us via



IMISCOE

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