

Migration Working Group

MigrationWorkingGroup@eui.eu

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Presentation Series 2025–2026

The Migration Working Group (MWG) is a researcher-led research group, whose aim is to foster exchange on the latest, cutting-edge migration research and give the opportunity to early career scholars and PhD researchers to present their research.

The MWG is organised by the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) in coordination with EUI researchers Andreea Ferent (SPS), Eréndira León (SPS), Marianna Hu (Law), Mustapha Kokumo (ECON). The sessions of the 2025-2026 series will be held **in-person**, with a hybrid option for those not located in Florence. Zoom links will be provided after registration to each event.

All sessions will take place **in person** from **11:00 to 12:30 CET** in **Villa Schifanoia** (except the Wed 28 January session that will take place online from 15:00 to 16:30 CET). Each session will feature presentations of 2 draft papers with a total of 45 minutes designated for each presentation/discussion, including audience Q&A.

5th November 2025, 11:00-12:30

Reflexivity and agency in migration studies: rethinking researchers' positionality and migrants' political engagement

Zeynep Montesoglu Tardivo, Research Fellow, University of Milan (visiting MPC)

Mapping the 'Participation Gap': A Comparative Analysis of Migrants' Political Engagement and Participation Patterns in Western Europe

Bahar Ayca Okcuoglu, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey

Researcher Positionality in Migration Studies: Methodological and Ethical Reflections

This session deals with questions of representation and voice in migration studies. It challenges two narratives: that researchers can be neutral or objective, and that migrants are politically disengaged. Bringing these debates into conversation, the seminar explores how researchers' positionality shapes the knowledge they produce, and, on the other hand, how migrants assert their own political agency.

3th December 2025, 11:00–12:30

Visibility, Measurement, and Public Perception in Migration Governance

Zoe Sigman, PhD candidate in the Dynamics of Demography, Democratic Processes and Public Policy at the DYNAMICS program, Hertie School

Estimating the hidden population of migrant deaths along the Southern U.S. Border

Rachel Kei Kawasaki, Max Weber Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre

Does Immigrant Integration Foster Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants: Evidence from England

This session brings together two papers that interrogate how migration realities are measured, represented, and perceived—and how these processes shape governance and public attitudes. The first paper presents one of the first applications of Multiple Systems Estimation (MSE) to migrant mortality along the U.S.–Mexico border, revealing that official statistics substantially undercount deaths and demonstrating how demographic estimation tools can uncover hidden dimensions of migration-related harm. The second paper examines whether observable integration outcomes, such as immigrants’ economic success or social participation, affect public attitudes toward immigration in the United Kingdom. Together, the papers highlight the importance of visibility in shaping how migration is governed, quantified, and understood, revealing the complex relationship between empirical realities and their political or societal interpretation.

14th January 2026, 11:00–12:30

Governing Migration and Vulnerability at Europe’s Borders

Nikolas Karoutsos, School of Transnational Governance (Trainee)

From Borders to Pathways: Greek Policymakers’ Perceptions of the Link Between Legal Pathways and Irregular Migration

Aleena T Sabu

Between Borders and Violence: Gender-Based Violence Against Asylum Seekers in Libyan Detention Centers

This session explores how European migration governance shapes mobility, control, and vulnerability across different contexts. Bringing together policy analysis and gender-focused research, the papers examine how states manage migration through legal pathways and how structural violence unfolds along transit routes. Together, they reveal the moral, political, and human dimensions of migration management at Europe's borders.

28th January 2026, 15:00–16:30

Aspirations and Constraints in Iranian Transnational Lives: Migration, Settlement, and Remittance under Sanctions

Sara Hormozinejad, PhD candidate, Department of Sociology at University of Toronto.

Dreaming the West: The construction and transformation of middle-class Iranians' migration aspirations

Leili Yousefi, McMaster University, Ontario.

Remittance Practices of Iranian Immigrants in Canada: A Statistical Exploration

This session examines how structural constraints and social imaginaries shape Iranian migration trajectories, from the formation of aspirations to the transformation of transnational practices. Bringing together qualitative and quantitative perspectives, both papers illuminate how global political–economic structures intersect with migrants' lived experiences and affective worlds.

18th February 2026, 11:00–12:30

Law, Technology, and Migrant Agency in European Labour Markets

Andreea Ferent, PhD Researcher, EUI Department of Political and Social Sciences (SPS)

The Role of Immigration Policies, Labour Regulations, and Training Systems in Shaping Technology Adoption and Migration in Horticulture

Angélica Cocomá Ricaurte, PhD Candidate in Law at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

(Legal) Agency as a Useful Framework to Analyze Migrants' Engagement with EU Labour Migration Law

This session brings together two perspectives on how institutions and actors co-produce migration and work. The first paper compares the Netherlands and the UK to examine how automation and “digital agriculture” intersect with labour regulation, immigration policy, unions, employers, and migrant workers—showing why precarious migrant labour persists despite techno-optimist narratives. The second paper develops legal agency as a framework for understanding how migrants interpret, mobilize, and contest EU labour migration law. It highlights how law not only structures resources and constraints but also shapes imaginaries and aspirations, calling for a reflective, decolonial legal methodology centered on migrant voices. Together, the papers trace how technology, law, and lived experience jointly configure opportunities, precarity, and pathways of action.

18th March 2024, 15:00–16:30

Recognition and Rights in Migration Governance

Daniela Movileanu, PhD Candidate at the European Institute of the London School of Economics

Measuring Access for People with Lived Experience of Migration and Displacement to International Organisations

Aitana Torró Calabuig, PhD candidate in Human Rights, Democracy and International Justice at the University of Valencia

Democratizing Work: The Right to Work of Foreign Nationals in Comparative Perspective

This session explores how migrants are recognized within governance systems. One paper traces the formal inclusion of people with lived migration experience in international organizations, while the other examines how European legal frameworks shape migrants' right to work. Together, they highlight how access and labor rights define belonging and participation in migration governance.

22th April 2026, 11:00–12:30

Trust, Integration, and Institutional Encounters in Europe

Gabriella Agyei, PhD Researcher, EUI Department of Political and Social Sciences (SPS)

Detained on an Island: The habitual banishment of the Crimean Khans to Rhodes

Abd Alkader Alhag Fteah, PhD Candidate in Economics, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

Tales of Integration: An Exploration of the Integration Experience of Immigrants and Refugees (with Iria Noa de la Fuente-Roldán and Rafael Fernández Sánchez).

This session explores how immigrants and their descendants build, negotiate, and experience trust in institutions and integration processes across European societies. The first paper examines the determinants of institutional trust among African second-generation individuals in the Netherlands. Adopting a transnational lens, it traces how perceptions of political instability in countries of origin intersect with everyday encounters in Dutch institutions, shedding light on the experiential foundations of trust and distrust. The second paper compares socio-economic integration experiences of Middle Eastern and North African immigrants and refugees in Spain and Germany. Drawing on 40 semi-structured interviews, it extends Ager and Strang's integration model to include legal status, institutional frameworks, and experiences of islamophobia and discrimination, showing that labor and social integration are deeply intertwined. Together, the papers reveal how institutional contexts and lived experiences shape diverse pathways of belonging and participation in Europe.

13th May 2026, 11:00–12:30

Labour Mobility and Migrant Integration in Europe

Mustapha Kokumo, PhD Researcher at the EUI Department of Economics (ECON)

The Effect of a Refugee Shock on the Integration of Earlier Migrants

Justyna Hejman-Mancewicz, Postdoctoral Fellow at CNRS – University of Strasbourg

At the Crossroads of Free Movement and Migration Control: Posted Third-Country Nationals in Poland

This session explores how new migration waves and labor dynamics reshape integration and mobility patterns across Europe. The first paper examines how the arrival of refugees in Germany during 2015–2016 affected the social and economic integration of migrants already residing in the country. It investigates how these effects vary depending on the origins of both incoming refugees and established migrants, shedding light on intergroup dynamics within migrant communities. The second paper turns to Poland to analyze the growing role of third-country nationals (TCNs) in temporary labor mobility within the EU. By tracing how TCNs posted from Poland sustain key sectors such as international transport, the paper reveals a form of “double migration” that has become a structural feature of the Polish labor market. Together, the papers highlight the evolving intersections between refugee inflows, migrant integration, and labor market transformation in Europe.