

A YEAR IN REVIEW AT THE MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE

Annual Activity Report, 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR	III
SECTION 1 - AT A GLANCE	1
Goals and impact	2
Newsworthy Highlights from 2025	2
SECTION 2 - THE NETWORK EFFECT	3
Who we connected with	
2.1 Connecting researchers	4
2.1.1 How and why do people move across borders?	4
2.1.2 Which policies work, and where do they fall short?	6
2.1.3 How do migration and work intersect with social protection?	8
2.1.4 What barriers prevent migrants from accessing rights and dignity?	9
2.1.5 What drives public support or opposition to migrants and refugees?	11
2.1.6 What mechanisms connect academic knowledge with political debates?	12
2.2 Connecting with field experts, policymakers and practitioners through executive trainings	14
2.2.1 Training course formats and dates	15
2.2.2 Key statistics	19
2.3 Connecting with civil society	20
SECTION 3 - OUR ECOSYSTEM: PROJECTS, TEAM MEMBERS, AND PARTNERS	22
3.1 Research projects	22
3.2 Our Team	24
3.3 Partners	25



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to share the Migration Policy Centre's 2025 Annual Activity Report, which reflects a year defined by deeper local engagement, stronger collaboration with civil society, and a renewed commitment to ensuring that evidence meaningfully informs public debate and policymaking across our core activities: research, training, and policy dialogue.

In pursuit of our core goal of advancing migration research, our team published 50+ articles, books, and briefs. We convened global audiences through 36 events and seminars, and our executive education programmes welcomed 145 participants from 38 countries. From analysing irregular migration and labour markets to developing new insights into mobility practices and public attitudes, our work has continued to provide clarity, expertise, and robust data to deepen understanding of migration dynamics.

Among the year's highlights were two editions of a new dedicated training programme designed to address the challenges of working with non-academic stakeholders and strengthening the policy impact of migration research. We also advanced research on the conditions of irregular migrants, including access to social and labour rights, alongside work on public attitudes that revealed more nuanced views on regularisation policies and the importance of policy design and context. We also published a *Directory of Migration Research Institutions*, a unique database mapping migration research centres worldwide.

In a world increasingly marked by division and disconnection, we worked with UNICEF to launch U-Lead, a youth leadership and participatory research programme that builds bridges between institutions and individuals, research and lived experience, and—most importantly - young people from very different origins and walks of life.

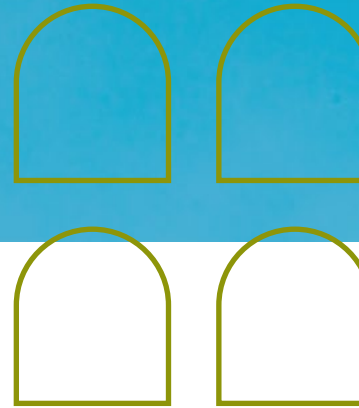
Looking ahead, we aim to deepen our work on global mobilities, expand our policy-oriented content and events, and further analyse pressing issues related to migration and displacement in East Africa and Horn of Africa.

None of this work happens in isolation; it is made possible by a strong network effect and the many connections it brings. I am grateful to the partners, participants, and team members who contributed their time and expertise to these efforts. I hope you find this activity report helpful, and I warmly invite you to join us (online or in person) at our upcoming seminars or trainings.

Best wishes,

Andrew Geddes,
Professor and Director, Migration Policy Centre

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Geddes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



SECTION 1

AT A GLANCE

Goals and impact

GOAL 1: ADVANCE ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE

We study migration from an interdisciplinary perspective, linking various migration types with regional and policy contexts.

50+

articles, working papers, books and briefs published

1M+

dedicated to research

GOAL 3: TRAIN AND EDUCATE

Our interactive courses connect research and practice, supporting researchers, policymakers, and students.

6

executive education courses

145

participants

38

countries represented

GOAL 2: FACILITATE DIALOGUES

We promote partnerships, exchanges and dialogues on research, public debate, and policymaking.

1273

attendees

36

seminars and events

49

partner organisations

GOAL 4: FOSTER CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We designed a model for research institutions to contribute to build a more inclusive and equitable society.

50+

consultations with schools, reception centres, NGOs, and government agencies

1

pilot programme June 2025

36

youth participants (high school students and unaccompanied migrant minors)

1

Autumn programme September - December 2025

12

coaches

DIGITAL REACH

Website 33K



6.3K



7.3K



1.9K



17.6K

NEWSWORTHY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025





SECTION 2

THE NETWORK EFFECT

Who we connected with

Our work is built on connecting the dots - between people, places, and areas of expertise. We operate at the intersection of research, policy, and society, bringing together researchers, policy actors, and civil society to generate and mobilise evidence in response to current migration challenges. With this networked approach, we aim to amplify individual efforts, foster dialogue across disciplines, and strengthen the relevance of research for real-world decision-making.

This section is structured around the results of who we connect with. We begin with our engagement with and among researchers, where collaborative inquiry and knowledge exchange form the foundation of our work and offer insight into the latest research advances.

We turn to our engagement with policy actors, through events, training activities, and dialogue platforms through which we work to bridge evidence and practice.

Finally, we engage civil society to ground our research in real-world perspectives, while our local engagement allows us to contribute meaningfully at the community level.

2.1 Connecting researchers

This year, our research continues to be shaped by six core themes (Mobility Practices and Processes; Migration Governance; Labour Markets and Welfare States; Rights, Protection and Inclusion; Public Attitudes; and Linking Evidence, Policy and Debate) pursued both individually and through collaborative projects with partner institutions.

In the pages that follow, each theme is presented through the core questions that lay at the basis of our work, key insights emerging from our research, and selected publications that provide opportunities to explore these areas in greater depth.

2.1.1 How and why do people move across borders?

In today's connected world, movement across borders is a key aspect of life. Beyond migration, we explore how and why people move and how technology impacts it, from long-term resettlement to short trips and daily commutes.



Emerging insights

» **Progress in mapping the flow of human movement**

We developed a global transnational dataset estimating the volume of human travel across country borders worldwide between 1995 and 2022: This groundbreaking resource enables the analysis of the volume, directions, and shifts in transnational travel over nearly three decades and shows that: international migration constitutes just 0.15% of all transnational travel in Europe; total transnational mobility surged from 4.87 billion trips in 1995 to 9.64 billion in 2019, and most border crossings are intra-regional, particularly in Europe.

» **Inequality trends in wait times for visa appointments**

After analysing 16,000 visa appointment requests from 130 German embassies and consulates worldwide, findings show a clear pattern: the poorer a country is, the longer its citizens must wait for a visa appointment.

This is one of the clearest pictures to date of how time functions as an unseen border: visa appointment wait times may appear to be a technical detail, not even the final step before mobility and migration, but they reflect deeper patterns of global segregation and systemic inequalities built into current procedures that are opaque.

» **Defining and understanding “essential travel” during COVID-19**

We studied how governments worldwide restricted international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on who was allowed to cross borders and on what grounds. Drawing on data from 212 countries and territories, we examined how states defined “essential travel” through selective exemptions rather than blanket bans. Our findings show that exemptions were granted primarily because of pre-existing ties, far more often than international protection, revealing the resilience of nationality and the fragility of asylum as basis for cross-border movement in times of global (health) crisis.



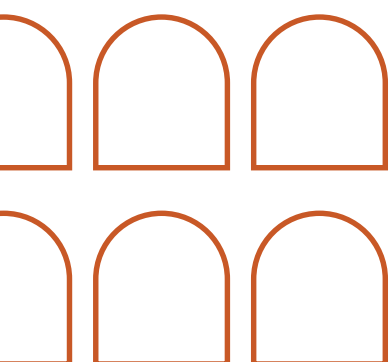
To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*A Time Penalty for the Global South? Visa Appointment Wait Times at German Embassies and Consulates Worldwide, "Political Geography"*](#)
| Emanuel Deutschmann, Lorenzo Gabrielli, Alexandra Orlova, Niklas Harder, and Ettore Recchi
- » [*Regulating human movement in a global pandemic. 'Essential Travel' during COVID-19*](#)
| Lorenzo Piccoli and Timothy Jacob-Owens
- » [*Space-sets: Introducing and testing a multi-dimensional measure of individual transnational mobility*](#)
| Ettore Recchi

Related MPC research projects

- » [*MIGMOBS: The orders and borders of global inequality migration and mobility in late capitalism*](#)
- » [*GMP: Global mobilities project*](#)



2.1.2 Which policies work, and where do they fall short?

Migration governance involves the complex set of policies and frameworks regulating human movement across borders. We aim to understand how these policies shape migration flows, influence national and international cooperation, and impact both migrants and host societies.



Emerging insights

» **Making sense of and improving migration debates and policymaking**

Migration governance is often shaped by difficult moral dilemmas, that is, conflicts between two moral goals that cannot be fully resolved. Neither goal is clearly morally weightier than the other, so any policy choice involves sacrificing something of high moral value. Dealing with such dilemmas is challenging. At the same time, failing to acknowledge or actively avoiding them is deeply problematic, as it can lead to incomplete analyses and understandings.

We have proposed and explored key moral dilemmas as a way to reduce excessive polarisation in migration debates and policymaking. Moreover, we have systematically grappled with further questions about the implications of dilemmatic phenomena, advocating for a model that discourages the search for easy but overly simplified solutions to the complex challenges arising in domestic, inter-, and transnational contexts of border and migration governance.

» **Measuring temporary protection of displaced persons from Ukraine across 32 European countries**

We traced how the Temporary Protection Directive was actually implemented across the continent during its first year, finding that while the directive ensured a baseline of protection (preventing a race to the bottom) the reality for displaced Ukrainians varied significantly depending on where they landed. Access to temporary protection, social benefits, and especially freedom of movement differed widely between countries.

Thus, although this exceptional measure provided immediate protection to millions, helped prevent the collapse of national asylum systems, and symbolised rare unity in EU migration policy, it did not guarantee an equal experience of protection for all. Research indicates that the directive functioned effectively as an emergency response, but the EU still lacks a coherent plan for what happens next, as temporary protection expires and millions will need to transition to new residence statuses.

We also studied how temporariness, as a policy category, directly shapes the temporariness of lived experience. The TPD offers immediate safety but creates legal and social precarity (often greater for women) that limits long-term planning, access to integration resources, and recognition of qualifications.

» **Exploring anti-smuggling directives and the role of criminal influence on migration governance:**

In examining the influence of criminal groups on migration policymaking, with a focus on their interactions with legal frameworks and the implications for migrants' rights, we analysed key elements of the 2023 EU anti-smuggling directive proposal. Our analysis highlights how these provisions shape human mobility in the Central Mediterranean and underscores that evidence-based policies, expanded legal migration pathways, and rights-based governance are essential to dismantling smuggling networks while safeguarding migrants' rights.

» **The use of refugee governance for geopolitical gain:**

The concept of *credible fictions* was developed to describe carefully curated displays through which states signal humanitarian strain, administrative capacity, and policy compliance to secure leverage, legitimacy, or resources.

Drawing on cases from the Middle East and beyond, three recurrent techniques are identified: illusions of scale; symbolic gestures of control that placate external audiences; and policy metrics curated to imply progress without reform. We investigated how credibility is produced, why it matters diplomatically, and how international organisations are often drawn into sustaining these narratives.



To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*Beyond myth busting: how engagement with ethical dilemmas can improve debates and policymaking on migration*](#)
| Lukas Schmid, Martin Ruhs, Rainer Bauböck and Julia Mourão Permoser
- » [*Negotiating temporariness through action, re-action and non-action: Ukrainian women under TPD in Germany*](#)
| Iuliia Lashchuk
- » [*Measuring the legal implementation of the EU's Temporary Protection Directive for displaced persons from Ukraine: convergence and divergence across 32 European countries*](#)
| Henriët Baas, Martin Ruhs, Siegfried Manschein, Hugo Bourrousse
- » [*From global to local: how local actors and networks shape global refugee protection norms in Brazil, Bangladesh, and Turkey*](#)
| Andrea Pettrachin, Leiza Brumat, Andrew Geddes
- » [*Future progress and prospects of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol*](#)
| Luigi Achili
- » [*Credible Fictions: How States Stage Refugee Governance for Geopolitical Gain*](#) *Journal of Refugee Studies*
| Gerasimos Tsourapas

Related MPC research projects

- » [*The Ethics of Migration Policy Dilemmas*](#)
- » [*DYNAMIG: How migration decisions are made: diverse aspirations, trajectories, and policy effects*](#)

2.1.3 How do migration and work intersect with social protection?

We examine how migration and labour markets intersect with social protection systems, the role of migration in addressing labour shortages, and the policies that influence workforce integration.



Emerging insights

- » **Setting the groundwork for future research on private-sector-led approaches to skills-based migration**

We examined how global skills partnerships (GSPs), that is, bilateral labour mobility agreements in which countries of origin train workers for skills needed both at home and abroad, can be strengthened through greater involvement of the private sector. While GSPs were originally conceived as public–private initiatives, most existing programmes remain small-scale pilots and have struggled to engage employers and to expand participation.

Research shows how well-designed business-to-business (B2B) partnerships could help align the interests of businesses, workers, and countries of origin and destination, while also outlining the conditions needed to ensure fair and sustainable outcomes.

- » **The critical role of migrant women in the care sector in Italy**

Italy's care system depends heavily on migrant women, especially from post-Soviet regions. In 2024, among the nearly 1 million registered domestic workers, 68.9% were foreign-born and 88.3% were women. Yet, those numbers only pertain to regularised workers, while domestic work is one of the most irregularised sectors, and the actual number of people employed can be even double.

Recent field research in Campania (Italy) exposes how in many cases, access to regularisation is often used as an instrument of control by the employer and that irregularity is not just a bureaucratic issue, but an assemblage of irregularities that put migrant women into a circle of dependency and vulnerability.



To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*Irregularised migrant domestic workers in Naples, Italy*](#)
| Sabrina Marchetti and Iuliia Lashchuk
- » [*Engaging the private sector in global skills partnerships: exploring the potential of international business-to-business approaches*](#)
| Friedrich Poeschel, Colleen Boland, Tesseltje de Lange, Martin Ruhs, Ayse Saka-Helmhout
- » [*From displacement to employment: comparing the labour market integration of Ukrainian women in Poland, Italy, and Germany*](#)
| Iuliia Lashchuk

Related MPC research projects

- » [*I-Claim project*](#)
- » [*GS4S: Global strategy for skills, migration and development*](#)

2.1.4 What barriers prevent migrants from accessing rights and dignity?

Our work focuses on understanding how migrants' access and exercise their rights, how protection mechanisms operate in practice, and how inclusion in host communities is shaped. We also believe that qualitative migration research must centre dignity by treating migrants as knowledge holders of their own lived realities. This approach entails critically examining research methods and modes of engagement, as well as valuing the preservation of testimonies and first-hand accounts as a foundational step toward justice and accountability.



Emerging insights

- » **Measuring and analysing the social and labour rights of irregular migrants in Europe**

Until now, there had been no systematic analysis of the rights that irregular migrants can claim under national laws. To fill this gap, within the Protecting Irregular Migrants in Europe project (PRIME) we developed IRMIGRIGHT, a cross-national dataset that maps how 28 European countries regulate social and labour rights for irregular migrants.

A set of indicators and a systematic comparative analysis of the legal rights of irregular migrants across the countries studied were released, assessing not only irregular migrants' access to rights, but also their potential to enhance migrants' capabilities and freedoms.

Findings revealed that a small core of fundamental rights is guaranteed to irregular migrants across most European countries. However, in 43% of cases where national governments could provide irregular migrants with some form of legal right, national laws operate to exclude this population from protection. In addition, no European country guarantees protection from immigration enforcement when irregular migrants assert their labour rights, such as in actions to recover unpaid wages.

» **Moving beyond migrating narratives of vulnerability**

We are putting forward a methodological roadmap to critically engage with the concept of vulnerability in migration research.

In re-positioning individuals often framed as ‘vulnerable’ instead of as experts’, research can play a role in acknowledging the dignity of individuals who have repeatedly experienced ‘vulnerabilisation’ in their migration journeys.



To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*Measuring and analysing the social and labour rights of irregular migrants: new indicators for twenty-eight European countries*](#)
| Clare Teresa Fox-Ruhs, Joakim Palme
- » [*Ukrainian forced migrants in the cultural policies of the European Union*](#)
| Marina Keda
- » [*Experts, not vulnerable: centring dignity in research with irregularised migrants*](#)
| Leila Giannetto, Abubaker Khan, Yagoub Kibeida, Sandra King-Savic, Usman Mahar, and Caitlin Procter
- » [*‘My grandmother has her keys, now I have mine’: building a database to preserve testimonies of genocide in Gaza*](#)
| Caitlin Procter

Related MPC research projects

- » [*PRIME. Protecting Irregular Migrants in Europe*](#)
- » [*U-Lead programme*](#)

2.1.5 What drives public support or opposition to migrants and refugees?

Public opinion plays a crucial role in shaping migration policy, we use surveys, polling, and experiments to understand attitudes towards migration, asylum, and integration.



Emerging insights

» The roles of policy design and context in public preferences

We surveyed 20,000 people across Austria, Italy, Poland, Sweden, and the UK to understand their preferences on migrant policies regarding access to healthcare, social welfare and labour protections, as well as the obtainment of regular legal status or for irregular migrants.

The results challenge the idea that public attitudes toward irregular migrants' rights are simply "for" or "against". Instead, we found that the public has more nuanced views on how migration should be managed than policymakers generally give them credit for and variations in policy design matter. Therefore, this suggests there may be more room for selective and inclusive policymaking than often assumed.

» Public fairness perceptions of the use of biometrics in border control

As biometric and automated technologies become increasingly embedded in border management, concerns arise regarding fundamental rights, safeguards, and the risk of misuse and stigmatisation. Our research examined public perceptions of fairness in the collection and processing of biometric data at borders, and whether these views differ when applied to asylum seekers, third-country nationals, or citizens. Based on survey data from five European countries, the findings indicate that automated decision-making is not widely perceived as fairer than human decision-making and, in some contexts, fully automated systems are even seen as less fair. Differences in perceived fairness across target groups are limited, while overall public acceptance of biometric and automated border technologies remains high.

» Understanding the psychology of political attitudinal volatility

Public attitudes toward immigration are often seen as volatile, yet new research shows that changes in opinion follow consistent psychological patterns rather than short-term reactions to events. Drawing on ten years of British Election Study panel data, we found that individuals' likelihood of changing their views on immigration is shaped by underlying traits such as social distrust, open-mindedness, and tolerance for uncertainty. Citizens with these characteristics are more prone to revising their views over time, while others hold more stable positions.

Findings suggest that fluctuations in public opinion reflect enduring differences in how people process ambiguity and disagreement, helping to explain persistent polarisation in migration debates. For policymakers, this highlights both the limits and possibilities of persuasion: immigration attitudes are not uniformly malleable, and effective engagement depends on recognising the diverse cognitive dispositions within the electorate.



To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*Public preferences for policies vis-à-vis irregular migrants in Europe: the roles of policy design and context*](#)
| Lutz Gschwind, Martin Ruhs, Anton Ahlén, and Joakim Palme
- » [*The psychology of political attitudinal volatility*](#)
| James Dennison
- » [*Public fairness perceptions of the use of biometrics and automated decision-making in border control: Experimental evidence from five European countries*](#)
| Lenka Dražanová
- » [*Understanding public perceptions of fairness in asylum decision-making*](#)
| Lenka Dražanová and Martin Ruhs

Related MPC research projects

- » [*AFAR: Algorithmic fairness for asylum seekers and refugees*](#)

2.1.6 What mechanisms connect academic knowledge with political debates?

We turn academic research into practical policy guidance, bridging the gap between academia, public debate, and decision-making.



Emerging insights

- » **Promoting more systematic and structured research-policy engagement in Horizon projects**

We analysed research–policy engagement dynamics within EU-funded Horizon projects on migration, examining how researchers, policymakers, and practitioners perceive the main barriers and opportunities for strengthening evidence-informed collaboration. The findings highlight the value of embedded engagement, rather than impact, as a realistic way to track incremental progress over the life of a project. They also underscore the importance of balancing research-driven and policy-oriented objectives from the proposal stage, setting achievable and credible impact expectations. Strengthening institutionalised engagement capacity within

project consortia emerged as a key priority as well. Finally, the analysis points to the need for post-project follow-up mechanisms to sustain dialogue and uptake beyond the formal end of projects.

» **Directory of Migration Research Institutions**

Migration research institutions are crucial nodes driving innovation in migration policy and analysis. They generate data, conduct research, and provide insights that help governments and international organisations develop evidence-based migration policies. These centres also play a key role in training the next generation of migration scholars. The Directory of Migration Research Institutions is a new database that maps migration research centres across the globe covering institutions established between 1945 and 2024 and including over 350 academic research centres, museums, think tanks, and international networks. This new resource aims to foster reflection on diversity in this field, exploring how factors like resources, gender, and geography shape the academic landscape.

» **Creating practical resources for bridging migration research and policy**

We launched the *Good Practices Toolkit*, a resource developed by researchers for researchers to strengthen research communication, support the integration of evidence into migration policymaking, and enhance collaboration between researchers and policymakers. Structured around six thematic sections, the toolkit spans the entire research cycle rather than focusing solely on the final stage of policy recommendations. It provides practical guidance on understanding audiences, building relationships and trust, tailoring research to policymakers' needs, engaging stakeholders to support policy change, crafting effective messages and content for policy actors, and selecting appropriate timing, tools, and communication channels.



To learn more

Featured publications

- » [*More research, less impact? Insights from Horizon-funded projects on migration*](#)
| Eleonora Milazzo, Andrew Geddes, Flaminia Delle Cese, Johannes Glöckner, Birgit Glorius, Meltem İneli-Ciğer, Özgenur Yiğit-Aksu, Marta Jaroszewicz, Marta Pachocka, Katarzyna Porwit, Madalina Lepsa-Rogoz, Martin Wagner, and Veronika Bilger
- » [*Directory of Migration Research Institutions*](#)
| Lorenzo Piccoli

Related MPC research projects

- » [*MR2P: Migration Research to Policy Co-Lab*](#)
- » [*Dilemmas: The ethics of migration policy dilemmas*](#)
- » [*Dynamig*](#)

2.2 Connecting with field experts, policymakers and practitioners through executive trainings

Throughout the past years, we have seen how tailored training can help build effective research-policy engagement. Training helps researchers understand more about the kind of evidence people in policy roles may need for their work, while for practitioners, a greater familiarity with research evidence reinforces their roles and strengthens their organisations.

To achieve this purpose, training needs to bring together professionals from a variety of roles, organisations and geographies in an interactive setting where the practical meaning and application of research can be discussed.

To this end, across all five of the MPC courses, our approach combines original research findings, practical tools, and peer learning to deliver cutting-edge training on global migration governance.

We foster a trust-based, inclusive environment that promotes global networking, critical thinking, and practical knowledge. Through sessions and activities, participants have the chance to break free from the constraints of organisational or institutional roles and positions and encounter the views and perspective of others from very different sectors and places. Moreover, we assist participants in building their professional networks and, by doing so, the capacity of the institutions and organisations they belong to.

In addition to our regular offer, this year we have hosted two editions of a new training: 'Building Effective Engagement between Research, Policy and Practice: A Strategic Approach to Impactful Migration Research', which focuses on the unique challenges of engaging with non-academic stakeholders, and empowers attendees to maximise the impact of their work.

These efforts are in the framework of the INNOVATE project where, with a multilevel focus (from local authorities and frontline workers, to national ministries, European Union institutions, and international organisations), we work to engage three core groups: researchers and academics who generate evidence and analytical insights, practitioners implementing programmes and delivering services on the ground, and policymakers who design and enact frameworks and policies that shape societal outcomes.

We do so together with a consortium of 12 partners with whom we team work in pilots that test different ways of collaborating to impact change identify proven ways to bridge migration research and policy, and produce *Shorts* that translate complex research into focused summaries, giving policymakers clear insights to inform decisions; as well as share practical strategies to help researchers effectively communicate and connect with policymakers and other stakeholders.

Another highlight was the research and policy dialogue of the Dynamig project on 20-21 October 2025 that brought together 25 migration researchers and policy actors from Africa and Europe to advance migration decisions and policies, since more effective cooperation in migration issues between European and African countries requires a shared understanding of the drivers and dynamics of migration processes and decision-making.

As Africa experiences mixed migration patterns, the East and Horn of Africa alone hosted 27.5 million forcibly displaced and stateless people in 2024 (18% more than the previous year). This situation underscored the need for specialised training and capacity building to better understand innovative approaches to addressing the region's complex movements and beyond. In response, and in partnership with the United States International University–Africa (USIU-Africa) and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC), we launched the inaugural East Africa Migration Academy, which will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4 to 8 May 2026.

2.2.1 Training course formats and dates

Migration Winter Academy | Residential

A 1-week in-person programme addressed migration attitudes, policies, and global challenges. Expert-led discussions and case studies expand participants' understanding of how public attitudes shape (and are shaped by) policies, media narratives, and political rhetoric.

3 - 7 February 2025

Building effective engagement between research, policy and practice: a strategic approach to impactful migration research in the world of policy (I)

This two-day executive training part of the Migration Research to Policy Co-Lab develops participants' skills in effective research to policy engagement around migration. Participants learn how to identify factors that help build strong connections and collaboration with research users and effectively disseminate and communicate research findings and outcomes.

10 - 11 March 2025

Migration Communication Strategies | Hybrid

This edition of this five-day online training with the Florence School of Transnational Governance enhanced migration communication skills with strategies based on research and case studies, with a particular focus on effective approaches to depolarize debates. Ideal for policymakers and NGOs navigating divisive, binary framings.

11 - 16 May 2025

Migration Summer School | Residential

A two-week in-person academic programme featuring lectures, debates, and workshops led by top experts. Participants dive into migration's political, sociological, legal anthropological, and practice-based dimensions while networking globally.

16 - 27 June 2025

Effective Migration Governance | Residential

A three-day in-person course with the Florence School of Transnational Governance covering migration policy dilemmas, governance complexities and trade-offs through theory and practical insights.

6 - 8 October 2025

Building effective engagement between research, policy and practice: a strategic approach to impactful migration research in the world of policy (II)

24 - 25 November 2025

Testimonies

"Having attended the Migration Summer School, I am more aware of topics and fields that I have not personally studied within migration, it's always good to diversify experiences and knowledge and hear from other professionals, and this programme definitely offers that opportunity"

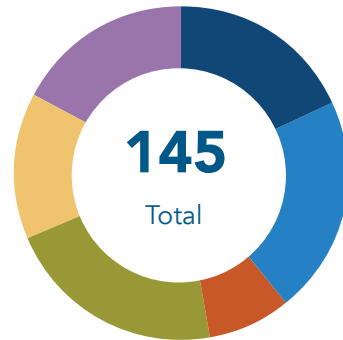
MPC 2025 Summer School participant




2.2.2 Key statistics

Course Participation

- 26 Migration Winter Academy
- 31 Building effective engagement between research, policy and practice (I)
- 12 Migration Communication Strategies
- 30 Migration Summer School
- 21 Effective Migration Management
- 25 Building effective engagement between research, policy and practice (II)



Gender

83% | Female 

17% | Male 

Sector

EU Institution	5%
International Organisation	12%
National authority or administration	10%
Non-Governmental Organisation	24%
Philanthropic sector	1%
Think Tank/Legal	4%
Academia	5%
Other	39%

Testimonies

"I found the peer-to-peer exchanges very beneficial. For me that was really the added value of this course, so to hear how practitioners, policymakers and research approach questions regarding migration in their own day-to day, learning about their experiences, mistakes, preferences etc. is something I definitely take back with me going back to work."

MPC 2025 Winter School participant



2.3 Connecting with civil society

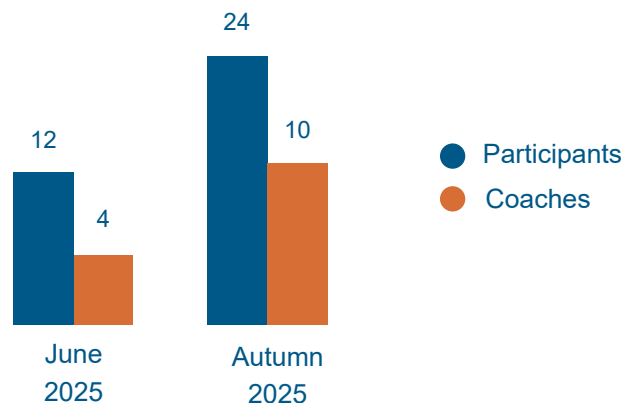
Embodying the aspirations outlined in the *EUI 2024 Vision Statement* (to serve as a European university that does not just study society from a distance, but helps shape it alongside those most affected) we identified a space for action where we could make a tangible impact and designed a model for how research institutions can contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

Today, over 17,000 unaccompanied and separated children (MSNA) live in Italy, most of them isolated from civic life. Cities like Florence are increasingly segregated by race, migration status, and religion, and teens often experience these divisions more acutely than adults. Adolescence is a formative window, yet young people lack safe spaces to connect across lines and envision shared futures.

In response, we partnered with UNICEF’s Europe and Central Asia Regional Office to create U-Lead, a youth leadership and participatory research programme that brings together three groups: local high school students, unaccompanied migrant minors, and EUI staff. After 50 consultations with schools, reception centres, NGOs, and government agencies, we launched the initiative and hosted a one-week pilot in June 2025, followed by a first 12-week edition.

The programme provided a space for young people from different walks of life to meet, learn from each other, and develop research-based civic proposals. By bringing together these groups, U-Lead created a rare and meaningful environment for relationships to form and for collaborative, research-informed solutions to emerge.

U-Lead aims to engage up to 500 young people over the next five years, both in Florence and in other European cities.



From pilot to program: Rapid growth in just months

The U-Lead model

Together, young people learn to reflect and lead in issues they care about and change the city around them.

- 01 You get to know each other
- 02 Select a right from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that they feel isn't being upheld
- 03 Learn how to conduct research
- 04 Collect and analyse data
- 05 Share findings with key stakeholders to drive action

Testimonies

"I'd recommend U-Lead because through it you can improve as a person, you can help, learn, and reflect"

U-Lead participant





SECTION 3

OUR ECOSYSTEM: PROJECTS, TEAM MEMBERS, AND PARTNERS

3.1 Research projects

- » [AFAR: Algorithmic Fairness for Asylum-Seekers and Refugees](#)
- » [ASILE: Global Asylum Governance and the European Union's Role](#)
- » [Dilemmas: Ethics of Migration Policy Dilemmas: Linking evidence, policy, and debate](#)
- » [DYNAMIG: How migration decisions are made: diverse aspirations, trajectories, and policy effects](#)
- » [INNOVATE: Innovating to Enhance Dialogues on Migration Policies and Practices](#)
- » [GMP: Global Mobilities Project](#)
- » [GS4S: Global Strategy for Skills, Migration, and Development](#)
- » [MIGMOBS: The Orders and Borders of Global Inequality: Migration and Mobilities in Late Capitalism](#)
- » [MirreM: Measuring irregular migration](#)
- » [PRIME: Protecting irregular migrants in Europe](#)
- » [U-Lead: Durable Solutions for displaced Child Migrants in Europe](#)

3.2 Our Team

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3.3 Partners

We work with a range of partnerships to conduct research, convene dialogue, and advance the use of evidence.







Director and Deputy Director
Andrew Geddes and Martin Ruhs

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