



Call for papers

Governing migration, contesting borders: Power, mobility and protection in Europe and beyond

Annual Conference organised by the Migration Policy Centre (MPC)

17-18 May 2027

European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy

Across Europe and beyond, migration governance is being reshaped by large-scale displacement, geopolitical instability, demographic change, the climate crisis, evolving public attitudes, and ongoing efforts to reform asylum and migration systems. Recent developments, including the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, have brought renewed attention to questions of responsibility-sharing, border management, protection, and international cooperation. At the same time, they raise broader questions about how states, international organisations, political parties, social movements, cities, civil society actors and migrants themselves shape, contest and negotiate increasingly complex patterns of mobility and displacement.

This conference will bring together scholars from migration studies, political science, economics, sociology, geography, anthropology, law, international relations and related fields to examine contemporary transformations in migration governance. While focusing on Europe, the conference situates European developments within wider comparative and global perspectives, encouraging reflection on how migration governance is shaped by transnational dynamics, geopolitical change, political contestation, and struggles over mobility, protection, rights and belonging.

The conference welcomes theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions addressing themes including, but not limited to:

1. European Borders, Externalisation and the Governance of Mobility

Examining changing bordering practices within and beyond Europe, including externalisation, digital surveillance and migration technologies, return infrastructures, detention, mobility partnerships, and the reconfiguration of sovereignty, territory and movement in comparative perspective.

2. Asylum, Protection and the Transformation of Refugee Governance in Europe

Exploring the evolving architecture of asylum and refugee protection, including the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, responsibility-sharing, differentiated protection regimes, access to rights, displacement responses, and tensions between humanitarian commitments and migration control.

3. The Politics of Migration: Contestation, Mobilisation and Policy Change

Exploring how migration governance is shaped through political conflict and collective mobilisation. This theme welcomes contributions on political parties, electoral politics, populism, nationalism, social movements, protest, activism, public opinion, policy advocacy, migrant organising, and the struggles through which migration and asylum policies are contested, defended and transformed at local, national, European and global levels.

4. Migration Diplomacy, Geopolitics and Europe's Global Migration Relations

Investigating migration as a domain of international cooperation, geopolitical bargaining and external action, including migration partnerships, readmission agreements, development-migration nexuses, South-North relations, regional migration governance, international organisations, and postcolonial perspectives on European migration governance.

5. Knowledge, Narratives and Evidence in Migration Governance

Examining how migration knowledge is produced, communicated and mobilised by researchers, policymakers, international organisations, media actors and civil society organisations. Topics may include expertise, narratives, misinformation, evidence use, policy learning, agenda-setting, research uptake, and the relationship between knowledge production, policymaking and public debate.

6. Migrant Agency, Contestation and Mobility Justice

Exploring how migrants, refugees and displaced populations navigate, resist and reshape migration governance through everyday practices, transnational networks, activism, claims-making, solidarity initiatives, and struggles for rights, belonging and mobility justice in Europe and beyond.

These themes are intended as indicative rather than exhaustive. We also welcome contributions addressing other aspects of migration, displacement and mobility from a range of disciplinary, methodological and theoretical perspectives.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please submit an abstract of up to 300 words via [the dedicated registration form](#).

Abstracts should clearly identify the research question, theoretical and/or conceptual framework, methodological approach, and key argument and/or findings.

The deadline for submission of applications is Thursday 12 November 2026.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

To support broad and globally inclusive participation, a limited number of travel and accommodation grants will be available for scholars based in low-income and lower-middle-income countries. Applicants wishing to be considered for financial support should indicate this when submitting their abstract and provide a brief statement outlining their need for support.

Submit paper proposal [here](#).