

dutch association for migration research

DAMR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025

27 November 2025

House of Connections – University of Groningen
Grote Markt 21
9712 HR Groningen

PROGRAM

<u>Time</u>		<u>Room</u>
10.30-10.45	<u>Welcome and opening by DAMR Board</u>	<i>Kwinkeplein</i>
10.45-12.15	<u>Panel round 1</u>	
Panel 1:	Older migrants and retirement Chair: Mirjam Kingma	<i>Red</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <i>Navigating Retirement Preparation: The Challenges and Strategies of Italian Migrants in the Netherlands</i> Sara Marcora (Utrecht University), Marleen Damman (Utrecht University), Verena Seibel (Utrecht University), Marcel Lubbers (Utrecht University), and Dora Sampaio (Utrecht University)2) <i>Migrants' retirement experiences in the Netherlands</i> Koen Veldman (NIDI)3) <i>"Doing family or undoing family?" – Grandparental care relations among Pakistani transnational families in the UK</i> Myra Mufti (University of Sheffield)	
Panel 2:	Migration law and access to rights Chair: Masja Zweers	<i>Grey</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <i>A castle in the air? The impact of strategic litigation in the field of asylum law in Europe</i> Kris van der Pas (Tilburg University)2) <i>EU law as a justification for efforts undermining the rule of law and migrants' rights</i> Jonas Bornemann (University of Groningen)3) <i>"They Lived Happily Ever After". The Relevance of Narrativity in Proceedings on Marriages of Convenience</i> Nina Fokkink (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)4) <i>Migration control through criminal law – Crimmigration in Switzerland</i> Enja Jäggi (Leiden University)	

12.15-13.15 **Networking lunch**

13.15-14.45 **Panel round 2**

Panel 1: **Refugee protection** *Kwinkeplein*
Chair: Basak Bilecen

- 1) *Prioritizing Protection: Limitations to Expanding Termination Grounds under the 1951 Convention*
Anna Chatelion Counet (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
- 2) *The ambivalent protection of Ukrainian refugees in Europe: gender and generations in the case of the Netherlands*
Jofelle Tesorio (Radboud University) and Jeroen Doomernik (University of Amsterdam)
- 3) *Legal Pathways to Protection in the European Union: from Access to Territory to Refugee Integration*
Emiliya Bratanova van Harten (Lund University & Radboud University)

Panel 2: **Highly-skilled migrants and capital** *Red*
Chair: Mirjam Kingma

- 1) *Impacts of inequalities of social rights on migrants' social outcomes: The role of system capital*
Verena Seibel (Utrecht University)
- 2) *Utilization of Resources through the Forms of Capital: Highly Skilled Migrant Entrepreneurship in the Netherlands*
Bulent Cosgun (Radboud University)
- 3) *The integration of high-skilled migrants in the workplace*
Ngoc Han Nguyen (University of Groningen)

Panel 3: **Migration governance and actors** *Grey*
Chair: Masja Zweers

- 1) *Negotiating human rights and voluntariness: implementation profiles of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration counselling in Europe*
Ana Maria Torres Chedraui (Erasmus University Rotterdam), Laura Cleton (Erasmus University Rotterdam), Antonella Patteri (Institute of Law Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences) and Agnieszka Kubal (Green Templeton College, Oxford University)
- 2) *The legal fiction of non-entry and the affective life of border regimes*
Simon van Ramshorst (Radboud University)
- 3) *"Stay Close to Your Child": Blame, Care, and Emotion in Gendered Visual Campaigns on Migration and Parenting in Romania*
Cristina Buza (University of Amsterdam)
- 4) *Invisibility of the Ordinary Mobility in Migration Research: Tourists and Visitors*
Marijana Matosevic (VU Amsterdam)

14.45-15.00

Coffee

15.00-16.30

Panel round 3

Panel 1:

**Transnational families, youth
and belonging**

Kwinkeplein

Chair: Basak Bilecen

- 1) *Digital Mediation and Family Dynamics in Transnational Migrant Households*
Cigdem Bozdog (University of Groningen), Rosa Dijkstra (University of Groningen) and Denise Mensonides (University of Groningen)
- 2) *Media as bridge or barrier? Exploring the role of news consumption on immigrants' sense of belonging*
Camila Melícia Valgas (Hogeschool Utrecht)
- 3) *An Intergenerational Perspective on Syrian Refugees' Lives in the Netherlands under Changing Migration Policies*
Abduhalim Albakkor (University of Groningen, Campus Fryslan)
- 4) *Parental Autonomy Granting, Youths' Autonomy Desires and Parent-Youth Relationship Quality: The Role of Immigration Background and Culture*
Ouissam Abattouy (Utrecht University), Catrin Finkenauer (Utrecht University), Gonneke W.J.M. Stevens (Utrecht University), and Susan Branje (Utrecht University)

Panel 2:

Labour migration

Red

Chair: Laura Cleton

- 1) *The Role of Strategy Formation in Labor Shortage Policymaking: Salience and Group Dynamics within Dutch and German Employers' Associations*
Jacob Alabab-Moser (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)
- 2) *Work that isn't work, workers that aren't workers, employers that aren't employers: The case of irregular migrant domestic workers in Utrecht*
Minke Hajer (Utrecht University)
- 3) *Responsibilizing migrants & normalizing unpaid labour: Volunteering for "workfare" and "civic integration" in peripheralised rural areas in the Netherlands*
Jana Finke (Utrecht University)

Panel 3:

Integration and group contact

Grey

Chair: Jeroen Doomernik

- 1) *Beyond the Ethnic Majority Bias: Is there a Bright Muslim Boundary in Intergroup Attitudes among Minority Groups?*
Frank van Tubergen (NIDI), Stefano Cellini (NIDI) and Christian Czymara (NIDI)
- 2) *Do Migrant Students Affect Performance of Natives?*
Tijana Breuer (Maastricht University), Bohdana Kurylo (Maastricht University), Cecile Magnée (Maastricht University) and Stan Vermeulen (Maastricht University)
- 3) *The Dynamics of Refugee Integration: A Longitudinal Study of Interethnic Contact, Well-being, and Belonging Using Growth Curve Modelling*
Meta van der Linden (Utrecht University), Patrick Kotzur (Durham University), Linda Trop

(University of Massachusetts Amherst) and Cierra Abellera (University of Massachusetts Amherst)

4) *Illiberal Integrationism: Shared Values as an Integration Requirement in Liberal Democracy*

Stefan Manser-Egli (University of Amsterdam)

16.30-16.45

Coffee

16.45-17.25

Panel debate

Kwinkeplein

Chair: Basak Bilecen

Connecting the Dots: Inequality, Migration and Belonging between Policy and Research

Speakers: *Marina Lazeri (Research Director of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum), Verena Seibel (Utrecht University) and Jeroen Doomernik (University of Amsterdam)*

This final panel discussion brings together scholars and policy professionals to reflect on the day's panels, from ageing and labour migration to refugee protection and integration. What common challenges emerge when we study inequality, migration and belonging across these diverse contexts? How can research more effectively speak to policy and how can policy experiences inspire new research agendas? The panel invites open dialogue about what it means to build ethical, inclusive, and evidence-informed approaches to migration and mobility.

17.25 –

Closing by DAMR Board & drinks in Groningen

Kwinkeplein

ABSTRACTS

PANEL ROUND 1 (10.45-12.15)

Panel 1: Older migrants and retirement

Navigating Retirement Preparation: The Challenges and Strategies of Italian Migrants in the Netherlands

Sara Marcora (Utrecht University), Marleen Damman (Utrecht University), Verena Seibel (Utrecht University), Marcel Lubbers (Utrecht University), and Dora Sampaio (Utrecht University)

Abstract: As a consequence of the ageing population, many governments are reforming pension systems to shift more and more responsibilities to individuals, making the topic of individual financial preparation for older age increasingly important. At the same time, the intersection of ageing and migration has led to a rising diversity within the older population, with many first-generation migrants reaching retirement age. An expanding body of research examines migrants' retirement income and highlights a 'migrant pension penalty', underscoring how international mobility poses multiple challenges when it comes to accruing retirement income. However, relatively little attention has been paid to how migrants understand, experience, and navigate financial preparation for retirement across their life course. Migration can add unique complexities to this process, including interaction with multiple welfare systems, international or bilateral agreements and pension cultures that might attach different meanings to what retirement preparation is. For this reason, it is essential to improve our understanding of migrants' experiences related to retirement preparation and to identify key challenges that they face and their strategies to overcome them. This study addresses this gap by exploring how Italian migrants in the Netherlands nearing and beyond retirement age (55–80 years) think about and prepare(d) for their retirement. Drawing on semi-structured interviews, this article offers an in-depth analysis of their views on retirement and how they approach retirement preparation, with the aim of identifying specific challenges and strategies they encounter in preparing for their older age.

Migrants' retirement experiences in the Netherlands

Koen Veldman (NIDI)

Abstract: The number of retired migrants in Europe is rapidly rising, and many face a pension gap. Previous research, mainly based on register data, explains these gaps through employment histories and eligibility policies. Yet such studies overlook 'unregistered' influences such as habits, norms, and social dynamics, here referred to as sociocultural factors. Qualitative studies can capture these better, but often focus on specific groups in Anglo-Saxon countries. We address this gap and study how sociocultural factors shape retirement preparation and coping among migrants in the Netherlands. Although the Dutch social security is extensive, non-Western migrants are more likely to experience pension poverty than non-migrants (40% versus 3%). We conducted interviews with 26 retired migrants from Suriname, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sri Lanka. We found that the migrants' retirement preparations were influenced by sociocultural barriers. Use of pension facilities was limited by low awareness of pension rights and deep distrust of formal institutions, rooted in personal experiences with the welfare state. Individual saving was often neglected, not only due to misconceptions about the pension

system but also because cultural norms prioritized supporting family members financially. Notably, these same sociocultural factors shifted during retirement. Family ties that once hindered saving became a crucial resource in old age. Similarly, limited means during working life fostered resilience, enabling coping strategies in retirement. Many older migrants expressed being 'at peace with poverty', demonstrating psychological acceptance despite financial hardship. In short, sociocultural factors both constrain and enable financial well-being, shaping how migrants navigate retirement in the Netherlands.

“Doing family or undoing family?” – Grandparental care relations among Pakistani transnational families in the UK

Myra Mufti (University of Sheffield)

Abstract: Transnational families, characterized by geographically dispersed members who maintain strong familial bonds, are increasingly common in today's globalized world. Literature on transnational families often portrays older individuals as passive care recipients, “left behind” by adult children or family members who migrate to other countries. This narrative reinforces stereotypes of older persons as dependent and isolated. However, this research challenges that notion by examining the mechanisms of intergenerational solidarity, arguing that older people actively participate in and sustain transnational families by contributing to an intergenerational circulation of care. Investigating the complex interplay of migration, care circulation, and transnational families, this research seeks to understand how care and solidarity is reimagined and reconstructed within Pakistani families residing in the UK with a specific focus on grandparents and their role in navigating caring responsibilities across their life-course, within and beyond national borders. Utilizing qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews and arts-based methods, the study included multiple interviews with 25 participants to address specific research questions related to: grandparents' negotiation of intergenerational and multidirectional care arrangements; the impact of UK migration regimes and welfare and family policies on grandparental migration and care responsibilities; and the gendered dynamics that shape these caring relationships and expressions of solidarity. By also interviewing grandparents who have returned to Pakistan after visiting their families in the UK, the research provides a unique perspective on caring experiences of returned or mobile migrants. This approach helps uncover the complexities of situated transnationalism's and therefore, caring in temporal and spatial contexts, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how intergenerational solidarity is maintained through both proximate and distant care experiences within transnational Pakistani families.

Panel 2: Migration law and access to rights

A castle in the air? The impact of strategic litigation in the field of asylum law in Europe

Kris van der Pas (Tilburg University)

Abstract: Civil society organizations (CSO) in the field of asylum have different tools at their disposal to attempt to increase the rights of asylum seekers and refugees. One of these is going to court, with judicial procedures aimed at creating a form of change (legal, social, political) beyond the individual interest/case. This strategy, referred to as strategic litigation, has gained traction in societal debate and academia over recent years. Courts are accused of overstepping their role in the separation of powers and CSOs are called out for intervening against the

majoritarian will by circumventing political actors. At the same time, studies in the United States have concluded that CSOs overestimate the potential of strategic litigation to create change in society, speaking of a ‘hollow hope’ in the courts and faith in a ‘myth of rights’. This raises an interesting puzzle, namely that there is a prevailing discourse that strategic litigation is doing ‘too much’ and interfering with political process, while at the same time it is not doing ‘enough’ to effect real-life change. This project, therefore, sets out an approach to research the impact of a strategic litigation campaign in order to assess the practical implications of using court cases to create change on the ground. Asylum law is a particularly relevant field to investigate this matter, given the political salience of migration and the catalogue of rights available in Europe due to EU law and applicable human rights law.

EU law as a justification for efforts undermining the rule of law and migrants’ rights
Jonas Bornemann (University of Groningen)

Abstract: For migrants, EU law may often appear as a safeguard – perhaps the last safeguard available to them – that can be invoked against restrictive trends in Member State migration policies. More recently, however, EU law has increasingly been used as a point of reference for justifying restrictive national practices. This presentation seeks to discuss these justifications, focusing specifically on national attempts that seek to rely on Article 72 TFEU as a form of Treaty-based emergency power. It will explore this phenomenon in relation to three recent developments: first, the maintaining of internal border controls beyond permitted maximum time-limits in several Member States; second, the German government’s plans to immediately return asylum seekers at internal Schengen borders; and third, measures adopted in response to the so-called instrumentalisation of migration at the Polish-Belarusian border.

“They Lived Happily Ever After”. The Relevance of Narrativity in Proceedings on Marriages of Convenience
Nina Fokkink (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Abstract: Couples that apply for partner reunification in the Netherlands are expected to have a genuine relationship. To establish that relationships are not fraudulent, couples are scrutinized in a myriad of ways. The importance of societal norms in proceedings on marriages of convenience (Wardlow and Hirsch 2006; Eggebo 2013; Hoogenraad 2021) as well as the element of securitization (Huysmans 2000, Ibrahim 2005, Bourbeau 2011) are well-studied. An understudied aspect of these proceedings is the role evidence plays (Odasso 2019, Satzewich 2014). Couples are, namely, required to submit evidence that shows that their relationship is profound. For instance, the District Court of The Hague ruled based on WhatsApp conversations, witness testimonies and pictures submitted by a couple trying to refute the presence of a relationship of convenience: “[t]his shows that although the applicant and the sponsor undertake things together, this does not prove there is a genuine (love) relationship” (Court of The Hague 21 May 2021, ECLI:NL:RBDHA:2021:5433). This case shows that couples are supposed to tell a credible love story. An important actor in developing and presenting this story convincingly is the lawyer. Lawyers, namely, play a crucial role in interpreting what happened and retelling it to match the legal requirements (Olson 2014, Fludernik 2010). They help couples choose which evidence to submit and how to frame their love story. Drawing on

narrative theory and affect combined with interviews with lawyers, this article examines which kinds of evidence lawyers recommend couples to submit and why.

Migration control through criminal law – Crimmigration in Switzerland

Enja Jäggi (Leiden University)

Abstract: This paper examines the increasing use of criminal law to control migration in Switzerland, a phenomenon known as crimmigration. It argues that this approach fundamentally disregards key principles of criminal justice. The research investigates how criminal and quasi-criminal legal instruments have evolved in Swiss migration control, analyzing the legal basis for these measures and questioning their legitimacy. Drawing on legal and theoretical analysis, I argue that criminal law principles such as proportionality and ultima ratio (the use of criminal law as a last resort) are consistently neglected. Offenses like illegal entry, illegal residence, and their aiders and abettors are created without a clear explanation of the legal harm they pose. The punishment for these acts is often disproportionate, and the criminalization of aiding and abetting unfairly targets private individuals who act out of solidarity. Furthermore, the paper analyzes the rise of measures that are not strictly criminal in nature but have equivalent effects. Examples include administrative detention for deportation purposes—a public law measure that functions like a criminal sanction—and the evaluation of asylum seekers' mobile phones, which uses a procedure typically reserved for criminal investigations. These practices apply powerful state-coercive measures to migrants without affording them the protective rights associated with the criminal justice system. By exploring these issues, this research contributes to the "Law and legal processes" and "Migration and integration governance" streams of the conference by shedding light on the legitimacy of exclusion policies and the erosion of fundamental legal principles in the context of migration control.

PANEL ROUND 2 (13.15-14.45)

Panel 1: Refugee protection

Prioritizing Protection: Limitations to Expanding Termination Grounds under the 1951 Convention

Anna Chatelion Counet (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Abstract: The 1951 Convention only provides one termination concept: cessation. However, UNHCR has identified two additional termination concepts that it considers implicit in the Convention: (1) cancellation, in cases of misrecognition during status determination; and (2) revocation, in cases involving Article 1(F) crimes committed after recognition. As the Convention lists the grounds for cessation exhaustively, the question arises whether it permits the application of additional termination concepts. This paper examines the legal basis of cancellation and revocation in light of the justifications given by UNHCR for the legal basis of these concepts. The analysis shows that cancellation differs from cessation, as cessation only applies to individuals who used to meet the refugee definition, whereas cancellation applies to individuals who never met the definition and, therefore, never were refugees. For the same reason, the paper concludes that cancellation cases fall outside of the personal scope (*ratione personae*) of the 1951 Convention. Consequently, the 1951 Convention provides no basis for

the mandatory application of cancellation advocated by UNHCR. Revocation has the same legal effect as cessation: ending refugee status of individuals who used to be refugees. Revocation is therefore incompatible with the Convention's exhaustive list of cessation grounds. No compelling justification for revocation could be derived from Article 1(F) either, since refugees should receive more protection after their recognition which render the exclusion grounds inapplicable to revoke refugee status. The lack of a valid legal basis for revocation underlines that termination concepts should not be conflated as it risks withholding refugee protection in contradiction with the 1951 Convention.

The ambivalent protection of Ukrainian refugees in Europe: gender and generations in the case of the Netherlands

Jofelle Tesorio (Radboud University) and Jeroen Doomernik (University of Amsterdam)

Abstract: The paper starts with general reflections on how gender and (second) generation impact the nature of migration processes. Where these initially tend to be conceived as temporary in nature because of the prospect of return with savings, or to a country recovered from war and persecution, such migrations often evolve into permanent resettlement. Important factors are changes in gender dynamics and the integration of the migrants' children into the educational system of the receiving state. Migration may allow women to emancipate from traditional roles they are reluctant to return to. The educational opportunities children get and the subsequent disconnect from their origin make return migration for their parents less of an option. The paper then explores how such dynamics play out in the case of Ukrainian refugees who benefit from the Temporary Protection Directive in Europe. The TPD, although valid throughout the EU, is not uniformly implemented. The interpretation of the Dutch government is such that the position of Ukrainians has remained ambivalent: integration into the labour market and education is encouraged yet desired temporality of stay underlies their legal position. In the case of the Netherlands, and based on original survey data, we argue that here again gender and generational dynamics are determining the actual outcome of the Ukrainians' "temporary" protection.

Legal Pathways to Protection in the European Union: from Access to Territory to Refugee Integration

Emiliya Bratanova van Harten (Lund University & Radboud University)

Abstract: Legal pathways to protection aim to offer a possibility for legal and safe entry and stay for people in need of international protection on the territory of the European Union Member States, which is especially important in the current European migration and asylum context, increasingly characterized by containment, externalization and securitization practices vis-à-vis migrants, including refugees. This project analyzes the relationship between legal pathways and the existing legal frameworks for access to territory and integration (limited to residency rights) of people in need of international protection in the European Union (EU) under EU, human rights and refugee law. More specifically, it answers the questions: how are legal pathways to protection conditioned (enhanced or constrained) by migration and asylum law and policy at the European Union level and in Spain and France?; and how are, in turn, protection seekers' human rights conditioned (enhanced or constrained) by legal pathways at the European Union level and in Spain and France? In EU law and policy, legal pathways are promoted mostly as a tool for migration control, but some of them also have a protection objective. These different

elements may result in contradictory objectives which then can create legal tensions, addressed in the thesis. The research methods used include legal and policy research, as well as empirical work carried out in Spain the first half of 2023, and in France in the first half of 2024, resulting in more than 40 interviews with decision-makers on the topic of legal pathways to protection.

Panel 2: Highly-skilled migrants and capital

Impacts of inequalities of social rights on migrants' social outcomes: The role of system capital
Verena Seibel (Utrecht University)

Abstract: Literature on migrants' social rights very much focuses on de jure regulations, governing migrants' chances within receiving societies. While providing a valuable insight, these studies overlook the variation among migrant populations to access these social rights de facto. In this paper, I develop and discuss the concept of System Capital and its importance for migrants to navigate their social rights. System capital can be distinguished between system knowledge — migrants' awareness and understanding of their social rights — system perceptions — migrants' attitudes and perceptions of their social rights — and system facilitators such as individual resources (such as human capital), but also social resources embedded within social networks. I first provide an overview of similar concepts such as administrative burden, instantiekapitaal, and capacity to act and discuss the similarities and differences to system capital. In a second step, I discuss potential predictors of system capital and provide empirical data showing that even "privileged" migrants with legal residence often underestimate their social rights, thereby reducing their access to the full range of social rights entitlement. The paper ends with a discussion on the relationship between migrants' system capital, their access to social rights, and its implications for ethnic (in-)equality. As such, the paper illustrates how social policies designed to reduce inequalities within societies can also increase social inequalities.

Utilization of Resources through the Forms of Capital: Highly Skilled Migrant Entrepreneurship in the Netherlands

Bulent Cosgun (Radboud University)

Abstract: There is a growing global trend of highly skilled migration driven by factors beyond just economic needs. Similarly, Europe, especially the Netherlands, has experienced a notable increase in highly skilled migrants, resulting in a significant shift in the profiles, motivations, skills, and social networks of migrant entrepreneurs. In this context, understanding how they utilize and mobilize their resources is essential to grasping this qualitative change. This study examines how highly skilled migrant entrepreneurs leverage their resources in the destination country using Bourdieu's capital theory. It aims to highlight recent shifts and variations in migration dynamics by analyzing the entrepreneurs' economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, providing a comprehensive view of resource acquisition, utilization, and transfer. The main research question is: "How do highly skilled migrant entrepreneurs from Turkiye to the Netherlands use their resources by transferring existing ones and acquiring new ones during the migration and entrepreneurship process?" Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with highly skilled migrant entrepreneurs from Turkiye to the Netherlands, and the data were analyzed using thematic content analysis, complemented by a document analysis of business-

related materials, such as company documents and social media accounts. The findings of this study contribute to the migrant entrepreneurship literature by enhancing the understanding of how migration dynamics shift from a capital utilization perspective among highly skilled migrant entrepreneurs. Additionally, it offers insights to help develop policies that increase the contributions of migrants to destination countries.

The integration of high-skilled migrants in the workplace

Ngoc Han Nguyen (University of Groningen)

Abstract: Under the increasing globalization of world trade, high-skilled migration has impacted the geographical distribution of knowledge across countries and added to the diversity of human capital within them. On the one hand, firms welcome this development, given that a culturally diverse workforce can, under the right conditions, excel in the performance of complex and innovative tasks. On the other hand, the process of integrating migrants into the workplace entails risks due to the obstacles migrants tend to experience when relocating to a new country. This may negatively impact migrants' mental state and interpersonal relations, consequently hindering their innovative work behaviours. To mitigate the challenges associated with diversity, many firms adopt human resource management policies that promote inclusiveness in the workplace. The objectives of my research are twofold. First, I aim to shed light on the unique work challenges that highly skilled migrants face, and hence, what human resource policies they desire to aid their smooth integration. Second, my study aims to explore whether the effective integration of those migrants indeed causes them to offer valuable task contributions that enhance a firm's innovation performance.

Panel 3: Migration governance and actors

Negotiating human rights and voluntariness: implementation profiles of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration counselling in Europe

Ana Maria Torres Chedraui (Erasmus University Rotterdam), Laura Cleton (Erasmus University Rotterdam), Antonella Patteri (Institute of Law Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences) and Agnieszka Kubal (Green Templeton College, Oxford University)

Abstract: Human rights no longer appear to constitute the uncontested global hegemony they once aspired to be, despite persistent policy rhetoric to the contrary. This is also true for the field of deportation policy, which knows longstanding concerns for safety and dignity of undocumented migrants. European governments installed "monitoring mechanisms" to safeguard such human rights related issues at stake in forced removal but have excluded so-called "Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programs" from its scope, as these are allegedly free of violence, coercion and resulting from a "voluntary decision". This paper challenges these propositions, and investigates how, when, and with what consequences human rights come to the forefront in the implementation of AVRR. We focus on the work of AVRR counselors in 9 EU countries and centered their "human rights practice" when preparing for return. We reveal three 'implementation profiles' that reflect distinct orientations towards voluntariness and human rights safeguarding: the rights-constrained, the safeguards-oriented, and the migrant-centered implementer. These show that human rights are continuously *reinterpreted* in the work of AVRR counselors and reveals how it enables states to claim

compliance with human rights standards while outsourcing the ethical and operational dilemmas of return to intermediary, subcontracted organizations.

The legal fiction of non-entry and the affective life of border regimes

Simon van Ramshorst (Radboud University)

Abstract: In this paper, I explore the affective dimension of the legal fiction of ‘non-entry’ – an increasingly prevalent device in migration law (Apatzidou 2025; Molinari 2024) – by extending affect theory into legal analysis. The non-entry fiction authorizes nation-states to treat migrants who are physically present at the border as if they had never arrived. After offering a sketch of the legal contours of this doctrine, I hone in on its affective texture. What affects does the non-entry fiction generate, reinforce and suppress? On the one hand, for nation-states, the non-entry fiction fosters bureaucratic indifference, filtering out existential and emotional engagement under the pretext of liberal fairness and neutrality. On the other hand, for migrants, it produces an affective condition of being trapped in limbo. This temporality of the bureaucratic suspension of rights induces despair and exhaustion (Cacho 2012; Stronks 2022). These affective conditions characterize today’s border regimes: migration law’s abstraction and proceduralism amplify affective detachment, while migrants are consigned to the permanent condition of a crippling ‘not-yet.’ The non-entry fiction propels affective forces that perpetuate the nation-state’s exclusionary violence, and reduces migrants to liminal subjects: legally suspended, affectively othered and politically marginalized. Implicitly acknowledging but effectively denying the migrant’s presence, the non-entry fiction denies migrants legal subjectivity, legitimating their subjection to practices of surveillance, confinement and control (De Genova 2013; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013; Shachar 2020). Relegating migrants to the nation-state’s margins, the non-entry fiction fortifies the us/them distinction that underpins the nation-state (Agamben 1998; Balibar 1990; Honig 2001).

“Stay Close to Your Child”: Blame, Care, and Emotion in Gendered Visual Campaigns on Migration and Parenting in Romania

Cristina Buza (University of Amsterdam)

Abstract: This paper examines how public campaigns in Romania construct migration as a gendered moral issue through visual and emotional appeals. Taking the 2023 “Stay Close to Your Child” campaign by Save the Children, the Ministry of Family, and the Border Police—displayed at airports and border crossings—as a starting point, the study situates this initiative within a broader set of campaigns addressing children left behind by migrating parents. Drawing on feminist migration studies (Silvey, 2004; Parreñas, 2005), care theory (Baldassar & Merla, 2014), and visual ethnography (Rose, 2016), the analysis shows how recurring images—torn photographs, crying children, absent mothers—frame maternal migration as abandonment. These campaigns use emotion and guilt as forms of governance (Foucault, 1991; Cruikshank, 1999), framing maternal migration as a moral failure and disproportionately holding women responsible for the emotional costs of labour mobility. The methodology combines visual content analysis with ethnographic inquiry, including interviews with mothers, fathers, caregivers, NGO staff, and border workers. While institutional framings emphasize blame, many parents reinterpret or resist these messages, emphasizing sacrifice, resilience, and transnational care. By analysing the gendered assumptions embedded in these visual and emotional campaigns, the paper contributes to scholarship on care, mobility, and visual politics

in Europe. It argues that these campaigns function both as protective interventions and instruments of moral regulation, shaping public understandings of gender, care, and migration. The paper calls for public narratives that move beyond blame and recognize the complexities of transnational family life.

Invisibility of the Ordinary Mobility in Migration Research: Tourists and Visitors

Marijana Matosevic (VU Amsterdam)

Abstract: Borders are crossed by millions of people every year, comprising citizens as well as foreigners who cross borders as residents, potential immigrants, family reunification candidates, refugees, asylum seekers – and as tourists and visitors. The latter category of short-term cross-border movement has received scant attention in border and migration scholarship. Rather than filling the gap, I aim to critically examine the reason for its existence. Inspired by the mobilities studies and calls for methodological de-nationalism and de-migrantization of migration research, this paper investigates the conceptual and methodological biases that result in the neglect of ‘ordinary’ cross-border mobility in research. My main argument is that the sedentarism bias and state-centered categories, reinforced by racial, gendered, and classed narratives, construct the ordinary cross-border mobility as either unproblematic or its unique problems as less significant than other types of cross-border movement. This framing obscures specific forms of border violence that shape ordinary mobilities of tourists and visitors. The relevance of this work is in making visible the often-overlooked border injustice tied to tourist and visitor experience of borders, as well as interrogating the biases that shape migration scholarship

PANEL ROUND 3 (15.00-16.30)

Panel 1: Transnational families, youth and belonging

Digital Mediation and Family Dynamics in Transnational Migrant Households

Cigdem Bozdog (University of Groningen), Rosa Dijkstra (University of Groningen) and Denise Mensonides (University of Groningen)

Abstract: Digital media are central to how migrant families maintain transnational family connections. This paper discusses how (transnational) relationships are mediated by digital technologies in families with a migration history. It draws on two research projects: INCLUDED, a participatory action research in Bremen, Germany, examining how young people (ages 13-15) in diverse, economically disadvantaged neighborhoods engage with digital media; and DigiMig, which looks at families with a migration history, digital inclusion, and intergenerational learning in the Netherlands. Through a mixed-method approach in both studies, including interviews, focus groups, and participatory observations, we highlight how socio-economic positioning influences opportunities for digital inclusion. We argue, first, that transnational networks within migrant families are primarily maintained through digital communication tools, including instant messaging services, social media, and video calls. Second, media in general play a connective role, bringing family members from different generations together as a common family activity, as they provide shared cultural resources for identity negotiations. Third, digital media use itself is shaped by the dynamics of the transnational migrant family, as rules and norms around

media are co-constructed, with parents playing a central role while children often take a mediating role, helping their parents to use the technologies, especially in families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Overall, the paper shows that digital technologies play a key constructive role in family practices in the context of migration. In doing so, the paper contributes to debates on transnational families, intersectionality, and the methodological challenges of researching intergenerational digital practices.

Media as bridge or barrier? Exploring the role of news consumption on immigrants' sense of belonging

Camila Melícia Valgas (Hogeschool Utrecht)

Abstract: This study investigates how news consumption influences immigrants' sense of belonging and how demographic factors shape this relationship. News media can act as a bridge—offering insights into societal norms and encouraging civic participation (Elias & Lemish, 2011)—and a barrier, reinforcing exclusionary narratives that fuel alienation (Yoon et al., 2011). To understand this dual role, a multilingual survey was conducted to measure news consumption, sense of belonging, and demographic variables of 500 immigrants in the Netherlands. Targeted recruitment reached refugees, knowledge migrants, labor migrants, and family migrants via community organizations, social media, and migrant networks. The survey was available in nine languages, ensuring accessibility. This study illuminates how news consumption shapes belonging, accounting for intra-group differences among the immigrant population, and offering insights for more inclusive media practices and policymaking.

An Intergenerational Perspective on Syrian Refugees' Lives in the Netherlands under Changing Migration Policies

Abduhalim Albakkor (University of Groningen, Campus Fryslan)

Abstract: This paper analyses how age at migration and settlement shapes adaptation, belonging and family dynamics among Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. Employing an intersectional lifecourse perspective, it differentiates the challenges experienced by children, young adults, mid-career adults and older migrants. Schooling disruptions affect children, education and work barriers challenge youth, loss of credentials constrains mid-career adults, and dependency and isolation undermine older migrants' authority. Drawing on qualitative research conducted in 2023 in Friesland and North Holland, comprising individual and family interviews as well as community focus groups, the analysis highlights not only intergenerational contrasts but also interdependencies within refugee households. Younger members frequently mediate bureaucratic and linguistic hurdles, while older generations provide moral support, cultural continuity and stability. By combining intergenerational comparison with an intersectional life-course approach, this paper extends current debates on refugee integration beyond youth-centered or policy-only analyses. It shows how migration and integration policies intersect with age and family roles to generate both vulnerabilities and resources across the life span, and it calls for age-sensitive strategies that acknowledge intergenerational interdependence as a key dimension of refugee adaptation.

Parental Autonomy Granting, Youths' Autonomy Desires and Parent-Youth Relationship Quality: The Role of Immigration Background and Culture

Ouissam Abattouy (Utrecht University), Catrin Finkenauer (Utrecht University), Gonneke W.J.M. Stevens (Utrecht University), and Susan Branje (Utrecht University)

Abstract: Transitioning to adulthood increasingly centers on autonomy—becoming independent—rather than traditional markers (e.g., leaving home). Youth seek responsibility to organize their lives while parents wish to guide them, yet current-day prolonged dependence leaves many feeling unprepared for adult responsibilities. This creates two autonomy mismatches: being granted less or more autonomy than desired. Youth with immigration backgrounds may experience these mismatches differently. When autonomy equals independence, it aligns less with collectivistic values endorsing family interdependence, often found among those from Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, and Asia. Autonomy mismatches may increase conflict and reduce closeness in the relationship with parents. Yet, collectivistic values might buffer negative impacts for youth with immigration backgrounds. This study examined how immigration background relates to autonomy mismatches and whether collectivistic values mediate this; how mismatches relate to parent-youth relationship quality; and whether immigration background moderates the mismatch-relationship association, with collectivistic values explaining this moderation. Data from 876 Dutch youth aged 16–25 ($M_{age} = 20.88$, $SD = 2.38$) revealed that youth with immigration backgrounds reported higher autonomy mismatches and endorsed more collectivistic values, though values did not mediate the association. Autonomy mismatches were associated with more conflict and less closeness, especially when youth perceived insufficient autonomy. Immigration background moderated the mismatch-closeness association (not conflict), with youth with immigration backgrounds showing weaker associations, though collectivistic values did not explain this moderation. These findings highlight that autonomy mismatches matter for relationship quality. Youth with immigration backgrounds show resilience in preserving closeness despite autonomy mismatches through mechanisms beyond collectivistic values.

Panel 2: Labour migration

The Role of Strategy Formation in Labor Shortage Policymaking: Salience and Group Dynamics within Dutch and German Employers' Associations

Jacob Alabab-Moser (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)

Abstract: Recent years have seen increases in labor shortages across European countries, with long-term demographic aging indicating their structural character. Though “managed” labor migration has been posited as a quick solution (Menz, 2011b; Paul, 2015), the current landscape of xenophobic public opinion and successful far-right parties complicates this policy option. Employers' associations have played a key role in migration policymaking (Freeman, 1995; Wright, 2017), yet gaps remain in understanding what shapes their strategies beyond material interests, especially during periods of high salience around immigration. Specifically, it is unclear why, among employers' associations who would stand to benefit economically from increased migration, some actively lobby for liberalizing labor migration policy whereas others passively approach policymaking processes. This paper identifies the critical roles played by political salience and intra-group dynamics, including the interplay between material interests and salient ideas within them (Hall, 2007). We use a most-similar case study design to compare different strategies of national employers' associations in Germany and the Netherlands, two

coordinated market economies with similar institutional structures, giving specific attention to the agricultural sector which faces high labor shortages. The results indicate that, in Germany, lower salience around labor migration and greater coordination within employers' associations have led to more active strategies in lobbying for liberalized extra-EU labor migration than their Dutch counterparts. The cases are researched using document analysis and interviews with relevant stakeholders including representatives of employers' associations. The article sheds light on how the current contentious context shapes non-state actors' roles in migration policy debates.

Work that isn't work, workers that aren't workers, employers that aren't employers: The case of irregular migrant domestic workers in Utrecht

Minke Hajer (Utrecht University)

Abstract: In the Netherlands, irregular migrants are seldom recognised as workers in public discourse. Formally excluded from the labour market, they find employment in sectors that are highly informal and/or poorly regulated, particularly in domestic work within private households. This paper examines the living and working conditions of irregular migrant domestic workers in Utrecht, focussing on how they negotiate their position as workers at the interplay of migration and labour market policy. Domestic work in the Netherlands occupies a unique position. Housecleaning and other types of domestic labour are not officially recognized as work, as they fall under the Domestic Services Act (*Regeling Dienstverlening aan Huis*), which effectively deregulates this sector. Furthermore, those who employ domestic workers rarely perceive themselves as employers. Consequently, irregular migrant domestic workers perform work that is both socially and legally invisible, for individuals who do not view themselves as having the responsibilities of an employer. Drawing on interviews with irregular migrant domestic workers, their employers, and local stakeholders, this paper examines how irregular migration status and sector deregulation influence working relationships and conditions. It illustrates how employment conditions are negotiated, how domestic work simultaneously offers opportunities and imposes constraints on irregular migrants, and how these dynamics affect the broader social and economic position of workers.

Responsibilizing migrants & normalizing unpaid labour: Volunteering for "workfare" and "civic integration" in peripheralised rural areas in the Netherlands

Jana Finke (Utrecht University)

Abstract: Volunteering is increasingly used as a policy instrument when it comes to the labour market integration of international migrants. This paper adopts a social reproductive lens (Dalla Costa, 2019; Federici, 1975, 2018) to highlight the increase of unpaid labour in the face of a crumbling welfare state, active citizenship policies, and civic integration, in the specific socio-geographic context of peripheralised rural areas. Social service authorities in the Netherlands may request welfare recipients to "compensate" for welfare payments by obliging them to volunteer (Kampen, 2014), and civic integration requirements increasingly include volunteering. This also affects international migrants in peripheral rural areas, who face bigger distances to employment and training opportunities due to their geographical location along with generally widespread discrimination, and devaluation of their skills. Moreover, in rural areas, volunteering is often represented as an inherent part of village life. In order to examine how state-incentivized volunteering plays out in such rural contexts, we examine migrant volunteers' experiences in

three peripheralised rural areas in the Netherlands: Groningen, the Achterhoek and Friesland. It draws on in-depth interviews with migrant and non-migrant residents and civil servants, participant observation and informal conversations in civil society initiatives for and/or by migrants. We demonstrate firstly, how experiences of migrant and non-migrant volunteers of diverse socio-spatial positions differ, and secondly, how these may contradict the expectations and hopes of policy makers, social service consultants and local stakeholders. We highlight the variety of different meanings and values attached to volunteer work in the rural “participation society”.

Panel 3: Integration and group contact

Beyond the Ethnic Majority Bias: Is there a Bright Muslim Boundary in Intergroup Attitudes among Minority Groups?

Frank van Tubergen (NIDI), Stefano Cellini (NIDI) and Christian Czymara (NIDI)

Abstract: A key hypothesis in the study of intergroup relations in Europe posits that Muslim group identity constitutes a particularly salient boundary that weakens social cohesion between Muslim and non-Muslim populations. To date, however, this hypothesis has been examined almost exclusively from the perspective of the ethnic majority. This majority-centric approach overlooks the diversity within minority groups and the dynamics that unfold between them. To address this gap, our study centers the perspective of minority populations, examining their intergroup attitudes using data from three large-scale probability surveys conducted in the Netherlands between 2004 and 2015. The data include over 10,000 first- and second-generation immigrants from two Muslim-origin groups (Turks and Moroccans) and two non-Muslim-origin groups (Surinamese and Dutch Caribbean). Contrary to expectations of the bright Muslim boundary hypothesis, we find no evidence that Muslim-origin minorities in the Netherlands hold exclusionary attitudes toward non-Muslims. Our findings reveal two paradoxes that invite further exploration. First, Muslim minorities express unexpectedly positive views of the ethnic majority, despite experiencing significant discrimination from that group. Second, we observe pronounced asymmetries in minority–minority attitudes between groups with shared religious identities or historical ties. Ultimately, this study challenges dominant, majority-centered models of intergroup relations by revealing the complexity of how minority groups view both majority populations and other minorities. By moving beyond the ethnic majority bias, it advances a more comprehensive understanding of boundary-making processes in diverse societies and opens new directions for the study of intergroup attitudes.

Do Migrant Students Affect Performance of Natives?

Tijana Breuer (Maastricht University), Bohdana Kurylo (Maastricht University), Cecile Magnée (Maastricht University) and Stan Vermeulen (Maastricht University)

Abstract: This paper examines how the presence of students with a migration background affects the academic performance of native Dutch students in primary schools. We draw on administrative data from the Student Monitoring System (LVS) between 2014 and 2022 and leverage variation in the share of migrant students within schools, across cohorts, and within individual students over time to identify peer effects. On average, migrant peers have small and statistically insignificant effects on native students' performance. However, disaggregated analyses reveal that exposure to first-generation non-Western migrant peers, particularly those

with refugee status, negatively impacts native students' performance in reading and math. No significant effects are found for second-generation migrant peers from Western backgrounds. The negative effects are most pronounced when peers have two non-Western, first-generation migrant parents, highlighting the likely role of home language environment and integration challenges. These findings underscore the importance of accounting for refugee status and family migration background when evaluating the consequences of classroom diversity.

The Dynamics of Refugee Integration: A Longitudinal Study of Interethnic Contact, Well-being, and Belonging Using Growth Curve Modelling

Meta van der Linden (Utrecht University), Patrick Kotzur (Durham University), Linda Trop (University of Massachusetts Amherst) and Cierra Abellera (University of Massachusetts Amherst)

Abstract: Since the large influx of Syrian refugees during the summer of 2015, European societies have grappled with the challenge of facilitating refugee integration. A key factor identified in the literature is interethnic contact, which has been positively associated with various integration markers, including well-being and belonging in the society of settlement. However, most studies rely on cross-sectional data, missing the dynamic nature of refugees' interethnic contact development during their early resettlement years, which likely evolves significantly due to greater societal participation and the gradual easing of cultural and language barriers. This study advances prior research by applying univariate unconditional latent growth curve models to capture how the dynamics of naturally increasing interethnic contact frequency, belonging, and well-being among refugees evolve over time. Using EUR Bridge three-wave panel data from 937 Syrian refugees during their first five years in the Netherlands, preliminary findings reveal significant variance in refugees' growth trajectories for interethnic contact with Dutch citizens, well-being, and belonging, with overall positive trends across all three variables. A subsequent mediation model, using a multivariate latent growth curve framework, tested whether growth in interethnic contact predicted growth in well-being, mediated by growth in belonging. Preliminary results showed a significant indirect effect (one-tailed test). Overall, these findings highlight that increases in refugees' interethnic contact with ethnic majority members enhances belonging, which, in turn, fosters improvements in well-being in the society of settlement. Moreover, the results underscore the interconnected trajectories of interethnic contact, well-being, and belonging, offering new insights into their importance in the integration process.

Illiberal Integrationism: Shared Values as an Integration Requirement in Liberal Democracy
Stefan Manser-Egli (University of Amsterdam)

Abstract: Can liberal democracies require shared values? The integration requirement to share constitutional values has become increasingly popular in many Western migration and integration regimes. In the process of what was considered a liberalization of the German naturalization law in 2023, the then Interior Minister Nancy Faeser (Social Democratic Party) asserted that "anyone who does not share our values cannot become German." In the Netherlands, since 2017, all subjects of integration must sign the Participation Statement, a one-sided contractual document in which one pledges to respect the "Dutch values" of freedom, equality, solidarity and participation. These Dutch values are supposedly embodied and transmitted by so-called "value-carriers". In view of these developments, the paper

examines the recent integration requirement to “respect the values of the constitution” in Switzerland in light of what has been discussed as the conundrum of illiberal liberalism. First, it scrutinizes illiberal bureaucratic practices of culturalization and state access to inner convictions in street-level implementation of the requirement. Second, it discusses whether the adoption of constitutional values can be required of non-citizens only, as is the case with this integration requirement. Finally, the paper examines whether, in liberal democracy, shared values can be legitimately required from society as a whole. In conclusion, the paper argues that the shared values requirement is incompatible with the pluralism of values in liberal democracy. Through the exclusion in the name of shared values, aggressive integrationism forecloses politics as an agonistic contestation of these values.