



CERC Migration Working Group – Scholars of Excellence Edition: Decentring the Governance and Knowledge Production on Migration

Co-convened by *Oliver Bakewell*, University of Manchester, *Nicola Piper*, Queen Mary University of London and *Anna Triandafyllidou*, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University

Date: April 19, 2023

Time: 10:00 AM to 4:15 PM EDT

Location: Hybrid (In person at CERC Migration office / online via Zoom)

Migration is viewed as one of the important transnational governance challenges of our times by policymakers. Even though international migration remains a contested topic – countries of origin and destination, migrants and their families, civil society organizations and international institutions having different views and interests – a consensus has been rising among a core group of states (primarily drawn from OECD members) and global institutions in recent years, that migration can only be mutually beneficial (a win-win-win situation for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination) if it is safe, regular and orderly. This is encapsulated in the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration from 2018. The narrative of the ‘good’ regular migration has become dominant, if not hegemonic, obscuring alternative perspectives on the needs and interests of different actors involved in the governance of international migration. This workshop challenges this consensus by articulating views of migration from outside this core group, particularly drawing on insights from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The first panel discusses the political economy of knowledge production on migration and its governance and the ways in which donors, international organizations, and states can shape how we talk about and study migration and the terminology we use or the perspectives we privilege. The second panel elaborates on the side effects of safe, orderly and regular migration governance showcasing how in some cases regulated migration can be unsafe and unfair for migrants. The aim of the workshop is to de-centre our investigation in multiple directions: towards different world regions, towards a multitude of governance actors and towards alternative policy paradigms.

PROGRAM

- 10-10:30 AM EDT** Welcome reception
- 10:30 AM EDT** Welcome: **Oliver Bakewell**, University of Manchester, **Nicola Piper**, Queen Mary University of London and **Anna Triandafyllidou**, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University
- 10:40 AM-1:00 PM EDT** **Panel I: Unpacking the ‘safe, orderly and regular’ nature of migration governance**
Chair: Oliver Bakewell, University of Manchester
- Putting the ‘safe’ in labour migration governance in Africa: the role of regional organizations* | **Amanda Bisong**, European Centre for Development Policy Management
- African states and the EU: The trope and practice of “safe, orderly and regular” migration* | **Faisal Garba**, University of Cape Town
- Middle space actors (intermediaries): The case of Nepali migrant workers to Malaysia* | **Yvonne Khor**, Monash University Malaysia
- De-centring migration governance in a post pandemic world* | **Anna Triandafyllidou**, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University
- 1:00-1:40 PM EDT** Lunch break
- 1:40-4:00 PM EDT** **Panel II: Political economy of knowledge production**
Chair: Nicola Piper, Queen Mary University of London
- Exclusions and disconnections: Migration and food insecurity in global and local knowledge production* | **Jonathan Crush**, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Wilfrid Laurier University
- The state in the field: Mitigation policy to counterbalance temporary workers’ vulnerability in Canada | **Danièle Bélanger**, Université Laval
- The politicization of migration in South America: Solving innovations and the weakness of legal frameworks regulating mobility* | **João Carlos Jarochinski Silva**, Universidade Federal de Roraima, Brazil
- Regional perspective/s on global governance of migration* | **Nicola Piper**, Queen Mary University of London and **Oliver Bakewell**, University of Manchester

4:00-4:15 PM EDT

Reflections and concluding remarks

ABSTRACTS

Panel I: Political economy of knowledge production

Exclusions and disconnections: Migration and food insecurity in global and local knowledge production
| Jonathan Crush, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Wilfrid Laurier University

Saliddin et al. (2019) note that there is a “need for increased coordination between the food security and international migration policy agendas” and that international migration and food security remain deeply disconnected in the policy and research domains at global, national and local levels. This presentation will trace the evolution of the exclusion of migrants from the international food security agenda, the exclusion of food security from the international migration agenda, and the exclusion of their interaction from international initiatives such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Milan Pact, the Committee on World Food Security, the Global Migration Compacts and the Sustainable Development Goals. Using the example of South Africa, the presentation will show how these disconnections are reproduced at scale in national and local policy-making, and will conclude with an overview of the priorities of the new field of scholarly research on the migration-food security nexus and the relevance of its findings to the global development agenda.

The state in the field: Mitigation policy to counterbalance temporary workers’ vulnerability in Canada
| Danièle Bélanger, Université Laval

Canada prides itself on its legal temporary labour migration programs and often stands as an example internationally. In contrast to this political stance, there is a consensus among researchers and other stakeholders that these programs produce various forms and degrees of precarity and provide a flexible, disposable and exploitable labour force, particularly in the current context of labour shortages in many sectors of the Canadian economy. In 2019, in recognition of the potential of its temporary foreign workers’ program for creating vulnerability, the Canadian government launched the Open Work Permit for Vulnerable Workers policy, which allows foreign workers on an employer-tied work permit to apply for an open work permit. Previous research has documented how the policy burdens community organizations who offer support to temporary migrants. This presentation seeks to unpack the effects of this new policy on migrants themselves. It shows how a new program aimed at mitigating the inadvertent effects of closed work permits creates new vulnerabilities and offers very little in terms of improving safe temporary migration in Canada. The presentation will argue that the program fails because it ignores the structure of power relations between vulnerable migrant workers, employers and intermediaries. The analysis will draw on an on-going study that follows agricultural migrant workers in Ontario, British Columbia and Québec who obtained an open work permit, and others who failed. Conceptually, it is informed by research on the role of the state in counterbalancing adverse effects of its own policies, with application to migration policies.

The politicization of migration in South America: Solving innovations and the weakness of legal frameworks regulating mobility
| João Carlos Jarochinski Silva, Universidade Federal de Roraima, Brazil

Since the colonial period, South America has been an important destination for human mobility. With the independence of most countries during the 19th century, the newly created states began to produce policies and norms to attract certain nationalities to occupy territories and contribute to economic development. This gave the

impression that the region had a welcoming and integrating logic in its migration policies, in a discourse that was widely used when these countries began to demand a "historical counterpart" for their nationals when they also configured themselves as countries of origin. Part of the institutional framework on migration reflects much of this vision, but it is difficult to apply it to more complex scenarios, such as the Venezuelan exodus. This presentation addresses how the South American context is characterized by institutional xenophobia, an enormous difficulty for migrants in gaining access to rights, the profusion of "ad hoc" instruments, as well as the absence of regional responses – all which weaken the discourse of a welcoming locality committed to human rights for migrants. The politicization of the mobility of certain nationalities is evident in a dynamic in which, a priori, the State uses mobility as a factor in the construction of political narratives, welcoming or excluding migrants to gain advantages.

Regional perspective/s on global governance of migration | Nicola Piper, Queen Mary University of London and Oliver Bakewell, University of Manchester

This presentation will examine how the ideas of migration governance vary between regions, focusing on the perspectives evident in Asian and African debates, policies and practice. It will show how these are shaped by the geography, history, economic and social conditions, within and between the regions. As a result, while they use the common language of migration governance, such as safe, orderly and regular migration, at times they may be referring to rather different phenomena, which demand different policy responses. The presentation will argue that the push towards global migration governance that fails to recognize these distinctions creates a veneer of consensus that may play a useful role in global geopolitics but may offer little to enhance the experience of migrants and the communities in which they live.

Panel II: Unpacking the ‘safe, orderly and regular’ nature of migration governance

Putting the ‘safe’ in labour migration governance in Africa: the role of regional organizations | Amanda Bisong, European Centre for Development Policy Management

About one-third of the migrants globally are labour migrants. In Africa, labour migrants within the formal sector accounted for about 2.8% of the total labour force in 2019. The numbers are speculated to be higher in the informal sector where for several reasons, most migrants work. Low-skilled migrants from sub-Saharan African countries working in destination countries, within and outside the African continent, are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, something which has become more apparent and amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. This presentation will provide an overview of the status of labour migration within the African continent, and to selected destination countries (in the Middle East). It identifies the regional measures taken by African governments to improve conditions for the recruitment and protection of African migrant workers in destination countries. The paper argues that regional organizations such as the African Union and regional economic communities – ECOWAS, IGAD and EAC – can play an important role in closing the regulatory gap in the recruitment and protection of low-skilled migrant workers from sub-Saharan African countries. It will explore the role of these regional organizations in promoting ‘safe’ labour migration governance in line with the commitments undertaken as part of the Global Compact on Migration and the African Union’s migration policy framework. In conclusion, the presentation will explore options available to regional organizations and propose practical steps towards promoting ‘safe’ labour migration.

African states and the EU: The trope and practice of ‘safe, orderly and regular’ migration | Faisal Garba, University of Cape Town

Several states in Africa have over the past decade adopted national migration policies ostensibly to ensure safe, orderly, and regular migration. Borrowing from what is known as “best practice” emanating from mainly Western Europe, these policies are often removed from the realities of movement in Africa – historically and in the present. Driven by the European Union’s (EU) objective of keeping African migrants out of its territory, the policies come as part of a campaign package that include images, audio-visuals, and street art to discourage migration to Europe. This campaign that targets mainly young people apparently promotes safe and orderly migration, in a context where States in Africa routinely ignore or even break regional instruments that they have put in place, such as the ECOWAS Protocol on the free movement which guarantees the right to move, settle and establish by citizens of the Economic Community of West African States. In direct violation of the ECOWAS Protocol, the State in Ghana leads raids on predominantly Nigerian migrant-owned businesses just as it promotes safe and orderly migration. In the same vein, The South African States which has a raft of legislations to promote “legal” migration creates the conditions for unsafe experience by migrants through practices such as inordinately delayed visa and permitting process that renders many migrants “irregular” with little option but to overstay visas or use “unsafe” means. Safe and orderly becomes a tool to identify people, exclude them and exploit them. Taking the examples of Ghana and South Africa, this presentation contrasts the rhetoric of safe, orderly, and regular migration, with the experience of unsafe and precarious conditions that States place on mobile populations.

Middle space actors (intermediaries): The case of Nepali migrant workers to Malaysia | Yvonne Khor, Monash University Malaysia

This presentation will discuss the complex mediating roles played by intermediaries along this corridor (migration channel). A bilateral MOU was signed between the state authorities of Nepal and Malaysia in 2018. Although there are strict state regulations impacting the role of intermediaries in facilitating the movement of migrant workers from Nepal to Malaysia, the actual practices of various intermediaries along the corridor varies. One of the key points in the said MOU is the elimination of migration cost (“zero cost migration”) between Nepal and Malaysia in keeping with ILO guidelines. The presentation will show how well-intentioned state policies to reduce exploitative practices in labour migration have also, unfortunately, produced other kinds of inequalities among migrant workers. The presentation is based on fieldwork done along the Nepal-Malaysia Corridor, one of six corridors for the Migration for Development and Equality (MIDEQ) project supported by the UK Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF).

De-centring migration governance in a post pandemic world | Anna Triandafyllidou, CERC Migration, Toronto Metropolitan University

De-centring our understanding of migration governance requires privileging the viewpoints of origin and transit countries, non-state actors and including both urban and rural perspectives. The presentation will argue that such de-centring involves a number of dimensions, notably along a geopolitical approach that gives primacy to the role that countries play in migration processes; along a spatial approach (views from the city vs views from rural areas); or with reference to the actors involved (state, civil society, private sector, migrants and their households). This presentation will explore whether such de-centring should be also epistemological, notably instead of putting migration centre-stage, paying more attention to broader processes including climate change, rapid (and often disruptive) technological transformation, as well as the re-imagining of the global world order after the Covid19 pandemic. The argument will also consider notions of sustainability and resilience both in migration governance and more broadly.

BIOGRAPHIES

Oliver Bakewell is Reader in Migration Studies at the Global Development Institute, University of Manchester. His work focuses on the intersections between migration and mobility and processes of development and change, with an empirical focus on migration within Africa. He is the Research Co-ordinator on Migration and Development for the Research and Evidence Facility of the EU Trust Fund for Africa (Horn of Africa). Prior to joining GDI, he spent over a decade at the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford. He was one of the founding members of the International Migration Institute and became Co-Director and then Director. Before taking up this role at Oxford, Oliver spent many years working with migrants and refugees both as a researcher and as a practitioner with a range of development and humanitarian NGOs. He holds a PhD and MSc in Development Studies from the University of Bath and a BA in Mathematics from the University of Cambridge.

Danièle Bélanger is Professor, Université Laval, and holder of the Canada Research Chair on Global Migration Processes. Between 1997 and 2013, she was a professor of sociology at Western University (London, Ontario). Her recent research examines the role of essential workers with temporary migration status in Canada. She is leading a project on Members of Parliament district offices as critical actors in the delivery of immigration services in Canada. Her research studies the trajectories and strategies of migrants with precarious status, including temporary migrant workers, trafficked individuals, undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, care migrant workers and marriage migrants.

Amanda Bisong is Policy Officer in the Migration and Mobility Team of The Centre for Africa-Europe Relations in Maastricht, The Netherlands. She has a background in law and master's degrees in international law and economics (World Trade Institute) and international trade policy and trade law (Lund University). She is currently pursuing a PhD on migration governance in West Africa at the Faculty of Law, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Her research focuses on migration agreements, labour migration, migration governance, the linkages between trade and migration in Africa and the interplay between regional and national commitments. In recent years, she has published several research articles on migration governance.

Jonathan Crush holds degrees from Cambridge University, Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU), and Queen's University. He is University Research Professor at WLU and a professor in the Balsillie School of International Affairs and the Department of Political Science. He also holds an Extraordinary Professorship at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. He has been involved in career knowledge production and dissemination through the development of international research partnerships that include the Southern African Migration Program (www.samponline.org), the African Food Security Urban Network (www.afsun.org) and the Hungry Cities Partnership (www.hungrycities.net). He is currently Principal Investigator of the SSHRC-funded MiFOOD Network which is exploring the connections between migration and food security in the Global South. He has published extensively on both subjects including in his latest book, the *Handbook on Urban Food Security in the Global South* (Edward Elgar, 2021).

Faisal Garba is a senior lecturer of Sociology at the University of Cape Town (UCT), and a research associate at the Institute of Sociology, University of Freiburg. He convenes the Global Studies programme and leads the UCT Migration and Mobility research cluster.

João Carlos Jarochinski Silva is professor at the Federal University of Roraima (UFRR) in the departments of International Relations and the Master's in Society and Borders, where he is also director of the Human Sciences Center and coordinator of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Chair. João spent part of his childhood in a multi-ethnic colonial nucleus, Barão de Antonina, where he became connected to the theme of mobility. A lawyer and historian, he began his studies on migration and refugees in 2007 while completing a master's degree in International Law, a theme on which he continued to focus his doctorate in Social Sciences and post-doctorate

in Demography. Since 2013, he resides and works in the region of Brazil which borders Guyana and Venezuela and is part of the Amazon biome.

Yvonne Khor is a Researcher at Monash University Malaysia. As part of the Migration for Development and Equality Hub (MIDEQ) project, her research explores the roles of intermediaries along the Nepal-Malaysia corridor. She is also part of the expert network of the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC). Her research scope also looks at trafficking in persons (TIP) and smuggling of migrants (SOM). Before joining Monash University Malaysia, Yvonne was a senior researcher for Government and Parliamentary Affairs at a locally-based think tank. She was involved in helping Members of Parliament and Senators to formulate national policies and legislation.

Nicola Piper is Professor of International Migration at the University of Sydney and the Founding Director of the Sydney Asia Pacific Migration Centre. She is currently a British Academy Global Professor Fellow hosted by Queen Mary University of London's School of Law, conducting research on global governance of labour migration and the role of the International Labour Organization in the promotion of decent work for migrant workers (January 2019 to December 2022). Nicola is also partner investigator in the UKRI funded Global Challenge Research Hub on South-South Migration and Inequality, and co-lead of the Gender Work Package (2019-2023). She is co-chief editor of the journal *Global Social Policy* and editor of two book series with Routledge (*Asian Migration* with Profs. Chan and Lee; *Labour and Skills Mobility in Asia* with Prof. Eric Fong, Chinese University of Hong Kong).

Anna Triandafyllidou holds the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration at Toronto Metropolitan University. Prior to joining TorontoMet, she was based at the European University Institute where she held a Robert Schuman Chair on Global Pluralism. She is Editor of the *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, Chair of the IMISCOE Editorial Committee, and member of the IMISCOE Board of Directors. In 2021, the University of Liège awarded Triandafyllidou a doctorate honoris causa in recognition of her contribution to migration scholarship. Her recent authored books include *What is Europe* (with R. Gropas, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2022) and *Rethinking Migration and Return in Southeastern Europe* (with E. Gemi, Routledge, 2021). Her recent articles have appeared in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2022), *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Society* (2022), *Ethnicities* (2022), *Comparative Migration Studies* (2021, 2022), *International Migration* (2021) and *Nations and Nationalism* (2020).