

Call for Papers

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE GLOBAL SHIFT IN MOBILITY AND MIGRATION GOVERNANCE IN THE LONG 1970s

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This conference stems from the idea that the immigration deadlock developed countries are facing today – especially in Europe – owes much to the radical changes that occurred during the long 1970s, i.e., between the late 1960s and early 1980s. Which transformation of migration patterns, perceptions, and policies occurred then and prepared today’s predicament? Which policy path did developed countries take then that could explain the current situation? In the answer to those questions may reside the key to finding a sustainable policy on immigration in Europe and other regions of immigration worldwide.

North-Western Europe – including West Germany, France, the Benelux countries, and Switzerland – was the epicentre of the transformation. From active immigration policies, governments moved to restricting immigration of low-skilled workers from outside Europe. After nearly three decades of active recruitment policies in the Mediterranean region, they interrupted bilateral recruitment agreements with sending countries unilaterally. The UK, too, restricted the right of entry and residence of Commonwealth subjects.

A variety of economic, social and political considerations influenced these policies. Restrictions relied on an emerging apparatus of state control, both at borders and within countries. The unwillingness and difficulty to deport vast numbers of immigrants unwilling to leave led some countries to accept, not without reservations, reunification schemes to integrate those already arrived. Later on, the failure of voluntary return programmes confirmed and strengthened the determination and need to integrate regular migrants.

Beyond North-Western Europe, Southern Europe began to transition from an area of emigration to an area of transit and destination, leading governments to consider a more restrictive stance. They eventually shifted to restrictive immigration policies between the late 1980s and early 1990s under the pressure of North-Western European countries.

Meanwhile, Cold War Détente contributed to making the Iron Curtain more permeable inside Europe.

Outside Europe, even though Persian Gulf countries became a magnet for low-skilled migrants from North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, those countries recognised few rights to immigrants, controlled their stays tightly, and favoured a rotating workforce. Japan’s prodigious economic growth did not lead Japanese policymakers to relax the country’s traditional closure to foreigners. In North America, the abolition of the quota system in 1965 did not lead to more open immigration policies.

Following the termination of the Bracero programme in 1964, the new set of immigration policies that was consolidated in the long 1970s shifted restrictions towards immigrants from Latin America.

International organisations could have been the place to establish international governance over mobility and migration. In the main fora, discussions became intertwined with reflections on identities, integration, economy, work, welfare, development, and security. In Europe, the European Community, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration searched for compromises to integrate migrants and respect human rights, while containing migration flows and fighting irregular immigration.

Outside Europe, Global South countries expressed through the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity serious concerns over the restrictive shift and tried to mitigate the closure to their emigrants. At the global level, the United Nations and within it the World Health Organisation and the International Labour Organisation stood out as important fora in mobility and migration, but they were generally unable to establish international governance over these policy areas. The discomfort at the General Assembly of the United Nations towards Western countries' restrictive immigration policies led to protracted negotiations. Only in 1990 did the General Assembly finally adopt an "International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families", which, however, no country in the major regions of immigration ever ratified.

Intense North-South confrontation and new Cold War dynamics created political reasons to mitigate restrictions slightly, especially as far as refugees were concerned. The 1967 New York Protocol removed the temporal and geographical restrictions in the UN Refugee Convention, which then began to apply universally. The combination of this measure with dramatic refugee crises in Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and South-East Asia significantly affected the refugee situation worldwide and made asylum a privileged route to access developed countries – next to family reunification and irregular migration.

The transformation in mobility patterns also resulted from technological change in transportation and communication. This change connected regions that had diverged economically substantially over the previous 150 years, with rising inequality between countries at the global level.

To account for the radical shift in mobility and migration patterns and policies, it is therefore necessary to combine reflections on economic and social policies within countries, international negotiations, international economic inequalities, and technological change. This conference aims to bring together the most competent scholars to explore all the facets of this problem.

Proposals in English should be submitted to Prof. Simone Paoli (simone.paoli@unipi.it) and Dr Emmanuel Comte (e.comte@eliamep.gr) by **14 February 2023**. The selection will be finalised by 7 March 2023. Proposals must include two separate files: first, a short curriculum vitae – with contact details and main publications – and second, the title of the proposed contribution with an abstract of 250 words – including the key argument and findings, as well as the research methods and sources. The geographical scope of contributions is not limited if they fit with the subject of the conference. Contributions may even take a broader chronological scope, which however should be related to the long 1970s.

The conference is organised by the Department of Political Science of the University of Pisa and the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy in Athens in the context of the Jean Monnet Module “[Mobility, Migrations and European Integration](#)”. It will take place in Pisa – even though a few participants may be online. There will be no participation fee. Participants’ accommodation costs will be covered. Travel costs will be reimbursed, based on original receipts, up to 250 euros for participants based in Europe and 500 euros for other participants. Selected papers will go through peer review to be published in an edited volume in English with a reputable international academic publisher.