

Call for Participation and Papers:

IMISCOE MITRA / TraFaDy Symposium & PhD Training

Linking policy and academia: Transnational Families in Europe

Date: 13/14 May 2024

Venue: CASTLE - Centre for the Study of Transnational Families, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca (UBB) Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Join us in Cluj, Romania, for a thought-provoking symposium that aims to critically examine the intersection of migration policies and transnational family dynamics in Europe. Together, we will explore avenues for research-policy dialogue and collaborative action to ensure the rights and well-being of migrant families are upheld in policy-making processes. We will bring together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers working in fields related to migration, family, policy, and related disciplines. The first day of the symposium will consist of paper presentations, workshops and a keynote. On the second day of the symposium, we have a special training for early career researchers such as PhDs and postdocs on how to relate academic research to policy.

Background

In recent years, the landscape of migration policies in Europe has undergone significant shifts, with an increasing trend towards stricter regulations and limitations on migration, including family reunification. The new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum is the latest example. The implications of these policies on migrant families, particularly transnational families, have become increasingly profound. For example, it often leads to elongated separation of family members. And more than 20 years of research shows, that this has a detrimental impact on the well-being of both the migrant and their family members at origin. It is therefore important to shed light on how these recent policies affect families both at destination and origin and feed this back to policy.

Additionally, it is crucial to address the pervasive issue of misinformation surrounding migration in political discourse. Across the political spectrum, “easy answers” regarding migration often take centre stage in campaigns, leading to the dissemination of myths and misconceptions that can have dangerous consequences. Addressing the tension between evidence-based research and policy-making driven by political agendas is an increasing challenge for everyone involved. While policymakers are confronted with myriad issues and constraints, including changing governments and public opinion, academics must strive to bridge the gap by effectively communicating research findings in accessible formats. From academics view, collaborative efforts to synthesize research, engage in dialogue, and provide policy briefs tailored to policymakers' needs can foster a more informed decision-making process. Moreover, building relationships and platforms for ongoing communication between academics and policymakers can facilitate mutual understanding and promote evidence-based policy-making that upholds human rights, ultimately benefiting migrant families and society as a whole.

Program Outline

This symposium is organised by the IMISCOE Standing Committee on Migrant Transnationalism (MITRA) and the Cost Action Transnational Family Dynamics in Europe (TraFaDy). It seeks to examine the ramifications of these policy trends on migrant families:

1. **Policy Implications for Transnational Families:** Exploring the ways in which recent shifts in migration policies have shaped the experiences and livelihoods of migrant families. Topics may include access to family reunification, challenges faced by transnational families, and the role of legal frameworks in shaping family dynamics.
2. **Empirical Research and Policy Advocacy:** Discussing strategies for integrating empirical research findings into policy discourse and advocacy efforts. Participants are encouraged to share insights on how academic research can inform policy-making processes and advocate for the rights and needs of migrant families.
3. **Engaging with Policy-Makers:** Facilitating discussions on effective strategies for engaging with policy-makers and influencing migration policies at local, national, and supranational levels. The symposium will include a workshop session aimed at fostering dialogue between researchers and policy-makers, with a focus on collaborative approaches to address the needs of migrant communities.

How to participate

Interested participants are invited to express their interest including the content related background (maximum 300 words) by **15 March 2024** by filling out [this form](#). Please indicate whether you would like to give a presentation or be a regular participant. The symposium especially welcomes early career researchers such as PhD candidates and postdocs. Depending on the costs, we are able to support travel expenses for some participants if they need help covering their costs, particularly PhD Candidates. For those who want to apply for this grant, please indicate what your travel cost would approximately be and we will see whether and how much we can refund. Accepted attendees and presenters will be notified by 22 March 2024. We are aiming for publishing a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal or an edited volume. If you want your presentation to be part of this, please hand in a first short draft (\pm 5 pages) of your paper two weeks before the symposium in order to be considered for publication.

For inquiries, please contact r.haagsman@maastrichtuniversity.nl