

Migration, Mobilities, and the Politics of Hostility and Hospitality

Call for Papers

MMRN Annual Conference 2026

Migration and Mobilities Research Network (MMRN)

Edinburgh Napier University | 23 June 2026

Deadline to submit your abstract: 31 March 2026

The Migration and Mobilities Research Network (MMRN) invites proposals for its 2026 Annual Conference on the entangled politics of hostility and hospitality in contemporary migration and mobility. Building on previous MMRN conferences on (dis)placement, liminality, and the thresholds of migration, we use this pairing to examine the conditions under which people are welcomed, refused, contained, and moved.

Drawing on Derrida's (2000) notion of hostipitality, we start from the claim that welcoming is never neutral: it is structured by power, conditionality, and the capacity to demand identification and set the terms of entry. Yet the positions of 'host' and 'guest' are unstable and shifting, and neat binaries often fail to capture lived realities. Following Berg and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2018), we also attend to alternative modes of thought and action grounded in feminist and decolonial ethics of care, solidarity, and reciprocity that emerge within and against bordered regimes.

We invite contributions that complicate the hostility–hospitality opposition by tracing how these dynamics operate across scales and sites, including in mundane and everyday ways. In the UK, the 'hostile environment' has produced extensive harms, from Windrush to the deliberate production of destitution and precarity (Guma et al., 2024; Reynolds, Erel, and O'Neill, 2024; Spiegel et al., 2024), but hostility is neither uniquely British nor confined to state policy: it is reproduced through media, everyday encounters, labour markets, and institutions, and is also contested through grassroots solidarity, mutual aid, and creative practice. Equally, conditional hospitality through resettlement, temporary protection, sanctuary initiatives, and third-sector support raises questions of deservingness, the terms of welcome, and how humanitarian frameworks can reproduce hierarchies (Wilkinson et al., 2025; Petie and Allsopp, 2025; Sharapov and Komenda, 2025).

Forced migration remains central to the conference, while we also encourage proposals that extend these debates to the wider landscape of mobility. The 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry, 2006) reminds us that movement and stasis cut across all forms of mobility, and that distinctions between 'desirable' and 'undesirable' mobilities are shaped by racialised, gendered, and classed hierarchies. We welcome interdisciplinary contributions across human geography, sociology, the humanities, languages, business and management, law, social work, creative arts, and related fields.

We invite proposals for both individual papers (15 minutes) and creative or practice-based contributions (film screenings, artistic interventions), and activist, practitioner and community-led presentations. We particularly welcome contributions from people with lived experience of migration, displacement, and bordering practices. We invite contributions that engage with, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- the politics of welcome, sanctuary, and solidarity in hostile policy environments
- the production and contestation of 'hostile environments' across national contexts
- conditional and unconditional hospitality in theory and practice
- hospitality as industry and as ethic – migrant labour in the hospitality, care, and service sectors
- language, translation, and multilingualism as thresholds of welcome and exclusion

- the conditional hospitality of visa regimes, protection regimes, integration requirements, and international student mobility
- institutional regulation and racialisation of workers' mobility across borders
- mobilities, immobilities, and the differential governance of movement
- creative, artistic, and participatory approaches to representing displacement and belonging
- lived experience, autoethnography, and testimony as modes of knowledge production and resistance; and
- broader questions of knowledge production in migration research, including questions of positionality, co-production, and decolonial methodologies.

Submission details

Please submit a 300-word abstract along with your name, institutional affiliation (or independent researcher/practitioner/organisation), and a short biographical note (up to 100 words) by emailing mmrn@napier.ac.uk no later than 31 March 2026.

Please indicate whether your proposal is for an individual paper (15 minutes) or a creative/practice-based contribution (for example, film screening, artistic intervention), and include any audiovisual or space requirements where relevant. If you have any questions, please contact Dr Kiril Sharapov at k.sharapov@napier.ac.uk

There is no conference fee. However, we are unable to offer bursaries, contributions towards travelling costs, or any other financial assistance, nor can we issue invitation letters for visa purposes for this conference.

References

- Berg, M.L. and Fiddian-Qasimiyeh, E. (2018) 'Introduction to the Issue: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility', *Migration and Society*, 1(1), pp. 1–6.
- Derrida, J. (2000) 'Hostipitality', *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 5(3), pp. 3–16.
- Griffiths, M. and Yeo, C. (2021) 'The UK's Hostile Environment: Deputising Immigration Control', *Critical Social Policy*, 41(4), pp. 521–544.
- Guma, T., Blake, Y., Maclean, G., MacLeod, K., Makutsa, R., & Sharapov, K. (2024). “Are we criminals?” – everyday racialisation in temporary asylum accommodation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 47(4), 742–762.
- Petie, O. and Allsopp, J. (2025) 'Exploring Hospitality, Hostility and (Un)home in Hotel Accommodation for Asylum Seekers in the UK', *Hospitality & Society*, 15(1–2), pp. 23–44.
- Reynolds, T., Erel, U. and O'Neill, M. (2024) 'Editorial Introduction: Racialised Migrants Navigating the UK's Hostile Environment Policies', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 47(5), pp. 781–797.
- Sharapov, K. and Komenda, H. (2025) 'Conceptualising Vulnerability in Forced Displacement: The Role of Human Rights-Based Approaches in Mitigating Trafficking Risks — Findings From Poland and Romania', *International Migration*, 63(5).
- Sheller, M. and Urry, J. (2006) 'The New Mobilities Paradigm', *Environment and Planning A*, 38(2), pp. 207–226.
- Spiegel, S.J. et al. (2024) 'Introduction: When Displacement Studies Meets "Hostile Environment" Politics', in *Displacement, Borders, and Unsettling Narratives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wilkinson, J., Urie, G., Moysidou, M. and Ratz, S. (2025) 'Welcome to the In-Between: The Liminality of Welcome Within Third Sector Organisations Supporting Refugees and Those Seeking Asylum in Scotland'. Presented at MMRN Annual Conference, Edinburgh Napier University, 19 June 2025.