



Annual Conference Migration and Mobilities Research Network

(Re)Mapping Mobility: Migration, Thresholds, and the Politics of (Dis)Placement

19 June 2025, 9.30 - 4.30 pm

Location: Glassroom, Merchiston Campus, Edinburgh Napier University, EH10 5DT

Registration link: <https://events.humanitix.com/mmrnconference>

In an era of political polarisation, economic instability, and shifting geopolitical landscapes, the experience of migration is increasingly marked by liminality. Many who migrate find themselves 'in-between' – neither fully embedded in their new environments nor entirely tethered to those they left behind. From bureaucratic delays that extend legal limbo to affective and psychological states of being stuck, the thresholds of migration have become sites of tension, negotiation, and contestation. This conference explores contemporary experiences of (voluntary and forced) mobility with a focus on those navigating precarious and transitional spaces – those waiting, being pushed, or living in prolonged uncertainty. How do states, institutions, communities, and migrants themselves manage these states of flux? How does mobility intersect with governance, global inequalities, and shifting cultural frameworks? And how are ideas of 'home' and 'arrival' disrupted by enduring impermanence?

Bringing together scholars, practitioners, and creative contributors from diverse disciplines, the conference fosters conversation on how people live through and respond to these conditions. It invites reflection on the systems that shape mobility and displacement, as well as the everyday strategies of endurance, refusal, and adaptation that emerge in their wake. From survival and solidarity to critiques of containment, the programme speaks to the complex realities of navigating, and resisting, the thresholds of migration.

Conference Programme (subject to last-minute changes)

0930 – 0950	Registration/Tea and Coffee	
0950 – 1000	Welcome	Kiril Sharapov
Keynote Address		
1000 – 1045	Moving Through the Thresholds of the Human: Migrants, Exiles, Slaves, and Criminals	Professor Julia O’Connell Davidson University of Bristol
Documentary screening + Q&A with filmmakers		
1055 – 1140	Voices from Ipswich (‘20.35) A participatory documentary film where a group of teenagers and young men from Africa explore what it's like to arrive and settle as a refugee in the United Kingdom. Car Wash (‘4.30) Car Wash explores the way government policy removes rights to work from people seeking asylum in the UK, and creates the conditions for this new phenomena known as 'modern slavery.'	Brook Woldu
Session 1: Coping, Temporality, and Exile (Chair: TBC)		
1145 – 1245	Busyness, Boredom and the Business of Time-Tricking: Temporal Dimensions of Well-Being Among Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK and the Gambia	Brianne Wenning King’s College London
	Navigating Academic Displacement: The Agency of New-Exile Academics from Turkey	Latife Akyüz European University Viadrina
	Necropolitical Horror: Spiders and Migration in <i>Infected</i> (2023)	Elsa Bouet Edinburgh Napier University
1245 – 1330	Lunch	
Session 2: Negotiating Belonging and Representing Displacement (Chair: TBC)		
1330 – 1445	The Politics of Enclosure: Lessons from Participatory Refugee Camp Governance for Rethinking Traveller Site Reform in the United Kingdom	Kyle Schwartz University of York
	Welcome to the In-Between: The Liminality of Welcome Within Third Sector Organisations Supporting Refugees and Those Seeking Asylum in Scotland	Jane Wilkinson. Gavin Urie, Mania Moysidou, Sibylle Ratz Edinburgh Napier University
	Crossing Lines: Comics about Human Migration	Frederik Byrn Køhlert Edinburgh Napier University
	Contemplating Kinship: The Role of Family in the Experience of Transfeminine Migrants from Lebanon Living in Germany	Eleanor Beaton University of Edinburgh
1445 – 1500	Coffee Break	
Session 3: Institutional Frameworks and Structures of Harm (Chair: TBC)		
1500 – 1615	Beyond ‘a Few Bad Employers’: The Structures That Facilitate Slavery in the Lebanese Kafala System	Marya Al-Hindi University of Edinburgh
	Navigating Barriers’: Examining the Challenges Faced by Social Workers in Addressing the Social Needs of Looked After Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People in Scotland	Akeem Babatunde Robert Gordon University
	A Continuum of Violence? An Exploration of the Lived Experience of the UK Asylum System Through the Voices of Children and Young People Who Have Experienced Trafficking and Professionals Who Support Them	Maria Fotopoulou, Maggie Grant, Paul Rigby University of Stirling
	Fostering Hope and Connection: Refugee Sanctuary Scotland’s Peer-Led Research on Mental Health and Wellbeing Services in Glasgow for Adult Asylum Seekers	Joanna Knight (and colleagues, TBC) merl Services
1615 – 1630	Closing Comments	
		Kiril Sharapov