

Final Document III ICoMiR

Brasília, May 22, 2025

The third International Conference on Migration and Refuge (ICoMiR), organized by the Scalabrinian Center for Migration Studies (CSEM) and, the Scalabrinian Foundation, two organizations of the Congregation of Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, took place in Brasília from May 19 to 22, 2025, following on the first and second editions held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2018, and in Tijuana, Mexico, in 2023 respectively. More than 200 people participated in person, while around 800 participated virtual, representing 30 countries. Members of universities and research institutions, organized civil society, international organizations and, most importantly, refugees and migrants shared analyses, reflections and experiences on the theme: **"Understanding, humanizing and valuing people on the move"**.

The current international situation presents enormous challenges, characterized by setbacks in the protection of the rights of individuals and groups, the increase in armed conflicts, situations with "characteristics of genocide", the destruction of the environment and, more generally, the growing "xenophobia/aporophobia". In this challenging context, **many people resort to international mobility as a strategy to address adversity and achieve a more dignified life through work. Many of these people are being violated, criminalized and deported, as in the case of Trump's current immigration policies.**

Contrary to prevailing public opinion, we, the participants of the III ICoMiR, call for people on the move not to be seen as a burden or a threat. Nor should they be treated in a welfare-based manner, as mere victims, nor used for electoral purposes. Instead, **migrants and refugees have rights, regardless of their migration status, and represent a potential source of enrichment, from a social, cultural, economic, political and religious point of view, for the societies of origin, transit, arrival and return**, provided that they are offered adequate conditions and opportunities.

Aiming to change the narratives about people in mobility, we at the 3rd ICoMiR seek **to understand**, humanize and value contemporary migrations. We believe it is necessary to understand, in an interdisciplinary and multifaceted way, the characteristics and challenges of contemporary human mobility, beyond the hegemonic bureaucratic-administrative categories, often marked by neocolonial and criminalizing biases. The focus of the reflection was not restricted to structural factors, but concentrated mainly on migrants, dialoguing with them, listening to their cries and highlighting the transformative dynamics that strengthen their agency, at an individual and collective level. **We therefore**

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call on policy promoters to adopt approaches that respect dignity and human rights in understanding migration processes and to value the contributions and protagonism of their subjects.

In this sense, we would like to highlight the concept of “**protagonism**”, that is, interpreting people in mobility not as numbers, but as historical subjects, builders of their own lives and people who define their own struggles, beyond the barriers they encounter. This is a concrete expression of our commitment to human dignity, a dignity that belongs to each individual, for no other reason than being human. It is worth remembering that our shared humanity must allow us to recognize ourselves in migrants. In some way, we are all migrants. From this perspective, we affirm that humanizing human mobility processes must be an absolute priority for contemporary societies, firmly rejecting any type of discrimination related to nationality, migration status, ethnicity, religion or gender identity.

We emphasize the importance of **valuing people on the move**. The inclusion of migrants and refugees as subjects of rights in countries of transit, arrival and return contributes to the construction of societies that are more open to intercultural complementarity, building two-way bridges where there is reciprocal learning. Migration should be considered a source of wealth. **Migrants and their families contribute their experiences, struggles and economic contributions to the formation of more developed, supportive and inclusive societies.** In this sense, it is necessary to see migrants in their entirety, so that governments can guarantee spaces for dialogue within communities, autonomy, access to justice and recognition of their cultural and religious expressions.

The concept of “radical hospitality” incorporates our life stories, our resistance and our partial and plural identities. The exercise of interacting with migrants involves strategies of care (especially for migrant children), demonstrations of affection and a willingness to be affected by their struggles. It is about sharing protection, recognizing the potential of others on their journey and building spaces of joy and fraternity (sisterhood) within the community.

We are living in a time of dehumanization, with derogatory, xenophobic, racist and totalitarian discourses that degrade and render invisible people on the move around the world. We, **the participants of the III ICoMiR, firmly affirm that the reality of migration represents benefit, life and growth — both for those who migrate and for those who welcome them. We therefore reject the narratives spread by some governments and sectors of the international media that seek to criminalize and dehumanize the mobile population.**

Migrants are not violent, they do not come to take jobs, they are not murderers, and they do not represent a burden. On the contrary, they contribute very positively to the lives of the

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countries that receive them. Migration is an opportunity for hope and a fair fight — both for those who migrate and for those who welcome them.

Therefore, we call for: **the implementation of migration regularization policies, facilitation of the recognition of diplomas, the possibility of access to decent work, the strengthening of migrant associations, the multiplication of intercultural mediators, guarantee of access to mental and reproductive health, the elimination of all discriminatory practices, especially in the media, the fight against organized crime and the eradication of human trafficking.**

It is essential to better understand, humanize our perspectives and value people in mobility.

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