

Open Call for Working Groups

IV International Conference on Migration and Refuge (ICoMiR)

Humanity on the Move: Diversity, Opportunities and the Promotion of Rights

The organizing committee of the **IV International Conference on Migration and Refuge (ICoMiR)** invites proposals for Working Groups (WGs) to be held during the conference.

ICoMiR is an international platform that brings together **academics, migrant leaders, civil society organizations, pastoral agents, journalists, artists, policymakers, and people with lived experiences of migration and refuge.**

The conference seeks to foster dialogue across disciplines, sectors, and communities in order to strengthen the protagonism of migrants and refugees and promote collective reflection on mobility, rights, and solidarity.

In this spirit, the Working Groups are conceived as open and participatory spaces where different forms of knowledge and experiences can meet.

Submission Deadline: May 8, 2026

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Scope of Contributions

We welcome submissions that engage with the realities of migration, displacement, refuge, trafficking in persons and human mobility from diverse perspectives.

Proposals may include, but are not limited to:

- Academic research papers based on scientific research.
- Articles and analytical reflections not only from scholars, but also from practitioners.
- Reports and testimonies from migrant, refugee, stateless and survivor of trafficking in persons communities.
- Experiences and practices from civil society organizations and sociopastoral initiatives.
- Journalistic investigations and reports addressing migration and displacement.
- Artistic expressions, including visual arts, storytelling, performance, poetry, photography, or multimedia projects.
- Community-based initiatives and practices of solidarity and care.

ICoMiR particularly encourages participation by **migrants, refugees, (former) stateless persons and survivors of trafficking in persons**, as well as initiatives that highlight their **agency, leadership, and contributions to society**.

We also encourage contributions from local authorities (e.g. local governments) addressing migration-related challenges within local governance frameworks, including issues such as integration, migrant wellbeing, return migration, and the situation of families of migrant workers.

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Important Note on Funding

ICoMiR **does not provide funding for travel or participation for the general public.**

However, if a proposal submitted to a WG is accepted, the organizing committee will provide an **official acceptance letter**, which participants may use to seek financial support from their institutions or funding bodies.

Exceptional cases may be considered for financial support: a limited number of participants who identify as **migrants, refugees, (former) stateless persons, survivors of trafficking in persons, migrant collectives representatives or individuals in situation of financial hardship** may apply for full support if they are unable to attend the conference in person due to economic constraints. These cases will be reviewed individually by the Conference Organizing Committee, which will evaluate both the financial need and the potential contribution of the participant to the conference.

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Working Groups

For this edition of the conference, the organizing committee proposes the following thematic Working Groups. We especially encourage submissions based on experiences and practices emerging from or engaging with Asian contexts.

Proposals should be submitted under one of these themes.

WG 1 - Spiritual and Psychological Accompaniment in Contexts of Mobility

This working group explores the role of spiritual and psychological accompaniment, including pastoral care in contexts of migration, displacement, statelessness and refuge. Contributions may address theological reflections, pastoral experiences, practices of interreligious respect, ecumenical initiatives, and spiritual practices that support migrants and displaced communities.

WG 2 - Migrant Protagonism, Leadership and Collective Transformation

This working group centers on the protagonism of migrants, refugees, (former) stateless persons and survivors of trafficking in persons as active subjects in mobility processes. Moving beyond approaches that frame migrants primarily as vulnerable or passive, this WG emphasizes their capacity to act, decide, influence and transform social realities.

Contributions may explore how migrants exercise autonomy, develop strategies of survival and resistance, and participate in shaping social, political and cultural processes mainly during the trajectory or in destination contexts. Particular attention is given to forms of collective organization, grassroots leadership, advocacy, and the production of meanings and knowledge from lived experiences.

WG 3 - Migration Governance, Deportability and Regimes of Control

This working group examines migration governance as a set of institutional, legal and political practices that regulate, manage and discipline human mobility across different scales. It invites critical analyses of asylum systems, border regimes and deportability, understood not only as legal mechanisms but as broader regimes of control that shape the conditions of mobility, belonging and exclusion.

Contributions may explore how processes such as criminalization, selective enforcement, and bureaucratic regulation produce differentiated access to rights, including health,

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education, housing and legal protection. Particular attention is given to the ways in which borders are extended and internalized within national territories through everyday practices, institutions and social relations.

WG 4 - Care, Solidarity, and Community-Based Practices in Contexts of Mobility

This working group focuses on practices of care and solidarity as central responses to the challenges of migration, displacement and forced mobility. Grounded in the defense of life and human dignity, it explores how communities, civil society organizations and sociopastoral actors develop concrete forms of support, protection and accompaniment for migrants, refugees, stateless persons and survivors of trafficking in persons.

Contributions may examine experiences of mutual aid, community-based networks and humanitarian responses, with particular attention to the ways in which these practices operate within and often against restrictive migration regimes. The WG also invites critical reflections on the criminalization of solidarity, as well as on the ethical, political and relational dimensions of care in contexts marked by inequality, exclusion and violence.

Special attention is given to practices that foster agency, autonomy and collective organization, recognizing care not only as assistance, but as a space of encounter, resistance and transformation.

WG 5 - Knowledge from the Field: Research, Practice, and Methodologies

This working group focuses on the production of knowledge - not only but mainly - grounded in lived experiences and field-based practices, emphasizing approaches that challenge hierarchical and extractive models of research. It invites reflections on engaged and committed research, in which knowledge production is intrinsically linked to ethical, political and social responsibilities.

Contributions may explore participatory, collaborative and horizontal methodologies that recognize migrants, refugees, stateless persons and survivors of trafficking in persons as the protagonists of knowledge, rather than objects of study. The WG welcomes analyses of research practices that foster dialogue and reciprocity in the construction of knowledge.

Particular attention is given to methodological approaches that emerge from the field, including community-based research and forms of inquiry that value situated knowledge, lived experience and epistemic plurality. The WG also encourages critical reflections on

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the tensions, limits and possibilities of producing knowledge in contexts marked by inequality, mobility and power asymmetries.

WG 6 - South–South Migration and Emerging Routes and Shifting Regimes of Mobility

This working group explores contemporary dynamics of migration across the Global South, including in the Asian context (but not only), moving beyond descriptive accounts of routes and flows to examine the structural, historical and political conditions that shape these mobilities. It invites analyses and experiences of how changing migration routes, transnational networks and regional configurations are embedded in broader processes of inequality and colonial legacies.

Contributions may address the emergence of not so visible corridors of mobility, the reconfiguration of transit and destination spaces, and the role of states, regional systems and non-state actors in governing and regulating South-South migration. Particular attention is given to the differentiated regimes of mobility that produce hierarchies of movement, legality and access to rights within the Global South.

The WG also welcomes reflections on the strategies, networks and forms of agency through which migrants navigate these routes, build transnational connections and reshape social, economic and political landscapes across regions.

WG 7 - Gender and Intersectionality in Migration

This working group examines how migration processes are shaped by the intersections of gender, race, class, citizenship, sexuality and age. It invites contributions that move beyond single-axis analyses to explore how multiple forms of inequality and discrimination are produced, experienced and negotiated in contexts of mobility.

Contributions may address issues such as domestic work, global care chains, “left-behind” women and children, gender-based violence, and the differentiated experiences of migrant women, children and youth. Particular attention is given to how these dynamics are embedded in broader structures of power, including labor regimes, migration governance and racialized hierarchies.

The WG also welcomes analyses of how migrants themselves navigate, resist and transform these intersecting conditions, as well as reflections on policies, practices and forms of collective organization that challenge inequalities and promote rights.

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WG 8 - Faith-Based Organizations, Advocacy and Institutional Responses to Migration

This working group focuses on the role of faith-based organizations as institutional actors in migration contexts, examining their contributions beyond pastoral and spiritual accompaniment. It explores how churches, religious congregations and interfaith initiatives engage in advocacy, service provision, policy dialogue and the defense of migrant rights at local, national and transnational levels.

Contributions may analyze the ways in which these actors operate within complex migration regimes, including their interactions with states, international organizations and civil society networks. Particular attention is given to their role in shaping public discourse, influencing policies, and responding to humanitarian needs through structured programs and institutional practices.

The WG also invites critical reflections on the opportunities, limits and tensions faced by faith-based actors, including issues related to power, representation, coordination and the negotiation of religious and secular frameworks in migration governance.

WG 9 - Youth, Education and Inclusion in Contexts of Mobility

This working group examines the role of education in shaping the experiences of migrant, refugee, (former) stateless and trafficked children and young people. It invites critical analyses of education systems as spaces where inclusion, exclusion and belonging are negotiated and contested.

Contributions may explore education policies, access to schooling, language barriers, documentation requirements and the impact of migration status on educational trajectories. Particular attention is given to how schools and educational institutions can function as sites of both integration and exclusion, reproducing or challenging broader social inequalities.

The WG also welcomes reflections on the agency of young people in mobility, including their strategies of adaptation, resistance and participation, as well as community-based and alternative educational initiatives that seek to promote rights, dignity and meaningful inclusion.

WG 10 - Trafficking in persons, Exploitation in Contexts of Mobility

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This working group examines trafficking in persons within broader dynamics of migration, labor exploitation and mobility. Moving beyond narrowly defined legal and victim-centered frameworks, it invites critical analyses of how trafficking is produced, governed and experienced across different contexts.

Contributions may explore the intersections between trafficking, labour regimes and restrictive migration policies, highlighting how conditions of vulnerability and exploitation are shaped by structural inequalities, gender, legal status and access to rights.

The WG also welcomes reflections on the experiences, strategies and forms of agency of survivors of trafficking in persons, as well as on community-based, institutional and policy responses that seek to address exploitation while promoting rights, dignity and autonomy, especially in Asia.

WG 11 - Labour Migration, Return and Transnational Livelihoods

This working group examines labour migration as a dynamic and multi-sited process, including departure, circulation and return. It invites analyses of how migrants engage in transnational labour markets, construct livelihoods across borders, and navigate changing economic and legal conditions over time.

Contributions may explore temporary and circular migration, return migration and reintegration processes, including the experiences of returnees and diasporic communities, such as the Balikbayan. Particular attention is given to the social, economic and political dimensions of return, including challenges related to reinsertion, recognition of skills, access to rights and the reconfiguration of family and community relations.

The WG welcomes reflections on how migrants actively shape transnational economies, sustain networks of care and remittances, and negotiate aspirations, mobility projects and future trajectories across different contexts.

WG 12 - Climate Change, Mobility and Uneven Vulnerabilities

This working group examines the complex relationships between climate change and human mobility, moving beyond linear or deterministic explanations of displacement. It invites analyses of how environmental changes interact with social, economic and political factors to shape diverse mobility strategies, including displacement, adaptation and immobility.

Contributions may explore how climate-related processes—such as extreme weather events, environmental degradation and resource scarcity—are embedded in broader

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contexts of inequality, territorial dynamics and governance. Particular attention is given to how vulnerabilities are unevenly distributed, affecting differently communities across the Global South.

The WG welcomes reflections on how individuals and communities respond to these conditions, including strategies of adaptation, resilience and mobility, as well as critical analyses of emerging policy frameworks and categories related to climate mobility.

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Format of Working Groups

Working Groups will function as **dialogue spaces** where participants present and discuss their contributions.

Each WG session will include short presentations followed by discussion.

Participants may submit proposals individually or collectively (max. 3 authors).

Submission Guidelines

Submissions must be in English, as presentations will be conducted in this language. Proposals should include:

- Title of the contribution
- Name(s) and affiliation(s) of the contributor(s)
- Indication of the Working Group
- Short abstract (max. 300 words)
- Type of contribution (academic paper, experience report, journalistic piece, artistic expression, etc.)

[Submit your proposal clicking on this link](#)

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About ICoMiR

The International Conference on Migration and Refuge (ICoMiR) is a global platform that promotes dialogue and collaboration among scholars, migrant communities, civil society organizations, pastoral agents, and policymakers.

Its goal is to **foster reflection, solidarity, and collective action for a world where no one is a stranger.**

Marlene E Wildner

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