



#escapes2025
Milano 11-12/09

Call VII Escapes 2025 Conference

Memories and places of exile Traces, solidarity, violation

Milan September 11-12, 2025

On May 13, 2015, the European Commission implemented the European Agenda on Migration in order to provide an immediate response to what was deemed to be a "Mediterranean crisis situation" and to indicate structural solutions for migration management. It was in fact a reorganization in a restrictive sense of the external and internal borders of the European Union and its member countries in relation to third countries.

This reorganization held the traces of previous phases of crises, such as the geopolitical destabilizations of the Middle East and North Africa area dated around 2011, the transformations of rescue practices in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes since 2013, and the movements related to the Balkan route. To the EU's gaze, these crises had incentivized irregular migration that was out of control in numbers and entry patterns. Adopting the pillars of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and in time becoming the inspiring basis for the new European Pact on Migration and Asylum (2020), the Agenda aimed to reconfigure border and transit zones inside and outside the Union by calling for political practices and mobilising resources, techniques and social actors useful for its purpose (e.g. relocation of control along West African borders, expedited return procedures and renewal of bilateral pacts, establishment of hotspot areas/approaches at entry points, deployment of forces to strengthen internal EU crossings).

These and other national and international policy measures, along with their implementation practices, have had immediate erosive effects on rights and freedom of movement. Prohibition of landing and transit; depletion of resources allocated to reception and dismantling of informal spaces for stopping and rescue; relocation and acceleration of repatriation procedures; forced stay in transit places that expose to violation; lists of safe countries and pacts for border externalization: these are just some of the measures that have made the consequences of these policy directions explicit and materially visible.

However, the refractive effects of these measures on individuals, communities, and their networks of relationships often manifest themselves with less visible and explicit characters. Their long-lasting reverberations, the force with which they affect migrant lives, and the wide-ranging consequences that also shatter local communities and forms of solidarity, inside and outside Europe, demand to be investigated, brought to light, and made public debate.

To reason about the consequences and transformations that have been generated around national and international migration policies is also to grasp the social ways in which they have been transgressed. People have continued to migrate and settle, to cross territories, reorganize lives, and cope with disciplinary orders. Where the Agenda has laid the groundwork for striking solidarity from below on behalf of migrant people, fostering a solidarity among member countries as a deterrence against migratory movements into and within Europe, new mobilizations, informal welcomes and solidarity have come to life, sometimes even recovering experiences deposited in places and in collective or solidaristic memory.



#escapes2025
Milano 11-12/09

The ten years since the European Agenda on Migration is a temporal pretext for capturing the forms and ways in which policy directions and implementation measures have eroded and fragmented the institution of asylum and, more generally, restricted access to mobility by people from the global South and stratified violations that affect both migrants and anyone who engages in forms of solidarity in their support.

Finally, understanding the current scenario implies considering a context in which the issues of border and mobility have become intertwined with the neoliberal crisis and the entrenchment of growing authoritarianism and populism, and in which there is a proliferation of wars and conflicts, starting with Ukraine and Palestine. It should be remembered, for example, that the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) was drafted in response to the aftermath of war and refugee status. Looking back allows one to look in perspective at the nexus between wars, diasporas and places of transit or landing, but above all to question the resilience of political and social rights.

The conference ***Memories and Places of Exile. Traces, Solidarity, Violation*** intends to situate itself in a broad temporal and geographical scenario in order to document sedimentations and consequences of violation on those who are considered external to the moral and national orders of things. It also intends to dwell on the memories deposited in the places traversed by migration, in communities and across generations, as well as to turn our gaze to the emergence of new forms of solidarity, alternative reception, practices of resistance and civic activism. We also intend to question, in a comparative perspective, the shattering of a public space capable of recognizing the memory and experience of exile and the possibility of building new spaces of recognition and solidarity. While experiences and memories may leave no trace or remain invisible to the institutional and public gaze, they can nevertheless equally settle in the places and lives of individuals and communities.

In a context of such complexity, empirical research and social experiences that have taken root in territories can express a methodological and reflexive tool aimed at exploring social processes in their articulation, observing the present in light of the past and possible future scenarios, and mobilizing memories of asylum, mobility, and solidarity.

The Call for Panels of the 7th Escapes Conference ***Memories and Places of Exile. Traces, Solidarity, Violation*** solicits proposals from research, professional, activist, artistic and visual experiences on the following macro-themes:

- Fragmentation and erosion of asylum law: analysis and reflections related to the hollowing out and establishment of legal categories and/or humanitarian taxonomies as a deterrent against migrant persons.
- Solidarity: although in a context in which and solidarity actions toward migrants have been affected and criminalized, solidarity practices and civic/political activism have nevertheless been maintained, others have come to life by taking innovative forms, and still others have reconstructed solidarity contexts by keeping the traces of past experiences.
- Comparison, historical temporality and memory: in the face of crumbling spaces of recognition and a memory bent on collecting and bearing witness to exile, the experiences that over time have been sedimented in contexts (territorial, social, labor, union), in collective histories of diaspora, in practices that have acted in a sense of solidarity or that have played a role in archiving and mobilizing memories of exile deserve to be recovered and made part of the memory of the present.



#escapes2025
Milano 11-12/09

- Reception and guardianship: analysis, reflections and research on the effects of shrinking reception systems on the people received, on caregivers/workers, and on local communities; what opposing practices are making space in the interstices and outside institutional reception.
- Practices of listening/construction of testimony: the international and national normative framework, humanitarian and bureaucratic taxonomies, and legislating through decrees have also had important consequences on the functions of the Asylum Commissions, on the timing and on the possibility of people to construct the testimony of violation. In this context, a priority is to question the habitus of listening, the timing/modes of telling the stories of violation, and the construction of new practices of listening and memory reconstruction.
- Crisis of the social and forms of aggregation: restrictive policies aimed at migration are to be placed in a neoliberal context that has disaggregated the social dimension of foundational elements of collective life-such as work, trade unions, forms of protection, health, and public education-with repercussions on migrant lives and communities at large.
- Long-lasting effects/longitudinal perspectives/generations: a complex analysis of migration attempts to capture effects and reverberations that the migration experience itself and the set-up of restrictions have on collectivities, the formation of subjectivities, and meaningful relationships including the consequences that are imprinted along generations and childhood.
- Impact on contexts of origin and transit: the constant call for agreements with third countries (in fact places of origin or transit of migrants) to dislocate, transfer control, and stem departures builds, renews, or reinforces border zones, impacts the social life and cultures of would-be migrants' mobility.

Method of submitting panel proposals

Panel proposals must be received by the scientific committee by March 15, 2025 and sent to migrazioniforzate@unimi.it indicating "Escapes 2025 Conference - call for panels" as the subject line.

The panel proposal should have a maximum length of 600 words and contain:

- a brief description of the content to be addressed within the panel, possibly already in the format of a call for presentations to be launched in a unified form by Escapes;
- A description of how the panel will be conducted (presentation of scientific papers, discussion of cases, discussion between practitioners and researchers, workshops, presentation of visual/art works).

The proposal should also be accompanied by the name of the principal proposer(s), title of the proposer(s), institution of affiliation, brief curriculum vitae, and e-mail address of the contact person. The main working language of the panels will be Italian. Panel proposals in English (without translation) will also be evaluated to facilitate the participation of foreign researchers.

In developing the panel proposal, proponents consider that each panel will last 2 hours and therefore the maximum number of papers to be provided is 4. The organizing committee reserves the right to combine panels with similar discussion elements (after consultation with the proposers).



#escapes2025
Milano 11-12/09

Timing

- March 15, 2025: closing of the call for panels
- end of March 2025: panel acceptance communication
- end of March 2025: launch of call for presentations
- early May 2025: closing of the call for presentations
- mid-May 2025: communication of accepted presentations and publication of the final conference program
- September 11-12, 2025 #escapes2025 conference in Milan, Italy

Further and subsequent updates regarding the organization will be posted at escapes.unimi.it