

26th International Migration Conference

Call for Papers on the Conference Topic „**Mapping Participation**” and on Current Challenges in the Context of Migration and “**Sustainable Global Social Work and Education**”.

Wednesday, June 10 to Friday, June 12, 2026

Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft des Saarlandes htw saar, Fakultät für Sozialwissenschaften (Saarbrücken, Deutschland)

“Mapping Participation” is the main topic of the 2026 International Migration Conference. In addition, contributions may be submitted on current societal challenges in the context of migration and “Sustainable Global Social Work and Education.” The conference languages are German and English. Presentations and discussions will not be translated.

Call for Papers on the conference topic “Mapping Participation”

Participation is more than political involvement. It is closely linked to the philosophical question of the “good life” as well as to the socio-philosophical concept of recognition, since recognition is considered a prerequisite for participation. Participation refers to people’s involvement in decisions that affect their lives, often in the context of democratic processes and social communities.

Since the 1990s, migration research in German-speaking contexts has identified a lack of societal participation among migrants. This applies to both political participation—where critiques frequently center on the challenges associated with acquiring citizenship—and social participation, particularly with regard to disadvantages in accessing and navigating the labor market, as well as the limited participation of children and youth in social and educational institutions. Cultural participation is also affected, with critiques highlighting disadvantages in cultural self-determination and limited involvement in the cultural offerings of the majority society.

While participation has been mainly examined in academic research, in public debates - especially in integration discourse - it is primarily framed as a problem. Lack of participation is often regarded as the result of insufficient integration efforts by migrants. Since the 2000s, many Western countries, especially in the German-speaking context, have therefore imposed new integration requirements on migrants, particularly concerning language

acquisition and so-called economic integration. Within these debates, the notion of participation has been narrowly construed, predominantly in terms of the contributions migrants are expected to make toward integration..

By contrast, broader forms of participation are discussed in relation to the creation of social opportunities - for example, in connection with multicultural policies developed in Anglo-Saxon migration societies since the 1970s, or in newer concepts of anti-racist, postcolonial, and decolonial critiques and of “multicultural conviviality.” Here, participation is understood as a comprehensive concept, opening up opportunities for migrants - especially newcomers in democratic societies - for equal social inclusion. Beyond democratic contexts, however, questions of integration and multiculturalism are also being debated, with legal frameworks for migrant participation being developed. Still, forms of participation in non-democratic societies remain largely unexplored.

The conference explores how and whether people who may be racially marginalized are included in decisions affecting their lives within democratic processes and social communities. Against this backdrop, contributions to the 26IMC will chart the wide field of participation in migration societies. A mapping of participation will be undertaken to highlight and analyze forms of participatory social practices, attitudes, and orientations. The aim is to outline new developments, examine current debates, and seek answers to the question of what significance participation can have at various societal levels - political, social, cultural, spatial, virtual - and in different societies - democratic and non-democratic - for a sustainable, peaceful, and mutually supportive future.

Call for Papers open section: Current Social Challenges in the Context of Migration and “Sustainable Global Social Work and Education”

The open section of the International Migration Conference provides a platform for studies that address current challenges in the context of migration.. Of particular interest are interdisciplinary and international investigations on education, participation, marginalization, or cultures of remembrance. The focus may also include issues concerning (new) minorities—people and groups who may have little or no direct migration experience but are nevertheless portrayed as “migrant” in public discourses or social media. Contributions on “Sustainable Global Social Work and Education,” on “Philosophy and Migration,” as well as on approaches oriented toward sustainable development and peacebuilding in migration societies are also welcome.

For both sections of the conference, theoretical as well as empirical contributions from current international and comparative studies are welcome, particularly from the Global South, as well as contributions on recent migration and refugee movements (e.g., from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan).

Please assign your contribution to one of the following thematic areas and indicate this in your proposal:

CFP1 «Mapping Participation»

1. Concept and Definition
2. Theoretical and Historical Developments
3. Social Participation
4. Political Participation
5. Cultural Participation
6. Spatial Participation
7. Participatory Research

CFP2 “Current Social Challenges in the Context of Migration”

8. Education
9. Sustainable Global Social Work
10. Philosophy of Migration
11. Cultures of Remembrance
12. Migration and Minorities
13. Solidarity

Submission and Proposal Format

1. Proposals must be submitted online only: www.migrationskonferenz.ch
2. Maximum length: 300 words, including presentation title, short biography, and contact details (email, phone, postal address).
3. Indicate which of the listed thematic areas your contribution belongs to.
4. Please also indicate in which language (German/English, or both) you are able to present and discuss.

Deadlines

Proposal submission (German/English): December 15, 2025 Extended until 15 January 2026!

Notification of acceptance: February 2026

General information: www.migrationskonferenz.ch

Participation as Presenter

Participation in the conference is subject to a fee for presenters. Upon acceptance of their proposals, authors will be required to register (fee-based) for the conference. Only registered presenters will be included in the program.

- Institute for Integration and Participation, University of Applied Sciences and Arts North-western Switzerland FHNW (Olten, Switzerland)
- University of Applied Sciences of Saarland (htw saar), Faculty of Social Sciences (Saarbrücken, Germany)
- Department of Educational Science and Research in Education & UNESCO Chair Global Citizenship Education – Culture of Diversity and Peace, Alpen-Adria University Klagenfurt (Austria)
- Centre de Documentation sur les Migrations Humaines (CDMH), Dudelange (Luxembourg)
- Key Research Area on Migration and Inclusive Societies, Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, University of Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
- Competence Platform on Migration, Intercultural Education and Development (KOPF), Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, TH Köln (Germany)
- Institute for Regional and Migration Research (IRM) (Germany)

Program Committee Members

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