



VII AGROMIG INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR MIGRATIONS, AGRIFOOD AND RURAL CHANGE

University of Calabria
23-24 May 2024

The international AGROMIG network has gradually developed around research-based discussions on labour migration issues in agrifood and rural areas, collaborating through the organisation of dedicated seminars and collective publications. The events held in Bergamo (2013), Murcia (2014), Athens (2015), Madrid (2017), Marseille (2018), and Agadir (2019) debated the issues of migration in relation to the transformations of agri-food systems and rurality, through theoretical and empirical contributions, involving scholars from different (sub)disciplines, and drawing from the fields of rural sociology, rural geography, critical agrarian studies, labour processes, migration studies, livelihoods studies, gender and intersectional studies, and political ecology. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on mobility and public events suspended opportunities for confrontation (i.e. a latest event scheduled for 2020 in Sibiu was cancelled). However, these dramatic events also brought to public attention the relevance of migrant workers in the international agrifood system, as well as the precarious conditions and deprivation of rights they suffer.

Consequently, public and private debates and interventions have focused on promoting the adoption of new technologies on the pretext of reducing labour dependency, ensuring decent working conditions and a sustainable use of resources and inputs. Actually, it is worth mentioning how, during the last years, rural areas have become the terrain of new social conflicts, new practices of exploitation and reproduction of labour, but also the settings for the humanitarianism of non-governmental and non-profit organisations, or private-public interventions for sustainability. Innovations are also produced by grassroots and civil society groups together with workers. Thus, the relationships, practices and strategies of the various actors involved in these dynamics and their impact on the organisation of production and work need to be understood more deeply in the making of the corporate-environment food regime.

Policy interventions and mechanisms, both formal and informal (i.e. feminisation, informalisation, racialisation), are also promoted to expand the recruitment pool of the temporary workforce in agrifood. Notwithstanding, alarms about labour shortages on the part of employers, restrictive migration policies persist, resulting in unprotected and precarious irregular migrants and refugees in rural areas. In the contemporary era, characterised by the dramatic and growing rise of regressive populism and populist nationalism, right-wing political groups are feeding off the rancorous and anti-immigration sentiments in rural areas fundamentally suffering from the contraction of public policies and the agrarian crisis. It is important to understand how these dynamics play together, what interests and social actors are involved, and what are the effects on rurality and labour.

Both in and out migrations are often produced by or participate in the transformations of agriculture, land and productive assets, nature and value chains, in the Global North as well as in the Global South. Migrant wage workers are crucial for agrifood capitalist development, but at times they are also important for the reproduction of small farms and rural communities in crisis. Rural areas also host migrants who decide to take up farming autonomously. How do gender, class and race differences affect these processes? What kind of conflicts, obstacles or opportunities do they experience? How do commodity and land rushes affect migration and labor organization? How do the ecological transformations or transitions impact on the organisation and condition of labour, and which role do migrant workers play within them?

This seminar aims to analyse these processes of change by highlighting cases in different countries and regions, in order to capture similarities and differences, but also to deepen our knowledge of issues and regional contexts that are still poorly investigated, and to make innovative theoretical contributions.

Migration as a subjective experience has both dimensions of out-migration and in-migration. Migration is again a litmus test for reading social transformations, at origin as well as at destination also in this case agrifood and rural changes.

Scientific Committee: Apostolos G. Papadopoulos (Harokopio University) - Loukia-Maria Fratsea (Harokopio University) - Carlos De Castro (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) - Gennaro Avallone (University of Salerno) - Mimmo Perrotta (University of Bergamo) - Ruth McAreavey (Newcastle University) - Yoan Molinero Gerbeau (Universidad Pontificia de Comillas) - Mohamed Bouchelkha (Université Ibn Zohr/Agadir) - Saturnino Jun M. Borrás Jr. (International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University of Rotterdam) - Cristian Alarcon Ferrari (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) - Alicia Reigada Olaizola (Universidad de Sevilla) - Andrés Pedreño Cánovas (Universidad de Murcia) - Frédéric Décosse (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) - Isabella Giunta (Instituto de Altos Estudios Nacionales, Ecuador) - Elena Gadea (Universidad de Murcia) - Marta Guadalupe Rivera Ferre (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas) - Juana Moreno Nieto (Universidad de Cádiz) - Alin Croitoru (Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu) - Monica Serban (Romanian Academy) - Martina Lo Cascio (University of Padoa) - Maura Benegiamo (University of Pisa) - **Local Organizer Committee at UNICAL:** Carmelo Buscema, Gilda Catalano, Giuliana Comisso, Alessandra Corrado, Mariafrancesca D'Agostino, Elisabetta Della Corte, Silvia Sivini, Giovanna Vingelli, Annamaria Vitale, Stefano Mori, Camilla Macciani, Karen Urso, Mario Pullano, Carlotta Ebbreo, Mauro Conti, Mario Coscarello

How to submit an abstract: Authors are invited to submit an abstract of a maximum of 300 words, with a title and three key words, to this email: agromigunical2024@gmail.com. The deadline is the **20th of December 2023**. Notification of acceptance will be sent by the **20th of January 2024**.

Among the topics that can be covered by the proposed contributions are:

- Transformations in agriculture sustained by migrations or causing migrations
- Migration and labour recruitment policies and mechanisms in agrifood
- Racialization, feminilization and refugeesation of labour in agrifood
- Mobility and social reproduction dynamics in rural areas
- In-migration, access to the land, new entrants in agriculture, conversion from wage worker to self-employed small-scale producer/peasant
- Migrant wage labour and farm transformation
- Worker-driven and women-led innovations in agrifood and rural areas
- Humanitarian initiatives and policies addressing migrant workers' conditions in rural areas
- The impact of technology and digitalization on migrant labor in agrifood
- The implication of ecological transformations and ecological transition on migrant labor in agrifood and rural areas
- Anti-exploitation private initiatives, alternative agrifood networks and certification schemes
- Workers' struggles and resistances, collective organization and unionization, alliances and strategies for social justice

This list is not exhaustive and can be expanded.

For any question please send your email at: a.corrado@unical.it and agromigunical2024@gmail.com



ICAS
Initiatives in Critical Agrarian Studies



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Initiatives in Critical Agrarian Studies (ICAS) is an international network of like-minded scholars, activists and scholar-activists. It is coordinated from the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam.



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RRUSHES-6 – Commodity & land rushes and regimes: Reshaping five spheres of global social life (food, climate change, labour, citizenship, and geopolitics) is a research project at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands, in collaboration with the Transnational Institute (TNI), that has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 834916).



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