

Conference

'Does Immigration Enforcement Matter? Irregular Migration and Control Polices in the UK'

27 October 2017, 9.30 am – 5pm

London, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, NW1 2BJ

Invitation

About the conference

For the past four years, as part of Oxford University's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), we have conducted an ESRC-funded project on irregular migration and immigration enforcement in the UK. Our study looks specifically at in-country immigration law enforcement and its effects, impacts and limits, an aspect that has so far received very little academic attention.

These have been times of significant economic, political and legal upheaval which have brought new drivers to bear on this issue. Austerity and Brexit and institutional reorganisation and the so-called 'hostile environment approach' have become signifiers of the new conditions.

At this conference, we will present and discuss the emerging findings of our research but also seek advice on further analysis and dissemination. We will look at (1) the impact of increasingly tight legislation and robust enforcement measures on irregular migration and on irregular immigrants; in particular, (2) investigate organisational structure, culture and practices of immigration law enforcement agencies; (3) analyse the political, legal, practical and ethical limits of law enforcement; (4) consider the interaction between irregular immigrants' strategies, employer practices and enforcement measures; (5) sketch how irregular migrants navigate and survive internal immigration controls; (6) highlight the impact of enforcement on irregular migrants' access to fundamental rights; and (7) show how all this is perceived and shapes policies.

Finally, we will assess the British case in comparison to other European countries and with regards to the normative framework, critically explore some of the implications of the 'hostile environment approach' and discuss the meaning for the type of state that is emerging.

(for more information see <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/project/does-immigration-enforcement-matter-diem/>)

Conference Programme

9.30 Doors open

9.45 Welcome & Introduction, Franck Duvell, Myriam Cherti

10.00 Findings

- Immigration Enforcement: organisational culture between austerity and change, F Duvell
- Immigration Enforcement: 'doing more with less?', M Cherti
- Irregular immigrants: between resilience and stress, Irina Lapshyna
- Public services and NGOs: between reluctant partners and civil disobedience, M Cherti

11.10 Coffee break

11.30 Findings

- Q&A

12.30 External views

- Context to recent changes in immigration enforcement, Prof Bill Jordan, Plymouth University
- Comparative aspects, Germany, Dr Dita Vogel, University of Bremen
- Fundamental rights of irregular immigrants, Elvana Thaci, Council of Europe
- Best practices with regards to irregular immigrants' rights, Eve Geddie, PICUM, Brussels

13.30 - 15.00 Lunch Break

15.00-16.00 Break-out sessions

- Civil society and public sector ('strategic response to hostile environment'), chair PICUM
- Immigration enforcement ('does it matter?'), chair M Cherti
- Immigrants' perspectives ('between stress and rights'), chair F Duvell

16.00-16.30 Reporting back from break-out sessions

16.30-17.00 Conclusion