

questions about state sovereignty, the erosion of refugee rights, and the long-term sustainability of deterrence as a policy framework. Its combination of analytical depth and policy relevance makes it an important resource for migration scholars, political sociologists, international relations researchers, and human

rights advocates. Furthermore, its accessible style and structured presentation enable it to be effectively integrated into graduate teaching, inform comparative research across regions, and contribute to broader public debates on one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of our time.

Migrations in the Mediterranean

By Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Ibrahim Awad

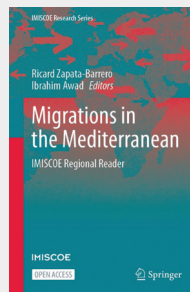
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Migrations in the Mediterranean, edited by Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Ibrahim Awad, is a significant study that aims to position the Mediterranean as an independent scale of analysis in migration literature. Prepared with contributions from the EuroMedMig network, the work argues that migration should be evaluated not only within the framework of Europe-centric crisis discourses but also across the social, economic, cultural, and environmental processes encompassing the three regions (Southern Europe, Northern Africa, and the Middle East). The organization of 24 articles under five main sections stands out as an attempt to overcome the long-standing fragmentation in migration studies and develop a holistic approach at the regional level.

The first section examines the geopolitical dimension of migration. The contributions here demonstrate how the European Union's (EU) strategies for externalizing migration management are being implemented in the



Mediterranean. An analysis of the EU-Türkiye consensus reveals that the safe third country policy leaves migrants in prolonged uncertainty, creating tensions between security concerns and humanitarian responsibilities. The examples of Morocco and Libya, on the other hand, demonstrate that the EU, by making migration a tool of foreign policy, has relegated democratization processes to the background. This section contributes to the overall aim of the book by emphasizing that migration has transcended a humanitarian issue and become a strategic element in European foreign policy.

Following the geopolitical framework, the second section focuses on the governance, political, and public opinion dimensions of migration. The Tunisian example demonstrates the decisive role of local governments in accepting migrants (activities themed around solidarity and assistance with migrants). In France, the media's power to shape public opinion reveals how poli-

cymaking is shaped by social perceptions. Contributions addressing the experiences of women refugees highlight the gendered dimension of migration (including sexist discrimination, disparagement, and neglect). Studies examining the burnout processes of activists in Lebanon reveal the limits faced by civil society. This section powerfully reflects the multilayered nature of migration, demonstrating that migration is shaped not only by state policies but also by cities, the media, and civil society.

The third section discusses the causes and forms of mobility, connecting the structural framework presented in the previous sections to the individual level. The paths taken by Afghan and Syrian migrants due to war, demographic, and economic pressures demonstrate that migration is shaped under challenging conditions. The migration strategies established by Moroccan youth through social networks reveal the intertwining of individual decisions with social ties, while historical migration dynamics in Spain highlight the continuity of migration (the constant influence of factors such as urbanization, industrialization, and economic factors on migration). The process of irregular migration, known as *harga*, demonstrates that migration is not solely economic or security-based but also linked to cultural and social expectations. Thus, this section serves the overall purpose of the book, highlighting the multifaceted causes of migration and the complex relationship between individual agency and structural conditions.

The fourth section examines the social transformation and spatial impacts of migration, concretizing previous discussions at the urban and environmental level. The contribution from Lisbon demonstrates that migrants are transforming their relationship with the

city by using information and communication technologies (e.g., sharing daily life information in social media groups), thus developing new forms of belonging to the city (community-based, experiential, and spatial ties). In Ceuta and Melilla, the prolonged stranding of migrants and the constant crossing of borders illustrate the intertwining of mobility and immobility. In contrast, the example of Marseille demonstrates how successive waves of migration have shaped the city's cultural diversity and identity. The forced migrations in Southern Morocco due to environmental change reveal the direct connection between ecological factors and migration. This section demonstrates that migration is not merely a population movement but also a process that transforms the social fabric and cultural identity of cities.

Section five discusses the economic dimensions of migration. Labor migration from Egypt to Europe highlights the critical importance of labor flows for regional economies, while economic mobilization in Morocco highlights the impact of migration (the Moroccan Diaspora) on local development. The critical role of migrant labor in Mediterranean agriculture points to a fragile yet indispensable labor source, while entrepreneurship policies in the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) demonstrate that migrants are influential not only in labor supply but also in the production of economic innovation. This section completes the book by explaining how migration is situated between economic vulnerability and opportunity.

A review of the sections as a whole clearly demonstrates the book's contributions to the migration literature. Its greatest strengths include its interdisciplinary approach (bringing together contributions from political science, sociology, anthropology, and geography),

methodological diversity (using qualitative field research, media analysis, historical studies, and comparative policy analysis), and thematic richness (addressing diverse topics such as the EU-Türkiye reconciliation, the Moroccan diaspora, women refugees, border cities like Ceuta- Melilla, and migrant labor in Mediterranean agriculture). The studies demonstrate that migration is not solely a security-centered issue; it should also be examined from diverse perspectives, such as gender, media, economic, environmental, and cultural transformation. This diversity opens up new debates in migration literature. Furthermore, the Mediterranean thinking approach developed by the editors conceptualizes the Mediterranean as an independent scale for understanding migration, encompassing its geopolitical location at the intersection of three continents, historical migration experiences, social diversity, and economic and environmental factors. In this respect, the book offers a unique contribution to global migration discussions on a regional scale.

This book presents a rich panorama by examining migration from different dimensions. However, this diversity also presents some limitations. While the sections offer in-depth analyses under their own headings, when taken together, they appear to be contributions that sit side by side rather than a holistic framework. This creates a fragmented impression throughout the work, forcing the reader to establish their own connections between sections. Furthermore, while criticisms

of Eurocentric approaches are voiced, a significant portion of the contributions remain focused on EU policies. While externalization strategies and “safe third country” practices are examined in detail, contributions from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean have received relatively limited visibility.

In conclusion, *Migrations in the Mediterranean* distinguishes itself in literature by treating the Mediterranean as an independent scale of analysis in migration studies. In its five sections, the book presents a comprehensive framework, ranging from geopolitical relations and governance to public opinion, from the causes of migration to its urban and cultural impacts, and ultimately to its economic dimensions. This approach enables consideration of migration not only through crisis and security discourses, but also across multiple dimensions, including gender, media, environment, diaspora, and labor markets. The editors’ concept of “Mediterranean thinking” transcends a Eurocentric perspective, aiming to understand the Mediterranean with its historical and social diversity shaped at the intersection of three continents. However, while the sections offer strong analyses on their own, taken together, they leave a fragmented rather than a cohesive framework. Furthermore, despite criticisms of Eurocentric approaches, many contributions maintain a central focus on EU policies. Despite all this, the interdisciplinary scope and rich themes explored make the book an important reference for both academic researchers and policymakers.