

Migrant workers, labour market and political regulations in times of austerity.

What policies and actions promote social justice and cohesion?

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The Mechanic Institute, 103 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 6DD

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In the current time of austerity, migration has been put at the forefront of many debates surrounding public spending. Nationalist and populist arguments are increasingly capitalising on the idea that immigration is adding further strains on scarce resources and are deeply undermining attempts at social inclusion and social cohesion.

Reflections that go beyond divisive nationalist arguments are rare despite the fact that the enforcement of austerity policies affect not only migrant workers and other vulnerable groups but a growing part of the working national population.

This workshop aims to contribute to the public debate on immigration, the labour market and political regulations by comparing and contrasting alternative views to the mainstream standpoints and by providing an informed outlook on current challenges as well as a reflection on possible solutions.

The workshop will:

- consider the working and living conditions of migrant workers in the UK
- analyse the effects of austerity measures on BME communities
- scrutinise the policies advocated by political parties
- reflect on the challenges for, and the role of, trade unions in promoting social cohesion

The contribution of international speakers will provide a comparative view on these topics and will enlarge the debate about the impact of neoliberalism, austerity and economic crisis on the labour standards and national regulatory frameworks.

See over for workshop programme >>

Programme

First session: Politics, Policies and the Labour Market

- 9.30 Welcome and Introduction - Stefania Marino, European Work and Employment Research Centre (EWERC), The University of Manchester
- 10.00 Ruth Barnett, Equality and Human Rights Commission
- 10.30 "Where the political parties are going wrong on migrant workers?" - Don Flynn, Migrants Rights Network
- 11.00 Lee Jasper, Black Activists Rising Against the Cuts (Barac)
- 11.30 Coffee break
- 11.45 "Austerity, trade unions and the end of Social Europe: The Baltic Model versus the European Social Model" - Charles Woolfson, Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO), Linköping University, Sweden
- 12.15 Open debate
- 13.00 Lunch

Second session: Trade Unions' Views

- 14.00 Rosa Crawford, TUC
- 14.30 Susan Cueva, UNISON
- 15.00 Coffee break
- 15.15 Steve Craig, UCATT
- 15.45 Sheila Coleman, UNITE
- 16.15 Open debate
- 17.00 Summary and review: Miguel Martinez Lucio, The University of Manchester and Jane Holgate, University of Leeds

With the participation of:

Lisa Berntsen (University of Jyväskylä and University of Groningen), Marek Čaněk (Multicultural Center Prague), Heather Connolly (De Montfort University), Sylvie Contrepois (London Metropolitan University), August Gächter (Centre For Social Innovation – ZSI – Austria), Rebecca Gumbrell McCormick (Birkbeck, University of London), Thomas Hastings (University of Sheffield), Mary Hyland (Dublin City University), Richard Hyman (London School of Economics), Julia Kubisa (University of Gothenburg), Rinus Penninx (University of Amsterdam), Matteo Rinaldini (Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia), Judith Roosblad (University of Amsterdam, Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs), Ines Wagner (University of Jyväskylä and University of Groningen)

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