

I-CLAIM

Improving the Living
and Labour Conditions
of Irregularised Migrant
Households in Europe



I-CLAIM investigates the living and working conditions of undocumented migrants in six European countries.

Our goal

I-CLAIM aims to uncover the spectrum and drivers of migrants' irregular status, as well as the impact it has on migrant families, through an intersectional and intergenerational lens.

The project combines the need to advance scientific knowledge and theorisation on the production of irregularity with the urgency to contribute to policy and public debates aimed at improving the lives of undocumented migrant households in Europe.

The project achieves its overarching ambition to inform public and political debates on irregularised migration by engaging with relevant European, national, local, and sectoral actors at all stages of the research process. These include labour unions, anti-racism civil society actors and migrant rights organizations in six European countries.

Methodologically, the project applies policy and discourse analysis of the legal and narrative frameworks that produce a complex infrastructure of irregularity in Europe. It also employs survey experiments to capture public perceptions of irregularity and ethnographies of labour market sectors with high numbers of undocumented migrants and varying degrees of digital platform penetration.

Who is an irregular migrant is not clear cut and this can change over time and depends on the country or even the city one resides in.

I-CLAIM focuses on agriculture, domestic work and cleaning, and logistics and delivery. All sectors with essential workers who make important contributions to Europe's economies and societies.

Workplan

The I-CLAIM project consists of four closely linked research streams that together capture the factors that contribute to create different configurations of “irregularity”: what we call the “irregularity assemblage”.



I-CLAIM examines the political economy of irregularity at the intersection of immigration, labour, and welfare regimes.



It analyses political, media, and public narratives and counter-narratives on irregular migrants and irregular migration. It also offers unique insights into how the public perceives the phenomenon.



I-CLAIM uses in-depth qualitative and ethnographic methods to focus on key labour sectors where people with irregular or precarious immigration status are employed. It explores how these sectors operate, migrants' experiences of mobility (social and geographical) within and across sectors, and the tactics used by undocumented migrant workers to challenge labour exploitation. It also casts light on the impact of precarious status on migrant households.



It brings together the different dimensions and scales of the analysis, comparatively examining critical sectors of the labour market, processes of racialization and how they intersect with the “irregular condition”, and the gendered, intergenerational impact of irregularity.

Our team

The I-CLAIM consortium is led by **Dr Ilse Van Liempt** (PI, Utrecht University) and **Professor Nando Sigona** (CI and Scientific coordinator, University of Birmingham).

The team includes six academic institutions – the **Universities of Utrecht, Birmingham, Helsinki, Ca' Foscari Venice, Warsaw** and the **Catholic University of Applied Sciences in Mainz**.

The **Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)**, a think-tank with expertise in EU and international policy research, acts as a bridge between research and knowledge exchange.

Our impact and engagement activities draw on the unique expertise and networks of the **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)** and the **European Network Against Racism (ENAR)**.

At country level, the national impact and engagement partners are central to developing policy options and public interventions to improve the conditions of migrants with precarious legal status and their families. They include the **Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants** (United Kingdom), the **Association for Legal Intervention** (Poland), **ActionAid** (Italy), **FairWork** (Netherlands), the **Deaconess Foundation** (Finland), and the **Catholic Forum "Living in Illegality"** (Germany).

In addition, the art gallery **Centrala** (United Kingdom) leads artistic residences across Europe.



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