

RESEARCH COUNCIL Webinar Working Group (WWG)

Background on the ReCo Webinar Series

The ISA is a unique organization. International in focus and consisting of two types of members (individual and collective) it brings together sociologists from all continents in the pursuit of scientific dialogue and discovery.

The ISA counts 70 Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups (RCs/WGs/TGs), which cover the impressive range of sub-disciplines in sociology. The Research Council (ReCo) is the governing body of these topic-specific collectives. While the ISA's in-person Congress and Forum are already places for the RCs/WGs/TGs to meet and exchange, there has been a vibrant discussion within the ReCo about the need and interest to benefit from our global membership and offer a space for the cross-fertilization of ideas from the diverse RCs/WGs/TGs.

Aims and Scope

The **purpose** of this series is to:

- Organize a series of cross-cutting webinars that are of interest to ISA RCs/WGs/TGs members because they facilitate scientific discussions around current research
- Facilitate the collaboration of ISA RCs/WGs/TGs
- Record these webinars and make them available to ISA members who can use them in their teaching or other forms of training/engagement

The **theme** of the series is focused on “**Reconnecting RCs/WGs/TGs**” whereby we will have thematic sessions that start from a common entry point and explore how the topic is approached differently and can engage different sociological approaches in dialogue among two or more RCs/WGs/TGs.



Transnational Families: Doing Family across Borders

What does it mean to be a family across international borders? How do families navigate transnational spaces? What challenges do they face? This webinar offers some paths to answer these key questions by focusing on how borders and boundaries recompose kinship relations among families in Europe, Asia, and Central America. Invited speakers explore some of the effects produced by international borders – paying attention to the disparate configurations of families on the move (i.e., their social class, race, administrative status, etc.), the social reproductive work of families across borders, and states' role in defining what a family is.

The goal of this panel is not to be comprehensive but to provide unique perspectives on transnational families to inspire additional thinking, reflection, and collaboration. We invite attendees to enter in conversation with the presenters about doing families across borders.

Chair: Lutfun Nahar Lata, School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Murdoch University, Australia

Agenda: 12 May 2026 | 13:00 – 14:30 GMT

Transnational family dynamics of people begging in Brussels

Mieke Schrooten, Odyssee University, Belgium

In her talk, Mieke Schrooten investigates the complex relationship between begging and migration among EU citizens in Brussels, emphasising the transnational family dynamics that shape this stigmatised income-generating activity. Schrooten conceptualises begging as part of 'doing family at a distance', where care, obligation, and emotional ties are enacted through mobility and income-generating strategies. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, including participant observation, interviews and focus groups, her presentation reveals how begging often functions as a form of transnational emotional and economic work.

Urgent Returns: The Link Between Family and the Remigration Intentions of Deported

Angel Escamilla Garcia, Yale University, USA

Central Americans in an Era of Border Externalization.

Research on post-deportation experiences has shown that family separation, especially separation from children and partners, shapes deported migrants' intentions to return to the US. Yet little is known about how these intentions intersect with other aspects of the remigration experience. In this article, we examine deported Central American adults'



intentions to reenter the US undetected and the transit experiences of those attempting to return while traversing Mexico. Drawing on survey data from the Encuesta Sobre Migración en la Frontera Sur de México (EMIF Sur), combined with ethnographic and interview data from recently deported Central Americans travelling through Mexico, we find that deported migrants who have left behind minor children in the US are more likely to intend to return to the US – particularly those who are separated from a partner or are a single parent. In turn, the eagerness and urgency to return to their families in the US shape the way deported migrants approach their journeys through Mexico. These results underscore the central role of family in shaping remigration and highlight the broader consequences of US border externalization policies operating within Mexico.

Transnational Families and Return Migration

Adrienne Lee Atterberry, University of Massachusetts Lowell, USA

This presentation unpacks how middle – and upper-class parents and their children living in Bengaluru, a city in southwest India, use transnational family networks in the intergenerational transmission of social and economic advantages. Using data collected from 35 return migrant, ethnic Indian families, Atterberry argues that we need to look beyond the parent-child relationship to understand how socially privileged families buttress their advantages for the next generation. To make this argument, she discusses how the practical and emotional support provided by extended family members positively impacts the quality of life for return migrant parents and their children, the ways in which parents and extended family members help shape and support children’s aspirations, and how parents and their children work together when encountering difficulties in accomplishing shared goals.

Discussant:

- Laura Odasso, Université Paris VIII Vincennes-Saint Denis, LIAGÉ, France

About the Speakers:



Mieke Schrooten is an Associate Professor in Social Work at Odisee University of Applied Sciences and the University of Antwerp. Her research and teaching are mainly focused on issues surrounding migration, transnational social work and informal social working practices. Her research has been published in many outlets, including *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and *European Journal of Social Work*.



Ángel A. Escamilla García is an assistant Professor of Sociology at Yale University whose research examines how vulnerable migrants make decisions in contexts shaped by violence and mobility. His expertise lies broadly in the sociology of international migration, forced displacement, and qualitative research, with specialized training in ethnographic and survey methods involving vulnerable populations in situations of both local and international mobility—such as refugees, asylum seekers, and unaccompanied minors. He has conducted extensive fieldwork in Mexico and Central America among unaccompanied minors from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador migrating through Mexico en route to the United States.



Adrienne Lee Atterberry is a US-based sociologist. Her research focuses on transnationally mobile families, children, and youth. Her work has appeared in journals such as *Families, Relationships, and Societies*; *Current Sociology*; and *Contemporary Education Dialogues*. She also co-edited the book *Children and Youths' Migration in a Global Landscape* (Emerald). Her current study examines the lifestyles of transnationally mobile, return migrant families in Bengaluru, a city in southwest India.



Laura Odasso, sociologist, is an Associate Professor in Education Sciences at Université Paris VIII Vincennes-Saint Denis, France, and a member of the group of research *Interculturalités, Apprentissages, marGes, Expériences*. Her research examines how migrants, immigrants, and their loved ones experience the state in both the Global North and the Global South. She explores social representations of migration in relation to gender, age, race, and religion; the learning effects of bureaucratic encounters, particularly migrants' understandings of law and rights; and the role of intermediary actors in facilitating access to rights. With an interdisciplinary profile, she bridges sociology and education, with a particular focus on lifelong, everyday, and informal learning.



Lutfun Nahar Lata is a Senior Lecturer in Asian Cultures and Societies in the School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Murdoch University. Her primary research area focuses on the Sociology of work and employment including the gig economy and the future of work. She has written about the gig economy, migration, poverty governance, urban marginality, housing and place-based disadvantage. Dr Lata is the author of *Spatial Justice, Contested Governance and Livelihood Challenges in Bangladesh* (Routledge 2023). Her research has been published in a number of high-ranking international journals such as *The Sociological Review*, *Current Sociology*, *Sociology Compass*, *Gender, Work & Organization*, *Cities*, *Geographical Research*, *Housing Policy Debate*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, and *Government Information Quarterly*.