

Raising Voices from the Low Countries

Exploring the Herstory of Female Labour Migration in the Netherlands and Belgium through Participatory Oral History Methods

A workshop within the transnational project “Female Labour Migration in European History”, organized by Minor and the CGM (Centrum voor de Geschiedenis van Migranten); hosted by KADOC – Documentation Center on Religion, Culture and Society – KU Leuven

26-28 February 2025, Leuven

Labour migration and female migration have shaped European societies in the 20th century. Nevertheless, the experiences, contributions and voices of migrant women, especially in the context of work, are often ignored in today's academic and public discourses.

During the workshop, we learn about female migration history and its intersection with labour history in the Low Countries, shedding light on different facets of this history from the perspective of research and oral history projects, museums, NGOs and migrant women themselves.

A special focus of the workshop is on questions of the (re)presentation of female migrants and their stories in research and educational work:

How can communities and individuals themselves participate more in the public narrative of their stories?

What principles should underlie participatory methods such as oral history?

We get to know existing projects and discuss guidelines for educational and research work together. These discussions specifically serve the conceptualization of the FeMig.Lab online education platform.

The workshop includes project presentations, group discussions, research presentations from the [CGM](#) network, a guided city tour through Leuven and a visit to the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp.

The workshop takes place within the transnational project “[Female Labour Migration in European History](#)” (FeMig.Lab). FeMig.Lab aims to render visible the often overseen herstories of Female Labour Migration in Europe as well as their consequences for today's mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of migrants and intersectional structures of discrimination. Our aim is to counteract anti-migrant and sexist narratives at both local and transnational levels. To this end, we bring together museums, memorials, cultural research institutions and migrant organizations in workshops throughout Europe and online events to exchange and work on a differentiated and intersectional narrative about European migration history and its interconnectedness with colonialism, the Cold War, and the struggle for democratic and diverse societies. Furthermore, exemplary testimonies of female (labour) migrants will be collected and documented on an online platform as a digital exhibition, accompanied by tools to integrate and make more visible the presence and agency of female migrant workers throughout European history in the 20th century into educational and exhibition programs.

Please find the program below.

The project is funded by the European Union within the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV).



**Funded by
the European Union**

Program

Wednesday, February 26

Time	Event
2:00 – 2:45	Welcome by Minor, CGM and KADOC – KU Leuven Introduction round
2:45 – 3:45	The FeMig.Lab Online Platform – Conceptual Discussion in the Network
3:45 – 4:00	Coffee Break
4:00 – 4:45	Tina De Gendt, Neslihan Dogan, and Thirza Vandenaabeele: Negotiated narratives to Migrant Heritage in Ghent
4:45 – 5:50	Group discussion on Guidelines for the Representation of Personal Stories and Participatory Work with Communities and Individuals
6:30	Group Dinner

Thursday, February 27

9:00 – 10:00	Group discussion: How to (re)present personal stories on the FeMig.Lab digital platform
10:00 – 12:00	Migration History City Tour “Traces of Islam in Leuven” by Stijn Carpentier and Winand Van Meerbeek (KADOC - KU Leuven)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break
1:00 – 5:00	<p><i>Female labour migrants in the Low Countries – Diverse Research and Project Inputs from the CGM network</i></p> <p>Mila Lemmens (Sprekende Geschiedenis): Forty Women Never to Be Forgotten: Oral Histories of Self-Organizations by Women from Turkey and Morocco in the Netherlands</p> <p>Maria Bruquetas Callejo & Franny Paren (FairWork Nederland): Migrant women working as live-in care workers in the Netherlands: insights from research and NGO perspectives</p> <p>Neslihan Dogan (Universiteit Gent): Connecting home, family, and community. A study into the trajectories and roles of Turkish migrant women in Ghent between 1964 and 1979</p> <p>Chiara Giordano (Université Libre de Bruxelles): Migrant women working in care services for the elderly and the informal labour market</p> <p>Stefaan Peirsman (ACV-CSC): Challenges and trajectories of Indian care workers in Belgium</p>
5:00 – 6:00	Drinks and poster session

Friday, February 28

8:30 – 10:00	Joint travel to Antwerp
10:00 – 12:30	Guided tour through the Red Star Line Museum Discussion with Rabab Hammoudi and Aniek Smit (in charge of the biographical collections) about oral history collection and representation in the museum
12:30 – 13:00	Conclusion, outlook and end of the workshop in Antwerp