

## Call for Papers

**The Promise of the Pact? What the EU promised but the Pact on Migration and Asylum does not deliver**

**Radboud University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands  
22 May 2026**

We are pleased to invite paper proposals for the one-day workshop “The Promise of the Pact? What the EU promised but the Pact on Migration and Asylum does not deliver”, that will take place at Radboud University on 22 May 2026.

### **Background and rationale**

After a lengthy and, at times, contested legislative process, the European Union (EU) Pact on Migration and Asylum (hereinafter the Pact) was adopted in May 2024 and will apply from June 2026. While the stated goal of the Pact was to deliver a set of new rules to manage migration and establish a common asylum system at EU level, the legislative package appears to heavily favour the latter, as evidenced by all key instruments focusing on asylum.

The Pact was an opportunity to create safe legal pathways, enhance integration of non-EU citizens, and recognise the significant contribution third-country nationals make to European society and economy. Instead, the underlying message of the Pact is that the EU is to be further fortified against unwanted influxes of people on the move who pose a risk or a threat to “our European way of life”. It seems that the resonance of such a message will continue to be amplified in the current political context, thus requiring continued critical reflection on how migration can be better managed, using academic rigour and insights from strong evidence-based research.

In light of the publication of the European Commission’s progress report on the implementation of the Pact (June 2025) and the ongoing initiatives at Member State level to embed the Common Implementation Plan (June 2024) into their own national legislation, this workshop critically aims to explore the issues that the EU Pact does not address, but which the EU legislator promised to solve in the Pact.

### **Suggested topics**

We invite submissions on, but not limited to, the following themes:

- One of the rationales underlying the Pact was the fight against smuggling and trafficking in human beings, yet rather than decreasing the risk of human trafficking, the Pact increases the vulnerability of migrants to being targeted by traffickers and exploited.
- The Pact also promises an effective system of responsibility and solidarity, which calls for a comparison with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, for instance as regards the extent to which the Pact contributes to responsibility sharing at the global level.

- The Pact promises to embed migration in international partnerships, yet none of the Pact instruments concern agreements with third countries (with the exception of the May 2025 Commission proposal to revise the “safe third country” concept).
- The Pact further promised to contribute to the social, cultural and economic integration of third-country nationals, yet the integration focus in the Pact is only on those who are beneficiaries of international protection. For integration of (other) third-country nationals, one must look beyond the Pact at adjacent soft law measures and tools, like the Action Plan on integration and inclusion.
- Despite promising to harmonise legal migration, the Pact – where legal migration is addressed – maintains the status quo and further entrenches a piecemeal approach to legal migration.

We welcome researchers at all career stages -from doctoral researchers to senior academics– to examine these topics and encourage PhD candidates to submit abstracts.

If you are interested in participating in the workshop, please send your abstract by **9 January 2026** by email to Karin Zwaan (karin[.]zwaan[at]ru[.]nl) with the subject ‘Pact workshop 2026’. Abstracts should be no longer than 400 words and set out the topic, main argument and methodology of the paper.

Applicants will be notified by the **end of January 2026** of the outcome of their submission. Ahead of the workshop, by **1 May 2026**, participants will be asked to circulate their full draft papers. Draft papers should be between 3,000 and 5,000 words. While publication plans will be discussed at the workshop, we intend to publish revised versions of selected papers in a special issue of a leading journal.

We strongly encourage in-person attendance at the workshop; however, online participation will be possible should this be necessary for professional or sustainability-driven reasons. Subject to funding and in line with Dutch universities’ travel policy, we may be able to contribute towards some presenters’ travel expenses and accommodation.

We look forward to your submissions. For queries, please email us!

*Organisers:*

- Dr. Amy Weatherburn, FWO Senior Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for European Law, KU Leuven
- Dr. Annick Pijnenburg, Assistant Professor, International and European Law, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Dr. Karen Geertsema, Assistant Professor, Sociology of Law and Migration Law, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Dr. Karin Zwaan, Associate Professor, Sociology of Law and Migration Law, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Dr. Lynn Hillary, Assistant Professor, Constitutional and Administrative Law, University of Amsterdam