

LEARNING

for democracy

DEMOCRACY

for learning

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

SEPTEMBER 1-4, 2026 • SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME, ITALY

PROMOTERS

**Scuola
democratica**
learning for democracy



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Fourth International Conference of the journal *Scuola Democratica*

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SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME, ITALY

SEPTEMBER 1-4, 2026

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

IN MEMORIAM

This conference is dedicated to the memory of children killed in contemporary wars.

It recalls the more than 20,000 children who have died in the Gaza Strip since 7 October 2023 and the 38 children killed in Israel during the terrorist attacks of that same day.

It also remembers children whose lives have been taken or shattered by violence in Iran, Lebanon, Ukraine, Syria, Yemen, Sudan, the Sahel, Somalia, and Myanmar, as well as those who died while attempting to cross the Mediterranean in search of safety from war, drought, and poverty.

According to UNICEF, approximately 473 million children today — one in six worldwide — live in areas affected by armed conflict. For them, there was no democracy, and there will be no education.

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PROMOTERS



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DUAL VOICES ON SKILLS AND MIGRATION: STAKEHOLDERS AND MIGRANTS IN CONVERSATION

Francesco Vittori (University of Verona, Italy) · **Hande Eslen-Ziya** (University of Stavanger, Norway)

Migration Studies

Dialogical and Polyphonic Ethnographic Approach

Labour Market Integration

Migration has become a central topic of academic research and public discussion. However, the knowledge production surrounding migration is still largely influenced by Eurocentric perspectives and institutional research agendas (Santos, 2014). In response to this challenge, this paper reflects on the creation of a collective edited volume titled 'Skills, Mobility and Justice in Contemporary Europe: Institutional Narratives and Lived Realities in Conversation' (submitted to: Routledge) that seeks to explore alternative forms of knowledge production, emphasizing the voices and experiences of migrants. Instead of presenting the book as a finished scholarly product, this paper treats the editorial process as a space for epistemic negotiation and political positioning, where issues of authorship, representation, and responsibility are central. The edited volume brings together two rarely combined perspectives: institutional actors influencing labor market policies and migrants navigating skill recognition and integration. It draws on empirical research from various European contexts within Horizon Europe projects, featuring contributions from employers, unions, municipalities, and policy-makers, as well as migrant workers. The chapters foster a dialogue between institutional narratives and migrants' experiences, highlighting tensions around skills, integration, and justice. Inspired by Haraway's concept of situated knowledges (1988) and Spivak's views on representation (2023), the volume emphasizes collective writing to explore positionality and the risks of reinforcing existing power dynamics. By examining the editorial journey of the volume as an empirical case, we contend that collective writing can serve as a critical practice for producing 'situated knowledge.' This approach has the potential to challenge dominant perspectives and experiment with more dialogical and politically accountable forms of migration research. Methodologically, the volume adopts a dialogical and polyphonic ethnographic approach (Clifford & Marcus, 2023; Marcus & Clifford, 1985; Ghorashi, 2014), encouraging participants to co-author and co-create relational narratives that disrupt institutional discourses on migration, skills formation, and recognition. Instead of viewing stakeholders and migrant workers as separate analytical categories, the book pairs their accounts within each chapter, fostering deliberate conversations that illuminate intersections, tensions, and silences. The collective volume features a dialogic and polyphonic structure, emphasizing that knowledge production is situated and co-constructed through various voices and power dynamics. It serves as an interactive space linking policy frameworks with lived experiences and macro governance structures with micro realities of recognition, exclusion, and belonging. The text presents both an empirical contribution and a methodological innovation, highlighting how migration and labor market governance are shaped through dialogue, power, and negotiation. The entire book is grounded in extensive qualitative interviews and focus groups conducted across various EU destination countries. At a time when European labor markets are grappling with skill shortages and growing political debates around migration, public discussions often separate institutional perspectives from migrants' lived experiences. This work challenges that separation. While much of the existing literature addresses skills, migration, and integration either through policy analysis or migrant narratives, this volume systematically stages their interaction, demonstrating a more integrated understanding of these issues.

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Spivak, G. C. (2023). Can the subaltern speak?. In P. H. Cain & M. Harrison (Eds.), *Imperialism* (pp. 171-219). London: Routledge. (Original work published 2004)