



Joint EMN Luxembourg – INNOVATE Workshop: Forecasting and Preparedness in EU Migration Governance

28 October 2025

Venue: **Chambre des Salariés, LLC, 2-4 Rue Pierre Hentges, 1726, Luxembourg City**

Background

The 2015–2016 migration crisis and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine revealed that many Member States and the European Union were not sufficiently prepared to respond swiftly and effectively to sudden, large-scale migratory flows looking for protection in the EU.¹ As a result of the new geopolitical challenges (e.g. tensions, wars, cybersecurity) that the European Union is being confronted with, the European Commission has presented a preparedness strategy to anticipate, prevent and respond to all these challenges, especially to migratory flows.² The challenges faced by governments across the European Union make the European Commission focus on forecasting and preparedness to confront new migration flows.³

Despite this policy shift, operationalizing migration forecasting and preparedness remains challenging. Even with improved data and forecasting methods, predicting future migration remains inherently complex (as there are too many factors involved), and some uncertainty remains irreducible.⁴ This situation poses challenges for experts and policy actors, such as:

- 1) Forecasting experts face the challenge of communicating complex forecasting models to policy actors and explaining what these models can and cannot deliver.
- 2) Policy actors must put in place preparedness strategies and contingency plans for an uncertain future, which poses challenges such as deciding on adequate resource allocation and policy planning.

¹ Sandra Morgenstern and Oliver Strijbis, “Forecasting Migration Movements Using Prediction Markets,” *Comparative Migration Studies* 12, no. 1 (October 9, 2024): 45, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-024-00404-0>; Council of the European Union, “Council Implementation Decision (EU) 2022/382 of”, March 4, 2022. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022D0382>

² European Commission. “EU preparedness union strategy,” accessed June 27, 2025. URL: https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en

³ Maciej Stępk, “In Anticipation of New Migration Crises: Resilience and Anticipatory Governance in the EU’s Migration Management Framework,” *Politeja* 19, no. 4 (79) (December 21, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.12797/Politeja.19.2022.79.09>; Sandra Morgenstern and Oliver Strijbis, “Forecasting Migration Movements Using Prediction Markets,” *Comparative Migration Studies* 12, no. 1 (October 9, 2024): 45, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-024-00404-0>.

⁴ Jakub Bijak, ed., *From Uncertainty to Policy: A Guide to Migration Scenarios* (Cheltenham, UK Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2024).

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Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA).

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This workshop is jointly organized by [EMN Luxembourg](#) and the [Horizon Europe Project INNOVATE](#) (*Enhancing Dialogues on Migration Policy and Practice*).

On the one hand, EMN Luxembourg has been organizing workshops related to forecasting and new technologies in the context of migration management since 2022, bringing together institutional stakeholders, international organizations and EU agencies (Council of Europe, OECD, IOM, EUAA, FRONTEX etc.), national actors (public servants and European NGOs such as the Danish Refugee Council) and academia to analyze the new forecasting models and the challenges that they bring. On the other hand, the aim of the INNOVATE project is to find new approaches to bridging knowledge between migration research, policy, and practice, to enhance the use of evidence in migration policymaking.

Objective of the Workshop

In response to the above-mentioned challenges, the workshop pursues two objectives:

1. Providing a hands-on opportunity to explore what preparedness for an unexpected migration scenario means through using the LEGO® Serious Play® methodology.
2. Fostering discussion on how to effectively communicate and translate complex migration forecasting models to policy actors and the wider public.

Event Format

1) LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) Session on Migration Preparedness:

In the first part of the workshop, participants engage in a LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) session. LSP is not a game, but a participatory method where participants use LEGO® bricks as a tool to collaboratively build ideas, visions, and scenarios and to discuss them.⁵ The hands-on, creative approach of LSP allows participants to engage in deep reflection on an issue and can contribute to gaining new insights that may not have appeared otherwise. Therefore, LSP is particularly well-suited to foster constructive communication and to work out shared problems to complex issues.⁶ This session will simulate a response to a hypothetical migration scenario, encouraging participants to think creatively and collaboratively about what it means to be truly prepared in the event of an unexpected migration scenario.

⁵ Michael Fearn, *The LSP Method: How to Engage People and Spark Insights Using the Lego® Serious Play® Method* (Erscheinungsort nicht ermittelbar, Austin, Texas? Lioncrest Publishing, 2019).

⁶ "Open-Source Introduction to LEGO® Serious Play®," June 2010.

https://www.lego.com/cdn/cs/set/assets/blt8ec1d6ff766ddfd4/LEGO_SERIOUS_PLAY_OpenSource_14mb.pdf

2) Interactive Panel Discussion on Forecasting and Uncertainty:

Migration forecasting experts will present their current work on migration forecasting, which will be followed by a moderated discussion with policy officers who will reflect on the need of these models in policy decision making.

The discussion will focus on the challenges and good practices on how to communicate forecasting models and their results to policy actors and the wider public. The audience can engage directly with the panel after the presentations and discussion.

AGENDA	
9.00 - 9.30	Registration and welcome coffee
9.30 - 9.45	Welcome words Prof. Dr. Birte Nienaber, coordinator of the EMN Luxembourg & Partner Coordinator of the INNOVATE team at the University of Luxembourg
9.45 - 12.30	LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) Session on Migration Preparedness (Part 1) Facilitation by Prof. Dr. Birte Nienaber and Jutta Bissinger
12.30 - 13.30	Lunch break
13.30 - 15:00	LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) Session on Migration Preparedness (Part 2) Facilitation by Prof. Dr. Birte Nienaber and Jutta Bissinger
15:00 - 15:30	Coffee break and networking opportunity
15:30 -17:00	Interactive panel discussion: Forecasting and Uncertainty - Derek Groen, Reader in Computer Science, Brunel University of London - Moises Maldonado, Data Scientist, Associate Innovation Officer UNHCR Innovation Service - Dionisios N. Sotiropoulos, Assistant Professor at the Department of Computer Science at the University of Piraeus - Magdalena Kozłowska, Head of Analysis and Statistics Division, Bureau of the Head of the Office for Foreigners, Poland - Axel Kreienbrink, Head of Research Center at the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees - Yves Breem - Research Project Director, Department of Statistics, Studies and Documentation, General Directorate for Foreigners in France Moderator: Adolfo Sommarribas, EMN Luxembourg, Senior Legal Advisor and Senior Legal Migration Expert
17:00 – 17:15	Closing Remarks and way forward Prof. Dr. Birte Nienaber, coordinator of the EMN Luxembourg & Partner Coordinator of the INNOVATE team at the University of Luxembourg

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Practical Information

Date: 28 October 2025

Location: Chambre des Salariés, LLC, [2-4 Rue Pierre Hentges, 1726](#), Luxembourg City

Time: 09:00 – 17:15

Target Audience:

The workshop is intended for a diverse audience, including migration experts and civil servants involved in migration analysis, forecasting, preparedness, or reception; academic researchers; national and EU-level policymakers; NGOs working on migration forecasting, preparedness, or reception; and EMN National Contact Points (NCPs).

Capacity: 24 participants

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