

Call for Papers

W G Hart Workshop 2025

Regulating the Global Movement of Care

Institute for Advanced Legal Studies, London
11-12 June 2025

We invite abstracts (of 250-300 words) for the 2025 W G Hart Workshop focusing on the role of law in regulating the global movement of care. Given the historical and contemporary significance of the issue of the movement of carers, we welcome abstracts that explore the legal regulation of care (including comparative and international aspects) through the lens of a variety of disciplines: law, history, anthropology, politics, sociology, criminology, and creative arts.

The Workshop is organised around four themes – precarity, advocacy, protection, and kinship networks (see below) – reflecting the varied facets through which law’s role in regulating the movement of care can be examined. Care is broadly defined and includes healthcare, social care, domestic care, as well as unpaid care. Legal requirements often create precarity by imposing stringent professional regulatory standards on migrant care workers or permitting the claw back of visa fees. Law may also be a tool in the hands of carers and individuals and organisations who support them to battle against exploitation. Legal regulation may, in some instance, offer protection to migrant care workers. Law, in particular immigration requirements, can also define relationships between migrant carers and their broader kinship networks both in their host countries and in the countries that they come from.

Abstracts should be emailed to adrienne.yong@city.ac.uk and p.saksena@leeds.ac.uk by **5pm on Friday, 24 January 2025 (deadline extended)**. Please also include a brief biography of the speaker in the submission. Further details on the workshop themes are included below.

Academic Directors:

Dr Adrienne Yong (City St George’s, University of London)
Dr Priyasha Saksena (University of Leeds)
Dr Amanda Spalding (University of Leeds)
Dr Amrita Limbu (University of Leeds)
Professor Marie-Andrée Jacob (University of Leeds)

Keynotes:

Professor Eram Alam (Harvard University)
Professor Majella Kilkey (University of Sheffield)

Plenaries:

A lived experiences panel featuring care workers and supporting organisations and individuals
A creative arts panel featuring Dr Ella Parry-Davies (King’s College London) and collaborators in research on performance as method with migrant domestic workers

Travel and Accommodation Bursaries:

The W G Hart Workshop supports and encourages the participation of ECRs (within 5 years of PhD) and PhD students. We are delighted to have secured funding from the Society of Legal Scholars to fund two bursaries of up to £400 each. If you require support for travel and accommodation to attend the workshop, please provide an indication of this when you submit your abstract with confirmation (e.g., by a statement on letterhead from your Head of School) that you either do not have access to other sources of funding or any funding you have is likely to be insufficient.

Workshop Themes:

Theme 1: Precarity

Precarity is present throughout many aspects of the global movement of carers. Institutionally, migration itself is a process filled with uncertainty – migrants, employers, and lawyers have all reflected on the various uncertainties of applying to migrate or sponsor migration. For individuals, the very nature and structure of this form of migration – which generally operates through sponsorship arrangements where their residence is tied to their employer – leaves them very vulnerable to precarious working conditions. This insecurity may be created or exacerbated by both legal and illegal practices such as “debt bondage”, repayment fees or misleading promises. Beyond the working and living conditions, care professionals (including healthcare professionals) are regularly confronted with the precarity of their professional identity. Moreover, the very use of migration to plug gaps in local care work shortages creates a different kind of precarity – the uncertainty of the system in the long run: whether it is a sustainable approach, whether the immigration policies will remain in the long-run, and especially what recruitment means for care work performed in sending countries. All the above issues may also intersect with various other characteristics such as race, class, and gender to further entrench insecurity and create new forms of it. Under this theme, we seek to examine the various forms of precarity created or exacerbated by the global movement of care to identify areas for improvement or regulation as well as to better understand the lived experience of those who participate in this system.

Theme 2: Advocacy

The global movement of care has become a field stimulating relationships between the state, various charities, and other bodies at the local, national, and international level. Networks of stakeholders organise themselves around the goals of resolving the crisis of care and workforce shortages via the NHS, associated charities, and private agencies. The World Health Organisation calls upon states to follow its code of practice on ethical international recruitment to avoid depleting sending countries of their healthcare workforce, and recommends the examination of fairness, efficiency, and transparency of governance safeguards, including those related to the oversight of the management of health and social care workforce. Despite this flurry of organisational activities and ample media attention, the experiences of carers themselves and those advocate on their behalf remain too often ignored. Under the theme of advocacy, we pay attention to various ways with which social movements, activism and lobbying are central to the ecology of global movement of carers. From the #lifttheban campaign to give people seeking asylum the right to work, to journalists documenting modern slavery within international recruitment, to professional associations supporting healthcare professionals from specific community or country of origin to court litigation, and to more localised informal mechanisms, we wish to examine the various forms and normative directions “advocacy” can take in this field.

Theme 3: Protection

Legal protection underlies the regulation of the movement of carers globally through international and domestic law and policies. There are various intersecting legal provisions that apply to a carer moving across borders, including external migration policies and domestic immigration laws, as well as the protection that these carers are offered before, during and after their moves in their new host territories. The perception of migrants and their journeys across borders have become so polarised that policies attributed to curbing protections are now frequently employed by politicians to gain political favour. This can arguably undermine any real urgent protection that migrants might find themselves in need of. As a large proportion of moving migrant carers in the health and social care sectors often do so with the intention of filling a need in the host territory's economy, these sectors come under increasing scrutiny in terms of regulation. However, as regulation does not always translate to protection, under this theme, we seek to examine the regimes of protection that are available to migrant carers moving across borders, legal or otherwise, to critically assess the level, extent, and effectiveness of any protection offered, and to evaluate any differentiation that may arise within the legal framework itself. It is importantly not limited simply to legal frameworks of protection, as there is also an understanding that underlying cultural and societal factors also impact on the extent of protection offered and received by carers.

Theme 4: Kinship Networks

In the global movement of care, immigration regimes have primarily focused on the flow of "labour", largely overlooking the significance of familial considerations. Despite repeated policy adjustments aimed at addressing the shortage of care with foreign workers, care and wellbeing of migrants or their families – whether back home or accompanied – has seldom received attention of policymakers. In fact, family migration, often the privilege of migrants to the West, is now garnering attention from policymakers as a privilege requiring reconsideration or reduction. Raising the minimum income requirements for bringing dependants or imposing restrictions on bringing dependants are commonly adopted measures by migration regimes to control and manage migration. Under this theme, we pay attention to various issues and aspects of family and kinship within the global movement of carers, exploring the implications of regulation on migrants and their families.