

**The Empire Within: Postcolonial Reflections on European Governance, Borders, and
Population Management
Call for Papers**

12th European Workshop in International Studies, Krakow, Jagiellonian University, 2-4 July 2025

Convenors:

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Abstract:

This workshop explores the EU's (and its member states') management of populations considered "at-risk" through a postcolonial lens, examining how contemporary policies reflect historical continuities with colonial practices. While the EU is often portrayed as a beacon of human rights and progressive governance, postcolonial scholarship reveals how its treatment of both internal and external populations echoes its imperial past. From migration control to counterterrorism, provisions of care and development programmes, the EU often frames certain populations or communities as "dangerous" or in need of intervention, perpetuating colonial hierarchies.

The goal of this workshop is to analyse the EU's (and its member states') management and governance of "suspect" populations at two interconnected levels:

- Internally, the workshop focuses on the treatment of migrants, racialized minorities, and other marginalised groups, highlighting how counterterrorism and migration policies disproportionately target these communities.
- Externally, the workshop examines international initiatives focusing on development, security, migration among others (e.g. in its Southern Neighbourhood, particularly in countries like Libya, Tunisia, and Turkey, where the EU has outsourced migration control and implemented development programs that reinforce dependency). The workshop will scrutinise the language of "partnerships" and "stability," unpacking how these narratives serve to maintain EU influence while undermining the agency of non-European states.

By engaging with postcolonial approaches, this workshop not only critiques existing policies but also explores opportunities for agency, resistance, and governance. Through interdisciplinary perspectives—spanning migration studies, international development, security studies, and political economy—we invite papers that explore themes including, but not limited to:

- The hybridization of EU governance and the entanglement of security, migration, and development policies..
- The impact of postcolonial critiques on understanding the EU's management of racialized and marginalized populations.
- Continuity and change between the colonial past of EU member states and current EU/member states population management policies (e.g. migration, aid, counterterrorism, healthcare)
- Case studies on EU migration control in the Southern Neighbourhood and the role of non-European states.
- Comparative analyses linking EU governance of populations to global trends in postcolonial and post-imperial governance.

We encourage contributions from across disciplines that engage with these questions and aim to examine EU management of "dangerous" or "at risk" populations from postcolonial perspectives. The workshop will be designed in an interactive format, where participants will engage in collaborative discussions on their papers, with the objective of participating in a special issue on the topic. Abstracts can be submitted via the [EISA website](#) until **11 February 2025**.