



REFUGIADOS & MIGRANTES  
EN NUESTRA CASA COMÚN

Islas Canarias 2026

# Compassion & Hope: Governments, Civil Society and the Future of Migration in Our Common Home

Universidad de La Laguna  
Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain  
11-14 June 2026

[Apply & Register HERE](#)

The **Canary Islands** sit at the center of migration routes towards Europe. The Atlantic route is now the deadliest in the world, and the islands stand at the crossroads of West African mobility corridors, EU externalization policy, and the civil society networks that ensure basic human protection as states withdraw. It is in this context that [Refugees & Migrants in Our Common Home \(OCH\)](#) convenes its International Symposium on Migration, coinciding with the pastoral visit of **Pope Leo XIV** to the islands. OCH is a global initiative of Villanova University's Mother Cabrini Institute on Immigration, launched in Rome in October 2025 with delegates from 42 countries, and committed to advancing concrete Action Plans in teaching, research, advocacy, and service for immigrants.

This is not a conventional academic conference. For three days, researchers, practitioners, faith-based and civil society organizations, policymakers, and migrants themselves engage equally with academic research, frontline field experience, and direct testimony. Field visits, working groups, and lightning talks are designed to dissolve the usual boundaries between scholar, practitioner, advocate, and witness, creating a working space where theory and practice inform each other directly.

## Keynote Speakers

The symposium will feature keynote addresses from leading voices at the intersection of migration, scholarship, and lived experience — including activists whose journeys have shaped global conversations on courage, displacement, and human dignity, alongside researchers and practitioners working at the frontlines of contemporary migration.

## Main Topics

*Submissions are invited under four strands. The Canary Islands are the vantage point; the questions reach across the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and beyond.*

### 1. **Migration Journeys, Trauma, and Human Dignity**

Lived realities of people on the move: journeys of survival and resilience, trauma-informed responses, mental health and healing practices, and the support systems that sustain migrants, frontline responders, educators, and community workers.

### 2. **Education, Youth, and Empowerment in Migration Contexts**

Education, digital learning, and youth-led innovation in migrant inclusion and empowerment. Topics include language acquisition and credential recognition, transferable learning models, technology-enabled continuity in transit and arrival, and the role of universities in welcoming migrant scholars.

### 3. **Community, Culture, and Local Responses to Migration**

Community-led, faith-based, and university-anchored responses: cross-cultural encounter, solidarity networks, and the negotiation of belonging in arrival societies — including but not limited to the Canary Islands, Lampedusa, Lesbos, and the US southern border.

### 4. **Civil Society & the Future of Migration Management in Our Common Home**

What does the future of migration management look like when NGOs, faith organisations, lawyers, sea-rescue crews, and ordinary citizens are prosecuted for filling the gaps left by states? More than 140 such prosecutions were registered in 2024 alone. This strand invites papers on the ethics of assistance and advocacy, the role of ecclesial and faith-based actors, and the questions raised when civil society takes on responsibilities that belong to states.

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## **Forms of Participation**

### **Lightning Talks**

Approx 10 minutes presentations with no more than five visual-led slides. Designed for fast-paced exchange across disciplines. Group submissions accepted (maximum two presenters). Here is our [Guidebook](#) and a [Lightning Talk video](#) about preparing a Lightning Talk.

### **Working Groups**

All registered participants join one of four working groups (teaching, research, advocacy, service with migrants and refugees) tasked with refining the OCH Action Plans.

### **Field Visits**

Small groups will visit civil society organisations working with migrants on the islands, combining facility tours, working presentations, and dialogue with staff and beneficiaries.

### "Who Are We?" Exhibition

A common space for invited civil society organisations to present their work to participants, ecclesial representatives, and press during the symposium day.

### Publication

Selected papers will be considered for publication in the [Journal on Migration and Human Security](#), a peer-reviewed public policy migration journal of the Center for Migration Studies and Villanova University's Mother Cabrini Institute on Immigration.

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### Submission and Registration

**Lightning Talk abstracts: 250–300 words plus a 100-word biographical note.**

**Submission deadline: Wednesday, 13 May 2026 (rolling review).**

**Notification of acceptance: by Wednesday, 21 May 2026.**

**General registration deadline: Tuesday, 26 May 2026.**

**Apply and register: <https://vuevents.villanova.edu/877447>**

**Organized by:**



In partnership with:



Tentative Agenda	
<b>Wed 10 June</b>	Arrival
<b>Thurs 11 June</b>	Film screening and Q&A with director Ousman Umar (afternoon) · Field visits to civil society organizations working with migrants- " <i>Understanding migration management on the ground.</i> "
<b>Fri 12 June</b>	Mass with Pope Leo XIV (time TBA) Panel discussions with academics, community leaders, migrants and refugees · Optional evening: " <i>What Would Happen to You if You Were an Immigrant?</i> " — interactive map and dinner.
<b>Sat 13 June</b>	Full symposium day — keynote, panels, lightning talks, working groups, Migrant Voices, closing reception, and <u>Ousman Umar</u> , activist, author, and founder of NASCO Feeding Minds.
<b>Sun 14 June</b>	Closing Mass at Catedral de la Laguna

\* detailed program coming soon

## Symposium Registration fees

*Fees include transportation and costs of Field Visits, coffee breaks, lunch, programs, simultaneous translation (English-Spanish) and closing reception*

Registration Category	Early Bird: By 5/21/26	Full Registration
<b>High income country</b>	Euro 125/US \$150	Euro 150/ US \$175
<b>Low income country</b>	Euro 70/US \$82	Euro 80/ US \$94
<b>Student/Religious</b>	Euro 40/US \$47	Euro 60/ US \$70
<b>NGOs based on Canary Islands</b>	Free (with discount code)	Free (with discount code)

## Accommodation Recommendations

List of recommended accommodation options in Tenerife:

[W Accommodation Canary Islands Symposium.docx](#)

For general questions or inquiries, please contact:

[migrationandacademia@villanova.edu](mailto:migrationandacademia@villanova.edu)