Event Details

Youth Mobilities, Digital Technologies, and Transnational Connections in Africa and the Diaspora

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Information sources :

https://www.ecasconference.org/2025/

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In transnational migration studies, digital technologies have primarily been understood as a way to connect those who leave and those who stay behind, and, more recently, as a key infrastructure of forced migration journeys. Yet recent technological developments in Europe and Africa mean that 'the digital' today has far greater repercussions for African, Afropolitan and Afropean life-worlds 'on the move'. This is particularly the case for young people.

Bringing together research on youth in Africa and in the diaspora, this panel seeks to explore the intersections of 'non-crisis' youth mobilities and digital media to offer new insights into how the digital is not just a conduit for transnational connectivity, but a fundamental factor shaping the changing character of young people's everyday lives and geographies: it shapes mobility practices and imaginaries, transnational engagements, and articulations of belonging. We are particularly interested in the ways that the digital is entangled with embodied practices and affective experiences, and the formation of new African/Afropolitan/Afropean networks through the digital. We invite papers that consider how technology usage is situated in specific contexts, and how global inequalities, class, gender, and other categories affect (im)mobility experiences. Potential topics include, but are not limited to: the ways digital mediation is reshaping youthful diaspora-'homeland' engagements; the role of smartphones during 'non-crisis' youth mobilities driven by leisure, 'roots', or economic endeavours; the interplay between hyper-connectivity, capitalism, and the character of youthful Afropolitanisms; the impact of everyday digital infrastructures and online communities in mobilising (imaginaries of) movement between Africa and Europe.

Mobility

For the Mobile Lives Forum, mobility is understood as the process of how individuals travel across distances in order to deploy through time and space the activities that make up their lifestyles. These

travel practices are embedded in socio-technical systems, produced by transport and communication industries and techniques, and by normative discourses on these practices, with considerable social, environmental and spatial impacts.

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Movement

Movement is the crossing of space by people, objects, capital, ideas and other information. It is either oriented, and therefore occurs between an origin and one or more destinations, or it is more akin to the idea of simply wandering, with no real origin or destination.

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Practical informations :