



BERKELEY INTERDISCIPLINARY
MIGRATION INITIATIVE

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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OUR MISSION

The Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative (BIMI) is a partnership of migration experts at UC Berkeley who investigate the social, political, legal, and economic dynamics of migration globally as well as locally. Our vision is to become the go-to place for migrants, students, researchers, academics, journalists, policymakers, non-profits, corporations, and community members seeking credible and evidence-based information on migration.

We study human mobility and the precarity that migrants face in their host country. We strive to be a resource for all migrants and especially the vulnerable migrants (undocumented, refugees, DACA, and forced migrants among others). BIMI's researchers will help policy-makers lower the barriers that these migrants face.

We embrace new data-gathering technologies as well as embedded, on-the-ground fieldwork, drawing from the interdisciplinary expertise of faculty, students, and the communities with which we engage. Bringing together research, training, and public engagement, BIMI aspires to inform, educate and transform knowledge to improve the well-being of migrants and the communities they live in!

BERKELEY CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT

To belong in a land away from home is a diasporic dream.

What does belonging mean and how does one belong? BIMl Cultures and Communities Project (BCCP) aims at looking deeper into these questions by reframing different ways in which belonging can manifest. What is culturally significant to diasporic communities? What do their culture and rituals look like? How do they celebrate their culture? BCCP is an endeavor to showcase the rich history and traditions of diasporic communities in California and educate the public about their history and culture.

This year, we provided weekly training and mentorship meetings, to support the research interests of **eleven undergraduate students of color** and first generation college students.



We engaged with the public and campus partners through **a research showcase, photo-exhibit** and a wall mural of the photos that students have taken of their communities.

We developed **four research projects**, which highlight the traditions and history of diasporic communities in California. The students also learned quantitative research methods to better inform their research into these communities.





SUMMER INSTITUTE IN MIGRATION RESEARCH METHODS

The 2023 Summer Institute in Migration Research Methods (SIMRM) provided 10 days of training in best practices and methodologies for the study of immigration and migrant populations. It was held from June 7- 15, 2023 at the University of California, Berkeley and was offered to 31 early career scholars. The Institute was organized and directed by Irene Bloemraad (UCB) and Jennifer Van Hook (Pennsylvania State University). It was made possible by funding from the U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Russell Sage Foundation.

SIMRM 2023's focus was on interviewing as a migration research methodology. Asking people about their thoughts and lives is one of the most effective and efficient ways to collect data, providing information on self-reported attitudes, beliefs, and actions. But asking questions as a research technique is also fraught with methodological, substantive, and ethical challenges. These conundrums become even more challenging when studying immigrants and mobile populations. The 2023 SIMRM tackled questions about the advantages and drawbacks of interviewing as a form of data collection and also provided space for broader conversations on building a successful career as a migration researcher through professionalization panels and sharing of in-progress research.

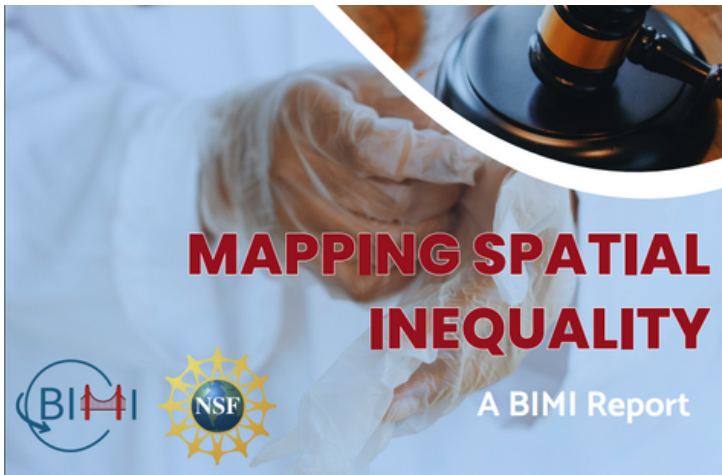
WHAT 2023 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING

“All the instructors that were invited, besides being very knowledgeable in their own topic of expertise, were excellent and engaging speakers. I felt safe asking questions and felt very engaged with all of the topics explored in the course.”

“The fact that the course was also a safe space for us to share not only our research but also the personal and professional challenges that we have faced. It was very helpful, instructional, and inspiring to hear about other’s research, as well as their personal and professional histories.”

MAPPING SPATIAL INEQUALITY REPORT

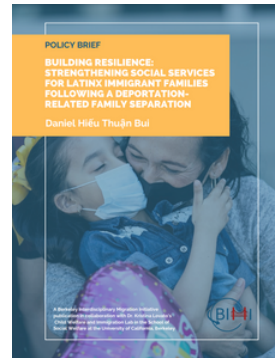
This report is the result of three years of work on the NSF grant 'Understanding Organizational Inequality in Immigrant Serving Nonprofits'. In this brief, BIMI identifies the gaps in access to health and legal services for immigrants in three states – California, Arizona, and Nevada – and we provide policy recommendations to address those gaps.



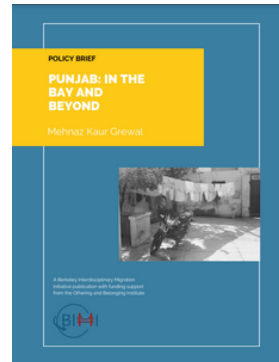
BLOGS

- [The Movement for Immigrant Voting Rights: Journey, Victories, Backlash & Future](#)
- [“Belonging Beyond Borders: A Tale of Historical Reminiscence, Black Diasporic Communities, and Me”](#)
- [Experiencing Afghanistan Beyond the Borders](#)
- [The Rich Yemeni Coffee Culture and Social Interaction Amongst the Yemeni Community](#)
- [The Perfect Day in Lalton Khurd](#)

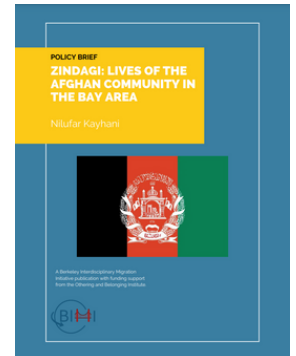
POLICY BRIEFS



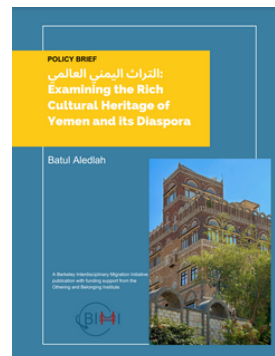
Building Resilience: Strengthening Social Services for Latinx Immigrant Families following a Deportation Related Family Separation



Punjab: In the Bay and Beyond



Zindagi: Lives of the Afghan Community in the Bay Area



التراث اليمني العالمي Examining the Rich Cultural Heritage of Yemen and its Diaspora



Addressing the Shift in Child Welfare Practices Serving Latinx Immigrant Population During the COVID-19 Pandemic

IMMIGRANT VOTING RIGHTS EVENT

In October, we organized an event titled “The Movement for Immigrant Voting Rights: Journey, Victories, Backlash, & Future.” We invited four academic and nonprofit researchers to discuss the fight for immigrants’ voting rights in San Francisco, what it means to communities, and what the future looks like across California. The event was moderated by BIMI’s faculty director, Professor Irene Bloemraad. The presenters were:

- Prof. Eric Shickler, Co-Faculty Director from the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS)
- Prof. Kathleen Coll, Associate Professor of Politics at University of San Francisco
- Annette Wong, Managing Director of Programs at Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA)
- Prof. Stephanie Zonszein, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the UC Berkeley



BIMI STUDENT SHOWCASE

In May, we organized BCCP’s student showcase, aiming to reframe the different ways in which belonging can manifest. Students presented the following research:

- Mehnaz Grewal: Chardi-Kala: Sikhs-Here and There
- Alexandra Gessesse: Ethiopians Abroad: Blackness, Transnationalism, & Self-Determination
- Batul Aledah: Turath: Examining the Rich Cultural Heritage of Yemen and her Diaspora
- Nilufar Kayhani: Zindagi: Lives of the Afghan Community in the Bay Area





I-HOUSE PHOTO EXHIBIT

In April, BIMI Cultures and Communities Project participated in the International Cultural Festival at the I-House and showcased its first photo-exhibit of finding 'belonging' in Sikh, Yemeni, Afghan, and Ethiopian communities.



MIGRATION MATTERS PODCAST

In January, we introduced our podcast series: Migration Matters. In our inaugural episode, BIMI Communication and Policy Fellow, Michelle Rivera Lopez talks to faculty director, Prof. Irene Bloemraad and Executive Director, Dr. Harpreet Mangat about BIMI's work. The podcast is available on Spotify.

