

***Archives and Traces of Migration (AToM):***  
***A MIGRATION FOND/COLLECTION DEFINITION***

**Prepared by AToM Project Partner:**

Spanish State Archives



**Approved by AToM steering committee on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

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## AToM\_MIGRATION FOND/COLLECTION DEFINITION

*Archives and traces of migration* project seeks to explore issues of appraisal, preservation, description and access of archival and documentary heritage material that documents emigration, expatriation, immigration, and diaspora communities. Archival inclusiveness in highlighting migration heritage from past and documenting and preserving present migration heritage is in the core of this project proposal.

The activities within this project are designed in a way to accentuate these facts and position of archives as places of communication among communities, cultures, and time periods. Archives and traces of migration raise distinctive issues for archival and other cultural heritage professionals, many of whom have mandates that focus on one state or jurisdiction or on only certain types of documentary materials. Those issues are manifold and manifested in various forms and formats in which material might exist; dispersion, fragmentation and transnationality of both materials and communities; incompletely understood diasporic community needs, identity and affect; motivations and priorities of “home” and “settlement” countries and their cultural institutions; and how to address existing documentary gaps and silences. The project started in September 2022 and will be wrapped up in 2025 with the international conference.

In the abovementioned timeframe, the partners collaborate in a wide range of complementary and, in most of the cases, cross-cultural activities and actions (exhibitions, training courses, repository of oral histories and life stories, etc.), distributed in different Work Packages (WPs).

The Work Package 5 (WP5) **Archival and documentary collections on migration, led by the Spanish State Archives, particularly has 4 objectives:**

- **To explore and define what constitute a migration fond/collection from an archival perspective**
- To create new finding aids and guides from existing archival collections that highlight material that is important for historical and/or contemporary migration
- To create digital collections that contain material about migration
- To create virtual and physical exhibitions based on re-described and newly created collections

Defining migration collections profiles is only the first step but it has to be well defined since it is the basis for the following wp5 activities. In order to achieve this first goal, one specific

research work should be carried out, consisting of a survey among the European Archives on the topic of “**migration fonds/collections**”.

## **WHY AGREE ON A DEFINITION OF MIGRATION FOND/COLLECTION IN THE CONTEXT OF ARCHIVES?**

A clear and shared understanding of what constitutes a migration fond/collection is crucial for effective archival practice and scholarship in the field of migration studies. Archival practice is guided by principles and standards that dictate the acquisition, description, preservation, and access of materials. Inconsistent or unclear definitions of a migration fond/collection may lead to challenges in meeting these standards and may hinder access to materials for scholars and researchers.

Moreover, different archival institutions may have varying approaches to collecting and preserving migration-related materials, depending on their mission and the contexts in which they operate. Having a common understanding of what constitutes a migration fond/collection can help to clarify these differences and promote collaboration and coordination among institutions.

A clear definition of a migration fond/collection is also important for academic researchers, policymakers, NGOs and other interested parties in the field of migration studies. It helps to ensure that they can access materials relevant to their research questions and that they can evaluate the scope and limitations of these materials. A well-defined migration fond/collection can also help to identify gaps in the archival record and guide future collecting efforts.

As a starting point, in the context of AToM, we might say that:

**A migration fond/collection, within the context of archival practice, refers to an assemblage of primary source materials that document various aspects of migration, encompassing the movement of individuals or groups across geographical, political, or social boundaries. These fonds/collections typically include a range of materials such as personal narratives, correspondence, photographs, government records, policy documents, oral histories, and other relevant materials; and they are collected and preserved by archives, libraries, museums, and other institutions for research, education, and public access. Migration archival fonds/collections may include materials that document the experiences of migrants and the impact of migration on societies. They serve as a valuable resource for researchers, scholars, and the general public, providing insight into the causes and consequences of migration, the**



**experiences of migrants, and the social, cultural, and economic impact of migration on societies. Archival fonds/collections play an important role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of migrant communities and contributing to a more accurate and inclusive historical record of migration.**

We must highlight the significant difference between “fonds” and “collections”. According to [ISAD\(G\): General International Standard Archival Description](#), a collection is an artificial assemblage of documents accumulated on the basis of some common characteristic without regard to the provenance of those documents. Not to be confused with an archival fonds, that are the whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities and functions.

**The aim of AToM is to harmonise the different perspectives of the European Archives on the concept of "migration fond/collection".** Having in mind that the obtained. “definition” will not be universal, rather just our understanding what that kind of fond/collection might be. Nevertheless, it is important to have a clear understanding of what a migration fond/collection is in the context of archives because it ensures that everyone involved in the documentary management, in particular, in the area of preservation and access of these materials, shares the same understanding and expectations. Without a common understanding, it can lead to confusion, misunderstandings, and potential conflicts among stakeholders.

Archival practice is grounded in shared principles and standards that govern the acquisition, organization, description, preservation, digitization and access of materials. A clear definition of a migration collection helps ensure that these materials are collected and preserved in a consistent and systematic manner, making it easier for researchers and scholars to access and use them.

Moreover, the definition of a migration fond/collection may vary depending on the context and the type of archives or institution. The creation of archives and the historical context of each country determine the types of materials and the objectives of the archival institutions. Some archives may specialize in collecting materials related to forced migration or refugee experiences, while others may focus on the documentation of voluntary migration. Having a clear understanding of the scope and parameters of a migration collection can help ensure that materials are collected and preserved in a way that reflects the specific context and mission of the archive or institution.

## SURVEY ON MIGRATION COLLECTIONS/FONDS

### Methodology-Survey

In order to reach a comprehensive definition of "migration fond/collection", a **template questionnaire was drafted** and proposed to the project Steering Committee for discussion and approval. It was planned to use an online questionnaire that included closed categorized questions, which allowed to standardize data and streamline their process and statistical analysis, as well as some open questions to obtain more spontaneous answers and qualitative contributions.

The questions, answered through this [link](#), are the following:

- Archival Institution Name
- Email
- Country
- City
- Legal Structure
  - Public
  - Private
  - Public and Private Partnership
- Do you have any different branches/archives under your responsibility?
- Is collecting migration materials part of your mission?
- Significance of migration in the context of your country
- Please, name the main archival holdings related with migration in your Institution
- Time period covered by these fonds/collections
- Access periods for these fonds/collections
  - Current
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Century
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century



- 18<sup>th</sup> Century
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century
  - 16<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Over 500 years old
- Access periods for these fonds/collections
- Linear meters for these fonds/collections
- Profile of users
  - Historian/Researchers
  - Archivists/Professionals from Archives Sector
  - Professors
  - Migrant individuals
  - Migrant organizations
  - Hobbyists
  - Unknown
- Does your institution collaborate with migrant organizations or individuals?
- Do you have any specific webportal for any of these archival holdings?
- How would you define a migration fond/collection in the archival context?
- Help us completing our glossary. Choose the ones that matches with your context (See glossary of terms)
  - Collective memory
  - Diaspora
  - Exile
  - Expat
  - Identity
  - Migration
  - National “minorities” outside the country
  - Social remittances
  - Transnationals
  - Other
- Please could you add other terms with a brief definition/explanation?

## Survey [link](#)

The initial objective was to gather primary data from at least 20 archival holdings institutions from at least 8 European countries.

## Executive Summary

1. The varied typology of archives that have responded to the survey clearly reflects that the **holdings on migrations are very dispersed** in different archives and cultural organizations and are, at the same time, **very diverse** (statistics, censuses, permits, oral histories, letters, etc.) with a wide range of materials. We find among the respondents: national and regional, public and private archives, ministerial archives, archives of the parliament, archives specializing in migration issues, university archives, museum archives and the archives of social organizations that work directly with migrants.
2. As it was expected, **a great majority** (87.5% / 21 out of 25 participating institutions) **of the participating organisations belong to the public sector**. This fact is consistent with the fact that 96% of the European Archives are publicly owned and that 90 - 95% are financed with public funds, according to the piece of research [Pan-European Diagnosis & State of the Arts report about Archival Holdings Institutions](#), developed by the Spanish State Archives in the framework of the EU cofounded project [European Digital Treasures](#).
3. **75% of the participating archives have as part of their mission to collect migration materials**. However, it is significant that 25% of the organizations that responded do not include the task of collecting migration materials as part of their mission.
4. For the vast majority of the organizations that participated in the survey, **migration in Europe is a central issue** for its archives. European migrations continue to shape the demographic, economic, and cultural landscape of the continent. As migration remains a dynamic and complex issue, European countries face ongoing challenges in managing and addressing the impacts and opportunities presented by migration flows.
5. Migration-related archival holdings mentioned by the organizations participating in the survey are very diverse, comprising fonds or collections directly related to migratory



movements (passport register books, travel familiar permits...) or fonds/collections that provide us with indirect information on population movements through other themes (e.g. notarial holdings).

6. Most of the holdings of the participating archives (52%) belong to the **20th century**, followed by the 19th century (21%).
7. **80% of the users of migration holdings are researchers.** However, we must highlight that 8% of users are migrants, and it is expected that this group will continue to rise in a short period of time.
8. In relation with the previous point, **54% of the organizations collaborate with migrant organizations or individuals.** An approach of community engagement and **participatory archival practice** has increasingly been recognized and adopted as best ethical practice by archives and other cultural institutions. So, it is expected that this percentage will increase in the coming years.
9. There is a common general idea in most of the answers about what is the **definition of collections/fonds on migrations.** The nuances are given by the different contexts and fonds that guard the different archives. However, we can mention as common concepts:
  - Migration holdings refer to groups across geographical or political borders. Movements of people between countries for economic, social, or political reasons.
  - Materials of fonds/collections include objects, books, personal correspondence, video interviews, photographs, films, and documents issued by governmental bodies in different countries.
  - Records created, accumulated and/or maintained by creators<sup>1</sup> serve to reconstruct and narrate the immigrants' ways of life and their integration into the immigrant-receiving society, as well as the social, cultural and economic impact of migration on societies.
  - They serve as a valuable resource for researchers, scholars, and the public.

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<sup>1</sup> Creator. The corporate body, family or person that created, accumulated and/or maintained records in the conduct of personal or corporate activity. Not be confused with collector. ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

## Results of survey on migration collections/fonds

The online questionnaire on migration collections/fonds was launched on 2 July and remained open until 14 July 2023. It was addressed to European archives holding migration collections/fonds. It was distributed among the different European archive networks.

The initial objective was to gather primary data from at least 20 archival holdings institutions. Thanks to a personalised approach, such targets have been overcome, as **24 questionnaires have been answered covering 10 countries.**

The responses received are detailed below:

### 1. Archival Institution Name

The variety of archives and cultural institutions that responded to the survey clearly reflects the variety of these holdings (statistics, censuses, permits, oral histories, letters, etc.) and its creation context.

The typology of organisations that hold this type of collection is reflected in the responses, with national and regional, public and private archives, ministerial archives, archives of the parliament, archives specialised in migration issues, university archives, museum archives and the archives of social organisations that work directly with migrants.

Comprehensive list of participant organizations:

- ✓ Archives nationales de Luxembourg
- ✓ Museo del Greco
- ✓ Archivo Del Congreso de los Diputados
- ✓ National Archives of Norway
- ✓ Archivo Histórico Provincial de Málaga
- ✓ Državni arhiv u Bjelovaru (State Archives in Bjelovar)
- ✓ Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cantabria
- ✓ Archivo de la Universidad de Alicante
- ✓ Cáritas Portuguesa
- ✓ Archivo Histórico de Euskadi-Archivo de la Diáspora Vasca
- ✓ Expatriate Archive Centre



- ✓ Sociaal Historisch Centrum voor Limburg
- ✓ Gemeente Peel en Maas
- ✓ National Archives (Czech Republic)
- ✓ Royal and General Archive of Navarre
- ✓ State Archives in Dubrovnik
- ✓ Archivo General de la Región de Murcia / Archivo Histórico Provincial de Murcia
- ✓ Archivo General del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación
- ✓ National Archives of Romania
- ✓ Security Services Archive (Czech Republic)
- ✓ State Archives of Cyprus
- ✓ Archivo Histórico de Protocolos de Madrid
- ✓ Archivo Regional de la Comunidad de Madrid
- ✓ National Archives of Belgium

## 2. Country

Responses from 10 different countries have been received. Of particular relevance is the participation of Spanish archives (11), followed by the Netherlands (3), Croatia (2) and the Czech Republic (2).

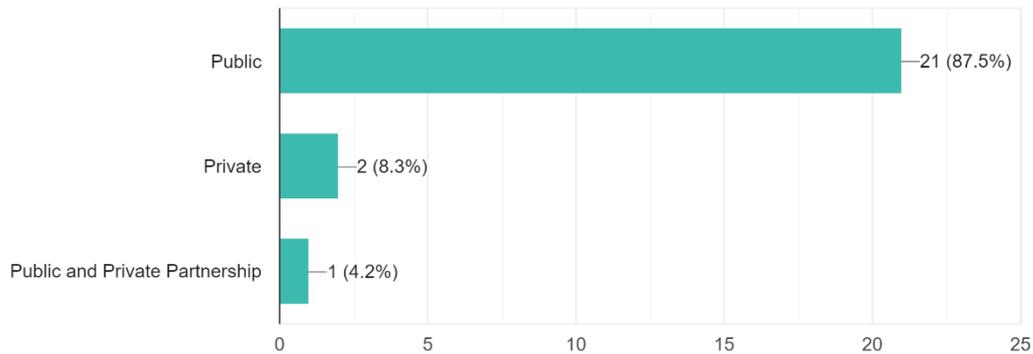
Complete list.

- ✓ Spain: 11
- ✓ The Netherlands: 3
- ✓ Croatia: 2
- ✓ Czech Republic: 2
- ✓ Belgium: 1
- ✓ Cyprus: 1
- ✓ Luxembourg: 1
- ✓ Norway: 1
- ✓ Portugal: 1
- ✓ Romania: 1

### 3. Legal Structure

#### Legal Structure

24 responses



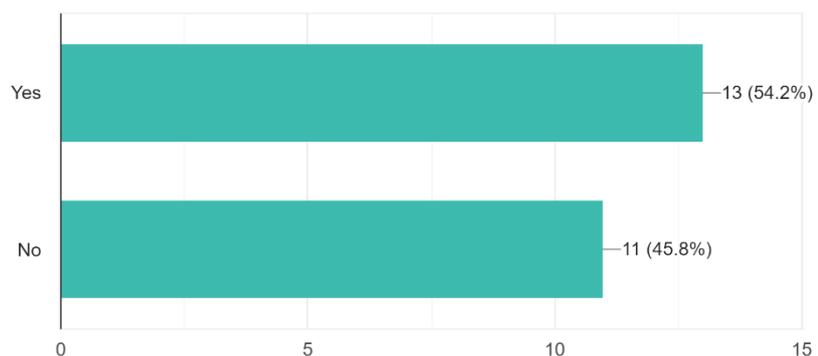
As it was expected, a great majority (87.5% / 21 out of 25 participating institutions) of the participating archives belong to the public sector.

Actually, the only 2 private institutions that has participated to the survey is an international one linked to charity (poor, vulnerable and excluded persons) and the Roman Catholic church; and the only public-private organization is a regional one, linked to a university and the regional government.

### 4. Do you have any different branches/archives under your responsibility?

#### Do you have any different branches/archives under your responsibility?

24 responses

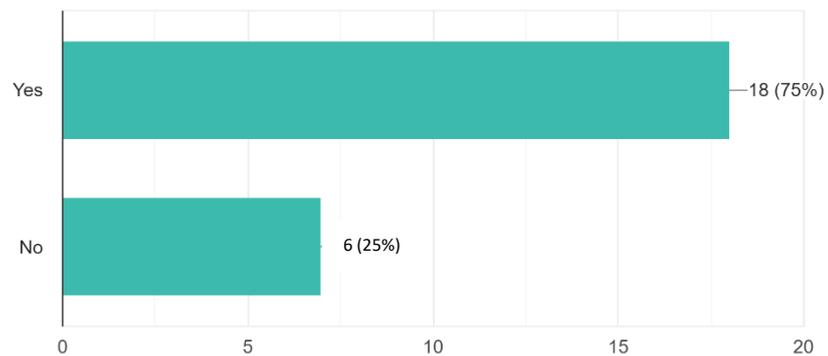


It can be highlighted that 54% of the archives that participated do have branches under their responsibilities, against 46% that do not. In fact, national and state archives commonly have a large number of local/regional/sectorial archives or representations under their responsibility.

### 5. Is collecting migration materials part of your mission?

Is collecting migration materials part of your mission?

24 responses



75% of the participating archives have as part of their mission to collect migration materials. However, the archives of organisations such as museums, universities or public historical archives do not have this task as part of their mission, but they also keep records that may be relevant for the study of migration phenomena.

### 6. Significance of migration in the context of your country

European migrations continue to shape the demographic, economic, and cultural landscape of the continent. As migration remains a dynamic and complex issue, European countries face ongoing challenges in managing and addressing the impacts and opportunities presented by migration flows. For this reason, migrations are essential for all organizations that have responded to this survey.

Nevertheless, each of the archives, depending on the European country to which they belong, call attention to one type of migration or another. We highlight the main typologies with examples:

## Emigration

**Historical Emigration:** European countries have a long history of emigration, with large numbers of people leaving their homelands in search of better opportunities abroad. The 19th and early 20th centuries saw significant emigration from various European countries to destinations like the Americas, Australia, and other parts of the world.

The Spanish archives highlight the importance of Spanish migration to Latin America in the 19th and 20th centuries and the refugee crises caused by the Spanish Civil War.

*Archivo de la Universidad de Alicante: "Migration in Spain has been a phenomenon of disastrous dimensions for the population and for the history of the country. The Civil War and the subsequent Franco dictatorship led to the exile of thousands and thousands of Spanish Republicans. Many went into exile in France where they were interned in concentration camps and later detained by the Nazis. Others were exiled to North Africa where they were forced to forced labour virtually as slaves. The family and social drama has been maintained for many decades due to the years of dictatorship."*

**Refugee and Asylum Migration:** Europe has witnessed several refugee crises forced by political reasons. One of the more representative responses about this one given by the National Archives of Romania: *Romania is predominantly a country of emigration (since 19s Century). Significant Historical emigration consists of some important flow waves, within the context of the overflow process from East Europe to much promising countries (economic reasons) or forced by political ones. We can mention here: migration to North America (19th-20th centuries), large-scale population transfers during the WWI and WWII (and here we highlight the process occurred in Transylvania), deportation of Jews (Romanian Holocaust WWII), Roma people (WWII) and German ethnics (immediately after WWII), the emigration of ethnic minorities during the Communist regime. Nowadays, the process of emigration (primarily economic reasons) goes on.*

**Labour Migration:** Labour migration in Europe has been a significant phenomenon for many decades, shaped by historical, economic, and political factors. The movement of workers within the European continent and beyond its borders has been continuous throughout the 19th and 20th centuries:



National Archives of Norway: *“Our holdings include archival holdings with important information on migration. Migration is an important part of our history. In the 18th century, a large part of the population from the southern parts of Norway migrated to the Netherlands. In the 19th and 20th century a lot of Norwegians went to USA and some to Canada. Most of them emigrated, but some came back after many years working abroad.”*

### Immigration

**Labor Migration:** In the mid-20th century, several European countries faced labour shortages and implemented guest worker programs to attract foreign workers from countries like Turkey, Morocco, and Tunisia. These labour migrants were initially intended to fill temporary positions but often ended up settling in their host countries.

National Archives of Belgium: *Overall, immigration has played an increasingly important role in Belgian socio-economic history throughout the 19th and 20th century.*

*Around 1900, Belgium became an immigration country, meaning the number of immigrants surpassed the number of emigrants. In the post-war period the mining industry (the backbone of Belgian economy) depended on the massive immigration of low-skilled foreign labour, an evolution which also occurred in other branches of the economy since the late 1950s. The “migration stop” in 1974 did not end migration flows to Belgium. Instead of labour migration, new arrivals were mainly triggered by resettlement and family reunion.*

Cáritas Portuguesa: *Since the Medieval ages, Portugal has been a country of migrations. Since the 16th century, when the Portuguese expansion/world discoveries, we had migrations from Portugal to the Portuguese colonies in Africa, Asia and Brazil, and from those countries to Portugal (mostly with the 20th century decolonization). Nowadays we receive migrants from Europe, Eastern Asia, North of Africa, former Portuguese colonies. The migrants are looking for better life, economic and political conditions and the Portuguese government is aware of it, implementing measures to face it.*

**Refugee and Asylum Migration:** Europe has witnessed several refugee crises, leading to the arrival of asylum seekers and refugees from conflict-ridden regions such as Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and various African countries. These migrations have sparked debates about asylum policies and integration in the last years.

National Archives of Belgium: *When looking at the “management” of refugee crises or violence induced mobility in Western Europe since the 1930s, Belgium has been at the forefront of changes in (international) asylum policies. During much of the 1930s, it was a “frontline state” for Jewish and political refugees from Nazi Germany, whereas in the second half of the 1940s, it recruited over 22,000 displaced persons (DPs) from Germany to work as miners. By early 1954, it had become the first country to delegate its national competence for recognizing refugees on its territory to the representative of an international body—the Belgian delegate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Since 1988, the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons has taken over this role.*

National Archives of the Czech Republic: *The Czech Republic is a multicultural society that is affected by waves of migration, on the other hand, young Czechs are leaving for work abroad (...) Currently, the Czech Republic provides comprehensive assistance to more than half a million refugees from war-affected Ukraine. Migration in the Czech Republic can be a carrier of positive values if we use its development potential.*

**7. Please, name the main archival holdings related with migration in your Institution. (Please, if possible, insert links to the resources, descriptions, finding aids, etc.)**

The main migration-related archival holdings mentioned by the archives participating in the survey are as varied as the participating archives themselves.

Two classifications can be made:

- A first one, distinguishing between:
  - fonds/collections directly related to migratory movements: application for foreign Passports, passport register books, travel familiar permits, fonds of migrant associations, refugees plans...
  - And fonds/collections that provide us with indirect information on population movements through other themes. Many archives do not have a collection exclusively related to migration, but there are numerous documents in their holdings in which its existence and activity can be traced. Some good examples of this are the notarial archives, military recruitment records, urban planning records... or even more specific fonds like the PROVINCIAL INSTITUTE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY fond, held in the *Archivo Regional de la Comunidad de Madrid: The large number of women from outside Madrid who were admitted to the maternity wards*

can be seen in the daily registers of the IPOG during the 1950s. They list their towns of origin and are, therefore, a source of information on emigration to the capital.

- The second distinction can be made based on the different missions of the archives.
  - i. Many archives generate **fonds** in the course of their activities. We should recall the definition of fonds provided by ISAD(G): *The whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family, or corporate body during that creator's activities and functions.*

Among these, fonds we can highlight:

- a. *Migration Records, which are official records and documents related to migration processes, including immigration and emigration forms, visa applications, passports, border crossing records, and naturalization documents. These records provide information about individuals or groups moving from one place to another;*
  - b. *and Government Reports and Publications: Archives often house government reports, policy documents, and publications related to migration, which provide insights into the official perspectives and regulations on immigration and emigration. Good examples are the fonds generated by the Spanish Parliament or the General Archive of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation; and the fonds kept in the National and Regional Historical Archives, which hold the historical fonds generated by the oldest administrative organizations.*
- ii. Other archives deal more specifically with migration and **build collections on migration**. The term collection is also defined by ISAD (G) as follows: *an artificial assemblage of documents accumulated based on some common characteristic without regard to the provenance of those documents. Not to be confused with an archival fonds.*

The archive of the University of Alicante has a collection called Archivo de la Democracia; a set of documentary collections that help repair the Democratic Memory. It is made up of donations from personalities, associations and other individuals. As for the exiles in North Africa, they have a web portal where all the documentary collections we have are related and described.

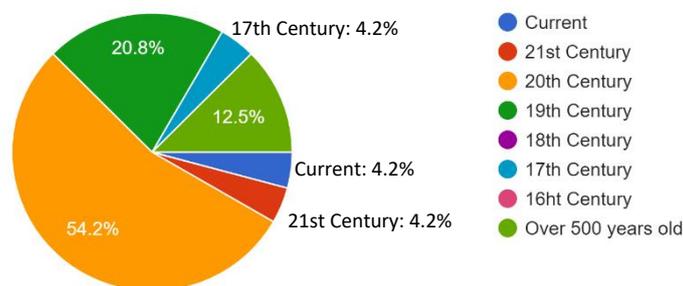


Expatriate Archive Centre in the Netherlands collects and preserves the life stories of expatriates worldwide for future research: *Our collection includes letters, diaries, blogs, photos, videos, and other documents which together give a complete picture of everyday life abroad, from the late 19th century to the present day. These original source materials are invaluable for academic researchers looking to study expatriate experiences from a wide range of perspectives.*

## 8. Time period covered by your migration fonds.

Time period covered by these fonds/collections

24 responses



The vast majority of the fonds/collections of the participating archives (52%) belong to the 20th century, followed by the 19th century (21%). It is also significant that 12% of the collections are more than 500 years old, mainly belonging to state/regional public archives.

## 9. Access regulations to these fonds/collections

Access rules to these collections are different for each archive, considering, in which country, region and city it is located and what kind of organisation it is.

We should point out that access regulations to archival fonds/collections in the European Union (EU) can vary from country to country, as each member state has its own laws and regulations governing archives. Nevertheless, there are European regulations such as REGULATION (EU) 2016/679 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals or the DIRECTIVE (EU) 2019/1024 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information, but not on access. Additionally, you can explore the websites of international archival organizations and institutions, such as the International Council on Archives (ICA)<sup>2</sup> or

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ica.org/sites/default/files/ICA\\_Access-principles\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ica.org/sites/default/files/ICA_Access-principles_EN.pdf)

the European Archive Group (EAG)<sup>3</sup>, for resources and guidelines related to archival access in the EU. However, there are some general principles and guidelines that apply to many EU countries concerning access to archival materials that are reflected in the archives' responses. Here are some common access regulations found in many EU countries:

**Principle of Openness:** The EU generally promotes the principle of openness when it comes to access to public records, including archival materials. Public archives are often accessible to researchers, historians, and the general public, subject to certain conditions.

**Time-Based Access Restrictions:** Some archival materials may be subject to access restrictions based on the sensitivity of the content or the need to protect individuals' privacy. In many EU countries, access to certain records may be restricted for a specified period, often determined by the data protection and privacy laws.

**Personal Data Protection:** Access to archival materials containing personal data may be subject to data protection regulations, such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Personal data should be processed and accessed in compliance with these regulations to ensure individuals' privacy is safeguarded.

**Researcher Access:** Researchers, scholars, and historians are usually granted access to archival materials for research purposes. They may need to apply for permission, follow specific procedures, or agree to certain terms and conditions set by the archive.

**Copyright and Intellectual Property:** Archival materials may be subject to copyright and intellectual property rights. Researchers accessing and using such materials must adhere to copyright laws and obtain proper permissions for reproduction or publication.

**Special Collections and Sensitivity:** Archives may hold special collections, such as records related to sensitive historical events or vulnerable populations. Access to such materials may be subject to additional restrictions to ensure their appropriate use and handling.

## 10. Linear meters of these fonds/collections

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<sup>3</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/service-standards-and-principles/transparency/access-documents/information-and-document-management/archival-policy/european-archives-group\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/service-standards-and-principles/transparency/access-documents/information-and-document-management/archival-policy/european-archives-group_en)



We found among the responses, fonds/collections on migration from 1.8 linear meters to 7 500 m.

In some cases, such as the national Archives, it is very difficult to determine the linear metres of the collections on migration, because the collections are distributed over several different sites. Precise criteria for the selection and specification of archive fonds/collections should be specified.

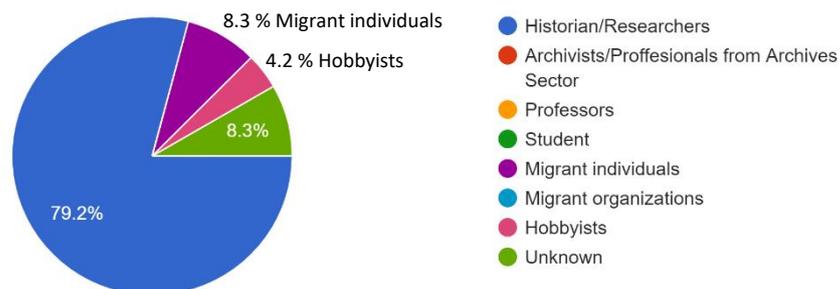
### 11. Number of annual user queries to these fonds/collections

It is very difficult to have the number of consultations of these collections because within the non-specialised archives, as we have seen before, the collections on migration are distributed in different files.

In addition, it is necessary to distinguish between in-person consultations by researchers and online consultations. The numbers vary a lot for different reasons, so they are not representative.

### 12. Profile of users

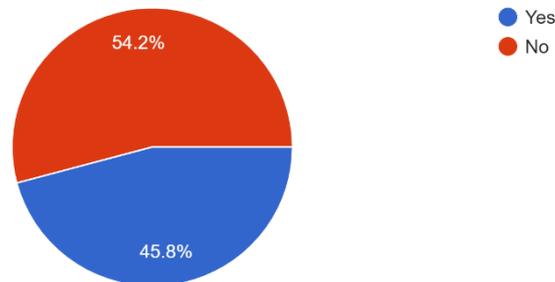
Profile of users  
24 responses



### 13. Does your institution collaborate with migrant organizations or individuals?

Does your institution collaborate with migrant organisations or individuals?

24 responses

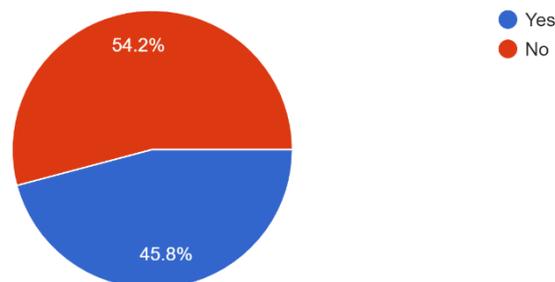


It is very relevant that 45% of the archives surveyed collaborate with migrant organisations or individuals even though most of them are not specialised in migration archives. This is a trend that should be supported to involve migrant groups as co-creators of funds/collections.

### 14. Web portal

Do you have any specific webportal for any of these archival holdings?

24 responses



More than 50% of the participating archives have web pages from which migration holdings can be accessed. However, there are almost no specific websites for migration holdings. In the national or regional historical archives there may be some specific microsites, but usually these fonds and collections are not highlighted.

**15. If you have answered "yes" in the previous question, please, write down the name of the webportal/s.**

List of websites:

<https://archivodemocracia.ua.es/es/exilio-republicano-afrika/1.-el-exilio-republicano-en-el-norte-de-afrika.html>

Papir: <https://portal.cehr.ft.lisboa.ucp.pt/arquivos/index.php/caritas-portuguesa-2>

[www.dokuklik.euskadi.eus](http://www.dokuklik.euskadi.eus)

<https://www.shclimburg.nl/>

<https://pem.hosting.deventit.net/>

<https://archivogeneral.carm.es>

<https://ebadatlna.cz/>

<https://gestiona3.madrid.org/archivos/index.php/fondos-y-colecciones/archivo-historico-de-protocolos-de-madrid>

[https://gestiona.comunidad.madrid/archivos\\_atom/index.php/informationobject/browse?showAdvanced=1&topLod=0](https://gestiona.comunidad.madrid/archivos_atom/index.php/informationobject/browse?showAdvanced=1&topLod=0)

Belgian State Archives' website: <https://arch.arch.be/index.php?l=en>

**16. How would you define a migration fond/collection in the archival context?**

We list here the responses from all the archives. We will analyse them in the next point of the document:

*“An archival series with relevant information about emigration.”*

*“Documentation of special relevance for the repair and recovery of the Democratic Memory.”*

*“The same as the glossary.”*

*“Primary and secondary source materials documenting migration processes, whether of individuals or groups across geographical or political borders. The materials held by the Diaspora Archive include objects, books, personal accounts (in the form of verse and personal correspondence), video interviews, photographs, films, and documents issued by governmental bodies in different countries.”*

*“The Expatriate Archive Centre collects and preserves the life stories of expatriates worldwide for future research. We define an expatriate as someone who lives temporarily in a country other*

*than their 'home' country. We are also interested in repatriation, third culture kids, and other roles and situations adjacent to expatriate life."*

*"Collection/collection items that deal with aspects of migration."*

*"Archival documents on the issue of exile, migration (emigration and immigration), national minorities, compatriots living abroad are located in the National Archives in a wide range of archival fonds and collections, for example in state administration fonds, in associational or personal archives and archival collections."*

*"A documentary fonds or collection produced or assembled by people or entities that were protagonists or directly intervened in migratory movements. As well as documentary fonds or collections that, without having been produced or assembled expressly because of migratory movements, provide significant quantitatively or qualitatively information about these movements."*

*"Structured set of documents from a producing organization related to the movements of people between countries for economic, social or political reasons, and their ways of life and integration into the immigrant-receiving society."*

*"A migration fond/collection consists of documentary heritage of people who had to leave their native country/region for different kind of reasons (economic, political, professional)."*

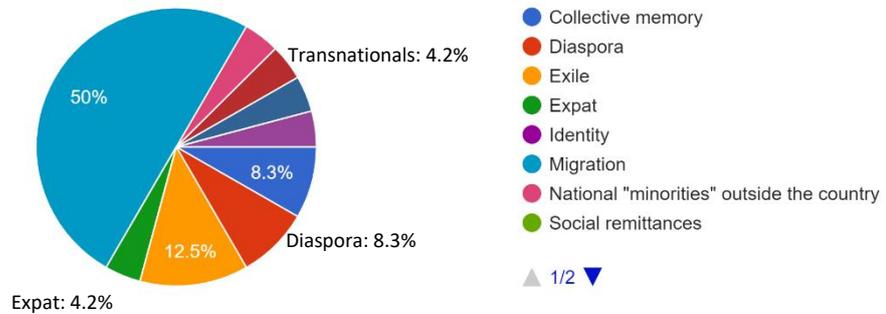
*"A fond/collection comprised of records that mainly address issues relating to people migrating to or from Cyprus or even internally displaced persons."*

*"Archival logic dictates that we identify archive fonds with archive producers. Consequently, the archive production of any organization involved in «migration management » (such as the former Aliens' Police or the old service of the Belgian delegate of the UNHCR) will count as a « migration fond »."*

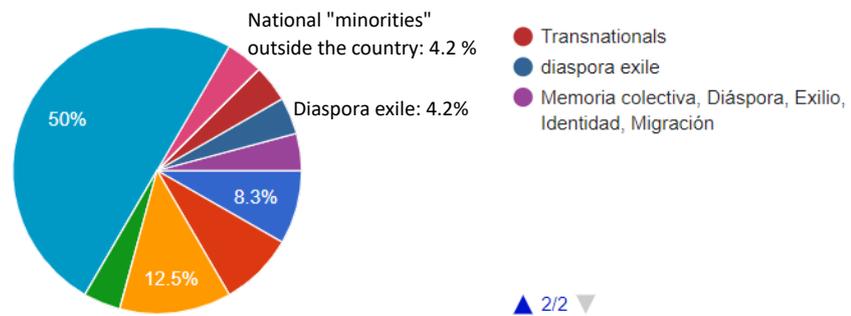
**17. Help us completing our glossary. Choose the ones that matches with your context.**

Help us completing our glossary. Choose the ones that matches with your context

24 responses



24 responses



Due to the non-specialisation of the surveyed archives, the option of "migration" in general, with 50%, is the one with which they feel most identified. "Exile", "Diaspora" and "Collective memory" are the following choices.

**18. Please could you add other terms (to the glossary) with a brief definition/explanation?**

*Refugees: foreign nationals taken in by another country due to political reasons or insecurity.*

*Refugees: People who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.*

*Rural Exodus: massive movement of people from the villages to the city due to a negative economic and social situation (agrarian crisis, crisis of rural values). It was particularly significant in the mid-20th century in Spain.*

## **MIGRATION FOND/COLLECTION: A MULTIPERSPECTIVE DEFINITION**

As mentioned in the first point of this document, the aim of AToM is to harmonise the different perspectives of the European Archives on the concept of "migration fond/collection". Having in mind that the obtained "definition" will not be universal, rather just our understanding what that kind of fond/collection might be. A common definition of migration records in archives is essential for maintaining accuracy, consistency, and interoperability across various contexts. It supports research, policy development, education, and the responsible management of historical information related to human migration.

It should be noted that most of the definitions given by the archives and organisations participating in the survey are contained in the initial definition given by AToM. Nevertheless, we have added to the initial definition the different nuances that the participants in the survey have brought to the definition of a migration fond/collection:

**A migration fond/collection, within the context of archival practice, refers to an assemblage of primary source materials that document various aspects of migration, encompassing the movement of individuals or groups across geographical, political, or social boundaries. These fonds/collections typically include a range of materials such as personal narratives, correspondence, photographs, government records, policy documents, oral histories, and other relevant materials; and they are collected and preserved by archives, libraries, museums, and other institutions for research, education, and public access.**

**Migration archival fonds/collections may include materials that document the experiences of migrants and the impact of migration on societies. They serve as a valuable resource for researchers, scholars, and the general public, providing insight into the causes and consequences of migration, the experiences of migrants, and the social, cultural, and economic impact of migration on societies. Archival fonds/collections play an important role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of migrant communities and contributing to**



a more accurate and inclusive historical record of migration. <sup>4</sup>*Besides, archival fonds/collections address the needs of migrant communities in terms of relevant records and recognition of rights. Additionally, they preserve their collective memory and maintain their identity.*

A noteworthy nuance is the distinction made by the Royal and General Archive of Navarre between *documentary fonds or collection produced or assembled by people or entities that were protagonists or directly intervened in migratory movements* and *documentary fonds or collections that, without having been produced or assembled expressly because of migratory movements, provide significant quantitatively or qualitatively information about these movements*. This distinction shows the great variety of records that can provide information on different aspects of migration movements and the complexity, for this reason, of systematising the different types of records.

Two new terms to add to the glossary have been mentioned within one of the definitions given by the participants: “Repatriation” and “Third Culture Kids” (see definition in the Glossary of Terms Used).

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

Concepts and terminology can vary widely according to national, professional, disciplinary, and political contexts. It is important to have a clear understanding of how they are being understood within AToM so that archivists can explain and justify them to others as needed.

The following working definitions have been developed for AToM based upon an analysis of the scholarly literature and internationally recognized terminology, however each partner archive will need to arrive at their own applied or refined versions of these definitions within the context of their actual archival work and the communities with whom they are engaging.

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<sup>4</sup> Text added to the initial definition after the survey.

**Assimilation:** the process whereby someone of one heritage takes on the values and habits of another community, culture or state in which they reside.

**Collection:** objects (including oral and digital) that are created, assembled or kept by individuals or LAMS. LAMs acquire or build collections based pre-defined collecting criteria such as appraisal and collection development policies.

**Collective identity (see Identity)**

**Collective memory:** the shared pool of memories, knowledge, and information belonging to a particular social group and significantly associated with that group's identity.

**Diaspora:** a specific transnational group(s) whose members are aware of and practicing or explicitly preserving to some extent, an identity or culture associated with an original homeland or country of origin, and who remain oriented toward that homeland in real or symbolic ways. The 'diaspora' of a particular country or ethnic group can be comprised of individuals and communities that are scattered across multiple locations outside the historic homeland.

**Documentary heritage:** includes all the kinds of official records, personal materials and memory objects that are traditionally collected by LAMs, as well as purpose-created documentation such as oral and life histories, photographs and video materials, social media content, and documentation of artistic productions and performances, memorialization practices, and youth activities.

**Documentary heritage professionals:** include not only traditional heritage occupations such as archivists, museum curators and librarians but also a diversity of relevant heritage actors from non-governmental associations, international organisations, community initiatives, and so forth.

**Exile:** an individual who has been banished from or has chosen to leave a country, especially a country of birth, due to reasons such as political persecution under a particular regime, legal punishment, or inability to exercise certain freedoms or creativity. May also refer to the status of being exiled or in exile.



**Expatriate or expat:** person living outside their country of birth and upbringing, often temporarily or for work reasons. The term has different connotations to “migrant” in that it usually refers to people who left their country by choice rather than due to financial or other exigencies.

**Identity: Individual identity** relates to self-definition on an individual level including goals, values, and standards for behaviour. **Collective identity**, which is integral to the broader transfer of cultural practices, relates to identification with particular groups and social categories. Individual and group **cultural identity** refers to membership of a cultural group such as a nation, religion, political group, generation, or family.

**Migrant heritage:** material and immaterial objects such as letters, photographs, stories, oral histories and digital media created, collected and kept by migrants or by heritage institutions such as LAMs that document migration experiences and migrant communities.

**Migration:** includes various forms of **internal** (i.e., moving within a country) and **external or out-migration** (i.e., away from one’s country of origin and into another), and associated processes of **immigration** and **emigration**). It also refers to different kinds of **return** and **circulatory migration** (e.g., of displaced populations, guest or migrant workers).

**National (noun):** Legally and bureaucratically, becoming a citizen can make a person a national of a particular country. Citizenship, however, does not automatically mean that an immigrant is socially acknowledged as a national, or member of that nation.

**National minorities outside the country:** People living as national minorities in other countries.

**Social remittances:** cultural practices transferred into the host country or from the host country into the home country.<sup>5</sup>

**Transnationals:** people who migrated to and sometimes through another country or multiple countries but have not assimilated completely into those countries’ societies. Transnationals may not think of themselves or be considered by others as formal immigrants within that country, based upon both their personal identification and commitment.

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<sup>5</sup> Levitt, Peggy. 1998. “Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion.” *The International Migration Review* 32 (4): 926–48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547666>.

## New terms from the survey

**Refugees:** People who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.<sup>6</sup>

**Rural Exodus:** massive movement of people from the villages to the city due to a negative economic and social situation (agrarian crisis, crisis of rural values). It was particularly significant in the mid-20th century in Spain.

**Repatriation:** *the act or process of restoring or returning someone or something to the country of origin, allegiance, or citizenship: the act of repatriating or the state of being repatriated.* (Merriam Webster Dictionary). For refugees, asylum seekers and illegal migrants, repatriation can mean either voluntary return or deportation. **Voluntary return** is the return of eligible persons, such as refugees, to their country of origin or citizenship based on freely expressed willingness to such return. Voluntary return, unlike expulsion and deportation, which are actions of sovereign states, is defined as a personal right under specific conditions described in various international instruments, such as the OAU Convention, along with customary international law. As repatriation can be voluntary or forced, the term is also used as a euphemism for **deportation**. Involuntary or forced repatriation is the return of refugees, prisoners of war, or civil detainees to their country of origin under circumstances that leave no other viable alternatives. According to modern international law, prisoners of war, civil detainees, or refugees refusing repatriation, particularly if motivated by fears of political persecution in their own country, should be protected from refoulement and given, if possible, temporary or permanent asylum. The forced return of people to countries where they would face persecution is more specifically known as refoulement, which is against international law.

**Third Country Kids:** Third culture kids (TCK) are people who were raised in a culture other than their parents' or the culture of their country of nationality, and also live in a different environment during a significant part of their child development years. They typically are exposed to a greater volume and variety of cultural influences than those who grow up in one particular cultural setting.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/what-refugee>

TCKs move between cultures before they have had the opportunity to fully develop their personal and cultural identity. The first culture of such individuals refers to the culture of the country from which the parents originated, the second culture refers to the culture in which the family currently resides, and the third culture refers to the distinct cultural ties among all third culture individuals that share no connection to the first two cultures. Third culture individuals are particularly adept at building relationships with other cultures while not possessing a cultural identity of their own. They can also be referred to as cultural hybrids, cultural chameleons, and global nomads.

The term third culture kid was first coined by researchers John and Ruth Useem in the 1950s, who used it to describe the children of American citizens working and living abroad.

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