



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest

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The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

Dear RRN Colleagues and Friends,

As we conclude the 2023-2024 academic year, we will take a summer break and plan to return in September 2024.

Thank you to our readers for your continued interest and support, and to our contributors for sharing your innovative refugee research with us!

We look forward to continuing our knowledge mobilization efforts in the upcoming academic year and wish you a productive summer semester.

*Sincerely,
The RRN Team*

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Bender, F. (2024). [Border Abolitionism: Migrants' Containment and the Genealogies of Struggles and Rescue by Martina Tazzioli](#). *Journal of Refugee Studies*. This book draws on earlier literature on abolitionism and brings it into conversation with the literature in migration studies. Doing so leads to a fruitful and surprising genesis of arguments. The author argues that border abolitionism is not about the abolition of borders, and should not be understood as the call for abolishing borders altogether, as is often associated with the 'no border' movement. Instead, in line with the 'open borders' literature, the book argues for a productive disintegration of border practices and institutions. It is not the administrative line that divides two territories that matters in the treatment of migrants (and their classification as such), but the practices and institutions that yield power, incarcerate, degrade, and kill.

Cascone, M., & Bonini, T. (2024). ['Disconnecting from my smartphone is a privilege I do not have': Mobile connection and disconnection practices among migrants and asylum seekers in three migrant reception centres of Sicily](#). *New Media & Society*. This

article investigates online connection and disconnection practices among migrants and asylum seekers. It draws from an ethnography of three Sicilian reception centres that hosted migrants and asylum seekers between September and November 2020. The research shows that they cannot afford to practise typically Western, urban and elitist forms of disconnection; however, they, too, can practise specific forms of disconnection, paradoxically afforded by staying connected. The article aims to contextualize and situate disconnection studies within different social, political, cultural and geographic contexts.

Sallam, H. H. (2024). [Holding the door slightly open: Germany's migrants' return intentions and realizations.](#) *International Migration*, 62(3), 73-99. Return migration intentions are complex and are not necessarily followed by future return migration. This study compares successful return or repeated migration with self-declared return intentions. Moreover, return migration estimates are examined over this long-observed return window. This empirical analysis explores (1) whether return intentions eventually materialize, (2) whether they can eventually predict actual return behaviours and (3) whether the determinants of actual and predicted return based on intentions are similar. Overall, the results support the idea that migration intentions can predict actual return behaviour. While the underlying results show discrepancies in the predictors of return intentions and those of actual returns, they show emigration intentions as significant predictors of actual future emigration. Moreover, the findings suggest that life satisfaction significantly correlates with the individual intention to remigrate. Both effects are highly significant.

Sprenger, E. (2024). [What makes us move, what makes us stay: The role of language and culture in Intra-EU mobility.](#) *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. This article analyses the determinants of international migration flows within the European Union and focuses on the role of cultural and linguistic differences in explaining the size of these flows. For that purpose, a set of indicators of cultural distance, economic, demographic, geographical, political and network variables are controlled for using data from 28 member states of the EU over the period 1998–2018. Economic factors play an important role in examining migration flows, but economic differentials alone may be insufficient to explain the uneven real-life migration pattern in the EU. The results suggest strong evidence of the importance of linguistic distance in explaining the direction of migration flows across the EU.

Zhuang, Z. C. (2024). [Suburban migration: Interrogating the intersections of Global Migration and suburban transformation.](#) *IMISCOE Research Series*, 227–240. Suburbanization as a global phenomenon has presented multifaceted patterns of evolution and transformation in various contexts. Migrant settlements in suburban spaces add more complexities to suburbia by bringing diverse demographics, (inter)cultural practices, new built forms, and new meanings of space and community. This chapter draws on the migration-related suburbanization processes in different contexts and applies the theory of the production of space to cast light upon the narratives of everyday suburban life, diversity management, growth and development, policy and governance, and socio-spatial (in)equity and (in)justice.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement. \(2024\).](#)

IASC. Internal displacement has risen dramatically since the United Nations (UN) first began to draw attention to this issue in 1992, when there were an estimated 24 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Today, there are more than three times that number, with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reporting 71 million IDPs at the end of 2022 and millions more in 2023 due to several escalating conflicts and many large-scale disasters. Far from slowing, this trend is accelerating at an alarming rate, driven not only by conflict, generalized violence and sudden-onset disasters but also increasingly by water scarcity, drought and food insecurity due to climate change. Indeed, it is estimated that climate change could lead to over 200 million people moving within their borders by 2050. The forecast, therefore, suggests internal displacement on an ever-more worrying scale.

[Report on the third global consultation on the health of refugees and migrants, Rabat, Morocco, 13-15 June 2023. \(2024\). World Health Organization.](#)

The Third Global Consultation on the Health of Refugees and Migrants in Rabat, Morocco, on 13–15 June 2023 led to the adoption of the Rabat Declaration. The purpose was to strengthen high-level political commitment to improve, protect and preserve the health and wellbeing of refugees, migrants and host communities. This report captures the summary of key points from this event, including the need for political commitment, and consideration of equity, inclusion, mainstreaming and accountability. Emphasis was placed on meaningful refugee and migrant participation, effective and equitable access to health care, tackling the social determinants of health and adopting data- and research-driven approaches.

[Supporting Self-Sufficiency: Considerations for Refugees' Transition out of Sponsorship and Complementary Pathways Programs. \(2024\). Migration Policy](#)

Institute. A growing number of countries are experimenting with and building humanitarian protection pathways that involve volunteers from receiving communities in supporting the welcome, settlement, and integration of refugees. These programs, which include different types of sponsorship, and labour and education complementary pathways, vary considerably in their design. A common challenge, often receiving insufficient attention, is how refugees transition from these programs to independently navigating life in their new community and country. This MPI Europe issue brief identifies lessons learned about how program organizers and volunteers can best support refugees' transition out of sponsorship and complementary pathways programs and toward longer-term integration. It highlights common obstacles to a smooth transition and promising practices, with examples from European, Canadian, and other programs.

[Understanding the economics of human smuggling in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia.](#)

(2024). Mixed Migration Centre. This report explores the financial dimension of human smuggling across Southeast Asia, drawing insights from extensive 4Mi surveys conducted between December 2022 and August 2023. Focusing on the experiences of refugees and migrants from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Somalia, and Myanmar who engaged smugglers during their journeys, the report sheds light on how refugees and migrants finance their smuggling journey.

[World Migration Report 2024.](#) (2024). IOM UN Migration. The World Migration Report 2024, the twelfth in the world migration report series, has been produced to contribute to an increased understanding of migration worldwide. This new edition presents key data and information on migration and thematic chapters on highly topical migration issues. In most discussions on migration, the starting point is usually numbers. Understanding changes in scale, emerging trends, and shifting demographics related to global social and economic transformations, such as migration, help us make sense of our changing world and plan for the future. The current global estimate is that there were around 281 million international migrants in the world in 2020, which equates to 3.6 percent of the global population.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[As countries toughen anti-gay laws, 'rainbow refugees' seek asylum in Europe,](#) May 16, 2024. **France 24. Since Nigeria criminalizes same-sex relationships, Anthony fled a possible prison term and headed with her partner to Libya in 2014 and then Italy, where they both won asylum. Their claim? That they had a well-founded fear of anti-LGBTQ+ persecution back home. While many of the hundreds of thousands of migrants who arrive in Italy from Africa and the Mideast are escaping war, conflict and poverty, advocates say an increasing number are fleeing possible prison terms and death sentences in their home countries because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. And despite huge obstacles to win asylum on LGBTQ+ grounds, Anthony and her partner, Doris Ezurike Chinonso, are proof that it can be done, even if the challenges remain significant for so-called “rainbow refugees” like them.**

[Brazil floods drive thousands from their homes](#) by Felipe Souza, Fernando Otto, Ligia Guimarães & Luiz Antônio Araujo, May 11, 2024. **BBC News. The flood has plunged much of the state capital, Porto Alegre into darkness, and damaged power and water treatment plants leaving most residents without drinking water. About 70,000 people are living in temporary shelters. Roselaine da Silva is one of them. She is staying in an evangelical church with her three children, one of whom has autism. Their two dogs are with them, but she says she has had to leave her two cats behind in her flooded Sarandi neighbourhood.**

[China Forcibly Returns 60 Refugees to North Korea](#) by Lina Yoon, May 8, 2024.

Human Rights Watch. The Chinese government forcibly returned about 60 North Korean refugees on April 26, putting them at grave risk of enforced disappearance, torture, sexual violence, wrongful imprisonment, forced labour, and execution. This round of forced returns came soon after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met with China's third-highest official, Zhao Leji, on April 13, seeking stronger bilateral ties. The meeting had raised concerns among North Koreans in exile and rights activists that China might speed up forced repatriations of North Koreans.

[Detaining migrants in prisons violates human rights and risks abuses](#) by Jessica Evans and Linda Mussell, April 25, 2024. **The Conversation.**

The Canadian government recently proposed earmarking \$325 million in the 2024 federal budget to upgrade federal immigration detention centres to hold more people. The budget also proposes to amend the law to allow federal prisons to be used to detain "high-risk" immigrants. The government's decision comes after all Canadian provinces committed to ending their agreements with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to detain migrants in provincial jails. In 2022, British Columbia became the first province to announce it would end its agreement with CBSA, stating the practice conflicts with provincial, national and international human rights commitments.

[Italy bans NGO planes from using airports close to migrant routes](#), May 8, 2024.

Reuters. Italy said on Tuesday that planes used by charities to track migrant boats in difficulty would no longer be able to fly from airports on the islands of Sicily, Pantelleria and Lampedusa, which are close to the shipping routes. The decision, announced by the Italian Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC), will make it much harder for non-governmental groups like Sea Watch to use its small planes to scour the central Mediterranean for boats in need of rescue.

[Protecting Syrian Refugees in Lebanon](#) by Ammar Musarea, May 8, 2024. **Fika Forum.**

Given the breakdown of the Lebanese state, Arab countries' normalization with Assad, and the fragmentation of the Syrian opposition, it seems that the United States can step in to play a pivotal role in protecting Syrian refugees facing persecution. Immediately after the April announcement of the assassination of Pascal Sleiman—the Lebanese Forces coordinator—a wave of threats towards Lebanon's Syrian refugee population swept through the country's Christian communities. Moreover, there have been instances of Syrian refugees being beaten, evicted from homes and businesses, and even being kidnapped, as happened when unknown individuals intercepted a taxi carrying two Syrians on a road in North Bekaa and kidnapped them to an unknown location.

[Starvation and Suicide: Refugees in Kenya Camps](#), May 6, 2024. **Relief Web.**

The extreme cuts to food rations in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Settlement in Kenya have led to deadly protests, suicides, and an inhumane situation for refugees seeking safety and protection. The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) is deeply

disturbed by reports it received on the current situation in the camp, which has warehoused refugees for over three decades. USCRI received credible information from refugees in the camp detailing a dreadful reality following World Food Programme (WFP) cuts to food rations.

[Win for Albanese government as high court rules indefinite detention legal in non-cooperation cases](#) by Paul Karp and Luca Ittimani, May 10, 2024. **The Guardian.**

Labour has won a major victory in the high court over the indefinite detention of non-citizens who refuse to cooperate with removal, but the win has put further in doubt its push for new deportation powers. Recently, the high court ruled detention is lawful in the case of ASF17, an Iranian asylum seeker who refused to cooperate with efforts to deport him because he “fears for his life” because he is bisexual, Christian and a Faili Kurd. The court unanimously held that detention is lawful if deportation were possible if the detainee cooperated in the undertaking of administrative processes necessary to facilitate their removal. The case was dismissed with costs.

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[James Paterson on Australia’s immigration detention system – Australian politics podcast](#) by **The Guardian. This podcast includes a discussion between Guardian Australia’s political editor Karen Middleton and the shadow home affairs minister, James Paterson, about the government’s deportation bill. They also discuss immigration, relations with China and what might happen to home affairs under a Coalition government.**

[Why Chinese people are the latest boat arrivals](#) by **ABC News Daily. When a boat carrying Chinese men arrived in Western Australia last month it was unusual. Not only because it’s rare for boats to make it to the mainland but those on board are almost never from China. So why are Chinese nationals so desperate to get to Australia that they pay people smugglers? ABC reporter, Wing Kuang, tackles this issue in this podcast episode.**