



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.

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Goltz, J. von der. (2024). [*The labor market impact of forced displacement: Jobs in host communities in Colombia, Ethiopia, Jordan, and Uganda.*](#) World Bank Group.

Communities that host refugees are often concerned about how their labor markets will change. Although high-income countries attract most policy attention, low- and middle-income countries host three of every four refugees worldwide. "The Labor Market Impact of Forced Displacement: Jobs in Host Communities in Colombia, Ethiopia, Jordan, and Uganda" seeks to address some of the key questions that arise in these host countries: How does forced displacement affect job outcomes for hosts? What effect do work permit schemes have? How does labor market competition influence attitudes? And what policies can support better job outcomes for hosts and refugees? The book explains how labor market restrictions rarely prevent refugees entirely from working but shape the type and quality of work they do, their contribution to the economy, and the effects of their participation on hosts. It shows that refugees matter not only as competitors but also as consumers, and it explains the importance of access to capital for hosts and refugees alike in economies where self-employment is key. It also discusses how hosts' concerns over labor market competition influence their attitudes toward refugees. The book seeks to provide a basis for more confident jobs policy making in host communities. It offers lessons on how to analyze local labor market characteristics that shape outcomes for refugees and hosts alike and on how to think about the likely effects of policies. It encourages policy makers to support workers who face negative impacts—and to proactively seize the opportunities likely to arise.

Cheong, A. R., Thomas, N. C., & Baltazar, M. A. (2025). [*Territorial claims, unclaimed people: The postcolonial geopolitics of statelessness in Sabah, Malaysia.*](#) *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1–18. This article connects the contemporary phenomenon of statelessness among populations of Filipino descent in Sabah, Malaysia, to historical geopolitical contestations over territory, sovereignty, and nationhood in the region. Drawing on household interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, and years of civil society engagement, the researchers

argue that the possibility of citizenship pathways for these communities is conditioned by postcolonial geopolitical struggles over, more broadly, the very territorial constitution of the Malaysian and the Philippines nation-states. Inter-state diplomatic conflicts regarding sovereignty over Sabah materially trickle down through the everyday governmental practices of registration offices, consular bodies, and border security forces, producing: (1) nonviable, in a practical sense, citizenship pathways into the Philippines; and (2) legally absent citizenship pathways into Malaysia. In addition to providing an in-depth qualitative portrait of people's lived experiences of statelessness, this article theoretically elucidates the constructivist affordances of the citizenship pathways framework.

Correa-Salazar, C., Amon, J. J., Page, K. R., Groves, A. K., Agudelo-Avellaneda, E. N., Torres-Benítez, D. S., & Martínez-Donate, A. (2025). [Navigating trauma: Venezuelan women's and adolescents' experiences before and after migration amidst the humanitarian crisis](#). *Journal of Migration and Health, 11*, 100299. Migrant and refugee women and adolescents are extremely vulnerable in humanitarian crisis and armed conflict contexts. The Venezuelan crisis has unleashed the largest exodus of migrants/refugees in recent Latin American history, most of whom have relocated to Colombia. There is a scarcity of research addressing how adverse and traumatic experiences related to violence affects mental health amidst the Venezuelan-Colombian humanitarian crisis context and how it affects communities in relocation communities. This study sought to explore how traumatic experiences pre-, during and post-migration might relate to mental health risks for Venezuelan migrant and refugee women and adolescents and assess feasible mechanisms that can protect and promote these populations upon relocation in Colombia. Key findings suggest that parental abandonment in origin contexts, experiences of household and community violence before and after migration, and structural barriers to access services are main factors impacting this population. Feasible strategies to promote and support wellbeing and better mental health access ought to include community leaderships and community-based support networks post-migration that can support trust in services, disseminate information, and engage vulnerable groups in services.

Edler, H., Krause, U., & Segadlo, N. (2024). [Making sense of peace in exile? Displaced people's intersectional perceptions of peace](#). *Peacebuilding, 1*–18. This article enquires into how people with lived experiences of conflict and displacement make sense of peace in exile. For the analysis, the article focuses on displaced individuals in Kenya and Germany and theoretically complements the varieties of peace framework, situated knowledge and an intersectional approach. Findings reveal multifaceted perceptions revolving around the three dimensions of structural, collective and individual peace, outlooks shaped by gender-specific experiences, religious beliefs and familial relations. Interlocutors associate structural peace with experiences of sociopolitical, economic and legal conditions in exile, collective peace with support systems and harmonious interactions in communities, and individual or inner peace with desires for and feelings of happiness, hope and healing. Although analytically distinguishable, these three dimensions are inherently intertwined in interlocutors' daily lives due to their lived experiences prior to and once in exile.

Okorie, M. M., & Okeja, U. (2024). [Leaving at all costs: Implications of the Italy-Libya border-externalization policy on migrant smuggling and Trafficking Facilitation.](#) *Perspective Politice*, 17(1–2). The literature on EU's border-externalization practices in Africa is ample but the case of Italy-Libya's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and its implications on African lives has received insufficient attention. Between 2014 and 2016, Nigerian nationals were the second-highest number of boat arrivals in Italy via Libya - a number that significantly reduced following the implementation of the MoU and related EU migration management initiatives in Africa. In light of the above, an important question arises: has this extra-territorialization of EU borders in Africa merely prevented Nigerians from arriving their destination or has it also stopped them from initiating the perilous journey? The findings of the study suggest that while border externalization measures have reduced the odds of successfully arriving the destination country - Italy - they do not prevent irregular migration and trafficking facilitation from Nigeria to Libya.

Perrin, P. C. (2025). [Applying a dignity lens in migration and displacement.](#) *Journal on Migration and Human Security*. Recognizing that migration and displacement are longstanding elements of human history, the paper emphasizes the critical role of respecting the inherent dignity of migrating persons as an important part of the right-to-stay dialogue. Although international frameworks, such as the Sphere Handbook, the Paris Declaration, and UNHCR's Durable Solutions, have provided a critical foundation for addressing many of the basic needs of migrating populations, they largely focus on material aspects of well-being, overshadowing the equally essential need for other aspects of one's dignity — a recognition of the inherent equal value that each human being possesses — to be respected and upheld. This approach positions dignity as a luxury to be addressed only after other basic needs are met. However, evidence shows that ensuring physical safety, food, and shelter alone does not fulfill the complex needs of migrating individuals, who often experience emotional distress and social marginalization when their dignity is ignored. By framing dignity as an intrinsic human right that is not contingent on external conditions or something that can be distributed out of the back of a truck, the paper argues that organizations can foster deeper engagement with migrant communities.

Spit, N., Tonkens, E., & Trappenburg, M. (2025). [The emotional costs of Solidarity: How Refugees and volunteers manage emotions in the integration process.](#) *Social Inclusion*, 13. While emerging right-wing populist voices are calling to prevent the arrival of refugees and their integration, volunteers perform solidarity by performing activities to support refugee integration. Most studies on these forms of solidarity in diversity focus on the quality and effectiveness of the activities. The emotional labor involved has received limited attention. To consider this emotional labor in more detail, we use Arlie Hochschild's concept of feeling and framing rules and relate these rules to prevailing citizenship regimes, distinguishing between the self-reliance regime and the community regime. Based on in-depth ethnographic research of volunteer solidarity work in a deprived urban neighborhood and a middle-class commuter town in the Netherlands, we show that volunteers are strongly aligned with the community regime, which involves navigating a multitude of feeling rules they struggle with. Refugees are more aligned with the self-reliance regime, which also gives

way to emotional struggles. We argue that to promote solidarity in diversity, scholars and policymakers should pay more attention to these different forms of emotional labor and the painful and joyful emotions involved.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Central Asia commits to end statelessness with Ashgabat Declaration. \(2024\). UNHCR.](#) Central Asian States have reaffirmed their commitment to eradicate statelessness, adopting the Ashgabat Declaration on Ending Statelessness in Central Asia. Adopted by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ashgabat Declaration highlights eight strategic directions to sustain and build on the progress achieved across the sub-region to reduce and prevent statelessness. The Declaration is a key outcome of the Ending Statelessness in Central Asia Ministerial Conference, co-convened by the Government of Turkmenistan and UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency, in Ashgabat on 8 November 2024. Over the last decade, Central Asia has made significant progress in reducing and preventing statelessness, supporting more than 200,000 people to confirm or acquire a nationality. One in every three cases of statelessness resolved worldwide is in Central Asia.

[Gender Alert: Gender and Displacement in Lebanon at the Juncture of the Ceasefire \(December 2024\). \(2025\). ReliefWeb.](#) Between October 2023 and late November 2024, Lebanon experienced the largest escalation of hostilities with Israel since the 2006 War. Following the ceasefire reached on 27 November 2024, around 80 per cent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are estimated to have returned to their places of origin. However, many others are unable to return to their communities due to damage and destruction, as well as restrictions imposed by the Israeli Army. Of the 20 percent that remain internally displaced, 52 per cent are women and girls. Despite the ceasefire, the impact of the escalation remains deeply felt across Lebanon. The mass displacement has challenged host communities already struggling to cope with the prolonged and multi-layered social and economic crisis in Lebanon since 2019. UN Women collected and analysed data to deepen understanding of the gender dimensions of the conflict and derive gender-focused recommendations to inform humanitarian response and recovery efforts.

[House of Commons Library releases updated briefing on UK's immigration schemes for Afghans. \(2025\). Electronic Immigration Network.](#) There are two immigration routes for people affected by the situation in Afghanistan: the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy. Around 30,000 people had come to the UK under these schemes by the end of September 2024. The briefing highlights several issues, including the narrow scope of the schemes, the slow pace of decision-making, and practical obstacles faced by applicants. It also addresses concerns about the handling of applications from former members of Afghan specialist units who served alongside UK forces. Earlier last month, the Defence Secretary set out the Labour government's plans to improve the schemes.

[The Sudan Crisis: How Over a Year of Violence and Humanitarian Access Restrictions Have Produced Famine Conditions, January 2025.](#) (2025). ReliefWeb. This report – part of a series examining the links between conflict and hunger – focuses on reported conflict-related incidents involving food-related violence in Sudan between 15 April 2023 and 31 November 2024. These incidents included the damaging and destruction of markets and food production factories by explosive weapons use and arson; the looting of markets, food aid and livestock; and incidents of violence directly affecting people at markets and travelling to and from markets. Other factors undermining food security included blockades disrupting food supply chains and humanitarian food aid deliveries, and restrictions on access to agricultural land due to insecurity. The report indicates how over a year of persistent violence and severe humanitarian access restrictions directly led to the famine conditions declared in parts of Sudan in July 2024. The repetition of violent incidents directly affecting objects that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population suggests that conflict parties have, in some cases, taken limited – or even no – precautionary measures to protect these objects.

[Towards the More Effective Use of Irregular Migration Data in Policymaking](#) by Jasmijn Sloopjes & Ravenna Sohst. (2024). Migration Policy Institute. Across Europe, concerns about irregular migration have dominated media headlines and shaped recent elections. Discussions of and policymaking related to irregular migration are often a numbers game, fueled by the latest estimates of changing migration trends and migrant populations. Data on irregular migration also influence decision-making, advocacy, and strategic and operational planning of a wide range of governmental and nongovernmental actors. This MPI Europe policy brief explores obstacles that hinder the effective collection and use of irregular migration data, how this affects policymakers and other actors, and potential avenues for strengthening the evidence base. This study, which is part of the Measuring Irregular Migration and Related Policies (MIrreM) project, draws on insights shared in workshops and interviews by policymakers, subject matter experts, NGO representatives, and other stakeholders.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Malawi sees influx of refugees from post-election violence in Mozambique](#) by Charles Pensulo, January 8, 2025. The Guardian. On a sunny Saturday afternoon, Manase Madia, 50, shows his Mozambican identity card. Once a sign of pride, he does not know what to believe in any more. Over the past few weeks he has seen houses being burned down, and shops and businesses looted, including his own. He now fears for his family, which has scattered. At a community ground where officials are processing new arrivals before being transferred to a shelter, Madia is one of about 13,000 people who have crossed into Malawi in the past two months, seeking refuge from post-election violence in Mozambique. The arrival of the refugees, albeit in smaller numbers, is reminiscent for people here of the civil war when almost a million Mozambicans sought refuge in the neighbouring southern African nation in the 1980s and early 1990s.

[Syria: how the fall of Assad has affected the asylum debate in Europe](#) by Morgiane Noel, January 10, 2025. **The Conversation.** After the fall of Bashar al-Assad and his family's 50-year dynasty of fear, several European countries announced a suspension of asylum application procedures. Germany, France and Sweden are among the countries which have paused all pending asylum requests from Syrians. Austria, meanwhile, has signalled it will soon order refugees to return. Across Europe, Syrians are presently make up one of the largest groups of asylum seekers. As the primary host country for Syrian refugees within the European Union, Germany has provided shelter to nearly 1 million Syrian nationals. So its decision to declare a halt to processing asylum applications from Syrians the day after the Assad regime collapse was a major step. This sudden shift in stance from several European countries raises questions about how attitudes have changed.

[The truth about asylum in Canada](#) by Yvonne Su, January 9, 2025. **Policy Options.** Canada's robust asylum system is largely misunderstood. Many Canadians don't actually know how asylum works, and the lack of understanding has allowed for a moral panic to develop around asylum seekers, particularly international students. The panic is being fuelled by misinformation, disinformation, sensational media narratives, and political rhetoric. But asylum isn't automatic. Many asylum seekers are rejected because they don't meet stringent criteria for protection. This is something that Canadians need to understand. Systemic issues are driving asylum claims but legal frameworks ground the asylum system. The moral panic around asylum seekers, particularly international students, ignores reality: asylum is not automatic, and many claims are rejected.

[The UN says Australia violated human rights law, but it's unlikely to change the way we treat refugees](#) by Sarah Moulds, January 9, 2025. **The Conversation.** The United Nations Human Rights Committee has ruled that Australia breached international human rights law by detaining a group of young asylum seekers in immigration detention in Nauru. The committee found the asylum seekers were subject to prison-like conditions, potentially indefinitely, and without knowing what was going to happen to them in the future. This, the committee found, was in breach of their human rights. It also found that although the "cruel and degrading" treatment happened in Nauru, Australia was responsible. This was because Australia was in "effective control" of the detention facilities and authorised the transfer and detention of the asylum seekers. Human rights advocates have been making these points for many years, but they often go unheard by governments of all persuasions. Will this UN ruling have an impact on Australia or other countries that copy its offshore processing policies?

[What's shaping aid policy in 2025](#) by Irwin Loy & Will Worley, January 9, 2025. **The New Humanitarian.** Whether it knows it or not, the humanitarian system is in a struggle to stake its relevance. Faith in multilateralism has fractured, if it ever existed at all. Last year, we said that humanitarians have a trust problem; this has deepened over the last 12 months amid double standards on Gaza, unmet promises, and imbalanced power and influence. The challenge in 2025 and beyond will be for humanitarians to redefine what they do and why it

matters. The article sets out five humanitarian policy trends that could play a role. There are obstacles to aid and disruptions to the system – but also opportunities for change.

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Costa Rica - Why is it important to include refugees to enhance development?

Factsheet. UNHCR. This report presents new evidence on why it is important to include refugees to enhance development. This, based on a study published by the Economic Sciences Research Institute at the University of Costa Rica (IICE-UCR) and supported by UNHCR, on the living conditions of Nicaraguans vis a vis the Costa Rican population.

CRS Seminar: Questions of Privileged Migration to North America in the Second Half of the 20th Century. Centre for Refugee Studies.

When millions of people were forced to flee from Ukraine after Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022, discussions were waged both in academia and the wider public if the Ukrainians were privileged in comparison to other groups of refugees (compare Şahin Mencütek 2022; Chishti/Bolter 2022; Pardy 2023). It seemed to have been forgotten, however, that similar accusations have been made earlier, ranging from the mid-1970s to the early 2000s with regards to refugees arriving in the United States and Canada from countries like Cuba, Kosovo, Poland and Vietnam. But by taking a close look, we can see that back then the situation too was much more complicated and nuanced, because privileges are relative as well as relational (Robertson/Roberts 2022). Why is it then that certain groups garnered a reputation of being preferentially treated while they mostly didn't feel favoured? Is there something that we can learn in hindsight from these historical cases? And last but not least is there a way to overcome the spiral of mutual accusations and distrust in order to forge alliances? This is a virtual event that be on February 5th, 2025, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM ET.