



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

Bijak, J. (2024). [*From uncertainty to policy: A guide to migration scenarios*](#). Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. Through conceptual, theoretical and methodological analysis, this open access book outlines the current state of the art in future-oriented migration studies. Highlighting key lessons and recommendations, expert contributors assess both the opportunities and limitations of scenario building as an analytical device. They combine demographic, statistical, sociological, economic, geographic and political science expertise to develop a new multi-step process for estimating, predicting and simulating migration flows and patterns. Ultimately, the book emphasises the importance of accounting for uncertainty and complexity in migration policy and presents practical tools for accurately measuring and managing migration now and in the future.

Flowers, P. R. (2025). [*Refugee policies in East Asia*](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. East Asia stands apart from the rest of Asia in the prevalence of the institutionalization of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Despite this widespread adoption of the Convention in East Asia, the record on implementation into domestic law and policy is uneven. This Element offers a comparative analysis of the gap between the institutionalization of the Refugee Convention and the implementation of refugee policy in China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, and Mongolia. Specific attention is given to two key policy issues: refugee status determination—deciding who is granted government recognition as a refugee—and complementary forms of protection—protection based on statutes other than the Refugee Convention. This Element demonstrates that implementation of the Refugee Convention in East Asia depends on a vibrant civil society with the space and opportunity to engage with local UNHCR offices, local branches of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and other stake holders. This Element is free online from 15th January 2025 - 12th February 2025.

Baú, V. (2024) [*Communicating social cohesion in forced displacement: A framework for protracted situations of encampment*](#). *Social Sciences*, Vol.13, No.10, 542. This paper

addresses the role that communication and media interventions can play in fostering social cohesion among displaced populations in camp settings through a review of both practical and theoretical notions in this area. The multiple definitions available in the literature on social cohesion do not come to a consensus on what this concept means. Yet, despite this lack of substance, reflecting on social cohesion in contexts of displacement has been a prevalent topic. Horizontal social cohesion, which is critical in protracted situations of encampment, is defined by UNHCR as the bond that ‘hold(s) people together within a community’. While a number of studies have focused on the social connection between host and displaced people, scarce attention has been paid to the dynamics and social fractures among displaced communities themselves. Yet, tensions both within and between groups of displaced people may be equally, if not more important to social cohesion than relationships with other groups. In order to begin to address this gap, a communication-based framework for humanitarian and development work on social cohesion in refugee camps is presented. Ultimately, the aim of this article is to offer a starting point for humanitarian agencies working in refugee camps to articulate the adoption of a communication-driven approach in their social cohesion programming.

Yousuf, B. (2025). [The invisibilised labour of diasporas as co-sponsors in refugee sponsorship: Lessons from Canada](#). *Refugee Survey Quarterly*. For almost 45 years, civil society groups have volunteered their time, energy, and finances to resettle more than 327,000 refugees through Canada’s Private Sponsorship of Refugees programme. Sponsorships are commonly arranged by local communities, faith-based organisations, or private citizens who have entered into agreements with the federal government. Much of this effort is supported by former refugees who were themselves resettled to Canada. Yet, the existing literature underrepresents the crucial role of sponsors with refugee histories. This research examines the previously invisibilised labour of diasporic sponsors, highlighting the unique and vital role stemming from their dual social locations as former refugees and private sponsors.

Huth-Stöckle, N., & Heizmann, B. (2025). [Are there limits to empathy? A survey experiment on empathic concern and perspective-taking as bases for attitudes towards different groups of refugees](#). *European Societies*, 1–40. This article examines how empathic concern and perspective-taking influence different exclusionary attitudes towards refugees. More specifically, the authors investigate how empathic competence underpins social distance towards refugees and the opposition to granting them civil rights. Furthermore, they explore the potential constraints of this relationship by investigating the moderating role of different refugee characteristics via a survey-experimental approach using single-wave data from the GESIS Panel, a representative survey conducted in Germany. The refugee characteristics relate to having a Muslim vs. Christian background and having high vs. low qualifications, implying different levels of intergroup threat. The results indicate that higher levels of perspective-taking and empathic concern are associated with lower social distance towards refugees and opposition to granting rights to refugees. Furthermore, while the respondents' exclusionary attitudes were higher towards refugee groups, implying higher levels of intergroup threat, empathic concern and perspective-taking predicted more positive

attitudes towards the different groups of refugees equally. This implies that the effect of empathy does not depend on outgroup characteristics.

Soennecken, D. (2024). [Trudeau 3.0 endgame: Immigrants, refugees, venue shifting, and the deepening of securitization.](#) In: Hillmer, N., Lagassé, P., Rigby, V. (eds) *Canada Among Nations 2023: Twenty-First Century National Security. Canada and International Affairs.* Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. Having carried three general elections, the Trudeau government has continued the concurrent trends of its predecessors by restricting certain, yet liberalizing other, aspects of Canada's immigration and refugee policy. During its most recent period in office, reverberations of the Trump presidency, pandemic-related border closures, the invasion of Ukraine, and the growing significance of artificial intelligence have further deepened the "securitization" of migration—that is, the construction of some migrants not only as "unwanted," but as security threats. Much of this deepening occurred alongside a shifting of decision-making "venues" away from traditional arenas characteristic of the Westminster system, particularly Parliament, toward other avenues. This trend was interwoven with government and societal perceptions of threats, security, and deservedness, which is in line with the evolution of migration policies in other advanced industrialized societies.

Ulusoy, O. (2025). [Financing externalisation: The role that EU funds play in shaping the Turkish Asylum and migration policies.](#) *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 1–13. The article investigates the impact of European Union (EU) financial instruments, particularly the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT), on Turkey's migration and asylum policies. It critically examines how the EU-Turkey Statement of 2016 signaled a shift from Europeanisation to a more transactional relationship centered on externalization and migration containment. The paper argues that while these financial mechanisms provided crucial support during the refugee crisis, they also contributed to the selective Europeanisation and De-Europeanisation of Turkey's policies, ultimately hindering the development of long-term structural migration policies.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Ecuador: Ongoing Violence Displacing Thousands.](#) (2025). Norwegian Refugee Council.

One year after the declaration of 'internal armed conflict' by the Ecuadorian President in the country, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) urges the government and the international community to recognise, and provide comprehensive humanitarian assistance to all people who are being forced to flee their homes due to violence from organised criminal groups. Today organised criminal groups are present in provinces Esmeraldas, Manabí, El Oro and Guayas. Their presence leads to a climate of fear. Daily murders are reported, while extortion targets all kind of businesses, forcing many to close. Children are at risk of recruitment into criminal groups, while women face intimidation and are in risk of sexual violence. Facing direct threats and violence, families have no other option than to abandon their homes. New

research shows that more than 80,000 were living in internal displacement as a result of violence in Ecuador by October 2024.

Financing Solutions to Internal Displacement. Bridging Humanitarian Aid and Development Finance. (2024). IOM. This policy brief focuses on the development finance perspective of solutions to internal displacement by exploring the complementary roles of public finance, international financial institutions, the private sector, the aid finance architecture and innovative financing mechanisms. Developed jointly by the Office of the Special Advisor (OSA) on Internal Displacement, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Development Programme, the brief represents an inter-agency effort to provide practitioners, governments, international financial institutions, private sector entities and donor agencies with initial findings and lessons learned from experience in implementing the OSA mandate. It offers recommendations for making development finance more conducive to addressing the complex needs of IDPs and the challenges faced by countries as a result of internal displacement.

No One-Size-Fits-All: Outreach and Counselling for Irregular Migrants by María Belén Zanzuchi and Bertrand Steiner. (2025). Migration Policy Institute. Tackling irregular migration to Europe has long been high on the EU agenda. The strategies proposed and adopted for addressing this issue have evolved over time, resulting in an increasingly diverse set of tools. These include strengthened border controls, voluntary and forced return efforts, new legal pathways to offer alternatives to irregular movement, and regularization. In recent years, European countries have also added to the toolkit to address irregular migration by conducting outreach and counselling for specific groups of irregular migrants. The reasons include informing them about available return and reintegration support, raising the visibility of pathways out of irregularity (such as regularization options, where they exist), and ensuring all members of a society have access to certain essential services. As interest and investments in this area grow, this MPI Europe issue brief explores the diversity of initiatives, actors, and practices in this field. It draws, among other sources, on interviews with government and nongovernmental stakeholders in eight European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom) and on roundtable discussions among public officials, local administrations, civil-society actors, and representatives of nongovernmental organizations.

Uprooting the Displaced- The Forced Evictions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. (2025). Access Centre for Human Rights. The escalating socio-economic crisis in Lebanon and the recent Israeli bombardment have worsened the already dire conditions faced by 1.5 million Syrian refugees. This report examines the widespread forced evictions of Syrian refugees, exploring causes, impacts, and providing legal analysis of the violation of forced eviction from a human rights lens. Lastly, recommended actions are provided.

[World Report 2025: Our Annual Review of Human Rights Around The Globe. \(2025\).](#)

Human Rights Watch. This has been a year of elections, resistance, and conflict, testing the integrity of democratic institutions and the principles of international human rights and humanitarian law. Whether in response to heightened repression in Russia, India, and Venezuela, or catastrophic armed conflicts in Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine, governments around the world are being called upon to demonstrate their commitment to human rights, democracy, and humanitarian action. Many have failed the test. But even outspoken and action-oriented governments have invoked human rights standards weakly or inconsistently, feeding global perceptions that human rights lack legitimacy. The latest edition of Human Rights Watch's annual human rights survey provides a summary of the human rights situations in over 100 countries and territories around the world.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Clearing the UK's asylum backlog has led to rising refugee homelessness](#) by **William Shankley, January 6, 2025. The Conversation.** New figures show the number of small boat arrivals to the UK in 2024 was up 25% on the previous year. While public attention remains on how people get to the UK, less discussed is what happens to them once they arrive and are later granted refugee status. The reality is that many are becoming homeless. The consequences of this are in plain sight, for instance in Manchester, where council offices have been surrounded by tents erected by refugees for months. Some tents were initially erected as a protest against the council's inability to provide rough sleepers with housing.

[Questions grow over UNHCR inaction as Uyghurs in Thailand face deportation threat](#) by **Jacob Goldberg, January 22, 2025. The New Humanitarian.** As Thailand faces calls from rights groups and UN experts not to deport a group of Uyghur asylum seekers to China, further questions have surfaced about the approach of the UN's refugee agency, including why it withdrew asylum seeker status from two men. Thai authorities arrested more than 300 Uyghur asylum seekers near the Malaysian border in 2014. The two countries were part of a popular overland route for Uyghurs fleeing repression in China to claim asylum in Türkiye, which hosts a large Uyghur community. Most of the detainees were either transferred to Türkiye or deported to China in 2015. Now, after more than a decade in Thai immigration detention, the remaining 48 men say they face an immediate threat of deportation.

[The Dominican Republic's expulsion of thousands of Haitians shows the brutality of mass deportations](#) by **Masaya Llaneras Blanco, January 7, 2025. The Conversation.** United States President-elect Donald Trump has threatened mass deportations of undocumented migrants once his second term begins. As he prepares to fulfil his campaign promise, it's important to understand how these types of mass deportations are carried out. The Dominican Republic (DR) offers a cautionary tale. Since the beginning of October 2024, Dominican President Luis Abinader Corona has committed to deporting 10,000 Haitians a week. The Organization of International Migration registered 27,000 Haitians who had been deported from the DR by the end of October, reaching 40,000 by Nov. 18. Haitians represent

the largest migrant community in the DR because Haiti and the DR share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

[Trump promises to end birthright citizenship and shut down the border – a legal scholar explains the challenges these actions could face](#) by Jean Lantz Reisz, January 20, 2025. **The Conversation.** During his first day in office on Jan. 20, 2025, President Donald Trump signed a slew of executive orders on immigration that would make it harder for refugees, asylum seekers and others to try to enter the U.S. – and for some immigrants to stay in the country. Trump signed executive orders that included declaring a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border and pausing refugee admissions for at least four months. Migrants trying to enter the U.S. at the border also found that CBP One, an app they used to schedule asylum application appointments, was shut down. Amy Lieberman, a politics editor at The Conversation U.S., spoke with scholar Jean Lantz Reisz, co-director of the University of Southern California’s Immigration Clinic and a clinical associate professor of law, to understand the meaning of Trump’s new executive orders – and the challenges he could face in implementing them.

[US Closing the door to refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants: Trump’s executive orders herald a more inhumane, dangerous world](#) by Bill Frelick, January 22, 2025. **Human Rights Watch.** The essential step toward a world in which people fleeing war, persecution, and poverty no longer need to risk their lives on overcrowded rickety boats, impale themselves on razor wire border fences, or be preyed upon by human traffickers is the establishment of safe and legal pathways that meet both the protection needs of refugees and the labor needs of countries of immigration. Though far from perfect, the Biden administration, to its credit, did take steps to establish safe and legal pathways. With a flurry of executive orders signed by President Donald Trump, purportedly to stop an “invasion” at the US southern border, regular migration pathways, particularly for people fleeing conflict and abuse, have effectively been closed. These orders suspend US refugee resettlement indefinitely, terminate the parole programs for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans, cease use of the CBP-One application, and revoke President Biden’s executive order “To Provide Safe and Orderly Processing of Asylum Seekers at the United States Border.”

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[CRS Seminar: Questions of Privileged Migration to North America in the Second Half of the 20th Century.](#) **Centre for Refugee Studies, York University.** 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. 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. 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 virtual event will be on February 5th, 2025, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM EST (Toronto).

No Exit: Preventing Exit to Prevent Entry. Professor Audrey Macklin (Professor & Rebecca Cook Chair in Human Rights Law, University of Toronto Faculty of Law). Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford. Enlisting states of origin or transit to prevent exit from their own territory has become a tool of extraterritorial migration control for industrialized liberal democratic states. This article first explores the practical erosion of the right to leave any country since the demise of communism, focusing on arrangements between EU member states and select African states of origin or transit. The author then documents the legitimating function performed by the anti-smuggling and search and rescue regimes in effacing the human right to leave. They conclude by situating exit restrictions in a wider European project of promoting, building and supporting border infrastructure in the name of development and capacity building in select African countries. This permits reflection on what the contemporary use of exit restrictions signifies for the equation of border control and sovereignty, and for mobility more generally. Taking place at the University of Oxford, this seminar will be on February 6, 2025, 5 PM to 6 PM.

Research Methods in the Refugee and Forced Migration Field. Refugee Law Initiative, University of London. This one-week in-person short course, run by the RLI, covers research methods and ethics relating to the interdisciplinary study of refugees and forced migration. The intensive research methods course provides high-quality training in methodology and ethics, by drawing on the extensive teaching experience and networks of the RLI. The course is aimed at PhD students working on forced migration issues in the fields of social and political sciences and law, more senior academics keen to expand their research skills, researchers, humanitarian and development workers, civil society, and consultants working on issues relating to displaced persons. The deadline to apply is February 2nd, 2025. The course will run from March 3 - March 7, 2025, 10 AM to 5 PM.

The Changing Landscape of Immigration and Refugee Policies in Canada. National Newcomer Navigation Network. This webinar seeks to inform health care providers and settlement workers about recent policy changes and their impact on access to health care, anticipated future policies, and the reasons behind these policies. It will draw on examples of past challenges in accessing health care for individuals with precarious status as a way to reflect on how to manage future issues. This event will be on February 6th, 2025, 1:00 PM EST.

What would be a fair distribution of refugees in Europe? National Center of Competence in Research - The Migration-Mobility Nexus. An IT tool developed by a

team of researchers at the University of Neuchâtel makes it possible to map the geographical distribution of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of temporary protection in Europe. The tool can calculate what a "fair" geography of protection would look like, taking into account population size, GDP and various other factors. It is particularly relevant in light of the recent influx of Ukrainian refugees and of the responsibility-sharing provisions of the 2024 EU Asylum Pact. It could form the basis for discussions on a common protection policy at European level.