



Research Digest

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

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NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Mendola, D. (2026). [From arrival to settlement. Vulnerabilities of asylum seekers and refugees in Europe.](#) Neodemos. **Open access book.** Italy, a strategic gateway for refugees and asylum seekers to enter Europe, faces growing influxes with a reception system that is not always adequate and not always responsive to people's true vulnerabilities. This ebook, edited by Daria Mendola, explores the issue from a multidisciplinary perspective, placing Italy within the broader European context and offering concrete policy recommendations for managing vulnerabilities.

Obeid, M. (2026). [Migration as anchorage: Ethnography of a Palestinian family in London.](#) BERGHAHN BOOKS. On a temporary visit to London, a Palestinian family found themselves unable to return to Gaza during Israel's 2008 war on their city. Understanding their stay in London as an act of 'anchoring', the family opened a Palestinian café and sought to make their lives – as individuals, as a family and as a community – viable in the face of uncertainty. By following the stories of various family members as they struggled to recreate a sense of home, this moving ethnography introduces the concept of anchorage as a novel lens to understand migration, home and place, highlighting the fluidity, temporariness and serendipity of these experiences.

Fee, M. (2026). [Believing in Light after Darkness: Displacement and Refugee Resettlement.](#) University of California Press. War, persecution, and climate change too often force people from their homes and across borders. Most remain in difficult conditions in neighboring countries. The less than one percent of refugees offered resettlement to a

different country gain an alternative path forward, with access to specialized supports and services that are traditionally understood as a solution to displacement and a program of integration. Examining the complexities of refugees' lived experiences, Molly Fee's deeply humanistic ethnography reframes resettlement as a period of disruption and disorientation, when newly arrived refugees must navigate the rules and expectations of a new country. For those who have already rebuilt their lives numerous times, resettlement becomes yet another uprooting. This book reveals how humanitarian solutions, though well intentioned, do not immediately resolve the conditions of displacement.

Schultz, J. (2026). [Revisiting the “Imperative of Categories”: Women at Risk in Resettlement Practice](#). *Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees*. Refugee “women at risk” (WaR) have been prioritized since the late 1980s as candidates for third-country resettlement. Drawing on Macklin (1995), this article interrogates the logic and consequences of the WaR category. Through the lens of Norwegian practice, it shows how restrictive interpretations of UNHCR’s criteria and securitized resettlement processes reinforce a culture of disbelief and a focus on non-state protection by men. The application of WaR incentivizes family separation and perpetuates essentialist ideas about women’s vulnerabilities. While a broader category for gender-based risks can moderate WaR’s exclusionary effects, it similarly contributes to legitimizing harmful border regimes.

Suter, B. (2026). [Sweden’s New Resettlement Policy: Introducing Gender and Gender Equality as Governing Tools in Migration Governance](#). *Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees*. In 2022, Sweden introduced new refugee selection guidelines prioritizing women and girls—a departure from earlier practices focused solely on vulnerability. Through a problem representation analysis, this article examines parliamentary motions on resettlement from 2015 to 2022, exploring how gender, im/mobility, religion, and vulnerability shape notions of deservingness. It argues that gender is—intentionally or not—used as a governance tool, reflecting a broader migration policy shift of not only framing men and asylum seekers as a problem but creating the grounds for weakening rights-based approaches in favour of a more humanitarian approach to migration governance driven by compassion but also control.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Data on the Forcibly Displaced: From Statistical Shadows to Inclusion](#). (2026). *Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement*. Forced displacement continues to increase globally, with most displaced people living in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) where displacement is often protracted and resources constrained. In many contexts, reliable and comparable socioeconomic data on forcibly displaced persons remain limited, creating significant gaps in understanding their living conditions and how their welfare is linked to that of surrounding host communities. *Data on the Forcibly Displaced: From Statistical Shadows to Inclusion* brings together analysis and country experience to examine the challenges—and opportunities—in generating and using data on displaced populations. The

report demonstrates how stronger displacement data systems can support policies that advance the socioeconomic inclusion of forcibly displaced persons while also improving outcomes for host communities.

[From climate stress to social strain: Migration, governance and local resilience in Iraq.](#) (2026). **Berghof Foundation.** Iraq's climate emergency has become one of the most pressing threats to human security and social stability in the region. Rising temperatures, shrinking rivers and recurring droughts are reshaping both the physical environment and the political landscape. For communities already weakened by decades of conflict and economic fragility, these environmental stressors are no longer peripheral, but they define daily survival and intensify existing vulnerabilities. This report presents a concise synthesis of key findings and insights from a broader, in-depth research study. It examines how climate change, migration and social cohesion intersect across four climate-affected governorates: Nineveh, Diyala, Kirkuk and Al-Sulaymaniyah.

[How Cruel Migration Policies Hurt People.](#) (2026). **American Friends Service Committee.** The report explains that the externalization of migration takes place through three main practices: (1) preventing migrants from reaching the destination country; (2) shifting asylum procedures, in whole or in part, to third countries; and (3) returning or expelling people to countries other than their country of origin. All three practices are currently present across Latin America.

[Migration Anticipation and Preparedness: Making Migration Management Work.](#) (2026). **OECD.** Governments face increasing pressure to respond swiftly and effectively to rapidly evolving international migration flows – whether forced or planned. Anticipation is key to this response, but remains a challenge, and some important categories of migration are still not the object of forecast. This practical guide offers concrete measures to introduce, run and strengthen migration forecasting systems and preparedness strategies.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Eid celebrations dimmed by war and displacement across Middle East](#) by **Justin Salhani & Maram Humaid**, March 20, 2026. **Al Jazeera.** Economic crises and conflict dampen traditional Eid celebrations in Iran, Gaza, and Lebanon.

[Over 1M Supported in 2025 as Nearly 11M Still Need Assistance in Ukraine](#), March 19, 2026. **IOM UN Migration.** The International Organization for Migration (IOM) assisted over one million people in 2025 across Ukraine and neighbouring countries, even as nearly 11 million people in Ukraine continue to require humanitarian assistance, according to its newly released 2025 Annual Report for Ukraine and Regional Response.

[Selective compassion in Australia's refugee policy](#) by **Nail Aykan**, March 12, 2026. **Pearls and Irritations.** Australia's decision to grant humanitarian visas to Iranian footballers highlights how refugee policy often rewards cases that fit convenient political narratives.

When Immigration Minister Tony Burke granted humanitarian visas on 10 March 2026 to a group of Iranian women footballers, the announcement was framed as a triumph of humanitarian compassion. Australia, we were told, had stepped up to offer refuge to women facing repression in Iran. Few would dispute that people facing persecution deserve protection. But the decision raises an uncomfortable question: why does humanitarian urgency sometimes appear selectively in Australia's refugee system – often aligning neatly with political narratives that reinforce western moral virtue?

[US to require up to \\$15,000 bond for visa applicants from 12 new countries](#), March 18, 2026. **Al Jazeera.** The United States Department of State has added a dozen countries to a list that requires visa applicants to post bonds of as much as \$15,000 for entry into the US. The 12 additional countries bring the total number of nations subject to the restrictions to 50. Most of them are African nations, and critics argue that the high bonds discriminate against low-income travellers.

[Why the world is managing crises, not solving them](#) by Dr. Azeem Ibrahim, March 21, 2026. **Arab News Japan.** A quiet but consequential shift is underway in global crisis management. The international system is no longer organized around resolving conflicts or reversing humanitarian catastrophes. Instead, it is increasingly focused on containing them, geographically, politically and financially. From Myanmar to Gaza to Sudan, the priority is not durable solutions but limiting spillover. This may appear pragmatic in a fragmented world. In reality, it is a strategy that risks normalizing permanent crisis.

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[Book launch: Weaving Indigenous Re-existences: Struggles for the Defence of Water and Territory in Mexico and Canada](#). **York University.** After centuries of colonization and territorial dispossession, Indigenous struggles to defend and protect water and land have become even more crucial. For Indigenous peoples, defending and protecting water and land involves not only rejecting the policies of the nation-state but also embodying alternative ways of life and building alternative political projects. This is an afternoon dialogue with book editor and authors Angele Alook and Isabel Altamirano-Jimenez. This will be on Monday, March 30, 2026, 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM, at Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages (CIKL) Boardroom, York Lanes, 3rd Floor – Room 353B.

[Course: Forced Migration, Protection, and Humanitarianism](#). **Oxford Brookes University.** This module explores the experience of refugees and other forced migrants displaced by conflict. It examines the causes of contemporary forced migration in order to understand the implications of different causes for the nature of migration flows and the corresponding humanitarian response. It critically evaluates the international and regional normative frameworks for the protection of forced migrants, considering different migrant categories: refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons, and victims of human trafficking. The module considers the practical dilemmas in protecting the rights of forced migrants. This course is £600

and participants will receive a certificate of participation at the end of the course from Oxford Brookes University. The course dates are 20 Apr 2026 to 15 Jun 2026, and the registration deadline is 17 Apr 2026.

End of Term Potluck. Centre for Refugee Studies. The CRS, CERLAC, and TCAR research centres cordially invite you to the end of term potluck. Bring your favourite food or drink to share. No registration necessary. It will be on April 2, 2026, 2:00PM - 3:30PM at the Common Area, Eighth Floor, Kaneff Tower, Keele Campus, York University.

Podcast: Grounding the Components of an Ethical Response to Refugees. Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford. With extensive and volatile disagreement on the existence and extent of the obligations of states in the Global North towards refugees, this talk seeks to develop an understanding of the grounds of specific obligations that states owe to refugees. These obligations will then constitute the components of an ethical response. Bradley Hillier-Smith of the University of St. Andrews aims to highlight the limitations of the dominant philosophical approach to understanding obligations to refugees – the duty of rescue approach – to reach a new understanding. He first analyses certain state practices used in response to refugees including border violence, detention, encampment and containment, which the duty of rescue approach fails to sufficiently engage with, in order to ground states’ negative duties towards refugees. He then analyses specific harms and injustices refugees face as a result of their displacement, which the duty of rescue approach fails to sufficiently engage with, in order to ground states’ positive duties towards refugees. Taken together these negative and positive duties constitute the foundational elements of an ethical response. The talk then briefly explores what this ethical response might look like and how it may be possible in practice.

Seminar: Safe third country concept: A tool for containment and illegalization of mobility. Centre for Refugee Studies, York University. The current global mobility paradigm is geared towards stopping and deterring the arrival of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants to the Global North through policies for externalization of migration control. Externalization is the strategy of shifting migration control functions, such as border controls or processing of asylum applications, that are normally undertaken by a state within its own territory, to another state territory. The safe third country (“STC”) concept is a prime example of policies for externalization of migration control: it implies that when refugees do not arrive in a state directly from a country where their fundamental rights are at risk, they can be sent back to ‘safe third countries’ they passed through that are willing to accept their return. This talk frames externalization measures, and specifically STC practices, as the embodiment of the fundamental problems in the global mobility regime by reinforcing of the containment trend. Guest speaker, Gamze Ovacık, is a postdoctoral Fellow at McGill University Faculty of Law Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism. This is an online event on April 15, 2026, 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET.