

***'Refugee Law and Forced Migration Studies'*****Refugee Law Initiative, 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference****2 - 4 June 2025, University of London****DRAFT PROGRAMME (19.03.25)\***

The 15th Anniversary Conference of the Refugee Law Initiative will be held in-person in 2025 from Monday 2nd June to Wednesday 4th June at Senate House, University of London.

The Refugee Law Initiative's annual summer conference offers a dedicated annual forum internationally to share and debate the latest research and cutting-edge developments in refugee protection. This conference builds on previous annual conferences by uniting academics, practitioners, policy-makers and students to consider pressing challenges in refugee law and policy.

This year's dedicated conference theme – *'Refugee Law and Forced Migration Studies'* – revisits these fields, their debates and the connections between them.

The Refugee Law Initiative was created in 2010 to promote research and collaboration on international refugee law. Since then, the refugee law field has expanded exponentially. But this field sits alongside, or within, a well-established field of forced migration studies with its own momentum and dynamics. Despite historical tensions between these fields, researchers and practitioners from a variety of disciplines have regularly sought innovative ways to develop and bridge them. The 'thematic' panels at this year's conference seek to address this debate, highlighting new and important directions in these fields, unpacking opportunities for mutual learning and reflecting on the remaining tensions.

**#RLIconf25**

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\* Note: All sessions, speakers, chairs, titles and times as advertised are provisional and may be subject to change or cancellation at short notice due to circumstances outside the control of the organisers.

**Day 1 – Monday 2 June 2025**

**0900-1000      Registration**

**1000-1020      Opening**

- *Professor David Cantor* (Director, Refugee Law Initiative)

**1030-1215      Panel Session I**

**Stream 1 -      The Future of Refugee Law [THEMATIC]**

Chair: tbc

- ‘The Enduring Relevance of International Refugee Law in the 21st Century’ – *Professor María-Teresa Gil-Bazo* (University of Navarra, Spain)
- ‘International Refugee Law as a “Self-contained Regime”’ - *Elias Faller* (University of Graz, Austria)
- ‘The (Un)Reliability of Human Rights Law in Advancing Refugee Protection’ - *Dr Ayse Dicle Ergin* (Bilkent University, Turkey)
- ‘From Refugee Law to the International Protection regime: An approach to the evolution of actors, subjects and normative intersections dedicated to the protection of international forced migrants’ – *Dr Silvia Morgades Gil* (Pompeu Fabra University, Spain)

**Stream 2 -      Enhancing Protection of Refugees through Mobility Facilitation and Complementary Pathways: The Road Ahead [OPEN]**

Chair: *Hannah Elford* (UNHCR, Headquarters)

- ‘Obligations of the Countries of First Asylum to Facilitate Refugees’ Access to Complementary Pathways’ - *Dr Cornelis (Kees) Wouters* (UNHCR, Headquarters)
- ‘Implications of Refugee Travel Documents in the Context of Complementary Pathways’ – *Professor Geoff Gilbert* (University of Essex, UK)
- ‘Perceptions and Expectations of Refugee Students Travelling on Complementary Pathways and the Receiving Higher Education Institutions’ – *Souzan Hussein* (Waseda University, Japan)
- ‘Outcomes of Complementary Pathways on the Future of the Beneficiaries’ – *Dr Zvezda Vankova* (Lund University, Sweden)

**Stream 3 -      Contemporary Geopolitical Manoeuvres and Policy Shifts: Implications for the Search for Solutions [OPEN]**

Chair: *Dr Nicholas Maple* (Refugee Law Initiative, UK)

- ‘Egypt’s Response to (Forced) Migratory Movements: Transit country vs EU realpolitik’ - *Elena Habersky* (University of Glasgow, UK)
- ‘Maintaining the Right to Deport: The Limits of Refugee Rentierism in Facilitating Local Integration in Jordan and Turkey’ - *Dr Shaddin Almasri* (University for Continuing Education Krems, Austria)
- ‘How Much is Good Enough? Analyzing Levels of Access to Services Essential for Meaningful Socioeconomic Integration and Self-Reliance of Refugees and Hosts in Kenya’ - *Patrick Mutinda Muthui* (World Bank, Kenya)
- ‘Transnational Return as a Solution by and for Refugees: The Case of Burmese Refugee Returnees from South Korea’ - *Dr Jae Hyun Park* (University of Sussex, UK)

**1215-1345      Lunch**

**1345-1530      Panel Session II**

**Stream 1 - Challenging Borders and Binaries - Feminist Approaches to Refugee and Migration Studies [THEMATIC]**

Chair: *Dr Ayşe Güneş* (University of London, UK)

- ‘Feminist Care Ethics to Re-Think International Law Principles in the Regulation of People Moving Across National Borders’ - *Natasha Yacoub* (University of New South Wales, Australia; RLI Feminist Theory Working Group Coordinator)
- ‘The Cassandra Complex in Gender-Based Asylum Procedures: Listening as a Feminist Method in Research on Rape Mythology’ - *Lore Roels* (Ghent University, Belgium)
- ‘Walking the Walk or Just Talking the Talk? Promoting Equality and Diversity in Research and Knowledge Exchange with Refugee Women’ – *Dr Moira Dustin* (University of Sussex, UK)
- ‘Feminist Lawyering to Address Gender-Based Violence against Women Refugees: Lessons from Uganda’ – *Dr Maëlle Noir* (University of Galway, Ireland)

**Stream 2 - New Questions on Disasters, Displacement and Climate Change [OPEN]**

Chair: tbc

- ‘In Search of Solutions: Reimagining Conventional Approaches to Resolving Forced Mobilities in a World of Loss and Damage’ - *Steven Miron* (Refugee Law Initiative, UK)
- ‘Environmental Displacement in a Violent Context: The Colombian Case’ – *Dr Beatriz Eugenia Sánchez-Mojica* (IE Law School, Spain)
- ‘Evacuations as a Form of Displacement’ – *Professor Jane McAdam* (University of New South Wales, Australia)
- ‘Why We Shouldn't Talk about Climate Change’ - *Dr Saphia Fleury* (University of Hull, UK)

**Stream 3 - Statelessness: Between Migration and Nationality Law [OPEN]**

Chair: *Bronwen Manby* (School of Advanced Study, UK)

- ‘“Statelessness is a Question of Identity, Not a Question of Residence Rights”: Statelessness Legislation in the Netherlands’ - *Katja Swider* (VU Amsterdam, Netherlands)
- ‘Statelessness and Nationals of Unrecognised States’ - *Shahd Qannam* (Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, UK)
- ‘Syria’s Expanded Statelessness Landscape in post-2011 Refugee Contexts: Bifurcated Experiences arising from Middle Eastern and European Asylum Paradigms’ - *Thomas McGee* (University of Melbourne, Australia)
- ‘What Do We Talk about When We Talk about Statelessness?’ - *Tendayi Bloom* (University of Birmingham, UK)
- ‘Statelessness and the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum: Progress Achieved and Persisting Protection Gaps’ - *Tamas Molnar* (WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria)

**1530-1600 Coffee**

**1600-1700 Distinguished Keynote – Plenary Session**

- ‘From Dusty Sidewalks to Halls of Power: Rethinking Refugee Law through an Ethnographic Lens’  
*Professor Maja Janmyr* (University of Oslo, Norway)

**1700-1900 Conference Drinks Reception and Poster Session**

- For all registered conference participants
- Please see List of Posters at the end of this programme \*

**Day 2 – Tuesday 3 June 2025****0900-1045 Panel Session III****Stream 1 - Exceptionality and Exclusion: Historical and Legal Approaches to Palestinian Refugees [THEMATIC]**  
Chair: tbc

- 'Defining and Erasing Refugees: Israel's UNRWA policy in Gaza' - *Dr Anne Irfan* (University College London, UK)
- 'The Prohibition on Forced Displacement, the Right to Leave, Non-refoulement, and the Right to Return: Four Sides of the Same Coin?' - *Dr Reuven (Ruvi) Ziegler* (University of Reading, UK)
- 'Without Protection or Assistance: Palestinian Refugees in Four Jurisdictions' - *Dr Catherine Briddick* (University of Oxford, UK)
- 'From Aid to Subjugation: The U.S., UNRWA, and the Politics of Palestinian Refugees' - *Dr Hasan Basri Bulbul* (Boğaziçi University, Turkey)

**Stream 2 - Excluding People on the Move from the Protection of the Law [OPEN]**  
Chair: tbc

- 'Criminalizing Asylum in Ireland' - *Dr Bríd Ní Ghráinne* (Maynooth University, Ireland)
- 'The Defector's Dilemma: Forced Migration, Refugee Exclusion, and the Burden of Dissociation' - *Rory Sugrue* (Tilburg Law School, Netherlands)
- 'Right to Seek Asylum Dismantled? Challenging Refoulement Practices in Courts During the EU-Belarus Border Crisis' - *Dr Aleksandra Ancite-Jepifánova* (King's College London, UK)
- 'Moving Beyond Fragmented Approaches to Human Trafficking? Uganda as a Case Study' – *Dr Gillian Kane* (Ulster University, UK)

**Stream 3 - Refugee and Migrant Rights in the Host Country [OPEN]**  
Chair: tbc

- 'Implications for Forced Migration Studies of a Japanese Case Study' – *Dr Chiaki Tsuchida* (University of Tokyo, Japan)
- 'On The Rim of Refugee Law? Socio-Economic Rights for Persons with a Temporary Protection Status in Flanders, Belgium' - *Roos-Marie Van Den Bogaard* (Ghent University, Belgium)
- 'Temporal Migration Governance and its Consequences for Migrant Children' – *Professor Rebecca Thorburn Stern* (Uppsala University, Sweden)
- 'Mapping Legal Borders: A Network Analysis of Regional Differences in ECtHR Article 8 Migration Jurisprudence' - *Tatiana Cernicova-Dragomir* (West University of Timisoara, Romania)

**1045-1115 Coffee****1115-1300 Panel Session IV****Stream 1 - Representation and Accountability in Research and Practice [THEMATIC]**  
Chair: tbc

- 'Accountability to Affected Populations: The Revolution Will Not Be Televised' - *Josep Zapater* (UNHCR, Headquarters)
- 'The Visibility of Self-Reliance within an International Refugee System. Assessing how Forced Migration Studies is Constituted Sociologically and Institutionally through the Voices of the Local Communities' - *Miriam Mylvaganam* (University of Bradford, UK)

- ‘Beyond Victims and Perpetrators: The Silencing of WWII’s Ethnic Germans in Forced Displacement Studies’ - *Jessica Aldrich Strassman* (Samuel Merritt University, USA)
- ‘Bridging the Gap between Academic Researchers and Civil Society: Ensuring a Usefulness and Purpose to Research that Places the Refugee at the Centre – An NGO Practitioner’s Perspective’ - *Bethany Cachia* (Jesuit Refugee Service, Malta)

**Stream 2 - Litigating the Rights of Refugees and Migrants [OPEN]**

Chair: tbc

- ‘The Legal Opportunity Structures of Migrant Rights Litigation: Dead Ends and Strategies to Overcome’ - *Hannah Katz* (University of Haifa, Israel)
- ‘The Politics of Legal Support in Precarious Transit Zones: Navigating Uncertainty and Deterrence at the Franco-British Border’ - *Maud Martens* (Ghent University, Belgium)
- ‘Who Should Have the Last Word? The Judiciary or the Government?’ - *Karolina Michková* (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)
- ‘Understanding and Assessing Strategic Refugee Rights Litigation through Refugee-Led Research in Australia and Across Borders’ - *Nhu-Duyen Jessica Vuong* (Australian National University, Australia)

**Stream 3 - Landmark Cases in International Refugee Protection [OPEN]**

Chair: *Professor Sarah Singer* (Refugee Law Initiative, UK)

- ‘*Canada (Attorney General) v Ward* [1993]: Refugee Law’s Parthenon’ – *Dr Hugo Storey* (IARMJ, UK)
- ‘*R v Uxbridge Magistrates Court and another ex parte Adimi* [1999]: When Border Control Regimes and Refugee Convention Obligations Collide – *Professor Kirsten McConnachie* (University of East Anglia, UK)
- ‘Refugee Rights Adrift: Haitian Interdiction and the Long Term Effects of *Sale v. Haitian Centres Council* (1993)’ – *Professor Stephen Meili* (University of Minnesota, USA)
- ‘Protection from Conflict: *Sufi and Elmi v UK* [2011]’ – *Dr Christel Querton* (University of the West of England, UK)

**1300-1430 Lunch**

**1430-1615 Panel Session V**

**Stream 1 - A New Agenda for Refugee Law Research [THEMATIC]**

Chair: *Professor Stephen Meili* (University of Minnesota, USA)

- ‘Conducting Fieldwork on Forced Migration: Personal, Structural and Contextual Challenge’ - *Bice Kurtoglu* (University of Warwick, UK)
- ‘Circumventing Refugee Law: The Impact of Categorisation on International Refugee Protection’ - *Alessandra Enrico Headrington* (Oxford University, UK)
- ‘The Future of Refugee Law: Refugee Between Law and Literature’ - *Abida Younas* (University of Warwick, UK)
- ‘Toward Decolonial Displacement Studies in South Asia: A Critical Postcolonial Approach to Refugee Law’ - *Sreetapa Chakrabarty* (Rabindra Bharati University, India)

**Stream 2 - Displacement and the City: Conceptualising Connectivity and Reciprocity [OPEN]**

Chair: *Dr Nicholas Maple* (Refugee Law Initiative, UK)

- ‘“Ghosted Refugees” and Resilient Social Networks: The Role of Conviviality and Hushamwari in Migration to Cape Town, South Africa’ – *Dr Tamuka Chekero* (University of Cape Town, South Africa)

- 'The Right to the City for Urban Refugees? Living in the Shadow of the Camp' - *Dr Lucy Earle* (International Institute for Environment and Development, UK)
- 'Displacement Cities: Uncertainty, Disruption, and the Making of Urban Spaces in sub-Saharan Africa' – *Professor Loren B Landau* (University of Oxford, UK)
- 'Displacement and the Making of Southern Urbanism' - *Dr Romola Sanyal* (London School of Economics, UK)

**Stream 3 - New Challenges in EU Asylum Law and Practice [OPEN]**

Chair: tbc

- 'Reconciling New Concepts of EU Asylum and Migration Pact With Refugee Law' - *Professor Lyra Jakulevičienė* (Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania)
- 'Risk in EU Migration and Asylum Law: A Biopolitical Approach' – *Dr Veronica Corcodel* (NOVA School of Law, Portugal)
- 'The 'Right to Asylum' under Article 18 and the EU Resettlement and Humanitarian Admissions Framework – A Tale of Two Uneasy Bedfellows?' - *Dr Riona Moodley* (University of New South Wales, Australia)
- 'Representing and Resisting EU Border Violence' - *Dr Niamh Keady-Tabbal* (Maynooth University, Ireland)

**1645-1830 MA in Refugee Protection Distinguished Lecture – Public Plenary Session**

- 'Breaking through the Wall: Taking Forced Migration Research Outside the Academy' *Dr Katy Long* (California Migration Museum, USA)

This public event marks 10 years of the RLI's successful [Master's degree in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies](#) by distance-learning, which has opened up postgraduate education opportunities to those working in the field across the globe. The event features a distinguished lecture from inaugural module convenor *Dr Katy Long*, and reflections from students past and present.

*A drinks reception begins at 16.45, followed by the lecture at 17.30*

**Day 3 – Wednesday 4 June 2025****0915-1100 Panel Session VI****Stream 1 - Interrogating the Politics of Mobility-related Labels [THEMATIC]**

Chair: tbc

- 'Who Gets Included or Excluded? Protection Thresholds and Labelling Politics among Displaced Persons in Nigeria' - *Tosin Durodola* and *Sarah Pajeau* (University of Edinburgh, UK)
- 'Shifting Paradigms, Shifting Narratives: From Sovereignty to Solidarity for the Climate Refugee Subject' - *Irene Sacchetti* (Nottingham Trent University, UK)
- 'Indigenous Grassroots Migration Labels: Resistance of Young People to Migration Influx in South Africa' - *Dr Nomatter Sande* (University of Glasgow, UK)
- 'The Politics of Categorising and Producing Migration Knowledge' - *Dr Kudakwashe Vanyoro* (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

**Stream 2 - Where Will Renewed State Interest in Externalisation Lead? [OPEN]**

Chair: tbc

- 'Studying International Refugee Law from the Prism of Rightlessness: The Case of Externalization' – *Dr Adel-Naim Reyhani* (University of Bologna, Italy)
- 'Hard Borders and Weak Safeguards: Frontex and the Future of EU Externalisation in the Sahel' – *Dr Mariana Gkliati* (Tilburg University, Netherlands)
- 'African Regional Mechanisms and the Legal Challenges of Safe Third Country Agreements' - *Ramy Abdelhady* (University of Bristol, UK)
- 'What Do Migration Enforcement and Humanitarian Responsibilities In The English Channel Look Like?' - *Toby Meredith* (University of Portsmouth, UK)

**Stream 3 - Novel Legal Perspectives on Defining Refugees [OPEN]**

Chair: tbc

- 'Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Subsidiary Protection for War Risks Claims' - *Mark Niklas Cuno* (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)
- 'Refugee Persecution through Cultural Heritage Destruction' - *Sherine Al Shallah* (University of New South Wales, Australia)
- 'Vulnerability to Re-Trafficking or Irregular Re-Migration in the Context of Climate Change and Disasters: A Sliding Scale of Risk' – *Dr Maja Grundler* (Northumbria University, UK)
- 'Assessing Balanced Out, Proud And Loud Queer Citizenship In Asylum Claims' - *Jaba Kaplanishvili* (University of Westminster, UK)

**1100-1130 Coffee****1130-1230 Distinguished Keynote – Plenary Discussion Session**

- 'Refugee and Forced Migration Studies: Origins, Evolution and Contemporary Challenges' *Dr Jeff Crisp* (University of Oxford, UK)  
Discussant: *Professor Nando Sigona* (Birmingham University, UK)

**1230-1245 Closing**

- *Professor David Cantor* (Refugee Law Initiative)

**Post-Conference Closed Session: RLI Affiliates****1330-1700 RLI Affiliate Working Groups - Post-Conference Workshops**

Working Groups holding workshops on the Wednesday afternoon include:

1. WG on Feminist Theory, Refugees and Displacement: *“Feminist Approaches to Refugee Law”* Workshop
2. WG on Externalisation: Workshop
3. WG on Courts: Workshop

The workshops are open to existing members of each RLI Working Group. Other RLI Affiliates or conference participants can request to join a workshop by writing directly to the appropriate WG contact(s):

- WG on Feminist Theory                      Rosa Da Costa (rosafidalgodacosta@gmail.com) and  
Tatiana Cernicova-Dragomir (tatiana.cernicova84@e-uvt.ro)
- WG on Externalisation                      Dr Mariana Gkliati (M.Gkliati@tilburguniversity.edu)
- WG on Courts                                      Dr Gillian Kane (G.Kane1@ulster.ac.uk)



**Day 1 Poster Session – Sample of Posters (alphabetical by author surname)**

- ‘Rethinking Refugee Law and Forced Migration Studies: The Instrumentalisation of Displaced Persons in the European Union from a Human Security Perspective’ - *María Martín-Andrade* (University of Navarra, Spain)
- ‘Redefining the Boundary Between Involuntarily Displaced Migrants and Refugees in the Spirit of Cartagena’ - *Professor Charles Shane Ellison* (Duke University, USA)
- ‘Internally Displaced Persons and their Post-Reintegration Experiences in Communities Affected by Boko Haram Insurgency in Northeast Nigeria’ - *Professor Jude A. Momodu* (Modibbo Adama University, Nigeria) and *Dr Ruth Abiola Adimula* (University of Ilorin, Nigeria)
- ‘Temporary Protection for Ukrainians in Europe’ - *Tássia de Oliveira Sodr * (MA Refugee Protection, University of London)
- ‘International Protection Claims with a Climate and Disaster Dimension: a Proposal for a Practical Toolkit for the UK’ - *Emily Rowe* (Refugee Legal Support, UK)
- ‘The Role For Positive Obligations under the Right to Life in Assessing Non-Refoulement Obligations toward People Displaced in the Context of Climate Change and Disasters’ - *Anna Talbot* (University of New South Wales, Australia)
- ‘Rights Mapping and Analysis Platform (RiMAP)’ – *Dr Cornelis (Kees) Wouters* (UNHCR, Headquarters)