



FORCED MIGRATION ISSUES: AN INTRODUCTION

Master in Solidarity and Sustainable Transition

Faculty of Social Sciences, Economics and Law

Course information

Master Year 2 21 HOURS

Fall Semester 5 ECTS

Seminar

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Course description

Why do forced migrants matter? First because numbers matter: hence the need to pay attention to the estimated 70 million forced migrants worldwide. Second because, over the last 25 years, an important relief industry has emerged to tackle mass displacement. This large scale humanitarianism needs both strategy and reflection. In particular the multiplication of actors, their effectiveness, efficiency, the problems of coordination beg questions. Third, in an era of globalisation and fear, national and international policies developed towards forced migrants have become symbols of new approaches to war, to poverty and to development. Indeed, the ways in which forced migrants are dealt with tell much about the 'donors', sometimes more than about the 'victims' the fate of whom is often stereotyped. Last but not least, forced migrants' plights are relevant to us because the comfortable distance between 'us' and 'them' crumbles occasionally, calling both policies and labelling into question. New Orleans in 2005, Lebanon in 2006, Fukushima in 2011, Calais, Lesbos, München over recent years remind us that the chaos, distress and powerlessness experienced in displacement can come abruptly, sometimes very close.

For these reasons amongst others, the situation of refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) is a regular news item. It is also discussed in numerous diplomatic meetings and academic seminars. Yet, our knowledge of displacement situations remains limited. For one refugee picture, one headline, how many untold stories? For one coverage of starving, helpless Sudanese, how many of activist camps in Pakistan, of peace communities in Columbia? For countless UN appeals to help 'them', how many articles question who 'they' are and who 'we' are? How many analysts discuss notions of agency, of responsibility, of connection?

In this course, we will look at causes of current forced displacements, patterns of flights and

of resettlement and international responses to the challenges of displacement. Emphasis will be placed on linking analytical tools to case studies. As an introduction, the course will offer forays into issues such as refugee law, fortress Europe, military-civil cooperation, gender and development.

The students are encouraged to explore the themes that interest them most in their presentations and essays.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1 Understand thoroughly current forced migration debates.

2 Present and discuss these issues in English, both in oral and written form.

3 Use online resources efficiently to keep up-to-date with changes in this field.

Key Scientific Reviews related to forced migration

Forced Migration Review, Oxford University, www.fmreview.org

International Journal of Refugee Law: <https://academic.oup.com/ijrl> (Articles accessible via FELS) Revue Internationale des Migrations Européennes (REMI),

<https://journals.openedition.org/remi/> accessible on CAIRN, also via FELS

International Review of the Red Cross: <https://international-review.icrc.org/>