



## **Refugees Digest 22** **January 2018**

### **Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons**

The situation of refugees, migrants and displaced persons will continue to be the focus of governments, civil society and multilateral organisations during 2018 as the UN seeks to formulate two Global Compacts, one for refugees and the other for the promotion of safe, orderly migration. The Church is part of this robust discussion. The links below set out some of the primary observations. The Church has already produced a 20 point action plan to assist faith communities to actualise these commitments. The US Bishops expressed disappointment that the Trump Administration decided on 2/12/17 to disengage from the process of formulating these Compacts.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2017/12/06/we-dont-need-reinvent-wheel-humane-migration-policy-we-need-get-it>

<http://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2018-01/governments-look-to-holy-see-for-leadership-on-migration-and-ref.html>

<https://migrants-refugees.va/20-action-points/>

<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-241.cfm>

<http://thehill.com/opinion/international/363310-trumps-withdrawal-from-migration-summit-shows-his-nationalist-colors>

The Pope's World Day of Peace message and the Message for the World Day for Refugees and Migrants can be read as part of the preparation for these important Compacts. The Pope spells out what for the Church are the pastoral and policy implications of welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating refugees and itinerant people.

<http://www.europe-infos.eu/migrants-and-refugees-pope-francis-proposals?ts=1516712299>

<https://zenit.org/articles/popes-message-for-world-day-of-peace-call-for-un-action/>

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/11/24/world-day-peace-message-pope-francis-decries-discrimination-toward-migrants-and>

<https://zenit.org/articles/archbishop-jurkovic-stresses-migration-points/>

In this Digest we also highlight two critical policy issues which are the subject of much debate, namely questions of family reunification and the variations and application of the 'right of the soil' principle.

The issue of family migration is one of the most contested areas of immigration policy. The following articles robustly challenge some of the arguments used to restrict the call for family friendly migration policies. Restrictions on the possibility of bringing immediate families to host countries are an increasing reality across the globe. The Bishops of the UK also called on the UK government to make easier provision for refugee children to be reunited with their families who are already in the UK. The Quakers in the UK also pledged ‘to resist the hostile environment being created for migrants.’

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/justice/chain-migration-misrepresents-reality-say-catholic-advocates>

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/justice/editorial-stop-mass-deportations-now>

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/salvadorans-risk-losing-immigration-status-find-support-churches>

<https://rcpolitics.org/bishops-call-on-uk-government-to-help-calais-migrants/>

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/33937>

At the end of 2017, the Italian government was unable to muster enough support for legislation that would offer citizenship to children born of foreigners in Italy, or who arrived in Italy below the age of 12 and had had five years formal education in Italy. Rules on citizenship vary across the European Union, and no country in the bloc follows a pure so-called “right of the soil” principle, whereby anyone born in the country is automatically considered a citizen, as is the case in the United States. Currently, anyone born in Italy to foreign parents can apply for citizenship when they reach 18, but must prove they have lived there without interruption their entire life, a requirement that rights groups say is too stringent. This is another key issue which is being discussed internationally.

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/576357/Gentiloni-mourns-failure-to-pass-new-citizenship-l>

Late last year the world was shocked by footage showing migrants being sold in Libya as slaves. France led the EU in promising to assist in destroying this form of modern slavery. African migrants who use Libya as a departure point for crossing to Europe are often trapped in Libya and vulnerable to traffickers.

[https://issafrica.org/iss-today/libyas-slave-trade-shocks-au-eu-leaders-into-action?utm\\_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm\\_campaign=ISS\\_Today&utm\\_medium=email](https://issafrica.org/iss-today/libyas-slave-trade-shocks-au-eu-leaders-into-action?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=ISS_Today&utm_medium=email)

<https://euobserver.com/migration/140098>

This link connects to an important, but little known and very perilous migration route from Africa to the Gulf nations, followed by people attempting to find work.

[https://issafrica.org/iss-today/path-of-insecurity-for-migrants-leaving-the-horn?utm\\_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm\\_campaign=ISS+Today&utm\\_medium=email](https://issafrica.org/iss-today/path-of-insecurity-for-migrants-leaving-the-horn?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=ISS+Today&utm_medium=email)

The links certainly underline the fact that the goal of honouring the dignity of all itinerant people, of providing a safe environment and hope for the traumatised, is still a long way off and needs urgent, persistent work, especially in the area of humane policies.

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