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New TRAFIG publication \ Identifying third-country solutions for refugees: The promise of complementary pathways

In light of the increasing numbers of people displaced and the duration of displacement globally, complementary pathways stand to offer an important tool for expanding solutions to protracted displacement. (UNHCR, 2019). TRAFIG Policy Brief 3 illustrates how facilitating movement for forced migrants based on their own resources, skills and networks could become the key added value of complementary pathways.

According to the recently published [Global Trends Report](#) of UNHCR, there are now 82.4 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, of whom 26.4 million are refugees, 3.9 displaced Venezuelans and 4.1 million asylum seekers, i.e. a sum of 34.4 million people who sought protection in another country. The number of persons in a protracted refugee situation remained the same with 15.7 million—that is 76 per cent of all refugees.

Complementary pathways have gained much prominence in recent global and European policy discussions as an innovative and new tool to broaden and scale up third-country solutions for refugees. Indeed, the need for ramping up access to durable solutions for refugees is pressing in the face of ever longer-lasting conflicts and far too low resettlement numbers. Complementary pathways, which include existing legal pathways for family reunification, studies or employment, as well as humanitarian admission, are commonly considered as new legal pathways that need to be developed for refugees, thereby perpetuating the narrative of refugees needing support. In [TRAFIG Policy Brief 3](#), authors Martin Wagner and Caitlin Katsiaficas stress the importance of taking refugees' own human and social capital into account. **“Various examples show that refugees do possess and use existing pathways and seek individual solutions outside of the refugee regime—if their resources and networks allow them to do so,”** the authors argue. Moreover, with resettlement reserved for the most vulnerable refugees, complementary pathways could be a game changer for refugees who have some networks and capital, but whose resources are not strong enough for them to access third-country solutions on their own.

This latest TRAFIG Policy Brief, “Networks and mobility: A case for complementary pathways,” recommends that actors devise strategies to develop and link networks in major host countries with those in potential destination countries farther afield and create favourable entry conditions for refugees, both of which could become essential building blocks for complementary pathways. **“The German Western Balkans Regulation, community sponsorship or similar initiatives are examples of the opportunities created by networks and offer a plethora of findings that could further develop complementary pathways for refugees,”** the authors underline.

You will find [TRAFIG Policy Brief 3 “Networks and mobility: A case for complementary pathways”](https://trafig.eu/output/policy-briefs/policy-brief-no-3/D084-TPB-Networks-and-mobility-Wagner-Katsiaficas-2021-v01p-2021-6-15.pdf) at:
<https://trafig.eu/output/policy-briefs/policy-brief-no-3/D084-TPB-Networks-and-mobility-Wagner-Katsiaficas-2021-v01p-2021-6-15.pdf>

TRAFIG Policy Brief 3 was published in the framework of the EU-funded Horizon 2020 research project “Transnational Figurations of Displacement” (TRAFIG), which investigates long-lasting displacement situations at multiple sites in Asia, Africa and Europe and analyses options to improve displaced people’s lives. To read more about the EU-funded Horizon 2020 project TRAFIG, click [here](#).

Further information

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