

Daily COVID-19 and Migration Digest
Monday, May 4, 2020

Headline: [Desert or sea: Virus traps migrants in mid-route danger zone](#)

Source: LA Times

Date: May 3, 2020

Notes: “Thousands of desperate migrants are trapped in limbo...as governments close borders and ports in the face of the coronavirus outbreak. Migrants have been dropped by the truckload in the Sahara or bused to Mexico’s border with Guatemala and beyond. Others are drifting in the Mediterranean after European and Libyan authorities declared their ports unsafe. And about 100 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar are believed to have died in the Bay of Bengal, as country after country pushed them back out to sea.”

Headline: [Migrant Advocates Call For More Testing Before Deportations](#)

Source: NPR

Date: May 2, 2020

Notes: After at least 100 people deported from the US to Guatemala tested positive for Covid-19, and Mexico has deported tens of thousands of migrants previously housed in detention centers, advocates are highlighting the problematic nature of the deportations. Some deportees are experiencing harassment upon return to their hometowns due to fears that they may have brought the virus.

Headline: [Labor calls for overhaul of Australia's 'lazy approach' to migration after coronavirus crisis](#)

Source: SBS News

Date: May 3, 2020

Notes: In Australia, some are calling for an overhaul of the immigration system following a shutdown due to Covid-19 concerns. The calls are for a new system to be orchestrated so that Australians have priority for any jobs that foreigners might otherwise occupy.

Headline: [Frustrated Hong Kong asylum seekers want to join Covid-19 fight](#)

Source: Hong Kong Free Press

Date: May 3, 2020

Notes: Medically trained asylum seekers in Hong Kong want to be able to assist their host country in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, but they are not allowed to work while their asylum claims are processed. Advocates say that allowing asylum seekers to work would not only decrease the burden on Hong Kong medical providers but would increase financial and psychosocial wellbeing of asylum seekers.

Headline: [Bihar Prepares For Return Of Million Migrants, Declares 3-Week Quarantine](#)

Source: NDTV

Date: May 2, 2020

Notes: About a million migrants are expected to return to their hometowns in Bihar, India after the national government gave clearance for the movement of stranded workers last week. The workers will be quarantined for 21 days in quarantine centers that are being rapidly configured, with an eye towards the provision of food, medical care, and adequate hygiene and sanitation supplies.

Headline: [Locked down in Libya: One refugee’s reflections on conflict and COVID-19](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: April 29, 2020

Notes: “For migrants and refugees like me, the virus hasn’t changed that much. Fear has always been a constant, and life has never been secure. We have become used to uncertainty, unsure if we will have somewhere to sleep at night or not.”

Headline: [Malaysia cites Covid-19 for rounding up hundreds of migrants](#)

Source: BBC

Date: May 2, 2020

Notes: Authorities said 586 undocumented migrants were arrested in a raid in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, on Friday. Those detained included children and Rohingya refugees, against whom there have been increasing xenophobic campaigns on social media recently. The UN condemned the raid, saying it could push vulnerable groups into hiding and prevent them from seeking treatment.

Headline: [Allemagne: des migrants solidaires dans la lutte contre le coronavirus](#) (Germany: Migrants united in the fight against the coronavirus)

Source: Metro

Date: May 2, 2020

Notes: A small group of women migrants and refugees in Berlin is making masks to be distributed for free to the Berlin population. "Germany is helping us, so now it's time for us to help them," said one of the women interviewed in the piece.

Compiled by Christina Kay

Headline: [Bangladesh: Rohingya Refugees in Risky Covid-19 Quarantine](#)

Source: Human Rights Watch

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: The Government of Bangladesh has quarantined 29 Rohingya refugees on an unstable silt island in the Bay of Bengal without sufficient access to aid. While the government states that these are Rohingya refugees who fled from Myanmar on route to Malaysia, Human Rights Watch reports that at least seven of those detained are from camps in Bangladesh.

Headline: [COVID-19 Is No Excuse to Abandon Basic Principles Protecting Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#)

Source: The Diplomat

Date: May 4, 2020

Notes: In this piece, Pierfilippo Nata argues for the importance of promoting respect for international law and continued contributions to international organizations in the face of national COVID-19 responses that limit human rights and the right to asylum.

Headline: [Outrage after India asks migrants to pay for train journey](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 4, 2020

Notes: The Government of India is being criticized after charging migrants for special interstate trains that the government commissioned to transport migrants back to their home states. Faced with growing criticism and an offer by the opposition party to pay the fares, the government said that it will pay 85% of the ticket prices and the state governments will pay the remaining 15%.

Headline: [ICE's Immigration Detainees Protested Lack of Coronavirus Precautions – and Swat-like Private-prison Guards Pepper-sprayed them](#)

Source: The Intercept

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: The article documents actions taken by Stewart Detention Center to violently suppress detained immigrants from speaking out and protesting a lack of protections and access to medical care. A for-profit facility operated by CoreCivic, Stewart Detention Center has 44 staff and 12 detainees who are positive for COVID-19.

Headline: [Government considers bringing back Nepali migrant workers from Covid-19- affected countries](#)

Source: The Kathmandu Post

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: Nepal's Minister for Foreign Affairs has announced that the government is working on a series of measures to safely repatriate Nepali migrant workers who are currently abroad and unable to travel home. The government did not provide a timeline for these measures, and advocates are concerned that the government has acted slowly to help migrants who remain in other countries.

Headline: [Before Covid-19, Trump Aide Sought to Use Disease to Close Borders](#)

Source: The New York Times

Date: May 3, 2020

Notes: The Times reports on Stephen Miller's multiple attempts prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to persuade President Trump to use public health powers to restrict the flow of immigration to the United States. One official said that using public health powers was on a "wish list" of about 50 other ideas to prevent immigration drafted within the first six months of the Trump Administration.

Headline: [COVID-10 compounds a long list of problems in Guatemala](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 4, 2020

Notes: Aid groups are concerned that COVID-19 and lockdown policies will exacerbate existing food insecurity due to drought in rural areas of Guatemala. Deportations from the US have now resumed, and President Giammattei has said that Guatemalans living in the US have voluntarily returned to Guatemala due to fears of COVID-19.

Headline: [Coloradans in the U.S. illegally – and their citizen families – were denied coronavirus aid. Will the state step in?](#)

Source: The Colorado Sun

Date: May 4, 2020

Notes: The US's \$2 trillion federal stimulus package, the CARES Act, included a clause that prevented people living in the country unlawfully, including mixed-citizenship families, from receiving stimulus payments. States such as Colorado are considering whether to provide state assistance for people who are not eligible for other public benefits.

Headline: [Refugees tell stories of problems – and unity – in facing the coronavirus](#)

Source: The Conversation

Date: April 30, 2020

Notes: In this piece, the coordinators of the Refugees in Towns network shared refugee researchers' and aid workers' stories on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected their lives.

Other Resources:

Migration Policy Practice, Vol. X, Number 2, April- June 2020 on [COVID-19: A New Challenge for Migration Policy](#)

Compiled by Sarah Guyer

Headline: [Coronavirus border closures strand tens of thousands of people across Africa](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: Facing border closures, tens of thousands of migrants are stranded across Africa. Many cannot continue on to their destination, facing border closures or stranded by smugglers, but are also unable to return home. Many of those waiting have lost work, making it difficult to survive where they remain.

Headline: [Joint statement by UNHCR, IOM, and UNODC on protection at sea in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: The joint statement issued by UNHCR, IOM, and UNODC calls on states to uphold commitments from the 2016 Bali Declaration and ASEAN pledges to protect vulnerable refugees and migrants at sea. Boats of migrants, including hundreds of Rohingya, are trapped at sea, unable to come to shore due to states' restrictions in light of COVID-19.

Headline: [As World Comes to Halt Amid Pandemic, So Do Migrants](#)

Source: New York Times

Date: May 4, 2020

Notes: In some areas of Latin America, the flow of migration seems to have slowed significantly due to border closures, increased restrictions on asylum, and interruption in transportation. Elsewhere in the world, including in East Africa and the Gulf of Aden, a similar phenomenon is taking place. In some areas, migrants are returning to their country of origin, unable to find work in their destination countries.

Headline: [Violence and Hunger Stalk Refugees and Migrants in Albania](#)

Source: BIRN

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: Migrants from the Middle East and North Africa housed in a reception center outside Tirana, Albania, report difficult conditions in the reception center, including insufficient food. With borders closed, many migrants reported trying to simply survive until they could resume their journey.

Headline: [Lebanon's decision on Palestinian expats 'racism'](#)

Source: Anadolu Agency

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: Geneva-based Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor yesterday decried the decision by the Lebanese government to prevent Palestinian refugees holding Lebanese travel documents to travel back to Lebanon as 'heinous racism.' The Lebanese government recently issued a circular to its embassy in the United Arab Emirates "ordering it not to allow the return of Palestinian refugees who are stranded in the UAE to Lebanon."

Headline: [UK asylum seekers fear for safety in cramped temporary housing](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: While the UK Home Office announced last month that it would stop evicting asylum seekers from state accommodation if their asylum claim was rejected, advocates are concerned about pre-existing delays with asylum support and unsafe accommodations in which asylum seekers are unable to properly self-isolate. Due to COVID-related restrictions, many services such as food banks and advice centers have closed, increasing the vulnerability of asylum seekers.

Headline: [We speak to a Migrant Worker About What It's Like to Live in One of Singapore's Coronavirus Hotbeds](#)

Source: VICE

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: The article reports on an interview with a Bangladeshi worker in Singapore, as he recounts his experiences in a dormitory during COVID-19.

Headline: [UN group calls for countries to stop immigration detention in response to coronavirus pandemic](#)

Source: Fox News

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: The conservative news outlet reports on recommendations from the UN to limit immigration detention, characterizing this as “the latest push by U.N. officials for relaxing, or abolishing entirely, forms of detention for those who cross borders illegally or seek asylum.”

Compiled by Sarah Guyer

Headline: [Schengen, Migration, Asylum and Security in Times of COVID-19](#)

Source: European Parliament News

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: “MEPs will quiz Commissioner Johansson on the future of the border-free Schengen zone, common migration and asylum policy and security in the context of the pandemic.”

Headline: [Boy Sprayed with Bleach Meant to Disinfect Buses, UP Government Explains](#)

Source: NDTV

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: A video has emerged on social media of a boy being sprayed with disinfectant by a municipal worker in Uttar Pradesh. Similar incidents have taken place targeting migrant workers.

Headline: [UN Calls on Greece to Integrate Migrants into Society](#)

Source: Daily Sabah

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: UNHCR has called for Greece to integrate refugees to aid in the COVID-19 response. Recently, protesters prevented a bus from entering several cities, and set fire to a hotel intended for refugee housing.

Headline: [COVID-19 Brings Abuse and Other Fears to Displaced Women in South Sudan](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: Aid organizations and advocates are concerned vulnerability to gender-based violence and a lack of services will rise with continued lockdown measures.

Headline: [Aid Groups Race to Protect Refugees from the Coronavirus](#)

Source: World Magazine

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: Advocates are concerned the threat COVID-19 has on Dzaleka refugee camp. Malawian officials alongside aid workers and UNHCR are organizing a COVID-19 response, including building a reception center and quarantine site. Yet, food rations and basic supplies run low.

Headline: [A New Movement in Europe Is Demanding That Cities Welcome Refugees Amid COVID-19](#)

Source: Global Citizen

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: A people-powered movement called Europe Must Act that has aimed to relocate refugees in camps to countries in the E.U. and 10 European cities have campaigned and mobilized to allow resettlement of refugees into their borders.

Headline: [COVID-19 Crisis Putting Human Trafficking Victims At Risk Of Further Exploitation, Experts Warn](#)

Source: UN

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: UNODC warns COVID-19 restricted movement, diverted law enforcement services and reduction of social and public services will lead to diminished justice and advocacy for human trafficking victims, as well as further abuse and neglect.

Headline: [First ICE Detainee Dies From COVID-19 After Being Hospitalized From Otay Mesa Detention Center](#)

Source: CBS News

Date: May 6, 2020

Notes: California Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez of San Diego has confirmed the first COVID-19 related death of an asylum seeker detained at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego. Carlos Ernesto Escobar Mejia was 58 years old and came to the U.S. from El Salvador in 1980.

Headline: [Migrants Are Among The Worst Hit By COVID-19 In Saudi Arabia And Gulf Countries](#)

Source: NPR

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes:

Headline: [Impact of the Global Pandemic on Informal Workers](#)

Source: Informal Economy Podcast

Date: May 5, 2020

Notes: This mini-series episode relays the impact of COVID-19 on informal workers in cities around the world through interviews with Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) team members in the field.

Compiled by Rocio Rodriguez Casquete

Headline: [Forced To Wait In Mexico, Migrant Medical Professionals Become Asset In Fight Against COVID-19](#)

Source: Border Report

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: Waiting indefinitely for resolutions to their asylum claims, dozens of nurses, lab technicians, chemists, biologists, and a few doctors are now valuable assets in efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 in Juarez, Mexico.

Headline: [Coronavirus: Asylum Seekers And Detainees Unable To Get Tests Despite Confirmed Cases In Living Facilities](#)

Source: The Independent

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: “Asylum seekers and immigration detainees have been unable to access coronavirus tests despite living in shared accommodation centers where there have been confirmed cases of the virus.” The Independent also reports that asylum seekers may need an increase in the financial support they are currently receiving.

Headline: [Latinos in Some States Have Seen Higher Rates of Infection](#)

Source: New York Times

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: As the adverse impact of COVID-19 on Latino communities in the US remains high, NY Times cites concerns that the disparities could grow “as annual harvest season begins” and seasonal farmworkers move between states for work.

Headline: [Karnataka To Restart Trains Taking Migrant Workers To Their Home States After Outrage](#)

Source: NDTV

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: On Wednesday, Karnataka’s government decided that trains that carry migrant workers from Karnataka to nine other states in India would be halted. On Thursday, this decision was repealed and trains were set to start again, enabling migrant workers to travel home beginning Friday.

Headline: [20,000 Migrants Have Been Expelled Along Border Under Coronavirus Directive](#)

Source: CBS News

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: “The Trump administration announced on Thursday that officials at the southern border have summarily expelled more than 20,000 unauthorized migrant adults, families and children from the US under a broad public health order issued in late March in response to the coronavirus pandemic.”

Headline: [Press Briefing Note On Migrant Rescues In The Mediterranean - Spokesperson For The UN High Commissioner For Human Rights: Rupert Colville | Geneva, 8 May 2020](#)

Source: UN OHCHR

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: In this press briefing, Colville shares concerns about failures to assist migrant boats in the central Mediterranean, and the coordinated pushbacks undertaken by nations along this migration route to expel and prevent the aid of stranded migrants. Colville calls for a moratorium on all interceptions and returns to Libya.

Headline: [Gender Matters: COVID-19’s Outsized Impact On Displaced Women and Girls](#)

Source: Refugees International

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: A summary of COVID-19's ramifications on global public health, as the impacts relate to women and girls in displaced populations. The piece offers analyses of the impact on livelihood and education, access to health care, WASH, and gender-based violence, and offers recommendations for targeted data collection and health service delivery.

Headline: [Caught Between Climate And Virus Threats, Migrants Have No Safe Place To Go](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: "Now those forced from their homes by weather-related disasters in impoverished, war-ravaged Afghanistan – about 1.2 million people at the end of 2019 – must also contend with the threat of the novel coronavirus."

Headline: [Two Rescue Ships Impounded By Italy](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 7, 2020

Notes: Two boats, which have been rescuing hundreds of stranded migrants off the Libyan coast and bringing them to Italy, have been impounded in the port of Palermo, in Sicily. The impounding poses a block to an effort to provide humanitarian aid to these migrants, while many humanitarian aid organizations have had to suspend larger rescue missions.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya

Daily COVID-19 and Migration Digest
Monday, May 11, 2020

Headline: [Covid-19 crisis stokes European tensions over migrant labour](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: European farmers risk losing their harvests due to a loss of migrant labor during the Covid-19 outbreak, but populists are seeking to cash in on fears of foreigners taking jobs. Additionally, some migrant workers fear exploitation and inadequate safeguards should they return to these jobs.

Headline: [Virus Forces Persian Gulf States to Reckon With Migrant Labor](#)

Source: New York Times

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: “The Mideast’s wealthiest countries depend on foreigners to do jobs their citizens won’t. But the virus has hobbled the arrangement and drawn attention to its inequities.” Xenophobia is also rising, with a prominent Kuwaiti actress vocally suggesting that Kuwait should send their migrant workers “into the desert” in order to leave hospital beds available for Kuwaitis.

Headline: [WHO, IOM raise concern over COVID-19 discrimination against migrants in Yemen](#)

Source: ReliefWeb

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: Following the recent announcement of Sana’a city’s first case of Covid-19, migrants in Yemen are being stigmatized. “Xenophobia and scapegoating campaigns are leading to retaliation against these vulnerable communities, including physical and verbal harassment, forced quarantine, denial of access to health services, movement restrictions, and forced movements to frontline and desert areas, leaving them stranded without food, water and essential services.”

Headline: [Call for probe after man found dead in Covid-19 asylum seeker hotel](#)

Source: The Ferret

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: In Scotland, the Covid-19 response has involved moving asylum seekers from their residences into hotels while discontinuing the weekly asylum seeker support funds they were previously receiving. This policy is being questioned after the death of a Syrian asylum seeker was reported in one such hotel last week.

Headline: [Migrants stranded all over world at heightened risk of COVID-19: IOM](#)

Source: Deccan Herald

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: “Thousands of migrants have been stranded “all over the world” where they face a heightened risk of COVID-19 infection, the head of the UN migration agency International Organization for Migration (IOM) has said.”

Headline: [Singapore's Coronavirus Outbreak Sends Malaysia Scrambling to Test Migrant Workers](#)

Source: Voice of America

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: Following a spike in Covid-19 cases in Singapore, largely focused in migrant workers who were neglected in the country’s original prevention and control efforts, Malaysia is working to test migrant workers for the virus in an effort to avoid a similar spike. Like Singapore, Malaysia also hosts millions of migrant workers, many of whom are living in cramped dormitories where social distancing is not possible.

Headline: [COVID-19 pandemic unleashing 'tsunami of hate,' says UN chief](#)

Source: CBC

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: “Antonio Guterres says anti-foreigner sentiment has surged online and in the streets. Guterres called on political leaders to show solidarity with all people, and on educational institutions to focus on “digital literacy” at a time when ‘extremists are seeking to prey on captive and potentially despairing audiences.’”

Headline: [Can COVID-19 positively change perceptions on migration?](#)

Source: Open Democracy

Date: May 8, 2020

Notes: “The awareness that threats do not stop at borders and that migration is essential, might open avenues for a renewed debate on migration.”

Compiled by Christina Kay

Headline: [Impact of COVID-19 Movement Restrictions on Migrants along the Eastern Corridor](#)

Source: IOM

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: “This report provides a snapshot of the current migration trends along the Eastern Corridor, and provides an analysis of the impact that movement restrictions have had in Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia and Yemen.”

Headline: [The COVID-19 pandemic can teach us compassion for migrants and refugees](#)

Source: Amnesty International

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: Amnesty International reports on the experiences of and risks faced by migrants during the pandemic, and calls on the EU to provide humanitarian assistance to countries “less capable to confront the crisis.” Amnesty International also recommends that the EU create conditions for refugee resettlement, and humane and effective systems for migration and asylum.

Headline: [COVID-19 cases at a Texas immigration detention center soared. Now, town leaders want answers.](#)

Source: The Texas Tribune

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: Concerns are rising about the for-profit detention industry’s efforts taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in their facilities, as confirmed cases of COVID-19 among detainees increase.

Headline: [‘We’re afraid of tomorrow’: Syrian refugees face hunger, poverty amid COVID-19 downturns](#)

Source: France 24

Date: May 10, 2020

Notes: Syrian refugees account many of their struggles in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Those in Lebanon face the plight of uncertainty and financial insecurity.

Headline: [RMRP 2020 - Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela 2020 \(May 2020 Revision\)](#)

Source: Relief Web

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: The Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform (R4V) has worked with WHO-PAHO and national and local authorities to revise operations affecting Venezuelan refugees, primarily in Colombia. These revisions, building upon a report launched in November 2019, address essential protections warranted in the context of COVID-19.

Headline: [Trump is continuing deportations during the pandemic. It’s causing the coronavirus to spread.](#)

Source: Vox

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: “The US has put most of its immigration process on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic and has for weeks been turning away all asylum seekers at the southern border. It closed its consulates abroad as well as most immigration courts and has temporarily stopped issuing green cards. But authorities have continued to charter deportation flights.”

Headline: [Exclusive: U.S. government officials worry about return of dual citizens if Mexico's pandemic worsens](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: US government officials worry that dual US-Mexico citizens may flee to the US if the spread of COVID-19 in Mexico worsens, and the Mexican health systems grow overwhelmed. Officials from the US Department of Homeland Security report concern that this influx of people may overwhelm US hospitals at the US-Mexico border.

Headline: [Malaysia seizes hundreds of migrants in latest lockdown raid](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Malaysia detained 1,368 undocumented migrants in an area under lockdown on Monday, due to offenses including lack of proper identification and holding of false papers.

Headline: [COVID-19: UN counters pandemic-related hate and xenophobia](#)

Source: United Nations

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: The United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) writes about the need to ensure solidarity, globally, against instances of hate speech, stigma, discrimination, and xenophobia as a result of COVID-19. DGC sheds light on the effects of anti-migrant rhetoric, and recent efforts by the UN to prevent hate speech towards and scapegoating of migrants in the public domain.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya

Headline: [Going 'Home to Home' to Stop the Coronavirus in a Refugee Camp](#)

Source: Medium

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Corrie Hulse, an iACT team member and a professor, writes in this piece about iACT's refugee-led response to COVID-19 and highlights the work of Murtada, an iACT Program Coordinator who lives and works in a refugee camp in Chad. Hulse sheds light on the needs of refugees in camps in Chad in the during the pandemic.

Headline: [Advocating for Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in COVID-19 Response](#)

Source: Inter-agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: IAWG on Reproductive Health in Crises urges "governments, humanitarian actors, and the private sector to work together to incorporate women's and girls' access to essential and rights-fulfilling SRH services during the COVID-19 public health response." A full suite of advocacy tools is provided, included an Advocacy Statement.

Headline: [Migration issue opens rift in Italy's coalition amid COVID-19 crisis](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Italy's coalition parties debate this week over whether or not to grant permits to migrant workers. These debates have delayed the approval of a stimulus package of 55 billion euros for the country.

Headline: [The coronavirus reveals the necessity of Canada's migrant workers](#)

Source: The Conversation

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: This piece highlights the impact of temporary migration of workers into Canada over decades, particularly on the nation's farming industry. "As the current pandemic has demonstrated, migrant workers in low-wage occupations are just as vital to the Canadian economy as skilled workers, and should similarly be given the opportunity to permanently immigrate."

Headline: [Syrian refugee women face new COVID-19 battleground](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Many of the social and political strides women in Syria have made over the past several years seem to have been unraveled during the pandemic, as women now report feeling taken "back in time." Access to resources, education, and health are increasingly limited due to COVID-19, and incidents of gender-based violence may be increasing in frequency.

Headline: [Mixed Migration Centre: COVID-19 global update #2 - Impact of COVID-19 on refugees and migrants](#)

Source: Mixed Migration Center via Relief Web

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: "This is the second update on the situation for refugees and migrants on mixed migration routes around the world in light of the COVID-19 pandemic based on data collected by MMC in North Africa, West Africa and Latin America."

Headline: [India's Migrant Laborers Begin Heading Home as Coronavirus Lockdown Eases](#)

Source: Wall Street Journal

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: As India eases on COVID-19-related lockdowns, migrant workers face uncertainty about their livelihood and employment options in India, and many begin to return home.

Headline: [What is the future for travel and migration in age of COVID-19?](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: In this piece, The Guardian assesses the potential long-term impact of COVID-19 on migration and travel between nations, and the risks associated with nations' attempts to ease restrictions, and prepare for "second waves" of the virus. The piece highlights Greece, and several tourist-dependent nations.

Headline: [Neglected refugees find themselves even more neglected during COVID-19](#)

Source: African Arguments

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: In this magazine article, authors Hovil and Capici explore the experiences of and challenges faced by refugees in Uganda.

Headline: [Impact of COVID-19 Movement Restrictions on Migrants along the Eastern Corridor, Report 2 - as of 30 April 2020](#)

Source: IOM via Relief Web

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: An updated version of a report illustrating the current migration trends along the Eastern Corridor. The updated version provides an analysis of the impact that movement restrictions due to COVID-19 have had in Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Yemen.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya

Headline: [Forced Returns of Migrants Must be Suspended in Times of COVID-19](#)

Source: UNICEF

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: The United Nations Network on Migration has released a statement on harms caused by forced returns during a pandemic that are risking safety and the human rights of migrants and asylum-seekers.

Headline: [Prioritizing Vulnerable Populations and Women on the Frontlines: COVID-19 in Humanitarian Contexts](#)

Source: International Journal for Equity in Health

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: This commentary focuses on gender balance in leadership positions to ensure equitable access to personal protective equipment, information, and the protection of women on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response.

Headline: [Pandemic as Pretext: Trump Administration Exploits COVID-19, Expels Asylum Seekers and Children to Escalating Danger](#)

Source: Human Rights First

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: Human Rights First has released a report commenting on the U.S. administration's exploitation of COVID-19 through the CDC order to prevent refugees from seeking and receiving humanitarian protection in the U.S.

Headline: [Thousands of Undocumented Migrants to get Italian Work Permits](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: Italy will approve provisional changes to permits, giving thousands of foreign laborers in the agricultural and domestic working sectors the opportunity to apply for residency permits valid for six months.

Headline: [Croatian Police Accused of Humiliating Asylum Seekers by Spray-Painting Their Heads](#)

Source: Newsweek

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: "The United Nations has called on the Croatian government to investigate allegations of police abusing migrants and asylum seekers, including claims officers have started humiliating asylum seekers by spray-painting crosses on their heads."

Headline: [Reprogramming for COVID-19 Without Retreating on Human Rights](#)

Source: Program on Forced Migration and Health

Date: May 11, 2020

Notes: Columbia University's Program on Forced Migration and Health's bi-monthly features its first contribution by Dr. Joanne Csete, highlighting the impact COVID-19 has on vulnerable populations and how human rights based responses can be adapted from HIV and TB programs.

Headline: [COVID-19 Confirmed in Crowded UN-Run Camp in South Sudan](#)

Source: AP News

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: COVID-19 has been confirmed in two people living in the Juba camp in South Sudan. There are now 174 confirmed cases in South Sudan.

Headline: [COVID-19 Control Measures, Gap in SaR Capacity Increases Concern About ‘Invisible Shipwrecks’](#)

Source: IOM

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Frank Laczko, Director of the IOM’s Global Migration Data and Analysis Centre comments on the response to COVID-19 has collecting accurate data on search and rescue operations and the number of vessels on the Central Mediterranean route, leading to ‘invisible shipwrecks.’

Headline: [Trump is Continuing Deportations During the Pandemic. It’s Causing the Coronavirus to Spread.](#)

Source: Vox

Date: May 12, 2020

Notes: Since March 15th, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has sent more than 50 deportation flights to Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. Over 100 of those deported later tested positive for COVID-19.

Compiled by Rocio Rodriguez Casquete

Headline: [First coronavirus case found in Bangladesh Rohingya refugee camps](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: On Thursday, the government of Bangladesh and the UN reported the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Cox's Bazar camps. "Rapid investigation teams" have been deployed to conduct contact tracing. The cases detected yesterday come after a near complete lockdown of the camp following the detection of cases in Cox's Bazar district in early April.

Headline: ['Like a ship about to sink': Refugees in Jordan voice pandemic despair](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: Tenuous employment and limited savings has meant that the COVID-19 lockdown in Jordan has hit refugees in the country particularly hard. UNHCR reported this week that more than 90% of refugees have less than 50 Jordanian dinar and over a third of workers have lost their jobs completely. As the country looks to reopen, Jordanians are being prioritized for employment and income assistance.

Headline: [Trump Administration Plans to Extend Virus Border Restrictions Indefinitely](#)

Source: The New York Times

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: A new order under review by several government agencies will extend the previous CDC restrictions – which were both in place for 30 days prior to their extension – indefinitely. As currently drafted, the new restrictions would be in place until the director of the CDC deems they are no longer necessary.

Headline: [Citing coronavirus, Trump ramps up expulsions of migrant youth](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 13, 2020

Notes: The Trump Administration has increased the immediate expulsion of minors in violation of the Flores Agreement, with 600 minors expelled in April alone. Two recently expelled teens have reported to AP that they were told they would not be allowed to request asylum.

Headline: [In the news: Italy to grant undocumented migrants work permits](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: As part a stimulus package approved on Wednesday, the Italian coalition government has passed a policy that would issue residency permits for undocumented migrants working in agriculture and as domestic helpers for a period of six months.

Headline: [Coronavirus cases among refugees on Lesbos spark fresh calls for evacuation](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: Two newly arriving migrants to Lesbos tested positive for COVID-19, renewing calls for evacuation of the overcrowded camps on the island. Government officials have said that they are testing the other 68 migrants in the facility where the cases were identified on Lesbos. Some groups have expressed concerns that restrictions on movement are being disproportionately applied to migrants, with the authorities announcing last week that quarantine measures for migrants are extended until May 21.

Headline: [Libya: Missile strikes on Tripoli hospital and residential areas injures at least 14](#)

Source: Middle East Eye

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: Ongoing violence, including a missile strike targeting a hospital in Tripoli on Thursday, has jeopardized efforts to respond to COVID-19 in Libya. At least 14 people were injured in the attack, which is the most recent of 17 attacks this year on field hospitals, ambulances, healthcare workers, and medical supplies, IRC reports.

Headline: [Mental Health Needs of Migrants and Displaced Persons Must Be Part of the COVID-19 Response](#)

Source: IOM

Date: May 15, 2020

Notes: Following the launch of a policy brief on the mental health consequences of the pandemic on Thursday by the UN Secretary-General, the IOM has called on national governments to ensure that the mental health needs of migrants and displaced persons are included in the response. The existing stressors that migrants, in particular, face are likely to be exacerbated during the pandemic.

Headline: [Europe's Far-Right has a Cure for COVID-19: Nationalism](#)

Source: BIRN

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: Far-right movements in Europe are using the COVID-19 response as part of their nationalist agenda. Among other claims, these movements have argued that some countries' anti-migrant policies have allowed them to better combat the pandemic.

Compiled by Sarah Guyer

Daily COVID-19 and Migration Digest
Monday, May 18, 2020

Headline: [Health experts slam Trump administration's use of public health law to close border](#)

Source: CNN

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: “On Monday, more than two dozen health experts at leading public health schools, medical schools and hospitals raised concerns about the basis of those restrictions, saying ‘the nation’s public health laws should not be used as a pretext for overriding humanitarian laws and treaties that provide life-saving protections to refugees seeking asylum and unaccompanied children.’”

Headline: [Coronavirus crisis 'increases suffering of most vulnerable refugees'](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 17, 2020

Notes: “Research from the University of Birmingham has revealed that many undocumented migrants were anxious about seeking medical help – fearful of being reported to immigration authorities and being deported – and were therefore suffering in silence. The report, Understanding the Impact of Covid-19 on Forced Migrant Survivors of Sexual and Gender-based Violence took witness testimonies from more than 90 survivors and organisations in five countries, including the UK.”

Headline: [Mexico faces triple burden: soaring COVID-19 cases and deaths, loss of jobs and rising femicides, warns IRC](#)

Source: IRC

Date: May 15, 2020

Notes: This press releases highlights the dangers facing asylum seekers and migrants in Mexico during the COVID-19 pandemic, including increased violence and loss of livelihoods. One response by IRC has been to set up a “Filter Hotel” where migrants can be housed for 14 days of quarantine before entering larger, more crowded shelters in an effort to increase their safety and decrease transmission of the virus.

Headline: [Tens of thousands of Singapore's migrant workers are infected. The rest are stuck in their dorms as the country opens up](#)

Source: CNN

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: The vast majority of Singapore’s more than 26,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have occurred in the country’s migrant worker population due to a failure to implement prevention mechanisms in migrant worker dorms early in the epidemic. Now, as restrictions on movement are lifting in the rest of the country, migrant workers are still facing additional weeks of lockdown in their dormitories.

Headline: [Many Asylum Seekers in Mexico Can't Get U.S. Court Hearings Until 2021. A Coronavirus Outbreak Could 'Devastate' Them](#)

Source: TIME

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the delays on asylum seeker hearings caused by the Trump administration’s Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), with some asylum seekers having their hearing dates postponed as far as May 2021. With reports that COVID-19 cases in Mexico have been underreported and few resources available for testing, treatment, or prevention measures, advocates worry about a potential outbreak of COVID-19 in communities of asylum seekers waiting in Mexico.

Headline: [Turkey Ending Migrant Border Checks, Greece Reopening Asylum Review](#)

Source: The National Herald

Date: May 17, 2020

Notes: Greece has reported that as of May 18, they will start reviewing asylum applications from refugees and migrants that had been suspended during the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. This piece from Greek news conjectures that Turkey will now loosen restrictions on movements of migrants out of its territory towards Greece.

Headline: [India's Stay-at-Home Order Created a Migration Crisis](#)

Source: Slate

Date: May 15, 2020

Notes: The author posits that the current migration crisis caused by COVID-19 containment measures in India is the worst that the country has experienced since the 1947 Partition, which displaced 15 million people. Months after the initial shutdown that stranded them, migrant workers in India are still struggling to make their way home, amid weak efforts by the government to aid them.

Headline: [Two more asylum seekers on Lesbos diagnosed with coronavirus](#)

Source: AlJazeera

Date: May 15, 2020

Notes: A total of four newly arrived asylum seekers on Lesbos have now tested positive for COVID-19. New arrivals have been quarantined away from the island's larger, overcrowded camps and thus far no cases have been confirmed in the main camps, but advocates are concerned.

Headline: [Indonesia, Australia explore solution to Rohingya refugee crisis under Bali Process](#)

Source: Jakarta Post

Date: May 17, 2020

Notes: "Amid pressure from humanitarian organizations, Indonesia and Australia have moved to follow-up talks under the Bali Process framework to prepare for the possibility of another refugee crisis in the Andaman Sea, where hundreds of asylum seekers died in 2015." Amnesty International estimates that there are about 1,000 Rohingya refugees currently stranded at sea.

Compiled by Christina Kay

Daily COVID-19 and Migration Digest
Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Headline: [Cyclone Amphan adds disaster threat on top of pandemic](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: “A powerful cyclone is veering toward parts of coastal India and Bangladesh, testing evacuation and response plans in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic.” The Rohingya refugee camps are at risk of serious impacts from the cyclone, with the camps being in the zone of uncertainty for the cyclone’s path, and flooding likely even if the cyclone does not hit the camps directly.

Headline: [Haiti, spared a major coronavirus outbreak so far, now a ‘tinderbox’ set to ‘explode’](#)

Source: Washington Post

Date: May 15, 2020

Notes: Haiti is bracing as cases of COVID-19 start to climb in the country, following the return of migrant workers from the Dominican Republic, the Caribbean country with the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the beginning months of the pandemic. Haiti’s public health and medical systems are ill-equipped to deal with a spike in cases and experts are concerned.

Headline: [Five things we can do to protect people on the move during COVID-19](#)

Source: MSF

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: MSF has published a list of five things that can be done to protect people on the move during COVID-19, including making sure that human rights are respected, evacuating displaced people at risk whenever possible, and ensuring that the virus is not used as an excuse to enforce deadly migration control policies.

Headline: [Coronavirus outbreak hits refugee home in Germany](#)

Source: Deutsche Welle

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: “At least 70 people at a refugee home near Bonn have tested positive for COVID-19. News of the outbreak prompted calls for better protection for asylum-seekers and more testing at the often crowded facilities.”

Headline: [COVID-19 highlights the plight of Malaysia’s refugees](#)

Source: East Asia Forum

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: The author highlights difficulties for refugees in Malaysia related to COVID-19, including the loss of work, a rise in xenophobia in the country, and barriers to medical care related to fear of deportation. The author also lays out recommendations for improvements in Malaysia’s refugee policy that would improve the situation in the future.

Headline: [How COVID-19 restrictions and the economic consequences are likely to impact migrant smuggling and cross-border trafficking in persons to Europe and North America](#)

Source: ReliefWeb

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: UNDOC has released a research brief finding that COVID-19 measures are likely to lead to an increase in migrant smuggling and human trafficking in longer term.

Headline: [Asylum seekers on front line of Quebec's COVID-19 battle in care homes](#)

Source: Lethbridge News

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: Advocates are calling for the granting of permanent resident status for thousands of asylum seekers who work in long-term care homes in Quebec amid the COVID-19 pandemic. "Asylum seekers don't have access to subsidized daycares or Quebec medicare cards and aren't covered by the provincial workplace health and safety board despite working some of the riskiest jobs."

Headline: [More than 70 COVID-19 cases recorded at Otero County federal facilities](#)

Source: Las Cruces Sun News

Date: May 16, 2020

Notes: "In southern New Mexico, the Otero County Prison Facility and the Otero County Processing Center together account for one of the largest outbreaks of COVID-19. The processing center holds immigrants, including asylum seekers, who are awaiting their cases to be heard in the immigration court system."

Headline: [As coronavirus spreads, refugee doctors want to join the fight](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 18, 2020

Notes: "Trained medics working as cashiers and wait staff want their qualifications recognized so they can save lives in the pandemic."

Compiled by Christina Kay

Headline: [The internal and external migrants, together, pose a refugee crisis that India is ill-prepared for](#)

Source: Quartz India

Date: May 19, 2020

Notes: Irudaya Rajan, faculty at the Centre for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram, tells in an interview of COVID-19's health and economic impact on migrant workers in India. Rajan elaborates on India's overall underestimation of the role migrants play in the Indian economy, and how many Indians are, in fact, internal migrants.

Headline: [10 Years Old, Tearful and Confused After a Sudden Deportation](#)

Source: NY Times

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: NY Times shares the story of Gerson Rodriguez, a 10-year old boy, who was deported out of the US back to Honduras without any notification to his mother, as she remained at the US-Mexico border. "Hundreds of migrant children and teenagers have been swiftly deported by American authorities amid the coronavirus pandemic without the opportunity to speak to a social worker or plea for asylum from the violence in their home countries."

Headline: [Many refugees living in Nairobi struggle to survive because of COVID-19](#)

Source: The Conversation

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: This piece highlights the experiences of nearly 81,000 refugees in Nairobi amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Financial insecurity and strict mobility restrictions greatly impact the forcibly displaced population in Nairobi at this time.

Headline: [UNHCR and humanitarian agencies strengthen health response in Kenya refugee camps](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: "UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, humanitarian agencies and the Government of Kenya are strengthening their COVID-19 response, after it was confirmed by the Government that two individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 in the Dadaab refugee camps." Health facilities have been enhanced, equipment has been provided, and hygiene awareness campaigns have been launched.

Headline: [Cyclone Amphan Makes Landfall, Bearing New Woes For India And Bangladesh](#)

Source: NPR

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: Heavy rains and gusts faster than 100 mph made landfall on the northeastern coast of India on Wednesday, with the strength of a Category 2 hurricane. The storm has affected the vulnerable fisherman communities in the area, and evacuation has been rendered complicated by COVID-19's presence.

Headline: [Community Responses to COVID-19: From the Horn of Africa to the Solomon Islands](#)

Source: World Bank

Date: May 19, 2020

Notes: The World Bank highlights community-driven development (CDD) programs in Uganda, Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia, as these nations scale up their responses to ongoing displacement crises and COVID-19.

Headline: [La crisi dei rifugiati e l'emergenza Covid-19 \[The refugee crisis and the Covid-19 emergency\]](#)

Source: Vogue Italy

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: Photojournalist Lynsey Addario, a field coordinator from MSF, and the CEO of Help Refugees explain some of the challenges faced by refugees on the border between Turkey and Greece, and their own journalistic and programmatic attempts to help report out and manage the health of the communities amid the pandemic. Author Liam Freeman urges readers to not underestimate the public's power in urging politicians to help protect refugee communities.

Headline: [Venezuelan counsellors offer fellow refugees 'psychological first aid'](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 14, 2020

Notes: "Even as David Marín Cabrera helps his fellow Venezuelans deal with the stress of life under COVID-19 lockdown through his twice-weekly online sessions, the 45-year-old psychologist and his family are grappling with some of the very same issues."

Headline: [Trump administration indefinitely extends US border restrictions, citing coronavirus](#)

Source: ABC News

Date: May 19, 2020

Notes: This week, the Trump administration announced the indefinite extension of a CDC order, allowing federal authorities at the US-Mexico border to immediately return unauthorized migrants to their home countries. The CDC order states that it will remain in effect until the "danger of further introduction of COVID-19 into the United States" is determined by CDC Director Robert Redfield.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya

Headline: [Coronavirus: Migrant Groups Call For Lifting Of Refusal Of Entry To Migrants Arriving By Sea](#)

Source: Cyprus Mail

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: Migrant rights groups have criticized the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot side for denying entry to 175 refugees in March, in a joint statement. They and other international groups, have called on the governments to “terminate its policy of refusing entry to migrants arriving by sea, introduced as a measure to slow the spread of coronavirus.”

Headline: [Indigenous Refugees Battle Coronavirus in Latin America](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: Indigenous communities from the Venezuela area are at risk of exposure while displaced in Brazil and Colombia. “UNHCR is concerned that for some indigenous Venezuelans, documentation issues, most notably their irregular status, and living conditions are placing them at heightened risk.”

Headline: [In Pictures: NHS Workers Fighting to Keep a COVID-19 Ward Safe](#)

Source: Politico

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: A photo essay and interview with Syrian filmmaker Hassan Akkad, who is currently volunteering as a hospital cleaner. His portraits of the healthcare workers around him highlight their personal experiences in healthcare and as immigrants or first-generation Brits.

Headline: [Coronavirus: Refugees Trapped in Balkans as Europe’s Borders Closed](#)

Source: Middle East Eye

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: Movement through the Western Balkans by asylum seekers have stopped, as caused by restrictive measures to combat the COVID-19 threat. UNHCR and the IOM have been working with local partners to combat stringent policies, as well as organizing food deliveries and supervised trips to retrieve money from Western Union.

Headline: [Qatar is Protecting Migrant Workers During the Coronavirus Epidemic](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 19, 2020

Notes: In this letter response by Thamer Hamad Al Thani, deputy director of the government communications office of the State of Qatar, Hamad Al Thani refutes an article previously released by The Guardian of food access challenges and loss of livelihood by low-wage migrant workers in Qatar.

Headline: [Greek Police Forcing Asylum Seekers into Turkey: Report](#)

Source: Andalou Agency

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: A report published by the Wall Street Journal says “at least 250 asylum seekers have been forcibly expelled from Greece since late March” by Greek police using the coronavirus pandemic as a cover for extrajudicial deportations.

Headline: [Dozens of Refugees Flown from Australia and PNG to U.S. Despite Coronavirus Travel Bans](#)

Source: SBS News

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: More than thirty-five refugees living in the Papua New Guinea and Australia immigration detention centers are being relocated to the U.S. for resettlement.

Headline: [WHO and UNHCR Join Forces To Improve Health Services For Refugees, Displaced And Stateless People](#)

Source: World Health Organization

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: The WHO and UNHCR signed a new agreement today to “strengthen and advance public health services for the millions of forcibly displaced people around the world.” This agreement updates an existing 1997 agreement that strengthened their relationship and included UNHCR to the COVID-19 Solidary Response Fund, gaining \$10M to support their work.

Compiled by Rocio Rodriguez Casquete

Headline: [Yemen: Displaced at Heightened Covid-19 Risk](#)

Source: Human Rights Watch

Date: May 22, 2020

Notes: Fighting in the Marib governorate between Houthi forces and the Saudi-led coalition forces has neared overcrowded camps for IDPs, jeopardizing their access to humanitarian aid at a critical time. Funding for the humanitarian response has been hampered, in part due to donor governments' concerns about Houthi obstruction.

See related articles:

[UN pulls half of its foreign aid staff out of Yemeni capital as COVID-19 spreads](#), The New Humanitarian
[Yemen: In Aden's only COVID-19 treatment centre we are seeing catastrophe unfold](#), MSF

Headline: [Briefing: In search of a more humane EU migration and asylum policy](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: The EU's New Pact on Migration and Asylum, originally set to be unveiled in February, has faced continued setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the interim, countries have adopted increasingly restrictive immigration measures to respond to COVID, which the head of the Mixed Migration Centre cites as emblematic of a "normalisation of the extreme."

Headline: [Coronavirus triggers fall in UK asylum and visa applications](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: The UK Home Office has released data on asylum and visa applications showing a significant drop in the number of applications during the first part of the year. While applications for asylum fell during this time, there remain nearly 52,000 people waiting for a decision about their asylum case, up 33% from the previous year. Many of these individuals have been waiting for more than six months.

Headline: [India's treatment of Muslims and migrants puts lives at risk during COVID-19](#)

Source: The Conversation

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: Conditions fostered by the ultra-nationalist Modi government could expose many groups to increased threat from the COVID-19 crisis. The author argues that the government has bestowed upon itself necropolitical power – or "the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" – and outlines the particular vulnerability of a number of groups, including migrants.

Headline: [COVID-19 border closure cuts off Idlib cancer patients from treatment](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 20, 2020

Notes: Syrians who had relied on entrance to Turkey for life-saving medical treatment have been unable to cross to access treatment for two months due a COVID-related border closure, highlighting the risk of substantial indirect health impacts of the pandemic response.

Headline: [The Disproportionate Effect of COVID-19 on Migrant Workers in ASEAN](#)

Source: The Diplomat

Date: May 22, 2020

Notes: Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam have adopted three distinct approaches when addressing the risk of COVID-19 among migrant workers. The article compares the three different approaches and the accompanying three different outcomes.

Headline: [‘The saddest Eid’ – coronavirus cuts lifeline for Indonesian migrant families](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: Many migrants from Indonesia have struggled to send home money for Eid celebrations this year due to COVID-related wage losses. Eid is characterized generally by a spike in remittances as migrant workers send home money for the celebration.

Headline: [The Coronavirus Pandemic Revealed How Domestic and Migrant Workers are ‘Invisible’ in the U.S. Economy](#)

Source: Time

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: Ai-Jen Poo, Executive Director of The National Domestic Workers Alliance, and Mónica Ramírez, Founder of Justice for Migrant Women, discuss the ways in which many workers have “found themselves on the frontlines during the COVID-19 crisis without adequate protections.” Many of these workers have been left out of economic relief legislation.

Headline: [Guatemalan president criticizes US over lack of COVID-19 assistance](#)

Source: Atlantic Council

Date: May 21, 2020

Notes: The newly elected president of Guatemala, Alejandro Giammattei, spoke yesterday with the Atlantic Council, discussing the country’s approach to responding to COVID-19 and noting, “Guatemala is an ally to the United States, but I don’t believe the US is an ally to Guatemala, because they don’t treat us like one.” President Giammattei has criticized US deportations of migrants to Guatemala, which has increased the burden of COVID-19 in the country.

Compiled by Sarah Guyer

Headline: [Fear And Uncertainty For Refugees In Malaysia As Xenophobia Escalates](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: Authorities in Malaysia have scaled up immigration arrests in neighborhoods with COVID-19 clusters and large migrant and refugee populations. Malaysia is reporting they are planning to deport and blacklist undocumented people, and the defense minister has described the arrests as “a continuous exercise to weed out undocumented foreigners’ that would continue even after the MCO is fully lifted.”

Headline: [Protesters Call On Trudeau To Grant Asylum Seekers On COVID-19 Front Line Permanent Residency](#)

Source: CBC

Date: May 23, 2020

Notes: “A group of advocates for asylum seekers held a demonstration outside Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Montreal riding office Saturday, calling for his government to grant permanent residency to those who are already in the country and working on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic in Quebec.”

Headline: [France to Welcome 750 Asylum Seekers from Greece](#)

Source: Greek City Times

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: Relocations from Greece to France scheduled earlier in the year are resuming. 750 asylum seekers will be relocated to France, with the first group scheduled to leave Greece in July.

Headline: [Italy’s Coronavirus Amnesty: Migrant Rights or Economic Self-Interest?](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: The Italian government passed a law May 13th to grant 6-month legal residency permits to 200,000 undocumented workers. Critics argue it does little to address the exploitation of migrant labor.

Headline: [Will COVID-19 Change How We Think About Migration And Migrant Workers?](#)

Source: World Economic Forum

Date: May 22, 2020

Notes: “Migrant key workers continue to perform crucial tasks on the front lines of the global pandemic response. But the shutting down of economies, closure of borders and fear of the invisible enemy is leading to the hardening of migration policies around the world – and the rise of a new “health securitization” migration rhetoric.”

Headline: [Less Gratitude, Please. How COVID-19 Reveals the Need for Immigration Reform](#)

Source: Future Development

Date: May 22, 2020

Notes: Marta Foresti, Director of Overseas Development Institute Europe, reflects on the what is needed to sustain COVID-related reforms beyond the outbreak. “First, the “problem” to fix is not migration. Rather, the problem is skills, jobs, and lack of legal pathways (aka visas). Specifically, the problem is the obstacles that immigration rules pose to filling skills and labor gaps and to people being able to fulfill their aspirations, using the full range of skills and experiences they have.

Headline: [Urban Refugees Struggling To Survive As Economic Impact Of COVID-19 Worsens In East, Horn And Great Lakes Of Africa](#)

Source: UNHCR

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: At a press conference today, UNHCR spokesperson Charlie Yaxley reported the UNHCR is working closely with government and partners to find solutions for urban refugees, keen on mitigating vulnerability to exploitation, debt, and risky decisions.

Headline: [Second Man with COVID-19 Dies in U.S. Immigration Custody](#)

Source: Al Jazeera

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: Santiago Baten-Oxlag, a Guatemalan migrant in U.S. detention in Georgia, has died from COVID-19. He is the second known migrant to die of COVID-19 while in immigration custody.

Compiled by Rocio Rodriguez Casquete

Daily COVID-19 and Migration Digest
Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Headline: [Donors raise more than \\$3 billion for Venezuelan refugees amid COVID-19](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: Over 60 countries have pledged funds to provide emergency aid for Venezuelan refugees in neighboring countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, in an attempt to stem reverse migration that is now occurring as Venezuelans try to re-enter the country after shutdowns in hosting countries have caused widespread job loss.

Headline: [Greece reportedly using floating tents to deport asylum seekers](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: “Greece is illegally deporting asylum seekers from the Aegean islands amid the COVID-19 pandemic by putting them in orange, tented rescue rafts and setting them adrift at sea, according to a report by Just Security, an online legal forum connected to New York University’s law school.”

Headline: [Lockdown gives asylum seekers reprieve and hope for change in policy](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: In the UK, after a 2-month pause on deportation and release of many immigration detainees, as well as automatic extensions on work visas for NHS employees, immigration advocates are hoping for changes in policy going forward.

Headline: [‘We were so ready’: LGBT refugees in Kenya live in fear as global resettlement is put on hold](#)

Source: Washington Post

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: “For some refugees who were on the verge of travel prior to the pause of resettlement due to COVID-19, it’s a relatively minor blip after years of trauma — just a few more months appended to years of waiting. For others, such as gay and transgender Ugandan refugees in Kenya, the delay comes with immediate risks.”

Headline: [New swarms of locusts threaten to increase hunger in East Africa reeling from floods and coronavirus – Oxfam](#)

Source: ReliefWeb

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: “Oxfam warned today that millions of people in East and Central Africa, already suffering due to flooding and the impact of coronavirus, are at risk of increased hunger and poverty as the region braces for the latest generation of locusts which are due to hatch in June – just when crops are to be harvested.”

Headline: [Easing of travel restrictions, movement of migrants behind surge in Covid-19 cases: Experts](#)

Source: The Tribune India

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: Public health experts in India are concerned about continued growth in COVID-19 cases in the country amid the easing of travel restrictions and the return of migrant workers to their home communities.

Headline: [Mobility in immobility: Latin American migrants trapped amid COVID-19](#)

Source: Open Democracy

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: “Latin America is now home to about 12 million migrants and refugees, to a large extent as a result of the progressively stringent migration restrictions imposed in the global north and the increasing externalization of borders. States urgently need to rethink their individual responses to COVID-19 and coordinate a collective approach to include and protect all people living in their territories.”

Headline: [The future of community sponsorship of refugees: Meeting COVID-19's challenges](#)

Source: UNSW Sydney

Date: May 25, 2020

Notes: This opinion piece, authored by senior staff at the Refugee Hub, explores the challenges to refugee resettlement by COVID-19, particularly with regards to the community sponsorship model, and outlines several recommendations for how to move forward, innovate and advocate for the best resettlement policies now in preparation for their reinstatement post-COVID-19.

Compiled by Christina Kay

Headline: [Coronavirus Triggers India's Largest Migration in 70 Years, Risking a New Wave in Villages](#)

Source: Wall Street Journal

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: "More than 10 million of India's suddenly jobless migrant workers are moving from cities back to their home villages, a historic reverse-migration that brings with it concerns about a new wave of coronavirus cases and social unrest in some of the poorest, least prepared places."

Headline: [Rohingya Refugee Camps In Bangladesh Are At High Risk Of The Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

Source: NPR

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: NPR shares an interview in which the conditions in Cox's Bazar, where Rohingya refugees live in camps, are discussed. Shah Dedar, a local aid worker, describes what makes this setting a complicated place for disease control.

Headline: [Yale survey of refugees in Bangladesh aims to help prevent COVID-19 spread](#)

Source: Yale News

Date: May 26, 2020

Notes: "Yale researchers recently surveyed 909 households in Cox's Bazar to better understand the prevalence of COVID-19 symptoms among the refugees and their host communities and how best to stop the disease's spread." Researchers are working with UNHCR to develop and implement policies that protect the communities in Cox's Bazar, including the Rohingya.

Headline: [In the Deep South, the COVID-19 pandemic creates unique challenges for immigrant communities](#)

Source: The Tennessean

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: This piece discusses needs of immigrant communities in southern states of the United States, many of whom are being disproportionately impacted by the virus by way of economic and food insecurity, uncertainty and fear, and language and communication barriers.

Headline: [Plight of Lebanon's migrant maids spurs coronavirus repatriation push](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: "Foreign governments are scrambling to organize repatriation flights for thousands of migrant domestic workers stranded in Lebanon due to the coronavirus lockdown following an outcry over their treatment and at least one suicide."

Headline: [How WHO is supporting refugees and migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Source: WHO

Date: May 28, 2020

Notes: WHO and UNHCR have signed a new agreement to strengthen and advance public health services for the millions of forcibly displaced people around the world. WHO is distributing health education materials to all migrant centres in Serbia and developing reporting systems for monitoring COVID-19 in camp and non-camp settings globally.

Headline: [Q&A: Progress for Migrant Workers in Italy](#)

Source: Open Society Foundations

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: Open Society Foundation interviews Giovanna Castagana, a program officer with the Open Society Initiative for Europe, who discusses the €55 billion stimulus package to relaunch the Italian

economy. Part of this package was intended to give undocumented migrants more opportunities to work legally in Italy.

Headline: [What Isolation Does to Undocumented Immigrants](#)

Source: The Atlantic

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: “The pandemic has thrown into sharp relief the lonely, confined lives many immigrants in the United States were already living.” This piece chronicles the story of Antonio, who left his home in Guatemala six years ago and now lives in New York City.

Headline: [Mixed Migration Centre: COVID-19 global update #3 - Impact of COVID-19 on refugees and migrants](#)

Source: Mixed Migration Centre

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: This is the third update on the situation for refugees and migrations on mixed migrant routes globally amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This update shares that majority of global respondents have some knowledge of virus. 87% of respondents maintain that they are in need of “extra help.” Loss of access to work is 66% and loss of income is 60% among refugees and migrants. Global updates are published once every two weeks.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya

Headline: [Crosses on our heads to 'cure' Covid-19: refugees report abuse by Croatian police](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: May 28, 2020

Notes: Migrants attempting to cross the border into Croatia from Bosnia-Herzegovina were allegedly robbed, beaten, and spray-painted with red crosses by Croatian police officers in early May. Migrants reported that police officers said the crosses were 'medicine for corona.' Migrants were expelled from Croatia into Bosnia-Herzegovina, where they were interviewed by the Danish Refugee Council.

Headline: [Palestinians in Lebanon say coronavirus help is too little, too late](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: May 27, 2020

Notes: Palestinian refugees in Lebanon attempting to access long-awaited one-time cash transfers from UNRWA in mid-May found money transfer offices chaotic and sometimes without enough cash on hand. Even days later, Palestinian refugees report continued difficulty accessing the cash transfers.

Headline: [Coronavirus lockdown | Don't change migrant workers bus or train fare, says Supreme Court](#)

Source: The Hindu

Date: May 28, 2020

Notes: The Indian Supreme Court announced on Thursday that railways and buses cannot request fares from stranded migrant workers attempting to get home during the lockdown. The Court also said that stranded workers should be provided shelter, food, and water by the state.

Headline: [African migrant workers are unable to send money home, cutting off a lifeline to vulnerable communities](#)

Source: CNBC

Date: May 29, 2020

Notes: The World Bank has projected that sub-Saharan Africa will see a 23% decline in remittances during 2020. In Somalia, the fall in remittances is anticipated to have a particularly dire impact as nearly half of all households rely on remittances and, in some places, families are experiencing multiple shocks including locusts, droughts, flash flooding, and violence.

Headline: [When \\$10,000 Is the Difference Between Contracting COVID-19 in Detention and Getting the Hell Out](#)

Source: Mother Jones

Date: May 29, 2020

Notes: A majority of migrants in detention in the US are eligible for release on bond; however less than half of those who are granted bond hearings are actually released on bond, which the national median is \$8000. Local aid groups, such as the New York Immigrant Freedom Fund, have been working to get as many individuals released as possible as COVID-19 threatens those in detention.

Headline: [Where Fears of Deportation Made the Pandemic Worse](#)

Source: The Atlantic

Date: May 29, 2020

Notes: In Chelsea, Massachusetts, activists such as Gladys Vega fear that the public charge rule has discouraged undocumented immigrants from seeking care when they are sick. Pivoting to basic assistance and linking people to health care, groups like Vega's have had to redirect their attention from other important efforts, such as a bill to allow undocumented residents to get a driver's license and mobilizing participation in the census.

Headline: [No temporary increase in weekly asylum payment during pandemic](#)

Source: The Irish Times

Date: May 29, 2020

Notes: A request by a group of more than forty organizations, legal professionals, and academics for additional financial support for asylum seekers was denied by the Irish Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Asylum seekers were not eligible for the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

Headline: [Opinion: How to fill the remittance gaps left by COVID-19](#)

Source: Devex

Date: May 28, 2020

Notes: Regulatory barriers continue to make sending remittances through mobile money platforms difficult. This op-ed suggests three areas that governments can prioritize to encourage mobile remittances: 1) use public-private partnerships to promote investment in infrastructure, such as network towers, 2) remove regulatory barriers and reexamine taxes to encourage growth of mobile money, and 3) explore mobile government-to-person payments.

Compiled by Sarah Guyer