

Global Refugee Migration Project Codebook
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This codebook summarizes two data files that represent our best guess estimations of the number of refugees and internally displaced persons that originated from specific countries between 1969 and 1990:

Global Refugees 1969_1990.xls

Global Internally Displaced Persons 1969_1990.xls

Proper Citation:

In citing the use of these data, please use the following citation:

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Overview of the Project:

The Global Refugee Project is a cross-national annual time-series data set that traces international forced migration by sending countries for all less developed countries between 1969 and 1990. In the "Global Refugees 1969_1990" file, we include only individuals included as "refugees" that fall within the legal definitions of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1951), the Organization for African Unity (1969) and the Cartagena Declaration (1984). We exclude individuals who have received 1st asylum or refugee/protective status in the developed countries (North America, Western Europe, Australia) and the East bloc countries (former USSR and its East European allies). Due to their displacement prior to 1969, we also exclude Palestinian refugees. By conventional estimates, this excludes between 5 and 10 % of the global refugees who have been hosted in Western Europe, North America and Australia.

The original project was funded by the National Science Foundation (Project SES-9113820; PI: Jenkins), a Presidential Fellowship to Schmeidl from the Graduate School, The Ohio State University, and the support of the Mershon Center for International Security, The Ohio State University. The basic coding for the period 1969-1990 was completed in the Fall of 1994 and posted for secondary use in 1999.

The second file "Global Internally Displaced Persons 1969_1990" provides similar best guess estimates of the number of internally displaced persons. It draws the same reports discussed below for the refugee file (i.e. U.S. Committee for Refugees and UNHCR reports).

The following publications stemming from this project drew upon these data. An asterisk (*) indicates papers that report on statistical findings using these data:

Jenkins, J. Craig and Kurt Schock. 1992. „Global Structures and Political Processes in the Study of Domestic Political Conflict." Annual Review of Sociology 18:161-85.

Schmeidl, Susanne and J. Craig Jenkins. 1994. „The World Refugee Crisis: Complex Causes and the Need for Early Warning." PIOOM Report 6:35-36.*

J. Craig Jenkins and Susanne Schmeidl. 1995. „Flight from Violence: The Origins of the World Refugee Crisis and Its Prospects." Sociological Focus 27:63-82.*

Schmeidl, Susanne and J. Craig Jenkins. 1995. „The Origins of the World Refugee Crisis." States and Societies Newsletter Spring, 1995, 12(1):3-4.

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1995. „Ethnic Dynamics and Forced Migration: A Comparison of Palestinian and Afghan Refugees." International Journal of Group Tensions 4:333-360.

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1995. From Root Cause Assessment to Preventive Diplomacy: Possibilities and Limitations of the Early Warning of Forced Migration. PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University.*

Kurt Schock. 1995. The Political Moderation Model of Violent Political Conflict. PhD Dissertation, Dept. of Sociology, The Ohio State University.

Kurt Schock. 1996. „A Political Moderation Model of Violent Conflict." Journal of Conflict Resolution 40:125-56.

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1996. "Causes of Forced Exodus: Five Principal Explanations in the Scholarly Literature and Six Findings from Empirical Research." Pp.15-43 in: Schmid, Alex P. (ed.) Whither Refugees? The Refugee Crisis: Problems and Solutions. Leiden: PIOOM (ISBN 90-71042-89-8). *

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1996. "Hard Times in Countries of Origin." Pp.43-60 in: Schmid, Alex P. (ed.) Migration and Crime, Proceedings of an Ancillary Meeting held on May 3, 1995 in Cairo, Egypt on the Occasion of the United Nations' Ninth World Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Milan, Italy: ISPAC.

Susanne Schmeidl. 1997. „Exploring the Causes of Forced Migration: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis, 1971-1990." Social Science Quarterly 78:284-308.*

Susanne Schmeidl and J. Craig Jenkins. 1998. „The Early Warning of Humanitarian Disasters: Problems in Building an Early Warning System" International Migration Review 32:471-86.

Susanne Schmeidl and J. Craig Jenkins. 1998. „Early Warning of Forced Migration."

Pp. 56-69 in John Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (eds.) Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems. NY: Rowan & Littlefield. *

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1998. "Comparative Trends in Forced Displacement: IDPs and Refugees, 1964-1996." Pp.24-33 in Hampton, Janie (ed.) Internally Displaced People: A Global Survey. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.*

Schmeidl, Susanne and Howard Adelman (eds.). 1998. Early Warning and Early Response. Columbia International Affairs Online, Columbia University Press.

Schmeidl, Susanne. 2000. "The Quest for Accuracy in the Estimation of Forced Migration." Pp.164-182 in Stephen C. Lubkemann, Larry Minear, and Thomas G. Weiss, (eds.) Humanitarian Action: Social Science Connections. Providence, RI: Watson Institute, Occasional Paper Series.*

Schmeidl, Susanne. 2001. "Conflict and Forced Migration: A Quantitative Review." In Zolberg, Aristide and Peter Benda (eds.), Global Migrants, Global Refugees: Problems and Solutions. Providence, RI: Berghahn Books. *

Data Sources for These Estimates:

Our refugee and internally displaced estimates come from two major sources: (1) the annual reports of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to their Executive Committee (EXCOM reports); and (2) the annual publication of the U. S. Committee for Refugees (USCR). Because the UNHCR is ultimately the major source for all refugee estimates, it might be argued to be the primary source of estimates. Yet due to a lack of field personnel and political constraints on reporting in particular countries, the UNHCR reports often contain gaps and significant inconsistencies that require a cross-check and supplementation from USCR reports. In the data file, we report estimates derived from both sources, which are identified separately in the data set, as well as our consensus or "best guess" estimate that we constructed after comparing both sources. The "best guess" estimates are in a separate column and indicate whether it corresponds closest to UNHCR or USCR. In order to avoid too much meddling, we refrained from mixing the two estimates further. We provide a minimum and maximum estimate and our "best guess" (typically the mean) number.

For the refugee estimates, these data are presented in terms of the receiving country (or the country of 1st asylum). In this project, our interest was identifying the sending country for the refugees, so we collected data from countries of asylum and then mapped to countries of origin. Thus, the final data set cannot not be readily compared with the original data sources. In addition, the UNHCR reports were often crude in terms of reporting a rough number (e.g. "about 5,000 Ugandans" or "5000 refugees mostly from Uganda") which led us to use minimum and maximum range estimates which were then converted in this data set to the mean of this range. To assess the significance of this and related possible sources of error, Schmeidl (1995) constructed a set of data quality codes,

which were found to be statistically significant but, when used in multiple regression, did not affect the overall statistical results in her dissertation. For the time period under consideration, we regard these estimates as the best currently available. Further data are available using similar methodology from the UNHCR and (for internally displaced persons) from the Norway Refugee Council websites.

It is important to note that we include data only for positive cases, i.e. countries that experienced refugee migration. We therefore assume that countries without estimates expelled “0” refugees or had “0” internally displaced. For statistical analysis, this would require the introduction of “0” for all missing values. [...] means that the respective source did not report any estimates for this country/year. If the best estimate shows a [...] this means that no best estimate was taken due to lacking corroboration of an estimate provided by either UNHCR or USCR.

It is also important to note that the numbers here do not present refugee or internally displaced flow or change. We report annual end-of-year refugee or internally displaced stock, i.e. annualized census-type counts of the estimated numbers of forced migrants. These are thus non-cumulative in the sense that they reflect new additions (in-flow, births) of refugees, as well as decreases due to deaths, repatriation or (re)settlement of refugee populations. While annual changes in these numbers might be rough approximations of genuine flows, they should not be treated as literal “flow” measures.

The reports used as raw input for this project were:

1. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 1969-1992 Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme: Report on UNHCR Assistance Activities and proposed Voluntary Funds Programmes and Budget. Geneva, Switzerland: Executive Committee for of the High Commissioner's Programme.

2. The U.S. Committee for Refugees:

The U.S. Committee for Refugees went through several organizational changes, which are reflected in the three different names for the same annual report. According to the staff of the USCR, there were no reports in 1974-1977 and 1979, which prevent us from checking UNHCR estimates for those years. We used the following reports:

U.S. Committee for Refugees. 1969-1974. World Refugee Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees.

_____. 1977-1978. World Refugee Survey Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees.

_____. 1980-present. World Refugee Survey. Hudson Press: New York.

Description of the Data File for “Global Refugees 1969-1990.xls”:

The data file is an Excel 6.0 file with the following variables. These are explained in greater detail below.

Name of Variable	Column
SUSICODE	A
YEAR	B
SENDING COUNTRY NAME	C
MINIMUM	D
MAXIMUM	E
REALNUM (or “best guess”)	F
MEANNUM (mean of minimum & maximum)	G
SOURCE (primary source)	H
UNREAL (UNHCR source)	I
USREAL (US Committee for Refugees source)	J

Description of the Data File for “Global Internally Displaced Persons 1969_1990.xls”:

YEAR	A
Country	B
WORLD REGION	C
MINIMUM	D
MAXIMUM	E
MEAN OR BEST GUESS	F
COMMENTS	H

Documentation of Variables:

SUSI CODE:

A 4 character abbreviation for each country and world region that generated refugees. These labels are drawn from HURIDOCS with additions.

YEAR

This is the year in four digits (e.g. 1969). There are currently 22 years in this data set (1969-1990). Generally the data reflects the number of refugees at the end of each year. When no end-year statistics were available, the mid-year information was coded.

SENDING COUNTRY

The full country name is used. Please note that countries do change their name, such as Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This data set reflects the most recent (as of 1999) country names.

MINIMUM/MAXIMUM:

The lowest and highest estimates available from our two sources.

REALNUM or MEAN/BEST GUESS

Our “consensus” or “best guess” estimate based on comparing the two sources.

MEANNUM

The mean of the number estimated from UNHCR and from USCR sources.

SOURCE:

The primary source which most corresponds to the estimate we used in “REALNUM”

UNREAL

The mean of the range of estimates possible from UNHCR sources.

USREAL

The mean for the range of estimates possible from USCR sources.

Background to the Data included in the Refugee File

Coverage

Both sources were coded identically with the focus on the sending countries. Because these sources focus on refugees that have come into contact with some official organization that counts them, these estimates are undoubtedly an underestimate. In specific, we underestimate refugees who: 1) were denied asylum but were allowed to remain in the country under special statuses (e.g., Temporary Protective Status in the United States); 2) illegal immigrants or self-settled refugees (especially in Africa), 3) internally displaced refugees; and 4) other refugees who are not detected or reported.

We focus solely on refugees originating from less developed countries. This means that we ignore refugees who have secured or sought asylum in Western Europe, North America and Australia, which we estimate to constitute approximately 5 to 10 percent of all refugees throughout the world (UNHCR 1993).

Definitions used by the Data Sources

The 1951 United Nations Convention defines a refugee as a person deserving legal protection "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [her] nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself [herself] of the protection of that county; or who, not having a nationality or being outside the country of his [her] former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (Smyser 1987, p.11; citing from UNHCR "Collection of International Instruments Concerning Refugees," 1979).

However, very early on, regional modifications of the UNHCR refugee definition broadened its scope to include a broader set of persons exposed to forced migration. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) established a separate definition in 1969 including as refugees those fleeing from external aggression, occupation or foreign domination as well as those persecuted by their government. In contrast to the UNHCR definition, refugees are accepted as a group or mass movement without having to prove individual persecution. Similarly, in 1984 the Central American countries adopted the Declaracion de Cartagena which adopted the basics of the OAU convention. Subsequently, refugees in Central America include "persons who have fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order" (UNHCR 1984, p.34).

The U.S. Committee for Refugees defines refugees as people "who require international protection and/or assistance [and] are unable or unwilling to repatriate due to fear of persecution and violence in their homelands" (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1993, p.50). Accordingly, refugee status is granted en masse and regardless of whether this

persecution stems from the sending country government or from other sources of forced migration.

References

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1995. From Root Cause Assessment to Preventive Diplomacy: Possibilities and Limitations of the Early Warning of Forced Migration. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University.

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 1969-1992. Report on UNHCR Assistance Activities and Proposed Voluntary Funds, Programmes and Budget. Geneva, Switzerland: Executive Committee for of the High Commissioner's Programme.

_____. 1984. Declaracion de Cartagena: Coloquio Sobre La Proteccion Internacional de los Refugiados en America Central, Mexico y Panama: Problemos Juridicos y Humanitarios. Cartagena, Columbia 19-22 November.

_____. 1993. The State of the World's Refugees: The Challenge of Protection. New York, New York: Penguin Group.

_____. 1993-1995. Populations of Concern to UNHCR: A Statistical Overview. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Food and Statistical Unit, Divisions of Programmes and Operational Support.

U.S. Committee for Refugees. 1969-1974. World Refugee Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees.

_____. 1977-1978. World Refugee Survey Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees.

_____. 1980-95. World Refugee Survey. Hudson Press: New York.