

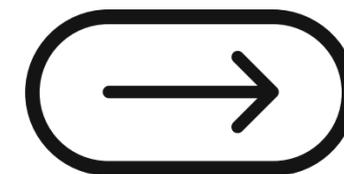


Università  
della  
Svizzera  
italiana

# **RISIS Research Seminar on Refugees Access to Higher Education in Europe**

## **Policy Goals, Data Needs and some Empirical Results**

Dr Agata A. Lambrechts





Università  
della  
Svizzera  
italiana

# Today's presentation

## Part 1

Introduction

## Part 2

Refugee background students in higher education - what do we know thus far?

## Part 3

Human rights, widening participation and social responsibility of universities

## Part 4

Indicators on refugee background students' access and participation in European HE

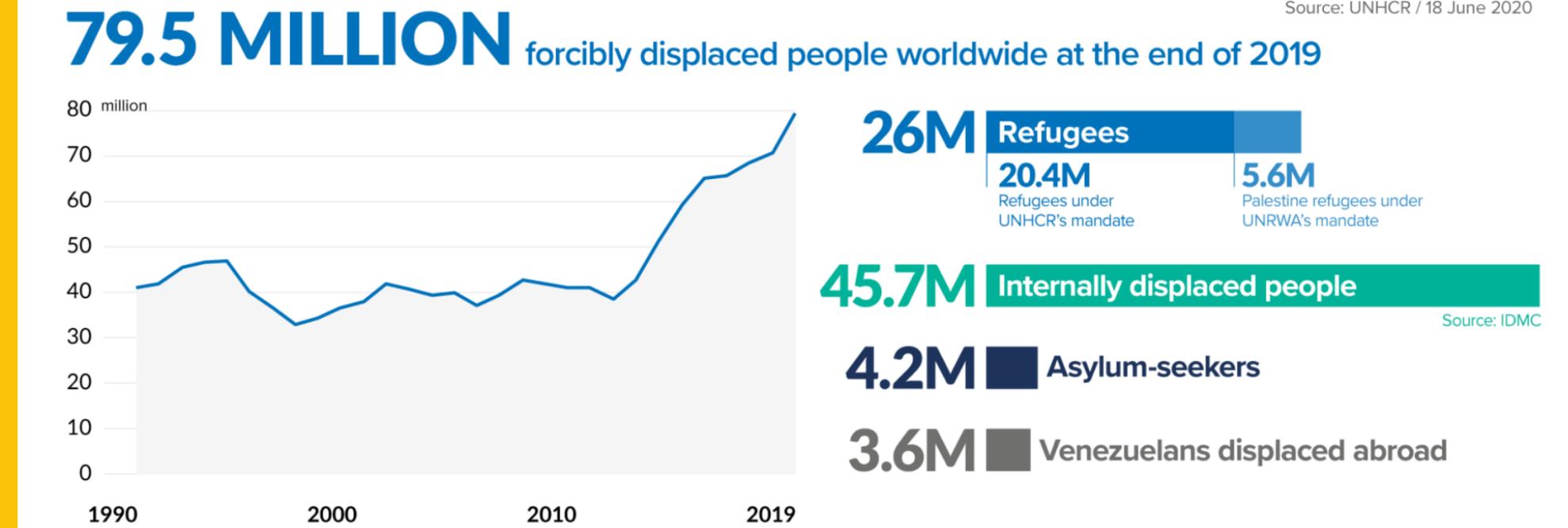
## Part 5

Framework for data collection

# Introduction

At the end of 2020, there were almost **3.13 mln** refugees and asylum-seekers hosted in the EU Member States.

In 2020, **47.7%** of first-time applicants in the EU-27 were aged **18-34** (and further 31.0% were minors ages less than 18 years).

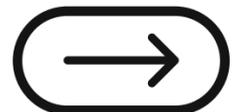


## Refugee Background Students in Higher Education

38.5% of young people access tertiary education (which includes higher education) opportunities globally, with a much higher rate of 71% enrolled in the EU countries (UNESCO, 2020).

***Only 3%  
of refugees  
worldwide have  
access to higher  
education  
opportunities.***

(UNHCR, 2019)



# Why higher education?

**Individual and societal benefits - including market and wider benefits**

**Benefits in the context of development - should refugees be able to return to their country/region of origin**

**Benefits of HE participation specific to refugees, their communities and host state societies**



# Why should universities support participation of students with refugee backgrounds?



**Internationalisation**  
(Berg, 2018)



**Widening Participation**  
(Murray, 2019)



**Human Rights and Social Responsibility**  
(Lambrechts, 2020)



**International and European level policy goals**  
(UNHCR, European Commission)

# Are people with refugee backgrounds underrepresented in European HE?



Yes, in England and Poland at least but likely also in other European states



**we need (reliable and comparable) data** to understand this better

although methodological and ethical issues must be carefully considered

# Refugee background students in European HE

Indicators



Data collection

Access

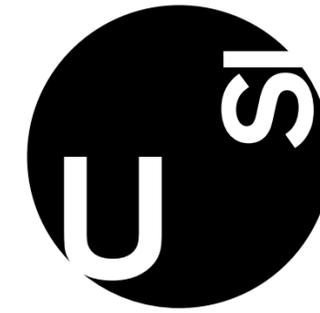
Eurydice

Participation

ETER

Success/Outcomes

U-Multirank



Università  
della  
Svizzera  
italiana

Contact

Dr Agata A. Lambrechts  
Institute for Public Communication  
agata.lambrechts@usi.ch  
Twitter @AgataLambrechts