



Refugee Digest 92

March 2025

Migrants, Refugees and Displaced Persons

The clouds of xenophobia and the ongoing dynamic of exclusion of foreign nationals, along with the scapegoating of such communities, continue to hang very low over the sad realities of mobile people in South Africa. The politics of recent years, and specifically over the past months, have witnessed a marked shift towards 'blame shifting.' This has become so predominant that it has strengthened an environment that seeks populist responses rather than evidence-based solutions. It sadly creates an environment where such distortions can be legitimised and normalised.

<https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/south-africa-populism/>

This kind of response is seen in countries across the world and has been a core issue in recent elections. This article analyses the role of misinformation about refugees in some recent polls.

<https://www.africasacountry.com/2025/02/trumps-fake-refugees>

The decision of President Trump to brutally cut aid across the globe has caused chaos and extreme vulnerability. People on the move have been seriously affected by these cuts, as many basic needs which have been funded by NGOs receiving US monies cannot now be met. In South Africa, many in the mobile community have had life-giving support knocked from under their feet. These include health-care, business start-ups, educational assistance and community cohesion groups, all of which are vital support systems for survival and success.

<https://tinyurl.com/zps3mury>

Research and health support, particularly in HIV/Aids, have been amongst the most affected categories to be cut under the USA executive orders. The impact on the refugee and migrant communities is particularly serious.

<https://tinyurl.com/zps3mury>

In South Africa, the funding cuts have become a pretext for attempts to ban foreign nationals from accessing help at hospitals and clinics. Minister Gayton McKenzie led the charge in this regard, thus strengthening his party's campaign against foreign nationals.

<https://tinyurl.com/y3te2nxb>

Voices have been raised against Mr McKenzie's expedient and xenophobic attitude, pointing out that better governance and more funding, rather than the denial of treatment to foreign nationals, are key to a better health system.

<https://tinyurl.com/3e7jzk4h>

A further point that needs to be raised is the abhorrent racism implied in President Trump's refugee policies. It was well noted that the President on his first day in office barred all refugees from entering the USA, even those who had been legally cleared. But one exception was made a few days later when he issued an order to permit Afrikaner South Africans to enter, thus becoming the one exception to his ironclad position on refugees. It clearly echoes with racism.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/02/27/racial-twist-trumps-cutoff-refugee-admissions>

This article studies President Trump's executive order with regard to South Africa. It raises his inaccurate assertions and race-baiting, and shows how the order contributes to a growing hegemony of right-wing ideas and actions. The impact of all this on migrant communities is also considerable.

<https://www.africasacountry.com/2025/02/trumps-fake-refugees>

While the next article specifically looks at the USA and the end of resettlement programmes for refugees under the Trump administration, the consequences of the end of such programmes are applicable across the globe, and therefore worth noting.

<https://tinyurl.com/bdz7ukwy>

This article, somewhat different from those above, is nonetheless important to people in the emigration/immigration cycle as it surveys the types of emotional responses in families who are divided in this way. It has a completely middle-class focus, but is nonetheless worth noting.

<https://tinyurl.com/mr47s8ut>

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