

A demographic perspective on forced migration and population displacement

Presented by:
Professor Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi

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Seminar Room 516, 5th Floor, 207 Bouverie Street



The increasing discussion of international migration is focused almost entirely on voluntary migration, and little attention is given to the reasons, consequences, and potential of forced migration. Yet, forced migration, especially refugees, makes up a significant proportion of international moves, most of it being south-south in nature. The number of forcibly displaced persons in the world surpassed 104 million (including 35.3 million refugees, 62.5 million IDPs, and 5.4 million asylum seekers) by the end of 2022 (UNHCR Global Trends 2022). This large-scale population displacement is mainly due to war and conflicts in various regions and countries. A significant number of refugees are also environment and climate-change driven and have been forced to leave their home, or their country, because of severe climate events, being forced to rebuild their lives in other places, despite the conditions to which they are subjected (IOM 2007, Hugo 2011; UNEP 2017; Adamo, 2018). Training of, and investment in, a new generation of scholars in the study of forced migration will not only lead to the generation of new knowledge, but also to better data collection, increasingly rigorous research methodologies and more evidence-based interpretations concerning forced migrations (Abbasi-Shavazi and Kraly, 2018). Professor Abbasi is an expert on Afghan refugees in Iran for whom issues of social inclusion are important. He will cover this in his talk.

Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi is Professor of Demography, University of Tehran, and Visiting Fellow Professor, School of Demography, Australian National University. He was formerly an Adjunct Professor of the University of Melbourne and an ARC Future Fellow. He has served as the Head of the Department of Demography of the University of Tehran, the Director of the Iran National Institute of Population Research, the President of Asian Population Association, and is a council member of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population. Abbasi's research focuses on three main topics: Fertility, International and Refugees Migration, and Muslim Demography. His prize-winning co-authored book (with McDonald and Hosseini-Chavoshi) on Fertility Transition in Iran and his co-edited book (with Hugo and Kraly) on Demography of Refugee and Forced Migration are the outcome of his long-term research in these areas. In recognition of his scientific contributions, Abbasi received the 2011 United Nations Population Award and the 2016 Distinguished Researcher of the Year in Iran.