



## Expanded refugee protection for some: Understanding the application patterns of the Cartagena refugee definition in Mexico

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 | 2:00PM - 3:30PM Pacific Time  
In-person Event Only | ERC Conference Room 115



### Luisa Feline Freier

Luisa Feline Freier, Associate Professor of Political Sciences and IDRC Research Chair on Migration and Forced Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean at the Universidad del Pacífico (Lima, Peru). Her research focuses on migration and refugee policies and laws in Latin America, south-south migration and the Venezuelan displacement crisis. Prof. Freier has published widely in both academic and media outlets, and has been cited on the Venezuelan displacement crisis in international media and provided advice to various international institutions and organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Inter-American

Development Bank (IDB), Amnesty International and the European Union (EU). She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), an M.A. in Latin American and Caribbean Studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Universität zu Köln.

*Since the entry into force of Mexico's new Law on Refugees, Complementary Protection and Political Asylum in 2011, it has been praised as an exceptionally progressive norm. A core aspect of the new law is the inclusion of the expanded refugee definition derived from the Cartagena Declaration. At the same time, implementation gaps tend to persist between Mexico's laws and policy practice. This research seeks to analyze in practice, how far Mexico has applied the Cartagena definition to alleageable asylum seekers. In order to fulfill this objective, we implemented a monitoring mechanism of the asylum system in Mexico through which we can identify patterns in the RSD administrative and legal reasoning such as the lack of application of the Cartagena definition to Central Americans, on the one hand, and the 99% refugee recognition rate under Cartagena of Venezuelan asylum seekers, on the other. Twenty in-depth elite interviews with authorities of different levels of government and NGO representatives shed light on the determinants of this differentiated application, which in practice, results in the regional refugee definition only benefiting a select group of people.*

**For more information please email [w2tam@ucsd.edu](mailto:w2tam@ucsd.edu)**