



## Legal and Policy Responses to Climate Refugees from Central European Perspective

Thursday, February 23, 2023 | 11:00AM - 12:30PM Pacific Time

In-person Event Only | ERC Conference Room 115



### Martin Rozumek

Martin Rozumek, since 2002 Executive Director of the Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU), Prague, Czech Republic and co-founder of the Center for Democratic Education (CDV). Martin is a lawyer and holds a doctoral degree in international public law from the Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. He worked in various positions with UNHCR in the Czech Republic and Pakistan, as well as at the Brno-based Society of Citizens Assisting Immigrants and in a private law-firm. He was a head of the Czech Government Human Rights Committee for Rights of Foreigners. His expertise includes refugee and immigration law and practices, EU law, advocacy, and international human rights law. In 2022, he received the Fulbright Scholarship to research climate migration at the Comparative Center for Immigration Studies in the UC San Diego. The Organization for Aid to Refugees was founded in 1991 as a civic association. OPU is a non-governmental and non-profit organization providing refugees and other foreigners in the Czech Republic with legal, social assistance, including legal representation and support to unaccompanied refugee children.

Since 2008, climate disasters such as floods, storms and droughts have caused more than 21 million displacements worldwide every year. Over 60 per cent of climate change related disasters are recorded in the Middle East, North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 95 per cent of all conflict displacements in 2020 occurred in countries vulnerable or highly vulnerable to climate change. The World Bank report from 2021 predicts that the direct effects of climate change, combined with secondary impacts, are estimated to cause the internal migration of 44–216 million persons by 2050, depending on the emission scenario. Most of the climate migration will be of local or regional character and many climate refugees will end up in rapidly growing large cities. Additional 2,2 billion people (from 4,46 billion in 2021) are projected to be living in urban areas by 2050, with up to 90 per cent of this increase concentrated in the regions of Asia and Africa. International migration triggered by climate changes will increase with no doubt too. The aim of today's talk is to discuss what can the developed and developing states do to prevent and response to the climate displacement and how individual climate refugees can be protected in the current international legal framework.

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