

# The Political Impact of Refugees in Africa

Cansu Demir (UCLouvain)

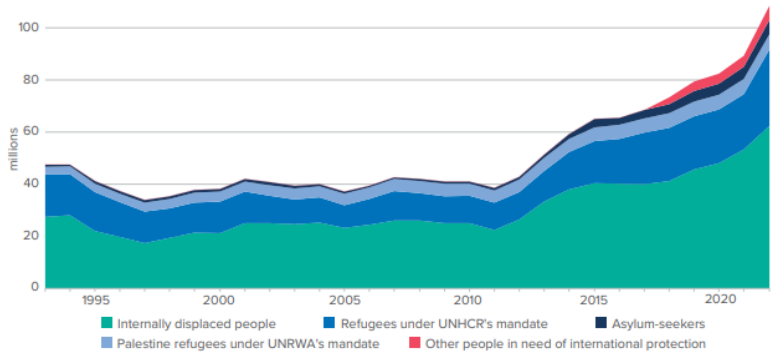
Anna Maria Mayda (Georgetown and CEPR)

**Jean-François Maystadt (UCLouvain, FNRS, Lancaster)**

*4 June 2026, 4th JDC Research Conference on Forced Displacement*

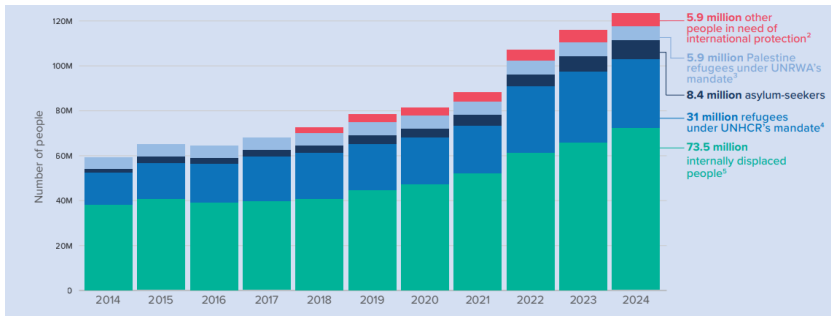
# Forced Displacement

Figure 3 | People forced to flee | 1993 – 2022



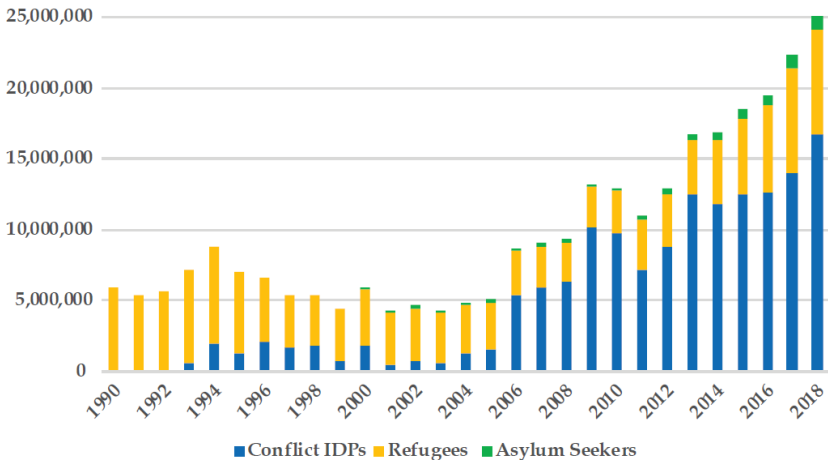
Source: UNHCR, 2023.

# Forced Displacement



Source: UNHCR, 2025.

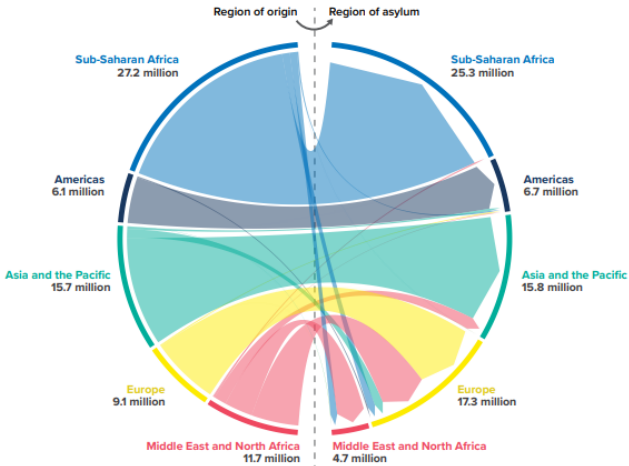
# Forced Displacement in Africa



Source: UNHCR, 2020.

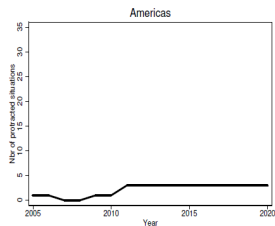
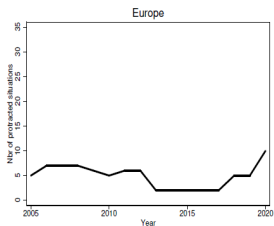
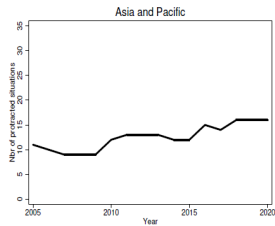
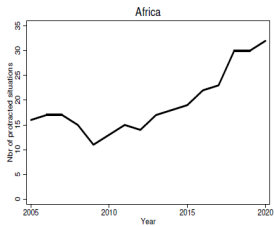
# Refugees in Africa

Figure 4 | Flows of refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection from their region of origin to their region of asylum | 1975 - 2022



Source: UNHCR, 2023.

# Protracted Refugee Situations



Source: UNHCR, 2020.

# The forgotten hosts

- Until 2010, no quantitative study on impact of refugees in LMIC ... only qualitative or anecdotal evidence
  - Chambers (1986, International Migration Review) “Hidden losers? The impact of rural refugees and refugee programs on poorer hosts”
  - Quote from the Sudanese Ambassador to Britain “Once I accompanied one of our Ministers to the Eastern Region, and we all drove out of town to look at a new wave of refugees arriving from Eritrea. Before reaching the camp, the Minister – who was not familiar with the region – saw a cluster of shelters made of mats and under their shade were a number of families with children who were very thin and almost in rags. The Minister turned to the Governor of the Region and asked him whether these were refugees, and the Governor promptly replied, 'No, Your Excellency, these are the hosts'”

# What we know

- Refugees do not constitute a burden for the local economy but generate distributive effects (Maystadt et al. 2019, Verme and Schuettler 2021) with evidence from ...
  - ... Tanzania (Alix-Garcia and Saah 2010, Maystadt and Verwimp 2014, Maystadt and Duranton 2018),
  - ... Uganda (Kreibaum 2016, d'Errico et al., 2022, Kadigo and Maystadt 2024),
  - ... Rwanda (Taylor et al. 2016, Alloush et al. 2017, Loschmann et al. 2019),
  - ... Turkey (Certigolu et al. 2017; Tumen 2016; Akgunduz et al. 2018; Altindag et al. 2018),
  - ... Jordan (Fellah et al. 2018; Malaeb and Wahba 2018),
  - ... Columbia (Calderon and Ibanez 2016; Caruso et al. 2016)
  - ... Kenya (Alix-Garcia et al. 2018)
  - ... Bangladesh (Endara 2020, Ndip et al. 2024)
- Winners and losers depend on contexts, but those with assets or human capital most likely to benefit

## What we know

- Perceived labor market competition may still explain attitudes towards refugees (Bousquet et al. 2025)
- Inclusive refugee policies (mobility, self-reliance, inclusion in national systems) beneficial to refugees and hosts (WDR 2023, Betts et al. 2017, MacPherson and Sterck 2021, Bahar et al. 2021, Ibanez et al 2024, Hoogeveen et al. 2025, Awor and Rozo 2026) ...
- ... and reduce group prejudice, when hosts are well informed (Baseler et al. 2025)

## What we do not know (much)

- Negative consequences on health (Baez 2011, Dagnelie et al. 2023, Ndip et al. 2024), environment (Alix Garcia et al., 2013; Maystadt et al. 2020; Salemi 2021, Ndip et al. 2024) and conflict (Zhou and Shaver, 2021; Coniglio and Vurchio, 2021; Bertinelli et al. 2024) have been qualified
- Little evidence on the political consequences of hosting refugees for low-income countries
- Quantitative studies on the political impact of refugees (or immigrants) mainly focus on high-income and middle-income countries.



# Political impact

## Underlying reasons

- Employment and wage concerns (even if limited impact): Labour substitution effect since immigrants are -on average- low-skilled and are willing to take low-pay jobs (Card 1990, Ottaviano and Peri 2012, Peri and Yasenov 2019, Tumen, 2018; Altındağ et al., 2020) ... Even if negative attitudes towards migrants driven by socio-tropic factors, not so much economic concerns (Card et al. 2012; Facchini et al. 2013; Valentino et al. 2019; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2024)
- Strain on public services: Congestion impact on healthcare/education facilities due to increased demand (Aygün et al., 2021; Tumen, 2021; Chevalier et al. 2024)
- Economic concerns: Fiscal burden on state's budget and public concerns about allocation (Edo et al., 2019)
- Other concerns: increased housing and commodity prices (Tumen, 2016; Cortes 2008), and personal security concerns (Bell et al., 2013)

# Political impact

## II. In low-income countries $\Rightarrow$ (ethnic) identity matters but opposition parties do not seem to capitalize on migration concerns $\Rightarrow$ No clear anti-immigration policy

- Less salient employment and/or wage related threats with low levels of formal employment (Alix-Garcia et al., 2018; Loschmann, Bilgili and Siegel, 2019) ... even if socio-economic concerns seem to matter in refugee contexts (Bousquet et al. 2025)
- Positive (average) contribution of refugees to local economic development (Alix-Garcia et al., 2018; Kreibaum, 2016; Maystadt and Verwimp, 2014; Maystadt and Duranton, 2019; Taylor et al., 2016; Maystadt and Kadigo 2024) ... better perceived locally?
- Less pronounced fiscal concerns due to less robust welfare system (Zhou and Grossman, 2023) and fiscal burden partly supported by international assistance
- Incumbents can benefit from foreign/humanitarian aids targeted for immigrants due to positive spillovers on local communities (Cruz and Schneider, 2017; Zhou and Grossman, 2023)

**Refugee settlements  $\Rightarrow$  positive spillovers to local community  $\Rightarrow$  improved wellbeing and access to public goods  $\Rightarrow$  positive attitudes towards newcomers?  $\Rightarrow$  political returns for the incumbent?**

# Refugee policy matters

- **Maximize the potential benefits (World Bank 2023)**

- Columbia: Granting labor right to refugees benefit the hosts (Bahar et al. 2021)

- **Usually associated with development programs**

- Uganda: Betts et al. 2019; Zhou et al. 2023; Kadigo and Maystadt 2023; Hoogeveen et al. 2025, Awor and Rozo 2026
- Kalobeyei versus Kakuma in Kenya (Betts et al. 2019; MacPherson and Sterck 2021)
- Ethiopia: UNHCR 2019, World Bank 2025, Refugees International 2025

Refugee settlements ⇒ positive spillovers to local community (**Magnified under inclusive refugee policies**) ⇒ positive attitudes towards newcomers? ⇒ political returns for the incumbent?

## Research Questions

- How do refugees affect political outcomes in 16 African countries between 2000 and 2016, as measured by voting support for the political incumbent and by political competition?
- What are the mechanisms through which refugees affect political outcomes?



# Contributions

- Extending existing research, mostly focusing on high-income and (to a lesser extent) upper-high-income countries or on a single country (i.e., Zhou and Grossman 2023)
- Political (and economic) benefits associated with refugees are contingent on the host country's policy framework.

## Related Research

### Zhou and Grossman (2023) (also Zhou, Grossman and Ge (2023))

- The case for Uganda: Museveni's vote share, effective number of candidates, and voter turnout.
- Greater proximity to refugee settlements  $\Rightarrow$  Museveni's vote share ( $\uparrow$ ), electoral competition ( $\downarrow$ ), null effect for voter turnout.
- Local development is the main mechanism: better access to education and health facilities, and infrastructure.
- Additional results using Afrobarometer: greater trust in president and parliament as well as improved perceptions.

### Blair et al., (2021)

- Introduce an original data set of de jure asylum and refugee policies (DWARP dataset)
- Conceptualizing refugee and asylum policy as a combination of policy provisions regulating five core dimensions (i.e., access, service, movement, participation, livelihood)
- Unlike in the global North, forced displacement policies in the global South have become more liberal over time.
- Relabel "inclusive" policies to fit with practitioners' call for sustainable "hosting policies" (World Development Report 2023) and with Zhou, Grossman and Ge (2023)

# Data

## (1) Data on Refugees: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

- Location and size information between 2000 and 2016.
- Our sample includes 202 refugee camps for 328 GADM-1 regions in 16 countries.

## (2) Data on Elections: Constituency-Level Elections Archive (CLEA)

- Data on lower-chamber elections aggregated at sub-national level (GADM-1 level).
- Timing of elections, number of eligible voters, votes cast, valid and invalid votes, voter turnout, party names, and votes for the competing parties and vote shares.
- Our sample includes 700 GADM1-year observations across 276 regions from 16 countries and 44 elections (328 regions from 20 countries and 53 elections when Angola, Cameroon, Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau are included).

Figure 1: Refugee camps in 20 CLEA countries (GADM-1 division)

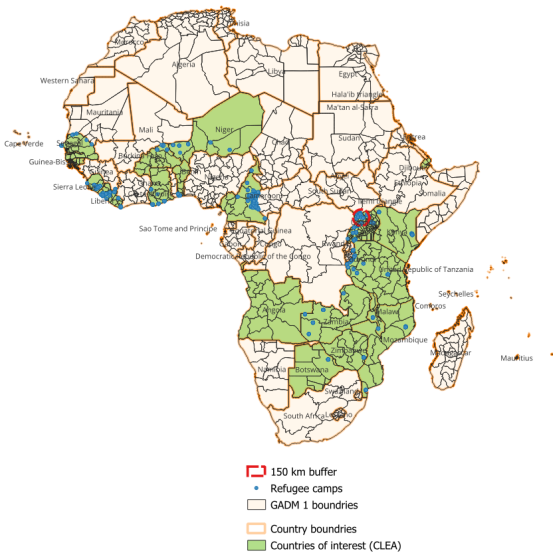


Figure 2: Refugee camps in 20 CLEA countries (GADM-1 division) detailed

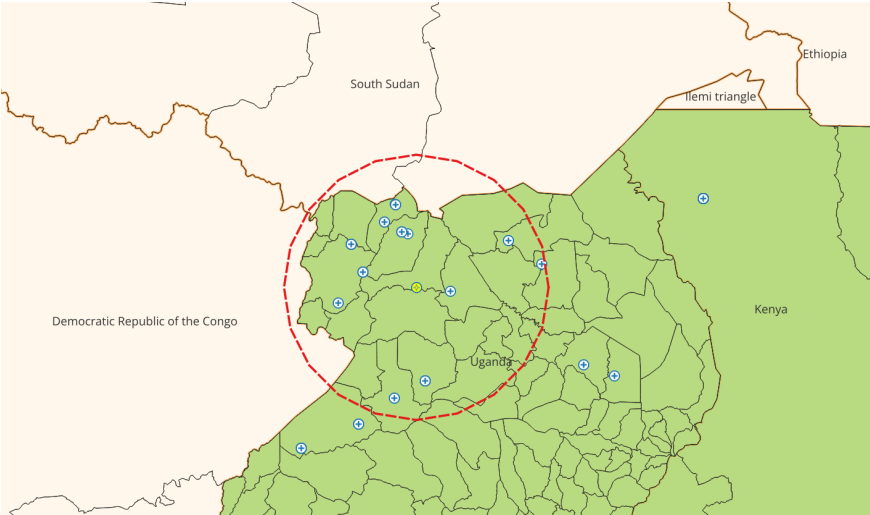


Figure 3: Refugee trends in 20 CLEA countries by election years

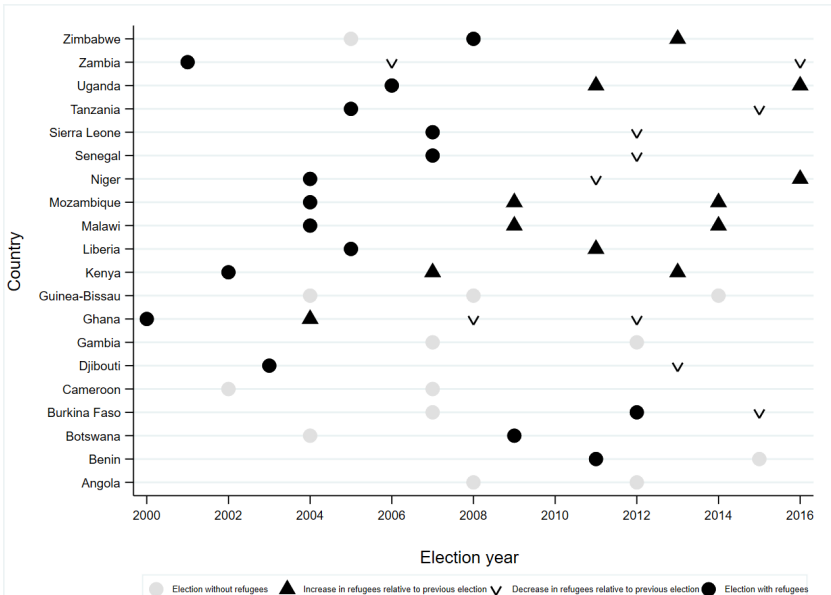
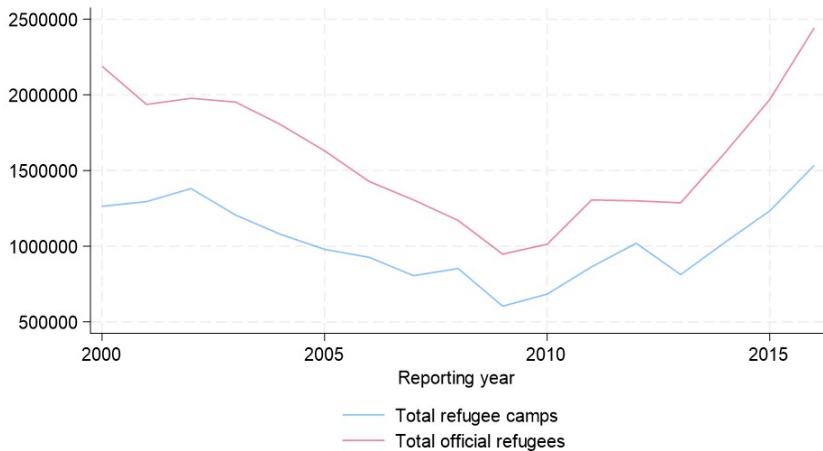


Figure 4: UNHCR Official Statistics versus UNHCR Refugee Camps



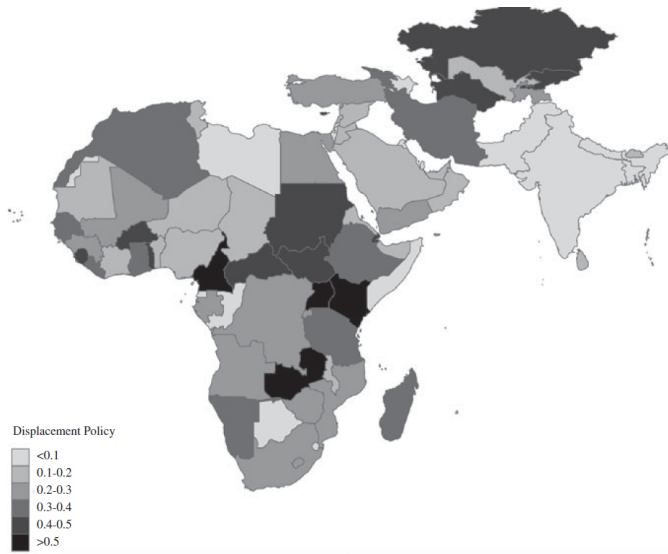
## Heterogeneity by refugee policy

### (3) Data on Refugee Policy: Developing World Refugee and Asylum Policy (DWRAP) by Blair et al. (2021)

- DWRAP Dataset: Determinants of de jure refugee policy in 92 African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian countries between 1951 and 2017.
- Refugee policy in five dimensions: (i) access: the ease of entrance and security of status, (2) services: provision of public services and welfare, (iii) livelihoods: the ability to work and own property, (iv) movement: encampment policies, and (v) participation: citizenship and political rights.
- Policy scores range from 0 (restrictive) to 1 (liberal or inclusive).

### (4) Afrobarometer Rounds 1 to 6 (2000 to 2015)

Figure 5: The original policy index by Blair et al., (2021)



Notes: Policy scores range from 0 (restrictive) to 1 (liberal). Darker shades indicate more liberal

# Identification Strategy

Our research design aims to compare the change in electoral outcomes of regions exposed to the refugees with regions that are not (or little) exposed.

$$Y_{r,c,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \left( \frac{Refugees_{r,t}}{Pop_r, 2000} \right) + \beta_2 \left( \frac{Refugees_{r,t}}{Pop_r, 2000} \times Policy_c \right) + \gamma' X'_{r,t} + \delta_t + \delta_r + t_{c,t} + \epsilon_{r,c,t} \quad (1)$$

$Y_{rct}$  is political outcome of GADM-1 region  $r$  in election taking place at year  $t$  in country  $c$

▶ See

- Incumbent party vote share (IPVS), ranging between 0 and 1, in each GADM-1 region ( $r$ ) at the time of election ( $t$ )
- Incumbent is defined as the winning party at the national level in the previous election [in 95% of the cases, the ruling party is the party of the President]
- Political competition (PC) as measured by the effective number of parties. Laakso-Taagepera measure of effective number of parties (i.e.,  $N = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$ ).

## Main variables:

- $\frac{Refugees_{r,t}}{Pop_r, 2000} \times Policy_c$ : the differential effect of refugee presence on the electoral outcomes, depending on whether the country  $c$  has implemented inclusive refugee policies.
- In addition to  $\delta_t$  and  $\delta_r$ ,  $t_{c,t}$  is key for identification

## Results - Table 1: Effect of refugees on Incumbent Party Vote Share (IPVS)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Incumbent Party Vote Share					
<b>Refugee Ratio (at t)</b>	0.139	0.0765	0.0430	-0.0405	-0.0651	-0.0603
(Clustered-GADM1)	(0.0910)	(0.110)	(0.0622)	(0.0624)	(0.0502)	(0.0500)
(Clustered-Country-year)	(0.117)	(0.108)	(0.115)	(0.0702)	(0.0481)	(0.0544)
(Clustered-Country)	(0.131)	(0.116)	(0.123)	(0.0445)	(0.0173)***	(0.0173)***
(Wild bootstrap-country)	(0.222)	(0.122)	(0.376)	(0.240)		
<b>Refugee Ratio (at t) × Baseline Policy</b>			0.216	0.263	0.318	0.289
(Clustered-GADM1)			(0.0655)***	(0.0668)***	(0.0819)***	(0.0838)***
(Clustered-Country-year)			(0.115)*	(0.0734)***	(0.0739)***	(0.0790)***
(Clustered-Country)			(0.120)*	(0.0481)***	(0.0615)***	(0.0595)***
(Wild bootstrap-country)			(0.376)	(0.240)***		
<b>Total Effect</b>			0.259	0.222	0.253	0.229
(Clustered-GADM1)			(0.0228)***	(0.0231)***	(0.0648)***	(0.0670)***
Observations	700	700	700	700	700	700
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country-Year Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time-varying controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Linear spline transformations	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes:\*\*\* denotes statistical significance at the 1 percent level ( $p < 0.01$ ), \*\* at the 5 percent level ( $p < 0.05$ ), and \* at the 10 percent level ( $p < 0.10$ ), all for two-sided hypothesis tests. Control variables at the GADM 1 level are as follows: (1) conflict incidence as measured by a dummy taking value of 1 if fatalities as a result of a conflict is greater than 0, and 0 otherwise, (2) mean temperature per land area and its square, and (3) mean precipitation per land area and its square.



## Results - Table 2: Effect of refugees on Political Competition (PC)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Political Competition					
<b>Refugee Ratio (at t)</b>	-0.0272	-0.0124	-0.0075	0.0022	0.0003	0.0017
(Clustered-GADM1)	(0.0175)	(0.0117)	(0.0065)	(0.0035)	(0.0016)	(0.00330)
(Clustered-Country-year)	(0.0209)	(0.0108)	(0.0252)	(0.0048)	(0.00486)	(0.0046)
(Clustered-country)	(0.0191)	(0.0120)	(0.0170)	(0.0026)	(0.0007)	(0.0026)
(Wild bootstrap-country)	(0.0291)	(0.0199)	(0.0348)	(0.0107)		
<b>Refugee Ratio (at t) × Baseline Policy</b>			-0.0440	-0.0330	-0.0265	-0.0445
(Clustered-GADM1)			(0.0148)***	(0.0065)***	(0.0047)***	(0.0112)***
(Clustered-Country-year)			(0.0390)	(0.0102)***	(0.0083)***	(0.0138)***
(Clustered-country)			(0.0355)	(0.0074)***	(0.0022)***	(0.0163)**
(Wild bootstrap-country)			(0.0348)	(0.0107)***		
<b>Total Effect</b>			-0.0515	-0.0308	-0.0261	-0.0427
(Clustered-GADM1)			(0.0126)***	(0.0043)***	(0.0044)***	(0.0096)***
Observations	700	700	700	700	700	700
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country-Year Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time-varying controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Linear spline transformations	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes:\*\*\* denotes statistical significance at the 1 percent level ( $p < 0.01$ ), \*\* at the 5 percent level ( $p < 0.05$ ), and \* at the 10 percent level ( $p < 0.10$ ), all for two-sided hypothesis tests. Control variables at the GADM 1 level are as follows: (1) conflict incidence as measured by a dummy taking value of 1 if fatalities as a result of a conflict is greater than 0, and 0 otherwise, (2) mean temperature per land area and its square, and (3) mean precipitation per land area and its square.



# Identification threats

- 1 Endogeneous location of refugees
- 2 Pre-existing trends
- 3 Heterogeneous treatment effect (using Jakiela (2021) and Gardner (2021))
- 4 Geographical concerns: bias towards urban and peripheral areas
- 5 Endogeneous refugee policy

## Threats to identification I - Table 3: Endogenous location choice of refugees

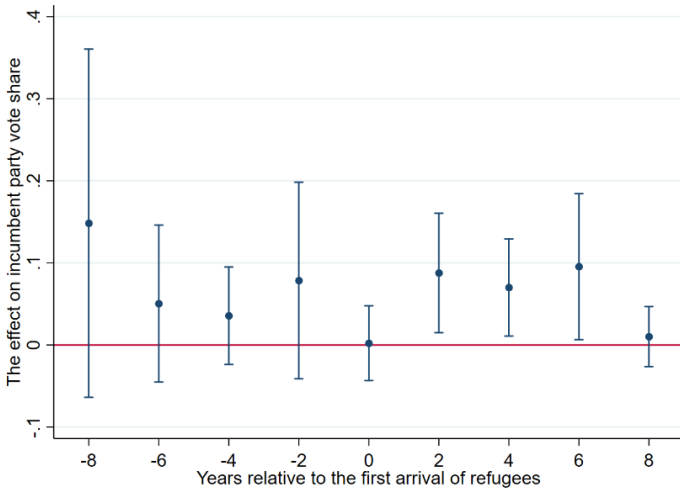
Dep. var.	Pr (Refugee Camp Opening) at t			
	Coefficient	SE	Obs	R-squared
Previous incumbent support	0.0321	(0.0407)	471	0.97
Previous incumbent support x Baseline Policy	-0.0570	(0.1059)	471	0.97
Previous political competition	-0.1726	(0.4329)	471	0.97
Previous political competition x Baseline Policy	0.1634	(0.4294)	471	0.97

Note: Authors' own calculations. We regress probability of opening a refugee camp at time  $t$  in the GADM-1 region of interest on IPVS (and PC) at time  $t-1$  (or, IPVS and PC in the previous election). To do so, we create a variable, previous IPVS and PC, and assign  $t-1$  values of IPVS and PC. The specifications include year, GADM-1, and country-year fixed effects. We control for the peripheral areas by utilizing an indicator variable taking value of 1 if a GADM-1 region has a border to another country and 0 otherwise, distance to border, distance to capital, as well as conflict and climate controls. Linear spline transformations are added. The standard errors clustered at the country-year level.

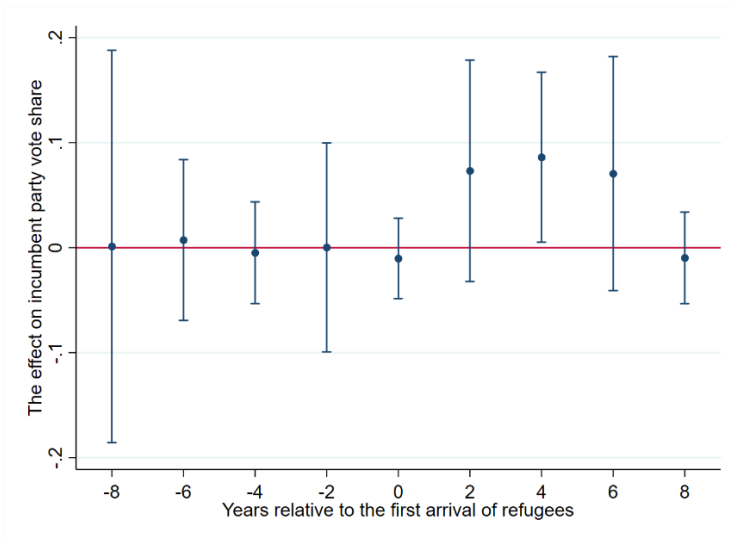
## Threats to Identification II - Testing Pre-Existing Trends

- We define the first year of observation as the initial arrival year of refugees in each GADM-1 region.
- We then calculate the difference between the initial arrival year and the election year, which provides the years relative to the first observed arrival of refugees (i.e., event time):
- Interpretation: Compared to the usual support to the incumbent in a particular region and a particular year, is the support to the incumbent higher or lower if elections take place before or after the arrival of refugees ?

## Threats to identification II - Testing pre-existing trends for all sample



## Threats to identification II - Testing pre-existing trends for inclusive sample



## Threats to identification III - Heterogeneous treatment effect

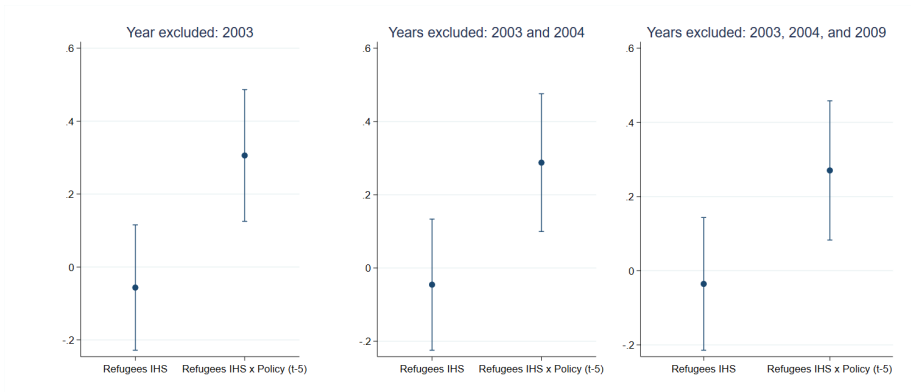
### I. Jakiela (2021)'s simple diagnostics for two-way FEs

- Weights range from -1.22 to 1.22 (the sum is 0).
- Around 23.40 percent of the treated units received negative weights.
- The highest shares of negative weights for the years 2003, 2004 and 2009 [▶ See](#)

### II. We then switch to an alternative method suitable for continuous treatment switching on and off by Gardner (2021).

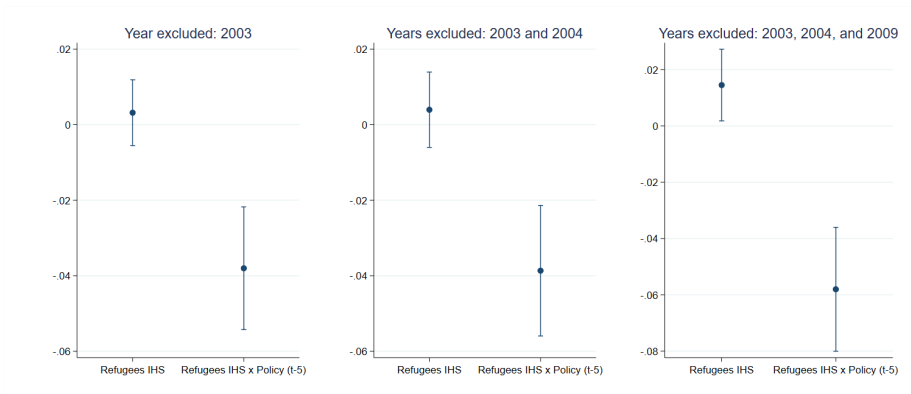
- Positive (*negative*) effect confirmed for incumbent support (*political competition*) despite less precise estimates.

## Threats to identification III - Heterogeneous treatment effect, Jakiela (2021) for incumbent support



Note: The dependent variable is incumbent party vote share (IPVS). The estimates include year, GADM-1, and country-year fixed effects as well as time varying controls.

## Threats to identification III - Heterogeneous treatment effect, Jakiela (2021) for political competition



Note: The dependent variable is political competition (PC). The estimates include year, GADM-1, and country-year fixed effects as well as time varying controls.

## Threats to identification IV: Table 4: Summary Table for heterogeneous treatment, geographical concerns

Model	Refugee Ratio	Refugee Ratio × Baseline Policy	Total Effect	Obs
<b>Panel A. Heterogeneous Treatment</b>				
Gardner (2021)	0.0812 (0.0630)	0.2030* (0.1222)	0.2843** (0.1134)	700
<b>Panel B. Robustness I: Geographic</b>				
Exclude Urban	-0.0234 (0.0968)	5.686*** (1.253)	5.662*** (1.293)	264
Exclude Non-bordering	-0.0808 (0.0572)	0.340*** (0.105)	0.259*** (0.0848)	354
Distance-to-Capital × Year	-0.0623 (0.0548)	0.284*** (0.0770)	0.222*** (0.0526)	700

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . All models include time-varying controls as well as year, region (i.e., GADM-1), and country-year fixed effects. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level. Linear spline transformations are added in each specification.

## Threats to identification V: Determinants of refugee policy

- Refugee policy (even at first election) considered as exogeneous?
- Conflict in neighboring countries, international incentives (e.g. aid), ethnic ties across borders, argued to be main determinants (Blair et al. 2022)

Model	Refugee Ratio	Refugee Ratio × Baseline Policy	Total Effect	Obs
<b>Panel C. Robustness II: Policy Determinants</b>				
Conflict × Ref Pres	-0.0955 (0.0759)	0.321*** (0.0884)	0.225*** (0.0494)	700
Aid I × Ref Pres	-0.0592 (0.0549)	0.289*** (0.0792)	0.229*** (0.0542)	700
Aid II × Ref Pres	-0.0586 (0.0557)	0.292*** (0.0806)	0.234*** (0.0591)	700
GDP × Ref Pres	-0.0509 (0.0600)	0.275*** (0.0819)	0.224*** (0.0516)	700
Ethnic Kin × Ref Pres	-0.0590 (0.0548)	0.286*** (0.0759)	0.227*** (0.0488)	700
Neighbor Civil War ≥ 1000 deaths × Ref Pres	-0.0598 (0.0546)	0.275*** (0.0872)	0.215** (0.0644)	700
Foreign aid-to-GDP × Ref Pres	-0.0601 (0.0545)	0.289*** (0.0794)	0.229*** (0.0544)	700
Democracy score × Ref Pres	-0.0603 (0.0545)	0.291*** (0.0804)	0.231*** (0.0558)	700
Negative GDP shock × Ref Pres	-0.0608 (0.0546)	0.301*** (0.0797)	0.240*** (0.0544)	700
Population × Ref Pres	-0.0603 (0.0545)	0.288*** (0.0788)	0.228*** (0.0534)	700
Civil war in policymaking state × Ref Pres	-0.0604 (0.0545)	0.394*** (0.121)	0.334*** (0.105)	700
Transnational terror attacks × Ref Pres	-0.0606 (0.0546)	0.398*** (0.104)	0.337*** (0.0852)	563
Trade-to-GDP × Ref Pres	-0.0722 (0.0529)	0.288*** (0.0626)	0.216*** (0.0278)	690

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . All models include time-varying controls as well as year, region (i.e., GADM-1), and country-year fixed effects. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level. Linear spline transformations are added in each specification.

# Analysis based on Afrobarometer

## Afrobarometer Round I-VI:

- Individual-level and geo-coded data between 2000-2016 with a total of 112,044 individuals.
- We match AB clusters (7,347 clusters) and UNHCR refugee camps (202 camps).
- Creating a buffer (i.e., 150 km) relative to 2000 population around each cluster. [▶ See](#)

## Empirical specification:

$$Y_{icjt} = \beta_1 \frac{Refugees_{jt}}{Pop_{j2000}} + \beta_2 \left( \frac{Refugees_{jt}}{Pop_{j2000}} \times Policy_c \right) + \theta H'_{icj} + \gamma X'_{cjt} + \alpha_j + \alpha_t + \alpha_{ct} + \epsilon_{icjt} \quad (2)$$

- $\frac{Refugees_{jt}}{Pop_{j2000}}$  denotes the number of refugees located within a certain distance from the cluster, divided by the estimated population in 2000 [▶ See](#)

$Y_{icjt}$  denotes outcome variables for individual  $i$ , living in cluster  $j$  of country  $c$ , at year  $t$ .

- Complementary results: Government performance indicators, institutional trust
- Channels: Public goods satisfaction, national identity and economic activity by nightlight intensity.

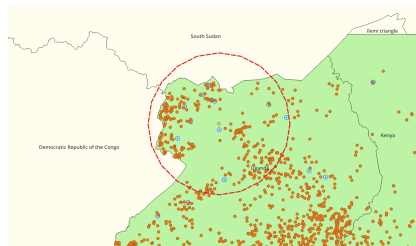
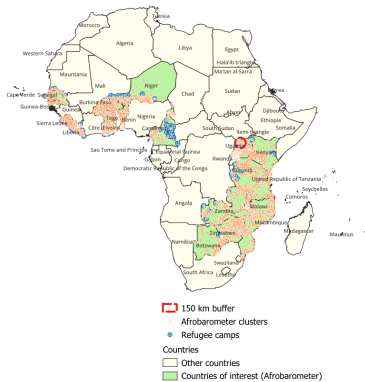


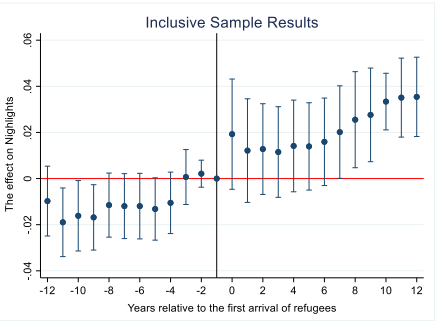
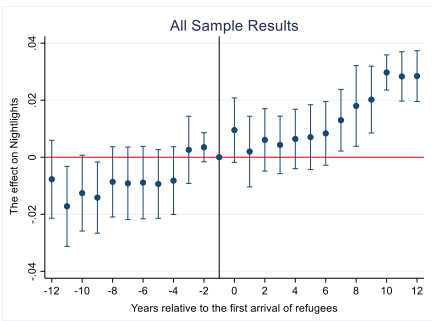


Table 5 (Continued): Afrobarometer Mechanisms (150 km buffer)

			Refugees x Baseline Policy		Total Effect		Obs N
	Coef	SE	Coef	SE	Coef	SE	
<b>Panel B: Afrobarometer Policy Mechanisms</b>							
<u>Public goods</u>							
Educational needs	-1.140***	(0.365)	1.065*	(0.589)	-0.0759	(0.460)	107,024
Improving healthcare	-0.899	(0.560)	1.260	(0.880)	0.361	(0.672)	107,325
Infrastructural maintenance	-2.445***	(0.826)	2.633***	(0.923)	0.189	(0.375)	80,837
Reducing crime	-1.691**	(0.795)	3.585***	(0.910)	1.893***	(0.430)	106,037
<u>Identity</u>							
National identity	-1.200*	(0.716)	2.610*	(1.367)	1.410	(1.169)	98,954
<b>Panel C: Economic Mechanism</b>							
<u>Economic Development</u>							
Nightlights	0.0001	(0.0004)	0.0067*	(0.0035)	0.0068*	(0.0035)	559
<b>Panel D: Political Mobilisation</b>							
<u>Voting Patterns</u>							
Voter turnout (log)	0.355*	(0.185)	-1.004	(1.769)	-0.650	(1.848)	321

Notes: \*\*\* denotes statistical significance at the 1 percent level ( $p < 0.01$ ), \*\* at the 5 percent level ( $p < 0.05$ ), and \* at the 10 percent level ( $p < 0.10$ ). All specifications (Panel A and B) include control variables, year, country-year, and cluster fixed effects. Individual-level controls: (1) age and age square, (2) sex, (3) education status, and (4) rural versus urban residence. Time-varying controls: (1) conflict incidence, (2) mean temperature per land area and its square, and (3) mean precipitation per land area and its square. Linear spline transformations are added in each specification. The robust standard errors are clustered at the country-year level.

# Zoom on nightlights





# Conclusions

- Based on election and refugee data for 16 countries, refugees increase the support to the incumbent, and strengthen institutional satisfaction and trust, ... but only under inclusive refugee policies.
- Why? Refugees under inclusive policies are associated with higher economic development and satisfaction towards local public goods.
- Refugees are not merely a fiscal burden but can positively impact local economies by providing rights to the displaced.
- Our findings further back the practitioners' call for such inclusive policies ...
- ... positive trend in inclusive policies in the Global South is a good signal
- ... lower support in the Global North may limit their ability to cope with massive displacements (interpretative caveat of our analysis)
- ... call for better understanding the institutional and organisation barriers for such policies [▶ World Development Report 2023](#)