



# Europe's Statelessness: Forgotten Past and Unsettling Future

October 8, 2024, 19:00-20:30 CET, Corvinus University of Budapest, Building C. Room 105

## Guest Lecturer Information

Lecturer	Email	Affiliation name and website
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## General Information

### Description

Statelessness intersects with the most prominent challenges of today: it is simultaneously a problem in human rights, minority rights, child protection, development, justice and democracy, forced displacement, torture and inhumane treatment, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. It disproportionately affects the marginalized and vulnerable populations. 45% of all stateless people are estimated to be children.<sup>1</sup> The problem is growing as children born into statelessness consistently outpace stateless people successfully resolving their statelessness, especially in recent years.<sup>2</sup>

In the long-term, statelessness undermines democracy and the rule of law, fragments society, violates civil liberties, creates a barrier to access justice, and puts to question the nation-state model of governance.<sup>3</sup> It entails disenfranchisement from the right to have rights, with people being denied basic rights and forsaken in a vicious cycle of vulnerability and unequal treatment. The stateless face many challenges, such as in accessing education, healthcare, freedom of movement, and the right to own property. Many are denied basic documents (birth, marriage, death certificates, travel documents, etc.), and are vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and detention.

Given the widespread ubiquity of statelessness and its gravity, why is it, then, that the topic is poorly known? Even in Europe, a continent where state actors have repeatedly caused and maintained mass statelessness over the last century to this day, the topic is buried away from the public. This guest lecture is meant to explore these issues and shed light on the causes and challenges of statelessness, shedding light on the overlooked subject.

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (2022) 'Protecting Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Children: What do we know?' <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/child-protection-data-analysis-2015-2021.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR (2023) 'Global Focus Report 2023: Statelessness' <https://reporting.unhcr.org/global-report-2023/focus-areas/statelessness>

<sup>3</sup> Mira L. Siegelberg (2020) 'Statelessness: A Modern History' *Harvard University Press*

## Expectations and Goals

The participants of this guest lectures will be introduced to statelessness, one of the most overlooked human rights issues. The guest lecture will focus on the following:

- Dispelling common misconceptions in regards to statelessness, such as its confusion with the refugee status and (mis)treatment as a marginal issue.
- Introducing key definitions and concepts to help students gain foundational insights into the epistemological and ontological questions on statelessness.
- Covering brief legal history of the concept of statelessness, along with the subject's past and ongoing debates in international law.
- Engaging students' critical thinking through the readings, presentation, and Q&A period.
- Concluding with forward thinking, covering a number of prospects to address statelessness.

## Suggested readings to learn more about statelessness

### Open access

'Manufacturing Statelessness', by Neha Jain: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-journal-of-international-law/article/manufacturing-statelessness/B9D0E41550EBF1AB04D893DAE2FCAB0B>

'The Death Ship', by B. Traven (first part):  
[https://dn720001.ca.archive.org/0/items/traven\\_b\\_death\\_ship/traven\\_b\\_death\\_ship.pdf](https://dn720001.ca.archive.org/0/items/traven_b_death_ship/traven_b_death_ship.pdf)

'Evaluation of UNHCR-led Initiatives to End Statelessness': <https://www.unhcr.org/media/evaluation-unhcr-led-initiatives-end-statelessness>

'Statelessness: Europe's Forgotten Human Rights Issue', by Aleksejs Ivashuk:  
<https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/statelessness-europes-forgotten-human-rights-issue-2/>

### Closed access

Mira L. Siegelberg (2022) 'Statelessness: A Modern History' *Harvard University Press*

## Additional Information and Resources

### Apatride Network ([apatride.eu](http://apatride.eu))

On its [website](http://apatride.eu) and therein accessible social media, Apatride Network has a number of resources to help learn about statelessness. The content is tailored to a diverse audience, from beginners to established experts, and includes stories, media interviews, and downloadable international conventions on statelessness.