# **Challenges and best practices in refugee integration: Croatia in comparative perspective**

research topic

The research titled "**Challenges and best practices in refugee integration: Croatia in comparative perspective**" examines the multifaceted process of integrating refugees into Croatian society, comparing it with practices in other countries. This study delves into the obstacles refugees face, such as navigating bureaucratic systems, overcoming language barriers, and addressing potential societal prejudices.

It also highlights effective strategies that have been implemented to facilitate integration, including community engagement initiatives, language and cultural orientation programs, and policies promoting access to education and employment. By analyzing Croatia's approach within a broader international context, the research aims to identify both unique challenges and successful practices, providing insights that can inform and enhance integration policies and programs.

research design approach

This study will use a **Small N comparative case study design** with a mixed-methods approach to analyze refugee integration policies in Croatia, Greece, and Sweden. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of how different national policies impact refugee integration, balancing qualitative and quantitative insights.

justification for the chosen design

A comparative case study is the most suitable design because:

1. It allows for analyzing how different political, economic, and social structures shape integration policies in Croatia, Greece, and Sweden.
2. Each country has a distinct migration framework, with Croatia as a transit country with emerging integration policies, Greece struggling with prolonged reception issues, and Sweden as a model for integration with long-term policies. These cases allow for meaningful cross-country comparisons on integration effectiveness.
3. Combining qualitative and quantitative data enhances the validity of findings, offering both statistical trends and deep contextual insights.

data collection methods+

* **Qualitative data**
  + Semi-structured interviews with policymakers, NGOs, and refugees.
  + Content analysis of legal frameworks, policy documents, and EU directives.
  + Media discourse analysis to examine narratives in public debates.
* **Quantitative data**
  + Statistical analysis of asylum applications, acceptance rates, and integration indicators.
  + Comparative analysis of migration trends between Croatia, Greece, and Sweden.

data analysis

* Qualitative: Thematic analysis to identify recurring challenges, narratives, and policy trends.
* Quantitative: Descriptive and comparative statistical analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of integration policies.
* Combining qualitative and quantitative findings to ensure comprehensive insights.

conclusion

This research design ensures a **systematic and comparative analysis of refugee integration policies**, providing empirical evidence to assess whether Croatia can transition from a transit country to a sustainable integration model. The findings will contribute to both academic scholarship and policy recommendations for improving refugee integration in EU border states.