

“AMORAL AND ANTISOCIAL INTENTIONS”
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On the Criminalisation of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Western
Occupation Zones and the Former Federal Republic of Germany

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The ascription of criminal behaviour to minorities and immigrants is a phenomenon that is as old as it is current. As shown by the example of the Germans displaced and forcibly relocated out of Eastern Europe after the Second World War, this criminalisation could also be applied to German-speaking persons: The millions of “refugees and displaced persons” coming into the German occupation zones were often not only considered undesirable newcomers but in fact viewed as thieves and threats to public safety. The present contribution examines how a putative or actual specific “refugee criminality” was discussed in West German sociological and criminological studies, and how the results might be integrated into a general history of the criminalisation of “others”.