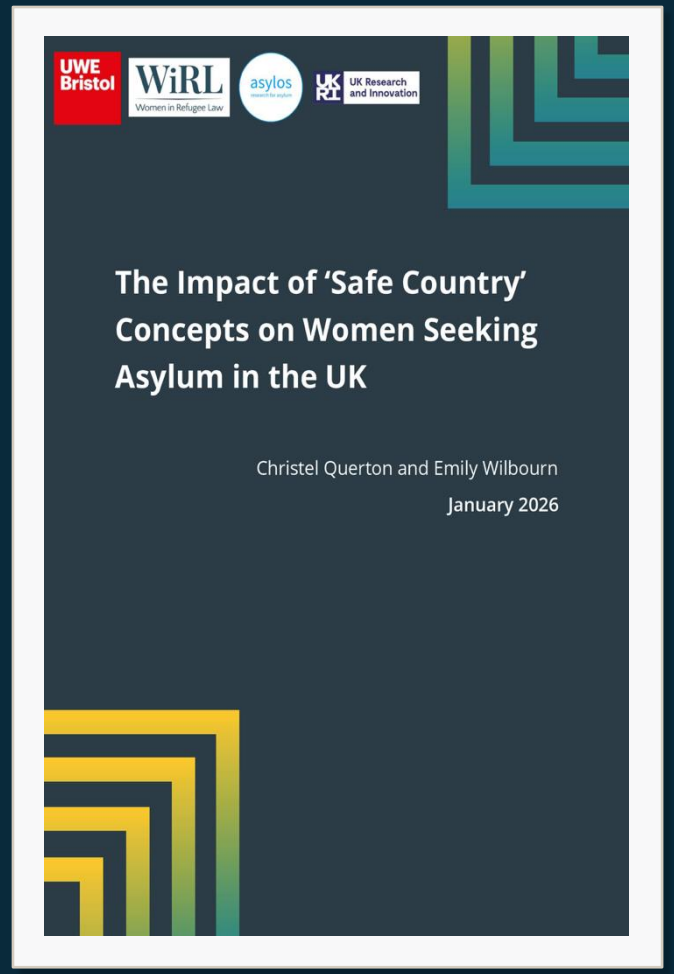
The Impact of ‘Safe Country’ Concepts on Women Seeking Asylum in the UK

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Presentation outline

- UK legal framework
- Impact on women
- Country of Origin Information
- Recommendations and conclusion



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Impact of ‘Safe Country’ Concepts in the UK

The designation changes whether, and how, an individual protection claim is examined.

SAFE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Certification	Claim may be certified as “clearly unfounded”
Inadmissibility	EU claims, and potentially a wider statutory list
Consequence	**No appeal on the merits; judicial review only**

SAFE THIRD COUNTRY

- A claim may be inadmissible where a person has a connection to a safe state.
- Removal may be to any other state treated as safe and willing to receive the person.
- The receiving state need not be one with which the person has any prior connection.

Key legal effect

A blanket “safe” designation can prevent substantive consideration of the claim.

03

How does the framework impact women seeking international protection?

A finding that a country is safe “in general” may obscure gender-specific risk and individual circumstances.

01

Hidden and under-reported harm

Domestic violence, forced marriage, trafficking and sexual violence often occur in private spaces and may be poorly documented.

02

Unsuitable procedures

Presumptions of safety, accelerated decisions and reduced appeal rights are ill-suited to gender-sensitive disclosures and individualised assessment.

03

Uneven safeguards

Some certification lists exempt women, but no equivalent exemption exists for safe-third-country inadmissibility.

Rwanda litigation

Judicial scrutiny remains essential, but parliamentary designation can constrain fact-sensitive review.

The relevance of Country of Origin Information (COI)

COI is central to designation, but information about women can be incomplete, outdated or given insufficient weight.

1	**Hidden harm**	Under-reporting and inaccessible evidence
2	**Coverage gaps**	Women and intersecting risks omitted
3	**Currency**	Without regular reviews, COI can rapidly become outdated
4	**Selectivity**	Unclear source selection and evidential weight
5	**Expertise**	Lived experience discounted or inaccessible

05

Recommendations and conclusion

Safeguards for the present system, not an endorsement of safe-country concepts.

Gender-sensitive designation	Regular and meaningful consultation with women and relevant expertise
Exemptions for women	Where evidence demonstrates gender-specific risk
Review and transparency	Twice-yearly review; publish evidence and decision data
Better COI	Gender-sensitive, holistic, intersectional and responsive to changing conditions
Effective remedy	In-country appeal, independent monitoring, specialist advice and legal aid