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The Refugee Experience

- Exit—rising numbers cite "political" motives
- Pervasive psychological distress linked to experiences in North Korea and China
- Experiences in China
  - Little interest in permanent resettlement in China under current rules
  - Pervasive problems in employment
  - Difficulties of on-migration

![Reasons for Leaving North Korea](chart.png)
Economic and social change

The easiest way to make money in North Korea is...

The best way to get ahead in North Korea is...

- Engage in corrupt or criminal activities
- Work hard at assigned job
- Engage in market activities
- None of the above

- Become a government or party official
- Join the army
- Engage in business
- None of the above
Criminalization of economic activity

- Market activity associated with 50% higher arrest rate
- Severe punishment
- Political intimidation and economic predation
Political implications: “everyday forms of resistance”

- Increasing access to foreign media
- Associated with more dissenting views
- Meta-narrative increasingly disbelieved
- Population atomized
The Market Syndrome—the regime is right to fear the market

Participants in market activities
- More likely to cite "political" departure motives
- More likely to have been arrested
- More negative views
- More likely to communicate views to peers
Counterfactuals

Sentiments about the Government and Economy:
Sample vs. National Projection

"Kim Jong Il's Regime is Improving": Sample vs. National Projection

Note: Brackets display confidence intervals at the 95 percent confidence
## Human rights policy matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies toward</th>
<th>Direct policies</th>
<th>Indirect policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident population</td>
<td>• Official dialogue&lt;br&gt; • Penal system&lt;br&gt; • Humanitarian relief&lt;br&gt; • POWs/abductees&lt;br&gt; • Family unification&lt;br&gt; • Nonofficial exchange</td>
<td>• Information&lt;br&gt; • Labor standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
<td>• Decriminalize exit&lt;br&gt; • Free repatriates&lt;br&gt; • Enable determination</td>
<td>US:&lt;br&gt; • Implement NKHRA&lt;br&gt; • Support asylum seeking&lt;br&gt; • Refugee scholarships&lt;br&gt; China&lt;br&gt; • Ease forced repatriation&lt;br&gt; • UNHCR access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eyes Open Engagement

- Address material deprivation and encourage institutional change
- Humanitarian assistance
  - Improve programmatic quality
  - Encourage agricultural reforms
- Development assistance
  - International financial institutions
  - Target non-state enterprises
- Commercial engagement
Whither North Korea?

- Looming succession
- Widespread discontent, but an absence of civil society institutions
- Exiting the system: Everyday forms of resistance
- The market as a zone of autonomy and freedom
- “Intensify contradictions”: Constrain an uncountable regime
Thank you for your attention

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http://www.piie.com/blogs/nk/