



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS  
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE BIBLIOTHECAIRES ET DES BIBLIOTHEQUES  
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG BIBLIOTHEKARISCHER VERBÄNDE UND EINRICHTUNGEN  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE ASOCIACIONES DE BIBLIOTECARIOS Y BIBLIOTECAS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ БИБЛИОТЕЧНЫХ АССОЦИАЦИЙ И УЧРЕЖДЕНИЙ  
国际图书馆协会与机构联合会  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات ومؤسسات المكتبات

## Open Societies are Healthy Societies

Libraries are at the heart of healthy societies. By bringing people together – students, researchers, creators, citizens – they support learning, sharing, and the creation of new ideas.

They also support the delivery of key human rights, as set out both in national constitutions and international conventions, most importantly the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#): freedom of expression and access to information, as well as the right to participate in cultural life and enjoy the benefits of scientific progress.

Libraries have long supported the flow of ideas and information across borders. IFLA has called for reforms to laws that hold this back. Evidence shows that such flows promote innovation and creativity, which in turn drives growth, jobs and equality everywhere.

However, arbitrary and unjustified barriers to the movement of people jeopardise this situation. Such policies run contrary to states' obligations under international law, which prohibit discrimination of any kind on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, as set out in the UN's [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#).

The [International Migration Convention](#) also provides the right to temporary absence from the country of residence, a right which can be undermined by barriers to re-entry.

IFLA condemns such policies, wherever they take place in the world. The recent [Executive Order issued by US President Trump](#) temporarily barring entry into the United States by individuals from seven countries is one such policy.

This policy will affect students, workers and academics, families and children. All use libraries to generate new ideas and perspectives which will benefit social, economic and cultural life.

The policy also adversely affects refugees fleeing extreme poverty, persecution and conflict. Libraries' doors are open to help them find support and encouragement to learn the language and develop the skills needed to find their place. Focusing on successful integration, rather than rejection, will produce the scholars, artists, workers and engaged citizens of tomorrow.

History has demonstrated that openness and exchange make countries great. We call on governments, for the sake of the future, to protect these principles.