



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest
Date March 28, 2018

The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

Recent Publications and New Research

Steinhilper, E., & Gruijters, R. J. (2018). A contested crisis: policy narratives and empirical evidence on border deaths in the Mediterranean.

This study contributes to the understanding of border deaths in the Mediterranean region in three ways: it describes and evaluates the most recent data sources on migration and mortality; it provides a descriptive statistical analysis of absolute and relative mortality risks between 2010 and 2016; and it assesses the relationship between European border policy and border deaths. The findings challenge the dominant deterrence-oriented policy narrative and highlight the failure of European authorities to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Available at:

<https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:0f62fe51-2b65-4b88-9d2a-c280906c0fb1/datastreams/bine0f2b4a1-6d3b-446e-b190-2473b0a7f0d7>

Morales, J. S. (2018). The impact of internal displacement on destination communities: Evidence from the Colombian conflict. *Journal of Development Economics*, 131, 132-150.

More than ten percent of the population of Colombia has been forced to migrate due to civil war. This study aims to estimate the impact that the arrival of displaced individuals has on local residents. It compares the effects on four different subgroups of the population, partitioned by skill (low-skilled versus high-skilled) and by gender. The analysis suggests that a conflict-induced increase in population leads to a short-run negative impact on wages. Though the impact tends to dissipate over time, it persists for one group, low-skilled women. The arrival of internally displaced people also affects local access to public goods. An open access version is available at: http://individual.utoronto.ca/jsmorales/displacement_JSM.pdf

Renner, W., Thomas, A., Mikulajová, M., & Newman, D. (2018). Threat Perception and Modern Racism as Possible Predictors of Attitudes towards Asylum Seekers: Comparative Findings from Austria, Germany, and Slovakia. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*, 7(12), 10-22.

This study intends to take a first step towards filling the research gap which resulted from recent demographic changes in the European Union as a consequence of forced migration from the Middle East. It has found that perceived cultural threat is the most powerful predictor of individual differences in the autochthon population's attitudes towards forced migration. In comparison, perceived economic threat as well as racist attitudes contributes to the prediction to a clearly lesser extent. When trying to find out what makes people prone to perceived cultural threat, contrary to expectations, life satisfaction had only a small—though statistically significant—impact on anxious expectations or racist attitudes at the individual level and optimism has been found to have no predictive power at all. Available at:

<http://www.thejournalofbusiness.org/index.php/site/article/download/1081/674>

Forced Dispersion: A Demographic Report on Human Status in Syria by Rabbie Nasser and others

This report diagnoses the population question in Syria before and during the crisis, by means of a rights-based participatory methodology. This diagnosis has involved a recalculation of some of the significant demographic indicators for the period prior to the crisis, including birth, mortality, and fertility rates, with

one result being that population issues have been re-read from a different perspective. To overcome the lack of theoretical and applied studies and research during the crisis, this report used the results of a field multi-purpose survey. If you would like to support this research and receive a paperback, the book is priced at \$16. In the interest of encouraging the free dissemination of this important information, this book is FREE in PDF form <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/forced-dispersion-scpr-2016-en.pdf>.

Reports, working papers and briefs

Report: The US Undocumented Population Fell Sharply During the Obama Era: Estimates for 2016, by Robert Warren, Center for Migration Studies

This report shows estimates of the undocumented population residing in the United States in 2016, by country of origin and state of residence. It shows the continued decline in the population from most countries and in most states since 2010. Major findings include the following: The undocumented population was 10.8 million in 2016, the lowest level since 2003; The number of US undocumented residents from Mexico fell by almost one million between 2010 and 2016; Population decline from Mexico in 2015 and 2016 was consistent with previous years. The Average annual undocumented population growth dropped from 15 percent in the 1990s to about 4 percent in 2000 to 2010. Since 2010, the numbers from most countries have declined. Available at: <http://cmsny.org/publications/warren-undocumented-2016/>

Field report: Political Pressure to Return: putting northeast Nigeria's displaced citizens at risk, by Alexandra Lamarche and Mark Yarnell, Refugee International

In January 2018, Refugee International (RI) conducted a mission to Nigeria to assess both the viability of the return plan of Nigerian IDPs and the wider humanitarian response. The RI team traveled to Abuja, Maiduguri, and Bama, and it interviewed a wide range of IDPs, returnees, international aid officials, and representatives of the Nigerian government and military. The team found that the overall conditions in Bama town are not conducive to sustainable returns at this time, especially on a large scale. Services for returnees are lacking, and the security situation is uncertain. However, political pressure for returns to continue is likely to increase with the approach of the 2019 national elections. RI believes that the Nigerian government should refrain from carrying out large-scale organized returns to Bama and other LGAs until conditions are conducive to safe and dignified returns. Doing so prematurely would put lives at risk. RI is also concerned that large-scale return programs promoted by the government under current circumstances will inevitably create the likelihood that returns will be less than voluntary. Available at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/506c8ea1e4b01d9450dd53f5/t/5aaa96c90d9297e80ca15047/1521129169564/RI+Nigeria+Field+Report.pdf>

Working paper: International Responsibility-Sharing for Refugees by Susan F. Martin, Rochelle Davis, Grace Benton and Zoya Waliany (March 2018)

The KNOMAD Working Paper Series disseminates work in progress under the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD). The aim is to create and synthesize multidisciplinary knowledge and evidence; generate a menu of policy options for migration policy makers; and provide technical assistance and capacity building for pilot projects, evaluation of policies, and data collection. This working paper argues for a holistic approach to responsibility-sharing that enhances the protection of refugees as well as policy responses that address the needs of host communities. It focuses on several areas of responsibility-sharing, including efforts to address the underlying causes of displacement within and across borders; efforts to find solutions, including resettlement of refugees from host countries to third countries; and others. The paper examines these issues from the perspective of host country governments, other host country stakeholders, donor governments, service providers, and, most importantly, the refugees and internally displaced persons themselves. The paper includes a case study of attitudes toward responsibility-sharing among these actors in the Middle East and North Africa, where

millions of refugees and internally displaced persons are located. It concludes with recommendations to enhance responsibility-sharing as well as mechanisms to alleviate the costs to host communities and broaden the benefits to refugees and hosts alike. Available at:

[http://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/KNOMAD%20WP International%20Responsibility-Sharing%20for%20Refugees.pdf](http://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/KNOMAD%20WP%20International%20Responsibility-Sharing%20for%20Refugees.pdf)

News reports and blog posts

Why Are Syrian Refugees Returning to Their Homes? By Inside Syria Media Center

Even though it may seem like a positive development, a study by Durable Solutions Platform (DSP), found that these returns are due to unsafe, precarious living conditions in exile, especially in neighboring countries. The report also discusses the counter argument where some Syrian experts claim this might be a sign that the situation in Syria has in fact improved. To access copy and paste the following link:

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/why-are-syrian-refugees-returning-to-their-homes/5632852>

Australians demand end to Manus Island and Nauru refugee centres by John Power

Under strict border control policies, asylum seekers who arrive by boat to Australia are sent to processing centres that the Australian government manages in the Pacific and permanently bans them from settling in Australia. Many have been waiting for a country to resettle in for years. Thousands took part in rallies in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth among other cities to call on the Liberal Party-led government to allow refugees under its care on Manus Island and Nauru to come to Australia. Available at:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/australians-demand-manus-island-nauru-refugee-centres-180325101723423.html>

UNICEF predicts fresh outbreak of deadly cholera in Yemen by Patrick Wintour

On the third anniversary of Yemen's conflict, aid agencies are warning that children's health, safety and education are at more risk than ever as the country's humanitarian crisis deepens. More than 5,000 children have been killed or injured by the fighting, but famine and disease pose an even greater threat. UNICEF's Middle East Director Geert Cappelaere said one Yemeni child was dying every 10 minutes from preventable disease and that, with the rainy season due to start in a few weeks, cholera was likely to make a comeback. He added that months had been wasted negotiating with authorities for permission to begin a cholera vaccination campaign. He also highlighted Yemen's education crisis, noting that nearly 2 million children are out of school, half a million more than before the conflict. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/26/unicef-predicts-fresh-outbreak-deadly-cholera-yemen>

'Sense of duty' sees Somali refugees head home, by Tracey McVeigh

Somalis who have spent decades in exile are returning with skills in engineering, medicine, building and other fields. Younger generations, who grew up in Canada, the UK or the US, see Somalia's fragile peace as an opportunity to put their education to use and to learn about their culture. The Guardian reports that even those who don't return are making important contributions to Somalia's economy with the diaspora funding construction of hospitals and other infrastructure. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/mar/24/somalia-refugees--head-home-sense-of-duty-rebuild-country>

Eritrea's new normal: The tragedy and the struggle for change, by Meron Estefanos

Journalist and activist, Meron Estefanos, explains how years of exposure to abuses in countries such as Sudan, Egypt and Israel have desensitised Eritreans even to the horrors of slavery in Libya. The threat of being kidnapped and sold has not prevented young Eritreans from continuing to flee indefinite military conscription and human rights abuses in their country. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-03-25-00-our-new-normal-the-tragedy-and-the-struggle-for-change>

Digital and social media

In Pictures: Refugees find new roots through the power of gardening by Caroline Briggs

After escaping the horrors of war and persecution in countries like Syria, Iran and Eritrea, refugees and asylum seekers are using the healing power of gardening in Tyneside. Check the pictures at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-43320559#>