



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest

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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

Gilman, Denise and Luis A. Romero (2018) Immigration Detention, Inc. *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 6(2): 145-160.

This article draws the connection between economic inequality and U.S. system-wide immigration detention policy. The authors argue that the extensive use of detention in for-profit prisons by the US Department of Homeland Security raises issues of economic power and powerlessness. The authors link the influence of wealthy private prison corporations to the expansion of detention in facilities that are akin to those offered by the private prison industry. This article also describes the mechanisms by which economic inequality dictates the likelihood and length of detention in individual cases such that bond amounts are calibrated to ensure that beds are occupied rather than in relation to flight risk and release is determined by ability to pay the full amount rather than by any consideration of whether the individual is likely to abscond or endanger the community. An open access version is available at:

<http://cmsny.org/publications/jmhs-immigration-detention-inc/>

Lenner, Katharina and Lewis Turner (2018) Making refugees work? The politics of integrating Syrian refugees into the labor market in Jordan. *Middle East Critique*.

This article outlines how Syrian refugees are no longer framed merely as objects of humanitarian care but are rather increasingly portrayed as enterprising subjects, whose formal integration into labour markets can simultaneously create self-sufficient actors and cure the economic woes of host countries. The authors document the contradictions and frictions that have emerged in the process of implementing the Jordan Compact, a political commitment to integrate Syrian refugees into the formal Jordanian labour market. They argue that despite the widespread commitment to the scheme, it is unlikely that the Jordan Compact will reinvigorate the Jordanian economy or offer Syrians the prospect of a dignified, self-sufficient life. They conclude that this provides an important lesson for comparable schemes being rolled out across the globe. An open access version is available at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19436149.2018.1462601>

Albahari, Maurizio (2018) From Right to Permission: Asylum, Mediterranean Migrations, and Europe's War on Smuggling. *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 2: 121-130.

This paper argues that the European Union (EU) and its member states have transformed the right to asylum into a state granted permission through their efforts to curb unauthorized maritime migrant arrivals. The author provides evidence that the state actors' deployment of an anti-smuggling discourse has not significantly curbed maritime arrivals but has resulted in the deaths of thousands of people. The author proposes that governments enhance provisions for family reunification, refugee resettlement, study visas and temporary protection. Furthermore, the author argues that the situation of Europe's ageing societies should be addressed through the reassessment of labour migration quotas and greater attention to worker rights. He concludes that such measures will lead to a reduced demand for smugglers. An open access version is available at: <http://cmsny.org/publications/jmhs-from-right-to-permission/>

Yafi, Eiad, Katya Yefimova and Karen E. Fisher (2018) Young hackers: Hacking technology at Za'atari Syrian Refugee Camp. *CHI'18 Extended Abstracts* (CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Montreal, Canada).

This paper reports on the results of an exploratory study that highlights the creative ways in which young people co-opt technology to perform information work in the UNHCR Za'atari Syrian Refugee Camp. Based on data collected through a survey, diaries and observation, the authors conclude that hacking in this camp is highly gendered, provides a way for youth to assist their families and community, provides monetary and affective benefits, produces a connected learning environment, and builds capacity. An open access version is available at: <https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=3174363>

Easton-Calabria, Evan and Naohiko Omata (2018) Panacea for the refugee crisis? Rethinking the promotion of 'self-reliance' for refugees. *Third World Quarterly* (online) <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1458301>

This article provides a critical examination of the current extensive promotion of 'self-reliance' for refugees. The authors propose that the existing scholarship largely ignores the unsuccessful historical record of international assistance to foster refugees' self-reliance and fails to discuss its problematic linkages to neoliberalism and the notion of 'dependency'. They argue that the current conceptualisation and practice of self-reliance are largely shaped by the priorities of international donors that aim to create cost-effective exit strategies from long-term refugee populations. The article concludes that where uncritically interpreted and applied, the promotion of self-reliance can result in unintended and undesirable consequences for refugees' wellbeing and protection. The article is available here (alas, not open access):

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01436597.2018.1458301?needAccess=true>

d'Orsi, Cristiano (2018) Ghana and the paradoxical situation of its asylum-seekers: Selected grounds for alleged persecution in a supposed democratic country. *African Journal of International and Comparative Law* 26(2): 181-204.

This study investigates the relatively high number of Ghanaian nationals applying for asylum in various countries despite that Ghana is widely recognised as having a positive record on the protection of human rights. The author analyses the requests for asylum submitted by 30 Ghanaian nationals to seven countries (Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK and the US) over the last 25 years. The article concludes that many Ghanaian asylum-seekers have actually been economic migrants who have faced increasingly stringent migration policies. The article is available here (alas, not open access):

<https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/ajicl.2018.0227>

Reports, Working Papers and Briefs

Te Lintelo, Dolf, Rajith Lakshman, Wissam Mansour, Emma Soye, Teo Ficarelli and Will Woodward (2018) *Wellbeing and Protracted Urban Displacement: Refugees and Hosts in Jordan and Lebanon*. Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research. April.

This publication provides a report of research that studied gendered wellbeing outcomes for refugee and host communities in cities across Jordan and Lebanon. The authors also provide advice to policymakers, practitioners and donors regarding how to support modalities of reception that promote gender equitable, improved outcomes for urban refugees and host communities. They note that humanitarian actors need to work with municipalities and national governments to address challenges related to informal settlements and conclude that portraying refugees as a resource that can be harnessed for the benefit of the host country is a strategy that is likely to improve relational wellbeing of refugees as well as the hosts. An open access version is available at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/wellbeing-and-protracted-urban-displacement-refugees-and-hosts-in-jordan-and-lebanon>

Refugees International (2018) *Field Report – Denial of refuge: The plight of Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers in Israel*. April.

In this publication, Refugees International reports the results of an assessment of the situation of Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers in Israel in light of the stated intention of Israeli officials to move forward with either removal or indefinite detention of large numbers of people. The organization notes that following the mission, Israeli officials announced an agreement to resolve the status of nearly 35,000 asylum seekers currently living in Israel through the departure from Israel of just under half of the asylum seekers to third countries and through regularized status for the others who would remain in Israel, but that sadly this announcement was subsequently rescinded due to opposition in Israel. Refugees International expresses deep concern that the Israeli government plans to employ indefinite detention and deportation to countries where the lives of asylum seekers would be at risk. An open access version is available at:

<https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/2018/4/26/the-plight-of-eritrean-and-sudanese-asylum-seekers-in-israel>

News and blog posts

Johar, Ali and Jessica Field (2018) *Fire Reduces Rohingya Camp To Ashes, Exposing India's Refugee Policies*. *News Deeply*. April 30.

Youth leader Ali Johar describes the fallout related to a massive fire that destroyed a Rohingya settlement in Delhi. Researcher Jessica Field explains the combustible mix of politics and poverty for these refugees. The post is available here:

<https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2018/04/30/fire-reduces-rohingya-camp-to-ashes-exposing-indias-refugee-policies>

AP News (2018) Greece: 5 aid workers cleared on migrant smuggling charges. May 7.

This article reports that five members of international aid groups from Spain and Denmark have been cleared in court on charges of attempting to illegally bring migrants into Greece. All five men on trial had all denied wrongdoing, arguing that they were on the island to help migrants who were facing dangers at sea. The post is available here:

<https://www.apnews.com/d4f538e2698f4cff9429019381bfa0ee/Greece:-5-aid-workers-cleared-on-migrant-smuggling-charges>

Videos

Min Sook Lee (2016) Migrant Dreams (video)

This award-winning documentary is now available through Al Jazeera. *Migrant Dreams* tears a rupture in the myth of 'Canada the Good'. It foregrounds the voices of migrant workers who work in farms in Canada through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and opens a conversation about the relationship between labour, gender, race, class and settlement otherwise known as immigration to Canada viewed through the prism of the Canada's migrant worker programs. The video is available here:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/witness/2018/05/migrant-dreams-canada-broken-promises-180501081841729.html>

Digital and Social Media

MOAS (2018) Statelessness (Podcast)

This podcast explores what it means when you are not legally a citizen of the country where you were born or in any other country. Statelessness affects the lives and chances of over 10 million people globally and the Rohingya community make up 3.5 million of them. In this podcast the author speaks with Melanie Khanna, Chief of the Statelessness Section at UNHCR, Amal de Chickera Co-founder and Co-director of the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, and Muhammed Noor, Co-founder and Managing Director of the Rohingya Project. The podcast is available here: <https://audioboom.com/posts/6837292-statelessness>