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

Evans Cameron, Hilary (2018) *Refugee Law's Crisis: Truth, Risk, and the Wrong Mistake*. **Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.**
This new book considers a long-neglected branch of refugee law. The author asserts that seeking refugee protection has become a game of chance and that partly to blame is the law that governs how refugee status decision-makers resolve their doubts. The author reviews what this law is trying to accomplish in a refugee hearing and argues that a hole in the law's normative foundations is contributing to the dysfunction of Canada's refugee determination system, and may well be undermining refugee protection across the globe. The author proposes a new legal model of refugee status decision-making. Peter Showler. former chair of Canada's immigration and refugee board, says: "This is a profound and brilliant book that should be read by all asylum claim decision-makers, judges, refugee lawyers, tribunal administrators, and asylum policy makers." The book is available here (sadly, not open access):
http://www.cambridge.org/ca/academic/subjects/law/human-rights/refugee-laws-fact-finding-crisis-truth-risk-and-wrong-mistake

Wolf, Marie and Marinus Ossewaarde (2018) The political vision of Europe during the 'refugee crisis': missing common ground for integration. *Journal of European Integration* **40(1): 33-50.**
These authors analyse the imaginaries of political decision makers of the European Union in the context of the 'refugee crisis' and interpret them according to theories of European integration – neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. Texts examined as part of this research include speeches, interviews, statements and press releases of the 28 heads of state and government and two Commissioners. The authors find that the European imaginaries expressed by the largest group of heads of state and government remain blurred without clarification of their position on European integration, while the imaginaries expressed by the Commissioners are mainly characterised by support of further integration. They suggest that the prospects for further integration remain limited according to neofunctionalism, but are higher following liberal intergovernmentalism. An open access version of this article is available here:
http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07036337.2017.1404054

Harvey, Gemma (2018) Deflection and deterrence: Europe's shrinking asylum space and its parallels with Australian policies. *Griffith Journal of Law & Human Dignity 5*(2): 143-164.**

This essay looks at how European Union asylum laws and policy rapidly evolved in 2015, when people from countries like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq started arriving in unprecedented numbers on the shores of Greek islands. The author notes that while there had been little emphasis on resettlement prior to 2015, since then this became increasingly important as a way of demonstrating solidarity with countries in turmoil, while at the same time limiting responsibility for people arriving spontaneously on the doorstep of the EU. The paper includes an analysis of the EU-Turkey deal, which sought to close off the main route across the Aegean Sea from Turkey into Europe. The author concludes that EU strategy was two-pronged, punishing 'bad' spontaneous arrivals and rewarding 'good' refugees who stay further afield, and resulted in the externalization of processing to buffer zones similar to Australia's approach of shrinking the protection space available to asylum seekers. An open access version is available here: https://griffithlawjournal.org/index.php/gjlhd/article/viewFile/972/898

Bustamante Duarte, Anna Maria, Nina Brendel, Auriol Degbelo and Christian Kray (2018) Participatory design and participatory research: An HCI case study with young forced migrants. *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI) 25*(1), Art.3.
These authors report on research of human-computer interaction based on on a month-long case study with a group of about 25 young forced migrants (YFMs) in Germany. The article provides insights into the combined use of participatory design and participatory research. They conclude that this approach supported intercultural collaborations between YFMs and young members of the host community and enabled communication across language barriers. The authors also share insights into the role of 'safe spaces' for participation. An open access version of the article is available here:
https://dl.acm.org/ft_gateway.cfm?id=3145472&type=pdf

Ellis, Basia D. (2015) The Production of irregular migration in Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies* **47(2): 93-112.**
Published several years ago, this article is included in this research digest because of its relevance to current events. The author points out that while economic globalization and capitalist expansion displace growing numbers of migrants, advanced nations including Canada are tightening their borders and increasing their immigration laws, leading to a growing number of migrants choosing irregular ways of life whereby they reside, work, and raise their families underground. This paper critically assesses how irregular migration is produced and perpetuated in Canada and discusses how employers and other social actors engage in practices that contribute to the production of irregular migration. The author proposes that irregularity should be viewed as a sociopolitical condition generated and maintained by a range of structural and psychosocial determinants. The paper also reviews the challenging conditions that constitute irregular life and proposes some directions for political action. The article is available here (sadly, not open access):
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/583325

Reports, Working Papers and Briefs

Peri, Giovanni and Vasil Yasenov (2017) *The labor market effects of a refugee wave: Synthetic control method meets the Mariel boatlift.* **IZA Discussion Papers, No. 10605. Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Bonn.**
The authors apply the Synthetic Control Method to re-examine the effects of the Mariel Boatlift, a large inflow of Cubans into Miami in 1980, first studied by David Card (1990). They argue that this method improves on previous studies by choosing a control group so as to best match

Miami's labour market features before the Boatlift. Using data from the larger and more precise May-ORG Current Population Survey (CPS) they conclude that there was no significant departure of wages and employment of low-skilled workers between Miami and its control after 1979. An open access version of the paper is available here: https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/161228/1/dp10605.pdf

Aleinikoff, T. Alexander and Susan Martin (2018) *Making the Global Compacts Work: What Future for Refugees and Migrants?* **Andrew and Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law. Brief 6. April.**
This policy brief includes the authors' recommendations for how the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) could be further improved. The authors propose better protection for persons fleeing life-threatening situations; expanding pathways to legal admission for migrants; defining more precisely the term 'vulnerable migrants'; and strengthening monitoring and accountability processes. This policy brief also identifies gaps and overlaps between the GCM and the Global Compacts on Refugees (GCR), particularly with regard to internal movements of people and situations involving mixed migration flows. The authors argue that in their present forms, both the GCR and GCM have the potential to improve the lives of migrants. An open access link to the brief is available at the bottom of this summary: http://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/news/new-policy-brief-released-making-global-compacts-work

Friesen, Chris and Kathy Sherrell (2018) *Syrian Refugee Operation to BC: Taking Stock Two Years After Arrival.* **Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia. May.**
Given the unprecedented arrival of Syrian Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) to British Columbia, the Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISSofBC) conducted a telephone survey to ascertain how refugees are faring after two years in the province. This report explores the findings of the first-language telephone survey, identifies key themes, and provides recommendations intended to better facilitate the settlement and integration of refugees in BC, and Canada more broadly. Key findings include: Eighty-seven percent (87%) report their English has improved since coming to Canada; Sixty-nine percent (69%) are attending free LINC classes; and that barriers to participation in LINC classes include work and education, health, lack of space in class, transportation issues, age and lack of childcare. An open access version of the report is available here: https://issbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ISSofBC-Report-Operation-Syrian-Refugees-to-BC-Taking-Stock-Two-Years-After-Arrival.pdf

Bose, Pablo and Lucas Grigri (2018) *PR3: Resettlement Trends in the Southeast.* **Refugee Resettlement in Small Cities Reports. University of Vermont. April.**
This report focuses on refugee resettlement trends from FY2012-2016 for the Southeast region of the United States. This region has been a key focus for scholars due in part to a significant growth in the foreign-born population, especially in terms of Latino labor migration as well as other forms of immigration. In this report, the authors consider the context of resettlement in the US with a particular focus on small cities. They take a closer look at several selected resettlement sites in order to explore what resettlement looks like on the ground. This report is the third in a six part series focused on resettlement trends across the US, and how these trends affect both the refugees and the communities where refugees are placed. An open access version of the report is available here:
http://spatializingmigration.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RRSC_PR3_Southeast_Resettlement_Trends.pdf

News and blog posts

Anderson, Allison and Jessica Brandt (2018) *Innovations for improving access to and quality of education for urban refugees.* **Education plus Development. Brookings Institute. May 11.**
The Foreign Policy Program and the Center for Universal Education at Brookings convened a discussion of the distinct needs of urban refugee populations and recommendations for improving their access to education. Discussants included Yasmine Sherif, director of Education Cannot Wait, a new global fund designed to position education as a priority on the humanitarian agenda, and Ravi Gurumurthy, Chief Innovation Officer at the International Rescue Committee. This report summarizes some of the insights that emerged. Available here:
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2018/05/11/innovations-for-improving-access-to-and-quality-of-education-for-urban-refugees/

Sadrehashemi, Lobat and Lorne Waldman (2018) Four myths about Canada's border crossings. Ottawa Citizen. May 14.
The authors observe that while the media may finally be writing about "illegal border crossings", they lament that several recurring myths are shaping much of the coverage. They outline four of these myths in this article, available here:
http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/sadrehashemi-four-myths-about-canadas-border-crossings

2017 internal displacement figures by country. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.
The IDMC has published data that show significant increases in forced displacement in 2017 across the globe. The data is available on their website:
http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data

Sikorski, Natlaie (2018) Understanding the algorithm meant to help refugees get jobs fast.
Researchers from Stanford University say an algorithm for locating refugee resettlement could vastly improve the probability that refugees will find work. The author reports on a conversation with the researchers about their findings and about the limits and opportunities of big data for refugee resettlement.
https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2018/04/20/understanding-the-algorithm-meant-to-help-refugees-get-jobs-fast

Videos

Videos: Climate-linked movement: forced and voluntary migration
This is a series of videos that introduces and reflects on statistics to demonstrate the implications of climate change on global movements. Available here:
http://climatemigration.org.uk/project/climate-migration-forced-voluntary-video/

Digital and Social Media

New Podcast from MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station): Childhood and Youth)

In this Podcast MOAS delves into the struggles and traumas of Rohingya child refugees who face living in the camps of Bangladesh. MOAS speaks with Max Frieder, Co-founder and Co-Executive Director of Artolution, a global organization focused on public arts that has operated in refugee camps on the Syrian – Jordanian border, Greece, France, Turkey and now Bangladesh. In the podcast, Frieder says that art helps those facing trauma and educates young refugees. Available here:
https://audioboom.com/posts/6812956-children-and-youth