



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

Foroutan, Y. (2020), Ethnic or Religious Identities?: Multicultural Analysis in Australia from Socio-Demographic Perspective, *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7 (1), 1-19. Focusing on the data of ethnic and religious identities in a multiethnic and multicultural context, this paper provides research-based evidence to explain whether and how significantly such data could be reliable from a social and demographic perspective. The explanation is based on population census that also provides unique nation-wide data sources on 'religious affiliation'. According to the findings of the present analysis, this paper argues that if ethnic migrants belonging to the same category of religious affiliation are considered as a single group without taking their ethnic origins into account, this will lead to insufficient, incomplete, and misleading knowledge. ([Open access](#)) [Read here.](#)

Byrne, R. (2019). Refugee Advocacy Scholarship. *Canadian Journal of Human Rights*, 8(1), 103. Refugee law specialists have produced a vast body of advocacy scholarship. Yet literature within the field is framed by a human rights based protection narrative that has lost traction amongst European policy makers and the public. This article explores why this has happened by looking at the protection narrative and how refugee law speaks to politics. The author argues that the changing political ecosystem makes it urgent for the profession to re-establish a more effective and relevant narrative that retains a human rights approach to refugee protection, yet widens the scope of rights holders to include host communities. ([Open access](#)) [Read here.](#)

Hojati, Z. (2020) Post-Covid 19: The Need to Revisit Canada's Work Regulation Toward Professional Immigrants (grey literature). This article addresses why in a time of a global pandemic Canada suffers from a shortage of health care professionals, and cannot benefit from its own immigrant professionals who immigrated to Canada as skilled workers. The author reviews the barriers imposed on immigrant professional doctors and makes recommendations in an attempt to include professional immigrants into the Canadian professional job market instead of rejecting and marginalizing them. ([Open access](#)) [Read here.](#)

Gonzalez Benson, O. (2020). Refugee-Run Grassroots Organizations: Responsive Assistance beyond the Constraints of US Resettlement Policy. *Journal of Refugee Studies*. This study examines Refugee Community Organizations (RCOs) in the US and their scope of services in relation to publicly funded resettlement services, drawing on focus groups and 40 interviews with RCO leaders of Bhutanese communities in 35 US cities. Findings illustrate RCOs are closer to communities both in terms of geographical and sociocultural proximity. Additionally, they target those neglected by work-oriented policies and provide assistance well beyond policy time limits. Issues of equity and social justice are thus raised, as RCOs aim to assume important functions of the state, without adequate resources and legitimacy. [More here.](#)

Report, Policy Briefs and Working Papers

Harmful Returns: The Compounded Vulnerabilities of Returned Guatemalans in the Time of COVID-19 by Yael Schacher & Rachel Schmidtke (June, 2020), Refugees International. The U.S. and Mexico have taken a series of steps that make it easier to return Guatemalans back to their home country, including policies and programs related to detention, deportation, and limits in asylum. These measures force home many Guatemalans with valid refugee claims who are at risk of persecution upon return and who then struggle to reintegrate. This report outlines how the deportations and returns carried out in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic compound these challenges and contribute to the spread of the virus. [Read here.](#)

Migrant Care Labour and the COVID-19 Long-term Care Crisis: How did we get here? By Lena Gahwi and Margaret Walton-Roberts (June, 2020), Balsillie Papers. A historic lack of investment in care, especially in areas of elder care, has resulted in long-term care (LTC) facilities being the epicentre of the pandemic in various nations. This paper provides some context regarding the care crisis in LTC facilities, in particular its relationship with the type and skill mix of labour, including the degree to which migrant workers are represented in this sector. It will highlight two of the contributing factors to this crisis; the first is the gendered and racialized devaluing of migrant labour so essential to this sector; the second is the role of the private sector and the unsustainable extraction of profits from this service and the labour that provides it. [Read here.](#)

News reports and blog posts

Canadian court correctly finds the U.S. is unsafe for refugees by Sean Rehaag & Sharry Aiken (July 24, 2020), The Conversation. Advocates for refugees have long argued that the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) violates international refugee law and Canadian constitutional law. Canada's Federal Court ruled that the STCA is unconstitutional and U.S. is not safe at least for some refugees. The authors discuss what this decision means and speculate on the various outcomes this can lead to. [Read here.](#)

Refugee Eligibility: Challenging Stereotypes and Reviving the ‘Benefit of the Doubt’ by Sabrineh Ardalan (August 4, 2020), Rethinking Refuge. In this article, the author argues that it is time to rethink the evidence so often submitted and relied upon in asylum claims, to return to a core principle of refugee law – the need to afford asylum seekers the benefit of the doubt. She emphasizes the need for a better way to establish asylum eligibility and challenge stereotypes. [Read here.](#)

LGBTQI+ Populations Face Unique Challenges During Pandemic by Yvonne Su, Yuriko Cowper-Smith & Tyler Valiquette (July 24, 2020), Policy Options. In an attempt to understand the gendered-impacts of COVID-19 beyond women, the authors draw on findings from a case study of Venezuelan LGBTQI+ asylum seekers in Brazil, an epicentre of the pandemic. The analysis of 23 interviews with Venezuelan LGBTQI+ asylum-seekers, politicians and workers in non-governmental organizations and UN staff, shows that asylum seekers are experiencing increasing violence, transphobia and xenophobia. [Read here.](#)

Digital and social media

Recording: Hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs that was held virtually via Cisco WebEx by the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and Nonproliferation, (August 3, 2020). The hearing provides an update on the Rohingya Crisis. [Watch here.](#)