



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

Forced Migration Review - FMR 65: Recognising refugees, November 2020. FMR issue 65's main feature on Recognising refugees explores shortcomings, challenges and innovations (and their consequences for refugees/asylum seekers) in refugee status determination processes worldwide. A second feature offers reflections on lessons and good practice emerging from the 2018–20 GP20 Plan of Action for IDPs. [Read here.](#)

Jutvik, K., & Robinson, D. (2020). Permanent or temporary settlement? A study on the short-term effects of residence status on refugees' labour market participation. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 8(1), 1-19. Using a sudden policy change as a natural experiment combined with detailed Swedish registry data, the authors examine the effect permanent residency on three measures of labour market inclusion in the short-term. The findings are twofold. On the one hand, we find that temporary residents that are subject to a relatively less-inclusive situation have higher incomes and less unemployment. However, at the same time, they are less likely to spend time in education than are those with permanent residency. [Read here.](#)

New Book: Okafor, O. C. (2020). *Refugee Law after 9/11: Sanctuary and Security in Canada and the United States*. UBC Press. *Refugee Law after 9/11* undertakes a systematic examination of available legal, policy, and empirical evidence to reveal a great irony: refugee rights were already so whittled down in both countries before 9/11 that there was relatively little room for negative change after the attacks. It also shows that the Canadian refugee law regime reacted to 9/11 in much the same way as its US counterpart, and these similar reactions raise significant questions about security relativism and the cogency of Canadian and US national self-image. [Learn more.](#)

Report, Policy Briefs and Working Papers

New Report: Blocked at Every Pass: How Greece's Policy of Exclusion Harms Asylum Seekers and Refugees, December 2020, Refugees International. Throughout the year, an already dire situation for asylum seekers in Greece has continued to deteriorate. Authorities have physically pushed people back from Greece's shores and undermined the asylum process. Individuals with refugee status have found themselves homeless and hungry in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through its policies and actions, the Greek government is systematically closing the space for protection. The report outlines Greece's efforts to deny access to asylum and services at every stage of an individual's search for protection. It makes urgent recommendations for how Greece—with the support of the EU—should reverse course and fulfill its international commitments to asylum seekers and refugees. [Read here.](#)

Collins, J., Reid, C., Groutsis, D., Watson, K., Kaabel, A., Hughes, S. 2019, *Settlement experiences of recently arrived refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan in New South Wales in 2018: Full Report*, Centre for Business and Social Innovation, UTS Business School: Sydney. This report is the second of three place-based reports on the outcomes of the first year of a three-year research project – funded by the Australian Research Council – examining the settlement, employment and education experiences and outcomes of recently-arrived Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees. The focus of this second report is to explore the challenges and opportunities of settlement in Australia from the experiences of the Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees themselves in New South Wales. Ultimately, the aim of reporting on the outcomes of the research is not only to present evidence but also to spark a conversation about, and to contribute to an understanding of the contribution that refugees make to Australian society and how we can enhance the social well-being, employability prospects, economic security and educational opportunities of recently arrived refugees in Australia. Finally, the reports aim to inform policy and services to enhance the settlement experience of this group. [Read here.](#)

Magdalena Perzyna, *The Substance of Solidarity: What the Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Says About the Global Refugee Regime* Working Paper No. 2020/15 October 2020. By examining how Western nation states in the global North have responded to asylum seekers during the pandemic against the backdrop of existing international refugee law, practice, and policy, this essay seeks to evaluate the normative potential of the GCR and the GCM for the entrenchment of the principle of solidarity. Employing the theoretical framework of governmentality, it argues that despite the rhetoric of responsibility-sharing, the reactions of Western nation states reflect an existing trend toward exclusionary impulses, with countries reflexively reverting to patterns of state-centric, insular protectionism. Taking these issues into consideration, the essay goes on to focus on Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in light of its proximity to and relationship with the United States to illustrate how biopower is being deployed to exclude in line with neoliberal rationalities, even in a country that is usually heralded as a beacon of humanitarianism. The essay concludes with a guarded diagnosis that warns of the potential for an international protection crisis should civil society fail to challenge prevailing biopolitics. [Read here.](#)

News reports and blog posts

Why so many Syrian women get divorced when they move to western countries by Rola El Hussein, The Conversation, December 7, 2020. The author explores the increasing numbers of divorce among Syrian refugee and immigrant women. While this phenomenon has been disparaged among Syrians, it has been [celebrated](#) by some western commentators. They saw it as part of the western mission to “save Arab (and Muslim) women” from the Muslim men who oppressed them. The author scrutinizes this claim and makes the case that it would be a reductionist and Orientalist (western-centric) account of the situation. [Read here](#).

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted barriers to vital digital financial services for refugees by Daphne Jayasinghe, EuroNews, November 26, 2020. The economic shock of COVID-19 has made this dire situation even worse. It has revealed how easy it is for refugees to slip through social safety nets. The research outlined in this piece has found that, in the absence of sufficient humanitarian aid, many have been forced to cut back on meals or sell their belongings. In Jordan, many lost their incomes overnight while, in Kenya, large numbers have been evicted from their homes. [Read more](#).

Digital and social media

REGISTER NOW: LERRN-IDRC Webinar: By Refugees, For Refugees: Refugee leadership beyond the pandemic. This webinar will explore the factors that influence the impact of refugee-led organizations (RLOs) as service-delivery providers in humanitarian settings before and during COVID-19. In the context of the Coronavirus pandemic, when international actors are limited in their mobility and access, RLOs are increasingly becoming frontline responders that provide vital assistance to displaced communities. This webinar aims to discuss how we can move the debate from a normative commitment to refugee participation and leadership to concrete measures that address the many barriers refugee-led organizations face in responding to local needs. Panelists include refugee leaders, donors, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, who will consider innovative solutions with and for refugees and engagement of refugee-led organizations during the pandemic and beyond. [Register here](#).

RRN Webinar Series: Ethics of Care and Knowledge Mobilization in Migration Contexts with Professor Christina Clark-Kazk. The second of the RRN webinar series explored the ways in which an ethics of care can complement dominant procedural ethics approaches to research and knowledge mobilization in migration contexts. Drawing on the Canadian Ethical Considerations: Research with People in Situations of Forced Migration, the International Association for Forced Migration Studies’ Code of Ethics, and participants’ own experiences, the webinar discussed key questions such as: To what extent can an ethics of care be practically applied in knowledge mobilization around migration issues? And What are the ethical opportunities and constraints of co-ownership and co-authorship in politicized migration contexts? [Watch recording here](#).