



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.

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Acker, S. (2023). [Beauty and beautification in refugees' lives and their implications for refugee policy](#). *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 39(1), 1–46. This article seeks to understand the significance of everyday beauty in refugees' lives and its implications for refugee policy. It demonstrates how beauty and beautification play an active role in how refugees (re)make home, even in temporary situations. Beauty is used to build hope, celebrate culture, create community, and honour past and present realities, and therefore has significant implications for the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. The role of beauty in refugee homemaking suggests challenging the narrow focus on durable solutions to a more holistic framework, transforming language and policy approaches to include refugees as decision-makers, and investing in the quality of shelters, camps, and homes as a more effective way to reduce pressure on host countries.

Al-Janaideh, R., Abdulkarim, M., Speidel, R., Filippelli, J., Colasante, T., & Malti, T. (2023). [A community-based needs assessment of resettled Syrian refugee children and families in Canada](#). *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 39(1), 1–29. A needs assessment was conducted to identify the needs, challenges, and strengths of Syrian refugee children and families resettled in Canada and of services for them. The results indicated significant needs and challenges experienced by refugees (e.g., persistent mental health issues, lack of in-person support), as well as challenges related to refugee services (e.g., discontinuity of mental health services). Several refugee strengths (e.g., optimism for the future and strong familial ties) and refugee service strengths (e.g., service collaboration), highlight refugees' adaptive capacities and points of service leverage to ensure refugees' well-being and positive resettlement.

Culcasi, K. (2023). [“Displacing Territory: Syrian and Palestinian Refugees in Jordan”](#). University of Chicago Press. This piece explores how the lived realities of refugees are

deeply affected by their imaginings of what constitutes territory and their sense of belonging to different places and territories. The author shows how these individual conceptualizations about territory do not always fit the Western-centric division of the world into states and territories, thus revealing alternative or subordinated forms and scales of territory. She also argues that disproportionate attention to “refugee crises” in the Global North has diverted focus from other parts of the world that bear the responsibility of protecting the majority of the world’s refugees. By focusing on Jordan, a Global South state that hosts the world’s second-largest number of refugees per capita, this book provides insights to consider alternate ways to handle the situation of refugees elsewhere. In the process, Culcasi brings the reader into refugees’ diverse realities through their own words, inherently arguing against the tendency of many people in the Global North to see refugees as aberrant, burdensome, or threatening.

Derksen, M., & Teixeira, C. (2023). [Refugees and religious institutions in a mid-size Canadian city. Population, Space and Place, 29\(5\), e2653.](#) This study explores how religious institutions affect refugee settlement in Kelowna, a mid-size city in British Columbia. Kelowna has had a significant increase in refugee sponsorship since the 2015 Syrian crisis, and most private sponsorship has involved churches and the local mosque in collaboration with government-funded settlement services and community partners. The results reveal that religious institutions help refugees cope with barriers and challenges in Kelowna in three main ways: bridging language barriers between newcomers, service providers, and sponsorship providers; helping newcomers establish new lives in Kelowna and move toward integration; and helping newcomers move away from precarity toward prosperity as they re-establish themselves and their families.

Schenck, Marcia C. & Reed, K. (2023). [The Right to Research: Historical Narratives by Refugee and Global South Researchers.](#) McGill/Queens University Press. Refugees and displaced people rarely figure as historical actors and rarely as historical narrators. We often assume a person residing in a refugee camp, lacking funding, training, social networks, and other material resources that enable the research and writing of academic history, cannot be a historian because a historian cannot be a person residing in a refugee camp. The Right to Research disrupts this tautology by featuring nine works by refugee and host-community researchers across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Identifying the intrinsic challenges of making space for diverse voices within a research framework and infrastructure that is inherently unequal, this edited volume offers a critical reflection on what history means, who narrates it, and what happens when those long excluded from authorship bring their knowledge and perspectives to bear. Chapters address topics such as education in Kakuma Refugee Camp, the political power of hip-hop in Rwanda, women migrants to Yemen, and the development of photojournalism in Kurdistan.

Warren, K. (2023). [Emotions in crisis: Consequences of ceremonial refugee camp visits to Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal.](#) *Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees*, 39(1), 1–18. Research on refugee resettlement frequently overlooks the larger context of the experience of forced migration. As a result, the micro-level interactions between refugees and

the bureaucrats who make resettlement decisions are hidden. We can better understand the socio-political dynamics between refugees and the officials deciding their resettlement cases if we approach encounters between refugees and migration officials during ceremonial visits as sites of emotional exchange. This article examines the complex socio-political emotional exchanges of power and vulnerability that underpin the refugee resettlement process through an ethnographic analysis of Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal.

Xhardez, C., & Soennecken, D. (2023). [Temporary Protection in Times of Crisis: The European Union, Canada, and the Invasion of Ukraine.](#) *Politics and Governance*, 11(3).

This article compares the policy responses of the EU and Canada to the crisis in Ukraine, focusing on the two temporary protection schemes and differentiating between their overarching goals, policy instruments, and settings. While the policies may seem similar initially, a closer examination reveals underlying disparities, contradictions, and complexities, particularly when analyzing the precise policy instruments and settings. Considering that the past informs contemporary policy trajectories, they suggest that while the two programs build on the respective regions' historical and political contexts, crises also create opportunities for change, raising questions about the future direction of immigration policy in both regions.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

Fratzke, S., Pulkkinen, V., & Ugolini, E. (2023). [From safe homes to sponsors: Lessons from the Ukraine hosting response for refugee sponsorship programs.](#) *Migration Policy Institute*. This policy brief examines the implementation of private hosting initiatives for displaced Ukrainians in a range of European countries. It situates these programs within the broader evolution of private welcoming and sponsorship initiatives in Europe and identifies key successes and limitations. The brief also offers recommendations that could help civil society, governments, and the European Union further develop hosting initiatives and refine refugee resettlement and community sponsorship programs.

Marks, J. (2023). [By land or by sea: Syrian refugees weigh their futures.](#) *Refugees International*. After 12 years of war, nearly 5.2 million Syrian refugees in Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan are caught in an increasingly untenable limbo. Host countries are normalizing relations with the Syrian government and are eager for refugees to depart, even though there is no foreseeable prospect of them ever safely returning to Syria. The time has come for a serious global conversation on durable solutions for Syrian refugees—one that acknowledges the impossibility of return and grapples seriously with expanded local integration and global resettlement.

Omata, N. & Gidrom, Y. (2023). [Refugee entrepreneurship in Rwanda.](#) *University of Oxford*. This research brief shows how refugees take advantage of their freedom of movement to establish trade networks and engage with the Rwandan economy, explores some of the differences between refugee enterprises in Mahama and Kigali, and includes

recommendations for policymakers and development and humanitarian actors for enhancing the feasibility and impact of entrepreneurship support for refugees in Rwanda.

Ugolini, E., & Damian Smith, C. (2023). [Why matching matters: Improving outcomes in refugee sponsorship and complementary pathways](#). Migration Policy Institute. This policy brief explores the evolution of community sponsorship, complementary pathways, and resettlement programs' approaches to matching refugees with sponsors or receiving communities and highlights opportunities for further innovation. The analysis includes a close look at novel approaches to matching developed by initiatives responding to high-profile emergencies, including the Ukrainian displacement crisis.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Canada-U.S. refugee pact changes expected to 'exacerbate existing threats': memo](#) by Jim Bronskill, October 21, 2023. CityNews Everywhere. This news article is about how a newly released memo shows federal officials warned last spring that expanding a bilateral refugee pact to the entire Canada-U.S. border would likely fuel smuggling networks and encourage people to seek more dangerous, remote crossing routes.

[Palestinians in Lebanon's largest refugee camp brace for another round of conflict](#) by Hanna Davis and Haisam el-Hreich, October 25, 2023. The New Humanitarian. Hostilities between Israel and Hamas in Gaza are threatening to spill over into Lebanon, raising fears in the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp for Palestinians that residents still recovering from earlier unrest could once again see their lives upended. Since Hamas, the Palestinian political and militant group that governs the Gaza Strip, launched a deadly incursion into Israel on 7 October, the clashes have largely subsided. However, residents fear another round of conflict, this time triggered by an expansion of the Gaza war into Lebanon.

[Shahrzad and 21 other women just walked from Melbourne to Canberra. Here's why](#) by Niv Sadrolodabae and Carl Dixon, October 23, 2023. SBS Language. Twenty-two women, who have joined a dozen asylum seekers who protested at Parliament House, completed a 700 km protest walk from Melbourne to Canberra. The protesters, mostly on temporary or bridging visas, are demanding a resolution to their visa status.

[Yesterday's crisis: Australia cuts aid to Rohingya refugees](#) by Stephen Howes, October 24, 2023. Devpolicy Blog from the Development Policy Centre. This article discusses how Rohingya people living in Bangladesh are struggling due to the spread of scabies and malnutrition. However, Australia is cutting aid to Rohingya refugees due to donor fatigue and shifting priorities, as the Pacific is their focus.

[Why Egypt and other Arab countries are unwilling to take in Palestinian refugees from Gaza](#) by Jack Jeffery and Samy Magdy, October 18, 2023. Associated Press. The article discusses why neighbouring countries are not taking in Palestinian refugees from Gaza. It discusses that their refusal is rooted in fear that Israel wants to force a permanent expulsion of

Palestinians into their countries and nullify Palestinian demands for statehood. The President of Egypt also said a mass exodus would risk bringing militants into Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, from where they might launch attacks on Israel, endangering the two countries' 40-year-old peace treaty.

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[A Cold Climate for Refugee Women? \(WiRL Seminar Series 2023/24 Seminar One\)](#) by **Women in Refugee Law (WiRL).** This will be the first in a series of free online seminars hosted by the Women in Refugee Law (WiRL) network on the 2023/24 theme of "Refuge in a cold climate: the impact on women." These are public events, ideal for anyone whose work relates to refugee or asylum-claiming women or with an interest in the needs and experiences of refugee women. This series will draw on WiRL's global membership to apply a gendered lens in analyzing the impact of increasing hostility to refugees in different states and contexts. Seminar One: A Cold Climate for Refugee Women? Mon, 27 Nov 2023 15:30 - 16:45 GMT.

[A Multi-Sector World Café to Promote the Mental Health of Refugees in BC](#) by **UBC Centre for Migration Studies.** The purpose of the World Café is to convene and collaborate with service users, health practitioners, settlement service providers, and policymakers to gain your expertise and knowledge about what you think to work to promote integrated mental health services and support for people who have experienced migration, such as refugees. It will take place on November 28, 2023, 11:45 AM - 4:00 PM PST at Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

[Refugee women get on the tools to build new lives](#) by **ABC Listen.** This podcast episode is about how arriving in a new country can be terrifying and exhilarating in equal measure, even more so when you are a refugee. There are more than 11,000 refugee migrant women around the Hunter Valley in Australia — many of them have come from countries where they may not have had a chance to get an education or where they have been treated as second-class citizens. Now, a new local course aims to empower these women and give them skills they never thought they could learn — all in the male-dominated construction field.