DEMOCRACY AND REFUGEES:

SETTING THE STAGE FOR INCLUSION

SOLIDARITY WITH OTHERS

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Abstract

The refugee crisis is problematic for both the refugees and the host country in terms of displacement and relocation. Refugees seeking to enjoy their individual rights at the highest level tend to migrate to democratic countries. Yet, this situation results in the occurrence of double-sided problems in society, which affect both sides. This report aims to outline general and major problems with the inclusion of refugees. In this regard, it first provides brief definitions of the concepts of democracy and refugee. Then, it discusses the challenges that refugees create and face in society. Next, the report outlines in which ways refugees can be beneficial to democratic societies. The report concludes with four ways to combat challenges to including and integrating refugees.

An Introduction to the Intersection: Defining Democracy and Refugees

Democracy is a political system that promotes the participation and voice of citizens in governance. In a democratic society, all individuals have the right to express their views and have a say in decision-making processes that affect their lives.[1] However, for refugees, this democratic ideal is often not a reality. While democracy is based on the principles of individual freedom, equality, and respect for human rights, refugees are repeatedly denied these fundamental rights and freedoms in different areas (such as economic, social, and health) because of their non-citizen status.[2]

According to the United Nations (UN), refugees are defined as "people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country."[3] As refugees flee their countries in search of safety and security, they often face discrimination in the countries of asylum. This often manifests in narratives focusing on xenophobia – "based on ethnicity and race, religion, income, language, and any signs of "otherness."[4] Refugees can therefore be perceived as a threat to local culture, economy, and security, which can result in social exclusion and even violence.[5] For these people, their displacement and lack of citizenship often complicate their access to democratic rights that other people in host countries have already enjoyed.

The relationship between refugees and democracy is complex in the sense that refugees often encounter significant hardships in accessing the political rights and protections guaranteed to citizens in democratic societies. The displacement and marginalization can make it difficult for them to participate and be heard in the democratic process fully.[6] Moreover, the

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[1] UNESCO. (2019, May 31). What is democracy? UNESCO. Retrieved March 9, 2023, from https://en.unesco.org/courier/novembre-1992/what-democracy

[2] Gökşen, E. (2021). Proportionality in Refugee Exclusion. Journal of International Criminal Justice, 18(5), 1131–1156. https://doi.org/10.1093/jicj/mqaa056

[3] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). What is a refugee? UNHCR. Retrieved March 9, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/what-is-a-refugee.html

[4] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). Social Inclusion of Refugees. MUN Refugee Challenge - UNHCR. (p. 2) Retrieved March 9, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/5fc126354.pdf

[5] Ibid.

[6] Carens, J. H. 2005. "The Integration of Immigrants." Journal of Moral Philosophy 2 (1): 29–46. doi:10.1177/1740468105052582.

presence of refugees can create tensions in democratic societies, which leads to an increase in right-wing populism, especially if they are perceived to take resources away from citizens or pose a security threat. This can lead to increased anti-refugee sentiment and policies that restrict refugees' rights and freedoms.[7] In this sense, it is argued that the global refugee crisis has posed a challenge to democracy.[8]

Despite these obstacles, many argue that democracy and refugee protection are not mutually exclusive. They argue that democratic governance can be strengthened by including refugees' perspectives and experiences in decision-making processes. They also argue that protecting refugees' rights and freedoms is an essential element of democratic governance as it reflects the values of equality and justice that underpin democratic societies.[9]

The focus of this report will be on the relation between refugees and democracy. With this report, it is aimed to reveal the complex connection of these concepts in general practice. The overview will discuss the question of how the participation and inclusion of refugees in society can be, which challenges they face, and how these challenges can be addressed. In this regard, the challenges that the global refugee crisis has created will be presented. Then, it will be specifically focused on barriers to the political engagement of refugees. Additionally, problems in getting access to basic needs by refugees will be explained. Next, how refugees can contribute to democracy and democratic governance will be elaborated. Then, possible solutions ways to all these challenges will be explained. This report will conclude with a brief summary.

Democracy and the Global Refugee Crisis: Understanding the Challenges

The global refugee crisis creates substantial challenges to democratic governance,[10][11] as the displacement and marginalization of refugees can undermine the values of equality, justice, and human rights that constitute the foundation of democratic societies. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "global forced displacement has reached 103 million at mid-2022".[12] Low- and middle-income countries, in other words developing countries, host 74 percent of the total refugees and other people requiring international protection. The least developed countries grant asylum to 22 percent of the total.[13]

The huge scale of the global refugee crisis can overwhelm democratic principles because anti-immigrant sentiments and conceptualizations can cause marginalization and

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[7] Roose, J., Karolewski, I., & Sata, R. (2020). Introduction: Patterns and Implications of Migration and Rebordering. In R. Sata, J. Roose, & I. Karolewski (Eds.), Transnational Migration and Border-Making: Reshaping Policies and Identities (pp. 1-33). Edinburgh University Press.

[8] DemDigest. (2019, November 19). How global refugee crisis challenges democracies. Democracy Digest. Retrieved March 9, 2023, from https://www.demdigest.org/how-global-refugee-crisis-challenges-democracies/

[9] Bender, F. (2021). Enfranchising the disenfranchised: should refugees receive political rights in liberal democracies? Citizenship Studies, 25(1), 56–71. https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2020.1825625

[10] DemDigest. (2019, November 19). How global refugee crisis challenges democracies. Democracy Digest. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.demdigest.org/how-global-refugee-crisis-challenges-democracies/

[11] Holm, M., & Deese, R.S. (Eds.). (2022). How Democracy Survives: Global Challenges in the Anthropocene (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003218586

[12] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022, October 27). Refugee statistics. UNHCR. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/#:~:text=At%20the%20end%20of%202021,below%2018%20years%20of%20age.&text=Between%202018%20and%202021%2C%20an,a%20refugee%20life%20per%20year.

[13] Ibid.

exclusion of refugees, which lead to social disintegration.[14] This situation often derives from the willingness for the homogenization of majority identity.[15] Additionally, exposure to the refugee crisis spurs a rise in anti-refugee attitudes because there is a misperception among people in the sense asylum seekers are more likely to commit terrorist attacks and crimes.[16] Exclusionary practices contribute to this perception "through sensationalized media presentations, polarizing political commentary, and unfounded racist claims."[17] These influential voices and channels create exclusionary spaces, reducing opportunities to be included in society as a peer.[18]

The refugee crisis also poses a challenge to institutions that are responsible for addressing and dealing with refugees. It is noticeable that there is "the lack of a clear, agreed understanding of what coordination and leadership mean in practice in humanitarian and/or refugee responses."[19] Bureaucracy is unable to meet the basic needs of refugees because of challenges caused by poor reception infrastructure.[20] Lack of coordination has led to duplication and inefficiencies in crisis response, weak controls, and, as a result, diversion of assistance away from genuine relief efforts.[21]

In addition to the factor of the lack of coordination, one of the main causes of the migrant crisis is the excessive interference of the United States and even some other states in Europe in the internal affairs of these troubled and crisis-stricken countries.[22] The lack of trust and coordination among actors impedes an efficient and humane intervention to the crisis, which also leads to the exclusion and marginalization of refugees.[23] Therefore, these factors have a role in the unfortunate situation of refugees and attitudes shown by the native people toward refugees.

The number of forcibly displaced people has passed 100 million, which includes "refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers who have fled their homes to escape violence, conflict, and persecution."[24] These people need to regain their representation (such as political, economic, and social) and rebuild their lives after hardships they had to challenge. Yet, although displacement is a kind of humanitarian crisis refugees face, they sometimes

[14] Goździak, E. M., & Main, I. (2020). European norms and values and the refugee crisis: Issues and challenges. In Europe and the Refugee Response (1st ed., pp. 1–11). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429279317-1

[15] Hachimi Alaoui, M., & Pélabay, J. (2020). Integration by contract and the "values of the Republic": Investigating the French State as a value promoter for migrants (2003–2016). In Europe and the Refugee Response (1st ed., pp. 111–127). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429279317-8

[16] Hangartner, D., Dinas, E., Marbach, M., Matakos, K., & Xefteris, D. (2019). Does Exposure to the Refugee Crisis Make Natives More Hostile? American Political Science Review, 113(2), 442-455. doi:10.1017/S0003055418000813

[17] Marlowe, J. (2017). Belonging and Transnational Refugee Settlement: Unsettling the Everyday and the Extraordinary (First edition.) (p. 77). Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315268958

[18] Ibid.

[19] Collinson, S., & Schenkenberg, E. (2019). UNHCR's leadership and coordination role in refugee response settings (p. 4(. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/5e3da94e4.pdf

[20] Lampropoulos, N. (2018, May 7). The EU's refugee crisis: Effective handling or botched up policy? www.euractiv.com. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/ep-and-refugee-crisis-superficial-approach-or-effective-handling/

[21] BouChabke, S., & Haddad, G. (2021). Ineffectiveness, Poor Coordination, and Corruption in Humanitarian Aid: The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon. Voluntas (Manchester, England), 32(4), 894–909. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-021-00366-2

[22] Garcia-Zamor, J.-C. (2017). The Global Wave of Refugees and Migrants: Complex Challenges for European Policy Makers. Public Organization Review, 17(4), 581–594. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-016-0371-1

[23] Panayotatos, D. (2022, February 24). The fallacy of control: Tightened asylum and reception policies undermine protection in Greece. Refugees International. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/2022/2/22/the-fallacy-of-control-tightened-asylum-and-reception-policies-undermine-protection-in-greece

[24] World Bank. (2022, September 30). Forced displacement. World Bank. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/forced-displacement

endure another crisis in the host countries that they seek for help and support, which is called 'protracted displacement'. According to the UNHCR, protracted displacement means "at least 25,000 refugees from the same country have been living in exile for more than five consecutive years."[25] Refugees in this situation often find themselves in a state of ambiguity: not only is it not secure for them to return to their home countries, but they also have not been granted permanent residence in another country.[26] Hence, protracted displacement appears to be a long-lasting situation of economic insecurity, marginalization, injustice, and future uncertainty experienced by displaced people after their initial displacement, compounded by endless and systematically denied options for both social and spatial mobility.[27]

Limited individual resources and diminishing social networks are a barrier to dealing with integration and settlement challenges. In many cases, newcomers' efforts to seek help are hampered by systemic barriers. Newcomers have wide-ranging unmet support needs that service providers are unable or ill-equipped to adequately address due to bureaucratic and resource constraints. Policies in various sectors affecting the lives of migrants and refugees are insufficient to address support gaps. These support gaps impede the successful settlement and integration of newcomers.[28][29] Besides the newcomers, programs offered to newcomers have not had the expected impact as service providers and policymakers face barriers such as restricted mandates, insufficient funding, lack of staff, and gaps in partnerships.[30] In this regard, the allocation of resources for refugees, the acceptance of foreign qualifications, the establishment of employment programs, the accelerating immigration processes, and ensuring access to support are necessities that need to be addressed by the governments[31] because socioeconomic inequalities have a negative impact on democracy.[32]

Migration can negatively impact political stability if the conflict between heterogeneous groups of people living in close proximity becomes entrenched due to the migration process. A high rate of immigration significantly decreases political stability.[33] The security dilemma faced by host countries becomes especially potent when there is doubt about the long-term consequences of migrant activities and when the 'aggressive' stance can be attributed to migrants' intentions.[34] The actions of migrants will be regarded as 'aggressive' if they do not return to their home country (and remain illegally) or if they bring their families (and friends) to increase their share of local resources and gain more political freedom.[35] Besides national

[25] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020, January 28). Protracted refugee situations explained. How to Help Refugees - Aid, Relief and Donations. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.unrefugees.org/news/protracted-refugee-situations-explained/

[26] Ibid.

[27] Etzold, B., & Fechter, A.M. (2022). Unsettling protracted displacement: connectivity and mobility beyond "Limbo." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 48(18), 4295–4312. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2090153

[28] Stewart, M., Anderson, J., Beiser, M., Mwakarimba, E., Neufeld, A., Simich, L., & Spitzer, D. (2008). Multicultural Meanings of Social Support among Immigrants and Refugees. International Migration, 46(3), 123–159. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2008.00464.x

[29] Fix, M., Hooper, K., & Zong, J. (2017). How are refugees faring? Integration at US and state levels. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.

[30] Al-Rousan, T., Schwabkey, Z., Jirmanus, L., & Nelson, B. D. (2018). Health needs and priorities of Syrian refugees in camps and urban settings in Jordan: perspectives of refugees and health care providers. East Mediterr Health J, 24(3), 243-53.

[31] Stewart, M., Anderson, J., Beiser, M., Mwakarimba, E., Neufeld, A., Simich, L., & Spitzer, D. (2008). Multicultural Meanings of Social Support among Immigrants and Refugees. International Migration, 46(3), 123–159. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2008.00464.x

[32] Lindberg, S. (2019, February 4). Are increasing inequalities threatening democracy in Europe? Retrieved March 11, 2023, from https://carnegieeurope.eu/2019/02/04/are-increasing-inequalities-threatening-democracy-in-europe-pub-78270

[33] Gebremedhin, T. A., & Mavisakalyan, A. (2013). Immigration and Political Stability. OECD. Retrieved March 11, 2023, from https://www.oecd.org/development/pgd/46923664.pdf

[34] Ibid.

[35] ALEXSEEV, M. A., & HOFSTETTER, C. R. (2006). Russia, China, and the Immigration Security Dilemma. Political Science Quarterly, 121(1), 1–32. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1538-165X.2006.tb00563.x

political instability, the refugee crisis leads to international social instability. "International instability results from states acting in their own self-interest; for example, when claims of human rights violations were made after Greece rejected masses of Syrian refugees, Turkey then also neglected integration programs, leading to a proliferation of conflicts."[36] If we define refugee management in terms of the problem of free riders, problems of cooperation can be solved if the public good of international stability is provided by a hegemonic power or if free riders are compelled to contribute.[37]

The Struggle for Political Representation: A Barrier to Refugee Engagement

There are very different levels of social and economic development across the world, and the different histories of states with the peoples they govern have a major influence on the political processes that are accepted.[38] "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphasizes that the will of the people is the basis of the authority of government."[39] Respect for human rights and freedoms and the principle of periodic and genuine elections are fundamental components of democracy. "Political and public participation is crucial to democratic governance, the rule of law, social inclusion and economic development, and the advancement of all human rights"[40] because participation rights are crucial for the empowerment of individuals and groups, which is necessary for the dismantlement of 'marginalization' and 'discrimination'.

Integrative democratization fosters an understanding of democracy as a social practice that can be seen as an important prerequisite for the process of integration and transforming an individual into a citizen.[41] Social groups emerge here as the basic cornerstone of democracy because they constitute the central actors of socialization.[42] Yet, concerns about the civic and political participation of refugees are mostly ignored because "refugees are often seen as passive recipients of humanitarian aid or collective subjects in respect of which measures must be taken, rather than as active political agents".[43] However, refugees have the potential to function as dual political actors, as they often become part of the host country's society while maintaining transnational ties with their homeland.[44]

One of the key challenges refugees face is the struggle for political representation. Refugees are often marginalized and excluded from political decision-making, rendering it difficult for them to participate in the democratic process or have a voice in their societies,

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[36] Kottou, E. (2023, January 24). International instability – born from the migration of refugees or a product of political aversion? The Yale Review of International Studies. Retrieved March 11, 2023, from http://yris.yira.org/comments/5966

[37] Ibid.

[38] Chatham House. (2023, February 16). Democracy and political participation. Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.chathamhouse.org/topics/democracy-and-political-participation

[39] United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2022, August 26). Democracy, right to participate and the electoral process. OHCHR. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.ohchr.org/en/topic/democracy-right-participate-and-electoral-process

[40] Ibid.

[41] European Commission. (2006, October 1). Civic and political participation recommendations for the integration of refugees and migrants in Europe. European Website on Integration. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/civic-and-political-participation-recommendations-integration-refugees-and_en

[42] Fuchs, D., & Zittel, T. (2007). Participatory democracy and political participation: can participatory engineering bring citizens back in? (D. Fuchs & T. Zittel, Eds.). Routledge.

[43] Adan, T. (2018). Political participation of refugees: Bridging the gaps - idea. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/political-participation-of-refugees-bridging-the-gaps.pdf

[44] Ibid.

which leads to the underrepresentation of refugees in society.[45] This situation is considered a major social problem, which is that in many countries, migrants are less likely to vote in elections than locals[46][47] and are underrepresented in important political bodies.[48]

There are various reasons why refugees find it difficult to obtain political representation. One of the main reasons is the lack of recognition of their legal status.[49] While legal citizenship at the national level is often the initial phase of legitimizing belonging, "empirical citizenship" is about transforming legal citizenship into "lived experience and meaning for ordinary people".[50] The interplay between legal and empirical citizenship is critical. Those without access to legal citizenship are unlikely to feel accepted and recognized in practice.[51] The inability to provide a positive legal path to citizenship exacerbates the isolation felt by long-term refugees in the host country.[52] Concerns about the "flood" of refugees which can disrupt the political status quo of the host country, lead to the emergence of arguments disfavoring allowing non-citizens to vote.[53] In this regard, the general opinion is based on the fact that the inclusion or exclusion of refugees from the political structure is determined by their ability to acquire citizenship.[54]

The integration of migrants into the host country begins in the labor market.[55] Working is the main source of income for migrants. Finding a job is, therefore very important for them, as they become a part of the economic fabric of the host country. This also helps them to find their place in society as a whole.[56] In addition to the contribution of finding a job to integrating into the economic structure of society, it affects the political representation situation of refugees.[57] "Those refugees who were able to enter the labor market relatively soon upon arrival tend to be less politically underrepresented over time."[58] In other words, individuals

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[45] Lindgren, K. O., & Österman, M. (2022). Opening a door to politics? Labour market entrance and political candidacy among refugees. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2069094

[46] Wass, H., Blais, A., Morin-Chassé, A., & Weide, M. (2015). Engaging Immigrants? Examining the Correlates of Electoral Participation among Voters with Migration Backgrounds. Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties, 25(4), 407–424. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2015.1023203

[47] de Rooij, E. A. (2012). Patterns of Immigrant Political Participation: Explaining Differences in Types of Political Participation between Immigrants and the Majority Population in Western Europe. European Sociological Review, 28(4), 455–481. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcr010

[48] Dancygier, R. M., Lindgren, K.O., Oskarsson, S., & Vernby, K. (2015). Why Are Immigrants Underrepresented in Politics? Evidence from Sweden. The American Political Science Review, 109(4), 703–724. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055415000404

[49] Adan, T. (2018). Political participation of refugees: Bridging the gaps - idea. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/political-participation-of-refugees-bridging-the-gaps.pdf

[50] Jackson, S. (2007). Of "Doubtful Nationality": Political Manipulation of Citizenship in the D. R. Congo. Citizenship Studies, 11(5), 481–500. https://doi.org/10.1080/13621020701605792

[51] Gebremedhin, T. A., & Mavisakalyan, A. (2013). Immigration and Political Stability. OECD. Retrieved March 11, 2023, from https://www.oecd.org/development/pgd/46923664.pdf

[52] Hovil, L. (2016). Refugees, Conflict and the Search for Belonging (1st ed. 2016.). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-33563-6

[53] Wallis, E. (2018, September 28). The 'voting rights gap' for refugees and migrants in the EU. InfoMigrants. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/12269/the-voting-rights-gap-for-refugees-and-migrants-in-the-eu

[54] Adan, T. (2018). Political participation of refugees: Bridging the gaps - idea. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/political-participation-of-refugees-bridging-the-gaps.pdf

[55] Clark, K., Garratt, L., Li, Y., Lymperopoulou, K., & Shankley, W. (2019). Local deprivation and the labour market integration of new migrants to England. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 45(17), 3260–3282. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1481000

[56] OECD/European Union (2015), Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In, OECD Publishing, Paris/European Union, Brussels, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264234024-en.

[57] Lindgren, K. O., & Österman, M. (2022). Opening a door to politics? Labour market entrance and political candidacy among refugees. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2069094

[58] Ibid (p. 12)

with higher labor market attachment experience less political underrepresentation, and this correlation exists for both women and men.

Language is another factor that can create a challenge for refugees in their political integration process.[59] There is a relation between language access, the politics of belonging, and the inclusion of refugees.[60] For example, language challenges and multiple pressures deriving from language challenges on women to behave in a particular way limit their ability to participate in community activities.[61] In this regard, knowledge of the language of the host country was found to be a significant barrier not only in expressing political demands but also in experiencing and understanding the local context and culture in order to actively engage in mainstream political participation.[62]

Exclusion and Marginalization: Challenges for Refugee Access to Healthcare, Education, and Housing

Refugees and asylum seekers rely on much humanitarian aid, such as housing, food, and healthcare; they also need access to education so that they can experience the associated socio-emotional and economic benefits.[63] Getting access to these humanitarian needs is defined by the UNHCR as the "Basic Needs Approach".[64] The UNHCR Results Framework identifies basic needs as "access to basic services and assistance such as health, nutrition, food, shelter, energy, education, as well as household goods and specialized services for people with special needs".[65] The approach also considers long-term prosperity, including needs related to conservation, "sustainable livelihoods and solutions".

Refugees and migrants often encounter poorer health outcomes in countries of transit and destination because of barriers such as language and cultural differences, institutional discrimination, and limited use of health services. "Social, political, and economic exclusion can result in poverty, homelessness, and exploitation which can lead to a higher risk of non-communicable diseases".[66] Especially, The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, particularly for certain populations in irregular situations, including refugees and

[59] Open Cultural Center. (2021, August 6). Language barriers and the importance of language learning for refugee and migrant communities in Europe. Open Cultural Center. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://openculturalcenter.org/language-barriers-and-the-importance-of-language-learning-for-refugee-and-migrant-communities-in-europe/

[60] Warriner, D. S. (2007). Language Learning and the Politics of Belonging: Sudanese Women Refugees Becoming and Being"American." Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 38(4), 343–359. https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.2007.38.4.343

[61] Change Institute. (2009). The National Archives. UK Government Web Archive. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/

[62] Ragab, N. J. (2018). Political participation of refugees - idea. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/political-participation-of-refugees-the-case-of-syrian-refugees-in-turkey.pdf

[63] Borg, N. (2020). "Chapter 10 Higher Education Innovations in Response to the Needs of Syrian Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Germany and Elsewhere". In Refugees and Higher Education. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004435841_010

[64] UNHCR. (2018). Basic needs approach in the refugee response - unhcr.org. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/blogs/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2018/05/Basic-Needs-Approach-in-the-Refugee-Response.pdf

[65] Ibid (p. 1).

[66] World Health Organization. (2022, May 2). Refugee and migrant health. World Health Organization. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/refugee-and-migrant-health

migrants.[67][68][69] The specific healthcare needs of refugees are poorly understood globally, as there is no effective, personalized communication between healthcare providers and refugees. In addition, there is generally inadequate responsiveness in health systems due to ill-preparedness, which is exacerbated by the medical problems refugees face in accessing health services.[70]

The significant reduction in the number of refugees resettled in host countries[71] shifts the focus from the provision of emergency services to longer-term development in displacement contexts.[72] The average duration of displacement for refugees is 10-15 years, so for young people, displacement is an important part of their lives.[73] Unfortunately, education is not accessible for many children and young people. According to the UNHCR data, at the pre-primary level, the average gross enrolment rate for reporting countries in the 2020-2021 academic year is 42 percent.[74] At the primary level, the corresponding rate for reporting countries is 68 percent.[75] At the secondary level, the corresponding rate is 37 percent, indicating that there are significant structural barriers to refugee students' access to post-primary education, such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of schools, qualified teachers, and learning materials.[76] Right to education is a fundamental right that needs to be provided for refugees to further their education.[77] Besides being a fundamental right, education also ensures skills that are transferable to different contexts[78], helps protect cultural traditions[79], encourages social inclusion[80], and brings a spirit of hope for the future[81]. Moreover, greater access to education is correlated with improved standards of living and livelihoods[82].

Migrants are especially vulnerable to human rights violations. The right to housing is among the most endangered rights. From the moment they enter the host society, migrants'

[67] US Global Leadership Coalition. (2022, April 13). Covid-19 brief: Impact on conflict & refugees. USGLC. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.usglc.org/coronavirus/conflict-and-refugees/

[68] World Health Organization. (2022, May 2). Refugee and migrant health. World Health Organization. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/refugee-and-migrant-health

[69] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022). Public health during COVID-19. UNHCR. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/health-covid-19.html

[70] Sherif, B., Awaisu, A., & Kheir, N. (2022). Refugee healthcare needs and barriers to accessing healthcare services in New Zealand: a qualitative phenomenological approach. BMC Health Services Research, 22(1), 1–1310. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-022-08560-8

[71] Connor, P., & Krogstad, J. M. (2020, August 20). For the first time, U.S. resettles fewer refugees than the rest of the world. Pew Research Center. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/05/for-the-first-time-u-s-resettles-fewer-refugees-than-the-rest-of-the-world/

[72] Crea, T. M., & Holdcroft S.J., D. A. (2020). "Chapter 2 Refugee Higher Education in Contexts of Displacement". In Refugees and Higher Education. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004435841_002

[73] Devictor, X., & Do, Q.-T. (2016). How many years have refugees been in exile? - world bank. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/549261472764700982/pdf/WPS7810.pdf

[74] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022). UNHCR Education Report 2022 - all inclusive the campaign for Refugee Education. UNHCR. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/631ef5a84/unhcr-education-report-2022-inclusive-campaign-refugee-education

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (1951). Convention and Protocol Relating to the status of refugees. UNHCR. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10

[78] Taylor, S., & Sidhu, R. K. (2012). Supporting refugee students in schools: what constitutes inclusive education? International Journal of Inclusive Education, 16(1), 39–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110903560085

[79] Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2011). Paradoxes of Sahrawi refugees' educational migration: promoting self-sufficiency or renewing dependency? Comparative Education, 47(4), 433–447. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2011.560710

[80] Oh, S., & van der Stouwe, M. (2008). Education, Diversity, and Inclusion in Burmese Refugee Camps in Thailand. Comparative Education Review, 52(4), 589–617. https://doi.org/10.1086/591299

[81] Crea, T. M. (2016). Refugee higher education: Contextual challenges and implications for program design, delivery, and accompaniment. International Journal of Educational Development, 46, 12–22. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2015.11.005

[82] Karlsson, L. E., Crondahl, K., Sunnemark, F., & Andersson, Å. (2013). The meaning of health, well-being, and quality of life perceived by roma people in west sweden. Societies (Basel, Switzerland), 3(2), 243–260. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc3020243

duties towards the host state are equal to those of the local population, as they are accountable to the laws of that society.[83] Refugees face a series of multi-layered regulations that have an impact on their ability to reside and move freely in the territory. This includes obligations to live and/or be present in certain municipalities and types of accommodation. Refugees' ability to have access to social and civil rights is linked to housing and residence.[84] "As well as being a fundamental human right, safe, secure and affordable housing plays a critical role in determining overall health and well-being and provides a base from which resettled refugees can seek employment, re-establish family relationships and make connections with the wider community."[85] There are some impediments to social and civil rights, such as free choice of housing, which apply particularly to different asylum statuses and differ not only from state to state but also between municipalities within the same state. This diversity leads to unequal treatment of refugees with the same legal status in different cities and states. The right to free settlement is subject to a range of restrictive regulations, difficult market conditions, and discriminatory housing market actors that make it extremely difficult for refugees to find housing. This is particularly the case in urban centers, where many vulnerable and low-income groups are excluded from the housing market.[86]

Democratic practice is the formal and informal institutional arrangements for collective decision-making and a wide range of deliberative decision-making processes that embody the core values of democracy in efforts to construct and maintain peace.[87] In order to build and strengthen democracy, social cohesion, as a strategic objective, needs to be combined with the "dimensions of sustainable development, trade and regional integration, human rights, employment, and technological development".[88] Adaptation should be addressed in three dimensions: i) providing opportunities for the development of human capabilities and social fabric to promote access to sustainable livelihoods; ii) empowering communities, municipalities and individuals to have a voice in issues affecting their quality of life and human rights; and iii) reducing the structural causes that create and entrench the vulnerability of the disadvantaged.[89] The necessity to focus on democracy from the dimension of rights - which also requires economic and political coalitions to reach an agreement on what measures are needed - makes it imperative to improve the organizational structure of the state so that it can rapidly deliver public services such as education, health, transport, energy, justice, security, housing, and food.[90]

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[83] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. (2010). Migration and the right to housing. OHCHR. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/migration-and-right-housing

[84] El-Kayed, N., & Hamann, U. (2018). Refugees' access to housing and residency in German cities: Internal border regimes and their local variations. Social Inclusion, 6(1), 135–146. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v6i1.1334

[85] UNHCR. (n.d.). Access to secure and affordable housing. UNHCR. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/ih/housing/access-secure-and-affordable-housing

[86] El-Kayed, N., & Hamann, U. (2018). Refugees' access to housing and residency in German cities: Internal border regimes and their local variations. Social Inclusion, 6(1), 135–146. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v6i1.1334

[87] International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. (2006). Democracy conflict and human security handbook - idea. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/democracy-conflict-and-human-security-handbook-volume-1.pdf

[88] Cuellar, R. (2009). Social Cohesion and Democracy - idea. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. Retrieved March 15, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/chapters/the-role-of-the-european-union-in-democracy-building/eu-democracy-building-discussion-paper-27.pdf

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

The Value of Refugee Perspectives: Contributions to Democracy

Effective democratic dialogue cannot function without respect for the cultural identities of the participants. If people from different backgrounds are not provided with the opportunity to be involved in this deliberation process, they will have no incentive or reason to support it and maintain their commitment to the democratic core values.[91] Refugees need this kind of social and political environment providing opportunities for them to be able to express themselves in a better and more transparent way and to contribute to the host society by exchanging their cultural, social, and political values. Multicultural democracies have the potential and capability to push refugees to be part of society because "multicultural democracy, simply put, incorporates socio-economic, cultural, and political diversity".[92] It encompasses individual differences, group differences, and the political community at the same time.[93] In this kind of democratic environment, refugees feel more comfortable and included; and the relations between refugees and democratic societies become reciprocal and complementary in many respects.

Refugees have crucial sources of information.[94] They can engage media and advocacy organizations abroad or communicate with people who are still in their home country. Refugees also bring critical perspectives on the regime from which they fled. In the relative safety of exile, they can speak more explicitly, engage more critically, and continue the criticisms and complaints abroad, which have been suppressed at home. Additionally, refugees can usefully complicate political narratives in host countries. They can bring light to the past and present connections between countries of origin and exile and how states that are currently shirking responsibility have led to the crises that drove refugees to flee. In doing so, refugees can reinvigorate anti-racist and anti-poverty movements in host societies, fostering transnational solidarity with and among other marginalized citizens struggling with the legacies of imperialism, racism, Islamophobia, and economic dispossession.[95]

Refugees prefer to move to a country that provides them with political, social, civil, and economic protection and rights. Therefore, they prefer to settle in democracies rather than in autocracies, which tend to generate high uncertainty about their rights and protection.[96] This reality is an indication of the value democracies and democratic institutions place on human rights, the rule of law, and freedom of speech, which increases the legitimacy of democracies in societies.[97] Democratic legitimacy in refugee reception requires the democratic inclusion of asylum seekers in decisions upon which their most fundamental interests hinge.[98] Democracies not only grant refugees formal participation rights but also adequate participation capabilities. In the case of asylum seekers or refugees from vulnerable minority backgrounds, this means

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[91] Tran, L.-V. N. (2001). Human Rights and Federalism: A Comparative Study on Freedom, Democracy and Cultural Diversity. Brill.

[92] Marri, A. R. (2003). Multicultural Democracy: Toward a better democracy. (p.263). Intercultural Education (London, England), 14(3), 263–277. https://doi.org/10.1080/1467598032000117060

[93] Parker, W. (1996). Curriculum for democracy. In: Soder, R. (Ed.) Democracy, Education, and the Schools, pp. 182–210. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[94] Vasanthakumar, A. (2022, March 18). How refugees strengthen democracy and Solidarity. New Statesman. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/03/how-refugees-strengthen-democracy-and-solidarity

[95] Ibid.

[96] Higashijima, M., & Woo, Y. J. (2020, August). Political regimes and refugee entries - V-dem. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.v-dem.net/media/publications/uwp_34_final.pdf

[97] Ebead, N., & McDonough, P. (2017). Migration, social polarization, citizenship and multiculturalism Chapter 7 - Idea. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.idea.int/gsod-2017/files/IDEA-GSOD-2017-REPORT-EN.pdf

[98] Kapelner, Z. (2020). Vulnerable minorities and democratic legitimacy in refugee admission. Ethics & Global Politics, 13(1), 50–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/16544951.2020.1735016

not only guaranteeing a minimum level of participation capabilities but also addressing inequalities in participation capabilities resulting from social injustice.[99]

In situations of prolonged violent conflict or widespread social displacement and repression, it is a common pattern for most people to search for safety in other countries and flee to these countries.[100] After moving, if exile continues and people consolidate themselves in the areas of refugee, lasting relationships will develop between these different places, which we can call the refugee diaspora.[101] The diaspora communities can help a country achieve soft power, which means "the ability to affect others by attraction and persuasion rather than just coercion and payment"[102] in the international arena and is often regarded as 'smart power'.[103] These communities can provide a unique contribution to the development of their homeland.[104] The European Union (EU) hosts 27.1 million refugees and 53.2 million internally displaced persons (due to conflict and violence) at the end of 2021.[105] In the future, it seems that the EU will have a huge diaspora. If these diasporas can transmit EU values (such as human dignity, democracy, freedom, and human rights)[106] to their home countries, they will spread these values and increase the soft power of the EU, which will contribute to democracy.

Refugees "have the potential to challenge hegemonic, taken-for-granted assumptions and contribute to "reframing" the dominant narratives of and widespread perspectives on migration and refugeehood in particular."[107] Considering refugees vulnerable, potential threats and all the other 'appropriate' roles we ascribe to them prevents us from seeing them as people with capabilities.[108] In order to reverse this narrative, emphasizing the positive contributions of migrants and refugees to society is needed.[109][110] Otherwise, the borders of the demos will be reconstructed by the xenophobic and brutal discourse of exclusionary and ethnocentric nationalism.[111] In this regard, integration and social cohesion should be ensured through the

[99] Ibid

[100] Van Hear, N. (2005). Refugee Diasporas or Refugees in Diaspora. In: Ember, M., Ember, C.R., Skoggard, I. (eds) Encyclopedia of Diasporas. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi-org.kuleuven.e-bronnen.be/10.1007/978-0-387-29904-4_60

[101] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2003). From durable solutions to transnational relations: Home and exile among Refugee Diasporas, Nicholas Van Hear. UNHCR. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/research/working/3e71f8984/durable-solutions-transnational-relations-home-exile-among-refugee-diasporas.html

[102] Nye, J. (2017). Soft power: the origins and political progress of a concept. Palgrave Commun 3, 17008. https://doi.org/10.1057/palcomms.2017.8

[103] Mohapatra, A., & Tripathi, A. (2021). Diaspora as a soft power in India's foreign policy towards Singapore, Diaspora Studies, 14(2), 161-178. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/09739572.2021.1935108

[104] Mitra, P. (2016). Addition by subtraction: How diasporas can boost home-country growth. IMF. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2016/05/18/addition-by-subtraction-how-diasporas-can-boost-home-country-growth

[105] European Commission. (n.d.). Statistics on migration to Europe. European Commission. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en#:~:text=Overall%20situation%20at%20end%20of%202021&text=27.1%20million%20refugees%20and,due%20to%20conflict%20and%20violence

[106] European Union. (n.d.). Aims and values. European Union. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values_en

[107] Mijić, A., & Parzer, M. (2023). Refugees' Arriving through the Lens of Fiction: Unveiling the Ambivalences of Hegemonic Expectations. (p. 1). Arts, 12(2), 55. https://doi.org/10.3390/arts12020055

[108] Bergholm, B. & Toivanen, R. (2022). Narratives on 'refugee knowledge' in the institutions of Europe. 10.4324/9781003092421-5.

[109] Tarawally, B. (2023, January 11). How to reset the migration narrative. VoxEurop. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://voxeurop.eu/en/how-reset-migration-narrative/

[110] Alrefai, R. (2019, November 5). Democracy and immigration - culture of fear. Open Government Partnership. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/democracy-and-immigration-culture-of-fear/

[111] DemDigest. (2019, November 19). How global refugee crisis challenges democracies. Democracy Digest. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from https://www.demdigest.org/how-global-refugee-crisis-challenges-democracies/

democratic political participation of refugees.[112] Through this participation, they are provided with inclusive spaces for engagement and conditions that they can both break the bad narratives about themselves and contribute to the internalization and embracement of democracy by refugees. Facilitating the participation of refugees in political negotiations leads these groups more likely to see themselves as shareholders in peacebuilding and reconstruction processes.[113]

Overcoming Barriers to Participation: Providing Resources and Support

Refugees commonly experience various barriers to their participation in society, as well as access to resources and support. Refugees with limited resources in terms of social networks, education, labor market experience, or socio-economic status are disadvantaged in accessing services compared to individuals with higher levels of these resources, which can be summarized as social and human capital.[114] "When faced with legal, financial, personal, housing, employment, or health needs as an outcome from post- and pre-migration stressors, professional services become important and valuable by providing support and assistance."[115] In general, refugees encounter problems in accessing services that will actually facilitate their settlement and integration.[116] Therefore, tackling these barriers is critical to the successful inclusion and integration of refugees into host societies.[117][118]

The first tackling method is to address education.[119] Having a higher education is correlated with a better understanding of the bureaucratic system in general[120], strengthening the respect for human rights and freedoms[121], and having a better awareness of existing rights and what services are available to refugees.[122] Additionally, education is positively associated "with non-cognitive skills, such as communication skills, self-efficacy, or motivation, as well

[112] European Comimssion. (2010, December 31). Promoting immigrants' democratic participation and Integration. European Website on Integration. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/promoting-immigrants-democratic-participation-and-integration_en

[113] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010). A review of refugee participation and the role of UNHCR in country of origin elections and other political processes. UNHCR News. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/4ca08d249.pdf

[114] Kosyakova, Y., & Brücker, H. (2020). Seeking asylum in germany: Do human and social capital determine the outcome of asylum procedures? European Sociological Review, 36(5), 663–683. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcaa013

[115] Heidinger, E. (2022). Overcoming Barriers to Service Access: Refugees' Professional Support Service Utilization and the Impact of Human and Social Capital. Journal of International Migration and Integration. (p.2). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00939-0

[116] Bernhard Thomas Streitwieser, Maria Anne Schmidt, Katharina Marlen Gläsener, & Lukas Brueck. (2018). Needs, Barriers, and Support Systems for Refugee Students in Germany. Global Education Review, 5(4), 135–157.

[117] World Health Organization. (2022, May 2). Refugee and migrant health. World Health Organization. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/refugee-and-migrant-health#:~:text=Refugees%20and%20migrants%20remain%20among,access%20to%20mainstream%20health%20services.

[118] Warnes, J. (2017, October 24). Update: 10 CWC challenges in the new face of the European refugee crisis. UNHCR Innovation. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/update-10-cwc-challenges-new-face-european-refugee-crisis/

[119] Nakhaie, M. R. (2018). Service Needs of Immigrants and Refugees. Journal of International Migration and Integration, 19(1), 143–160. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-017-0534-0

[120] Mood, C. (2006). Take-up down under: Hits and Misses of Means-Tested Benefits in Australia. European Sociological Review, 22(4), 443–458. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcl007

[121] Council of Europe. (n.d.). Introducing human rights education - manual for human rights education with young people - www.coe.int. Manual for Human Rights Education with Young people. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/introducing-human-rights-education#:~:text=Article%2026%20of%20the%20Universal,human%20rights%20and%20fundamental%20freedoms.

[122] Abrego, L. J. (2011). Legal Consciousness of Undocumented Latinos: Fear and Stigma as Barriers to Claims-Making for First- and 1.5-Generation Immigrants. Law & Society Review, 45(2), 337–370. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5893.2011.00435.x

as cognitive abilities like problem-solving, intelligence, verbal abilities, and memorizing."[123] These capabilities enhance the possibility of tackling various barriers to service utilization.[124]

The second tackling method is to have language proficiency.[125] Overcoming language barriers and achieving language proficiency are positively related to matching service needs and use. Language proficiency is not only necessary for benefitting from support services but for the whole integration process.[126] Understanding administrative language, articulating needs, and understanding service providers are essential features of successful service provision.[127] Additionally, having language proficiency can accelerate the integration into the job market and finding employment in the host countries.[128] In this regard, language and literacy classes should be increased and encouraged through non-formal or formal programs.[129]

The third method is to establish inter-ethnic networks.[130] Possessing a native network to the community in which one wishes to integrate can provide valuable insider and host community knowledge.[131] For example, mentoring programs with German natives increase refugees' language skills and overall participation in the host society.[132] Making use of cultural knowledge and being able to communicate with friends whose subjects are specific to the language, culture, and bureaucratic system can increase the utilization of services in all areas. Hence, having an interethnic network is positively and significantly related to service utilization regardless of the service area.[133]

The last method is to increase getting the assistance of and assisting non-governmental organizations (NGOs).[134][135] "NGOs are assisting refugees and migrants in Europe and globally, in particular through humanitarian assistance in refugee camps or other accommodation for migrants, medical and psychological support, educational services, or legal assistance and

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[123] Heidinger, E. (2022). Overcoming Barriers to Service Access: Refugees' Professional Support Service Utilization and the Impact of Human and Social Capital. Journal of International Migration and Integration. (p.6). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00939-0

[124] Ibid.

[125] Migration Yorkshire. (2023, January 5). Barriers to refugee participation. Migration Yorkshire. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/refugee-integration-yorkshire-and-humber/our-toolkits/refugee-participation-toolkit/what-you-need-know/barriers-refugee-participation

[126] Heidinger, E. (2022). Overcoming Barriers to Service Access: Refugees' Professional Support Service Utilization and the Impact of Human and Social Capital. Journal of International Migration and Integration. (p.6). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00939-0

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

[129] UNESCO. (2019). Language And Literacy Programmes For Migrants And Refugees: Challenges And Ways Forward. Unesdoc.unesco.org. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266077

[130] Heidinger, E. (2022). Overcoming Barriers to Service Access: Refugees' Professional Support Service Utilization and the Impact of Human and Social Capital. Journal of International Migration and Integration. (p.6). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00939-0

[131] Lazega, E., Snijders, T. A. B., & Wittek, R. P. M. (2022). Inter-ethnic relationships in social networks and their effect on the resilience of ethnically diverse societies. In A Research Agenda for Social Networks and Social Resilience. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

[132] Jaschke, P., Löbel, L.-M., Krieger, M., Legewie, N., Kroh, M., Jacobsen, J., & Schacht, D. (2022). Mentoring as a grassroots effort for integrating refugees - evidence from a randomised field experiment. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 48(17), 4085–4105. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2058918

[133] Heidinger, E. (2022). Overcoming Barriers to Service Access: Refugees' Professional Support Service Utilization and the Impact of Human and Social Capital. Journal of International Migration and Integration. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00939-0

[134] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (1994). Refugees Magazine issue 97 (ngos and UNHCR) - ngos: Our right arm. UNHCR. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://www.unhcr.org/publications/refugeemag/3b53fd8b4/refugees-magazine-issue-97-ngos-unhcr-ngos-right-arm.html

[135] Council of Europe. (2020, September 7). Rights and obligations migrants in Europe of ngos. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/MIG/Pdf/TextesProvisoires/2020/20200907-MigrantsObligationsNGOs-EN.pdf

translation services before administrations and courts."[136] Additionally, NGOs bear increasing responsibility for social, political, and economic development.[137] In this regard, strengthening the role of NGOs in social integration and facilitating cooperation with labor offices.[138]

Conclusion: Advancing Democracy through Inclusion and Support for Refugees

Democracy is based on principles of individual freedom, the rule of law, equality, and respect for human rights. In this regard, an individual has the utmost importance in democracies. Democratic societies offer people an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process in society while protecting the rights of each person. Yet, the concepts of refugee and democracy have a complex relationship because refugees can encounter inclusion, integration, and participation problems. The displacement and marginalization of refugees can lead to problems such as exclusion and xenophobia by local people in these societies.

There are some fundamental challenges that refugees pose to democratic governance. The sheer scale of the global refugee crisis can overwhelm democratic principles, as anti-immigrant sentiments and conceptualizations can result in social fragmentation. The refugee crisis also creates a problem for the institutions responsible for caring for refugees in terms of coordination issues. When we think of this situation with the factors of limited individual resources and diminishing social networks, migration can trigger political stability.

Political representation is significant for democratic governance because it enables people to be empowered, which paves the way for the eradication of discrimination. In this regard, refugees need to be politically engaged and get political participation. Yet, since they are excluded from political decision-making; suffer from the lack of recognition of their legal status; face challenges in integration into the labor market; do not know the language of the host country, they face some challenges in political participation.

Refugees are generally in need of housing, food, education, and health care. They often face worse health outcomes in transit and destination countries due to barriers such as language, cultural differences, and institutional discrimination. Education is also not accessible for many of them. They lack housing due to the multi-layered regulations affecting their ability to reside and move freely in the territory. In order to address these basic needs of refugees, providing opportunities for the development of human capabilities, empowering communities, municipalities, and individuals to be involved in issues affecting the quality of life and human rights issues of refugees, and reducing the structural causes of vulnerability of disadvantaged groups are required.

Although refugees are often perceived only as passive recipients of humanitarian assistance, refugees can provide a contribution to democracy through integrative democratization practice. In this regard, refugees can have very important sources of information. They can connect with media and advocacy organizations abroad or contact people still in their home countries. Their preferences in settlement to generally democratic

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[136] Ibid (p.1)

[137] Tshiyoyo, M. (2023). The Changing Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations in Development in South Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. Global Perspectives on Non-Governmental Organizations. doi: 10.5772/intechopen.107015

[138] European Commission. (n.d.). Increasing the role of ngos in the social integration of labour migrants in the Czech Republic. European Website on Integration. Retrieved March 17, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practice/increasing-role-ngos-social-integration-labour-migrants-czech-republic_en

societies indicate the value of democracies that give to human rights issues, which promote the legitimacy of democracies. Additionally, refugees have the potential to challenge hegemonic, taken-for-granted narratives and contribute to the "reframing" of these dominant narratives, especially about refugees.

In order to deal with all these problems, education is a must in terms of understanding the bureaucratic system and improving the respect for human rights and freedoms. Learning the language of the host country is important, especially for understanding administrative language, articulating needs, and understanding service providers. Having inter-ethnic networks is another way to facilitate integration and inclusion. Lastly, the active involvement of NGOs to provide assistance can help both strengthen the role of NGOs and accelerate the meeting of the basic needs of refugees. Through these solutions ways, barriers that refugees face can be overcome in proper manners.

SOLIDARITY WITH OTHERS

BELGIUM

2023