

Immigrant and Refugee Policies, Politics, and Spaces of Integration

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Abstract

Despite the growing refugee populations and increasingly protracted displacement situations, there has been limited scholarly attention on the connection between gender and the three primary durable solutions to refugee situations: voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement. Women refugees are disproportionately exposed to risks such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), forced marriage, and limited access to education, health services, and livelihood opportunities. Moreover, many LGBTQI+ refugees encounter various forms of mistreatment and aggression during transit and in their host nations. Even though the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration in 2018 highlighted the urgent need for sustainable solutions for refugees and acknowledged the role of gender in influencing experiences and access to these solutions, these acknowledgements remain insufficient. In this sense, this paper investigates the impact of gendered power imbalances on perceptions, accessibility, and experiences of long-term displacement resolutions. It critically evaluates the taken-for-granted presuppositions on gender embedded within the 'malestream' international refugee regime from a feminist perspective. Also, employing an intersectional lens, the study investigates the interplay between gender and other identity aspects and power structures, encompassing race, nationality/citizenship, age, social class, sexual orientation, and more. By exploring gendered encounters with durable solutions both in real-life situations and within policy documents, this paper ultimately aims to present policy recommendations.

Biography

Irmak Kurtulmuş holds a BA with an honors degree in Political Science and International Relations from Bogazici University and an MA degree with distinction from Sabancı University. Her interests lie in humanitarianism, forced migration, migration governance, refugee regimes in Middle Eastern countries, comparative politics, political sociology, and identity. Her main interests have developed out of her professional experiences within the humanitarian field, working with several top national and international organizations in Turkey. Currently, she is a Ph.D. candidate in the Policy Studies program, specializing in Immigration, Settlement, and Diaspora Policies, at Toronto Metropolitan University. She has been funded by the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration for her doctoral studies at TMU.