Call for Papers

Exploring the Dimensions of Refugee Inclusion:
Social Structures, Institutions and Strategies

Date: Thursday 28th and Friday 29th of November, 2019
Place: Consulate-General of the Netherlands, Istiklal Caddesi 197, Beyoğlu, Istanbul, Turkey
Organizers: Maissam Nimer and Jannes Tessmann (2018/19 Mercator-IPC Fellows)

Confirmed Keynote Speakers: Prem Kumar Rajaram (CEU) and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (UCL)

Background
Political, economic, and societal actors shape the processes through which refugees become part of the receiving society, including in education, the labor market, or health system. While state actors remain crucial in creating the legal and administrative structures that permit or deny refugees access to rights, state power is being progressively redeployed in favor of multi-level governance processes affecting refugee inclusion. Transnational and international organizations then become key actors in shaping governance agendas and financing public services, which are often implemented and administered by NGOs and local municipalities. Furthermore, economic actors, such as private enterprises or trade organizations, play a role in integrating refugee workers into their local and global production networks.

At the micro level, the perceptions, interests, and strategies of refugees themselves play a crucial role regarding their access to education, employment, and wider social services. Beyond the liberal discourse of the new migrant as a useful and adaptable worker as well as the logic of victimization prevalent in NGO’s interventionism, refugees are also active providers of support and solidarity and creators of networks and shared spaces. From this perspective, it is crucial to examine how migrants develop processes of inclusion and participation from the bottom up.

While these various levels interact in complex ways, they may be mutually reinforcing or contradicting each other in line with an orientation towards the composite and impure character of governance. For example, states may seek alliance with certain NGOs to include civil society into the process of refugee inclusion. In contrast, uncertain regulatory frameworks in between national and international bodies of law, characterized by the overall lack of transparency and unpredictability, may similarly hinder processes of inclusion. Further, migrants’ strategies, practices, and desires continue to clash with logistical rationalities of the governance systems and state infrastructure that manage the inclusion of refugees into the labor market, while refugees struggle to translate their body power into valued labor.

Hence, recent literature highlights the agency of refugees within wider macro-social structures based on ideologies, religion, class, gender, or ethnicity. This has been accompanied by an emerging view of migration as a creative force within economic and social structures beyond the duality between the new economics of migration versus humanitarianism.
Conference Targets
This conference aims to explore the structural, institutional, and strategic determinants of refugee inclusion into various domains of host societies. We welcome applicants working on the overarching topic of refugee inclusion in the context of forced migration focusing on but not limited to Turkey and the Eastern Mediterranean region. In particular, we invite theoretical and empirical contributions that reflect on one or more of the following questions:

- How do political, economic, and societal structures and institutions shape the inclusion of refugees into different domains of host societies?
- How does the strategic agency of refugees shape their social, economic, and cultural participation in host societies, and how does it impact governance mechanisms at different levels?
- How do different levels of refugee governance interact with each other, and how is power distributed among different actors?
- What are possible disparities, contradictions, as well as types of cooperation and competition between different scales of refugee inclusion (transnational, national, local, and individual, among others)?

Applicants are invited to submit an abstract of max. 250 words and a short bio of max. 250 words (in English). Abstracts should be sent to: migrationcon@sabanciuniv.edu

Registration Timeline
Abstract submission deadline: August 15, 2019
Notification of accepted papers: September 15, 2019
If you would like to attend, please register by November 25, 2019:
https://forms.gle/4qbp4bKwwucCbuwU6

There are limited funds available to help defray the costs of participants. The funds will be disbursed as fairly as possible. Priority will be given to students and independent researchers. If you do not receive travel support from any institution and would like to apply for a travel subsidy, please provide a total estimate for travel and accommodation cost required to attend the conference as you submit your abstract.


