



RSC Director, Professor Alexander Betts, on Amanpour, CNN International, January 2016

A note from the Acting Director



As 2016 began, the new UN High Commissioner for Refugees, RSC Honorary Associate, Filippo Grandi, took office, and the RSC has extended to him its warmest congratulations. We last welcomed Filippo to the RSC in July 2015, when he gave an inspiring closing lecture for our Summer School participants.

2016 will see several major international conferences and meetings on refugee protection. Alexander Betts attended the London Syria Donors Conference on 4 February. On 30 March, there is a UNHCR conference on resettlement and other legal pathways for those fleeing the Syrian conflict. The World Humanitarian Summit takes place in Istanbul in May, and in September, there will be a UN Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, to be held in the General Assembly. Crucial decisions are being taken about the future of refugee protection. The role of research and academic expertise in informing these processes is important, and RSC scholars are engaged in various ways.

In a busy term, we welcome three Visiting Fellows – Stephanie Motz, Sébastien Moretti and Chiara Cipolletti – who are working on disability and the refugee definition, refugee protection in South East Asia, and nationality law. We are currently hiring two Research Officers and two Junior Research Fellows. We have also received a record number of applications for the MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies next year.

Forthcoming RSC events include an international gathering on 14–15 April at All Souls College to mark the retirement of Professor Guy Goodwin-Gill. On 4 May, the Annual Elizabeth Colson lecture will be given by Séverine Autesserre of Columbia University. The RSC is also working with Oxford City of Sanctuary and the national City of Sanctuary movement to host a conference on integration and belonging, which aims to provide a bridge between research, advocacy and protection.

Cathryn Costello

Andrew W Mellon Associate Professor of International Human Rights and Refugee Law

Destination Europe: the refugee crisis

The refugee crisis, particularly in relation to Syria, continues to dominate the news in Europe, as the numbers of refugees arriving, dying in the Mediterranean, and trying to leave Syria increase, and European leaders continue to argue over responses. The crisis features heavily in the work of the RSC this term.

The EU response to the crisis is the subject of our Public Seminar Series. The series, titled 'Destination: Europe', has been convened by Professor Cathryn Costello and Stephanie Motz, a Visiting Study Fellow at the RSC this term. It examines the causes and consequences of the current 'crisis' for European integration, European values and the global refugee protection regime. The series complements the latest issue of *Forced Migration Review*, also titled Destination: Europe, which has a full 43 articles on this theme, including from authors such as François Crepeau, Volker Türk and Elizabeth Collett.

RSC researchers have continued to actively engage with the media, endeavouring to stimulate more informed and wide-ranging debate. The RSC Director, Professor Alexander Betts, has written articles for *The Observer* and *Foreign Affairs*, and been interviewed at length on CNN's Amanpour, on issues ranging from development-based approaches to the crisis such as special economic zones to benefit both refugee and host populations; to the 'elephant in the room' of Islamophobia; to the consequences of the polarization of the debate between extremes of right and left; to the compartmentalised way in which many global issues, such as displacement, are approached, meaning connections and opportunities for solutions are missed. The RSC was also host to BBC Radio 4's *The World Tonight* in the autumn, for a programme on immigration and social cohesion.

Despite being on parental leave this term, the Director has been very active, attending meetings such as the recent Supporting Syria Conference in London and the Solutions Alliance Roundtable in Brussels.

Meanwhile Emeritus Professor Dawn Chatty convened a December workshop at the RSC on 'Refuge from Syria', one outcome of which was a set of policy recommendations circulated ahead of the Supporting Syria conference. She also attended the Supporting Syria civil society event on 3 February in London, and has spoken on BBC South Today about the Syrian refugee crisis.

Read more: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/news

Refugee from Syria



In December, this one-day workshop was held to bring together researchers and practitioners to present findings from recent research into the perceptions, aspirations and behaviour of refugees from Syria, host community members, and practitioners in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Emeritus Professor Dawn Chatty presented her British Academy funded research, alongside other researchers including Eduardo Chemin (Çağ Üniversitesi, Turkey), Filippo Dionigi (LSE) and Annika Rabo (Stockholm University). Also presenting were Oxfam's Sally Abi Khalil (Policy Advisor, Lebanon) and Valentina Bacchin (Lebanon Protection Coordinator), and from UNHCR Shaden Khallaf (UNHCR Regional Office, Amman).

Presentations and discussions focused on issues such as education, social cohesion, sustainability, and impact on host communities and infrastructure.

One outcome of the workshop is a set of policy recommendations, circulated ahead of the conference 'Supporting Syria and the Region' on 4 February in London.

The workshop was also livestreamed and is available to view online.

For more details visit:

www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/refuge-from-syria

The politics of the Syrian refugee crisis

With over 10 million displaced Syrians, including over 4 million refugees, the Syrian refugee crisis is the most significant for a generation. Despite European focus on those crossing the Mediterranean, the overwhelming majority of those Syrians are in neighbouring countries in the region. These host countries have been overwhelmed and the political willingness to provide indefinite asylum is under threat.

In this context, Alexander Betts is leading a new research project that seeks to understand the politics of responses by the main host states of first asylum: Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey. Although we already know a lot about these governments' basic positions at the capital city level, there is a lot more to understand at the local level. For example, how do municipal or district level authorities shape responses, and what potential opportunities does this open up? Understanding how interests and power relations have played out at a micro-political level can open up new diplomatic channels to enhance protection space.

To take an example in Jordan, in the governorate of Mafraq a series of opportunities to integrate Syrian refugees into local labour



Syrian refugees near Zahle, Lebanon © UNHCR/S Tarling

markets have emerged as a result of local political dynamics.

Funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the 1-year project will be based on fieldwork in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, working together with a number of local partners. It will seek to inform policy responses that can enhance protection space for displaced Syrians within the region of origin.

Read more about the RSC's research at:

www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research

The RSC is expanding

At this time of heightened interest in refugee issues, the RSC is in a period of expansion. We will be taking on four new researchers in the very near future.

Two Research Officers will be employed to work on the above project on the politics of the Syrian refugee crisis, with the RSC Director Alexander Betts.

We are also seeking two Junior Research Fellows. One will focus on the Economics of Forced Migration, and build on emerging

strengths at the RSC such as the existing 'Refugee Economies' research. The second will focus on Global Refugee Policy, as the RSC launches a new Centre-wide project called 'Rethinking Refuge'. Both of these posts will be for 2 years. We look forward to welcoming these new researchers to our team.

For details on vacancies at the RSC visit:

<http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/about/vacancies>

Colson Lecture 2016



This year's Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture will be given by Séverine Autesserre, Associate Professor of Political Science at Barnard College, Columbia University. The lecture will focus on **'Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention'**.

Dr Autesserre works on civil wars, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, and African politics. Before becoming an academic, she worked for humanitarian and development agencies in Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nicaragua and India.

The lecture will be held on Wednesday 4 May at Queen Elizabeth House.

Further information and registration details:

www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/colson2016

What if we helped refugees to help themselves?

In the autumn Alexander Betts gave a passionate talk at TEDxVienna addressing some of the common misconceptions about refugees, and the problems with the EU response to the current refugee influx.

He describes the situation of many refugees in protracted displacement situations, spending many years in camps with little hope or opportunities for work or education. In contrast he highlights Uganda's treatment of refugees. Here refugees have the right to work and some freedom of movement. They are engaged economically, in diverse ways, with local, national and even international economies. They are setting up businesses, employing others including Ugandans.

Betts goes on to highlight lessons from Uganda for other countries, such as Jordan which is currently home to over 600,000



refugees but does not give them the right to work.

He ends by calling on the audience to "rethink refugees not just as vulnerable victims... but as people with capacities, as people with potential if we invest in them and support them, to teach us many things, and contribute to our economies and our societies."

Watch the talk here:

www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/tedxvienna

Forced Migration Review

In the news and looking for feedback

With the latest issue of FMR focusing on the current migration 'crisis' in Europe, FMR has been getting more attention than usual on Twitter...

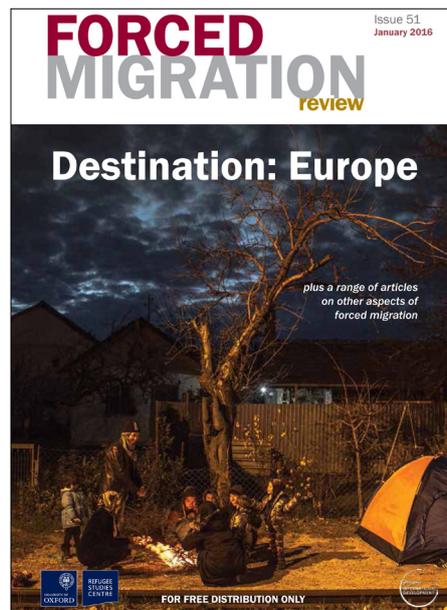
- On the very top of the reading list of early 2016: Forced Migration Review 51 - Destination Europe
- Excellent from @FMReview on the disparate manifestations of the 'migration crisis' – essential reading
- Worth a read: Migrant arrivals and deaths in the Mediterranean: what do data really tell us? @FMReview
- Thanks to @FMReview an outstanding FMR special issue on migration to Europe.

Europe is experiencing the mass movements of displaced people in a way that it has largely been immune from for decades. Alongside the disparate manifestations of the 'crisis' – the border fences, the deaths at sea, the political bickering – we also see an upsurge of grass-roots compassion, solidarity and assistance to those whose human suffering constitutes the reality behind the rhetoric.

The authors of this issue's 43 articles on 'Destination: Europe' throw legal, practical, moral and experiential light on a variety of the multifarious issues and manifestations that make up this 'crisis'.

FMR issue 51 also includes five 'general' articles on other aspects of forced migration: economic reintegration of returnees in Liberia, development-induced displacement in China, RSD in Albania, the right to work in Ecuador, and the impact of personal contact with 'the face of refugees'.

The issue is available online in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, at: www.fmreview.org/destination-europe



For print copies, please email the Editors.

Forthcoming issues:

- 'Thinking ahead: displacement, transition and solutions', due out May
- 'Local communities: first and last providers of protection', due out September

Details at www.fmreview.org/forthcoming

How will FMR look in the future?

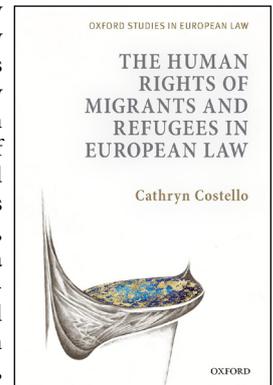
Over recent years we have changed the ways we publish and distribute FMR. Now we want to know whether there are any further helpful changes we could make. Would you take 5 minutes to answer 5 questions in our survey at <http://tinyurl.com/FMR-Survey>? We would be very grateful – and we will report back on the results. Thank you!

Marion & Maurice, FMR Co-Editors
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New publications

The Human Rights of Migrants and Refugees in European Law (OUP, 2016)

Oxford University Press recently published this volume by Professor Cathryn Costello. Part of the acclaimed Oxford Studies in European Law, it contributes a scholarly analysis of EU and ECHR migration and refugee law, including key EU



legislative measures, the Court of Justice's main rulings, and related European Court of Human Rights case law.

To claim a 30% discount, order online from the Oxford University Press website, adding promotion code ALAUTHC4 to your shopping basket. The discount is valid until 31 March 2017. Limit 10 copies per transaction, non-trade customers only. This discount does not apply to the eBook. Visit: www.oup.com/uk/law

Journal articles

The normative terrain of the global refugee regime

Alexander Betts (2015) *Ethics & International Affairs*, 29 (4)

Open wallet, closed doors: exploring Japan's low acceptance of asylum seekers

Naohiko Omata (2015) *Migration Information Source*

Economic reintegration of returnees in Liberia

Naohiko Omata & Noriko Takahashi (2016) *Forced Migration Review*, 51

Working Papers

Forced migration in the 'First World': questioning the logics of a humanitarian concept

Anna Wherry, RSC Working Paper 110, December 2015

Assessing economic impacts of hosting refugees: conceptual, methodological and ethical gaps

Naohiko Omata and Nina Weaver, RSC Working Paper 111, December 2015

Dilemmas of representation: organisations' approaches to portraying refugees and asylum seekers

Mackenzie Green, Andonis Marden, Maira Seeley, and Kristiina Wells, RSC Working Paper 112, December 2015

Further details: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications

RSC Research in Brief

This autumn we launched our new Research in Brief series, presenting concise and engaging summaries of RSC research. Four briefings are now available.

The first in the series focuses on **Bottom-Up Humanitarian Innovation**, which aims to enable aid agencies to support the creativity and skills of affected populations. Written by Louise Bloom, it provides findings

from research in Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, Jordan, and the USA.

The second briefing, on **Refugee Economies**, is written by Alexander Betts and Naohiko Omata. It reports on research in Uganda into the economic lives of refugees, how refugees' economic lives are distinctive from others, and what explains the variation in economic

outcomes for refugees.

The ongoing **Syrian humanitarian crisis** is the subject of the third briefing, by Dawn Chatty. This provides research findings on the perceptions, aspirations and behaviour of refugees, host communities and practitioners in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.

Finally, the latest briefing, by Martin Lemberg-Pedersen and Dawn Chatty, documents the institutional dynamics of the **European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors (ERPUM)**, a pilot project that was discontinued in June 2014.

All briefs are available at: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications

