

Upcoming Meetings & Events

WORLD REFUGEE WEBINAR – JUNE 17

On June 17 at 2 pm EDT, Catholic Charities and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will host a webinar titled “World Refugee Day: Refugees in the Time of COVID-19.” For more information and to register, email cross@catholiccharitiesusa.org.

USCRI WORLD REFUGEE DAY EVENTS

USCRI field offices are hosting a number of events for World Refugee Day. Please go to field office Facebook pages and websites for more information.

STORIES BEYOND BORDERS– JUNE 18

On Thursday, June 18 at 7 PM EDT, Women Advance will host a film viewing of five short films that show a more complete picture of the attacks on immigrant families and communities. Beyond building empathy, these films lift up real stories of resilience and strength, while illustrating some of the ways people can give their time, energy, and resources to support organizing led by immigrant communities. The films will be followed by a panel discussion. To register and for more information, click [here](#).



Every Action Counts: Dismantling LGBTQIA+ Migrant Invisibility in the Context of Pride Month and World Refugee Day

By Kelly Ann Whelan

June 20, 2020, is the 19th official World Refugee Day celebrated since the United Nations General Assembly formalized the day in Resolution 55/76. 2020’s theme is “Every Action Counts.” According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), this theme is meant to highlight how the COVID-19 and anti-racism protests “have shown us how desperately we need to fight for a more inclusive and equal world: a world where no one is left behind.”

This includes the LGBTQIA+ population in forced migration.

June also is LGBTQIA+ Pride Month. LGBTQIA+ migrants are among the most vulnerable and have specific protection needs, yet due to the persecution and cultural stigmas they face, they often remain invisible. Throughout their journeys to safety and well-being, LGBTQIA+ individuals face unique challenges at every stage, even where they are meant to be protected.

While the needs and issues of female and child migrants have recently begun to be addressed globally, there have been very few efforts to ensure the rights of those of the LGBTQIA+ population in forced migration, a group expressly provided for in the 1951 Geneva Convention. And, while governments, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have established some guidance on LGBTQIA+ migrants, it is generally left on the shelf collecting dust when it comes to identification, training of those involved, and protection.

In this brief, we discuss the background of why LGBTQIA+ individuals migrate, the challenges they face, and what can be done moving forward to ensure the protection of this vulnerable population.

Read this week’s full brief [here](#).

this issue

Every Action Counts: Dismantling LGBTQIA+ Migrant Invisibility in the Context of Pride Month and World Refugee Day **P.1**

Issue Updates **P.2**

Time Machine **P.3**

Global Gigabyte **P.3**

USCRI COVID-19 RESOURCES

[Nonprofit Organizations and the CARES Act](#)

[COVID-19 Bill #1: Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act \(March 6\)](#)

[COVID-19 Bill #2: Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(March 18\)](#)

[COVID-19 Bill #3: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act \(March 28\)](#)

[COVID-19 Bill #4: Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act \(April 23, 2020\)](#)

[Executive Order: Suspension of Immigration Following COVID-19 Outbreak \(April 23\)](#)

[Flores Enforcement Actions and COVID-19 \(April 27\)](#)

[The HEROES Act \(May 12, 2020\)](#)

[The Impact of COVID-19 in Refugee Camps \(June 9, 2020\)](#)

• Fourth Circuit Dismisses Challenge to Administration's Travel Ban

On Monday, June 8, a three-judge panel of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the dismissal of a lawsuit challenging Presidential Proclamation 9465. With the proclamation, which extended a prior executive order, nationals from ten countries were forbidden to enter the United States. The appellants retain the possibility of an en-banc review by the entire Fourth Circuit. Read the ruling [here](#).

• ACLU Files Two Lawsuits Challenging Border Closure

On Tuesday, June 9, the American Civil Liberties Union filed the first of two lawsuits that challenge an Administration policy to close the border to asylum seekers. The policy has used a power to quarantine found in section 42 of the U.S. Code to deny access to protection to asylum seekers, including children who have additional rights under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. The cases were filed in conjunction with the Center for Gender and Refugee Studies and Oxfam America. Read the complaint from *J.B.B.C v Wolf* [here](#) and read the complaint from *G.Y.J.P v. Wolf* [here](#).

• GAO Concludes CBP Broke Law to Spend on Dirt Bikes Instead of Migrant Care

On Thursday, June 11, the U.S. Government Accountability Office released its decision on whether U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) had properly used dedicated funds allocated by Congress. GAO concluded that "CBP violated the purpose statute" by diverting funds for food and medical care for migrants in CBP custody to other uses, including dirt bikes and dog food. The decision came after an audit requested by a member of Congress. Read the decision [here](#).

• EOIR Updates Adjudication Guidance Related to COVID-19

On Thursday, June 11, the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) released an updated guidance for operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance covers building access, email filings, court practices and more. Read the guidance [here](#).

• Administration Proposed Regulation Would Dramatically Curtail Asylum

On Monday, June 15, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ) released a draft rule on "Procedures for Asylum and Withholding of Removal; Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear Review." The proposed regulation eliminates most asylum protections on the basis of gender, gang coercion or persecution, as well as for asylum seekers who have spent more than 14 days in transit and those who have worked without authorization. Read the proposed regulation [here](#).

USCRI Time Machine

*This week's Time Machine turns to USCRI's 1999 report *The Wall of Denial: Internal Displacement in Turkey*. It highlights tensions and grievances of a minority group that state policy brushes off or denies.*

"For many Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin, the Kemalist strategy has succeeded. Today, about half of Turkey's Kurds live outside the southeast. It is often observed that the largest Kurdish cities in Turkey are Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara. It is common to find people of Kurdish origin in Turkey who do not speak Kurdish, and many are fully integrated into Turkish society. Fully assimilated people of Kurdish origin, including former President Turgut Özal (who claimed to be of partial Kurdish ancestry) and Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin, have risen to the highest ranks within the Turkish state."

"On the other hand, some Kurds outside the southeast, including displaced persons, contend that they are discriminated against, and treated with suspicion and as second-class citizens, a claim that ethnic Turks often react to with great offense..."

"It is difficult even to broach the subject of internal displacement in Turkey, let alone to do anything to provide for the welfare and safety of the displaced. A wall of denial isolates the displaced from their own society and from the world at large. Denial extends to the existence of a Kurdish problem at all. As the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly delegation found, 'Most government representatives, as well as several others, expressed a belief that the 'Kurdish problem' does not exist. The problem, according to them, is terrorism.' Denial covers nearly every aspect of the problem: Kurds are not a minority; they don't speak a cohesive language; there is no discrimination; there is no forced displacement. As evident from this paper, the Turkish government itself is the principal architect of the wall of denial."

"But the wall is constructed with the help of an international system that finds it convenient to look the other way. Turkish denial is too often met with silent acquiescence from Turkey's trade and security partners due to its strategic importance to other governments. Turkey, sensitive to any criticism of its treatment of the Kurds, loudly proclaims its displeasure when international actors take an interest in this internal affair. Governments and other bodies that want to maintain good relations with Turkey see the Kurdish question as a litmus test. Those who defend the Kurds are accused of supporting the PKK, of being unwitting or active accomplices of terrorism. Weighing the relative value of good relations with the Kurds or with Turkey, international actors sometimes re-main silent when Turkey commits abuses, such as forced displacement."

"Another brick in the wall is the UN system's limitations in dealing with governments that deny a problem exists and do not request international assistance. Only in the rarest of circumstances has the UN system overcome the barrier of sovereignty to come to the aid of an uprooted population within a country whose government denies the problem and refuses international assistance."

Global Gigabyte

The Italian government has passed a law that will allow around 200,000 undocumented workers to apply for residency permits.

The scheme opened on June 1 and will remain open until mid-July. Estimates put the total undocumented population in Italy at around 600,000. While the program is limited to migrants working in certain economic sectors—especially agriculture—it marks a rapid shift from recent anti-migrant policies under the prior government. Workers may apply on their own or through an employer. The bill granting status also includes sanitation measures meant to ensure that migrants are protected from COVID-19 no matter their status.

Read more [here](#).

If you have any questions
or comments, please
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