Refugees: From Securitization to Integration

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The 1951 Geneva Convention defined a refugee as someone who has a 'fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'. The same agreement defined asylum seekers as people who, 'left their country of origin, have sought international protection, have applied to be recognized as a refugee and are awaiting a decision from the host government' (UNHCR 2016, 4). As we observed in the introduction to this volume, to understand how the issue of refugee flows has become a security issue, one must focus attention on how those flows have routinely been presented as posing an existential threat to the receiving nations' societies and thus require immediate and extraordinary measures by those states to address them.

A plethora of previous studies have illustrated that the securitization of refugees has the capacity to unleash the emotive power of nationalism in unhelpful ways (Deudney 1990). Moreover, the securitization of refugees, often, finds governments treating such population movements as suspicious activities that must be controlled, monitored, and registered. That is, the migration of often forcibly displaced people and refugees is very frequently seen as a security threat that must be intercepted (Benedicto 2019). Refugee issues are unfortunately readily securitized as potential terrorist infiltrations and that argument is regularly employed by public leaders and advocates alike as grounds for tight control of borders (Faist 2005; Huysmans 2006; Adamson 2006; Gerard 2014). Because securitizing the refugee issue is now generally easier in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, that concern for recipient nation safety and security has frequently taken attention away from the economic factors that have always been at play in international migration (Waever et al., 1993).

This chapter first describes the processes by which refugees are securitized and thereafter outlines the policies that receiving states should enact and what actions they should undertake to integrate refugees into their national societies effectively. Our reasons for undertaking this analysis are twofold. First, understanding how refugees are often perceived as threats to military, economic, political, societal, and environmental security will help readers of this volume comprehend why and how eastern Mediterranean governments and political and social groups have securitized Syrian refugees. Second, we hope that a description of 'best practices' of refugee integration will provide readers a heuristic that will help them understand how successful the countries of the eastern Mediterranean have been in integrating Syrian refugees into their national societies.

The Securitization of Refugees

Securitization is the process whereby various actors operating within the domestic environment of a state transform concerns from political issues into matters of security, thus justifying extraordinary measures to be implemented to address them. That a given issue, such as the refugees, is securitized does not necessarily mean that such must occur for the survival of a given state, but instead suggests only that one or more actors have successfully constructed an object or concern as an existential problem (Waever 1993 and 1995; Buzan, Waever and de Wilde

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1998; Williams 2003). In other words, refugees may not pose any factual danger to a receiving state, but government and popular leaders may nonetheless effectively securitize them as representing a threat. The ability to securitize a targeted subject depends on the status of a given actor and whether similar issues are generally perceived as threats by those the leaders wish to mobilize.

In this sense, security becomes a self-referential practice, because it is within such practices that a matter becomes a salient security issue and not necessarily because that concern constitutes a real risk. Moreover, because social and political groups within different states possess the power to declare an issue a security concern, security is best understood as a social construct that may carry different meanings in different societies at different times (Weiner 1992, 103). This fact implies two things. First, some populations may consider the existence of Syrian refugees per se as a threat to their security, while others may not. Second, Syrian refugees may not pose any risk to a receiving state, but particular social and political groups within that country may nonetheless prove successful in framing them as a 'security problem'. Thus, any attempt to classify types of dangers that may arise from refugee flows must distinguish between real and perceived threats. Such analyses must likewise also grapple with often 'paranoid notions of threat or mass anxieties that can best be described as xenophobic and racist' (Weiner 1992, 104).

Successfully securitized subjects receive disproportionate amounts of attention and resources compared to concerns that do not, regardless of their objective significance (Waever 1993 and 1995; Taureck 2006; Balzacq 2005). Thus, in order to understand how refugees are securitized, one must, among other things, focus on the reasons offered for why they should be perceived as threats to a country's security. As we noted above, successfully securitizing refugees makes it possible for leaders to legitimize extraordinary means to address the issue. Those steps could include declaring a state of emergency or mobilizing the military and/or the police force to address the purported 'usurpation'.

The securitization of refugee issues becomes a relatively simple process in many cases because the distinction between refugees and immigrants is unclear in the eyes of the citizens of many potential host countries. Refugees are generally not the only foreigners living within the boundaries of potential recipient states. Most often, those who have previously immigrated voluntarily and for economic reasons will already reside in a nation prior to the arrival of refugees. When those economic migrants are broadly perceived as having affected the security of their receiving states, any potential influx will automatically also be viewed as potential threats to that security, whether they share common ethnicity, language, culture, or religion with prior migrants. In such cases, migrants and refugees will be viewed as foreigners, whose presence and actions jeopardize citizen and state security. This analysis implies that the Syrian refugees were very likely to be seen as a potential threat to the national security of those countries that already had a considerable number of migrants living within their territory, including Greece, Italy, Cyprus, and Malta. Again, Syrian refugees need not have posed any actual security threat to these states, but the fact that other 'foreigners' living within them were already perceived in such terms made the populations of these nations skeptical about receiving additional 'outsiders,' irrespective of the causes of their displacement.

Securitization affects all five security sectors of a nation's political economy identified by the Copenhagen School, namely, military, political, societal, economic, and environmental security. The comprehensive security perspective suggests that all these sectors are interdependent, with the result that 'spill-over' effects from one sector have the potential to affect, positively or negatively, other sectors (Buzan 1991, 111). For example, migration and refugee issues are often popularly associated with societal and economic security, but they often also 'spill-over' into the political and military security sectors (Stivachtis 1999).

Refugees and Military Security

For the military sector, the referent object of security is territorial integrity and the function of various national institutions (Buzan 1991, 116–118). Military threats, which mainly arise from the external environment, are traditionally accorded highest priority in national security consideration. Refugees may be perceived as threatening the military security of receiving states in four ways (Stivachtis 1999, 42). The first may occur if some use the territory of the receiving state as a base from which to initiate military activities against their home country. The latter may hold the receiving state responsible for those actions, whether or not it supported them. Second, refugees may come

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to be perceived as constituting a military danger when large numbers seek to persuade the receiving state to undertake direct actions against their home country. Third, refugees may be 'militarized' in these terms if the receiving state has an interest in challenging the regime of the refugees' home country and uses them to that end. Finally, when refugees are perceived as posing a substantial economic burden, whether such is the case, they can be seen as diminishing their receiving states' financial capacity to support defense spending and social services.

Refugees and Political Security

Political threats undermine the organizational stability of the state by threatening its national identity and organizing ideology and the institutions that express those beliefs (Buzan 1991, 119–122). Political threats often may result from actors and forces in the domestic and external environments of a state and thus, it can become quite difficult to distinguish such risks from military ones. Consequently, public leaders may fear political threats as much as overtly military ones.

Perceived political threats pose an even greater danger to weak states (Buzan 1991, 122). Such allegations seek to re-orient the political behavior of the state by manipulating principal factional disputes within it. Thus, a state may not threaten another state in a simple, direct fashion. Instead, it may participate in domestic disputes among various factions, backing whichever one seems most likely to pursue policies it favors. There are countless possible variations in this style of political intervention. These range from providing support to legal parties in a relatively stable electoral system, to encouragement of, and military assistance to, armed struggle within a targeted state. Such interventions may be aimed at changing the ideological character of the target government, or at encouraging secessionist forces within that state. Voluntarily or not, refugees may be perceived as serving as instruments in such intervention.

Internal threats may arise as a result of governmental actions that pose threats or constraints to individuals or groups. Resistance to the government, perceived or real, efforts to change its policies or overthrow it, or movements aimed at autonomy or independence all threaten state stability and enhance state insecurity. Externally, a state can be threatened by the ideology of another state, such as nationalism, fundamentalism, liberal democracy or communism. Such perceived threats stem from the great diversity of ideas and traditions. Because contradictions in ideologies are basic, states of one persuasion may well feel threatened by the ideas represented by others. In this sense, when the originating nations of refugees and receiving states do not share similar ideas, emigres may be seen as posing political threats to the ideology of the refugees' host country. Public leaders perceive political threats as more serious when nationalist ideology prevails (Stivachtis 1999, 43).

An external political threat may be transformed to an internal one. For instance, threats to national identity may involve attempts to heighten the ethno-cultural identities of groups within a target state. In the present case, it may also happen that a host country's leaders believe they do not share a common ideology with Syrian refugees, and they may perceive that those individuals constitute an external threat. Either of these scenarios will likely result in refugees being labeled as a security 'problem' (Stivachtis 1999, 43).

Officials may also believe the political security of their states may be under threat when refugees are opposed to the regime of their home country and are involved in activities aimed at undermining that government in their host country, even as their host nations may actively be supporting the Syrian refugees to achieve unrelated political ends.

Refugees may also be perceived by government leaders as threatening the political security of their host country by providing financial and military assistance to rebel groups or by marshalling public opinion through publicity campaigns aimed at the international community and at specific international institutions. They may also be viewed as affecting the internal security of their host countries by initiating activities (terrorism, violent protests, etc.) against the governments of states that are not willing to take any actions against Syria or that are determined to maintain friendly relations with it. Moreover, some political parties and groups in some host countries have exhibited concern when they became alarmed that refugees are placing significant pressures and constraints on their governments by successfully influencing host country public opinion. Such refugee political activity may become a source of conflict between the home and host governments (Stivachtis 1999, 44).

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A difficult challenge can confront government leaders who do not wish to target refugees. When adopting that more beneficent stance, it may heighten conflict among officials within their governments. This situation may become more acute if those individuals criticizing refugees obtain the support of significant numbers of citizens. This concern may become even more acute for officials when refugees obtain the support of a significant minority (racial, religious, or ethnic, for example) group within the receiving state. This scenario may create fears that such support may lead to a considerable social upheaval or even to secessionist movements. Apart from threats arising from domestic law-making, refugees may be threatened by regime administrative or political action and activities related to law and order enforcement. In turn, they may undertake certain activities to minimize the impact of such policies and actions. Whatever the scenario, the governments of the receiving states may be pressed toward adopting a less friendly stance towards refugees, even as anti-foreign sentiments may rise in the general population because of their presence and activities. This analysis suggests that when state leaders perceive that refugees are severely at odds with the prevailing ideology or beliefs or other characteristic claims in their nation, they may act on that perceived dissonance in ways that target refugees unfavorably (Stivachtis 1999, 44).

Because refugees tend to maintain strong connections with their home countries, even when a political settlement has been reached there, we suspect that any subsequent turbulence or instability in post-conflict Syria (not yet a reality) may find expression within Syrian communities abroad as well, a challenge for their host societies.

In sum, refugees can play significant political roles in international and national politics (Bali 1997). Their continued political involvement in states whose rules they are not subject to may be perceived by their host nation's leaders as a serious challenge to their ability to exercise independent control over the direction of their own foreign and domestic policy. Paradoxically, that risk may be heightened when a host country has previously armed refugees against their country of origin (Bali 1994, 214).

Refugees and Societal Security

The referent object of security in social terms is collective identities that can function independent of the state, such as religions and ethnicities (Buzan 1991, 122–123). Perceived military and political threats are often part of a larger constellation of concerns in relations between states. Such perceptions can be difficult to disentangle from actual political or military concerns. More generally, even the interplay of ideas and communication may produce what are perceived to be politically significant societal and cultural threats, as illustrated by the reaction of many Western state leaders to religious fundamentalism.

As in the political sector, threats in the societal sector may arise from the internal or external environment of the state, while an internal threat may be transformed into an external one and *vice versa* (Buzan 1991, 123). If it can be said that societal security is about the sustainability of traditional patterns of language, culture, and religious, and ethnic identity, then it may also be argued that threats to these values may arise more frequently from within states, rather than beyond them. This dynamic occurs because the state- nation building process often aims at suppressing, or at least homogenizing, sub-state social identities. As a result, perceived internal societal threats may precipitate conflict within states.

In the long term, the most obvious effect of refugee migration is often the creation of ethnic minorities in host countries. Admitting refugees has long- lasting social effects on receiving states. Admitting refugees may turn relatively homogeneous societies into multi-ethnic and multicultural ones by the introduction of ethnically and culturally different people (Weiner 1992, 110). In this sense, refugees often raise societal concerns because they are perceived as challenging traditional notions about membership in a state, including the meaning of nationality and citizenship, and the rights and duties of citizens towards their country and *vice versa*. The fact that very few states fit the idealized picture of the homogeneous nation-state, and that most nations are cultural and social products of earlier movements of people, often fails to register in the popular consciousness when populists or nationalists raise these matters as concerns (Bali 1994, 214).

By receiving asylum and becoming citizens of the receiving state, refugees are commonly viewed as creating or constituting a cultural, linguistic, religious, and possibly a racially distinct minority within the host country, thereby

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altering the nature of its society. Thus, the migration of refugees can be seen as threatening communal identity and culture by altering the ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic character of the population of the receiving state.

Refugees are also very often seen as threatening the cultural norms and value systems of receiving societies. If, in fact, refugees become widely perceived as violating these norms and values, citizens of receiving states may come to view them as a threat to national security. In such scenarios societies may emphasize their perceived differences from refugees (Waever, et al. 1993, 77).

Government officials of receiving states may also become concerned because of refugees' alleged or purported social behavior, typically offered by populists or nationalists, such as criminality and illegal forms of employ. These claims may generate local resentment which, in turn, may lead to xenophobic popular sentiments and the rise of anti-migrant political parties that may be viewed as threats to the government in power (Widgreen 1990, 757). Indeed, political parties often use anti-migrant slogans and rhetoric to mobilize supporters to increase their electoral power. This situation may prompt the governments of countries receiving refugees to adopt anti- migration policies to blunt public reaction and avoid possible electoral loss.

How and why refugees can be perceived as cultural threats is a complicated issue, involving initially how a host community's population defines itself. Cultures differ with respect to how they settle on who belongs to or can be admitted into their community. These norms govern who is granted admission and what rights and privileges are accorded those individuals. Thus, a plausible explanation for relative state willingness to accept or reject migrants is perceived ethnic, cultural and religious affinity with groups (Weiner 1999, 105). A government and its citizens are likely to be relatively more receptive to those who share their language, religion, or race, while populations might regard as threatening those with whom they do not share such characteristics. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that what constitutes 'ethnic affinity' is a social construct that can change over time. Moreover, what comprises cultural affinity for one group in a multi-ethnic society may be perceived as a cultural, social, or economic threat to another.

Societies may also exhibit a limited threshold of tolerance for refugee migration if that flow begins to undermine the social and political cohesion of the receiving country. When such may occur is shaped by the economic, social, and cultural circumstances of the receiving society as well as by the refugees themselves (Weiner 1999, 106). Anti-immigrant feelings and xenophobia also rise during times of recession and high unemployment. Finally, tolerance levels are likely to be lower in countries without a tradition of immigration and higher in those that have such histories.

Refugees and Economic Security

Referent objects and perceived existential threats in the economic sector that may shape a nation's attitude toward refugees are more difficult to identify. One principal difficulty associated with making such judgments is the fact that the normal condition of actors in a market economy is one of risk, competition, and uncertainty. However, when the consequences of a perceived economic threat reach beyond the strictly economic into the military and political spheres, three potential national security issues may emerge. These involve linkages between economic capability, on the one hand, and military capacity, power, and socio-political stability, on the other hand (Schultz 1977; Buzan 1991, 126).

Refugees may be perceived as threatening the economic security of their receiving states by imposing limits on their financial capability. That is, refugees are usually seen as creating a substantial economic burden on their host societies by straining housing, education, sanitation, transportation, and communication facilities, while at the same time increasing consumption.

Societies, or specific social groups within them, may react to an influx of refugees first, because of the economic costs the latter impose on the receiving state; second, because of the refugees' purported behavior, such as welfare dependency, that may affect a host country's tax payers; and third, because refugees are perceived as potentially displacing some people from employment because they are willing to work for lower wages (Buzan 1991, 127–128).

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These perceptions and claims, when pressed by advocacy groups and party members in efforts to gain voters, may encourage a considerable degree of social hostility not only against refugees, but against all foreigners living in a host country. Put more generally, popular fears regarding economic security may engender sufficient social hostility to threaten to undermine the socio- political cohesion of states, and thereby, their security.

Refugees and Environmental Security

In the environmental sector, the basic concern, is how residents are relating to their physical surroundings. These threats do not operate in isolation, but interact in multiple and often contradictory ways. Environmental threats, including military and economic ones, can damage the physical foundations of a state, perhaps sufficiently as to threaten its animating idea and institutions. This salience has increasingly moved environmental issues into the political arena (Buzan 1991, 133).

In the absence of relevant infrastructure in a receiving country, the presence of high numbers of refugees in a particular place and at a specific time runs a higher risk than would normally obtain and result in air, water, and solid waste pollution. That condition may then prompt host country citizens at the local and regional level to frame refugees as a threat to their environment.

Integrating Refugees into National Societies

Securing refugees' social integration into host societies is, formally, at least, high on the international agenda. Refugees' social integration is also in line with Sustainable Development Goal 16, which is, 'to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels,' particularly target 16.10, which focuses on 'Ensur[ing] public access to information and protect[ing] fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements' (UN 2022).

The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol place considerable emphasis on refugee integration. The Convention enumerates social and economic rights designed to promote and further that process, and in its article 34 calls on states to facilitate the 'assimilation and naturalization' of refugees (UNHCR 2014, 1).

The rationale for integration of refugees into receiving state societies rests on the contention that refugee status is not permanent. In practice, this argument assumes that refugees will either return voluntarily to their home country when the conditions that forced them into exile have been substantially ameliorated or overcome, or they will have to find a permanent home in a new community either in their country of first refuge or in another nation. Meanwhile, according to the 1951 Convention, refugees should gradually enjoy a wider range of rights as their association and ties with their host states grow stronger. In this sense, the 1951 Convention at least nominally offers refugees a solid basis on which to restore the social and economic independence they need to get on with their lives.

Berry's conceptual framework of immigrants' acculturation to host societies has been used frequently to address immigrants' adaptation and integration in their new home nations. That model includes four strategies or forms: assimilation when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with their new host cultures; separation – when individuals hold on to their original cultures and wish to avoid interaction with others; marginalization – when there is little cultural maintenance and few relationships with others; and integration – when emigres maintain their original cultures while engaging in daily interactions with other groups (Berry, 1997).

The integration of refugees is a dynamic and multifaceted process that requires efforts by all parties concerned, including a preparedness on the part of refugees to adapt to their new host society without having to forego their own cultural identity, and a corresponding readiness on the part of host communities and public institutions to welcome their new residents and work to meet their needs (UNHCR 2014, 1). The process of integration is complex and gradual, comprising distinct but inter-related legal, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, all of which are important for successful outcomes.

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According to Berry (1997), integration can only be successfully attained when host societies are open and inclusive in their orientation toward cultural diversity. Inclusiveness implies that refugees should be provided with equal access to housing, health care, education, training, and employment opportunities. For their part, refugees' level of integration and adaptation depends on a number of factors, including their pre-migration experiences, departure process, and post-arrival experiences and environment. Many refugees and asylum seekers experience severe pre-migration trauma, including mental and physical torture, mass violence and genocide, witnessing the killings of family members and friends, sexual abuse, kidnapping of children, destruction and looting of personal property, starvation, and a lack – sometimes prolonged – of adequate water and shelter (UNDESA 2018, 2).

Refugee departure is a complex endeavor often associated with life threatening risks. Although arrival in a safe place provides initial relief, frustration sometimes develops for refugees as new difficulties emerge that may include family separation, language barriers, uncertain legal status, unemployment, homelessness, or lack of access to education and healthcare services (UNDESA 2018, 3).

The circumstances and experiences of forced migration have profound effects on refugees' health and integration into host societies. Migrants who fled from armed conflicts and persecution in their countries, such as that which has occurred in Syria since 2011, report high rates of pre-migration trauma and evidence high frequencies of mental health problems, particularly post- traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) and depression (UNDESA 2018, 3).

Post-migration experiences also shape refugee health and adaptation. Research shows that asylum seekers present higher rates of PTSD and depression than other refugees, due to post-migratory stresses, delays in application processing, conflicts with immigration officials, denial of work permits, unemployment, and separation from families (UNDESA 2018, 3). Forced migrants often arrive in places where they have no contacts or knowledge of the local language. These factors very often lead to relative social isolation and limit the opportunities accorded to refugees.

Almost all countries in the eastern Mediterranean that have received significant refugee populations during the Syrian exodus of the past decade are likely to see a substantial share of those individuals remain in their midst. A good number of those who fled their homes are now doing well economically in their new societies, and many have become citizens in their new countries. But many others have not yet been integrated, economically or socially. Unemployment and underemployment among Syrian emigres are endemic, and many who wish to naturalize have encountered barriers to citizenship and persistent residential and social segregation.

Although refugees are entitled by law to the same socio-economic rights as nationals, several obstacles typically impede their integration efforts. These include insufficient subsidized housing and access to employment, challenges relating to recognition of their academic and professional qualifications for employment, restrictions on family reunification, and stringent criteria for naturalization (UNHCR 2014, 1).

All of this is to say that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to refugee integration. The situation of refugees must be analyzed in the context of their respective host societies, and with full awareness of the living and working conditions of those already residing in those nations. However, it is also clear that international events, discourses, and frameworks have an important impact on the integration of refugees and policies at the national and local levels. UNHCR and relevant international agreements have articulated broad goals for integration, irrespective of the specific country involved. These include efforts to enable refugees to reach and develop their full potential, to protect their human rights, prevent their marginalization, and foster social cohesion and harmonious co-existence (UNHCR 2014, 2).

As one considers these aspirations, a key question arises: At what point should integration programs begin? Upon application for refugee status? After recognition of refugee status? Upon the granting of citizenship? Every refugee is first and foremost a possible asylum seeker. A good reception policy for those individuals is therefore vital to a would-be refugee's eventual integration into a new society in legal, psychological, and social terms. It is in the best interests of both the host society and would-be asylees and refugees to promote a reception policy guided by a long-term perspective. Refugees who begin their lives in a host country in detention, or isolated for several months in a state of enforced inactivity at a collective reception center are likely to be hampered when they later attempt to integrate

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(UNHCR 2014, 2).

The conditions in which asylum seekers find themselves during the immediate reception stage are therefore significant mediators of their future possibilities for integration. A reception policy that combines effective and adequate services (particularly skills training, access to gainful employment, and health care) with a swift asylum decision procedure that is based on providing petitioning individuals as much autonomy as possible increases the chances of successful integration in a host country (UNHCR 2014, 2).

Specifically, international organizations, such as OECD, IMF, IOM and UNHCR have identified a set of guidelines to facilitate effective integration of refugees into host societies (WEF 2016; UNHCR 2021). First, host states should provide integration services as soon as possible for those asylum seekers most likely to be allowed to remain. Time spent waiting around can damage refugees' chances of integrating, yet they often must wait months or even years before receiving language training and other social support, including skills assessments and civic integration courses.

Second, when dispersing humanitarian migrants across countries, governments should consider whether the jobs available in a region match asylee/refugee capabilities. Many governments disperse refugees to prevent segregation, ensure suitable housing and spread costs. Refugees should thus be matched to localities based on their overall profile, including their education level and work experience.

Third, refugees should be treated differently, depending on their backgrounds. Different refugees require distinct levels of support. For example, those with college degrees have very different training requirements than those lacking such qualifications. Moreover, gender and age require specific consideration in light of prevailing social norms.

Fourth, host governments should pay particular attention to unaccompanied minors who arrive past the age of compulsory schooling. Most unaccompanied minors arrive around the age at which compulsory schooling ends, but have little or no formal education, and therefore often demand specific, appropriate support to catch up. Relevant integration programs should provide intensive case management by social workers, educational support, language training, career and educational counselling, mental health care, and social integration support to these individuals.

Fifth, host countries should be able to provide or match refugees with employment opportunities and thus enable them to integrate more quickly into receiving societies. Many host-government officials are often reluctant to allow asylum seekers to work as they fear doing so will encourage abuse of the asylum mechanism. They frequently therefore demand that certain conditions, often including a prior waiting period, are met before asylum seekers can legally work. But not working can have detrimental effects on asylee's ability to integrate in the long run as their skills may decrease and because such periods create gaps in their employment history. Moreover, local employers often discount and dismiss foreign qualifications and work experience, with the result that humanitarian migrants often struggle to secure jobs appropriate to their levels of expertise and experience. This challenge is often compounded by the fact that many fled their homes with no proof of their qualifications. Receiving countries can help with this difficulty by carefully empirically assessing and documenting newcomers' education, skills, and experiences.

Sixth, poor health affects a refugee's ability to obtain a job, learn the local language, interact with public institutions, and do well in school – all steps that are critical to integrating successfully. Seventh, governments should not be alone in their efforts to support refugees' integration: employers, charities, immigrant associations, community-based organizations and trade unions all have roles to play. They may assist, for example, by providing needed support services, developing mentorship programs, thoughtfully appraising refugees' skills and welcoming the newcomers to their new communities.

Eighth, refugees will need to navigate various practical tasks in unfamiliar environments, often with limited fluency in the language of their new home nations. Providing early social support can help reduce anxiety and aid resettled refugees in developing a sense of control and independence. Early positive relationships in the receiving community have other benefits, too, including restoring a refugee's sense of belonging. Such support can be facilitated by

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integration caseworkers, youth workers, and volunteers (i.e., buddies, mentors). Whenever possible, resettled refugees should be placed close to family members because the support provided by those individuals is a vital resource in the integration process. Supportive relationships with members of established refugee and diaspora communities can also help resettled refugees build connections within their new communities. Such ties can allow them to access other important integration resources such as employment, volunteer opportunities and a wider social network. Social connections among resettled refugees and members of diaspora communities are particularly important in this regard. Supporting refugees to reconnect with familiar cultural and religious institutions can assist them in maintaining their cultural integrity while building new identities. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that some refugees might not seek contact with other refugees from their country of origin, due either to personal circumstances, or as a result of the specific reasons for their flight.

Finally, while long-term support of refugees is expensive, it pays off in the long run, even benefiting the children of refugees who might otherwise struggle with integration issues themselves.

Conclusions

We had two principal aims for this chapter. First, we wished to investigate how refugees are securitized and under what conditions such processes are more or less likely to occur. To that end, we paid particular attention to how refugees can come to be perceived as threats to a population's military, economic, political, societal, and environmental security. We hope this analysis and framework will help readers of this volume understand better why and how so many Syrian refugees have been securitized by governments as well as political and social groups in eastern Mediterranean countries during the last decade. Second, we sought in this chapter to focus on the policies that receiving states should enact and the actions they should undertake to integrate refugees effectively into their societies. We did so to provide readers with benchmark criteria by which to assess how successful the countries of the eastern Mediterranean have been, and are likely to be, in integrating Syrian refugees into their national societies.

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