Call for Papers: Moving Beyond Borders - Comparative Perspectives on Refugees

UCL Migration Research Unit, 3 June 2016, 10.00-18.00, UCL Gower Street campus

2015 has witnessed the largest mass migration of people to and in Europe since the Second World War, partly because of the conflict in Syria, which the UN described in 2013 as ‘the most dramatic humanitarian crisis we have ever faced’ (UNHCR, 2013).

However, the EU has struggled to respond to this crisis. States have drifted between hostility and hospitality, pulled apart by the varying demands of domestic and regional politics and the inconsistent perception of refugees within the media and among the public.

In this complex setting reflection is essential if we are to truly understand the reception of refugees within the EU. But more than this, examining the ways in which refugees have been received both in the past and in non-European contexts provide essential insights - how could the EU or states and civil society produce more effective measures for receiving, recognizing and integrating refugees? What informs and underpins media representations of refugees and how does it shape refugee reception? This conference invites a broad discussion on the dilemma of refugee reception in order to gain a better understanding of how and why Europe has struggled to respond to the ‘Refugee Crisis’.

This conference, part of the Refuge in a Moving World series and hosted by the Department of Geography, is being convened by an interdisciplinary team of MSc students affiliated with the Migration Research Unit at UCL with the support of Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Dr. Claire Dwyer.

It will offer a space for students from across UCL and also from other universities in the UK and the EU to present papers that will help us better understand the history, causes, experiences, representations and implications of these shifts in politics, people and perceptions.
To address the three overarching aims of the conference, we invite undergraduate, graduate and PhD/Postdoc students to submit papers that explore topics along the following questions:

1. **Analyse and question the use of the term ‘refugee crisis’:**
   - To what extent is the use of the term ‘refugee crisis’ appropriate? How and why can it be framed in terms of (failed) protection or securitization?
   - Can we talk of a refugee ‘crisis’ or should we talk of ‘crises’?
   - What temporal implications does the use of the word ‘crisis’ have in framing responses to contexts of displacements?

2. **Explore the ways in which the state, media, and public impact refugee reception and how the reception is negotiated by refugees themselves:**
   - How and why do state and non-state actors’ responses differ across the EU?
   - How are migration processes portrayed by the media across the Member States and how does this affect the public and policy responses?
   - What role do different methodological approaches play in the discourse on refugee reception?
   - How can alternative approaches to research (e.g. mixed methods, use of visual and audio data) enhance our understanding of refuge?
   - How do refugees themselves negotiate the circumstances of their reception?
   - How does agency and structure inform refugee integration?

3. **Contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the current EU refugee crisis by drawing on other past and contemporary contexts of displacement around the world:**
   - To what extent is the current migration process in the EU comparable to other historical or international situations of displacement?
   - How has the development and interpretation of international legal frameworks on human rights influenced responses to contexts of displacement and vice versa?
   - How has the inclusion of ethics in research on refuge evolved over time?

**Submission of papers:** If you wish to give a 20-30 minute presentation of your paper at the conference and be part of an interactive workshop or panel, please submit a 300 word abstract by **March 1, 2016**. Please also provide us with a short bio. Papers from any discipline or professional background are welcome.

We particularly welcome submissions by UK-based refugees for whom bursaries are available that will cover all costs of transport.

Please note that participants who require a visa to attend the conference in the UK will have to arrange this autonomously.

Please submit your papers and direct all questions to our team via [geog.migrationconference@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:geog.migrationconference@ucl.ac.uk)

Please visit our [website](http://example.com), [Facebook](http://facebook.com) and [Twitter](http://twitter.com) for up to date information.