



SHATTUCK
CENTER

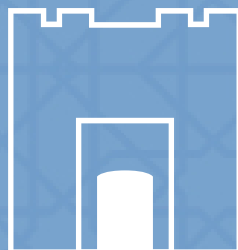
CEU SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC
POLICY

Stateless in Exile, Unrecognized at Home: Barriers to Registering Syrian Newborns in Lebanon

NOVEMBER 2018
NORA PALANDJIAN



THE ALEPPO PROJECT



مشروع حلب

Stateless in Exile, Unrecognized at Home: Barriers to Registering Syrian Newborns in Lebanon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Offspring of Syrian refugees in Lebanon are at a heightened risk of statelessness due to barriers they face in the process of birth registration. A series of 2015 changes in residency renewal requirements and the discontinuation of the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) registration directly led to this increased risk among Syrian refugee children. While already part of a generation with protracted refugee status, children who do not get registered will face a lifetime of challenges accessing basic human rights, protections, and services.

The right to nationality is particularly important considering the facilitation of future return to Syria. Likewise, addressing the issue of Syrian children at risk of being stateless is relevant to a larger campaign launched by the UNHCR to eliminate statelessness within 10 years. The following paper highlights these motivations and outlines the various barriers to birth registration for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In particular, the paper addresses those barriers attributed to the relevant costs, prohibitive for a population that is primarily living under the poverty line, as well as risks associated with parents' irregular status. In addition, it will analyze the barriers with international human rights standards, focusing on violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and considering the relevant actions outlined in the UNHCR plan to eliminate statelessness. Upon providing a successful case study of a large-scale effort to register Syrian refugee births in Jordan, the paper will conclude with a series of recommendations modeled after the protection-sensitive, human rights-based, and cooperative approach applied in Jordan.

This paper was presented at the fourth Lemkin Reunion, held in February 2018 and organized by the Shattuck Center at the School of Public Policy, Central European University in Budapest.

Context of Syrian refugees in Lebanon

To put the birth registration process into context, it is important to consider the overall challenges Syrian refugees face in Lebanon. With an estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees, Lebanon is the second largest host of Syrian refugees, yet approximately two-thirds are without legal status.¹ Being host to the most refugees per capita in the world, it is challenging for Lebanon to receive such a population influx, having previously received a large number of Palestinian refugees and continuing to experience political volatility and socioeconomic challenges.²

Syrian refugees in Lebanon face issues accessing consistent employment and income, including informal work, leaving approximately 70 percent of this significant population living below the poverty line.³ Since Lebanon has not signed onto the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, Syrian refugees in Lebanon are subject to local procedures to obtain legal status.⁴ Until 5 January 2015, Lebanon had an open-door policy for Syrian refugees, with no visa requirement or residency fees.⁵ This date marks when the Lebanese General Security Directorate implemented new entry and residency requirements, including an annual renewal fee of \$200, as well as the need to prove financial assistance and place of residence.⁶

Specifically, the path to apply or renew residency for Syrians is through either registration with UNHCR or sponsorship by a Lebanese.⁷ For those who are registered with UNHCR, in addition to pledging not to work and paying the \$200 renewal fee among other administrative expenses, over half of those interviewed as part of Human Rights Watch (HRW) field research report being rejected.⁸ This practice of rejecting residency renewal, despite applicants having UNHCR registration, has especially affected Syrian men of working age.⁹ The UNHCR stopped registering refugees in May 2015, per a directive by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰ In addition, under the sponsorship system, Syrians are dependent on their Lebanese sponsors, who “exert considerable control on the Syrians as withdrawal of sponsorship leaves Syrians vulnerable to abuse” and in some cases “threatened to cancel their sponsorship if [sponsored Syrians] refused any tasks at work.”¹¹ The Lebanese sponsorship system, as the other alternative for those Syrians already in Lebanon and currently the main legal way for new refugees to enter, puts Syrians at risk of abuse and exploitation.¹² Palestinian Refugees from Syria face even greater restrictions and requirements for legal residency, including possession of an entry permit approved by the General Directorate of General Security.¹³

Access to healthcare and education are affected by these conditions for Syrian refugees. Sponsored individuals are similarly dependent on their sponsors for their healthcare and accommodation.¹⁴

1 Hana Addam El-Ghali, Roula Berjaoui, and Jennifer McKnight, “Higher Education and Syrian Refugee Students: The Case of Lebanon,” United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, March 2017, <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/Lebanon.pdf> (12).

2 Niall McCarthy, “Lebanon Still Has Hosts The Most Refugees Per Capita By Far,” Forbes, 3 April 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/forbes/welcome/?toURL=https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2017/04/03/lebanon-still-has-hosts-the-most-refugees-per-capita-by-far-infographic/&refURL=https://www.google.com/&referrer=https://www.google.com/>.

3 Hana Addam El-Ghali, Roula Berjaoui, and Jennifer McKnight, “Higher Education and Syrian Refugee Students: The Case of Lebanon,” United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, March 2017, <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/Lebanon.pdf> (12).

4 “I Just Wanted to be Treated Like a Person: How Lebanon’s Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees,” Human Rights Watch, January 2016, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/lebanon0116web.pdf (11).

5 Ibid (1).

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid (10).

9 Ibid (13).

10 Ibid (10).

11 Ibid (19).

12 Ibid (13).

13 Ibid (12).

14 Ibid (19).

While those registered with UNHCR can access health services through UNHCR partners, those not registered only “have access to some subsidized health services and assistance at the Primary Health Care Centres (PHCc) listed...for example free vaccinations for children.”¹⁵ Should unregistered refugees go to a PHCc not partnered with UNHCR, they are to pay as would other Lebanese patients.¹⁶ With UNHCR registration no longer an option and the risks associated with depending on sponsors, there are barriers to preventive healthcare even for children.

Likewise, although the Ministry of Education mandated enrollment of Syrian students in school whether or not they have legal status, according to HRW, “some school directors continue to deny children without legal status enrollment in public schools.”¹⁷ In addition to direct discrimination by some schools, transportation to far away schools and risks associated with checkpoints also prove to be prohibitive to the attendance of children with irregular status.¹⁸

Overall, Syrian refugees without legal residency are at risk of arrest, detention, and ill-treatment. There are even documented cases of raids of informal refugee settlements as well as arrests at checkpoints.¹⁹ Although Lebanon is not a State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, they are required to abide by the principle of non-refoulement. However, in January 2016, according to an Amnesty International press release, Lebanon violated this principle by forcibly returning 400 Syrians to Syria.²⁰ Those with legal residency also face similar risks due to discrimination of Lebanese security personnel.²¹ Thus, the Lebanese government both fails to protect Syrian refugees’ access to some of the most basic human rights and directly violates a number of human rights standards.

Overview of birth registration in Lebanon by Syrian refugees

With these challenges in mind, Syrian refugees face a number of direct and indirect barriers to registering new births. The risk of statelessness among Syrian refugee children is not only among those born in Lebanon to Syrian refugee parents, but also among those born in Syria who fled soon after without the possibility of obtaining appropriate documentation. According to the UNHCR, “78% of new births surveyed since their arrival to Lebanon were not registered with the national authorities by Syrian refugees.”²² This low level of registration is largely attributed to the risks associated with the process for parents, including arrest due to their irregular status. In order to register a birth, in addition to having a birth notification from the hospital or midwife, parents must obtain a birth certificate from the local notary, which costs up to \$20.²³ With the average monthly income of \$177 among those working, this cost alone is a challenge.²⁴ The final step to registering the birth with national authorities

15 “Health Services for Syrian Refugees in Mount Lebanon and Beirut,” The UN Refugee Agency, September 2017, <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0ahUKEwjaveeqxJPYAhXJb1AKHT2G-DasQFggsMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.unhcr.org%2Fsyrianrefugees%2Fdownload.php%3Fid%3D14255&usg=AOv-Vaw1Z7LsuZuFJ71W-k5nkIC67> (3).

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid (15).

20 “Amnesty International regrets Lebanon’s decision to overturn its open border policy towards refugees and refusal to address discrimination against women and migrants,” Amnesty International, 16 March 2016, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDE1836582016ENGLISH.pdf>.

21 “Health Services for Syrian Refugees in Mount Lebanon and Beirut,” The UN Refugee Agency, September 2017, <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0ahUKEwjaveeqxJPYAhXJb1AKHT2G-DasQFggsMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.unhcr.org%2Fsyrianrefugees%2Fdownload.php%3Fid%3D14255&usg=AOv-Vaw1Z7LsuZuFJ71W-k5nkIC67> (16).

22 “Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The UN Refugee Agency, 4 November 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=546217229&query=Special%20Report:%20Ending%20Statelessness%20Within%2010%20Years> (10).

23 John Davidson, “A generation of Syrian children who don’t count,” Reuters Investigates, 3 May 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/syria-refugees-stateless/>.

24 “Syrian Refugee Livelihoods,” Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, 2016, <http://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/43420> (1).

requires that parents register the birth certificate with the local Lebanese registry office.²⁵ For Syrian parents who have irregular status in Lebanon—a high probability—this last step puts them at risk of arrest should they approach the local registry office without their own proof of legal status, as noted by the experience of Syrian refugee couple Asheqa and Trad in a recent investigative report on birth registration in Lebanon.²⁶ Should they not complete the registration process within the first year, parents face even more barriers, including “courts, lawyers, and DNA tests,” according to reporter John Davidson.²⁷

Parents who attempt to register Syrian refugee newborns with the UNHCR in Lebanon after 10 July 2015 also face disproportionate challenges. The process requires that one parent be registered with the UNHCR, which excludes those who arrived after May 2015, the cutoff for UNHCR registrations implemented by Lebanon.²⁸ An additional requirement among a number of countries including Lebanon is that nationality be acquired from the father, but as noted by a UNHCR regional protection officer, “the war in Syria has robbed hundreds of thousands of children of their fathers.”²⁹ Newborns who lost their fathers are subject to even greater measures of exclusion due to this discriminatory requirement and are at a higher risk of statelessness.

Relevant Human Rights Standards and Barriers to Protection and Public Services

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

In addition to human rights violations that Syrian refugees face in Lebanon, there are a number of international human rights standards violated specifically by the current conditions of unregistered newborns, including fundamental rights covered by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). As a State Party to the ICCPR, Lebanon is required to protect these standards for all without discrimination, as confirmed by Article 2.³⁰ In particular, Article 24 of the ICCPR protects every child’s right to protection, immediate registration, and acquiring a nationality.³¹ Currently, the majority of Syrian newborns in Lebanon are not being registered due to financial shortcomings as well as parents’ fear of arrest due to their lack of regular status and requirement to present their own documents to local Lebanese registry authorities as part of the birth registration process. The low rate of birth registration among Syrian refugees puts a generation of newborns at risk of statelessness, which “deprives them of the rights that the majority of the global population takes for granted.”³² Without access to a nationality, Syrian refugees in Lebanon will face issues accessing protection and services.

The risk of arrest that parents with irregular status face should they present their documents to local authorities to complete the registration process is a violation of Article 17 of the ICCPR which protects every individual from “arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or

25 John Davidson, “A generation of Syrian children who don’t count,” Reuters Investigates, 3 May 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/syria-refugees-stateless/>.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 “Information for Syrian Refugees: Registration of newborn babies in Lebanon with UNHCR,” The UN Refugee Agency, July 2015, <https://www.google.hu/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjX7Yz205HYAhXJZVAKHZESDjMQFggoMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.unhcr.org%2Fsyrianrefugees%2Fdownload.php%3FfidI%3D9132&usg=AOvVaw1-CRBiT7sY-guzPd6S9ZBQ>.

29 Emma Batha, “War may make hundreds of thousands of young Syrians stateless,” Reuters, 17 September 2014, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-foundation-syria-crisis-stateless/war-may-make-hundreds-of-thousands-of-young-syrians-stateless-idUKKBN0HC1W620140917>.

30 “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 16 December 1966, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>.

31 Ibid.

32 “Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The UN Refugee Agency, 4 November 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=546217229&query=Special%20Report:%20Ending%20Statelessness%20Within%2010%20Years> (2).

correspondence.”³³ Considering the requirement to fulfill this law in addition to non-discrimination, the right to immediate birth registration, and the right to acquire a nationality, parents with irregular status seeking to register newborns should not face the risk of arrest upon completing the registration process, and they should be assured that their information will not be shared with those enforcing residency regulations. Aside from the issue that the large-scale lack of regular status for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is structural and in itself a violation of international human rights standards, the right to timely birth registration and acquiring a nationality is paramount to protecting individuals from the grave risk of statelessness. Parents’ circumstances should not be a factor in deterring the birth registration process.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Lebanon is also a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and, as such, must protect the relevant rights of newborn Syrian refugees, according to Article 2, without regard for the child’s or parent’s status.³⁴ To supplement the protection of ICCPR Article 24, CRC Article 7 calls for Lebanon to protect the right to immediate registration after birth and acquiring a nationality, “in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.”³⁵ Acknowledging the risk of statelessness, CRC directly addresses the State Party’s responsibility to prevent the child’s risk of statelessness. Connected with these are articles 3 and 6, which address the protection and care of the child as well as the right to life and development of the child, respectively. Children who are not registered will inevitably face the same or worse issues as other Syrian refugee children with irregular status in their access to healthcare and education, a direct violation of CRC Articles 24 and 28 on access to healthcare and education³⁶

Considering the steps necessary for the future return of the newborn’s family to Syria, CRC Article 8 protects the right to preserve identity, including nationality, which would be necessary for the newborn to remain with her or his family.³⁷ According to a Reuters report, “Children without a registered birth certificate face separation from their families if they try to cross international borders, including into Syria. Without the certificate, [children have] no legal proof of parentage or place of birth.”³⁸ Thus, whether the parents are arrested and forcibly deported to Syria or the conditions in Syria allow for their return, their children born in Lebanon would be at risk of being separated from them and unable to enter Syria without valid documentation.

Echoing the relevance of the right to privacy and family life in the ICCPR, CRC Article 16 notes specifically the child’s right to privacy and family life, meaning that there is no reason why birth registration authorities should be able to share data regarding her or his parents’ status with residency enforcement authorities.³⁹ The CRC also outlines in Article 22 that a child seeking refugee status, “receive appropriate humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights,” and that UN and other partnering organizations should be able to cooperate with the State Party to provide appropriate protection and assistance.⁴⁰ This goes against the previously mentioned requirement for at least one parent to already be registered with the UNHCR in order to register their newborn with the UNHCR, thus, excluding newborns from access to this international support.

33 “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 16 December 1966, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>.

34 “Convention on the Rights of the Child,” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 20 November 1989, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 John Davidson, “A generation of Syrian children who don’t count,” Reuters Investigates, 3 May 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/syria-refugees-stateless/>.

39 “Convention on the Rights of the Child,” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 20 November 1989, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>.

40 Ibid.

1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
Although Lebanon is not a State Party, it is important to mention the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as there have been ongoing efforts to eliminate statelessness globally by the year 2024.⁴¹ This effort initiated by the UNHCR in 2014 garnered large-scale international support and set out a series of actions to achieve this goal.⁴² Putting the risk of Syrian refugee statelessness into context, the UNHCR report for this campaign notes, “Over 50,000 children have been born to Syrian refugee parents in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, and Egypt since the onset of the conflict. Most are entitled to the nationality of Syria but those who remain without civil birth registration may face serious problems proving this later in life.”⁴³ As a systemic issue that Syrian refugees face, among other vulnerable populations, the UNHCR #IBelong campaign to eliminate statelessness is an important effort to combat their risk of statelessness. In particular, Action 7 of the plan calls on the need for birth registration as a critical step to prevent statelessness.⁴⁴

Actors

Tackling this risk of statelessness among Syrian refugees in Lebanon who face barriers to birth registration involves the cooperation of a number of local and international actors. Locally, cooperation of the Lebanese Government, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, and the General Security along with local registration offices and notaries are necessary to implement accessible, timely, and consistent procedures of birth registration for newborns. Likewise, international support from the UNHCR, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and partner NGOs supporting refugees is crucial to address the gaps in Lebanon’s ability to provide protection and services to the large number of hosted Syrian refugees and, more specifically, to reach the goal of eliminating statelessness and its associated risks.

Comparative Perspective – Lessons from Jordan

Considering the challenges to birth registration and risks of statelessness among Syrian refugees throughout the Middle East, the approach in Jordan to tackle this issue can demonstrate best practices and steps that can be taken moving forward. According to a 2016 UNHCR report on Addressing Statelessness in the Middle East and North Africa, in 2015 action was taken in Jordan to reduce the approximately 44,000 Syrian refugee children who were not registered at birth in Syria and had no form of identity documentation to 8,800 in 2016.⁴⁵ Through cooperation with other agencies, the government established a Special Committee on Complex Cases, through which the “UNHCR refers undocumented Syrian refugee children to the Committee, [and] they are issued an official identity document that includes the same data traditionally found on a birth certificate, such as the child’s age, identity and parentage.”⁴⁶ In addition to facilitating the procedure of birth registration, the government of Jordan and the UNHCR helped to reduce the risk of irregular status parents seeking alternative ways

41 “Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The UN Refugee Agency, 4 November 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=546217229&query=Special%20Report:%20Ending%20Statelessness%20Within%2010%20Years>.

42 “Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The UN Refugee Agency, 4 November 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=546217229&query=Special%20Report:%20Ending%20Statelessness%20Within%2010%20Years> (8).

43 Ibid.

44 “Good Practices Paper: Action 7,” The UN Refugee Agency: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years, November 2017, <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/11/Good-Practices-Paper-on-Ensuring-Birth-Registration-for-the-Prevention-of-Statelessness.pdf>.

45 “In Search of Solutions: Addressing Statelessness in the Middle East and North Africa,” The UN Refugee Agency, 2016,

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&ved=0ahUKEwjR353E75PYAh-WJK1AKHbgsAaAQFgg7MAM&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.unhcr.org%2Fsyrianrefugees%2Fdownload.php%3Fid%3D11762&usg=AOvVaw0hDq-ykGIpr5w00KSybmBT> (20).

46 Ibid.

of registering their children under others who have legal status.⁴⁷ This cooperation by the government of Jordan with the UNHCR and other actors is an exemplary demonstration of the sort of “protection-sensitive” and human rights-based approach needed to address the complex nature of birth registration among Syrian refugees.⁴⁸ Its significant reduction in the number of unregistered children is evidence of its success and significant impact.

Proposals and Conclusion

To reduce barriers to birth registration and the corresponding risk of statelessness among Syrian refugees in Lebanon, it is imperative that the Lebanese Government cooperates and coordinates a targeted action plan with the UNHCR and NGOs providing refugee support services. Keeping in mind that vulnerable populations in Lebanon are not limited only to Syrian refugees, it is important to be sensitive to the local population’s needs in the implementation of any recommendations as well as inclusive, when possible, in enhancing the protection of rights.

As an initial step, restrictions on UNHCR registration should be removed, with the priority being the removal of the requirement for at least one parent to be registered with UNHCR in order for a newborn to become registered. This would allow newborns to be able to access UNHCR-sponsored healthcare and not face discrimination of children with irregular status in school enrollment. UNHCR and NGOs supporting refugees should scale up efforts to facilitate and provide guidance on the birth registration process as part of the plan to eliminate statelessness in 10 years, covering any associated fees to remove barriers that can be prohibitive for a majority population living below the poverty line. In addition, in accordance with the right to privacy and family life, a protection-sensitive mechanism for firewalling parents’ data from being shared with residency enforcement authorities should be put in place as part of the birth registration process. This would ensure that parents do not face the risk of arrest and/or refoulement by registering their child. Likewise, as expressed in the UNHCR report on the case in Jordan, this would prevent irregular status parents from resorting to other means of birth registration, including registering children under the names of friends or relatives with legal status. Especially considering the circumstances of deceased fathers among Syrian refugees, the Lebanese requirement for nationality to be acquired from the father should be extended to the mother as well at least temporarily and most immediately for cases of Syrian refugees. It is strongly recommended that this extension of acquiring nationality by the mother as well be considered as an overall policy change in Lebanon, although this is beyond the scope of this paper.

There is a need for an immediate and coordinated effort to reduce the risk of statelessness that Syrian refugee children face in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East. Birth registration is a basic and fundamental component of civil registration that is paramount to a child’s access to human rights, protection, and services. In order to effectively implement the #IBelong campaign to eliminate statelessness by 2024, it is crucial for the Lebanese Government, the UNHCR, and NGOs providing support to refugees in Lebanon to cooperate in order to prevent cases of statelessness among children born into extremely challenging circumstances.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

Bibliography

“Amnesty International regrets Lebanon’s decision to overturn its open border policy towards refugees and refusal to address discrimination against women and migrants.” Amnesty International. 16 March 2016. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDE1836582016ENGLISH.pdf>.

Batha, Emma. “War may make hundreds of thousands of young Syrians stateless.” Reuters. 17 September 2014. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-foundation-syria-crisis-stateless/war-may-make-hundreds-of-thousands-of-young-syrians-stateless-idUKKBN0HC1W620140917>.

“Convention on the Rights of the Child.” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. 20 November 1989. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>.

Davidson, John. “A generation of Syrian children who don’t count.” Reuters Investigates. 3 May 2016. <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/syria-refugees-stateless/>.

El-Ghali, Hana Addam, Roula Berjaoui, and Jennifer McKnight. “Higher Education and Syrian Refugee Students: The Case of Lebanon.” United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. March 2017. <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/Lebanon.pdf>.

“Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years.” The UN Refugee Agency. 4 November 2014. <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=546217229&query=Special%20Report:%20Ending%20Statelessness%20Within%2010%20Years>.

“Good Practices Paper: Action 7.” The UN Refugee Agency: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years. November 2017. <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/11/Good-Practices-Paper-on-Ensuring-Birth-Registration-for-the-Prevention-of-Statelessness.pdf>.

“Health Services for Syrian Refugees in Mount Lebanon and Beirut.” The UN Refugee Agency. September 2017. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/59124>

“I Just Wanted to be Treated Like a Person: How Lebanon’s Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees.” Human Rights Watch. January 2016. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/lebanon0116web.pdf.

“Information for Syrian Refugees: Registration of newborn babies in Lebanon with UNHCR.” The UN Refugee Agency. July 2015. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/45285>.

“In Search of Solutions: Addressing Statelessness in the Middle East and North Africa.” The UN Refugee Agency. 2016. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/51053>.

“International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. 16 December 1966. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>.

McCarthy, Niall. “Lebanon Still Has Hosts The Most Refugees Per Capita By Far.” Forbes. 3 April 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/forbes/welcome/?toURL=https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2017/04/03/lebanon-still-has-hosts-the-most-refugees-per-capita-by-far-infographic/&refURL=https://www.google.com/&referrer=https://www.google.com/>.

“Syrian Refugee Livelihoods.” Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon. 2016. <http://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/43420>.



This paper was presented at the fourth Lemkin Reunion, held in February 2018 and organized by the Shattuck Center at the School of Public Policy, Central European University in Budapest. Each year the Shattuck Center hosts the Lemkin Reunion, a gathering named in honor of Raphael Lemkin, the Polish lawyer who lost his family in the Holocaust and first coined the word genocide. He campaigned tirelessly during his life to ensure that the crime of genocide was enshrined in international law. The Lemkin Reunion will gather policymakers involved in responding to atrocity crimes and assess the lessons they learned.

This year, the Lemkin Reunion, with the participation of expert panelists, and external seminar participants, as well as specialists from the CEU community, examined the obstacles to return through the identification and categorization of the different obstacles that those who decide to fully or partially return are facing, in addition to the categorization of actors causing these obstacles.

[Click here](#) for more information.

**Shattuck Center
on Conflict,
Negotiation and Recovery**

Central European University

Nador u. 9 | 1051 Budapest |
Hungary Phone:
+36.1.327.3000 | ext. 2614

aleppo@spp.ceu.edu