



Mandated economic self-sufficiency from state and refugee perspectives: refugee integration policy and practice in Sweden and New Zealand

Micheline van Riemsdijk, Vivienne Anderson & Anna Burgin

To cite this article: Micheline van Riemsdijk, Vivienne Anderson & Anna Burgin (2024) Mandated economic self-sufficiency from state and refugee perspectives: refugee integration policy and practice in Sweden and New Zealand, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 50:20, 5147-5166, DOI: [10.1080/1369183X.2024.2346614](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2346614)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2346614>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 01 May 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 630



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Mandated economic self-sufficiency from state and refugee perspectives: refugee integration policy and practice in Sweden and New Zealand

Micheline van Riemsdijk ^a, Vivienne Anderson ^b and Anna Burgin ^b

^aDepartment of Human Geography, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden; ^bUniversity of Otago College of Education, Dunedin, New Zealand

ABSTRACT

Using the case studies of Sweden and New Zealand, this article examines the ways in which self-sufficiency and individual responsibility are embedded in integration policy and enacted in daily practice. New Zealand was at the forefront of international neoliberal reforms in the 1980s. These reforms were entrenched and strengthened in the 1990s, with profound impacts on economic and social policy. Sweden, while internationally known for its protection of social rights, also emphasizes economic self-sufficiency and individual responsibility in its integration policies. In this article, we draw on S. J. Ball's conceptualization of policies as text, discourse, and enactment to conduct a critical analysis of refugee integration policies in these contexts. After outlining broad patterns in policy and practice, we draw on our respective research with highly skilled refugees (Sweden) and refugee-background young people (New Zealand) to trace the implications of refugee integration policy 'on the ground'. Thus, we contribute to an emerging literature that examines the ways in which national policy is translated into local integration practices. We conclude by considering the relevance of our analysis beyond our respective national borders.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 9 October 2023
Accepted 19 April 2024

KEYWORDS

Forced migration;
integration; neoliberalism;
Sweden; New Zealand

Introduction

Many governments have implemented integration policies to promote the economic, socio-cultural, and political integration of immigrants into their societies. In many contexts, employment is used as a proxy for integration 'success', as employment enables migrants' economic self-sufficiency and participation in the host society (van Riemsdijk and Axelsson 2021). Employment also benefits immigrants since well-being is tied to meaningful work (Ager and Strang 2008; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2006).

Internationally, forced migrants have the lowest employment rates compared to voluntary migrants and native-born persons (OECD 2016b). According to OECD

CONTACT Micheline van Riemsdijk  micheline.vanriemsdijk@kultgeog.uu.se

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

data, forced migrants take longer than voluntary migrants to find employment, and they are most likely to be under-employed (OECD 2016b). These outcomes are due to long wait times during the asylum-seeking period, mental and/or physical health challenges, non – or partial recognition of qualifications and skills, language and cultural barriers, unfamiliarity with local labor market norms, a lack of professional networks, and employer discrimination (Konle-Seidl and Bolitz 2016; Laban et al. 2008; Steel et al. 2009).

Forced migrants' economic rights are enshrined in international law. Signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol have specific obligations concerning economic integration – namely, to ensure that refugees have the same rights as nationals in regard to labor legislation and social security (UNHCR 2010, article 24). Various United Nations (UN) documents note the right for refugees to work in *meaningful* employment, i.e. 'employment that is adequately remunerated and commensurate with a person's skills and qualifications' (O'Donovan and Sheikh 2014, 82). Despite the right to work, and various initiatives to facilitate former refugees' entry into the labor market, barriers to employment continue to exist. Government actors try to increase the employment rates of refugees through economic integration policies that explicitly target forced migrants.

In this article, our use of the term 'refugee' encompasses Convention refugees, resettled (or 'quota') refugees, and persons who have been granted temporary protection. Convention refugees are persons who arrived as asylum seekers, and have been granted a residence permit based on the criteria in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol (UNHCR 2010). Resettled refugees are admitted through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s resettlement program, based on quotas set by national governments. Temporary protection status is awarded to persons temporarily prevented from safely returning to their countries of origin.

Our focus is on refugee integration policies in Sweden and New Zealand. Despite their different historical, socio-political, and migration contexts, both countries' settlement and integration policies valorize economic self-sufficiency and individual responsibility, reflecting the application of neoliberal ideology to social policy. The case selection of Sweden and New Zealand is rooted in practical considerations (Koivu and Hinze 2017), as the first author, employed in Sweden, was awarded a research fellowship in New Zealand. We use an exploratory case study method, asking 'how' policies frame the labor market integration of refugees and 'what' real-life impact they have on refugees. The latter is an emerging research area where 'what' questions lend themselves well to an exploratory case study (Yin 2003). Using ethnographic research in Sweden and Participatory Action Research in New Zealand, we gained an in-depth understanding of the enactment and everyday experiences of refugee integration policies. Our article is timely given the unprecedented displacement of large numbers of people internationally and recent debates about their integration into the labor market (Ferris 2020; OECD 2016a).

Researchers' use of the concept of integration has been critiqued for its problematic separation of 'members' who are considered to make up 'society' from immigrants who need to integrate (Schinkel 2018). According to this view, 'society' is conceptualized as a fixed, bounded, unscathed whole where '[w]hat people are supposed to be integrated in is never questioned, and is assumed to be constant' (Schinkel 2018, 7). In addition, the

classification and monitoring of immigrants can be considered a form of neocolonial knowledge production (Schinkel 2018). While acknowledging these critiques, we use the concept of integration because it is used in the policy texts and discourses we examine, and their enactment. Our ethnographic research aims to foreground the voices of those who are affected by – and enact – these policies, thereby moving beyond a ‘thinking-for-the-state’ (Favell 2019, 4).

In the remainder of the article, we examine the formulation, interpretation, and outcomes of integration policies in Sweden and New Zealand. We use the term ‘policy’ in reference to a ‘purposive course of action or inaction followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern’ (Anderson, Moyer, and Chichirau 2022, 8). While the Swedish Establishment Act and the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy are not ‘policies’ in name, they do steer the designation of resources and integration practices. We analyze the 2012 New Zealand Resettlement Strategy which was in place during data collection for our two research projects (Immigration New Zealand 2020). A new Strategy has since been developed (Immigration New Zealand 2023b).

We use S. J. Ball’s (1993, 2015) conceptualization of policies as text, discourse, and enactment to structure our analysis, focusing on the following questions: How are refugees and employment framed in the policies? How do they articulate the rights, roles, and responsibilities of refugees and the state? What do policy discourses in each context tell us about the state’s perspective on economic integration and belonging? And how do the policies ‘play out’ for refugees ‘on the ground?’ The latter question explores the ‘mundane practices’ through which neoliberal subjects are constituted (Larner 2003, 511), and how they interpret, translate (Ball 2015), and negotiate these.

We contribute to the existing literature on refugee integration in two ways. First, our article examines integration policies from the perspectives of ‘receiving states’ that create these policies, as well as the experiences of the intended ‘objects’ of integration, in this case refugees. While a plethora of studies have focused attention on the implementation of policies by local ‘street-level bureaucrats’ (Lipsky 2010), this article examines the enactment of policies from the point of view of refugees. Second, building on the work of Brännström et al. (2018) and Grip (2020), we use refugees’ narratives to examine how they experience and internalize employment and workfare policies. Their narratives provide insights into the workings of institutions and ‘make visible the social and governance relationships between people, institutions and practices’ at the national and local scale (Brännström et al. 2018, 32). Integration policy is *produced* and *lived* when national policy is translated into local everyday practice (Grip 2020, 862, 873, italics in original).

The article is organized as follows. First, we discuss neoliberal ideals of employment and economic self-sufficiency in relation to integration policies for refugees. This is followed by a short overview of critical policy analysis as theory and method for the purposes of this article. We then present an analysis of refugee integration policies in each context as text, discourse, and enactment, drawing on research on the labor market integration of highly skilled refugees in Sweden (van Riemsdijk 2023a, 2023b, 2024), and refugee-background students’ transition into tertiary education in New Zealand (Anderson et al. 2023a, 2023b, 2023c, 2023d). We conclude by identifying broad patterns in policy and practice across our two contexts and consider the relevance of our analysis to refugee establishment more broadly.

Neoliberal ideals of employment and economic self-sufficiency

The United States and the United Kingdom were among the first to implement neoliberal economic policies in the late 1970s and early 1980s in an attempt to recover from a global economic downturn. These policies promoted economic liberalization, including privatization, marketization, and deregulation of markets in an effort to reduce costs and increase efficiency (Kelsey 2002). Other governments soon applied neoliberal ideologies to social and economic policy in different iterations worldwide (Larner 2003).

Arguably, neoliberal ideology requires the ‘responsibilization’ of citizens to adopt and internalize neoliberal governance ideals, and act as ‘self-actualised and self-managing individual[s]’ (Trnka and Trundle 2014, 139). Workfare policies are examples of these, requiring the unemployed to participate in labor market initiatives in order to receive benefits (Eriksson and Johansson 2022). Sanctions may be imposed if welfare recipients do not comply with program requirements (Ennerberg 2021). Workfare policies have opposing aims of supporting and empowering individuals while exercising control through disciplining actions (Ennerberg 2020). Under workfare, it is the job seeker’s responsibility to find work, rather than the state’s responsibility to create employment opportunities (Ennerberg 2021). Workfare ideologies are reflected in refugee integration initiatives where governments aim to facilitate their employment as quickly as possible.

Labor market integration policies tend to envision labor market entry as a linear process, consisting of sequential stages. This model assumes that successful completion of one stage will lead into the next. Thus, social and cultural integration will follow after a person is employed (Huot et al. 2013). Such a ‘linear, economic, and individualistic discourse on integration’, however, does not take into account that integration is an ongoing process that takes place in multiple fields of integration and practice (Huot et al. 2013, 13).

Critical policy analysis

Public policies socially construct the groups that they serve in a positive or negative manner (Schneider and Ingram 2005). Ingram and Schneider (2005) argue that governments use public policy as a tool to institutionalize and legitimize social constructions. Through policy, the state’s positive or negative constructions of a social group ‘become accepted as the natural order of things’ (Ingram and Schneider 2005, 5). The social constructions embedded in public policies are reinforced through the power and legitimacy of the state. Thus, ‘[t]hrough institutions, the social constructions of target groups become semipermanent dispositions that are rarely questioned, even by those harmed by such constructions’ (Ingram and Schneider 2005, 19).

In this article, we engage in critical policy analysis, drawing on Ball’s (1993, 2015) conceptualization of policy as text, discourse, and enactment. Policy as text refers to ‘what is written and said’, encompassing the language used in policy documents, speeches, and actions during social events (Ball 2015, 311). Attention to policy as text recognizes ‘that policies are ‘contested’, mediated and differentially represented by different actors in different contexts’ (Ball 2015, 311).

Policy as discourse examines ‘how statements are formed and made possible’ – how ‘we’ construct *and are constructed by* policy that requires us to act (or to be seen as

acting) in particular ways (Ball 2015, 311). In this regard, Ball (1993) draws on Foucault, who describes discourses as the ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault 1977, 49). Integration policy discourse requires refugees to behave, speak, think etc. in ‘correct’ ways to be(come) a ‘good migrant’ (Findlay et al. 2013). Attention to policy as discourse examines the taken-for-granted and implicit knowledges and assumptions that inform policy formation and implementation (Ball 2015).

Policy enactment (Ball 1993; 2015) is how policy plays out in practice where ‘it confronts ‘other realities’, other circumstances’ (Ball 1993, 13). For example, policies are enacted when governments, civil servants, civil society organizations and other actors provide integration services. Refugees also internalize, negotiate and contest the ways that policies govern their settlement and integration, as we illustrate further below. We turn now to refugee integration policies in Sweden and New Zealand.

Refugee integration policies in Sweden

Sweden, a country of ten million inhabitants in northern Europe, is a fairly recent immigration destination. Sweden received the largest number of asylum seekers per capita of any European country between 2009 and 2015 (Dustmann et al. 2017). In 2015, the arrival of asylum seekers totaled 163,000 persons or 1.6 percent of Sweden’s population (European Migration Network 2017). Sweden also resettles a smaller number of refugees through the UNHCR resettlement program.

The Swedish welfare model, developed after the Second World War, aims to provide universal welfare services funded by taxpayer revenues. This model is based on the belief that everyone can work to some extent, that everyone benefits from contributing to society, and that all individuals can provide for themselves (Wikström and Ahnlund 2018). However, amidst a global economic downturn in the late 1980s, critics argued that the welfare model was inefficient and that centralized governance stood in the way of individual enterprise (Dahlstedt and Vesterberg 2017).

In the 1990s, in response to rising unemployment, the government implemented cost-cutting and privatization measures in social services (Meagher and Szebehely 2019). Public administration was decentralized (Dahlstedt and Vesterberg 2017), and municipalities took charge of refugee and immigrant integration services. Concerns about widening employment gaps between immigrants and native-born Swedes made the economic integration of refugees a priority (Breidahl 2017). As a result, a new immigration policy implemented in 1998 focused on individual responsibility and self-sufficiency (Eastmond 2011).

Since the 1990s, the Swedish government, in line with other Nordic welfare states, has shifted its emphasis from migrants’ rights and protections to their responsibilities (Wikström and Ahnlund 2018). This involves the expectation to participate in job preparation initiatives and to accept job offers, showing a good work ethic and personal responsibility (Wikström and Ahnlund 2018).

In Sweden, people from refugee backgrounds have the lowest employment rates of any group. In 2010, in response to concerns about the welfare dependency of refugees, the Swedish government implemented an establishment reform (Proposition 2009/10:60). This created a national introduction program for refugees under the auspices of the

Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES),¹ shifting the responsibility for refugee integration from municipalities to the national level. The two-year program promotes gainful employment and broader socio-cultural integration through language training, civics courses, and employment preparation activities (Lidén, Nyhlén, and Nyhlén 2015).

The SPES is governed by the Ministry of Labor, which decides on the SPES's goals and budget in an annual regulation letter (*regleringsbrev*). The SPES's assignment is to contribute 'to a well-functioning labour market ... providing those who find it difficult to enter the labour market with the right tools' (Swedish Public Employment Service 2023b). The establishment policy also reflects these goals, which are discussed more below.

While the government had committed to increasing the number of resettled refugees between 2018 and 2022, concurrent policy measures have reflected a toughening stance on immigration. In an attempt to curb the number of asylum seekers, the government revised the asylum legislation in 2016. The new law awards refugees temporary residency (while they had been granted permanent residency before), and sets maintenance requirements for the right to family reunification and permanent residency (Hagelund 2020). In July 2021, the maintenance requirement for permanent residency was further increased.

Asylum and integration policies are likely to become more restrictive in Sweden in the near future. The center-right coalition government is proposing stricter migration policies that will affect asylum seekers and refugees, including lowering the establishment benefit, phasing out permanent residence permits, and introducing stricter requirements for Swedish citizenship (Government offices of Sweden 2023). These proposed measures mark a significant turn to the right.

'The aim is for you to become ... self-sufficient as quickly as possible' – Sweden's establishment program as text and discourse

This section analyzes Sweden's establishment program as text and discourse. The 2010 establishment reform was accompanied by a shift in terminology from 'integration' to 'establishment', signaling a discursive shift from positioning refugees as passive recipients of welfare benefits to active participants in the labor market (Brännström et al. 2018; Ennerberg 2020). The reform (*etableringsprogram*) re-positioned refugees as responsible for their own labor market integration, as reflected in its title: 'Labour market introduction of newly arrived immigrants – individual responsibility with professional support' (noted in Breidahl 2017). The reform's aim was 'to shorten the time taken by newly arrived migrants to enter the labour market' (Prop. 2009/10:60) (quoted in Ennerberg 2021, 17), in other words, to strengthen the focus on labor market integration and enable immigrants to more quickly establish themselves in society (Brännström et al. 2018).

The establishment program is regulated by Act (2010:197) on Establishment activities for certain new arrivals (*etableringsinsatser för visa nyanlända invandrare*) (hereafter, 'Act'). The initial Act granted participants a relatively strong right to financial support and the right to decide which establishment activities to participate in. New legislation enacted in 2018 (Act 2017:584; Regulation 2017:819, 2017:820 and Regulation 2017:819) required program participation, and refugees could be sanctioned if they did not follow the establishment plan (SAPM 2019:4; Eriksson and Johansson 2022).

This change reflected a clear shift from a refugee rights to a workfare approach (Eriksson and Johansson 2022).

Neoliberal discourses of self-sufficiency and activation are reflected in the Act's focus on giving 'the newly arrived the conditions for self-sufficiency and strengthen[ing] their active participation in working and social life'. The Act 'contains provisions on responsibilities and efforts aimed at facilitating and speeding up certain newly arrived immigrants' establishment in working and social life' (par. 1). Notably, the Act emphasizes the *speeding up* of the establishment process and references employment *before* social integration, reflecting a belief that social and cultural integration will follow employment, or that (economic) self-sufficiency is the primary measure of 'success' in Sweden (Huot et al. 2013).

The Act states that the SPES is responsible for the coordination of the establishment efforts (par. 3), while municipalities are responsible for civics courses (par. 5). According to the Act, an employment officer of the SPES should create an individual plan that contains initiatives to facilitate and speed up a newcomer's establishment (par. 6). The establishment plan should be developed in collaboration with the newcomer, the municipality, government agencies, businesses and organizations (par. 7). It should include language courses (Swedish for Immigrants), civics courses, and labor market preparation activities (Act 2015:484) over a maximum period of 24 months (par. 8). Program participants have the right to an establishment benefit; they may also be entitled to other benefits such as a housing supplement (par. 15).

The legislation was amended in January 2018 with the introduction of Act 2017:584 which *required* participation in activities, and introduced economic sanctions for those who did not follow the establishment plan (SAPM 2019:4) (Eriksson and Johansson 2022, 702). The amended Act entrenched the shift from establishment-as-support to establishment-as-disciplinary-tool, aimed at creating self-sufficient actors. In addition, in 2018 the Swedish government initiated a reform of the SPES, since it failed to meet the targets set forth in the government's annual regulation letter (*regleringsbrev*). During 2019–2020, half of the 200 local SPES offices were closed. By 2021, labor market preparation activities were transferred to private actors, outsourcing responsibility for newcomers' integration (see Government decision A2019/00923/A) (mentioned in Eriksson and Johansson 2022).

An emphasis on individual responsibility and rapid labor market entry is also evident on a website for the establishment program, hosted by the SPES (Swedish Public Employment Service 2023a) and available in multiple languages. The website emphasizes the importance of rapid self-sufficiency: 'The aim is for you to learn Swedish, find a job, and become self-sufficient as quickly as possible' (Swedish Public Employment Service 2023a), reflecting the wording in the Acts (2010:197; 2015:484; and 2017:584) that guide the SPES's integration efforts.

The website explains that a video about the establishment program will 'show you what support and help you might be eligible for and *what you can do yourself* to begin studying and working' (Swedish Public Employment Service 2023a, italics added). As such, it 'responsibilizes' job seekers to find information and facilitate their own study and employment trajectories, reflecting a workfare approach where it is the job seeker's responsibility to find work (Ennerberg 2021).

The SPES explains that '(p)articipation in the programme is naturally voluntary but if you join the programme *you must be active and follow the plan that we have agreed on together*' (Swedish Public Employment Service 2023a, italics added). This statement juxtaposes participants' choice with their duty to abide by the plan. While the program is voluntary by law, refugees can lose their eligibility for welfare benefits if they fail to participate. Program information reflects conflicting discourses of refugees' rights versus obligations, and the use of sanctioning tools for those who do not comply (Ennerberg 2021).

Enactment of the establishment policy in Sweden

This section discusses the enactment of Sweden's establishment policy 'on the ground', drawing on a four-year research project on the social integration of highly skilled refugees in Sweden (project website <https://kultgeog.uu.se/integration>). Interviews with 32 labor market integration actors plus 20 refugee-background pharmacists, 10 doctors, and 7 veterinary nurses explored, among other topics, the ways in which integration policies shaped refugees' labor market integration and how they interpreted and negotiated these. The research project has been approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (2019-05330). Informed consent was obtained verbally before the start of each interview, after the first author had explained the purpose of the project and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

We now provide some enactment examples, using pseudonyms for study participants. The examples illustrate how highly skilled refugees experienced mandated economic self-sufficiency and responsabilization discourses in their everyday lives. In the interviews it was evident that the establishment program's 'responsibilization' ethos comes at a personal cost for highly skilled refugees. Take Khalil (pharmacist 1), a pharmacist from Syria, who wanted to do a language internship.² Since he had to find an employer by himself, he dropped off his CV in many pharmacies. He felt demotivated when no one contacted him, but he secured an internship after several weeks. Khalil had to be resourceful and energetic to 'shape his own success'.

Several informants internalized and reproduced the neoliberal discourses and expectations encountered during the asylum-seeking period and the two-year introduction program. Zahra, a doctor from Afghanistan, explained 'in Sweden, you can't [just] live, you have to provide for yourself, work' (Zahra, doctor 5). She appropriated neoliberal discourses of self-sufficiency and economic productivity in an attempt to convince a municipal case worker to admit her to a Swedish language course for medical professionals: 'I work, I pay taxes, I don't just take money from the Swedish Migration Agency' (Zahra, doctor 5). Her effort, however, was unsuccessful as the profession-specific language course was more expensive than a 'regular' Swedish for Immigrants course. In this case, the case worker valued short-term cost-efficiency over a longer-term investment in professional training.

The SPES's responsabilization discourse fails to acknowledge inequities in access to resources. Abdel (pharmacist 3), who lives in a small town, had to wait six months to take a Swedish language course. He noted: 'If you live in a city like Södertälje or Stockholm then you can take Swedish for Academics. You get Swedish for Immigrants in six to seven months. You get a faster route in the big cities. ... I had not heard one pharmacy

word in SFI and SAS [general Swedish language courses]. In other places [large cities] they hear medical terms from day one'. Thus, refugees' place of residence shapes their opportunities for upskilling and reauthorization, which has also been noted by Carlbaum's study of refugee women's establishment in Sweden's rural north (Carlbaum 2022). Distance education can overcome these geographical divides to a certain extent, but these courses have limited seats.

Responsibilization only works for those who know what questions to ask, and of whom. Tarik, a veterinarian from Syria, criticized the withholding of crucial information from refugees who did not proactively ask for assistance. Tarik only found out about a fast track for veterinary nurses when he met a student who was enrolled in the program. He then asked his SPES employment officer if he could enroll. He explains: 'if I don't ask you, you won't tell [me] what I should do. ... You take the first step and then others will come and help you. It should not be that way [laughs a little]. It should be that people ask what you want and that they help you' (Tarik, veterinary nurse 3). A lack of information – and the need to ask for it – was also noted in a recent study of immigrant integration in Norrköping and Linköping (Korver-Glenn et al. 2023).

A shortage of affordable housing, especially in Sweden's larger cities, made it difficult for some informants to study. Karim (pharmacist 15) came to Sweden by himself, and was reunited with his wife two years later. He shared a crowded apartment with three friends and remarked: 'It is important to have a place to live. How can you study if you do not have an apartment that suits you?' Seth (pharmacist 9) moved in with friends and could not find a room of his own for six months. He said: 'it's a vicious circle. This is why immigrants are segregated if no one gives immigrants jobs and housing'. Some informants were eligible for municipal housing or found housing through their networks of family, friends, coworkers, and volunteers.

Family care obligations can also slow down highly skilled refugees' re-entry into their professions. Soon after Mariam (pharmacist 7) received her residence permit, she gave birth to her third child. Her husband, also a medical professional, was taking Swedish language courses and an internship. They wanted to enroll the child in preschool so that Mariam could also take a Swedish language course. However, if the child was admitted to preschool, it would have been for only 15 hours a week, which was not enough time for Mariam to take a course. As a result, Mariam studied Swedish language and grammar at home. She explains: 'One wants to start right away but everything takes a lot of time in Sweden'. In the dual career households included in the study, men would pursue formal education first, while their wives would perform caring duties at home.

Despite their educational attainment and desire to work, the study participants encountered various structural obstacles in their professional re-entry process. The examples illustrate that the mandate of self-sufficiency is thwarted by, among others, the realities of housing and child care, and access to information and language courses. We turn now to the New Zealand context.

Refugee integration policies in New Zealand

New Zealand immigration policy, including refugee admission processes, fundamentally changed in the 1980s with New Zealand's transformation from a Keynesian welfare state

to ‘one of the purest expressions of a neoliberal structural adjustment programme’ in the world (Redden, Phelan, and Baker 2020, 71). The ‘New Zealand experiment’ (Kelsey 1995; cited in Redden, Phelan, and Baker 2020) was the fourth Labour government’s effort to improve the economy after the global financial crisis of the 1970s. Neoliberal policy measures introduced in the 1980s included the liberalization of markets, the removal of subsidies, and the privatization of state-owned companies and some industries in an effort to open up New Zealand to global markets (Redden, Phelan, and Baker 2020). In addition, the government abandoned its goal of full employment, opening up employment to market needs (Nairn, Higgins, and Sligo 2012).

The 1980s economic reforms made New Zealand’s economy more dependent on international markets, and the country experienced high inflation rates, debt, and unemployment rates during economic downturns (Redden, Phelan, and Baker 2020). Market-based principles were extended to immigrants and their integration through the Immigration Act of 1987. The Act gave preference to immigrants that brought economic value to New Zealand’s labor market. The shift to prioritizing highly-skilled migrants with economic capital was further amplified in 1991 by introducing a points-based system (McMillan 2021). The 1987 Act also established an annual refugee resettlement quota, however, no coordinated refugee integration policies were introduced until 2012 (Humpage 2019; Marlowe and Elliott 2014).

The neoliberal policy regime was consolidated under the fourth National government in the 1990s, which sought to discourage welfare dependency by cutting benefits, restricting eligibility, and implementing tax cuts to promote employment (Nairn, Higgins, and Sligo 2012; Roper 2021). These measures led to rising poverty rates and an increasingly unequal society, where employment was prioritized but characterized by low wages and precarity, and where migrants and refugees faced disproportionate unemployment and underemployment (O’Donovan and Sheikh 2014; Spoonley 2017).

With the election of a center-left government in 1999, New Zealand adopted Third Way policies that continued to support free trade while strengthening social welfare programs, including investments in education, child care, infrastructure, and employment subsidies (Kelsey 2002; Simon-Kumar 2014). Arguably, Third Way policies did little to change the underlying neoliberal policy regime, which was strengthened under the fifth National government of 2008–2017 (Roper 2021). The same government introduced the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy (Immigration New Zealand 2020), hereafter ‘Strategy’), which prioritized employment as a key marker of integration (McBrien 2014).

Contrary to Sweden, New Zealand predominantly receives quota refugees. Since the Second World War, New Zealand has resettled over 50,000 persons (Marlowe et al. 2023), and its government has maintained its commitment to resettle refugees through the UNHCR since the implementation of the resettlement quota program in 1987 (Marlowe and Elliott 2014). In 2020, the quota was increased from 1,000 to 1,500 refugees, in addition to 300 family reunification places per year (increased to 600 in 2022/23). However, the Covid-19 outbreak significantly reduced refugee arrivals in New Zealand (Anderson et al. 2023b). Notably, quota places are predominantly reserved for urgent protection cases, women-at-risk,³ and medical reasons/disabled persons (Marlowe and Elliott 2014).

New Zealand also gives asylum to a small number of Convention refugees, averaging 178 approved applications per year in the last ten years (Marlowe et al. 2023). During the asylum-seeking period and the first three years after obtaining refugee status, Convention

refugees have temporary residency status. However, they have fewer rights and entitlements than quota refugees regarding housing, healthcare, and the right to family reunification (Mahony et al. 2017). Three years after obtaining refugee status, Convention refugees can apply for permanent residency. Convention refugees and persons who arrived under the family reunification scheme were not eligible for settlement support and services under the 2012 Refugee Resettlement Strategy (Marlowe, Bartley, and Hibtit 2014).

Quota refugees are awarded permanent residency upon arrival and, as ‘new Kiwis’, have the same rights to social services and protections as other New Zealanders (Rafferty 2019). After arrival, quota refugees participate in a five-week orientation program in Auckland where they receive an orientation to living and working in New Zealand, psycho-social needs assessments, medical care, and English language training (Mahony et al. 2017). After completing the orientation program, participants are moved to a designated settlement area (Immigration New Zealand 2023a). They are eligible for at least twelve months of settlement support, including a Pathways to Employment program offered by the New Zealand Red Cross. However, even for quota refugees, being treated equal to other residents does not necessarily result in equity (Rafferty 2019). Inequities are evident in lower literacy rates, lower employment outcomes, and higher debt rates among former refugees compared to native-born New Zealanders (Humpage 2000; Ward and Liu 2012; cited in Rafferty 2019).

The Strategy is currently being ‘refreshed’, alongside the New Zealand Migrant Settlement Integration Strategy. The government of New Zealand aims to align migration and refugee resettlement policies with its economic and social cohesion goals.

‘The overarching vision is [that] [r]efugees are participating fully and integrated socially and economically as soon as possible’ – New Zealand’s refugee resettlement strategy as text and discourse

The 2012 New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy listed five goals formulated as integration outcomes: self-sufficiency; housing; education; health and wellbeing; and participation. Self-sufficiency was listed first, defined as ‘all working-age refugees are in paid work or supported by a family member in paid work’ (Immigration New Zealand 2020). The success of self-sufficiency was measured by an ‘(i)ncreased proportion of working-age refugees in paid employment [and a] reduced proportion of working-age refugees receiving unemployment related benefits’ (Immigration New Zealand 2020). Thus, the 2012 Strategy reflected a neoliberal emphasis on refugees’ obligation to find paid employment, rather than the state’s responsibility to ensure refugees’ access to language tuition, education, and/or qualifications recognition (McBrien 2014).

The overarching goal of the Strategy was that ‘Refugees are participating fully and integrated socially and economically as soon as possible so that they are living independently, undertaking the same responsibilities and exercising the same rights as other New Zealanders and have a strong sense of belonging to their own community and to New Zealand’ (Immigration New Zealand 2020). The Strategy listed refugees’ responsibilities before their rights, emphasizing the obligations of refugees to the state. Integration and belonging were mentioned but the emphasis is arguably on migrants’ duties to the collective and the collective creation of a common good (Simon-Kumar 2014).

The Strategy's emphasis on economic self-sufficiency reflected the business focus of Immigration New Zealand, the government agency responsible for its implementation. Immigration New Zealand sits within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, which aims 'to grow New Zealand for all' (<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/>). Immigration New Zealand 'work[s] with international organisations and industry partners to improve border security and make immigration easier. We lead government strategy designed to help migrants settle in New Zealand' (<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do>). The emphasis on border security reflected the state's sovereign right to control migrants' entry and stay in its national territory (Dauvergne 2004).

The aim of the 2023 Strategy refresh was 'to ensure it continues to effectively support successful settlement in the future, as well as providing the agility to respond to changes in the settlement environment ... The refresh will focus on reviewing the success indicators of both the NZRRS [New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy] and NZ Migration Settlement and Integration Strategy ... [and] to make sure they reflect successful settlement outcomes sought by government and communities' (Immigration New Zealand 2023a). The review mentions the need for agility when the context of reception changes. The refreshed Strategy reflects a new emphasis on participation, belonging, and the goals of resettled refugees, but it is unclear how this will be enacted in practice (Ministry of Business 2023).

New Zealand Immigration states that 'The New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy is a whole-of-government approach to delivering improved refugee resettlement outcomes. Refugees resettled in New Zealand under the Refugee Quota Program more quickly achieve self-sufficiency, social integration and independence' (Immigration New Zealand 2020). Strikingly, the 2012 Strategy listed employment as a resettlement goal before health and education: 'Immigration New Zealand works with refugees to assess their health and employment options. The aim is to help refugees find work, and improve their health and education outcomes' (Immigration New Zealand 2020). The linear representation of employment as a means to improving one's health was ironic, given New Zealand's commitment to receiving 'at risk' people, including those with medical conditions (see earlier).

As noted, The New Zealand government implemented welfare reforms while the 2012 Strategy was being developed. These activation reforms aimed to get more people into work and to reduce their welfare dependency. Since 2012, the expectations for job seekers to secure employment have increased, and sanctions have been implemented for persons who do not comply with the new requirements (O'Donovan and Sheikh 2014).

Enactment of New Zealand's resettlement strategy

This section (re)considers New Zealand's Resettlement Strategy (Immigration New Zealand 2020) in light of data from a three-year participatory action research project (website <https://www.otago.ac.nz/transitions-project/index.html>). It involved 44 refugee-background young people aged 16–25 years, who were interested in tertiary education. Most were in senior secondary school although some had been unable to attend school, or had recently left. They lived in two relatively new 'settlement areas' (Immigration New Zealand 2023a). Factors that shaped young people's access to education included family members' level of education, understanding of education pathways, and the educational infrastructure in the resettlement city. The research findings showed patchy

education provision for resettled refugees in New Zealand, which is unsurprising since refugees are not a named ‘priority group’ in education policy (Anderson et al. 2023b).

Ethical approval for the project was granted by the Human Ethics Committee in December 2019 (19/175). Informed consent was obtained verbally and in writing when young people first joined the project. Then, at the beginning of each workshop or project-related event we again sought verbal consent, reminding young people that the event was part of a research project, and that they could choose not to have their comments, ideas and artefacts included in our research. We also sought informed consent verbally from any family members who were present at project workshops.

We now focus on two young people whose education pathways illustrate the impact of resettlement policy that valorises ‘self-sufficiency’ as a primary resettlement goal. Whitney and Luna (both pseudonyms) had come to New Zealand from Colombia via Ecuador: Whitney with her mother and brother, and Luna with elderly relatives. Both came from families who had experienced intergenerational displacement, violence, and educational disruption. Both recalled high expectations of education as a pathway to a better future for themselves and their families (Anderson et al. 2023a). Luna entered high school when she arrived in New Zealand, and remarkably, achieved her school leaver qualification while learning English, gaining a driver’s licence, and working part-time to support dependent family members.

As she gained English language fluency, Luna also became the family translator and advocate, skipping school to manage housing issues, and interpreting for family members at health appointments. Luna had access to English language classes in her school, but her teacher was not a qualified language teacher and Luna found their teaching ineffective. She told us, ‘I ... learned English by myself. After finishing school, Luna was accepted for a university ‘pathways’ (access) program in a different city. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all learning moved online. Luna had never used a computer before; she had difficulty enrolling and accessing a student allowance (both of which require online applications), and engaging with new and unfamiliar content. Luna’s family also struggled to manage day to day life without her assistance, so she would travel ‘home’ to help them most weekends. In her second year, one family member was hospitalized, and since the other family member required full-time care, Luna had to withdraw from study. Despite her ongoing challenges, Luna told us, ‘I refuse to give up’.

Unlike Luna, Whitney could not access school. She arrived in New Zealand aged 19 years (older than most New Zealand school leavers), and was initially enrolled in a school-based English language program. When the teacher left unexpectedly, she was not offered a place in general classes, despite being legally allowed to stay at school until 21 years. Whitney did not meet the criteria for enrolling at her local tertiary education institution, and when her mother suffered a major health crisis, she attended her mother’s medical appointments and cared for her mother and brother. Whitney said, ‘If I had known I could not study here, I would not have come here. Because what I wanted was to study. I feel very discouraged, much more than at the beginning’. In 2022, Whitney started community-based English language classes online after we helped her access a community grant to buy a computer while still caring for her mother full-time. She told us that service providers were encouraging her to get a job. Whitney’s comment below reflects both the lure and the limits of self-sufficiency as a resettlement goal, without concurrent attention to meaningful pathways or refugees’ own aspirations. She told us:

It's good to be independent, if you know what I mean. My mum wants me to be something too ... But I don't come here to work as a cleaner. I can work, but not all my life. I come here for something. I didn't come here to earn money and that's it; I came here to feed this (pointing to her head).

For Whitney, low-paid work as a cleaner was not a desirable means for gaining self-sufficiency.

Whitney and Luna's stories reveal the embodied impacts of resettlement support that reifies independent self-sufficiency without concurrent attention to refugees' skills, aspirations, relational commitments, and human needs. It illustrates the cruel implications of policy that prioritizes 'at risk' refugees while valorising self-sufficiency. Responsibilization for Luna and Whitney involved forgoing education to care for family members who were unable to work due to age, disability and illness.

Ironically, a high level of necessary self-sufficiency was evident in both young women's stories – Luna navigated exceptionally challenging circumstances to gain university entrance, and supported her family members when social service providers failed to meet their (housing and health) needs. She withdrew from education to become an unpaid, full-time caregiver for her family members, although she hopes to return to university one day. In 2022, after completing community English classes, Whitney gained access to a certificate level program at her local education provider. She tells us, she would like to become a nursing assistant, and one day, a nurse.

Discussion and conclusion

In this article we have shown how neoliberal integration discourses shape activation and workfare policies, emphasizing refugees' duty to seek rapid employment, and placing the onus of economic integration on the individual. Unemployment is the result of an individual's lack of employability rather than the state's failure to create structural opportunities for full and meaningful employment (Ennerberg 2021; Wikström and Ahnlund 2018), and access to education, healthcare and other social services (Rafferty et al. 2020). The policies seemed grounded in an assumption that social integration would happen after employment (Huot et al. 2013), providing little detail as to how social integration would be accomplished. Our data show tensions in how these policies 'played out', illustrating the challenges refugees faced achieving economic self-sufficiency and fulfilling career and educational aspirations.

However, refugee integration policies at the time of our studies arguably focused more on refugees' responsibilities than their rights. In their focus on rapid labor market integration, integration policies tend to disregard the UN framework for the right to work in *meaningful* employment (O'Donovan and Sheikh 2014, 82), and the *quality* of employment (van Riemsdijk and Axelsson 2021). In the case of highly skilled refugees, it takes considerable time to re-enter their professions, especially for licensed professions (Khan-Gökkaya and Moesko 2021; van Riemsdijk 2023a). In addition, refugees need to be proficient in the host country's language in the case of institutional monolingualism (Auer 2018; Anderson et al. 2023c). Integration policies' focus on rapid employment seems to ignore the – often lengthy – upskilling process (van Riemsdijk 2023a).

Arguably, integration policies serve the interests and demands of capital rather than a commitment to social justice (Humpage 2019). Instead of focusing on the well-being of

refugees and social equity, the policies considered here reflect a universal notion of a ‘successful’ (gainfully employed) citizen. However, refugees are a diverse group with different strengths and needs. A social justice perspective would acknowledge the specific challenges that refugees encounter, reflecting government responsibility for *enabling* self-sufficiency, for example, by prioritizing access to healthcare, education, and language classes as foundational necessities for all.

An emphasis on self-sufficiency may close off other possible pathways. This is the case for young refugees who choose (or need) to become rapidly self-sufficient instead of pursuing higher education, and for highly skilled refugees, who may choose to accept a job below their level of expertise in order to secure permanent residency and support family reunification. These migration outcomes involve a loss of human capital over time.

As refugees negotiate their integration in multiple fields (Huot et al. 2013, 12), integration policies must align with other policy areas: housing, health, education, employment, social cohesion, etc. If integration policies and other social policies were more coordinated, and if education and social cohesion were the primary goals of integration instead of individual responsibility and economic self-sufficiency, refugees might experience more positive long-term outcomes than those attained through a short-term focus on rapid employment. This integrative perspective is reflected in the newly developed New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy. It appears to take a more inclusive perspective on integration, as it envisions that ‘recent migrants and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)’ (Immigration New Zealand 2023b). This vision places migrants’ goals and well-being at the center, and encompasses several policy areas. It remains, of course, to be seen how this strategy will ‘play out on the ground’.

Notes

1. The SPES has translated the Swedish word for the introduction program (*etableringsprogrammet*) to ‘establishment program’ in English. Internationally, the term ‘introduction program’ is more commonly used (Eriksson and Johansson 2022). In this article we use the term ‘establishment program’ as the documents that govern the program discuss the establishment of refugees in a broad sense – including their economic, political, and socio-cultural establishment.
2. In a language internship (*språkpraktik*), interns perform tasks under supervision and learn profession-specific Swedish. Participants in the establishment program could combine an internship with a Swedish language course or a civics course.
3. Women-at-risk includes women who are pregnant, unaccompanied, disabled, heads of household and/or elderly (<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/23331-three-year-refugee-quota-programme-2022-23-to-2024-25-proactiverelease-pdf>).

Acknowledgements

We also thank Kevin Durand for suggesting the Wayback Machine for retrieving the website for the New Zealand refugee resettlement strategy.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

Van Riemsdijk's research in New Zealand was funded by a Matariki research fellowship, and her fieldwork in Sweden was supported by the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare [grant number 2019-01220]. Funding for Anderson and Burgin's research was provided through the New Zealand Ministry of Education in the form of a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative Grant.

ORCID

Micheline van Riemsdijk  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0937-9163>

Vivienne Anderson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2055-8998>

Anna Burgin  <http://orcid.org/0009-0007-1369-8486>

References

- Ager, A., and A. Strang. 2008. "Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21 (1): 166–191. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fen016>.
- Anderson, V, A. Ortiz-Ayala, S. Mostolizadeh, A. Burgin, J. Oranje, A. Fraser-Smith, P. Laufiso, J. Cooke, and G. Atkins. 2023a. Refugee-Background Students in Aotearoa: Supporting Successful Secondary to Tertiary Education Transitions. [Project Report]. <http://www.tlri.org.nz/tlriresearch/research-completed/cross-sector/refugee-background-students-aotearoa-supporting>.
- Anderson, Vivienne, Sayedali Mostolizadeh, Jo Oranje, Amber Fraser-Smith, and Emma Crampton. 2023b. "Navigating the Secondary-Tertiary Education Border: Refugee-Background Students in Southern Aotearoa New Zealand." *Research Papers in Education* 38 (2): 250–275. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2021.1961300>.
- Anderson, James E., Jeffrey Moyer, and George Chichirau. 2022. *Public Policymaking*. 9th ed. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
- Anderson, Vivienne, Alejandra Ortiz-Ayala, and Sayedali Mostolizadeh. 2023c. *Refugee-Background Students in Southern New Zealand: Educational Navigation and Necessary Self-Sufficiency*. Edward Elgar.
- Anderson, Vivienne, Alejandra Ortiz-Ayala, and Sayedali Mostolizadeh. 2023d. "Schools and Teachers as Brokers of Belonging for Refugee-Background Young People." *International Journal of Inclusive Education*: 1–15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2023.2210591>.
- Auer, Daniel. 2018. "Language Roulette—the Effect of Random Placement on Refugees' Labour Market Integration." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44 (3): 341–362. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1304208>
- Ball, Stephen J. 1993. "What is Policy? Texts, Trajectories and Toolboxes." *The Australian Journal of Education Studies* 13 (2): 10–17.
- Ball, Stephen J. 2015. "What is Policy? 21 Years Later: Reflections on the Possibilities of Policy Research." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 36 (3): 306–313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.1015279>
- Brännström, Lotta, Katarina Giritli Nygren, Gustav Lidén, and Jon Nyhlén. 2018. "Lived Experiences of Changing Integration Policies: Immigrant Narratives of Institutional Support and Labour Market Inclusion/Exclusion in Sweden." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 8 (1): 25–34. <https://doi.org/10.1515/njmr-2018-0009>

- Breidahl, Karen N. 2017. "Scandinavian Exceptionalism? Civic Integration and Labour Market Activation for Newly Arrived Immigrants." *Comparative Migration Studies* 5 (1): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-016-0044-9>
- Carlbaum, Sara. 2022. "Refugee Women's Establishment in the Rural North of Sweden: Cultural Capital in Meeting Local Labour Market Needs." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48 (5): 1210–1227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1933402>
- Colic-Peisker, Val, and Farida Tilbury. 2006. "Employment Niches for Recent Refugees: Segmented Labour Market in Twenty-First Century Australia." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19 (2): 203–229. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fej016>
- Dahlstedt, Magnus, and Viktor Vesterberg. 2017. "Citizens in the Making: The Inclusion of Racialized Subjects in Labour Market Projects in Sweden." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 40 (2): 228–246. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12084>
- Dauvergne, Catherine. 2004. "Sovereignty, Migration and the Rule of Law in Global Times." *The Modern Law Review* 67 (4): 588–615. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2230.2004.00501.x>
- Dustmann, Christian, Francesco Fasani, Tommaso Frattini, Luigi Minale, and Uta Schönberg. 2017. "On the Economics and Politics of Refugee Migration." *Economic Policy* 32 (91): 497–550. <https://doi.org/10.1093/epolic/eix008>
- Eastmond, Marita. 2011. "Egalitarian Ambitions, Constructions of Difference: The Paradoxes of Refugee Integration in Sweden." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37 (2): 277–295. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2010.521323>
- Ennerberg, Elin. 2020. "Unemployment Services for Newly Arrived Migrants in Sweden: The Privatization and Rebureaucratization of the Introduction Programme." *Social Policy & Administration* 54 (5): 719–732. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12571>
- Ennerberg, Elin. 2021. "Trajectories of Newly Arrived Migrants in the Swedish Introduction Program." *Nordic Journal of Transitions, Careers and Guidance* 2 (1): 14–26.
- Eriksson, Erik, and Kerstin Johansson. 2022. "Street-level Bureaucrat in the Introduction Programme – Client-Centred and Authority-Centred Strategies to Handle Challenging Working Conditions." *Nordic Social Work Research* 12 (5): 698–715. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2020.1869063>
- European Migration Network. 2017. *The Changing Influx of Asylum Seekers in 2014–2016: Member States' Responses. Country Report Sweden*.
- Favell, Adrian. 2019. "Integration: Twelve Propositions After Schinkel." *Comparative Migration Studies* 7 (1): 1–10.
- Ferris, Elizabeth. 2020. "Making Sense of Public Policy on Refugee Integration." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 690 (1): 200–224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716220941577>
- Findlay, Allan, David McCollum, Sergei Shubin, Elina Apsite, and Zaiga Krisjane. 2013. "The Role of Recruitment Agencies in Imagining and Producing the 'Good' Migrant." *Social & Cultural Geography* 14 (2): 145–167. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2012.737008>
- Foucault, Michel. 1977. *Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Government offices of Sweden. 2023. "Integration Requirements." Accessed July 8, 2023. <https://www.government.se/government-policy/swedens-new-migration-policy/stalla-krav-pa-integration/>.
- Grip, Lena. 2020. "Knocking on the Doors of Integration: Swedish Integration Policy and the Production of a National Space." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 21 (3): 861–877. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-019-00691-y>
- Hagelund, Anniken. 2020. "Atypical Citizenship Regimes: Comparing Legal and Political Conceptualizations." *Comparative Migration Studies* 8 (1): 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0156-0>
- Humpage, Louise. 2000. "Systemic Racism: Refugee, Resettlement, and Education Policy in New Zealand." *Refugee* 19: 33.
- Humpage, Louise. 2019. "Refugee Protection and Settlement Policy in New Zealand." In *Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity*, edited by Steven Ratuva, 1689–1710. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Huot, Suzanne, Debbie Laliberte Rudman, Belinda Dodson, and Lilian Magalhães. 2013. "Expanding Policy-Based Conceptualizations of 'Successful Integration': Negotiating

- Integration Through Occupation Following International Migration.” *Journal of Occupational Science* 20 (1): 6–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2012.717497>
- Immigration New Zealand. 2020. “New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy.” Accessed March 6 2024. Archived 22 January 2020, at the Wayback Machine. <https://web.archive.org/web/20200122181023/https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-strategies-and-projects/refugee-resettlement-strategy>.
- Immigration New Zealand. 2023a. “Increasing New Zealand’s Refugee Quota.” Accessed March 3, 2023. <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-strategies-and-projects/refugee-resettlement-strategy/rqip>.
- Immigration New Zealand. 2023b. “New Zealand migrant settlement and integration strategy.” Accessed September 18 2023. <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/other-resources/nz-migrant-settlement-and-integration-strategy.pdf>.
- Ingram, Helen M., and Anne L. Schneider. 2005. “Introduction: Public Policy and the Social Construction of Deservedness.” In *Deserving and Entitled: Social Constructions and Public Policy*, edited by Anne L. Schneider Helen M. Ingram, 1–28. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Kelsey, Jane. 1995. *The New Zealand Experiment: A World Model for Structural Adjustment?*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Kelsey, Jane. 2002. *At the Crossroads: Three Essays*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Khan-Gökkaya, Sidra, and Mike Moesko. 2021. “Labour Market Integration of Refugee Health Professionals in Germany: Challenges and Strategies.” *International Migration* 59 (4): 105–126. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12752>
- Koivu, Kendra L., and Annika Marlen Hinze. 2017. “Cases of Convenience? The Divergence of Theory from Practice in Case Selection in Qualitative and Mixed-Methods Research.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50 (4): 1023–1027. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096517001214>
- Konle-Seidl, R., and G. Bolitz. 2016. *Labour Market Integration of Refugees: Strategies and Good Practices*. Brussels: European Parliament, Directorate-General for Internal Policies.
- Korver-Glenn, Elizabeth, Alisa Rogers, Sarah Valdez, and Elizabeth Roberto. 2023. “Structured Encounters and Immigrant Experiences of Integration in Sweden.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2023.2290445>
- Laban, Cornelis J., Ivan H. Komproe, Hajo B. P. E. Gernaat, and Joop T. V. M. de Jong. 2008. “The Impact of a Long Asylum Procedure on Quality of Life, Disability and Physical Health in Iraqi Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands.” *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 43 (7): 507–515. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-008-0333-1>.
- Larner, Wendy. 2003. “Neoliberalism?” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21: 509–512. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d2105ed>
- Lidén, Gustav, Jon Nyhlén, and Sara Nyhlén. 2015. “Forced Cooperation from Above: The Case of Sweden’s Establishment Reform.” *Policy Studies* 36 (5): 468–486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2015.1089983>
- Lipsky, Michael. 2010. *Street-level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Service*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Mahony, Chris, Jay Marlowe, Louise Humpage, and Natalie Baird. 2017. “Aspirational yet Precarious: Compliance of New Zealand Refugee Settlement Policy with International Human Rights Obligations.” *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies* 3 (1): 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMBS.2017.081176>
- Marlowe, Jay M., Allen Bartley, and Aklilu Hibitit. 2014. “The New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy: Implications for Identity, Acculturation and Civic Participation.” *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 9 (2): 60–69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2014.934847>
- Marlowe, Jay M., and S. Elliott. 2014. “Global trends and refugee settlement in New Zealand.” *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 9 (2): 43–49.
- Marlowe, Jay M., Arezoo Zarintaj Malihi, Barry Milne, Jessica McLay, and Annie Chiang. 2023. “Settlement Trajectories of Nearly 25,000 Forced Migrants in New Zealand: Longitudinal Insights from Administrative Data.” *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 19 (1): 21–44.

- McBrien, Jody. 2014. *I ōrea te tuātara ka patu ki waho: Competing Priorities in the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy*. Fulbright New Zealand (Wellington). <https://www.fulbright.org.nz/publications/2014-mcbrien/>.
- McMillan, Kate. 2021. "Immigration Policy." In *Government and Politics in Aotearoa New Zealand*, edited by Janine Hayward, Lara Greaves, and Claire Timperley. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Meagher, Gabrielle, and Marta Szebehely. 2019. "The Politics of Profit in Swedish Welfare Services: Four Decades of Social Democratic Ambivalence." *Critical Social Policy* 39 (3): 455–476. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018318801721>
- Ministry of Business, Immigration and Employment. 2023. "New Zealand refugee resettlement strategy." Accessed 1 March 2023. <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/refugees/refugeeresettlementstrategy.pdf>
- Nairn, Karen Marie, Jane Frances Higgins, and Judith Sligo. 2012. *Children of Rogernomics: A Neoliberal Generation Leaves School*. Dunedin: Otago University Press.
- O'Donovan, T., and Mehak Sheikh. 2014. "Welfare Reforms and the Refugee Resettlement Strategy: An Opportunity to Achieve Meaningful Employment Outcomes for New Zealanders from Refugee Backgrounds?" *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 9 (2): 82–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2014.944193>
- OECD. 2016a. *Hiring Refugees - What are the Opportunities and Challenges for Employers?* Paris: OECD.
- OECD. 2016b. *How are Refugees Faring on the Labour Market in Europe?* Paris: OECD.
- Rafferty, Rachel. 2019. "Rights, Resources, and Relationships: A "Three Rs" Framework for Enhancing the Educational Resilience of Refugee Background Youth." In *Migration, Education and Translation*, edited by Vivienne Anderson, and Henry Johnson, 186–198. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Rafferty, Rachel, Anna Burgin, and Vivienne Anderson. 2020. "Do we really offer refuge? Using Galtung's Concept of Structural Violence to Interrogate Refugee Resettlement Support in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies* 17 (1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.11157/sites-id455>.
- Redden, Guy, Sean Phelan, and Claire Baker. 2020. "Different Routes up the Same Mountain? Neoliberalism in Australia and New Zealand." In *Neoliberalism in Context: Governance, Subjectivity and Knowledge*, edited by Simon Dawes, and Marc Lenormand, 61–82. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
- Roper, Brian. 2021. "New Zealand Politics, Post-1984." In *Government and Politics in Aotearoa New Zealand*, edited by Janine Hayward, Lara Greaves, and Claire Timperley. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schinkel, Willem. 2018. "Against 'Immigrant Integration': For an end to Neocolonial Knowledge Production." *Comparative Migration Studies* 6 (1): 1–17.
- Schneider, Anne L., and Helen M. Ingram. 2005. *Deserving and Entitled: Social Constructions and Public Policy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Simon-Kumar, Rachel. 2014. "Difference and Diversity in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Post-Neoliberal Constructions of the Ideal Ethnic Citizen." *Ethnicities* 14 (1): 136–159. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812466374>
- Spoonley, Paul. 2017. "Can I Have a Decent job? The Labour Market Experiences of non-European Immigrants." In *Precurity: Uncertain, Insecure and Unequal Lives in Aotearoa New Zealand*, edited by Shiloh Groot, Bridgette Masters-Awatere, Clifford van Ommen, and Natasha Tassell-Matamua, 183–191. Auckland: Massey University Press.
- Steel, Z., T. Chey, D. Silove, C. Marnane, R. A. Bryant, and M. van Ommeren. 2009. "Association of Torture and Other Potentially Traumatic Events with Mental Health Outcomes among Populations Exposed to Mass Conflict and Displacement: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *JAMA* 302 (5): 537–549. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2009.1132>.
- Swedish Public Employment Service. 2023a. "The Establishment Programme." Accessed February 5, 2022. <https://arbetsformedlingen.se/other-languages/english-engelska/stod-och-ersattning/att-delta-i-program/etableringsprogrammet>.

- Swedish Public Employment Service. 2023b. "Our Assignment." Accessed March 15, 2023. <https://arbetsformedlingen.se/other-languages/english-engelska/about-us/our-mission/our-assignment>.
- Trnka, Susanna, and Catherine Trundle. 2014. "Competing Responsibilities: Moving Beyond Neoliberal Responsibilisation." *Anthropological Forum* 24 (2): 136–153.
- UNHCR. 2010. *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Geneva: UNHCR Communications and Public Information Service.
- van Riemsdijk, Micheline. 2023a. "Career rewind: professional trajectories of pharmacists with a refugee background." *Globalisation, Societies and Education*: 1–12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2023.2236581>.
- van Riemsdijk, Micheline. 2023b. "Obstacles to the labour market integration of highly skilled refugees in Sweden." In *The Integration of Refugees in the Education and Labour Markets*, edited by Karolina Sobczak-Szelc, Marta Pachocka, and Justyna Szałańska, 138–151. New York: Routledge.
- van Riemsdijk, Micheline. 2024. "Unpacking "the system": Multi-level governance gaps in the labour market integration of highly skilled refugees." *International Migration* 62 (2): 38–52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/imig.v62.2>.
- van Riemsdijk, Micheline, and Linn Axelsson. 2021. "Introduction. Labour market integration of highly skilled refugees in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands". *International Migration* 59 (4): 3–12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/imig.v59.4>.
- Ward, Colleen, and James H. Liu. 2012. "Ethno-cultural conflict in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Balancing indigenous rights and multicultural responsibilities." In *Handbook of ethnic conflict: International perspectives*, edited by D. Landis R. D. Albert, 45–69. New York: Springer.
- Wikström, Eva, and Petra Ahnlund. 2018. "Making Refugees Work? Individualized Work Strategies in the Swedish Refugee Settlement Program." *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* 8 (S4): 47–65. <https://doi.org/10.18291/njwls.v8iS4.111157>
- Yin, R. 2003. *Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.