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Southeast by Southeast mural in South Philadelphia

Evidence on Refugee Integration in the United States

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Urban Institute Program on Immigrants and Immigration

- Advancing research and providing evidence on immigration and integration in communities across the US
 - Impact of local, state, and federal policy and practice on immigrant and refugee communities
 - Strategies to promote wellbeing and advancement of immigrant and refugee families
 - Supports for practitioners to drive evidence-driven policymaking
- Check out our website at www.urban.org/immigration and sign up for our newsletter
- You can reach me at hbernstein@urban.org

What do we know about refugees' experiences in the US?

Economic

- High labor force participation
- Incomes increase over time but stay low
- Many own homes and/or businesses
- Public benefits use declines over time but remains relatively high

Linguistic

- English proficiency increases over time but remains a challenge
- Lower native language literacy among more recent arrivals
- Educational attainment varies across groups
- Age of arrival matters

Civic

- More likely than non-refugee-immigrants to naturalize
- Engage as voters

"Bringing Evidence to the Refugee Integration Debate" (2018):

<https://www.urban.org/research/publication/bringing-evidence-refugee-integration-debate>

What don't we know?

- Little evidence about the impact and effectiveness of refugee resettlement programming
- Lose contact and data after the initial period of arrival in the U.S., but integration is a long-term process
- Impacts of changes to refugee and immigration policies and the COVID-19 pandemic
- Beyond economic self-sufficiency, understanding the multidimensional process of integration and wellbeing

Other indicators important for understanding integration

- Moving beyond self-sufficiency
- Consider health, well-being, social connection, access
- Consider experiences before arrival

What is the Annual Survey of Refugees?

- The ASR is the only U.S. national survey of recently arrived refugees – unique data source
- Offers representative sample of refugees resettled in the U.S. in the previous five years
- Public use datasets now available on ICPSR
- Recent redesign process has developed an improved and more comprehensive questionnaire which is launching this year

New Annual Survey of Refugees launching 2020

Family Demographics

Experiences before arrival in the U.S.

Home country

Period of Displacement

Human Capital

Characteristics on arrival

Progress since arrival

Economic Self-Sufficiency

Employment

Sources of Support

Social Connection

Ingroup

Outgroup

Welcoming

Engagement

Receiving Community

Markers

Housing

Safety

Discrimination

Health

Healthcare services

Health insurance

Health status

Children and Schools

Child's experience

Parental engagement

To see the new ASR questionnaire, visit the OMB site:

https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=202006-0970-011&icID=9803