According to a 2013 UN report, there are 232 million individuals living outside their country of origin today - approximately 35 million of these are children and young people under the age of 20. By exploring the challenges that these young people face, the tensions and frictions that exist between internationally-recognized human rights, national politics, and lived experience become readily apparent. The increased visibility of grassroots efforts like the DREAMer movement in the United States also proves that there are many perspectives to be heard on issues of youth and child migration.

At the third annual UCL Migration Research Unit Student Conference, postgraduates from across disciplines will share their research and contribute to debates in contemporary migration studies. Topics will include young migrants’ access to education and health care, their treatment by different legal regimes, and questions of identity and representation.

The conference will conclude with a talk by Carlos Saavedra, Immigrant Justice Organizer. Co-founder of the Student Immigrant Movement in Massachusetts and national coordinator for the United We Dream Network in the United States. Carlos Saavedra is an activist and consultant to immigrant rights organizations.
Child & Youth Migrants: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

We are delighted to welcome you to the third Annual UCL Migration Research Unit (MRU) Student Conference, hosted by UCL MSc Global Migration students at University College London (UCL). It is a student-lead initiative which provides a unique opportunity for young researchers to discuss and contribute to contemporary migration studies. Postgraduates from across disciplines will share their research and contribute to debates in contemporary migration studies. Topics will include young migrants’ access to education and health care, their treatment by different legal regimes, and questions of identity and representation.

This year’s conference theme on migrant children and youth aims to further the dialogue on an overlooked segment of the migrant population in academic scholarship. According to a 2013 UN report, there are 232 million individuals living outside their country of origin today - approximately 35 million of these are children and young people under the age of 20. The conference hopes to offer increased visibility of the challenges these young people face as well as the tensions and frictions that exists between internationally-recognised human rights, national policies, and their lived experience.

Masters and PhD students will engage in an interdisciplinary exchange on important and complex migration topics. Featured research papers will cover a range of subjects including young migrants’ access to education and health care, their treatment by different legal regimes and questions of identity and representation. Conference panelists are students from leading universities in the United Kingdom and Europe as well as from postgraduate programmes in Africa and North America.

We are grateful for the UCL Migration Research Unit for collaborating with us in organising this event. Additionally, we would like to thank the UCL Institute for Human Rights, the UCL Faculty Institute of Graduate Studies, the UCL Environment Institute and UCL Grand Challenge of Intercultural Interaction for sponsoring the conference.

We are honoured to have Carlos Saavedra, Immigrant Justice Organizer, as a Keynote Speaker. Co-founder of the Student Immigrant Movement in Massachusetts and national coordinator for the United We Dream Network in the United States, Carlos Saavedra is an activist and consultant to immigrant rights organizations.

UCL’s MRU Student Conference Organisers & Helpers:

Conferece Organisers: Karin Ander, Nancy Landa, Vanessa V. Landeta, Gabriella Morrone and Lauren Shaw (UCL Global Migration).

With special thanks to our Conference Helpers: Adam Davies, Layla Hantouli, Mona Hussein, Bhupinder Mann and Elizabeth Sheehan (UCL Global Migration).
### CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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<tr>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>North East entrance to Pearson Building, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT (corner of quad)</td>
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<td>9.20am</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
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<td>9.45am</td>
<td>Panel I: Educational Opportunities and Challenges</td>
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<td><em>Young and Misplaced: The Educational Experiences of Refugee Youth in San Diego</em></td>
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<td><em>Amberley Middleton</em>, London School of Economics, UK</td>
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<td><em>For Whom the School Bell Tolls: Public Education and the Rights of Migrant Children in Russia</em></td>
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<td><em>Higher Education Aspirations for Refugee Youth in South Africa</em></td>
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<td><em>Faith Mkwananzi</em>, University of Free State, South Africa</td>
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<td>Panel II: A Young Person’s Place in Law and Policy</td>
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<td><em>Unaccompanied Minors as Independent Child Migrants: The Making of Vulnerability</em></td>
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<td><em>Alice Krozer and Dong-Eun Lee</em>, University of Cambridge, UK</td>
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<td>1.00pm</td>
<td>Panel III: What’s in a Legal Status?</td>
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<td>The Violated Rights of Afghan Children in Iran</td>
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<td>Behnaz Tavakoli, Coburg University of Applied Science, Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany</td>
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<td>Return to the Country of Origin in the Best Interest of the Asylum-Seeking Child</td>
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<td>Danielle Zevulun, University of Groningen, Netherlands</td>
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<td>Panel IV: Health and Wellbeing</td>
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<td>Young Irregular Migrants in Germany: Access to Health Care and Everyday Life in the Shadows of Society</td>
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<td>Wiebke Bornschlegl, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany</td>
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<td>What Works for Independent Migrant Children? The Example of Local Authority Placements and their Impact on Mental Health</td>
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<td>Aoife O’Higgins, University of Oxford, UK</td>
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<td>Migration and Reproductive Health among Ghana’s Female Porters</td>
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<td>Samantha Lattof, London School of Economics, UK</td>
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<td>Panel V: Identity and Representation</td>
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<td>Negotiating Notions of ‘Home’ and ‘Belonging’ among Young Lithuanian Migrants in Ireland</td>
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<td>Dovile Vildaite, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland</td>
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<td>‘Going Home’: Young Migrants’ Imagined Connections and the Reality of Transnational Homemaking</td>
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<td>Shannon Damery, University of Liège, Belgium</td>
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<td>Time, History, and the Body: The ‘Lost Boys of Sudan’</td>
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<td>Catherine L. Crooke, University of Oxford, UK</td>
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<td>4.30pm</td>
<td>Keynote Address by Carlos Saavedra</td>
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<td>DREAMer Movement Activist &amp; Organizer, Strategist, and Coach at Movement Mastery</td>
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<td>5.30pm</td>
<td>Reception</td>
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PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

Panel 1: Educational Opportunities and Challenges

Amberley Middleton
London School of Economics, UK

Bio: Amberley Middleton is currently studying in the MSc International Migration and Public Policy program at The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Before coming to The LSE, Amberley worked as a Youth and Education Coordinator for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in San Diego, California, where she was responsible for designing and implementing programs to best serve the needs of resettled refugee youth from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. After 8 years of working as a youth development practitioner in the field of refugee resettlement, Amberley has a wealth of experience in working with refugee and immigrant youth. Her interest in working with refugee populations began during her undergraduate years at UC Berkeley, when she studied abroad for a semester in Ghana and volunteered as an HIV/AIDS Peer Educator at the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp.

Young and Misplaced: The Educational Experiences of Refugee Youth in San Diego

Abstract: This paper interrogates the ramifications of the current practice of enrolling resettled refugee youth into the U.S. public school system based on their age, not their actual academic level. It examines the process by which refugee youth are placed in public high schools in the San Diego Unified School District. It further explores the lived experiences of refugee youth at Crawford High School in San Diego as they struggle to adapt to a foreign academic environment. The paper probes the extent of accommodations (or the lack there of) that are made for refugee students with limited or interrupted formal education. It analyzes the role of local NGOs and resettlement agencies in providing educational intervention and support programs for refugee youth including Out-of-School Time programming. The paper investigates the consequences of age-based school placement on educational outcomes for refugee youth, including high school graduation rates and access to higher education. It suggests that refugee youth should be provided with access to educational programs designed to meet their unique academic needs and that accommodations should be made to allow refugee youth to stay in school past the age of 18 if necessary to fulfill the requirements for high school graduation. Every year, the U.S. government through the U.S. Refugee Program (USRP) resettles between 40,000-70,000 refugees in the United States. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) provides funding for basic case management services and support to newly arrived refugee families for their first 4-8 months in the United States. Case managers who work for U.S. resettlement agencies are charged with ensuring that newly arrived refugee youth are enrolled in school, but the resettlement services to refugee youth end there. There is no long-term strategy or comprehensive plan to ensure that the particular and often extensive academic and educational needs of refugee youth are being met.

U.S. Refugee Resettlement policy does not directly address the needs of refugee youth.
A main challenge with the current system is that young refugees are enrolled into the public school system based on their age, not their actual academic ability. Not only do these refugee students need to learn English as quickly as possible, but many are also significantly behind their American-born peers in their knowledge of content areas (math, science, history, etc.). This is due to the fact that because of war, conflict, and the reality of life in a refugee camp not all refugee youth had the opportunity to consistently attend school before being resettled in the U.S. Most local public school systems, including the San Diego Unified School District, do not currently make any significant accommodations for refugee students.

This paper is based on primary research in San Diego. The study includes surveys with 100 refugee youth in San Diego. These surveys are supplemented with in-depth interviews conducted with refugee youth, school teachers, and the staff of local non-profit and refugee resettlement agencies. The study draws on a multiple-actor approach in understanding the educational challenges experienced by resettled refugee youth in San Diego.

**Brianna Greenwald**  
Indiana University, USA

**Bio:** Brianna Greenwald is a second-year MA student in Indiana University’s Russian and East European Institute, where she focuses on regional migration issues. As an undergraduate student in the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College, Brianna became involved with the immigrant community through her work as a volunteer ESL teacher and social work intern at Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC. Her MA thesis research explores the relationship between masculinity and male labour migration to Russia from Ukraine. Her other research interests include gender studies, Muslim minorities, public education, and workers’ rights in the region.

**For Whom the School Bell Tolls: Public Education and the Rights of Migrant Children in Russia**

**Abstract:** Since the collapse of the USSR, Central Asian labor migration to Russia is an issue shrouded in domestic debates and a point of critical tension in international relations between Russia and migrants’ home countries. Increased child migration in recent years has sparked a new domestic social reaction to the migrant population and brought compelling questions to light regarding rights for non-citizens in Russia and the role of the child in immigration policy. This research uses discourse analysis to gauge the political regard for both the rights of the child and the rights of foreign migrant children in comparison with the notion of citizens’ rights in the Russian Federation. Focusing on the debate over allowing migrant children into the public education system, this paper argues that official rhetoric on this subject is guided by a lack of acknowledgement of the human rights of non-citizens and children. Furthermore, the research suggests that the chronic marginalization of these children is a manifestation of the political will to prevent the successful integration of ethnic non-Russian migrant communities into society.
Faith Mkwanazi
University of Free State, South Africa

Bio: Faith Mkwananzi is a graduate of the University of the Free State where she completed her MA in Development Studies. She is currently a PhD student at the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Development (CRHED) at the same university. With particular concern for young people in marginalised and disadvantaged communities, her research interests include social and human development, particularly the facets of higher education (access and aspirations); migration; poverty and inequality; as well as issues of social justice and human rights. Faith can be contacted at faithmkwananzi@gmail.com

Higher Education Aspirations for Refugee Youth in South Africa

Abstract: Globally, people have been migrating for different reasons such as political conflict, poverty, economic instability and other human development and security issues of concern. Therefore, in this modern-day of increased global mobility, the fields of migration and education (aspirations, access and throughput) are fast growing areas of interest in many countries. South Africa is no exception. The country’s economic and political stability, as well as its developed infrastructure has caused it to be on the receiving end of both economic immigrants and asylum seekers from many parts of Africa.

Pivoted on the capabilities approach, this paper conceptualises the aspirations for higher education among refugee youth by drawing on the concepts of agency, aspirations, freedoms and conversion factors. It seeks to interrogate questions such as: what happens when refugee youth find themselves in a host country? How do they experience the unique cultural, social and economic diversity? Do they have different educational and professional aspirations? What do they value being and doing?

In looking at aspirations, the works of Caroline Hart (2013) and Arjun Appadurai (1996, 2004) are of significance. Hart largely focuses on aspirations for higher education in widening participation in HE, whereas Appadurai focuses on cultural and social reproduction with societies. He argues that aspirations are influenced by, and derived from larger cultural norms; they are never simply individual as the language of wants and choice might incline us to think, but they are always formed in different interactions and in the ‘thick of social life’ (Appadurai, 2004:67). Fundamental to this paper, is that HE helps refugee youth not only realise their childhood aspirations, but also plan their career and life pathways.

Panel II: A Young Person’s place in Law and Policy

Nadja Dumann
University of Kent, Brussels, Belgium

Bio: Nadja Dumann is German and currently lives in Brussels, where she completed a MA in Migration Studies at the University of Kent, Brussels campus. Her research interests
include unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, and irregular labour markets. She is a legal guardian for unaccompanied minors in Belgium and has previously worked in the fields of immigration, human rights, and international development.

**Unaccompanied Minors as Independent Child Migrants: the Making of Vulnerability**

**Abstract:** In 2011, the reported number of unaccompanied minors (UAMs) seeking asylum across the EU member states amounted to 12,225. The Council of Europe nevertheless estimates that the actual number of UAMs is closer to 100,000. This means that only a small percentage of UAMs in the EU is visible to the state. The immense gap can in part be explained by the fact that most UAMs do not seek asylum. In order to successfully claim some form of protection and right to residence, UAMs must prove that they are vulnerable victims of some form of persecution or trafficking. Because children are indeed among the most vulnerable migrants and while it is certainly important to protect them, the legal and political frameworks of the EU nevertheless undermine that minors can have agency in the migratory process.

Most UAMs arrive in the developed world from countries where children often work from a very young age to support their families. They are often much more mature than their counterparts in the industrialized world and they may feel greater responsibility for their families back home. Young migrants often have resilience, determination and goals. But UAMs are often a far cry from the conventional western image of a child or adolescent. This cultural misconception results in foreign youths ending up living in the streets or in squats. Without legal documents, education or health care, they are exposed to a life of danger, despite the fact that, as minors, they should be protected according to EU law and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Ironically, it appears that the EU’s protection scheme for UAMs renders more vulnerable precisely the vulnerable children it is meant to protect. The problem has become more acute as the number of UAMs in the western world increases. Until now, the EU has ignored or downplayed the plight of irregular migrants, including UAMs. But given the frequent drownings off European shores, it is vital that the EU address the issue of irregular migrants in a more concrete, helpful way, i.e. by acknowledging that UAMs may also be irregular migrants and that they need adequate protection.

**Narumon Changboonmee**
Monash University, Australia

**Bio:** Narumon Changboonmee is a PhD Candidate from Monash Law School, Australia. Her doctoral research focuses on the human rights protection of child migrant workers from Thailand’s neighbouring countries. Prior to commencing at Monash, she was working as a law lecturer at Kasetsart University in Thailand where she held a tenured academic position.

**Push back vs. Protection: The Plight of Irregular Child Migrants in Thailand**

**Abstract:** In 2010, the estimated total number of international migrants in Thailand was at 1,157,263, which was about 1.7% of the total number of the Thai population. The exact
number of child migrants is unknown; however it was estimated at around 376,845. The difficulties in estimating the number of child migrants in Thailand makes it hard to assess the impact of migration on children and their need to access social services, particularly those with irregular migration status.

Whist there is a large number of child migrants; child migrants seem to be left out of the debate of migration and little attention has been given to them. Besides, the lack of acknowledgement of the human rights-based approach is widely observable amongst authorities. Children are often viewed as illegal migrants not a person who is vulnerable and in need of protection.

This paper examines responses of the Thai Government towards child migrants. It focuses on the existing legislation and policy on child protection and their applicability in the case of child migrants in an irregular situation in particular. It will address the tension between immigration law and child protection legislation and argue that there is a need to balance the two opposing normative frameworks in Thai practices. The paper will further discuss what would be the best approach towards child migrants under human rights principles.

Alice Krozer and Dong-Eun (Dara) Lee
University of Cambridge, UK

Bio: Alice Krozer is a PhD student at the Centre of Development Studies in the University of Cambridge. Before coming to Cambridge, she worked for several years in Central America and Mexico, most recently with the UN Economic Commission for Latin America. Her work with the NGO Comparte Chunches in Mexico City first brought her in contact with the Central American transmigrant populations in Mexico. Besides migration, her research interests include inequality, poverty, public policy, and the region of Latin America.

Bio: Dong-Eun (Dara) Lee is an MPhil student in Development Studies at the University of Cambridge. Before her studies at Cambridge, her primary focus was in the rights of migrant and urban refugee populations in Malaysia. She has worked in the UNHCR and Amnesty International offices in Malaysia, where her primary duties were in legal counselling, advocacy, and public engagements. Her research interests include migration policymaking, the migration-development nexus, and issues concerning integration within the Southeast Asian region.

Trapped and Invisible: A Study of the Violation of the Rights of Child Transmigrants in Malaysia and Mexico

Abstract: The unique experience of migrant youths traveling through “transit countries”, such as Malaysia and Mexico, on their way to the more promised lands of developed nations, is an understudied yet highly pertinent phenomenon. About one third of migrants from developing countries are youths, which makes the harsh reality and violation of their basic rights they experience in the transit countries a worrisome tendency that deserves more attention. Children of transmigrants often find themselves stranded “in transit” for
longer than expected, yet during their stay in these countries, they are essentially legally non-existent. The absence of a formal status makes them vulnerable to abuse by local authorities and human traffickers, exposure to violence and crime, and limited access to basic rights including education, health and protection of their physical integrity. In Malaysia, growing needs for labor in the palm oil industry has created demand for child migrant labor, while these children are barred from access to public education. The main issues in Mexico concern deportation; exposure to extreme violence, and kidnapping by drug cartels for ransom. In light of this humanitarian crisis, emergency care and social work for the protection of refugee children that should be carried out by state social workers is left in the hands of private actors or UNHCR. However, a rigorous refugee status determination process limits access to UNHCR services, increasing exposure to risk especially for migrating youths. In an attempt to organize self-help groups, ”apartment schools” have appeared in Malaysia to support the education of the migrant children.

These organizations exist in a liminal space, with little accountability to Malaysian authorities or international standards. Likewise, in Mexico, aid to thousands of young transmigrants traveling on the freight train towards the U.S. every month is privately funded by religious organizations and civil associations. Social workers are faced with death threats from criminals and intimidation from authorities. The problem with this institutionalization of short-term crisis relief as opposed to long-term management is that neither country has seen much improvement in managing the crisis. Thus, both countries benefit from the non-state institutions filling a policy void; they see little reason for taking action, supposing a certain “minimum safety net” in place through private structures.

The conclusions drawn from the Mexican and Malaysian experience are very similar: while commendable, emergency relief provided by non-state agents can crowd out long-term management of migrant crises. Improving the welfare of young migrants and transit countries in the long run entails shifting the focus from aggressive policing of migrants to a rights-based approach, and resolving the inherent tension between the demand for illegal labour and public resentment towards transmigrants through comprehensive policymaking. We call for collaboration between the state and non-state actors to ensure a minimum living standard as measured by access to health, education and physical and socioeconomic security. A shift towards long term welfare considerations requires the states of transit countries to humanize migration. Rethinking the development model, both nationally and regionally, is necessary to accommodate a long-term solution to this humanitarian crisis. Acknowledgment must come from the international community that the welfare of migrant children in transit countries are of concern, and that these crises should be managed through long-term policies.

Panel III: What’s in a legal status?

Behnaz Tavakoli
Coburg University of Applied Science, Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany

Bio: Behnaz Tavakoli was born in Tehran, Iran. After earning her bachelor’s degree, she began to work voluntarily for an NGO that supports children in Iran, most of whom are migrants. This experience motivated her to deepen her academic knowledge of the field
Danielle Zevulun
University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Bio: Danielle Zevulun, LLM, MSc is a PhD student at the Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law at the University of Groningen, Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences, Youth Care (Department Orthopedagogy). The multidisciplinary Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law at the University of Groningen carries out legal and social behavioural research about the best interest of the child determination in migration procedures. Danielle Zevulun’s PhD research focuses specifically on return migration. She studies the living situation and socio-emotional wellbeing of returned migrant children in Kosovo and Albania. Danielle Zevulun has a background in Cultural Anthropology (Utrecht University) and Public International Law (University of Amsterdam).

Return to the Country of Origin in the Best Interest of the Asylum-Seeking Child
Abstract: Even though it is stipulated in article 3(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that ‘the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children’, the best interests of asylum seeking children are not always pursued by the host country’s immigration authorities.

Since 2004, the Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law (Study Centre) of the University of Groningen (the Netherlands) has been working on the interpretation of ‘the best interest principle’ from a behavioral scientific perspective. At the Study Centre, reports are written on the best interest of the asylum seeking child in individual cases, which are introduced in their migration procedures. The ‘Best Interest of the Child’ (BIC) instruments determine which legal decision would be in the asylum seeking child’s best interest, when taking in mind the development of the child and the quality of rearing environment (article 3 in conjunction with article 6 CRC). These BIC-instruments are based on environmental conditions for children’s development and the CRC. Results show that asylum seeking children in the Netherlands have internalizing behavioral problems, and that the environment in which they grow up in the Netherlands gives them insufficient opportunities for development.

My PhD research concerns the best interests of the child with regard to return decisions and the determination of the conditions under which it is in the child’s best interests to return to the country of origin. Through collecting data on the rearing environment and social-emotional development of returned minors in Kosovo and Albania I want to determine which child-specific and socio-cultural factors contribute to a prosperous development of the child after return to the country of origin.

Panel IV: Health and Wellbeing

Wiebke Bornschlegl
University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany

Bio: Wiebke Bornschlegl, M.A., is currently working as a research assistant at the Institute for the History of Medicine and Medical Ethics at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. After one year as a volunteer in various social projects in the northeast of Brazil, she began her academic studies of Geography and Political Science in Germany and Costa Rica (completed in 2010). Her research emphasis consists of the implementation of human rights in medicine, especially the access to healthcare for children without legal residence permit status in Germany.

Young Irregular Migrants in Germany – Access to Health Care and Every Day Life in the Shadows of Society

Abstract: Article 25 of the declaration of human rights states the right of everyone “to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family (...”). The Convention on the Rights of the Children declares in article 24: “States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such
health care services."

In the European context Germany is the only country featuring the so called duty to report (Meldepflicht, § 87 residence law), denoting that any public authority is bound to report a person without legal residence permit status to the Aliens Department the moment of revelation.

Inconsistent with the Human Rights Declaration and the Conventions on the Rights of the Children this circumstance leads to an exclusion of every Undocumented Migrant (UDM) (adult and/or child) from the German health care system. As a result a parallel infrastructure of over 50 facilities based on voluntary commitment has emerged, located largely in the bigger German cities, providing free and anonymous medical treatment as well as general counselling.

I consider these facilities one of the most promising contact points for my study focussing on the vulnerable and unheard-of group of children without legal residence permit status in Germany. There are different strategies in place across Germany undertaken by NGOs, professionals, local authorities, as well as undocumented migrants themselves to overcome barriers faced by undocumented children in upholding their rights. To gather and to show these strategies as well as pointing out the significant gap between legal protections of the right to access public health care and the situation in practice for undocumented children and their parents trying to access health care I launched a qualitative-explorative study in 2010 (consisting of an online survey, semi-structured interviews with experts and case studies at five German children’s clinics). I furthermore intend to ascertain the urgent needs of children without legal residence permit status and identify the most-needed changes to finally reach a status of human rights in action and not just in theory.

First results show two main findings:

1. The fear of detection seems to be even bigger concerning children than adults. This might lead to a considerable increased avoidance of any contacts or networks.
2. The most challenging issue concerning the medical needs of children seems to be the supply of medical treatment in the case of acute illness. In that case help offered by the alternative facilities does not offer sufficient treatment because the opening hours of these facilities are by nature very limited (on average once a week for 2 hours).

Samantha Lattof
London School of Economics, UK

Bio: Samantha Lattof is a PhD student in the Department of Social Policy at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She previously completed an MSc in Global Health and Population at Harvard University and worked as the Senior Research and Evaluation Manager at the Dean’s Flagship Initiative on Women and Health (W&HI) at Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH). Her research has also taken her abroad, where she has collaborated on projects with Ghana Health Service, University of Ghana, International Service for Human Rights, and Aga Khan University.
Migration and Reproductive Health among Ghana’s Female Porters

Abstract: While Ghana’s overall fertility rate is declining, increased female mobility and a growing number of women entering their reproductive years make migration and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) timely topics for study. The interactions between socioeconomic and health inequalities stemming from gender, social class, and ethnicity are increasingly apparent in Accra, where they result in specific SRH vulnerabilities for young female migrants working as kayayei (female porters). My doctoral research seeks to understand how North-South female migration in Ghana influences migrants’ SRH knowledge, perceptions, and use of health services.

Aoife O’Higgins
University of Oxford, UK

Bio: Aoife O’Higgins is a DPhil student at the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford. She is trying to figure out what the risk and protective factors are for the education of children in care in England. She completed a Masters in Refugee Studies from the University of East London in 2011 while working at The Children’s Society. In 2012, she started a second masters in Evidence Based Social Interventions at the University of Oxford to escape from life on the front line of practice with migrant children in London. Aoife is also an independent consultant and provides training, research, and evaluation for a number of charities around the UK. At Oxford, her favourite procrastination activities are reading about feminism and facilitating an interdisciplinary childhood and research group.

What Works for Independent Migrant Children? The Example of Local Authority Placements and their Impact on Mental Health

Abstract: The well-being, and in particular the mental health, of independent child migrants in high income countries has been the focus of much research in the last decade. Various studies estimate the prevalence rates of mental health problems to be in the range of 19 to 54% (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011). However, there is a dearth of research about what support young migrants actually want or need, whether interventions in place are effective or if there is a gap in services provided. Moreover, research about independent migrant children remains relatively isolated from other fields of enquiry on children, mental health and interventions more broadly. These should be serious concerns for researchers and practitioners in this area.

This paper presents the findings from two international systematic reviews (one quantitative, one qualitative), which asked whether different types of local authority placements could impact the mental health of migrant children.

I will present a brief overview of the rationale for systematic reviews and their relevance to this field of enquiry. I will summarise the main findings from my critical analysis of the included studies and the conclusions that could be inferred from these. I will discuss how these do and don’t answer the review questions and what the findings from the review tell us about the impact of different placement types on the mental health of independent migrant children. Finally, I will make a case for greater diversity of methodologies and
more interdisciplinary research to create a strong evidence base for interventions for migrant youth in the UK.

Panel IV: Identity and Representation

Dovile Vildaite
Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Bio: Dovile Vildaite is currently working towards a PhD in Child and Youth Research, based in the Children’s Research Centre at Trinity College, Dublin. She also holds an MSc in Migration, Ethnic Relations, and Multiculturalism from Utrecht University and a B.A. in Political Science from Vilnius University. Her research interests are interdisciplinary and include child and youth migration, transnational family ties, and social research methodologies. Dovile is also a volunteer with the Immigrant Council of Ireland which aims to promote equality and advocate against racism, discrimination, and prejudice among students in Irish secondary schools.

Negotiating Notions of ‘Home’ and ‘Belonging’ Among Young Lithuanian Migrants in Ireland

Abstract: The proposed presentation is based on the preliminary findings of my PhD research in which I am exploring the transnational social relations maintained by the selected sample of Lithuanian adolescent migrants living in Ireland with their significant others left in the country of origin. The aim of research is to contribute to the transnational migration research and youth studies by exploring the cross-border ties and connections of the so called “1.5 generation” migrants, i.e. children and young people who moved to the country of settlement as part of family unit when older than 6 years of age and who have experienced at least some of their formative socialization in the country of origin. Thus, drawing on a qualitative multi-sited, multiple methods approach, namely biographical and semi-structured interviews with 14-18 years old Lithuanian migrants, the study investigates meaningful recurring patterns of transnational social relationships emerging in the migration processes. In my presentation I will specifically address the themes of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’ that were generated by in-depth interviews with 25 Lithuanian migrants in Spring 2013. In these interviews I asked young migrants to tell their stories, talk about their migration experiences as well as their thoughts and feelings about ‘home’ and ‘belonging’. Previous research has shown that the 1.5 generation is a unique migrant group due to ambivalence (or ‘in-betweenness’) regarding the settlement and attachment to the new society. Hence, in my presentation I will explore how living between origin and destination societies has a particular impact on the creation of multiple and hyphenated identities, as well as multiple notions of “home” among this group of young migrants.
Shannon Damery
University of Liège, Belgium

Bio: Shannon Damery received her Master’s degree in Anthropology from the National University of Ireland-Maynooth, and subsequently returned to the United States where she worked as the residential director of a non-profit organization that provides homes and educational support for young people. Now, as a PhD candidate at CEDEM at the University of Liège and a member of the INTEGRIM Initial Training Network, Shannon continues to work with displaced young people. In the framework of the 7FP Training Network “Integration and International Migration: Pathways and Integration Policies”, Shannon is part of the “Citizenship and Political Participation” work package. Her research focuses on young migrants’ home making practices in Belgian society and the connections to they create to their homelands through social networks, the arts, materiality, and the creation of sensory environments.

‘Going Home’: Young Migrants’ Imagined Connections and the Reality of Transnational Homemaking

Abstract: When speaking of integration or incorporation, home and feelings of belonging are often part of the conversation. Home is present in most every person’s life, and social scientists recognize home as more than a merely physical space. Whether a house or a nation, home may be temporal, imagined, remembered, or even a place one has never been. It is also imbued with ideas of identity and belonging. ‘Transnational’ homemaking, and research on this topic, is becoming ever more common, but it is a relatively new practice to focus this research on young people. Home is considered to be a place where one has control, but for young people it is often seen as a place they inhabit rather than create. Until quite recently children and young people have been treated by researchers “as objects of adult activity” (Wulff 1995:1), who are not yet considered full members of society. Migrants transitioning to adulthood are in the unique position of experiencing a double layer of special statuses due to their position of being feared, in need of protection, and somehow ‘outside’ of society. I will investigate the home-making practices of migrants in Belgium, ages 15-25, with a focus on the imaginary, their cultural production, the social connections they foster, and the sensory environments they create. Since these young people are migrants and are also at a stage in life where they are transitioning to adulthood, they have complex statuses to negotiate. I will use their home-making practices in order to investigate their choices of integration and the connections they may foster to the homeland and host community. Ultimately, whether or not they feel they have the “right to count both places as home” (Cressey 2006:63) may be a question that can be answered by focusing on the young people’s own agency in this realm.

Catherine L. Crooke
University of Oxford, UK

Bio: Catherine L. Crooke is an MSc student in Refugee & Forced Migration Studies at the University of Oxford, affiliated with St Antony’s College and the Oxford Department of International Development. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Oxford Migration Studies Society, and is the Chief Copy Editor of St Antony’s International
Review (STAIR). Catherine is particularly passionate about identity formation, memory and youth experiences within the context of forced migration. She is also interested in conceptualizations of race and ethnicity, and maintains a semi-closeted but lasting obsession with Discard Studies. She completed her undergraduate degree in Comparative Literature & Society at Columbia University in 2012.

**Time, History, and the Body: The “Lost Boys of Sudan”**

**Abstract:** When and how are the bodies of young refugees and forced migrants rendered visible in the public eye? To what ends are they made visible? Examining published accounts portraying the experiences of the “Lost Boys of Sudan” both before and after resettlement in the United States, I demonstrate in this paper that foregrounding the body in refugee studies creates new opportunities to critique how refugee youth are represented, perceived, and engaged in public spaces of encounter. The resettlement in the early 2000s of several thousand Dinka and Nuer children in the United States unfolded as a public undertaking, sparking the production of myriad well-circulated narratives, stories, and autobiographical pieces about their experiences. Analysing these popular texts as a corpus, I interrogate their ambiguous and inconsistent placement of the young Sudanese male body. For the purposes of this study, “text” is broadly defined, encompassing creative written works like Dave Eggers’ best-selling *What Is the What*, but also the Sundance-winning documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, as well as features pieces in mainstream media outlets like *The New York Times*. These materials are united by their wide dissemination and by their alleged value as points of access into the experiences and identities of the “Lost Boys of Sudan.” To the extent that these texts function as past-oriented trauma literature, they frequently place the body at the centre of the child’s perception and interpretation of pain and suffering. The body thus performs a crucial role in the act of witnessing. But how, and to what effect, are these bodies repositioned as the boys move into the sociocultural orbit of the United States? To what extent are they elided as the emphasis shifts to verbalized accounts of suffering or to the mind as the perceived container for memory? And how do they find expression in a place where the generalized icon of the young black male body is so deeply fraught? I am interested in how these young bodies perform in the United States as public narrators and producers of their own histories and identities, and in how they enter — and are sometimes pushed — into conversation and conflict with distinct, local constructions and embodiments of history. The American public discourse surrounding the “Lost Boys of Sudan” — insistent in its mythologizing of them as perpetually young orphans of promise — enters into a dance with other contemporary discourses about hope, belonging, and what it means to transform traumatic pasts into promising futures. Looking to the future, this takes on new meaning as the young men are newly embraced as transnational activists and ordained political leaders of South Sudan. In analysing the confrontations triggered between distinct mythologies and embodied (hi)stories in American literature and media discourse about the “Lost Boys of Sudan,” I will offer a lens for exploring not only how refugee narratives perform divergent social functions concurrently, but also for unpacking the factors that dictate when, how, and for what purpose the public engages with refugee youth as full-bodied persons.
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Carlos Saavedra
Immigrant Justice Organizer. Co-founder of the Student Immigrant Movement in Massachusetts and National Coordinator for the United We Dream Network in the United States, Carlos Saavedra is an activist and consultant to immigrant rights organizations.

Saavedra migrated to Boston, MA at the age of 12 with his parents as an undocumented student. He will share his personal narrative of growing up in the U.S. lacking a legal status and his involvement in the DREAMer movement, one of the largest immigrant youth-led advocacy mobilizations worldwide. Saavedra was chosen as one of the 2010 Progressive Activist of the Year, awarded by Nation Magazine for his work on immigrant rights issues.

Migration Research Centre

Founded in 1988, the Migration Research Unit (MRU) undertakes research, teaching and consultancy on migration. Members of the MRU are all based in the geography department and their research focuses broadly on diasporas, transnationalism, asylum and refugees, national and international migration policies, measuring and mapping migration and ethnicity, theorising mobilities, development and migration.

Msc in Global Migration - An interdisciplinary degree

Migration in today’s globalised world stands at the heart of key national and international debates: over migrants’ and asylum seekers’ rights and citizenship; state security and border management; development, conflict and violence; ageing populations in the West; the globalization of skilled labour markets; links between internal and international migrations; smuggling and trafficking and other issues.

UCL is one of the world’s top universities and has internationally recognized expertise in the field of migration. It has two established research centres, the Migration Research Unit (MRU) within the Department of Geography, and the Centre for Research on Economic Analysis of Migration (CREAM) within the Department of Economics. The MSc offers cutting-edge research expertise in every aspect of migration studies, from the latest developments in domestic, European and international law, analyses of state and global politics, implications for health and disease, to reflections on ethnographic, visual and literary representations of migration. Work on migration at UCL has a strong international dimension, benefitting from extensive networks across Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.
This MSc programme is interdisciplinary in scope, and offers the best of migration teaching and dissertation supervision from across UCL Faculties. The departments involved include: geography, anthropology, laws, economics, the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies (SSEES), the Development Planning Unit (DPU), Spanish and Latin American Studies, the Institute of Child Health and others. This range makes the programme unique among migration studies programmes in the UK. MSc students will benefit from the consolidation of migration expertise across UCL and a vibrant and expanding body of PhD students working in the field of migration.

The course combines policy and theoretical debates over migration in the world today. It provides an ideal foundation for PhD research, or for those wishing to work with migrants and asylum seekers, aspiring to posts in UN, EU, national policy think-tanks, NGOs and grassroots organizations. The MSc is also suitable for professionals who would like to take time out to reflect on developments in a fast-moving field.
UCL’s MRU Student Conference Organisers:

Karin Ander is an advocate for migrant rights. Before moving to London in 2013, her primary focus was on U.S. immigration issues, specifically as it relates to detention and the Dream Act. Her research interests include liminality, access, urban geographies, mapping and identity. Karin is currently working on her dissertation and is an active participant in the SOAS Detainee Support group.

Nancy Landa is an advocate for migrant rights and a member of Los Otros Dreamers, a growing network of young people who have been deported by the U.S. immigration system, as well as those that returned to Mexico due to stringent immigration policies. Nancy is the author of the blog MundoCitizen which explores issues of migration from a deportee’s perspective. Her research interests include Diaspora communities and return migration.

Vanessa V. Landeta is a refugee advocate working with support networks dedicated to protect and promote the welfare of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe. Currently working with SOAS Detainee Support, Holy Cross Centre Trust, and Joel Nafuma Refugee Center.

Gabriella Morrone is a MSc Global Migration student at UCL. She is currently working with Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS on a project that aims to investigate migrants’ health and safety at work in three Italian regions.

Lauren Shaw is a research associate at the German Historical Institute, DC and works with the project ‘Transatlantic Perspectives: Europe in the Eyes of European Immigrants to the United States, 1930-1980’. Her research interests include generational difference, multilingualism, and identity.

Child & Youth Migrants: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

UCL Migration Research Unit Student Conference
14 June 2014 at UCL

For more information:
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