



Fresh eyes on the refugee crisis: an interdisciplinary approach

Berlin, 04 December 2015 – In his State of the Union address in September¹, European Commission President Juncker called for a “*bold, determined and concerted action by the European Union, by its institutions and by all its Member States*” to take in significantly more refugees from Syria and Iraq, sparking a heated public and political debate that continues to rage. The tension between taking in refugees and managing migration is a major challenge for policymakers and currently one of the biggest concerns voiced by European citizens. It looks set to be a highly controversial policy area for many years to come.

With the UNCHR, the UN Refugee Agency,² describing the current refugee crisis as the biggest since the Second World War, the ethical, social, economic, health, legal, and cultural dimensions of this issue need to be considered in an integrated way. Addressing these developments requires an open discussion of challenges and opportunities – in both the short and long term.

To this end, the Dutch Young Academy³, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences⁴, and the Global Young Academy will host a two-day workshop (10-11 December 2015 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands) of 20 academic experts and practitioners drawn from different disciplines and from over 10 countries across three continents. The meeting will also engage the wider community of young scientists and scientists who are themselves refugees.

The participants will endeavour to provide a fresh and innovative perspective on the refugee crisis, focusing in particular on societal integration. They will identify gaps in current understanding, and explore how research and policy communities might work together more effectively to address this complex, politically charged and highly emotive issue. The outcomes of the workshop will be made publicly available through conventional and social media, together with a summary document for policymakers.

This expert meeting is organised with generous support from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, and an anonymous donor.

1 http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/soteu/index_en.htm

2 <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

3 <http://dejongeakademie.nl/en>

4 <https://www.knaw.nl/en>

The key partners

The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences was founded in 1808 as an advisory body to the Dutch Government – a role that it continues to play today. The Academy derives its authority from the quality of its members, who represent the full spectrum of scientific and scholarly endeavour and are selected on the basis of their achievements. It is also responsible for sixteen internationally renowned institutes whose research and collections put them in the vanguard of Dutch science and scholarship. As the forum, conscience, and voice of the arts and sciences in the Netherlands, the Academy promotes quality in science and scholarship and strives to ensure that Dutch scholars and scientists contribute to cultural, social and economic progress. As a research organisation, the Academy is responsible for a group of outstanding national research institutes. It promotes innovation and knowledge valorisation within these institutes and encourages them to cooperate with one another and with university research groups. More information on the Academy is available at <https://www.knaw.nl/en>

The Dutch Young Academy is a dynamic and innovative group of top young scientists and scholars with outspoken views about science and scholarship and the related policy. It has been set up by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2005 and operates independently within the Royal Academy. The Young Academy organises inspiring activities for various target groups focusing on interdisciplinarity, science policy, and the interface between science and society. The Young Academy has fifty members. All are between 25 and 45 years of age and received their doctorates less than ten years before their appointment to the Academy. They represent a broad spectrum of scientific and scholarly disciplines and work at Dutch universities and a wide range of research institutes.

About the Global Young Academy

The Global Young Academy was founded in 2010 with the vision to be the voice of young scientists around the world. The GYA empowers early-career researchers to lead international, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational dialogue by developing and mobilizing talent from six continents. Its purpose is to promote reason and inclusiveness in global decision-making. Members are chosen for their demonstrated excellence in scientific achievement and commitment to service. Currently there are 200 members and 101 alumni from 67 countries. The academy is hosted at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) in cooperation with the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The GYA received its seed funding from the Volkswagen Foundation and has since 2014 been funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and supported by the IAP: the Global Network of Science Academies. The GYA has also benefitted from project funding from a variety of donors and partners.

A brief report giving insight into the organization's major achievements as the voice of young scientists may be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/1L7WbQy>.

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