



## **Journal of World Business**

### **A Special Issue on**

### ***“Global Migrants: Understanding the Implications for International Business and Management”***

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#### **Objective of the Special Issue:**

In today’s increasingly interconnected world, global migration has become a reality that touches nearly all corners of the world. In 2015, there were 244 million migrants globally (19.5 million of them refugees) and this number is expected to increase in the future (United Nations, 2016). Evidence shows that migration can contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development in both home and host communities. Global migrants often fill critical labour shortages, create jobs as entrepreneurs, and boost the host nations’ working-age population and talent pool. With their skills and competences they also accelerate technological progress and human capital development of receiving nations (OECD, 2016). Countries of origin also benefit from migration. In 2014, migrants from developing countries sent home an estimated US \$436 billion in remittances; a 4.4 percent increase over the 2013 level (World Bank, 2015).

Global migration has profound implications for international business (IB) and poses significant challenges as well as opportunities for the individuals and organizations involved in it. At the individual level, global migrants represent a key talent pool for multinational corporations (MNCs) and other organizations, yet they remain among the most vulnerable members of society (Hajro, Zilinskaite, & Stahl, 2017). They are often the first to lose their job in the event of an economic downturn, often working for less pay, for longer hours, and in worse conditions than national workers (United Nations, 2016). In addition, due to the rising tide of anti-immigration voices and fueling populism in several countries (e.g., the recent Brexit, the US travel ban and the increased popularity of right wing parties in Austria, France, Germany, and the UK) (OECD, 2016), they repeatedly face discrimination, ethnocentrism, cross-cultural adjustment problems, career-related issues, and other difficulties (Dietz, Joshi, Esses, Hamilton, & Gabarrot, 2015; Zikic & Richardson, 2016). Against these challenges they are expected to integrate into the employing organizations and host societies and become proficient as quickly as possible (Hajro, 2017).

At the organizational level, many MNCs employ migrants in order to gain access to diverse markets and customers, secure local resources, or share knowledge across national and geographic boundaries (Cerdin, Dine, & Brewster, 2014; Hajro, Pudelko, & Gibson, 2017). Furthermore, firm's international expansion often depends on cross-national immigration (Hernandez, 2014). For example, while economic considerations were important factors in the decision of Honda to enter the United States in 1959, a key reason why managers selected Los Angeles was its large Japanese community (Pascale and Christiansen, 1989). Yet despite the many benefits that migrants bring to corporations, empirical evidence shows that in an effort to help these individuals "fit in", organizations often design policies that ultimately encourage assimilation, thereby failing to leverage the unique capabilities of these individuals with negative implications for organizational performance (Hajro et al., 2017).

Likewise, not much is known about international human resource management (IHRM) strategies and policies that companies utilize to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills of global migrants (Guo & Al Ariss, 2015). In light of new realities (e.g., increased mobility, large movements of refugees, and the phenomenon of brain circulation) it has become more difficult to make clear distinctions between nation of origin and destination of migrants. A migrant may be born as a child of bi-cultural parents in one country, raised/educated in a different country, employed in a third country, while his/her spouse and children reside in a fourth country. Hence, topics of investigation in traditional IHRM – such as attracting, developing and retaining globally mobile employees – may take on different meanings in the context of today's migrants, with implications for both talent and diversity management practices of organizations that employ them (Tung, 2008; Tung, 2016).

In terms of the broader societal and institutional context it remains uncharted territory understanding how national immigration policies, public support systems, and societal values shape organizational norms and practices that in turn affect different organizational- and individual-level outcomes. Since organizations and their decision makers are embedded in different national systems, they experience different degrees of internal and external pressures to develop effective policies and practices (e.g., attracting migrants to fill local gaps), and they embrace different societal values and attitudes toward migrants in general. Yet our knowledge of the cross-level links between these different aspects of the societal context (i.e., the macro level), organizational policies and practices (i.e., the meso level), and individual strategies and outcomes (i.e., the micro level) remains very limited (Guo & Al Ariss, 2015; Cerdin et al., 2014; Reitz, 2005; Reitz, Curtis, & Elrick, 2014). Given that no single antecedent variable or set of variables at one level (e.g., individual coping strategies) is likely to predict or explain migrants' outcomes in the destination country (Rousseau, 2011), this represents a significant gap in the literature.

In summary the global movement of migrants has changed the nature of global work with implications for international business activities of many organizations (e.g., market entry decisions, increased use of multicultural teams, and changing nature of IHRM practices). In this special issue we invite contributors to submit manuscripts that explore and explain how migration-related outcomes (e.g., integration of refugees, entrepreneurial activities of migrants, organizational migration, industry-specific knowledge spillovers, etc.) are affected by influences at multiple levels and across levels (i.e., individual, organizational, societal level). We are interested in uncovering what receiving nations and/or corporations can do to make immigration work, and what should be changed in order to avoid potential negative consequences of existing and/or new policies and practices (e.g., exploitation, high levels of prejudice, or negative mutual attitudes among cultural groups). We also welcome submissions that examine how research on other forms of movement of people (e.g., self-initiated expatriates) or other cross-cultural workers (e.g., "foreign locals", Caprar 2011) can inform research on global migrants. Papers using diverse methodologies, including theoretical essays, large-sample analyses, and qualitative studies will be considered, as long as they provide a clear and detailed explanation of theoretical mechanisms and/or a

strong empirical contribution. The following topics are meant to illustrate the range of submissions rather than limit the ideas; authors are welcome to contact the guest editors to discuss the appropriateness of other topics related to the theme of this Special Issue:

Examples of research predominantly at the individual level of analysis:

1. How do individual factors such as refugee status, religious beliefs, motivation to migrate, and local language skills influence migrants' ability to integrate into the workplace? What role does organizational climate for inclusion play in this relation?
2. How do different personality characteristics (e.g., the Big Five personality characteristics) link to acculturation patterns of global migrants? How do employment and diversity specific practices influence these processes and when do they lead to positive or negative individual-level outcomes?
3. What behavioral strategies and psychological processes do migrants use in order to make sense of their experiences and cope with their new life situations? Under what circumstances and how do migrants internalize different associated cultural schemas and develop bi-cultural mindsets? How do these processes differ in "multicultural" organizations characterized by a collective commitment to integrating diverse cultural identities from "plural" organizations that expect nontraditional employees to assimilate to dominant norms (Ely & Thomas, 2001)?
4. Why are migrants more entrepreneurial than host country nationals (Vandor & Franke, 2016)? What helps or hinders their success as entrepreneurs in their new environments? How do selection and discrimination at the corporate level, or other organizational and societal factors, drive this phenomenon?

Research at the organizational level of analysis:

1. How does migration impact the nature of global work and the way MNCs manage their foreign activities (e.g., use of traditional expatriate assignments versus hiring of migrants)?
2. How do connections to co-national immigrants influence location choices of MNCs? What are the benefits and downsides of relying on immigrants in the process of foreign investment?
3. Which features of organizational culture pose major challenges for migrants? How do migrants deal with corporate ethnocentrism, nepotism, xenophobia or other types of social discrimination at the workplace? What implications does this have for the ability of firms to exploit tacit knowledge and gain access to diverse markets and customers?
4. How does organizational strategy impact the migrants' adjustment patterns and acculturation outcomes? Do companies with a geocentric or a transnational approach do a better job in reaping the potential benefits of migration than companies with ethnocentric or polycentric strategies?

Research on societal influences:

1. How do aspects of the broader institutional and cultural context (immigration policies, public support systems, societal values, etc.) shape organizational culture, policies and practices with regard to integration of migrants and promote or constrain migrants' ability to cope with existing challenges in the destination country?
2. What are the consequences of the anti-immigration sentiments that are gaining popularity in many countries for organizations? How can organizations maintain a positive culture in the context of the current opposing political agendas on migration and changing perception of foreigners? Under what conditions do stereotypes and power imbalances at the societal level pose threats to individual identity of migrants in the workplace? How can companies filter, augment or impede these socio-cultural stereotypes?

3. What role do immigrant agencies, policy makers and professional associations play in helping organizations to source migrants' talent? How do migrants with established professional identities respond to local institutional rules of conduct when trying to re-enter their professions and gain access to host-country organizations?
4. How do organizations respond to institutional pressures, and how does this in turn affect the design and utilization of IHRM policies and practices targeted towards migrants? To what extent and how do these relationships vary across different institutional and cultural contexts?

### **Submission Process:**

Between September 1 and October 31, 2018, authors should submit their manuscripts online via the *Journal of World Business* submission system: <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-world-business>. To ensure that all manuscripts are correctly identified for consideration for this Special Issue, it is important that authors select 'SI: Global Migrants' when they reach the "Article Type" step in the submission process.

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *Journal of World Business* Guide for Authors available at <https://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-world-business/1090-9516/guide-for-authors>. All submitted manuscripts will be subject to the *Journal of World Business*'s double blind review process.

We will organize a workshop designed to facilitate the development of papers that will be held at Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Vienna) in spring of 2019. Authors of manuscripts that have progressed through the revision process will be invited to attend. However, presentation at the workshop is neither a requirement for, nor a promise of, final acceptance of the paper in the Special Issue.

Questions about the Special Issue may be directed to the guest editors: Aida Hajro, Brunel University London ([aida.hajro@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:aida.hajro@brunel.ac.uk)); Jelena Zikic, York University ([jelenaz@yorku.ca](mailto:jelenaz@yorku.ca)); Dan V. Caprar, The University of Sydney ([dan.caprar@sydney.edu.au](mailto:dan.caprar@sydney.edu.au)).

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