BOOK REVIEW

Amelie F. Constant and Klaus F. Zimmermann (Eds.), The International Handbook on the Economics of Migration, Edward Elgar Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, USA (2013), 588 pages

by Monica Roman, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Migration constitutes one of the most complex phenomena in the global world, with important impacts at various levels- demographic, social, economic and political, for both the place of origin and for the receiving country. Therefore, a rigorous treatment of mass movements of the people faces many challenges such as the diversity of migration flows or the continuous dynamics of these flows. Although it is becoming one of the most studied topics in the world and the field of economics of migration is more and more relevant in the context of integrated labour markets, there has not been an adequate and authoritative approach of various migration aspects, integrated in one volume.

The volume “International Handbook on the Economics of Migration”, edited by Amelie F. Constant and Klaus F. Zimmermann and published in 2013 by Edward Elgar, comes to fill this gap in the existing literature. It has a unique place in the recent migration research, being the first handbook to ever discuss this topic, as an expression of the high commitment of the editors. Professor Amelie F. Constant is a reputed expert in the field of economics of migration and program director for migration at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA). Professor Klaus F. Zimmermann is one of the pioneers of migration research in Europe and one of the founders of migration economics and as IZA director, he is leading one of the world’s largest research networks in the field of labour economics, being committed to the diffusion of research in the society. Therefore, the new handbook offers a comprehensive perspective on most recent developments in the field of migration to economics scholars, researchers and students, as well as to policy advisers.

The book consists of five distinct parts, gathering in the 28 chapters the research results of 44 leading scholars and highly recognized experts in the field of migration economics.
In the first part, the authors **Amelie F. Constant** and **Klaus F. Zimmermann** offer a necessary introductive perspective on the relationship between migration and ethnicities and emphasize the role of ethnic identity in economic integration.

The second part of the book, “The Move”, provides insights on the concepts, characteristics and some less tackled aspects regarding the “dark face” of migration such as child labor migrants. In the chapter “Modeling individual migration decisions” **John Kennan** and **James R. Walker** make a review on empirical analyses of migration decisions, using life-cycle models to interpret migration histories.

The authors of the chapter “The economics of circular migration”, **Amelie F. Constant**, **Olga Nottmeyer** and **Klaus F. Zimmermann** conclude that “circular migration is the ideal solution for filling labor market shortages over time”. In the following chapter “The international migration of health professionals”, authors **Michel Grignon**, **Yaw Owusu** and **Arthur Sweetman** propose a double perspective of this particular segment of brain drain: a developed countries’ perspective and a developing countries’ perspective.

In the chapter “Independent child labor migrants”, **Eric V. Edmonds** and **Maheshwor Shrestha** document the major research needs in measurements, causes and consequences of independent child labor migration.

**Guido Friebel** and **Sergei Guriev**, in their chapter “Human smuggling” approach a phenomenon of human smuggling in illegal migration that has only recently received attention in scientific research. They refer the theoretical framework and challenges of this topic, considering that “a consensus to what is morally sounds behaviour with respect to illegal migration is very much needed, but we are far from it” (p.131).

The third part of the book deals with the performance of migrants and the labor markets; it contains seven chapters, starting with “Labor mobility in an enlarged European Union”, authored by **Martin Kahanec**. The chapter describes what is known about mobility in an enlarged Europe, in the context of increasing fears and controversies on freedom of labour movement. The author states that these pre-enlargement fears were unjustified and no significant detrimental effects on the receiving countries’ labour markets have been documented. More than that, there appear to be positive effects on macroeconomic aspects such as EU’s productivity, inflation and GDP. The author’s conclusion is that the freedom of labor movement provides a triple-win situation, for the receiving and sending countries as for the migrants themselves.
In the chapter “Minority and immigrant entrepreneurs: access to financial capital” Robert W. Fairlie finds that access to capital, wealth inequality and lending discrimination create substantial barriers for the business success of minorities.

A special chapter is devoted to “Migrant educational mismatch and the labor market”, authored by Matloob Piracha and Florin Vadean. The chapter reviews the literature on the educational mismatch of immigrants in the receiving country’s labour market and presents relevant empirical approaches which show that immigrants are over-educated to a larger extent compared to the natives.

The issue of ethnic hiring is described by David Neumark in a chapter that focuses on three key influences on the hiring of racial, ethnic or national minorities: discrimination, spatial mismatch and networks.

The next chapter, “Immigrants in risky occupations”, written by Pia M. Orrenius and Madeline Zavodny, surveys the literature on immigrant–native differences in occupational risk. After a brief explanation of the economic theory of occupational risk and of compensating differentials, the chapter surveys the literature on whether immigrants are disproportionately employed in risky jobs and whether they are more likely than natives to experience work-related injuries or fatalities.

The last two chapters of this part, the former authored by Krishna Patel, Yevgeniya Savchenko and Francis Vella and the latter by Susan L. Averett, Laura M. Argys and Jennifer L. Kohn, deal with occupational sorting of ethnic groups and the wages and obesity of immigrants respectively. These are almost unexplored and innovative topics in the existing literature.

Part IV brings to front ”New lines of research” in the field of migration economics, starting with interethnic marriages that are often perceived as a measure of integration, which is a new topic in the field of migration economics. Delia Furtado and Stephen J. Trejo, the authors of the chapter “Interethnic marriages and their economic effects” discuss the causes of intermarriage, differentiating between determinants related to direct preferences for ethnic endogamy, indirect preferences, and opportunity structures, and examines the economic consequences of intermarriage.

In the second chapter of the fourth part, “The impact of migration on family left behind”, Francisca M. Antman focuses on the effects of migration on non-migrant children, spouses and parents who are left behind. In the following chapter “Natural disasters and migration” Ariel R. Belasen and Solomon W. Polachek examine the implications of natural disasters on communities and differentiate between them based on magnitude, level of development for the impacted region and a number of additional factors.
Teresa García-Muñoz and Shoshana Neuman in their chapter “Immigration–religiosity intersections at the two sides of the Atlantic: Europe and the United States” conclude that “the predicted growing share of Moslem immigrants in European countries will potentially become a source of deep social and religious tensions” (p.347).

The relationship between immigration and crime is explored by Brian Bell and Stephen Machine, while David C. Ribar in his chapter “Immigrants’ time use: a survey of methods and evidence” emphasizes the new possibilities for migration research opened by the variety of time use data sources.

The chapter “Happiness and migration” by Nicole B. Simpson explores the various channels in which happiness and migration are related, in regard to both international and internal migration.

Part five of the book addresses several political and frontier issues and is opened by the chapter written by Gil S. Epstein, “Frontier issues of the political economy of migration”, while skill-based immigrant selection and labor market outcomes by visa category are addressed by Abdurrahman Aydemir.

The chapter authored by Timothy J. Hatton, “Refugee and asylum migration”, has its starting point in increasing debates over asylum policies and as consequence; the literature reviewed in this chapter concentrates on asylum seekers in the developed world and gives attention to the evolution of policies in this respect. In the same line, the next chapter, “The economics of immigrant citizenship ascension” by Don J. DeVoretz deals with frontier issues regarding economic implications of citizenship or even dual citizenship ascension.

Since in recent years a controversial debate has erupted on whether immigrants are exploiting the welfare system, Corrado Giulietti and Jackline Wahba bring valuable conclusions in the chapter „Welfare migration”. The author concludes that, based on existing evidence, “fears about immigrant abuse of welfare systems are unfounded or at least exaggerated” (p. 502).

Frontier issues regarding diaspora are described by Sonia Plaza in next chapter, “Diaspora resources and policies.” The author concludes that migrants facilitate host and source country bilateral trade and investment because they help overcome information asymmetries and other market imperfections. The potential contribution of the diaspora to their homeland’s development goes far beyond the personal remittances.

Ulf Rinne presents in the closing chapter of the book an evaluation of immigration policies. This chapter reviews the existing policies, discusses problems associated with the evaluation of these interventions and surveys selected empirical evaluation studies.
We express our appreciation towards Amelie F. Constant and Klaus F. Zimmermann, the editors of the book “International Handbook on the Economics of Migration”, for the remarkable effort of gathering most valuable and innovative insights on the migration phenomenon in the global world. The book that was successfully launched in Romania at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies has already raised interest among academics and researchers that appreciate the well balanced analysis it offers.