

*Migration and Mobility in Europe: Trends, Patterns and Control*

edited by Heinz Fassmann, Max Haller and David Lane

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reviewed by Theodore P. Lianos\*

This book consists of 14 papers, 13 of which were presented at an international conference on “Migration in Europe: Threat or Benefit” held in Vienna on September 28-29, 2007. The organization of the book is as follows. The first part has five papers under the general title “Costs and Benefits of Migration”. The second part “Patterns of Migration and Mobility” has five papers, the third part “Problems of Return and Migrant Integration” has two papers and the last part on “State Control and Citizen Rights” has three papers. The book begins with a lengthy and interesting “Introduction” where two of the editors give summaries of the papers.

An interesting feature of this volume is that the contributors belong to related but different academic disciplines (Economics, Demography, Sociology, Applied Geography, Politics, Industrial Relations, Social Studies). In some cases the co-authors of a paper come from different disciplines, e.g. Economics and Demography, and Sociology and Education. Despite the variety of the academic disciplines of the authors, the ideas presented, the type of analyses, the techniques used and the basic conception of the main theme are not dissimilar. The papers presented in this volume form a homogeneous body of knowledge with many facets.

The topics researched present a wide variety. They include the costs and benefits of migration, mobility within the European Community, youth mobility, migration from some of the former Soviet Republics to Europe, female migration and home care services, retirement migration, social integration, return migration, irregular migration, border control, etc. This is not the place for a critical review of the papers included in this volume, but it is worth noting that the results although not always novel, are always interesting.

There are two findings in two different papers, one in each, that can be combined. In their paper on employment rates of return-migrants in Finland, Saarela and Finnas found that those “who have return-migrated have odds of employment that are only

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about half those of non-migrants”. They cannot attribute this finding to structural factors (age, education, etc) and they conclude that “the employment difficulties are associated to some latent personal characteristics that we cannot observe explicitly”. (p. 224). In other words, return migrants have a lower probability of employment and this cannot be explained by the data available to the authors.

In their paper on migration decisions in Eastern and Western Europe, Fouarge and Easter have found that “Stronger intentions to cross-border migration are observed for unemployed, compared with employed people in the EU25 model” (p.64). Of course this is easily understood.

Combining these two results, one might say that people who are unemployed tend to migrate and when they return home they tend to be unemployed again. Thus one may assume that there is some latent personal characteristic that is expressed in this way, as for example something that prevents the individual from developing a strong attachment to the labor market. However, one should also examine the employment behavior of such an individual while in the country of destination, after his migration there and before his return. This would be an interesting research question.

In conclusion, this volume offers some solid research on a variety of issues in the study of migration.