

GLOMO Newsletter

Implications of global mobility: Research findings from an institutional, individual and organizational perspective

Issue: October 2021

Bringing researchers who come from across the globe and who have backgrounds in psychology, sociology, political science and economics the GLOMO project brings diverse perspectives together to better understand individual, organizational and societal implications of labor mobility, i.e. people moving internationally for work. In this newsletter we are pleased to share some of the insights we reached in relation to econometric evaluation of public policies, benefits of living and working abroad, motives and implications from migration, global mobility and the COVID pandemic. During the last three years, the GLOMO network of researchers developed dozens of papers that analyse some of the most prominent issues on global mobility, participated in many academic conferences and discussed the research findings with diverse academic audiences. In addition, it organized a number of highly effective public events that informed and engaged citizens on diverse questions related to global mobility. Researching topics that unpack the issue of global mobility from micro, macro and meso level perspective, the GLOMO network of researchers developed innovative interdisciplinary research outputs that contribute to the disciplines of business studies, economics, political science, migration studies. Moreover, all GLOMO research outputs have practical implications and provide knowledge that can contribute to better practices for governments and institutions, as well as business and corporate organizations. Below we share some insights from five GLOMO researchers.

Econometric evaluation of public policies and institutional changes by Jacopo Bassetto, IAB Nuremberg

“Within the GLOMO framework I am working on a few research projects. In my research I am investigating the effects of institutional factors on the migration behaviors and integration of migrants in host countries. My work focuses on the econometric evaluation of public policies and institutional changes. In one of my projects, jointly with Malte Sandner and Silke Anger, I examine the effects of the Federal Recognition Act in Germany on the integration of non-EU migrants. In particular, I test whether facilitating the procedures for the recognition of professional certificates acquired abroad (e.g., nurse degree) increases the applications for

recognition and the probability of entering regulated occupations such as jobs in the healthcare sector. Results show that the reform increased the number of non-EU applicants applying for recognition, and it improved the integration of migrants through better job opportunities in high-paying regulated occupations. It is important to note that the reform does not seem to have harmed the quality of foreign professionals hired in regulated occupations.

In a different project, jointly with Teresa Freitas Monteiro, we investigate the effects of home-country terrorism and political turmoil on the migration and integration intentions of migrants abroad. Using datasets on daily events from the 1970 onwards combined with detailed survey and administrative data, the project shows that right after a large political shock or terrorist event in the home country migrants tend to be willing to remain longer in the host country and to identify more with the host culture. Still to be tested is whether these attitudinal changes translate into changes in their realized behaviors, such as putting more effort in learning the host language or in searching for better jobs in the host country labor market.“

Transferring Insights, Growing as a Person and Using Networks: Realising the Benefits of Living and Working Abroad by Emilija Oleškevičiūtė, University of Cranfield

„International working experience often feels like a big learning process which covers both personal and professional insights. Gaining new job-related skills and business/technical, social, cognitive, organizational, cross-cultural etc. knowledge is one part of the learnings. Another part includes meeting new people such as colleagues, managers, customers, neighbours, gym buddies, or even partners. And finally, all these experiences of life and work abroad gives time, space, and opportunities to explore more and learn about ourselves: what do we want out of our careers? Why is that important to us? What do we like and what is not our “cup of tea” or “piece of cake”? All these learnings are, if not always then very often life changing. These above-mentioned learnings that come out of the international working experience are also known as a career capital (CC).“

„Some international experiences last forever but often global workers go back to the home-country. Reasons to return home can include the wish to settle down and be closer to the family, it also can be the wish for a better career in the home-country. While the motivation to return to the home-country is not the main focus of my research, it partially covers the

question of “what happens with internationally acquired or developed CC after the repatriation?”. Interviews with Dutch and Lithuanian returnees who come back to their home country based on their own decision and initiative (also known as self-initiated repatriates; SIRs) suggest that International Transfer of CC can include such aspects as: (1) planning or expectations of using CC back in the home-country while still being abroad; (2) actual use of CC back in the home-country straight after the return; as well as (3) the use of CC back in the home-country in the long term after the return either in the same company but having a new job role or acquiring a new job within another organization.“

„Another important aspect of my research is focusing on the factors affecting different stages of International Transfer of CC. Similarly to the outcomes of my systematic literature review, interviews with Dutch and Lithuanian SIRs so far suggest that the way we can use our CC for our careers back in the home-country depends on the personal, organizational, and broader contextual factors. Personal factors can include motivation to use CC, understanding of own CC value, ability and willingness to find ways using CC, as well as educational and professional background. Organizational factors include similarity between the organization and job in the home-country and the host-country, whether the new organization mainly focuses on local or international markets, employers’ attitude towards the internationally developed CC possessed by SIR etc. Broader contextual factors that drive this include cultural similarity or distance between home- and host-countries, lack of professional recognition by employers and more. The journey has shown a lot of variety in my research area – it is fascinating to explore more“.

Motives and implications from migration by Blanca Suarez-Bilbao, University of Bamberg

“One of 18 million Europeans, availing of the free movement granted to EU citizens, currently live and work in a different EU country. While in general this is a technically uncomplicated move – as opposed to non-EU citizens, who have to contend with (at least!) visas and other legal requirements – it is a decision that can have (both positive and negative) repercussions for an individual’s life and career. In particular for people who move countries by their own means and initiative (without organisational support), this decision is not taken lightly... or is it? In some instances, mobile professionals may be lured by the glittering lights of a particular city or attracted by their prospective host country’s reputation. For some it could be a purely career-related move, while for others the decision involves many different moving parts, not

least their families and friends. These factors raise a number of questions: How are individuals' careers, identities, their relationships and the connections (both career-related and social) with their 'home' countries affected by their move? Are their expectations met, or are they reframed as time goes by, as they find themselves adapting and settling into their 'host' countries? Which career strategies do they apply in order to cope with the challenges of intra-EU mobility and, crucially, what can organisations learn from this? I joined the GLOMO project late and I am currently still collecting data. Therefore, it is unfortunately a bit early for sharing insights yet. From what I can see so far in my research, the COVID19 pandemic has affected the flow and process of data collection, as much as it has the lives of the participants in my study. I have interviewed Irish, German and Spanish citizens living and working in different European countries (Irish and Germans in Spain, Germans and Spanish in Ireland, and Spanish and Irish in Germany). Because of their shared European values, the cultural distance between these countries is not big. Their European passports have facilitated their (intra-EU) mobile lives; however, their sheltered and (self-perceived) privileged lives and lifestyles were affected by the constraints and challenges introduced by the pandemic. It is still too early to say, but it seems that emotions (such as trust in institutions), the strength of home country (and/or host country) familial ties and general well-being considerations have come to the fore; in some cases making them recalibrate and consider their decision to remain in their host countries“.



Global mobility and the COVID Pandemic

Researching global mobility of employees in times of global pandemic, Kerstin Martel and Ivan O. Vulchanov recently wrote about how pandemic restrictions affected their research and they summarized implications of restricted mobilities on international employees and organizations.

„While limited travel possibilities had implications for all those who want to travel abroad for holidays, it changed even more profoundly the work and private lives of transnational workers. Having family and friends spread across several countries and being isolated outside one’s ‘home country’ during the pandemic crisis generated long-term separations for countless individuals. This seems particularly paradoxical in the European Union context, where the principles of free movement have encouraged personal and professional cross-border activity so that it has become an important and necessary part of life for some. New entry restrictions and border controls have made this kind of life more challenging.

Generally speaking, employees and employers are equally challenged by the pandemic. Many businesses have traditionally relied on moving employees across their operations in various countries according to different projects and needs. Multinational organizations have been able to continue some of these practices to a small extent, as work purposes have been recognized as a valid reason for travel within the EU. However, processes of relocating employees and their families to other regions have often been interrupted. Administrating additional documentation and the exceptional permits required has made working overtime the norm for many global mobility departments in organizations.

Overall, we can state that the pandemic and the related restrictions have triggered a lot of societal changes that have led us to develop alternative understandings of what ‘global mobility of employees’ stands for and might stand for in the future. Although certain jobs require physical on-site presence, globally dispersed organizations will explore alternative ways of supporting recruitment needs by hiring locally or other measures. Hybrid and flexible approaches to mobility will need to ensure knowledge sharing across borders, which can mean, for example, an increase in virtual teamwork and contracts that allow for remote working.”

Kerstin Martel and Ivan O. Vulchanov, Copenhagen Business School

You can access the full content on ScienceNordic: <https://sciencenordic.com/denmark-epidemics-health/how-do-you-research-global-mobility-during-a-pandemic-when-travel-is-highly-restricted/1902334>

Upcoming events

Public forum: Promoting immigrants democratic participation and integration

Date and time: 9 November 2021 at 15:00 CET

Login in for meeting: <https://uni-bamberg.zoom.us/j/94909262045>

Meeting-ID: 949 0926 2045

Kenncode: pB!D2m

Within the program of Interkulturelle Wochen in Bamberg 2021, organized by the city of Bamberg the GLOMO team from University of Bamberg will organize the event 'Public forum: Promoting immigrants democratic participation and integration'.

Focusing on the issue of immigrant political participation and integration, this event will raise a discussion on why it is important for immigrants to engage in politics? What kind of barriers do immigrants face to become politically active and integrate politically in the country of residence? What role do political parties have in the process of immigrant political integration? Discussing recent research findings on patterns of immigrants' political participation, the forum will raise a debate on how the political participation of immigrants can be promoted on a local level in Bamberg.

RES Forum Live Event: What is the Next Normal for Global Mobility

Date and Time: 10 November, 14.00 CET

GLOMO ESR Rodrigo Mello, with the support of Professor Michael Dickmann and David Enser, CEO of RES Forum, has undertaken global mobility strategy research amongst 22 multinational companies. The results will be presented and discussed in the RES Forum Live Event to which almost 1000 globally operating organizations have access. RES Forum invites their members with the following description:

"GLOMO have spoken to HR, GM and Rewards Leaders from various sectors. These open and honest conversations allowed us to dig into the full effect of COVID and investigate the future of GM and cross-border working. Excitingly, our research team have crunched the numbers, chewed over the anecdotes and digested the insights. And now we're ready to share them with you."