

Editorial: Migration and *Migration Letters*

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Migration is a dynamic and changing phenomenon so too is migration scholarship and research. While we understand that migration experience has always been responsive to political and economic environments we continue to search for new approaches and statements about migration's triggers. Speedy progress in information and communication systems helped people in making informed decisions; improvements in transportation have both increased the number of potential destinations and origin areas contributing to migration. In policy and research papers, we have seen more and more mention of temporary migration, circular migration, and short term migration and so on. Chinese and Indian economic growth, the attraction of the EU and USA to job seekers everywhere, food crisis, environmental hazards as well as large or small scale wars and conflicts will continue to displace people internally and internationally. The distances covered by migrants have increased significantly; people move between far away places. Even with these changes, new pulls and diverse destinations the volume of migration has not shown a substantial rise. Perhaps in recent years we have seen an increase in xenophobic attitudes and discourses against migrants and migration. This is partly linked to the New York and London bombings, job market fears and surrounding debates and events. Nevertheless, students and

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scholars of migration are still to come up with comprehensive explanations of this particular human behaviour and reasons behind it.

Within this context, increasing number of stakeholders joined in ranks with demographers, sociologists, anthropologists and geographers trying to understand human migration. Scholarly journals in the field have increased the number issues and intake of papers while a few new journals appeared. Speed of scholarly publication is in the rise; partly due to better communication technologies but also competitive pressures on researchers. Migration Letters is born in such a context to offer a unique outlet for dissemination of research and scholarship. It was distinctive in its format: the first ever *letter-type* journal in population studies. Publishing short articles with an emphasis on quick circulation of most recent thinking, Migration Letters have received a very warm welcome. We have managed to build a strong board of editors gathering distinguished scholars and practitioners all around the world. Similar strength and richness can also be seen among the authors we have published.

We have published less than one third of submissions we have received throughout the five volumes of our journal. We take this as a sign of very healthy demand and interest. This was also evident in readership as some of the articles have been requested by as many as 8,000 people. Another unique aspect of the journal was quick turn over. The specific format has also helped us to run an expedited processing of submitted articles. Of course down to the efforts of our very kind colleagues who reviewed and commented on submissions, we have achieved to publish articles within about six months on average.

In the same period, we have also achieved a reputable status. In some recent surveys, the journal has been ranked highly while also gaining inclusion to IBSS. Articles published in the journal are getting cited and reprinted as book chapters. We do hope to see an ever increasing demand pushing us to publish more issues in the near future.

Nevertheless, we owe our success to the well coordinated and voluntary effort of our reviewers (over 120 to date), who devote their time and expertise to guide us as we help authors to enhance articles. Equally important is the contribution of over 40 members we have on our editorial board, contributing to the journal in many ways. Finally, we should also acknowledge the generous support of European Business School London in the last three years.

We are open to collaboration on special issues, or creating special sections for organisations or projects. One such successful example was IRFAM's special volume on *Recognition of Islam in European Municipalities* that we published at the end of 2005 (volume 2, no 3).

The first five volumes (2004-2008) of the journal are available freely to download from the journal website and included in the data base of DOAJ (www.doaj.org). We will keep the earlier issues open access as long as it is viable.

In this issue, we have two papers looking at gender aspects though from completely different angles. O'Leary discusses the 'deadly' impact of border controls based on examples from US-Mexico border. Allen brings us an analysis of British fiction highlighting the ways in which sex trafficking is represented.

De Jong and Graefe examine inter-state migration of immigrants in US in relation to life course trigger events. They argue that relocation decisions are linked to family life course events more than human capital effects. Stillwell, Hussein and Norman analysed the internal migration propensities of immigration-bound minorities in England and Wales based on the most recent UK Census. They present comparisons between whites and non-whites in terms of inter-district net migration. The two papers provide a good contrast at two different levels.

Lunt opens up a debate on the paucity of scholarship on contemporary British international migration experiences

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with references to migrations of the post-war era, of pensioners, and of professionals. He urges for a full investigation of British migratory experience.

Markova and Reilly move our attention to Madrid, Spain in their micro level analysis of earnings of Bulgarian immigrants in the city. They apply a pretty standard model looking at human capital, duration of migration, and gender aspects. Tsimbos estimates net migration in Greece by delineating the effects of age, sex and citizenship in between the last two consecutive Greek Censuses. He applies demographic techniques in estimations while also acknowledging the limitations of available statistics used.

We do hope this issue will also be useful and inspiring for researchers, students and practitioners around the world. Please also note that an ongoing call for papers as well as special issue calls is live on the journal's website.

We are also pleased to announce that a special issue on biographical migration research is edited by two colleagues, *Theodoros Iosifides* and *Deborah Sporton*. Further news about this collection of papers on biographical, life history, and narrative approaches to migration will be placed on our website. We are also happy to note that *Migration Letters* continuously seek proposals for special issues on contemporary topics in migration studies.