

Labour Migration Policies in the Countries of Destination

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Bratislava, August 2013



Which labour immigration policy?

- Why? Who? How many? For how long? Which rights at what stage?
- Demand- and/or supply-driven elements
- Constraints – specific to geography, political system, economic structure, demography, enforcement capacities, type of welfare state and so on
- Which impact – intended or unintended? Winners and losers
- Labour immigration vs immigration of labour
- Possibly divergent interests of countries and destination, countries of origin and migrants



Recent developments

- EU: recession + unemployment + persisting demand in some occupations
- Focus on maximizing the economic benefits of labour immigration policies – improving links to labour market needs
- Dychotomy between high and less skilled; emphasis on ensuring temporariness, especially for less skilled; rising barriers to residency security, also for rights-based immigration
- Marginalization of immigrant population (and some groups of native population). But integration outcomes ultimately determine success or failure of (labour) immigration policies



Improving links to labour market needs

- Can these be accurately identified?
- Which role for employers? Importance of employer endorsement/job offer – ex, Skill Select (Australia), Sweden, Poland + employer role in integration
- Short-term vs long-term objectives – ex, Gulf countries
- Impact on skill mix considerations
- Significant part of immigrant recruitment in the EU is local market recruitment, not international – easier to recruit migrants already in the country (on regular or irregular basis), especially for SMEs
- Is it a problem and what could be changed?



Skills – economic rationale and reality

- Theoretical considerations – why preference for skilled workers?
- Which skill mix is needed by a particular country?
- Are migrant skills recognized and used?
- Different rights for different skill levels?
 - Impact of supply – limited for skilled and unlimited for unskilled
 - Reality of rights vs legal norms
 - Relationship between ↓rights and ↑openness in migration regimes (Ruhs, 2013)
 - “What is worse than being “exploited” abroad? Not being “exploited” abroad.” (Martin, 2003)
 - Wider societal implications of exclusion – of migrants and other “failed” citizens (Anderson, 2013)



Some policy issues

- Sensible provisions may not work – why?
- Many “unknowns” – how to ensure flexibility in policy and practices?
 - Selection – by whom? Checks and balances
 - Status changes – trust-building with migrant, also as incentive for integration
- Employers and international recruitment – aspects of enforcement, support and voluntary incentives
- Managing societal diversity
- International cooperation – migration management as part of wider bi- and multi-lateral cooperation frameworks (incl. portability of benefits, , internationalization of higher education, skill development, recognition of qualifications and validation of competences, pre-departure and reintegration support, trade)
- Regional competition for labour?



Some policy issues

Migration is part of a wider policy mix, not a solution on its own – need for clarity on the goals (for resident population and newcomers) and complementarity of measures



International Organization for Migration

the migration agency

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THANK YOU!

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<http://labourmigration.eu>