

EAO Program Impact

Joseph G. Bock

September 26, 2016

Since participating in the EAO Program last May, I have written a Concept Note on a migration policy initiative. It envisions a multinational research and public policy outreach initiative to address the migration/refugee crisis globally. I propose sessions on the U.S. side, probably at KSU or perhaps the Carter Center, and sessions on the European side, possibly at EOA.

I have submitted this Concept Note, with input from fellow EAO participant Paul McDaniel, to Allan Goodman, President of the Institute for International Education (which houses the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars--CIES), María de los Ángeles Crummett, the Executive Director of CIES, and Richard Mei and Deborah L. Guido-O'Grady, the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. The Concept Note has been well received. Please see the messages on the next page.

Our next step is to develop a proposal for the State Department that includes greater specificity and a budget. I have called a meeting for tomorrow, September 27, 2016, of interested faculty members to provide input.

I assume the step after submitting the proposal will be rewriting it based on feedback. After that, I assume Paul and I will need to meet with people at the State Department and IIE/CIES.

The Concept Note follows the email messages, below.

E-mail Messages

9/15/2016

Sure looks good to me. And much needed. Any response from USG?

All best.

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Opening Minds to the World®

Dear Joe,

Allan has kindly forwarded me your email and the refugee concept paper. It is a solid and highly important endeavor and I am pleased to hear that there is continued interest from our colleagues at ECA. I remember well that your presentation at the CIES Advisory Board meeting led to a broader discussion on how migration topics of this magnitude could very well be addressed with an approach similar to the Fulbright Arctic Initiative. It certainly merits the same kind of attention with a multiregional and multidisciplinary focus.

IIE/CIES would be quite interested in supporting your work with the first step being acknowledgement from ECA that they would shape an initiative such as you have identified. As a Fulbright program, they would need to take the necessary steps to discuss and define the approach and allocate financial resources. It appears there is continued interest and the new branch chief for Europe at ECA is great to follow-up with as you have done. I would keep the communication with her in place; she will be the person that can work with others at ECA to build momentum toward a new initiative or set of projects that could then further shape the ideas in your concept paper.

Let's do keep in touch as I am confident this could well be the next critical program to garner greater State Department support and resources.

Very best,

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9/21/2016

Dear Professor Bock:

Many thanks again for your concept paper on migration policy and I look forward to meeting you in the future, having taken on Richard's duties as the Fulbright Branch Chief for Europe/Eurasia.

To help us understand this concept, could you provide further examples as to how you would gather the data and who would enter it into the database? Do you have a research assistant in mind who would conduct the various surveys needed for this information. What are the tools that you envision creating or linking to? Would this information be available in multiple languages? How would policy makers and others know about the proposed tools?

In short, further details on the practical aspects and a possible budget for what you have in mind would be useful to have.

Looking forward to your reply.

Best regards,

Deborah

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The Migration Policy Navigation Initiative

Concept Note
(September 7, 2016)

The Problem

The world is experiencing the largest flow of displaced people since World War II. The drivers include war, gang violence, drug trafficking and associated violence, oppression, economic stagnation, global warming, social media, and population growth relative to scarce resources. In Europe, thousands of displaced people are arriving each month. And in the United States, displaced people from Latin America continue to flow across a porous southern border.

While there is widespread empathy for people fleeing war and other violence, there is less for people who are migrating for economic reasons or due to oppression. Host country resistance is a result of four main concerns. First, host country nationals are concerned about the burden new arrivals will place on their health, welfare, and education services. Fatigued by successive budget cuts, they sense that helping migrants and refugees will be a loss to expenditures in areas that will benefit them.

A second concern is that migrants and refugees will take jobs away from people in the host country. This is particularly acute in countries that have stagnant economies, with relatively high levels of unemployment.

Third, people are concerned about a loss of culture, as if increased heterogeneity will result in losing part of their world as they know it. The sentiment regarding this loss is (in some locations and within certain demographic, ethnic and religious groups) stronger than an assessment of the value of increased socio-linguistic, religious, culinary, and cultural diversity.

And, finally, there is fear of terrorism. News programs and political rhetoric have linked some religious groups, especially Muslims, as having a higher propensity to engage in terrorist acts.



The resistance regarding costs and jobs are zero-sum assessments—their gain is our loss. The second two, culture and terrorism, relate to identity and safety.

The problem with this situation is that many migrants have arrived illegally, or have overstayed their visas, and there is also a time lag in processing cases of people seeking asylum. Even when irregular migrants have been sent to their countries of origin, some of them are not accepted back. Furthermore, many of the migrants and refugees are reluctant to move to official camps or fill out asylum paperwork for fear they will be rejected and deported. As a result, we have stateless people, on the one hand, and uprooted, off-the-grid people on the other. This, combined with resistance within host countries, creates a policy conundrum. Human rights of displaced people can be readily violated—their vulnerability subject to labor and sexual exploitation. Conversely, one of the largest groups of migrants and refugees is young men.

Many of them have committed or witnessed violence and are therefore “conflict carriers.” A sense of marginalization, hopelessness and joblessness may result in behavior that is less than ideal.

Policy makers are thus in difficult situations. Their constituencies are upset or fearful, or both. At the same time, preventing problems associated with alienation and idleness demands that able-bodied people find jobs or other opportunities (such as getting a degree or starting a company) which give newcomers hope and a stake in the communities in which they find themselves. Cultivating such opportunities is key for newcomer integration in communities and societies.

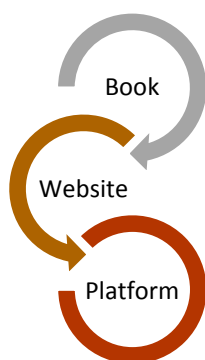
Arguments in favor of giving legal migrants and refugees a warm reception have centered on the skills they have and the demographic balance they can bring. But there has been little in the way of giving these arguments greater definition. One organization in Germany conducted surveys which calculated skills and the potential economic impact of legal migrants and refugees, but such measurement is not being done elsewhere in Europe. And even in this case, the findings are for statistical, not hiring, purposes.

We contend, therefore, that there would be a substantial benefit in an initiative designed to share current understanding within and between Europe and the United States. From there, new policy-relevant research can be conducted, new measurements can be made (applied more consistently across countries and states), and new tools can be developed.

In brief, despite relative abundance of research and data regarding the general processes and dynamics of international migration, policy makers and civic leaders are facing a very difficult situation and are largely operating in the dark. We propose to develop a system that will give them greater visibility, which will enable them to make more convincing arguments, based on data at an individual level to inform a suite of policy tools.

Proposed Project

We propose a systematic process for developing policy tools and measurements to address this challenge. They will be designed for use by policy makers and civil society leaders. They will address these central questions: What information and measurements do policy makers and civil society leaders need to enable them to provide accurate pictures of the impact of hosting migrants and refugees to their constituencies? What policy and programmatic tools are at their disposal?



We propose the formation of a working group of current, former and newly recruited Fulbright awardees coupled with a comparable number of Europeans with similar or complementary expertise. The working group would have clear deliverables with firm deadlines. Each tool and measurement will be tested and refined with input from policy makers and civil society leaders in both the United States and Europe. The deliverables include: (a) a book which explains each measurement and tool; (2) a website which helps users visualize how to tabulate the measurements and how to use the tools; and (3) an online platform for “policy navigation” that has the functionality to calculate the measurements and apply the tools for specific locations at different levels of government (regional union, nation, state, and city).

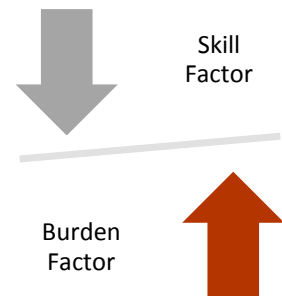
Examples of measurements are:

Skills and aptitudes. These could be measured through an on-line test administered by authorized proctors. Both unemployed citizens as well as legal migrants and refugees could be tested.

Skill factor. This is the factor resulting from combining migrants and refugees with skills and aptitudes which are needed in the prospective host community.

Burden factor. The number of people with no-skills, no-aptitudes, or are otherwise not able to work at an individual level.

Skill-to-burden ratio. This would be a calculation of the number of people with various degrees of skills at different weights of likely productivity as a numerator, and the number of unproductive people weighed by the likely social welfare burden, on the other. This ratio could be calculated over the long-run using statistical and modeling techniques, incorporating demographic information, for instance, as to likely number of working years before retirement of specific workers and average life-span of retirees.



Human resource needs. These could be derived from various government and business association data bases, or determined at an enterprise and community level.

Heterogeneity index. Nations, regions, states or cities can be ranked for heterogeneity as determined by their ethnic, linguistic, educational, and religious composition. This index can be used for estimating relative receptivity to migrants and refugees.

Receptivity factor. Even amidst places where there is generalized resistance, there are pockets of support. State, city, and sub-municipal maps can be developed showing the most likely places where legal migrants and refugees would receive a warm reception.

Examples of tools include:

Training and educational programs. These are especially helpful in the short-run, because they do not require work permits. If it is possible and desirable for migrants and refugees to return to their country of origin, these programs can prepare them for productive lives.

Manufacturing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business manager• Process engineer	Software Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computer programmers• Translators	Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carpenters• Electricians
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Optimal matching configurations. This links skills and aptitudes of individuals with human resource needs of businesses, schools, governments, and non-profits within specific host communities.

Skill increment financing. This is when configurations of people working with skills and aptitudes relative to human resource needs will have a positive economic impact. The incremental tax revenue gain resulting from increased productivity is equal to or greater than the cost that will accrue (“burden”) when people with no or little skill (or who otherwise are incapable of working) are combined for resettlement with

groups having tailored sets of skills and aptitudes. Groupings could be maximized to keep families together as much as possible.

Economic stimulus initiatives. This would involve providing tax incentives or subsidies, or both, to businesses which will stimulate job growth.

Entrepreneur-venture capital platforms. Unemployed citizens, along with legal migrants and refugees, who are determined to have an entrepreneurial aptitude can be trained in business plan development. They can then be mentored as they write their plans. Thereafter, they could present their plans to a panel of judges at an open forum. The plans could then be scored. Those that reach a specific threshold could then be listed on an internet-based platform. The plans could then be marketed to venture capital firms and investors who can purchase units or shares in promising companies.

Rapid work permits. This involves administrative changes that accelerate the rate of issuing job permits for migrants and refugees who are eligible to work.

Work ratio. This is the recommended ratio of new jobs acquired by the host community's unemployed population relative to new jobs acquired by migrants and refugees, adjusted for overall unemployed in the area and the heterogeneity index.

Acculturation and language training. Faith communities, for instance, can be encouraged to offer these services in their basements or meeting rooms. Educational, cultural, and nonprofits are also important organizations for integration, providing language, civics, and other training.

Extremist screening. This involves cooperation among law enforcement, security agencies and ministries. Until citizenship is granted, surveillance could be allowed using anonymized data. If there are warning signs (such as frequenting extremist websites), a data key could be applied to identify the person who could be a security threat. If necessary, the person could be questioned and potentially deported.

Timeline

We envision this to be a three-year project, though every effort would be made to disseminate measurements and tools as they are developed.

Partnership and Funding

We propose that this project be sponsored by the U.S. State Department's Fulbright program in collaboration with the Institute for International Education (with meetings elsewhere, perhaps at the Carter Center in Atlanta), combined with sponsorship by the European Commission, with meetings held at the European Academy at Otzenhausen in Germany.

The project will have co-directors, one from Europe, the other from the United States. They will be supported by research assistants. Other experts will be assigned research, writing, measurement development, and data analysis. The European and American experts will meet twice yearly, alternating between Europe and the United States.

Areas of Expertise

We anticipate needing expertise in these fields: international relations, geography and migration policy, demography, environmental science, social psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, mathematics, computer science, social work and human services, and law.

Budget

To be developed.