



MIGRATION AND EDUCATION BUILDING ON COMMON GROUNDS

LAURA WURM, JUDITH KOHLENBERGER

Abstract

This paper aims to shed light on the multifaceted and interrelated processes of education and migration, assessing how investment in and improvement of education can contribute towards more effective migration management and mobilities, a partial prevention of emigration in countries of origin, selection and support of migrants in countries of transit and destination and a better integration. The three spotlights selected to provide insight into the prospects of investment in education are: a) the importance of equal access to and quality of education according to the findings of UNESCO and OECD reports, b) the significance of fostering human capital, and c) the prospects of mobility programmes. While, in terms of host countries and integration, a focus lies on European states – Austria, in particular – Middle Eastern and North African countries being the origin of significant numbers of migrants in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, will be in the centre of case studies with regard to mobility and exchange.

The aim of this contribution, building a bridge between education and migration, is to assess how and to what extent investment in and improvement of education can contribute towards more effective migration management and mobilities, a partial prevention of emigration in countries of origin, selection and support of migrants in countries of transit and destination and a better integration. Three spotlights will be presented with regard to the fruitful prospects investments in education can bear: a) the importance of equal access to and quality of education according to the findings of UNESCO and OECD reports, b) the significance of fostering human capital, and c) the prospects of mobility programmes.

Accordingly, the first part of this contribution will outline the shortcomings of global education in terms of equal access to and quality of education, analysing references made to migration populations in the UNESCO's 2017 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) and the OECD's Education at a Glance: Indicators 2017. The second part will provide insight into the analysis of knowledge, competencies and skills of migrants, especially post-2015 refugees in Austria, explaining the backgrounds of selective migration. The third part will examine the backgrounds of student mobility and selective international education offers, providing a case study of mobility programmes between Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), being the origin of a significant part of immigrants in Europe. Regional approaches will be presented on the example of Egypt after the Arab Spring. Migration flows of our time are strongly related to differences in education and socio-economic opportunities. It is, among others, Europe's task to enable higher education to all citizens, especially to more vulnerable groups. Enhancing both the access to and the quality or effectiveness of education can be pursued in host countries as well as in countries of origin, provided that Europe recognises its role in this complex challenge.



1. THE UNESCO AND OECD REPORTS

Goal 4 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) listed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which officially came into force on 1 January 2016, is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". This goal is divided into seven targets and three means of implementation. The seven targets comprise primary and secondary education, early childhood, technical, vocational, tertiary and adult education, skills for work, equity, literacy and numeracy, and sustainable development and global citizenship (targets 4.1-4.7). The three means of implementation consist of education facilities and learning environment, scholarships and teachers (4.8-4.10). The UNESCO and the OECD collaborate in building a comprehensive data system for global reporting, aiming to shed light on education deficiencies and how to tackle them, in order to enable a progress made with regard to SDG 4.

The 2017 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) and the OECD's Education at a Glance: Indicators 2017 both aim to provide and analyse information on the state of education at the global level. The GEM Report seeks to assess a progress made with regard to SDG 4 and its seven targets and three means of implementation, and investigate accountability in education, taking into account all stakeholders involved and mechanisms to hold them accountable for inclusive, equitable and quality education. Education at a Glance is published by the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills to assist governments in creating more inclusive and equitable education systems. In a chapter dedicated to SDG 4, thematically organized global indicators agreed with the UNESCO are used to assess a progress of OECD and partner countries in targets 4.1-4.10. While a progress has been made in terms of school infrastructure and access to basic education, OECD and partner countries still face major challenges in attaining targets that measure learning outcomes and equity, hence target 4.5, being in the centre of SDG 4. This target is also most directly linked to migrant populations.

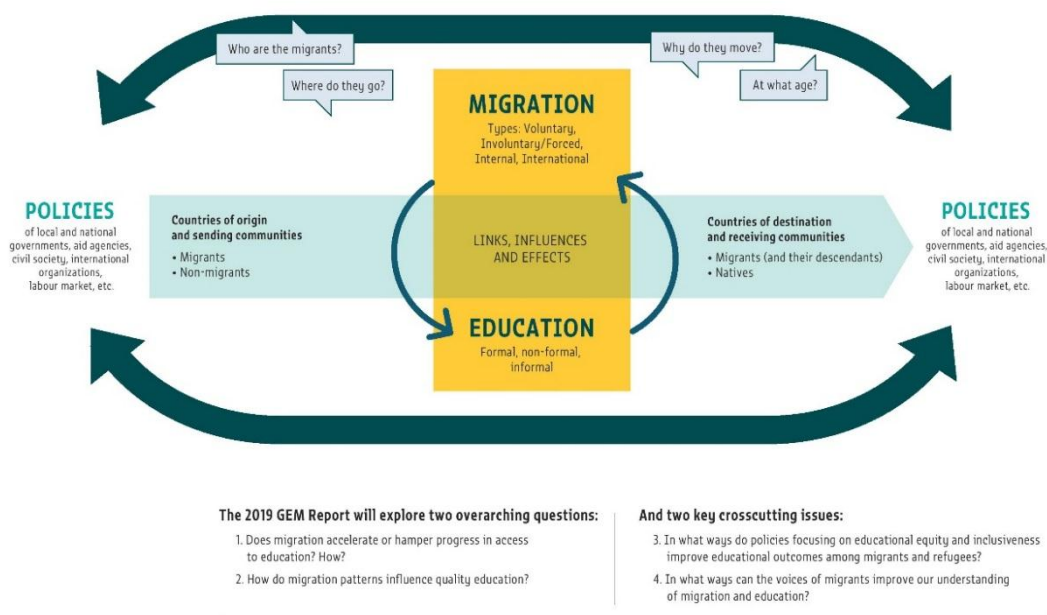
Target 4.5. is to, "by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations" (OECD, 2017, 31). An important group of these vulnerable groups are people with a migratory status.

When aiming to eliminate education disparities by gender, location and wealth and to ensure equal access to education for vulnerable groups, target 4.5 points to disparities and limited access to education due to language of instruction and migrant status. Cross-national school-based surveys provide data on the education status of migrant populations. The 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed an overall 54-point gap in science test scores equivalent to around a year and a half of instruction between 15-year-old non-immigrant students speaking the test language at home and immigrant students who did not. In Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, this gap accounted for 90 points. The 2015 PISA showed that, in OECD countries, two in three first-generation and almost one in two second-generation immigrant students spoke a different language at home than the test language. In Austria, Germany, Sweden and the United States, more than 75% of first-generation immigrant students spoke another language at home. Immigrant students in participating OECD countries were more than twice as likely as their non-immigrant peers to perform below minimum proficiency in science. On average, migrant populations in OECD countries tend to have lower literacy skills (UNESCO, 2017a, 187-203). Immigrant students are more than twice as likely to underperform in PISA. Being a first or second-generation immigrant also affects the likelihood of completing upper secondary education. Worldwide, completion rates for non-immigrant students are higher than for first- and second-generation immigrants (OECD, 2017, 157).



The 2019 GEM Report will specifically focus on different types of migration and their characteristics, as well as on national differences in migration policies and the influence of education on migration, posing challenges to education systems and skills acquisition. Migration and education will be presented as multifaceted and dynamic processes involving a variety of stakeholders (UNESCO, 2017b, 2).

Figure 1: Migration and education dynamics



The Report will derive conclusions and policy recommendations in relation to the global goal on education (SDG4)



Note: Most data, research findings and policies in this field reflect the one-way migration movement portrayed in the Figure; however, some percentage of migrants do return to their home countries or communities and related issues will be considered in the 2019 Report.
Source: The GEM Report Team, 2017.

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Migration and education allow for the development of competencies, and can contribute to the social and economic development of host countries as well as countries of origin, if access to and quality of education are safeguarded.¹

An important aspect of target 4.5 is to eliminate gender disparities in order to provide equal access to education. The Women, Peace and Security agenda, verbalised in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), implemented at the international and national level by seven further Security Council resolutions and a series of regional and national action plans, highlights the importance of female participation in the governance of peace and security (Holvikivi and Reeves, 2017). Women have a crucial role in international cooperation and the promotion of values of peace and democracy. Female migrants, facing unique challenges through dependencies, should be in the centre of integration efforts. They can function as important mediators and multipliers of educational and integration investments.

¹ The 2019 GEM report will be published in fall 2018. Key focal points have been presented in a concept note: <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/Concept%20Note%205%20April%20Final.pdf>



2. HUMAN CAPITAL OF MIGRANTS IN AUSTRIA AND INTEGRATION

Many countries seek to employ highly-qualified immigrants in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) (OECD, 2017, 46). This also holds for Austria, being included in the Europe and Northern America region and in high income countries in the GEM Report's framework for analysis. Migration is selective: the mobility of those with higher levels of education and socio-economic resources is higher. This not only holds for labour migrants, but also for refugees. The Displaced Persons in Austria Survey (DiPAS) showed that the human capital of persons seeking refuge in Austria was high, and even above the average of education and work experience in their countries of origin. The DiPAS was conducted to uncover socio-demographic characteristics of the persons seeking refuge, having arrived in Austria in 2015 - mainly originating from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. Migrants with high levels of education are likely to be faster at and more open for acquiring new knowledge and skills, but have to be given opportunities to timely apply these skills and acquire a level of German required for working or starting an enterprise in Austria as well as other prerequisites (Kohlenberger, 2016). Higher levels of human capital call for sustainable, rather than quick integration.

DiPAS respondents originating from Syria and Iraq who have arrived since summer 2015 show consistently high levels of education. The percentage of respondents with no or minimal formal education was around 15% for all respondents - higher among Afghans with 25% and low among Syrians and Iraqis with around 7–9%. Asylum seekers from less developed countries like Afghanistan were equally positively selected. The share of asylum seekers with upper secondary education is 53% among the Syrians, 46% among the Iraqis and below 30% among the Afghans. 67% of all respondents opted to "search for a job" after having been granted official asylum status in Austria. The option "continue school/studying" was prevalently chosen by the age groups of 15–19 years and 20–24 years, with 71% and 46% respectively indicating their wish to continue or complete their education (Buber-Ennser et al., 2016, 21-22). Facilitating adequate jobs to apply and further develop existent knowledge and skills as well as enabling to continue education is the core of integration approaches. Analyses by the AMS confirm an increased potential for the integration of refugees in the host country's labour market, since their levels of competence and skills are in line with their levels of education and/or occupation (Buber-Ennser et al., 2016, 10). What is more, according to a 2016 IMF analysis, rapid labour market integration can reduce net fiscal cost of the inflow of asylum seekers. The sooner refugees can be active members of the host country's labour market, the faster they contribute positively towards the public finances by paying income, tax and social security contributions. Successful labour market integration can also partly counter the adverse fiscal effects of population aging (Aiyar et al., 2016, 5). Integration efforts, however, are to be tailored to specific needs due to the increasing diversity of refugee populations with regard to their family context, education, professional qualifications, and nationalities - and require country-specific studies.

3. MOBILITY PROGRAMMES AND REGIONAL EFFORTS TO ENHANCE EDUCATION

Another important aspect of a linkage between education and migration is student mobility, a very proactive approach of temporary selective migration. Differences in education capacity are important causes for student migration. A lack of educational facilities in countries of origin or the status of institutions in countries of destination, as well as differences in returns to or rewards for education and skills, economic factors such as higher economic performance and subsidies in the host country and non-economic factors, such as political stability, can lead to increased student migration (OECD, 2017, 291).



In 2015, 4.6 million tertiary education students, 2% of total tertiary education students, studied in a country other than their home country. Aid by means of scholarships decreased by 4% from 2010 to 2015, equivalent to the overall decrease in aid to education. Almost 70% of mobile students in the OECD area are hosted by the top five OECD destination countries. The top five sending countries worldwide constitute under 40% of total migration towards the OECD area. Advanced English-speaking countries are the largest host countries: the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, followed by France, Germany and the Russian Federation. Most mobile students in the OECD area are of Chinese nationality, followed by Indian, German, Korean, French and Saudi Arabian mobility students (OECD, 2017, 287).

Different fields of action were defined for Erasmus Mundus, the cooperation and mobility programme with Third Countries in the field of higher education, which ended on 31 December 2013 and in 2014 came to be part of Erasmus+, the new EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. These fields of action were: Action 1: Joint Programmes including scholarships with master courses as Action 1 A and joint doctorates as Action 1 B; Action 2: Partnerships with Third Country Higher Education Institutions and scholarships for mobility; and Action 3: Promotion of European higher education. Targeted institutions, groups and individuals would comprise higher education institutions (Actions 1 and 2) and related organisations (Action 3), as well as individual students, researchers and university staff (Action 1 & 2) (EACEA, 2017).

Most states have lowered barriers to the migration of highly skilled students, mostly pre-doctoral students and doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. Many countries favour outward mobility of students at advanced education levels and inward return mobility experienced researchers, aiming to create knowledge spillovers. Between 2013 and 2015, incoming student numbers have increased most in Estonia, Latvia, Poland and the Russian Federation. Increases have also been observed in Brazil, Chile and Turkey. Austria, Israel, Japan, Korea and Slovenia experienced a decline in international enrolments between 2013 and 2015 (OECD, 2017, 296).

Erasmus+ as the European Commission's current mobility Programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014–2020 is not only offered at the academic level, but also for secondary schools and facilities for technical and vocational training, with a budget of €2.27 billion in 2016. Aiming to deliver on the objectives of improving the level of key competences and skills, enhancing social inclusion and promoting citizenship and values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, the EU supported 725,000 mobilities in 2016, involving 79,000 organisations and 21,000 projects (European Commission, 2016). Exchange with Southern Mediterranean neighbours is currently to be enhanced by offering online courses, aiming to provide a virtual version of the Erasmus+ programme to 25,000 students between 18 and 25 years from the 33 Erasmus+ states as well as from MENA states, involving Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Israel (APA, 2018).

3.1 Case study: Mobility programmes with the MENA region

This focal point is to provide insight into exchange between Europe and the MENA region in terms of education and research, which constitutes an approach of regional empowerment and cooperation. The MENA region, being the origin of many migrants in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, especially refugees arriving in Europe, has not yet been significantly involved in mobility programmes. Of 13,957 master's students worldwide participating in the Erasmus Mundus Programme between 2004 and 2013, only 87 were from Tunisia and 219 from Egypt. 2 Tunisian and 6 Egyptian candidates were among the 1,005 doctorates participating in Erasmus Mundus during this period, while among the 2,449 scholars, 13 were from Tunisia, and only 14 from Egypt (EACEA, 2015).

For the post-Arab Spring North African region in particular, Erasmus Mundus Al-Idrisi I and II were created as an institution-based network of mobility, involving nineteen North African and European



partner universities, six associate universities, three associate institutions, as well as the Ministries of Higher Education in the region. Al-Idrisi I and II were conceived for a period of 48 months coordinated by the University of Granada, with the University of Graz as an Austrian partner. From the North African side, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria were to participate in Al-Idrisi I, starting in 2011. Egypt and Libya were selected as additional North African participants for Al-Idrisi II, starting in 2013. A budget of around €3.2 million was allocated for Al-Idrisi I, comprising around 170 mobilities. Al-Idrisi II was supported with around €4.1 million, leading to an overall of 288 mobilities. According to the Organisation Opportunities for Africans, Al-Idrisi served as an example for the attempt of equal participation of all parties involved in the conception of knowledge exchange. Due to the programme's strong focus on regional needs, North African partners were directly involved in the selection of relevant subjects and areas. Providing equal access to higher education and improved training to socio-economically disadvantaged students thereby served as one of the core ideas (OFA, 2015). This shows a very progressive approach, promising an equal involvement of both European and North African partners.

The following thematic areas were identified as essential to meet regional needs and were defined as priority fields of Al-Idrisi II: Agricultural Sciences, Art and Design, Business Studies and Management, Engineering, Technology, Environment and Renewable Energies, Soil and Water Sciences, Archaeology, Languages and Intercultural Communication, Mathematics, Informatics, Health and Life Sciences, Natural Sciences, Sustainable Development and Communication and Information Sciences (OFA, 2015).

Three target groups for grantees and five different types of mobility flows for students and staff were defined to address each group's individual needs and priorities: Target Group 1 was directed at students and academic staff registered in one of the partner universities, while Target Group 2 was designed for students enrolled at higher education institutions in the partner countries that do not belong to the group of partner universities, as well as for professionals in public administration or public and private enterprises who had obtained an university degree in one of the partnering countries. Target Group 3 was to consist of socially or politically disadvantaged groups, such as refugees, indigenous groups or students who suffered from unjustified university expulsion. The Types of Mobility for Target Groups 1 and 2 comprised Master, Doctorate, Post-Doctorate, Academic and Administrative Staff, as well as Undergraduate in the case of Target Group 1. Target Group 3 was designed for undergraduate and master levels. Apart from educational expenses, the EC's funding of the programme also was to comprise a monthly subsistence allowance, travel and insurance costs and possible tuition fees. The monthly allowance accounted for €1.000 per month for undergraduates, €1.500 per month for doctorates, €1.800 for post-doctorates and €2.500 for academic and administrative staff. A subsidy to travel expenses was to range from €250 for under 500km of travel distance up to €2500 for a distance of more than 10.000km. The duration of the educational programme could vary, depending on the mobility type, from six months to 36 months (OFA, 2015). These were high levels of allowances, ensuring for living costs and other vital expenses to be covered. Al-Idrisi I and II have been precisely conceived approaches towards a stronger involvement of partnering universities and students in North Africa. Unfortunately, these programmes ended with a last call in 2016.

Apart from Erasmus Mundus, the Horizon 2020 programme operates as an EU Research and Innovation programme aiming to further economic growth and industrial leadership, create jobs, and tackle societal challenges, available for the period 2014 to 2020. The project is strongly linked to attracting private investment, striving to abolish barriers to create a single market for knowledge, research and innovation and thus, despite involving neighbouring countries, putting emphasis on the supremacy of a European research area.



MEDASTAR (Mediterranean Area for Science, Technology and Research) is a specific project between Europe, Egypt and Lebanon for a cooperation in fields of science, technology and research. It classifies as an Action 2 programme, and therefore promotes partnerships with third country higher education institutions and scholarships for mobility. Enhancing regional participation, on a regular basis, Egypt and Lebanon publish national reports on the state and development of education (MEDASTAR, 2018). Country-specific needs for higher education are to be met while promoting equal opportunities, democracy, rule of law and human rights, as foreseen in the general "New response to a changing Neighbourhood" of the European Commission.

By 2012, Mobility Partnerships had been discussed with Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Jordan. While a Mobility Partnership was signed with Morocco in June 2013 and with Tunisia in March 2014, the partnership was declined twice by Egypt and postponed by other Arab states such as Libya (Seeberg, 2014, 2).

3.2 Regional approaches on the example of post-Arab Spring Egypt

An important question Europe faced in the aftermath of the Arab Spring was how to deliver on the demands of the Arab Spring's main actors: members of civil society, especially youth. What Arab Spring actors wished for was democracy, social justice and equal and enhanced socio-economic opportunities in the region. The EU, considering a further evolvement of Mobility Partnerships while fearing an increase in irregular migration, solidified the idea of strengthening the role of civil society in the MENA region. While this task was more conveniently to be completed in Tunisia - which had quickly undergone a democratic transition - supporting civil society organisations in Egypt, many of which were related to the military government or led by Islamist groups, resulted more difficult. Some of the approaches the EU chose for more instable countries such as Egypt, accounting for high flows of irregular migration to the EU, aimed at regional employment creation and education enhancement. A decision adopted by the European Commission in November 2013, entitled "New EU support for job creation and vocational training for young people in Egypt", envisaged concrete measures in the fields of education and employment creation (European Commission, 2012). The EU showed a clear initiative to support the creation of employment for unskilled workers and to enhance youth employability through a reform of the technical and vocational training system. €120 million were allocated to create employment opportunities for 82,000 workers in small infrastructure projects in the poorest areas of Egypt, with €70 million budgeted for job creation and €50 million for vocational training. These measures of support were also announced at the EU-Egypt Task Force in November 2012 (European Council, 2011).

The European support in youth employment creation culminated in the Emergency Employment Investment Programme initiated in December 2013. Partnering with the World Bank and the Social Development Fund, the project, budgeted with €70 million, aimed at temporary job creation through labour intensive small-scale infrastructure construction provision of labour intensive community services, especially for unemployed, unskilled and semi-skilled, poor or vulnerable Egyptians, including youth and women (EEAS, 2016).

4. POLICY SUGGESTIONS

- **Investment in qualifications of migrants:** The higher the education of migrants, the higher the potential of effective integration. Enhancing human capital is not only a principal aim in host countries, but can also be beneficial for countries of origin, if migrants are willing to move back and induce change. Investment in education, such as continuous adult education, enhanced qualification or language courses, shaped by the providence of equal opportunities and support to vulnerable groups, bears the potential of creating multiplying benefits and positive spillovers.



- **Recognizing existing qualifications:** Especially in Austria and neighbouring European countries, the human capital of migrants, coming from solid middle-class background with sustained access to education, is remarkably high – yet, it has to be recognised (nostrification) and made use of in an effective manner.
- **Transferring skills and qualifications:** Migrants' qualifications are to be adapted to the host country's standards, which includes fostering language proficiency. This process should not precipitately be effectuated, but be followed through in a sustainable manner, allowing for a holistic unfolding of potential brought upon by migration, raising hopes for creating mutual long-term benefits.
- **Enhance educational mobility for global youth:** Mobility programmes, on the other hand, are a highly proactive approach towards enhancing human capital, selecting individuals with high levels and specificity of education and fostering them, offering programmes tailored to specific areas of research and skills, which are likely to be of high significance for contributing towards the development of their countries of origin.
- **Capacity building for ensuring democratic societies:** Capacities that are built when providing opportunities of education and employment to migrants in host countries or countries of origin, but also when creating mobility programmes, do not only consist of technical skills and expertise, but also transmit concrete ideas of how development and democratisation can be furthered.
- **Target women as multipliers of integration and education measures:** This is crucial now, facing the years following the Arab Spring, when also women's role in international cooperation and the promotion of values of peace and democracy was strengthened. Female migrants, operating in comprehensive networks and tasked with parenting, are important mediators for peace and development between the home and the host community.

SUMMARY

This paper is dedicated to the interrelated processes of education and migration, assessing the prospects of investment in and improvement of education. The shortcomings of global education in terms of equal access to and quality of education are examined, analysing the UNESCO's 2017 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) and the OECD's Education at a Glance: Indicators 2017. A second spotlight linked to selective migration provides insight into the analysis of knowledge, competencies and skills of migrants, especially post-2015 refugees in Austria. The third part, examining student mobility and selective international education, is combined with a case study of mobility programmes between Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), being the origin of a significant share of migrants leaving their home countries in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Regional approaches as a response to the revolution are to serve as an example for local change and empowerment through education.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

LAURA WURM is a Master's student of Management at Vienna Business University and a Master's graduate of Translation and Interpretation at University of Vienna, holding a Bachelor's degree of Vienna University of Applied Arts. The author is currently working as a translator, cultivating a vested interest in international relations and current developments in the Middle East and North Africa.

JUDITH KOHLENBERGER is a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute for Social Policy of the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU), where she heads the research project "Refugee Health and Integration Survey (ReHIS)". Since fall 2015, she has been contributing to the interdisciplinary study "Displaced Persons in Austria Survey (DiPAS)", which investigates the human capital, values and attitudes of refugees in Austria. She is also affiliated with the Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital (IIASA, VID / ÖAW, WU) and teaches in the European Studies Program of the University of Vienna in Strobl / Wolfgangsee. Her research interests include forced migration, gender and education, integration research, and the demography of displaced populations.

