

Migration and Organizations

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Theme and Objectives

Migration is one of the defining issues of our time. Many economic, social, and political issues can be traced to differing opinions about the benefits and costs of immigration. Yet this is not just a recent or passing topic. The causes and consequences of migration have been long debated in academic and public circles (see National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017 for a review). Despite the importance of the phenomenon, organizational scholars have rarely incorporated migration as a focus of study. The topic has been studied mainly in other disciplines, focusing on issues seemingly far removed from organizations and more germane to policy—such as the effects of immigration on labor markets, aggregate demand, or global trade.

Despite such a lack of research attention, migration is highly relevant to organizational scholarship. Organizations are one of the primary settings in which migrants interact with the economy and society; therefore, they impact and are impacted by migrants in many ways. At the individual level, immigrant workers bring unique and varied levels of human capital—fostering knowledge diffusion, divergent thinking, creativity, and innovation within and across organizations. The interactions of immigrants with others inside their organizations are critical to the functioning and performance of teams and other intraorganizational units. Immigrants affect a wide range of phenomena at the organizational level by either working for established organizations or starting their own organizations through entrepreneurship. Firms are the main entities that use the human, intellectual, and financial resources provided by immigrants; and firms also take the lead in meeting the demand novel for products and services resulting from demographic changes induced by migration. Further, organizations strategically determine whether and where to make investments to benefit from the resources and markets created by immigrant communities. Therefore, migrants shape the functioning and outcomes of the organizations they inhabit, and organizations influence the flows and experiences of migrants in meaningful ways. These issues are relevant to multiple theories of longstanding interest to organizational scholars, including those pertaining to individual motivation and effectiveness, teams, knowledge and innovation, social networks, organizational design, competitive advantage, institutions, and more.

Indeed, a growing body of research has begun providing evidence that migration plays an important role in explaining organizational phenomena (e.g. Foley and Kerr, 2013; Hernandez, 2014; Wang, 2015; Kulchina, 2016; Choudhury and Kim, 2019). Published in leading management journals, this work suggests an increasing awareness of the impact of migration on firms. However, this literature is young and many important questions remain unanswered.

This special issue of *Organization Science* seeks to bring the study of migration to the core of organizational research, resulting in a distinctive stream of inquiry linking human mobility across borders the internal workings of organizations, their strategic choices, and the performance consequences of those workings and choices. While migration involves the movement of people across borders, its antecedents and consequences may be domestic or international. Hence the topic is relevant to organizations regardless of their geographic scope.

Special Issue Scope and Sample Topics

The following set of questions, though not exhaustive, illustrates the breadth of potential topics appropriate for this special issue:

Migration, Mobility, and Human Capital in Organizations:

- How does the mobility of migrants, both low- and high-skill, across countries and firms affect the development of organizational capabilities?
- How does migration affect the diffusion of resources within and across firms?
- What role do organizations and their strategies play in the migration choices of individuals and in the formation of migrant communities?
- In what ways do migrants interact with natives and assimilate within organizational contexts?
- What does the recent increase in the acceptance of remote work by organizations mean for firms hiring migrants and where migrants might be located?
- How does ethnic matching between immigrant workers, nonimmigrant co-workers, and managers affect organizational processes and outcomes?

Migrant Workers in Organizations:

- How do migrants, through interactions with other migrants and non-migrants, alter the internal structures and practices that characterize organizations?
- How do organizations enable migrant workers to experience a sense of inclusion and belonging within organizations?
- What organizational factors are associated with integration and adjustment of migrant workers?
- How do the intercultural experiences and identities of migrant workers foster divergent thinking and creativity in organizations?
- How do teams and organizations manage differences and conflict between migrant and non-immigrant workers and leaders in organizations?
- What do non-migrant workers learn from the presence and experiences of migrant workers?
- What role does immigration play in fostering diversity within organizations?

Migration, Markets, and Entrepreneurship:

- What role do immigrants play in the creation of new markets as their tastes and preferences mix with those of natives, and how do new and/or incumbent organizations capitalize on the creation of such new markets?
- What role do migrants play in new venture creation?
- How do ventures founded by migrants differ from those founded by natives?
- How do immigrant entrepreneurs overcome the liabilities of foreignness when starting ventures in the receiving location?
- When do immigrant entrepreneurs gain advantages by straddling the home and host locations or more broadly through transnational entrepreneurship?

Migration, Knowledge, and Innovation:

- How does the mobility of high-skilled migrants affect knowledge diffusion and innovation by organizations in the sending or the receiving location?
- What role do migrants play in the recombination of knowledge across geographies, and how does that role differ compared to native high-skill workers?
- What kinds of innovations result when migrants and natives work together and recombine knowledge within or across firms?
- How does the structure of immigrant networks—local or transnational—affect knowledge diffusion and innovation within and across organizations?

Migration, Location Choice, and Capital Investment:

- How do immigrant communities affect the investments made by different types of organizations, such as foreign direct investment, venture capital, private equity, etc.?

- What mechanisms drive the co-location of organizations and immigrants of the same nationality or ethnicity in foreign markets?
- What is the role of migrant remittances in fostering investment, innovation, or entrepreneurship by organizations located in the home country of the migrant?
- How does the foreign expansion of firms from specific source countries affect the migration of individuals from the same source country?

Instructions for Authors

We encourage submissions that cover these questions or any others that intersect migration and organizations. In keeping with *Organization Science*'s focus and audience, papers need to engage with the debates of interest to organizational scholars by building on or making a contribution to organizational theory. This issue is NOT appropriate for papers focused only on policy or other "macro" topics in which the role of the organization or firm is not apparent. It is also not appropriate for papers focused only on individual-level processes, experiences, or outcomes divorced from organizational factors.

Authors should submit papers to the special issue by **December 31, 2021**. Submissions will begin to be accepted on October 1, 2021 via <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/orgsci>.

Please contact the guest editors with any questions at migration.organizations@gmail.com.