

International Migration of China

Lu Miao · Huiyao Wang

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Status, Policy and Social Responses
to the Globalization of Migration

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International Migration of China: Status, Policy and Social Responses to the Globalization of Migration is a new book on the latest development of international migration in China, especially on Chinese global talent migration. Based on extensive research and analyses, the authors have presented the latest trend and development on international migration in China. It will be a book for the quick and well understanding on the opportunities and challenges for the international migration situation in China and the government's latest policy analysis in this respect. The authors want to express the support given by Beijing Dongyu Global Talent Research Foundation for the research grant given to make this research project possible.

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Introduction

Definition and Classification

Drawing upon the International Organization for Migration (IOM), relevant experts and scholars on international migration, and our research on international migration, this book takes the position that international migration refers to the permanent departure from one’s home country or residing country to move to another country (Table 1).

Table 1 Classification of international migrants

Classification	Definition	Details
Investment immigrants	To invest a certain amount of money in the destination country or create businesses that provide locals with a certain number of job and investment opportunities, thus securing permission to immigrate to the destination country	Investment immigration generally includes five categories: financial, real estate, entrepreneurship, senior managerial, and business ownership immigration. In terms of operations, investment immigration is divided into three categories, short-term business visas, temporary investment immigration, and permanent immigration
Foreign Students	To apply as an international student for academic pursuits after being accepted by the appropriate teaching institution or organization in the destination country	Generally divided into two categories: foreign students who get admitted into foreign secondary or post-secondary educational institutions to pursue further study; second is visiting scholars or trainees who go to other countries to acquire new skills or obtain training in schools or work environments

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Classification	Definition	Details
Skilled immigrants	To leave one’s home country or previous country of residency and travel across national borders, using their personal skills as the main tool for legitimately migrating to another country	Skilled migration includes highly skilled migrants. These migrants move because they can obtain better development opportunities in the migration country versus their original country of residency. In addition, they can enjoy certain preferential treatment within specified time limits, change employers, and be reunited with family members already living abroad
Labor immigrants	To provide transnational production and service labor of all kinds and obtain a share of the proceeds generated by such labor	Compared with skilled migration, international labor refers to people with lower educational and skill levels who generally only engage in low-tech and low-end work and have short-term residence permits
Illegal immigrants	To enter, illegally reside or illegally work in a country without permission, acting outside of the law	Includes illegal residents and workers

Source Li (2009)

Causes of International Migration

First of all, income gaps have long been viewed as a primary cause of international migration (Rodriguez 1998). The development of the global economy and production systems widened the economic disparities between developed countries and developing countries, creating income gaps between them. In this view, people migrate to increase their economic well-being (Palát 2001).

The recent development of advanced economies has been marked by the emergence of a dual labor market. It consists of a higher end and better paid labor market utilized by capital-intensive, highly efficient, and skill-intensive industries. This also includes a labor market for less skilled workers employed in tertiary industries and service activities such as cooking, cleaning, and the like. Since local residents are reluctant to take up work in the latter labor market, it must be filled by labor migrants. Immigration has become a structural necessity for the social and economic advancement of developing countries.

Second, one of the basic characteristics of human history is the uneven social and cultural development of different countries. One key aspect of this process is the effort of people across borders to learn about each other’s cultures. In today’s world, culture has become a strategic resource and an important asset in human societal development. Thus, countries with flourishing traditional or dominant cultures are able to spread their culture worldwide. Cultural appeal is an important

cause of immigration (UNDP and UNESCO 2002). Western foreign students in China are a case in point: nearly 10% of them come to the country to study because they are obsessed with the mysterious Eastern culture (Wen 2007). Also, with the globalization of Western popular culture, Chinese students tend to study in Western countries to be familiar with the Western culture as a global citizen.

Third, many less developed countries are latecomers to or have not even begun the process of democratization. The rule of law is weak and corruption flourishes, while the overall political environment is very harsh (Lim 2009). In general, people naturally try to protect themselves and their families from economic downturns and market instability. They also typically try to be well removed from political crises and other risks. When the government is unable to maintain order, people will choose to leave such environments out of concern for their personal safety and migrate to more secure countries as refugees. For example, in Africa, the Middle East, and central Asia, war and conflict have resulted in a large number of migrants escaping such trouble spots as refugees.

Fourth, the unbalanced development of the world's population and the aging population of developed countries are exacerbating the contradiction between the supply and demand for labor around the world. According to the current population growth rate, by 2050, the share of the global population living in less developed countries will continue rising, reaching 86.5%, while the share held by developed countries will fall to 13.5% (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007). This ongoing shift in global demography and consequences for the supply and demand for labor in advanced and developing countries gives rise to migration from the latter to the former countries. According to the International Labor Organization data, in 2005, the developed countries had already begun graying with respect to their age profile in the 1980s (Li 2011). Especially in developed countries like Japan and those in Western Europe, the aging population and negative population growth is starting to create labor shortages and is causing increased demand for labor migrants in such economies.

Fifth, the recent past has seen the emergence of significant differences among countries with respect to ecological problems such as desertification, deforestation, soil erosion, and the like. As environmental problems mount in certain parts of the world, it becomes more difficult for local populations to survive, creating pressure for migration. Deterioration in the environment and natural disasters now ranks as an increasingly important cause of human international migration (UNDP and UNESCO 2002).

Globalization of Migration

According to the United Nations international global migration statistics, by 2015, there were 244 million international migrants worldwide, accounting for 3.4% of the world's population. Among them, 142 million were living in developed

countries, accounting for 58% of all international migrants, while 102 million were living in the developing countries, accounting for 42% of the global total. Of the 183 million international immigrants, 75% are working-age immigrants aged from 20 to 64. In 2015, 90 million people born in developing countries migrated to other developing countries, while 85 million people born in developing countries migrated to developed countries. From the point of net immigrant population growth from 1990 to 2015, the U.S. underwent the largest net increase in immigrants, with about 23 million people in total, or a net gain of 0.9 million people per year on average. Coming in second was the United Arab Emirates, with a net immigrant population of 7 million people, while Germany placed third, with a net immigrant population of 6 million, Saudi Arabia and Spain both placed sixth with 5 million immigrant populations each (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2016).

The 2008 global economic crisis had a profound impact on migration flows. Between 1990 and 2015, the number of international migrants worldwide rose by over 91 million, or 60%. Much of this growth occurred between 2000 and 2010, when some 4.9 million migrants were added annually, compared to an average of 2 million from 1990 to 2000 and 4.4 million from 2010 to 2015. In Europe, the countries that were the hardest hit by the economic crisis, such as Greece and Spain, suffered from massive emigration. Conversely, countries doing much better economically such as Germany or Britain, attracted more and more immigrants. In 2015, Europe became the most popular destination for the world's immigrants. Meanwhile, Asia's international immigrants increased by 25.8 million people from 2000 to 2015, mainly due to a massive increase in demand for foreign workers from the emerging economies in West Asia and Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, etc. By 2015, overseas immigrants in Europe and Asia accounted for two-thirds of the world's total immigrants, there were 76.1 million international immigrants living in Europe and 75.1 million living in Asia. Moreover, Asians have become the largest group of international migrants, with a total of 40 million of them living on other continents. Among them, 20.2 million live in Europe, 15.5 million in North America, and 3.0 million in Oceania. Those that were born in the corridor from Latin America and the Caribbean areas constitute the third largest group of international migrants in 2015, with most of them living in North America, which accounts for 25 million people (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2016).

Immigration Bonus

In the case of high immigration countries, migrants have made significant contributions to their economies. They bring their professional skills, capital, and human resources along with them, which helps to promote economic and social development in their destination countries. In November 2013, the U.S. Migration Policy

Institute held its annual meeting in London, with the theme “Cities and Regions: The Harvest of Local Immigrant Dividends”. The meeting opened up global discussion regarding “immigration bonuses” suggesting that the role of foreign immigrants in local areas of science and technology, economy, and society are gaining more and more attention.

In recent years, immigration to the U.S., the U.K., and other immigrant nations have brought forth increasingly prominent economic contributions. Seventy-two immigrant scientists won Nobel Prizes for the U.S. between 1960 and 2013, making up roughly a quarter of the total number of American Nobel Prize winners. In terms of entrepreneurship, immigrants have created a quarter of the high-tech companies in the U.S. (White House Immigration Blueprint 2011). Likewise, immigrants from 155 countries have set up companies in Britain and the number of immigrant entrepreneurs in the country amounts to nearly 500,000. London alone boasts 190,000 immigrant entrepreneurs, much more than the amount in Birmingham (19,000) or Belfast (17,000). Because London contains the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs, it has benefited the most from them. The number of firms set up by immigrants in London amounts to 188,000, about 20 times that of Birmingham (China News Service 2014). According to statistics from the Singaporean Ministry of Trade and Industry, during the decade of the 1990s, the contributions made by foreign nationals to the Singapore GDP growth was 41%, and among them, 37% come from the professional and technical white-collar class (Wang 2009).

Meanwhile, foreign students comprise a large proportion of “future immigrants” and they also bring significant “bonuses” to the receiving country’s economy, contributing significantly to their development and growth. According to the latest research of the Institute of International Education, in 2015, international students along with their families contributed USD \$30.8 billion to the U.S. economy—a 41.3% increase from about USD \$21.8 billion in 2012—which directly or indirectly created 370,000 new jobs and thus boosted overall employment in the U.S. by 14% (IIE 2015). Education also generated substantial economic benefits for Britain. According to a report by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), in 2012, the British overseas education industry generated £14.1 billion for the British economy and that income is expected to reach GBP £21.5 billion in 2020 and GBP £26.6 billion in 2025 (BIS 2011). In Australia, education had become the largest service trade industry in the world. The Australian Bureau of Statistics showed that international education activity arising from international students studying and living in Australia contributed AD \$18.2 billion to the economy in 2014–2015. Especially in 2010, the Australian education service trade income was AD \$16.3 billion, exceeding the value of the exports of the country’s long-standing trade stalwart, the wool industry (Department of Education and Training 2015).

New Immigration Trends

The report *Policies to Support Immigrant Entrepreneurship* issued by U.S. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) shows that compared with local natives, new immigrants tend not only to be more entrepreneurial, but they also quickly acquire and develop skills in this area, although new immigrants normally face more obstacles in becoming entrepreneurs than the native-born population (MPI 2014). The report pointed out that policymakers in many countries around the world now increasingly recognize that supporting immigrant entrepreneurs can bring higher returns to the economy. At the same time, countries that favor “entrepreneurial immigrants” have introduced measures to encourage the foreign population in their countries to create business start-ups.

In April 2013, the Canadian Immigration joined together with venture capital firms to issue the business Visa (Start-Up Visa) program to encourage people to invest in Canada and set up new businesses. In 2014, the Canadian government canceled the investment immigration policy, with the aim of attracting more “entrepreneurial immigrants”. At the same time, through an analysis of Canadian immigration policies, by attracting skilled migrants and investment immigration to business immigration, we can see that the government is paying more and more attention to the economic vitality and job opportunities that business migrants bring forth.

In November 2013, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services launched the Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR) plan and set up a special website, to provide a one-stop service for business immigrants (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2013). This website aims to familiarize immigrants with immigration applications and procedures as well as helping them understand obstacles of entrepreneurship and its guiding principles. According to survey data from 2006 to 2013, the sales volume of science and technological companies founded by foreign immigrant entrepreneurs reached USD \$63 billion in the U.S., while employing 560,000 people (People’s Daily 2013).

In Japan, the government is also setting up new windows for the “national strategic district” which is aimed at helping immigrant entrepreneurs settle various kinds of formalities and solve all related problems to facilitate business immigration. At the same time, the Japanese government also cut the time for immigration clearance from 2–3 weeks to 1 week, while providing specialized services in English to help the entrepreneurs from around the world set up businesses in Japan and reduce communication barriers. The government also plans to set up an “Innovation Promotion One-stop Service Center” in Tokyo circle, circle of Kansai, and Fukuoka city to create all sorts of convenient conditions for the immigrant entrepreneurs (Kingston 2013).

Immigrants Integration

The percentage of immigrants in most developed countries now is over 10% (Table 2). The role of immigrants in the host countries is increasingly valued, thus integration problems “after the age of immigration” have become the focus problem of countries with a large percentage of immigrants, such as the U.S., Singapore, France, and Germany.

Ever since Germany introduced foreign workers in the 1950s, for instance, the integration of immigrants has been an ongoing problem for German society. During the 1970s–1980s, the German government was not fully aware of the integration problem. At that time, it mistakenly believed that the immigrants would eventually return to their country of origin years later. Thus, the German governmental authorities did not consider allowing children of immigrants and local residents to learn and live together. This inaction with respect to integrating immigrants has led to many problems. According to a report issued by the Berlin Institute for Population and Development, the unemployment rate of the Turkish immigrants and people with a Turkish background is 16% (the youth unemployment rate is 19%). These individuals also have the lowest integration rate in Germany. The first generation of Turkish immigrants has low levels of education, which leads to lower economic status. The educational levels attained by immigrant children are also poor. Most Turkish people believe that life in Germany is good, but also feel that they are not recognized by society (People’s Daily 2014). Therefore, the government must face up to the problem of how to maintain social justice to avoid social differentiation.

Table 2 Amount and proportion of immigrants in the main countries and regions in 2015

Countries or regions	Amount of immigrants	Proportion	Countries or regions	Amount of immigrants	Proportion
The U.S.	4662.71	14	India	524.10	0
Germany	1200.57	15	Hong Kong	283.87	39
Russia	1164.33	8	Singapore	254.36	45
The U.K.	854.31	13	Switzerland	243.87	29
Canada	783.55	22	Japan	204.39	2
France	778.44	12	South Korea	132.73	3
Australia	676.37	28	New Zealand	103.97	23
Spain	585.30	13	China	97.80	0
Italy	578.89	10	Brazil	71.36	0

Unit: 10 thousand people, %

Source *International Migration Report 2015*, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016)

In April 2009, Singapore established the National Integration Council to promote social integration among Singaporeans, new immigrants, and foreigners. Singapore's approach to integration does not demand that new immigrants abandon their own beliefs and culture. Rather, they expect the new immigrants to share commonalities, values, and experiences with fellow Singaporeans so that they can all work together to achieve their aspirations and build the best home for themselves and their children (National Integration Council 2010).

In February 2014, France government set up "the inter-ministerial representative" position to be responsible for the execution of the coordination measures among the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment, and other departments (Xinhua News 2014). In July 2016, the Prime Minister Didier Leschi of the Office France of Immigration and Integration (OFII) proposed the new "Contract of Integration Republic (CIR)" instead of the too standardized "Contract of Reception and Integration (CAI)", which were both intended to help the lawful immigrants learn French and prevent discrimination against them by employers (China.com.cn 2016).

In 2014, some universities in the U.S. introduced Chinese students to the "Immigration Bridge Program", in order to help Chinese students to quickly integrate into American society and acquire employment after graduation. For example, Indiana University's Kelley School of Business joined together with businesses and law firms to help students solve the problem of getting H1-B visas (Indiana University's Kelley School of Business 2017). Michigan State University (MSU) sent their school chefs to China to study Chinese food preparation so that authentic Chinese dishes could be served in university cafeterias (MSU 2017), while the University of Michigan (UMich) even launched its own Chinese website (UMich 2017).

In Berlin, Germany, residents with a migration background make up more than 28.4% of the total population. Since 2006, the share of people in Berlin from a migrant background accepting vocational training in the field of public service, increased from 8.7 to 18.8%. The proportion in the public sector increased from 13.3% in 2010 to 22.6% in 2013. Among the Berlin state recruited professional trainees, the proportion is 25.4% (Chinese Social Sciences Net 2014). In December 2010, the Berlin State Government introduced the integration law, the first measure of its kind in Germany to promote the integration of the federal state and provide a legal basis for immigrants to participate in social affairs (People's Daily 2014). The German government's measures will help foreign immigrants to integrate into the local environment and realize their self-worth. To a certain extent, these measures also helped ease the pressure from the shortage of the local labor market.

International Migration of China

In the last 30 years, the volume, complexity, and the types of migrants have changed considerably in China. Currently, the so-called “third wave of migration” after the implementation of “Reform and Opening Up” policies, has been accelerating. The proportion of Chinese with high net worth who have already emigrated to foreign countries, are applying to do so, or are considering such a move now stands at 64% (Hurun Research Institute 2015). Thus, emigration has become an important issue in Chinese society today.

Meanwhile, as the Chinese economy and society continue developing, increasing numbers of foreigners are being attracted to the country. Currently there are three main groups of foreigners in China: international students, tourists, and foreign skilled workers. The development of these groups are closely related to the rapid economic and social development in China. The possible influence from foreign migrants in supporting development in China domestically and internationally should also be recognized. However, compared with the percentage of similar groups within many other countries, the percentages of international students, tourists, and foreign skilled migrants in China are much lower. In order to further benefit from the positive influence of international migration in China, immigration policies require further reform.

In addition to attracting regular immigrants, the rising economy in China is also attracting large numbers of irregular immigrants into the country. Further, there is evidence from official sources which suggest irregular immigrants are contributing to increased criminal activity in China. Therefore, while it is important to promote regular international immigration to China, policies for tackling irregular immigration to the country also require further regulatory support.

In sum, Chinese international migration forms an integral part of global migration flows, and international competition for talent (Wang 2010). In order to have a detailed understanding of the situation of Chinese migrants, we must first grasp global migration as a whole. This book will explore the new changes and trends of Chinese international migration, within the larger context of worldwide migration and globalization.

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