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*Migration, displacement and education:
Building bridges, not walls*

INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION: SHIFTING MOBILITIES, POLICY CHALLENGES, AND NEW INITIATIVES

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ABSTRACT

Cross-border mobility in higher education, while still referring to a minority of people, is a large phenomenon that is increasingly taking new forms, extending from students and faculty member mobility to the movement of educational programs and institutions, including the spread of online courses facilitated by improvements in technology. It is also a phenomenon with major implications in facilitating the flow and exchange of ideas and knowledge, improving practices, generating resources for receiving countries, and attracting talent. For that reason, the internationalization of higher education puts pressure on countries to develop a strategy that would maximize the education, political and economic benefits while minimizing the costs.

Based on an in-depth review of research and existing data, this paper examines key issues in the internationalization of higher education, assesses broad consequences, and discusses a selection of the latest trends. The paper also provides an overview of the key policy challenges and options facing governments in low, middle and high income countries as they seek to internationalize their higher education sectors while also sending their top talent overseas to acquire a global education.¹

1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

This paper provides a comprehensive overview of cross-border mobility in higher education around the globe, including the key policy challenges and options facing countries. Examining emerging trends and the consequences of the internationalization of higher education, this paper focuses on three key areas of mobility: students; faculty; and courses, programs, and institutions.

It is important to first define the primary terms and areas with which this paper is concerned. We consider the term *internationalization* to include the “policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions—and even individuals—to cope with the global academic environment” (Altbach & Knight, 2007: 290). In other words, internationalization encompasses not just the movement of people but also the mobility of courses, programs, and institutions. Within this definition, recognition is given to how internationalization occurs both *at home* and *abroad*. At home, an internationalized curriculum and academic environment can promote student learning outcomes by including “international and intercultural

¹ This paper draws in part on Farrugia, C., & Bhandari, R. (2018). Global Trends in Student Mobility. In P. Nuno Teixeira & J. Shin (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Systems and Institutions*. New York, NY: Springer.

knowledge, skills, and values” (Knight, 2012: 20). While we refer generally to movement that occurs by choice as opposed to that which occurs by force, this paper touches too on the case of refugees displaced by protracted conflict, civil unrest, and natural disasters.

Following *Project Atlas’* definition, *mobile students* are individuals who undertake all or part of their higher education experience in a country other than their home country or who travel across a national boundary to a country other than their home country to undertake all or part of their higher education experience. This paper looks beyond the traditional definition of mobile faculty, which is often limited to Assistant and Associate Professors in tenured or tenure track positions in visiting positions abroad. Encompassing the growing population of teaching and research staff engaged in academic activities outside of their country and/or institution of residence, whose work contributes to institutional- and policy-level strategies of internationalization, this paper takes a broad view of *mobile faculty*. This population includes (but is not limited to) permanent and visiting international lecturers/professors/academics, visiting researchers, post-doctoral scholars, short-term scholars and visiting specialists.

Turning to the *mobility of courses, programs, and institutions*, the term transnational education (TNE) refers to the provision of education by an institution based in one country to students located in another country (Knight & McNamara, 2017). It encompasses a wide and growing range of mobile learning modalities and includes, but is not limited to, offshore; cross-border; online and virtual learning; blended course and delivery modes; and flying in faculty for short courses. These key areas also reflect an evolving definition of the internationalization of higher education which has moved beyond an exclusive focus on geographic mobility and migration of students, to broader forms of internationalization captured in the three areas above.

The first part of this paper focuses on the current landscape of student mobility, including key destinations, and sending countries. The second part examines faculty mobility and considers the drivers and impacts of faculty mobility at the individual and institutional levels. Next, the various forms of institutional and learning mobilities, many of which are supported by advances in technology, are discussed. There follows a review of emerging trends that have marked the international higher education landscape in recent years, and an overview of the consequences of mobility in all its forms. The paper then sets out key policy challenges and options faced by low, middle and high income countries. The paper concludes with a consideration of evolving trends and complications, as well as the prospects for academic mobility.

2. MOBILITY OF STUDENTS

MAJOR HOST COUNTRIES OF MOBILE STUDENTS AND SHIFTING MOBILITIES

English-speaking countries are among the largest hosts of international students, with the United States enrolling about one-quarter of all the world's international students, almost double the number of international students enrolled in the U.K., which is the next largest host of international students ([Project Atlas, 2017](#)). Taken together, 50 percent of the world's international students enroll in five English-speaking countries (United States, U.K., Australia, Canada, and New Zealand) ([Project Atlas, 2017](#)). Non-English speaking countries such as France and Germany are also large hosts of international students, accounting for 8 and 6 percent respectively, of all globally mobile students. Their numbers have grown in recent years, due in part to the increasing availability of English-taught master's programs throughout Europe (Brenn-White & van Rest, 2012).

While Western countries have long attracted many international students, other countries have also entered the market for students more recently, such as China and Russia, which enrolled 10 percent and 6 percent, respectively, of the world's international students in 2017 ([Project Atlas, 2017](#)). These new entrants into global student mobility reflect an expansion beyond traditional Western host nations that attract students from all over the world to include countries that draw largely from regional bases. In the case of China, six out of the top ten places of origin of international students are in Asia and for Russia, seven of the top ten places of origin are post-Soviet nations ([Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016](#)). Such regional mobility patterns are partly a function of geographic proximity and historical and cultural ties, as well as concerted efforts at the national or regional level to strengthen connections via student mobility.

ORIGINS OF GLOBALLY MOBILE STUDENTS: MAJOR SENDING COUNTRIES

In recent history, much of the mobility of international students has been a function of South to North mobility, with Asian students studying in the West making up large segments of globally mobile students. Worldwide, three of the five largest senders of students for overseas study in 2016 were in Asia, namely China, India, and South Korea; these three countries together account for 25 percent of all outbound students ([UNESCO, 2018](#)). While many Asian students travel to Western countries, a growing number are electing to stay within the region. Of the 1.3 million international students in the East Asia-Pacific region in 2016, students from within the region accounted for 36 percent ([UNESCO, 2018](#)). The high level of international mobility is largely attributed to Australia, China, and Japan which each hosted sizable shares of international students from within the region. Some places in Asia are reliant almost entirely on other countries in the region for their international student bodies, including Hong Kong (91 percent), Japan (87 percent), and South Korea (75 percent) ([Project Atlas, 2017](#); [UNESCO, 2018](#)).

Europe is the second largest sending region of international students, accounting for 23 percent of the world's globally mobile students in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018). However, many mobile European students stay within the region. Among the more than 878,000 European students who study outside their home country, about 76 percent (64,000 students) remain within Europe (Eurostat, 2016; UNESCO, 2017), with the top five senders – Germany, Turkey, France, Italy, and Poland – accounting for almost half (48 percent) of this intraregional mobility (Eurostat, 2016). This high level of intraregional mobility accounts for 35 percent of all international students in the region (Eurostat, 2016; UNESCO, 2017).

Looking beyond the common South to North mobility patterns and increasing regionalization of student flows, other unique patterns exist, such as African students in China, whose numbers have increased in recent years due to growing economic ties between Africa and China. In 2000, the bilateral Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was established to advance Sino-African collaboration in several areas, including education. The Forum's educational initiatives include Chinese scholarships for African students and professionals to study or train in China, as well as Chinese investment in African schools, development of institutional partnerships between higher education institutions in Africa and China, and investment in Africa's research capacity (Obamba, 2013). As a result of these initiatives, China has awarded an estimated 12,000 scholarships to students from Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, many more African students (an estimated 18,000) study in China using their own funds (Allison, 2013; King, 2014). Other unique mobility patterns include sizable numbers of African students in France as well as Latin America students in Spain, both due to factors such as shared languages and historical ties.

DRIVERS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FLOWS

Many factors at the individual, institutional, national, and global levels drive patterns of international student mobility. This section discusses the current key drivers of academic mobility, but with the understanding that many of these factors act in conjunction to propel students to seek an education abroad.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Desire to develop employability skills in an international context

The opportunity to gain practical work experience is growing in importance as a driver of student mobility around the globe – both for international students who pursue a full degree in another country, as well as for shorter term exchange students. Globally, policies governing students' ability to work have impacted

international student numbers in top destination countries such as Canada, Germany, New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S. In the United States, 14 percent of the more than 1 million international students in 2016/17 engaged in Optional Practical Training (OPT) which is a period of work available for international students who have graduated from a U.S. College or university. While recent extensions of the length of OPT from 12 months to a total of 36 months for graduates in STEM fields accounts for some of the recent surge in OPT participation, students' willingness to stay on for work in growing numbers and for longer periods indicates how important this aspect of international education is for many students. Many students value the ability to gain practical work experience that will help them secure jobs back home or in their host country, while others may be driven by economic conditions in their home countries that push them to take advantage of study-related work opportunities in the host country. Yet other students value such work-study opportunities as they provide a stepping stone to skilled migration in their host country.

Work opportunities in the U.S. are more influential drivers of mobility for students from certain countries than from others. Many students from Asia pursue OPT in relatively high numbers including those from India, Nepal, Taiwan, and China. Indian students are especially motivated by the opportunity to work in the host country following graduation. In the United States, Indian students are the leading participants in OPT, with 31 percent engaged in OPT in 2016/17.

The expansion of such opportunities has a clear correlation with student mobility, as evidenced by recent trends in the U.K. where the number of Indian students has dipped in recent years as a result of policy changes that limit post-study work visas following graduation. Following the implementation of the U.K. policy, Indian students fell by nearly 50 percent from 2011 to 2014, while their numbers increased by 70 percent in Australia, and 37 percent in the United States in the same period ([Project Atlas, 2016](#)).

While U.S. students are also engaging in work-related education abroad in increasing numbers, their motivations for doing so are different from those of international students who pursue OPT in the U.S. In 2014/15, more than 46,000 U.S. students engaged in a work, volunteer, or internship experience overseas, including those who received academic credit for their work abroad and those who pursued non-credit opportunities ([Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016](#)). These types of international activities provide the opportunity to gain hands-on experience outside of the classroom and to develop international work skills that can be attractive assets on the job market down the line. Globalization of the workforce and careers creates incentives for students to pursue all or part of their higher education abroad in order to gain global competencies that employers seek ([Farrugia & Sanger, 2017](#)).

Quality and capacity

At the individual level, students and their families make decisions about where to pursue higher education based on a number of factors. The quality of higher education institutions and their capacity to enroll students drives individuals' university selection processes in many cases. Many large sending countries of international students have a limited capacity to enroll higher education students domestically. While China and India have devoted resources in recent years to develop their higher education capacity, the availability of seats is still not sufficient to meet demand (FICCI Higher Education Committee, 2013; Xiaoying & Abbott, 2008).

In some cases, students decide to earn a degree in another country because there are not enough seats available in the best universities at home; rather than enroll in a less prestigious institution in their home country, they pursue an education overseas in a country where there is more capacity in high-quality institutions. For example, in China students must score highly on the competitive *gaokao* exam in order to gain admission to the country's best universities. Those who are not optimistic about faring well in the domestic exam have been reported to enroll in international tracks in secondary school to prepare them for foreign university study. In 2016, there were nearly 169,000 Chinese students enrolled in international curriculum secondary schools within China ([IEduChina, 2016](#)). Yet others elect to enroll in secondary school abroad, also with the goal of preparing to enroll in foreign universities. In 2015, there were more than 43,000 diploma-seeking Chinese students enrolled in U.S. high schools and students from China likewise have a large presence in secondary schools in Australia, Canada, and the U.K. (Farrugia, 2017).

Indeed, quality is an important consideration for many international students in the selection of study destinations. A survey of nearly 16,000 international students in 19 countries found that the quality and diversity of higher education institutions and programs are chief attractions for students considering study in the United States, with over three quarters of respondents rating the country highly in these dimensions (Obst & Forster, 2015). Institutional rankings have also been noted as a powerful influence on students' decision-making, with many students seeking admission to institutions that appear on global or national ranking lists and even some national government scholarship programs, such as KASP defining institutions' eligibility to participate by their global rankings (Hazelkorn, 2015; ICEF, 2016; Redden, 2016; Walcutt, 2016). For some students, the availability of liberal arts curricula, which is not common in many sending countries, provides an approach to education and program flexibility not found in students' higher education institutions at home.

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Institutional drivers of mobility encompass both the efforts of individual institutions to attract the best and brightest from around the globe, but also the extent to which countries' higher education sectors and institutions have the capacity to offer quality higher education.

Higher education institutions in traditional destinations in the North, as well as emerging destination countries in the South, have adopted international student recruitment strategies for two broad reasons. The first is the desire to internationalize and to diversify their student body, which in turn results in a more global campus that provides cultural and linguistic exposure to all students on campus. More recently, the concept of comprehensive internationalization has also become intertwined with global rankings and the notion that to be "world-class" and globally competitive, institutions also need to have a student body and faculty drawn from all over the world. This has led to the aggressive adoption of an international recruitment agenda by some institutions regardless of whether or not it aligns with broader institutional goals.

Yet another incentive for institutions to recruit international students is the economic benefit that such students provide to their institutions and the national economy of the host country. In the United States, for instance, international students brought an estimated \$39.4 billion dollars into the economy in 2016, largely through living expenses and tuition payments, which flow to the institutions. Full-fee paying international students also help offset the high costs of a college education for domestic students (Shih, 2017). In fact, U.S. higher education is one of the country's top export industries. Other countries also see a large economic benefit, including Australia (\$24.7 billion U.S.), Canada (\$15.5 billion U.S.), and the UK (\$31.9 billion U.S.) (Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Maslen, 2018; Universities UK, 2017).

NATIONAL AND POLICY-LEVEL DRIVERS

Policies to increase student mobility take a variety of forms, from those of sending countries that provide financial sponsorship for their students to go abroad, to host countries that set numeric targets to increase the number of international students in their countries, to bilateral initiatives that aim to build closer ties between nations (British Council & DAAD, 2014; Teichler, Ferencz, & Wachter, 2011). Government involvement in student exchange has a range of motivators, including serving as a form of cultural diplomacy ("soft power"), developing a country's human capital and capacity to innovate, and providing development aid.

One long-running major government scholarship initiative is the U.S. government's Fulbright program, which is designed to strengthen ties between the United States and countries around the world. The program was launched in 1946, in the wake of World War II during a time when many in U.S. higher education and government were focused on the potential of international educational exchange to build cultural understanding across borders and to support U.S. public diplomacy around the world (Bettie, 2015). The Fulbright program operates through a partnership model, with 49 bilateral commissions and, in 149 countries where such commissions do not exist, through U.S. embassies in cooperation with host country governments. The program currently supports about 8,000 students, scholars, teachers, and professionals in over 160 countries each year.

Other countries that have launched large-scale national scholarship programs more recently have driven international student mobility pattern in recent years. The Saudi government launched the King Abdullah Scholarship Program (KASP) in 2005, providing full funding and living stipends to Saudi students to pursue degrees overseas. This significant investment by the government over a decade altered the profile of international students coming to the U.S., with Saudi students currently ranking among the top five international student groups in the U.S. However, due to declining crude oil prices, it was widely reported in 2016 that there would be budget cut-backs and changes to the program, such as restrictions on academic eligibility requirements, fields of study, and the number and variety of U.S. universities where students would be able to study.

Another example of a large and influential national scholarship program was the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program (BSMP) - known in Brazil as *Ciência sem Fronteiras* – which operated from 2011 to 2016 and funded thousands of undergraduate and graduate students from Brazil to study at colleges and universities in more than 40 countries. The program focused on disciplines viewed by the government as critical to the country's growth including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The program model was designed to enable students to return to Brazil to complete their degrees after one year abroad for academic study followed by a summer internship.

In some cases, government scholarship programs are viewed as a form of development aid, with scholarships from developed nations made available to students from developing countries. One example is the Intra-ACP [Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific] Academic Mobility Scheme which is implemented by the European Commission in partnership with the ACP Secretariat and funded by the European Development Fund to provide access to higher education for students from these countries. More recently, target 4.b of the

Sustainable Development Goals monitors the provision of scholarships to tertiary students from developing countries by developed countries (UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, [2016](#), [2017](#)). However, the current global estimate of the provision of such scholarships is a significant undercount since most developed countries providing such scholarships do not have in place the systems to report data on scholarship recipients (Bhandari & Mirza, 2016; Bhandari & Yaya, 2017).

3. MOBILITY OF FACULTY MEMBERS

Faculty play a key role in internationalizing higher education institutions. Internationally mobile faculty have the potential to integrate international, intercultural, and comparative perspectives into the student experience (Knight, 2012). Those who engage globally can also boost the international profile of institutions through the publications and projects tied to their international networks. Faculty are therefore increasingly charged by institutional- and national-level policies to engage internationally.

Despite the critical importance of faculty mobility to internationalization strategies, there are limited data available to understand the trends and patterns in their mobility. This section discusses what is known about this population, including the long-term faculty in permanent posts abroad, with a focus on the drivers and impacts of their mobility.

THE DRIVERS OF FACULTY MOBILITY

The factors that motivate faculty decisions to go abroad are often linked to the duration of their mobility generally either short-term appointments away from one's 'home' campus or long-term and permanent academic posts abroad.

Short-term mobility is often driven by cross-cultural exchange opportunities, the prospect of learning new approaches to pedagogy and curriculum, and the chance to build international networks. Through their international networks, faculty review and learn from each other's work; they connect at academic conferences; collaborate on research; and within each field share an "academic language" and set of concepts that provide a natural point of connection and communication across national boundaries. This global interconnectedness of academic fields provides higher education institutions with a powerful mechanism for infusing internationalization into the core activities of higher education, specifically teaching, learning, and research. When faculty travel and engage in international activities, they can take those ideas and knowledge back to their classrooms and often inspire the next generation of students and scholars to think globally. This type of mobility often occurs through short-term courses abroad, attending international

conferences or holding seminars overseas. Conducting topic-specific research or field research may also require short-term periods of residence abroad.

Economic and professional development concerns often drive long-term mobility. In countries where financial returns to a PhD degree are low, or the job market for academics is limited, aspiring faculty may look abroad for opportunities. The availability of a stable environment for an academic career, clear contractual arrangements, a transparent system for promotion, and reasonable security of tenure are crucial to attract and retain academics (Rumbley and de Wit, 2017).

There are also faculty who undertake permanent or long-term contractual positions abroad as the result of recruitment drives. Universities may look to international academics as sources of talent to increase internationalization, build institutional prestige, or fill skills gaps. Elite universities may seek to boost their rankings, research, and teaching by recruiting highly sought-after “superstar” academics. Institutions or systems facing a shortage of local staff, such as Saudi Arabia, and some African countries, recruit academics from abroad to meet basic teaching needs (Rumbley and de Wit, 2017).

THE IMPACTS OF FACULTY MOBILITY

Research has established that international experiences are often personally transformative for students and faculty alike (Eddy, 2014; Miller-Perrin & Thompson, 2014). At the same time, classroom instruction and the production of knowledge are profoundly shaped by the perspectives of faculty (Neumann, 2006; O’Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). Taken together, these two strands of research suggest that international experiences can impact how faculty carry out their teaching and research when they return to their campuses. However, little is known about how faculty apply their international learning in their teaching and research back home. Tracking how many faculty are engaged internationally in both long- and short-term roles, their destinations, and what they do while overseas would provide vital information to inform internationalization strategies.

Given the expanding scale and scope of higher education mobility, it is also important to consider the impacts of this growth on faculty themselves. Among the many types of mobile faculty, foreign academics working in institutes that are operating in a host country may be particularly impacted by new cultural and institutional pressures. For instance, Dedoussis (2007) documented the struggles of “third-country” faculty who are neither Americans nor locals and are hired by U.S. branch campuses overseas. These third-country faculty are expected to teach in an “American style”, hold fluency in American English, and use a U.S. curriculum – a situation which is not always compatible with their prior training and experience. The ability of institutions to reap the benefits of internationalization hinges upon the assumption that faculty should be able to work in and with different international and cultural settings. However, the case of third-country faculty raises the

question of how institutions can best support their staff to gain the intercultural competencies and language skills required as individuals and institutions become increasingly mobile.

4. MOBILITY OF COURSES, PROGRAMS, AND INSTITUTIONS

One of the most significant shifts in higher education in recent years is that cross-border mobility has extended from the geographic mobility of students and faculty members to the movement of educational programs and institutions, including the spread of online courses facilitated by technology. Indeed, information itself has become mobile in the form of distance or virtual learning, MOOCs, and blended course and program delivery modes. The explosion of offshore, cross-border, and borderless have rapidly expanded the scope and scale of higher education learning opportunities. These types of educational offerings reach a range of students and enable a greater number to benefit from an international education experience without leaving their country of residence.

The growing range of TNE programs are giving new shape to the international higher education landscape (Knight, 2016; HEGlobal, 2016). In addition to the mobility of education provision, TNE can also involve the movement of students across borders, sometimes for short periods of study either in the institution's "home" country and/or at an education hub. There are also multi-modal programs that offer blended online and on-site study options and may require students to move between countries and higher education institutions. TNE offers to students the opportunity to enroll in courses and study toward a foreign qualification from within their home countries.

The flexibility of TNE programs can facilitate the completion of coursework and degree programs while allowing students to remain employed, resulting in economic benefits. A British Council (2014) study on TNE in ten countries – Botswana, China, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, and South Africa – found this to be the case across the surveyed countries. Fifty-nine percent of respondents from the ten countries held full time employment and an equal percentage continued in their existing roles following completion of TNE programs (British Council, 2014). These findings suggest that TNE can contribute to the development of a more dynamic labor market where employees can gain new skills quickly and apply them in the workplace. TNE can also support economic development at the national level. Allowing more students to access a range of courses offered by providers from abroad while remaining in their countries of residence, TNE may reduce the costs to developing countries associated with the loss of intellectual capital (HEGlobal, 2016).

BRANCH CAMPUSES AND EDUCATION HUBS

The advent of the branch campus model and, more recently, in the emergence of regional education hubs—such as, Malaysia’s higher education sector, Dubai’s Knowledge Village, Qatar’s Education City, and Singapore’s Global Schoolhouse—have expanded the international higher education landscape. Hubs can include different combinations of domestic institutions, international branch campuses, and foreign partnerships. These programs offer the opportunity for students to enroll in well-known and highly ranked institutions and receive an education that is international in nature. Hubs also attract a significant proportion of international students to their campuses, offering a wholly global campus environment (British Council, 2014). The opportunity to enroll in English-taught courses is another factor that makes these hubs attractive study destinations for international and domestic students. Many international branch campuses, some of which may be part of hubs, offer the opportunity to study under well-known faculty from abroad, some of whom may fly in from a branch’s home campus to deliver short-term courses and seminars. The import of well-respected institutions that have established systems for ensuring the provision of quality education and renowned faculty can also serve to build the international reputation of higher education systems in host countries (Dessoiff, 2012).

The mobility of institutions has significant implications for domestic and international higher education. As prospective international students choose branch campuses located in their own countries over the institution’s home campus, traditional student mobility, as we know it, might decline. Conversely, possibly these diverse forms of internationalization will continue to grow rapidly, serving different types of students with varying educational needs (Bhandari & Belyvania, 2012).

MASSIVE ONLINE OPEN COURSES

Among the various types of online learning opportunities, Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) have gained attention for their ability to reach a greater range of learners and serve students who may be globally mobile during their enrollment. In recent years, there has been a surge in the provision of MOOCs, offered through higher education institutions and by a growing number of providers including EdX, Coursera, and Udacity. Illustrating the scale of educational provision, Coursera, one of the largest providers of MOOCs, has enrolled more than “10 million students in courses offered by more than 100 universities” (Wildavsky, 2015: 23). MOOCs typically provide an interactive mix of video segments, quizzes, online discussion forums, and may include peer-graded assignments.

Large-scale online classes, particularly those that are tuition-free, offer the global potential to make education openly accessible to learners. Particularly in the developing world, MOOCs can widen access to higher education with the only requirements being internet connectivity and a computer. A growing number of courses are now being offered through mobile phones, further increasing access to an international higher education.

Despite making educational opportunities more widely available, a common critique of virtual learning is the reportedly low completion rates. Retention rates are estimated to be as low as 10 percent, a number which varies widely among courses and providers (Hone & El Said, 2016). Difficulty engaging with instructors and lack of peer support are among some of the reasons why learners might fail to complete online courses. New approaches are being developed to address difficulties related to course completion including the provision of local host country support for distance education students (Knight, 2016).

5. EMERGING TRENDS IN INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In this section of the paper, key issues that are shaping the global landscape of higher education and thus international higher education and mobility are discussed.

GROWING COMPETITION FOR GLOBAL TALENT

Valuing the global perspectives and talents brought by international cohorts, higher education stakeholders around the world are devising new incentives to draw students to their shores. This section examines some of the key policy innovations that aim to attract international students not only to study but also to gain valuable career building opportunities through internships and employment pathways. Long-standing exchange programs, such as Erasmus in Europe, have also recognized the growing demand for employability skills, with internships and apprenticeships comprising recent offerings. While the desire to pursue an education abroad is only expected to grow in the coming years, what has given new shape to student flows are the many initiatives competing to attract global talent. In this section we will examine the expanding range of favorable policies and programs in some of the countries aiming to edge past competitors.

In recent years, with the expanding scale of knowledge-based and innovation-driven economies worldwide, some countries are turning to international higher education to provide a pool from which to recruit highly skilled job applicants. Germany and China are among the many countries that have initiated policies to not only bolster the enrollment of international students, but to retain them in their labor markets (Knight-Grofe & Rauh, 2016; Hemmadi, 2016; ICEF, 2017; Liu-Farrer, 2009; Nafie, 2017).

Offering degree programs with minimal fees, career incentives, and more English-taught graduate programs, Germany's higher education sector is becoming increasingly attractive. These concerted efforts have drawn more international students to Germany's institutes. In the 2017 reporting year, 251,542 international students were enrolled in German institutions, representing a 7 percent increase since 2016 ([Project Atlas, 2017](#)). The country's goal to increase international student enrollment to 350,000 by 2020 was surpassed in 2017, three years before the target date (Kennedy, 2017; Nafie, 2017). International graduates from non-EU countries have 18 months to find employment in Germany and a large number take advantage of this policy.

Emerging destinations like China have recently stepped up initiatives to attract global talent. In China, the cohort of 442,773 international students hosted in 2015/16 are benefiting from new opportunities to undertake internships, smoothed pathways to residency permits, and a variety of programs which enable graduates to stay in-country to work. The aspiration is to host 500,000 international students by 2020. Several cities – including Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen – have policies to address local skills gaps and create opportunities for international students in high-technology and e-commerce programs to transition easily into the workforce (Sharma, 2017).

HARMONIZATION OF PROVISION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

We know that international higher education is becoming increasingly interconnected, as universities around the world are engaging in complex relationships and agreements such as dual and joint degree programs, credit transfer schemes, strategic partnerships, and cross-regional consortia. Cross-institutional linkages are often tied to shared regional standards, national commissions, and councils. These initiatives support mobility through student exchange agreements, solidified in Memoranda of Understanding, that ensure the transferability of credits among partner institutions. This section examines recent harmonization efforts that are playing pivotal roles in supporting regional student mobility and in strengthening higher education in emerging economies.

Regional student mobility initiatives, based on mutual exchange, are often enacted in support of broader regional economic and political goals. For example, recent U.S. and Mexican government initiatives to strengthen U.S. – Mexico academic exchange were tied to the formation of the Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research (FOBESII), which has a broad goal of supporting sustained economic and social developments in both countries. As part of FOBESII, the Mexican government established *Proyecto 100,000* with the goal of sending 100,000 Mexican students to study in the United States and 50,000 U.S. student to Mexico. On the U.S. side, President Obama launched the 100,000 Strong in the Americas in 2011,

with the goal of sending 100,000 students in each direction between the United States and Latin America, including Mexico (Faruggia, 2016). Academic mobility initiatives in other regions are similarly tied to larger efforts to unify those regions, such as Europe's ERASMUS programs and those undertaken by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in the Asia Pacific region.

In recent years, harmonizing education provision has become critical for countries seeking to strengthen their higher education sectors. East Africa is an example of a locale that is expanding its links and promoting mobility within the region. While East Africa is comprised of a diverse set of countries, there are some common issues that hinder academic mobility into and out of the region, not least of which are the difficult socioeconomic and political environments in which many universities function. Significant and persistent challenges for students who wish to study abroad include: university management issues; questions about the quality of education and the transferability of credits; and difficulty retaining intellectual capital at the faculty level (Teferra & Altbach, 2004; [UNESCO, 2017](#); Waruru, 2017b).

Nonetheless, coordinated efforts are being made to address some of these challenges and promote mobility within the region with higher education harmonization announced as a priority of the recently established East Africa Higher Education Area. Formalized during the 18th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State of the East African Community (EAC) in May, 2017; five countries head the initiative – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. The agenda includes the development of regional standards, guidelines, and national commissions and councils for higher education. To facilitate student flows at the national and regional levels, EAC students will be able to enroll in any of the 100 universities in the region without taking a special exam, and credits will be transferable across institutions (Waruru, 2017a).

DECLINING POPULATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGIES

In some parts of the world, including several Asian countries and many U.S. states, declining birth rates and aging populations are impacting tertiary enrollments ([Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016](#)). In recent years, higher education sectors are turning to internationally mobile student populations to help sustain the enrollments needed to keep the doors of institutions open. Demographic shifts have underscored policies and new initiatives to attract mobile student populations from abroad – a situation which is particularly evident in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan.

In Korea, demographic trends around declining birthrates have impacted both the number of South Korean students in domestic higher education, as well as those going overseas. Since 2012, the number of tertiary age students has been decreasing, prompting the government to close or merge institutions in anticipation of a surplus of unfilled higher education seats (ICEF, 2015).

Partially in response to declines in domestic students, South Korea has made efforts to increase its international students. In 2015, the government set a goal of 200,000 international students by 2023, to make up 5 percent of all higher education. Initiatives to support this goal include: scholarships; regulations allowing universities to open international departments or programs; expansion of English instruction; and increased post-graduation employment opportunities (Custer, 2015; ICEF, 2015).

International higher education strategies are at the heart of initiatives to bolster higher education enrollments and bring in and retain skilled labor in both Japan and Taiwan. The declining birthrate in Taiwan is expected to result in a drop of 40 percent in higher education enrollments between 2012 and 2028 (Chi-Wei & Hsin-Yin, 2017). In response, the Ministry of Education has launched a Talent Development Policy, allocating NT\$430m annually over the next three years in financial support for initiatives ranging from student recruitment to overseas internships and branch campuses, as well as exchange agreements. Similarly, Japan's higher education sector aims to mitigate low domestic enrollments by attracting international students both from within Asia and from farther afield through initiatives such as English-taught courses and programs.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This section discusses some of the key consequences of the internationalization of higher education experiences in low-income as well as middle- and high-income countries.

LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES: THE LOSS OF INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

Among the consequences of the internationalization of higher education for low-income countries is that of brain drain and the loss of trained human capital. While many regions of the world that see large outbound ratios of their college-aged population (such as Asia), have begun to see a shift towards "brain circulation", with many of their foreign-educated citizens returning home, Africa continues to experience a significant loss of human capital through student mobility (Ziguras & Gribble, 2015).

The current financing and aid policies may exacerbate the brain drain experienced by African countries. Foreign aid to support higher education in Africa is biased towards providing financial support to African students studying in donors' universities rather than direct aid going to students or universities in Africa ([Experton & Fevre, 2010](#)). For instance, under the current higher education financing scheme, an average of 18 percent of current public expenditures on higher education is spent supporting students abroad, much higher than the world average. In the case of the high staying rate of African students in host countries, the current funding and aid policies do little to alleviate the brain drain experienced in Africa in the short run. It has been estimated that each year \$4 billion is spent on salaries for approximately 100,000 western expatriates who make up the loss of professionals in Sub-Saharan Africa (Teichler & Yağcı, 2009).

While some scholarships in the form of development aid provide international educational opportunities for students from low-income countries such as Africa, the students who obtain them do not always return home. This situation raises the issue of what obligations and responsibilities the international higher education sector and industry has towards balancing the needs of developing countries to retain their critical human capital, against the needs and aspirations of individuals to seek the best education possible regardless of where it is offered.

CONSEQUENCES FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH INCOME COUNTRIES

Issues of capacity for hosting growing international student populations

In popular host countries, such as the United States, Australia, and U.K., higher education sectors are challenged to meet the needs of growing numbers of international students. Comprehensive international student support services and faculty with the skills to accommodate international students who may have different learning styles are two areas where there may be a lack of capacity (Wongtrirat, Ammigan & Pérez-Encinas, 2015; Whitsed & Green, 2015). Issues related to further internationalizing the curriculum and building an inclusive community for international students largely remain. Providing internationalized curriculum that accounts for students' previous educational experiences and encourages contribution to the learning community can benefit both domestic and international students, but requires that instructors have strong intercultural competencies. Effective international student services and extra-curricular activities can have a strong impact on international students' overall experience, development, and success. Yet faculty and staff, particularly those who do not have international experience themselves, may require intercultural training to accommodate the needs of international students.

In recent years, top destination countries in Europe, such as Germany and France, have been impacted by

declining funding for university research and teaching. With insufficient monetary support for the higher education, individual universities have limited capacity to implement internationalization strategies. In addition, the sustainability of tuition-free university education remains a significant concern and poses obstacles for hosting a growing number of international students (Streitweiser, Olson, Burkhart & Klabunde, 2015). Profound social and economic issues negatively impact internationalization aspirations in some parts of Europe, including financial crisis, unfavorable demographic trends, immigration, and ethnic and religious tensions (de Wit and Hunter, 2015).

Strained Capacity to Host Refugees: The Case of Germany

In 2015, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) allocated 100 million euros until 2019 to implement a package of targeted programs including German courses, introductory programs and mentoring activities for refugees. These offerings are known as the “Integra – Integrating Refugees in Degree Programmes”, and implemented by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The aim of *Integra* is to enable refugees to prepare for university study and enroll as quickly as possible. *Integra* also helps participating institutions to set up or expand their range of language and preparatory courses. By 2016, 135 higher education institutions were involved and 6,806 refugees attended subject-specific and language preparatory courses.

The concerted efforts by the BMBF and DAAD since 2015 have provided a bridge for refugees to eventually enroll in tertiary education in Germany, yet various roadblocks still remain. The most significant obstacle is the long period of time required to attain sufficient language skills to enroll in tertiary education. Another challenge is that the average age of potential students is 27 years old, with a quarter aged 30 or older. Many older refugee students need extra assistance such as childcare in order to complete their studies.

In addition, refugee students also face issues common among much of the international student population. Cost of tuition and travel, unavailability of identification and academic documents, lack of recognition of prior studies, language barriers, and difficulty obtaining information all restrict access to education.

7. KEY POLICY CHALLENGES AND OPTIONS FACING COUNTRIES

EQUITY AND ACCESS IN MOBILITY

The adoption of the United Nations’ new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 has brought a renewed focus to the critical issues of equity and access in higher education as well as international higher

education, and the availability of a global experience to a diversity of students. Traditionally, participation in academic mobility has been viewed as an elite privilege reserved for those who either have the social and financial capital to access high-quality postsecondary education at home and abroad, or for those who have the skills and know-how to apply for and obtain financial aid overseas.

The imperative to make global education more accessible is growing in both developed and developing countries. For example, in the U.S., the U.S. Department of State's Gilman Scholarship Program and IIE's Generation Study Abroad initiative aims to increase the numbers of under-represented students who study abroad. Other scholarship programs funded by governments and private foundations such as the Ford Foundation and the Mastercard Foundation aim to provide international fellowships to marginalized individuals from developing countries. Research has shown that these types of targeted efforts have a significant impact in increasing access to international education, and can have a multiplier effect on communities and countries (Martel, 2017). The technological developments highlighted in Section 3 have also raised the prospect of delivering higher education across borders to reach students who may not have the means or ability to leave their home countries for higher education.

ACADEMIC DISPLACEMENT AND THE UNPRECEDENTED SURGE OF REFUGEE POPULATIONS

Since 2015, the world has seen human displacement on a scale unknown in more than a generation and many of these displaced people face challenges in preparing for or accessing higher education. Attention to the access of displaced students and scholars to higher education and an understanding of the implications of an uneducated generation has been triggered by the prolonged displacement of the largely educated middle-class populations from countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, all of which has well-established tertiary systems and ambitious national higher education reforms in pre-conflict years (Milton & Barakat, 2016; De Wit & Altbach, 2016).

The number of refugees has surged in recent years. UNHCR estimates that in 2017, there were 68.5 million people worldwide – including 25.4 million refugees and 10 million stateless people – who have been displaced from their homes (UNHCR, 2017). Over half of all refugees are under the age of 18, and have yet to enter higher education, or have experienced a disruption of their tertiary (UNHCR, 2017). Only 1 percent of all college-age refugees are enrolled in higher education in comparison with 34 percent of tertiary-level age youth worldwide (UNHCR, 2016). In response to the growing refugee crisis, some countries have created pathways to smooth the transition of displaced individuals into higher education, often as part of initiatives offered to facilitate entry into new cultures and economies. For instance, Germany's state-funded integration

courses, which provide German Language instruction, and pathway colleges (*Studienkollegs*) enable displaced populations to enter the country's higher education system (Streitweiser & Morris-Lange, 2016).

Displaced individuals face many roadblocks in accessing higher education. Cost of tuition and travel, unavailability of identification and academic documents, lack of recognition of prior studies, language barriers, pressure to assume work or family responsibilities, host community discrimination, and difficulty obtaining information all limit access to education (Elmes, 2016; Institute of International Education, 2016; Lambrechts, 2015; Magaziner, 2015; Watenpaugh, Fricke & King, 2014). While efforts are being made to provide financial and application support and to utilize technology to reach displaced students, the need remains great and is expected to continue for some time (Stampfl, 2016; Alfa Shaban, 2016; Redden, 2015). While displaced students fall outside the profile of what is typically considered an international student, their circumstances require special attention from the higher education community. As displaced students seek entry to higher education institutions outside their home countries, issues of transferability of academic credentials, language preparation, integration, and support of these students on campus, and preparation of students to enter labor markets following graduation will become significant issues for higher education institutions around the world.

AN ALTERED POLITICAL CLIMATE AND THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY

One of the most significant developments over the past several years has been the rise of nationalism around the world, and what is perceived as a turning inward of many traditional host destinations that have typically attracted large numbers of students and scholars from around the world. The first such development was "Brexit" in the U.K. in 2016, which will likely have far-reaching consequences on student mobility into and out of the U.K., and also on mobility between the UK and continental Europe. Along with student visa restrictions in the U.K, other factors that may influence students' decisions regarding where to pursue a higher education include the rising costs associated with health insurance and changes in student visa policies that may limit the possibility of transitioning from study to employment. Similarly, political shifts in the United States and proposed policies restricting immigration have raised many questions about whether the United States remains an attractive destination for international students. While drawing precise conclusions will require time and new sets of enrollment data before we can see with clarity just how student flows are responding to international political changes, undulations in student flows have of late become perceptible in the uptick in international enrollments in Canada. Amid early indications that the patterns of international student mobility across countries may be shifting, these developments have mobilized the international education community—including higher education institutions and associations—to develop new joint strategies and outreach to underscore the value of international education even further.

8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis above, it is clear the many new modes of education provision and factors drawing students and faculty to work and study abroad are reshaping how we think about cross-border mobility. Students around the world are benefiting from new opportunities to go abroad in the form of short courses, and an increasing range of possibilities to gain employability skills either during or after their education abroad. The growing numbers of education hubs, offshore programs, and online learning opportunities are enabling more students than ever before to receive an international education. At the institutional level, we have also seen that many low-income and emerging economies employ international higher education as a strategic asset – drawing more international students to their shores, building their intellectual knowledge base, strengthening their knowledge economies, and developing more dynamic workforces.

While little is known about the faculty that go abroad, we do know that they are engaged in a range of mobilities, many of which support institutional- and national-level internationalization strategies. From filling staff shortages in some countries to undertaking short periods abroad for the purpose of enriching their teaching and research, faculty engage internationally in a growing number of ways. Yet questions remain about whether or not and how mobile faculty, particularly those that are pursuing long term careers abroad, are supported by their institutions to adapt and respond to cultural and institutional demands. As the mobility of faculty continues to grow, so too should support for this population.

This paper has viewed the internationalization of higher education globally not only in terms of the benefits for individuals, institutions, and nations; but we have also considered the challenges, consequences and pressures brought by mobility in all its many forms. It is clear that South-to-South flows remain generally weaker and inequities in access to an international higher education persist. Insufficient funding in many countries continues to pose barriers both for increasing the quality of higher education, necessary to attract international students, and also in the form of scholarships necessary to support student flows. Growing populations of refugees, while accommodated to some extent in certain parts of the globe, remain a group in need of smoothed pathways into higher education and the new societies in which they have been relocated.

The discussion in this paper has also pointed to continuity amidst uncertainty in the current climate of political and economic flux and change. While financial crises have impacted mobility in some parts of the world in recent years, and political shifts and uncertainties are beginning to steer some students' decisions about where to study abroad, it is clear mobility in all its forms is growing. The demand for an international

education is only expected to increase and the value of the skills, competencies, and global outlook gained abroad continue to gain currency.

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APPENDIX: KEY DATA AND RESEARCH RESOURCES REFERENCED IN THE CHAPTER

Data Source	Citation & Link
Eurostat	Eurostat. (2016). <i>Key figures on Europe: 2016 edition</i> . Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. https://doi.org/10.2785/81608
Generation Study Abroad	Farrugia, C. & Sanger, J. (2017). <i>Gaining an employment edge: The impact of study abroad on 21st century skills & career prospects in the United States</i> . New York: Institute of International Education. https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Publications/Gaining-an-Employment-Edge---The-Impact-of-Study-Abroad
iEduChina	IEduChina. (2016). https://www.ieduchina.com
Open Doors®	Farrugia, C. & Bhandari, R. (2016). <i>Open Doors 2016 Report on International Educational Exchange</i> . New York: Institute of International Education. https://www.iie.org/opendoors
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World Bank	Experton, W. & Fevre, C. (2010). <i>Financing higher education in Africa (English)</i> . Africa Regional Educational Publications; Directions in development. Human development. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/497251467990390368/Financing-higher-education-in-Africa