

Navigating Global Disruptions: Migration, Education, and Labor Markets in a Post-Pandemic World

JAKA VADNJAL

Euro-Mediterranean University, Slovenia

jaka.vadnjal@emuni.si



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In recent years, global challenges have demanded that academic research adopt multidisciplinary approaches to address increasingly complex societal issues. This issue of our journal brings together articles that explore the intersections of migration, education, labor markets, and the socioeconomic shifts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, these studies provide critical insights into how global crises reshape local and international experiences of mobility, education, employment, and economies.

The collection of articles offers fresh perspectives on intra-African migration, internationalization within higher education, job retention schemes, and the mobility of early-career scientists in the Mediterranean region. They reflect on the responses to challenges brought about by COVID-19 and assess the socioeconomic impact of these changes. Through these insights, the authors contribute to ongoing discussions about policy-making and future research in an evolving global landscape.

The first article, authored by Pierre Oyono Mvogo, titled 'Morocco's Contribution to the Consolidation of Intra-African Migration: An Analysis through the Prism of Gabonese and Cameroonian Student Migration Flows in the City of Fez,' addresses the underexplored issue of intra-African migration. While much literature focuses on African migration to Europe, Mvogo shifts the focus to Morocco, which has emerged as a hub for student migration from Gabon and Cameroon. The article emphasizes the role of student migration in fostering economic, political, and cultural integration within Africa. By examining the migration of students to the city of Fez, the study illustrates Morocco's importance in consolidating African unity and development.

Mvogo's findings offer a nuanced understanding of migration as a driver of regional collaboration, economic growth, and political integration in Africa.

- [6] In the article 'The Internationalization at Home: Intercultural Engagement of Students in Extracurricular Activities; MED2IaH Case Study,' Nada Trunk Širca (Slovenia), Karim Moustaghfir (Morocco), Dorsaf Ben Malek (Tunisia) and Anica Novak Trunk (Slovenia) address the concept of 'internationalization at home' in higher education. As physical student mobility became severely restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus has shifted to how students can engage with diverse cultures in their own domestic educational settings. Their work explores how extracurricular activities create opportunities for intercultural engagement and dialogue among students, which may play a crucial role in post-pandemic education. With international student exchanges largely disrupted, this study argues that meaningful intercultural experiences can still be fostered through intentional, localized programming. This model of internationalization may redefine how universities approach cross-cultural learning in the future, particularly in a world still adapting to the constraints and opportunities brought about by COVID-19.

In Lili Takacz's (Hungary) article, 'The Use of Analytic Hierarchy Process for Measuring National Interests: Demonstrating the Impact of Multicriteria Decision-Making Models on Foreign Policy Formulation,' the focus is on decision-making tools for prioritizing national interests in complex geopolitical environments. The study introduces the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) as a way to evaluate and measure conflicting national objectives. Takacz shows how AHP can assist policymakers in navigating competing priorities in a structured manner. By applying the model to current geopolitical scenarios, the article provides insights into how governments can balance short-term and long-term national interests effectively. This method not only advances the theoretical understanding of decision-making in international relations but also offers a practical tool for policymakers facing a rapidly evolving global landscape.

The article 'Early-Career Scientists' Mobility in the Mediterranean during COVID-19: Transforming Crises into Opportunities for Blue Economy' by Jihene Nouairi, Alice Affatati, Giorgia Rivoira, Sergio Rejado Albaina and Mounir Ghribi (Italy) examines the impact of the pandemic on academic mobility, particularly for early-career scientists



in the Mediterranean region. With travel restrictions, halted research projects, and fewer networking opportunities, early-career researchers faced considerable challenges. However, the article also points to the opportunities that arose from the crisis. By embracing digital tools and remote collaboration, early-career scientists adapted to new forms of engagement and cooperation. The authors argue that this shift toward virtual collaboration and digital research tools is likely to have long-term benefits, democratizing access to international academic networks. This study highlights how adversity can spur innovation and foster new ways of academic collaboration. [7]

Anton Rop (Slovenia) examines the impact of job retention schemes in the article ‘The Effects of Job Retention Schemes on Employment Preservation during the COVID-19 Epidemic.’ Governments worldwide introduced these schemes to prevent mass unemployment during the pandemic, but the effectiveness of these measures remains a topic of debate. Rop’s analysis of various job retention schemes reveals that while they were effective in keeping workers employed in the short term, there were unintended consequences, such as wage stagnation and limited job mobility. The article emphasizes the need for governments to consider the long-term effects of such schemes, particularly in terms of economic recovery and workforce flexibility. Rop calls for a balanced approach that not only preserves jobs during crises but also fosters a dynamic labor market in the long run.

In their article, ‘The Positive Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Slovenian Economy,’ Pierre Rosta and Alexandra Rostan (USA) challenge conventional narratives that depict the pandemic solely as a negative economic force. The authors explore how Slovenia managed to turn the crisis into an opportunity for economic growth, particularly in the healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing sectors. The article attributes Slovenia’s resilience to pre-existing policies, swift governmental interventions, and the adaptability of key industries. The pandemic accelerated digital transformation and innovation, which has positioned Slovenia for long-term economic growth. This case study offers valuable lessons for other countries seeking to build economic resilience in the face of future global disruptions.

To conclude, this issue brings together diverse perspectives on how migration, education, and labor markets have been affected by global crises, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic. The articles underscore the importance of adaptability, innovation, and resilience in respond-

ing to the challenges posed by these disruptions. By examining these key areas through a global lens, the contributions in this issue offer valuable insights for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners. As the world continues to grapple with the long-term effects of the pandemic, [8] these studies will play a crucial role in shaping future research and policy aimed at fostering socioeconomic recovery and sustainable development.

