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Book Review

**MIGRATION, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT –
PATHWAYS TO SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION**

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Marianne Teräs, Ali Osman and Eva Eliasson (Eds.). Migration, Education and Employment Pathways to Successful Integration. Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 2024, pp. 208.

The book “Migration, Education and Employment – Pathways to Successful Integration” emerges from the project “Successful Integration of Migrants into and through Business and Work.” It highlights the crucial roles of language proficiency, motivation, and quality support networks in migrant integration. The book examines how returning skilled migrants to their previous jobs impacts work productivity and explores the politically charged nature of migration in Sweden, especially following the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in recent years. Sweden’s new government has initiated a “paradigm shift” in asylum and immigration policies since the 2022 general election.

A program for newcomers to Sweden aims to quickly acquaint them with the professional landscape and foster self-sufficiency. The public employment agency provides immigrants with a comprehensive 40-hour weekly schedule that includes Swedish language courses, social orientation, skill development, practical work experience, job search assistance, and guidance. This program is inclusive, accepting refugees with various educational backgrounds and offering them diverse opportunities to enter the labour market.

The 12-chapter book systematically addresses education and employment approaches influenced by historical contexts. It provides empirical, theoretical, and methodological insights into education, employment, and migrant integration, with a focus on Sweden, Switzerland, and Norway. These countries share robust welfare systems that shape migrant reception and integration initiatives.

The integration initiative, launched in March 2015 through a tripartite agreement among labour, employers, and the government, aims to implement effective measures for integrating migrants into various professions. The program

targets migrants and refugees with skilled backgrounds, offering over 40 career opportunities. The focus is not on training but on guiding migrants to achieve their professional goals in Sweden and secure employment successfully.

The book underscores that each country's migration policies and historical contexts affect integration processes. It highlights the importance of a diversified workforce for Sweden to remain competitive in the global market. A diverse workforce brings varied perspectives, enhancing the competitiveness of companies and public institutions, which must provide high-quality services to multinational clients. The paradigm shift in Sweden's policy includes allowing refugees to resettle throughout the country, reflecting a significant departure from previous frameworks.

Pilot training programs have been collaboratively organized by vocational education, retraining, and adult education organizations, with companies providing academic tuition fees. Companies with a history of hiring immigrants show high cultural awareness, and employers value immigrants' education and qualifications, creating competition among companies to attract skilled immigrants. The book demonstrates that new arrivals, particularly refugees, can gain practical work experience through pilot projects and internships, which also include high school-level instruction in mathematics, Swedish, and English. International job fairs, such as EURES, highlight job opportunities and mentoring programs, emphasizing practical assistance and skill development.

Social identity in the professional context is analysed, including concepts like self-determination and placement, revealing the dual nature of identity construction. The book examines gender, ethnicity, and class, particularly in Sweden, where gender equality rhetoric is strong. The integration term encompasses institutional activities designed to aid immigrants' social adaptation. Given the political debates on integration, refugee immigration remains a central issue in Swedish politics. The book notes that Sweden's refugee and immigrant integration policy began in the mid-1970s, founded on equality, freedom of choice, and partnership, aiming to shape the welfare state's and civil society's future.

In conclusion, the book differentiates various approaches to achieving integration through education and employment, emphasizing that successful integration is context-dependent and influenced by historical circumstances. It critically assesses whether state measures promote or hinder integration, acknowledging that such measures can inadvertently lead to exclusion based on migrant status. The study aims to transparently present trends in migrant integration processes, enriched by empirical research and migrants' perspectives.

The authors of the book skillfully combine empirical, theoretical, and methodological perspectives to examine the education, employment, and integration of migrants, drawing on extensive project outcomes supported by comprehensive data. This approach is a significant strength of the book that makes it stand out. The book delves deeply into the social and practical aspects of migration, helping to conceptualize optimal policy measures for successful migrant integration. The authors prioritize focusing on achievements and identifying the key ingredients for successful migration, answering the question "what to do?" rather than "what to avoid?" to provide smooth and efficient integration for immigrants. This practical approach sets the book apart from much of the existing literature on migration and related areas of study. The detailed analysis of the most suc-

successful practices in integrating migrants is particularly noteworthy and will be appreciated by readers.

However, one of the critical points about the book is the incongruence between the migration cases analysed and the overall theoretical and historical background of migration to Europe. The book provides broad statistical and historical data on migration to EU countries from non-European countries starting from the 1970s but attempts to extrapolate the outcomes of a project that ran from 2020 to 2022 in three European countries to the overall migration case to the EU. This approach overlooks the complexity and diversity of the numerous migration waves to Europe since the 1970s, which occurred under different political and socio-economic circumstances and varied across EU countries and countries of origin.

Regarding the structure, the book focuses more on Swedish cases, while the Swiss and Norwegian contexts are not as thoroughly covered. A more balanced analysis of all three country cases would enhance its comprehensiveness. The book also predominantly uses a discursive format with little use of charts and tables, which at times makes it difficult for readers to summarise and systematise the abundant empirical information provided.

The book offers a comprehensive examination of the factors contributing to the successful integration of migrants, with a focus on education and employment as crucial pathways. It combines empirical research, theoretical insights, and practical examples to offer a nuanced understanding of integration processes and challenges. Besides summarising the results of the “Successful Integration of Migrants in and through Vocation and Work” project, it highlights essential components for implementing migrant adaptation and management and helps set the right priorities in migration policy. The book deserves a prominent place and high evaluation in contemporary migration studies.