Hendriks, Martijn; Burger, Martijn J.

Working Paper

Happiness and Migration

GLO Discussion Paper, No. 842

Provided in Cooperation with:
Global Labor Organization (GLO)

Suggested Citation: Hendriks, Martijn; Burger, Martijn J. (2021) : Happiness and Migration, GLO Discussion Paper, No. 842, Global Labor Organization (GLO), Essen

This Version is available at:
https://hdl.handle.net/10419/233996

Happiness and Migration

Martijn Hendriks
Erasmus University Rotterdam
Erasmus Happiness Economics Research Organisation (EHERO)
Department of Applied Economics
Rotterdam, the Netherlands
hendriks@ese.eur.nl

Martijn J. Burger
Erasmus University Rotterdam
Erasmus Happiness Economics Research Organisation (EHERO)
Department of Applied Economics
Rotterdam, the Netherlands
mburger@ese.eur.nl

Abstract

A subjective well-being angle has emerged as an important new frontier to advance the understanding of the causes and consequences of migration. The purpose of this chapter is to organize and take stock of this emerging literature on the bi-directional relationship between migration and happiness by reviewing the available literature from a global perspective. The literature review covers both international migration and internal migration and considers the outcomes of various stakeholders (migrants, hosting communities, and family members left behind). The literature documents ample evidence that happiness plays an important role in migration decisions, with relatively unhappy people moving to happier places, even after accounting for standard predictors of migration. In some contexts, internal migrants experience a pre-migration happiness dip. Most international migrants gain happiness from migration, hosting populations tend to experience a mixed but small impact, and family members staying behind generally experience a positive impact on evaluative well-being but not emotional well-being. However, the outcomes are strongly context-dependent and important differences exist between individuals. The impact of migration is much smaller for internal migrants. Overall, the current evidence suggests that migration contributes to a happier world because of the generally positive effects on migrants and the marginal effects on hosting communities.

Acknowledgments: This manuscript has been accepted for publication as part of the Springer Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics, edited by Klaus F. Zimmermann. The authors would like to thank the section editor Milena Nikolova and three anonymous reviewers for helpful comments and insights. All errors are our own.

1. Introduction

The international migrant population has grown from 175 million in 2000, representing 2.8 per cent of the world population, to 272 million in 2019, representing 3.5 per cent of the world population (UN DESA 2019). Currently about 0.6% of the world population migrating across borders in a five-year period (Abel and Sander 2014). In addition, an estimated 750 million adults (15% of the world's adult population) say they would permanently migrate to another country if they could (Esipova et al. 2018). Considering that a small subset of people with international migration aspirations actually moves abroad, the international migrant population is expected to grow to 400 million in 2050 (UN DESA 2015). Moreover, an estimated 763 million persons (12 per cent of the world population) lived within their own country but outside their region of birth in 2005 (Bell and Charles-Edwards 2013), which illustrates that many more people relocate within countries than between countries, particularly from the poorer rural areas to the richer urban areas.

Consequently, migrant inflows are an increasingly important societal issue in hosting communities. For instance, a 2017 survey shows that Europeans consider immigration together with the threat of terrorism the biggest issues faced by the European Union (O'Connor 2020). The concerns about migration have major impacts on public policies and voting behavior (e.g., Brexit). Given the omnipresence and potential impact of international migration, optimizing the human migration process is one of the biggest challenges in our globalizing world. However, a comprehensive account of the causes and overall consequences of migration is lacking because the traditional focus on objective drivers and outcomes of migration has proven insufficient to explain migration behavior and evaluate migration outcomes at the broadest level of well-being (Castles 2010; Zuccotti et al. 2017).

In the 2010s, a subjective well-being angle has emerged in the migration literature as an important new frontier to advance the understanding of migration (Hendriks 2015). Subjective well-being (SWB), colloquially referred to as happiness and used interchangeably here, is a person's subjective experience of his or her quality of life. It includes people's affective experiences (the frequency of experiencing positive and negative emotions and moods) and life evaluations (contentment or life satisfaction) (Diener et al. 1999). This trend parallels the rapidly growing science of happiness and the growing use of SWB measures in the social sciences to comprehensively evaluate human well-being or utility, a trend that is also seen in economics (see the "Economics of Happiness" chapter in this handbook). An important reason for the emerging SWB angle is the growing evidence that people's choice behavior in important life decisions is strongly (even if not exclusively) driven by the maximization of happiness when basic survival needs are met, which reflects the notion that virtually all people yearn for a happy life (Benjamin and Heffetz 2012; Benjamin et al. 2014a). A second reason relates to the core strengths of SWB measures (see the "Measuring Subjective Well-Being" chapter in this handbook). SWB is typically measured by self-reported information, with experienced affect being gauged by survey questions asking people how often they experience certain emotions and moods (e.g.,

the PANAS scale) and life evaluations being gauged by survey questions such as "How satisfied are you with your life, all things considered?" or the Cantril ladder-of-life question[1]. While SWB measures tend to be less precise than objective measures of well-being such as income and educational outcomes due to measurement biases, they capture in an integrated manner what people hope to ultimately gain from life by allowing individuals to evaluate their own outcomes while taking into account their own preferences (Hendriks and Bartram 2019; OECD 2013; Ormel et al. 1999). By implication, knowledge regarding the bi-directional relationship between migration and happiness is essential for prospective migrants and policymakers in making informed decisions regarding migration. Accordingly, this chapter features the key insights and evidence on the bi-directional link between internal and international migration and happiness from this emerging literature.

This chapter proceeds as follows. Section 2.1 features key insights about the role of happiness in migration decisions. The impact of migration on the happiness of migrants is reviewed in Section 2.2. The impact of migration on hosting populations is discussed in Section 2.3, while the impact on those left behind is discussed in Section 2.4. The key findings, policy implication, and directions for future research of this emerging literature are summarized in Section 3.

2. Literature review

2.1 The role of happiness in migration decisions

About one per cent of the world's population have fled their homes within or across country borders because of conflict or persecution (UNHCR 2020), representing a small fraction of the total number of internal and international migrants. Another small fraction of migrants are forced to leave their homes because of other direct survival threats such as malnutrition. However, the migration decision of a large majority of migrants includes a voluntary component that is driven by the goal of achieving a better life for themselves or their significant others. In other words, voluntary migrants attempt to maximize utility at the individual or household level by migrating within or across borders if the expected benefits of doing so outweigh the expected costs, i.e., if expected utility is positive (Stark and Bloom 1985).

2.1.1 Happiness expectations

Given that people generally consider happiness and health as the aspects that matter most in life (Balestra et al. 2018), happiness expectations are proposed to be valuable proxies for expected utility and can be interpreted as a summarizing measure of the more specific goals people aim to achieve from migration (Frey

[1] "Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. If the top step is 10 and the bottom step is 0, on which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?"

and Stutzer 2002). Benjamin et al. (2014b) confirms the importance of happiness expectations in the context of migration by showing that the best predictors of the choice rankings over residencies of U.S. medical students in the National Resident Matching Program were evaluative SWB expectations, i.e., where one expects to have the best possible life and the highest life satisfaction. While evaluative SWB expectations were imperfect predictors of choice rankings, they were better predictors than for instance future career prospects and location desirability. Evaluative SWB expectations predicted choice behavior better than affective SWB expectations in this migration context, which has also been found for choice behavior more generally (Benjamin and Heffetz 2012; Benjamin et al. 2014a). Unfortunately, the role of happiness expectations in other migration contexts is unknown, probably because such data are not readily available.

2.1.2 Individual happiness levels

One strand of literature has turned to exploring whether people's happiness *levels* are relevant predictors of the desire or intention to migrate to another country using cross-sectional data at the individual level. Most studies use data from the Gallup World Poll where migration aspirations are measured using the question "Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to move permanently to another country, or would you prefer to continue living in this country?" while migration intentions are measured using the question "Are you planning to move permanently to another country in the next 12 months?" or the follow-up question "Have you done any preparation for this move?".

Correlational evidence consistently shows that relatively unhappy people have more frequently both a desire and the intention to emigrate, even after accounting for standard predictors of migration such as socio-demographic and economic characteristics and having a network abroad (Brzozowski and Coniglio 2021; Migali and Scipioni 2019; Graham and Nikolova 2018; Ruyssen and Salomone 2018; Cai et al. 2014; Lovo 2014; Otrachshenko and Popova 2014; Chindarkar 2014; Graham and Markowitz 2011). To exemplify, the unconditional difference on the 11-point Cantril ladder-of-life scale between people with and without migration aspirations is approximately a half point in Europe (Lovo 2014) and two-tenths of a point in Latin America (Graham and Nikolova 2018). More specifically, those aspiring or intending to move abroad tend to have relatively high objective success (wealthy and well-educated) but relatively low SWB, which Graham and Markowitz (2011) refer to as 'frustrated achievers'. A plausible explanation for this pattern of frustrated achievers is that unhappy people stand to gain the most from migration while wealthier people can better bear the financial costs of migration. The selection of unhappy people into migration holds for both affective and cognitive measures of happiness, and although it is more prominent in high-income countries, it also holds in middle-income countries (Migali and Scipioni 2019; Cai et al. 2014). The relationship is more complex in low-income countries, with unhappier people having more often a desire to migrate but less probability to prepare to move abroad (Migali and Scipioni 2019). People in low-income countries may act less often on their migration aspirations because they lack the financial resources to cover the costs of

migration and they face greater legal barriers to move abroad. The finding that happier people are less likely to self-select into migration in middle-income and high-income countries suggests that outmigration does not lead to a 'happiness drain' in those countries, but such a 'happiness drain' may occur in low-income countries. In line with the notion that people yearn for happiness, those with an intent to emigrate prefer locations with higher average life satisfaction, which holds after controlling for standard predictors of migration such as the macroeconomic environment, distance, language, and share of migrants (Lovo 2014).

More scant evidence is available on some related questions about international migration decisions. First, few studies have gone beyond conditional associations to examine the causal effect of happiness on emigration intentions. Ivlevs (2015) shows that the consistently observed association between emigration aspirations/intentions and happiness does not necessarily imply that there is a causal effect of happiness on emigration aspirations/intentions because of endogeneity issues. He has attempted to address the endogeneity issue using an instrumental variables approach. Consistent with previous literature, Ivlevs observed that more dissatisfied people in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia were more likely to have emigration intentions in a standard OLS framework, with a U-shaped relationship emerging after further inspection. However, the instrumental variable analysis revealed the opposite; more satisfied people had a higher probability of reporting intentions to move abroad. Although it is questionnable whether the positive causal effect generalizes to other contexts because happiness and migration intentions are exceptionally weakly related in Eastern Europe (Lovo 2014), this finding highlights that caution is needed in making causal inferences based on the widely documented negative association between happiness and emigration intentions/aspirations. Better causal evidence is available in the small literature on return intentions based on German panel data. The panel study of Shamsuddin and Katsaiti (2020) shows that greater life satisfaction positively influences the intended length of stay and the intention to stay permanently among immigrants in Germany, which also holds in a study on older immigrants in Germany (Cela and Bettin 2018). In a similar vein, the correlational study of Schiele (2021) shows that immigrants in Germany are more likely to have return intentions when life satisfaction is higher in their home country and lower in their host country, which holds at both the country level and the (projected) individual level.

Second, there is limited evidence about how individual-level happiness relates to actual emigration behavior rather than emigration aspirations/intentions. Using Polish panel data, Brzozowski and Coniglio (2021) show that the greater intent to migrate among unhappier Polish individuals within and between households translates into more actual migration only for selected subgroups, such as women and employed individuals. Although also in this case the absence of a main effect may not generalize to other contexts because of the exceptionally weak link in Eastern Europe (Lovo 2014), this finding suggests that happiness may shape individuals' willingness and intention to emigrate more than their actual migration behavior, at least in Poland.

Third, few micro-level studies have examined the relative importance of happiness as a predictor of emigration aspirations and intentions. Graham and Nikolova (2018) show for Latin America that the predictive power of life evaluations tends to be smaller compared to some standard predictors of emigration intentions and aspirations (socio-demographics, network abroad, income and mobility, and confidence in institutions) when jointly considered. It is sensible that the predictive power of happiness reduces when modeled jointly with more specific subjective perceptions and objective circumstances given that happiness serves as a summary indicator of the perceptions and circumstances that matter for quality of life.

More panel evidence is available on internal migration decisions. Internal migration typically refers to moves of at least 25 kilometers. Kratz (2020) finds evidence for the 'frustrated achievers' hypothesis among economically motivated internal migrants in Germany by showing that they had a better socioeconomic disposition but not higher life satisfaction before relocating than those who stay. Mixed evidence is found regarding the existence of a pre-migration happiness dip among internal migrants. Internal migrants in Germany did not experience a life satisfaction (or happiness) dip before migration (Fuchs-Schündeln & Schündeln 2009; Erlinghagen et al. 2021), apart from women moving long distances (Kratz 2020) and migrants who moved from eastern to western Germany after the reunification (Melzer and Muffels 2017). Internal migrants in the UK who moved short distances (<25 km) experienced a life satisfaction dip in the four years before migration, but those moving longer distances did not (Nowok et al. 2013). Similarly, a life satisfaction dip before migration was experienced by those moving residence in Australia (Preston and Grimes 2019; Frijters et al. 2011) and young adult migrants moving within Sweden (Switek 2016). In general, the life satisfaction dip seems to be caused more by people moving to overcome the dip than that anticipating migration causes a dip, but stronger evidence is needed to verify this supposition.

2.1.3 Aggregated happiness levels

The limitations of the above discussed micro-level studies are further addressed by various macro-level studies that use aggregated happiness to help predict actual migration flows. This strand of the literature confirms that people move away from unhappy places towards happy places. The strongest evidence on international migration comes from the panel study of Grimes and Wesselbaum (2019) in OECD destination countries. They show that bilateral migration flows increase with increasing life evaluations in destination countries and decrease with increasing life evaluations in origin countries, even after controlling for income levels and other standard predictors of migration such as colonial ties, language similarity, sharing borders, and geographical distance (for additional evidence, see Polgreen and Simpson 2011 and Cai et al. 2014). The relative importance of happiness is smaller than these standard predictors of bilateral migration flows, but it is at least as important as economic indicators such as GDP per capita and the unemployment rate (Grimes and Wesselbaum 2019; Polgreen and Simpson 2011; Cai et al. 2014; Lovo 2014). In addition, Grimes and Wesselbaum (2019) find that higher happiness inequality in a country appears to boost both emigration and

immigration, possibly due to frustration arising from a social comparison effect on the one hand and an optimism bias of upward mobility on the other hand. A similar picture emerges for internal migration decisions. Happier places in the United States grew at substantially faster rates than did less happy places due to higher net intra-country migration, controlling for economic and non-economic variables typically associated with intra-country migration (Lucas 2014; Glaeser et al. 2016; Hummel 2016). However, Glaeser et al. (2016) note that this process is slow so that cities may remain unhappy for long periods, implying that people are not happiness-maximizing but trade off happiness against other competing objectives such as higher wages and lower housing prices. Overall, a growing literature shows that happiness dynamics capture important quality-of-life related reasons for both internal and international migration that are not captured by traditional migration models.

2.2 The impact of migration on the happiness of migrants

The geographical variation in happiness within and between countries suggests that a person's place of residence is a key determinant of happiness (Helliwell et al. 2018; Burger et al. 2020; →The Economic Geography of Happiness). However, it cannot be assumed that moving to happier places always makes migrants happier, and vice versa, because migrants and locals may differ in their stable personal characteristics (e.g., genetic differences), objective circumstances (e.g., differences in their labour market position, social exclusion, and language boundaries), happiness functions (e.g., migrants may derive more happiness from social support), and the person-location fit (e.g., migrants may fit less well in happy but xenophobic places). Similarly, it cannot be assumed that the utility maximizing behavior of migrants and the important role of happiness maximization in this regard will always lead to positive happiness outcomes because of people's bounded rationality (McKenzie et al. 2013). This raises the question to what extent—and under what conditions—migrants become happier through migration.

2.2.1. International migrants

The more detailed but less up-to-date overview of Hendriks (2015) shows that longitudinal or experimental data on the happiness outcomes of international migrants is scarce. Some studies have resorted to comparing migrants to stayers with similar characteristics in the home country ('matched stayers'). However, when stayers are solely matched based on objective characteristics (e.g., education, age, and gender), the estimated impact of migration on happiness tends to be downward biased if relatively unhappy people tend to migrate (see section 2.1). To alleviate this selection problem, some studies have compared migrants to matched stayers who intend to move ('matched potential migrants') (Nikolova and Graham 2015; Hendriks et al. 2018). By comparing approximately 36,000 migrants to matched potential migrants across more than 150 countries, Hendriks et al. (2018) estimate that immigrants worldwide, on average, evaluate the quality of their lives 9 per cent higher after migration while experiencing 5 per cent more positive affect (enjoyment,

happiness, and laughter) and 7 per cent less negative affect (worry, sadness, and anger). This finding suggests that migration generally results in substantial happiness gains for migrants. However, the outcomes substantially differ between migrants moving to and from different regions of the world.

The largest happiness gains are generally experienced by people moving to more developed countries (see also IOM 2013). For instance, of all flows examined in Hendriks et al. (2018), the largest happiness gains occurred among migrants who moved to Western Europe from developing regions, including sub-Saharan Africa (a gain in perceived quality of life of 29 per cent), the Middle East and North Africa (16 per cent gain), Central and Eastern Europe (14 per cent gain), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (14 per cent gain). These findings correspond with the observation by Helliwell et al. (2020) that the life satisfaction levels of immigrants in the United Kingdom (UK) and Canada mimic those in their destination countries rather than their typically unhappier origin countries. Long-term life satisfaction gains are also observed among Russians who migrated to Finland in the longitudinal study of Lönnqvist et al. (2015) and among Turkish labour migrants in old age who moved to Western Europe decades ago and stayed there for at least five years (Baykara-Krumme and Platt 2018). However, there are notable exceptions to this general pattern. Latin American migrants moving to Western countries do not gain much happiness by migrating (Graham and Nikolova 2018; Hendriks et al. 2018). One likely reason is that Latin Americans are much happier than would be expected based on Latin America's level of economic development, which is partly because of their rich social lives—a part of life they may partly lose by migrating. Another notable exception comes from the natural experiment of Stillmann et al. (2015) who showed that migrants from Tonga to New Zealand were one year after arrival as happy as their counterparts who had to stay in Tonga while being significantly less happy 33 months after their move despite large gains in objective well-being. In contrast to Hendriks et al. (2018), Bartram (2013a, b) found no consistent evidence of Eastern European migrants in Western Europe being happier than stayers, which may be attributed to sample or methodological differences (e.g., Bartram controls for more potentially mediating pathways). An important gap in the literature is that the happiness outcomes of international refugees has remained unexplored.

The impact for people moving between similarly developed places is mixed, with persons moving between developed countries benefiting more than people moving between developing countries (IOM 2013; Hendriks et al. 2018). Examples of such migration flows where positive outcomes were observed are Western Europeans moving to Northern America, Australia or New Zealand, UK residents moving to Ireland (Hendriks et al. 2018), migrants aged 50+ who moved between European countries (Gruber and Sand 2021) and German emigrants who moved to other (mostly Western) European countries (Erlinghagen 2011). Examples of migration flows where no positive outcomes were observed are individuals moving within South Asia or between Anglo-Saxon countries (Hendriks et al. 2018).

For those moving to less developed countries, the results tend to be either neutral or negative (IOM 2013). For instance, Hendriks et al. (2018) observed a null effect for some 750,000 Western Europeans who moved to Eastern Europe, while Bartram (2015) found a negative effect for Western Europeans moving to Southern Europe.

The above findings should not be interpreted to show that moving to a wealthier country is all that matters. Other country-level conditions are at least as important for well-being—most notably, the host society's social environment and in particular the attitudes of the native born toward immigrants (Hendriks and Bartram 2016). Accordingly, the average happiness gain of migrants is more strongly correlated with the happiness gap (r=0.80) and the development gap (r=0.76) than with the income gap (r=0.62) between destination and origin countries (Hendriks et al. 2018). This finding implies that moving to a happier or more developed country contributes more to happiness than migrating to a wealthier country. An illustrative example is the relatively low happiness gains of Latin American migrants in Western countries compared to migrants from similarly wealthy but unhappier regions (Hendriks et al. 2018).

Consistent with hedonic adaptation theory, migrants moving to more developed countries achieve almost the full happiness gain from migration in the first few years after migration, after which migrants' happiness does not substantially change with their length of stay and the second generation is generally not happier than their immigrant parents (Hendriks and Burger 2020). The initial happiness gain leads the happiness levels of immigrants to converge close to the happiness levels of the host country's native populations (Helliwell et al. 2018; Hendriks 2015). The stagnant happiness levels after the initial 'honeymoon' period of migration are inconsistent with the objectively improving life conditions of most migrants moving to more developed countries. A prominent reason that their subjective gains lag behind their objective gains is that migrants and migrant generations gradually evaluate their conditions in the host country through an increasingly critical lens because of hedonic adaptation mechanisms (Hendriks and Burger 2020). Notwithstanding these hedonic adaptation mechanisms, acculturation remains important because happiness gains are particularly achieved by migrants who successfully acculturate to the mainstream society while simultaneously maintaining their heritage culture (Nguyen and Benet-Martínez 2013; Angelini et al. 2015).

2.2.2. Internal migrants

Studies investigating how internal migration affects the happiness of internal migrants have predominantly focused on economic migration within large countries such as China, Germany, and the United States. The impact of migration is generally much smaller for internal migrants than for international migrants. A primary explanation is that the circumstances of internal migrants tend to change less, such as the quality of institutions and the experienced cultural and language boundaries. The literature discussed below shows that the happiness returns to internal migration vary from positive to negative.

Positive effects are generally documented in developed countries. Melzer (2011) and Melzer and Muffels (2017) studied migration from East Germany to West Germany following the reunification in 1990. These studies report an increase in life satisfaction following migration due to better labor market outcomes. Although migrants report happiness levels above the East German average, their average happiness levels remain below that of the West German population. Building on this work, Kratz (2020) found for Germany that economic migration has a positive impact on life satisfaction, net of both observed and unobserved differences between migrants and stayers. Positive long-lasting effects are also found for internal migrants in the UK (Nowok et al. 2013), Australia (Preston and Grimes 2019), and for young adult migrants in Sweden (Switek 2016). However, the results exhibit heterogeneity and context dependency. Kratz (2020) found that the impact is transitory for women and long-lasting for men, while Preston and Grimes (2019) found stronger gains for women and Nowok et al. (2013) did not find gender differences. While all studies found that the moving distance did not matter, Kratz (2020) found that moving towards urban areas results in stronger permanent gains than moving towards rural areas.

Studies on developing countries have mainly focused on urban-rural migration. Despite urban populations being generally happier than rural populations in developing countries (Easterlin et al. 2011; Burger et al. 2020), rural-urban migration has limited or negative effects on the happiness of these internal migrants. Knight and Gunatilaka (2010), Akay et al. (2012), Jin (2016) and Huang et al. (2017) found that rural to urban migrants in urban China had lower happiness levels than rural households. Similar findings were reported by De Brauw et al. (2018) for Ethiopia, Chen et al. (2019) for Pakistan, Mulcahy and Kollamparambil (2016) for South Africa, and De Jong et al. (2002) for Thailand. Indeed, as noted by Cardoso et al. (2019), migration decisions are often made based on what people *believe* urban areas can offer and not on what they actually offer. At the same time, objective circumstances for these migrants often improve, as evidenced by income and consumption patterns.

Several explanations have been brought forward to explain lower happiness among rural-urban migrants compared to rural non-migrants despite their advantaged economic situations. First, a number of studies (e.g., Knight and Gunatilaka 2010; Mulcahy and Kollamparambil 2016; Chen et al. 2019) have attributed the lower happiness levels of migrants to high aspirations in relation to achievement as well as social comparison effects. With regard to China, Cai and Wang (2019) argue that the higher subjective social status of rural residents vis-à-vis migrants explains their higher happiness, while Wang (2017) shows that people living in the countryside adopt lower standards when assessing their social status than migrants. At the same time, it should be taken into account that Chinese rural to urban migrants face institutional discrimination due to the hukou system (Chen 2013), have to leave behind family and friends (Bonnefond and Mabrouk 2019), and disproportionally end up in 3-D (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) jobs with limited income opportunities (Meng 2012), which in turn could reduce happiness.

A similar train of thought is found in the small literature on displacement and happiness. Randell (2016) examined rural households that were displaced due to construction of the Belo Monte Dam in Brazil. Overall, Randell (2016) concluded that the wealth and perceived quality of life of the local population improved. However, the perceived quality-of-life effects of displacement were most positive for those individuals who managed to remain near family and friends, were poorer at baseline, and achieved relatively more economic gains. This study then also suggests that both material and non-material compensation is necessary to overcome the well-being costs of forced migration and explains why some relocation programs have an adverse effect on mental health even when they offer a good compensation program (e.g., Snodgrass et al. 2016).

2.3 The impact of migration on the happiness of hosting populations

An emerging literature has considered the impact of immigration and ethnic diversity on the happiness of hosting populations. For Europe, higher migration inflows at the country level generally have no statistically significant effects (O'Connor 2020; Akdede and Giovanis 2021) or small positive non-linear effects (Betz and Simpson 2013) on the happiness of natives. O'Connor (2020) shows that the null result over the years 1990-2017 holds (i) across population subgroups including the poorly educated and elderly (ii) across migrant subgroups from within or outside the European Union (EU) and for refugees. Immigrant diversity is also not statistically related to natives' life satisfaction in Europe (O'Connor 2020). However, Akdede and Giovanis (2021) do find a positive impact of migration on the happiness of natives and second-generation immigrants in Northern, Western and Eastern Europe but a negative impact in Southern Europe over the period 2004–2017.

Inspired by Brexit, various panel studies have been conducted for the UK. Howley et al. (2020) document that net inflows of foreign-born individuals into local areas had small negative effects on happiness in the period 2000-2017, and these happiness losses are particularly experienced by relatively older, poorer, low-educated, and unemployed individuals. Ivlevs and Veliziotis (2018) find no main effect of inflows of Eastern European immigrants in local areas on natives' life satisfaction following the 2004 enlargement that resulted in an unprecedented wave of Eastern European workers relocating to the UK. Consistent with Howley et al. (2020), they observed that local immigration was associated with a decrease in life satisfaction among older, unemployed and lower-income people, and with an increase in life satisfaction among younger, employed, higher-income, and better educated people. The heterogeneous impact is congruent with voting patterns in the Brexit vote. Focusing on the related concept of ethnic diversity, Longhi (2014) finds that white British people living in more diverse NUTS3-areas report lower levels of life satisfaction than their counterparts in more homogenous areas. However, Knies et al. (2016) found no effect of ethnic diversity at the neighbourhood level on the life satisfaction of white British people.

For Germany, Akay et al. (2014, 2017) found a small positive impact of both local immigrant inflows and ethnic diversity on the life satisfaction of natives. The middle class and people below 50 years old particularly benefited from local immigration, while people with open, agreeable, and conscientious personalities benefited most from ethnic diversity. In addition, the impact of ethnic diversity was more positive when immigrants were better assimilated and when other ethnicities were culturally and economically closer to the German ethnicity. Ethnic diversity at the neighborhood level was unrelated to life satisfaction in Germany (Kóczán 2016).

For the United States, Kuroki (2018) showed that county-level increases in ethnic diversity and the immigrant population were associated with declining life satisfaction among white men and women during the period 2005-2010. Consistent with the age pattern observed in Germany and the UK, life satisfaction declined most for older whites. For Australia, ethnic diversity at the neighbourhood or state level has a small negative association with emotional well-being through reduced neighbourhood trust (Churchill et al. 2019).

The magnitudes of the observed positive and negative effects are generally rather small. To illustrate, Betz and Simpson (2013) find that a ten percent increase in the immigrant inflow (at the sample mean) in Europe increases the happiness of natives by 0.07 points on an 11-point scale in the following year while no positive effects were observed after the second year. Howley et al. (2020) find that an increase of 100,000 foreign-born individuals in the UK leads to a happiness decline of 0.025 points on a 37-point scale. Akay et al. (2014) find that a 1 percentage point increase in the immigrant share in a local area results in a 0.03 increase on a 11-point life satisfaction scale. Kuroki (2018) finds that a 1 percentage point increase in the percentage of the immigrant population is associated with 0.0009 and 0.0021 points reduction on a 4-item life satisfaction for white men and women, respectively. The positive and negative effects documented in other studies are typically of a small magnitude as well. In general, the literature documents that only large immigrant flows have a substantial impact on the happiness of natives.

In sum, the literature on migration inflows in developed countries documents mixed and context-dependent effects, with most studies highlighting that the observed effects are modest, and much smaller than would be expected based on the worries of many natives about the negative consequences of migration for their well-being. In some contexts, older people and those with lower socio-economic status benefit less or are hurt more by ethnic diversity and immigration. Several studies have explored how the macroeconomic environment mediates the observed effects. Consistent with the broader migration literature showing that macroeconomic gains or losses of immigration and ethnic diversity are small, objective macroeconomic gains or losses are not found to be major channels driving positive or negative effects on the life satisfaction of natives (Akay et al. 2014, 2017; O'Connor 2020). However, Howley et al. (2020) provides suggestive evidence that perceived as opposed to actual labour market competition and social identity are relevant channels for a

negative impact of immigration on the happiness of some natives in the UK. Possible non-economic channels such as congestion, social cohesion, and perceived safety have remained unexplored.

There is less evidence on the impact of immigration in developing countries. One exception is the study of Kreibaum (2016), which examines the impact of both the long-term presence and additional inflow of Congolese refugees on the life satisfaction of the hosting population in Uganda. Using multiple surveys and a difference-in-difference approach, the study finds that although the objective circumstances of the Ugandan population living near refugee settlements improved in terms of consumption and public service provisions, they were less satisfied with their living conditions.

2.4 The impact of migration on the happiness of the left-behind

Millions of migrants have left family members or other significant others behind. The most common reason is to support, via remittances, the well-being of family members and others who remain in the less developed place of origin. Hendriks et al. (2018) and Ivlevs et al. (2019) offered a global perspective of the happiness outcomes for those remaining behind using Gallup World Poll data. These studies consistently showed that having family members abroad is associated with greater evaluative well-being and positive affect (happiness, enjoyment, and laughter), but also with more negative affect (worry, depression, sadness, and anger) for adults left behind. The absence of an improvement in negative affect held across all of the 21 explored regional migration flows in Hendriks et al. (2018) and thus represents a global phenomenon. Correspondingly, Ivlevs et al. (2019) observe that remittance receipt is not associated with less stress and depression (two components of negative affect) and that those receiving remittances experienced more stress and depression than similar individuals who did not have one or multiple household members abroad. By contrast, remittance receipt amplifies the positive effects of having household members abroad on evaluative well-being and positive affect. Individuals in developing countries with household members living in developed countries benefited the most in these aspects of happiness, as well as, poorer individuals within a certain country (Hendriks et al. 2018; Ivlevs et al. 2019). This finding corresponds with the common observations that money matters more for poorer people and that the monetary benefits of migration are larger when moving to more developed countries. The amplifying effect of remittance receipt is consistent with the literature showing that remittance receipt increases the life satisfaction of those staying behind (Joarder et al. 2017) through significant economic gains and poverty alleviation for those left behind, thereby stimulating better outcomes in other domains, such as better education and health outcomes. Remittance receipt does not appear to be the only advantage of having a family abroad given that Ivlevs et al. (2019) observe a positive effect of having a household member abroad on positive affect and life evaluations independent of remittance receipt or income (see also Cárdenas et al. 2009). Non-positive effects for the left-behind were observed in particularly short-distance migration flows, such as those moving within Western Europe or within Southeast Asia (Hendriks et al. 2018). A plausible explanation is that these people often

moved for reasons other than sending remittances or could send less remittances due to smaller pay gaps between host and home countries within world regions.

Additional research has primarily taken place in the context of Latin America. Individuals in the former Soviet Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean with household members living permanently abroad or temporarily abroad for work reported higher life evaluations than individuals who did not (Hendriks et al. 2018). However, those with household members living temporarily abroad for work also experienced more negative affect. A hedonic adaptation process may explain why those with household members living permanently abroad did not experience more negative affect. These findings are consistent with the observation of Cárdenas et al. (2009) that Latin American individuals evaluate their lives more positively when having relatives or friends abroad who they can count on. Focusing on Mexico, Lara (2019) documented that higher migratory intensity, at the municipal level, increases life satisfaction among the left-behind men and women while negatively affecting the emotional states of women and positively affecting the emotional states of men. This finding confirms the more global pattern that the left-behind benefit more in terms of evaluative well-being than emotional well-being. Additional evidence comes from case studies of single communities. Borraz et al. (2010) find no positive overall effect on life satisfaction among left-behind adult household members in an Ecuadorian community, arguing that the received remittances compensate for the social costs of family separation. Similarly, case studies by Jones (2014, 2015) show that household members who stayed behind in some Mexican and Bolivian communities do not report higher family happiness than similar non-migrant households. Jones (2014, 2015) shows that the erosion of family values and family unity (social cohesion) are relevant negative channels, probably because it leads to more conflicts between household members. Case studies focused on emotional well-being and mental health show mixed results. Negative effects were reported for left-behind Mexican women and caregivers in Southeast Asia, whilst left-behind families in Tonga and the elderly in Moldova were not significantly affected (Gibson et al. 2011; Böhme et al. 2015; Nobles et al. 2015). Although the above studies did not distinguish between positive and negative affect, the overall results (null or negative effects) are in line with the global observation that increases in positive affect are counterbalanced by increases in negative affect. The external validity of these case studies is questionable because it is well-possible that these communities were selected because they fared worse than others.

One caveat of the above studies is that the reported results represent the adult population, not children. In addition, there is scant evidence on the channels through which the happiness of the left-behind is affected. Plausible, but untested reasons, mentioned by the authors were that the left-behind may derive satisfaction and hope for their own futures from observing that migrants realize their potential abroad. Various other drawbacks are highlighted in qualitative studies, such as changing responsibilities, loneliness, impaired emotional support, psychological disconnection from the migrant (Abrego 2014; Dreby 2010).

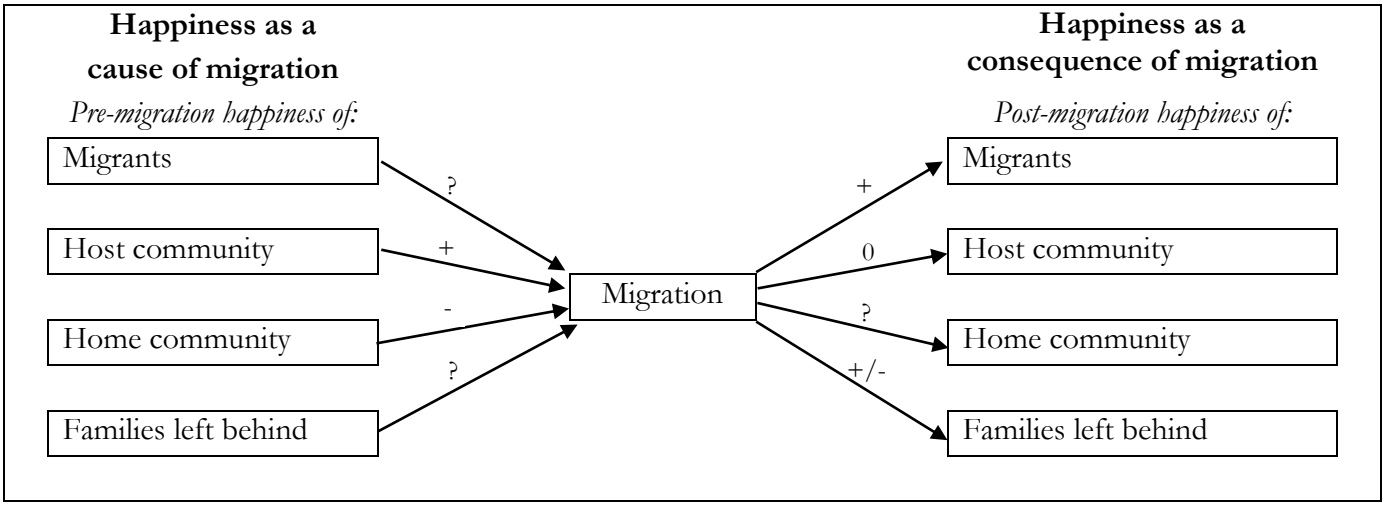
In the context of internal migration, negative effects of migration on those left-behind are reported in studies on Chinese urban-rural migration. Scheffel and Zhang (2019) reported lower happiness and more loneliness among the elderly parents left behind. The authors attributed these lower levels of well-being to the one-child policy in combination with an elderly support system that is largely based on inter-generational support. Interestingly, Chinese studies also focus extensively on the effect of parental migration on the SWB of left-behind children, showing that parental migration has at best a neutral effect on children's SWB (Murphy 2020). Some studies report no differences in general happiness and life satisfaction between left-behind and other children (e.g. Wen and Lin 2012; Murphy et al. 2015; Xu & Xie 2015; Ren & Treinman 2016), while other studies report a negative effect (e.g., Su et al. 2017; Shen and Zhang 2018). Parental migration seems to have especially disruptive SWB effects when both parents migrate (Wang and Yao 2020) and on boys (Shen and Zhang 2018). The negative effects of parental migration are particularly explained by increased loneliness, lower self-esteem and decreased social support.

3. Summary

3.1 Main findings

A subjective well-being (or happiness) angle has emerged as an important new frontier to advance the understanding of the causes and consequences of migration. This chapter highlights several key findings that have emerged from this literature. Figure 1 provides a general overview.

Figure 1. The bi-causal relationship between migration and happiness



Regarding the causes of migration, there is ample evidence that relatively unhappy people in middle-income and high-income countries have more often the aspiration or intention to emigrate, even after

accounting for standard pecuniary and non-pecuniary predictors of migration. Correspondingly, panel evidence in the German context shows that happiness is predictive of the intended length of stay of migrants; migrants have more often the intention to return home when having less positive happiness trajectories or when the happiness difference between the host-and home country decreases, even after controlling for standard predictors of migration. On the other hand, there is also initial evidence that the *causal* effect of happiness on *actual* emigration is weaker than the (conditional) association between happiness and emigration intentions/aspirations, and that there may be no causal effect at all. Panel studies on internal migration in developed countries show that, in some contexts, internal migrants experience a pre-migration happiness dip, but it remains unknown whether people move to overcome the happiness dip or whether anticipating migration causes a happiness dip. It is also unknown whether this happiness dip extends to developing countries and international migration. Taken together, it remains uncertain whether unhappiness causes actual emigration (hence the upper-left question mark in Figure 1). At the macro-level, there is consistent evidence that people move towards happier places, with bilateral migration flows that increase with increasing happiness in host communities and decrease with increasing happiness in home communities (see the middle-left arrows in Figure 1). The lower-left arrow shows that it remains unknown what role the happiness of family members left behind plays in the decision to migrate and leave these family members behind. *Anticipated* happiness is probably a better but less explored predictor of migration decisions than the *level* of happiness. Initial evidence confirms that the anticipated happiness gain of migration is a particularly powerful—though imperfect—predictor of migration behavior, which is plausible given its close relationship with expected utility. Taken together, happiness dynamics capture important underlying quality-of-life related reasons for both internal and international migration that are not captured by standard migration models. This observation should encourage the migration literature to devote more attention to the role of happiness in migration behavior and the underlying factors it captures.

Regarding the consequences of migration, the literature on international migration shows that most international migrants gain happiness from migration, hosting populations tend to experience a mixed but small impact, and household members staying behind generally experience a positive impact on evaluative well-being but not emotional well-being because the left-behind tend to experience both more positive and negative affect (see Figure 1). However, the outcomes are strongly context-dependent and important differences exist between individuals. Notably, negative effects have been reported for the elderly and economically deprived groups in some hosting countries (e.g., the United Kingdom), for some immigrant groups (e.g., those moving to less developed countries), and for the left-behind in some local communities in various countries (e.g., caregivers in Southeast Asia). By contrast, particularly positive effects are achieved by migrants and the left-behind when migrants move to more developed countries and send back remittances. The impact of migration is much smaller for internal migrants, which is plausible because of the larger

circumstantial differences between countries than within countries. Positive effects are generally documented for internal migrants in developed countries. Studies on developing countries have mainly focused on urban-rural migration and show that, despite urban populations being generally happier than rural populations in developing countries, rural-urban migration has neutral or negative effects on the happiness of the internal migrants or household members left behind, with China being the best documented example.

3.1 Policy implications

The current evidence suggests that migration contributes to a happier world because of the generally positive effects for migrants while migration has mixed effects on family members left behind and marginal effects on hosting populations. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of migrants become unhappier through migration, which implies that prospective migrants in selected migration flows could benefit from support in developing realistic expectations of migration to avoid such negative outcomes. The current evidence suggests that international migration reduces happiness inequality around the world at the individual level because migrants typically take an intermediate position between the happiness of natives in the home and host countries, those left behind in low-income countries benefit the most, and the effects on host countries are negligible. However, the effect of migration on happiness inequalities between nations is less clear. On the one hand, it may slightly increase inequalities if happier individuals in low-income countries have a higher probability to prepare to move abroad, leading to a happiness drain in low-income countries (Migali and Scipioni 2019). On the other hand, the lower happiness of migrants compared with natives in the typically happier host countries may reduce average happiness in the host countries. It is also important to note that the prevalent and vast concerns in immigrant-receiving countries about migration are not in line with the small (and often non-negative) effects of immigration on societal happiness, even if some natives do experience negative effects. Moreover, increasing the happiness of immigrants can be a fruitful way to enhance the benefits of immigration for the host society, since happiness has proven to be a key driver of economic, social, and health advantages, such as greater productivity and more openness toward other cultures (De Neve et al. 2013). Hence, policies that contribute to migrant happiness may create a win-win situation for both immigrants and natives. Notably, happiness gains among immigrants can be promoted by facilitating migrants' acculturation to the mainstream society while allowing them to also maintain their heritage culture. Finally, the documented relevance of happiness as a determinant of migration suggests that policy makers aiming to reduce outmigration should target not only to improve the objective well-being of citizens, but also their subjective well-being.

3.3 Directions for future research

Much remains to be learned about the bi-causal relationship between happiness and migration. Major progress in understanding the role of happiness as a cause of migration can be achieved by further exploring

(a) how strongly the *expected* happiness consequences of migration influence migration decisions (thereby building on Benjamin et al. 2014b); (b) the role of individual happiness *levels* on actual emigration behavior rather than emigration aspirations/intentions (thereby building on Brzozowski and Coniglio (2021); (c) the relative importance of happiness compared with other standard predictors of individual-level migration decisions; (d) causal evidence through panel, experimental, or instrumental variable designs to better establish the causal effect of happiness on migration; (e) whether a possible happiness dip before migration is caused by people moving to overcome the dip or because anticipating migration causes a dip; and (f) the role of the happiness of family members left behind in triggering people to migrate to support their families back home.

Major progress in understanding the role of the consequences of migration for happiness can be achieved by further exploring (a) causal evidence through panel, experimental, or instrumental variable designs to alleviate endogeneity issues that remain present in for instance migrant-stayer comparisons; (b) the channels through which migration affects the happiness of the various stakeholders; and (c) the impact of migration on the happiness of children and the impact of outmigration on happiness in home countries.

References

Abel GJ, Sander N (2014) Quantifying global international migration flows. Science 343(6178): 1520-1522

Abrego L (2014) Sacrificing families: Navigating laws, labor, and love across borders. Stanford University Press, Stanford

Akay A, Bargain O, Zimmermann KF (2012) Relative concerns of rural-to-urban migrants in China. J Econ Behav Organ 81(2):421-441

Akay A, Constant A, Giulietti C (2014) The impact of immigration on the well-being of natives. J Econ Behav Organ 103:72–92

Akay A, Constant A, Giulietti C. et al (2017) Ethnic diversity and well-being. J Popul Econ 30(1):265–306

Akdede SH, Giovanis E (2021). The impact of migration flows on well-being of elderly natives and migrants: Evidence from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe. Soc Indic Res (in press)

Angelini V, Casi L, Corazzini L (2015) Life satisfaction of immigrants: Does cultural assimilation matter?. J Popul Econ 28(3):817-844

Balestra C, Boarini R, Tosetto E (2018) What matters most to people? Evidence from the OECD Better Life Index users' responses. Soc Indic Res 136(3):907-930

Baykara-Krumme H., Platt, L (2018). Life satisfaction of migrants, stayers and returnees: Reaping the fruits of migration in old age?. Ageing Soc 38(4):721-745

Bartram D (2011) Economic migration and happiness: Comparing immigrants' and natives' happiness gains from income. Soc Indic Res 103(1): 57-76

Bartram D (2013a) Happiness and 'economic migration': A comparison of Eastern European migrants and stayers. Migr Stud 1(2):156-175

Bartram D (2013b) Migration, return, and happiness in Romania. Eur Soc 15(3):408-422

Bartram D (2015) Inverting the logic of economic migration: Happiness among migrants moving from wealthier to poorer countries in Europe. J Happiness Stud 16(5): 1211-1230

Bell M, Charles-Edwards E (2013) Cross-national comparisons of internal migration: An update of global patterns and trends. UN DESA Population Division, New York

Benjamin DJ, Heffetz O (2012) What do you think would make you happier? What do you think you would choose? Am Econ Rev 102(5):2083-2110

Benjamin DJ, Heffetz O, Kimball MS et al (2014a) Beyond happiness and satisfaction: Toward well-being indices based on stated preference. Am Econ Rev 104(9):2698-2735

Benjamin DJ, Heffetz O, Kimball MS et al (2014b) Can marginal rates of substitution be inferred from happiness data? Evidence from residency choices. Am Econ Rev 104(11):3498-3528

Betz W, Simpson NB (2013) The effects of international migration on the well-being of native populations in Europe. IZA J Migr 2(1):12

Böhme MH, Persian R, Stöhr T (2015) Alone but better off? Adult child migration and health of elderly parents in Moldova. J Health Econ 39:211-227

Borraz F, Pozo S, Rossi M (2010) And what about the family back home? International migration and happiness in Cuenca, Ecuador. J Bus Strategy 27(1):7-27

Brzozowski J, Coniglio N (2021) International Migration and the (Un) happiness Push: Evidence from Polish Longitudinal Data. Int Migr Rev (in press).

Burger MJ, Morrison PS, Hendriks M, Hoogerbrugge, MM (2020) Urban-rural happiness differentials across the world. In: Helliwell JF, Layard R, Sachs J, De Neve J-E (eds), World Happiness Report 2020, UN SDSN, New York, p 66-93

World Happiness Report, 66-93.

Cai R, Esipova N, Oppenheimer M et al (2014). International migration desires related to subjective well-being. IZA J Migr 3(1):8

Cai S, Wang J (2018) Less advantaged, more optimistic? Subjective well-being among rural, migrant and urban populations in contemporary China. China Econ Rev 52:95-110

Cárdenas M, Di Maro V, Sorkin I (2009) Migration and life satisfaction: evidence from Latin America. J Bus Strategy 26(1):9-33

Cardoso R, Meijers E, Van Ham M, Burger M, de Vos D (2019) Why bright city lights dazzle and illuminate: A cognitive science approach to urban promises. Urban Stud 56(2):452-470

Cela E, Bettin G (2018) Returning to the country of origin in later life: Longitudinal evidence from the German Socio-Economic Panel. Area 50(4):483-491

Chen J. (2013) Perceived discrimination and subjective well-being among rural-to-urban migrants in China. J Soc. & Soc Welfare 40:131-156

Chen J, Kosec K, Mueller V (2019) Moving to despair? Migration and well-being in Pakistan. World Dev 113:186-203 Chindarkar N (2014) Is subjective well-being of concern to potential migrants from Latin America?. Soc Indic Res 115(1):159-182

Churchill SA, Farrell L, Smyth R (2019) Neighbourhood ethnic diversity and mental health in Australia. Health Econ 28(9):1075-1087

De Brauw A, Mueller V, Woldehanna T. (2018) Does internal migration improve overall well-being in Ethiopia?. J Afr Econ 27(3):347-365

De Jong GF, Chamratrithirong A, Tran QG (2002) For better, for worse: life satisfaction consequences of migration. Int Migr Rev 36(3):838-863

De Neve, J-E, Diener E, Tay L et al (2013) The objective benefits of subjective well-being. In: Helliwell JF, Layard R, and Sachs J (eds), World Happiness Report 2013, UN SDSN, New York, p 54-74

Diener E, Suh EM, Lucas RE, Smith HL (1999) Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. Psychol Bull 125(2):276-302

Dreby J (2010) *Divided by borders: Mexican migrants and their children*. University of California Press, Berkeley

Erlinghagen M (2011) Nowhere better than here? The subjective well-being of German emigrants and remigrants. Comp Popul Stud 36(4):899-926

Erlinghagen M, Kern C, Stein P (2021). Migration, social stratification and dynamic effects on subjective well being. Adv Life Course Res, (In Press).

Esipova N, Pugliese A, Ray J (2017), More than 750 million worldwide would migrate if they could. https://news.gallup.com/poll/245255/750-million-worldwide-migrate.aspx. accessed 2 Oct 2020

Frey BS, Stutzer A (2002) What can economists learn from happiness research?. J Econ Lit 40(2):402-435

Frijters P, Johnston DW, Shields MA (2011) Life satisfaction dynamics with quarterly life event data. Scand J Econ 113(1):190-211

Fuchs-Schündeln N, Schündeln M (2009) East–West migration within Germany since reunification: who stays, who goes, who returns?. Econ Transit, 17(4):703-38

Gibson J, McKenzie D, Stillman S (2011) The impacts of international migration on remaining household members: Omnibus results from a migration lottery program. Rev Econ Stat 93(4):1297-1318

Glaeser EL, Gottlieb JD, Ziv O (2016) Unhappy cities. J Labor Econ 34(S2):S129-S182

Graham C, Nikolova M (2018) Happiness and international migration in Latin America. In: Helliwell JF, Layard R, Sachs J (eds), World Happiness Report 2018, UN SDSN, New York, p 89-114

Grimes A, Wesselbaum D (2019). Moving towards happiness?. Int Migr 57(3):20-40

Gruber S, Sand G (2021) Does migration pay off in later life? Income and subjective well-being of older migrants in Europe. Soc Indic Res (in press)

Helliwell JF, Huang H, Wang S, Shiplett, H(2018) International migration and world happiness. In: Helliwell JF, Layard R, Sachs J (eds), World Happiness Report 2018, UN SDSN, New York, p 13-44

Helliwell, JF, Shiplett H, Bonikowska A (2020) Migration as a test of the happiness set-point hypothesis: Evidence from immigration to Canada and the United Kingdom. Can J Econ 53(4):1618-1641

Hendriks M (2015) The happiness of international migrants: A review of research findings, Migr Stud 3(3):343-369

Hendriks M, Bartram D (2016) Macro-conditions and immigrants' happiness: Is moving to a wealthy country all that matters?. Soc Sci Res 56:90-107

Hendriks M, Bartram D (2019) Bringing happiness into the study of migration and its consequences: What, why, and how?. J Immigr Refug Stud 17(3):279-298

Hendriks M, Burger M, Ray J et al (2018) Do international migrants increase their happiness and that of their families by migrating, In Helliwell JF, Layard R, Sachs J (eds), World Happiness Report 2018, UN SDSN, New York, p 44-65

Hendriks M, Burger M (2020) Unsuccessful subjective well-being assimilation among immigrants: The role of faltering perceptions of the host society. J Happiness Stud 21:1985-2006

Howley PM, Waqas M, Moro L et al (2020) It's not all about the economy stupid! Immigration and subjective well-being in England. Work Employ. Soc 34(5):919-936

Hummel D (2016) Inter-state internal migration: State-level wellbeing as a cause. J Happiness Stud 17(5):2149-2165

IOM (2013) World migration report 2013: Migrant well-being and development, IOM, Geneva.

Ivlevs A (2015) Happy moves? Assessing the link between life satisfaction and emigration intentions. Kyklos 68(3):335-356

Ivlevs A, Nikolova M, Graham C (2019) Emigration, remittances, and the subjective well-being of those staying behind. J Popul Econ, 32(1):113-151

Ivlevs A, Veliziotis M (2018) Local-level immigration and life satisfaction: The EU enlargement experience in England and Wales. Environ Plan A: Econ Space 50(1):175-193

Joarder MAM, Harris M, Dockery AM (2017) Remittances and happiness of migrants and their home households: Evidence using matched samples. J Dev Stud, 53(3): 422-443

Jones R (2014) Migration and family happiness in Bolivia: Does social disintegration negate economic well-being?. Int Migr 52(3): 177-193

Jones R (2015) Migration pessimism and the subjective well-being of migrant households in Mexico. Bull Lat Am Res, 34(3): 305-323

Knies G, Nandi A, Platt L (2016) Life satisfaction, ethnicity and neighbourhoods: Is there an effect of neighbourhood ethnic composition on life satisfaction?. Soc Sci Res 60:110-124

Knight J, Gunatilaka R (2010). Great expectations? The subjective well-being of rural–urban migrants in China. World Dev *38*(1):113-124

Kóczán Z (2016) (Why) are immigrants unhappy?. IZA J Migr 5(1):3.

Kratz F (2020) On the way from misery to happiness? A longitudinal perspective on economic migration and well-being. Migr Stud 8(3):307-355.

Kreibaum M (2016) Their suffering, our burden? How Congolese refugees affect the Ugandan population. World Dev 78:262-287

Kuroki M (2018) Racial diversity, immigrants and the well-being of residents: evidence from US counties. J. Popul. Econ 31(1):107-133

Lara J (2019) Subjective well-being among communities left behind by international migrants. Migr Dev 8(3):355-369

Longhi S (2014) Cultural diversity and subjective well-being. IZA J Migr 3(1):13.

Lönnqvist, JE et al. (2015) The mixed blessings of migration: Life satisfaction and self-esteem over the course of migration. Eur J Soc Psychol 45(4):496-514.

Lovo S (2014) Potential migration and subjective well-being in Europe. IZA J Migr 3(1): 24

Lucas RE (2014) Life satisfaction of US counties predicts population growth. Soc Psychol Personal Sci 5(4):383-388

McKenzie D, Gibson J, Stillman S (2013) A land of milk and honey with streets paved with gold: Do emigrants have over-optimistic expectations about incomes abroad?. J Dev Econ 102:116-127

Melzer SM (2011) Does migration make you happy? The influence of migration on subjective well-being. J Soc Res Pol 2(2): 73-92.

Melzer SM, Muffels RJ (2017) Migrants' pursuit of happiness: An analysis of the effects of adaptation, social comparison and economic integration on subjective well-being on the basis of German panel data for 1990–2014. Migr Stud 5(2):190-215

Meng, X (2012) Labor market outcomes and reforms in China. J Econ Perspect 26(4):75-102

Migali S, Scipioni M (2019) Who's about to leave? A global survey of aspirations and intentions to migrate. Int Migr 57(5):181-200

Mulcahy K, Kollamparambil U (2016) The impact of rural-urban migration on subjective well-being in South Africa. J Dev Stud 52(9):1357-1371

Murphy R (2020) The children of China's great migration. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Murphy R, Zhou M, Tao R (2016) Parents' migration and children's subjective well-being and health: Evidence from rural China. Popul Space Place 22(8):766-780

Nguyen AD, Benet-Martínez V (2013) Biculturalism and adjustment: A meta-analysis." J Cross Cult Psychol 44(1):122-159

Nikolova M, Graham C (2015) In transit: The well-being of migrants from transition and post-transition countries. J Econ Behav Organ 112:164-186

Nobles J, Rubalcava L, Teruel G (2015) After spouses depart: Emotional wellbeing among nonmigrant Mexican mothers. Soc Sci Med 132:236-244

Nowok B, Van Ham M, Findlay AM et al (2013) Does migration make you happy? A longitudinal study of internal migration and subjective well-being. Environ Plan A 45(4):986-1002

O'Connor KJ (2020) The effect of immigration on natives' well-being in the European Union. J Econ Behav Organ 180:257-274

OECD (2013) OECD guidelines on measuring subjective well-being. OECD Publishing, Paris

Ormel J, Lindenberg S, Steverink N, and Verbrugge LM (1999). Subjective well-being and social production functions. Soc Indic Res 46(1):61-90

Otrachshenko V, Popova O (2014). Life (dis)satisfaction and the intention to migrate: Evidence from Central and Eastern Europe. J Socio Econ 48:40-49

Polgreen LA, Simpson NB (2011) Happiness and international migration. J Happiness Stud 12(5):819-840

Preston K, Grimes A (2019) Migration, gender, wages and wellbeing: Who gains and in which ways?. Soc Indic Res 144(3):1415-1452

Randell H (2016) The short-term impacts of development-induced displacement on wealth and subjective well-being in the Brazilian Amazon. World Dev 87:385-400

Ren Q, Treiman DJ (2016) The consequences of parental labor migration in China for children's emotional wellbeing. Soc Sci Res 58:46-67

Ruyssen I, Salomone S (2018) Female migration: A way out of discrimination?. J Dev Econ 130:224-241

Schiele M (2021) Life satisfaction and return migration: analysing the role of life satisfaction for migrant return intentions in Germany. J Ethn Migr Stud 47(1):110-129

Scheffel J, Zhang Y (2019) How does internal migration affect the emotional health of elderly parents left-behind?. J Pop Econ 32(3):953-980

Shamsuddin M, Katsaiti MS (2020) Migration and Happiness: Evidence from Germany. J Happiness Stud 21:2931-2955

Shen K, Zhang Y. The impacts of parental migration on children's subjective well-being in rural china: a double-edged sword. Eurasian Geogr Econ, 59(2):267-289

Snodgrass JG, Upadhyay C, Debnath D, Lacy MG (2016) The mental health costs of human displacement: A natural experiment involving indigenous Indian conservation refugees. World Dev Perspect 2: 25-33

Stark O, Bloom DE (1985) The new economics of labor migration. Am Econ Rev 75(2):173-178

Stillman S, Gibson J, McKenzie J et al (2015) Miserable migrants? Natural experiment evidence on international migration and objective and subjective well-being. World Dev 65:79-93

Su S, Li X, Lin D, Zhu M (2017) Future orientation, social support, and psychological adjustment among left-behind children in rural China: A longitudinal study. Front Psychol 8:1309

Switek M (2016) Internal migration and life satisfaction: Well-being paths of young adult migrants. Soc Indic Res 125(1):191-241

UN DESA (2019) International Migration 2019: Wall Chart (ST/ESA/SER/A/431)

UN DESA (2015) Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin, United Nations database (POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2015).

UNHCR (2020) Figures at a glance. https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html Accessed 2 Oct 2020

Wen M, Lin D (2012) Child development in rural China: Children left behind by their migrant parents and children of nonmigrant families. Child Dev 83(1):120-136

Wang L, Yao J (2020) Life satisfaction and social anxiety among left-behind children in rural China: The mediating role of loneliness. J Community Psychol 48(2):258-266

Xu H, Xie Y (2015) The causal effects of rural-to-urban migration on children's well-being in China. Eur Sociol Rev 31(4):502-519