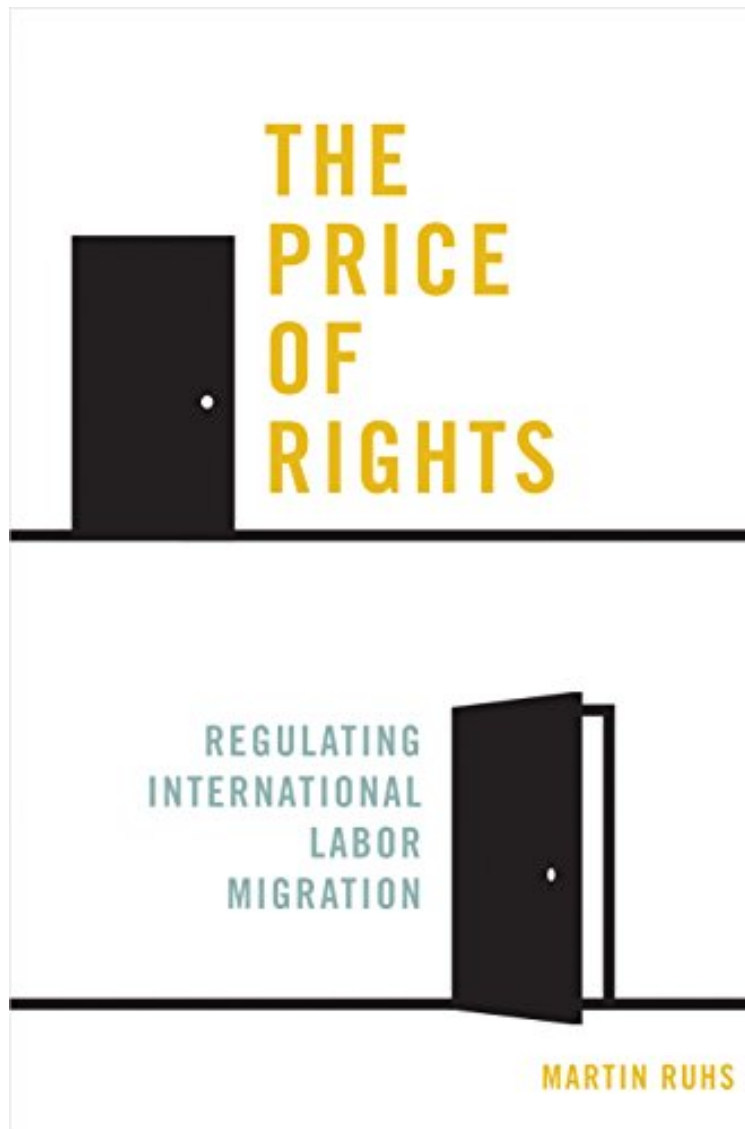


(Download pdf ebook) The Price of Rights: Regulating International Labor Migration

The Price of Rights: Regulating International Labor Migration

Martin Ruhs

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Martin Ruhs : The Price of Rights: Regulating International Labor Migration before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Price of Rights: Regulating International Labor Migration:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Regulating international labor migrationBy CustomerThe central argument of Ruhs' carefully researched and argued work is that there can be a tension between promoting more international labor migration and more rights for migrant workers. This has proved a controversial issue, especially with international organizations such as ILO and the World Bank that have tended to ignore the social costs that migration can cause. He makes his case persuasively with an array of empirical studies from a range of countries.4 of

5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Reality Check, Solid Argument
By Amy
Excerpt from a review on The Migrationist -Martin Ruhs, lecturer in political economy at the University of Oxford argues for the middle ground between state interests and immigrant rights. To be clear: Ruhs is not anti-immigrant, nor anti-immigrant rights. Rather, he argues "for a pragmatic approach that is both realistic and idealist" (20). He asserts "...we cannot hope to close the gap between human rights... and migrant rights in practice unless we understand as well as account for the reasons why nation-states grant and restrict certain rights" (16). Ruhs' work focuses on the space between the rights of the individual and the interests of the state; the careful balance between maintaining rights and enabling access to the economic market. Immigration policy decisions, according to Ruhs, are made with four sets of constraints in mind: i) domestic and international legal constraints ii) the capacity to control immigration iii) domestic institutional factors (such as the welfare state) and iv) labor market structures. Ruhs describes the trade-offs between these factors and immigrant rights. Importantly, his analysis "...shows that among programs in upper-high-income countries, labor immigration programs can be characterized by a trade-off between openness and some migrant rights..." in the receiving country (19). Ruhs finds that a high degree of openness to migrants in the receiving country results in more restricted rights once in the country. Despite this, migrant workers continue to make the choice to emigrate and make this trade-off between their rights and economic opportunity. To grant more rights, Ruhs argues, would close up immigration policies, which is good for the protection of the existing migrants but bad for the interests of any "potential future migrants." Where Ruhs' work gets interesting, is how he suggests countries tackle these rights restrictions. Rather than an outright banishment of any rights restrictions, which could in turn restrict their movement and subsequent economic opportunity, Ruhs argues to allow for some rights restrictions - with caveats. "Any rights restrictions should... be limited to the right to free choice of employment, equal access to means-tested public benefits, the right to family reunion, and the right to permanent residence and citizenship. Rights restrictions need to be evidence based in the sense that there must be a clear case that they create specific costs that the receiving country wishes to avoid... to enable greater openness to admitting migrant workers... I also hold that any rights restrictions should be time limited... After this period, migrants need to be granted access to permanent residence (and thus eventual citizenship) or be required to leave (21)". All this is, as Ruhs said himself, very practical. His suggestions would make an interesting and potentially fruitful compromise between the state and individual rights - if ever actually applied to policy. What stands out as problematic is the idea that a country could ever enforce such a potentially large number of people to leave at the end of any temporary program. The United States has an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants and an estimated 40% overstayed term visas. More subtly problematic is the underlying assumption that a country would care enough about the rights of a non-citizen to make the compromise in the first place. What is the motivation of the state to compromise at all? That being said, in many ways, Ruhs' work is an excellent reality check for idealism within the immigrant advocacy community and a solid discussion on the rights of migrants and the trade-offs of policy decisions. It'd be a good addition to a graduate or higher-level undergraduate migration course reading list, or to the bookshelf of an academically minded policy maker.

Many low-income countries and development organizations are calling for greater liberalization of labor immigration policies in high-income countries. At the same time, human rights organizations and migrant rights advocates demand more equal rights for migrant workers. The Price of Rights shows why you cannot always have both. Examining labor immigration policies in over forty countries, as well as policy drivers in major migrant-receiving and migrant-sending states, Martin Ruhs finds that there are trade-offs in the policies of high-income countries between openness to admitting migrant workers and some of the rights granted to migrants after admission. Insisting on greater equality of rights for migrant workers can come at the price of more restrictive admission policies, especially for lower-skilled workers. Ruhs advocates the liberalization of international labor migration through temporary migration programs that protect a universal set of core rights and account for the interests of nation-states by restricting a few specific rights that create net costs for receiving countries. The Price of Rights analyzes how high-income countries restrict the rights of migrant workers as part of their labor immigration policies and discusses the implications for global debates about regulating labor migration and protecting migrants. It comprehensively looks at the tensions between human rights and citizenship rights, the agency and interests of migrants and states, and the determinants and ethics of labor immigration policy.

"To what extent should countries encourage immigration? What rights should be conferred on immigrants, especially temporary ones? Ruhs emphasizes the uncomfortable tradeoffs built into every answer to those questions." - Richard Cooper, Foreign Affairs, US
"Ruhs's work is an excellent reality check for idealism within the immigrant advocacy community and a solid discussion on the rights of migrants and the trade-offs of policy decisions. It'd be a good addition to a graduate or higher-level undergraduate migration course reading list, or to the bookshelf of an academically minded policy maker." - Amy Grenier, The Migrationist, US
"Supporters of the rights of migrants can and should read this book with a proper sense of gratitude that such a thoughtful piece of work which critically assesses exactly what we are trying to achieve has been written." - Don Flynn, Migrant Rights Network, UK
"We may

argue with the detail of Ruhs's prescriptions for expanding labour migration schemes for low-skilled workers, but the substance of his ethical argument is not easily dismissed. To shut down labour migration - even in the name of protecting migrants' rights - is to deny opportunity to potential migrant workers, and to condemn them to living in the state of poverty they seek to overcome." - Peter Mares, Inside Story, Australia

"This is an academic book, but very accessible, and it is an important one for anybody interested in the migration debate to read." - Diane Coyle, Enlightenment Economics

From the Author: The website and blog for this book can be found at priceofrights.com

From the Inside Flap: "In this excellent book, Martin Ruhs presents a fresh analysis of the reasons why many countries, whether they be high or low income, restrict the rights of migrant workers. His carefully researched volume will be of great interest to policymakers and migration experts across the globe." --Frank Laczko, International Organization for Migration

"This may be the most important book on migration in the last decade. Focusing on the trade-offs between openness to more migration and limitations on migrants' rights, Martin Ruhs tackles one of the fundamental challenges of the twenty-first century: how to resolve the tensions between national security and human rights." --Khalid Koser, Geneva Centre for Security Policy

"In analyzing the trade-off between liberalizing international labor migration and extending social and economic rights for migrants, this book moves the debate about migrant rights from ideals to realities. It is a must-read for those working in the fields of human rights, development, globalization, and international governance, as well as for specialists and organizations dealing with migration-related issues." --Philip Martin, University of California, Davis

"While it is not easy to write a forcefully argued book about the rights of migrant workers, Ruhs succeeds because he opts for a strong, pragmatic approach. He clearly commands a broad and diverse literature, and he makes his case with extensive knowledge and an array of empirical studies about a range of countries." --Saskia Sassen, Columbia University and author of *Territory, Authority, Rights*

"This compelling and cogently argued book addresses an important matter, namely the conditions affecting the rights of labor migrants. Where much of the research on rights and citizenship focuses on the developed world, Ruhs rightly expands the scope to include the Persian Gulf states, as well as developing societies such as Malaysia and Indonesia." --Roger Waldinger, University of California, Los Angeles