



Refival.org

**Synergistic Refugee Integration,
Rural Redevelopment & the Future of Jobs**

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Refival: Synergistic Refugee Integration, Rural Redevelopment & the Future of Jobs

Summary

The Refival refugee integration initiative currently seeks stakeholders who would be interested in adopting Refival and who would be willing to set-up or participate in a task-force to jump-start it.

Although the project is at the moment fully focused on the European refugee streams and "the big 5" EU countries, its concept is in principle universal and can be adapted and applied almost anywhere in the World.

Refival is primarily based on creating flexible employment. This employment is realized by stimulating the transfer of specific tasks to Internet so that jobs can be moved to people instead of people to jobs.

With currently more than 150 million EU jobs being services related, every percent of tasks that can be packaged as Internet based jobs means a potential of 1,5 million people to be freely migrated geographically.

Refugees have better chances for employment if jobs can be spread to rural, lower cost/salary, areas and if companies can be offered a competitive edge.

Rural job migration scenarios can thus save substantial money compared to the current approach in which even educated refugees will remain unemployed and dependent on welfare at high-living-cost and high-level-minimum wage areas.

Further, by investing in labor skills, a future labor reserve can be efficiently grown in such environments. Rural areas have over the past 50 years been vacated by around 45 million people and can be revitalized this way.

The labor reserve/"internal EU labor migration potential" built this way can compensate the serious demographic aging issues at the European level, which are expected to arise in 5-10 years from now.

Part of the skills development process is to teach refugees languages and other qualifications so that they will be better prepared to enter the higher level North-Western-European job market at any time when this is required demand-wise.

Finally, revitalization creates different skills based indirect "community support" employment. Longer term, job diversity is expected to be reestablished, which enables the return of entrepreneurs and people from local origin.

Introduction

With about 1,3 million refugees arriving in Europe during 2015 and with many hundreds of thousands more expected to arrive in 2016, the next question (after providing them shelter) becomes how to give these people a future in Europe?

Such future may be temporary and people may be able to return home eventually, but unfortunately for most of them that is not expected to happen very soon. They will likely stay in Europe for a period of 5-10 years at least.

What does Europe have to offer to them? Looking at the problems Europe faces, the answer is not optimistic. Although the EU economy recovered over the past two years, this has (with exception of in Germany and some smaller countries) not led to the type of labor demand that can easily absorb refugees.

Germany, being the big exception under the "big 5" European countries (low unemployment combined with strong demographical population aging issues), has generated about 500.000 additional jobs per year recently, more than double of the 200.000 jobs it usually creates. However, 350.000 of these new jobs have been filled via internal EU migration and a shift to employing refugees instead of Europeans would raise serious questions about free EU movement.

What makes the situation even more complex is that almost all refugees have been attracted by a few high-social-standards, high-living-cost and high-wage areas in Europe. This on one side costs these areas a fortune (total shelter and integration cost up to 2000 Euros per refugee per month) whereas on the other side it does not guarantee any improvement in integration success.

At the same time does Europe face other challenges; many European areas have high, especially youth, unemployment. There are serious demographic population aging issues in many countries and urbanization has led to urban scarcity. (over the past 50 years around 45 million people left the European countryside).

Looking at all the above issues a common thread arises, namely that there is a very unequal economical spread in Europe: "Refugee shelter populations", employment levels and demographical ageing are unevenly spread over Europe, also between rural and urban areas.

Refival wants to improve sharing of economical activities and burdens between European countries and between rural and urban areas. Basis of such sharing is a better use of the lower living-cost advantage "deprived" areas offer. At a macro (European) level such an approach can generate a competitive edge for business.

Starting point is to embrace the increased flexibility of jobs as it is offered by the "Fourth Industrial Revolution". This makes it possible to move jobs to people instead of people to jobs. For those settled it means a change in job tasks and priorities, for those entering the job market it means much stronger adaptation.

The refugees, being forced to restart their lives, can be the catalyst required to relocate fully Internet based tasks to more competitive (mostly rural) areas. Both Europe and refugees could benefit: redevelopment and integration go hand in hand here.

The Refival refugee target group

The Refival approach is not suitable for all refugees. To begin with one needs to carefully select specifically qualified refugees who match the "Internet based jobs skills demand" that drives Refival's rural revitalization. Relatively high educated, computer literate, refugees who serve as rural "brain injection" are the catalyst.

From the approximately 50% (650.000) Syrian refugees who arrived in Europe during 2015 (of which 99% qualifies for protection status), 58% are adult men (380.000); from this group 10% is estimated to be so highly qualified that they can find a direct matching connection with the European job market, but another 20% of educated refugees will likely face difficulties in fulfilling labor market demands. Finally there is a great majority of 70% whose education is at a lower level and who will face a longer process to adapt to the European labor market.

Refival mainly targets the second (20%) group of approximately 75.000 people. (The Syrian refugees are in general better educated than other refugee groups and although women can equally participate, Refival's conservative estimate excludes them here). Since Refival is based on integrating families (x4), it means that Refival attempts to directly migrate around 300.000 refugees to rural areas.

As a result of such rural revitalization indirect "community supporting" jobs will also be created. These jobs can be either fulfilled by female partners of Internet job employees, local people, other refugee groups or the 70% less educated Syrians. This indirect employment is estimated to at least support another 25.000 families, bringing the total refugee migration potential to around 400.000 people, roughly 30% of the total refugee level arriving to Europe during 2015.

(Refival is family relocation based. Some migrants will be part of a reunification process. This means that there is no direct one-to-one relationship with the present refugees. It implies that extra people will arrive from outside of the EU.)

In case the European borders are going to be firmly closed and refugees will be selected in the region and brought to Europe, the composition of the refugee stream will likely fully change. Whereas currently the strongest, most educated and relatively rich middle class arrives (the trip to Europe is expensive), in the alternative case other, political, criteria like vulnerability, ethnicity etc. will likely start to prevail. Refival's European synergetic effect can become a selection criterion in this case by, on purpose, inviting those who can contribute to Europe.

The future of work

Recent publications such as McKinsey & Company's "Four Fundamentals of Workplace Automation" (<http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/business-technology/our-insights/four-fundamentals-of-workplace-automation>) and the WEF's "The Future of Jobs" report (<http://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs>) predict a strong disruption of employment in the coming years.

The World Economic Forum report states that: "The Fourth Industrial Revolution, which includes developments in previously disjointed fields such as artificial intelligence and machine-learning, robotics, nanotechnology, 3-D printing, and genetics and biotechnology, will cause widespread disruption not only to business models but also to labour markets over the next five years, with enormous change predicted in the skill sets needed to thrive in the new landscape."

According to McKinsey: "More specifically, our research suggests that as many as 45 percent of the activities individuals are paid to perform can be automated by adapting currently demonstrated technologies.⁴ In the United States, these activities represent about \$2 trillion in annual wages. Although we often think of automation primarily affecting low-skill, low-wage roles, we discovered that even the highest-paid occupations in the economy, such as financial managers, physicians, and senior executives, including CEOs, have a significant amount of activity that can be automated."

The World Economic Forum report concludes that one of the main disruptive factors are flexible working arrangements: "Organizations are likely to have an ever-smaller pool of core full-time employees for fixed functions, backed up by colleagues in other countries and external consultants and contractors for specific projects. (44% Impact felt already WEF, The Future of Jobs, 2016)".

What does the above mean short-term? It predicts that a general labor task analysis and reshuffling will take place in which tasks will be categorized in "to be automated or robotized" and "not to be automated or robotized". However, if such a process is executed and tasks are being reorganized then an important third category exists, namely: "whether a task can be outsourced or not".

Meanwhile, fast Internet is available almost everywhere in the world and in recent years many tasks ranging from sales agents, customer support, administrative back office tasks and all kind of internally "shared services" have been relocated. For example just in Budapest there are 50.000 people working via Internet for large international corporations this way.

A second task based category is "tele"-services. In the meantime one can consult doctors, psychologists and mentors via Internet and one can outsource text writing, graphical design and many other tasks via crowd-sourcing. Finally as a third category one can study via distance-learning, consulting teachers online.

Although the number of Internet based jobs has grown rapidly over the past years, it is to be expected that as soon as the Fourth Industrial Revolution's "task reshuffling" will reach its full swing, the scale of outsourcing will become much larger than today because many smaller companies will start to participate.

Core direction of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution is no other than that of the previous ones. The target is to increase productivity via innovation and cost optimization. As a result, this should increase the GDP and bring more prosperity.

What possibly can turn out to be different in this "Fourth Revolution" is that (due to large scale automation and robotization) there will not be more or even the same amount of human labor required. What is clear is that jobs will be disruptively different from today and that the desired skills will be much more dynamically and more rapidly changing than ever before. Especially for the core "strategically important" organizational tasks, but also for most tasks to be outsourced via Internet (which is the most relevant factor in this context) there will be a continuous "life-long" learning and skills development requirement.

Repackaging tasks in newly defined more dynamical jobs will likely also lead to a shift of priority between three main job "aspect categories": -1- the execution of tasks, -2- hard and soft skills development (including social networking) and -3- reflections about the results. The first aspect will very probably contain much less routine elements than today because routine can be mostly automated or robotized, however work must still be done and also robots require management. The second aspect will become much more pronounced than today because people will need to adapt to or master technological and social developments more intensively, meaning that there must be a strong focus on external factors. Finally there must be room for reflection, on one side because of work overload that can be easily caused by less routine, on the other hand because of the necessity to target a clear future goal in a high pace development environment.

Whereas strategic management and core coordination tasks will probably remain centralized at a company's main location, this is no longer the case for those tasks that cannot be automated or robotized but that can still be outsourced to third parties and can be freely relocated (physically or via Internet) to lower cost areas. The disruption here is that whereas currently people are recruited and brought to jobs, in future the jobs can be much more easily brought to people.

The impact of bringing jobs to people can be huge. In the European Union there are meanwhile 150 million services related jobs (70% of the total; agriculture related jobs are 5% and production related jobs are approximately 25%). This means that for every 1% of tasks that can be packaged as Internet based jobs there is the potential to geographically relocate and address 1,5 million people.

Although the overall tertiary services sector mostly covers activities in which local physical presence is essential, it can still be conservatively estimated that at least 5-10% of all services related tasks could be moved via Internet; a direct relocation potential of 7,5-15 million jobs in Europe. (There is no current reliable data available; according to an old US estimate 25% of tasks are outsourceable.)

The incentive to move jobs is an economical one; for companies there is a cost advantage at lower wage areas if qualified people are available there. In principal this leads to a competitive edge for the companies that outsource such jobs. However, there are also risks or negative aspects to be taken into account.

First, there is a substantial risk of people ending up exclusively working from home. Although this may create maximal economical flexibility, it embeds an important risk for social isolation. Working environments have in practice more functionality than to provide income and to organize a worker's contribution to society. People spend many hours performing their daily job tasks; their work environment is therefore almost always essential for social participation as well.

Second, due to the world-wide character of Internet, outsourcing tasks can easily result in creating work at the lowest cost location, which not necessarily has to be part of the same "economical and/or political zone". Moving as many as possible Internet based jobs from Europe to India or to other emerging cheap labor countries may lead to higher unemployment and social unrest in Europe; this may be something one would like to avoid.

A third aspect is that the extreme transparency of the Internet can easily lead to non-sustainability of jobs. As soon as the supply is greater than the demand, the price/reward may drop under the employee's or contractor's sustainability level, new "virtual" forms of poverty or slavery can thus be created by relocation.

Related and evenly problematic is that Internet based services are frequently perceived to be extremely cheap or free. For quality based individual services this cannot be true though. A good illustration of this phenomenon is the crowd-sourcing of graphical design. If 100 graphical designers make a draft design and compete on a crowd sourcing platform like for example www.designcrowd.com, and the designer who wins the final contract receives a 100 or 200 USD reward in the end, this means that 99% of the designers made a loss and it is likely that even the one who won the contract can only deliver copy-and-paste level quality results. Such crowd based approaches attempt to make a commodity out of specialists' professional work; longer term this implies a great loss of skills.

The above aspects illustrate a clear need for regulation and for protection of the task executing individuals. Although it makes sense to relocate activities within economical zones and create a competitive edge for companies, it equally makes sense to protect minimum wage levels and the sustainability of the employee's or contractor's position; international labor unions will likely gain new grounds here.

Finally there are long-term aspects that are difficult to predict. If the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" will in future also start to impact the (company-non-core) reshuffled and relocated jobs (in case automation and robotization become increasingly advanced), this can easily lead to an overall loss of employment. It would mean an increased GDP but with less labor participation. If this happens there will be "solidarity mechanisms of prosperity-sharing" required of which a "basic-income for everyone" could be one of the options.

However, for the near future there will be disruption and many challenges to cope with first. After managing this, the end-result should be a higher GDP and a better general quality of human life. It resembles a bit the Tesla electrical car development strategy: by building and using electrical cars there is experience and innovation demand. This is expected to result in better life-spans and lower production cost for the batteries used. These are currently a critical component but "stimulated progress" will likely solve this in some years from now.

The Future of Education

Partially related to the “future of jobs” type of disruptions, there is also an increasingly changing perspective for the “future of education”. In fact for many disciplines, the factual knowledge one obtains during the first years of one’s study is already outdated or obsolete at the time one graduates. The speed of technological change fully demands life-long learning/updating to keep pace with and to be able to master the ongoing rapid developments.

The implication is that whereas in the past, education has largely focused on “one time” up-to-date personal knowledge transfer from teacher to student, it now is forced to focus on optimizing the development of “learning skills” rather than on dominantly studying or mastering specific content.

Of course basic knowledge requirements remain, but developments in distance learning offer much more room for personalized and individualized knowledge transfer. It appears that for almost any age-group and education level there are distance learning offers available. (Some, very limited, examples:

<http://www.connectionsacademy.com/curriculum/online-elementary-school>

<http://www.foresttrailacademy.com/online-elementary-school.html>

<http://www.k12.com/schools-programs/online-public-schools.html>

<http://www.apus.edu/> (100.000+ current students)

<https://www.coursera.org/> high/top level university courses (many free)

<https://www.udacity.com/> high/top level university courses (many free)

<https://www.edx.org/> high/top level university courses (many free)

<https://www.class-central.com/> top level courses scanner (many free)

<https://www.mooc-list.com> an overview of multiple platforms

<http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/distance-learning/moocs-%28massive-open-online-courses%29/> also in Europe)

Next to the “classical” distance learning courses via Internet which mostly include a strong and individualized teacher student interaction; new mass-scale offers with much less interaction have over the past 5 years become available. MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) participation, where hundreds of thousands of students are simultaneously studying the same subject is growing rapidly.

Similar to the “future of work’s” split in categories of job tasks (execution, skills development, reflection), the future of classroom education will likely face a shift between -1- knowledge absorption (out<>in), -2- learning skills and soft skills development (in<>out) and -3- reflection (in<>total). The knowledge aspect will probably become less important than today because, as long as students possess proper skills, factual learning can to a great extent be virtualized, individualized and spread over time. In many cases, knowledge transfer based teaching does no longer require a physical teacher to be present. The second, skills, aspect will become much more pronounced than today. It will become the core of (flipped) classroom based education. How to build a curriculum, how to be disciplined, how to cooperate, how to train soft-skills, how to improve socialization, how to support each other, how to use and be used as a mentor etc. Outward oriented personality building and know-how of “others” will become the skills development core. Finally there must be room for reflection. Today’s hyperlink surfing based information processing and continuous fragmented interactions lead to a lack of abstraction. Vision and internalization require more than facts and know-how.

The incentive to change education is economical and it is strongly related to the requirements of a rapidly changing job market. For companies it is necessary to make sure that qualified people are available. Educational demand will follow this. However, there are risks or negative aspects to be taken into account here.

To start with there is a substantial risk of disconnection for those who are less individualistic, less motivated or less disciplined. The current classroom based education has a high level of social control and social reward. MOOC experience so far shows that 90% of the people do not finish the courses (not necessarily as bad as this seems at first sight because also a partial or browsed course can add value and the 10% who finishes the courses is still a very high absolute number). Further, most people participating in MOOC education are people who already completed other studies and who are experienced and qualified students. Longer term evaluation will have to show if a system like MOOC is a valid alternative for less experienced or less qualified students as well. Finally, especially young pupils up till now need continuous and permanent supervision (in case of distance learning, supervision from their parents). However distance learning technologies face great difficulties to offer this type of supervision to participants.

To be expected in reality is that neither everything will remain the same nor that everything will change. Very well imaginable are hybrid educational forms in which more or even most knowledge transfer tasks will become computer and/or distance learning assisted and where the classroom teacher's role will more dominantly become one of mentoring and assistance in skills development. If this will be the case there are a number of important consequences.

First, unlike today (where there is a very small age and knowledge bandwidth in school classes) a much wider range of students or pupils can be brought together and served by the same teacher or mentor. Part of this process can also be that more experienced students help less experienced ones.

Second, with a large part of the factual knowledge transfer being computer or distance learning assisted and thus mostly being individualized, there is much more flexibility in when and where to study. Like with the outsourcing of work via Internet, there is more geographical freedom. MOOC courses offer everyone who is educated enough to be able to absorb the high abstraction level, access to many top-class universities and professors.

Third, there are still many skills that can be more efficiently and precisely taught via classical "personal teacher's assistance" than via distance learning. Practical experience is a prerequisite to develop most crafts. Real-time guiding by someone mastering a craft is very beneficial and quite difficult to replace.

Crafts are and will remain important and many crafts cannot be easily automated or robotized. An interesting example is hand-writing, although people less and less frequently write by hand, mastering it means mastering a basic fine motor skill that is required for many other crafts and for arts like painting and drawing.

Finally, there is "mastering" one's reflection. This is neither a knowledge related individual skill nor a social skill. It is a component of self-control, abstraction, contemplation, internalization and derived vision. Reflection helps people finding their purpose, philosophy or religion. It requires spiritual influencing or guidance.

Rural redevelopment, its importance and competitive edge

Living in cities certainly offers certain clear personal and economical advantages compared to rural life. There are more densely and efficiently shared facilities, infrastructures, transport and cultural participation options. But, for many people, there are also serious setbacks to city life such as overcrowding, scarcity, high living cost, pollution, limited private space and higher crime levels.

In the past where agriculture became mechanized and when factories were built at or near urban locations where a sufficiently large labor potential was available, there also was a clear reason for urbanization. But with the economy being 70% services jobs based, the second (recruitment related) factor for urbanization is theoretically becoming less important than before. The density of city based jobs may still offer a greater job variety and higher employment chances, but in principal many service jobs can be much more easily relocated than the mass employment (meanwhile reduced to 25%) of large scale factories.

Rural employment outside of the primary agricultural sector (which by itself no longer counts for more than 5% of employment in Europe) is at the moment limited and the lack of rural job opportunities drives further urbanization. The question is if this is inevitable or that it makes sense to research and initiate alternative rural redevelopment or revitalization scenarios.

At a worldwide level, urbanization is predicted to result in 66% of the world population living in cities by 2050 (up from 54% in 2014) and currently about 3 million people per week are changing rural areas for urban ones.

In Europe this trend is already further evolved. Although further urbanization is still ongoing (especially in Eastern Europe), it is albeit at a slower pace. 112 million people, 22% of the European population, are currently living in predominantly rural EU-28 areas, which cover 51% of the land in Europe (intermediate regions cover 39% and house 35%; urban areas cover 10% and house 43%). Fifty years ago this number used to be much higher when 157 million people were living in rural areas (at that time about 37% of the 425 million EU-28 inhabitants, which is a rough estimate, based on EU-15 data). It means that 45 million people left rural Europe over the past 50 years.

A desolated European countryside does it matter? Yes, it probably does. The growing individuality of European culture has increased personal space demands, which are currently difficult to fulfill in (over)crowded and expensive cities. One of the main indirect results, related to income pressure and non-affordability of larger housing, is a decreasing birthrate. Balancing urban and rural options can lead to a general availability improvement and thus reduce pressure. A second reason why rural desolation matters, is the countryside's population. 112 million people are living in a deteriorating environment, many of them being old and needy. Revitalization of rural Europe is essential for the quality of life of its 22% rural population. Finally, also economically it makes sense. There in principal is a strong competitive edge achieved by employing people at rural lower cost and wage areas instead of expensive urban areas. The question is how the trend can be reversed and rural areas be redeveloped? Potentially, refugees can be a catalyst here; they can constitute the required brain injection, compensating for the brain drain caused by past urbanization.

Urbanization, economical migration and relocation of jobs

Urbanization is generally a result of structural, long term, gradual development. Of course one could strategically and politically (have) take(n) measures to influence or stop migration. For example, one could have actively stimulated the replacement of agricultural jobs by industrial ones in rural areas. Instead, developments have been almost fully led by capitalist market mechanisms and its related supply and demand of labor. The result is not that easily reversible.

Similar to the urbanization process there is a European economical migration process in which large numbers of people mostly move from south to north and from east to west in order to find better paid employment and improve their economical conditions. The result of internal EU migration is that prosperous areas become more prosperous, whereas many deprived areas are having almost no chance to catch up and remain poor. As with urbanization, predominantly the younger people are migrating, leaving the more vulnerable behind.

From an individual Western-European country point of view, the availability of European migrants to fill the labor gaps required to optimize growth is positive. Also from a European perspective, the individual freedom to relocate and to have chances for upward economical mobility is an important and positive aspect of European integration. However, there is a clear conflict of interest between the position of individual member states and the European Union as a whole. An uncompensated brain and fertility drain from south to north and east to west deepens the gap between prosperous and deprived areas and causes inequality.

Until recently there was not really much that could be done to influence the economically motivated urbanization and migration processes besides of allocating financial stimulation funds for deprived areas and improving their connection to the European road network infrastructure. Slowing down urbanization and migration by relocating industrial jobs (based on cost/wage difference) to for example Eastern-Europe via greenfield investments has also been partially successful, but it did/does in most cases not outweigh migration.

Once urbanized or migrated, most people will unlikely voluntarily return to lower wage, economically more deprived, areas unless being forced by unemployment. Some migrants will in the end voluntarily return upon retirement but their contribution is financial in that case and does hardly revitalize the infrastructure.

With most jobs becoming services related and with fast Internet spreading to deprived areas, substantial changes occurred in the past five years. Many international companies are relocating their shared services, back office and customer service centers to those cities where sufficient, educated, people are available at lower cost wage levels. Budapest, for example, has meanwhile attracted 50.000 of such jobs and also smaller cities attract Internet based jobs. Meanwhile even in East-Africa, India, and Haiti there are Internet based trainings and jobs offered to poor people in order to help them to move upward out of poverty (www.samagroup.co). However, because of a lack of sufficient (skilled) Internet literate workers at rural locations, the above opportunities have not reached the countryside yet. Since educated migrants usually do not return, the question is how to recruit suitable workers for rural communities in order to create a wider sustainable basis for their local economy and revitalize it this way.

Supply and demand, migrant and refugee profiles and definitions

Although the term migrant is used by others to include all types of relocation, Refival defines it as being a voluntary relocation which is economically motivated. For Refival the term refugee complements this migrant category as being non-voluntary, and therefore, being a war or natural disaster driven relocation.

The main fundamental difference between migration and seeking refuge is the immediate possibility to return "home". In principle migrants can return to a possibly poorer or lower standard but nevertheless economically sustainable origin situation, whereas refugees do not have such a choice.

Of course things are not always black and white, in situations of extreme poverty the economical sustainability can be questioned and the relocation is far from entirely voluntary. Also in rural situations where the next generation of the population is quite often (not everywhere) better educated than the previous one but where there is no suitable employment for them, there can be a grey zone.

Still, the fundamental mechanisms of migration and seeking refuge are different. Whereas migrants try to economically move upward if there is an opportunity to do so and will not migrate or will return home if the opportunity in practical reality does not exist, refugees have no choice and will still seek shelter if there are no economical opportunities available to them.

However, although refugees are not primarily economical opportunity driven, this does not imply that there is no economical migrant element in their behavior. Refugees try to optimize their (expected) quality of shelter and chances for a better future. But, since refugees are basically "escape" and not "existing" opportunity driven, this does not automatically lead to an optimal match between supply and demand. In the current crisis in Europe it has lead to a clustering of almost all refugees at a few high-economical-standards locations where many refugees, because of a lack of demand for them, will remain welfare dependent.

The issue is that refugee shelter often can be much more cost effectively offered closer to where the refugees originate from and (if no option) that also within the destination countries or areas the refugees move to there are huge shelter cost differences. In this case being cost effective means to be able to help more refugees or to improve the quality of help to them. As there often is no direct quality relationship between the money spent and quality of shelter offered (mostly the general living and housing cost are just higher) it is in a situation of "no economical-demand" almost always more efficient to house refugees at lower cost locations. Of course this is not true for refugees who can in a reasonably short term enter the labor market and integrate, but main criterion for offering shelter to refugees should be to optimize the realistic chances for an integrated refugee future and locating refugees should not be driven by the refugee's "perceived future prosperity" which they currently too often unfeasibly target.

Realistically seen, Europe has not many job opportunities to offer to refugees and when there are employment chances, like in Germany, there are (EU) migrants willing and waiting to grab them. Unlike in the past, there is little demand for unskilled or industrial labor. Current employment chances strongly depend on the skills and educational background migrants or refugees have to offer.

The migrant and refugees skills offered do in general depend on the people's origin. Whereas many rural to urban and international migrants in developed countries are educated and therefore have reasonable chances on economically upward mobility type employment, this is less the case with mostly uneducated (economical) migrants from less developed countries. Still both have in common that they must exploit existing opportunities and adapt to them to be successful.

Refugees show a very different pattern, this because war and natural disasters mostly do not discriminate much between poor and rich, between educated and uneducated. Refugee skills vary a lot and some refugees can connect well to their host countries whereas others have no chance at all. Of course also here the general development level of their originating country matters a lot.

A complicating factor is the difference between general skills of "illegal" versus "legal" refugee streams. Whereas illegal streams such as the current/past Balkan stream to Europe tends to attract better educated and richer (a trip to Europe is expensive) refugees, from now on the opposite will likely be the case. If refugees become "officially selected" and relocated from Turkey, vulnerable people (often poor and uneducated) will probably fulfill the refugee selection criteria first.

Question is if the above refugee relocation mechanisms are beneficial for refugee and host; likely not much. As said before, if there is no realistic chance to at a reasonable term employ refugees, the criteria for offering shelter to them should be primarily based on cost efficiency (however, there is an important restriction here, one does not want to cluster all refugees at the cheapest location either, but properly spread them for social/cultural integration reasons). The above implies to select and relocate refugees to places where their employment and integration chances are optimal, which is not automatically the case at the highest-living-cost, highest-minimal-wages areas in Europe. Of course will those who manage to fully integrate at these "rich" locations promote their success-stories, but for those on welfare nothing has been gained. From a macro cost point of view more refugees could likely have been helped better. (By the way, "migrants" should in principle return home if there are no employment opportunities. Development aid is a far more efficient mechanism compared to offering them social benefits/welfare at high-living-cost locations).

Refival is fully refugee-employment-driven. By creating a competitive edge for employers, the number of refugees to be employed is maximized. This approach fits well to refugees for whom there is insufficient demand at high-wage areas but who are skilled enough to match lower paid jobs demand elsewhere.

However, there are conflicts of interest. Relocated jobs can be equally attractive for European migrants and for locally unemployed people. With refugees costing up to 2000 Euros per month and with welfare budgets already allocated, it is tempting to stimulate refugee integration at the cost of migrants. Still, doing so would reduce European mobility and poses a threat to European integration. Migrants cannot relocate without first finding a job or having own money to stay, the fact that refugees can "freely" select their destination is problematic. Direct competition between locally unemployed, migrants and refugees should therefore be clearly avoided. The best way to do so is by relocating jobs to the deprived areas where migration started and where migrants do not intend to return. Here there is ample space for Internet based refugee jobs and refugees.

Educated refugees as a rural revitalization catalyst

As previously stated does Refival target the optimization of refugee employment. Very likely this can be most effectively achieved by moving Internet based service jobs to deprived, often rural, low-living-cost low-wage areas. By creating a competitive edge for employers and by structurally stimulating the approach politically, such areas can likely be redeveloped and revitalized this way.

Missing link to reverse previous migration effects is the relocation of educated people willing to provide a rural brain and fertility injection, thus compensating for the earlier brain and fertility drain caused by outward migration.

Elsewhere non-employable, but skills-wise suitable refugees could potentially be the ideal catalysts for rural revitalization, this because they are forced to restart their lives from scratch in Europe and do not possess any achieved position yet.

The main obstacle to overcome is the lacking political will to sufficiently stimulate and prioritize rural redevelopement. The project requires substantial investment in people and although Refival potentially saves huge amounts of money at a macro level via welfare savings, budgets must (together with the refugees) be moved.

Relocation of budgets can sometimes take place within the border of a country but often there is much more to gain via trans-border relocation of jobs and budgets. So far EU solidarity is limited and economical prosperity and economical developments are very unequally spread over Europe. Even between a country like Germany on one side and Italy and Spain on the other, there are huge gaps.

Still most rich countries are spending huge amounts to locally shelter refugees, whereas at the same time it is unlikely that these refugees can be employed at the wage and skills level required by these countries. In this case it is better to move refugees and (much lower paid) jobs elsewhere and invest the achieved "shelter and welfare cost difference" between locations in the refugees' future.

At first sight Refival may smell like depriving refugees by moving them to less prosperous locations, but this it is not the case. The project attempts to realize a starting point for upward economical mobility and refugee integration. Refival is further focused on recruiting suitable job candidates and not on moving people to lowest cost shelter locations. Swedish experience has shown that an "available rural space" based approach does not work; it has been abandoned. Finally, lower cost does not imply lower quality life; there is high rural value for money.

A major advantage of the Refival approach is the availability of ample affordable space and housing in rural areas. This makes it much more easily possible to relocate families or reunite them. At the current high-living-cost shelter locations reunification comes at very high price and will be restricted because of its cost. In sharp contrast with this, Refival needs young families (not single individuals) for the revitalization and redevelopement of rural communities.

Refival potentially makes European migrants out of refugees; it offers a starting point for upward economical mobility via work experience, integration and life long learning. As soon as there is demand at a better job level elsewhere, Refival participants can move on and be replaced by a next group of suitable refugees.

Revitalized village life, indirect Refival results

There is a so called "Law of the handicap of a head start" ("Dutch origin", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_the_handicap_of_a_head_start) it means that people who are more advanced, possess a handicap against the ones lagging behind because they can learn from them and can often skip entire development steps or even overtake the advanced ones by directly using a later technology. A simple example is the fast development of mobile communications in third-world countries where fixed line communication technology was largely ignored.

For the Refival project the "head start law" is important because whereas job and education changes in developed urban areas will be gradual because of existing infrastructure, the more or less from scratch redevelopment of rural or other deprived areas will not face this handicap and can fully use the latest technology.

This does not imply to on purpose do everything revolutionary different; it only means that one has less restrictions. To be expected is that neither everything will remain the same nor that everything will change. However, changes can be far more disruptive in comparison with other "further developed" environments.

In respect to workplace and education facilities required, Refival targets a hybrid and balanced form between partially working/studying from home in combination with co-working and classical schooling facilities. In both cases the inter-human and inter-cultural component is extremely important for adaptation and community integration. Mentoring is therefore surely not a remote individual activity; it is primarily a human to human and also a social community activity.

Also for reestablishing other facilities Refival follows a hybrid strategy approach. Medical care improvement can for example be organized via local doctors who are partially employed in tele-medicine and for example food supply can be organized via Internet based grocery shopping with regular physical delivery.

If job sustainability is reestablished via relocation of Internet based jobs and the rural or deprived community grows back to a level of economical sustainability, there will be indirect "community serving" jobs created as well. People will need hairdressers, handymen etc. These supporting jobs require other skills compared with the Internet relocated ones and could employ other segments of refugees.

However, there is a clear restriction here. Refival's target is to integrate refugees and to eventually create a European upward mobility starting point for them. This means the need for properly obtaining local/European cultural and language skills, something that is unlikely to be accomplished if the villages become inhabited by any dominant refugee cultural group. Refival therefore wants to limit the refugee population to a maximum of 25% of the village population.

If job diversity is becoming re-established, also the return of entrepreneurs and of people from local origin can be expected. A healthy community with a healthy level of facilities and available jobs is in principle an attractive place to live again. It means that there is full synergy between the rural brain-injection delivered by relocated Refugees, the Refugee's integration and upward mobility chances, and the redevelopment or revitalization of the deprived community.

European demographics, need for a future labor reserve?

Why would a country like for example Germany subsidize Refival's relocation of work and refugees beyond its borders? Germany's current situation is that besides of human-aid factors, there are economical motives for absorbing refugees in their labor market. Furthermore, offering shelter stimulates consumption. Both factors imply to keep the refugees in Germany and integrate them as future labor. Main underlying reason is a demographic one; although the peak of baby-boom retirement in Germany will first be reached around 2030 (later than in other European countries) there is a strong ageing of its population expected. An ageing that can very likely not be compensated via automation and robotization; it requires investment in building a suitable future workforce.

Although birthrate improvement can be stimulated via government programs as is successfully done in France, it is a very slow and unpredictable approach. The German alternative so far has been "immigration of labor" and it is expected that this policy will continue in future. Problem is that whereas in the past simple labor skills were required, the German industry now needs higher level qualified people. These are often not readily available as immigrants. "Growing" suitable refugees locally can thus be a solution; the question is if it is cost efficient?

With more refugees seeking shelter as there are jobs available and with a conflict of interest between refugees and European migrants, there are a number of reasons to be very careful. Without prioritizing refugees over EU migrants, many of the refugees will remain long-term unemployed at very high welfare cost level locations in Germany. This will neither make the German government nor the unemployed refugees happy. The alternative Refival offers is to split-off Internet based tasks and relocate these tasks together with suitable unemployed refugees to lower cost areas within the European Union.

The advantage of this approach is that refugees will have a better chance on (lower-paid lower-cost) employment whereas German industry will have a direct competitive-edge cost advantage by employing these refugees elsewhere. The economical trade-off is to have less consumption from refugees in Germany but this can be outweighed by a potential reduction of spending on welfare cost.

Without strategically investing in Refival, the relocation of work and refugees will not occur automatically. A Refival prerequisite is that welfare budgets can be initially relocated to lower cost areas and can this way be invested in the refugees' and the rural redevelopment. Some limited cost savings can likely be immediately realized, but from a future-labor-force-reserve development point of view it is far more logical to further invest in educating the relocated refugees (as this was previously intended to be done locally in Germany). Target is to prepare refugees to become, if required at any time, the potentially properly fitting European migrants of the future. For refugees this means at the same time to develop or optimize their upward economical mobility path.

Although different (Germany is an exception in Europe having no unemployment in combination with a low birthrate) also in most other European countries it makes sense to redevelop rural areas via active relocation of Internet based jobs. Starting at the origin of migration and re-growing a sustainable economy at such locations generally means optimization of space, cost and human resources.

Worldwide concept

Refival is currently focusing on the European refugee crisis but with some adaptation, its concept and strategy can likely be applied worldwide in many other cases. Essential is to find a sufficiently enough educated (or to be educated) group of refugees, migrants or unemployed who match Internet based job/skills requirements. (The Sama approach and other outsourcing projects show that this is possible in third-world countries as well (www.samagroup.co)).

The second main parameter for Refival is to exploit cost advantages or use other incentives for redeveloping deprived or rural locations. Such incentives must create a competitive edge justifying revitalization and must lead to sustainability. Project funding will mostly fully depend on this. The redevelopment itself is done via relocation of people; it means a brain injection at deprived or rural locations.

Finally, there is a third important component. Revitalization can indirectly be the starting point for upward economical mobility of participants. This can happen both locally or via outward migration. Such on purpose achieved migration is based on educational investment in the participants' skills. If there is a (future) demand for such skills, educating and culturally preparing people is a valid goal.

However, in order to maintain sustainability, these educational developments must be financed by those receiving/exploiting the skilled migrants in the end. Those who leave also must be replaced by others. Observing current migration, such is often not the case and leads to brain-drain and non-sustainability issues. This can for example be clearly observed in Eastern-Europe where, attracted by the better conditions in Western-Europe, many skilled doctors and nurses left.

Conclusions

Refival currently targets a group of approximately 75.000, medium skilled, dominantly Syrian refugees who arrived in Europe during 2015. Since Refival is based on integrating families (x4), it means that Refival attempts, for the time being, to relocate around 300.000 refugees to rural or deprived areas.

Such relocation is Internet job migration driven. General "future of work" predictions expect that a labor task analysis and overall reshuffling will take place soon. If such process is executed and tasks are being reorganized, the "if a task can be outsourced or not" criterion will become an important categorization.

Bringing jobs to people instead of people to jobs will be disruptive. In the European Union there are meanwhile 150 million services related jobs. This means that for every 1% of tasks that can be packaged as Internet based jobs there is potential to geographically freely relocate 1,5 million people.

Different from the past, education will also become much more dynamic. Whereas before, education has largely focused on "one time" up-to-date personal knowledge transfer from teacher to student, it now is forced to focus on optimizing "learning skills" rather than on studying or mastering specific content. Unlike today (where there is a very small age and knowledge bandwidth in school classes) a much wider range of students or pupils can be brought together and served by the same teacher or mentor.

Urbanization is predicted to result in 66% of the world population to be living in cities by 2050. Worldwide, currently about 3 million people per week are exchanging rural areas for urban ones. Does it matter? Yes, it does. Lack of space in (over)crowded cities causes strongly decreasing birthrates. Although this may seem positive, for many developed areas it is not. Balancing urban and rural options can lead to improvements in averagely available personal space.

Refival is fully refugee-employment-driven; it optimizes refugee participation by relocating refugee jobs to lower cost areas. By creating a competitive edge for employers, the number of refugees to be employed is maximized. Politically, direct competition between locally unemployed, migrants and refugees should be avoided. Best way to do so is to relocate jobs to those areas where migration streams originated from and where migrants likely do not intend/want to return.

Main obstacle to overcome is the lack of political will to sufficiently stimulate and prioritize rural redevelopment. Refival requires substantial investment in people and although the project potentially saves huge amounts of money at a macro level via welfare savings, budgets must (together with the refugees) be moved.

Refival potentially makes European migrants out of refugees; it offers a starting point for upward economical mobility via work experience, integration and life long learning. As soon as there is demand at better job levels elsewhere, Refival participants can move on and be replaced by a next group of suitable refugees.

Educating refugees to become migrants is not sustainable. This can be clearly observed in Eastern-Europe where, attracted by the better conditions in Western-Europe, many skilled doctors and nurses left. It implies that the transformation of refugees into migrants must be paid for by those exploiting them in the end.

To summarize: Refival is comparable with sustainable forestry or agriculture. One can cut trees as long as one plants and grows new ones and one can harvest crops as long as one remineralizes the soil. The redevelopment of rural areas via relocation of refugees is quite similar, upward mobility and urbanization are no rural sustainability threats as long as what migrants leave behind is revitalized.

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