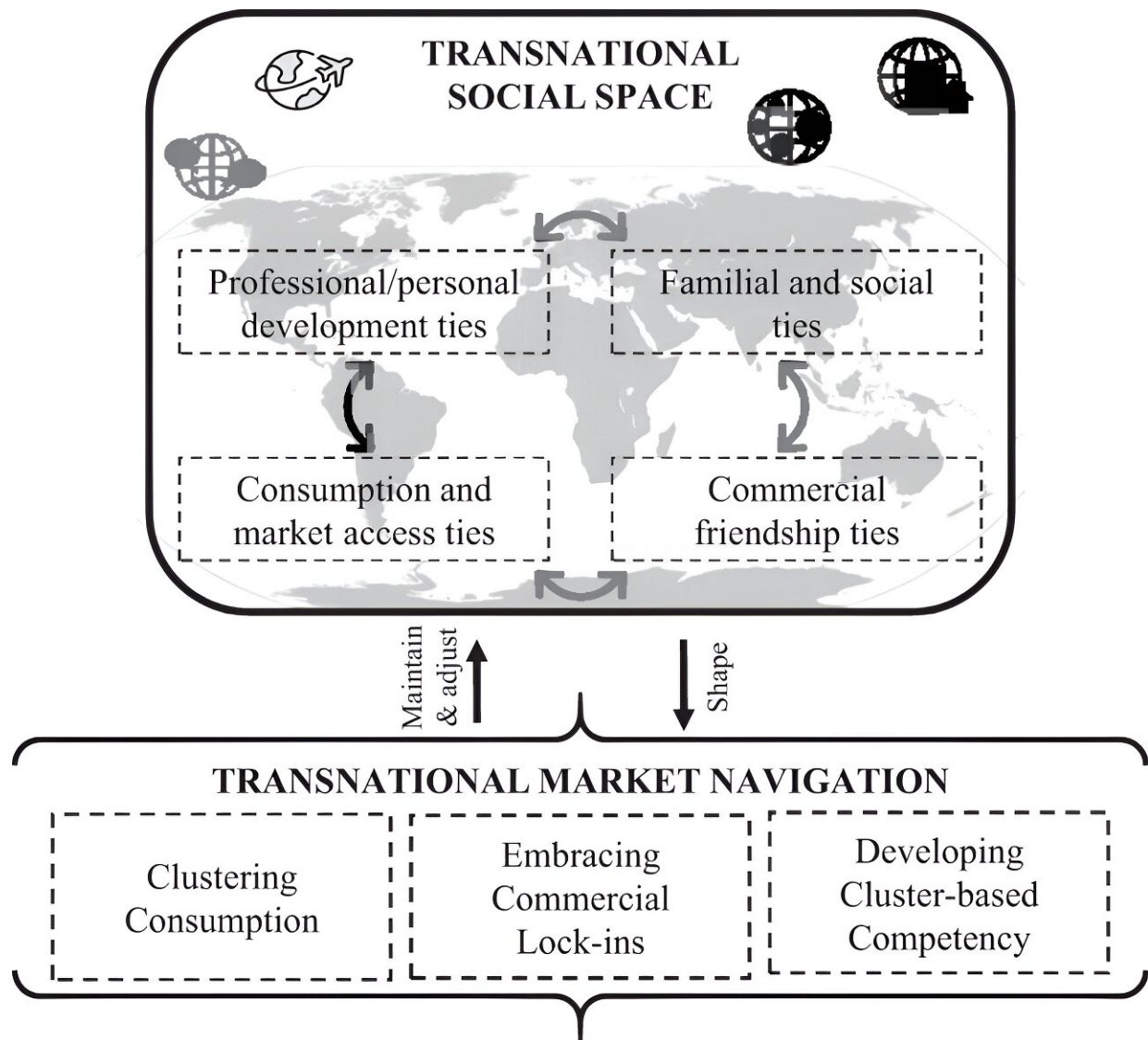


Struggling to stay: The impact of rising visa fees for transnational workers

August 16 2023



TRANSNATIONAL MARKET NAVIGATION. Credit: *Journal of Consumer Research* (2023). DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucad049

New research from School of Business and Management academic Dr. Zahra Sharifonnasabi reveals the complexities of transnational workers lives and how the impact of the divisive policy could damage the UK economy.

The latest figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that the economy grew by 0.5 percent in June, defying expectations, however with the Governments proposed [visa](#) increases set to go ahead new research from Queen Mary University of London reveals that an increase in visa fees for transnational workers could damage further an already fragile economy.

In her latest research paper, titled "Transnational Market Navigation: Living and Consuming across Borders," Dr. Zahra Sharifonnasabi Lecturer in Marketing and Co-Director of the Marketing Insights & Digital Societies (MINDS) at Queen Mary University of London reveals insights into the "precarious and challenging" lives of transnational professionals working simultaneously across multiple countries.

Dr. Zahra Sharifonnasabi explains "Transnational living is complex, challenging, resource-heavy and often precarious. Transnational professionals need to extensively invest in their time, money, and effort to plan their lives. We have also seen how this group of workers use their network to adapt and react to external shocks, such as increases in visa fees, Brexit and the COVID pandemic."

Exploring the impact of disruptions and external shocks, such as economic, political and social crises, Dr. Sharifonnasabi and her research team reveal that transnational workers adapt their networks (e.g., moving [investments](#) to a different country with better rates and lower risks) in response to external shocks. Indeed, maintaining a

transnational network of places, people, and institutions, however challenging and resource heavy, can serve them as a plan B when situations become unfavorable.

With the increase in visa fees for migrants in the UK set to go ahead, it raises the question if transnational workers will still choose to work in the UK?

Rising UK visa fees impact transnational workers in varied ways, but this could also damage the [economy](#) warns Dr. Sharifonnasabi. "Financially, lower-income workers face hurdles, deterring their UK prospects. Specialized workers might seek friendlier immigration policies elsewhere due to costly fees, causing skill drain. The UK could miss out on returning transnational workers' knowledge and investment due to fee-related disincentives. Industries like health care could suffer more from labor shortages, affecting services."

"Cultural diversity might wane as fees discourage transnational workers' contributions. Family reunification could be harder, and remittances could drop, hurting home economies. Investment, integration, and legal concerns are also heightened due to the potential fee hike."

The work is published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*.

More information: Zahra Sharifonnasabi et al, Transnational Market Navigation: Living and Consuming across Borders, *Journal of Consumer Research* (2023). [DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucad049](https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucad049)

Provided by Queen Mary, University of London

Citation: Struggling to stay: The impact of rising visa fees for transnational workers (2023,

August 16) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-08-struggling-stay-impact-visa-fees.html>

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