

BOOK REVIEW

International Business Travel in the Global Economy
*Jonathan V. Beaverstock, Ben Derudder, James Faulconbridge,
Frank Witlox, editor (2010).*
Ashgate, Surrey, UK

Although globalization, technology, management and other many trends are mushrooming the size of business travel, there is a lacuna in the literature addressing this market segment. In this vein, the aim of this book is to explore the role, the nature and the impacts of business travel in the twenty-first century by including most of the important debates associated with the causes, motivations for and the measurement of business travel. To achieve that, the book is consisted of 12 chapters contributed by twenty international researcher with various backgrounds. Book chapters provide a wide and multiple perspective of the factors influencing the nature, flows and impacts of business travel including sociology, management and globalisation factors, technology factors (e.g. aircraft technology and information & communication technology), political factors (e.g. air sky liberalisation) and economic factors (e.g. fuel costs). The book chapters are structured into three sections addressing the following three major topics: a) the role of the airline industry in the international business travel and the changing nature of provision; b) the role of mobility in international business activities; and c) the sociology of international business travel, its role and effects in the global economy. All chapters are well written in an easy-to-read format and structure providing practical and research evidence of their arguments as well as a wide literature review of the topic that they analyse.

The book starts with an introductory chapter written by the book editors (Jonathan V. Beaverstock, Ben Derudder, James Faulconbridge and Frank Witlox) explaining the aims and the structure of the book.

The first section of the book consists of four chapters exploring the forms and geographical spatialities of business travel. The chapter written by John Bowen gather and debate data showing the spetial development of airline business class services, while the chapter by Ben Derudder, Lomme Devriendt, Nathalie Van Nuffel and Frank Witlox examines the



validity of "business class air travel" data for studying the geography of "business travel" at large and presents an analytical framework that allows for meaningful comparisons of the spatiality of different types of travel flows. The next chapter contributed by Jonathan Beaverstock and James Faulconbridge, reports on some of the most important characteristics of the patterns of overseas' residences' business visits to the UK and UK residences' business visits abroad from late 1970s onwards. The last chapter of this section, written by Lucy Budd and Phil Hubbard, focuses on the growth of an emerging form of business travel namely private-jet and it examines its consequences on the networked geographies of the global economy.

The second book sections includes three chapters exploring the mobility regimes and requirements of firms. The first chapter written by John Salt explores business travel within the broader portfolios of mobility developed by large international companies that serve several roles such as career development, project planning and implementation, staff rotation and attendance of a wide range of meetings. The second chapter contributed by James Wickham and Alessandra Vecchi contextualise the taxonomy of business travel by presenting findings of a case study about the business travel of an Irish software company that show that business travel replicates rather than destabilizes managerial hierarchies. The last chapter written by Sven Kesselring and Gerlinde Vogl examine the social consequences of the intensification and extensification of corporate travel activities for employees.

The four chapters in the third section of the book examine the causes and consequences of business travel. The first chapter written by Aharon Kellerman sets the scene by comparing business and leisure travel at the international level from several basic perspectives: motivations and goals, relative magnitude, spatial patterns and interrelationships between both types of travellers. The second chapter written by Claus Lassen conceptualises business travel as a structural output of work and business. The chapter uses data from international business travel amongst knowledge workers in two Danish organisations in order to demonstrate that the travel needs of international professionals should be understood in conjunction with a number of social obligations and compulsions of face-to-face meeting. The next chapter written by Andre Jones continues the debate that the motives for international business travel are much more complex than an amorphous set of "work requirements" by examining the nature, form and function of mobility in the professional business service sector. The last chapter written by John Martin Denstadli and Mattias Gripsrud assess the qualities of video-conferencing and

information and communication technologies for evaluating their four potential impacts (i.e. complementary, substitutional, modification and neutral) on business travel.

Overall, this is an easy-to-read book that provides under one cover a rich set of international studies showing the size, nature, motives and impacts of business travel. The book nicely integrates theoretical concepts, analytical tools and research findings from many disciplines and perspectives for broadly analysing the phenomenon of business travel. Overall, the book provides a nice rethinking and update of business travel in the twenty-one century. The book constitutes a comprehensive reference book and useful source of numerous studies to graduate students, university faculty, and professionals alike that are interesting to study and further understand the crucial market segment of business travel.

Marianna Sigala

Marianna Sigala (m.sigala@aegean.gr) is an Assistant Professor at the University of the Aegean, Department of Business Administration, Chios, Greece.