



IZA Press Release – July 20, 2011

## 2011 IZA Prize in Labor Economics goes to U.S. economists George Borjas and Barry Chiswick

The Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) announced today that this year's IZA Prize in Labor Economics will be awarded to George J. Borjas (Harvard University) and Barry R. Chiswick (George Washington University) for their fundamental contributions to the economic analysis of migration and integration. The prestigious science award carries a cash prize of 50,000 euros (about 70,000 dollars). The award ceremony for the 2011 IZA Prize will be held in Oslo, Norway, on August 25.

Borjas and Chiswick have pioneered the economic analysis of global migration and its impact on labor markets and social security systems. They have been the leading figures in the intense debate about earnings assimilation and the nature of migrant selectivity. Their research has made migration an important subdiscipline of economics with high policy relevance. For example, the prize-winners have shown that the successful integration of immigrants depends on individual qualifications and language skills, but also requires an active integration policy that selects immigrants on the basis of labor market needs.

“Migration has become one of the most important challenges of our time. The contributions of both prize-winners are not only timely, they are also crucial for our understanding of how societies can benefit socially and economically from labor mobility. Selection and integration are key elements of this story,” said IZA Director Klaus F. Zimmermann.

Barry Chiswick and George Borjas have stimulated a tremendous amount of research by many academics all over the world. The immense contribution of these scholars also lies in their empirical ingenuity and their deep understanding of data. They raised issues about the inadequacy of existing data and developed new techniques, emphasizing the importance of high-quality micro level data for examining serious public policy questions. Their work has served as a role model for many subsequent researchers, and it

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has been the basis for the rapid growth of interest in the economic analysis of immigration during the past three decades.

George J. Borjas is the Robert W. Scrivner Professor of Economics and Social Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. He has been a consultant to the World Bank and various government agencies. His academic work provided a theoretical and empirical framework for analyzing the welfare effects and distributional consequences of immigration. His studies demonstrate the need for high-skilled immigration and a selective immigration policy.

Barry R. Chiswick is Professor and Chair of the Department of Economics at the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), George Washington University. He has advised the United Nations, the World Bank and governments around the world. His award-winning work on language acquisition and immigrant labor market outcomes underscores the importance of education and language skills for socioeconomic mobility. He has also studied the integration challenges for different ethnic groups. Chiswick has cooperated closely with IZA for many years.

The IZA Prize in Labor Economics has been awarded annually since 2002 for outstanding contributions to the field. It is regarded worldwide as the most prestigious science award in labor economics. Previous laureates include Dale Mortensen and Christopher Pissarides, who later received the Nobel Prize in Economics.

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More information about the IZA Prize: [www.iza.org/prize](http://www.iza.org/prize)