### **CIRCULAR MIGRATION POLICIES:**

# A WAY TO ACHIEVE WIN-WIN-WIN OR FORCED TRANSNATIONALISM?

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I, the undersigned Dóra Hardy hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis.

To the best of my knowledge this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non-degree program, in English or in any other language.

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#### **Abstract**

Emergence of the win-win-win discourse framed migration as a development tool that can benefit all parties involved in the migratory process: sending countries, receiving countries and migrants. Circular migration policies were proposed since the 2000's as an optimal policy solution to achieve the triple win scenario. Conceptual analysis shows that a distinction shall be drawn between spontaneous circular mobility as a natural process and 'induced circularity' result of public policy. Based on the clarification of the nature of circular migration policies theoretical analysis reveals that development potentials of circular migration policies are hindered by: moral constrains, theoretical overstatements and the existence of a migration industry pushing for a variety of interests within the framework of international migration management.

Key words: migration, development, circular migration policy, transnationalism, win-win-win

#### **Dedication**

I dedicate my efforts invested in the completion of this program to my colleagues at the Think Tank Fund, for their continuous encouragement, support, and inspiration. I'm grateful to TTF for allowing me this opportunity of professional growth.

I wish to give thanks to Dr. Luicy Pedroza who exposed me to issues of migration policy in a thoughtful, engaging and immensely humanistic way.

Last but not least I wish to give thanks to Balázs for his endless care and patience; my beloved mother for her unconditional support and love and my grandmother for being an inspiring role model in life. Also thanks to Andi for the helping hand when this all started.

With the newly acquired knowledge under my belt, I hope to contribute to understand and to solve tensions around one of the most natural activity of human beings: migration.

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#### List of abbreviations

**GCIM** Global Commission on International Migration

**GFMD** Global Forum for Migration and Development

ILO International Labor Organization

**INGOs** International Non-Governmental Organizations

IOM International Organization for Migration

**OWMp** Overseas Workers' Migration policy

POEA Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

**SAWP** Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program

**TCLM** Temporal Circular Labor Migration

#### Introduction

Circularity in migration embraces the idea that migration is not a linear one-off event in time and space but rather a continuous process of mobility. This conceptualization informed policy thinking and fed into the development of an optimistic international discourse, anchored within the migration management framework that looks into ways to capitalize circularity to enhance potential positive effects of mobility. Since the early 2000's circular migration policies were promoted by the international policy community as a tool for development to achieve a win-win-win situation benefitting migrants, sending and receiving states. In this thesis I will engage in a theoretically driven analysis of the win-win-win discourse, the concept of circularity and its practical materialization in the form of circular migration policies.

Throughout this thesis I will seek to answer the following questions:

- Can circular migration policies fulfill the expectations to serve as a development tool as formulated by the international policy community that promotes them as such?
- Is there any aspect of circular migration policies that remain uncovered within the win-win-win framework? If yes how does it relate to the development prospects of circular migration schemes?

To answer these questions I will observe internal (theoretical and moral) and external (asymmetric power relations and practical realities of policy formulation and implementation) limitations of circular migration policies. My analysis is based on primary literature (policy and legal documents of policy design and implementing agencies) and secondary literature (evaluation and monitoring reports of international organizations and scholarly research). Throughout the analysis I provide practical, illustrative case studies to support my argumentation.

The thesis is structured as follows1:

First, I will account for the relation between migration and development and the theoretical background of the emergence of the triple win discourse with a special focus on the significance of transnationalism in scholarly research as proposed by Glick Schiller (1995). Second, I turn to the presentation of circular migration policies promoted as a policy solution fulfilling development goals pursued by all three parties involved in the migratory process. Building on Gaiger and Pécoud's conceptualization of migration management (2010) I propose to observe circular migration policies as part of the practice of international migration management. In my analysis I explore the relevance of the existence of a migration apparatus in the formulation of migration policies, concept elaborated by Feldmann (2012, a; b).

Beyond engaging with the above questions at a theoretical level, I then relate and contrast the theoretical arguments to circular migration policies implemented between Spain and Colombia; Mexico and Canada and the Philippines and the United Kingdom. Though these three policy schemes are not fulfilling entirely the ideal type of circular migration policies, they are considered to be best-practice approximations to it by the migration policy industry. Therefore they can serve as illustrative case studies to evaluate achievement of the aspiration to reach win-win-win situation at practical levels.

As a conclusion I observe that that circularity in migration management is rather a policy scheme used by receiving states to exercise migration control and fulfill labor needs with the assistance and approval of the international community, than a genuinely thought development tool. I also bring the attention to the point that the win-win-win discourse is missing out a number of actors involved in the formulation of migration policies beyond migrants, sending and receiving states. I argue that the conceptual and moral grounds of the triple win framework are inconsistent. Additionally I point out that it's insensitive to the existence of a migration "apparatus", its policy agenda and realities of political economy of policy formulation that is ultimately limiting circular migration policies' development potentials.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Part of a draft version of this thesis (approximately 5000 words) was accepted as course requirement for the course of CEU School of Public Policy, "Migration Policy in a European Context", some of the arguments of this paper were first elaborated in a final paper for CEU Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, "Transnational Migration".

#### Chapter 1. Evolution of the migration-development nexus

The concepts of migration and development have been interlinked since the inception of migration theories.

The nature of this linkage however varied greatly according to the changes of the theoretical lenses scholars took.

The first modern migration theories in the 50's, neoclassical macro and micro theories, explained migration as an outcome of the differences in wages and income between regions –factors closely related to development (Lewis 1954; Rani and Fei 1961; Harris and Todaro 1970; Massey 1990). According to those theories, migration was triggered by a set of pull and push factors such as the difference in returns on labor. This difference in macro level theories was conceptualized as result of the structural economic divergence between two places. Micro theories conceptualized this difference as a result of individual cost-benefit analysis. Neoclassical theories embraced an optimistic approach that development differentials will equilibrate through migration following the logic of market equilibrium. Todaro and Harris (1970) suggested that as migrants depart from less developed states, differential on returns on labor and capital equilibrate due to the change in the relative scarcity of the factors of production. Additionally, in sending countries the alleviation of unemployment through migration drives wages up contributing to trickle down development effects through higher levels of consumption.

During the 60's and 70's a considerably different perspective emerged from the structuralist school of thought. For the dependency and world systems theory, development differentials at world level were the result of the way international power relations shaped interaction between states. According to Wallerstein (1974), a global, self-sustaining system had been built based on the exploitation of the periphery (developing states) by the core (developed states). According to this view, international especially South-North migration was part and result of the exploitative relation between the two regions. (Royal Society 1963; Portes 1981; Sassen 1988). Grubel and Scott (1977) argued that migration had a negative impact on the periphery's development prospects due to brain drain -the exit of the most capable members of the society who settle in developed regions (1977).

Both of the above discussed theories treated development effects of migration on sending and host countries as separate phenomena. From the mid 90's the "transnational turn" questioned this assumption. As exposed first by Glick Schiller, transnationalism revealed that migrants do not necessarily define themselves and create existential ties exclusively in one place or with one community but with multiple ones (Glick Shiller et. al 1995; Levitt and Schiller 2004). This multiple embeddedness of migrants in sending-, transit- and hostcommunities or elsewhere made it possible to observe not mutually exclusive but complementary development effects of migration in all of these places. The phenomenon gained special importance due to the progress of international transportation and technological infrastructure and services used by migrant communities -such as money transfer institutions, low cost airlines and communication through internet. Castles (2002) claimed that the decrease of the costs of these services since the 2000's, worked as a catalyst to maintain and create transnational ties. The most noticeable and perhaps most promoted sign of the relevance of transnationalism in development is the constantly growing amount of remittances channeled to developing countries. Only in 2014 remittances sent to developing countries amounted to \$436 billion. Figure 1 shows that that this sum is more than twice as high as the total yearly amount of official foreign aid disbursed towards developing countries. Additionally, flow of remittances seems to be a more stable form of income than private debt and equity flows (Figure 1. World Bank 2015).

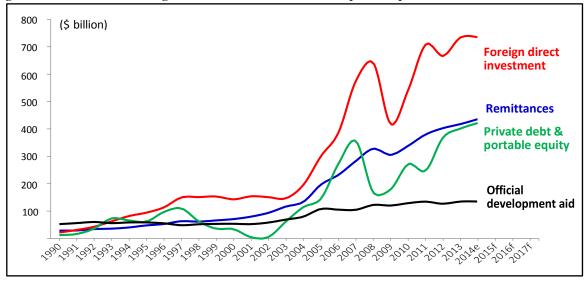


Figure 1 Remittance flows are larger than ODA, and more stable than private capital flows

Source: Migration and Development Brief 24, World Bank, Migration and Remittances Team, Development Prospects Group (2015): 5, Figure 2, (Private debt includes portfolio investment bonds, and commercial banks and other lending.)

Transnationalism proved to be a fertile soil for the re-emergence of optimistic voices about the migrationdevelopment nexus.

Co-development is a term first used by the Algerian thinker Sami Naïr, in his report addressed to the French Prime Minister (1997) to describe the role migrants can play as agents of development for their home country. He pointed out that in case France was willing to stop a massive influx of migrants it had to consider to pursue development policies tackling the root push factors of migration in sending countries. Moreover he proposed that migrants established in the host country should be involved in such development policies. He defined the concept of co-development as:

"a proposal to integrate immigration and development in a way that both the country of origin and of reception benefit from the flow of immigration. That means to create a relationship by consensus between the two countries in which the contribution of immigrated people in the country of reception doesn't mean a loss for the country of origin." (Naïr 1997 translation by Observatorio del Tercer Sector 2009).

Naïr described a mutually beneficial situation where receiving and sending states are benefiting from the migratory phenomenon. The concept of co-development was embraced and modified by Spanish scholars and policymakers. Giménez (2004) speaks about actions of mutual benefit to receiving and sending countries in which migrants settled in receiving countries play a lead role through their transnational ties. Other definitions put an emphasis on the participating institutions rather than actions of individual migrants and the trans-boundary aspect of the actions (Malgesini 2001). Early references of co-development took migration as given. Only later, with the emergence of migration management and its cross-fertilization with co-development the idea arose that migration could be the very subject of policies to achieve co-development. That's where the location of migrants stopped being necessarily bound to the receiving state and temporal limitation of migrant's stay became framed as a development tool. We can appreciate that transformation of policy subject of co-development replaced trans-border solidarity with regulated trans-border mobility.

Scholars and particularly multilateral development agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such the International Organization for Migration (IOM), (2008), the United Nation's Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), (2005) and the World Bank (2006) building on the intellectual proposition of co-development re-conceptualized migration as a tool for development. Interpretation of INGOs on the way how migration can help development focuses primarily on the transfer of financial and social capital "back home" by migrants themselves. According to this logic: as transnational migrants are able to obtain higher wages than in their home country they can save and send remittances to their home communities. In turn those communities can consume more and invest in productive activities thus contributing to their development. Moreover transnational ties and eventual back and forth movements also facilitate transfer of financial and social capital in form of skill transfers. It is expected that during their stay abroad, migrants familiarize themselves with novel skills related to their work or personal life projects that they can capitalize on their return. Such capitalization of acquired skills entails engagement in entrepreneurial activities, productive investment or projects serving the benefits of the local community. As a consequence migrants are not lost for their home societies rather they embody new channels to access knowledge, skills and innovation (IOM 2008, 2010; Nyberg—Sørensen et. al 2002; Newland 2003; Russel

2003). This phenomenon is called brain-circulation as opposed to brain-drain, which is the negative side effect associated with traditional forms of permanent migration due to the emigration of the most capable members of a society. Brain circulation is depicted as the optimal situation where sending countries can benefit from the reincorporation of former emigrants.

Re-emerging optimism around the potential positive effects of migration put mobility in the focus of the international policy community concerned about development.

# Chapter 2. Win-Win discourse and circular migration policies as a policy product

#### 2.1 The win-win discourse

Based on the re-emerging optimism on the relation of migration and development discussed in the previous chapter, a burgeoning community of thought established the win-win-win policy discourse since the 2000's. Most vocal and influential members of this circle are the different agencies of the United Nations, the World Bank, IOM and institutions of the European Union (GCMI 2005; World Bank 2006; IOM 2008; 2010). The triple win depicts an ideal situation where migration benefits all parties involved in the migratory process: the sending and hosting countries and the migrants themselves. This approach became the mantra that frames policy discussion of international, especially South-North migration by international policy networks in the developed world.

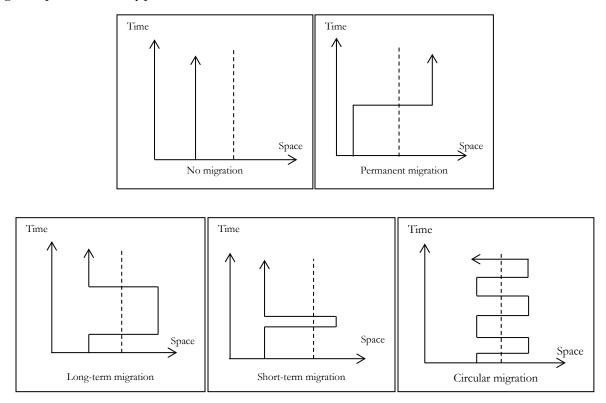
Policy prescriptions to achieve the triple win outcomes focus on two areas: first, there is an advocacy for further facilitation of transnational ties. In this area the major focus is put on curbing the costs of sending remittances and facilitating access to formal financial institutions (Orozco 2013). Policies aiming to channel remittances towards productive investments often are complemented with government financed co-payment schemes—such as the Mexican 3X1 program (Aparicio and Covadonga 2008). Second, there is a push for the establishment of a migration management system that satisfies economic needs and capacities of sending and host states, and ensures that migrants can get access to foreign labor markets. The second area is a more complex instrument but basically it aims to create a controlled—alias managed—migration that uses available labor or labor excess of sending countries to satisfy labor demand in receiving countries in a way that it ensures some sort of legal status for migrants to work abroad. This way managed migration restricts irregular migration and caters for security concerns of the receiving states (GCIM 2005; World Bank 2006; IOM 2008; 2010). The goal is to maximize benefits of ensuring security and fulfilling economic needs for flexible labor migration and to minimize costs avoiding illegal migration. In the last ten years circular migration policies were prompted as the ultimate policy solution fulfilling these requirements. However circular migration is a

contested and often ambiguously used term. In the next chapter I offer a theoretical clarification of the concept and introduce the term 'induced circularity' to differentiate between spontaneous and facilitated circular mobility.

#### 2.2 Conceptualization of circularity in migration

The generally accepted taxonomy of migratory movements is based on how long migrants stay abroad. Accordingly, we can differentiate between permanent, long term and short term migration. Whereas there is no consensual limit where short term ends and long term begins (nor can we tell with certainty that a permanent settler won't decide to move, thus becoming a long-term migrant) usually a short-term or temporary migrant is defined as "... a person who changes his or her country of usual residence for at least three months but less than twelve months." (The Migration Observatory 2015). Consequently long-term migration means change of usual residence for more than a year. Since migration is not necessarily—and is usually not- a unidirectional, one off event, beyond temporality we shall categorize migration according to the spatial pattern of back and forth movement. Nevertheless such categorization is much less clear cut. I propose for this purpose to use Malmberg's (1997) time-space mobility patterns. While Malmberg included in his original categorization non-cross-border mobility, hereby I only focus on international movements. In Figure 2 the two axes of the graphs represent space and time; the dashed line stand for an international border, the continuous line represents the migratory path. The figures depict the different modalities of mobility migrants usually take.

Figure 2 Space-time mobility patterns



Source: Malmberg, 1997, 24 and own elaboration.

Through the figures we can appreciate the differences in length and repetition of migration and identify permanent-; long-term-; short-term-; and repeated migration. We speak about permanent migration when the migrant stays at the destination country. In turn in the case of long-term and short-term migration, migrants eventually return to their home country in the first case after an extended period of time, in the latter case after a shorter period of time. Note that spatiality can expand beyond two points (migration doesn't necessarily happen between two only points) but for reasons of graphical presentation here I omit this option. As a point of departure of my conceptual analysis I observe that relatively short-term, repeated back and forth movements broadly constitute circular migration. The magnitude of spatial distances covered by circular migration is not yet specified by this description.

I argue that two types of circularity shall be distinguished: natural or spontaneous circular mobility and 'induced' circularity that is a constructed circularity, result of migration management.

Circular migration in its natural form or "embedded circularity" as Cassarino suggests (2008: 3) can be observed primarily in border areas where habitants regularly commute across state borders for employment or trade. The stay of circular migrants varies from a daily commute to more extended time periods. Irrespective of the length of stay, the common characteristic is that migrants perform a continuous back and forth movement that leads to a transnational form of livelihood. Circular migrants perform certain aspects of their life simultaneously in different but generally geographically close spaces. A Hungarian citizen living in a border land village owning a plot of land but working in the factory on the other side of the border in Slovakia is a good example. This person has her family and private life centered in Hungary but all his professional life from labor law to taxation is centered in Slovakia. The other example is the indigenous group of Zacatecas living in the northern-central regions of Mexico. Migration to the US for Zacatecas is part of the community's perception of becoming an adult. Young male members take the route to the North to try themselves and work for a year or two to return back and to settle back home (Eguren 2010). Circularity in this case is not a constant feature of individual life but a characteristic of a community where a generation is on the move and return to give way to the younger ones to go.

As exposed in the previous chapter, Castles (2006) highlighted that technology and accessible long-distance transportation had a facilitating effect on migration and transnational ties. As a result the migratory path of embedded circularity has changed also modifying its time-space mobility pattern. Typically it shrunk the time and expanded the space variable, giving way for more intensive back and forth movements across longer distances<sup>2</sup>.

I propose to distinguish as a different type of circularity the recently adopted conceptualization of circularity by international organization and agencies. I argue that this recently adopted conceptualization stretches and restricts the concept of natural circularity at the same time. I propose to use the term 'induced circularity' referring to its emergence as a product of the policy sphere as a differentiation from the spontaneous

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In the same time it is important to note that costs of travel remains unaffordable to a wide range of the society.

phenomenon of circular migration depicted above<sup>3</sup>. This new type of circularity is described in the following way by multilateral agencies and INGOs:

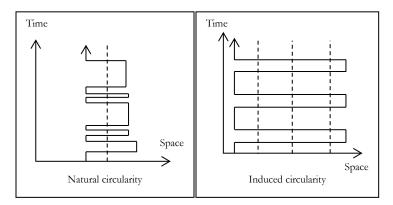
- "[A] repetition of legal migration by the same person between two or more countries" (European Migration Network, 2011: 14)
- "Circular migration can be defined as a form of migration that is managed in a way allowing some degree of legal mobility back and forth between two countries" (European Commission 2007: 4).
- "The fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved, if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labor needs of countries of origin and destination." (IOM Glossary 2015)
- "[Migrants] who remain in a destination country for a limited period of time and then return home permanently, or for a short time before emigrating again (to the same or to another destination country). When this type of migration occurs back and forth between a specific home and host country, it is also referred to as 'circular migration." (Global Migration Group 2010: 116)

We can see that there are competing definitions of the term. We can appreciate however that the multiplicity of definitions of induced circularity concord in referring to temporality and iteration of movement as opposed to permanent settlement. It stretches the concept of circularity as it is not anymore restricted to regions of geographical proximity. Following the structure of Malmberg's (1997) space-time pattern graphs to visually represent the two types of circular mobility, Figure 3 shows that natural circularity stretches across short distances over typically one international border entailing changing length of stays in both home and host territory. In turn induced circularity stretches over long distances across various international borders and the length of stay a circular migrant is spending in the host country is strictly defined.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Even though spontaneous circular migration in border areas are indirectly influenced by a range of policies (labor regulation, taxation, border control etc.), and therefore are not fully a natural phenomenon, nevertheless those movements are distinct in a sense that are not directly triggered by any specific policy.

Figure 3 Space-time mobility patterns in natural- and induced circularity



Source: Own elaboration based on Malmberg, 1997, 24.

Beyond the differences in physical mobility patterns, the concept of induced circularity is of normative nature and is more specific, as it brings in administrative categories of migration namely legal, regulated, documented mobility –especially the European Institutions' definitions.

Additionally there is a relevant distinction in the profile of migrants who are portrayed as subjects of new induced circular schemes. Highly skilled professional migrants are usually conceptualized as expats or participants of professional exchange programs or simply foreign professionals but very rarely as temporal or circular migrants. Usually only low skilled migrants are related to temporal and circular migration. This difference in connotation is puzzling since mobility space-time patterns of the two groups can show identical trajectories.

After this clarification the conceptual grounds of circular migration, in the following section I will elaborate that the normative nature of induced circular mobility responds to the objectives of the international policy circles to depict circular migration policies as a tool for development and a way to achieve win-win situation.

#### 2.3 Policy practice of induced circularity

Temporality is not a novelty in migration policies. Previous experiments with temporary labor migration schemes as the *Braceros* program between Mexico and the US in the 50's or the *Gastarbeiter* program between Germany and Turkey in the 70's left bitter memories in all parties involved. Both programs intended to

attract low skilled foreign labor to boost national agriculture or nascent industrial production. Each program meant to allow temporal access to the labor market to fulfill demands of seasonal or temporarily existent work (typically construction and re-construction) without changing national labor market structures in the long term. Now we know that these programs didn't perform according to the expectations. As Castles (1986) highlights, host societies were unhappy since these programs at the end didn't pan out as temporary as originally planned but lead to permanent settlement of many laborers. Furthermore workers often suffered from abuse at the workplace, they were kept in a status of lawlessness and nobody was concerned about their social interactions and integration since they were seen as temporary factors of production and not as new members of the local community.

Induced circular migration policies in the strict sense of the word are temporal labor migration schemes. One of their primary aims is to satisfy demand in labor markets where there is a scarcity of certain type of labor within a country in a way that the process doesn't lead to permanent settlement of foreign laborers. The major distinction between the objectives of old temporary labor migration programs and new circular migration programs is that the latter is aiming to fulfill certain development goals beyond the host country also for the migrants and the sending countries. This way the framing of the new policy schemes extends the circle of stakeholders from receiving states to migrants and sending states. I argue that development objectives of circular migration policies are primarily informed by the win-win-win discourse in a way that they stress importance of facilitating remittances and skills transfer of migrants back to their home country. The new generation of induced circular migration policies claim to prevent pitfalls of past temporary labor migration schemes. Therefore they are framed carefully in a way to avoid the concept of resurrection of past problems (Castles, 2006). The international policy community such as the IOM (2009, 2010), Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), (2008) and the World Bank (2006) recommend policy makers to include the following safeguard in the circular migration schemes to fulfill their development objectives:

- Programs should be flexible, not tying migrants to employers, this way reducing their exposure to abuse.

- Programs should be administered and formulated in cooperation with sending country, to ensure coownership and mutual agreement between the states.
- Programs should safeguards migrants' human rights and protect them from trafficking and other abuse.
- Programs should ensure return of skills to origin countries –to fulfill the development potential for the sending country.

In contrast to the first generation of temporary labor migration schemes new circular migration schemes in principle are more attentive to the needs of sending countries and better safeguard benefits of participating migrants. Circular migration policies following the above requirements appear to be the perfect policy solution to achieve win-win-win. They are controlled in order to safeguard concerns on host states, ensure return of migrants thus avoid brain drain and ensure a set of rights for migrants. Nevertheless, can we confidently state that these policies in practice can serve as the silver bullet for policymaking? Can we identify a common interpretation at the level of practical policy elements of the requirements spelled out above? In order to engage with the above questions, in the following section I will identify and point out relevant aspects of policy case studies of induced circular migration schemes considered as best practices for the achievement of win-win-win.

#### Chapter 3. Case studies

#### 3.1 Case selection

In this section I seek to identify practical illustrative case studies of induced circular migration schemes. Though there is a vibrant scholarly and theoretical discourse in policy circles about circular migration, at a practical level, implemented policies that would qualify as circular migration schemes are often not called as such. This is due to the ambiguity in distinction between circular-; temporal-; seasonal- etc. migration policy instruments. The most comprehensive list of policy schemes involving elements attributed to circular migration policies is the "Compendium of Good Practice Policy Elements in Bilateral Temporary Labour Arrangements" compiled by the GFMD. The list is the result of a consultative process among participants of the first forum of the GFMD held in 2007, and is compiled based on the knowledge gathered by several international organizations such as the IMO, International Labor Organization (ILO), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The compendium was last updated in 2008 December, though in principle it should act as a living document. The list enumerates policy elements identified by the Forum as good practice in labor migration policy schemes and enlists existent bilateral policies that comply with each identified good practices.

I used the GFMD list as a starting point to select illustrative policy cases to analyze. Further I used the below set of criteria to choose among the 72 policy schemes included in the compendium:

To ensure relevance for analysis:

- Component of circularity –beyond temporal migration arrangement the scheme should include incentives to repetitive mobility.
- High number of good policy practice elements identified in the compendium –to ensure relevance and proximity to 'ideal' policy schemes.

To ensure diversity of cases:

- Diversity of geographic areas covered.

- Diversity of the characteristics of the migratory profile of the mobility –seasonal vs non-seasonal migration, low- vs. mid-skilled labor.
- Diversity of designing and implementing institutions, agencies and organizations –state agencies, decentralized public authorities, INGOs and the private sector.

To ensure viability of analysis:

- Programs with available documentation of regulations, monitoring and evaluation.

According to the above set of criteria I identified three circular, temporary migration policy schemes that according to the benchmark of the international community approximate best to the ideal type of induced circular migration:

- Temporal Circular Labor Migration (TCLM) between Spain and Colombia.
- Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) between Canada and Mexico.
- Overseas Worker's Migration policies (OWMp) of health professionals between the Philippines and the United Kingdom.

My analysis is based on primary literature, policy and legal documents of policy designing and implementing agencies, and secondary literature such as evaluation and monitoring reports of international organizations and scholarly research.

#### 3.2 Context and brief description of the case study policy schemes

#### 3.2.1 Temporal Circular Labor Migration between Spain and Colombia

The TCLM scheme is targeted towards fruit picking and plantation maintenance related work in the Catalonian agro-industrial sector. Catalonia is the autonomous community which receives the highest share of immigrant population within Spain. 22 percent of migrants arriving to the country are residing in Catalonia – figure unchanged since 2008 (INE 2015). Immigrants of Colombian nationality in Spain constitute the fifth

nationality in magnitude among immigrants. Their share of the total national immigrant population varied between 5.2 percent in 2009 and 2.9 percent in 2014.

The TCLM offers employment for six to nine month per year on plantations for Colombian citizens. The nature of the work is primarily seasonal. The scheme aims to encourage repeat recruitment of personnel year by year. The program started in 1999 with the employment of 35 Colombian temporary migrants in Catalonia. In 2008 this number has raised to 3,211 people expanding also in terms of territory to Valencia and the Balear Islands (Zapata Barrero et al 2007: 39). Stated objectives of TCLM are threefold: organize the mediation process of the labor force, welcome and accompany migrants, promote development for country of origin of migrants (IOM 2009: 117).

The initiator and main implementer of the scheme in Spain is the Fundació Pagesos Solidaris a non-profit branch of Unió de Pagesos, the biggest trade union of agricultural producers in Catalonia. On the Colombian side IOM is acting as the central organizer and implementer of the scheme. Legal framework of the program is anchored within the agreement between the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Spanish Ministry of Interior (BOE-A-2001-12853). The agreement sets out broad lines of cooperation between the two countries. Concrete conditions of recruitment in home country, transportation, labor, wages, accommodation etc. are set out in agreements initiated by the Unió the Pagesos (Zapata Barrero et al 2009: 27-36) and local authorities in Spain.

#### 3.2.2 Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program between Canada and Mexico

SAWP is one of the first institutional circular migratory programs. It was established first between Jamaica and Canada in 1966. The program aimed to alleviate the labor shortages in the agricultural sector experienced in the province of Ontario allowing short term entry of foreign laborers. The scheme was extended to Mexico in 1974 when 203 workers were recruited. Since the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, Canada and Mexico become one of the most important economic partners mutually, a fact that was also reflected in the rapid growth of Mexican migrants going to Canada (Massey 2011). The program offers employment up to 8 months yearly in fruit and vegetable picking and plantation

maintenance related tasks. Labor force is recruited in the home country. The scheme encourages return of laborers yearly (Massey 2011). The Mexican Embassy expects to engage 20,000 migrant workers within the SAW Program during 2015. Approximately 80 percent of the workers are returning yearly (Dwyer 2008).

SAWP is implemented within the legal framework of a memorandum of understanding between Canada and Mexico. The program is administered in Canada by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Recruitment is overseen by the Mexican Government consular officials and is managed by private recruitment agencies.

## 3.2.3 Overseas Workers' Migration policy of health professionals between the Philippines and the United Kingdom

The Philippines has a long history of migration facilitation from the 70's. The population growth that the country experienced since the 50's put a pressure on the available economic possibilities and social welfare provision capacities of the state. The Philippines deliberately turned to facilitation of emigration of its nationals as a tool to ease unemployment and allow its citizens benefitting from higher wages in external labor markets (Calzado 2007: 3). The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) was set up to regulate and oversee the migratory process. It regulates a multitude of private actors involved in the OWMp such as recruitment agencies, capacity building providers, travel agencies, financial institutions specialized on remittance related services etc. The Migrant Workers Act was enacted in 1995 (Migrant Workers Act RA 8042) with the following purpose:

"to institute the policies of overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress...".

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is a specified state agency of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) responsible to deliver welfare services to overseas migrants.

Migration of health professionals proved to be a niche 'market' for the country that now provides the highest number of migrant health care professionals after India. According to the latest statistics provided by the POEA 16,404 nurses were deployed in 2013 –a number not including other medical professionals. According to recent research the UK's national health system is relying on foreign professionals to a great extent, 11 percent of all staff is non-British. The Philippines provides the highest number of foreign nurses and midwifes in the UK with 8,094 professionals employed (Sidiqque 2014). Health care professionals are engaged in labor contracts from one to three years. The POEA is tasked with encouraging return and facilitating reintegration of workers but doesn't administer return in a strict manner. While the international community refers to the OWMp as a circular migration scheme it is not formulated as a comprehensive program. Moreover the country deliberately follows a strategy of facilitating out migration expecting benefits in remittances (O'Neil 2004; Lorenzo et al 2007).

Table 1 summarizes the most important characteristics of the three policy schemes selected as case studies.

Table 1 Characteristics of the case study circular migration policy schemes

Characteristics	Spain-Colombia, TCLM	Canada-Mexico, SAWP	Philippines-UK, OWMp
Number of participating	3,000	20,000	approx. 3000
laborers per year			(suffered a recent drop since mid- 2000's from nearly 20,000)
Skill level	low level	low level	high and mid-level
Term of employment	one to eight months	six weeks to eight	one to three years
		months	
Seasonality	yes	yes	no
Stakeholders involved in	Non-governmental	Host country state	Sending country state
design and	actors	actors	actors
implementation (in bold	Host country trade union	Sending state	Private recruitment
the lead actors)	IOM	government	agencies
	Sending state	Employers	Private training
	government	Sending country local	companies
	Private recruiters	government agencies	Migrant workers' state
	Private consultancies	Private recruiters	agency
			Host sate health care
			administration

Source: own elaboration based on (IOM 2009; Zapata-Barrero et al 2009; Massey and Brown 2011, Department of Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Boseley 2011)

The TCLM scheme is a relatively small scale initiative of short-term seasonal works. Though embedded in state regulations it if designed and facilitated primarily by non-state actors based in the host country. The SAWP is a much larger scale seasonally bound short-term migration scheme administered and overseen by

state actors in the host country. Finally, the OWMp has reduced recently but originally was a large scale scheme of long duration of non-seasonal-; high to mid skilled work. It is overseen by state agency in the sending country.

# Chapter 4. Internal and external constraints of the win-win approach and circular migration policies

After providing in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 a theoretical analysis and overview of the emergence of the win-win-win discourse and circular migration policies, I turn to analyze the internal and external constrains of the triple win approach and induced circular migration policies. I will elaborate how these constrains effect the potential of induced circular migration policies to achieve triple win.

#### 4.1 Moral considerations

The discourse that centers migration and migrants in the focus of development prospects of a country is not without moral consequences. In a way this discourse pushes the responsibility to migrants for the development of their home country. According to the triple win discourse, migrants should take wise decisions to use their skills abroad to benefit from higher income and further skills. They should of course return at a certain point. Once returned, migrants are expected to invest their hard earned money and skills in a productive way for the prospect of their community. This approach raises moral and ideological questions of how far migrants can be expected to work for the development of a country -including the political and administrative institutions- that they had to leave in order to prosper at individual level. Massey (1990) argues that corruption, inefficient institutions or lack of social welfare are often the reason why migrants leave their home country. How far is it fair to expect from migrants to go back to their home country and for example finance the construction of a community school on funds that they had to earn abroad specifically because of lack of possibilities and welfare provision offered locally? The win-win-win logic of migration-development nexus is embedded in the liberal understanding of development, where individuals are the agents of development without a closer look at the institutional constraints at hand. In this perspective the options of exit, voice and loyalty that Hirschman proposed and Hoffman adopted to the context of migration (2008) are completely missing. Namely, from an institutional point of view members of a society can choose to give voice to their concerns trying to shape the social and political space in which they live. As an alternative option individuals can express their dissent through exit (emigration) to discontinue their embeddedness in a

given socio-political space. This interaction and embeddedness of the individual in the national socio-political institutional framework is completely toned down to the mechanistic individual or household level economic decision making on migration (Hoffmann 2008). Furthermore since circular migration policies require the back and forth movement of individuals between sending and host society labor markets; these individuals are expected to fulfill multiple roles at the same time. On one hand they are expected to fulfill labor needs of host societies. Except for highly skilled migrants -who are anyways usually conceptualized as expats or foreign professionals and not as temporary or circular migrants- temporary migrants mainly work in the agrarian, industrial or service sectors in low ranking positions. However, when they return home, they are expected to be the 'heroes of development' of their own country being skillful entrepreneurs and wise investors.

This individualized approach to development also disregards the institutional constraints that migrants wiling to act as agents of development have to face in their home country. Dysfunctional institutional settings such as lack of physical-; and legal security, lack of access to financial services, and obsolete or missing infrastructure all hinder efforts of migrants to act effectively as agents of development. It is not only immoral to expect from migrants to be the agents of change but often is unviable.

In the case of the TCLM project the evaluation report prepared by the IOM (2009: 31) recognizes that labor migration and development without the right public policies in place at the international and national level won't have developmental effect. Nevertheless in the policy documentation of the TCLM scheme we can trace very limited sensitivity and consideration of the importance of the institutions and stakeholders in Colombia beyond the migrant's themselves. Within the TCLM various capacity building activities are offered for participating migrants in order to "[Train] temporary entrepreneurial workers so they become agents of co-development" (IOM 2009: 23). Such trainings include awareness raising on issues of community development, entrepreneurial skill building, project development and management etc. The trainings are delivered by Spanish trainers, not embedded in local realities of the migrants and are reported to be overly generic. In any case, only a small fraction of migrant workers are attending these facultative sessions.

This ethical dilemma at macro level becomes even more acute when looking back at structuralist dependency theory that emphasizes the role of the developed states in the perpetuation of underdevelopment of the South. While developing states provide ready-made labor force for the developed part of the globe the latter doesn't contribute to the formation and long term social provisions of this labor force. Costs of social reproduction of the mobile labor force are entirely passed on to migrant sending states. In a sense these states are providing an in-kind subsidy to receiving states. While some policy documents acknowledge this issue, such as the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development (2006), the ultimately liberal approach and holding migrants responsible to act as agents of development doesn't seem to disappear. Migrants might well transfer remittances back to their families but during their contracted stays abroad they are not contributing to the public finances of the home country but of the host country. On one hand this situation creates a gap in the public budget hindering the establishment of a capable state. On the other hand migrants tend not to use social services in host country (either by fear of loss of position or willingness to maximize work days even at the expense of health issues). Taking this into account taxes paid by migrants during their stay are subsiding host countries budgets. Furthermore circular migration policies in sending states are anchored with the propagation of the neo-liberal approaches in developing countries -assisted in part by international actors such as the World Bank. In the neo-liberal context, states gradually withdraw from provision of social services a burden that is put on the shoulders of international migrants. Remittances channeled back to home countries often cover expenses related to lacking public welfare such as health care or education. According to the framing of circular migration policies as a development tool these questions of responsibility sharing between the states and individuals are completely marginalized.

The most acute symptom of the asymmetric dependency can be observed in the Philippine case. The country invests in the formation of health care professionals who in their majority are deployed to work oversees. In the same time the national health care system suffers from lack of capacities, personnel and funding. As a consequence nurses and doctors working overseas on temporal contracts, tend not to return to the Philippines to work often due to the bad working conditions in public hospitals at home. Rather they seek to engage in repeated overseas employment. This way the virtuous chain of brain circulation associated to

circular migration policies breaks (Lorenzo et al 2007). Moreover the state is using the influx of remittances as a valve on the pressure on public welfare provisions since households can rely on remittances.

#### 4.2 Conceptual overload of transnationalism to justify circularity

Beyond the ethical dilemmas of putting migrants in the center of development, using and abusing transnationalism as a wild card for policymaking is questionable. As described above, transnational practices got a lot of attention from scholarly research. INGOs and multilateral organizations were very eager to build on it, to back their understanding of the migration-development nexus. Nevertheless reliance on transnationalism has its own limitations. First, transnationalism is not valid for a large number of migrants. In fact majority of migrants are not extending transnational ties in the sense as INGOs expect them to do. Transnational economic ties conducive to development effects are rather the exception and not the rule. Migrants still move with the wish to settle down in different places and not to circulate between places. Depending on a set of socio-cultural and personal factors, caring for the homeland may disappear as soon as after a couple of years –if it was there at all- or during an extended timespan of generations especially if migrants are faced with or are keen to take on assimilation to the host society (Barkan 2006).

Second, transnationalism is a much broader concept than circularity. Transnationalism refers to the existence of a transnational social field that includes a variety of identities, practices and actions from religious, political-, family- to economic life. Migrants are part of this social field in multiple layers in a selective way that changes with time (Levitt and Schiller 2004). Referring to transnationalism as facilitator of transnational economic ties misses to understand the complexity and volatility of these relations. Migrants who identify themselves with the homeland culturally or politically don't necessarily direct any economic activity back home and vice-versa. Ways of being and belonging embedded in the homeland are far from being a continuum.

Third, economic relations across different places appear for reasons beyond the scope of focus of the winwin-win discourse. While the win-win-win approach still focuses on the economic rationale behind migration and its development potential, other factors seem to contribute equally to the emergence of transnational ties. Al-Ali et al. (2010) show that the historical background of the particular migratory movement, social factors and the levels of nationalism promoted by the sending state all condition how far migrants would engage in transnational activities. Çağlar and Schiller (2009) on the other side bring attention to the formulation of opportunity structures for migrants to engage in transnational economic activities as a result of the repositioning processes of cities. According to them as globalization creates differentiated state spaces within sending and host countries, urban areas operate in different city scales that enable or disable migrants to prosper. Rescaling and thus opportunities available to migrants doesn't depend on the sending state, receiving state differentials neither are determined at the national level within sending and hosting countries, but within a smaller scales of cities.

Despite the complexity of the concept of transnationalism, the simplistic framing of the optimistic view on the development potentials of migration through transnationalism reduces its focus to the back and forth movement and the existence of personal ties to the homeland. At the level of practical policies the primary instrument meant to facilitate such transnationalism is that migrants on temporary worker visas can't apply for long term residency thus are forced to return to their home country. This is the case in the TCLM and the SAWP schemes. Furthermore the simplistic idea of fostering transnationalism is reflected in the recruitment criteria of both short term migration schemes (TCLM and SAWP). Each require applicants to be married, give preference to those with children and extended family to support and individuals with presumed engagement in their home communities (Zapata Barrero et al 2009; Brown and Massey 2011). The assumption behind the enforcement of these criteria is that these people will have stronger transnational ties that can be reinforced by circular migration thus they are less likely to overstay and more likely to contribute to home communities. The most evident signal of this forced transnationalism reported by the study group Alma Mater in the TCLM program (Mejía et al 2009) is the practice among Colombian migrants of creating and associating with fake local associations in their home communities to gain access to the TCLM program. Even if the program successfully identifies participants who are prone to nurture transnational ties it remains questionable how far can migrants can engage in meaningful entrepreneurial and community building activities who are absent six-eight months yearly.

Documentation prepared by ILO of case studies of return and circular migration experiences of Filipino health professionals reveals the importance of the formulation of local opportunity structures that allow for transnational ties and eventually can facilitate successful return or maintenance of professional trans-border activity contributing to local development. While there was no difference in the personal qualities of the professionals, each held personal transnational ties through their families, success stories occurred where changes in the local context opened up opportunities for the profile of return migrants rather than conational professionals. These opportunities involved teaching, trainer and research positions — positions where holding international experience were considered to be an asset. Those who went back to the same work realities as if they won't have had experience abroad were dissatisfied and soon migrated again (ILO 2014).

In the previous two sections I put forward the moral and conceptual constrains circular migration policies present in relation to their potential to foster development. In the following section I will analyze the implications of the policy -environment; and -process in which these circular migration schemes are embedded.

#### 4.3 Circular migration policy as part of a process

Beyond the moral and theoretical limitations it seems that the win-win-win discourse is also falling short in observing the political economy of policymaking —of which the same policy network is part of its production. While the triple win discourse portrays itself as it speaks about all parties involved in the migration process it fails to account for the broader policy environment where these programs take place. Decentralization and privatization processes in migration gave space to the entry of a set of actors to the world of policymaking, such as private service providers, civil society and knowledge providers. These actors are exercising an influence on the framing of the policy problems, implementation and materialization of programs (Menz 2013).

The win-win discourse and the promotion of circular migration policies are all part of the so called "international migration management" that Gaiger and Pécoud (2010: 1-2) define as a combination of actors,

practices and discourses related to migration. Migration management emerged as a result of the interaction of participating actors formulating policy discourses in a way legitimizing their own existence and performance facilitating "a broad and coherent global strategy to better match demand for migrant workers with supply in a safe, humane and orderly way" (IOM 2008). The first generation of temporary labor migration schemes agencies were the designing and implementing actors -generally with higher level of engagement and authority of the receiving state. In contrast, new circular migration schemes are not exclusively driven by neither the receiving or sending country, nor they are designed and implemented only by state agencies but include a wider array of actors such as private companies of production, recruitment-, and travel agencies and non-governmental organizations. This multiplicity of actors induce a divers set of interests and agendas in the negotiation, design and implementation of policies. Migration management does a great deal in distancing the question of how to deal with migration from morale, ethics and politics towards clear cut technical questions of optimizing risks and benefits and reducing costs. Emergence of migration management and the policy network around development and migration made migrants and related issues subjects of knowledge and expertise. As Feldman (2012 a) puts it, circular migration policies are the result of a "mediated practice of policy making" where adoption of programs and schemes are the result of a negotiation process influenced by mediating actors.

INGOs and multilaterals act as discourse settlers in these negotiations; since they portray themselves as imminent expert knowledge providers on the matter, they gain certain potential to frame the policy issue at hand and to propose and endorse solutions. The most common way circular migration policies take shape is in the form of bilateral agreements between states. The content of these bilateral agreements normally stretches beyond the narrow content of labor migration scheme and include provisions of regulation and control of borders, security clearance of participants etc. Private actors, service providers are involved in these tasks in an increasing degree. Beyond the bilateral agreements between states details of the mobility schemes are negotiated between the varieties of actors involved. The agreements often integrate elements of capacity building and monitoring to be more times than not done by INGOs and multilaterals -the same agencies framing the issue and proposing the policy solutions. This way we can appreciate that circular migration

policies are integral part and product of the international management discourse and migration industry therefore we should evaluate them as such.

The case of the SAWP scheme is a striking example of the difference between the way circular migration policies are framed by INGOs and the way implementing actors frame and convey the actual content of the policies. While there is an ample policy literature that frames the SAWP scheme as a best practice to achieve win-win (GFMD 2008; IOM 2009) traces of such approach in the primary documentation of the policies are non-existent. The evaluation report of the program done by the Canadian Government doesn't list a single Mexican private or institutional actor among the list of stakeholders nor does it question the effect of the policies on the sending country or the migrants. The same report assigns the following roles and responsibilities to temporary workers:

- Application for a work permit and visa
- Respect the terms and conditions of the work permit and the labor contract
- Leave Canada at the end of the authorized period

It is problematic to prove that a policy instrument so insensitive by design to two elements of the triple win (sending states and migrants) can actually fulfill win-win-win prescriptions set out by the policy community. Nevertheless the INGOs repeatedly bring the example of the SAWP scheme to back their argumentation on the viability and positive effects of circular migration schemes.

While migration is a highly political issue the framing of circular migration policies as a "tool for development", as policy device "maximizing benefits and minimizing costs" brings in a depoliticized, technical perspective where the issues are to be solved with the optimal tools available. Geiger and Pécoud (2010) warn that this framing in the end serves to tone down the political content of decisions at hand and facilitates pushing for certain solutions in a less contested manner. International migration management depoliticizes and distantiates decisions and actions on migration from the political economy of policy processes. It represents terms and conditions legitimate and acceptable to everybody —who would want to push migrant to the hands of traffickers instead of legal and orderly migration? In reality however the policies

are loaded with asymmetric power relations between negotiating states and governments with an increasing willingness to control migration. Circular migration policies are a political compromise par excellence for host states between liberal economic interests –pushing for more cheap labor- and conservative voters –willing to contain migration (Feldman 2012 b). In effect circular migration policies are the most extreme materialization of migration regulation as they give way to control exactly who, for exactly what purposes and for exactly how long enters national territory. Such level of control is actually striking especially if we realize that it is framed not as a migration control tool but a development one. Sørensen also highlights that though in their materialization as policy solutions they often overlap (2012), framing of migration as a security concern on the one hand and migration as a development tool on the other hand are completely detached from each other. While circular migration policies are loaded with elements of security policy there is no account taken about the way this in effect limits the potential of the policies to serve as a development tool.

Tedious pre-screening processes, recruitment in home country, arrangement of logistics of travel and accommodation are all constituting elements of each three circular migration schemes. While these steps are framed as technical elements of the schemes or –especially recruitment- elements ensuring development potentials of the program in fact they serve to enhance control by the receiving states on the migrants entering their territory.

Another issue is whether circular migration policies leave agency to migrant sending countries let alone migrants themselves, beyond the option of taking or leaving them. We can appreciate a dual level of power asymmetry: first, among sending and receiving states; second, among migrants and institutional actors and employers. Turning back to structuralist theories of international political economy, sending states are eager to facilitate migration of their citizens (especially low-skilled migrants) to ease their labor excess to solve their problems of unemployment and to capitalize on remittances. Stake holders in developed host countries are in a better position to initiate and to negotiate the terms of the policy schemes leaving little room for negotiation for sending countries on whether to accept the conditions offered. Receiving states can easily expand the pool of eligible partner states to other developing countries. In case of disagreement or opposition sending states

run the risk of having to compete with other developing countries eager to participate in the temporary migration schemes. The Philippines constitute an exception due to its strategic market position gained through the high number of professionals provided to the UK. But the existence of a strong institutional structure in the sending state that engages in negotiations and veil for the benefit of migrants it's the exception not the rule.

Similar analogy can be drawn from the participating individuals' perspective. Migrants have the opportunity to engage multiple times in the temporary labor program. This continued engagement is contracted year by year. As highlighted by the study of Alma Mater (IOM 2009: 115) and Preibisch and Sanatamaría (2013: 111) migrants are discouraged to raise their voice in case of breach of contracts or abuse of rights fearing that they would be perceived as trouble makers and not contracted the next time. In SAWP and TCLM schemes migrant workers depend on their employers for the actual job, accommodation and often access to local community. In both schemes employers are able to nominate individuals to participate in consequent years. This creates a paternalistic dynamic that can easily lead to abuses. Temporary migrant workers usually don't enjoy the same set of workers right as local laborers. They are banned from unionizing or to represent their interests in any other organized form (The Prince George Citizen 2011). Taking into consideration that the TCLM scheme is primarily managed by the Catalonian trade union of agricultural producers the asymmetry of policy design becomes even clearer. Individual migrants often seek assistance of their home country in vain. Sending states willing to reap benefits of the schemes (alleviating unemployment and taking in foreign currency in form of remittances) are not willing to remedy individual grievances. In this context we shall think through if temporary circular labor migration schemes are not driving migrant workers to precarious working conditions which national laborers already managed to fight and escape.

In this section I analyzed circular migration schemes as a product of the international migration management paradigm. I argued that while INGOs act as discourse settlers and validate certain policy options as conducive to the triple win they masque and omit a set of important actors, interests and goals of circular migration policies. Overlooking these aspects ultimately limit if not impede development potential of circular labor migration programs.

#### **Conclusions**

In the first part of this thesis I gave an overview of the evolution of the migration-development nexus. I presented the emergence and the driving logic of the win-win-win discourse and circular migration policies. The paper clarifies the importance of the disambiguation of circularity as a spontaneous process versus as practice induced by migration management. This section contributed to clarify the concepts and assumptions anchored to circularity in migration.

In the second part of the thesis I highlighted that circular migration policies as promoted and negotiated by policy actors are loaded with internal theoretical overstatements, moral inconsistencies and external constrains. Instead of being the optimal embodiment of transnationalism facilitating development of sending states, benefiting migrants with the option to work abroad and fulfilling labor needs of receiving countries they prove to be the product by a simplistic and overly optimist policy discourse. As such they masque a range of asymmetrical power relations between stakeholders, lack of consideration of the institutional constraints on development and they induce perfect control for migration management without exposing the political choices behind.

The scope and magnitude of this thesis didn't allow a detailed policy evaluation and analysis of the case studies. Nevertheless using them as illustrative examples it become clear that even policy schemes labeled as best practice are falling short in fulfilling the win-win-win ideal. Beyond that, they served to uncover aspects of circular migration policies beyond the win-win-win framework that limit their potential to fulfill development aims. It argue that the circular migration policies are rather a product used by receiving states to fulfill labor needs with the assistance and approval of the international community rather than as a genuinely thought development tool. Therefore it is important to analyze them in the future as such. Future studies aiming to contrast ideas put forward here through in depth design, stakeholder and implementation analysis of concrete policy schemes would better inform about the detailed mechanisms of the constrains and limitations exposed here.

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