

Call for papers

Proposals to be submitted before October, 10, 2015.

The EU as a forum of labour migration: Entrepreneurship, Exploitation, Dignity and Development

University of Bologna, Forlì Campus, December 3-4, 2015

Introduction

International migration is one of the most powerful forces shaping the world today; UN estimates place the number of international migrants at 232 million, almost equally divided between women and men, and making up 3.2 % of the world's population. In the European Union, there are around 3 million third country nationals regular migrants.

Many more people are profoundly affected by international migration: former migrants, intending migrants, short-term migrants, those who employ or work with migrants, those who benefit from the services migrants provide, those who find themselves living alongside migrants, those who have migrants as clients or customers and—not least—the families and friends left behind when people emigrate. Despite the ideas and intentions for a more dynamic EU economy, the EU still continues to have national labour markets, with obstacles to a real regime of free movement of not European workers.

Migrants whose human rights are duly promoted and respected, who are well integrated in the countries where they live, and who are able to exercise their talents and energy in productive employment and decent work, can contribute mightily to the development of their countries of origin and destination, and to the well-being of their families and communities, while providing economic, social and cultural added value and also pursuing their own development as human beings. A policy framework that is respectful of the human rights and dignity of every human being, in particular of minors, women and vulnerable persons, is a prerequisite for implementing the full developmental potential of international migration and averting negative manifestations such as forced labour, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants, discrimination and xenophobia. At the same time, migrants' support to the development of their countries of origin could be fundamental, from economic, social and cultural perspectives.

However, migration can also have negative effects: in the countries of origin because of the risk of brain drain, of poverty, and the connection with uncultured and economic involution; in the countries of destination, because of the fact of the wasted skills of migrants who are not well integrated in the labour markets; and of the risk for social cohesion and, consequently, for the respect of their human rights. These challenges need to be identified and addressed in order to harness the potential of migration as a positive contributor to development.

The aim of the conference is to investigate the importance of the EU as a forum of labour migration, pointing out its impact in countries of destination and, at the same time, in countries of origin, considering its contribution to development and democracy and facing the risk of criminal exploitation.

After a keynote speech, three roundtables will focus on: the role of migrants as entrepreneurs and job seekers; labour exploitation of migrants; future perspectives between countries of destination and countries of origin..

Submission:

We invite all scholars, researchers, stakeholders, and – more in general – experts interested in the topics of the conference to submit their proposal – summary with cv - until October 10, 2015, to the email: **migrationconference@puntoeuropa.eu** .

Authors of the selected paper will be informed not after October 25, 2015.

The organizer will cover accommodation costs. A contribution to travels expenses could be considered depending on the distance of country of departure.

Scientific Committee:

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Roundtable I

Migrants As Job Seekers and Entrepreneurs

Migrants as job seekers are attracted by wage differentials, better living standards and job opportunities, but the migration choice also depended on non-economic reasons. The place of destination is sometimes the result of ethnic chains and connections built by pre-existing immigrant communities. Similarly, migration cannot be considered an income-maximizing choice taken by an individual alone; as historians underline, it is often a household strategy, a decision taken within the family context to support and improve life conditions at home. Furthermore, some ethnic groups are more or less likely to engage in the entrepreneurial process: a difference which may be a function of ethnicity per se or the outcome of the complex interplay of social, economic and institutional processes known as “mixed embeddedness”. Mainstreaming migration into deliberations across a wide range of policy fields in destination countries is also a significant factor in coherence among immigration policies, employment policies that address labour market needs, and development cooperation policies.

In this session, the contributors will try to explore the universe of migrants as both job seekers and ethnic minority entrepreneurs in Europe over the last hundred years, to contribute to a better understanding of the effect different forms of migration have had and will have on economic change in recipient countries.

What were and what are today their motivations? How was and how is the adaptation to the new cultural and working environment? What the effects of their presence in the country of destination from a social and economic structure perspective? Why some ethnic groups seem to compete more successfully in business, floating between organizational learning, social networks and the country of destination’s rules? How to attract and to retain skill labor? In a global perspective, skill-dependent sectors and migration policy needs to be part of a common (EU or national) strategy?

Roundtable II

The dark side of labour migration: risks and models of exploitation

The diffusion of low-skilled labour in different sectors, such as agriculture and care, as well as the corresponding need to improve protections for these workers and enforcement of their rights, needs further discussion. Exploitation deprives migrants of their dignity; the fact they are forced to be idle or to work in the underground economy has severe consequences for host communities; but consequences affect countries of origin too.

The third roundtable will focus on different and specific forms of migrants’ exploitation, and the social and economic impacts thereof; pointing out new ideas and approaches to prevent and to combat them.

Focus will be placed on the protection and promotion of human rights, with particular attention to the rights of the children and of vulnerable persons, taking under consideration relevant gender dimensions. Additionally, the questions of recruitment, with the risks of a low transparency system, fostering criminal organizations, are essential.

Violence, deception, frauds, abuses are very common; not only in the country of destination but also in countries of origin and of transit. The link between mobility and security issues is increasing.

How to address this? How to guarantee migrants’ rights? How to prevent criminal activities also in countries of origin? Is the protection for migrants in the EU sufficient or is this the moment to plan a new integrated approach, also fostering a new model of cooperation with the countries of origin? What is the role of the partnership between public and private sector?

Roundtable III

The future, the EU and beyond the EU: labour, dignity and development

Migration is a force whose positive contributions to development can be enhanced by the cooperative efforts of states at every point along the spectrum of the migration experience: skills that reside in the diaspora are essential to both countries of origin and residence ability for remaining competitive in the global economy. At the same time, the situation is unbalanced from a gender perspective, considering the increasing feminization of poverty: although women make up about 48% of the world's international migrants, their particular needs and potential contributions are often ignored, especially in areas such as support for diaspora and migrant business development.

This roundtable will focus on how to assess the impacts, effects and future implications of migration; in particular, the way to enlarge space for international cooperation on new and emerging issues in migration; the role of private sector and the role for public-private partnership to support migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs to create or expand businesses and creating job for others; the role of the gender approach; the protection of vulnerable persons and of the respect and implementation of human and fundamental rights; the possibilities for refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection.

How to create conditions for entrepreneurs to flourish? How to strengthen the possibilities to invest in the country of origin? What are the limits of this type of action? What is the role of corruption and – more in general – suffering conditions that are limiting diaspora activities in countries of origin? How to support the role of diaspora in country of destination and as investors in countries of origin? What is the role of the cooperation between public and private sector? What is the role of this issue in the EU external policy? Is this a potential element for pushing growth and job creating?