Integration, Transnational Mobility and Human, Social and Economic Capital

Concept Paper for the ITHACA Project

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ITHACA PROJECT

The ITHACA Research Project

ITHACA - Integration, Transnational Mobility and Human, Social and Economic Capital
ITHACA studies the links between migrants' integration and their transnational engagement. Migrants engage in transnational mobility for an array of economic reasons as well as emotional or political ties with their country of origin. They develop transnational business, trade, investments, or social and cultural programmes and circulate between their two countries. ITHACA explores the interconnections between the integration process and transnational mobility of migrants and aims to answer three key questions: To what extent, and in what ways, do integration conditions in the country of destination encourage transnational mobility? What are the conditions in the country of origin that may encourage transnational mobility? What type of transfers take place through the transnational mobility of migrants? ITHACA focuses on economic integration and mobility conditions as factors that encourage or prevent transnational mobility.

The ITHACA project is hosted at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and co-ordinated by Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou (anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu). The project is funded by DG Home of the European Commission.

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinion expressed by the author(s)

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Abstract

The ITHACA project aims to contribute to the rising research and policy interest on migrant transnationalism and its effects on countries of origin and destination as well as on migrants themselves (and their families). The project concentrates specifically on **transnational mobility** rather than transnationalism writ large, and particularly so on **the link between transnational mobility and the migrant integration conditions. It also looks at the type of transfers generated by transnational mobility**. We consider **transnational mobility to be the basic but also more intensive form of transnationalism**. We concentrate principally on **transnational mobility for economic purposes**, i.e. the migrant engages in economic activity in either country) but we look at the **different type (social, cultural and economic) of transfers** that it generates.

In this context, we shall seek to answer the basic questions of:
- **Who**: what is the identikit or a possible typology of transnationally mobile migrants?
- **What**: what type of transnational mobility for economic purposes do they engage in?
- **How**: how does it take place, through which means, what are its basic features, what are the conditions that enable or prevent transnational mobility? What is the relationship between integration conditions and transnational mobility of migrants?
- **Why**: what are the motivations of migrants who engage in transnational mobility? What are the reasons, opportunities or factors that drive them to become transnationally mobile? To what extent and in what ways might conditions of integration influence this transnational mobility?

The aim of this paper is to set out the research framework within which the ITHACA Project will develop. The following section proposes a working definition of integration and highlights the conditions of integration that may be relevant for migrants' transnational mobility. We then discuss transnationalism and physical mobility as one type, perhaps the most basic, of transnational activity. We connect our definition of transnational mobility to the wider field of transnationalism studies today. We subsequently focus on the types of transfers that may be triggered through transnational mobility. Section six presents the project's research design and the concluding section introduces some additional research questions to be explored.

Keywords

1. Introduction

According to statistical data presented by the United Nations, more people than ever before are living in a country other than their own. In 2013, 232 million people, or 3.2 per cent of the world's population, were international migrants.[1] At the same time, remittances have increased exponentially, and as the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief highlights, approximately $550 billion of earnings were remitted globally in 2013.[2] The multi-faceted dimensions of the migration phenomenon in our global, mobile world are impressive, as are its impacts on countries, societies, economies, communities and individuals at both ends of the migration route (and invariably, transit countries in between as well).

The way we approach migration and settlement today is rather different to the past. There is a much wider recognition of the **various forms that migration may take**, departing from the more classical view that migration involves movement from the country of origin to the country of destination with a perspective of settling down in the latter. Indeed, there is more attention paid to the different forms of short term migration (such as seasonal or shuttle migration for instance) (Triandafyllidou 2009), and to the fact that migration may be circular or it may also involve more than two locations And, these locations may be cities, regions or countries.

There is also a concomitant **shift of attention away from push and pull factors** taking as separate and independent from one another, to **a networked understanding of migration** as **a flow of people, motivated by a multiplex set of factors** (economic, political, social, cultural), **and embedded within a network of social relations** (involving both migrants and natives) **and institutions** (civil society, international organisations, alongside state authorities are important actors). In other words, the idea is that migration cannot be understood by simply looking at the country of origin or at the country of destination and at the differences between them. Attention must be attributed to the context and **the liminal spaces between the "origin" and "destination"**. Indeed, studying migration today is more about an understanding of the journey rather than about the arrival at "Ithaca."

Terminology has also changed. Alongside migration, return migration or re-emigration, there is increasing talk of *mobility* in recognition of the dynamic and often more fluid nature of the phenomenon. Mobility refers to the breaking down of state borders and the creation of a transnational social and economic space within which people move and relocate. Hence, we speak of mobility rather than migration within the EU, where internal borders have been mostly dismantled. Even though the mobility paradigm tends to obscure the socio-economic inequalities (Faist 2013) that frame international and intra-European migration (often referred to as intra EU *mobility*), it is useful in that it puts more emphasis on the fact that settlement (and integration) are not a one-off experience; it is a process which may involve different life-cycle stages.

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[1] See http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm Although migration patterns and destinations are changing rapidly, Europe remains the most popular destination region with 72 million international migrants in 2013.

[2] See http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2013/10/02/Migrants-from-developing-countries-to-send-home-414-billion-in-earnings-in-2013 ; see also the IOM for relevant information at: https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/about-migration/facts--figures-1.html

Following from the above, increasing attention is paid to the **wide range of relations that migrants develop with people, organisations, communities, and networks in their country, region, or community of origin, and the ways these webs of relations link in with individuals, organisations, communities and networks in the country of destination**. **Transnational linkages have been increasing in intensity, in scope and in variety** (Faist 2000). The 'modern' trans-migrant is 'at home' in a number of different social worlds, s/he is active in different economies or markets, and participates in cross-border social networks and political movements (Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006: 285).

Schunck (2012: 260) suggests that complex phenomena like transnational social spaces, transnational communities and transnational networks (Faist 2000) presuppose transnational activities. He defines **transnational activities** as **specific actions that the migrant undertakes and which "connect" the country of origin and the country of destination**. For instance visits to the country of origin are the most basic type of a transnational activity as they involve physical border crossing.

Remittances have been considered as an exemplary form of migrant transnationalism (Vertovec 2002). Resource flows across borders are however not limited to money flows in the form of remittances but also include immaterial, social remittances in the form of ideas, identities, behaviours and social capital (Levitt 2001) which are equally important in the impact they may have on the country of origin. Overall, most research and most of the emphasis has explored the impact of migrant transnationalism on the country of origin. The resource flows of transnational mobility towards the countries of destination have attracted less attention, yet as Eischen has argued, "immigrant contributions may be symbiotic across borders, with both the country of origin and settlement benefitting, and synergistically so" (in Eckstein and Najam 2013: 13).

ITHACA aims to contribute to the rising research and policy interest on the conditions for migrant transnational mobility in the countries of origin and destination as well as with regard to the migrants themselves (and their families). The ITHACA project concentrates specifically on **transnational mobility** rather than transnationalism writ large, and particularly so on **the links between transnational mobility and the migrant integration conditions. It also looks at the type of transfers generated by transnational mobility**.

We consider **transnational mobility to be the basic but also more intensive form of transnationalism**. We concentrate on **transnational mobility for economic purposes**, i.e. the migrant engages in economic activity in either country) but we look at the **different types (social, cultural and economic) of transfers** that it generates.

More specifically, we shall seek to answer the basic questions of

- **Who**: what is the identikit or a possible typology of transnationally mobile migrants?
- **What**: what type of transnational mobility for economic purposes do they engage in?
- **How**: how does it take place, through which means, what are its basic features, what are the conditions that enable or prevent transnational mobility? What is the relationship between integration conditions and transnational mobility of migrants?

- **Why**: what are the motivations of migrants who engage in transnational mobility? What are the reasons, opportunities or factors that drive them to become transnationally mobile? To what extent and in what ways might conditions of integration influence this transnational mobility?

It should be noted that **transnationalism and even more transnational mobility concern only a minority of all migrants** (Guarnizo et al 2003; Portes et al. 2002). Portes (2003) has argued that the share of immigrants who are transnationally active rarely exceeds one third of all immigrants. In addition, only a small share of immigrants participate regularly in time and resource intensive transnational activities as for instance transnational entrepreneurial activities (Schunk 2011: 261).

The aim of this paper is to set out the research framework within which the ITHACA Project will develop. The following section proposes a working definition of integration and highlights the conditions of integration that may be relevant for migrants' transnational mobility. We then discuss transnationalism and physical mobility as one type, perhaps the most basic, of transnational activity. We connect our definition of transnational mobility to the wider field of transnationalism studies today. We subsequently focus on the types of transfers that may be triggered through transnational mobility. The concluding section presents the methodology and research objectives of the project.

2. Defining and operationalising integration and how we can measure it

A thorough literature review of the way integration has been defined and debated in migration studies is beyond the scope of this paper. Rather, in this section we aim to highlight the dimensions of integration that we need to explore further in order to understand a) in what ways integration impacts transnational mobility and, b) in what ways integration impacts the sort of transfers that are catalysed and pursued through transnational mobility.

Immigrant integration has long been at the heart of sociological research and policy-making. Approaches to integration have been impregnated by normative and highly political considerations alongside pragmatic ones. The definition of migrant integration provided in the Common Basic Principles for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (Council of the European Union 2004) is pretty basic – "integration is a two-way process of accommodation by all migrants and residents of member-states" – and mainly aims at emphasising that integration is not a one way process of the migrant integrating at the country of residence but rather a process that involves the whole of society.

Nonetheless much of the policy debate focuses on individual migrant competences such as language learning, employment, educational attainment and relevant "migrant integration" data, without necessarily due attention to the actual process of integration (Mahendran 2013). Migrant integration policy discourses often involve an imagination of society and the majority culture as a bounded unit to which migrants as individuals have to integrate, see actually assimilate. Thus integration requires the migrant to achieve a set of attainments in education, language and economic self-sustenance. In addition, while the policy discourse requires individuals to conform

with the majority culture, their failure is attributed collectively to their minority culture that is not sufficiently "modern" (Schinkel 2013).

- Conditions for integration encompass economic, social and cultural dimensions, and it is generally agreed that integration is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. The processes of integration involve both migrants and the receiving society, and in many cases also the sending country. A definition of integration that has been adopted by the Council of Europe (drawing from the work of R. Baubock 1997) includes a common framework of legal rights and active participation in society, on the basis of minimum standards of income, education and accommodation. Integration also requires freedom of choice of religious and political beliefs, cultural and sexual affiliation, within the framework of basic democratic rights and liberties (1997: 15). Ager and Strang have formulated a framework on the processes that may facilitate integration identifying **domains in which achievement and access matter**. These domains include the sectors of employment, housing, education and health, assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights, processes of social connection within and between groups in the community, and barriers to such connections stemming from lack of linguistic and cultural competences and from fear and instability (2008: 184-185).In effect, integration involves the real economy and the cultural space, it involves the political realm, the social sphere and everyday public life. The 'markers' and the 'means' of integration include the following dimensions:Education (participation rates; achievement; recognition of qualifications, skills and competences including vocational and professional qualifications, and entering employment);
- Employment (position in the labour market and access to employment; employment/unemployment rates and duration, occupation and level; proportions in dangerous/dirty jobs, all by age/ sex; self-employment and proportions in key professions (such as architects, lawyers, teachers, engineer, doctors), and in managerial and governmental posts);
- Income (absolute and relative earnings);
- Access to citizenship (also political participation and political rights);
- Access to housing and social benefits;
- Civic participation;
- Language acquisition; and
- Judicial indicators (relating to arrests, convictions, police and judicial behaviours).

Assessing the extent or degree of a migrant's integration in the receiving society is challenging, as is comparison across time and across countries, not least because of the **diverse normative understandings** of what integration actually entails, what it presupposes, and how it is 'achieved'. In the ITHACA project we will use the indicators of migrant integration that have been developed on the basis of the April 2010 Zaragoza[3] declaration which focus on the following policy areas:

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[3] See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/migrant_integration (accessed 3 February 2014). To download the report on the pilot study: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-11-009/EN/KS-RA-11-009-EN.PDF

- Employment
- Education
- Social Inclusion and
- Active citizenship

Naturally, in trying to assess, conceptualise or even understand 'integration', the discussion unavoidably leads to who are the 'objects' of integration that we are referring to. In the ITHACA project we are particularly interested in third country nationals, mainly of first generation, who are transnationally mobile. We focus on the individual while taking into account his/ her wider household. Our target populations include:

- first generation[4] migrants who may still be third country nationals or who may also have naturalised. They are migrants who are settled in their country of destination but who are transnationally mobile;
- return migrants: migrants who have returned to their country of origin after having lived abroad in one or more countries and who are transnationally mobile;

Table 1. The Zaragoza Indicators for Migrant Integration

Table I. Indicators of migrant integration.

Policy area	Indicators
Employment	Core indicators: • employment rate • unemployment rate • activity rate
Education	Core indicators: • highest educational attainment (share of population with tertiary, secondary and primary or less than primary education) • share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science • share of 30–34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment • share of early leavers from education and training
Social inclusion	Core indicators: • median net income – the median net income of the immigrant population as a proportion of the median net income of the total population • at risk of poverty rate – share of population with net disposable income of less than 60 per cent of national median • the share of population perceiving their health status as good or poor • ratio of property owners to non-property owners among immigrants and the total population
Active citizenship[2]	Core indicators: • the share of immigrants that have acquired citizenship • the share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits • the share of immigrants among elected representatives

Source: Zaragoza Declaration

Source: EUROSTAT 2011: 10

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[4] While we do not exclude second generation migrants from our study they are not our primary focus. As we shall explain in the last section of this paper, we shall seek to capture transnational mobility that involves households/families and where both first and second generation migrants may be involved.

One issue to point out here is that as migrants' transnational engagement has intensified and transnational lifestyles have emerged, destination countries have begun to consider **alternative integration models** (Pitkanen et al 2012). This is particularly interesting and deserves more detailed attention as there exists very limited insight into what is needed to empower people to mobilise, work, interact and live in transnational settings. What sort of skills or competences might initiate or facilitate transnational engagement? What instruments or policy measures may be relevant? And finally, which actors may be relevant in the integration process?

We consider important to therefore also examine the impact of the country of origin on migrants' integration in their society of settlement. As Nebiler et al (2013) have pointed out, sending countries may impact in their expatriates' integration in the countries of destination through formal or informal channels, and through formal and informal actors. Government actors, non-governmental organisations, churches, families and even the media may thus play a role in the integration process of the migrant in the society of settlement as well as in their transnational engagement.

3. Transnationalism today

The field of transnational migration studies has been expanding dynamically in recent decades. Anthropology has been extremely influential in introducing the concept of 'transnationalism' into migration studies in the 1990s, and it has since grown as an area of study that has bridged disciplines and insights from social anthropology, economic studies, sociology, political geography as well as political science and international relations studying different kinds of interactions that migrants develop between the sending and receiving countries, and the impacts these may have.

Glick Schiller et al (1992) defined 'transnationalism' as a social process through which migrants establish social fields that cross geographical, cultural and political borders. Similarly, Alejandro Portes recognised the ways in which migrants live in 'transnational communities' (Portes 1997; 2003). He emphasised the regular and sustained social contacts dense networks that migrants develop across political borders in their quest for economic advancement and social recognition. Through these networks, migrants are able to lead 'dual lives' in a way, moving between cultures, often maintaining two homes, and pursuing economic, political and cultural interests that require their (regular) presence in both countries of origin and destination (1997: 812).

Basch et al. (1994: 6) offers a very good working definition of transnationalism:

> "the process by which immigrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields across borders".

The fact that individuals may lead transnational lives or heavily engage in transnational activities does not however necessarily lead to the development of transnational communities.

Transnational communities, as all communities, require the existence of mutual trust and shared identities (see Faist 2004 on the Turkish migrants in Germany and their contacts with Turkey). Portes et al (2001) also coined the term 'transnational fields' to refer to the web of contacts created by immigrants who engage in repeated back-and-forth movements across national borders in search of economic advantage and political voice. The variety of terms and concepts may highlight different dimensions of the phenomenon, but what they essentially refer to are "relatively stable and persistent social relationships, identifications, patterns of communication and transfers of resources, which connect migrants and non-migrants in two or more nation-states, mostly the migrants' country of origin and the country of residence" (Nieswand 2011: 32).

Although transnational social relationships existed long before they was actually identified as such by the social sciences, in more recent research, transnationalism has been conceptualised as a novel phenomenon in the context of globalisation. Indeed it differs from previous forms and patterns of migration because leaps in technology, communication and transportation infrastructure have facilitated migrants in kick-starting, maintaining, or developing their home-based relations, activities and interests to an unprecedented extent and with an unprecedented intensity. Transnational migration is in this sense both a manifestation and a consequence of the process of globalisation.

This changing migration context has been defined by Duany (2002: 358) as resulting in 'mobile livelihoods.' Duany has argued that as people spatially extend their means of subsistence across various local, regional, and national settings and geopolitical borders, they also move along the edges of cultural borders, such as those created by language, citizenship, race, ethnicity and gender ideology. These mobile livelihoods have significant implications for the construction of labour markets, discourses and policies of citizenship, language policies and ultimately also national identities. In effect, **transnational migrants may claim membership and participation in multiple polities thereby challenging the traditional model of participation**. They may claim citizenship in a country in which they are resident, or part time resident or even absentee, or they may have the citizenship of a country in which they do not live. The facilitation of dual citizenship is effectively a recognition that people can have multiple ties, some of them extending to other nation states, and transnational lives (Pitkanen et al 2012). Migrants are thus active agents in transformations that are underway globally (Glick Schiller 2009).

These definitions unavoidably lead the discussion to 'who is a transnational migrant'? Some have attempted to confine the notion to political activists or economic entrepreneurs who conduct cross-border activities on a regular basis (Guarnizo et al 2003). Others have preferred wider definitions as regard the range of activities (including non-professional ones such as family ties) (such as Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). And, others still have argued that 'bodily' geographic mobility is not a requirement.

Transnationalism has been categorised on a number of dimensions. Portes et al (2005) for example have suggested a typology according to sector of activity (economic, political and socio-cultural) and on degree of institutionalisation

Table 2. A typology of transnationalism according to sector of activity and degree of institutionalisation

		Sector		
		Economic	Political	Socio-Cultural
Level of institutionalisation	Low	Informal cross country traders; Small businesses created by return immigrants in home country; Long-distance circular labour migration	Home town civic committees created by immigrants; Alliances of immigrant committees with home country political associations; Fund raisers for home country electoral candidates.	Amateur cross-country sport matches; Folk music groups making presentations in immigrant centres; Priests from home town visit and organise their parishioners abroad.
	High	Multinational investments in Third World Countries; Development for tourist market of locations abroad; Agencies of home country banks in immigrant centres	Consular officials and representatives of national political parties abroad; Dual nationality granted by home country governments; Immigrants elected to home country legislatures	International expositions of national arts; Home country major artists perform abroad; Regular cultural events organised by foreign embassies.

Source: Portes et al (2005)

Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) proposed a typology of transnational activities from a different perspective, focusing on the political sphere. She distinguished two types of transnational political practices:

- transnational immigration politics as politics of the country of destination when the country of origin is involved in helping improve the legal or socio-economic status of its citizens;
- and homeland politics in which migrants and refugees engage in that are directed to their home country – these include diaspora politics and translocal politics (by immigrants who aim to improve the local community from which they originate).

Our focus in the ITHACA project is on transnational mobility involving economic activity. Transnational migration, similarly to circular migration is part of larger frameworks of cooperation and exchange (see Cassarino 2008). These frameworks may be more or less regulated and may or may not have pre-existing economic, political and cultural ties between the countries involved. Ambrosini (2014: 4) draws a typology of four types of transnational economic activities:

> "[The first type involves] **circulatory transnationalism** represented by activities that physically connect the two sides with the land carriers linking many Italian citis with a variety of destinations in Eastern Europe. Second, there is a **connective transnationalism** represented by activities that link the places of origin and transfer shops, phone centres, and increasing internet cafés and other services related to new communication technologies. A third broad area of economic activities can be categorised under the label of **commercial transnationalism**. It includes the businesses that offer various 'ethnic' products, mainly food, but also furniture, clothing and gift items. A fourth category comprises activities mainly related to the area of leisure and in which transnationalism has a primarily **symbolic** connotation (Turkish baths, yoga centres etc.)." (Ambrosini 2014: 4, emphasis added)

Ambrosini concentrates his typology on the country of destination and at the bottom up activities undertaken by immigrants. He argues that the level of involvement is higher in circulatory transnationalism where the migrant (entrepreneur) travels back and forth and gradually decreases in forms of connective or commercial transnationalism and is weakest in symbolic transnationalism (Ambrosini 2014: 4).

Indeed, transnational mobility is part of the circulatory transnationalism as defined by Ambrosini. It involves the physical activity of travelling back and forth for purposes of economic activity. We define economic activity as a notion that is wider than employment. It may involve different type of activities that produce added value or income in kind or in money: for instance, cultivation of crops, house repairs or other types of income or resource generating activities at origin and destination.

We would like to point out that transnational mobility may be more trans-local than transnational. Translocality, involves local-to-local connections across national boundaries that are created through everyday practices of transnational migrants; it involves the concept of life space: the locations with which the individual interacts, such as job, leisure, family, residence. Research has been increasingly asserting the importance of local-to-local connections of transnational migrants and the concept of translocality has offered an 'agency oriented' approach to transnational migrant experiences (Brickell and Datta 2011: 3). In effect, research on **translocality has focused on how social relationships across locales shape transnational migrant networks, economic exchanges and diasporic space**, and it has been argued that transnational activities are only effective when they are firmly anchored in particular locales (see Zhou and Tseng 2002). Networks linking California's Silicon Valley and the Hsinchu region in Taiwan or Hyderabad in India are illustrative of such translocal networks.

In this project, **we will build on these typologies further with the aim to also differentiate between two main types of transnational mobility and thereby consider what kind of capital transfers are involved in each case**. The first involves transnational mobility after settlement in the country of destination and the second involves mobility that may occur after return migration.

a. Transnational mobility after settlement

The migrant is settled in the destination country but engages into economic activity in his/ her country of origin. This economic activity may take the form of investments e.g. buying property, opening a shop or simply employment e.g. construction work, trade, cultivating land. It may also take the form of civic activism (promoting contacts between hometown of origin and destination, creating transnational partnerships, creating programmes for study and exchange between the two places). The migrant circulates between the two countries but is mainly based at the country of destination. We consider both first and second generation migrants.

b. Transnational mobility after return

In this case, the migrant has returned to the country of origin after having spent abroad a number of years, working or studying or for family reasons. S/he takes advantage of her/his transcultural capital (knowledge of and networks in both countries) to develop economic or civic activity that is transnational in character (e.g. trade, business, real estate or other work or cultural, political, civic initiatives). The migrant circulates between the two countries but is mainly based at the country of origin. Same as above, we consider both first and second generation migrants.

4. Conditions affecting transnational mobility

There have been numerous attempts to conceptualise the changing nature of migration and to identify the most salient conditions that encourage or hinder migration and mobility. In this section we attempt to highlight the legal, economic, social and political conditions that are most relevant in understanding when why and how migrants engage into transnational mobility **for economic purposes**. These conditions may concern the country of origin, the country of destination (or even another location), and the particular situation and socio-economic features of the migrant.

Conditions concerning the country of origin

Governmental and non-governmental actors from the countries of origin may influence transnational ties directly or indirectly through **economic measures** that aim to attract financial transfers and investments; through **cultural initiatives** that aim at maintaining or reviving cultural heritage; through **political measures** that aim at expanding the constituency; and through legal actions that aim at supporting their citizens' rights. They may develop **diaspora policies** aimed at maintaining links with their populations outside their borders. Or, they may develop specific **emigration policies** that may encourage, restrict or limit outward migration, return migration and different forms of mobility (circular, seasonal, temporary or other). These come in the form of bilateral agreements with countries of settlement concerning employment visas, visa facilitation measures, agreements on recognition of qualifications or portability of rights, etc (see Unterreiner and Weinar 2014: 3-12).

Countries of origin may **influence transnational engagement indirectly through developments that have nothing to do with migration** *per se*. In effect, conditions in the homeland define migrants' transnational engagement at different degrees and at different stages. Positive conditions in the country of origin – for instance social, economic or political transformations - may attract its nationals who have chosen to emigrate from their country to consider return or, they may attract some form of engagement with the homeland. In many cases, rapid economic growth may provide opportunities for entrepreneurial investment and the cases of China and India have become textbook examples testifying to this. Negative conditions, or deterioration in the countries socio-economic or politico-institutional situation may equally serve both as triggers (for instance in the form of political activism, or humanitarian assistance) or as obstacles to migrants' transnational engagement.

In some cases, countries have introduced specific incentives to reach out, target and attract its emigrant population, to encourage return and/ or transnational engagement. Tax incentives for return migrants or for their investment from abroad have facilitated migrants' decisions to pursue investments back home. Policies aimed at attracting and facilitating the transfer of remittances or even encouraging their investment into specific sectors may also influence decisions to (re)engage with the homeland. So far, for most migration-sending countries, the challenge has been to **formulate appropriate policies that will facilitate the leveraging of remittances for development**. Studies have shown that policies aimed at channelling remittances to specific investments have had limited success. On the contrary, what seems more effective is to improve the overall investment climate in the country of origin and to encourage the use of banking channels (thereby enabling savings, investment and even access to credit based on remittance history) (Gropas 2013).

Facilitating the **portability of social, welfare or pension benefits** may be relevant. Even more so, the recognition of professional or academic qualifications acquired in third countries may also serve as an incentive, not only in terms of opening the labour market to nationals who have lived/ studied/ worked abroad, but also by particularly valorising the experience and expertise gained from 'abroad'. This valorisation may be expressed by finding employment that corresponds to the skills (educational, professional) that they have acquired abroad, it may be expressed in financial terms, or in the form of social recognition (for instance invitations to participate in Advisory Boards in firms, NGOs, foundations, public sector organisations, etc).

Many countries have also engaged into a wide range of actions that tends to be referred to as **Diaspora policie**s. These policies may include offering extended voting and participation rights to members of their diaspora, military duties and responsibilities, sponsoring language teaching in third countries, offering national curricula education in third countries, offering scholarships to second or third generation migrants, or other such policies that actively seek to maintain a link with the homeland or actively seek to ensure some sort of return (see Zapata-Barrero et al 2013).

Countries of origin may also pursue policies and initiatives that aim at the integration of their emigrants in third countries in the first instance, but which may eventually serve as feedback loops and channels through which to encourage their nationals to maintain links with their societies of origin and reinvest in them. For instance, origin countries may pursue **bilateral agreements with destination countries aimed at improving their migrants' labour market**

insertion, improving their language acquisition, or their vocational training, or encouraging dual citizenship (Nebiler et 11 2013). These measures are intended to maximise the benefits of integrating in the society of settlement and improve the migration outcomes. This results in increasing the potential for their expatriates to accumulate human, social and economic capital. The remittances that will mostly likely be repatriated are not the only motivation behind such policies.

These policies do not need to be pursued by the state only. **Non-state institutions and organisations may also be active in reaching out to emigrant communities** in order to pursue economic or other interests. This has been typically the case of hometown associations in Mexico-USA migration (REF). Commercial chambers, banks and financial institutions, real estate funds, NGOs, Churches, cultural foundations, media outlets are some actors that may be involved in triggering transnational engagement of emigrants. Just as important are ties and links with families in the homeland

Moreover, **new technologies** have served to substantially transform the nature of interactions between diaspora groups/ emigrant communities, governmental and non-governmental organisations in origin and destination countries (Sheffer 2006). The ease of access, low-cost and extensive potential for outreach that new technologies, and mainly internet and social media networks, have offered have facilitated communication and interaction among local, regional, national and global NGOs and IGOs, and they have enabled the mobilisation of transnational resources and transfer of economic, cultural and political resources to unprecedented levels.

Conditions in the country of destination

Conditions in the country of settlement do not only shape migrants' socio-economic and political integration; they may also influence individuals' decisions to 'exit', to become 'vocal' and to express their 'loyalty' transnationally.[5] They have the potential to influence outcomes and choices in both positive and negative ways thereby enhancing or hindering transnational mobility.

General economic conditions in the country of destination may 'push' migrants to seek some sort of 'return' to their country of origin. For instance, economic stagnation, recession or even crisis may lead migrants to seek economic opportunities elsewhere (and their country of origin is often the first place to look at). Similarly, at a more micro level, encountering a glass ceiling for further advancement or facing direct or indirect practices of discrimination and a generalised anti-immigrant climate may also lead migrants to seek opportunities elsewhere.

At the same time, however, **'push' factors for transnational mobility do not necessarily have a negative connotation. On the contrary, there may be conditions and factors that facilitate, trigger or encourage migrants to engage in transnational activities, particularly of an**

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[5] Drawing from Hirschman Albert (1978), *Exit, Voice and the State,* in *World Politics* 31(1), pp. 90-107, and Bert Hoffmann (2008), *"Bringing Hirschmann Back in: Conceptualizing Transnational Migration as a Reconfiguration of 'Exit', 'Voice' and 'Loyalty'",* GIGA Working Paper no. 91, December 2008.

economic nature. There may be institutions and organisations that are active in their outreach activities to promote links and relations with third countries (notably with the source countries) in order to pursue economic or other interests, such as commercial chambers, banks and financial institutions, NGOs. Or there may be a general entrepreneurial culture in the country of destination that views in a positive light and thereby rewards transnational or global activism and entrepreneurship. This could serve as a motivational factor for the migrant to engage with their country of origin not only because of the benefits s/he may reap there, but also for the social reward or upward mobility that s/he may experience in the country of destination if their transnational project is successful (in political or economic terms).

Finally, there are **legal and political conditions in the country of destination that may facilitate or hinder transnational activities**. The access that the country of destination provides to legal, long-term residence, citizenship and political participation, as well as inclusion in the welfare system is among these.

Individual conditions

At present, 'return' is acknowledged as a much more fluid and multi-faceted concept, as in fact is migration. The shift away from thinking of migration and settlement in 'permanent' terms has shed light on different varieties of migration. Indeed, the repetition of the act of migration and its often periodic nature, has been documented in migration studies over the past three decades and has enriched the way migration is conceptualised to also include different forms of mobility. Serial and circular migration, temporary and seasonal migration, suitcase migration are some of the typologies that have been coined to map the various pathways of migration and mobility (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014).

In 1974, Cerase provided an early typology of the main reasons for which migrants return to their country of origin. Although in this project we only consider return migration in the case of individuals who are active transnationally, Cerase's typology offers a useful starting off point (see in Williams and Baláž 2008: 95) to delve deeper into the particular conditions that contribute to migrants' decisions to engage in transnational mobility. He argued that return can be driven by:

- *failure*: the migrant returned because s/he did not manage to find a job or cope in the host country. In this case, the process of integration never really began or was very dysfunctional;
- *conservatism*: This is a planned move (often before the migration project begins) that is effected when the migrant has generated enough wealth or other capital to achieve his/ her desired economic goals. In this case the migrants has been oriented towards the country of origin from the outset and throughout the experience of migration, thereby tending to experience very restricted forms of integration in the destination country;
- *retirement*; and what is often referred to as sunset migration;
- *innovation*: The migrant returns with the intention of being innovative, or perhaps on realisation that s/he has reached the limits of what can be achieved at the destination with the newly acquired skills and knowledge.

Virkama et al have suggested that transnational migration involves some changes in one's social status. They have noted that when "migrating to another country, individuals need to renegotiate their status in the new host society, but their status also changes in the sending society" (2013: 90). In today's interconnected world however, upward social mobility is not automatically achieved through an increasing consumption potential as was the case in past decades for instance. Moreover, given that migrants' socio-cultural profiles are more diversified than in the past, and conditions in the countries of origin and destination are being impacted in dynamic ways by the effects of globalisation, the drivers of transnational mobility may be much more complex than those that have so far characterised return migration.

We will therefore dig into the empirical material that we will collect through this project to understand the **conditions and factors that impact the link between integration and transnational mobility at the individual level**. In this, age and life-course stages at which emigration, return migration or re-return is decided and enacted are important factors to consider, as are gender and family obligations. Indeed, few studies have addressed these issues in the past (see also Schunck 2011; Levitt 2002). Level of education, knowledge of the language(s) of the country of origin, access to citizenship (and therefore access to dual citizenship), level of wealth, access to political connections are also considered defining conditions.

We also aim to explore the **selectivity effect** in migrants' transnational engagement. It has been widely documented that individuals with high human capital tend to migrate more and extensive research has been conducted on migrants' agency in their migration project. It is interesting to therefore consider the determinants that trigger transnational engagement. **Motivations for transnational mobility may differ widely**. Also resources that are mobilised, the ways in which they are mobilised, and to what intent they are mobilised may differ just as much. In effect, some migrants are 'pioneers' in the sort of transnational activities they become engaged in, while others may be 'followers' attempting to repeat the success stories of others. Some are successful in the transfers that they make, and others less so; some do act as agents of change while others do not. We aim to identify the conditions or the particular characteristics that lead to these categories and understand the sort of transfers that are made in either case. We aim to explore **migrants' intentionality and agency in order to understand the drivers of their transnational mobilit**y.

Theories of return migration offer valuable insight in our effort to identify the macro and micro factors and conditions that may impact the dynamics of transnational engagement. Although we do not offer a thorough critical review of these theories in this paper, we consider it useful to highlight some interpretations and perspectives of return migration here in order to map out the full range of potentially relevant factors. Turning to neoclassical economics first, their focus is on wage differentials between receiving and sending countries as well as migrants' expectations for higher earnings in the host countries.

Return migration is considered as the outcome of failed migration that did not yield the expected benefits (i.e. their human capital was not rewarded as expected) and therefore an anomaly as migration is intended to be permanent (Cassarino 2004: 255-256). On the contrary, **new economics of labour migration views return migration as the outcome of a 'calculated strategy' which occurs when the individual's or the household's goals have been achieved.**

As such, it happens as a result of a successful experience. Skills and savings are gathered in the host society with the aim to send remittances back home and eventually return and accomplish upward socio-economic and professional advancement. Structural approaches to return migration on their part emphasise context, i.e. the social and institutional factors in the home country. These influence migrants' decisions (or expectations) to return and determine the extent to which returnees have the capacity to innovate or act as agents of change. Interestingly, they also influence migrants' integration in the society of settlement (Cassarino 2004: 262).

As regards social network theory, this approach underlines the linkages and regular exchanges that migrants have with their former places of settlement; these linkages are part of the migrant's social capital that is paramount to his/her ability to return. These different perspectives mentioned in brief here are useful at highlighting various dimensions of transnational mobility and the conditions that may define its forms and its outcomes. However, **the growing diversity and intensity of transnational mobility suggests that we need to revisit the various facets of this phenomenon and take into account new variables to explain under what circumstances migrants engage in transnational mobility in binational or wider international contexts**, in what ways does their integration in the society of settlement influence this engagement, and what sort of transfers are being made.

We will therefore examine the ways in which individual conditions of migrants' shape their transnational mobility. As such we will *inter alia* explore:

- Gender as well as family relations: who is where? (offspring, partner, dependents, wider familial connections);
- The length of residence in country of destination and country of origin;
- The residence status or access to citizenship and especially dual citizenship;
- The educational and skills background and the type and conditions of occupation the individual is engaged in whether in the country of origin or of destination;
- And finally, the migrant's life-cycle (i.e. the biographical phase a respondent is in).

5. Transfers through transnational mobility

Migrant transnationalism involves important transfers of not only economic but also social and human capital, notably not only of money but also of ideas, networks, behaviours, even identities (Levitt 2001). The importance of transfers has been recognised by international organisations. The World Bank and the IOM are illustrative of this as they have conducted extensive research on the extent and size of economic remittances and on their impact on the homeland economies.[6]

From another perspective, the UNDP, notably through its TOKTEN initiatives has also recognized the linkages between migration and development. It is one of the first practical efforts in promoting brain gain and brain circulation by linking diasporas and home countries. The Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals was initiated by UNDP already in 1977 to counter the effects of brain drain in developing countries by temporarily bringing back talented

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[6] See the work of Dilip Ratha overall, including http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/Remittances-PovertyReduction.pdf

expatriate nationals to their home countries. It was an initiative based on the spirit of volunteerism as TOKTEN consultants are expatriates from developing countries who return to their country of origin for short periods of time (lasting between two weeks to three months) to share the expertise they have gained abroad in research, academic, public or private institutions.[7] This was encouraged across a range of technical fields and specializations, such as agriculture, banking, business management, computer science, economics, environmental sciences, food industry, geophysics, industrial hygiene and safety, marine science, manufacturing processes, medicine and public health, intellectual property law, remote sensing, telecommunications, urban studies, water management. These were developed within UNDP or UNESCO projects and have taken place in Lebanon, Mali, Rwanda, Sudan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, Pakistan and the Palestinian Authorities.[8] Similarly, the EU has supported, endorsed and contributed to the international discourse on the migration-development nexus, which considers migration as a 'tool' for development and aims at harnessing remittances and diasporas in order to maximise their positive impacts on development and poverty reduction.

To a large extent, **these initiatives have attempted to address the main concern caused by emigration, namely the brain-drain** challenge for countries of origin. The argument has been that **developing countries are most likely to benefit if their skilled labourers do not permanently uproot but return-migrate and invest income and skills they have acquired abroad**. This has contributed to the idea of **brain circulation** where immigrants apply the skills, capital, contacts and experience that they have acquired abroad to their homeland, and of 'transnational entrepreneurs' who may generate jobs and income in their country of origin. They may eventually even return (permanently or temporarily) to their country of origin while maintaining economically relevant ties they have established in third countries (see Portes in Eckstein and Najam 2013). For this however, conditions in the country of origin must encourage productive investment. This requires adequate infrastructure and specific policies and attractive incentives that will essentially make it in the economic (or other?) interest of the migrant to return or to invest back home.

It is necessary to draw attention to a number of issues.

First, **transfers are not uni-directional**, i.e. from the country of destination to the country of origin, and may in fact be **reciprocal**.

Second, when we refer to transfers we do **not only consider high-skilled migrants** (i.e. doctors, IT experts and scientists) and the range of capital transfers they may trigger. **Migrants with 'intermediate' skills (electricians, nurses, etc) or migrants in so-called 'un-skilled' jobs should also be considered as skills are socially defined and they too may have significant knowledge capital and financial resources to transfer**. Williams and Baláž have introduced the concept of 'knowledge migrant' that goes beyond the contested notion of the oversimplified

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[7] TOKTEN consultants volunteer their services and forego professional fees; they are motivated by a desire to give something back to their countries of origin, and contribute to its development. Experts are traced through a database of emigrant professionals and graduates (see
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/migmain.showPractice?p_lang=en&p_practice_id=26)

[8] http://www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/migmain.showPractice?p_lang=en&p_practice_id=26

bifurcation between 'skilled vs unskilled' workers/ migrants and argues that all migrants are knowledge bearers, with the potential for knowledge sharing (Williams and Baláž 2008).

Third, a core dimension that needs to be highlighted **is gender**. Gender and gender relations may be relevant in the kind of transfers that take place through migrants' transnational mobility. Gender may have much to do with conditioning the ways in which a migrant is integrated in the receiving society and economy, how transnational networks are accessed, what sort of involvement or investment they may be interested in the country of origin, as well as what kind of capital transfers occur.

Fourth, **transfers are not always necessarily benign**. Remittances may provoke unintended consequences as they may fuel consumption (particularly of imported goods), infuse foreign money into the economy thereby devaluating local currencies and driving up prices, or they may even undermine the recipients' motivation to work themselves (see Eckstein and Najam 2013). As for social or cultural transfers, here too substantial changes may be spurred at the family or community level through the effects of migrants' transnational mobility. As any change leads to some form of tension, social or cultural transfers may affect family and social relations in emancipating ways but also in ways that exacerbate inequalities. Moreover, if migrants have been exposed to ghettoized, racialised and criminal social networks in the country of destination, often due to an undocumented status, this may be transferred back home in the form of gangs, criminal and illegal cross-border activities. Thus socio-economic inequalities and criminality may equally be transnationalised.

Fifth, transnational mobility may lead to the 'silverstreaks' that Khadria identified (1999) in terms of the positive economic consequences of migrants in their home communities, but this does not mean that transnational mobility is always necessarily successful in its results. **Efforts to invest back home may encounter a series of difficulties and obstacles, or lead to tensions**. For instance, entrepreneurial ideas acquired in the country of settlement may be ill-suited to the market conditions and its potential back home, [9] or they may be challenged by local interest groups or practices. Thus the efficiency or successfulness of a transfer depends on a wide range of factors in the receiving society/ sector as well as on the intensity and nature of the interactions.

Sixth, transnational migration tends to be gradual and is variable to changes over time. In short, **the frequency and intensity of transnational relations and engagement may vary among migrants, institutional settings and opportunity structures in the countries of origin and destination. They may also vary during a migrant's life-cycle and between generations**. This variation needs to be explored further as it may shed light into the links between integration and mobility and on the impacts of transnational transfers (for both countries involved in the migration system and the migrant him/herself).

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[9] See for instance
http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2009/07/08/for_brazilian_immigrants_return_home_can_be_tougher_than_imagined/

Russell King's (1986) work on return migration is relevant here as he identified a set of **conditions that determine the success of return migrants' projects in their country of origin. These include**:

- the number and spatial/ temporal concentration of returnees. A critical mass of new ideas and individuals willing to attempt change and effect changes in particular areas is necessary;
- the duration of the migration. If it is too short, the migrant may lack sufficient capital to transfer back home, and if it is too long then s/he may have become alienated from the home society and the relevant networks and contacts;
- the social class of the migrant. The higher the level of education, the greater the impact that h/she might have;
- the opportunity structures offered by the specific country/ region;
- the nature of the skills and training that have been acquired abroad;
- and whether the return is planned and organised or unplanned and spontaneous. The former tending to have a higher economic impact.

In the study of transnational mobility, we need to further elaborate on these conditions in order to explore them not only with regard to the country of origin, but also with regard to the country of destination and the wider international context.

The next set of issues that must be examined concerns **what exactly is transferred**. Transfers may involve activities that include (reference to Mahroum et al 2006 in Williams and Balaz):

- The exchange of scientific, technical or political information;
- Specialist knowledge transfer (for example setting up recycling facilities or start-up farms/ incubators, etc);
- 'Scientific and technological diplomacy' or promoting the country in the R&D and business community of the countries of destination;
- Training and tutoring;
- Enterprise creation including the return of expatriates on a part-time or permanent basis;
- Consultations (in public sector reform; etc).

These activities are embedded in various forms of capital that these transnational migrants have developed or can tap into. Thus, ITHACA, aims to explore the various forms of human, social and economic capital that are transferred.

Human capital is considered as one of the core components to economic growth, regional development and competitiveness. At the dire risk of over-simplifying, human capital stocks can essentially be increased either through training and education or through immigration (though all too often we witness de-skilling and brain waste in migration). Human capital tends to be regionally concentrated, particularly in urban centres, as people who have invested in their human capital get 'better return' on their investment there (see Poot et al 2008). This tendency for human capital to concentrate or even gravitate in certain regions makes the case even more compelling to examine mobility and transfers translocally.

Social capital is defined by the OECD as networks (bonds, bridges and linkages) together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups. It has been defined as the resources that are embedded in one's network or associations, and it relates to an individual's ability to make weak and strong ties and to trust others, within a system (see Williams and Baláž 2008: 70). On the one hand, Robert Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital deals with collective values and societal integration, and has highlighted three components: moral obligations and norms; social values (especially trust); and social networks (especially voluntary associations). On the other, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital approach considers that actors are engaged in struggle in pursuit of their interests. His approach emphasises conflicts and the power function (social relations that increase the ability of an actor to advance her/his interests). Seen from this light, social positions and the division of economic, cultural and social resources are legitimized with the help of symbolic capital. Thus, social capital becomes a *resource* in the social struggles that are carried out in different social arenas or fields. In the field of our focus, Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' is relevant in that it represents a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behaviour people acquire through acting in society. It also represents the dimension of *agency* that we aim to capture through ITHACA's empirical research.

Economic capital in practical terms concerns remittances and investments. It also consists of economic possessions that increase an actor's capacities in society.

6. The ITHACA Project: Rationale and Research Design

In answering the **who, what, how and why questions on transnational mobility, the ITHACA project particularly explores**

- Which **factors that pertain to the country of origin** (policies, programmes, background and place of origin of the migrant) are conducive to transnational mobility?
- Which **factors that pertain to the country of destination** (policies, programmes, socio economic integration of the migrants) are conducive to transnational mobility?
- Is there an **identikit (or a possible typology) of the transnationally mobile migrant**(s)?
- **What type of transfers (economic remittances, social/cultural remittances) take place through transnational mobility**?

The ITHACA Project conceptualises **transnational mobility** as cross border physical movement of migrants for the purposes of economic activity. For this movement to qualify as transnational mobility for the purposes of our research we require **that the migrant has travelled back and forth at least twice during the year or at least three times during the last two years**. We also require that the migrant engages into some sort of economic activity in both the country of origin and the country of destination.

In ITHACA we frame transnational mobility as not simply a type of movement that takes place **between a country of origin and a country of destination but rather as part of a wider migration system**.

A migration system is a set of places that are linked by flows and counter-flows of people, families, and communities over space – i.e. in source and destination countries/ regions. Along with people, remittances, goods, services, ideas and various forms of capital also flow and counter-flow leading to a set of rather stable and regular exchanges (see inter alia Kritz et al. 1992; Fawcett 1989; Gurak and Caces 1992; Massey et al. 1998). The idea of a migration system assumes an internal feedback loop that may sustain, intensify or eventually lead to a withering away of these interactions and flows.

Citing our earlier work on the governance of migration, we define a migration system as

> "**a set of origin and destination countries that are connected by a web of flows that persist over time and that are of an unusual volume**. The countries belonging to a migration system are also part of a larger web of socio economic and political relations that involves the exchange of goods, capitals, and people as well as ideas and cultural products." (Triandafyllidou 2008: 288)

A migration system provides the socio-economic and territorial context within which transnational or trans-local mobility of migrants takes place.

The aforementioned web of socio-economic and political relations is considerably shaped by power-relations, which are to be taken into account when looking at transnational mobility of individuals within these migration systems. Stephen Castles (2004: 210f) points to the relevance of factors linked to processes of globalization, transnationalism and the North-South divide. Far from conceiving these as monolithic geographical entities, he stresses the increasing relevance of a North-South divide in political and social terms rather than in geographical ones. He argues that "The North-South divide is a useful general term for the growing disparities in income, social conditions, human rights and security linked to globalization. (…)" (ibid.: 211).

As further argued by Sonja Buckel (2012), transformation of international labour division has to be taken into account as a crucial mode in shaping these power-hierarchies within migration systems. She distinguishes four major dimensions in order to analytically seize the process (2012: 82ff. and 95):

(1) the transnationalisation and financialisation of production processes. As a consequence, production processes are increasingly flexible with regard to **exploiting varying conditions of commodification across the globe**;
(2) **a gender-specific division of labour**, comprising the globalization of supplies of unpaid reproductive labor (i.e. household, care and emotional labor) to the transnational private markets on the one hand and a partial and subordinating inclusion of women as a labour force on the other (for example through the commodification of reproductive, gendered segmentation of the labour market, gendered part-time work and atypical forms of employment etc.);
(3) **a postcolonial mode of production** through outsourcing of production to sites in the global South; and
(4) **ethnicized/racialized labour divisions within national labour markets**.

If, in a nutshell, **a migration system provides the socio-economic and territorial context within which transnational or trans-local mobility of migrants takes place**, it should be noted that the subject positions of migrants therein may be hierarchized according to a stratified regulation of mobility and rights within these processes. Whereas flows of goods and capital have increasingly become facilitated globally, the mobility of individuals has been organized in a highly selective manner, which is also reflected in the significance of categorizing migrants as more or less desirable in policy-making.

ITHACA engages into a comparative study of **five migration systems involving four destination and five origin countries**:

- **North Africa-EU migration system** –Moroccan immigrants in Italy and Spain;
- **Western Balkans-EU migration system** – Bosnians in Austria and the UK;
- **Eastern Europe–EU migration system** – Ukrainians in Austria, Italy, Spain and the UK
- **Asia–EU migration system** – Indians and Filipinos in Austria, Italy, Spain and the UK

Our research will focus primarily on the **nation-state level** as regards policies. But it will focus on the **regional level** as regards regions of origin and destination and special programmes or initiatives that may exist. We shall also address the specific regional or city context within which migrants are integrated and develop their economic activity. In other words we adopt **a combined transnational and trans-local perspective**.

On the receiving end, we will look into the situation of Italy, Spain, Austria and the United Kingdom. The UK and Austria are selected as countries with a long migration history while Italy and Spain have experienced immigration more recently but have very large immigrant populations.

They have all developed different approaches to migrants' socio-economic integration: Austria has pursued a standard guest-worker model, the UK has been perhaps the strongest proponent for multiculturalism in Europe, while Spain and Italy are notable for their 'subordinate integration' approach to migrants. These four European countries present different patterns of economic integration of their immigrant populations with different levels of ethnic entrepreneurship, but with similar sectorial distribution of migrants.

On the sending side, we will examine migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Morocco, the Philippines and Ukraine. All five are major source countries, with particularly large emigrant populations. However, they have been active in varying degrees with regard to their diaspora.

India constitutes an example of a remarkable case in transforming its diaspora into major agents of development and in achieving internationally competitive results, notably in the high tech sector. Morocco is also an extremely interesting case as it has successfully encouraged its emigrants to send remittances through the formal state-banking system thereby financing important development initiatives. The Philippines constitute an insightful case study not just because of the size of its immigrant population globally, but also because of the importance of its

female emigration. The case of Bosnians is exceptional as a large proportion of Bosnian refugees and migrants cannot or will not return to their homeland, thus the nature of their transnational engagement is particularly interesting. Moreover, Bosnian migrants tend to experience high levels of economic integration in the labour markets of the receiving economies as there is also a very high participation rate of women in the work force. As for Ukraine, it also has one of the largest emigrant populations yet it is characterised by an exceptionally absent diaspora policy. Ukrainian emigration shares some similarities with the Filipino case as here too Ukrainians are predominantly women who leave their families at home and are driven by dire needs to complement family income.

Our work will focus on the pairs of countries identified. Through our background work we shall identify the relevant destination cities or regions in the EU countries and we shall check the cities and regions at origin which are relevant hubs of transnational mobility. We shall thus further demarcate our area of empirical research. **Our focus is triple: national as regards policies and state actors, and local/regional as regards activities of the migrants at origin and destination and relevant stakeholders.**

Our comparative analysis develops at two levels: within each migration system and between migration systems. Thus, within the North Africa-EU migration system we shall compare the transnational mobility patterns of Moroccan immigrants in Italy and Spain; within the Western Balkans-EU migration system we shall pay special attention to the transnational mobility of Bosnians living in Austria and the UK. In addition we shall compare the transnational mobility patterns of Ukrainians with reference to all four destination countries (Austria, Italy, Spain and the UK) and the same will be the case for Indians and Filipinos that we shall study again in all four destination countries (Austria, Italy, Spain and the UK).

In addition to comparing among pairs of countries within each migration system we shall compare then our findings among different migration systems by for instance investigating how is transnational mobility and transfers of Ukrainians vs. Indians or Filipinos different or similar within each of the two systems (Eastern Europe-EU and Asia-EU)? How do similar integration conditions/an identical policy framework affect the transnational mobility patterns of different migrant populations pertaining to different migration systems (for instance how is it that Ukrainians and Filipinos in the UK, or Ukrainians and Filipinos in Italy differ in their integration-transnational mobility linkages?)

Our study is exploratory and qualitative in character as there is no register or database where transnational mobility patterns of the kind that we are investigating here are registered or where we can identify a cohort of migrants that are transnationally mobile and hence, select from them through some sort of quantitative sampling. Therefore we have taken **transnational mobility as our entry point to the study of the linkages between integration conditions and transnational mobility**. We shall look for migrants who are transnationally mobile and will investigate their integration patterns and conditions. We shall also investigate their different types of transnational mobility and related economic activity and different types of transfers that they do. This research strategy prevents from statistically checking causal inferences as to how different socio economic integration variables or specific individual features influence transnational mobility. However it gives us a strong vantage entry point as it allows us to explore

in depth and in a variety of countries and with a variety of migrant groups the phenomenon of transnational mobility and map the processes that lead to it.

Fieldwork Design

The ITHACA project research design involves desk research and extensive qualitative fieldwork in the source and destination countries identified above. We shall investigate the relevant scholarly literature, policies and programmes at countries of origin and destination and will also engage national experts in the origin countries with a view to having access to documentation in the national language and to local resources.

As regards the fieldwork we shall conduct a **large qualitative survey looking at the pathways of integration of migrants that are transnationally mobile**.

We shall first conduct a range of interviews (12-15) with stakeholders at the 4 countries of destination and the 5 countries of origin including state authorities at national, regional and local level as relevant, NGOs and migrant associations, professional associations and chambers of commerce, embassies and consulates, and academic experts.

Second, we shall conduct 60-80 qualitative interviews with migrants from the four nationality groups studied in each destination country, who engage in transnational mobility for economic activity purposes (see also figure 1 below). We shall conduct approximately 35 interviews with the largest nationality group and between 10 and 20 with the smaller groups.

Third, we shall conduct 15-20 interviews with returned migrants at the countries of origin who engage in transnational mobility with one or more previous countries of settlement. In the countries of origin we shall need to be selective in our interviews with transnationally mobile migrants who have returned with a view to making the fieldwork feasible within the time frame and resources available. Each expert will concentrate on returnees from the main country of destination (notably, Spain for Moroccans, UK for Indians, Italy for Ukrainians, Austria for Bosnians, and in the case of the Philippines from any of the 4 countries).

The interview guide for transnationally mobile migrants will elicit information about the integration level of the migrant, the motivations for becoming transnationally mobile, the factors at the country of destination and at the country of origin that facilitated or impeded transnational mobility; and last but not least the type of transfers that transnationally mobile migrants make. Interviews with stakeholders will ask for their own knowledge, expertise, opinion and involvement on the same topics.

We shall start with stakeholder interviews but also immediately conduct migrant interviews where possible with a view to exploiting contacts and referrals of relevant informants from the stakeholders (e.g. NGO suggesting a transnationally mobile migrant to be contacted).

7. Concluding Remarks

In addition to addressing our four core sets of questions

- **Who**: what is the identikit or a possible typology of transnationally mobile migrants?
- **What**: what type of transnational mobility for economic activity do they engage in?
- **How**: how does it take place, through which means, what are its basic features, what are the conditions that enable or prevent transnational mobility? What is the relationship between integration conditions and transnational mobility of migrants?
- **Why**: what are the motivations of migrants who engage in transnational mobility? What are the reasons or opportunities or factors that drive them to become transnationally mobile?

We envisage to explore the following research questions:

In what ways do differences in institutional context among the countries of destination influence the kind of transnational activities that are pursued by migrants?

What forms does transnational mobility take, and to what extent do these impact the sort of transfers that are made, or also the success of the project? Is transnational mobility an individual project? Do migrants engage in transnational activities individually, or do they do so with the involvement of friends and family members from their generation (siblings, cousins)? Is it a trans-generational project (involving offspring)?

What motivates their transnational mobility? Why do they select this most intensive form of transnational engagement?

Do they intend to be 'agents of change' in their homeland, or are they motivated by personal advancement goals and economic motives?

Can we create a typology of leaders/pioneers and followers? Or of transnationally mobile migrants who do so for increasing their opportunities or out of necessity?

Is there a spill-over effect? For instance, if an individual observes other migrants engaging in transnational activities with their home country, and the results of these activities are positive (in terms of economic gains, social prestige or political capital), does this motivate them to engage in similar actions? And can this spill-over effect also occur by observing and being exposed to successful transnational engagement from other ethnic or national groups?

Do hurdles, or even failures to actualise a transfer/ investment 'back home' deter retrials? Basically, are transnationally mobile migrants prepared to make repeated attempts to be successful in their transnational project or do failures and obstacles in either their country of origin or destination restrict their entrepreneurial efforts?

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