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**FORTUNADO'S, DESPERADO'S AND CLANDESTINO'S IN DIASPORA LABOUR
MARKETS: THE CIRCULAR 'HOMO MOBILIS'**

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Abstract

Demographic patterns in our world (e.g., aging processes, birth and death rates) are increasingly influenced by migration movements. A rising number of people is 'on the move', in search of a better fortune elsewhere. It is noteworthy that nowadays many migration movements do not show anymore stable patterns, but reflect a high degree of dynamics, for instance, in the form of return migration, circular and temporary migration, or chain migration. There is also a great heterogeneity in the motivations of many migrants that may have significant impacts on the migration choice, the destination place, the migrant's status, and the duration of stay. Consequently, return migration, temporary migration and circular migration have in recent years become important research and policy issues. This note offers a short review of the dilemma's and assessment issues inherent in the effects of non-structural or temporary migrants (so-called 'movers') on host economies. Particular attention will be paid to circular migration policy in Europe as a vehicle to both mitigate temporary tensions on regional labor markets of host economics and to provide a solid base for sustainable growth in the sending countries. Various research and policy challenges are outlined as well.

1. Preface: People on the Move

Our contemporary world is in full swing. Ups and downs in socio-economic systems have become a structural feature of our modern society: rise is often accompanied – or followed up – by fall. It seems as though the general product life cycle theory manifests itself in many multi-faceted specific cycles: economic development, demographic evolution, political fluctuations, urban dynamics, and so forth. The cyclicity of many socio-economic phenomena (in particular, population demography in the form of migration and refugee movements) – with greatly varying fluctuations in amplitude and time coverage, ranging from short-term cycles to long-range cycles – prompts a variety of intriguing research and policy questions on social and spatial dynamics in a modern society. A prominent and pressing issue is of course whether cross-border migration will prompt economic growth and spatial-economic convergence (see Fratesi and Percoco 2014, Kanbur and Rapoport 2005, Kubis and Schneider 2016, Ostbye and Westlund 2007, Ozgen et al. 2010). We refer here in particular to a recent interesting and informed study on international population movements from an analytical economic perspective, written by Kondoh (2016).

One of the most prominent phenomena which prompt nowadays splintering views on a modern society and its cohesiveness is without any doubt international migration (see for a detailed overview Chiswick and Miller 2015). Clearly, unforeseen spatial-demographic developments and socio-economic disruptions caused by a massive influx of migrants or refugees is often seen as a tragedy for both the sending and the receiving country, but may also be seen as an unprecedented and innovative opportunity for individuals to improve their own economic fortune (*'fortunado's'*). It is in the meantime broadly recognized that innovative behaviour and economic progress in a host economy depend also on a favourable local absorption capacity. Do such seedbed conditions also hold for modern migration movements? Can heterogeneity and fluctuation in migration inflows create an unsustainable situation or, inversely, stabilize a local labour market? And which are the conditions to create a balanced migration situation in both a sending and a receiving country or region? These questions will be highlighted in the present paper.

We live nowadays in the *'age of migration'* or the age of the *'homo mobilis'*, but this does not necessarily mean that migration is a uniform social-demographic phenomenon in space. Some people deliberately leave their home country to seek for better opportunities elsewhere (the so-called *'fortunado's'*), but other people – refugees – are forced to leave their country of origin as a consequence of war, political or religious suppression, natural disaster, or poverty (the so-called *'desperado's'*). Clearly, in the latter case they have to look for better living conditions elsewhere, so that at the end the search pattern of *'desperado's'* for an attractive host country resembles that of the *'fortunado's'*. In addition, there are in an open world with more healthy and wealthy people in an ageing society, also many people who decide to spend the final part of their life in climatologically attractive places (the so-called *'pensionado's'*). The same may hold for the *'happy few'* who have sufficient resources and leisure time to spend part of life elsewhere under

favourable climatological conditions. And finally, there is also an increasingly large share of cross-border migrants who have moved to another country (either as *fortunado's* or as *desperado's*) without being in the possession of the legally required documents in the form of visa, working permits or residential permits (the so-called '*clandestino's*') (see also Leerkes et al. 2007; Orrenius and Zavodny, 2013).

It is also noteworthy that the two phenomena of an ageing society and of the 'age of migration' may become mutually interwoven phenomena, since a lower labour force participation in a host country or region as a result of ageing may prompt the need for a compensating socio-demographic mechanism in the form of immigration to meet the needs of host labour markets. Clearly, education and skills of immigrants are also critical conditions in this context (see Newbold 2017).

It should be noted that in the history of migration many migration movements show a bilateral or two-sided nature of these flows. There are people moving from country A to B, but there are often also people going from country B to A. In an article published by Lutz et al. (2014a), the authors map out bilateral migration flows between most countries in our world in a 5-year time span (2005-2010), using a so-called circular plot. These bilateral migration plots display at a global level a rather robust pattern over the relevant period, although there are large variations among continents. Circular migration (from country A to B and visa versa) is a frequently occurring phenomenon (e.g., for India and Malaysia), especially for educated migrants. It also turns out that over the period concerned, Europe was the biggest receiver of migrants, while South Asia was the bigger sender. It is noteworthy that in all these migration plots schooling appeared to be a major determinant for the size of flows and the duration of stay. Finally, it should also be noted that for Europe in-migration is the major determinant of a (slight) population increase (see also Lutz et al. 2014b).

In the light of these observations, it is important to regard migration not exclusively as a structural one-directional flow between countries, but as a potential bilateral flow (return migration or temporary or circular migration) or even as a multi-lateral flow (stepwise or chain migration). Income differences, cultural and geographic proximity, urban accessibility, and education/schooling appear to be the critical factors for this pluriformity in migration behaviours (see Ratajczak and Nijkamp 2015, Tubadji et al. 2015).

The present paper aims to provide a review of bilateral or multi-lateral migration flows, with particular emphasis on temporary circular migration as an organized mechanism for regional or national labour markets. After a broad description of some important facts, trends and underlying mechanisms for migration movements in Europe, we will zoom in here on circular migration as a vehicle for a balanced labour market policy in the EU. Circular migration policy will be evaluated from the perspective of a triple-win situation (viz. with benefits for the temporary migrants, for the sending country and for the receiving country), using The Netherlands as an example.

This paper is organized as follows. After this introductory section, Section 2 will briefly describe the constellation of the migration system from the perspective of temporary or structural migration. The next section, Section 3, will offer a few illustrative statistical facts on the migration scene in Europe, and in particular on circular migration. In Section 4, some outcomes of a policy and applied research experiment and its implementation in the area of circular migration for The Netherlands will be presented, while Section 5 will offer an overview of the findings. The paper will be concluded with a policy perspective.

2. Structural or Temporary Migration

Population dynamics is one of the drivers of spatial and socio-economic dynamics in our world. This concept does not only refer to growth and decline of population as a result of births and deaths or of migration, but also of societal developments reflected in spatial ageing patterns. Since ageing means lower labour force participation rates, the question of compensating inflows into the labour market of ageing host regions through a rise in immigration flows links population changes to migration.

Migration – both domestic and international – is not an exclusive phenomenon of the past decades. People all over the world have been moving around in search of better opportunities, sometimes forced by famine, natural disaster, war or religious suppression (desperado's), sometimes also driven by better economic conditions elsewhere (fortunado's) or by family formation or family re-unification. In the context of foreign migration, in the aftermath of WWII various immigration countries have emerged, such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand or Brazil. But in the past decades, the flows of migration have been widened to virtually all countries in the world. This does not only hold for European countries, but also for Asian, African and Latin-American countries. In addition to the scope of migration, also the size of international migration has significantly increased. In the year 2010, the World Bank reported that more than three percent of the world population may be classified as migrant, and this share is steadily rising.

From a purely economic perspective, migration may be considered to be an equilibrating mechanism to match supply and demand on national labour markets. It is thus a phenomenon that has a welfare-enhancing effect. Notwithstanding this positive interpretation of migration, reality is often more complicated and harsh. In various cases, migrant sending countries are concerned about the loss of qualified labour force and about the waste of public expenditures for education of talented people leaving the country, even though remittances may offer a financial compensation for the loss of talent. On the other hand, migrant receiving countries complain about adjustment costs for migrants, tensions on local housing and labour markets, relatively high unemployment figures for migrants and associated high social welfare transfers to migrants, ethnic segregation and ghetto formation, as well as relatively high crime rates for

specific cohorts of some ethnic groups. The socio-economic picture of foreign migration is thus by no means unambiguously positive, as is witnessed in recent political elections in various countries.

Over the past years, the awareness has grown that we need a trustworthy, systematic assessment of the various social-economic impacts of international migration. A first analytical framework and various empirical examples of this so-called *Migration Impact Assessment* (MIA) can be found in Nijkamp et al. (2012). In their study the authors provide the foundations and operational tools for a quantified estimation of a great diversity of migration effects on the receiving country, such as labour market effects, growth effects, innovation effects, trade and tourism effects, and cultural diversity effects (see also e.g., Combes and Duranton 2008, Ottaviano and Peri 2006, Suedekum et al. 2014). Various research tools are presented in this MIA book, such as econometric analysis, micro-based surveys, comparative case studies, and so forth. MIA is based on the availability of quantitative information on distinct groups of migrants.

A major problem clearly emerges if we are faced with unknown migrants. This group is – as mentioned above – often called undocumented migrants, unregistered migrants, illegal migrants or ‘clandestino’s’. They comprise illegal seasonal workers, illegal permanent workers, undocumented refugees, unregistered opportunity seekers, unregistered knowledge workers, informal businessmen, informal long-term visitors such as relatives or friends etc (see Orrenius and Zavodny 2013). The assessment of the socio-economic effects of the latter class of (structural or temporary) migrants is fraught with many difficulties due to lack of reliable data (see Kondoh 2000; Gheasi et al. 2014). Yet, the order of magnitude of this group tends to increase. This is partly due to the emergence of open borders in many countries, the rise of globalization and world-wide communication systems (including the Internet), and the substantial decline in the costs of geographical mobility. There is an increasing concern on the problematic phenomenon of such unknown migrants. Particularly important issues related to such migrants in the host economy are:

- job risks related to a less protected position on the labour market;
- higher probabilities for wage exploitation of illegal migrant workers;
- unfair competition in the business sector, if migrant entrepreneurs do not respect taxation, employment or safety rules or regulations;
- loss of tax revenues for the public sector due to income tax evasion (or no income tax payments at all);
- emergence of a ‘grey economy’ in case of informal ethnic entrepreneurship;
- high expenditures for the health care system if no insurance premiums are paid;
- high claims on the social welfare system in case of loss of jobs by foreign migrants;
- relatively low degree of loyalty of migrants regarding the host country.

It is thus clear that the intriguing phenomenon of informal and unknown migration will be high on the political agenda in the years to come. Informal and unknown migration will also form a tremendous challenge for a reliable socio-economic impact assessment in a diaspora world (see Gheasi et al. 2014).

As mentioned, as a result of many structural factors in a globalizing economy, rising volumes of people are nowadays on the move (for both the short and the long term). And despite various observed negative impacts, the positive effects seem to prevail, so that in our 'age of migration' it is foreseeable that global migration flows will continue to be an established fact in the future. This migration phenomenon exhibits rather complex behavioural patterns. And one of these intriguing patterns is the attraction force of large cities for migrants (the 'urban magnetism'). Cities have become a last resort for people on the move. This does not only hold for knowledge migrants, but also for migrant entrepreneurs and unskilled workers. Big cities offer also a shelter for illegal migrants, because it is so much easier to be hidden in large population concentrations and nevertheless to find a living there. Consequently, international migration and urban cultural diversity are two parallel phenomena (see Nijkamp et al. 2015).

The complex socio-economic position of migrants in urban areas has prompted various research and policy concerns on key elements of immigration in cities in the receiving countries, notably the social costs of migrants, the risks economic-political of a high share of undocumented migrants, the general perceived negative image of migrants, the competition on scarce knowledge migrants, the counterfactual question what the economy would have looked like in case of zero immigration (the 'dead weight' effect), local tensions on housing and labour markets, and the growing importance of informal migrant business. Clearly, MIA aims to map out the various consequences of these migration flows for the receiving country, but the assessment of all relevant effects of a variety of migrants is a real challenge.

In addition, it is increasingly recognized that an important source of trans-border migration is found in climatological change and related territorial and social tension. People are for their well-being and economic survival depending on the physical resources of our planet. Destruction or decay of these resources erodes the basis of their existence and will by necessity lead to cross-border migration movements. This phenomenon is not new in the history of our world, but is intensified by the high population density and scarce resources in many countries. Climate change may thus act as an important cause for migration across borders, both directly (people leave their country to seek for better opportunities elsewhere) and indirectly (population groups fight for scarce resources, with the consequence that several people have to move out of their region because of socio-political tensions or even war conditions).

Europe – with its relatively stable political climate and its relatively high welfare profile – becomes increasingly a magnet for international migrants and refugees, not only from within Europe (e.g., the Balkan region), but also from outside (e.g., the Middle-East or Africa). Sometimes this influx is caused by forced migration (e.g. climatological conditions, famine, war), but at times also by opportunity seekers, often in

the form of fortunado's, but sometimes also in the form of forced migrants desperately seeking for a living (desperado's). This diffuse flow of immigrants leads to increasing concern on the social and political instability in European countries and induces more and more security issues, originating from socio-economic discrepancy and cultural diversity among this influx of people (Nijkamp et al. 2015). A major problem is that a migrant – once he/she has decided to leave the country and to find his/her fortune in another host country – becomes almost automatically a labour migrant (or an opportunity seeker) who cannot – or hardly – be distinguished anymore from other job seekers. Consequently, the demarcation line between voluntary and forced migrants becomes very thin, as soon as such migrants enter the host economy or labour market of another country. In addition, the distinction between temporary and structural migrants becomes also increasingly vague, as an increasing number of people on our planet is 'on the move'. This phenomenon of the 'homo mobilis' will certainly be one of the greatest challenges in the age of globalization.

3. Europe: A Migration Challenge

Europe has over the past decades exhibited two interesting demographic changes: (i) it has moved into an 'ageing' society (except only a few countries); (ii) it has exhibited a high degree of complex (cross-border) population movements in the form of rural to urban migration, internal European migration (especially from East to West), and external immigration (mainly from the Middle East and Northern African countries). Clearly, Europe shows clear signs that the spatial mobility of people is increasing, while the costs of geographical mobility are decreasing. The high cross-border mobility of people in Europe means that population dynamics is nowadays more determined by migration (and refugees) than by fertility patterns.

It ought to be recognized that the share of foreign-born people in Europe varies a lot across countries in Europe (see OECD Factbook 2016; Wittgenstein Centre 2016). For example, countries like Hungary, Finland, the Czech Republic or Slovakia have relatively low shares (about 5 percent), while Germany, Sweden, Austria, Ireland or Switzerland have relatively high shares (about 10-15 percent or higher) of foreign people.

Europe has also shown the fastest growth in foreign-born population among all world regions in the past decades (with an average annual change of 4-5 percent). Furthermore, these shares – and their growth rates – vary considerably between regions in these countries. Consequently, also cultural diversity among these regions in Europe does vary significantly.

It is noteworthy that most cross-border migration in Europe comes from inside Europe, even though migration between European countries is lower than domestic migration in European countries. As mentioned, significant cross-border migration flows in Europe are now taking place from Central and

Eastern European countries to Western European countries, though the recent recession has also prompted some return migration (e.g. to Poland).

The World Economic Forum (2016) has recently produced some very interesting information on migration flows in Europe, which sheds new light on bilateral migration flows. For example, the highest proportion of immigrants to the UK in 2015 originated from its former colony, India, while most of Ireland's foreign-born population comes from the UK. Colonial and cultural linkages appear to dominate also for the cases of France, Spain and Portugal, with most immigrants coming from Algeria, Morocco and Angola. It is also noteworthy that the countries with the highest percent point change in immigrant population are Norway, Switzerland, Belgium, Austria and Sweden. And finally, it turns out that migration is a selective geographic choice process, as is witnessed inter alia by the following figures: the highest rise of immigrants (2010-2015) into France is caused by Algerians, in the UK by Indians, in Sweden by Syrians, in Germany by Poles, in Austria by Germans, in Belgium by French, and in Italy by Romanians.

It is thus clear that Europe has become a migration continent with a mixed nature. The current migration pattern falls somewhere in between purely international migration patterns and domestic migration patterns, with different national migration rules. The recent refugee crisis has brought to light the vulnerability of the present heterogeneous European migration system.

From an economic perspective, labour migration is usually seen as a long-term investment which leads to high costs at the beginning for a migrant, but may generate benefits in the form of higher wages or better prospects in the future. Costs items of migration comprise normally transport, removal, housing as well as loss of social capital and identity, while benefits comprise higher long-range earnings as well as (perhaps) better career opportunities, amenities and living conditions. A major problem inherent in any migration decision (at least in the past) is its irreversible nature. If a migration fails, the movement costs may be very high. It is therefore, no surprise that in our contemporaneous world – with its open character and worldwide information flows – the migration risk may be considerably lowered by a combination of comprehensive information supply on the place of destination as well as by more flexibility in return migration in case the movement was not successful. Consequently, there are many more migration opportunities nowadays, for instance temporary migration, return migration or chain migration (from A to B to C etc.) (see also Kondoh 1999). More flexible forms of non-structural migration are nowadays arising that may form a meaningful vehicle for coping with temporal tensions or job needs on regional labour markets, while they may also mitigate the disadvantages of brain drain or loss of skills in the sending countries. Therefore, in recent years several ideas have been developed to create flexible forms of temporary migration, not only for seasonal workers (e.g., in agriculture), but also for short-term migrant workers for a limited number of years (e.g., in the construction industry or in the medical care sector). The remaining

part of this paper will address in particular such new forms of temporary migration in Europe, which might mitigate some of the former migration tensions.

4. Temporary and Circular Migration

International migration has in recent years become one of the most debated and controversial topics – social, economic and political – in most developed and developing countries. There are apparently ambiguous and contrasting feelings on the flows of migrants from both a sending and a receiving country perspective. Receiving countries are more concerned about the social and economic consequences of foreign immigration, while sending countries are more concerned about the brain-drain effect. It is believed that migration flows are stronger from developing countries to developed ones, but actual figures indicate that the migration pattern is stronger between developing countries themselves or between developed countries. Figure 1 below indicates various patterns of international migration in Europe between 1960 and 2000.

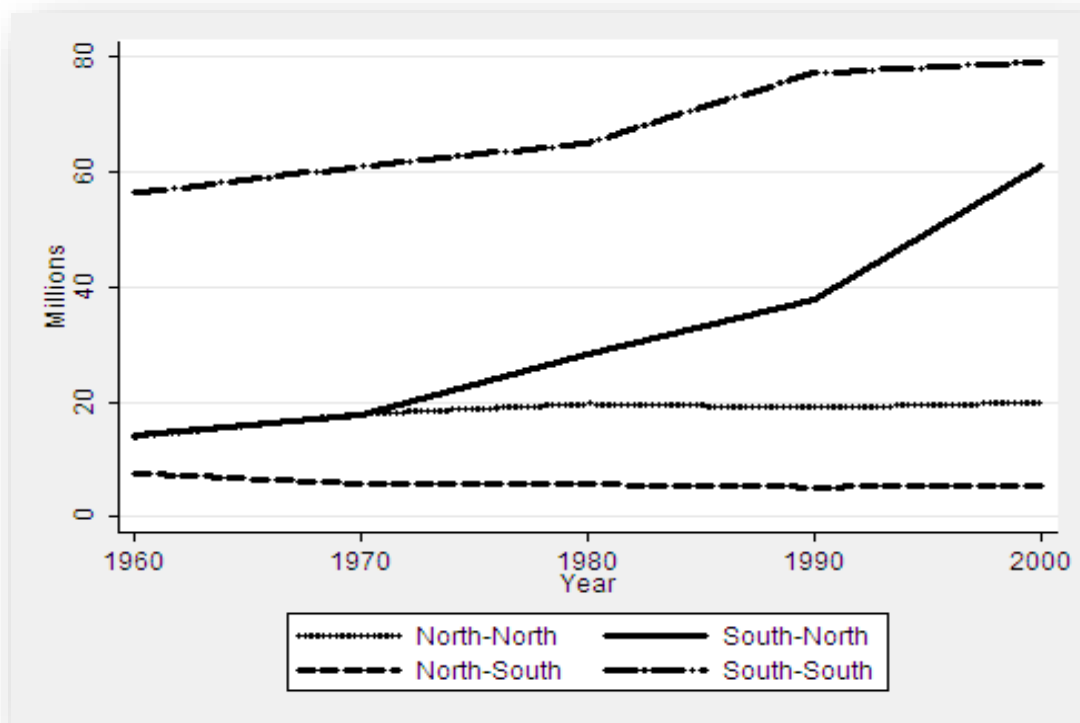


Figure 1. Stock of migrants by country of origin and destination

Source: Özden et al. (2011)

Although South-South migration dominates international migration, its share is falling. Özden et al. (2011) indicate that the South-South migration share has decreased by 13 percent between 1960 to 2000, while the South-North migration share has increased during the same period. It is, for instance, illustrative that opportunities for migrants from third countries to enter Europe and to find legally employment opportunities are rather unfavourable, while only a very limited group of people – highly educated and skilled – have this possibility. However, restricted migration policies have not been very efficient to stop the flow of migrants in this region.

Historically, it is believed that migrating people will structurally leave their country of origin and will resettle on a permanent basis in a host country. However, in reality most people migrate only for work purposes and their intention for migration is often temporary. Furthermore, an OECD report (2008) indicates that depending on the country of destination, around 20% to 50% of immigrants leave again their destination countries within five years of stay. They either return to their country of origin or to a third country. Since 2000, there has been a gradual shift in European policy thinking with increasing attention for the re-opening of borders and the management of migration flows. While most EU states still reject the idea of providing legal entry on a permanent basis (particularly for lower skilled workers), there has been a flowering of schemes to allow a temporary (including seasonal) entry of limited numbers of migrants, in most cases to fill specific needs in the labor market by sector or by skill level. Schemes are, for instance, put in place in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK, Ireland, Belgium, Sweden, Greece, Italy and Spain (see Plewa and Miller, 2005; OECD, 2005).

Circular migration offers a new interest in an old form of migration; the most common example of this type of migration is internal migration where people move from rural to urban areas due to better job opportunities, without changing their residential place. This type of migration has not only happened inside the countries—rural to urban—, but also at the international level (Fargues 2008, p. 5).

If we review the history of immigration, we can also find many examples of seasonal or circular migration in the contemporary history of people. For example, Meillassoux (1975), a French anthropologist, explains the interaction between capitalist employers and circular migrant workers in the traditional economies of Western Africa. He indicates that at that time workers were employed on a seasonal basis and after each period of employment, they had to return back to their homes. Through this mechanism of employment, the wealth was transferred from a subsistence-crops sector to export-oriented capitalist areas (Fargues, 2008). This type of migration was a very common type of people mobility in Western Africa, Eastern Africa and Indonesia. In Asia, the two-way mobility of people has been a potential topic of research for three decades (Bovenkerk, 1974). Another example of circular or return migration happened in Europe after the World War II, where some European countries signed a bilateral agreement with Maghreb and Turkey, to fill their labor shortages on a temporary basis.

For the US, Tienda and Diaz (1987) argued that circular migration to the US decreased the employment opportunities for those circular migrants who returned back to Puerto Rico, and were consequently almost forced to re-migrate. They also indicated that circular migration increased the number of female-headed families and led to higher school-dropout' rates. In a more recent study, Porter (2003) related circular migration to illegal migration, and indicated that circulation of migrants—going back and forth— between Mexico and the United States happens often illegally. The increasing legal and border restrictions on international migration have not stopped people from moving to developed countries, but it rather stopped a circulation of migrants. It was found that on average an illegal Mexican migrant stayed for about three years in 1980s, while during the 1990s an illegal Mexican stayed on average nine years in the United States (Constant and Zimmermann, 2011). Furthermore, evidence from Bulgarian migrants to Greece shows that the benefit gained by Bulgarian migrants in Europe after joining the EU was the freedom of movement enabling them to travel to Bulgaria to visit their families and friends. Evidence on Bulgarian migrants also shows that legalization of their movement strengthened their bonds with their country of origin (Newland, 2009).

Circular and temporary migration is not only beneficial to the host country, but as Zimmermann (2014) argues, it is a win-win-win situation. It means that the host country can fill its labor shortages without an increase in population, while the host country also can restrict the employment opportunities to specific jobs. Clearly, in case of permanent migration such measures are not possible. Secondly, there are advantages for the country of origin, such as benefits from the knowledge gained and remittances of circular migrants. And thirdly, the migrant himself/herself can benefit from various locational opportunities without a permanent relocation and without suffering from psychological costs of movement.

In general, circular migration can be divided into spontaneous and managed (or controlled) circular migration. The first type of circular migration includes less mobility limitations, as then migrants usually go back and forth between their country of origin and country of destination. An example of such migration flows can be found between Asian and the Gulf countries, where some migrants circulate more than once between their country of origin and the Gulf countries. However, circularity of Asians in the Gulf states is not freely chosen, because the regulations in the Gulf states do not grant these migrants a long-term permit, and also the savings that these migrants make during their stay in a host society are not always sufficient to support them for a longer time in their countries of origin. Therefore, they emigrate again, and this situation creates circular migration. In Europe, the flows of people from new EU members to more developed EU countries also include elements of spontaneous circular migration, where workers come for temporary or seasonal jobs and return back to their country of origin after some time.

Legally managed circular migration usually refers to official governmental programs, bilateral agreements, and migration policies of the country of origin or destination or by both countries (see also

Martin 2013). Circular migration has different definitions and interpretations, and mostly there is not a clear distinction between circular migration and temporary migration. The interchangeable usage of these two terms can also be observed in different definitions. For example, the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2016) defines circular migration as *“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”*.

Given the definition of circular migration mentioned above, it is difficult to distinguish between circular migration and temporary migration. For example, The Netherlands defines temporary migration as *“migration for specific motivation and/or purpose with the intention that afterwards there will be a return to the country of origin, or onward movement to another country.”* Both definitions – circular and temporary migration – share the same formal obligation for the migrants, namely the return of migrants at the end of their rights. It is the essential part of the process, and according to Dutch migration policy, the return means repatriation from the Netherlands. In many definitions nothing – or hardly anything – has been mentioned on the duration of stay. This makes the differentiation between these two types of people’s mobility more difficult. The only difference we can extract from these two definitions – circular and temporary – is the possibility of multiple entries for circular migrants, while such rights would be limited to temporary migrants. However, in practice there are no official programs or bilateral agreements between the Netherlands and third countries to allow circular migration.

Wickramasekara (2011) presents the commonalities and differences between circular and temporary migration programs, as described in Table 1. From the commonalities and differences, it seems that temporary migration is a more general concept, while circular migration is a part of it. On the other hand, it also suggests that not any type of temporary migration can be counted as circular migration, because of a multiple involvement of the same person in circular migration, while for temporary migration it can be once in a lifetime. In terms of duration of stay, it is still difficult to differentiate between these two types of migration.

Table 1: Commonalities and differences between circular and temporary migration programs

Common	Different
Temporariness: both involve temporary stays with no pathway to permanency	Circular migration programs allow for frequent temporary stays abroad, whereas temporary migration programs are based on a one-time only temporary stay and return which usually closes the migration cycle-single migratory cycle
Both can be components of broader patterns of loose or formal (backed by bilateral agreements) bilateral cooperation	Repetition of movements possible in spontaneous circular migration and regulated circular migration

Often involved countries that are characterized by large differentials in terms of economic and social development	<p>a. Circular migration programs are more resource-intensive in terms of financial and logistical resources required for implementation than temporary migration schemes</p> <p>b. Circular migration programs usually involve the same groups of persons (migrants who are invited back), while temporary migration programs often involve different groups</p>
Returns may be voluntary and forced	<p>a. Circular migration schemes are based on professional mechanisms aimed at selectively organizing the mobility of foreign workers and at securing the return of migrant workers (related to above point)</p> <p>b. One pillar of circular migration programs is the outward circular migration to home countries for varying duration by diaspora settled in destination countries</p>
Similar benefits claimed: remittances, bringing back skills and mitigating brain drain	Involves specifically diaspora contributions

Source: Wickramasekara (2011, pp.11-12)

Apart from the difficulties in distinguishing circular migration from temporary flows, there is also a statistical problem in the identification of circular migrants at national and international level; the term circular migration hardly appears in any national and international data system, while most countries even lack an official definition of this term. This adds to the above mentioned difficulties in estimating flows of circular migrants between countries, as will be illustrated in a subsequent section.

5. Circular Migration: Empirical Evidence from the Netherlands

In this section we will address some recent experiences and policy initiatives on circular migration in Europe, and in particular in The Netherlands. Circular and temporary immigration is in recent years a highly debated topic by the European Commission and various EU member countries, because especially the population decline and the ageing process in many EU countries call for new labour market perspectives. Therefore, there is increasingly a need for migrants – skilled and unskilled – to fill temporary labour market shortages in various countries. In this context, Germany and The Netherlands, for instance, have developed various initiatives on welcoming highly educated (skilled) migrants and also on stimulating circular and temporary migration from specific target groups (e.g. in agriculture). In the two sub-sections below, we will present some evidence on such initiatives, with particular emphasis on The Netherlands.

5.1. Temporary and Circular Migrants in The Netherlands

The economic literature has argued that human capital is a significant and determining factor for long-term economic growth and development (see e.g., Borjas 1989, Mellander et al. 2011). For this reason, the return of skilled migrants is often considered as the main factor to turn the vicious circle of brain drain into a virtuous circulation of the production factor labor (Card 2001). However, large-scale flows of return migrants, especially less skilled workers, can cause adverse economic outcomes, if they cannot be absorbed

in the local labor market of the original country and if a sudden decrease in remittances would affect the economic conditions of family members in sending countries.

One of the biggest concerns on circular and temporary migration usually refers to the question whether migrants return back to their country of origin after a period of employment or not. Migrants are heterogeneous in terms of skills, age, nationality etc, and therefore their willingness to return is also based on different motives, which includes both possibilities and constraints (see Longhi et al. 2008, 2010). In this context, Gmelch (1980, p. 135) has defined return migration as: “*the movement of emigrants back to their homeland to resettle*”. From this definition it can be derived that, when an emigrant returns back to his/her country of origin, this means the end of the migration story. This forms a contrast to recent migration movements which show that migration is an open-ended human behaviour in space, so that a return is often only a step within a continued migration movement. A number of studies has tried to explain the return behavior of migrants from different motivations. For example, Dustmann and Weiss (2007) indicate that migrants might return to their country of origin, once they have accumulated the knowledge and skills that have a higher return in their country of origin. Furthermore, migrants may also return after they have accumulated sufficient savings in the country of destination and return to establish a business to secure themselves and their family future (see Bellemare, 2007, and Kirdar, 2004 for more information).

One of the countries with an officially adopted circular migration policy is the Netherlands. We will concisely outline here this scheme of circular migration from third countries into the Netherlands. The only official dedicated circular migration program that the Dutch government has implemented for low and medium skilled occupations from third countries is the so-called ‘*Blue Birds*’ program. This programme aims to attract on a temporary basis (max. two years normally) foreign workers under strictly controlled support conditions, with a guaranteed return scheme to their country of origin. However, this program failed to bring a sufficient number of low and medium skilled migrants; instead, most candidates were highly educated – mostly, engineers, researchers and creative professions – migrants. It is important to add here that in general the Dutch government had already a rather open migration policy toward highly educated and highly skilled migrants. Migrants from third countries who are involved in temporary occupations are usually highly educated migrants. Low and medium skilled positions are mostly filled either by third country nationals who have a permanent residence, or by migrants from new EU member states (e.g., Poland, Romania). Furthermore, third country nationals are also heavily involved in low-skilled jobs, such as domestic work or the care sector. However, these migrants are mostly undocumented, and do not qualify for the terms and conditions of official Dutch circulation migration projects. The ‘*Blue Bird*’ programme, at the end, did not have a significant outreach and impact, and may be regarded as a failure.

5.2. Temporary Migrants: Young Knowledge Workers

A particular group of temporary and/or circular migrants is formed by young knowledge workers (in particular, Master students and PhD students) and academic professionals. They tend to be rather mobile during a specific period in their career. We will offer here some evidence from The Netherlands. We provide here a short overview of experiences and findings from an academic workshop on '*temporary/circular migration in the Netherlands*', held in Amsterdam in 2015, with almost 40 foreign young knowledge workers. The findings from this workshop, based *inter alia* on a semi-structured survey questionnaire regarding the participants' personal situation, working and learning conditions, and their network and support system, are now briefly presented and commented on.

Most participants were female (63% of our participants). From the participants, 66% were European and 34% were non-European countries. The majority of these young knowledge workers achieved their educational attainment in the country of origin; they speak fluently English, followed by French and Spanish. Regarding their family situation, both parents of the majority of the participants live and work in the country of origin. Most of the parents, in particular their mothers with a University bachelor degree achieved in the country of origin, appeared to have a full-time job in the health and education sectors in that country or are employers (26%). On the contrary, most of the fathers with a University bachelor degree achieved in the country of origin were operating as a business-owner in various sectors (e.g. accountancy, finance, logistics). Most of these young knowledge workers in our sample were planning to stay only for a short period in the Netherlands, normally a maximum of one year.

Most persons participating in the workshop were already employed in their country of residence before departing to the Netherlands, with an average of 4.75 years of work experience. They were also happy with their job, because of a good work environment and experience with interesting opportunities to earn money, *inter alia* for their journey to the Netherlands.

Their general motivation profile can be distilled from the content cloud in Figure 2. The 'content cloud' technique offers a hierarchically decomposed and visualized presentation – often in a multi-colour format – of the most relevant items related the contents and elements from the survey information, by depicting the key words that appear most frequently, in size and colour-varying ways, within the cloud. It is not a research tool in itself, but merely a visualization method for qualitative contents (see also Kourtit 2014, 2015). The majority experienced that their education and work experience, accumulated in their country of birth or residence, was valued more or less equally in the Netherlands.



Figure 2. A content cloud mapping of main differences, in terms of working and learning conditions, between country of origin and the Netherlands

The participants experienced a few differences related to the high level of openness due to the Dutch ‘non-taboo’ culture. Furthermore, they faced different educational and work experiences in terms of non-hierarchical attitudes within a company, short communication lines, high efficiency, open-minded freedom of choice, better cooperation among co-workers and less competition, and a high tolerance within their operational environment. They also learned many new things from the Dutch working and learning experience, such as better communication skills. This appeared to have a significant effect on their future career plan, and would inspire and encourage them towards a higher productive working and learning performance in their home countries and a broadening of their international formal and informal network. The future migration plan for the majority was to return to their country of origin, because of their strong social capital (family and friends), perhaps starting a new higher education, with good career prospects, in their home countries.

The majority experienced a few clear differences between their country of origin and the Netherlands in terms of the investment in the level of education and in scientific knowledge on the hand and the availability and better functioning of educational institutions on the other hand. The Netherlands had in their view a more dynamic, free and diverse educational atmosphere related to a stronger and efficient socio-cultural work environment.

Participants had – prior to their visit to The Netherlands – used a variety of *information sources* on the Netherlands, in particular *professional networks* (e.g. international offices), *social networks* (e.g., family and friends), and *ICT-tools* (e.g., Internet, Google Search), followed by words-of-mouth. These sources

helped the majority (i) to receive reliable and specific information, and (ii) to get a broad understanding and perception, of both the country and the specific city, on daily livability and local rules. The role of families and social networks in their choice process appeared to play an important role, in particular regarding the mental support (affiliation, affection, social bond, family connections), financial support (cost of living, educational expenses) and information support (information on possibilities to go abroad). It is noteworthy that hardly any participant had drawn up a formal personal development plan (PDP), nor attracted a coach, to ensure a learning and capacity building component for their stay in the Netherlands.

The most important strengths of their stay – apart from professional skills – appeared to be the improvement of their English skills, experiences on international issues (e.g., more knowledge on the EU and its legislations and conditions), exposure to a challenging socio-economic diversity (e.g., different (sub-)cultures, cultural integration, (in)formal networks), and a friendly and international future-oriented learning and working environment.

In most cases, the participants appeared to have achieved their goals almost completely (e.g., targets regarding their tests and assignments in the host country and home country), including a good improvement of their English skills. They acquired skills and competences which they could not have acquired in their country of origin and which would benefit them after their return, such as a broader expertise in work and learning, new views on the European system, improvement of language and communication skills, self-reflection and self-confidence, learning and understanding of new cultures (global open mind), freedom, diversity and more social responsibility, new professional networks and different views on international work cooperation.

It is thus clear that this type of temporary and circular migration has the triple-win benefits alluded to before. Clearly, the above evidence-based experiences on circular migration are fragmented and not necessarily representative, but they tell us interesting stories on the benefits of international mobility flows, which are important for policy lessons.

6. Lessons

International migration may be seen as an innovative decision and a creative act state of mind of millions (potential or actual) migrants. They do unusual things in an attempt to improve their welfare position and career or to avoid a dramatic decline in their well-being. In addition, as a result of the rise in smart specialization and in cultural diversity induced by rising volumes of migrants, their position on the labour market or in business in the host economy may induce new ways of operating, working or doing business, and may hence lead to various types of innovation (see Falck et al. 2012). Migration and innovation are thus often mutually intertwined phenomena.

Empirical research has clearly demonstrated the rise in innovation potential as a result of a diversified labour market or local business environment from an innovation perspective. The long-run benefits of both formal and informal migration are most likely significant (Olfert and Partridge 2011, Alesina and La Ferrara 2005). Consequently, international migration should not be seen as a threat causing socio-economic disaster, but more as a ‘blessing in disguise’ (Nijkamp et al. 2012).

Globalisation, development in information technology, and cheap transportation have multiplied and intensified the network ties between migrants and their source countries. The Internet helps migrants maintain social and business ties and provides prospective migrants with a customer-ready information about jobs and life styles in the destination country, as well as information on how to enter a destination country. Cheap international transportation has made return visits or circular migration much more feasible nowadays.

On the basis of the observations in the present study, a few set of provisional policy recommendations may be put forward:

- Government policies should focus on the visibility and feasibility of official circulation migration programs, such as the ‘*Blue Birds*’, in The Netherlands and the countries of origin. By making such programs more visible and attractive in the future, it may stimulate a situation of a more intense talent competition based on human capital quality; this may give to the host country a fair chance to select the best possible candidates, and also to migrants the possibility to find the best possible employment option in a host country.
- A close collaboration on temporary and circulation migration strategies and rules between the sending and receiving countries is needed to improve the understanding about the needs of both countries and to enhance mutual benefits.
- Circular migration programmes need to be well articulated. The ‘*Dutch Blue*’ birds program was officially a circular migration pilot program, but from the implementation perspective it was a temporary migration program. Future circular migration programs need to ensure the circularity of brains as well.
- The recruitment of migrants from third countries always deals with the recognition of the migrants’ qualifications and the resulting selection of migrants. In practice, more freedom of choice might be needed for employers and recruiters in the receiving country to fill their labor shortages by recruiting the skills and qualifications they need. This can bypass many unnecessary regulations for a legal recognition of qualifications including the government employment agencies.
- Given the above observation on the recruitment of migrants, it is also important to note that many migrants are happy to work in host countries for lower wages. This needs further harmonization of labour market rules, such as minimum wages.

- Recent experiences from the impact of diaspora on social - economic development in developing countries show that the stock of diaspora can play a significant role in the social-economic development of their country of origin (see Gheasi 2015). Therefore, policies to make these migrants more mobile are needed.
- At present, female migrants are increasingly recognized, not as dependents - as part of the family reunification process or as forced migrants in a displacement situation - , but as independent actors and/or family supporters. Therefore, gender composition needs more focus and policy interest at the outset.
- Social integration is an important issue, as it turns out that temporary migrants experience often loneliness; therefore, social integration and social capital aspects should not be ignored in the policy development for future circular migration programs.
- Highly educated and talented migrants tend to show a strong commitment to return back to their country of origin. Therefore, better articulated policies (or improvement of current policies) are needed to focus more on increased mobility and social participation of these migrants.
- Circularity of migrants is not only a matter of public concern; it can also flexibly be organised inside large multinational companies. This does not only decrease the concerns on the mismatch of the migrants' qualifications for jobs in the host country, but needs also less political concern. Therefore, policies to encourage such companies and to provide technical support (in the form of advice and guidance) are desirable to reconcile the ambitions of migration and development goals of a country or region.

In conclusion, more empirical insights on exploratory circulation programs are needed to develop sustainable/mobility policies in the context of circular and temporary migration. Our findings show a considerable diversity in life style, working and learning patterns, communication, values and preference systems, as well as in needs and decisions of circular and temporary migrants in the Netherlands. These differences are not sufficiently addressed in current policies and related programmes on circular and temporary migration and their communication strategies. This evidence calls for more emphasis on 'ethno-marketing' and 'diversity policy' for circular and temporary migration policy, so as to strengthen and expand 'bonding and bridging' strategies in order achieve the above-mentioned 'win-win-win' situation that would favour all interested parties, in particular, the country of destination, the country of origin, and – last but not least – the migrants themselves.

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