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Shifts in the European Discourses on Migration and Development

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The issue of migration and development is currently high on the agenda of both development agencies and research institutes in several European countries. It used to be discussed during the 1960/1970s within a framework which, among others, comprised push-and pull factors in migration, brain drain, remittances and return migration. Its return on the development agenda occurs within the context of European post-modern societies, globalization and transnationalism. Key notions now are remittances and foreign direct investment, knowledge transfer, brain gain, transnational entrepreneurship and diasporas.

This paper aims to explain the shifts in paradigms and discourses, with reference to the European Union, and particularly in the Netherlands and Germany. Research efforts and policy documents were scrutinized to trace the shifts in discourses. Moreover, the role of different actors in the debate - government agencies, migrant organizations, development funding agencies, and research institutes - is explored. Although some comparisons were made with similar situations in other parts of the world, the paper focuses on Asia-Europe migration. Although the migration and development debate has acquired a more positive tone, the recognition of the potential of diasporas for development varies by country context and policies have yet to integrate migration and development issues in their frameworks.

Introduction

The relationship between migration and development has re-emerged on the agenda of researchers and policymakers dealing with development issues. Governments, multilateral agencies, NGOs, academics and migrant diasporas have joined the debate on the migration-development nexus (Van Hear and Nyberg-Sorensen, 2003; Hugo, 2003).¹ While the impacts of migration on the development process of migrant sending countries in the developing world had been acknowledged for quite some time, the jury is out as to whether migration has a positive or negative impact on development. What has been notable is the shift from a rather pessimistic tone to a more optimistic appraisal in recent years.

According to Papademetriou and Martin (1991:5; 14) past analysis of the effects of migration on the development of sending countries has been erroneously narrowed down to a single element, such as brain drain or migrants' remittances, thereby glossing over the multidimensional nature of the development process.² Although these issues still figure prominently, other themes are now under consideration. Framed within the new paradigm of transnationalism, such themes include circular migration, brain circulation, skill formation (Wicramasekara, 2003), migrant entrepreneurship (Amuedo-Dorantes et al., 2003, Ammassari, 2004), transnational philanthropy (Opiniano, 2002), and the role of return migrants (Black et al., 2003).

Despite possible analytical pitfalls of transnationalism, e.g., methodological nationalism or the glossing over of class differences and the importance of national regulations (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003; Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 2004), this new paradigm has firmly linked development with processes of globalization and global technological advances. Guarnizo (2003) postulates that the existence of transnational communities, with a drive to reproduce their socio-cultural practices abroad, stimulates business in the country of origin. The migrant diaspora is an extended national market and offers ample opportunities to create transnational businesses and joint ventures. They can generate significant multi-directional flows of

¹ The term "diaspora" is used here in a broad sense as we find it now in the literature. It refers to the existence of communities living abroad. We are aware of the looser and watered-down use of the term since it had for many years a religious connotation and was also part of geopolitical argumentation (see Lacoste, 1989)

² Development subsumes issues such as sustainable environments, food security, female empowerment, political empowerment, democratic values, health and education etc.

commodities, capital, skills and ideas, contributing to social, political and cultural linkages, in addition to economic impacts.

This paper aims to clarify the shifts in discourses on migration and development and to bring out the contrasts in experiences and thinking about the theme. In the following sections, we will first discuss migration and development on a more general theoretical level, after which policies and programs in the EU are succinctly reviewed. An expose of the Dutch and German debates follows, dealing with the main actors at the policy-level and the empirical evidence that is reflected in academic debates.

The Changing Discourse on Migration and Development

Within the space of this article we cannot do justice to the vast literature and variety of theoretical approaches, rather, we restrict ourselves to pointing to some basic notions underlying the debate.³ Two contrasting theoretical approaches formulated several decades ago exemplify the basic notions that inform the thinking on the migration-development theme.

The first is the 'balanced growth approach' as represented by Kindleberger (1965), and Griffin (1976). This approach, rooted in neo-liberal economic theory, posits net positive effects of out-migration for the regions/country of origin. The emigration of (surplus) labor from underdeveloped, peripheral areas leads to a new equilibrium between capital and labor that eventually fosters development. This line of reasoning emerged within the context of high demand for unskilled labor in Western Europe and the burgeoning labor forces in developing regions in the south (Martin, 1991:29). Kindleberger (1965) acknowledges possible negative effects, such as direct loss of skilled labor and loss of production. But these are considered short-term and the positive factors outweigh the negative ones in the long term. Among the major arguments is the idea that out-migration leads to an improvement in resource availability and income distribution in origin areas. Since migrant labor is surplus labor or easily replaceable, there are no major production losses. At the macro and micro levels, remittances contribute to a more favorable balance of payment situation, fosters consumption and investment and improves the well-being of migrants households. Moreover, economic growth can accelerate through incoming investment capital and by the application of returning migrants skills and ideas.

³ For discussions of the theoretical literature in the field of migration and development we refer to Martin (1991), Massey et al. (1998), Binford (2003); Van Hear and Nyberg-Sorensen (2003).

During the late 1970s and 1980s the second approach, the contrasting 'asymmetrical growth approach,' gained ground (Abadan-Unat et al., 1975; Penninx and Van Velsen, 1977; Martin, 1991). The basic assumption is that there is a link between underdevelopment in migrant sending regions and development in receiving regions. This is manifested through an unbalanced distribution of benefits and resources, which is reinforced through migration. Among others, this approach argues that migration is selective and deprives the origin areas of their young, healthy, productive and innovative workforce, subsequently resulting in changes in production and a loss in productivity. Furthermore, the return benefits from the investments in human capital by the origin countries are foregone. As return migration also includes those returning due to failure, illness or old age, it does not contribute to productivity. Skill formation of migrants is limited due to the nature of employment at the destination and acquired skills are incompatible to the production systems in origin areas. This approach also argues that remittances are insufficiently geared towards productive investment, but rather fuel consumption and price inflation and a greater dependency on remittance income. Finally, at the community level, migration fosters greater socio-economic differentiation and social inequality.

In the 1980s and early 1990s the tone of the debate on migration and development was still rather pessimistic. Papademetriou and Martin's (1991) influential study is emblematic: they concluded that migration has rarely contributed significantly to economic take-off in origin areas. Therefore Martin (1991:28) asserts that policies should stimulate the maximization of benefits from remittances and the skills of return migrant, instead of assuming that they will automatically contribute to development within emigration regions.

However, the 1990s saw a shift towards a more optimistic discourse and more studies emphasizing the positive impact of international migration, in particular in relation to the impact of remittances for the local economy in the areas of origin. It is argued that even consumptive expenditure of remittances has positive multiplier effects, stimulating productivity and employment. Given the poor, marginalized origins of migrants, earnings from international migration reduce income disparities across class, regional and rural-urban lines (Binford, 2003).

The World Bank Global Development Finance report (2003) gave this positive stance more clout, by pointing to the large increase in remittances in the 1990s, which even superseded the total official development assistance of developed countries. Remittances are considered as an alternative form of (investment) capital for developing countries (Ratha, 2003). There is also a growing awareness that "remittances" encompass more than money transfers alone. As the president of the Inter-American Foundation (IAF)

cogently stated “We have learned that remittances are not just financial transfers but include “remittances” of new ideas and practices (for instance, citizen participation or the role of women) and “remittances” of new skills and experiences (for instance, construction techniques or computer applications) that can also be transferred to the “home-town” communities” (IAF, 2003).

The on-going academic discussion on transnationalism has widened the perspective on the connections between migration and development. Transnationalism advances that migration is not a unidimensional process but rather entails the maintenance of multi-stranded economic and non-economic relationships between home and host countries. This framework contributed to a more positive viewpoint in the current migration-development debate. In the past there was concern over the negative effects of brain-drain, translating into policies aimed at restricting the emigration of highly-skilled manpower, exacting compensation, or, alternatively, attempting to retain these people through incentives. Currently, the debate is more balanced and weighs the pros and cons of the emigration of skilled and professional manpower (Lowell and Findlay, 2002; Wickramasekara, 2003).

Moreover, there is more awareness of the potential to benefit from the highly-skilled diaspora – parts of the discourse narrowed down to the privileged group of migrants. Capitalizing on the diaspora for development purposes can be done through, e.g., the facilitation of return migration or involving the diaspora through circulation, business networking, virtual return and information exchange. A good example is the Thai Reverse Brain Drain project started in 1997 under the auspices of the National Science and Technology Development Agency of Thailand (NSTDA).⁴ Migrants’ skills, networks and financial resources/remittances should be mobilized to promote capacity building, technology transfer and private investments (IOM, 2003).

Thus, brain drain can evolve into what has been coined ‘brain-gain,’ or even “brain circulation” (Hugo, 2003), if expatriates are enticed to (temporarily) return home, or, when the exchange of knowledge, investments and business cooperation is facilitated through circulation.⁵ A striking example is that of expatriate IT workers in Silicon Valley fostering the development of businesses in India and China (Saxenian, 2000; Hunger, 2002). It is crucial to create an enabling environment where opportunities for investments,

⁴ See the Reverse Brain Drain project’s website: <http://rbd.nstda.or.th/index.html>

⁵ On the role of the highly qualified migrants in the transformation process of Eastern Europe, see Rudolph and Hillmann (1998).

innovation and business creation are maximized. Emigration of skilled workers can also have positive spin-off effects in terms of remittances and a stimulus to follow and invest more in higher education, thereby enhancing the human capital resources.

Apart from involvement in business, returning migrants also have a role to play in the transformation of domestic political and administrative systems through their newly acquired skills, ideas and authority. Skeldon (2004:16), for instance, notes that return migrants are important players in the parliaments of Asia's new industrialized countries. The influence of returning nationals in domestic politics and government is also manifest elsewhere, for instance, as exemplified by the Philippine Overseas Absentee Voting Law, passed in 2003.

Next to stressing the positive role of remittances and the brain gain, the discourse shift pays attention to the role of migrant diasporas in development. The migrant diasporas can be involved in local development efforts, without necessarily returning permanently to the country of origin. This could also include second and third generation migrants, for whom the "country of origin" is rather the country of their forebears. Furthermore, diasporas are becoming more and more active in advocacy, networking and projects aimed at involvement of their countries of origin.⁶ The involvement of the diaspora also takes place in disaster and (post-)conflict situations whereby migrants in the diaspora pool funds for relief or reconstruction efforts, e.g., in Sri Lanka and Indonesia (Cheran, 2003; Steijlen, 2004).

As has been articulated by different observers (Wickramasekara, 2003), optimizing the involvement of the diaspora, including transnational entrepreneurs would presuppose the facilitation of circular migration. This, however, runs counter to the tendency of developed countries governments to implement restrictive policies towards population movement and immigration. Skeldon (2004:6) points out that immigration policies are not reconcilable with more flexible labor recruitment regimes, e.g., GATS mode 4,⁷ but in the short term, seem to leave room for the mobility of certain categories of migrants, such as intra-corporate transferees, highly-skilled service workers, entrepreneurs and trainees.

⁶ The number of diaspora networks are quite numerous and involve many regions and nationalities. Hugo (2003) provides examples for Asia while Turner et al. (2003) lists fifty-seven diaspora networks in ten Asian countries including networks of ICT professionals, engineers and physicians.

⁷ Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), in force since 1995, refers to the movement in natural persons, i.e., a person travelling to supply services in another country (*see* Lavenex, 2004).

For a more balanced assessment of the benefits of migration for the development of sending countries, we also need to take into account the social costs entailed by migration. International migration often implies the separation of spouses, disrupted families, children having to cope without parents, increased inequality and friction in communities and considerable psychological strain on migrants and those left behind. Moreover, the current trend in feminization of migration also implies a higher vulnerability to exploitation and (sexual) abuse (IOM, 2004d; Wets, 2004).

Linking Migration and Development in European Policy

In Europe, the thinking about the relationship between migration and development was mainly framed in the context of return flows of former guest workers and asylum seekers. During the late 1970s and 1980s, when economic recession hit the European economies and guest-worker migration was put to an end, governments became more aware of the economic effects of migration for both immigration and emigration countries. Economic restructuring, rising unemployment and social tensions brought about a policy orientation towards return migration, translating into indirect measures such as quota systems or temporary residence permits (France, Belgium, Netherlands), or more direct incentives to foster return migration (Germany, Belgium, Netherlands).

Nevertheless, there was some concern over the effect of massive return migration of redundant workers in terms of labor market reintegration (Tassello, 1986:126). This instigated a report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on migration, growth and development (Kindleberger, 1978), that called for devising appropriate mechanisms for the reintegration of migrants and supporting employment generation projects in origin countries. The Netherlands' experience with the Reintegration of Emigrant Manpower and Local Opportunities for Development (REMPLOD) project in 1977, which is discussed in a latter section, provides insights into policy issues.

In recent years the debate on the migration-development nexus has widened beyond the economic dimension and acknowledges the multifarious linkages between the countries of origin and destination. Nevertheless, *repatriation and reintegration* are still important elements in European migration policies, although they do not necessarily address development issues in the long term. Assisted voluntary return (AVR) programs have increasingly been seen as a viable option, as suggested by the increasing number of AVR programs. In 1979 only Germany had such a program called Remigration and Emigration for Asylum Seekers in Germany (REAG); in 2004, 20 AVR programs were implemented by 18 European countries,

including the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Austria (IOM, 2004a; Black and Koser et al., 2004). The voluntary return programs aim to facilitate the permanent return of legal and unauthorized migrants by reintegrating the returnees socially and economically in the origin community. Thus, it fits the policy aim of many programs to limit future migration flows (OCIV, 2001).

Return migration is *potentially* a means of contributing to the development of countries of origin. The assumption is that migrants acquire knowledge, skills and capital in the receiving countries that can be used productively in their country of origin upon their return.⁸ However, the successful application of these human, social and financial resources can be hampered by all kinds of constraints, including an unfavorable economic environment, unstable political and security situation, lack of institutional support, inefficient bureaucracy, corruption, inadequate capital markets, local competition or a mismatch of skills. Therefore, several prerequisites are necessary for return migration to contribute to local development efforts. Moreover, the active participation of (local) government and other stakeholders in the country of origin is necessary in the planning and implementation phases.

At present the different EU countries still lack a clear, integrated and uniform policy in the field of return migration, reintegration and development (AGEF, 2004). Although many return and reintegration programs are implemented by various governmental and non-governmental organizations, these programs are carried out independently of each other and without clear coordination. In a number of countries - e.g. Spain, Greece, Italy and Ireland - the issue is almost absent on the political agenda. Only Denmark and the Netherlands have special laws on return migration. Hitherto, the number of countries that have managed to forge a strong link between return, reintegration and (local) development in the countries of origin are still few.⁹ The set-up of such programs requires more coordination across relevant government departments and developing an adequate legal basis, taking into account the different legal statuses of the migrants and the variety of origin country contexts.

More recently, the *role of diasporas in development projects* became visible, not the least because of the efforts of migrant organizations. A major

⁸ Early initiatives taken in this field are UNDP's 'Transfer of Know-how Through Expatriate Nationals' (TOKTEN) program started in 1976 and IOM's 'Return of Qualified African Nationals' program carried out during 1983-1999 (Trotzki and Schuman, 2002:50).

⁹ Some countries have piloted programs that foster development, such as support for business start-ups. For details, see European Reintegration Networking: <http://www.reintegration.net/laender/index.htm>

initiative was the Euro-Moroccan conference in Tangiers (1996), which led to a number of meetings and conferences in Morocco and Europe on migration and development, and ultimately to the Euro-Moroccan network on Migration and Development in 2002.¹⁰ From the viewpoint of governmental aid agencies, however, private development projects taken up by the diaspora are not embedded in a well thought out general development strategy and may lack a firm professional basis. On the other hand, migrant organizations and NGOs can view these attempts at integrating diaspora activities with formal development aid as unnecessary since they consider themselves capable of running the programs in an efficient and autonomous way. In the Dutch debate, as discussed below, many small-scale diaspora organizations involved in development projects have articulated distrust about state intervention; for this reason, they maintain separate aid initiatives. The two channels are not usually compatible in that official development aid mostly targets the poorest people and areas, while migrants are not necessarily from the poorest strata or countries.

Migration and development aid now also figure in the European debate. Governments have attempted to promote development as a means to alleviate the adverse conditions causing underdevelopment and conflict, while at the same time reducing propensities for migration to Europe. In this respect, the French policy of *co-developpement*, instigated after 1997, serves as a kind of model. It attempts to forge a link between immigration (control) with development processes in sending countries. It built on already established transnational development initiatives by the African diaspora in France. The policy advocates possibilities for temporary immigration for (vocational) training or facilitation of business creation, next to more conventional measures such as repatriation support. It specifically aims to involve regional state agencies, migrants' associations and business and professional networks. The rationale is that by boosting development in countries of origin, migration pressures will be reduced.

This policy spurred considerable debate at the national and EU levels and remains controversial for some, particularly because of its (supposed) connection with immigration control (Aumüller, 2004a). In 2001 the European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs Antonio Vitorino advocated a co-development policy that ensures "migrants have possibilities of moving on or going back as the situation develops in their country of origin and elsewhere in the world... [including] innovative ideas to encourage the voluntary return of migrants ... in a framework of supported reintegration in countries of origin... [and] reduce the negative factors associated with

¹⁰ At present around two million Moroccans are living in Western Europe.

emigration and ensure longer term benefits, particularly for developing countries" (*Migration News*, 2001).

However, various consultations with agencies such as ILO and OECD and submission of proposals on the issue have yet to be translated into coherent, comprehensive migration-oriented and development aid policy. According to Aumüller (2004b), this is due to a lack of research and knowledge on the issue. Moreover, development aid agencies are reluctant to execute policies with the underlying motive to stem (the alleged or real) mass influx of refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. The linking of development aid with migration policy remains contentious (Baschle, 2004), and to a certain extent, it is a sensitive issue in the development cooperation circles.

Nevertheless, on a higher level, the EU has taken first steps to forge a stronger link between the migration and development policies. A decade ago the European Commission (EC) signaled the need for more cooperation with migrant sending countries in a bid to reduce migration pressure on Europe. But it was only in 2002 that the Commission publicized a document specifically addressing the theme of migration and development (EC, 2002). The EU underscored the necessity of integrating migration issues in its relations with third countries, including a more harmonized migration admission policy that takes the interests of the EU *and* sending countries into account. At the European Council meeting in Seville, Spain in June 2002, the EC decided to include actions on the joint management of migration flows and readmission of unauthorized migrants (EC, 2003a: 39). The conclusions reached at the EC meeting hinted at a reevaluation of relations in cases of countries that do not show sufficient cooperation in the fight against unauthorized migration.

Migration in general is to be integrated into *a comprehensive external policy of the EU, linking migration and development issues*. It is increasingly recognized that the reduction of international migration cannot be realized only by restrictive immigration policies, but that the conditions in the origin countries in the developing world also need to improve. This implies fostering progress in human rights and conflict prevention, economic conditions and the labor market, food security, health and the environment.

Thus, a more integrative EU policy was announced in 2002 that should not only address the management of migration flows and host country integration issues, but also the root causes of migration, repatriation of immigrants and asylum-seekers, reintegration of migrants in origin countries and the promotion of the role of the diaspora in the development (cf. EC, 2004c). The latter implies the more efficient and productive mobilization of financial resources and strengthening transnational communication facilities of migrant communities. To these could be added measures aiming

at fostering "brain-gain" through repatriation of skills, fostering circulation of highly skilled labor between European and developing countries, and refraining from harmful recruitment of professionals in short supply in developing countries (EC, 2002, 2003b, 2005).

In March 2004, the Council of the European Union and European Parliament officially adopted a program for financial and technical assistance to third countries in the areas of migration and asylum (AENEAS). The EU aims to intensify cooperation along a three-pronged strategy: 1) tackling root causes of migration; 2) integrating migration issues in the political dialogue with a focus on unauthorized as well as on channels for legal migration, and 3) integrating migration in development cooperation programs to improve the capacity of developing countries to manage migration flows (EC, 2004b:46). However, thus far, the emphasis in their regional programs still lies on migration management, countering unauthorized migration and border enforcement. Diaspora efforts in development are also acknowledged. EC regulation No. 491/2004 does explicitly mention the EC support for actions by third countries aimed at fostering the maintenance of linkages between the diaspora and their communities of origin and facilitating their contributions to local social and economic development (EC, 2004b).

Asia-Europe Migration

Next to the economic importance of the Asian region for Europe, migration flows from Asia to Europe have increased in recent years and have become more diverse in terms of nationalities and types of migrants. Not only are flows of asylum-seekers more apparent, e.g., from Afghanistan, Iraq, Sri Lanka and China (Pieke et al., 2004), but also trafficked persons, unauthorized migrants (who transit via Eastern Europe) and, more recently, highly-skilled workers including students and trainees (ICT, health and engineering). In particular, China is of significance for transnational ties and development linkages, now that restrictions to mobility have been lifted, China's economy is booming and is becoming an important partner for business networking.

Up until now, migration has not figured as an important issue in European relations with Asian countries, but this will change given the intensifying migration linkages between the two regions. Dialogues and programs between Asia and Europe have hitherto been concerned with readmission agreements, countering people smuggling/trafficking¹¹ and

¹¹ Two Regional Ministerial conferences on people smuggling and trafficking in human beings were held in Bali in 2002/2003, where actions plans were initiated.

refugees assistance. In Asia itself, the discourse has mainly focused on the negative (socio-economic) impacts of temporary labor migration for the countries of origin. Return migration of the less skilled is structural and given.

As to Asia-EU relations, migration and trafficking have been incorporated into the regional and bilateral dialogues with Southeast Asian countries (EC, 2003a:5). In the migration field, the EU prefers bilateral cooperation programs to suit the specific situation of the highly diverse Asian countries (EC, 2004). In the EC strategy paper (EC, 2003a:12) unauthorized migration is considered harmful for development and is targeted for intervention within the framework of an integrated and holistic policy framework:

Moreover, the EC takes a holistic approach to its broadened policy agenda, acknowledging the inter-relationship of different issues and addressing them through integrated policies. Thus, terrorism, organized crime and illegal migration undermine the rule of law, discourage investment, and hinder development.

Furthermore, the EU Regional Strategy paper on Asia (EC, 2004) states that:

Migration takes an increasingly prominent role in the relations between the two continents and also in discussions at official level. Asia is the source of potentially significant – documented and non-documented - migratory flows to Europe. The EU and Asian countries have started a dialogue on this common challenge in the context of ASEM¹² and are beginning to develop common approaches at bilateral level.

However, as of yet, the EC cooperation with ASEAN currently does not clearly and explicitly include *migration and development* issues. Similarly, the Hanoi Declaration on Closer ASEM Economic Partnership (Hanoi, 9 October 2004), while aiming at the strengthening of business, investment opportunities and the trade in goods and services, does not mention migration issues specifically.

Thus, the emphasis in EU-Asian cooperation in the field of migration is still on control of migration flows, readmission of migrants and countering unauthorized migration and trafficking within the framework of mainstreaming Justice and Home Affairs issues (EC, 2003a:39; EC, 2004b). This is done through exchange of information, training of immigration

¹² Asia Europe Meeting

officials, capacity building and improvement of border control systems.¹³ For the Southeast Asian region, the program is still tentative and in a phase of orientation and identification of possible areas of cooperation. The dialogue within ASEM and ASEAN priority is given to -anti-trafficking projects (EC, 20004b).

As to highly skilled and professional migrants, the EU supports the training, mobility and return of scientific personnel and trainees. Within the context of the Asia-Link program, the EU aims to foster the involvement of expatriate scientists with their countries of origin.¹⁴ In addition, due to the shortage of highly skilled workers in sectors such as ICT and health, several European countries have entered into bilateral agreements with Asian countries for the supply of these workers. For instance, Germany and the UK have allowed for the immigration of Indian engineers and ICT workers. Next to that there is an increasing demand for unskilled labor in care and domestic services, but this flow, however, is less regulated.

In the next two sections we will focus on the shift in discourses in the Netherlands and Germany, respectively. Comparing the Dutch and German cases is interesting in that it highlights the contrasts in migration experiences and thinking about transnational relations and immigrants' contribution to their countries of origin. Østergaard-Nielsens' (2000; 2001) research, while focusing on the political participation of Turkish and Kurdish immigrants, brings out the contrasting institutional and political contexts, i.e., a more inclusive political system (Netherlands) against a more exclusive system (Germany), and shows how both governments exhibit a sensitivity towards "homeland politics."¹⁵ Moreover, Østergaard-Nielsen asserts that the Netherlands differs with Germany in terms of hosting migrant diasporas that are more organized which support more diaspora-development initiatives.

¹³ Concerns Hong Kong, China, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka.

¹⁴ The objective of the Asia-Link Program is to promote regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in Europe, South and Southeast Asia and China. Eligible countries are the 25 Member States of the European Union and 19 Asian countries.

¹⁵ According to Østergaard-Nielsens (2001), in the Netherlands, given its more inclusive multicultural policies, there is a tendency among policymakers to view the taking part in "homeland" politics by Turkish immigrants as a failure of immigrant incorporation and integration policy.

Dutch Discourses and Policies

In the case of the Netherlands, five periods characterized by a specific economic conjuncture, type of immigration and subsequent discourse on migration and development, can be distinguished:

1. The first wave of non-European immigration in the Netherlands occurred shortly after World War II when 10,000 Indonesian-Dutch (*mestizos* of the Dutch Indies) and Moluccan soldiers in the service of the colonial army, left Indonesia. During the period of their arrival, from 1945 till about 1960, the Dutch economy and society underwent substantial changes. The foundations were laid for a post-colonial industrial and welfare state. The reconstruction went together with a tight labor market, and full employment facilitated the integration of the immigrants. The predicament of developing countries was not really on the agenda, hence, there was no debate on migration and its link with development.

2. During the next period, 1960-1973, like in other parts of Northwestern Europe, sustained economic growth continued and shortages in the labor market led to the recruitment of foreign 'guest workers,' mainly from Morocco and Turkey. This period ended with the so-called oil-crisis and the coming to a standstill of the guest worker program. The first debates on the relation between migration and development took place in this period, focusing on the underlying *reasons for migration* (poverty) and 'highly-skilled migration.' The latter, in particular, became part of 'developmentalism' (balanced growth) and 'dependency' (asymmetrical growth) discourses and was consequently framed in terms of '-brain gain' or 'brain drain.'

3. 1973-1990 was a period of recession and restructuring of the Dutch economy that gradually evolved from a Fordist to a post-modern, service-oriented and knowledge-based economy. Economic growth stagnated and unemployment became widespread. Contrary to original expectations, many guest workers stayed in the Netherlands, their families came over under family reunification arrangements, and a large part of them obtained Dutch nationality. *Return migration* became part of the migration and development debate. In 1973 the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS) started a re-migration program called Reintegration of Emigrant Manpower and Local Opportunities for Development (REMPLOD) that lasted six years. Studies were carried out to evaluate the results and they showed that although re-migration could be successful at the individual level, at the village level sustainable positive effects remained to be seen (Abadan-Unat, 1975).

4. In the period 1990-2000 the West European economy recovered and the labor market improved. Intensified globalization and political repres-

sion and civil wars in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Somalia caused an increase in the number of asylum seekers and refugees. The Netherlands was one of the countries that received this wave of immigration. Migrants' origins became more diverse. With 15 percent of its 16-million population born outside the country or having at least one parent born outside the country,¹⁶ Dutch society gradually became conscious of being an immigration country. Resistance against immigrants, especially asylum seekers, increased.

It is against this background that a new discourse - the causes of migration/brain drain and return migration - appeared. The first issue was taken up mostly at the theoretical level (e.g., see Heins and Kox, 1998) while the latter was translated in policies. Successive governments spent millions to promote the return of asylum seekers and migrants to the countries of origin. Three re-migration programs were launched, none of them successful.¹⁷ To these discourses a third discourse was added focusing on *transnationalism* and the role of migrant communities or diasporas. After 1990, the role of diasporas in development projects increasingly received more attention, not the least because of the efforts of migrant organizations.¹⁸

5. The current period, from 2000 till the present, is characterized by economic recession, an increase in the level of unemployment, and immigration as a core issue in Dutch politics. Like in other European countries, the Dutch asylum policy has become more and more restrictive, intensifying the discourse of return migration and development in the process. On April 1, 2000 the Law on Re-migration became effective. It aims at facilitating the return of accepted asylum seekers and migrants who want to return volun-

¹⁶ Regarding the Dutch definition of the 'allochtonous' population, allochtones should not be seen as synonymous with foreigners since many of them had Dutch nationality when they migrated from the former colonies; many others obtained Dutch nationality. The largest groups are those of Dutch-Indonesian (450,000), Surinamese (325,000), Turkish (350,000) and Moroccan (250,000) descent. New large immigrant groups are from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, China, Ghana and Somalia.

¹⁷ These programs are: 1) Return and Emigration of Asylum Seekers ex Netherlands (REAN), under which program 6,700 people returned between January 1992 and May 1998; 2) Facilitated Return of non-Accepted Asylum Seekers (GTAA), which assisted the return of 900 asylum seekers from Ethiopia and 300 from Angola; at the beginning of 2000 only 13 asylum seekers had returned; and 3) Facilitated Return to Somalia - no one returned under this program.

¹⁸ Examples are the Euro-Mediterranean Center of Migration and Development (<http://www.emcemo.nl/>), and a conference organized by the National Consultation of Municipalities and Development (LOGO), where organizations of migrant communities and Dutch development organizations discussed opportunities for cooperation (Posthumus, 1996).

tarily to their home countries. The Netherlands Migration Institute, on behalf of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, implements the Law, which provides transport costs and financial assistance for the first two months. In addition to the law, political developments in Iraq and Afghanistan invited return migration and development projects in these countries. The Dutch European Refugees Fund (*Nederlandse Europees Vluchtelingen Fonds*), for example, allocated more than one million euros for return migration in 2003.

What is new is the involvement of development funding agencies such as Cordaid, Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation or NOVIB (Oxfam Netherlands). For example, Cordaid started an organization (*Bureau Maatwerk voor Terugkeer* = *Office for Tailor Made Return*), with the aim to mediate between rejected asylum seekers and the demand of development organizations in countries of origin. However, their efforts have yet not proven to be effective, among others because: "It is characteristic of the projects that they target people who have been for years involved in asylum procedures, who are not accepted and who receive welfare without much perspective for work. Seldom had the discussion focused on the return of people who belong to the better-off of the refugee population" (Kalsbeek, 2003:3). Nevertheless, it is significant that migration is now on the agenda of development NGOs.

The discourse on migration and development received a new impetus with the publication of a policy paper 'Development and Migration,' written on behalf of both the Minister of Development Cooperation and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Integration. The paper aims at bringing into balance policies of poverty alleviation, conflict management and protection of human rights with the elasticity (*'spankracht'*) of Dutch society regarding legal and undocumented immigration and multiculturalism. In fact, the report brings the three discourses discussed earlier together. A new element is the framing of the migration and development issue by paying attention to national and regional contexts. The central issue at stake is why migration generates more positive effects in some countries compared to other countries.

The report focuses on two areas: remittances and human capacity building. Remittances are considered beneficial to countries with a favorable climate for entrepreneurs: "There are indications that in particular in countries with a favorable climate for entrepreneurial activities remittances will indeed lead to extra investments and, in situations with sufficient surplus production capacity, to substantial economic growth. There are also strong indications that the poor (although not the ultra poor) will benefit from the remittances" (Royal Dutch Government, 2004:34). Human capacity building is related to the role of diasporas, which is supposed to generate

trade relations, international capital transfers for investments and transfer of technology. The general conclusion of the policy paper is that the effects of international migration are positive for the middle income countries because of economic opportunities to invest. The relation between international migration and lower income countries is less clear. Of decisive importance is the development environment: political stability, economic growth, the quality of government, policy and business climate and whether the emigrants are high or low skilled.

Based on this analysis, a new policy was devised. Among others, the policy paper states that the government will involve migrant organizations more intensively in the design of Dutch development cooperation and in the debate on brain drain. Moreover, efforts of migrant organizations to contribute to development in the countries of origin will be supported. It further considers the promotion of circular migration as a suitable strategy that unifies the interests of the migrants, the countries of origin and the destination countries. These conclusions imply that governmental policy acknowledges that the transnational linkages of migrant organizations contain a potential for economic and political development in the home countries. In the following paragraphs we will give some examples with regard to diaspora organizations formed by migrants of Indonesian origin.

There are many local organizations and activities in the Netherlands that support small-scale projects in Indonesia. The Moluccans who came to the Netherlands around 1950 numbered about 42,000 as of 2001 (Beets et al., 2002). They originally assumed that their stay would be temporary and that they would return to a free Moluccan republic. This ideal and the *adat* (traditional law) and *pela* (kinship) linkages still play a role in constituting the Moluccans as a migrant group with a clear, well-defined identity. Kinship relations are also important in keeping the links with the Moluccan Islands in East Indonesia. In 1999-2001 violent ethnic and religious conflicts occurred in the region of origin, during which at least 5,000 people died and 500,000 were displaced. The Moluccans in the Netherlands undertook various initiatives and demonstrations to express their solidarity; the latter were joint efforts by Christian and Muslim Moluccans. Political pressure to end the violence was exerted, both on politicians in the Netherlands and in Indonesia, and twice a delegation of prominent members of the diaspora visited political leaders in Indonesia. The diaspora also became much involved in relief efforts. Campaigns were held to collect money, at the national level by way of a national aid campaign supported by two Dutch mayors and the Dutch Red Cross, as well as by numerous local actions. The national campaign resulted in 5.5 million Dutch guilders (around 2.75 million euros) in 2001. Steijlen (2004) suggests that the interethnic conflict of 1999-2002 has strengthened transnational ties, and the emergency assistance developed into development oriented small-scale projects.

The second group is smaller and consists of Papuans from West Papua (Irian Barat) that was separated by the Dutch from the rest of Indonesia during the transfer of sovereignty in 1949. Given their small number, there are only a few diaspora organizations of Papuans. The core members consist of Papuans but their membership includes Dutch sympathizers. *Hulp aan Papua's in Nood* (HAPIN), which stands for 'Support to Papuans in distress,' is a case in point. It claims to have 12,000 member-contributors. It combats human rights abuses by the army and supports the regional autonomy and decentralization laws of Indonesia that should lead to greater inclusion of Papuans in regional decision making. HAPIN also has various project activities, such as support to four boarding schools, emergency aid, information, and support to refugees in Papua New Guinea. In 2003/04 grants were given to 450 students for higher education both in West Irian and elsewhere in Indonesia. Besides, a small fund supports initiatives of local populations in the field of small scale production and education.¹⁹

The above examples demonstrate how the relations between migrant groups and their countries of origin could be inter-generational and maintained for decades. They also show the current interest in mobilizing the resources of migrant organizations for development. This interest is not only from the side of Dutch private or semi-governmental funding agencies, but also from the Dutch government. An example of an Asian initiative supported by the Dutch government is a project of the Dutch-Filipino organization PASALI, an organization of Filipino seafarers. It initiated a project "from brain drain to brain gain," with the aim to use the knowledge and skills of expatriate Filipinos to develop the fishery and agricultural sector; to foster the economic and social reintegration of returnees and to help avoid the migration of Filipino graduates (IOM, 2004c).

The discourse on transnationalism and development is, of course, not only a matter for policymakers; it is also a matter of academic interest. Gradually, more academic work has been done on the subject and three Dutch studies will be highlighted here that show different results. The study of Janine Klaver (1997) on labor migration from Oaxaca (Mexico) to the USA is one of the first Dutch studies on transnationalism, based on fieldwork in two villages in the Oaxaca region and the diaspora community in Los Angeles. It pays much attention to cross-border social networks. Labor migration is a major livelihood strategy for many Oaxaqueños, but, accord-

¹⁹ Since 2002, this fund is supported by the Dutch funding organization NOVIB (Oxfam Netherlands), which allowed for expanding assistance programs. The LINKIS/NOVIB Program is meant for co-financing of small scale development projects of Dutch civil society organizations, including migrant and refugee organizations (see www.linkis.nl).

ing to the researcher, on balance the effects of migration on the social and economic development are negative, both at household and village level. Adverse effects are the lack of adult males in the villages (although more and more young women migrate); the neglect of investments to increase production; and the increase in fallow land and the decrease of land cultivation. While incoming remittances increase the standard of living, it leads to ever-higher expectations and ambitions. While migrants support individuals and migrant organizations support public works in the villages of origin, the idea of solidarity and mutual assistance weakens in due time.

A study in Indonesia (Spaan, 1999) showed that labor migration (either internal or international) was part of strategies adopted by households across all socio-economic strata in the study sites to diversify the households' resource base. International labor migration was more prominent in communities with a high degree of development and economic incorporation in the wider economy. The poor and landless managed to cover the initial costs of migration by taking loans and using the services offered by intermediaries (as against paying placement fees to recruitment agencies). The investment patterns of migrants varied by socio-economic stratum: poorer migrant households tended to use earnings for housing, livestock and repaying debts, while more well-endowed migrant households invested more in productive assets such as land, transportation, tools or accumulated savings. In some areas, the local government benefited by appropriating a percentage of migrant remittances for infrastructure projects. The high brokerage fees and ensuing debts, however, prevented many migrants from making productive investments. These intermediaries, often return migrants, were important investors and served as catalysts of local economic development (Spaan and Hartveld, 2002).

The third study by Hein de Haas (2003) analyzes migration and development in an agricultural area in southern Morocco. For more than three decades cross-border migration to Western Europe is part of households' coping strategies. Many of the migrants obtained a permanent permit to stay, others returned while there are also circular migrants as well as legal and undocumented migrants. According to IMF data, remittances to Morocco totaled US\$3.3 billion in 2001 (Nyberg Sorensen, 2004:5). In his study area, De Haas estimates the annual value of remittances at some 12.2 million euros. This is spent on the improvement of agriculture by buying water pumps, fertilizers, agricultural machines; housing; education; the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca; purchase of luxury consumption goods, etc. In addition, diaspora organizations support communities by supporting hospitals and building new mosques. De Haas shows that there is more prosperity than before, that traditional cleavages between traditionally powerful and marginal groups are eroded, and that women are more educated than

before. On the other hand, he admits that the poorest families are not (able to be) involved in the migration culture and that there is an increasing agrarian inequality. De Haas' study exceeds narrow interpretations of 'development' as purely an economic process.

In summary, the different findings of these studies support the thesis that the context determines the outcome of transnational linkages. Besides, the three studies together mark the transition in the Dutch migration and development debate from a rather skeptical and pessimistic point of view towards a more positive and optimistic one.

The German Discourse on Migration and Development

Also in the case of Germany it is helpful to distinguish periods marked by specific economic and political characteristics, type of immigration and subsequent discourses on migration and development. Germany's immigration history is marked by a paradox. In post-war Europe Germany became one of the most prominent immigrant countries – even if there was no *declared* policy towards immigration and integration. But it was only in 1998, 43 years after the first recruited migrant laborers came, that Germany declared itself officially to be an immigration country. From the outset, the access of migrants to the labor market was highly regulated, and the regulations were contradictory (Bade, 2001).

1. After the collapse of the Nazi-regime with its anti-Semitic and racist policies towards migration and its extensive use of forced labor, Germany was confronted with remarkable streams of refugees. Most refugees came from the Eastern territories and fled to Western Germany. Internal migration was directed nearly exclusively towards Western Germany as well. This first phase of migration ended in 1961 when the Berlin Wall was raised and internal migration between the two German states was blocked. Western Germany started to prosper economically as a result of the Marshall Plan, but it was short of labor. Recruiting from the refugee population and other solutions (such as increasing the participation of women in the labor market) were not on the political agenda.

2. The import of migrant labor turned out to be a reasonable solution to the labor shortage for the economic and political actors in this period. From the outset the recruitment of workers was directed towards European countries and potential immigrants coming from Asia or Africa were excluded. In principle, it was less a preference for 'Europeans' but the exclusion of individuals who, in internal parlance, were frequently referred to as 'Afro-Asians' (Schönwälder, 2004:249). The recruitment of thousands of workers, mainly from Southern European regions took, place from 1955 onwards and was managed by a loose coalition of big enterprises in the

booming industries and the German government. It was not accompanied by an integration policy for the immigrants. Contracts for the recruited workers were made originally on a one-year basis. The main countries of recruitment at the time were Italy, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and the former Yugoslavia. Initially, countries like Bolivia, Taiwan, India, Iran, Togo, the West Indies and the Central African Federation had offered to send workers to West Germany. However, Germany rejected those offers; later it accepted workers from Morocco and Tunisia. The recruitment treaties did not contain provisions on the immigration of family members of the recruited workers. This made it difficult for immigrants from developing countries to bring their families to Germany. In 1973 the German government stopped its recruitment policies due to the oil crisis and economic recession (Rist, 1980).²⁰

3. Since 1973, the third phase of migration to West Germany continued through three modes: special agreements covering the recruitment of (seasonal) workers; the repatriation of so-called ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe (people having German descent), and asylum and refugee migration. These migrations were regulated directly (e.g., visa requirements) and indirectly (e.g., the treatment of spouses and children who were admitted under family reunification). Many of the immigrants stemming from the guest worker system brought their families to Germany, indicating a consolidation of this immigrant generation (Bade, 2001).

In addition, Germany forged special agreements with several countries for the benefit of certain sectors that needed qualified workers. In the 1970s and 1980s there was already a limited inflow of Korean and Philippine nurses to Western Germany. Those two immigration groups were largely female; unlike the guest worker program, there was no possibility for them to bring their spouses and children to Germany.²¹ In the late 1970s refugees from Vietnam (known as the 'boat people') were also allowed to come to Western Germany. They received institutional support and, compared to other refugee groups, they integrated rather quickly into the Western German society.

In this phase the idea that poor countries should not be deprived of their well-educated personnel dominated the debate on the recruitment of workers from developing countries. Left-liberals criticized the recruitment of

²⁰ In that year 72,946 African and Asian citizens, representing 3.11 percent of the foreign workforce, were gainfully employed in Germany. The total number of foreigners in Germany was about four million persons (Schönwälder, 2004:254).

²¹ Most of the South Koreans already came to Germany in the 1960s and 1970s as nurses or miners. Filipino migrants had lived in Germany for many years and often work as nurses (women) or as seafarers (men) (*see* Schmidt-Fink, 2004).

nurses from South Korea since it also had a shortage of medical personnel (Schönwälder, 2004:258). The brain drain debate was high on the agenda and the concept of brain drain itself became a highly politicized issue (see Schipulle, 1976:193). Germany's repatriation policies focused on the guest worker population. A program launched in 1983 offered incentives for return migrants to Southern Europe. It did not meet the expectations of the government and it ceased within a few years (Entenmann, 2002).

East Germany (German Democratic Republic or GDR) followed its own recruitment strategies. The GDR recruited workers (so called *Werkvertragsarbeiter*) from a variety of socialist developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s, mostly from Cuba, Mozambique and Vietnam. In this case the migration policies did not invite the permanent stay of migrants in the GDR. The immigrants lived in segregated condominiums and had little contact with the country of destination. The most numerous group of immigrants were the Vietnamese. They were able to maintain a strong relationship with their country of origin and they sent all kinds of goods to their country on a regular basis (Hillmann, 2005).

4. After reunification in October 1990 many immigrants living in the former GDR were not captured by an appropriate legal framework and, subsequently, became a main target of repatriation policies. Statistics suggest that about 19,500 out of 60,000 Vietnamese left the country for good in the years after reunification. *Arbeitsgruppe Entwicklung und Fachkräfte im Bereich der Migration und Zusammenarbeit* (AGEF), an official mediator for migrant reintegration in Vietnam, estimates that nation-wide about 12,000 Vietnamese went back to their home country in the 1990s (Hillmann, 2005). While Germany wanted the former contract workers to return home, Vietnam itself was not keen to have those migrants back because of its own economic problems.

Up until today the immigrant population in Germany, though highly diverse, is still mainly "European," except in the eastern parts of the country. In the year 2002 about 12 per cent of all foreigners came from Asia (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2002). Asian immigrants are a diverse group; they came to Germany in various ways. It may be recalled that the Filipinos and Koreans were part of specific recruitment agreements; as detailed below, all other groups did too under certain labor market regulations. Today, a substantial proportion of the immigrant population lives under uncertain conditions, as asylum seekers or as "tolerated immigrants" who do not have the right to work in Germany. Among Vietnamese, Afghan and Sri Lankan immigrants, less than a fourth held an unlimited permit to stay in 2002 (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung, 2003). In addition, there are migrants without a legal status; they work in the informal sector of the economy (Schönwälder, Vogel and Sciortino, 2004). Furthermore, possibilities for self-employment were

for many years restricted due to complex bureaucratic procedures. Students from developing countries are allowed to stay in Germany, but only since January 2005, when the new law on immigration was passed allowing them to stay for another year to find work in the labor market.

The biggest immigrant group from Asia, the Vietnamese, is now mainly engaged in self-employment. The second group, the Chinese, came mainly as specialty cooks since the 1960s. More recent arrivals came mainly to study at German universities. In 2003, 9,109 Chinese were registered as students at German universities. It is estimated that many Chinese immigrants today stay illegally in Germany and that this kind of immigration is on the rise (Giese, 2003). Immigrants from Thailand include women who had been trafficked (IOM, 2003b). Large numbers of Thai women also came in the context of marriage migration. Data indicate that in the year 2002 2,775 marriages were registered between Thai women and German men, while marriages between Thai men and German women are exceptional.²²

In 2000 the so-called "Green card" program was introduced to bring in about 20,000 highly specialized IT-workers to Germany. In 2003 half of the 13,774 recruited IT-workers came from India. The "Green Card" program marked the beginning of a new era of immigration policies in Germany because it implied that Germany should make more use of its integration into global labor markets.

Policies of Return and Repatriation

As this brief review of Germany's immigration context shows, the access of immigrants to the country and to the labor market was highly regulated from the outset. As in the case of the Netherlands, Germany also implemented repatriation policies. Limited data on the dimensions of voluntary repatriation are available and there is no central coordination of actions in this respect; an evaluation of repatriation programs is also lacking (Moritz, 2005; Entenmann, 2002). Several institutions are involved at various levels and there is a growing consensus among policy makers that return programs should be given more attention than was the case in the past (Unabhängige Kommission Zuwanderung, 2001).

In cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Germany came up with the program, "Remigration and Emigration for Asylum seekers in Germany" (REAG), in 1979. The program aimed at

²² In comparison 26 marriages between a German woman and a Thai man were registered in 2002 (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration und Integration, 2004).

assisting migrants and refugees willing to return to their countries of origin. The program provided travel subsidies and reintegration assistance through income-subsidies in the country of arrival under the Government Assisted Repatriation Program (GARP). In the years 1979 to 2003 a total of 543,052 migrants availed of the program (IOM, 2005b:153). At the national level, return programs involve three agencies: the Ministry of Labor, specifically the *Zentralstelle für Arbeitsvermittlung* (ZAV) unit, which takes care of migrants who have studied in Germany and who want to return to their countries of origin; the Ministry of Internal Affairs (BMI), and the Ministry for Development (BMZ), which run special programs to facilitate the return of migrants and refugees.²³

At the local community level some authorities offer economic help to migrants willing to go back to their countries of origin (Entenmann, 2002). Mediator agencies as well as church organizations are also involved in carrying out repatriation programs. Generally three forms of return programs exist: (1) financial and organizational help for the trip back home, including financial support during the initial stage in the country of return, (2) programs for the economic reintegration of employees in the form of training and job exchange, and (3) financial support, access to credit and consultancy services in setting up a business. Large-scale programs are directed towards certain groups of migrants, for example Bosnian refugees, while small-scale programs are more tailored to individuals. Recently a special unit, ZIRF (*Zentralstelle für Informationsvermittlung zur Rückkehrförderung*), has been created to coordinate and organize the return programs and to enable potential returnees better to do so (Moritz, 2005).

The Shift in the Discourse: Empirical Evidence

Even if Germany did not favor the settlement of migrants from developing countries (and had, in fact, recently created ZIRF, an institutional body to better coordinate the return of migrants back to their home-country), the debate on *migration and development* surfaced in Germany in the past two to three years. The policy of the 1970s and 1980s viewed the emigration of highly qualified migrants from the developing countries, labeled as 'brain drain,' as detrimental to the development of the countries of origin. This argument justified the practice of sending students from developing coun-

²³ Germany has agreements on repatriation with several other countries such as Algeria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Morocco, Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic and the Baltic states (Sachverständigenrat, 2004).

tries back home once they obtained a university degree in Germany. Generally the discourse on migration and development has shifted away from the stigmatized brain drain debate, and now underlines aspects of the *brain gain* (see Hunger, 2003).

In this changed debate the focus now is on the more positive effects of return migration for the countries of origin. Migration, it is argued, becomes a tool for development and transnational networks might lead to a win-win situation in the country of arrival and in the country of origin. This line of thinking challenges the notion that improved development strategies for the developing countries could prevent migration from poorer countries to the rich countries (Thranhardt, 2005).

This shift in the discourse is due to two major trends: (1) a new, more transnational understanding of 'development' within globalization processes, which includes the influence of international policy-oriented NGOs in the field of migration studies; and (2) changed local realities in Germany itself.

As regards the first trend, proponents of the discourse on migration and development in Germany are oriented toward the Anglo-Saxon discourse - they compare the situation of migrants in Germany with that of the UK or the US, even if the level of organization of the immigrant communities as well as the status and the possibilities for integration differ among the various countries. Often reference is made to the economically successful examples of global diasporas like the Indians and Chinese. The *guanxi* model of the overseas Chinese community is seen as a viable resource for many migrants all over the globe. Melchers et al. (2004) blame the migration experts in Germany in putting too much attention to the 'negative' aspects of immigration to Germany while failing to pay sufficient attention to transnational forms of migration, including diasporas. Some of the more policy-oriented scholars now call for a better integration of the diaspora into development policies (Kuptsch and Martin, 2004; Süßmuth, 2004). As in the Anglo-Saxon discourse, diasporas in Germany are now examined more and more as a potential tool for poverty-reduction in the countries of origin. The 'Anglo-Saxon conception that "individuals constitute the most sizable and tangible form of diaspora contribution to development and poverty reduction" (Van Hear et al., 2004:3) goes along with a changing view of migration. Today the diaspora is seen as a provider of remittances and knowledge for the developing countries. A better management of those remittances might stimulate development at home. Some authors view Germany as not doing much to recognize the positive value of its diaspora communities (Melchers et al., 2003).

The second trend concerns changes in German society. The demographic trend shows a decline in fertility rates and the greying of the

"native" population. According to some experts, falling birth rates and the anticipated problems of a shrinking society could be mitigated by immigration from abroad (Thränhardt, 2005). As mentioned earlier, Germany has already allowed the access of highly-qualified workers to the IT- sector, systemically recruiting workers from developing countries such as India for this economic purpose.

Few scholars are aware that many assumptions about diasporas in Germany are based on limited knowledge of the nature and dynamics of immigrant groups (Mundt, 2004). The available scientific evidence is much more critical in tone than the briefly sketched debate here suggests. While anecdotal evidence seems to highlight the success stories, more solid research shows that the impact of the returns at the local level in the country of origin are likely to be overestimated (for the Moroccan case, *see* Berriane, 2001) or that migrant groups would need other preconditions to invest in their home countries. A study on the voluntary repatriation program of Afghan refugees underlines the loose connection of migrants within the diaspora and the difficulties of migrants in the country of destination and in the country of origin (Schmidt, 2003). Research on Bangladeshi migrants in Germany shows that most Bangladeshi came as refugees and that only one-third of them send home remittances on a regular basis (Feuchte, 2002). Ongoing research on the Ghanaian community in Germany indicates that the ties between the diaspora and the home country exist, but these are mostly based on an individual, non-organized fashion. While remittances are sent back home, oftentimes this is not on a regular basis. Highly qualified migrants stated that there was no need for them to send remittances home since their families were well established there.

On the whole, the link between migration and development turns out to be mixed: remittances are sent, but as empirical evidence suggests, these are sent mostly in order to pay school bills and used for consumption or to offer help in needy situations. Some of those who had tried to establish development projects at home (e.g., sending medical-technical instruments), turned out to be frustrated by the bureaucracy at home (e.g., high import taxes) and cases of donated instruments being stolen. Similar skepticism is indicated by a study on migrants who came to study in Germany and stayed thereafter. Most of them have a strong emotional bond to their country of origin, but very few have the financial freedom to visit their country of origin every year (Schmelz, 2004). A study on the integration of refugee women in the region of Berlin and Brandenburg indicates further that many migrants from developing countries remain isolated in the county of arrival and that their integration into the labor market is difficult, given the constraints they face, and thus their economic resources are also limited (Foda and Kadur, 2004).

Conclusion

As the overview attests, the debate on the advantages and disadvantages of migration for the development process has not been conclusive. The debate has long focused on issues such as remittance flows and brain drain, but recently changed focus to issues such as brain circulation, transnational migrant entrepreneurship, and diaspora linkages with local politics, societies and economies in countries of origin. The specific impacts of bilateral and multilateral policies on these latter issues are hard to gauge since they are recently initiated and still being debated. Furthermore, there seems to be some association between the discourses and policies relating to immigration (control) and local development through return migration and diaspora involvement.

The involvement of migrant diasporas in developments in their countries of origin is not something new; all kinds of diaspora initiatives for development and reconstruction efforts have been going on for a long time. Civil society and governmental involvement in this field is generally independent. Recently, there are more attempts by governments to involve and support return migrants and diaspora organizations in transnational development policies and efforts. This is the case in France and the Netherlands; at the EU level, awareness of this issue has grown.

In this respect, the Dutch case – which has a strong minority population coming from developing countries – shows some optimism and the sense that there are new opportunities for positive outcomes in linking migration with development issues. In the German case, existing as well as ongoing research on the relationship between migration and development point to a mixed picture. In Germany, the available data on the numbers of immigrants from developing, especially Asian countries, does not at first sight underline the thesis of strong diasporas that could shape a more effective development policy vis-à-vis the home countries. The potential of migrant diasporas has not yet been recognized as such. Here a careful reading of the Anglo-Saxon discourse would be appropriate.

Given the still underdeveloped policies linking international migration and development, we underscore the conclusion made by Nyberg-Sorensen et al. (2002) that the role of migrants as development agents should get more weight in discourses and policies. This paper shows that there are differences in national frameworks where concrete policies take place – and that the discourse is moving beyond the scope of repatriation. However, there still tends to be an emphasis on economic aspects, while the social costs and internal fragmentation in the countries of origin resulting from international migration and transnationalism receive less attention. Finally, it should be acknowledged that up to now knowledge about immigrant

groups is limited and often glosses over the transnational aspects of migration. In other words, more definite conclusions regarding the role of diasporas in development have to be postponed.

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