Transnationalism:
A New Mode of Immigrant Integration

by Alvaro Lima | September 17, 2010

INTRODUCTION

Immigrant transnationalism can take many forms, be it the regular phone calls a cab driver makes to relatives and loved ones in his native country, the daily transactions of an immigrant entrepreneur who continues to manage business endeavors back in India, remittance transfers, or one of many other forms. Broadly speaking, immigrant transnationalism refers to the regular engagement in activities that span national borders by foreign-born residents as part of their daily routines. It is important to note that this definition distinguishes regular engagement in economic, political, and socio-cultural activities from more occasional or one-off engagement such as the rare trip to the home country or a singular cross-border monetary transaction.

This concept is a relatively new one in that it seeks to capture the frequent and durable participation of immigrants in the economic, political, and cultural lives of their home countries – a phenomenon only made possible by advances in transportation and communication technologies over the past two decades that were unavailable to previous generations of migrants.[1] Transnationalism is not characteristic of all immigrant groups and it varies across and within groups with significant differences in the scope and range of transnational activities. Nor does it prevent immigrants' integration into their new communities. In reality, researchers have found that the more integrated an immigrant is, the more transnational he or she is likely to be. Professor Alejandro Portes (2007) found, for example, that it is the better educated and the more comfortably established migrants who are the most likely to engage in transnational activities.

The first and foremost reason why transnationalism deserves attention is its sheer growth in recent years. Its existence is highly relevant to the modern workings of global cities. Therefore, a transnational framework gives policymakers a new lens with which to develop innovative public programs, and public-private partnerships across borders. And because of the economic implications of transnationalism, it provides opportunities for businesses, social entrepreneurs, and governments.

The range of activities that transnationalism comprises provides an alternative and, some argue, an especially promising route for immigrant wealth creation through entrepreneurship and employment (Portes, 2010). Transnational activities can promote higher levels of multiculturalism by creating and preserving hybrid cultural forms. With this in mind, it is clear that transnationalism has broad implications for notions of community, personal identity, and economic development.

Finally, transnationalism challenges traditional theories of assimilation, which assume that immigrants who are more fully integrated into their host societies are less likely to continue to involve themselves in the economic, social, and political spheres of their countries of origin.

In this article, we first explore the relationship between globalization, immigration, and transnationalism and examine the main drivers of the transnational phenomenon. We then define immigrant transnational activities and investigate the relationship between transnationalism and immigrant integration. We conclude by tracing broad implications for policymaking.

Globalization, Immigration, and Transnationalism

Transnationalism has significant implications for the way we conceptualize immigration. Traditionally, immigration has been seen as an autonomous process, driven by conditions such as poverty and overpopulation in the country of origin and unrelated to conditions (such as foreign policy and economic needs) in the receiving country. Even though overpopulation, economic stagnation, and poverty all continue to create pressures for migration, they alone are not sufficient to produce large international migration flows. There are many countries, for example, which, despite longstanding poverty, lack significant emigration history. Also, most international immigration flows from the global South to the global North are not made up by the poorest of the poor, but, in general, by professionals. Additionally, there are countries with high levels of job creation that continue to witness large-scale emigration.

It is not safe to assume that the reasons and catalysts for migration are wholly embodied within the country of origin. Instead, they are embedded within broader geopolitical and global dynamics. Significant evidence of geographic migration patterns suggests that receiving countries become home to immigrants from the receiving country's "zone of influence." Immigration, then, is but a fundamental component of the process of capitalist expansion, market penetration, and globalization. There are systematic and structural relations between globalization and immigration.

The emergence of a global economy has contributed both to the creation of pools of potential emigrants abroad and to the formation of economic, cultural, and ideological links between industrialized and developing countries that subsequently serve as bridges for international migration.

For example, the same set of circumstances and processes that have promoted the location of factories and offices abroad have also contributed to the creation of a large supply of low-wage jobs for which immigrant workers constitute a desirable labor supply. Moreover, the decline of manufacturing jobs and the growth of the service sector, key drivers of the globalization of production, have transformed western economies' occupational and income structure.

Unlike the manufacturing sector, which traditionally supplied middle-income jobs and competitive benefits, the majority of service jobs are either extremely well-paid or extremely poorly paid, with relatively few jobs in the middle-income range. Many of the jobs lack core benefits such as health insurance. Sales representatives, restaurant wait staff, administrative assistants, and custodial workers are among the growth occupations.

Finally, the fact that the major growth sectors – rather than declining sectors – are generating the most low-wage jobs indicates that the supply of such jobs will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. To meet this demand, the influx of migrant workers will likewise continue. This influx, in turn, provides the raw material out of which transnational communities emerge.

Drivers of Transnationalism

The foremost driver of transnationalism has been the development of technologies that have made transportation and communication infinitely more accessible and affordable, thus dramatically changing the relationship between people and places. It is now possible for immigrants to maintain more frequent and closer contact with their home societies than ever before.

However, another crucial driver for transnationalism has been the fact that international migrations have become integral to the demographic future of many developed countries. Beyond simply filling a demand for low-wage workers, migration also fills the demographic gaps created by declining natural populations in most industrialized countries. Today, migration accounts for 3/5 of population growth in western countries as a whole. And this trend shows no sign of slowing down.[2]

Additionally, global political transformations and new international legal regimes have weakened the state as the only legitimate source of rights. Decolonization, coupled with the fall of communism and the ascendance of human rights, have forced states to take account of persons qua persons, rather than persons qua citizens. As a result, individuals have rights regardless of their citizenship status within a country.

Traditional and Transnational Lenses

There has also been a cultural shift, fostered by global production and consumption, which has blurred the distinction between what is native and what is foreign, creating hybrid cultures that have taken the place of folkloric romanticism and political nationalism as the dominant essence of national cultures.

Immigrant Transnational Activities and Communities

When immigrants engage in transnational activities, they create "social fields" that link their country of origin with their new country or countries of residence. These social fields are the product of a series of interconnected and overlapping economic, political, and socio-cultural activities:

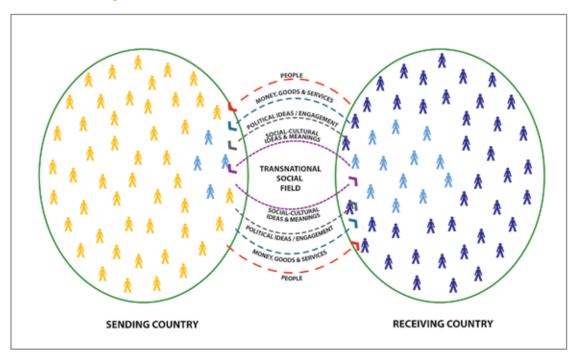| Traditional Lenses	Transnational Lenses
• immigration conceptualized as a bi-polar relation between sending and receiving countries (moving from there to here);	• immigration conceptualized as flows of cross-border economic, political, and social-cultural activities (being here and there);
• emigration is the result of individual search for economic opportunity, political freedom, etc.;	• emigration is the result of geopolitical interests, global linkages, and economic globalization;
• migrants are assumed to be the "tired, the poor, and the huddled masses";	• migrants are not the poorest of the poor nor do they come from the poorest nations;
• immigrants occupy low-skilled jobs in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing;	• growth in the service and technology-based industries create opportunities for low- as well as high-skilled migrants;
• immigrants steadily transfer their contextual focus, and their economic and social activities to receiving country;	• after the initial movement, migrants continue to maintain ties with their country of origin;
• immigration should not bring about significant change in the receiving society.	• immigration creates hybrid societies with a richer cultural milieu.

- **Economic transnational** activities such as business investments in home countries and monetary remittances are both pervasive and well documented. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) estimates that in 2006 immigrants living in developed countries sent home the equivalent of $300 billion in remittances, an amount more than double the level of international aid.[3] In essence, this intense influx of resources may mean that for some nations development prospects become inextricably linked – if not dependent upon – the economic activities of their respective diasporas.[4]
- **Political transnational** activities can range from retained membership in political parties in one's country of origin and voting in its elections to even running for political office. Less formal but still significant roles include the transfer or

dissemination of political ideas and norms, such as publishing an op-ed in a home country newspaper, writing a blog, or lobbying a local elected official. There is also the more extreme example of individuals such as Jesus Galvis, a travel agent in New Jersey who in 1997 ran for a Senate seat in his native Colombia. Had he been elected, he intended to hold office simultaneously in Bogota and Hackensack, New Jersey, where he served as a city councilor.[5]

- **Socio-cultural transnational** activities cover a wide array of social and cultural transactions through which ideas and meanings are exchanged. Recent research has established the concept and importance of "social remittances," which provide a distinct form of social capital between migrants living abroad and those who remain at home (Levitt, 2001b). These transfers of socio-cultural meanings and practices occur either during the increased number of visits that immigrants take back to their home countries (or visits made by non-migrants to friends and families living in the receiving countries) or through the dramatically increased forms of correspondence such as emails, online chat sessions, telephone calls, cassette tapes, and traditional letters.

To say that immigrants "build" social fields that link those abroad with those back home is not to say that their lives are not firmly rooted in a particular place and time. Indeed, they are as much residents of their new community as anyone else. But the difference is that their daily lives also depend upon people, money, ideas, and other resources located in another setting.

Immigrant Transnational Activities and Social Fields

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Essentially, then, transnational social fields comprise stable, durable, and dense sets of ties – economic, political, and socio-cultural – that reach beyond and across the borders of sovereign states.

The geography of these transnational social fields varies significantly, depending on factors such as gender, class, and the context of exit (from country of origin) or mode of incorporation (into the country of migration). Moreover, social field structures are often not simply one-dimensional relationships between a community in Country A, with a community from Country A now living in Country B, but also with communities from Country A living in many other countries of settlement as well.
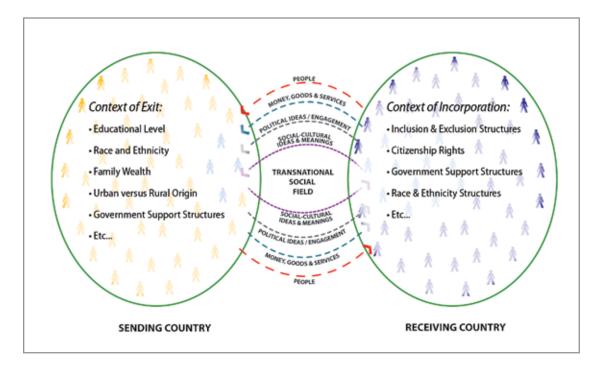
Contexts of Exit and Modes of Integration Shape Transnationalism

Contexts of exit and modes of integration can facilitate or impede, foster or discourage cross-border activities. Receiving states often play a central role by setting the boundaries of inclusion, exclusion and citizenship or by allowing or prohibiting various forms of political mobilization within their borders. Guarizo, Portes, and Haller (2003) provide an illustrative example of how forces shaping different patterns of settlement can be found in comparing Colombian to Dominican immigrants living in the United States. Both populations come from Latin America and share a common language and many cultural norms, but their contexts of exit and reception translate to different realities upon their integration to American society, and different transnational behaviors.

Their research found that Colombian immigrants tend to come from urban areas and have higher levels of education than other Latin immigrants. Their departure has often been motivated by violence and the deterioration of economic and political conditions, which has created a significant number of refugees. Additionally, Colombian immigrants are often white or light mestizo and consequently escape the more damaging forms of discrimination experienced by non-white groups in American society.

Dominicans, on the other hand, are mostly working class, but with a significant number of them being middle-class professionals and entrepreneurs. Departure is almost always motivated by economic circumstances/opportunities. However, because the Dominican Republic is predominantly a mulatto country with a white upper class that does not emigrate, Dominican migrants are mostly black or mulatto and therefore encounter significant discrimination upon reaching the United States (Guarnizo, Portes, & Haller, 2003).

Contexts of Exit and Incorporation

The Comparative Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project (CIEP, Princeton University) examined data gathered from a survey of these communities to test hypotheses about the impact of contexts of exit and modes of incorporation on the character of immigrant transnationalism. The researchers found a number of significant differences in transnational participation with respect to the following contexts:

- Immigrant groups who migrate from rural areas tend to form apolitical "hometown" civic committees in support of the localities they left behind. Conversely, immigrants who come from more urban settings often become involved in national politics and cultural life of their countries of origin, especially when it comes to affiliations with national political parties.

- Contexts of reception also have a strong influence with regard to the onset of transnational activities. When an immigrant group finds itself discriminated against, for example, their members will often band together and adopt a defensive stance toward the host country, collectively appealing to symbols of cultural or national pride from their home country. However, when discrimination is absent, transnational activities become more individualized as organizations adopt more "middle-class" forms like those embodied by Kiwanis clubs, Lions clubs, or other such charitable and service-driven associations.

- The role of national governments is varied but it is becoming integral to shaping these contexts. Some home country governments have enacted laws enabling migrants to retain their citizenship, vote, and even run for office while living in another country. Some consulates have taken a proactive stance toward immigrant communities by providing legal assistance, health care, English classes, and other services.

Transnationalism and Integration:
Negotiating the "Here" and "There"

Immigrants' persistent and growing connections with their countries of origin have been the subject of much discussion and political preoccupation. Traditionally, immigration policymaking has been almost entirely focused on procedures and prohibitions governing cross-border flows – how many, and what kind of immigrants should be admitted. Immigration flows have been understood mostly as a one-way movement from sending countries to receiving countries. Over time, immigrants are expected to "assimilate" into the dominant society's socio-cultural and economic systems while simultaneously shedding their "old" cultural practices and political loyalties (Alba, 1985).

The expectation, despite varying emphasis, is that the outcome of the process of integration is assimilation. However, the idea of assimilation has always been inherently ambiguous. Assimilation means to become alike – but alike to whom? At the turn of the last century, it meant conformity to Anglo-Saxon ways (Gordon, 1964). Today, given the diversity of the American society and that of the immigrant groups arriving in the country, we can no longer assume that new immigrants will follow a linear process of assimilation to a coherent culture.[6]

If traditional assimilation theories (and their neo-assimilationist versions)[7] treat transnationalism and integration as opposing processes, contemporary transnational theorists understand these processes in terms of multiple combinations of transnational and integrative practices (Morawska, 2004). That is, transnationalism and integration are simultaneous processes in which immigrants forge relationships with sending and receiving countries, with integration reinforcing transnationalism and transnationalism creating a basis for successful integration.[8] Transnationalism, in this view, offers a viable mechanism for bypassing market constraints and nativist prejudice (Portes, 2001). It facilitates and is part of the process of integration, not a step prior to integration or total "assimilation."

Integration is a socio-political process by which immigrants negotiate the terms of membership and belonging in their new countries. Whether integration occurs as the outcome of a long process of settlement depends on the (social, economic, cultural, and political) structure of the receiving society. That is, if immigrants are afforded educational, occupational, and political opportunities, integration will reduce the social distance between immigrants and natives – they achieve parity in terms of life chances. If, on the other hand, immigrants are marginalized, social distances will increase.[9]

In the United States, immigrant integration policies – education, training, placement, English language acquisition, health care, entrepreneurship, citizenship, etc. – are skeletal, ad hoc, and under-funded. As Nathan Glazer (1993) puts it, "the settlement, adaptation, and progress, or lack of it, of immigrants is largely, in the U.S. context, up to them." Integration policies, as noted above, have been dominated by the ideology of assimilation.

Finally, a word about multiculturalism as a mode of integration. As summarized by Stephen Castles (2005), multiculturalism recognizes "rights to cultural maintenance and community formation, and links these to social equality and protection from discrimination." Multiculturalism thus represents a kind of corrective to assimilationist approaches and policies surrounding the incorporation of immigrants (see Vertovec, 2001). Transnational theorists have criticized multicultural theories for

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maintaining the expectation of exclusive attachments and belonging to one society and loyalty to the receiving state – albeit re-imagined as culturally diverse and tolerant.[10]

Present-day policies, at the national and local levels, while displacing conventional assimilation models for multicultural ones, still do not take into consideration the transnational character of immigrant life and its far-reaching consequences for integration policies such as dual or multiple citizenship, massive flows of remittances, and participation in homeland politics – all overlapping forms of membership in more than one place.[11]

Integration, therefore, represents overlapping relationships. Immigrants become part of the receiving country and its institutions, and transform them, while simultaneously maintaining and strengthening their ties to their countries of origin (Itzigsohn & Giorguli Saucedo, 2002; Levitt, 2001a; Morawska, 2003). In this sense, transnational integration is quite different from multiculturalism. The latter, acknowledges the presence of immigrants (and minorities) and tries to accommodate their specific cultural needs and differences in a largely ad hoc manner (see Favell, 2001).

Many authors distinguish between a structural and a social-cultural dimension of integration. The structural dimension can be defined as the full participation of migrants in the central institutions of the host society, particularly the educational system and the labor market. Social and cultural integration accounts for immigrants' ability to adapt to the host society's prevailing moral standards and values at the same time as they change them, creating hybrid cultural systems.[12]

The challenge today is to put in place policies that will insure successful integration while benefiting both the countries of residence and origin. Policy making therefore should move away from assimilationist frameworks. Instead, the policy emphasis should be on working with countries of origin to achieve sustainable integration (and re-integration in the case of return immigration.) Consequently, we have to put integration (and re-integration) on the agenda of bi-lateral, multi-lateral, and international dialogues.

Thinking and Acting Transnationally –
Implications for Policy Making

A transnational perspective highlights significant policy interventions that can be pursued in search for sustainable migration regimes, migrant integration, and return solutions. State as well as non-state actors, particularly business, community and civil society organizations are keys to successful policy making in these areas. Development agencies and multilateral organizations are also important actors in supporting and strengthening the engagement of migrants and diaspora organizations in the integration process and development of origin countries.

A transnational framework for policy making casts immigrants as active agents who initiate and forge global interactions by engaging simultaneously in a number of countries relating to their migration (Zhou & Tseng 2001).

Broad and Practical Implications of Transnationalism for Policy Making

Because of the increased presence and dominance of transnational activities shaping the daily lives of both immigrants and their communities (both in the receiving countries and countries of origin), there are a number of general implications that can be summarized into five strategic principles:

- **Portability.** As transnational immigrants move from place to place it is essential that they be able to "carry" with them their various professional certifications, health insurance, retirement plans, etc. Portability of economic and social benefits is key to immigrant transnational life.

- **Transferability.** Besides being able to "carry" their credentials, records, and benefits, they must be transferable that is, recognized at both the place of origin and destination. In practice, transferability should be universal as it is more and more in the spheres of commerce and finance.

- **Visibility.** Though the activities of transnational immigrants, particularly those of transnational immigrant entrepreneurs, have significantly contributed to the revitalization of inner-city neighborhoods throughout the U.S., they remain buried under "ethnic" and "minority" classifications and are invisible to policy makers, business leaders, and nonprofit organizations.[13] The same is true in countries of origin where emigrants are just "absentees" even though their presence is real.

- **Hybridity.** Nation-states, both those that serve as countries of origin and those that serve as receiving countries, have to adapt to transnational realities challenging traditional notions of national identity and belonging. Transnational communities create hybrid cultures (Canclini, 2001). The ideal of a nation-state "containing" its people via the commonalities of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic ties no longer applies.

- **Translocality.** The concepts of "local community" and "local development" must be redefined in terms of relationships and flows instead of semi-autarchic geographies to allow for transnational behaviors.

The following is a summary of some practical implications for select policies. It is not the purpose here to be exhaustive or to set an agenda but only to illustrate how a transnational framework could impact policies positively.

Policy Implication 1: Migration Management — A New Political Priority

The scale, transnational character, and growth of migration flows call for a global approach to migration management:

- The contemporary migration system should be conceptualized as an emerging system of international labor mobility. Developed and developing countries must work together through regional dialogues, bi-lateral agreements, and international bodies to create a free and fair international system based on shared responsibilities.

- Increased cooperation at a global level regarding migration management should extend the dialogue from improving border controls to the promotion of new forms of legal labor migration including temporary and circular forms, transparency in migration policies, and the combat of trafficking.

- The institutional capacity and arrangements at a global level for dealing with asylum seekers and refugees should be strengthened in order to deal effectively with

the processes of refugee settlement and resettlement.

- In cooperation with sending countries' governments, receiving countries should develop immigration policies that incorporate the reception and integration of immigrants, guaranteeing equal treatment regarding access to social services, education, housing, employment, and political and civic participation.

- Migration and development policies should also be situated at the sub-national government level – state and municipal – to take into consideration different tiers of migration management. This is key because many of the consequences of migration are experienced and played out on an urban scale (Crush, 2006).

- Receiving and sending countries should increase consideration, at the policy design level, for the relationship between migration and development in the context of migrants' activities and their impact on cities of origin and settlement (e.g., remittance and investment flows).[14]

Policy Implication 2: Immigrants and City Re-Building

- Receiving countries must recognize and engage immigrants as key actors in the transformation of cities into structural nodes in the world economy and places of global identity (Sassen, 2006).[15]

- Receiving and sending countries should recognize and support immigrants as bearers of urban regeneration – e.g. economic, physical, social, and cultural rebuilding not only of their cities of destination but also their cities (or rural areas) of origin (Crush, 2006).

- Receiving countries should promote the insertion of immigrants into all aspects of local policies and planning – especially employment, housing, community and urban development, schooling, training, health, and leisure activities – in order to integrate immigrants and avoid urban segregation, inner-city degradation, and overcrowding.[16]

- Receiving countries should create specific mechanisms of support, in conjunction with sending countries, to spur transnational entrepreneurship as a desirable mode of integration for first-generation immigrants and as a means of supporting the successful adaptation of their children (Guarnizo, 1997).

- Receiving and sending countries should research, document, and monitor immigrant integration and its impact in the areas of origin and residence.

Policy Implication 3: Immigrants and Development

- Receiving countries should increase policy coherence and good governance to harness the benefits of migration. This can be achieved by bringing together the relevant ministries responsible for different aspects of migration to avoid inconsistencies and to develop common objectives at the national, regional, and international levels.

- Receiving countries should leverage remittance flows for economic development by creating mechanisms that reduce the cost of remittances and increases their development potential. A well-known example is the Mexican government's "3 + 1" program, whereby for each dollar invested in development projects back home by migrants collectively, the Mexican federal, state, and municipal governments each will contribute a dollar.[17]

- Receiving countries should create mechanisms to "tap" national diasporas for investment[18] and philanthropic funds in order to support homeland development. They should also stimulate knowledge transfer in order to facilitate brain circula-

tion as opposed to brain drain.[19] Some existing examples include financial incentive programs such as high-interest foreign currency accounts, special bonds, and tax exemptions for savings and investments.[20]

- Sending countries, in partnership with receiving countries, should create databases and censuses of emigrants, their families back home, and professional networks in order to understand their capacities, assets, and ways in which they can contribute to development abroad and at home.
- Receiving countries should explore ways in which immigrant communities can act as mutually beneficial bridges with sending countries. Governments in receiving countries could work with their immigrant populations to reach foreign markets for bilateral trade, develop overseas investment opportunities, and build global knowledge networks.
- Countries of origin, in partnership with development agencies, multi-lateral bodies, and civil society organizations should create mechanisms to facilitate reintegration upon return.

Policy Implication 4: Immigrants' Rights and Representation

- Sending countries' governments and elected officials should acknowledge the contributions of nationals abroad and advocate for their systematic support and protection. Examples of such actions could include the granting of dual citizenship, portable social benefits, and support for emigrants' associations.[21]
- Sending countries, in partnership with receiving countries, should organize government-sponsored conferences to create working agendas and define priorities to support emigrants and their families at home and abroad and to facilitate participation at different levels of government.
- Sending countries should engage in bilateral, regional, and international dialogues on behalf of emigrants to guarantee their right to mobility, increasing protection, family re-unification, and quality of life within the framework of universal human rights.
- Sending countries should provide critical pre-departure training, including language acquisition, fundamental rights awareness, and basic orientation regarding the country of destination. During the migrant's time abroad, the sending country can help to protect the migrant through consular outreach and monitoring systems.
- Partnerships between countries of origin and destination should encourage understanding, cooperation, and respect while discouraging xenophobia, and prepare both immigrants and host societies for meaningful and successful integration.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the evolving concepts of transnationalism and integration, their multifaceted dimensions and relationships, and the need for cooperation to ensure the development of effective integration policies and practices. As argued, integration takes place along several dimensions simultaneously involving local and transnational relations across countries of origin and residence. Yet, policy perspectives of both sending and receiving countries either misinterpret or ignore migrants' transnational orientations (Bauböck, 1998).

Considering a transnational framework when designing policies will move us toward policies more in keeping with today's world. The goal should be to design comprehensive and coherent policies at the federal, state, and local levels of government[22] addressing a broad range of issues in close partnerships with sending and receiving countries, multilateral and international organizations, and civil society organizations. Diaspora members and groups are key resources and players in this process.[23] Such a policy framework, transnational in nature, is the only way to promote stability, prosperity, and security on a global scale.

Notes

[1] Though the concept and scope of transnationalism is relatively new, its occurrence is not. During the waves of immigration that dominated the late 19th and early 20th centuries many new arrivals to the U.S. left behind family members. Nearly 80% of Italian immigrants between the 1870 and 1910 were men who came without their wives or children. Many Jewish men likewise came to the U.S. alone and later sent money to finance the tickets of other family members. Between 1900 and 1906, the New York Post Office sent 12.3 million individual money orders to foreign countries, with half the dollar value going to Italy, Hungary, and Slavic countries (See Foner, 2000).

[2] Declining fertility and population aging compel many developed countries to rely on immigrants as a source of labor market and population growth. Among OECD countries, the only countries that have a fertility rate near 2.1 – the replacement rate – are the United States (2.04), New Zealand (1.96), and Ireland (1.94). Japan, Italy, Spain, and Germany have fertility rates of 1.3. Canada has a rate of 1.5.

[3] Inter-American Development Bank and the Multilateral Investment Fund, Sending Money Home, 2007.

[4] Remittances have become a major source of hard currency and the cornerstone of macroeconomic policies for countries such as Colombia, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic.

[5] Political parties from immigrant sending countries have opened chapters in immigrant settlements and political candidates have campaigned regularly to gain votes and monetary support. In countries such as the Dominican Republic, migrants' financial contributions are estimated to be as much as 15% of major Dominican parties' annual fundraising revenues (See Graham, 1997).

[6] Recent research on immigrants' experiences criticizes classical or straight-line assimilation theory for assuming that "immigrants must let go of their ethnic/cultural ways and adopt the ways of the host culture in order to participate in social institutions." Instead, "for some immigrants, retention of ethnic cultural ties may not necessarily inhibit participation, but actually facilitate participation in the new culture" (See Nuñez, 2004).

[7] A recent influential author who fits that tradition is Samuel P. Huntington, who in a recent book (2004) warns against the undermining influence of immigration and transnationalism on the cohesion of the American society.

[8] Contrary to nativistic rhetoric, there is no zero-sum relationship between such activities and successful integration (Portes, Escobar, & Arana 2008).

[9] Legislation granting "in-state tuition" in state colleges is a good example of policies that advance successful integration.

[10] In the United States, this form of new multiculturalism was codified by the congressionally-sponsored Commission on Immigration Reform, which published its report in 1996. The Commission advocated a renewed commitment to integrating immigrants, while recognizing diversity, by way of an emphasis on citizenship, national identity and strong common civic values (See King, 2000).

[11] Vertovec (2001), emphasizes that "the transnational challenges to multiculturalism (old and new) suggest that real recognition of 'diversity' includes not just easily conceived notions of cultural difference or community belonging, nor of rather more sophisticated ideas surrounding multiple or hybridized identities, but also to diversity of attachments and belongings – some of which refer to people, places, and traditions outside of the containing limits of the nation-state of residence."

[12] Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (1999) points out that "in the global era, the tenets of unilineal assimilation are no longer relevant. Today there are clear and unequivocal advantages to being able to operate in multiple cultural codes, as anyone working in a major corporation knows. There are social, economic, cognitive, and aesthetic advantages to being able to transverse cultural spaces."

[13] Governments are already shifting to accommodate transnational migration flows. Increasingly, governments of countries with significant migrant populations – from the Philippines to Mexico – are changing their policies, and developing practices that treat their emigrating populations as part and parcel of their nation state. However, governments from receiving countries continue to treat immigrants as ethnic groups, and immigrant integration continue to privilege assimilation over other forms such as transnationalism. According to Portes (1978), what is specific to immigrant life was lost as a result of the shift to racial and ethnic characteristics.

[14] International migrants numbered 191 million in 2005. Of these, 75 million (40%) were in developing countries.

[15] For example, while New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston housed 17.7% of the total foreign-born population of the United States, they were home to only 4.4% of the native-born population. In 2001, the foreign-born population living in Canada represented 18% of the total population. However, in Toronto and Vancouver, the foreign-born population comprised 43.7% and 37.5% of the cities' population respectively. In Copenhagen, the percentage of the foreign-born population in 2002 was 11.4%, compared to a national average of 5%. In Amsterdam, 48% of the population is of immigrant origin, compared to 17% throughout the Netherlands. In 1999, 37% of the foreign and naturalized population living in France was concentrated in Paris. In Eastern Asia, as in Europe, North America, and Oceania, the foreign-born population tends to be concentrated in big cities: Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, Seoul, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

[16] An important tool to monitor the inclusion of immigrants and immigrant needs in local policies is the migration audit of local development plans. Other important instruments are city-level migrant household surveys, strategic plans for managing migrants, public awareness campaigns, and other counter-xenophobia strategies including training for city officials (Crush 2006).

[17] Governmental and non-governmental organizations are starting to discover the role of migrant associations as "agents of change" and "actors in development cooperation." They consider family remittances as a private matter but are willing to support migrant collective transnational engagement for development cooperation (Naerssen, 2007).

[18] The opening of China to investment to overseas Chinese led some analysts to estimate that the combined equivalent GDP of the Chinese diaspora was perhaps as large as that of China itself. In 1998, for example, 70% of China's $50 billion foreign direct investment (FDI) came from the Chinese diaspora. Likewise, India's technology-oriented diaspora stand behind much of the FDI in the country's emerging technology hubs of Bangalore and Hyderabad (Devan & Tewari, 2001).

[19] Knowledge transfer can take place through various channels. The most obvious is the actual physical return of skilled emigrants to their home country. The Hsinchu Science-based Industrial Park in Taiwan is one example of such a channel for knowledge transfer. Silicon Valley returnees stand behind half of the companies started in the park, which now accounts for 10% of GDP in Taiwan. Short, targeted visits by highly skilled emigrants to their home countries can serve as another channel for knowledge transfer. This is what the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has thought to do with the TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nations) program.

[20] Beyond those, immigrants have played a role in facilitating international trade and "diaspora tourism." The World Bank recently started to espouse some of those schemes as the way forward in creating "win-win-win" scenarios to benefit migrant sending countries, receiving countries, and migrants themselves.

[21] As mentioned earlier, remittances alone now amount to well over twice the amount of official development assistance and to tenfold the amount of net private capital transfers to developing countries. Remittance transfers have significant direct poverty reducing and welfare-increasing effects.

[22] The social, economic, and taxation policies enacted by national governments set the broad context for immigration and immigrant integration. State and local governments, however, play a crucial role because they organize and regulate many activities of daily life that are mundane, but nevertheless crucial to the social and economic inclusion of immigrants. As cities across the world increasingly become the focal points of economic growth and immigrant settlement, city governments, agencies, and organizations of civil society should play more influential roles in shaping integration pathways.

[23] Increasingly, expatriate scientists from the global South develop professional linkages with their home countries creating transnational networks introducing the notion of "brain circulation." For example, a survey by Zweig and Changgui (1995) found that more than 31% of Chinese scientists who remain in the United States have relatively frequent contacts with their home institutions in China. Likewise, Saxenia (1999) found that Indian and Chinese scientists maintain extensive professional relationships with institutions in their home countries.

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