



## SPAIN'S PERSPECTIVE ON MIGRATION & DEVELOPMENT: MIGRATION POLICIES

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### I. Introduction

Migration is one of the most important and complex phenomena on the current international scene. It is by no means a new phenomenon, but in recent years it has taken on new life, propelled by globalization and the differences in the levels of development and wellbeing among different zones of the planet.

Undoubtedly, the main cause of migration today lies in the fact that millions of persons find themselves immersed in a situation of poverty and vulnerability, along with a lack of expectations or opportunities for a sustainable livelihood. Facing the challenge of migration, therefore, involves a dual responsibility.

**In the first place, there is a need to seek out wide-ranging development.** Policies aimed at poverty reduction, improvement in levels of education and health, fostering productive infrastructure, economic growth, and job creation, as well as the promotion of good government, democracy, and human rights, **should all contribute to having an impact on the deep-seated, structural causes of migration forced by necessity.** Moreover, **coherence** amongst those policies able to have an impact on development is fundamental.

**However, it is important to point out that the fight against poverty and the phenomenon of migration are two phenomena which do not have a relationship of immediate causality.** In other words, the fight against poverty is an end in itself, which is not subordinate to any other end, and which is an essential aspect of Spain's foreign policy. **Development policies are not directly aimed at acting on migratory flows, but at generating opportunities and livelihood expectations in the countries of origin.** Of course, in the long term, development policies, together with other actions and policies, may contribute to creating a context in which migration comes out of a free choice, rather than necessity.

**Meanwhile, in the short and medium term, within a more specific, concrete perspective, the countries of origin and transit of migration must be assisted in designing migration policies and putting them into practice in order to attain a concerted and appropriate management of migratory flows amongst all of the countries involved (of origin, transit and destination), one able to maximise the positive effects and minimise the negative consequences involved in any migratory phenomenon, both for these countries and for the migrants themselves, and their families.**



## II. Spain: Lessons learned from experience

Spain knows very well from its own experience the extent to which migration can contribute to development. Migration played a key role in our country's development, when in the recent past it experienced an intense emigration process, with thousands of Spaniards seeking abroad the opportunities for work and a better life that they could not find in Spain. From this intense migratory experience, Spain can extrapolate a set of lessons learned regarding the extent to which migration can contribute to development.

In a very short time, Spain has gone from being a country that generated emigrants to a country that receives immigrants, who are seeking in our country the same opportunities which, not long ago, Spanish emigrants sought abroad. This dual perspective enables us, from a vantage point intimately acquainted with the issues involved, to approach and understand the concerns and demands of both sides.

From its own experience, Spain has striven to make migration a positive force for countries of origin, transit and destination. One of the main axis of Spain's contribution in the Migration and Development agenda has been the description of the content of a public, government-led migration policy that contributes to development.

## III. Migration policies

Migration can contribute to development through the **elaboration and application of migration policies in the countries of origin, transit and destination which carry out a concerted and appropriate management of migratory flows**. The first responsibility in this sense resides in the countries of destination. However, it is also necessary to count on the involvement of countries of origin and transit.

Given this situation, it is also essential to meet the needs of these countries of origin and transit, and, based on those needs, to provide them with the technical and financial assistance necessary so that they may create or upgrade their capacities. The migration policies of these countries must form an integral part of national development plans or strategies that also address aspects or facets linked to migration. Support for the construction, in countries of origin and transit, of such migration policies must also be integrated within international co-operation policies, promoted on the part of the developed countries and international organizations.

Therefore, the orderly management of migration should be carried out within a framework of **shared responsibility** and **co-operation** with the countries of origin, transit and destination, working towards a **concerted and coherent management of migratory flows**. These migration policies are necessary for all of the parties involved, be they countries of origin, transit, or destination, because if they are not interconnected, they will be inefficient.



Within such a scenario, an appropriate migration policy would be based on an **integrated approach** to migratory flows, which, necessarily, must consider **different fields of action**:

➤ **General (countries of origin, transit and destination)**

1) The creation of **sources and systems of statistical information referring to all aspects of the migratory phenomenon, e.g. flows and diasporas**. Obtaining, analysing, and interpreting data on the different aspects of migration should lead to evidence-based formulation of appropriate migration policies.

2) **Ensuring that migration follows legal channels, promoting legal migration, and providing a fair response to the needs involved**. Irregular migration brings with it the drama of loss of human life, the abuses linked to human trafficking, and a situation of vulnerability and absence of rights in the country of destination. Only legal migration, properly managed, and which makes it possible for the immigrant to enjoy integration and full rights, can contribute to development in the countries of origin. Therefore, it is important for the countries of origin to facilitate legal migration, co-operating with the host countries to reduce irregular entries.

This problem must be approached at the point of origin, through the collaboration and co-ordination of all the operative services involved in this area from the different States forming part of the migration routes. Measures should be adopted aimed at improving their capacities in managing migratory flows and the fight against irregular immigration, through border control and surveillance, security in identity and travel documents, the readmission of emigrants who have entered in an irregular manner, and the fight against the mafias and networks trafficking in human beings. Moreover, potential emigrants should be informed regarding the risks involved in irregular emigration.

➤ **Countries of destination**

1) Integration policies

Adequate integration of immigrants in the host society improves their capacity to act as a development factor in their countries of origin. Therefore, it is necessary to delve deeper into those aspects of the integration process that have the greatest impact on immigrants' capacity to act as agents of development in their countries of origin.

- **Reception** programmes: introduction to the host society, and initiatives aimed at improving their fluency in the local language.
- **Employment** integration programmes: training programmes for developing professional aptitudes and facilitating adult education; access to employment, promotion, and equality of treatment; intermediation mechanisms in the labour market; support and consulting services for business activities, etc.



- **Educational integration** programmes: access to compulsory education, facilitation of non-compulsory education.
- Programmes of integration into **social life**: access to housing, social services, and health services.
- Programmes promoting **participation** in the life of the host country (trade unions, parents' associations, civic associations) and support for the development of **associative bodies** for the immigrant population, fostering co-operation between native and immigrant organizations.
- Programmes promoting **equality of treatment and non-discrimination** in access to public or private goods and services.

2) Policies that promote **return migration** and **temporary mobility of emigrants**, enabling them to finish their studies and/or work for a limited period of time in countries of destination, later returning to their countries of origin, where they can put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired, thus contributing to the development of their home countries. Some measures able to promote such temporary mobility of emigrant students and workers include:

- a) An adequate **migration legislation** and **visa policy**, providing greater mobility of those competencies having an impact on the country of origin, cutting red tape, and favouring efficient management, without a reduction in security.
- b) Incentive measures, such as agreements on the **transfer of pensions and health benefits** via recognition of contribution periods.
- c) Programmes promoting **work visits** to the country of origin.

3) Measures **supporting voluntary returns**, always based on the free decision of immigrants to return to their home country, and linked to a project of integration into economic activity in the country of origin, through such activities as self-employment, small and medium-sized businesses (SMB), or family firms.

Such measures should be co-ordinated in migrants' country of origin as well as that of destination, and involve the creation of mechanisms and partnerships to:

- Provide information, orientation, and consulting services regarding resources and return incentives.
- Analysis and assessment of the technical and financial viability of the project.
- Support financing: micro credits, public co-financing, remittances, etc.
- Accompaniment: orientation and consulting services during the start-up phase and first year of the life of the project in the country of origin.

It should be taken into account that a major factor in the success of return programmes depends on the existence of minimal conditions of stability and confidence in the political and economic/financial system of the country of origin,



as well as support for these kinds of programmes on the part of the Governments of migrants' countries of origin.

**4) Incentives providing alternatives to the brain drain** suffered by many countries of origin. This brain drain can be combated not only through measures promoting return migration and temporary mobility of emigrants, and support measures for voluntary returns, but also through reinforcing the countries of origins' educational capacities, increasing employment opportunities, and improving the employment conditions of specialised workers, as well as promoting possibilities for professional promotion and the establishment of adequate salaries.

Moreover, countries of destination should adopt an ethical code which involves renouncing the massive recruitment of professionals in certain developing countries susceptible to a negative impact on their development conditions, especially in the healthcare sector.

**5) Policies promoting co-development** (intimately linked to integration policies):

Strictly speaking, state-sponsored measures aimed at promoting collaboration with **diasporas and immigrant associations** in the host countries are of high importance, in order to make it possible for them to participate in the decision-making process and the elaboration of migration policies, including all aspects pertaining to integration and the maximization of the positive impact on development in countries of origin, identifying needs and possible spheres of action.

In this process, immigrant associations can be assisted and empowered in carrying out specific development actions in their communities of origin (education, health, infrastructures, etc.); it is also possible to support linking such initiatives to the communities of origin, through the eventual creation of **transnational networks** and **public-private alliances**, featuring the participation of local authorities, associations of emigrants' families, business organizations, and local savings and loan co-operatives.

From a broad co-development perspective, it is essential to become fully conscious of the basic role of, and need for, immigration in the economy and demography of the host countries, and for the host countries to assume the development objectives of the countries of origin as being part of their own concerns and needs.

➤ **Countries of origin and transit.** In these countries, the elaboration and application of **migration policies** for the appropriate management of migratory flows should occupy a vital position within the definition of **wide-ranging development policies**, of national development plans and strategies that also address aspects or facets linked to migration, so that the positive impact of migration on their own development may be maximised, and the negative consequences minimised. It would be a question of establishing migration ministries, institutes, or public services, which would be in charge of drawing up these policies and putting them into practice. Support for the construction, in



countries of origin and of transit, of such migration policies must also be integrated into the international co-operation policies promoted on the part of developed countries and international organizations. Some of the spheres of action where they could operate are detailed below.

**I) Skills creation for the appropriate management of migratory flows, through legal and institutional reinforcement and providing human and material resources for migration services:**

**A) Information and orientation services, furnishing information regarding:**

- Legal migration channels, existing mechanisms and legal framework for migration in the country of destination.
- Needs of the labour market in the country of destination: sectors requiring workers, occupations whose needs are not met by locally available workers, necessary qualifications, language skills, etc.
- Living conditions (social and cultural life, transportation, housing, democratic values) and working conditions (workers' rights, salaries, trade unions, collective bargaining, training) in the host country.
- Risks in opting for irregular migration: loss of rights, exploitation, human trafficking, loss of one's own life.

**B) Mechanisms for training at the point of origin**, such as occupational training for adapting to a different job, and learning the language of the host country.

**C) Perfecting recruiting and personnel selection processes for migrant workers**, through greater transparency and the participation of social agents from the countries of origin.

**D) Services that ensure the protection and integration of emigrants and their families.** In many countries, such as El Salvador, Morocco, and the Philippines, there are already high-level civil servants who look after their countries' emigrant communities abroad.

The **use of new information and communication technologies** can be a useful instrument aimed at disseminating information on available job vacancies, and providing information.

**D) The establishment of Emigration Observatories** to analyse the trends and impact of migration in countries of origin.

**E) The training of personnel** for migration management.

**F) The creation or modification of legislation, policies, and migration programmes** able to improve the management of migratory flows and the protection of emigrants' rights, and to guarantee the readmission of persons in an irregular situation in their countries of destination.

**II) Promoting business skills in emigrants and their families**, giving them access to financial institutions, providing them with skills in management and other issues involved in setting up a business, and providing financial assistance, if necessary. An entrepreneurial spirit can be promoted in the country of origin or of destination through remittances or the return flow of emigrants, or both at once; moreover, the **constitution of transnational business ties** can be promoted.



III) The promotion of initiatives aimed at making it possible for **remittances** to have an impact on the development of the communities to which they are sent. Such initiatives are developed in a separate paper.

**All of these courses of action need to part of migration policies designed as the result of a process of dialogue and negotiation amongst the countries involved.** This process must be oriented towards putting into practice a co-operative management of migration, based on the idea that all of the countries affected by it recognise the lines of reasoning, and the advantages and incentives, which justify their involvement in this negotiation and concerted management.

From Spain's point of view, it is essential to highlight the **integrated approach** that must be the driving force behind these migration policies; in other words, it is important to underline how **all of these spheres of action complement each other**, as well as the importance of maintaining **coherence in those policies** regarding migration issues, which encompass all of these areas.

Most especially, there should be coherence between the actions aimed at building skills for the appropriate management of migratory flows in countries of origin and transit, and those aimed at managing the entry of emigrants into their countries of destination. These policies are intertwined, and should always be based on the principles of involvement of the countries of origin and transit, partnership and association, and joint responsibility amongst the countries of origin, transit and destination of migration. **All of these policies should, moreover, be long-lasting, and long-term.** States must design policies that look towards the future.