

# THE LINK BETWEEN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SPANISH PUBLIC POLICY



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**ABSTRACT:** Current literature has not thoroughly explored the multiple interactions between migration and development. Whether migration can foster and encourage development in sending regions greatly depends on the context and the political approach of the governments involved. This article examines Spain's stance on the subject. It focuses on public management documents, discourse, and the ways in which contextual elements and concepts of immigration consolidate into a political attempt to establish intervention mechanisms that can assist and encourage a beneficial relationship. Among them is the specifically European approach of co-development, which is currently implemented in Spain by players in the fields of cooperation and migration.

**KEYWORDS:** migration, development, co-development, policy, Spain.

**RESUMEN:** Las múltiples relaciones que pueden generarse entre la migración y el desarrollo aparecen como una cuestión no resuelta en la literatura. El que las migraciones puedan favorecer e impulsar el desarrollo de las regiones entre las que se producen, depende en gran medida del contexto que se analice y de la gestión política de los gobiernos. Por ello, a partir del análisis de la documentación y el discurso procedente de las administraciones públicas, en este artículo se aborda el caso específico español. Revisamos los elementos contextuales y las concepciones sobre la inmigración que confluyen en una apuesta política por establecer mecanismos de intervención que favorezcan y potencien esta relación. Entre ellos, el enfoque del codesarrollo, una propuesta específicamente europea y, en la actualidad, recogida e implementada por los actores que en España trabajan en los ámbitos de la cooperación y las migraciones.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** migración, desarrollo, codesarrollo, políticas, España.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

One of the ongoing debates in the field of migration studies and cooperation involves the multiple connections and potential bonds between migration and development; the ways in which processes and degrees of development affect migration and vice versa; the dynamics of this mutual influence, and the elements that preponderantly condition this relationship. Factors involving population movement and development are often analyzed independently of each other. The growing interest in exploring their interaction the channels through which it can be potentiated is quite recent: how should efforts be directed; what resources are needed; who should the protagonists be, and so on. A solution has yet to be proposed (Appleyard, 1992) and answers, while hardly univocal, also differ by case; research conclusions depend on the chosen variables and point of view.

The bond between migration and development is not new and has always been present in the motivations of Europeans moving to the Americas, or rural populations moving to urban areas; migration is an attempt to improve the lives of individuals and their families. Human mobility has always been an intrinsic part of human development and plays a central role in local and global processes of social, economic, and political change: it is molded by social transformations at the same time that it affects them (Hass *et al.*, 2009). Nowadays, this bond is understood in particular terms and is a goal in itself. Political, social, and economic efforts in this area attempt to fight poverty and inequality in an interconnected world, a space in which the management of international migration could play a relevant role.

We are witnessing an increased interest in the degrees and ways in which migration affects development in regions of origin. Current migrations take place in a globalized framework and affect relationships between the northern and southern hemispheres in areas as diverse as international commerce, investments, external debt management, or political agreements between nations and regions connected by migration flow. All this entails a series of profound changes that question the limits of national governance and introduce new approaches through which to understand or apprehend reality; a specific framework within which analysts can carry out research, civilians can present initiatives, and governments can structure their policies.

There is a substantial body of literature that analyzes the bond between migration and development in the Mexico-United States migration system (Delgado, Márquez and Rodríguez, 2009; Portes, Escobar and Walton, 2006; García

<sup>1</sup> This article is an extract from the doctoral dissertation «Co-development in Spain: an analysis of migrant implications» (El codesarrollo en España: un análisis de la implicación de los migrantes), a four-year research project carried out as part of the Complutense University of Madrid's Research Personnel in Training program.



Zamora, 2005, among others). In the case of Spain, research has been less extensive and is also more recent. This is why I am interested in the particularities of the Spanish approach to this issue as presented in official discourse and political documentation. This is an attempt to understand the migration and development nexus in what is clearly a national political gamble, and explore the ways in which this relationship is managed.

## 2. CONTEXT: THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Recent international reports and literature often include multiple allusions to the migration and development nexus and the positive aspects of said interdependence. The United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000) and the *International Conference on Financing for Development* held in *Monterrey, Mexico* (2002) made no mention of the possible impact of migration on development processes but, in 2003, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) stated that,

The bonds between migration and development are complex and many. They are not new, but the focus of the international debate has developed over the years. In the past, the trend was to focus on the negative implications of migration in relation to development. [...] Nonetheless, the international community has increasingly focused on the positive bonds. It is generally acknowledged that, when correctly managed, international migration can benefit local development (OIM, 2003: 2).

The above statement shows the approach being taken on the international stage and points to given understandings and definitions of these phenomena that public policy makers and managers can transform into norms and concrete intervention tools. The United Nations' (UN) General Assembly has issued successive resolutions regarding migration and development<sup>2</sup> and these became the basis for the September 2006 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The last report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development* (UNDP, 2009), deals with precisely these issues.

The European Union (EU), on the other hand, issued a series of recommendations after the 1999 Tampere Summit and stated the need for a global migration policy applicable to the whole of the EU, one that incorporated development cooperation as a basic management instrument on an international level. The section on asylum and immigration states,

<sup>2</sup> *International Migration and Development*, 2004 resolution, General Assembly 58/208; *International Migration and Development*, 2005 resolution, General Assembly 59/241; *International Migration and Development*, 2006 resolution, General Assembly 60/227.



The European Union needs a comprehensive approach to migration addressing political, human rights and development issues in countries and regions of origin and transit. This requires combating poverty, improving living conditions and job opportunities, preventing conflicts and consolidating democratic states and ensuring respect for human rights, in particular rights of minorities, women and children. (I, 11)

This requires coherent internal and external policies within EU territory. The document also introduces the concept of co-development, which will become increasingly relevant in European proposals: «Partnership with third countries concerned will also be a key element for the success of such a policy, with a view to promoting co-development» (I, 11).

Since then, Europe has issued several documents along these lines, highlighting the link between migration and development. The European Council has adopted the measures addressed in «Global Approach to Migration: *Priority Actions* focusing on *Africa and the Mediterranean*», published in December 2005 following a Spanish initiative. This covers a wide range of issues involving migration (foreign relations, development and employment, justice, freedom, and security). But the establishment of a working program with Africa cannot be understood outside the context of the dramatic events involving Moroccan and Sub-Saharan immigration to Europe in 2005, which led to the Spanish and Moroccan initiative to host the Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development in July 2006. Some 60 nations located across the migration routes of Central and Western Africa met to discuss an action plan put together by Spain, France and Morocco. The plan covered immigration policies; bilateral and multilateral agreements on border control; sectorial commercial agreements that allow the circulation of people; security and information measures, and agreements on immigrant rights. The subsequent Rabat Declaration remarked upon the need to act jointly and in cooperation with origin, transit, and destination countries. It also stated that migration management projects involving Africa and Europe must be inscribed within a framework that seeks to fight poverty and promote sustainable development while optimizing migration management through the shared responsibilities of origin, transit, and destination territories.

This agenda will undoubtedly focus on the specific case of the Mediterranean Basin and its contextual importance across the rest of the EU. Spain will spearhead the creation of proposals and handle a clearly positive discourse regarding migration, which the government has incorporated among its priorities in the fight against poverty. As Europe's southern border and in the face of problems such as the arrival of fishing canoes to the coasts of the Canaries all the way from Mauritania and Senegal, or the Melilla border fence incidents (which Security Minister Antonio Camacho classified as a «state problem», *El País*, 28/09/2005), Spain is now attempting to prioritize border issues given that it serves as an irregular entry point for migration flows across Europe.



The action plan stipulated in Rabat outlined the EU's commitment to help African states in the creation of migration and asylum management infrastructure, and provide reinforcement (especially in the area of customs) and institutional support to improve the reception of migrants and protect their rights. It also insists on the need to reach an equilibrium between migration management and development and foster measures that encourage migrant settlement in countries of origin. The latter include reductions in remittance-sending costs, technical support for the creation of entrepreneurial projects in regions of origin, microcredits, university education and exchange meant to prevent brain drain, and temporary migration plans that facilitate emigrant return.

Subsequent EU documents confirm the importance of the migration and development bond. An example is the Commission's communiqué «Strengthening the global approach to migration: Increasing coordination, coherence and synergies» (2008), which has a section focused on migration and development. This compiles the numerous initiatives in this regard, including those involving remittances, return to places of origin, and brain drain, and again stresses the importance of channeling diasporas toward the fostering of development in countries of origin. In this sense, the document supports the initiatives of emigrant groups and diaspora organizations that seek to participate in EU policy initiatives involving their countries and regions of origin; the speeding up of exchanges, investment and transnational diaspora networks, and the incorporation of diasporas into development activities in countries of origin.

### 3. THE SPANISH PUBLIC POLICY GAMBLE ON THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

To speak of Spanish approach to the migration-development nexus we must first take into account the proposals issued within the European framework and the notion of co-development, an approach being discussed and implemented across the UE. France spearheaded this process and began implementing it as public policy in the late 1990s. Spain is currently working on it in a more intensive manner.

Generally speaking, co-development intends to positively link migration and development. It proposes a new and equal relationship between countries of origin and destination based on mutual collaboration and consensus; it argues migrants should necessarily and ideally be at the center of these processes, and demands coordinated action on the part of public and private actors involved in productive and formative activities in origin and destination points, political participation, etc. (Giménez *et al.*, 2006). These general principles do not only affect the implementation of presumably new approaches to certain projects. They also attempt to transcend these immediate issues to become an efficient, fair and coherent mold were the migration-development nexus can help consolidate a model of shared responsibility. The latter can serve to manage global is-



sues, establish new forms of bilateral relationships between sending and receiving nations, enrich outlooks on migration and migrants, and strengthen cooperative practical alternatives to traditional development.

Co-development has become a recurrent term in the fields of cooperation and migration management in Spain. This is, however, a notion that can be interpreted in many diverse ways. Fieldwork<sup>3</sup> shows that the implementation of co-development in Spain mainly involves three types of actors: public administrations, NGOs and development NGOs (DNGOs), and migrant associations. While organizations like churches, unions, research centers, and banks also participate, most projects and proposals are spearheaded by the aforementioned players (Sanmartín, 2009).

Here I intend to focus on public administrations, since the content of co-development plans and policies (which involve three structural administrative levels: national, autonomous, and municipal) are key to the understanding of the normative frameworks within which these processes are carried out; they also provide a closer look at the Spanish political stance in regards to the migration-development nexus. We must not forget that, as shown in analyses on public policy, administrations have access to all sorts of resources (economic, political, and normative) with which they can influence, condition, block, or activate public decisions. Given that their decisions respond to general interest, they can always enforce these from their sovereign and representative stance. In short, they embody what is known as «general interest» and are the umbrella under which civilian organizations must work.

A detailed reading of the texts issued by these players reveals both similarities and differences in the treatment of and approach to co-development. The differences are related to political and contextual factors that, during a particular time, determine the stance of each administration and department; each responds to plural interests, has a roster of members, specific ruling principles, and must adjust to particular political and social repercussions, degree of responsibility, or territorial influence. All of this, of course, leads to different discourses and goals within the development of a given process.

Generally speaking, institutional approaches to co-development are usually concerned with the restrictive regulation of immigrant flow and, in this sense, encouraging development in places of origin is seen as an alternative to migration. The proposals hinge on the idea that migrants can become vectors of development in countries of origin and therefore reduce migrant flow into receiving nations. Differences regarding overall approach have to do with integration programs, which are more relevant at the municipal and autonomous community levels because of proximity. These administrations are, therefore, key players in the immigration process.

<sup>3</sup> This research includes interviews with public administration members, DNGOs, and migrant associations involved in co-development activities; it also comprises participant observation in events, courses and meetings on the subject between 2004 and 2009.



It is important to underline that, in Spain, decisions regarding immigration correspond exclusively to the State, along with issues of citizenship, emigration, foreign status, and refugee law. This is stated in Law 4/000 and its successive reforms addressing the rights and freedoms of foreign citizens in Spanish soil and their social integration (LODYLE). However, many aspects involving the welcoming and integration of immigrants also involve the municipalities and autonomous communities, which, in this case, share responsibility with the State. Attention is then placed on the generation of funds with which to carry out these activities and the designing of a general framework possessing joint criteria. Immigration, then, demands the intervention of several administrative levels and this inevitably entails political tensions across strategic areas. In this, co-development also opens up new possibilities: going beyond the attention given to migrants in the stipulated territory and expanding actions outward, establishing bonds with the municipalities and regions of origin, and creating transnational development networks.

This administrative division is one of the keys to understanding the reason why Spain seems to have taken up France's place in regard to the implementation of co-development. But before we take a look at the discursive elements of Spanish notions and practices of co-development, we must take a look at the Spanish context and stance in regards to immigration regulation since 2001, the year when the term «co-development» first appeared in the Global Program of Regulation and Coordination of Foreigners and Immigration (GRECO).

### *3.1. The construction of immigrant Spain*

According to the January 1, 2002 Municipal Registry, Spain had 1.977.944 registered foreigners across Spanish municipalities, 4.73% of the total registered population. This represented a 44.31% increase in relation to the previous year (1.370.657). This increase was, nevertheless, below the 48.36% of the previous year, which shows a relative decline in migration flow if we take into account that the percentage in 2000 was 23.36% vis-à-vis 17.56% in 1999 (INE, 2004). The progressive increase in the numbers is not particularly steep. Starting in 2000, however, there is talk of a «third stage» in the construction of «immigrant Spain». This phase has to do with immigration as a political issue: «it is around this time that we have the 'institutionalization' of immigration in Spain, either as a 'social fact' or a 'social problem'» (Cachón, 2003: 226).

In the midst of an European debate to establish consensual measures across the EU, migration management has entered public discussion and national policy. Since the Tampere Summit, efforts seem to be focused beyond policies that seek to control flow outwardly and instead pay more attention to internal mechanisms that guarantee and facilitate social integration of migrants in European



nations. In Spain, measures move from a dual model focused on flow control and restriction, managed by the Central Administration, to those aimed toward the insertion of immigrants into the receiving societies, which depend on municipal and autonomous community administrations.

Starting in 2000, Spain went through a series of relevant events in the area of immigration. Immigrant integration plans were approved in eight autonomous communities, two immigration laws were approved nationally (4/2000 y 8/2000) and two extraordinary regularization periods were carried out (2000 and 2001). It was also during this period that the media began to cover migration insistently and report on the «problems» caused by it after a particularly dramatic event: along with the arrival of fishing boats on Spanish coasts, attacks and disturbances took place in El Ejido (Almería) after the killing of a young Spanish woman by a young Moroccan man. This tragic event shocked the public and led to an intense debate on racism and tolerance in Spain.

Spanish immigration law underwent a significant restructuring that year. The post of Government Delegate for Immigration Affairs was created in the Ministry of the Interior, which proves the importance ascribed to this issue and the prioritization of immigration control, border security, and national interest (Colectivo IOE, 2001). It is in this context that the GRECO Program was launched, focusing on the four following aspects:

1. Global and coordinated immigration design as a desirable phenomenon for Spain within the EU framework.
2. Integration of foreign residents and their families, who contribute actively to national growth.
3. Regulation of migration flow to ensure harmonic coexistence in Spanish society.
4. Maintaining the protection system in place for refugees and victims of displacement.

The plan took the European principles (a «global perspective on migration») and adapted them to the particularities of the Spanish context:

- a) as far as territorial configuration is concerned, it explicitly recognizes the fundamental role played by regional and local governments in immigrant integration;
- b) it acknowledges Spain's geographical situation as the south-western border of Europe and an entryway for migrants;
- c) it recognizes the peculiar characteristics of its immigrant flow and types of settlement (places of origin, flow composition, integration requirements, etc.);
- d) it looks at the internal needs of the national labor market. In fact, it underlines immigration as a «desirable phenomenon for Spain» given migrants' active contributions to national growth, social security, and taxation. This is, however, explicitly subordinated to the needs of Spain as a receiving country:  
we must not forget that Spain has its own unemployed citizens and two million emigrants, many of whom desire to return to work in their country [and there-





fore] a limited reception capacity based on a strict number of labor posts it can offer to foreigners who emigrate for economic reasons and in search of opportunities they cannot find in their own countries.

In this sense, immigration regulation was one of the main goals of the program and it was based on annual working post availability and established agreements with sending nations. Alongside this concern for national interests we have attempts to stop clandestine immigration and illegal residence and a «utilitarian» perception of migration to Spain; GRECO was the first initiative to tackle human traffic and networks facilitating irregular immigration. At least on a discursive level, it acknowledged the need to stipulate «integration measures» accepted across public administration levels and NGOs, a fundamental step in articulating a social and labor integration system across the country.

This project, however, was severely criticized. The language was found objectionable (the term «illegal» was used), as were the labor-based concept of migrants and the unilateral interests behind the proposal, which focused on providing the immigrant temporary laborers required by the country. Since then, immigration Spanish policy has focused on battling irregular immigration and human trafficking, two priorities that are largely conditioned by the nation's border-like geographical position and the magnitude and seriousness of African immigrant flow to its shores (López Sala, 2009).

The Spanish government has also played an important role in the EU by bringing these issues into a common agenda. Spain has supported initiatives such as visa requests for citizens of Ecuador and Colombia (two of the nations that send the most emigrants in Spain) who want to access communal territory. During its 2002 EU presidency, the nation also proposed the elaboration of a repatriation program for immigrants in an irregular situation and joint border operations on the outer limits of the EU (Terrón, 2004). At the time, Spain also tried to issue a proposal that would link migration to cooperation initiatives involving sending countries: that is, the use of development aid as a tool to stem irregular immigration and the approval of norms allowing for the suspension of agreements with nations that did not cooperate in the fight against illegal immigration. This proposal was rejected by other member states, but it shows Spain's law enforcement-based immigration stance vis-à-vis more flexible proposals such as those of Tampere.

### *3.2. The current Spanish stance on immigration*

The Spanish stance has become more nuanced since then, and it is during recent times that we can see a consolidation of co-development, a sign of the country's new take on immigration and the global challenges it faces as a European power.



After 2004 and with the electoral triumph of the Socialist Party, immigration policy took a turn.

Without significantly altering its priorities, which continued to encompass flow migration management, the battle against irregular migration, and integration and settlement policies for immigrants in Spanish territory, the new socialist government took a risk with its first legislature and decided to strengthen the foreign aspects of this policy» (Pinyol, 2009: 276).

The 2005 European Consensus on Development established poverty eradication as the EU's central development goal, and Spain has adopted it as the main concern in its cooperation policy. As expressed in the last Directing Plan of Spanish Cooperation (2009-2012),

The fundamental acknowledgement of poverty as the cause and effect of the denial of fundamental rights stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights imposes an obligation on the whole of the international community. Additionally, in an interdependent world, the persistence of poverty is not only a bane for those who suffer it, but a source of problems that concerns us all» (Plan Director 2009-2012: 6).

Thus, poverty eradication has become a fundamental line in Spanish cooperation policy and the nation's approach to migration and development is expressed thusly,

Spain is undertaking extensive work in four fundamental areas: the need to address ample development strategies that impact the root causes of migration flows and generate desirable living conditions in countries of origin; the design and implementation of adequate and coordinated public migration policies in countries of origin, transit, and destination; the deployment of humanitarian action in situations that require it; support for and implementation of programs and projects in the areas of migration and development and co-development, entailing diasporas in Spain» (Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación, February 2008).

Spain's political wager is focused on the migration-development interconnection. The nation's stance and discourse allow for the incorporation of a new, efficacious, inclusive and dialogue-based proposal for immigration management within the wider EU context. Since 2005 we have been witnessing the gradual increase of Spanish leadership in immigration management and international cooperation. The joint Spanish, French and Moroccan proposal during the Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, which brings together the new Spanish stance with the traditional concerns over border control, attests to this.

Spain has been an influential player in European border policy since 2006, particularly given its emphasis on cooperation-based initiatives involving transit



and sending countries and its insistence on border control as a «common issue». Border security and the externalization of policy implementation have undergone the most development in these past few years (López Sala, 2009: 36).

This has led to migration policies that seek to fight poverty –especially in regards to Africa– and at the same time focus on immigration control. Or, as the State Minister of Immigration, Consuelo Rumí, put it, «stemming sub-Saharan flow is not only up to Spain and Morocco but the whole of the European Union and the Maghreb; Morocco, in addition to being a sending country, is now also a transit one, and Spain's southern border is also that of Europe» (El País, 28/09/2005).

The concept of co-development is another possible response to Spanish needs in the search for intervention mechanisms, a new migration management language, and a different approach that establishes new relationships between those places connected by migration. But why is Spain currently leading co-development policy? What elements can it incorporate into its discourse and management practices to make its stance pertinent? Some answers follow.

1. Co-development incorporates a positive discourse on migration and attempts to transform the existing relationship with sending countries by going beyond unilateral, security-based concerns on the part of receiving nations. The new strategy involves partnerships, shared responsibilities, and collaboration agreements.

2. This allows for the introduction of the migration-development nexus into national public policy across all territorial levels. This is, in fact, one of the keys to Spanish success: it allows for decentralized management, a horizontal cooperation scheme that ascribes a relevant and strategic role to autonomous communities and municipalities. In fact, it is these who have invested the most in co-development (financing projects and research, specific departments and personnel), fostering civilian participation (primordially NGOs and migrant associations) and encouraging direct cooperation agreements between sending and receiving municipalities.<sup>4</sup>

It is no coincidence that the first Spanish proposals came from regional administrations: the «First Congress on Immigration and Cooperation: toward Co-development» was organized by the Basque government's Department of Housing and Social Issues in December of 2002. Association representatives, cooperation organizations, and university and government members came together to discuss the concept of co-development and attempt to reach some form of consen-

<sup>4</sup> The role of local administrations in migration management and co-development has been explored by the Complutense and Autonomous universities of Madrid and Flacso Ecuador through the research project «Applied Diagnostic for local governance in a municipal co-development action from Madrid: Quito's House of Migrations» (Diagnóstico aplicado para la gobernanza local de una acción municipal de codesarrollo desde la ciudad de Madrid: la Casa de las Migraciones de Quito, 2009). This is part of the University Research Network on Development Cooperation of the Madrid City Council.



sus. It is just as significant that the proposal to make co-development into a national cooperation policy came from a Catalan parliamentary group (Proposición de Ley 122/000018, April 2004). Co-development is ideal for Spanish administrations because it distributes immigration management responsibilities across administrative levels (i.e., immigrant integration in a municipality or region) and propitiates the increasingly active role of towns and communities in cooperation activities involving sending regions.

3. Co-development allows for two-way measures that respond to internal and external factors in the migration process: it implements integration measures in host regions and seeks to foster development in sending localities. The idea is that increased development and opportunities in places of origin will diminish migrant flow, and this is seen as an effective migration management strategy.

4. Co-development also responds to national needs and strategies at a given time: Spain has long been an immigrant receiving country and is now on par with some other European nations in this regard. Data shows that, in 2008, 11.4% of Spain's residents were foreigners; this number has since risen to 5.3 million, with an annual increase of 16.6%. According to Eurostat data, immigration accounted for an estimated three fourths of population growth in the EU in 2008. In relative terms and at 10.2 per every 1,000 habitants, Spain possesses the EU's fourth largest immigrant flow (INE, 2009).

5. Spain is now one of Europe's major powers and seeks to present itself as a prosperous and innovative country with solutions to common problems, a leader in certain areas. Its most outstanding campaign so far has been its immigration management strategy: the fight against poverty and cooperation with sending nations. Co-development presents itself as an ideal mechanism for public debate and legitimacy within the EU context. It is an approach that attempts to tackle the complexities of current migration processes and attend to immigrant populations while acknowledging the multiple bonds between sending and receiving societies, and fostering development processes and other strategies that stem migration to Europe. An undoubtedly preventative approach that agrees with current discourse and the relationship with third countries.

Spain is relatively new to migrant inflow, especially when compared to some of its European neighbors. In spite of this, it has seen a noticeable and quick change in immigration flow. This and its southwest border-like location have required new measures, which include co-development as a way of improving immigrants' situation in the country while improving relations with their sending countries. The Spanish-led proposal is presented as a new, solidarity-based and positive model that responds to a number of needs: the fight against poverty, cooperation with Southern countries, fair migration regulation, and attention to immigrant populations in host countries. All of these issues are at the center of European governmental agendas and have been spearheaded by Spain.



#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

This paper attempted to illustrate the particularities of the migration-development nexus from a territorial perspective and within the Spanish context by presenting the institutional/governmental discourse the country uses in its role as an immigrant receiving nation and an European power. Dominant discourse utilizes privileged channels to spread and legitimize itself, since this erects an objective, official theory that holds its description and interpretation of reality as true. This is because said discourse constructs meanings that create practical norms, design social policies, organize modes of response, and structure social action policies (Agrela, 2009). On the other hand, the literature shows that political management is essential if a government intends to harness the power of migration to foster development, for this is not an automatic relationship (Abad, 2005). So, what are Spain's particularities as a receiving country? What contextual elements influence the migration-development nexus? What types of instruments are being used by the administrations intervening in this relationship?

Official Spanish policy has found a tool for international leadership and presence in the defense of migration, development, and the implementation of concrete co-development measures. The latter is also a useful way in which to attend to both internal and external migration management and articulate strategies involving different administrative levels and task distributions with strategic interests for involved actors. The opportunity to become increasingly involved in migration management and cooperation is crucial for autonomous and municipal administrations and a key factor to the implementation of co-development in Spain.

There is also a tendency toward an evolution of co-development contents, from concerns almost exclusively involving border control and national security (Plan GRECO) to preventative strategies that emphasize cooperation mechanisms between receiving and sending countries and seek to fight the causes behind massive emigration. The idea is to reduce the amount of reasons behind migration by offering improved living conditions and viable opportunities in sending nations (Pinyol, 2009). And yet, the vast gap between global and specific goals (those agreed on the international stage and within larger decision-making contexts vis-à-vis specific public actions at the national, regional, and local level) needs to be breached.

Co-development stresses the importance of using and fostering migration-based channels in countries of origin. In this sense, there is a need to involve diasporas in particular strategies (e.g., encouraging remittances, facilitating return to places of origin, nurturing productive activities and employment opportunities in these regions). These strategies can activate networks between sending and receiving countries, but they will continue to respond to unilateral interests if the main goal is to stem migration flow.



The type of co-development proposed by Spanish administrations is a clear show of their desired incorporation in cooperation programs and practices and immigrant integration projects. The introduction of a series of financial and research measures, along with stipulated agreements, are an evident key factor in ways that clearly interest Spanish public powers. It remains to be seen what role sending governments and local administrations, for example, will play in this model. How will they participate in co-development proposal design and execution, and what stance will they take? Will they be proactive or merely facilitate Spanish proposals? In what ways will these proposals materialize in Spain and abroad? What will the real role of migrants and their associations be, and in what ways will mutual benefits be ensured? Is this really a viable model of migration management cooperation? Can co-development proposals be implemented in contexts other than the Spanish one?

Co-development's potential in the field of migration management cooperation is directly related to political will. This is a political proposal that speaks of renewed cooperation practices and the need for set, consensual and coordinated intervention formulas and practice design. The type of regulations in use will play a key role in understanding the meanings, forms, priorities or practical agents in this process.

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