

GRITIM-UPF Research in Progress Session

Thursday, March 15th 2018

12.00-14.00

Room 24.200

1. Not in my front yard: geographic proximity and public attitudes toward building a fence along the Texas-Mexico border

Jeronimo Cortina

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Abstract

The wall along the U.S.-Mexico border has become one of the most controversial issues in the immigration debate. Even though public opinion is often aligned with partisan or ideological predispositions, the role that geographic distance to the border plays in attitude formation it is often ignored. Using the case of Texas, this paper explores the role of geographic distance as a determinant of public attitudes toward the border wall. This paper argues that geographic distance has two generalizable and interrelated effects on the formation of public attitudes: as a catalyzer for the realization of a diverse number of social processes and as a dynamic filter that mediates how people process information and consequently understands the border and consequently the wall. Using geocoded survey data for 2008, this paper shows that as the distance between respondents' place of residence and the Texas-Mexico border increases, respondents' are more likely to support building a wall or physical barrier.

Keywords: Geographic distance; Public opinion; Texas-Mexico border; Border wall.

2. "Transnational Entrepreneurship between Catalonia and Morocco: a new generation of Moroccan entrepreneurs"

Zouhair El Hairan

UPF-GRITIM

Abstract

This research deals with Moroccan diaspora entrepreneurship between Catalonia and Morocco. It analyses how young Moroccans in the diaspora undertake a business in Catalonia and/or Morocco, how they develop social and cultural capital, and the transnational factor. The research also tries to contribute to updated data regarding the Moroccan diaspora entrepreneurs living in Spain, and to provide a comparative analysis of the characteristics and dynamics of young first and second generation of Moroccan entrepreneurs in Catalonia. This information would provide a good opportunity to adapt policies for governments.

This research also seeks to identify tools and good practices that can contribute to the improvement of Moroccan diaspora entrepreneurship by providing insight into public policies that influence entrepreneurial endeavours. This ongoing study will also try to highlight the potential of young Moroccans entrepreneurs, who can therefore perform as economic and social investors in Catalonia, breaking the preconceived idea of the Moroccan who is just a migrant worker in the host country. It additionally aims to illuminate transnational connections and activities. Data will be gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews with young Moroccan entrepreneurs and policy-makers. Surveys to entrepreneurs, or potential entrepreneurs, as well as participant observation at conferences and events related to Catalan-Moroccan entrepreneurship is also envisaged.

Keywords: Moroccan Youth Diaspora, Transnational Entrepreneurship (TE), Catalonia, Morocco, Business Launch, First and Second Generations, Social and Cultural Capital, Public Policies