

## GRITIM-UPF organizes the round table IEMed Interdisciplinary Research Seminars

### Diaspora governance and transnationalism: linking two cross-border concepts through migrant entrepreneurship

**Day:** 13 March 2018

**Time:** 9h30-11h15

**Place:** Institut d'Estudis Catalans- Carrer del Carme, 47, Barcelona **Room:** Sala Nicolau d'Oliver

#### Framework of the roundtable

Migrant Transnational Entrepreneurship (MTE) as a new field of research in migration studies is at the crossroad of several current key scholarly framework debates, and can contribute to develop the research agendas, advancing both our empirical knowledge and theoretical understanding of contemporary forms of two cross-border concepts: diaspora and transnationalism. These frameworks have served these last decades as prominent research lenses through which to view the aftermath of international migration and the shifting of state borders across populations.

First of all, **the transnational long research agenda** has preliminarily considered the MTE debate as a new economic practice, which goes beyond the traditional focus on remittances, since it mobilises the competences, skills, social and cultural capitals acquired by migrants during their incorporation processes. But it still has not gone beyond the purely economic dimension towards cultural, political and social dimensions, as by-products of these migrant TE projects, as this special issue seeks to explore in depth.

Secondly, some debates focus the exploration of this new practice from the **diaspora lens**, and even speak about diaspora entrepreneurs. This view involves at least the awareness that one belongs to a national group, maintaining relations with the home country. Considered as a focus this view will help us to draw on the specificities we propose for this Special Issue: *how home politics are responding to this new profile and trend, and if they meet their purposes*.

The interface between these emerging transnational migratory dynamics and the home diaspora politics is the core focus of this Roundtable.

By mentioning “diaspora governance” in the title we would like to broaden the scope of this focus, incorporating macro and meso levels, since there are an amount of networks, from the stakeholders coming mainly from civil society to the so-called “business incubators”, which are institutions that help entrepreneurs overcome the financial, human, and social capital impediments that they face during the business creation (Riddle, Hrivnak, & Nielsen, 2010). These actor networks contributing to the diaspora governance on this specific transnational practice usually have the function to bridge home governments and TE. This focus is extremely important for us, since it allows us to jump to the general current new trend of migration studies to consider the extension of home policies towards their own nationals living abroad, examining not only the institutional, social, economical and political effects this recognition of MTE as new actors may have in terms of change and transformation in home countries, but also how it is the epicenter of new actor networks dynamics in need of exploration. The support and policies fostering this new transnational practice may also involve normative issues, in terms of externalisation of home politics (between domestic and international politics, home governments become agents attracting their own national talents), new frameworks to rethinking citizenship (the external citizenship theorised by R. Bauböck, 2009, for instance) and national-state policies from home countries.

**Background** The main purpose of this roundtable is to discuss different contributions related to a Special Issue in preparation for the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies (Guest editors: R. Zapata-Barrero and S. Rezaei) entitled *Diaspora governance and transnational entrepreneurship: the rise of an emerging social global class*

This roundtable is an activity within the framework of the European project *Diasporalink Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship as a Development Link between Home and Residence* (2014-2019, H2020-MSCA-RISE-2014), a 4 year project (2015-2019) in collaboration with 25 research institutions in the EU, Americas, Asia and Africa. <http://www.diasporalink.org>

**Chair:** Shahamak Rezaei, Roskilde University, Denmark

**Discussant:** Lorenzo Gabrielli, GRITIM-UPF

#### Title, Abstracts

**From ripples to waves, are transnational entrepreneurs the new Argonauts?**, Shahamak Rezaei and Victoria Hill

Much has been written about transnational entrepreneurs. Migrants' economic activities have often been cast as 'entrepreneurship of last resort'. However, in the past few years there are indications that a shift is underway. Kloosterman and Rath allude to it by referring to “Mixed Embeddedness” in ethnic businesses. But the blending of entrepreneurship theory and migration theory is beginning to disrupt conventional thinking on the subject. Perhaps better than anyone else, A. Lee Saxenian (2006) describes in *The New Argonauts* how highly skilled migrants circulate between the US and developing countries, creating new technology businesses and spreading prosperity along the way. But more recent research shows that this phenomenon is not limited to the ‘highly skilled’. “Operating in two countries exposes the entrepreneur to more sources of information and can increase the ability of the entrepreneur to make connections and discover opportunities” (Radulov and Shymanskyi 2014).

TME communities are arising across the globe without receiving scholarly attention. In this article the authors revisit the phenomenon of transnational entrepreneurship by examining data representing 25 different countries in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been drawn from an empirical data set in a Horizon2020/Marie Curie research project. The authors utilise Value Stream mapping of the empirical data to produce a new theoretical model. Subtle changes that previously went unnoticed reflect an altogether new approach to transnational entrepreneurship.

**Harnessing the potential of Moroccans living abroad through diaspora policies? Assessing the factors of success and failure of a new structure of opportunities for Transnational Entrepreneurs**, R. Zapata-Barrero and Z. Hellgren

The main purpose is to assess the change of the Moroccan policy paradigm concerning their diaspora engagement policy, which is being shifted from remittances to mobilisation of competences during this last decade. This particular focus is situated in the broad process of change of Morocco already explained by Haas (2007), which described how focus shifted from controlling the Diaspora to including it given the high contributions of their remittances, and after recognizing Moroccan authorities were working with a false premise in assuming that integration in the host country of their nationals would reduce national engagement and remittances. *The mobilization of competences* can be considered as a second phase of this shift and certainly must be understood as the mainstream focus of Moroccan diaspora governance. It is the most recent Moroccan effort to include migration within its broad strategy of development (OCDE, 2017).

Once we have framed this process, the purpose of our article is to assess the factors of success and failure of this new structure of opportunities for Moroccan Transnational Entrepreneurs. We have interviewed young transnational entrepreneurs in Morocco and Catalonia, and also stakeholders and public policy officers from different Moroccan institutions, and our findings indicate that there is a gap between what the Moroccan engagement policy pretends and assumes, and the views and experiences of these Moroccan transnational entrepreneurs. At the end we try to evaluate the potential scenarios this gap can create and its potential effects in the process of this new policy paradigm shift.

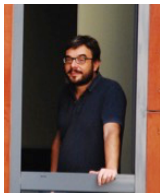
## The mixed embeddedness of Moroccan transnational entrepreneurs in Amsterdam and Milan, Giacomo Solano

In recent years, the growing phenomenon of migrant entrepreneurs establishing businesses which span across borders (transnational migrant entrepreneurship) has emerged as a promising area of analysis in transnationalism and migrant entrepreneurship fields. Despite this, the factors influencing transnational entrepreneurial patterns of migrants are still unclear.

In this paper, the mixed embeddedness theory is applied to shed light on the different possible patterns of TE. By analysing the case of Moroccan entrepreneurs in Milan and Amsterdam, the article illustrates how the combination of structural characteristics and opportunities (political-institutional framework, economic context), and migrant's profile (skills, experience, etc.) shape the patterns of transnational entrepreneurship. On the one hand, transnational entrepreneurs combine opportunities from different places - country of destination, country of origin, and other countries - at different spatial scales - both local and national scale. The opportunities and characteristics of different contexts (opportunity structure) are particular relevant. On the other hand, transnational entrepreneurs use their (previous-acquired) contacts and their skills (e.g., linguistic knowledge, previous work experience) to seize these contextual opportunities.

In addition, the paper highlights two possible patterns of migrant transnational entrepreneurship. The first one is characterised by migrants who strongly stress the entrepreneurial aspects of their migratory journey (prevalent in Amsterdam). The second one is particularly linked to emphasizing their profile as migrants (prevalent in Milan). These two patterns are due to both the different contexts of the two cities and the different background (e.g., education) of the entrepreneurs.

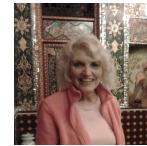
## Bios Speakers



**Lorenzo Gabrielli** ([Lorenzo.gabrielli@upf.edu](mailto:Lorenzo.gabrielli@upf.edu)) is Post-Doc researcher at GRITIM - Universitat Pompeu Fabra, associate lecturer at Political Science Department and associate researcher at Centre Emile Durkheim - Sciences Po Bordeaux. He has been visiting researcher at United Nations University -Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility (UNU-GCM), and senior visiting researcher at European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). His research interests covers the issues of borders and bordering/re-bordering processes; the 'migration-development' nexus; the transnational diaspora; the multilevel governance of international migration in the Euro-African space, the geopolitics of migration in the Mediterranean, the external dimension of European immigration policies and transit migration in the West Mediterranean area; integration policies in Europe, with a special focus on Spain and Catalonia; between other issues related with migration phenomena.



**Zenia Hellgren** ([zenia.hellgren@upf.edu](mailto:zenia.hellgren@upf.edu)) is senior researcher at GRITIM-UPF. Currently, she is PI of the project Roma inclusion in education: fostering constructive attitudes and good practices in the Barcelona area (Vakeripen), co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the EU. Her main research interests involve the situation of immigrants and minorities in multiethnic societies, particularly in terms of inclusion/exclusion, discrimination, opportunities, participation and representation. Zenia teaches at the Master in Migration Studies at Pompeu Fabra University, and was recently awarded with the Marie Curie Individual Fellowship for her coming research project REPCAT, which will examine the representation of ethnic diversity in Catalan institutions. During 2016, she worked as researcher within the DiasporaLink project and performed fieldwork on transnational entrepreneurship of migrants in the Catalan-Moroccan-Chilean corridors, with emphasis on the obstacles and opportunities they encountered. For her publications see website: <https://www.upf.edu/web/zenia-hellgren>



**Victoria Hill** ([ve.victoria@gmail.com](mailto:ve.victoria@gmail.com)) is graduated from NYU-Tandon School of Engineering, M.Sc. Computer and Telecommunications Systems Engineering. She received her PhD in Management Science from Strathclyde School of Business, Glasgow. She has been Visiting Professor-Management Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et de Management Tours and Poitiers, France. Further she has been Programme Director and teaching Leadership for MBAs and Exec. Ed. at Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. Taught Entrepreneurship for Engineers at German-Jordanian University. Taught Operations Mgmt., Supply Chain Mgmt., Quality Mgmt. and Entrepreneurship at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. Presently she is teaching Entrepreneurship and Innovation plus Study Abroad Coordinator at Moulay Ismail University in Meknes, Morocco. Victoria Hill is author of multiple academic publications, amongst them A Kaizen Approach to Food Safety. Quality Management in the Value Chain from Wheat to Bread.



**Shahamak Rezaei** ([shre@ruc.dk](mailto:shre@ruc.dk)) is Associate Professor at the Department of Social Sciences and Business, Roskilde University, Denmark. He is also affiliated with Sino-Danish Research & Education Center (SDC - The University Partnership Denmark - China). Since 2010 has been conducting research and teaching activities in China with main focus on "Innovation, Returnee Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, Knowledge Transfer & Brain Circulation". During 2011-2013 he has been appointed as the Head of Social Science Study Program at Roskilde University. During 2013 and 2014 he was Visiting Professor at University of Oxford, Center on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) in the UK, Visiting Professor at Princeton University, Department of Sociology, Center for Migration & Development (CMD), Visiting Professor at UCLA, Department of Sociology and Guest Lecturer at Yale University, Department of Sociology. Shahamak Rezaei was appointed as one of "the most influential" persons in "immigration & integration" in Denmark in the magazine EUROMAN (February 2006). He is the winner of "Danske Bank" 2014 award in "Social Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship" (September 2014). He is the Coordinator of "DiasporaLink" (Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship as a Development Link between Home and Residence Countries) ([www.DiasporaLink.org](http://www.DiasporaLink.org))



**Giacomo Solano** ([giacomo.solano@gmail.com](mailto:giacomo.solano@gmail.com)) holds a PhD in Sociology from University of Amsterdam and University of Milan-Bicocca (joint degree) with a dissertation on transnational migrant entrepreneurship. He previously worked as post-doc fellow at the School of Innovation Sciences of the Eindhoven University of Technology (the Netherlands). He is now working as researcher at GERME (Group for Research on Ethnic Relations, Migration & Equality), Université Libre de Bruxelles (Brussels, Belgium) and as consultant for IOM (International Organisation for Migration).



**Ricard Zapata-Barrero** ([Ricard.Zapata@upf.edu](mailto:Ricard.Zapata@upf.edu)) is Full Professor at the [Department of Political and Social Sciences](#), Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona). His main lines of research deal with contemporary issues of liberal democracy in contexts of diversity, especially the relationship between democracy, citizenship, human mobility and immigration. He is director of [GRITIM-UPF](#) (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration) and the [Master Programme on Migration Studies at UPF](#). He is member of the Board of Directors of the largest research network on Immigration in Europe [IMISCOE](#), and member of several European projects. He founded the Intercultural Cities Network in Spain in 2014 (now composed by 16 cities), as expert of the intercultural cities program since 2008. He is also member of editorial boards of several academic journals, and member of several government advisory boards, and occasional contributor to media and policy debates. Full details of his publications, see: <http://dcpis.upf.edu/~ricard-zapata/>