

THE CIRCULAR MIGRATION IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE: A CHOSEN OR IMPOSED DOMINATION?

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Circular Migration

CONCEPT

Circular migration has long existed and is especially prominent in the **agricultural sector**. The use of seasonal foreign labor is a structural prerogative of agriculture in the European Union, particularly in France.

Regulated circular migration refers to "people [who] are selected at the country of origin and move within the framework of a bilateral (or multilateral) agreement", corresponding to one of several types of circular migration. *[We focus exclusively on a specific type of circular migration, as is defined by the CARIM network of the European University Institute, 2013].*

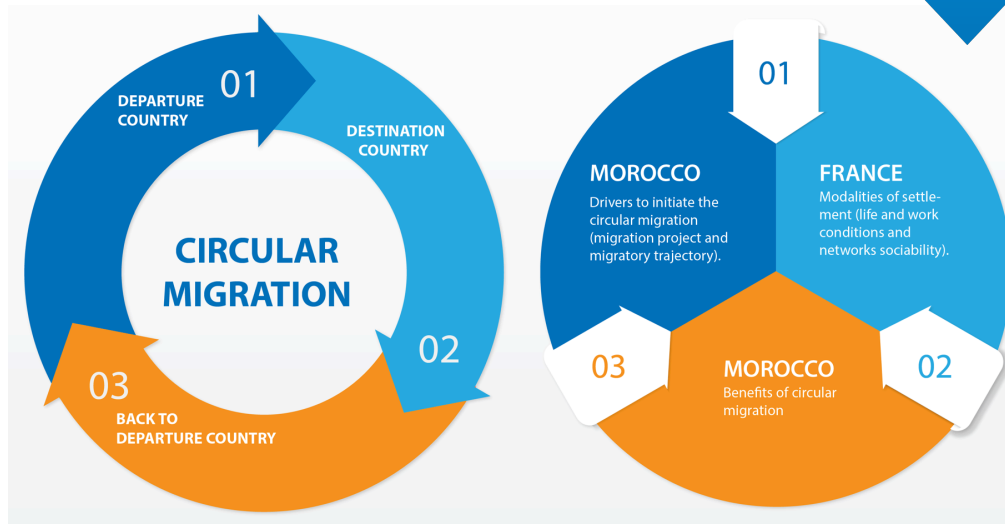
THE MOTIVATIONS

By putting Moroccan circular migrants at the center of our analysis, we propose analyzing, in terms of all processes of circularity (repeated migrations; comings and goings), the **motivations of migrants to choose circular migration** as a form of mobility; their conditions of life and work in France; and finally their return to their country of departure.

Info Box: METHODS

Interviewed were **20 Moroccan circular migrants** in 3 departments in the South of France: Bouches-du-Rhône, Gironde and Vaucluse.

Method applied: a semi-structured interview, non-participant observation and content analysis.



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OBJECTIVE

This work is based on the objective of studying the **pattern of circular migration that has developed in the South of France** and has been applied in the agricultural field for decades. The **agricultural field** has witnessed the transition from a family model to a highly developed one and has been steadily exposed to the international system's fluctuations.

Circular Migration

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- These mobility programs are designed and planned to be **rigid and selective which induces an atmosphere of domination**. Despite being aware of these constraints, migrants accept them in order to benefit from them.
- Circular migration between Morocco and France is a response to **urgent economic situations and deficits**, but it is questionable whether it will guarantee profits and long-term gains whatsoever in either the host country or in the country of departure.

2 DISTINCTIVE GROUPS OF MOROCCAN ENCOUNTERED:

GROUP 1

The first group is marked by an upward mobility path; circular migration was seen as a springboard to a more stable and permanent life project in the host country, France.

- Very demanding and difficult work conditions, total obedience and submission to the employer. They were between 50-65 years old and they are now permanently settled in France.
- The relationship of circular migrants and farmers is based on inequality, servility, docility, and the presumption that nothing can alter the nature of the worker/employer relationship.

GROUP 2

The second group of Moroccan circular migrants are still engaged in circular migration. They are younger and they have yet to settle or attain residence in France.

- Circular migrants have little say regarding the place where the contract will take place in the country of destination. Individuals are placed according to the needs of the employer;
- Work contracts are subject to interruption every 6/7 months and potentially re-conducted;
- All in all, the status is characterized by fragility and precariousness.

KEY RESULTS

Circular migration is part of a strategy of economic survival, in order to overcome underemployment or unemployment situations in their country of origin.

1 Circular migration is **not the preferred form of mobility**, it is rather the only legal form of mobility that may guarantee income for them and their families.

4 Circular migration is synonymous with hardships and difficulties for migrants who "decide" to start back and forth between Morocco and France.

3 Moroccan circular migrants would prefer to settle permanently in one country.



RESEARCH THESIS

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