

Borderless Industrial Denizenship: A Transformative Space for the Creation of Alternative Futures in Global Economic Migration

Giovanni Di Lieto
Navitas College of Public Safety
Australia

Abstract

Historically, the concept of labour started as an objective basis of value and evolved into a notion of subjective economic utility. This article proposes an open-border labour process to be initiated in connection with the broader trade liberalisation trend. This would thoroughly restructure the current concept of labour as a mere immobile input into the production of goods and services. In the proposed model of borderless industrial denizenship, labour movement would eventually be freed from the nation-state border constraints that undermine the enforcement of labour and other related human rights standards. A causal layered analysis maps the theoretical framework shift from a hard-bordered model of labour migration to a soft-bordered one.

Keywords: Labour migration; industrial citizenship; denizenship; de-nationalisation; human movement; global rights; causal layered analysis.

Introduction

The concept of borderless industrial denizenship (BID) seeks to open up space for the articulation of a labour-centred discourse that can shape soft-bordered scenarios of global migration management. The present study approaches this transformative space by means of a causal layered analysis (CLA) to unfold less visible levels of migrant labour epistemologies, and ultimately to explore ALTERNATIVES FUTURES of globalised human movement.

In a context of unsettled cross-border migration, the traditional approach to industrial citizenship does not appear to be able to effectively manage the economic and social issues

attached to human movement. Temporary migration or guest worker schemes cannot provide a comprehensive solution if they position cross-border workers outside the scope of labour rights protection. Instead, the borderless industrial denizenship model proposed in this study can potentially be the first leap towards addressing the dilemmas of decent work in an interconnected world.

The asymmetrical socio-historical context of economic migration trends

Over the past few years, immigration policy literature has generally interpreted cross-border workers' mobility as a mere function of economics. This has influenced in particular the domestic labour market policies of developed countries, where the interplay of interests in the political arena can amplify the pressure of cross-border immigration demand. Such consideration can be demonstrated by swift policy change in countries where managing immigration for national economic benefit became the imperative after decades of *zero immigration* being the legitimate objective. The immediate effects of this trend are the dramatic changes in the patterns and flows of workers' mobility into old and new countries of migration, where new policies are leading to a complete overhaul of systems of migration management.

Population movements have played a vital role in the structural transformation of economies throughout history, thereby contributing greatly to development. Despite the widespread perception that international migration is associated with the rise of globalisation and trade in the late 20th century, large-scale, long-distance movements were prevalent in the past. At the peak of Iberian rule in the Americas, more than half a million Spaniards and Portuguese, and about 700,000 British subjects, went to the colonies in the Americas (Altman and Horn, 1991). Through the brutal use of force, 11–12 million Africans were sent as slaves across the Atlantic between the 15th and late 19th centuries. Between 1842 and 1900, some 2.3 million Chinese and 1.3 million Indians travelled as contract labourers to Southeast Asia, Africa and North America (Sanjek, 2003). At the close of the 19th century, the fraction of foreign-born residents in many countries was higher than today. In 1907 alone, almost 1.3 million people (or 1.5 per cent of the population) were granted permanent resident status in the United States (US). A century later, in 2007, both the absolute number and fraction were lower: 1.05 million or only 0.3 per cent of the population (Department of Homeland Security, USA, 2007).

The British Industrial Revolution both generated and was fuelled by rapid urban growth, driven mainly by movement from the countryside. The share of rural population declined markedly in all economies that became developed, falling in the US from 79 per cent in 1820 to below four per cent by 1980; and even more rapidly in the Republic of Korea, from 63 per cent in 1963 to seven per cent in 2008. In 1900, more than one million people were moving out of Europe each year, spurred by the search for better conditions in the face of hunger and poverty at home. The size of these flows is staggering by contemporary standards. At its peak in the 19th century, total emigrants over a decade accounted for 14 per cent of the Irish population, one in 10 Norwegians and seven per cent of the populations of both Sweden and the United Kingdom (UK) (Cinel, 1991). In contrast, the number of lifetime emigrants from developing countries today is less than three per cent

of the total population of these countries. This historical episode was partly driven by falling travel costs: between the early 1840s and the late 1850s, passenger fares from Britain to New York fell by 77 per cent in real terms (Galenson, 1984). By the late 19th century, the cost of steerage passage from the UK to the US had fallen to one tenth of average annual income, making the trip feasible for many more people. However, the cost from elsewhere was much higher: for example, from China to California in 1880, it cost approximately six times Chinese per capita income. In addition, there were other determining factors in particular cases, such as the potato famine in Ireland. These population movements had sizable effects on both source and destination countries. Workers moved from low-wage, labour-abundant regions to high-wage, labour-scarce regions. This contributed to significant economic convergence: between the 1850s and World War I, real wages in Sweden rose from 24 to 58 per cent of those of the US, while, over the same period, Irish wages rose from 61 to 92 per cent of those of Great Britain. According to economic historians, more than two-thirds of the wage convergence across countries occurring in the late 19th century can be traced to the equalising effect of migration (Taylor and Williamson, 1997). These population movements were enabled by a policy stance that was not only receptive to migration; in many cases, it actively encouraged it. This is as true of origin countries, which often subsidised passage to reduce pressures at home, as it was of destination governments, which invited people to come in order to consolidate settlements and take advantage of natural resources. The late 19th century was marked by the absence of the plethora of mechanisms to control the international flows of people, which emerged subsequently. Until the passage of restrictive legislation in 1924, for example, there was not even a visa requirement to settle permanently in the US; and in 1905, only one per cent of the one million people who made the transatlantic journey to Ellis Island were denied entry into the country (Foner, 2002).

One key distinction between the pre-World War I period and today lies in the attitudes of destination governments. While anti-immigrant sentiment could run high and often drove the erection of barriers to specific kinds of movement, the prevailing view among governments was that movement was to be expected and was ultimately beneficial to both origin and destination societies. For example, Canada's open policy towards immigration following confederation was seen as a pillar of the national policy to generate economic prosperity through population growth (Kelley and Trebilcock, 1998). This was particularly remarkable in societies where intolerance of minorities was prevalent and socially accepted to a far larger extent than today. However, the pro-migration consensus was not to last. Towards the end of the 19th century, many countries introduced entry restrictions. The causes were varied, from the depletion of unsettled land to labour market pressures and popular sentiment. In countries such as Argentina and Brazil, the policy shift occurred through the phasing out of subsidies; and in Australia and the US, it occurred through the imposition of entry barriers (Timmer and Williamson, 1998).

There was nothing in the area of migration policy even remotely resembling the rapid multilateral liberalisation of trade in goods and movements of capital that characterised the post-World War II period, when commodities rapidly took the place of people in the arena of international movements, somewhat negatively influencing governmental policies and attitudes towards worker migrants.

Some countries entered bilateral or regional agreements to respond to specific

labour shortages, such as the US 1942 Mexican Farm Labour (Bracero) Program, which sponsored 4.6 million contracts for work in the US over a 22-year period (Brown and Shue, 1983); the 1947 UK–Australia Assisted Passage Agreement; and the flurry of European labour movement agreements and guest worker programmes (Appleyard, 2001). However, early enthusiasm for guest worker programmes fizzled out by the 1970s. The US phased out its Bracero Program in 1964, and most Western European countries that had heavily relied on guest worker programmes ceased recruitment during the 1970s oil shock (Cornelius et al., 1994).

In sum, the period since 1960 has been marked by a growing concentration of migrants in developed countries against a background of aggregate stability in overall migration. This pattern can be explained by key factors, such as trends in income, population and transport costs, that tended to increase movement, but which simultaneously faced increasingly significant constraints by growing legal and administrative barriers. Recent declines in transport and communication costs have also increased movement. The real price of air travel fell by three-fifths between 1970 and 2000 (Doganis, 2002), while the costs of communication fell massively. The real cost of a three-minute telephone call from Australia to the UK fell from about US\$350 in 1926 to US\$0.65 in 2000 and, with the advent of internet telephony, has now effectively fallen to zero (Government of Western Australia, 2002). Such trends have made it easier than ever before for people to reach and establish themselves in more distant destinations. Given these drivers, a significant growth in international migration was expected in recent decades. However, this potential has been constrained by increased policy barriers to movement, especially against the entry of low-skilled applicants.

International migrants moving to a country with a higher level of human development than their country of origin often face constraints in the form of restrictive policies that impose barriers to entry or limited resources to enable their move. Paradoxically, despite the fact that people moving out of poor countries have the most to gain from moving, they are the least mobile. For example, by the beginning of the 21st century less than one per cent of Africans, out of a total population of one billion, have moved to Europe.¹ Despite the high levels of attention given to emigration from Africa to Europe, only three per cent of Africans live in a country different from where they were born, and less than one per cent of Africans live in Europe. Several scholars have observed that if we correlate emigration rates with levels of development, the relationship resembles a “hump”, whereby emigration rates are lower in poor and rich countries than among countries with moderate levels of development. Indeed, where there are either scarce or abundant resources at home, people stay rather than emigrate. Therefore, there may be a non-linear inverted-U relationship between migration and development, which in poor countries typically goes hand in hand with increasing, rather than decreasing, rates of emigration (Martin and Taylor, 1996). When we restrict the comparison to out-migration to developed countries, the relationship is even stronger: the median emigration rate among countries with low human development is less than one per cent, compared to almost five per cent in countries with high levels of human development. An analysis of bilateral migration flows confirmed that this pattern holds, even when controlling for characteristics of origin and destination countries, such as life expectancy, years of schooling and demographic structure (Altman and Horn, 1991). These results might shed strong doubts on the attractive idea

that development in countries of origin will always reduce migratory flows. More specifically, it could be argued that development reduces migration only above certain minimum levels.

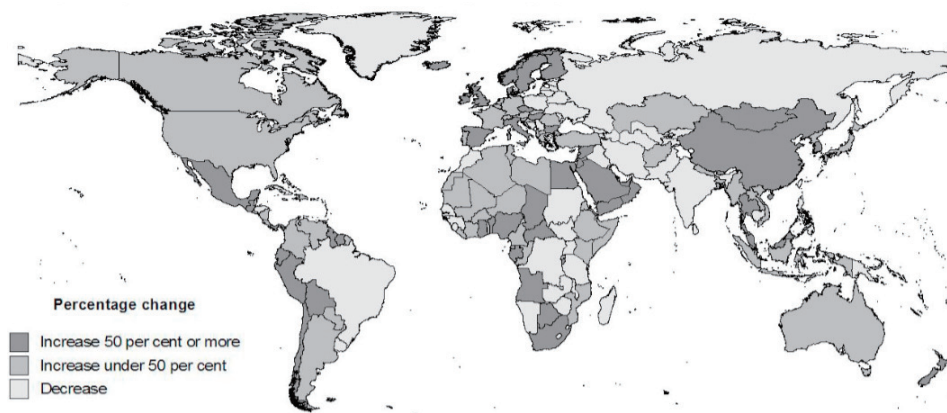
Therefore, structural factors have an increasingly recognised role in determining the causes of human movement, while early migration studies tended to conceptualise ‘laws of migration’ and movement patterns based on inequalities in living standards, both in neoclassical economic and Marxist theories (Ravenstein, 1885; Lewis, 1954; Harris and Todaro, 1970). By contrast, why do many successful migrants choose to return to their country of origin after several years abroad? This is difficult to explain if movement responds only to income differentials. Besides, if migration were purely determined by wage differences, then large movements from poor to rich countries and very little movement among rich countries would be expected, but neither of these patterns holds in practice, as previously outlined. Even visually, the below chart shows that there is no identifiable pattern in the migration flows between regions and world’s top origin and destination countries for the period from 2005 to 2010.



Figure 1. Global migration flows

Source: Snader, Nikola et al. 2014. Visualising Migration Flow Data with Circular Plots, working paper, Vienna Institute of Demography, Austrian Academy of Sciences.

The map below shows the asymmetry of global human movement even further when considering the change in the international migrant stock from 2000 to 2013.



Source: United Nations (2013), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: the 2013 Revision*.

Figure 2. Global migrants' stock.

It is thus clear that, even in our globalising age, there are no 'laws of migration' to be found outside of foresight analysis that dig deeper into unexplored layers of knowledge in migrant labour narratives, contexts, and paradigms.

For this purpose, the next sections will survey a transformative space for the global creation of alternative futures in economic migration.

A soft-bordered model of labour mobility

When human movement is not forced, it is in most cases work-related. Thus people on the move are defined in large measures as economic migrants, because they want or need to work. Newcomers are commonly seen in the workplace as a swarm of locusts having vicious impacts. In terms of social justice, the preservation of decent working conditions locally is often preferred to the promotion of free human movement globally, or the two issues are perceived as being at odds and unresolvable together. In a world of severe inequality between countries and individuals, sacrificing people's mobility on the altar of labour protectionism can be ethically disconcerting, as it equates to indiscriminately depriving people of their only chance to create the conditions for a decent life for themselves and their families. Yet, it is hard not to look at economic migration through the eyes of local workers: the more immigrants, the more competition, and the worse work becomes. Is there a way out of this seemingly unresolvable dilemma?

The main idea behind this study is concerned with developing a new theoretical approach to structuring supranational and cross-border economic migration. This theoretical approach is based on a unique combination of concepts: *borderless industrial denizenship*.

The term denizenship refers to an obsolete process in English Common Law similar to the Roman "*civitas sine suffragio*" (i.e. citizenship without the franchise) by which non-citizens would be admitted to virtually all the social and economic rights enjoyed by citizens, but excluded from active political rights. Dating from

the 13th century, *denization* at English Common Law would occur by a royal grant of letters patent upon payment of a fee and an oath of allegiance to the crown. The denizen, therefore, would achieve “a kind of middle state, between an alien and a natural-born subject, and partake of both” (Blackstone, 1769). Historically, denizenship was the instrument to allow (and control) land ownership by foreigners, which at some point became necessary for the economy, but dangerous politically. Eventually, by the end of the 19th century denizenship fell into disuse when the instrument of naturalisation developed.

This study proposes the revamp of the concept of denizenship as applied to economic migration (as first developed by Hammar, 1990). Denizenship fell into disuse also because land ownership no longer became an issue in political terms. Today, in terms of economic migration, labour market access is equivalent to what foreign land ownership was for the freedom of human movement in the past for England and the Roman *Res Publica*.

The reintroduction of denizenship-like instruments would strike a viable compromise between political protectionism and economic liberalisation of human movement, while at the same time preserving the acquired principles of equality and social justice that citizenship brings about.

This revival of denizenship is a thought experiment to be narrowed down within the labour area, more specifically within the notion of industrial citizenship. Thus, industrial denizenship can be conceptualised as following the ‘industrial citizenship beyond the workplace’ approach. This scenario recognises that, although not contractual or economically quantifiable, a wide range of work is socially necessary and contributes to the community. Common examples are care for others, volunteer work, and self-imposed training. Many commentators on industrial relations law and policy maintain that labour and social protection should be attached to such unpaid work (Giles, 2000; Standing, 1999).

Experts of the EU went further in replacing the paradigm of employment with a broad concept of work that covers “people from the cradle to grave ... in both periods of inactivity and periods of training, employment, self-employment and work outside the labour market”, where “work outside the labour market” includes training at one’s own initiative, voluntary work and care for other people (Supiot, 2001).

The European experts adopted the term “professional status” to encompass this concept of work activity beyond employment. Thus, professional status can broadly include not only the rights corresponding to wage-earning employment, but also common rights affecting professional activity in terms of gender equality, health and safety, and rights relating to work beyond employment (Supiot et al., 1999).

These rights are fundamentally a revamp of social rights attached to prior entitlement to industrial citizenship in general, but “brought into effect by the free decision of the individual and not as a result of risk” (Supiot, 2001).

The spectrum of citizenship between industrial and economic dimensions is broad, and the contrast between domain, subjects and substance of citizenship in these two regimes can be stark. Industrial citizenship beyond employment relies on institutionalisation of rights at work, thus maintaining a strong, “Keynesian” role for the nation-state. Conversely, economic citizenship as based on the commodification of labour and privatisation of rights expands—or is expanded by—the role of the market globally (Supiot et al., 1999).

To deal with economic migration thoroughly, industrial denizenship requires supranational or borderless connotations. The following sections demonstrate how, on a theoretical level, the notion of industrial denizenship can be entrenched in an open society with little or no physical and regulatory barriers to human mobility.

Creating alternative futures in economic migration by means of a causal layered analysis

Following Inayatullah’s (2004) methodological model of CLA, this epistemological investigation on the future of economic migration moves across four analytical layers, including: 1) litany; 2) systemic causes; 3) discourse/worldview; and 4) myth/metaphor.

In the first layer, the concept of borderless industrial denizenship attempts to reframe the assumed truth, the litany that economic migration is an inherent threat to domestic labour markets and thus border hardening policies are the natural response to human movement.

The second layer of analysis revolves around the de-nationalisation of industrial citizenship as a new paradigm of the systemic causes of global standards of labour rights.

The third layer of analysis unfolds more in-depth the positions assumed in the previous analytical segments. As mass production and globalised outsourcing call for a supranational union model, the analysis delves deeper in a regime of borderless industrial denizenship that puts less emphasis on boundaries and socio-economic access, and more on social mobility and economic exchange.

Hence, the last layer of analysis denudes the mythicised linkage of border control with workplace rights by offering the alternative metaphor of labour mobility in an open society.

Table 1. *Overview of Causal Layered Analysis*

BORDER CONTROL IN THE WORKPLACE <i>(Dominant perspective)</i>	CAUSAL LAYERED ANALYSIS	BORDERLESS INDUSTRIAL DENIZENSHIP <i>(Alternative future)</i>
Migrants are a social problem, an inferior category of workers; they scrounge off the taxpayer and exploit the welfare system of wealthier countries.	LITANY	Denizenship-like instruments strike a viable compromise between political protectionism and economic liberalisation of human movement.
Migrant workers complain too much, bear too many children and only add to the underclass of “irresponsible poor”.		Industrial denizenship can be entrenched in an open society with little or no physical and regulatory barriers to human mobility.

<p>Trade unions have taken a protectionist approach to migrant labour.</p> <p>Like nation-states allocating benefits and services according to national citizenship, unions separate those eligible to claim the higher wages guaranteed by union contracts from those beyond the contract's scope.</p> <p>The protection of migrant work conditions lies in the arena of immigration policy, which may be in direct or indirect control of employers.</p>	<p>SYSTEMIC CAUSES AND EFFECTS</p>	<p>Rather than a job offer from an employer, membership to intergovernmental labour institutions can be the requirement to acquire denizenship and enjoy the related entitlements.</p> <p>The integration and institutionalisation of industry, labour and state interest groups at the supranational level can form the global version of a corporatist labour community.</p> <p>In exchange for their access to work, industrial denizens would commit to the core socio-economic values of the receiving system, irrespective of citizenship issues.</p>
<p>The best strategy to improve wages is to remove competition.</p> <p>Bounded membership is the only channel through which unions can control the access to working rights protection, as countries do with geographical borders.</p> <p>Labour liberalisation and minimum workplace standards protection are antithetical.</p> <p>An open labour system does not exist yet.</p>	<p>DISCOURSE / WORLDVIEW</p>	<p>The dynamics of economic migration and globalisation call for a more competitive labour market</p> <p>Labour liberalisation cannot advance pro-labour developments without affirming the minimum decent work standards.</p> <p>In the absence of labour liberalisation, basic working rights are inadequately enforced.</p> <p>The frameworks of international trade and outsourced production have already opened cross-border labour markets to a certain extent.</p>
<p>The global village is like a bounded box with interlocking passages.</p> <p>During the day people from the dungeon (third world) move across the walled city (middle hump) to work in the castle (first world), but at night they all must go back to their allocated box. If they fail to do so, the crocodiles in the moat (border control in the workplace) will eat them.</p>	<p>MYTH / METAPHOR</p>	<p>The global village is like a house with many doors between worlds, opening these doors can break the chain of social fear.</p> <p>In the borderless industrial denizenship model, migrant workers are like the water poured into communicating vases (the labour markets) that reach the same level despite the different shape of the vases.</p>

The litany of migrant labour as a social problem

Since the early stages of modern times, the moral dimension of labour based on post-Aristotelian theories of labour value was used to attract migrants to regular factory work, and keep them under control through training and discipline, which was necessary under the production-intensive regime in place.

The gradual disappearance of this kind of migrant labour vision has marked the last decades of boosting the free movement of goods and frustrating the expectations of the freer movement of people.

The workers who are migrants progressively and inexorably end up inhabiting a separate culture in a world with different conditions, rules and, ultimately, rights. As a result, migrant workers are becoming “more migrant” than ever, and the high-skilled core of local workers is retracting in a cocoon made of privileged professional opportunities and discriminatory social security apparatuses.

In addition, the fall of the welfare state in most immigration countries is echoed in the present consensus against the principle of collective responsibility for individual misfortune and disadvantaged position. The outcome of this apparently unstoppable process is the evolution of the way in which migrant workers come into existence and are defined legally, economically, and culturally as one ‘social problem’, an “extra-legion of ethnic minorities”, as a faulty underclass or an inferior category of workers.

The concept of the welfare state implies the duty of the State to guarantee a dignified and decent life, as understood in a given time in a given society, to all its beneficiaries, including non-national residents.

Soon after the advent of workers’ compensation schemes in the late 1800s, the initial conceptualisation in Western democratic countries of the welfare state switched progressively from providing social benefits on a universal basis to doing so through a selective (means-tested) rationale, inevitably resulting in the creation of inferior services for the poor and the majority of first generation migrants among them (Titmuss, 1968).

In a society where labour has a moral dimension (i.e. is a measure of value), public welfare is instrumental in ensuring that migrant workers who go through hard times are kept ready to re-enter employment once jobs are again available. Ultimately, this guarantee to all accepted members of immigrant communities, regardless of their own contribution to the common wealth and skills, was very much in line with the very notion of social citizenship (Marshall, 1950).

In a society of consumers and global traders, at its peak in the cold war-winning developed countries, local capital freed from the responsibilities of moral values in migrant labour is transitioning to find a low-maintenance offshore workforce, rather than retaining imported workers at home. Hence, unemployed and migrant workers, as such mere auxiliaries of labour, risk being socio-economically marginalised, as the costs of keeping them ready for active occupation if and when necessary are still paid for on a local basis while impacting on the production agents competing globally. Under the local economy, there is no immediate benefit in paying more taxes to keep at the ready auxiliaries of labour that are unlikely to be ever needed again, as there is a growing availability of labour globally. Conceivably, only reducing drastically the cost of local labour would reverse this trend. However, cutting the cost implies the inescapable standard lowering of the social security

system and, ultimately, of the rights pertaining to the most vulnerable categories of workers, including cross-border migrants.

In relation to the public, the welfare state downgrade attracts a very high consensus, to the point that it is now conceivable to discuss its total dismantling, as a result of the observed process that is rooted in denying the middle classes equal access to certain collective provisions, such as unemployment benefits and public housing subsidies. These provisions are associated with disadvantaged migrant workers who can benefit from them. In a vicious circle, devoted funds start to shrink as a consequence of the lack of power of beneficiaries, and over-publicised discoveries of petty frauds and abuses from the “irresponsible poor” and migrant workers, who live and bear children in degrading conditions. Lastly, the support of public welfare drops concomitantly with its quality, and the middle classes, already not directly concerned and interested in its continuation, agree to its restriction (Halimi, 1997).

Systemic causes and effects of furthering the de-nationalisation of industrial citizenship

Borderless industrial denizenship adopts a new approach in structuring the global governance of cross-border economic migration that draws on recent developments in the area of transnational industrial relations, and goes beyond current theories of supranational citizenship. Borderless industrial denizenship involves the redesigning of the intergovernmental relationships between labour institutions and private actors of both immigrant sending and receiving countries.

The recent trend of organising migrant workers provides the conceptual baseline for realising the potential of borderless industrial denizenship in linking permission to access foreign labour markets to societal membership through appropriate community and industrial institutions. Rather than a job offer from an employer, membership to intergovernmental labour institutions would be the requirement to acquire denizenship and enjoy the related entitlements. Such a clearly defined framework would dramatically facilitate the enforcement of basic migrant labour rights, as migrants would carry benefits, services and duties with them as they move across borders. Thus, it would have a levelling effect on labour rights overall, virtually eliminating the discrepancies between domestic and alien workers, irrespective of national citizenship status. Ultimately, the aim of borderless industrial denizenship is to smooth the way for the free movement of people for the purpose of work, while preserving the status quo of working conditions in the receiving labour markets, without the need for practices of standard-levelling across countries.

Preliminary to this proposal is the supra-nationalisation of labour organisations at the same level of business and, to a lesser extent, States. However, historically trade unions have taken a protectionist approach to migrant labour, although more recent developments show a more open and international outlook. In an increasing number of cases, union interest groups welcome immigrants, even if undocumented, although with preference to those already present in the industries they organise (Silver, 2005). Arguably, unions with a restrictionist attitude towards the ongoing influx of new immigrants fail to achieve their goal of improving the working conditions from a social justice perspective, and therefore need to redesign themselves to commit to the reality of modern labour.

Crucially, a simultaneous step should be the integration and institutionalisation of industry, labour and state interest groups at the supranational level, to form the global version of a corporatist labour community (Howard, 1996). In particular, nation-states need to reconfigure their approach to economic migration to blend the interests of labour, capital and society altogether. The corporatist configuration of borderless industrial denizenship may shed light on the challenges that open-border policies face in the collective consciousness of the political, social and economic governance arena. In general, it seems that Marshall's industrial citizenship perspective is still firmly entrenched in the unions' approach to implement workers' solidarity as parallel to the conventional national citizenship outlook. Thus, like nation-states allocating benefits and services according to national citizenship, unions separate those eligible to claim the higher wages guaranteed by union contracts from those beyond the contract's scope. The traditional unionist approach appears to regard industrial citizenship as a limited commodity, a cake to share among as few members as possible to obtain a bigger and better piece. It is the central contention of this study that this is true because citizenship is bound by definition, and encourages the exclusionary approach of amassing and distributing limited resources, a characteristic of a mercantilist economic view. From the perspective of both nation-states and unions, bound membership is the precondition for the development of an equal and democratic community. Therefore, supra-nationalisation is seen with suspicion, if not as a threat to the continuity and solidarity of the entity. Nevertheless, increasing pressure from the massive human movement around the globe is bearing down upon the traditional structure of citizenship on the national level, and on unions alike (Bosniak, 2000). On the economic level, immigrant remittances can be seen as the driving socio-economic force behind the de-nationalisation of industrial citizenship. However, there is a widespread reluctance at all levels to investigate the conditions of work producing these remittances. Reshaping the migrant labour framework in a de-nationalised fashion appears to be a theoretically valid avenue to serve the ends of a socially fair system of economic migration.

The nationalised model of industrial citizenship is unsustainable in the face of a globally interconnected labour market. Failing to create a new concept of industrial citizenship would compromise its normative dimension as embodied in labour organisations. In other words, a nationalised industrial citizenship would be at odds with a transnationalised economy, leading to the de-nationalisation of membership of labour organisations. Therefore, a new model of industrial membership should follow to accommodate the new patterns in economic migration. Where an open model of national citizenship is not possible or would not make sense, denizenship at the industrial level could be the desired solution. Industrial denizenship offers a more open model in terms of membership access to other countries for work, and a non-limited vision of labour entitlements. In exchange for their access to work, industrial denizens would commit to the core socio-economic values of the receiving system, irrespective of citizenship issues. The possible imbalances of the labour market created by a sudden over-supply of workers may well be solved by the increased mobility and responsiveness of other interconnected labour markets. In the short term, employment crises may become more frequent, but quicker to overcome. In the medium to long term, the global labour market would become more stable yet flexible (Pecoud and de Guchteneire, 2007).

In the face of a persisting hard-bordered model of national citizenship, the globalised economy brings about polarising effects of human development between countries and individuals across the world. The more unequally developed countries are, the more migrant workers will continue to arrive, regardless of immigration control policies. A purely economic solution would be to abandon the regulation of working conditions to employers, who would then set them as low as the market requires. Naturally, a balanced society requires the government to actively enforce basic workplace standards, especially where migrants are heavily present. However, unfortunately States do not usually have the political will, the resources, or the mechanisms to enforce minimum labour standards consistently. In practice, workers' interest groups fill this gap. The problem is that in a globalised economy setting, the protection of migrant work conditions lies in the arena of immigration policy, which may be in direct or indirect control of employers. This arguably could be seen as another factor in the steady decline of the power of unions. Instead, the model offered by the borderless industrial denizenship would shift to the arena of labour standing, where workers' groups are in control. This would balance the economic dynamics of globalisation with a labour-centred vision, and level the ground for a corporatist management of global society.

A transformative discourse of global futures in economic migration

Is borderless industrial denizenship so different from our current regime as to be unthinkable? The emerging institutions of transnational economic and political citizenship offer some theoretical scaffolding in this regard.

Due to more affordable communication and transportation technologies, increasing numbers of people can pursue dual lives, residing outside their countries of origin while maintaining socio-economic ties with home. Even at the political level, emigrant countries seek to keep strong bonds with expatriate citizens through specific policy mechanisms aimed at maximising their social and economic remittances. For instance, there is a widespread emergence of normative and financial incentives for dual citizenship, and migrant voting and representation back home (Chander, 2006). Certainly, these measures have not broken the mould of the bound citizenship paradigm. Yet, they can display new opportunities for improving cross-border political and economic participation, better reflecting the reality of globalised labour markets. However, unlike what is happening in migrant-sending countries, the formal citizenship and migration policies of receiving countries have remained rather static in the face of a massive global movement of people. Borderless industrial denizenship could even up this international lopsidedness, and help support an institutional framework that reflects cross-border lives, putting migrant workers in the role of agents, rather than supplicants or victims.

Borderless industrial denizenship usefully demonstrates that change in economic migration governance does not necessarily require obliteration of the traditional citizenship paradigm or its radical transformation to open-border structures. On the contrary, because borderless industrial denizenship is inclusive and participatory in nature, it does not imply added social rights and economic burdens on the host communities. In fact, the corporatist tripartite structure based on networks of cross-border interest groups does not raise questions of distribution and exclusivity that

open-border citizenship reforms do.

In our globalised world, workers flow in and out of labour markets. Rather than a bounded box, the proposed model of borderless industrial denizenship evokes the image of communicating vases. According to this principle of physics, any liquid substance poured into two communicating containers would reach the same level, even if their shape were different. In the borderless industrial denizenship model, migrant workers would be the liquid substance, and labour markets would be the communicating vases. This concept rejects the idea that the workers' level has to be categorised according to their nationality or immigration status. Instead, it is based on the assumption that workers can eventually reach the same level of the others who are better off when the labour markets effectively "communicate". This approach could ultimately realise a new norm of global labour, moving away from the rigid concepts of national citizenship and worker representation.

From a union perspective, borderless industrial denizenship can divert immigration control from the workplace, a practice that undermines the social movement essence of unionism, and makes the protection of workers' rights weaker. Conversely, open-border labour policies raise the unions' primal fears of limitless competition (in particular for low-skilled work), and concerns about absolute numbers of workers in labour markets (Johnston, 2001). However, these worries are predicated on the idea that an open labour system does not exist yet, whereas to a certain extent, the frameworks of international trade and outsourced production have already opened cross-border labour markets. Borderless industrial denizenship would bring more people into the job market legally, and therefore curtail distorting labour market trade practices, contributing significantly to the re-negotiation of the terms on which economic migration is pursued. Such an inclusive approach to labour representation and socio-economic membership can help resolve the perennial conflict between nationals and newcomers in favour of mutual solidarity. Domestic workers would not be so concerned with migrants, however many there were and wherever they came from; and industrial denizens would be committed to the core tenet of labour solidarity in return.

Free labour mobility: a different story for the global compact

Overall, borderless industrial denizenship is a call for an intensive application of labour rights to a world of massive migration, and recognition of the unavoidability of an ongoing flow of economic migrants. It is also a method for settling migrants in the fold of open labour markets, immediately conferring on cross-border industrial denizens a legal status and relationship with a network of labour, governmental and economic organisations. Especially at the bottom of the ladder, industrial denizens would access labour markets many steps ahead of both temporary and permanent migrants in the current situation.

However, open-border labour policies alone cannot resolve the whole migration problem. Other measures need to be implemented concomitantly in terms of global economic development and enforcement of labour standards. In particular, concerted efforts at the intergovernmental level should be directed at raising standards of living, wages and quality of life in economically depressed areas of the world. Such equalisation policies would develop economic infrastructure with a view to give incentives for labour to remain in the developing area, rather than moving it to higher waged countries. The ultimate challenge would be to remove the low-high

wage economy polarisation, thus precluding investors and corporations from basing their business tactics mainly on low-wage advantage. In combination with freeing labour movement, this approach would also reduce the capacity of capital to benefit from the existence of extensive pools of jobless people. In fact, the unemployed would have the real option to move, stay or return following the competitive development of economic and social infrastructures expanding local employment. This can also expand the scope for labour, social and environmental protections, empowering developing communities against the corporate demand for lower standards of all types, and ensuring that depressed labour enclaves are not recreated for a cheap workforce to enter developed economies. Certainly, these concepts are not new to trans- and supranational socio-economic debates. Even though they would represent an improvement in terms of openness, the resulting policies are still based on national citizenship concepts entailing hierarchical and state-imposed operations, and assume an as yet not-existent race, class and gender equality. Instead, the theoretical framework of borderless industrial denizenship is formed on a grassroots aspiration of organising the global community in multipolar and post-national networks through the recognition of the means of differently empowered groups of interest.

At present, the immigration, refugee and border control laws of nation-states may stand in direct conflict with the right to move and the right to remain within one's State included in art 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

As a result, the global sphere of labour is constrained in its ability either to enforce the already existing international standards, or to transpose domestic social contracts based on principles of distributive justice and workers' protection. Thus, the current international and domestic labour frameworks based on these principles are running out of steam, and struggle with the cross-border economic forces besetting them.

At the individual nation-state level, workplace security and other labour protection measures traditionally operated to balance the local forces of labour and capital. However, domestic factors alone cannot thoroughly address the conditions confronting labour mobility, and local governments cannot control the effects of the transnational economic trends of existing domestic labour standards. In particular, multilateral trade liberalisation has not only brought about wider consumer choice for cheaper goods, but it has also exposed both capital and labour to a greater cross-border competitive edge, altering the social contracts within individual nation-states. In many cases, the attempt to bolster economic competitiveness is forcing labour to relinquish many of the protective mechanisms previously won, according to the idea that the bar of labour protection standards must be lowered to attract globally mobile investments.

On the contrary, the borderless industrial denizenship framework aims to include pro-labour protection mechanisms in the global social contract by allocating an equal economic role to labour and capital. In this context, by analogy with trade in capital and goods, the liberalisation of labour is required to allow its participation in the creation of economic factors that affect it, and of legislative standards that protect it. This study proposes that an open-border labour process be initiated in connection with the broader trade liberalisation trend. This would thoroughly restructure the current concept of labour as a mere immobile input into the production of goods and services. In the borderless industrial denizenship model, labour movement would

eventually be freed from the nation-state border constraints that undermine the enforcement of labour and other related human rights standards. In other words, the abstract right to leave and to remain would turn into a real power to enter and exit labour markets, therefore imposing a greater degree of socio-economic discipline on illiberal governments seeking to oppress the populations of their nation-states. Overall, labour liberalisation would expand international competition for skilled and educated populations, thus encouraging the recognition, enforcement and promotion of fundamental civil and human rights. In fact, in order for borderless industrial denizenship to be most effective, it must take place within a context where not only free labour movement, but also core labour rights standards are recognised and enforced. Borderless industrial denizenship combines into a coherent whole the relationship between labour liberalisation and minimum workplace standards protection, which have been antithetical to date. In such a context, this relationship is turned into a symbiotic one, on the double assumption that labour liberalisation cannot advance pro-labour developments without affirming the minimum decent work standards, and that in the absence of labour liberalisation, basic working rights are inadequately enforced.

In a context of unsettled cross-border migration, the traditional approach to industrial citizenship does not appear to be able to manage effectively the economic and social issues attached to human movement. Temporary migration or guest worker schemes cannot provide a comprehensive solution if they position cross-border workers outside the scope of labour rights protection. Instead, the borderless industrial denizenship model proposed in this study can potentially be the first leap towards addressing the dilemmas of decent work in an interconnected world.

Correspondence

Giovanni Di Lieto
Level 10, 123 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE Victoria 3000
Australia
Email: giovanni.dilieto@ncps.edu.au

Notes

- 1 The above figures on international migration and development are sourced from: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), population division, World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision, at IV: 18-19, available at <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2008/wpp2008_highlights.pdf>.

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