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**MIGRATION, RURAL TRANSFORMATION, AND INCLUSION CHALLENGES
IN TAIWAN'S FARMING SYSTEMS**

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In recent decades, Taiwan's rural areas have undergone profound demographic and economic restructuring driven by sustained out-migration to major cities for education and employment. This shift has precipitated population decline, rapid aging, and acute labor shortages across the agricultural, caregiving, and service sectors. In response to skewed sex ratios and a diminishing rural workforce, many communities have become sites of international migration. Cross-border marriage has emerged as a key pathway for family formation, with migrant spouses providing essential social reproductive labor and contributing directly to agricultural production. The government has also expanded migrant worker quotas; by mid-2025, Taiwan hosted 858,939 migrant workers—70 percent employed in productive industries and 30 percent in social welfare—alongside

an estimated 94,301 undocumented migrants who frequently engage in seasonal farm labor.

Although farming organizations and producer cooperatives remain central to agricultural production and rural development, their membership structures and governance practices often inadvertently exclude new entrants, small-scale producers, and migrant workers. Drawing on the political economy of labor migration, translocal and relational rurality, and feminist social reproduction perspectives, this study situates migrants within broader processes of economic restructuring, demographic transition, and gendered social change. It examines how migration flows reshape labor relations, family farming systems, and community dynamics.

Employing a qualitative research design across three townships, the study analyzes the mechanisms through which migrants are incorporated into local agricultural practices and social structures. Findings indicate that migrants not only sustain essential rural industries but also generate translocal linkages and cultural diversity that challenge conventional notions of rurality and belonging. The study further explores how returnee farmers and alternative agricultural models contribute to rural regeneration. By examining Taiwan's evolving migration regime within debates on labor governance and community development, this research evaluates whether cooperative initiatives and rural revitalization policies promote inclusive and sustainable rural futures.

Palavras-chave: migration; agricultural labor; family farms; farming organizations; institutional inclusion.