

There are too many clichés. Given that people all over the world are moving in search of better living conditions, the issue is to understand how the phenomenon is evolving. Europe, for example, will increasingly

This is a world of migrants

MIGRATIONS 1

by Donato Speroni

require fresh manpower. To achieve this, however, it will have to come up with a reception policy that is both selective and capable of encouraging integration

Which is the fifth most populous country in the world after China, India, the United States and Indonesia? “Brazil”, the well informed would reply. But there is another “population” that, at nearly 200 million people, outnumbers Brazil’s 184 million (2005 figures) and appears likely to grow strongly in the next few years. This is the population of migrants, people who have moved far away from their home countries to escape wars or famine, seek better living or working conditions or even to enrich their intellectual training and subsequently return home. The number of migrants has grown by 15 million in the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. The recent growth is mainly due to the search for better living conditions, rather than to political events (which do however count), and the consequences are having a major impact. The economic effects are largely positive. Migration makes a fundamental contribution to the economies of wealthy nations, which have rapidly aging populations, while remittances to migrants’ countries of origin contribute to ensuring the survival of entire regions. On the social front, however, migration creates problems

of assimilation and multiculturalism that are not easily solved. In many cases, people in industrialised countries find it hard to realise that they need immigration and tend toward extremist and ideologized policies (from total refusal to indiscriminate opening) instead of managing immigration in the best possible way so as to encourage their own development.

Comprehensive statistical data are maintained by the International Organization for Migration (generally referred to using the acronym IOM), a U.N. agency originally set up 50 years ago to handle the resettlement of people uprooted by World War II in Europe, which subsequently evolved into a global structure that has assisted on issues such as the Vietnamese boat people, Kosovo and the tsunami and is increasingly the governing body as regards policies related to large-scale migrations. Aid to people fleeing wars and political persecution is however managed by the UNHCR (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency), the U.N. agency that has worked with Palestinian refugees in Middle Eastern countries since 1949.

The number of refugees under the UNHCR's protection increased from 2 million in 1975 to peak at 16 million in 1990 before dropping, thanks mainly to partial improvement in the African situation, to 8.4 million in 2005. In addition to these figures, there are however the 4.3 million Palestinians in the care of the UNRWA and no fewer than 6.6 million internally displaced persons (IDP), i.e. people who have had to flee their homes because of war or persecution but continue to live within the borders of their own country. It should in fact be mentioned that the number of IDPs is growing: there were an estimated 20 to 25 million IDPs worldwide in 2004, with major concentrations in Sudan, Angola, Colombia, Liberia, Sri Lanka and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and some countries of the former Soviet Union. Refugees are actually in a position of privilege in the overall migration scenario, cynical though this observation may seem.

They are entitled to visas for many countries they would not otherwise be able to enter, whereas people who suffer the equally dramatic conditions of famine and poverty are not as well protected, as these conditions do not entitle them to the status of refugees. It is among these categories in particular that there are a large number of illegal immigrants: the U.N. estimates that there are now from 30 to 40 million unauthorized migrants (who therefore have no legal rights) worldwide.

However, emigration is not made up exclusively of poverty and suffering. A recent estimate suggested that some 400,000 scientists and engineers from developing countries (between 30 and 50% of the total stock) were working in research and development in the industrial countries. How serious is this brain drain for the countries of origin? There is no doubt that the situation sometimes becomes



unmanageable: 25 to 40% of Central Americans with tertiary education live in the U.S. Jamaica is an extreme case: 80% of Jamaicans with tertiary education live in the U.S. More Ethiopian doctors are practising in Chicago than in Ethiopia. However, in particular after the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), in operation since 2000, international exchanges between countries of origin and destination countries has opened up the prospect of turning “brain drain” into “brain gain” (see box).

What are the most significant migrant flows in this historic phase? Here is an updated scenario, drawn for the most part from IOM documents.

Africa and the Middle East

In the future, the bulk of African emigration will come from the sub-Saharan areas. The drop in fertility rates in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in the last 25 years is similar to the drop in France over a period of two centuries, and Tunisia’s fertility rate has already settled at 1.55 children per woman, more or less that of the Western countries. It is therefore estimated that the migratory flow from the Maghreb countries will drop substantially after 2010.

Overall, however, the mobility of the African people is the highest in the world: not only towards Europe, the U.S. and the Gulf States but also among the various countries of the

COUNTRIES HOSTING THE LARGEST NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS, 1970 AND 2000

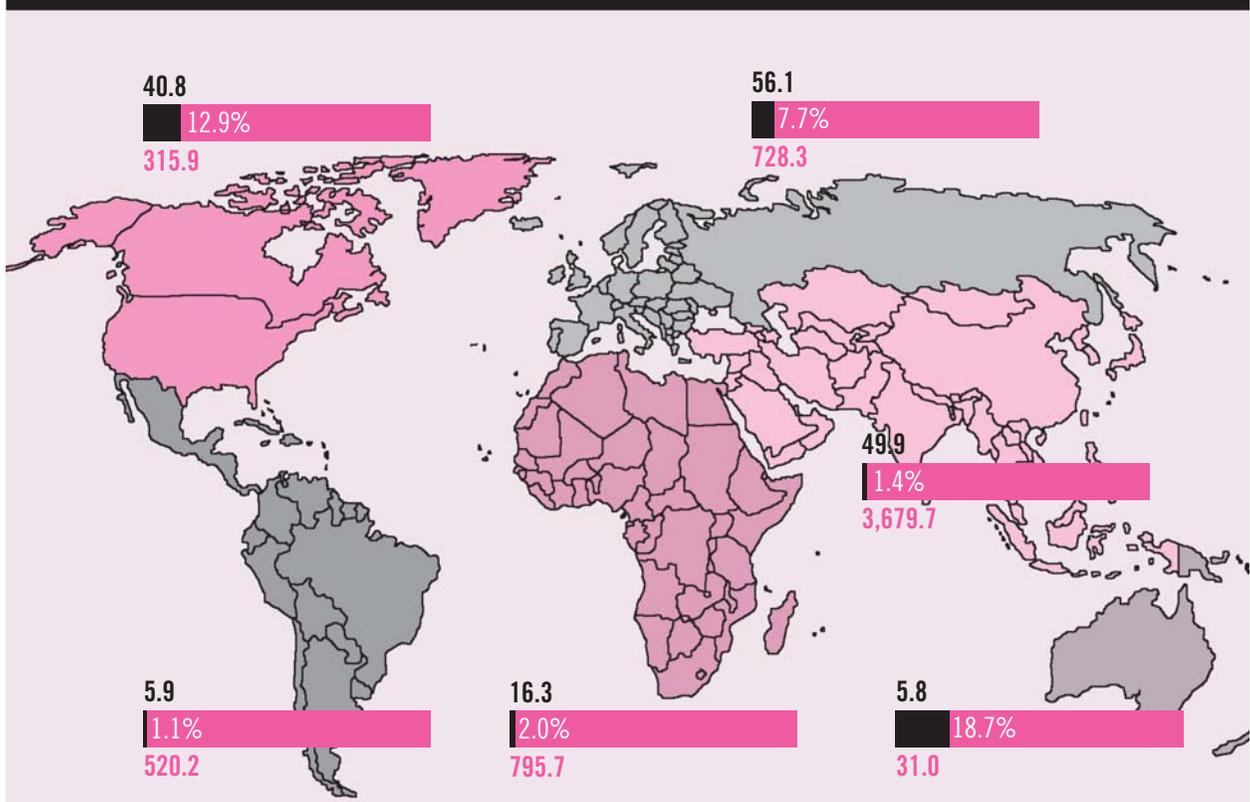
1970				2000			
Country or area	Migrant stock (millions)	Percentage of the world's migrant stock	Cumulated percentage	Country or area	Migrant stock (millions)	Percentage of the world's migrant stock	Cumulated percentage
1 United States	9.7	11.9	11.9	1 United States	35.0	20.0	20.0
2 India	9.1	11.2	23.1	2 Russian Federation	13.3	7.6	27.6
3 France	5.2	6.4	29.5	3 Germany	7.3	4.2	31.8
4 Pakistan	5.1	6.3	35.8	4 Ukraine	6.9	4.0	35.8
5 Canada	3.3	4.0	39.8	5 France	6.3	3.6	39.4
6 USSR (former)	3.1	3.8	43.6	6 India	6.3	3.6	43.0
7 United Kingdom	2.9	3.6	47.2	7 Canada	5.8	3.3	46.3
8 Germany	2.6	3.2	50.4	8 Saudi Arabia	5.3	3.0	49.3
9 Australia	2.5	3.0	53.4	9 Australia	4.7	2.7	52.0
10 Argentina	2.3	2.8	56.2	10 Pakistan	4.2	2.4	54.4
11 Poland	2.1	2.6	58.8	11 United Kingdom	4.0	2.3	56.7
12 China, Hong Kong SAR	1.7	2.1	60.9	12 Kazakhstan	3.0	1.7	58.4
13 Dem. Rep. of the Congo	1.4	1.7	62.6	13 China, Hong Kong SAR	2.7	1.5	59.9
14 Israel	1.4	1.7	64.3	14 Cote d'Ivoire	2.3	1.3	61.2
15 Brazil	1.3	1.6	65.9	15 Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2.3	1.3	62.5
16 Indonesia	1.2	1.4	67.3	16 Israel	2.3	1.3	63.8
17 Cote d'Ivoire	1.1	1.4	68.7	17 Poland	2.1	1.2	65.0
18 Switzerland	1.1	1.4	70.1	18 Jordan	1.9	1.1	66.1
19 South Africa	1.0	1.2	71.3	19 United Arab Emirates	1.9	1.1	67.2
20 Uganda	1.0	1.2	72.5	20 Switzerland	1.8	1.0	68.2
21 Italy	0.9	1.1	73.6	21 Occupied Palestinian Terr.	1.7	1.0	69.2
22 Occupied Palestinian Terr.	0.9	1.1	74.7	22 Italy	1.6	0.9	70.1
23 Sri Lanka	0.8	1.0	75.7	23 Japan	1.6	0.9	71.0
				24 Netherlands	1.6	0.9	71.9
				25 Turkey	1.5	0.9	72.8
				26 Argentina	1.4	0.8	73.6
				27 Malaysia	1.4	0.8	74.4
				28 Uzbekistan	1.4	0.8	75.2
World	81,5	100,0	100,0	World	174.9	100,0	100,0

Source: United Nations, Trends in total migrant stock: the 2003 revision (POP/DB/MIG/2003/1 and ESA/P/WP.188), data in digital form.

African continent. And it will increase in the future. A few figures suffice to outline the scope of the problem. Africa now has a population of around 680 million, of whom almost 50% live below the poverty threshold. In comparison, the 25 members of the European Union have nearly the same total population, 630 million. According to forecasts, the EU's population will remain more or less the same in 2050, while Africa's population will triple to between 1.6 and 1.8 billion: a wave of people will therefore migrate in search of better conditions. African emigration is directed to Europe, the United States and the Gulf States, with a large inter-regional component. It is estimated in fact

that 16 million migrants live in an African country other than their country of origin, with a major difference compared to the past: the number of refugees is diminishing constantly, with a corresponding rise in the number of economic migrants, from merely 2 million in 1990 to 12.7 million in 2000. While migration is partly due to the famines that make entire areas uninhabitable, the discovery of and search for behavioural models different from traditional village life also play a large part. In fact the considerable, but hard to quantify, migrations within each country must be added to migration from one state to another. The African population has the world's highest rate of urbanization – 3.5% a year – so

TOTAL AND MIGRANT POPULATION BY REGION, IN 2000



TOTAL and MIGRANT population in millions and per cent of total population



Source: United Nations, Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2003 Revision. Database maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Affairs, 2003. POP/DB/MIG/2003/1/ Trends in Total Migrant Stock by Sex 1990-2000.

much so that it is forecast that 54% of Africans will be living in huge, unmanageable cities with few work opportunities in 2030. It is estimated that tens of millions of people will be involved in the movement towards African cities as well as cities on other continents before policies aimed at strong promotion of rural development correct this trend.

It should be noted that the proportion of females in the African migratory movement is growing strongly, from 42% of all migrants in the 1960s to 47% currently, with a major qualitative difference: while women moved in the past primarily to follow the head of the family, they now emigrate on their own to seek work as home help and caregivers as well as more skilled jobs. There were 382 nurses from Zimbabwe in the U.K. in 2001, equal to the number of trained nurses the country is capable of turning out over a three-year period. The Middle East is another migration hub, partly because of the region's historical problems, from the Palestinian tragedy following the 1948 war to the Iraqi diaspora (a phenomenon that began 20 years ago at the time of the war with Iran), taking the total count to about five million refugees, and partly because of the strong appeal of the oil exporting countries, which host about 14 million foreign workers. Foreigners account for 35% of the population in the six Persian Gulf states and up to 70% of the workforce, peaking at over 80% in Qatar, Kuwait and the Emirates.

A significant population of displaced persons known as *Bidun*, from the Arabic term *bidun jinsiya*, meaning "stateless", has also established itself in the region. Biduns have been living in many countries for several years, but have very few rights in terms of social security and property purchase.

America

While the exact count of migrants on the New Continent is uncertain, it can be reliably estimated that there are currently about 20 million immigrants from South America and the Caribbean. Until the 1970s things were different: South America and the Caribbean attracted immigrants, especially from Spain, Italy, Portugal and Japan. Economic problems in Argentina and Venezuela as well as other countries have reversed this pattern, so much so that the net emigration rate for South America and the Caribbean was the highest of

any region in the world over a five-year period from 1995 to 2000.

The United States and Canada are the prime destinations for these movements. In 2000 the U.S. Census Bureau documented 28.4 million foreign-born individuals in the U.S., about half of them from South America. U.N. estimates place the number of foreign-born individuals – including illegal immigrants – in the U.S. at 35 million. U.S. visa policies have become very restrictive over the last few years, partly as a reaction to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. One indicator of this trend is that the number of visas Washington issued to those seeking political asylum diminished from 68,426 in 2001 to 28,455 in 2003. The U.S. government is however facing another serious migratory problem: the large number of undocumented people already living in the U.S., with others continuing to arrive, particularly from across the Mexican border – a situation that it is very hard to control because this large mass of illegal immigrants (about 500,000 per year) is



subjected to every possible form of oppression. The situation will not really be resolved by building a wall along the border. The number of irregular immigrants is so large that it is important to take their economic contribution into account and also give them political rights, as recent protest marches have shown. Canada, which once attracted skilled immigrants, has also undergone the impact of new migrants. In the forty-year time span between 1961 and 2001, the size of the Latin American and Caribbean-born population increased by a factor of 45 from 12,900 to 585,800, whereas those coming from Europe increased from 809,330 to 1,478,230. Because the majority of Canadian immigrants come for labour purposes, the level of immigrant education is highly polarized;

immigrants are either very well educated or barely at all. This situation has sparked a major debate in Canadian society on managing immigration and its contribution to economic development. Migration within the Americas is however not directed uniquely to the two big North American countries: economic uncertainty and political tensions have also led to large-scale movement among South American countries. Ecuador is an example of the complexity of these movements: in the five-year period from 1997 to 2002, 550,000 Ecuadorians, about a fifth of the work force, left the country but were however largely replaced in the north by people fleeing Colombia and in the south by migrants from Peru. In Argentina, which was a land of immigration until the 1990s, some of the more recent immigrants have returned to Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru and part of its population has left to seek work in Europe, taking advantage of citizenship systems favourable to the descendants of the old emigrants.

_The government of the Philippines estimates that there are about seven millions its citizens living abroad, especially in North America (facing page: the swearing-in ceremony for new American citizens) and Europe



Asia

Asian migration is more legally organised than in other world regions, either because of migration-promoting government programmes involving emigrant training and aid in various countries, from the Philippines and Indonesia to Vietnam, or because of the many legal and regulated immigration brokers in the region to respond to the demand for labour in developed countries. However, the process is tending to become increasingly disorganised because of the strong demographic push that strengthens the demand for labour in emigration countries and the ever-increasing demand in countries that import manpower. The result is a forecasted increase in migrations in the coming years, with a consistent increase in the number of irregular immigrants. Where do Asian migrants go? Those who remain on the Asian continent move to Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, all countries with rapidly aging populations. However, there is a slowdown in emigration towards the Gulf States, which have been the main destination for workers from the Asian continent since the 1970s. The demand for labour in these countries diminished in the 1990s, partly because of the completion of many construction projects but above all because of a precise choice to “indigenize” manpower, with incentives for companies hiring locals instead of foreigners. Migrant flows towards the more developed countries in North America and Europe continue, with fairly specific professional profiles, from Filipino domestic workers (the government of the Philippines estimates that there are about seven million of its citizens living abroad) to Indian IT workers. Iran, which in the past was principally a destination country, is emerging as a labour exporter, registering an annual outflow of about 285,000 workers, mainly to Europe and the Middle East. There are currently about 3 million Iranians working abroad temporarily, mostly young, male and well educated. China is a special case in the Asian scenario. The Asian giant has registered substantial internal movement (in 2003, 120 million people lived outside their town of origin for over six months) and is also a labour exporter and importer. It should be noted first of all that the outflow, whether for temporary work, study or tourism, is very

high, with over 20 million temporary outbound visas in 2004 and anything from 70 to 120,000 Chinese going to live abroad every year. Meanwhile, no fewer than 120,000 foreigners went to China to work in 2001, albeit on short-term contracts for the most part and generally managerial-level staff hired by foreign companies or university lecturers.

Over the past 25 years, over 700,000 Chinese went to study abroad, and over 170,000 of them returned to China, benefiting from government programmes offering incentives such as the choice of working place and equipment purchase to start new businesses. About 80% of the members of the Academy of Sciences of China are former overseas Chinese students.

Oceania

Australia and New Zealand are traditional immigration countries: as at the last census, 17.4 % of Australia’s population and 19% of



New Zealand's population was born overseas. The policies of the two big Oceania countries are however changing, with a propensity towards the immigration of skilled manpower and people who intend to invest in businesses there. The flow of workers from Asia and Polynesia is on the rise compared to the traditional European immigration, with particular attention to the citizens of the small Pacific States who will probably have to leave their islands because of the rising level of the ocean and the increase in extreme weather phenomena: this is a preamble to far more substantial migrations that could soon concern the whole world as a result of the greenhouse effect.

_Many States also witness skilled migration for work reasons, which, as in the case of migration for purposes of study, is composed of people with a high level of education

Europe

How is the Old Continent placed as regards these vast movements, made ever easier by low transport costs and the global flow of information? In many European countries, immigration makes the difference between a population decline (due to natural events) and its increase or overall stability. In absolute numbers and using comparable data, in 2003 net migration was largest in Spain (+594,000) and Italy (+511,000), followed by Germany (+166,000) and the U.K. (+103,000). These data make it clear that the countries that absorbed the largest number of migrants in the past are today subjected to less pressure than the Southern European countries. It is difficult, however, to quantify the overall number of immigrants in Europe, because unlike the United States or Australia, where the census records the number of foreign-born individuals, almost all European countries use the nationality criterion, and since immigrants are naturalised after a certain number of years,



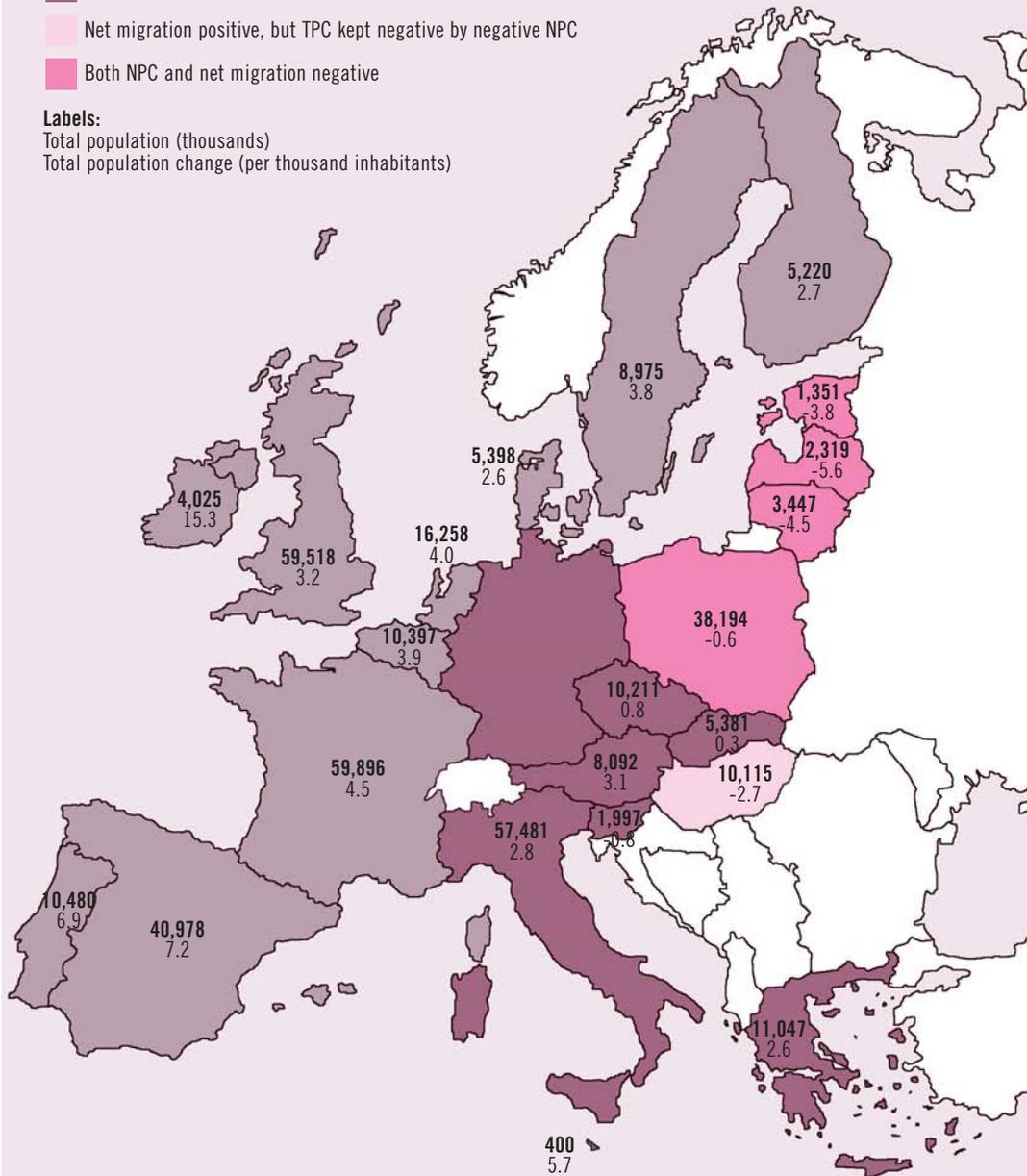
POPULATION CHANGE
IN THE CURRENT 25 EU COUNTRIES IN 2003

NPC¹, net migration and TPC²

- Both NPC and net migration positive
- NPC negative, but TPC turned positive by positive net migration
- Net migration positive, but TPC kept negative by negative NPC
- Both NPC and net migration negative

Labels:

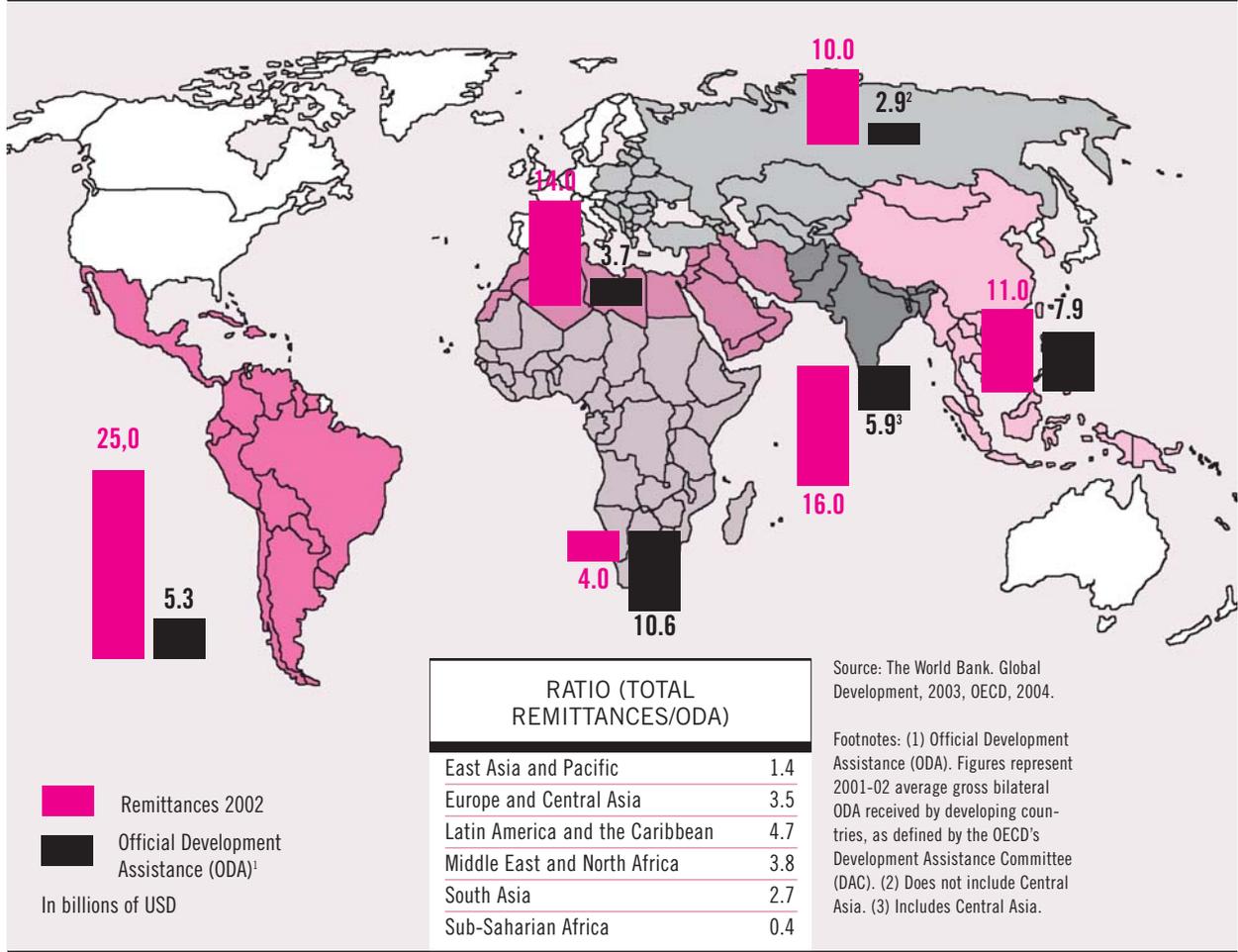
Total population (thousands)
Total population change (per thousand inhabitants)



Source: EUROSTAT Chronos Database, cited in Charter 7 of this report.

Footnotes: (1) The abbreviation NPC used on the map means Natural Population Change = fertility minus mortality in a given year, per thousand inhabitants. TPC means Total Population Change = NPC plus net migration, per thousand inhabitants. (2) The Greek area of Cyprus only.

REMITTANCES AND FOREIGN AID BY REGION, 2002



the distinction for statistical purposes becomes nearly impossible. Meanwhile, even second-generation immigrants born and raised in a European country whose parents have not changed their original nationality continue to be considered “foreigners”. Overall, however, the number of people legally considered as foreigners according to the milestone 2000-2001 census in all the 15 pre-enlargement EU countries is estimated to be around 20 million. But the statistical estimate is that first-generation immigrants in the 15 countries, including those who have been naturalised, amount to about 33 million.

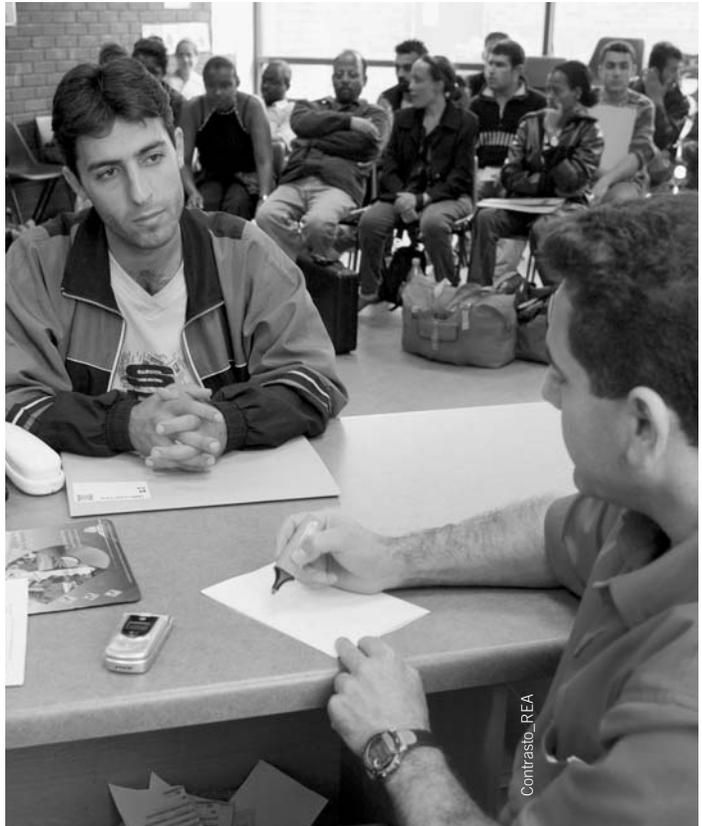
How has EU enlargement affected migratory flows? In fact, many countries imposed temporary limits to avoid the large-scale entry of “Polish plumbers”. In perspective, however, experts estimate that the central European countries do not have the demographical

potential for large-scale movement, as their populations are also aging. On the contrary, thanks in part to the current or forecast effects of economic development as a result of entry into the EU, some of these countries, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, are already becoming immigration areas.

All in all, it is estimated that Western and Central Europe (i.e. excepting the former Soviet countries, which witnessed large-scale migrations among the new republics after the dissolution of the USSR) host from 36 to 39 million international migrants, a figure that is more or less equal to the U.S. foreign-born population. However, the IOM points out, in Europe the economic and political integration of immigrants takes place at a slower pace than in the U.S. In this context, it is important to emphasise the conclusion of the International

Organization for Migration: “During the 21st century, for demographic and economic reasons, all present and future EU member states will either remain or become immigration countries. After 2010, many countries will have to develop pro-active migration policies to meet those burgeoning manpower needs. For a relatively short period of time, European East-to-West migration will continue to play a role. But in the medium and long term, potential migrants will inevitably have to be recruited from other world regions. In this context, Europe will have to compete with traditional countries of immigration, in particular Australia, Canada, and the U.S., for qualified migrants to fill their labour gaps. However, all attempts to implement coherent migration regimes, and integration and citizenship policies, need public support among domestic populations”.

It is therefore necessary to explain to Europeans that it is also in their interest to develop policies aimed at shaping, not preventing, immigration. Even if an immigration quota must continue to be reserved for polices of solidarity towards the most deprived, the more general problem will be that of encouraging the entry of those who can integrate best, make the best contribution to the host country and be prospective European citizens.



As regards Europe, the highest levels of immigration occur in Spain and Italy, followed by the U.K. and Germany. The southern European countries now attract the largest flows

The pros and cons for developing countries

As in Italy in the early 1900s, remittances from emigrants, i.e. the quantity of money that people working abroad send their families in their countries of origin, play an important role in the local economy. In 2005, migrants transferred an estimated \$167 billion to developing countries: a flow that was at least three times higher than development aid. In all, remittances account for 2.4% of the overall GDP of developing countries and are significantly higher in poorer countries.

According to the IOM, Asia in particular offers excellent examples of how emigration policies can be handled through remittances and proactive diaspora management. India and the Philippines receive substantial remittances, and remittance flows are also increasingly important for Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

However, there is an aspect that worries emigration countries: the more skilled an emigrant, the less money he tends to send back home, possibly because he is well-placed to get his family to emigrate to the destination country too. If this trend were to continue, there would be two disadvantages to the “brain drain” – the cost of bringing up and educating young people who subsequently emigrate and the lack of remittances. To avoid this risk, the more active countries make an effort to maintain close relations with their more skilled emigrants, the objective being to turn the brain drain into a “brain gain” that would also benefit developing countries, as they would be able to count on a network of highly skilled expatriates.