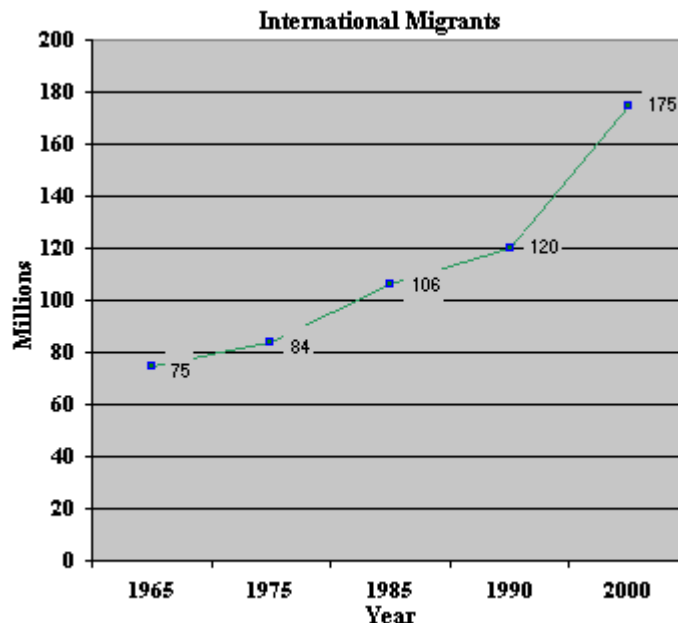


Executive Summary - International Migration

* Historically, migration has been a major source of individual and community progress, a barometer of changing social, economic and political conditions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations guarantees citizens of the world the right to emigrate from a country, but does not guarantee them right of entry into a given country, reserving that right for the nation state.



Source: IIN Population Division 2009

* While international migration has no impact on overall world population growth, it has a significant social and economic impact on specific countries and regions. Over the past decade, the magnitude and complexity of migration has increased. International migration is now a global phenomenon and an issue of growing concern to the international community.

* Although the causes of international migration are varied and complex, persistent economic disparities between the areas of origin and destination have been at the root of most migration flows in the latter half of the 20th century. The number of international migrants increased dramatically from prior decades, reflecting the high birth rates during the mid-century that resulted in a growing number of young workers in many poor countries without adequate employment opportunities.

* The role of the state is crucial in international migration. By setting the rules on who can enter and exit and under what conditions, the nation-state controls migration and its consequences. Establishing family reunification or citizenship in a former colony as a basis for legal admission facilitates the creation of social networks and trans-national communications that are likely to fuel migration over the short run. Education and skill as the basis for legal admission establishes a different dynamic, which allows the state to meet workforce demands.

* Earlier labor immigration patterns and former political or military involvement established long distance networks that facilitated and sustained the emigration process. The exploding international communication system revealed the economic opportunity and affluent life style of the developed countries; an expanding,

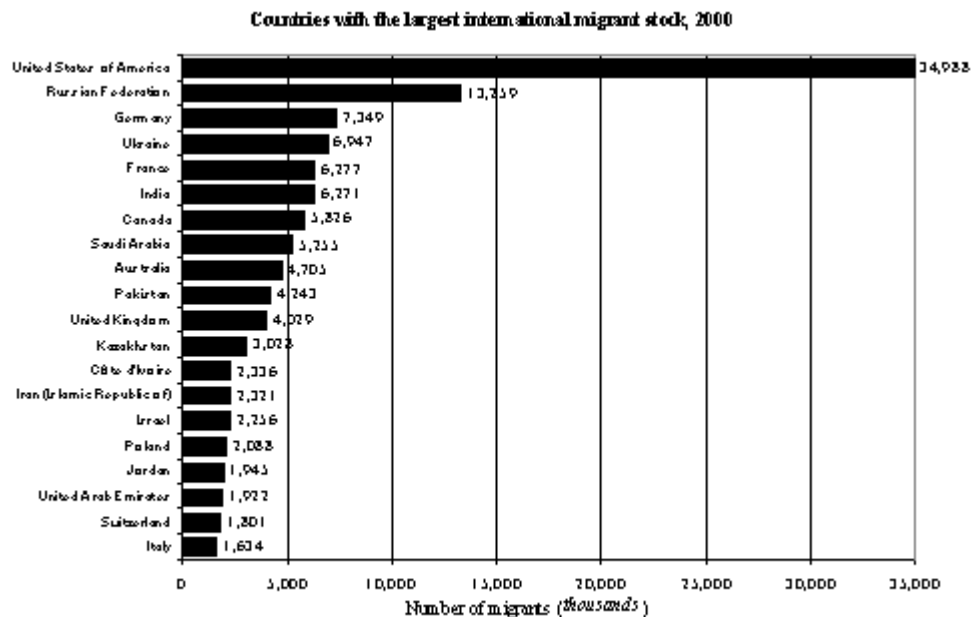
increasingly inexpensive and fast transportation system eased the formidable task of leaving one's place of birth to go to a new country with more economic opportunities.

By the Numbers

* At the beginning of the 21st century the Population Division of the United Nations estimated that there were 175 million people living outside of their country of birth or citizenship, a total of less than three percent of the world's population. This figure has doubled since 1975, and is a population larger than those of all but four countries.

* In any given year during the mid-1990s more than four million people migrated across national borders. Of these, more than one and one-half million emigrated permanently to other countries and close to one-half million sought refugee or asylum status. The remaining two million migrants sought legal or illegal employment without the intention of remaining within the country.

* While most migration stems from the decision of persons to try to improve their economic well being, about 16 million of the estimated 175 million people living outside their country of origin are refugees.



Source: UN International Migration 2002

* In 2000, most migrants resided in Europe (56 million), Asia (50 million) and North America (41 million). Three-fifths of the world's foreign-born lived in developed world. Canada and the United States have five percent of the world's population but currently they receive more than half of the world's permanent immigrants. The United States has more migrants (35 million in 2000, a 50% increase from 1990) than any other country. The Russian Federation is next with 13 million.

*Between 1995 and 2000, more than 2.3 million migrants left less developed regions of the world for the more developed world annually, a total of almost 12 million people. Each year, a net of 1.4 million migrants came to North America, and Europe had a net gain of 800,000. Latin America and the Caribbean had the highest rate of emigration; there was a loss of one migrant per 1,000 population.

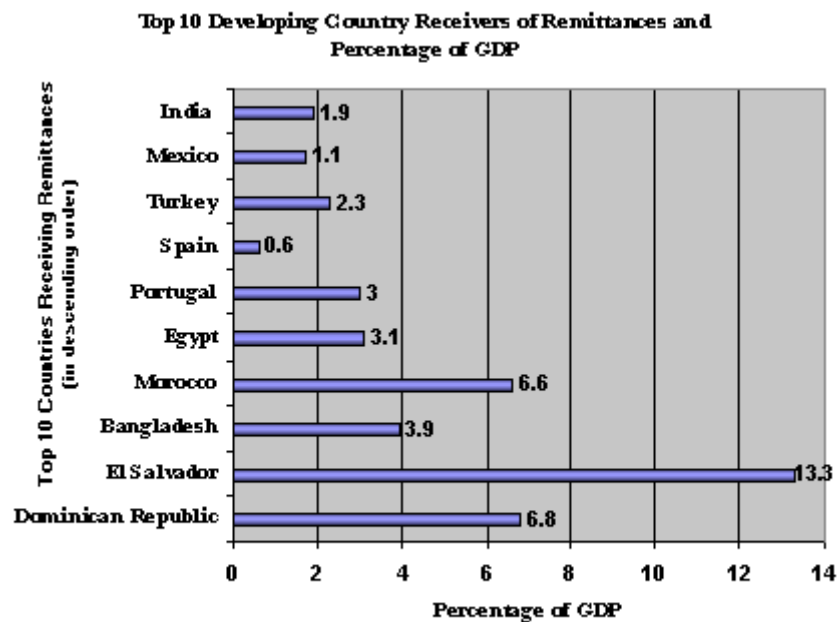
* In several countries, migrants make up a significant portion of the overall population. In 2000, over one-half of the population in Andorra (81%), the United Arab Emirates (74%), Qatar (72%) and Kuwait (58%) were migrants.

* There is a growing concern among governments about the increase in international population mobility. More than 40 percent of the UN member states have established policies to reduce immigration compared to only six percent in 1970. As of 2001, 39 percent of developing countries and 44 percent of developed countries had implemented policies to reduce immigration.

Non-Refugee Migrants

* Migration is part of the development process. The young and better educated, those who have work and the resources to pay for travel, migrate. Their relocation represents a loss of critical social investment in education for the country of origin and a gain for the host country; it contributes to a "brain drain" from the developing to the developed world. Unequal economic growth between developed and developing countries during the 1980s and 1990s had a significant impact on international migration.

* Non-refugee migrants are concentrated within sub-Saharan Africa (11 million), Asia (41 million), Europe (54 million) and the Americas (46 million).



Source: United Nations Population Division, October 2002

*An estimated \$62 billion annually in remittances from migrants contributes to international financial flows and to the economies of many countries, including Jordan (23% of its GDP), Yemen (15%), Albania (14%), El Salvador (13%) and Nicaragua (13%). Remittances are the monies that migrants return to their country of origin. If labor is considered an export, then remittances are part of the payment for exporting labor services returned to the country of origin. In 2000, the largest workers' remittance credits went to India (\$9.0 billion), Mexico (\$6.6 billion) and Turkey (\$4.6 billion).

*There is debate about the contribution of migrants' remittances, which are greater than international world aid flows. While contributing significantly to the economic

well-being of individuals and local communities, they do little to redress the current economic inequality between the developed and developing world. They are used primarily for current consumption, health care and educational expenditures.

Refugees -By Country of Origin- Top Ten (2002)	
Country	Refugees
Palestine	4,000,000
Afghanistan	3,800,000
Burundi	550,000
Iraq	530,000
Sudan	490,000
Angola	470,000
Somalia	440,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	430,000
DR Congo	390,000
Vietnam	350,000

Refugees

* Widely accepted international accords define refugees as persons who are outside of their country of nationality and are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

* In 2002, over 40 million people — 16 million refugees and an estimated 25 million internally displaced persons — fled their homes because of persecution, war, and human rights abuses. Uneven economic development exacerbates the unstable conditions and limits the ability of both the sending and receiving countries to appropriately provide for those who are temporarily displaced.

* Four-fifths of all refugees seek asylum in Africa or Asia, with the rest migrating to Europe (15%), the Americas (4%) and Oceania (0.4%). There are almost 13 million refugees in the developing world compared to three million in the developed.

* A relatively small number of countries (10) have produced a majority of the world's refugees. In 2002, about one-half of all refugees were from Palestine or Afghanistan.

* According to the Global IDP Project, the majority of internally displaced people (IDPs) lived in Africa (13.5 million), with the remainder in the Americas (3 million), Europe (3.2 million), the Middle East (1.5 million) and the rest of the Asia and Pacific region (4.6 million). About three million IDPs returned to their homes in 2002, while a comparable number were newly displaced.

Women as Migrants

* During the 1960s and 1970s the majority of migrants were men; this pattern changed during the 1980s as women became nearly one-half of the international migrant population, as they are today. Despite the traditional thought that women migrate for family reunification, over half of the female migrants from Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean moved in search of employment. In South Asia and Africa, the percentage of female migrants relocating for economic motives approaches 50 percent.

* Female mobility tends to be concentrated among non-married women 16-24 years old, and among separated, divorced or widowed women in their fifties and sixties. Women who migrate face numerous obstacles. Chief among these obstacles is economic exploitation due to a lack of economic or legal protection, limited access to well-paying jobs, and the threat of sexual exploitation in the receiving country.

Global/Regional Impacts

* The majority of the migrants in each individual receiving country still originate in only a few countries due to economic, political, historical, cultural and/or institutional ties between sending and receiving countries. During the 1980s and 1990s,

interdependence between countries grew through the creation of regional trading blocs and globalization.

* In the long-run, development is the main means of reducing migration pressures. However, in the short-run, development sets in motion forces that foster migration, particularly within countries but, to the extent that options exist, to other countries as well. Migration pressures are expected to remain high in the immediate future as a result of the existing economic disparities between developed and developing countries and the growing linkages between countries in the two groups.

* The process of economic globalization has the potential to increase the volume of migration worldwide. Globalization results in tighter integration of poor countries into the international trading system, increasing the potential pool of migrants. One effect of the expansion of international trade is to facilitate the movement of capital, goods, services, and labor across borders.

* Concerned about migration pressures, developed countries are taking measures to reduce migration inflows, particularly by imposing restrictions on those seeking asylum and by controlling irregular migration. Despite the slow growth of their populations, developed countries do not foresee an increasing demand for labor, especially unskilled.

This executive summary was prepared by Jane S. DeLung and Becca Jones of the Population Resource Center in Spring 2003. Sources include [The World Development Report 2000/2001](#), World Bank; [Migration-Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options](#), International Office of Migration; [Migration News](#), UC Davis; [International Migration 2002](#), Population Division, United Nations; United Nations General Assembly report on International Migration and Development, 3 July 2001; [Human Capital Flight: Impact of Migration on Income and Growth](#), International Monetary Fund. For more information contact the Center at (609) 452-2822, 15 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540 or (202) 467-5030, 1725 K Street, NW, Suite 1102, Washington, DC 20006, prc@prcdc.org.