

# POPULATION BULLETIN

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A PUBLICATION OF THE POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU

## Managing Migration: The Global Challenge

by Philip Martin and Gottfried Zürcher



- In 2005, 62 million migrants from less developed countries moved to more developed countries.
- The number of international migrants in more developed countries more than doubled between 1985 and 2005, from almost 55 million to 120 million.
- Those who cross national borders usually move to nearby countries.

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# Managing Migration: The Global Challenge

by Philip Martin and Gottfried Zürcher

The number of international migrants is at an all-time high. There were 191 million migrants in 2005, which means that 3 percent of the world's people left their country of birth or citizenship for a year or more.<sup>1</sup> The number of international migrants in industrialized countries more than doubled between 1985 and 2005, from almost 55 million to 120 million.

However, most of the world's 6.6 billion people never cross a national border; most live and die near their place of birth. Those who cross national borders usually move to nearby countries, for example, from Mexico to the United States, or from Turkey to Germany. The largest flow of migrants is from less developed to more developed countries (see Figure 1). In 2005, 62 million migrants from developing countries moved to more developed countries, but almost as many migrants (61 million) moved from one developing country to another, such as from Indonesia to Malaysia. Large flows of people also move from one industrialized country to another, from Canada to the United States, for example, and much smaller flows move from more developed to less developed countries, such as people from Japan who work in or retire to Thailand.

The international community believes that international migration should be voluntary, and has tried to minimize "forced migration," whether motivated by persecution or economic deprivation at home. The United Nation's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that "everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."<sup>2</sup> However, the right to emigrate does not give migrants a right to immigrate, and most migrants are not welcomed unconditionally into the countries to which they move.

## Migration in Perspective

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another. As long as humans have wandered in search of food, they have migrated from place to place. But international migration is a relatively recent development. Only in the early 20th century was the system of nation-states, passports, and visas developed to regulate the flow of people across borders.<sup>3</sup>



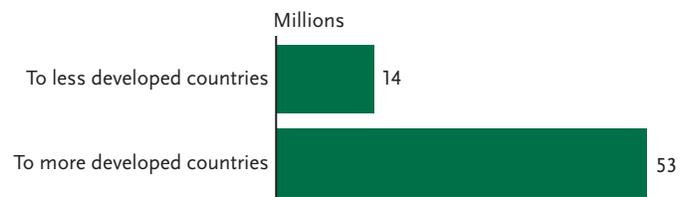
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*A Surinamese migrant worker assembles a bouquet at the world flower market in Aalsmeer, Netherlands.*

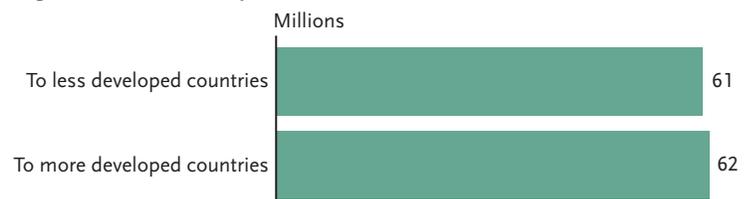
International migration is the exception, not the rule. Most people do not want to move away from family and friends. In addition, governments try to regulate border crossings. But international migration is likely to increase in the 21st century because of persistent demographic and economic inequalities and because many advances in communications and transportation facilitate mobility.

Figure 1  
**Origin and Destination of International Migrants, 2005**

### Migrants from more developed countries



### Migrants from less developed countries



Sources: United Nations (UN), Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *International Migration Report* (2006); and UN, *International Migration 2006* (Wall Chart).

Borders proliferated over the last century, sometimes placing legal and administrative boundaries between extended families, friends, and trading partners where there were none before. There were 193 generally recognized nation-states in 2000, more than four times the 43 in 1900.<sup>4</sup> Each nation-state distinguishes citizens and foreigners; uses border controls to inspect those seeking entry; and determines what foreigners can do while inside the country, whether they are tourists, students, guest workers, or immigrants.

Most countries discourage immigration—they do not welcome the arrival of foreigners who wish to settle and become naturalized citizens. Some also discourage emigration. This was the situation in communist nations as symbolized by the Berlin Wall, which was used to deter crossing from East to West Germany between 1961 and 1989. Today, North Korea continues to prevent its citizens from leaving the country.

Five major countries plan for the arrival of immigrants: the United States, which accepted 1.2 million immigrants in 2006; Canada, which accepted 250,000; Australia 125,000; New Zealand 50,000; and Israel 25,000.<sup>5</sup> Industrialized countries had planned to accept 1.5 million immigrants a year. The number of newcomers arriving in these countries each year exceeds the number planned, suggesting that many are temporary visitors or unauthorized foreigners who find ways to settle rather than newcomers who enter explicitly as potential new citizens.

Perspectives on the rising number of migrants can be framed by two extremes. At one extreme, organizations ranging from the Catholic Church to the World Bank have called for more migration, arguing that people should not be confined to their countries of birth by national borders and that more migration would speed

economic growth and development in both sending and receiving countries.

At the other extreme, in virtually every industrialized country, organizations are demanding sharp reductions in immigration. In the United States, the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) argues that unskilled newcomers hurt low-skilled U.S. workers, have negative environmental effects, and threaten established U.S. cultural values. Political parties in many European countries have called for reducing immigration at one time or another. For example, during the 1995 French presidential campaign, the National Front in France proposed removing up to 3 million non-Europeans from France in order to reduce the number of Muslim residents.<sup>6</sup>

Amid regular reports of migrants dying in deserts and drowning at sea, some experts consider international migration unmanageable, with migrants scaling or tunneling under the walls intended to keep them out. The late President Houari Boumedienne of Algeria made an appeal for more foreign aid for the Group of 77 developing countries, warning that if industrialized countries did not provide more foreign aid, “No quantity of atomic bombs could stem the tide of billions ... who will some day leave the poor southern part of the world to erupt into the relatively accessible spaces of the rich northern hemisphere looking for survival.”<sup>7</sup>

The first step toward making migration manageable is to understand why people migrate. Most people do not want to cross national borders, and even though the number of migrants is at an all-time high, international migration is still low relative to the 97 percent of the world’s residents who did not migrate. Furthermore, economic growth can turn emigration nations into destinations for migrants, as it did for Ireland, Italy, and Korea. The challenge is to manage migration by reducing the differences that encourage people to cross borders, while taking into account how investment, remittances, and aid can stimulate economic development and reduce migration pressures in the countries that migrants leave.

## Why People Migrate

International migration is usually a carefully considered individual or family decision. The major reasons to migrate to another country can be grouped into two categories: economic and noneconomic (see Table 1). The factors that encourage a migrant to actually move fall into three categories: demand-pull, supply-push, and networks. An economic migrant may be encouraged to move by employer recruitment of guest workers, or demand-pull reasons. Migrants crossing borders for noneconomic

Table 1  
Factors That Encourage Migration by Type of Migrant

Type of migrant	Factors		
	Demand-pull	Supply-push	Network/other
Economic	Labor recruitment (guest workers)	Unemployment or underemployment; low wages (farmers whose crops fail)	Job and wage information flows
Noneconomic	Family unification (family members join spouse)	Fleeing war and persecution (displaced persons and refugees/asylum seekers)	Communications; transportation; assistance organizations; desire for new experience/adventure

Note: All three factors may encourage a person to migrate. The importance of pull, push, and network factors can change over time.

Source: P. Martin and J. Widgren, *International Migration: Facing the Challenge* (2002): table 1.

reasons may be moving to escape unemployment or persecution, or supply-push factors.

A worker in rural Mexico may decide to migrate to the United States because a friend or relative tells him of a job. In this case, the availability of higher wage jobs is a demand-pull factor. The same worker may not have a regular job at home or may face debts from a family member's medical emergency, and these supply-push factors also encourage emigration. For this worker, a network of friends and relatives already played a role by providing information on jobs and wages in the United States. This network and others pave the way at many points during the migration process. Networks encompass everything from moneylenders who provide the funds needed to pay a smuggler for help crossing the border to employers or friends and relatives at the destination who help migrants find jobs and places to live.

Demand-pull, supply-push, and network factors rarely exert equal pressure in an individual migration decision, and their importance can change over time. Generally, demand-pull and supply-push factors are strongest at the beginning of a migration flow, and network factors become more important as a migration stream matures.

The first migrant workers are often recruited, beginning the migration flow. In the 1940s, for instance, the U.S. government sent recruiters to rural Mexico to fill jobs on U.S. farms. Migrants returned with savings, encouraging more people to seek U.S. jobs and fueling unauthorized migration. After this migration stream had been established, network factors ranging from settled friends and relatives to the expectation that men, particularly young ones, should "go north for opportunity" sustained migration between rural Mexico and rural America after the Mexico-U.S. *Bracero* program ended in 1964. A similar process played out in Western Europe: After governments stopped recruiting Turks and other southern European workers from 1973 to 1974, more arrived to unify families or to seek asylum.

One of the most important noneconomic motivations for crossing national borders is family unification. In such cases, the immigrant in the destination country is a demand-pull factor for family migration. Spouses and children join the immigrant first and may be followed by parents and brothers and sisters, in so-called chain migration.

Globalization has made people everywhere aware of conditions and opportunities abroad. Tourism has become a major industry, as people cross national borders to experience new cultures, different weather, or the wonders of nature. Many young people find a period of foreign study or work experience enriching. In some cases, former colonies have become independent nations, but traditional migration patterns persist, with a continuing

flow from India and Pakistan to the United Kingdom and from the Philippines to the United States.

Immigration policies aim to facilitate wanted migration, such as tourism, and to deter unwanted migrants, including those who arrive on tourist visas and do not depart as scheduled. However, it is often hard for inspectors at ports of entry to distinguish between, for instance, a legitimate tourist and a potential unauthorized worker. Most countries require visas from foreigners wishing to enter and maintain consulates abroad to screen potential visitors to determine if they are truly tourists or students who intend to return home. At many U.S. consulates around the world, most applicants for tourist visas are rejected.

## Effects of Globalization

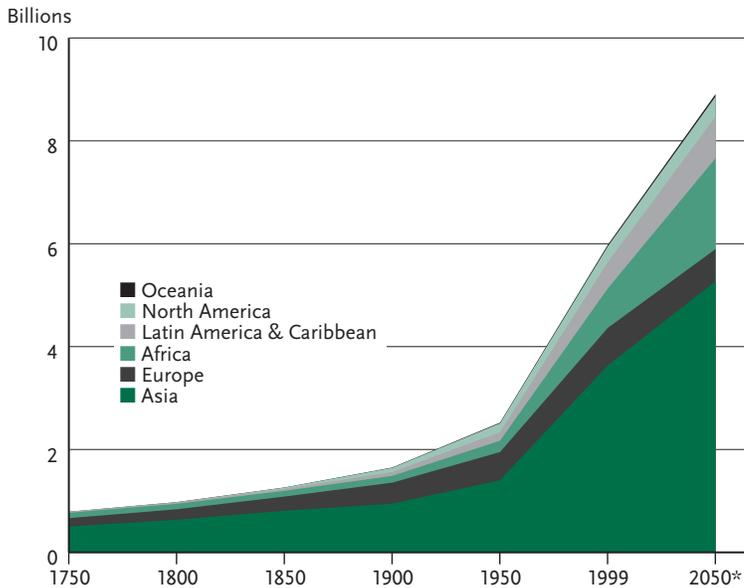
Globalization has increased links between countries, as evidenced by sharply rising flows of goods and capital over national borders and the growth of international and regional bodies that regulate such movements. However, controlling the entry and stay of people is a core element of national sovereignty, and flows of people are not governed by a comprehensive global migration regime. Most nation-states do not welcome newcomers as immigrants, but almost all of the industrialized or high-income countries have guest worker programs that allow local employers to recruit and employ foreign workers. These countries also attract significant numbers of unauthorized or irregular migrant workers.

Most of the world's people are in developing countries, as is most population growth. The world's population, which reached 6 billion in October 1999, is growing by 1.3 percent or 80 million a year, with 97 percent of the growth in developing countries. In the past, significant demographic differences between areas prompted large-scale migration. For example, Europe had 21 percent of the world's almost 1 billion residents in 1800 and the Americas had 4 percent. When there were five Europeans for every American, millions of Europeans emigrated to North and South America in search of economic opportunity as well as religious and political freedom.

Will history repeat itself? Africa and Europe have roughly equal populations today, but by 2050, Africa is projected to have three times more residents (see Figure 2, page 6). If Africa remains poorer than Europe, the two continents' diverging demographic trajectories may propel young people from overcrowded cities such as Cairo and Lagos to move to Berlin and Rome.

Two types of economic differences encourage international migration: inequality between countries and inequality within a country. The world's almost 200 nation-states have per capita incomes that range from less than \$250 per person per year to more than \$50,000, a

Figure 2  
World Population by Continent, 1750 to 2050



\*Projected.

Source: United Nations, *The World at Six Billion* (1999): table 2.

difference that provides a significant incentive for people, especially young adults, to migrate for higher wages and more opportunities.

Uneven geographic distribution in the growth of the world's labor force is another dimension of economic inequality between nation-states that adds to international migration pressures. The world's labor force of 3.1 billion in 2005 included 600 million workers in the more developed countries and 2.4 billion in the less developed countries (see Figure 3). Almost all labor force growth is projected to be in the lower-income countries: The work force in these countries is projected to increase by about 425 million between 2005 and 2015, while the labor force in higher-income countries is projected to remain stable.

Income inequality within a country may also contribute to international migration. In lower-income countries, 40 percent of workers are employed in agriculture, a sector in which workers' earnings are often lower than average. Low farm wages and incomes provide an added incentive for farm workers and farmers to migrate to urban areas, where wages, incomes, and opportunities are better. This migration is one reason the urban share of the world's population surpassed 50 percent for the first time in 2008.<sup>8</sup>

Industrialized countries had "great migrations" off the land in the past, providing workers for expanding factories, fueling population growth in cities, and adding to emigration pressures. Similar migrations are underway today in countries from China to Mexico, and this rural-urban migration has three implications for international migration. First, ex-farmers and farm workers are most likely to

accept 3-D (dirty, dangerous, difficult) jobs inside their countries or abroad. Second, rural-urban migrants often make physical as well as cultural transitions, and many find the transition as easy abroad as at home. Many Mexicans, for example, find adapting to Los Angeles as easy as navigating Mexico City. Third, as rural-urban migrants get one step closer to the country's exits, it is usually easier to obtain visas and documents for legal migration in the cities or to make arrangements for illegal migration.

Demographic and economic differences encourage migration, but it takes networks or links between areas to support actual moves. Migration networks include communication factors that enable people to learn about opportunities abroad, the migration infrastructure that actually transports migrants over national borders, and the rights regime that allows them to remain abroad. These networks have been shaped and reinforced by three major transformations in the past half-century: the communications, transportation, and rights revolutions.

The communications revolution helps potential migrants learn about opportunities abroad. The best information comes from migrants established abroad, since they can provide family and friends with understandable information. Cheaper communications help migrants quickly transmit job information and advice on how to cross national borders. For example, friends and family in rural Mexico may hear about California farm jobs before people living in nearby cities with unemployment rates of more than 20 percent hear the news. Meanwhile, films and television programs depicting life in high-income countries may encourage people, particularly the young, to assume that migration will inevitably lead to economic betterment.

One major benefit of the transportation revolution has been the declining cost of travel. With today's relatively low transportation costs, traveling anywhere in the world legally typically costs less than \$2,500. Getting smuggled into a country may cost up to \$20,000. Most studies suggest faster payback times for migrants today than in the past, so that even migrants who pay high smuggling fees can usually repay them within two or three years.

While the communications and transportation revolutions help migrants to learn about opportunities and to cross national borders, the human rights revolution affects their ability to stay. After World War II, most industrialized countries strengthened the constitutional and political rights of people within their borders to prevent a recurrence of fascism, and most granted social or economic rights to residents in their evolving welfare states without distinguishing between citizens and migrants.

As migration increased in the 1990s, some European countries and the United States began to roll

back socioeconomic rights for migrants in an effort to manage migration. For example, in the early 1990s, more than 1,000 foreigners a day applied for asylum in Germany. The government distributed them throughout the country and required local communities to provide housing and food. But, when Germans discovered that more than 90 percent of these foreigners did not need protection, there was a backlash that included attacks on foreigners.

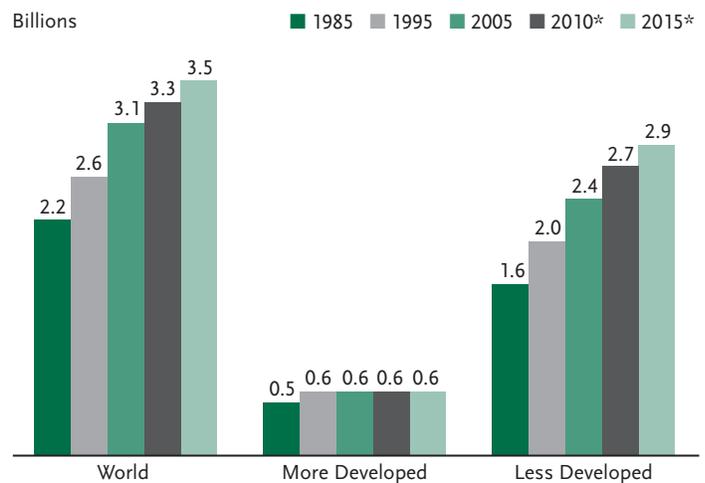
After World War II, many European governments put liberal asylum provisions into their postwar constitutions to prevent another situation in which refugees perish because other countries return them to a country that persecutes them, as happened in Nazi Germany. With the strain caused by increased migration, the German government responded in three ways. First, it required asylum seekers from countries such as Turkey to obtain visas, allowing prescreening. Second, it imposed fines on airlines that brought foreigners to Germany without visas and other documents. Third, Germany and other European Union (EU) countries agreed to make it difficult for foreigners from “safe” countries or who transited through safe countries en route to Germany to apply for asylum.<sup>9</sup> In this way, the constitutional protection of asylum was maintained, but making it harder to apply reduced the number of asylum applicants.

The United States pursued a similar strategy of restricting migrant rights in order to reduce the number of migrants entering the country. The 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was expected to speed up economic and job growth in Mexico, reducing Mexico-U.S. migration. Instead, Mexico-U.S. migration surged during a recession, prompting California voters in 1994 to approve Proposition 187, which would have denied unauthorized foreigners access to state-funded services. A federal judge stopped implementation of Proposition 187, but some of its provisions were included in 1996 federal immigration reforms.

Proposition 187 led to a national debate over immigrant numbers and rights, especially access to social assistance. President Bill Clinton argued that the number of needy migrants should be reduced in order to continue giving legal immigrants access to welfare benefits. Employers argued that a better solution would allow immigration to remain at high levels but reduce access to social assistance.<sup>10</sup> Employers won, so immigration remained high and welfare benefits were curbed. But benefits to poor children and elderly immigrants were restored during the economic boom of the late 1990s.

Balancing migrant numbers and migrant rights is a major challenge. Countries with the highest shares of migrants in their labor forces, such as the oil-exporting

Figure 3  
Economically Active Population, 1985 to 2015



\*Projected.

Source: International Labor Office, *Laborsta Database* (<http://laborsta.ilo.org/>, accessed Jan. 22, 2008).

countries in the Persian Gulf, tend to extend few rights to migrants—it is very hard for a guest worker to win immigrant status and naturalize in Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates. Countries with relatively fewer guest workers, such as Sweden and other Scandinavian countries, tend to grant more rights to foreigners. The trade-off is apparent in World Trade Organization negotiations, where some developing countries argue that their migrant “service providers” should not have to earn the minimum wage in the destination country. Requiring payment of a minimum wage, they reason, will reduce the number of migrant workers.<sup>11</sup>

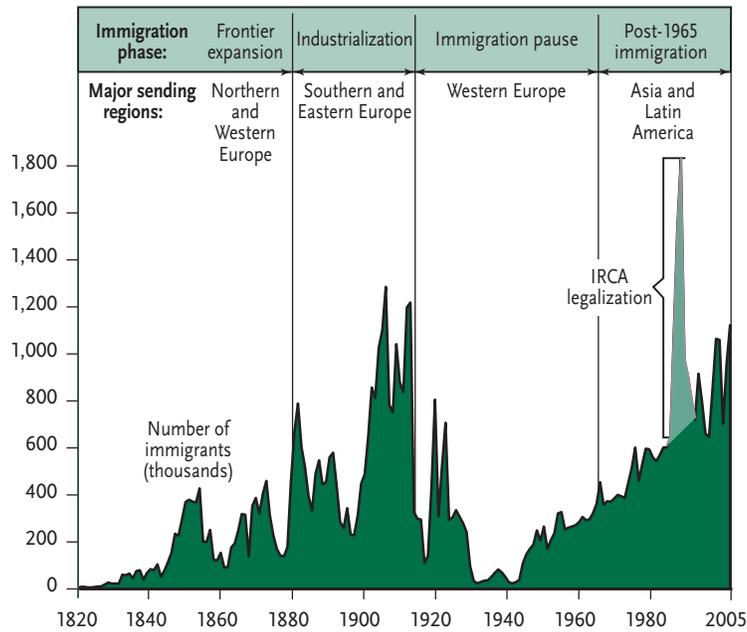
## Regional Migration Trends

Most people who cross national borders do not go far, so most international migration occurs within regions. This section reviews the most notable migration flows in the major world regions.

### North and South America

The North American migration system includes the world’s major emigration and immigration destinations, whether defined in absolute numbers or by per capita rates: 300,000 to 400,000 Mexicans move each year to the United States, and Canada aims to increase its population by 1 percent a year through immigration. Canada and the United States represent about 5 percent of the world’s population but receive over half of the world’s anticipated immigrants. Emigration rates from many Caribbean nations are high. Jamaica, with 2.7 million residents, loses about 27,000 a year, 1 percent of its

Figure 4  
**Legal Immigration to the United States, 1820 to 2005**



Note: IRCA adjustments refer to the amnesty provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, under which 2.7 million undocumented foreign U.S. residents obtained legal immigrant status.

Source: DHS, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2006* (www.dhs.gov, accessed Jan. 28, 2008).

population. Thousands more leave as temporary workers for Canada and the United States.<sup>12</sup>

### Canada

Canada is an exception among industrialized countries, with high levels of immigration, generous social welfare programs, and significant public satisfaction with immigration policies.<sup>13</sup> Many analysts attribute this satisfaction to Canada's point system, under which foreigners seeking to immigrate are assessed on the basis of their education, youth, work experience, and knowledge of English or French.

Canada offers three major avenues of entry for legal immigrants:

- Economic or independent skilled workers and business investors (55 percent of the 251,600 immigrants in 2006).<sup>14</sup>
- Family unification (28 percent).
- Refugees (20 percent).

Immigration to Canada peaked between 1895 and 1913, when 2.5 million newcomers arrived in a country that had a 1913 population of 7 million. Canada's "white only" immigration policy, which favored entries from Europe and the United States, ended in 1962.

Almost half of Canada's immigrants are from Asia. In 2006, the leading countries of origin were China with 13 percent of the immigrants, India (12 percent), and the Philippines (7 percent).<sup>15</sup>

In 1967, Canada developed a point system to assess foreigners wishing to immigrate. Under the point system, foreigners seeking to enter Canada as skilled workers must earn at least 67 points on a 100-point scale.<sup>16</sup> Education is worth up to 25 points (for a master's degree or doctorate); English and/or French proficiency is worth up to 24 points; and work experience can add up to 21 points. Those ages 21 to 49 get 10 points, those employed legally in Canada with a temporary work visa get 10 points; and up to 10 points are awarded for adaptability—for having studied or worked in Canada. This point system and negligible illegal migration allow the Canadian government to micromanage immigration to spur economic growth.

Canada also admits temporary visitors or nonimmigrants, persons expected to leave after a period of work, tourism, or business. Chapter 16 of the North American Free Trade Agreement permits 64 types of Canadian, Mexican, or U.S. professionals, including accountants, engineers, and lawyers, to work in another NAFTA country by showing an offer of employment, a professional credential, and a passport. Most NAFTA professional migrants are Canadians employed in the United States.

The Commonwealth Caribbean and Mexican Agricultural Seasonal Workers Program is often praised as a model for employing guest workers. About 20,000 guest workers are admitted each year, and most work on Ontario fruit and vegetable farms. The selection criteria, as well as Canadian winters, encourage returns at the end of the growing season. Canada's guest worker programs are also expanding to include more nonfarm industries, providing caregivers as well as construction and other workers for provinces with a booming energy sector.

### United States

For its first 100 years, the United States welcomed foreigners to settle a vast country. Beginning in the 1880s, qualitative restrictions barred certain types of foreigners: prostitutes, workers who arrived with contracts that tied them to a particular employer for several years, and Chinese. In the 1920s, quotas set a ceiling on the number of immigrants accepted each year.

Amendments to U.S. immigration legislation in 1965 shifted preferences from those wishing to migrate from countries in northwestern Europe to those who had relatives in the United States and those desired by U.S. employers. The origins of immigrants were not expected to change, but they did (see Figure 4). In the 1960s, half of U.S. immigrants were from Latin America and Asia; between 2000 and 2005, 73 percent were from these regions.<sup>17</sup> Illegal immigration began rising in the 1970s, rose faster after immigration reforms in 1986, and was

the first major immigration issue debated in Congress in the 21st century.

Foreigners enter the United States through a front door for legal permanent immigrants, a side door for legal temporary migrants, and a back door for the unauthorized (see Table 2). About two-thirds of legal immigrants are family-sponsored, which means that family members in the United States asked the government to admit their relatives. There are no limits on the number of immigrant visas available for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, and 580,000 were admitted in 2006. There is a cap on the number of immigrant visas available to relatives of permanent residents and more distant relatives of U.S. citizens. Only 222,000 were admitted in 2006, resulting in long waits for visas. For example, in 2008, Mexican spouses of U.S. immigrants will need to wait six years for immigrant visas, and adult brothers and sisters in Mexico of U.S. citizens face a 13-year wait.<sup>18</sup>

Legal temporary migrants are foreigners who come to the United States to visit, work, or study. There are no limits on most types of temporary visitors; the United States is willing to accept more than the 30 million tourists and business visitors who arrived in 2006. Temporary foreign students and workers are more controversial. After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. government required foreign students to undergo personal interviews before receiving visas to study in the United States and to pay a fee to support a database that tracks them while they are studying there.

Guest workers receive visas that tie them to a U.S. employer and specify how long they can stay. H-1B visa holders, for example, have at least a college degree and fill jobs that

normally require a college degree. They can stay up to six years and “adjust” to regular immigrant status if their U.S. employer deems them uniquely qualified to fill the job.

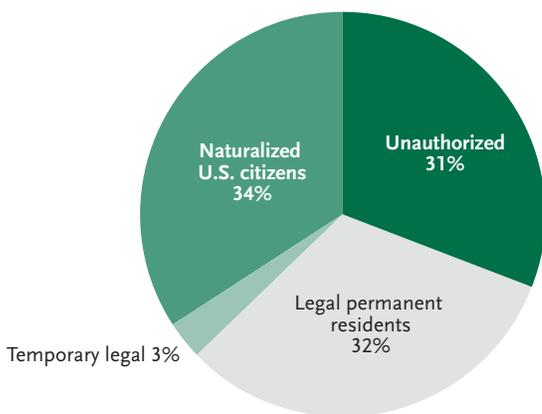
The number of guest workers admitted doubled in the 1990s and almost doubled again to nearly 400,000 in 2004, as Congress raised the cap at the request of high-tech firms.<sup>19</sup> The annual cap on the number of H-1B visas available has now reverted to 65,000, but employers want far more. Critics of the H-1B program say that the easy availability of H-1B visas has discouraged American citizens from studying and working in science and engineering fields.<sup>20</sup>

Unauthorized foreigners are persons in the United States in violation of U.S. immigration laws. Demographer Jeff Passel estimated 11.5 million unauthorized foreigners in the United States in 2006, with the number increasing by 770,000 a year.<sup>21</sup> Of the 38.1 million foreign-born U.S. residents, 34 percent were naturalized U.S. citizens, 35 percent legal immigrants and temporary visitors, and 31 percent unauthorized (see Figure 5). Over half of the unauthorized foreigners entered the United States by evading border controls, while 45 percent entered legally but did not leave when required.<sup>22</sup>

**Mexico**

Most Latin American countries send more people abroad than they receive as immigrants. Mexico is Latin America’s major emigration country, sending up to 500,000 people (half of its net population increase) to the United States. Most made unauthorized entries. Mexico is also a transit country for Central Americans en route to the United States.

Figure 5  
Status of Foreign-Born United States Residents, 2006



Source: J. Passel, “U.S. Immigration Trends: A Focus on U.S. Agriculture and California” (2008 presentation).

Table 2  
Immigration Status of Foreigners in the United States, by Category, 2004 to 2006

Category	2004 (thousands)	2005 (thousands)	2006 (thousands)
Legal immigrants	958	1,122	1,266
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	418	436	580
Other family-sponsored immigrants	214	213	222
Employment-based	155	247	159
Refugees and asylees	370	460	381
Diversity and other immigrants	99	83	88
Estimated emigration	308	312	316
Legal temporary migrants	30,781	32,003	33,667
Pleasure/business	27,396	28,510	29,929
Foreign students (F-1 visas)*	613	621	694
Temporary foreign workers*	676	726	821
Illegal immigration			
Apprehensions	1,264	1,291	1,207
Removals or deportations	189	203	—
Unauthorized foreigners**	770	770	770

\*Excludes their spouses and children.

\*\*Annual average based on estimated unauthorized entries between 2000 and 2006.

Sources: DHS, 2006 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: tables 6, 26, and 35; and J. Passel, “U.S. Immigration Trends: A Focus on U.S. Agriculture and California” (2008 presentation).

The Mexican and U.S. governments have taken several steps to reduce Mexico-U.S. migration. NAFTA lowered trade and investment barriers between Canada, Mexico, and the United States, and one hoped-for side effect was faster economic and job growth in Mexico that would reduce Mexico-U.S. migration.

In fact, workers displaced in Canada and in the United States tended not to migrate to Mexico, but some of the Mexicans displaced as a result of freer trade migrated to the United States. Mexico-U.S. migration was accelerated in the mid-1990s by an economic crisis in Mexico and in the late 1990s by an economic boom in the United States.

In 2000, Mexican President Vicente Fox made improving conditions for Mexicans in the United States his top foreign policy priority. Calling Mexican migrants “heroes” for their remittances, Fox asked the U.S. government to approve broad immigration reform in 2001: the legalization of unauthorized Mexicans, a new and large-scale guest worker program, cooperation to reduce border violence, and an exemption for Mexico from the U.S. cap on the number of immigrant visas available for each country. Shortly after Fox discussed these proposed changes with President Bush, the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, prompted tighter immigration rules.

#### **Central America, the Caribbean, and South America**

The seven countries of Central America, with 40 million residents, sent few immigrants to the United States until civil wars erupted in the mid-1980s. Fighting displaced tens of thousands of Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, and Salvadorans, many of whom found their way to the United States. The U.S. government initially granted asylum to Nicaraguans, who were fleeing a government the United States opposed, but not to Guatemalans and Salvadorans, who were fleeing governments the United States supported. Resulting lawsuits eventually allowed most Central Americans in the United States an opportunity to become immigrants.<sup>23</sup> Natural disasters, such as Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Nicaragua in 1998 and earthquakes in El Salvador in 2001, led the U.S. government to grant unauthorized Central Americans in the United States “temporary protected status” so they could work legally and send home remittances to help in rebuilding.

The 15 independent Caribbean nations and dependencies have 40 million residents and some of the world’s highest emigration rates. The largest four are Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica. At least 10 percent of those born in these countries now live in the United States. For example, there are 1 million Cuban-born U.S. residents, and Cubans continue to

arrive as legal immigrants as well as illegally in small boats. Under the “wet-foot, dry-foot policy,” if Cubans are intercepted at sea, they are returned to Cuba, but if they reach U.S. land, they can stay as immigrants. Most Cuban immigrants have settled in South Florida, where their business and political success have helped turn Miami into a gateway to Latin America.<sup>24</sup>

Dominican immigrants are concentrated in New York City, and network ties are so strong that half of the residents of the Dominican Republic have relatives in the United States.<sup>25</sup> Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. Fleeing the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haitians migrate to the neighboring Dominican Republic as well as to the United States.<sup>26</sup> In order to reduce the outmigration of Haitians, the U.S. government threatened military intervention in 1994 to restore to power the elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Aristide regained the presidency, but the economy continued to flounder, prompting some Haitians to continue to attempt the 720-mile trip by boat to Florida.

Jamaicans have been migrating to the United Kingdom and the United States for decades, both as temporary workers and immigrants.

Today, some descendants of Europeans and Japanese who emigrated to South America are returning to their ancestral countries of origin. For example, economic turmoil in Argentina prompted some of the descendants of immigrants from Italy and Spain to move to these countries, and several hundred thousand ethnic Japanese Brazilians and Peruvians have moved to Japan. Colombia and Ecuador are major sources of migrants to Spain, and ever-strengthening networks promise more emigrants from these countries.

#### **Europe**

Europe has traditionally been a source of immigrants, with over 60 million people leaving between 1820 and 1914.<sup>27</sup> War and the creation of new nation-states prompted migration within Europe during the first half of the 20th century, including the exchange of Greeks and Turks in the 1920s and the migration of Germans to West Germany after World War II. Many also migrated between overseas provinces and their colonial powers, such as Algeria and France, and between colonies and mother countries, such as India and Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

Western European nations such as France and Germany recruited guest workers in the 1960s to fill jobs producing goods for export. The need for foreign workers, first from Italy and other southern European countries and later from countries that ranged from Morocco to Turkey, was

supposed to be short-lived. However, with undervalued currencies spurring investment by Europeans and Americans, employers from Volkswagen to Renault asked for more guest workers, and governments complied. Some guest workers settled and formed or unified families, leading to the aphorism: “Nothing is more permanent than temporary workers.”<sup>28</sup>

From 1973 to 1974, guest worker recruitment stopped in the wake of a recession attributed to oil price hikes. However, European governments did not force guest workers to leave, even if they lost their jobs and were collecting social welfare benefits. Instead, France and Germany offered “departure bonuses” to encourage settled migrants who lost their jobs to leave, but most migrants knew that economic conditions were even worse at home and thus elected to stay. European nations today are struggling to integrate these guest workers and their children. High unemployment rates among these foreign residents—often twice the overall rate—make many Europeans reluctant to see immigration rise.

In 2007, the EU comprised 27 of the more than 40 countries of Europe, and about two-thirds of Europe’s 730 million people. A core principle of the EU is “freedom of movement,” meaning that an EU national may travel to another EU member state and live, study, or work on an equal basis with native-born residents. For example, a French worker who applies for a job at Volkswagen in Germany must be treated just like a German applicant, and can complain if a private employer discriminates in favor of local workers. Public-sector jobs, however, can be restricted to residents born in the country.

Relatively few EU nationals move from one country to another, although an increasing number of northern Europeans are retiring in southern European countries such as Spain and Portugal. More young people are studying outside their country of citizenship as curricula are standardized and teaching in English spreads. The EU added 10 member states in Central Europe in 2004, and Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007. However, the “old” EU-15 countries, such as France and Germany, that earlier recruited guest workers and got unanticipated settlers, have been reluctant to allow Poles, Czechs, and Romanians freedom of movement to seek jobs.

Most foreigners in EU countries are from outside the EU, from countries such as Morocco, the former Yugoslavia, and Turkey. Some of these non-EU countries, including Croatia and Turkey, could become EU member states, which would give their nationals freedom-of-movement rights immediately or after a transition period. Fears of too much migration have complicated Turkey’s accession negotiations. Turkey applied for EU entry in 1987, was rebuffed in 1989, and has reapplied.

If allowed entry, Turkey, a country of 74 million, would be the most populous EU member state by 2015, when a growing Turkey would surpass a shrinking Germany. Turkey’s high unemployment rate also raises concern that a possible new wave of migrants might prove hard to employ if Turkey were to join the EU. Some 2 million Turks worked in Western European countries in the 1960s and 1970s, and many stayed. Today, about 3.5 million Turks live in Western Europe, two-thirds in Germany. These Turks, their children, and grandchildren have high unemployment rates, and many have not learned German. Fears that Turkish-speaking ghettos could become a source of Islamic fundamentalism complicate Turkey’s bid to join the EU. On the other hand, many Turks who migrated to northern Europe have become successful, opening businesses that employ Germans and getting elected to local, state, and federal offices.

The EU Commission believes that opening new channels to work in Europe could further discourage illegal migration. It has proposed a blue-card program under which highly skilled non-EU foreign professionals, such as computer programmers from India and health care workers from Africa, could enter a European country, work, and eventually settle.

Both the commission and individual countries are developing “mobility partnership agreements” with particular countries that send migrants. Under these agreements, a country such as Senegal agrees to police its harbors to discourage migrants from leaving in small boats for Spain’s Canary Islands, and Spain admits several thousand Senegalese to work legally for a year or two. Spain and Italy have signed mobility partnership agreements with countries ranging from Albania to Senegal, and the EU opened a job center in Mali in 2007 to provide information on jobs available to legal workers in Europe. More Africans want to migrate than there are legal jobs available for them in Europe, so it is not clear if the agreements and job centers will add to or cut illegal migration.

The EU’s approach to a common immigration policy is illustrated by its rules governing foreigners settled in a particular EU country and border-free travel. EU nationals can move to any other EU country to live and work, but non-EU nationals cannot move from one EU country to another until they have been a legal resident for at least five years. For example, Turkish residents of Germany cannot move to France until they have lived in Germany legally for at least five years.

In 1999, the Amsterdam Treaty required that new EU member states adopt border control rules that allow freedom of movement across internal borders between EU member states. These states must also

Table 3  
**Foreigners and Foreign Workers in Western Europe, 2005**

	Foreign population (thousands)	Percent of total population	Foreign labor force (thousands)	Percent of total labor force
Austria	802	10	418	12
Belgium	901	9	435	9
Denmark	270	5	109	4
France	3,263	6	1,456	5
Germany	6,756	9	3,823	9
Ireland	259	6	102	6
Italy	2,671	5	1,479	6
Luxembourg	181	40	196	63
Netherlands	691	4	288	3
Norway	222	5	159	7
Spain	2,739	6	1,689	8
Sweden	480	5	216	5
Switzerland	1,512	20	830	21
United Kingdom	3,035	5	1,504	5

Note: Data for foreign population in France are for 1999. Data for foreign labor force in Ireland, 2002; Italy, 2003; and Sweden, 2004.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *International Migration Outlook* (2007): tables A.15 and A2.3.

follow a common set of rules for checks at borders between EU and non-EU states. The treaty effectively expanded the free-travel zone established between the Benelux Economic Union (Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg), Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Austria, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden, under the 1985 Schengen Agreement and the 1990 Schengen Convention. The agreement led to a common system for issuing visas and a database that includes information on people that the EU member countries want to exclude.<sup>29</sup> Ireland and the United Kingdom, already EU members in 1999 and not signatories of the Schengen agreements, still enforce border controls with other EU member states.

Germany had the most foreign residents of any EU member in 2005, some 6.8 million, followed by France with 3.3 million (in 1999), the United Kingdom with 3 million, and Italy and Spain with 2.7 million each (see Table 3). Luxembourg had the highest percentage of foreigners among residents—40 percent—followed by Switzerland with 20 percent and Austria with 10 percent.

The European population is aging and shrinking. The EU today has four workers for each retiree. By 2050, the ratio is projected to be two workers per retiree. In order to finance the retirement of such a large cohort of retirees, EU countries will have to reduce pension benefits or encourage more people to work longer. Other alternatives are to increase the number of workers, either by increasing fertility or immigration. Most European countries make payments to families with children, and these policies are credited with keeping fertility near replacement

level (2.1 children per woman, on average) in France and Scandinavia. Other European countries are increasing child payments in a bid to boost fertility.

Immigration would have to be very high to stave off population decline in countries such as Italy (see Table 4). The UN Population Division estimated the number of immigrants that various countries would have to admit to maintain their 1995 populations, labor forces, and ratios of younger to older persons.

The Big Four EU countries (France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom) received about 88 percent of the EU's immigrants in 1995. To maintain their 1995 populations at current fertility rates, immigration would have to triple, from 237,000 a year to 677,000 a year; immigration to Italy would have to increase over 42 times its mid-1990s level. To maintain their 1995 labor forces, the Big Four would have to increase immigration to 1.1 million a year, and to "save social security" or maintain the ratio of persons 18 to 64 years old to persons 65 and older, immigration would have to increase 37-fold, to almost 9 million a year, including 2.3 million a year to Italy.

Opinion polls suggest that most Europeans do not welcome more immigration.<sup>30</sup> EU nations currently receive 300,000 to 500,000 legal newcomers a year, including returning citizens, family members of settled foreigners, guest workers, and asylum applicants. In addition, up to 500,000 unauthorized foreigners enter the EU annually, though not all remain as residents. Any suggestion to increase current immigration flows or legalize unauthorized foreigners tends to produce strong political opposition from EU nationals.<sup>31</sup>

Opposition to immigration and legalization of unauthorized immigrants is also strong in Russia, the most populous European country with 142 million residents. Although the population in Russia is shrinking by about 700,000 a year, most Russians do not welcome immigration as a way to stop the decrease. Ease of movement among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that were part of the Soviet Union and higher wages in Russia draw migrants from CIS to Russia. Workers from Moldova and Tajikistan earn up to 10 times more in construction and service jobs in Moscow and other Russian cities than they would at home. Responses to this migration stream have included both anti-migrant movements and efforts to legalize migrants.

## Asia

Asia, home to 60 percent of the world's people, is a major source of immigrants for countries in North America. People also migrate within Asia, usually as guest workers expected to leave after two years. Thai workers migrate

Table 4  
Immigration Required to Avoid Population Decline in the European Union, 2000 to 2050

	Immigrants, 1995 (thousands)	Average annual number of migrants required from 2000-2050 to maintain:					
		1995 population		1995 working-age population		Population support ratio*	
		Migrants (thousands)	Multiple of 1995 immigration	Migrants (thousands)	Multiple of 1995 immigration	Migrants (thousands)	Multiple of 1995 immigration
EU (15 countries)**	270	949	4	1,588	6	13,480	50
Big 4 EU	237	677	3	1,093	5	8,884	37
France	7	29	4	109	16	1,792	256
Germany	204	344	2	487	2	3,630	18
Italy	6	251	42	372	62	2,268	378
United Kingdom	20	53	3	125	6	1,194	60
Other EU (11 countries)	33	272	8	495	15	4,596	139
United States	760	128	0	359	0	11,851	16

\*Migrants needed to maintain 1995 population ratio of persons ages 15-64 to those ages 65 or older.

\*\*The EU-15 consists of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Source: United Nations, "Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Aging Population?" (www.un.org, accessed May 7, 2001).

to Taiwan to fill construction jobs, for example, and Filipinos work as domestic helpers in Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia. Significant rural-urban migration also occurs within countries. In 2001, 130 million Chinese lived outside the places they were registered. Most had moved east from villages in the interior to cities and coastal provinces.<sup>32</sup>

Policy reforms in the mid-1960s in Canada and the United States eased entry for Asian professionals. They were joined in the United States by 1 million Southeast Asian refugees after the Vietnam War ended in 1975. Asians continue to emigrate to traditional immigration countries, and many go abroad to study, with some settling there after graduation.

Asia includes some of the world's most rapidly aging nations and leading countries of emigration. In the future, migration may match labor demand in one country with supply in another. However, Asian nations vary widely in their policies toward migrants.

### Japan and Korea

Japan and South Korea are homogenous and largely closed societies where most low-skilled foreign workers have been students and trainees or unauthorized entrants. Japan has debated whether to open itself to unskilled foreign workers, but has not yet done so, while Korea introduced a migrant-worker system in 2004.

Japan's 2005 census reported 770,000 foreign workers, or 1.3 percent of the labor force. The largest group is Koreans who have been living in Japan for decades, followed by 240,000 descendants of ethnic-Japanese emigrants to South America. These Portuguese-speaking Japanese are concentrated in the small factories that often supply parts to Toyota and other major firms. The second-largest group is mostly Chinese trainees, 140,000 in 2007, with

three-year contracts that tie them to a particular employer and often pay them only half the minimum wage. Finally, there are foreign professionals, including Americans working for Japanese multinationals and Filipina entertainers. An estimated 200,000 unauthorized foreign workers live in Japan.

The number of Japanese ages 15 to 64 (working age) was 85 million in 2005, but is expected to fall to 72 million by 2025. Japan has shifted much of its productive capacity abroad to lower labor costs. To stabilize the population and labor force, Japan is debating whether to open itself to immigrants, to admit guest workers who would be expected to leave after several years, or to persuade Japanese workers to work longer and more productively.

Like Japan, South Korea introduced foreign workers as trainees to fill jobs in small and mid-sized firms offering so-called 3-D jobs, which are dirty, dangerous, and difficult. However, high broker fees and sometimes abusive conditions led to runaways, since unauthorized workers could earn more than legal trainees. In 2004, the Employment Permit System began to treat migrants who enter Korea legally with a work contract as workers entitled to the minimum wage. Many of the unauthorized migrants already in Korea were unwilling to return to their countries of origin, pay broker fees and learn Korean, and return legally, so 200,000 were still unauthorized among the 910,000 foreigners in Korea at the end of 2006.

### Taiwan

Taiwan began to import migrant workers to help construct high-priority infrastructure projects in 1990, including highways and subways. Migrants soon spread to factories and later to private households as caregivers. By May 2007, the number of foreign workers in Taiwan hit a

record 347,000, and half were in service jobs. As foreign workers moved from one-time infrastructure projects to providing care for the elderly and children, the government promise of a “natural” end to migrant employment was lost. Migrants are entitled to at least Taiwan’s minimum wage of NT\$15,840 (US\$480) a month in 2007, but employers may deduct up to NT\$4,000 a month for room and board, and most do.

Most of Taiwan’s migrants are from Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. They often complain about the high fees brokers charge for arranging employment. The maximum fee should be about a month’s wages for each year of a worker’s contract, but many migrants report paying much more, up to 30 percent of what they expect to earn in fees and interest charges. Because of these fees, which are deducted from the migrant’s pay, some migrants can earn more as unauthorized workers, so they run away from the employer to whom they have been assigned.

### South and Southeast Asia

The Philippines is the major labor exporter in Asia. According to the Philippine government, there are 83 million Filipinos at home and 8 million abroad; they remit, or send home, \$1 billion a month, equivalent to 10 percent of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP). In recognition of the importance of migrants and their remittances to the economy, the Philippine president welcomes returning migrants at Christmas in a *Pamaskong Handog sa OFWs* (“Welcome home overseas foreign workers”) ceremony.

One million Filipinos leave the country to work each year, including about 75 percent who fill jobs that range from domestic helper to driver to construction worker in countries from Saudi Arabia to Canada. The remaining 250,000 leave the country to work on the world’s ships.

Over half of the migrants leaving the Philippines are women, and some are vulnerable to abuse in the private households in which they work. Legislation now requires the government to protect migrants abroad. Also, in 2007, a new program required a minimum wage for Filipinas abroad.

Most migration in Asia involves workers moving from one country to another in the region for temporary employment. Migration of Asian workers closer to home is exemplified by the migration of more than 1 million Indonesian workers to Malaysia and more than 1 million Burmese to Thailand. In these cases, workers move from a poorer to a richer neighboring country, with all the countries involved classified as developing. Many of these migrants are unauthorized despite periodic efforts to legalize and manage these migrant worker flows. Today, the governments in both Malaysia and Thailand

are adopting stricter policies, with Malaysia’s paramilitary force RELA checking for unauthorized migrants and some provincial governments in Thailand restricting the movement of migrants and their right to use cell phones.<sup>33</sup>

The Asian financial crisis of 1997 and 1998 began in Thailand, when foreigners stopped lending money. Unemployment rose sharply. To open up jobs for Thais, the Thai government announced a crackdown on unauthorized foreign workers. The effort to substitute Thais for Burmese workers largely failed, as exemplified in rice milling. Thailand is a major rice exporter, and most of the workers who carry 100 kilogram bags of rice from the mills to trucks are Burmese migrants. After the government stopped allowing Burmese to work in rice mills in 1998, the Thai workers who replaced them complained that the bags were too heavy. The government suggested reducing the rice bags to 50 kilograms. Mill owners refused, and the Thai government allowed migrants from Burma, Cambodia, and Laos to continue working in rice mills and other economic sectors.

Most Asian nations assert that they are not countries of immigration—most do not invite foreigners to settle—and some do not welcome guest workers. Singapore and Hong Kong are the exceptions. Both encourage the immigration of professionals and 30 percent of Singapore’s workers are foreigners.

Singapore welcomes foreign professionals and their families as settlers, but rotates unskilled migrant workers in and out of the country. Less-skilled migrants may not bring their families, and their employers pay a significant levy or tax on migrant wages to encourage them to hire Singaporean workers if they are available. Female migrants are subject to pregnancy tests and sent home if they become pregnant; marrying a Singaporean citizen does not guarantee a low-skilled migrant the right to settle in Singapore.

Hong Kong, the financial and supply-chain hub for mainland China, includes many professionals, both native- and foreign-born, who hire domestic helpers, usually from the Philippines and Indonesia. These domestics were paid at least the minimum wage of HK\$3,480 (US\$446) a month in 2006, and given free room and board.<sup>34</sup>

India is both a source of migrants—sending millions of migrants abroad for every kind of job, from information technology specialists and doctors and nurses to construction workers and laborers—and a major receiver of migrants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. One-sixth of the workers from the Indian state of Kerala are believed to be working abroad, and their remittances help to give the 32 million residents in Kerala higher-than-average levels of education and health care.<sup>35</sup>

## Middle East

The Middle East, which stretches from Western Asia to North Africa, has witnessed some of the world's largest population and labor flows in the past 50 years.

After oil prices rose in the 1970s, workers from Bangladesh to Egypt migrated to the Gulf states to fill the jobs created by higher oil revenues. After oil price hikes from 1973 to 1974, Gulf oil exporters turned to foreign contractors and workers to build infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges. Migrants from South and Southeast Asia—Indians, Pakistanis, Filipinos, and Indonesians—continue to dominate the private-sector work forces of these exporters. The demand for labor has shifted from construction to services, and from men to women. Despite efforts to “nationalize” Gulf work forces by prohibiting foreigners from filling some jobs, foreigners fill 90 percent or more of private-sector jobs.

By 2005, the Gulf Cooperation Council (Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) had 13 million foreigners among 36 million residents, including 6.5 million foreigners among the 25 million residents of Saudi Arabia. In part because these countries discourage women from working, fertility is high; half of the native-born population is under 18; and labor forces are growing by more than 3 percent a year, raising unemployment among young citizens. In the past, oil-rich governments guaranteed jobs to native-born residents, but rapid population growth has made this policy unsustainable.<sup>36</sup> Instead, Saudi Arabia and other oil exporting countries have required that only some jobs be filled by the native-born.

Israel welcomes Jews to immigrate under the law of return. Immigration to Israel increased rapidly after 1989 with the opening of borders in Eastern Europe and the demise of the Soviet Union. Some 200,000 immigrants arrived in 1990, a one-year surge of 4 percent over Israel's population of 5 million residents. Many of the Jews who immigrated to Israel were well-educated professionals who helped to turn Israel into a high-tech center. Some then emigrated to the United States and Germany.

Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza after wars in 1973 and 1976, and allowed Palestinian residents from these areas to commute to jobs in Israel. In the late 1980s, more than 100,000 Palestinians commuted daily to jobs in Israel. During the intifada that began in the late 1980s, Israel limited the number of commuting Palestinians to reduce terrorist incidents and began to allow migrants to enter from Thailand, Romania, and other countries to fill jobs once held by Palestinians.

## Africa

In 2006, Africa had one-seventh of the world's population, one-fourth of the world's nation-states, and one-quarter of the world's 10 million refugees.<sup>37</sup> Many national borders in Africa were drawn by colonial governments, so that nomadic tribes that continued their traditional migrations became international migrants after independence. The tribal structure of many African societies means that neighboring African countries sometimes host refugees from each other. For example, there are Mauritanian refugees in Mali, and Malian refugees in Mauritania.

In 1994, Africa witnessed one of the world's largest refugee movements in recent times, as 2 million Rwandans left their country. Some 500,000 mostly ethnic Tutsi residents were killed in a genocide organized by the Hutu government. When the Tutsi-led rebel army defeated the government's military forces, Rwanda's leaders fled, and encouraged Hutus to flee with them to avoid retaliation. Many of the Hutus later returned home, but in 2006, about 10 percent of the world's refugees remained in the Great Lakes region in eastern Africa.<sup>38</sup>

Traditionally the richest country in its region, South Africa is a major destination for migrants south of the Sahara Desert. More than 200,000 migrants from Lesotho, Swaziland, and Mozambique were recruited to work in South African mines in the 1980s. These migrants were housed in barracks and rotated in and out of the country. Apartheid ended in 1994, and the government of Nelson Mandela discouraged the recruitment of foreign miners. However, few South Africans wanted to move to remote areas and work in the mines. Instead, machines replaced miners.

The black-majority government was reluctant to deport unauthorized migrants who arrived from neighboring countries that had sheltered anti-apartheid activists, and at least 3 million arrived between 1994 and 2000.<sup>39</sup> As unemployment among South Africans rose, attacks were made on foreigners in the cities, and opinion polls suggested that one-quarter of South Africans wanted immigration stopped. The South African government continues to grapple with employers asking for easier entry for professionals, in part to replace those South Africans who emigrate, as well as the entry of unauthorized foreigners from neighboring countries such as Zimbabwe.

## Oceania—Pacific Islands

Oceania is the world's least populous region, with 34 million people in 2006, including almost two-thirds in Australia. Australia and New Zealand welcome immigrants from around the world and permit freedom of movement between them under the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement.

The United Kingdom originally shipped criminals to Australia. Free British and European immigrants also arrived, and immigration peaked during the gold rush of 1851 to 1860. Australia encouraged immigration from Europe after World War II, but ended its so-called White Australian immigration policy in 1971, easing the entry of Asians.

New Zealand's immigration history is different. British settlers made a treaty with indigenous Maori in 1840. The number of Maori declined because of disease and warfare as the number of European settlers rose. New Zealand admits about 35,000 immigrants a year, increasing its population by almost 1 percent.

Both Australia and New Zealand select most of their immigrants using point systems that award individuals points for youth, knowledge of English, skills, and previous work experience in the country. From 2005 to 2006, 17 percent of Australia's immigrants were from the United Kingdom, followed by 14 percent from New Zealand and 8 percent each from India and China. From 2004 to 2005, 33 percent of New Zealand's immigrants were from the United Kingdom, followed by China (10 percent), and South Africa and India at 7 percent each.<sup>40</sup>

Australia and New Zealand historically welcomed settlers, not guest workers. However, both countries have recently expanded their temporary-worker programs to admit both skilled and seasonal workers. Australia offers a visa that allows skilled foreign workers to remain up to four years. Both Australia and New Zealand have a program that allows people ages 18 to 30 to work seasonal jobs in agriculture.

Most Pacific islands have relatively few residents, often 200,000 to 400,000, and unusual migration issues. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), a U.S. territory that sets its own immigration policies, includes only 44 percent CNMI natives, who are U.S. citizens. The other residents are guest workers from China, the Philippines, and other Asian countries. The CNMI government permits Chinese and other firms to establish garment shops on the island, to import women to sew clothes, and to then send the clothes to the United States with "Made in the USA" labels.<sup>41</sup>

Global warming that causes ocean levels to rise might lead to emigration from many Pacific islands, including Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu. Each of these island nations is considering options for emigration.

## Reducing Unwanted Migration

Most of the migrants arriving in industrialized countries are not wanted. Less than half are immigrants who have been invited to settle. Unauthorized migration is a major issue in the United States and many European countries,

prompting many leaders to look for solutions that minimize push factors in sending countries.

The 30 high-income countries, as defined by the World Bank, contain one-sixth of the world's people but produce five-sixths of the world's economic output. Most of the changes that would speed up development and reduce unwanted migration lie within the developing countries that are the source of most migrants. However, trade, investment, and aid policies of the industrialized nations can accelerate the narrowing of the demographic and economic differences that motivate migration.

## Trade and Investment

Trade means that a good is produced in one country, taken over borders, and used in another. Economic theory suggests that if countries specialize in producing those goods in which each has a comparative advantage, the residents of all countries that trade will be better off. This means that, if Mexico can produce TV sets more cheaply than the United States can, and the United States can produce corn more cheaply than it can produce TV sets, Mexico should produce televisions and send them to the United States in exchange for corn. In this way, Americans get cheaper TVs and Mexicans get cheaper tortillas. With trade accelerating economic and job growth in both countries, less Mexico-U.S. migration would occur.

Migration and trade were substitutes between Europe and the Americas.<sup>42</sup> For more than a century, Europeans migrated to North America, until restrictive laws in the 1920s almost stopped the flow. When these restrictions were relaxed in the 1960s, European economies were expanding more rapidly than the U.S. economy. This fast growth narrowed gaps in wages and incomes and reduced transatlantic migration to a trickle. A similar story of narrowing wage and income gaps due to freer trade and investment explains why emigration from southern European nations such as Italy and Spain slowed in the 1970s and 1980s, just when Italians and Spaniards won the right to live and work anywhere in the European Union.

The U.S. Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, which seeks mutually beneficial ways to reduce unwanted migration, concluded that "expanded trade between the [migrant-] sending countries and the United States is the single most important remedy." In fact, trade has expanded rapidly. In 2005, merchandise trade topped \$10 trillion for the first time, equivalent to almost one-fourth of the world's \$45 trillion GNP.<sup>43</sup> Germany and the United States are the world's leading exporters of goods, almost \$1 trillion each. China is third, with exports worth \$760 billion in 2005.

However, when countries become more open to trade, adjustments can displace workers and increase migration. For example, NAFTA accelerated the closure of television factories in the United States and their expansion in Mexico, and the displacement of Mexican corn farmers by U.S. corn. Displaced U.S. workers were unlikely to migrate to Mexico, but some Mexican corn farmers migrated to the United States. In this case, trade stimulated migration, at least in the short to medium term.

Migration resulting from increased trade may be smaller and may last for a shorter time if foreign investment accelerates job growth in the migrant-sending country. Foreign direct investment (FDI) totaled \$665 billion in 2004, but more than two-thirds went to high-income countries, such as when British firms buy U.S. firms. Investments in developing countries go to places where investors expect maximum profits. China received almost a quarter of the total \$211 billion invested in developing countries in 2004.<sup>44</sup> In most developing countries, about

**Box 1**  
**Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

Political persecution at home encourages some migrants to cross national borders. The 1951 Geneva Convention defines a refugee as a person outside his or her country of citizenship who does not want to return “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” Countries that sign the Geneva Convention pledge not to “refoul” or return those recognized as refugees to places where they could be persecuted.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the world’s 9.9 million refugees in 2006 fled to neighboring countries, where governments or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) can provide temporary assistance. Some of those living in refugee camps are allowed to move to third countries as immigrants and begin their lives anew. Other foreigners travel directly to the country where they would like to start new lives and then they request asylum, asking to be recognized as refugees and to be given immigrant status.<sup>2</sup>

Most refugees are from developing countries and move to other developing countries, while most asylum seekers are from less developed countries and move to more developed countries. In 2006, Pakistan and Iran hosted about 20 percent of all refugees worldwide—most from Afghanistan, the top refugee-producing country (see figures). The United States was the third leading host of refugees, and the top five refugee-hosting countries had 40 percent of the total.

The major sources of refugees were Afghanistan and Iraq, a third of the total, followed by Sudan, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of

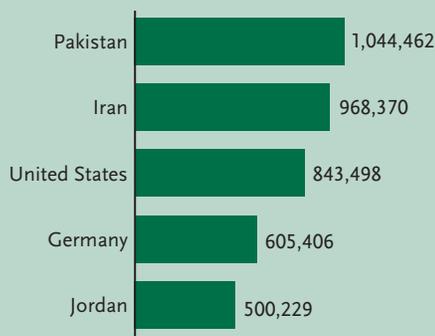
Congo; these five countries produced over half of the world’s refugees. Afghani refugees included those who fled the Taliban rule as well as those who supported the Taliban after the U.S.-led coalition toppled the Taliban government. Iraqis fled fighting that broke out after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. Most moved to neighboring Jordan and Syria. Conflict between the Muslim north and the Christian south of Sudan, and between Arab herders and indigenous pastoralists in Darfur, moved refugees to Chad, Kenya, and other neighboring countries. Similarly, in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, internal conflicts have sent refugees fleeing over the last decade. Somalian refugees also fled when Ethiopia invaded the country in 2006.

The sources of asylum seekers are more diverse. Only two of the five major refugee-producing countries were among the top five origin countries for asylum seekers with pending cases in 2006 (Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo), and the top five origin countries accounted for only one in five asylum seekers. Fewer than one-quarter of asylum seekers are recognized as refugees in need of protection, but more are allowed to remain because it is difficult to return them to their countries of origin.

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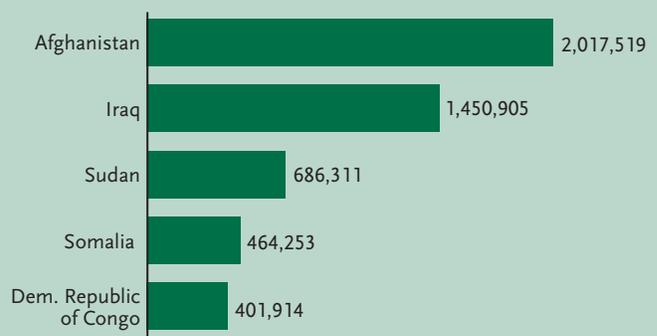
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**Top 5 Host Countries for Refugees**



Source: UNHCR, 2006 *Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons* ([www.unhcr.org/statistics.html](http://www.unhcr.org/statistics.html), accessed Aug.1, 2007).

**Top 5 Origin Countries for Refugees**



Source: UNHCR, 2006 *Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons* ([www.unhcr.org/statistics.html](http://www.unhcr.org/statistics.html), accessed Aug.1, 2007).

\$10,000 in foreign investment is associated with one “good job,” making it clear that more jobs linked to FDI are created in China than other developing countries.

Even if FDI decreases migration in the long term, it may increase migration in the short and medium term. This might occur for several reasons. Foreign professionals may arrive to manage these investments, and job opportunities may attract workers. Jobs created by FDI may also increase internal migration such as migration from rural areas to cities.

### Aid and Intervention

Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds are given or lent to developing nations to speed their economic and job growth. In 2005, the Organisation for International Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations that are members of the Development Assistance Committee provided a record \$107 billion in ODA. Almost two-thirds of ODA came from five countries: United States, \$28 billion; Japan, \$13 billion; and the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, \$10 billion each.<sup>45</sup>

Many appeals have been made to increase aid and to redirect it to promote equitable development. At the UN’s Social Summit in Copenhagen in March 1995, the Group of 77 (130 developing nations) pledged to follow a 20-20 distribution formula if they received more aid. Under this formula, 20 percent of ODA would go to meet basic human needs, such as building and staffing schools and hospitals, and governments receiving aid would devote at least 20 percent of their expenditures to basic human needs.

Instead of the 20-20 formula, the major donors focused on debt relief. Many developing countries, including some

with corrupt governments, took on external debt to build new capital cities or launch nonproductive projects. Interest on these foreign debts eat up an increasing share of government revenues. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative between 1996 and 2006 approved debt-reduction packages for 30 countries, including 25 in Africa.<sup>46</sup>

Trade, investment, and aid takes time to reduce emigration pressures and may even increase emigration in the short run. But these economic policies narrow differences over time and, after wage gaps are narrowed to four to one or five to one, economically motivated migration virtually ceases, especially if economic growth is faster in the poorer country.

The alternative to slow but steady economic progress is humanitarian intervention, or military intervention to head off emigration. The United States restored deposed Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power in 1994 in part to stop the exodus of Haitians to Florida. The U.S. military presence in Haiti cost about \$140 million a month, or the equivalent of Haiti’s annual GDP.

### Remittances

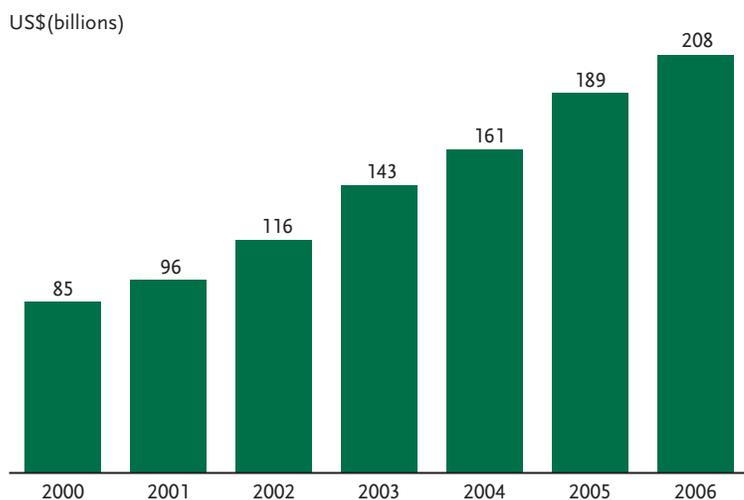
Millions of people live outside their country of birth, and they send billions of dollars to their countries of origin. These remittances are among the fastest-growing international financial flows.

Formal remittances to developing countries doubled between the late 1980s and mid-1990s to almost \$60 billion a year, doubled again by 2002, and almost doubled again to \$208 billion in 2006 (see Figure 6). The total flow of remittances is actually larger than the formal amount. Some remittances are sent home informally, with friends or relatives or via unregulated transfer agents, rather than through banks or regulated financial institutions. In 2006, India received the most remittances (\$27 billion), followed by Mexico (\$25 billion), China (\$22 billion), and the Philippines (\$15 billion).

International organizations such as the World Bank advocate more labor migration to generate more remittances and speed development in the migrants’ countries of origin. More migration, this argument runs, generates more remittances and reduces poverty. Remittances can also have other favorable effects. Through a multiplier effect, migrants increase spending in their home countries when they send money back to buy materials and hire workers to improve their housing. Similarly, when migrants make savings deposits in their country of origin, banks can lend remittance deposits to provide the funds needed for infrastructure, business development, and expansion.

Most researchers agree that the best way to increase remittances is to ensure that migrant-sending countries

Figure 6  
Remittances to Less Developed Countries, 2000 to 2006



Source: The World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook* (<http://econ.worldbank.org>, accessed Jan. 22, 2008).

have sound fundamental economic policies, including an appropriate exchange rate and a banking system that is cost-efficient and friendly to remitters and recipients.

The UN held a high-level dialogue on International Migration and Development in September 2006 that acknowledged the importance of remittances for the development of migrant countries of origin. One outcome was the Global Forum on Migration and Development, a non-UN body that brings governments together to promote coherence in the policies each country pursues. One of its goals is to prevent cases in which, for example, a rich country government provides aid to speed development but has trade policies that block imports from migrant-sending countries. The hope is that more coherent policies might lead to matching aid funds for migrant remittances, thereby increasing the development impact of these remittances. Another possible policy outcome would be new temporary-worker programs providing return bonuses that workers can invest upon their return home.

## Managing Migration

The number of international migrants—people living outside their country of citizenship—is at an all-time high. The number is likely to continue increasing because of demand-pull factors in receiving countries, supply-push factors in sending countries, and networks that create communications and transportation infrastructures that help migrants learn about opportunities abroad and take advantage of them. Countries that try to manage migration by making it harder to apply for asylum or restricting welfare benefits may face protests by human rights advocates.

Every one of the world's countries participates in the international migration system as a destination for migrants, a transit country, or an area of origin. Many countries participate in the migration system in all three ways. For example, Mexico sends migrants to the United States, receives Central American migrants, and allows Central Americans transit en route to the United States.

Most migrants do not move far from home, and each of the world's continents has a migration system with unique characteristics. As a result, each region and individual countries face different challenges. In the United States, the large number of unauthorized migrants is a prominent issue. In the European Union, the unexpected settlement of guest workers and the challenge of integrating their children and grandchildren is the subject of political and cultural debates. And in oil-exporting countries, very high shares of foreign workers in the private sector have raised concerns about job prospects for native-born youth.

Demographic and economic differences promote international migration. Narrowing these differences would likely reduce migration from one country to another. Many international organizations and governments in developing countries have recognized the importance of the money that migrants send home from abroad and are seeking ways to use these remittances to accelerate economic development. Trade, investment, and aid can also accelerate economic growth in lower-income countries. However, even if sending and receiving countries reach free trade and investment agreements that reduce migration in the long term, a short-term increase in migration is still possible, highlighting the complexity of managing migration.

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## Managing Migration: The Global Challenge

The number of international migrants is at an all-time high. There were 191 million migrants in 2005, which means that 3 percent of the world's people left their country of birth or citizenship for a year or more. The number of international migrants in industrialized countries more than doubled between 1985 and 2005, from almost 55 million to 120 million.

Those who cross national borders usually move to nearby countries, for example from Mexico to the United States, or from Turkey to Germany. The largest flow of migrants is from less developed to more developed countries. In 2005, 62 million migrants from developing countries moved to more developed countries, but almost as many migrants (61 million) moved from one developing country to another.



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