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Immigration: A Challenge Offering Opportunities?

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Summary

The main objective of this paper is to consider a series of topics, largely in a descriptive manner, with the aim of providing a stimulus to debate in order to facilitate informed decision-making on the part of the political and social agents involved in different aspects of the migratory phenomenon. Another of the challenges the authors are seeking to address is that of using available information to look at the future with a view to analysing how the migratory phenomenon might evolve in the Atlantic neighbourhood and the approach and planning to be adopted by Spain, Europe and the international community at large.

Introduction

International migratory movements have been prevalent throughout history but today more than ever we are witnessing increased flows and a growth in the complexity of this phenomenon. Our era is one that analysts have termed ‘the new era of migration’.

A significant part of current migration can be explained as a phenomenon caused by economic factors or, at least, as one that is closely related to economic factors combined with social and political factors, such as a lack of freedom in regimes with a low level of democracy. Or by the idea that emigration, and hence immigration, is a response to ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors, as many experts claim.¹ For example, when present and future prospects for earning a living in the country of origin become less attractive, residents of the country in question are ‘pushed’ to take the decision to emigrate in order to seek a better future elsewhere. For their part, the ‘pull’ or ‘attraction’ factors arise in situations when present and future hopes of earning a living, or merely of surviving, in the country of origin, as well as the returns obtained from economic activity (through working, for example), are better and/or more promising in the potential destination country. In other words, the destination’s economic incentives attract people when compared to economic incentives in the country of origin, leading them to emigrate in search of a better return for their labour. The push factors normally coincide with the attraction factors, and migratory potential therefore becomes greater.

The great advantage of an economic migratory phenomenon is that, in relative terms, it is not very problematic. It is true that immigration can create tensions and it is not uncommon to observe disturbances of varying degrees of seriousness, as has recently been the case in countries such as France, the Netherlands and Denmark. But economic or labour migration is characterised by the fact that it responds to the of the host country, facilitating greater economic growth than if there were no migrants.² It also improves living prospects for migrants, and normally becomes profitable for countries of origin when they begin to send remittances to their families. In other words, once immigrants gain access to the labour market in the host country it is a win-win situation for all sides.

¹ R. Sandell, ‘[Were They Pushed or Did They Jump? The Rise in Sub-Saharan Immigration](#)’, ARI nr 133/2005, Elcano Royal Institute, 2005.

² Only in economic terms, the Spanish government associates a significant part of the growth of the Spanish economy with immigration. See the report published by the Prime Minister’s economic office: *Inmigración y Economía Española: 1996-2006*, <http://www.la-moncloa.es>.

Nevertheless, we should not overlook the disadvantages and problems for the countries of origin, the brain drain, for example. The term brain drain refers to an exodus of human capital in which, for example, the benefits of the country of origin's investment in education are reaped elsewhere, in the country of destination, with a consequent lack of returns on the investment. This type of argument is normally employed as the main negative point against labour emigration, and also to explain that the country of origin will not necessarily benefit despite the remittances that migrants manage to send home. However, estimating the economic effects and the consequences that the migratory phenomenon might have on the society of origin is more complicated. First, it must be the case that the 'brains' emigrating should have had the possibility of engaging in economic activities in line with their qualifications in the supplier country itself. In numerous instances, this would have been simply impossible in the countries of origin of migratory flows, with the result that trained individuals have a better opportunity of securing a return for the investment in training if they emigrate. Thus, emigration can be seen as a regulatory mechanism that redirects the workforce in accordance with demand, perhaps not efficiently, but at least in such a way that it allows us to get the best from the world's human capital.

The affirmation that economic migrations are not very problematic does not imply that the phenomenon is without its difficulties. From a strategic standpoint, the main problem of massive economic migration, such as current immigration to Spain and to the US, for example, is the way migrants gain entry to the country. Do they do so by legal or illegal means? There are no difficulties with the former, but the latter exposes us to certain security risks, and also to strategic risks in certain circumstances. A high level of illegal immigration implies the inadequate control on entrants to the country, with the result that there is a higher likelihood of suffering the consequences of terrorism, organised crime and trafficking in all its forms.

There are other considerations linked to the management of the entry of immigrants. Strange as it may seem, a high level of illegal immigration is not so bad from an economic point of view, because countries experiencing this phenomenon normally achieve very satisfactory economic results. Spain and the US are two good examples. But as Americans say, 'there is no such thing as a free lunch'. Immigration that grows practically devoid of controls always has a sting in the tail. The experience of almost all countries receiving significant migratory flows shows that in order to ensure that public opinion accepts high levels of immigration it is crucial to stop it being a disordered phenomenon. This is more important than one might initially think, given that without the support of public opinion for relatively large-scale immigration it is hard to imagine that there will also be positive economic development in the future.

Nor should we ignore the fact that the phenomenon also has the potential to become a strategic and security problem on the international stage.³ The incessant arrival of immigrants from Africa to Spain and other EU countries is an unequivocal sign that African immigration should be taken more seriously, and that it is time to alter our approach to this migratory flow. It is very likely that the migratory crisis experienced in 2006 was due to an increase in African pressure to emigrate. Economic and demographic data for Sub-Saharan countries indicates that it is very likely that we are only at the threshold of a migratory movement that could become one of the biggest in history.

The aim of the present paper is not to provide a response to the great questions mentioned in the course of this introduction. Its main objective is rather to consider a series of topics, largely in a descriptive manner, with the aim of providing a stimulus to debate in order to facilitate informed decision-making on the part of the political and social agents involved in different aspects of the migratory phenomenon. Another of the challenges we are seeking to address is that of using available information to look at the future with a view to analysing how the migratory phenomenon might evolve in the Atlantic neighbourhood and the approach and planning to be adopted by Spain, Europe and the international community at large.

³ L.B. Smith III, 'Illegal Immigration: Is it a Threat to National Security?', US Army War College, Pennsylvania, 2006.

The document is structured as follows. First, there is a brief review of the principal migratory movements in the Atlantic region. Then there is an analysis of the current status of European immigration policy. This section also includes an analysis of illegal African immigration. In addition, the political repercussions of the recent migratory crisis between Africa and Spain at EU level are considered. The final part of this working paper launches a debate on the relationship between development and immigration, in which we place an especial emphasis on the role of remittances. We conclude by posing a number of questions that arise from the ideas considered in the paper, as a way of inviting others to participate in the debate.

International South-North Migratory Flows in the Atlantic Region: The Two Sides of the Atlantic

From 1960 to 2005, international emigrants world-wide increased from 75 million to 191 million,⁴ a figure equal to 3% of world population.⁵ Latin American and Caribbean migration is currently one of the most dynamic and largest migratory flows. In the last few years the flow of immigrants from North Africa has also increased. The nationalities of immigrants from third countries to the EU is also a result of historic and cultural ties, and a common language. Nevertheless, the origin of immigration is more diverse, and new migratory routes are appearing. China, for example, has been the source of significant migratory flows to EU countries in the last 10 years.

In the US case, the migratory phenomenon from the south of the American continent prevails. Latin American immigration to the US is noteworthy not only for the significant size of the flows but also for the size it is attaining. The population of the US is currently over 300 million⁶ and the stock of people born in Latin America residing in the US stands at over 18 million, or 6% of the population. If immigration is measured in terms of ethnic groups rather than the country of birth, over 40 million people in the US define themselves as Hispanic, Latino or Chicano, a figure equal to 14% of the total US population.⁷

Between 1970 and 2000, the number of Latin American and Caribbean immigrants in the US practically doubled. Although Mexicans have accounted for the main migratory flow, there has been increasing diversification of countries of origin, with significant currents from Central and South America. In spite of amendments to American migratory policy and 9/11, immigration from the region has continued to grow in recent years. Latin American and Caribbean immigrants and their US-born offspring have therefore become the country's largest ethnic minority, overtaking Afro-Americans for the first time.

On the other side of the Atlantic, since 1950 Europe has been a constant receiver of immigration. However, migratory behaviour has been heterogeneous. Northern Europe (Ireland, the UK, Finland and Sweden) has been very dynamic in migration terms; Central Europe (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Austria) has been the main focus of attraction for immigration to Europe; the Mediterranean countries (Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece) have undergone a radical transformation, changing from being senders to receiving immigrants. Since 1997, Spain has been the country that has contributed the most to the net migratory balance of the EU-15. In 2003, Spain, Italy and Portugal received half of the net migratory balance of the EU as a whole. In 2004, the main contributors were Spain, Italy and the UK.

⁴ United Nations, 'Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision', Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, February 2006.

⁵ The proportion of international migrants has remained relatively low world-wide. It increased from 2.5% in 1960 to 2.9% in 2000 and to 3% in 2005. However, net migration constitutes a significant proportion, and it is growing.

⁶ US Census Bureau.

⁷ *Ibid.*

The economic upturn in the 1980s and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union are amongst the factors that have determined migratory patterns in Europe. Both phenomena produced an increase in migratory flows towards Western Europe of migrants largely from the former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union and Turkey. In recent years, the flow of migrants from North Africa has also increased.

According to Eurostat estimates,⁸ in 2004 the stock of foreigners in the EU stood at almost 25 million people, around 5.5% of the total population. In absolute terms, most of them resided in Germany, France, Spain, the UK and Italy. The Turks are the most numerous immigrant group in Europe, with an important presence in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

On a global level, the current migratory trend indicates that flows are characterised by a high degree of mobility. As part of this pattern, the southern Mediterranean countries, in particular the Maghreb, are becoming the launch pad for a significant human movement from Sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe. This process entails an attendant impact for countries like Morocco and Algeria, which are subject to a growth in illegal immigration resulting from transnational immigration networks using the region as their platform.

To what extent does south-north immigration differ on one side of the Atlantic to the other? Given that it is a very complex phenomenon it is difficult to undertake the comparative analysis that might provide us with the response to this question. Nor can we avail ourselves of full information, in view of the fact that it is a phenomenon often characterised by irregularity and illegality. Despite the difficulties involved in measuring the migratory phenomenon, the World Bank, in cooperation with the University of Sussex, has produced a matrix of bilateral migrations that facilitates the task of analysing migratory flows world-wide.⁹ Based on the aforementioned information, we present the results of this analysis in Table 1. We have gathered information on the stock of immigrants from the 11 main regions to Canada, Japan, the US and the European Union (27) plus EFTA.

⁸ Eurostat, 'Statistics in Focus: Population and Social Conditions 8/2006', 2006.

⁹ See <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/South-SouthmigrationJan192006.pdf> for a more detailed description of the database.

Table 1 Migrations Originating in 11 Main Regions to Canada, Japan, the US and the European Union (27) plus EFTA

Immigration originating in:	Destination Country/Region				Total
	Canada	Japan	US	EU-EFTA	
Northern Africa	98,233	1,877	204,620	4,352,143	4,656,873
(% column)	(3.0)	(0.1)	(0.7)	(17.7)	(7.7)
(% row)	(2.1)	(0.0)	(4.4)	(93.5)	(100.0)
Southern Africa	82,198	1,042	130,369	903,724	1,117,333
(% column)	(2.5)	(0.1)	(0.4)	(3.7)	(1.9)
(% row)	(7.4)	(0.1)	(11.7)	(80.9)	(100.0)
Sub-Saharan Africa	246,111	11,592	653,996	2,203,511	3,115,210
(% column)	(7.4)	(0.6)	(2.2)	(9.0)	(5.2)
(% row)	(7.9)	(0.4)	(21.0)	(70.7)	(100.0)
Central America + Mexico	126,584	2,676	12,655,060	148,815	12,933,135
(% column)	(3.8)	(0.1)	(41.6)	(0.6)	(21.5)
(% row)	(1.0)	(0.0)	(97.8)	(1.2)	(100.0)
The Caribbean	304,485	664	4,918,617	652,265	5,876,031
(% column)	(9.2)	(0.0)	(16.2)	(2.7)	(9.8)
(% row)	(5.2)	(0.0)	(83.7)	(11.1)	(100.0)
South America	223,216	364,891	2,197,987	2,434,675	5,220,769
(% column)	(6.7)	(19.0)	(7.2)	(9.9)	(8.7)
(% row)	(4.3)	(7.0)	(42.1)	(46.6)	(100.0)
Eastern Europe	239,000	5,381	1,223,957	5,327,275	6,795,613
(% column)	(7.2)	(0.3)	(4.0)	(21.7)	(11.3)
(% row)	(3.5)	(0.1)	(18.0)	(78.4)	(100.0)
The Middle East + Turkey	281,400	9,626	989,482	4,803,773	6,084,281
(% column)	(8.5)	(0.5)	(3.3)	(19.6)	(10.1)
(% row)	(4.6)	(0.2)	(16.3)	(79.0)	(100.0)
East Asia	723,179	1,239,738	2,351,003	698,190	5,012,110
(% column)	(21.8)	(64.6)	(7.7)	(2.8)	(8.3)
(% row)	(14.4)	(24.7)	(46.9)	(13.9)	(100.0)
South-East Asia	516,310	251,492	3,504,253	1,293,905	5,565,960
(% column)	(15.5)	(13.1)	(11.5)	(5.3)	(9.2)
(% row)	(9.3)	(4.5)	(63.0)	(23.2)	(100.0)
South Asia	483,955	29,624	1,566,213	1,726,315	3,806,107
(% column)	(14.6)	(1.5)	(5.2)	(7.0)	(6.3)
(% row)	(12.7)	(0.8)	(41.1)	(45.4)	(100.0)
Total	3,324,671	1,918,603	30,395,557	24,544,591	60,183,422
(% column)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
(% row)	(5.5)	(3.2)	(50.5)	(40.8)	(100.0)

The information in Table 1 is complex and might therefore be difficult to interpret. In order to facilitate analysis we have taken the following case as a reference. For instance, Canada has a stock of North African immigrants of 98,233 people. This corresponds to 3% of Canada's stock of immigrants and 2.1% of total immigration from North Africa.

In studying the migratory phenomenon shown in Table 1 we can make several interesting generalisations. First, of the 60 million emigrants from the 11 regions considered, 50% are located in the US, 40% in the EU, 5% in Canada and just over 3% in Japan.

The region generating the most emigration (without taking the population size of each region into account) is Central America, including Mexico. Of the almost 13 million Central Americans who have emigrated, 98% have chosen to go to the US. Central American immigration in the US is highly significant. It represents over 41% of total immigration to the US. It has the highest concentration, without comparison with all migrant groups included in this table.

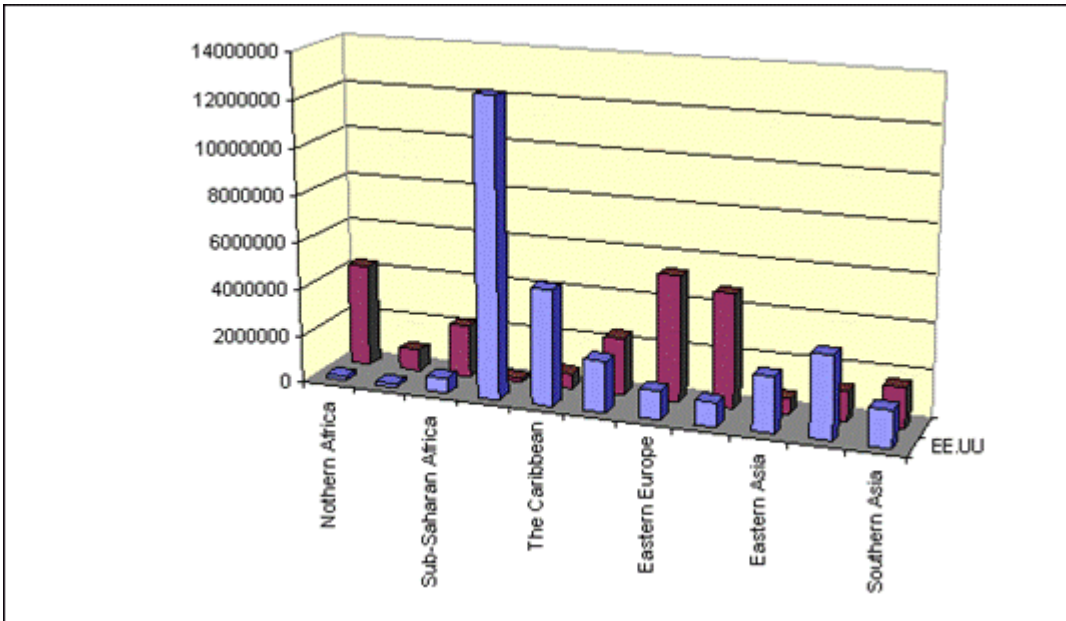
Maghreb or North Africa represents the other extreme in terms of concentration in the destination of its emigrants. Of the 4.65 million Maghrebis who have emigrated, 4.3 million, or 93%, reside in the EU. Even so, in contrast to Central American immigration, the fact that the concentration of Maghrebi emigration to the EU is so significant does not mean that the concentration is the highest in relation to total EU immigration. In terms of origin, the concentration of immigrants from the Middle East is even higher. Generally speaking, immigration to the EU is much more

heterogeneous than immigration to the US. It is interesting to note that, in terms of origin, Canadian immigration and EU immigration have more in common than immigration to the US has with that to the EU or Canada.

Another point to highlight in regard to the immigration received by the US is that Spanish-speaking immigration is extremely high. According to available data, 65% of all immigrants in the US are of Latin American origin. As we can see, in relative terms this figure is higher than that for South American immigrants to Spain, the second destination of choice for Spanish-speaking emigrants. The numbers speak for themselves, and it is easy to draw the conclusion that such concentrated immigration has the potential to cause a significant cultural impact in the US.

Another factor to consider from Table 1 is the importance that must be attached to geographical proximity in migratory decisions. On the one hand, we have the EU, which is the destination of choice for 78% of Eastern Europeans, 79% of the Middle Eastern migrants and 93% of those from North Africa. In the case of the US, 98% of Central Americans have opted for emigration there. Finally, on the other side of the world, Japan, despite not being a prominent actor in immigration terms, has an immigrant population which largely originated in East Asia. Canada, the country furthest away from the supplier countries, is the one with the greatest degree of heterogeneity with regard to the origin of the immigrants it receives.

Graph 1. Comparison of the US and the EU in Terms of the Origin of Immigrants



Lastly, we have included a comparative graph to illustrate the differences between immigration to the US and immigration to the EU. It is easy to see the differences between these two destinations. On the one hand they are complementary, insofar as the US receives significant immigration from one region of origin; Europe receives a lower level of immigration from it. On the other hand, it can be seen that there is greater diversity in Europe in terms of the regions of migratory origin. The explanation for this complementarity appears to be related to the geographical proximity between sending country and receiving country. It is to be expected that there are also social effects that might cause an appreciable interaction effect. For example, social networks usually have a decisive role in decisions to emigrate to one destination or another. Or, in other words, one explanation for the destination of migrants (but not of their reason for migrating) is geographical proximity, which is a factor that may or may not be subsequently accentuated by the social networks facilitating initial contact with the receiving country.

The Policy Dimension: EU Immigration Policy

In migratory matters interests and needs vary considerably from one country to another, a factor which to a large extent conditions attempts to achieve a real European immigration policy.

Germany, the country currently leading the EU, since it is occupying the rotational presidency during the first six months of 2007, has traditionally refused to progress on integration and legal immigration issues, and recently blocked the transfer of these competences to qualified majority voting. Domestically, it is facing a difficult labour market situation, given that it is still affected by the consequences of reunification with Eastern Germany. Turks form the largest foreign minority, with a total of approximately 7 million immigrants, who face integration difficulties. On a European level, this translates into a reticence to advance in regard to agreements with third countries on questions relating to visa granting and legal immigration and integration, with African countries, for example. It does, however, actively drive forward initiatives linked to combating illegal immigration, readmission and border controls. Its geographical area of interest is Eastern Europe, in view of the fact that once the Schengen enlargement to the new eastern members is confirmed, the European border will move to Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. Likewise, it maintains its reluctance on the issue of strengthening European policy with Africa, largely for economic reasons.

As in most European issues, the UK has important differences with the remaining member states. In particular, it is not a member of the Schengen area and does not participate in the visa policy. On migratory issues it exercises the pragmatic policy of participating in those initiatives that most correspond with its interests, basically participating in operational and practical questions. For example, it supports European border control efforts and the European Border Agency. Given the significance of its immigrant population, largely from the Commonwealth, it prefers to maintain its own policy on the issue. In view of the large number of asylum seekers it receives annually, it participate in and supports the European asylum policy. It backs initiatives to extend and consolidate dialogue and aid to transit countries and countries of origin of illegal African immigrants, especially when these coincide with its areas of interest (the Horn of Africa, etc.). It also has an interest in the migratory routes from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

France is a European country with a great tradition of receiving important migratory flows, largely from its former African colonies. It is currently managing second- and third-generation immigrants, by means of a model for integration based on the assimilation of secularism and republican values. It does not have an interest in advancing community policies for legal immigration and integration, given that it wishes to retain ample national room for manoeuvre to manage these situations. In the wake of the disturbances in Paris and other French cities in November 2005 it has opted for repressive domestic measures. It does therefore support European initiatives on illegal immigration and border control. Its geographical area of interest is linked to the migratory flows from the Maghreb and West Africa, mainly from its former colonies, because it is aware that the final destination of most of the illegal immigrants arriving on Spanish shores is France, for cultural and linguistic reasons.

With a significant immigrant population, 1,638,000 foreigners or 10.1% of its total population, the Netherlands has supported and directly driven forward a European asylum policy, especially during its term of EU presidency (2004), which was given substance in the Hague Programme. However, it still has many reservations when it comes to the establishment of a community policy on legal immigration and on integration issues. It supports the improvement of the cooperation channels with countries of transit and origin from an ample perspective that includes support measures for local development, institutional strengthening, the fight against human trafficking, etc. Although the Netherlands has shown its solidarity towards the southern border countries and has provided support, it believes that border control remains the responsibility of each member state and not the EU.

The interests of countries bordering the Mediterranean coincide to a great extent with Spanish interests. Italy is also being seriously affected by the migratory flows, especially from North and Sub-Saharan Africa. It holds that immigration is not solely a national prerogative and that it should also be administered at a European level via a common policy. Italy agrees with Spain on the difficulties of adequately controlling the EU's southern maritime border. For Italy and for Malta, Libya represents a serious problem in regard to illegal migration. In this respect, the European Border Agency is seen as a step in the right direction. Likewise, the Italian government supports European initiatives to promote the political stability and development of the countries of origin of migration. It seeks the consolidation of the Barcelona Process and the Neighbourhood Policy with the Arab countries and North Africa, as well as of the recent conferences organised between the EU and Africa.

The Nordic countries have traditionally not been very receptive and favourable to progressing on legal immigration issues, although this contrasts with their active role on integration questions. Both domestically and in terms of EU foreign policy, their priorities are asylum and refugee questions, especially vis à vis the flows from African countries, with which they maintain an intense policy of development cooperation. Nevertheless, they remain countries which are not affected by the massive migratory flows arriving in the EU. The Swedish position is that of a border-free Europe and not the current trend directing EU policy. It should be recalled that their geographical area of interest is essentially eastern Europe, especially Russia.

The new member states, located on the external eastern border of the EU, share the concerns of the rest of the border countries, such as Spain, arising from the fact that they are tackling illegal immigration largely seeking to enter the EU on a daily basis. Their main concern is the eastern land border, from where irregular flows from Ukraine, Russia and the former Soviet republics originate, as well as asylum seekers and refugees from Chechnya and the Caucasus. Countries like Poland are seeking greater EU involvement in border management, and this is the reason why they have proactively supported FRONTEX, with the effect that its central headquarters is in Warsaw. This community decision was an achievement of its European policy, given that Poland, like other countries in the region, is afraid that the human drama of illegal immigrants arriving on Mediterranean shores in small boats reduces the interest in and importance of the eastern border. The country also supports moves to apply qualified majority voting to justice and home affairs decisions, as a way of driving forward European policies on these issues.

As we have seen, the discrepancies are varied and manifold, but it nevertheless seems that we are at a new juncture favourable to greater progress on these policies at a European level from a more holistic perspective and based on greater understanding than previously, especially in regard to migration issues. Questions linked to management, control and integration of migratory flows are currently a priority on the European agenda.

The profile of migration was recently heightened by the tragic events during the summer months of 2005 on the Spanish border of Ceuta and Melilla with Morocco. Hundreds of immigrants, mostly of Sub-Saharan origin, who had established settlements on the Moroccan side of the fence separating both countries and waited for months for the opportunity to cross over, stormed the border in order to reach Spanish territory and thereby Europe. This tragic event, which was broadcast live, revealed the need to display determination in facing up to the challenges implied by illegal and massive migratory flows, which, in the case of the southern European and Spanish border, largely originate in Africa, especially the sub-Saharan region.

The Spanish government opted to 'Europeanise' the crisis occurring on its European borders. The argument employed was that the aim of the illegal immigrants was to eventually reach EU territory and that management responsibility should also come within the European sphere. As a result of this strategy, the Hampton Court informal summit of EU heads of state and government called by

the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, reached the conclusion that urgent measures were required in this field, both in the European area and in relation to the countries of transit and origin, especially in North and Sub-Saharan Africa. In response to this important political drive promoted by Spain, the European Commission has published a range of reports to advance in terms of an integrated and full European immigration policy covering all the aspects of this complex phenomenon.

However, political initiatives are usually overtaken by the speed of events, and following a lull of a few months, images of *cayucos* (rudimentary boats) arriving on the shores of the Canary Islands took the place of those of people attempting to cross the fence. According to a range of experts, there is a close link between the increase in controls and surveillance of Moroccan maritime and land borders, the cooperation of the Moroccan government in containing the migratory flows to Spain and the wave of *cayucos*. It might be inferred from this that the migratory flows are shifting their focus and that they are adapting to the progressive tightening of border controls. As greater restrictions are applied to one of the exit platforms, the migratory flow is diverted in search of other less-controlled areas from which to depart for the 'European dream'. From Cádiz to Granada and Almería, then to Ceuta, Melilla and Morocco and, subsequently to the Sahara, Mauritania, Senegal and Mali.

Table 2. Illegal immigrants arriving by sea

ITALY – Including Sicily. Lampedusa	
January - August 2006 14,567	total 2005 22,939
SPAIN – Canary Islands	
January - July 2006 17,058	total 2005 11,781
MALTA	
January - August 2006 1,502	total 2005 1,822

Source: FRONTEX.

Similarly, street disturbances led by second- and third-generation immigrants in Paris and other important French cities, which threatened to spread to other European cities, brought migratory issues to the forefront of European political debate and public opinion. However, they did so only from one perspective: the difficulty of integrating these groups in the host societies.

Amongst other factors, these events have brought new vigour to the idea of an integrated European immigration policy. In particular, it is possible to identify three lines of action promoted by the European Union.

On the one hand, management and control of the EU's external borders is one of the areas in which most progress has been made in recent months. This is due to the fact that it is one of the few areas linked to immigration and security on which there is an important political agreement between member states, within the context of a wider framework, that of combating illegal immigration. The EU approach to combating illegal immigration is based on a set of basic principles which attempt to harmonise the need for solidarity and the shared responsibility of member states, essential in an area without internal borders, and which recognises the special burden borne by countries controlling an external border, the entitlement to and promotion of basic rights, the legitimate expectations of third countries and the perception of public opinion in the member states.

A vital part of European cooperation since the Tampere Programme (1999), management of external borders has been based on three lines of action: a body of common legislation, operational cooperation between member states and solidarity between them and the EU. These principles have been embodied in three concrete actions: entry into force of the Schengen Borders Code, creation of the Border Agency (FRONTEX) to manage operational cooperation on external borders, and the availability of a fund for external borders since January 2007, which is aimed at making shared financial responsibility for management and control of the EU's external borders a reality. Its use is planned for the period 2007-13 for spending on new infrastructures such as improvements to border-crossing zones and surveillance systems on the thousands of kilometres of external European land and sea borders.

Despite the importance of the launch of these measures, progress is still needed on certain issues before it is possible to talk of common management of the EU's external borders. Some of the recent measures implemented by the EU stand out, for instance carrying out joint operations in the Mediterranean region, including the Canary Islands, the creation of a Mediterranean Coastal Patrol Network and a European System of Surveillance and Operational Assistance at external borders to increase the capacity of states to cope with mixed flows of illegal immigrants, the establishment of regional immigration officer networks and the creation of rapid response teams. Likewise, there is also consideration of moves to analyse the viability of creating several regional control centres on the external southern sea borders, staffed and equipped by the member states and coordinated by FRONTEX.

In the light of these advances, it can be said that progress is being made in terms of operational cooperation between member states on border control, in particular via FRONTEX, which two years on has finally been established, has managed to double its meagre budget and has created rapid-response teams for deployment in moments of crisis. Nevertheless, many doubts remain, since the central register of the technical team, developed by FRONTEX, and voluntarily provided by one member state to another, is a model employed in other fields and by other institutions (such as ESDP and NATO), and in many cases has failed meet expectations or specific capacity requirements.

Another of the aspects firmly driven forward by the EU with member-state support is that of harnessing technological possibilities for improving border control in order to enable more reliable personal identification. The exact requirement is an inflow-outflow system which is generalised and automated, in line with the general orientation on security matters of cooperation for the purposes of sharing available information amongst all the actors involved in border control tasks. Cooperation is not limited to the European states, but also includes third countries, essentially the US. This requirement has led to perfecting of the Schengen Visa and Information System, as well as improvements to personal information, due to the incorporation of biometric technology within the border control systems, enhancing their effectiveness. In this respect it is worth highlighting the decision of the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 15 February to incorporate different aspects of the Prüm Treaty into the EU's legal framework, linking police and judicial cooperation in the field of cross-border cooperation, in particular in terms of the fight against terrorism, cross-border crime and illegal migration. This Treaty, which includes the principle of automatic information exchange, even for DNA data and fingerprints, which until now had only entered into force in Austria, Spain and Germany, seems to be achieving positive results in cooperation, largely between these northern European countries.

The recent advance in this area can be deemed positive, fundamentally in terms of the reinforcement of the southern maritime borders,¹⁰ essential for Spain and the EU to be able to deal with problems caused by migratory pressure from Africa. This interest is backed up by a political willingness to improve controls on the flow of people at border posts for security reasons, in response to terrorist attacks,¹¹ and the possible support of external terrorist cells. In this context, it is likely that the EU will achieve further progress in operational terms, which will be vital if progress in transatlantic cooperation with other countries is to be made on these issues.

Secondly, greater emphasis has been placed on the external dimension of migrations, essentially via the promotion of a policy of cooperation with the countries of origin and transit of the principal migratory flows towards Europe. One of the priorities is the signing of agreements on readmission, and technical cooperation to facilitate the management of migratory flows and the control of their borders. Likewise, a reduction in migratory pressure is being sought via the promotion of instruments for development cooperation with the countries of origin. Until now, these have focused on the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean.¹² However, an important obstacle to the initiatives is the resistance of important member states to develop European-level instruments to facilitate legal migration, one of the most complicated issues and one that it is also vital to address if a common European immigration policy is to be achieved.

The integration of immigration policy in the EU's relations with third countries was an agenda item as early as the Seville European Council in 2002, at which there was insistence on the need to employ 'all the appropriate tools in the European Union's external relations' in order to combat illegal immigration. Since 1999 it had been agreed that the fight against illegal immigration would be integrated within all partnership and cooperation agreements, in particular in those reached with countries from the Mediterranean basin (MEDA programme), in the cooperation agreements with the newly independent states of Central Europe and Central Asia, with the Balkan countries and states of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Following Seville, there were demands for the inclusion of a clause on obligatory readmission in cases of illegal immigration in 'all future agreements of cooperation, partnership or equivalent that the European Union or the European Community signs with any country'.

As mentioned above, in geographical terms, efforts have been focused on Africa and the Mediterranean region. The EU cooperation framework with Africa is defined by the EU Strategy for Africa, agreed in December 2005. The main purposes of the strategy are the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of sustainable development, security and good governance in Africa. In 2006, attempts were made to agree on a work plan for Africa, and several conferences were held for this purpose.

In July 2006 in Rabat, the Spanish and Moroccan governments sponsored a ministerial conference on migration and development attended by 60 countries located on the migratory routes of central and western Africa. In September of that year, the African and EU states participated in a high-level United Nations dialogue on migrations and development, while in November an EU–Africa ministerial conference on migration and development was held in Libya, with the aim of agreeing on the first ever focus of common agreement between the EU and Africa as a whole.

¹⁰ 'Communication on Reinforcing the Management of the European Union's Southern Maritime Borders', COM(2006) 733 final, 30/XI/06.

¹¹ For further information see Rut Bermejo, '[Avances en el control de fronteras: cooperación, información y tecnología](#)', ARI nr 18/2007, Elcano Royal Institute, 2007.

¹² For further information see 'Presidency Conclusions on the Global Approach to Migration: Priority Actions Focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean', European Council, Brussels, 15-16/XII/2005; 'EU Strategy for Africa', European Council, SEC 15961/07, 15-16/XII/2005.

The issue of migrations also forms part of programmes for dialogue and cooperation with the Mediterranean countries, within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and the Euromed Forum has also been used to promote the exchange of good practices and to work on a joint action programme. Dialogue on these questions has also been launched with the principal states of Sub-Saharan Africa, based on Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement, and the rapid response mechanism was employed to support Mauritania and Senegal in their efforts to combat illegal migrations.

In this context, there appears to be consensus on the need to address the root causes of migration, such as poverty, conflicts and unemployment, and for other EU policies, including those related to trade, agriculture and fisheries, to be coherent with the development policies. The fact that all the agreed priority actions were implemented in just a few months is evidence that the balance is positive, except that field checks must still be carried out to see if execution was effective, suitable and sufficient.

However, in order for this EU approach to migration to succeed, in the first instance externally, but also internally, the future development of a European legal migration policy is essential. From a home affairs standpoint, migration can contribute to covering the changing labour market needs and the economic aspects must be taken into account. In this context, as stated in the Policy Plan on Legal Migration¹³ and in accordance with the objectives of the European Employment Strategy, the EU is adopting a dual approach for the coming years: facilitating the admission of certain categories of migrant in accordance with existing needs (for example, seasonal workers and highly-qualified workers) without prejudice to the application of the community principle of preference and ensuring common and secure judicial status for all legal migrant workers.

From a foreign policy perspective, it is difficult to establish stable and productive relationships of cooperation with the countries of origin on illegal migration issues and readmission agreements without offsetting these with a range of tools and initiatives vis à vis legal migration. In this respect, we are witnessing the launch of actions such as the Migration Portal, the European Job Mobility Portal, and the European Researcher's Mobility Portal. Third countries will be supplied with information on the legal possibilities of working in Europe, including specific information campaigns. Nevertheless, the positions of a number of member states in regard to economic migration largely serve as an obstacle to achieving a European agreement and to agreeing the substantial package of measures on this issue requested by the countries of origin.

Thirdly, several community-level proposals have been tabled on integration policies in relation to the growing number of migrants already residing in European territory. The link between migration and integration is a priority theme for the EU. The European institutions are attempting to proactively promote the application of the common integration programme,¹⁴ based on common principles on integration which cover all the important fields including work, socio-economics, public health, culture and politics. Higher participation rates of interested parties are being sought, including for migrants themselves, as a means of promoting an effective integration strategy.

However, despite attempts to imbue integration policies with more relevance at the European level, it has not so far proved possible to implement many practical measures in this respect. One of the reasons that can be given is ideological differences, without forgetting that the nature of these varies from one country to the next. According to the European Commission,¹⁵ integration should be understood as 'a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third countries and the host society, which provides for full participation of the immigrant'.

¹³ 'Policy Plan on Legal Migration', COM (2005) 669 final, 21/XII/2005.

¹⁴ 'Communication on the Common Programme for Integration – Framework for the Integration of Third-country Nationals in the European Union', COM (2005) 389 final, 1/IX/2005.

¹⁵ 'Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment', COM 2003 336.

On the one hand, this implies that the host society is responsible for guaranteeing migrants' legal rights in such a way that it is possible for them to participate in economic, social, cultural and civil life and, on the other hand, that migrants must respect the regulations and basic values of the host society and actively participate in the integration process, without having to renounce their own identity in so doing. Integration implies achieving a balance between rights and obligations over time, with the effect that a citizen of a third country legally residing in a member state will acquire more rights and obligations the longer he or she remains in it.

This 'gradual approach' implies that measures for integration are applied to all citizens of third countries as soon as possible after arrival and, in any event, from the moment that their stay acquires a degree of permanence or stability. According to principles advocated by the EU, integration policies should be based on a holistic approach, taking into account not only the economic and social aspects of integration but also problems related to cultural and religious diversity, citizenship, participation and political rights. Although priorities do vary between countries and regions, integration policies should be planned as part of a long-term global and coherent framework and, at the same time, be sensitive to the specific needs of particular groups and adapt to local conditions. They depend on cooperation between a wide spectrum of agents and they require appropriate resources.

Amongst the advances on a European level in this field we should mention the Manual for Integration¹⁶ and the Hague Programme, adopted in November 2004, which underlines the need for greater coordination of national integration policies and EU initiatives. It also specifies that all future EU initiatives will be included within a framework based on common principles, as well as on clear objectives and evaluation instruments. The JHA Council of November 2004 passed a number of Basic Common Principles (BCPs) designed to form the groundwork of a coherent European framework on issues concerning the integration of third-country nationals.

In addition, it adjudged the promotion of basic rights, non-discrimination and equality of opportunities to be key elements for integration. In this context, the EU has incorporated¹⁷ different anti-discriminatory provisions within its legislation, thereby providing these aims with a suitable legal framework.

Application of integration measures requires adequate funding. The EU supports the member states' integration policies by means of different financial instruments. The Commission has had an Integration Fund since January 2007. These additional resources, €825 million for the period 2007-13, prioritise preparatory actions for the integration of third-country nationals at a local level, for example by ensuring access to language courses for recently-arrived migrants. Priorities include the development of cooperation between member states, increasing the exchange of information and good practice, and paying special attention to the integration of minorities.

The importance attached to improving labour-market integration stands out amongst the European proposals, and it is expected that the high-level group on social integration of ethnic minorities and their full access to the labour market will publish its practical recommendations later in the year. There are also plans for more action to ensure that migrants receive civic education on basic European values. This issue features in the current debate throughout Europe on models of integration and the need to establish intercultural dialogue as a tool for integration.

¹⁶ 'Handbook on Integration for Policy Makers and Practitioners, European Commission and Migration Policy Group, November 2004.

¹⁷ Directive 2000/43/EC, of 29/VI/2000, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and Directive 2000/78/EC, of 27/XI/2000, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, there are many complex obstacles and difficulties to be overcome in relation to this aspect of a future European-level immigration policy. Integration-related issues form part of the political-ideological debate within member states themselves, with significant differences between them, and at the end of the day there is a desire that they should remain under strict national control.

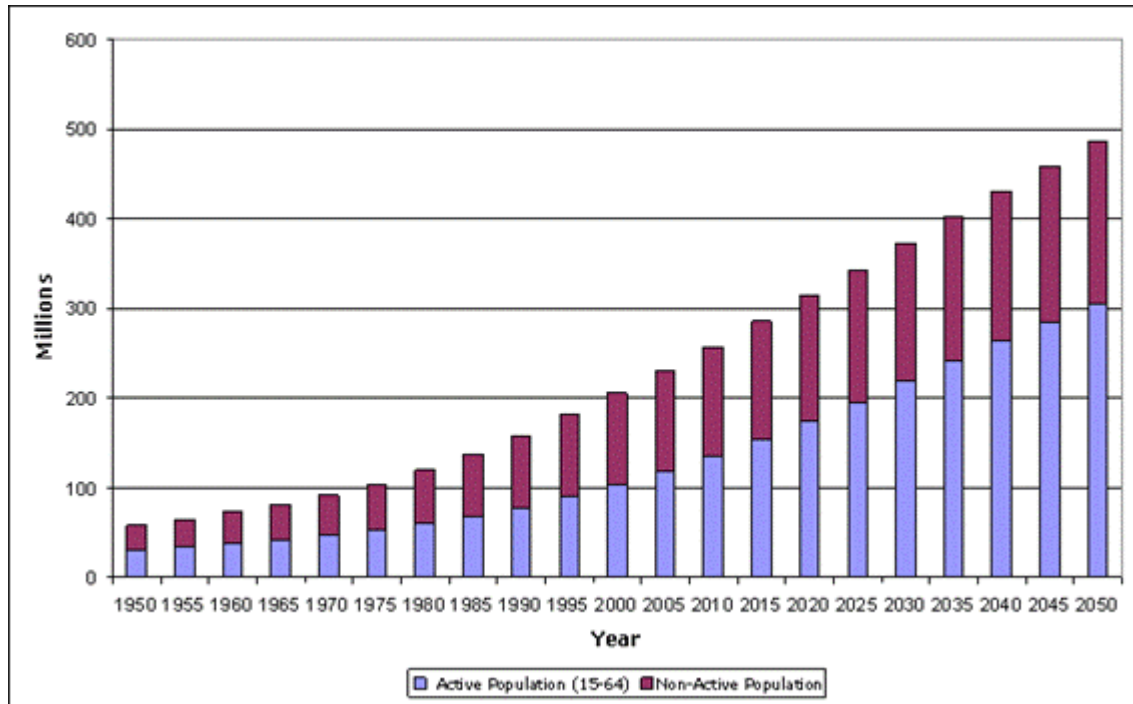
Development and Immigration

The previous section clearly showed that the migratory crisis in 2006 between Africa and the EU awoke an interest on the part of EU to address a number of immigration-related questions from a common policy standpoint. We have also seen that until now emphasis has clearly been placed on actions geared towards the surveillance and control of the EU's external borders.

Perhaps the key question when analysing African immigration to Europe is not 'what has happened?' but 'what is the future potential for migration to Europe from the region?'. In order to answer this question it is necessary to understand the processes that generate the incentives due to which migration occurs.

Although these processes are multiple, the present analysis will focus on two: (1) the evolution of the size of the active population and urbanisation ratios; and (2) the evolution of the economies of Sub-Saharan countries. To date, most Sub-Saharan countries have experienced a relatively moderate increase in the size of their active populations (people aged from 15 to 59). However, this is about to change. In order to understand the magnitude of the changes forecast it is useful to consider some gross data. It is estimated that in 2005 the active population of the Sub-Saharan countries analysed here was 118 million and the forecast is for this figure to rise to 304 million by 2050. In other words, the forecast is for the active population of these 13 countries to grow by 186 million, or 157%. Put another way, Sub-Saharan Africa is going to experience extremely high demographic growth. Taking this into account and on the basis that a large part of the active population will want to find work as a means of survival, the Sub-Saharan countries will be faced with one of their greatest-ever challenges. This challenge will mean that the region will need to be prepared to generate new employment opportunities at a rate previously unheard of in these societies. If the region fails in this task, the result will obviously be an unprecedented increase in competition for job vacancies, and, therefore, in all likelihood, an unprecedented increase in the region's migratory potential.

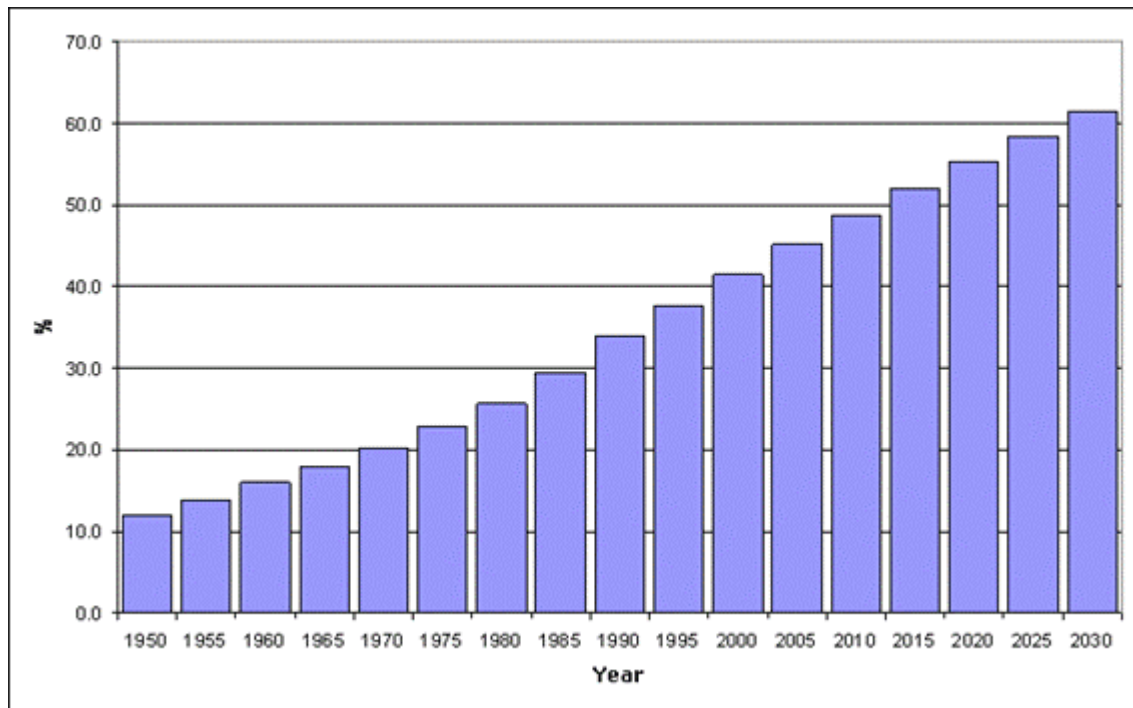
Graph 2. Evolution of the Population of 13 Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1950-2030



The prospect is further complicated by the increased rhythm of the process of urbanisation that has been occurring in these countries for a long time now. A high increase in the level of urbanisation means that large-scale restructuring is occurring in the economies of Sub-Saharan Africa. This in turn means that every year more and more people are entering the urban job market as opposed to the rural market, with the effect that competition for jobs in urban areas is soaring. Although urbanisation is by no means a new phenomenon, changes that will occur in future will still be very significant. The process of urbanisation thereby adds to the region's growing migration potential.

Another important factor in assessing the future migratory potential of a region like Sub-Saharan Africa is the economic difference between a neighbouring country in relative terms, such as Spain, and the region in question. From 1980 until the present, the difference between Spanish per capita GDP and the average for Sub-Saharan countries has risen from US\$8,000 to over US\$14,000 (measured by 2000 prices). The growing differences are not so much due to a reduction in per capita GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa, although this is often the case in similar comparisons, but rather to extraordinary growth in Spanish per capita GDP. Obviously, an evolution of this type suggests that economic prospects of living in Europe are becoming increasingly attractive for many Sub-Saharans. Thus, the 'attraction' factor represented by growing Spanish per capita GDP is growing in importance, and there is nothing to suggest that this is about to alter in the immediate future.

Graph 3. Evolution of Urbanisation, Sub-Saharan Africa, 1950-2030



Source: UN, *World Population Prospects*, 2004.

To summarise, the rules of labour market survival in the societies of Sub-Saharan Africa are changing very quickly, making job competition increasingly harder in countries that already faced serious problems in attempting to absorb their active population. The only way to prevent an explosion of the migratory potential of Sub-Saharan Africa as a result of its present demographic and economic evolution is to create employment opportunities to cover the increase in supply. There are few indicators that this is actually happening; reports in the field rather communicate a feeling of desperation, and if things continue like this it is unlikely that the situation will improve in the coming decades. Thus, it could be that the massive avalanche on the Spanish border with Africa was just the first warning of what is likely to occur in the future. The situation is so serious that the possibility of a mass exodus should not be dismissed if the African states are unable to absorb the rapid growth of their active population. Neither can we rule out the possibility of violent conflicts as a result of the political tensions that are the likely outcome of an inefficient management of the region's demographic problems.

Except in a few isolated cases, Europe's borders with Africa are those under the most surveillance in the whole of Europe and probably in the world. Furthermore, current visa legislation, both long- and short-term, is highly restrictive with respect to Sub-Saharan countries, meaning that it is probably not an exaggeration to say that migration from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe is complicated. In view of the fact that both legal and illegal migration to Spain and Europe from Sub-Saharan countries is now so difficult it is likely that an increase in the migratory potential from these countries will almost automatically lead to higher clandestine migration and an increase in the dangerous border crossings that we are currently witnessing. It might even be vouched that while the migratory potential of Sub-Saharan Africa is rising, the higher the investment in short-term preventive measures the more dangerous and dramatic it will be to migrate illegally.

In order to respond to the current problem of illegal African immigration it is necessary not only to strengthen border controls, but also to implement measures which take into account the causes of migration and to try to change them. The recent Plan Africa, drawn up by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides for different actions to drive forward African development, and because of this it is a clear example of a strategy that aims to address the causes of African emigration in order to reduce the continent’s migratory potential. But concerted international efforts are needed, since no single country has the capacity to deal with the African problem on its own.

Any long-term plan to reduce migratory pressure must be accompanied by a mid- and short-term strategy focused on the growth in migratory potential likely to occur while Spain and the EU are endeavouring to lay the groundwork for a more economically prosperous Africa in the future. As far as short-term remedies go, Spanish government initiatives have consisted of reinforcing maritime surveillance, for which they have secured the cooperation of other members of the Union; equipping FRONTEX; increasing and/or establishing Spanish diplomatic representation in the countries of origin; and in strengthening the capacity of the African security forces to manage the transit of migrants between the countries of origin and the African coastline. These are worthwhile initiatives, and, taken as a whole, they will probably be reasonably efficacious, but given the lack of an alternative to illegal immigration to the EU and increased African migratory pressure, it will not be surprising if in 2007 there are more of the dangerous border crossings that we witnessed throughout 2006.

As we have seen in the previous section, the EU has recognised that part of the response to uncontrolled immigration is to be found in increased development of the African countries of origin. One measure to facilitate development of the countries of origin of the largest migratory flows, would be to increase legal migration. The reason given to justify this approach, as advocated by certain experts, is that higher immigration would serve to generate an increase in the remittances received by the societies of origin.

According to World Bank estimates, in 2005 migrants’ remittances received by developing countries totalled US\$167 billion, increasing from US\$160 billion the previous year. However, the weakness of the calculations leads one to think that the real flow of remittances could be up to 50% higher. Thus, remittances might be on the way to becoming the main source of external financing for developing countries. In 2004, they were already higher than debt and development aid flows, and just below direct investment (Table 3).

Table 3. Remittances and Other Economic Flows World-Wide, 1995-2004

US\$ bn	1995	2004
Migrants’ remittances	58	160
Direct Foreign Investment	107	166
Private debt and portfolio equity	170	136
Official Development Aid	59	79

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

There are no data to allow us to identify the transatlantic flows of remittances but data provided by the World Bank do indicate geographical distribution. In 2005, East Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean were the principal receiving regions of this flow, followed by South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Europe (developing) and Central Asia and, in last place, Sub-Saharan Africa (Table 4).

Table 4. Migrants' Remittances to Developing Countries, 1990-2005

(US\$ bn)	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Latin America & the Caribbean	5.8	13.4	20.1	24.4	28.1	34.8	40.7	42.4
South Asia	5.6	10.0	17.2	19.2	24.2	31.1	31.4	32.0
Eastern Asia & the Pacific	3.3	9.7	16.7	20.1	27.2	35.8	40.9	43.1
Middle East & North Africa	11.4	13.4	13.2	15.1	15.6	18.6	20.3	21.3
Europe & Central Asia	3.2	8.1	13.4	13.0	13.3	15.1	19.4	19.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.9	3.2	4.9	4.7	5.2	6.8	7.7	8.1

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

The importance attached in recent years to migrants' remittances, both in the academic world and in the media, and the insistence on the part of different sectors that these remittances can be an effective way to combat poverty contrasts with the lack of information on this flow and the low quality of published data –due, in large measure, to the great diversity of the informal transfer channels–.

One of the main problems in analysing the impact of remittances on development is the lack of full and reliable information on the volume, destination and use of this economic flow; a lack of information which also serves to limit the action proposals that governments of the countries of origin of migration might make to development aid donors, to the migrants themselves or to their families.

It will therefore be important to start to improve the data-gathering systems in relation to remittances. On the one hand, it is necessary to have a truer picture of the proportion of their savings that immigrants send back to their countries of origin and to analyse which factors influence the frequency and volume of these transfers, in other words, the propensity to remit.

On the other hand, it is also vital to know what activities these savings are spent on once they reach migrants' relatives. We will probably not encounter a homogenous pattern for dispatch and use of remittances, but rather that each country, or even each province or small community, follows its own specific pattern depending on a long list of factors including their real investment possibilities, their consumer requirements, the regional educational and health situation, the level of development of the financial system, currency exchange rates, etc. In other words, in more general terms, use of the remittances in the destination will be conditioned by the economic and social structure of the migrant's country of origin.¹⁸

In order that remittances contribute to the development of receiving countries obviously the first condition that has to be met is that as high a proportion as possible is sent at the lowest possible cost to migrants and/or their families.

It is common knowledge that a good part of remittances are channelled via the informal financial system via remittance agencies. To date, access on the part of migrants and their families to the formal financial system has been very limited, partly due to the fact that a high proportion of the remittance senders are living illegally in developed countries.¹⁹ Cost and insecurity are normally cited as the main disadvantages of transferring remittances by means of the informal system. As far as cost goes, a recent World Bank study²⁰ indicates that it may be around 20% of the sum sent.²¹

¹⁸ However, two economic contexts as different as Ecuador's and Senegal's have similar destination uses.

¹⁹ This situation depends largely on the migratory policy in the receiving country.

²⁰ P. Fajnzylber and J.H. López, 'Close to Home. The Development Impact of Remittances in Latin America', *Conference Edition*, World Bank, Washington DC, 2007.

²¹ A study published by CECA in 2002 states that the sending costs of remittances in Spain are lower than in other countries. They do not exceed 10% of the principal.

Finally, there is use at destination, the key factor for many studies when it comes to determining the impact of remittances on development. In addition to a possible counter-cyclical effect, remittances have a direct, positive impact on income, and this translates as an increase in consumption, an increase in investment, or both. A good amount of the literature on remittances and their impact on development focuses on the proportions of remittances spent on consumption and investment, with the latter being key when it comes to quantifying their net impact on development. In principle, an increase in investment would appear to be more beneficial than increased consumption. However, this will also depend, on the one hand, on whether the investment is on productive activities or on those with an effect on development or if, as opposed to this, it feeds non-productive sectors, the growth of which is not reflected in the country's standard of living. Nevertheless, if investments in housing and construction manage to significantly improve the basic standard of living of migrants' relatives from a base of very deficient living conditions, then the remittances will be contributing to covering basic social needs in a similar way to consumer spending on basic needs. In this case, a very direct contribution is made to development and to achievement of the Millennium Goals – specifically, to the seventh goal–. The latter effect will depend on a variety of factors, including the base level of economic well-being of migrants' family members. On the other hand, the effect will also differ in accordance with the type of goods that are purchased. If basic-needs goods are largely bought, such as food, clothes or shoes, there will be direct effects on educational and health conditions, and even on the population's nutritional levels. From this there will be a direct and positive impact on development and an indirect impact, via productivity, on the work factor, as well as its corresponding effect on economic growth.

It may therefore be concluded that remittances, in addition to contributing to an increase in household incomes, will also have a wider impact on the development of the country if they are spent on basic-needs products –or on those related to the productivity of the human capital– and on investment in productive sectors.

What little empirical evidence is available for Latin America appears to show is that remittances are spent more on consumption than on investment. Specifically, according to an IADB study,²² between 61% and 74% of the flows are spent on basic consumption, improving the standard of living via foodstuffs or health. Meanwhile, non-basic consumption, which is more marginal, accounts for 3% to 17% of remittances received. For its part, investment only appears to be absorbing between 1% and 8% of the remittances. Furthermore, the largest part of the investment goes to the housing and construction sector, with there being precious little of the productive investment that would ensure a greater impact on development. This pattern is similar to those observed in Ecuador and in Senegal. Although for these two countries investment from remittances is higher, a considerable part of it goes on housing. In Senegal, for example, according to the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), over half the value of remittances, 52.78%, is spent on the educational sector, thereby directly contributing to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals –specifically to the second goal–. Secondly, over 27% of the remittances contributes to family support, while, in last place, just under 14% is spent on property construction. In Ecuador, 61% of remittances is spent on basic needs –food, rent, electricity, water, telephone, transport, clothes and medicines– while 17% finances the purchase of luxury consumer goods. According to this study, 14% is invested in the following sectors: 4% on property purchases, 2% on education and 8% on businesses. The remaining 8% is saved. A number of studies indicate that property investment may have created a bubble; something which leads one to think that housing investment might sometimes be higher than the levels necessary to cover minimum habitability conditions.²³

²² IADB/MIF, *Sending Money Home: Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington DC, 2004, <http://www.iadb.org/mif/v2/files/StudyPE2004eng.pdf>.

²³ A. Acosta, S. López Olivares and D. Villamar, 'La contribución de las remesas a la economía ecuatoriana', A. Acosta et al., *Crisis, migración y remesas en Ecuador. ¿Una oportunidad para el codesarrollo?*, CIDEAL, Madrid, 2006.

In principle, it can be affirmed that for these three cases use at destination appears to be facilitating an impact of remittances on socio-economic development via basic consumption, and possibly an improvement in living conditions. Nevertheless, the channelling of remittances towards productive investment still appears to be insufficient, given that the latter would potentially have a greater macro-economic impact.

Similarly, certain mechanisms that result in remittances not having a beneficial effect on development have been identified, and they might even become counter-productive. First, remittances might lead to higher levels of inequality in countries already suffering from unequal income distribution. This occurs when migratory movements are highly concentrated in terms of areas and socio-economic classes which, moreover, are not the most vulnerable. When migrants' relatives receive remittances the aforementioned concentration phenomenon occurs. Secondly, a number of studies also warn of the risk of 'Dutch disease' when the volume of remittances is very high. This economic phenomenon occurs when currency enters on a large-scale, in this case due to the arrival of remittances, causing appreciation of the local currency and thereby undermining competitiveness abroad. In other words, the country's export capacity would be affected.

Conclusions

It has been the aim of the present paper to describe some of the most important features of the migratory scene in the Atlantic region. On the one hand we have seen how the migratory phenomenon has taken shape on both sides of the Atlantic, and how, despite being a phenomenon with many similarities, there exist manifold differences between types of migration, especially in terms of origin.

Another of the issues developed in this document is the driving forward of a range of European initiatives on migration topics in the wake of the tragic events in Ceuta and Melilla in 2005 and the subsequent migratory avalanche in 2006, produced by the so-called *Cayucos* moving between Africa and the Canary Islands.

Lastly, we have highlighted the importance of linking migration to the development of the countries of origin. This forms part of the open debate on remittances and how they might be considered to be both positive and negative for the countries receiving them.

With the aim of stimulating a debate on the subjects addressed, we have formulated a number of questions that could serve as the launch-pad for a dialogue between the representatives of the countries affected by the migratory movements in the Atlantic region.

In view of the fact that, on the one hand, the phenomenon of migration in the EU and the US tends to be characterised by a high level of homogeneity in terms of the respective countries of origin and, on the other hand, by the fact that there is a considerable difference in terms of which countries send migrants to the EU and which send them to the US:

- What are the mid- and long-term advantages and disadvantages of the current development of the migratory flows?
- Is it preferable to achieve a high level of heterogeneity in terms of the origin of the migration (as in the case of Canada), and, if so, why?
- What long-term consequences might be caused by the fact that the EU receives an ample majority of (over 80%) Muslim migrants?

We have noted how the EU is attempting to progress towards the common management of the migratory phenomenon. We should not exaggerate the advances made. There is need for work to coordinate border surveillance efforts, and we are still a long way from common management of the migratory phenomenon. On the other hand, we should take account of the fact that the European countries are and will continue to be amongst those most affected by African migration. We have also seen how development and immigration are increasingly mentioned in the same breath, and that the best way of controlling illegal and irregular immigration in the long term is to stimulate development in the countries of origin.

- In the short-term, what are the likely consequences of increased staffing and surveillance of the EU's southern borders?
- Is it likely that the African migratory phenomenon will change because European countries improve their surveillance systems? What might be the consequences for the countries of transit in North Africa?
- Is it possible to combat illegal immigration from Africa if the fight is not complemented by a European strategy to manage legal migration?
- In political and economic terms, is it viable to believe that the EU can develop a real common immigration policy?
- In terms of development, how should remittances be classified: good or bad? Are they an effective resource? Are there alternatives or policies that could contribute to making remittances more efficient and efficacious in promoting development?
- From the standpoint of the countries of the Atlantic region, if we accept that Africa can generate serious problems if there are uncontrolled migratory movements, what should be the role of the affected countries? And to what extent is greater coordination of the international community on African aid and development policies desirable and viable?

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