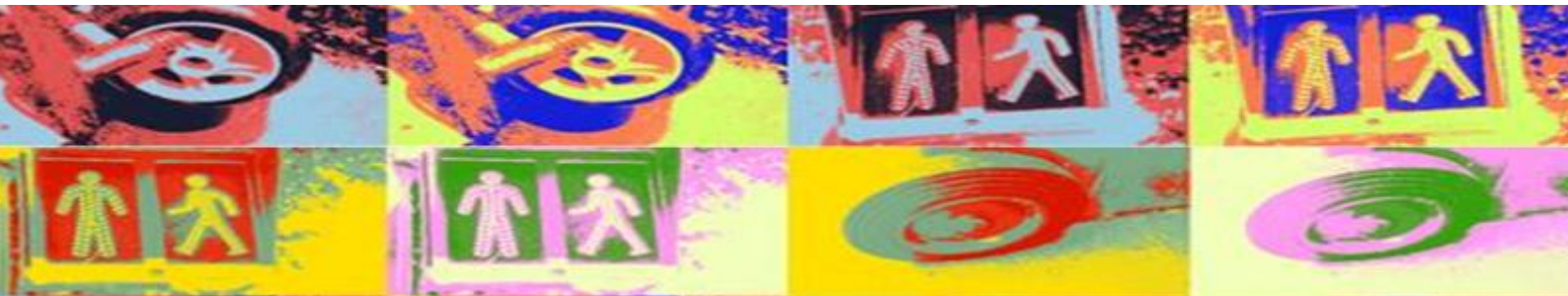




# The Future of International Migration to OECD Countries Regional Note Latin America

JORGE MARTINEZ PIZARRO,  
ECLAC,  
SANTIAGO DE CHILE, CHILE





## Foreword

In the course of the project ‘The Future of International Migration’ carried out by the OECD/IFP Secretariat in 2008/2009 a number of regional notes were commissioned from leading experts to help shed light on the diversity of situations and future migration trends in different parts of the non-OECD world. The aim of the regional notes was to provide a largely qualitative, personal assessment of the likely evolution in factors in the principal non-OECD regions which could influence outflows of people either in the form of intra-regional migration or, of particular significance to this exercise, to OECD countries, through to 2025/2030. More specifically, the experts were asked to give some consideration to the most likely trajectory that outward migration might take in the years ahead, together with some speculation about possible “wildcards” (unexpected events or developments which could impact significantly on pressures to migrate to OECD countries).

A regional note on India/Pakistan/Bangladesh was written by Prof. Binod Khadria, (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi). Sub-Saharan Africa was covered by Laurent Bossard (OECD Club de Sahel). Jeff Ducanes and Manolo Abella (ILO Regional Bureau, Bangkok) submitted a note on China and South East Asia/Asia Pacific. A note on North and East Africa was prepared by Flore Gubert and Christophe Jalil Nordman (DIAL, IRD, France). Jorge Martinez Pizarro (CEPAL, Chile) drafted a note on Latin America. The Russian Federation and Eastern and South East Europe were covered by Prof. Dietrich Thränhardt (University of Münster, Germany). Prof. Philippe Fargues (European University Institute, Italy) provided information on the Middle East and North Africa. These papers can be found on the OECD/IFP webpage ([www.oecd.org/futures](http://www.oecd.org/futures)).



*In the coming months, I also call on the European Union to develop a migratory policy that respects human rights, that maintains this dynamic which is beneficial to both continents, and that addresses once and for all the tremendous historic, economic and ecological debt that European countries owe in large part to the Third World, finally closing the veins still open in Latin America. Today, they cannot fail in their "policies for integration" as they did fail with their supposed "mission of civilization" during colonial times.*

- Evo Morales Ayma, President of Bolivia

In these notes, we intend to show that international migration in Latin America today presents several features that will remain constant during the second and third decades of the 21st century, and that new issues will emerge. It is a complicated rather speculative exercise, because both sets of characteristics depend on the attitude of developed nations, that will define opportunities and problems that Latin American countries will encounter regarding migration governance, including issues of concern that remain unsolved (migrant trafficking and undocumented migration) and opportunities (such as negotiations to humanize migration, as within the Ibero-American community of nations).

The hypothesis is approached from a Latin American ("regional") perspective. In that sense, it is imperative to bear in mind the following:

- a) this paper is not aimed at presenting a quantitative analysis, even though it is essential to mention this type of considerations in any examination of the probable trends of migration; that is why we examine the main characteristics of migratory patterns at the beginning of the 21st century that are expected to remain static during the coming decades;
- b) these visions of future will not only be affected by the current expressions of international migration determinants, but also by their probable changes –the most predictable of which refer to the demographic context, and allow us the exercise of anticipation;
- c) any vision of Latin American international migration, be it present or projected, should ineludibly take into account the actions and omissions of those countries that currently receive migration, especially regarding the toughening of their migration policies and the exacerbation of discrimination against migrants;
- d) in a speculative exercise such as the one here proposed, it is impossible to consider the consequences of non-desired events as determinants of international migration since, evidently, when it comes to natural catastrophes, famine, environmental disasters, violence or armed conflicts, we forcibly assume that science, research, democratic institutions, and public policies all aim, precisely, to prevent their occurrence. This means, instead, that any outlook on the future should contemplate asymmetries, deficiencies, rigidities and negative externalities resulting from social and economic processes. These may activate or change migration processes, which, in our opinion, are right now triggering the emergence of new issues;
- e) in this context, we analyze various emerging recent issues, especially those that most likely will continue not only be part of social and economic changes in Latin American societies, but also determine new migratory challenges. The analysis takes into consideration that the numerous migration-related problems and opportunities found at the beginning of the century will probably remain unchanged during the next years. From the point of view of sending countries, these problems have accompanied economic changes and the decreasing role of the

State in social protection. Also, I dedicate some few lines to examine the context of the antiimmigration discourse that is currently developing in developed countries;

- f) Special mention is devoted some times to the Ibero-American community context, because, at the beginning of the XXI it is considered a strategic issue for Latin American countries and States have devoted significant attention to this topic during the last three Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government (2005, 2006 and 2007).

## **1. Anti-immigration discourse and its implications to human rights of migrants**

Throughout the nineties, the notion of a historical paradox took shape in Latin America: as certain organizations pointed out at the turn of the century, in a world interconnected as never before, and when financial flows and trade are liberalized, human mobility, instead, faces strong restrictive barriers. This lead to assumptions about the formal exclusion of migration in the current context of globalization, an idea highlighted, for example, in the works of ECLAC (CEPAL, 2002). Moreover, it was acknowledged that the contributions of migration to the intensification of world-scale economic and labor relations, as well as social, political and cultural ones, were scarcely valued in circumstances when mobility peeped out as an issue stimulated by multiple factors, starting with development-driven asymmetries and the demand for migrant workers. In that sense, it was emphasized that, for numerous migrants, motivations resulted in vulnerability when confronted to restrictions, thus exacerbating their social disadvantages.

Almost at the end of the decade of 2000s, several new tensions are recognized in Latin America: undeniably, there exist negative aspects that powerfully restrain the possibilities of humanizing migration processes in the coming years. There has been no advancement in terms of liberalizing mobility, and vulnerability still affects many migrants –before emigration, during their journeys, throughout their insertion in the countries of destination, and increasingly frequently, during repatriation. Also, the spread of a mistrustful outlook on certain facets of migration (especially on irregular migration), and the events of September 11th in New York (2001) have set a very bad precedent for human rights. This adds to further negative features over which developed countries are debating without clear course.

The counterpoint between the negative aspects and the more affirmative perception of migration processes entails a new paradox that will become notorious in the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and one that has unpredictable and highly worrying consequences: as the inclusion of migration on international relations agendas moves forward, new and deeper problems –which may be summarized as a discriminatory and anti-immigration attitude– are identified around migration processes. Among the negative facts, it is worth mentioning, for example, several initiatives taken by the developed countries, and certain omissions and setbacks at the global level.

Under the aegis of developed countries, immigration is growingly seen, in a negative light, as a critical problem. Never before has migration been perceived or treated in such a way: while the need for migration is proclaimed, initiatives for migrants' admission and integration are particularly selective, joint development programs get no support from potential beneficiaries, and temporary mobility is a reality only applicable to people from developed countries. There are practically no elements that may lead us to envision substantial changes in this evaluation in the near future.

Several First World countries have toughened their policies, norms, and practice vis-à-vis immigration, ignoring the principles of International Right and all considerations of due process of law, besides contradicting their declared intentions of cooperation and their own statements about the need for orderly immigration. There are directives on return that, apart from being rejected in Latin America, generate debate within the European Union. Migration reform in the United States (peculiarly led by the migration administration in the hands of the Department of Homeland Security) entails an unprecedented process of non-definitions, and the construction of a border fence stands as the paramount proof of the lack of sense that seems to persistently accompany certain decisions. Even during the presidential campaigns, the debates on the migration “problem” in the United States have not refrained from recognizing the “validity”, so to speak, of such construction.

There are serious elements to make us doubt about the cooperative attitude for the governance of migration flows showed by those developed countries receiving Latin American immigrants. This does not forecast good news for migrants. Latin American countries have sought to establish common points in order to counter such initiatives though, naturally, they do not have ample margins of action to negotiate each State’s sovereign decisions, and, at times, they do not even develop strategies to this end. The example of the Ibero-American Summit is revealing in this sense, since a considerable number of declarations and action-plan proposals are being debated without yet evaluating their concretion. This may be speaking of a slow rhythm of progress in the region: such is precisely the case with the follow-up of the so-called Montevideo Compromise (November 2006) which, stemming from the deliberations held at the Ibero-American Summit, gave origin to a specialized Forum (Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development, Cuenca, 2008) that has so far shown no advancement. We wonder what can be expected from this initiative without the support of the States involved.<sup>i</sup>

Among the considerations of global nature, the failure to include the migration issue in the free-trade agreements between countries with differential development levels is still a noticeable fact at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Despite the initiatives undertaken by financial international organizations such as the World Bank –which recommends “brain exchange”–, and the efforts by certain countries to support their diasporas, there have been no discussions on how to jointly profit from the mobility of qualified human resources.<sup>ii</sup>

On the other hand, little progress has been made regarding the productive use of remittances (which, moreover, would be dropping in Latin America), and the agreements and programs targeted for temporary labor migration have not only not become widespread but also continue to include meager migrant worker quotas. Even though we should highlight the existence of good practices in this field within the Ibero-American context, such as the *Project for Temporary Agricultural Workers from Guatemala to Canada*, it should also be noted that as to 2007 it promoted the hiring of only 2225 workers (CEPAL, 2008a).<sup>iii</sup> Similar remarks can be made of other Ibero-American initiatives, such as the project *Temporary and Circular Labor Migration between Spain and Colombia* (CEPAL, 2008a).

In our view, however, what is most worrying is the absence of signs in support of the *United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (2003). This is a problem in the region because many countries, like Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela, have not yet ratified this instrument and do not seem inclined to

do so. The central issue is to evaluate the validity of International Right in face of the European Union's and the United States' negative to legitimate the Convention –a negative that has been vividly questioned by Latin American countries, most of which have ratified it (14).

Simultaneously, global and regional institutional venues have been created and consolidated, where dialogue and cooperation initiatives have been implemented in several areas involving international migration. At the global level, there stands out the launch of the United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (New York, 2006), and the establishment of its consultation forums (Belgium, 2007, and Philippines, 2008). At the regional level, intergovernmental consultation groups have consolidated their presence (especially, the Regional Migration Conference) and others have emerged vigorously (from within the Organization of American States and the Ibero-American Conference, through its summits and the implementation of the above mentioned Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development which was established in Cuenca in 2008). In all of these institutional scenarios, the importance of migration has been gradually acknowledged while its specifics and challenges have been more precisely defined, thus contributing to the delineation of a migration agenda that combines development with human rights, and that will be continually under examination throughout the next years.

All the facts we have here alluded to should lead to deep analyses of the international agenda, particularly the Ibero-American and regional ones, aimed to revise, among others, the so-called principles of shared responsibility –a notion that has been frequently put forward in negotiations but which many countries of origin of migrants have hardly admitted.

What could therefore be said about the future situation of international migration in Latin America? The works of ECLAC (CEPAL, 2008a) have emphasized that: *“once gone the nineties, and over halfway into the decade of 2000s, the migratory panorama has turned more complex, and several issues associated to international migration have become key topics of the development agenda, in the regional as well as in the national contexts. Incomplete debates and ignorance about the migratory reality have gradually been left behind. Today, we are progressively witnessing a state of effervescence in the search for more in-depth studies, the definition of agreements and the design of policies, so that migration has grown to be a recurrent topic in all countries”*. After this assertion, we admit that, paradoxically, dialogue seems to be impoverished, the interests of developed countries clash with the reality of vulnerability that affect numerous migrants, and there are well-founded reasons to characterize cooperation for the development of migratory initiatives as a slow process (slow, though not inexistent, since it is at least evident in certain concrete fields, such as the agreements on temporary hiring like the ones celebrated between Canada and many Latin American countries). It needs be acknowledged that, even when the evaluation of the extant dialogue and the debates is still pending, they will nonetheless keep on taking place throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The importance of establishing a genuine debate on international migration from the perspective of the developing countries does not exclude accepting the responsibilities befalling their governments and social élites, and should extend to all those topics that make up a contemporary migration agenda. The starting point for such discussions, which will persist in the coming years, should be the recognition of the fact that the consequences and potentialities of migration for the developing countries are not neutral, and that the worst of scenarios is to postpone negotiations of an issue that will prove crucial

for many countries in the future, and that will foster decisive changes in concepts that today have a limited nature, such as those of citizenship and nation.

## **2. United States and Spain are the main destinations of Latin American migration: ¿Under which conditions will the new flows take place?**

At the beginning of the century, the number of Latin American and Caribbean emigrants has shown a considerable increase, reaching an estimated total of more than 21 million people by the year 2000. In 2005, this figure would have risen to 26 million. In that sense, migrants from the region represent more than 13% of international migrants around the world. This percentage exceeds the proportion of the Latin American and Caribbean population over the total world population, which amounts to nearly 9% (CEPAL, 2007).

A concentrated migration pattern to the United States and Spain dominated the region. Although this will continue during the next decades, there will also be an incipient pattern of diversification of destinations (other European countries, Canada and Japan). Taking into account the context that characterizes these countries with regards to their migration policies is of extreme importance, especially in the case of the former.

### **United States**

Nearly half of the emigrants from the region left their countries of origin during the 1990s, and were headed primarily to the United States, the preferred destination of most of them. By 2004, that country had close to 18 million Latin Americans and Caribbeans living in it (more than half the cumulative total of immigrants in the United States). They, along with their descendants born in the host country, make up an ethnic group known as “Latinos” and are the largest minority in the United States. The Latino community is not, in any case, a socially and economically homogeneous group. There are differences among them, depending on the number of immigrants from each country, their ethnicity, their territorial distribution, how many of them are undocumented, the extent to which they are integrated into society and in the labour market, their level of organization and other factors that will signal a future of marked contrasts in Latino population (CEPAL, 2007).

Immigrants have acquired a major national presence as they have continued to flow into the country in ever larger numbers. Their countries of origin, sources of income and sociodemographic characteristics have become increasingly diverse as well. The socioeconomic inequalities between North and South and the demand for labour in the United States, the role of recruiters and the sharp contrast between the labour market in the United States and that of Latin America, all largely explain the migratory movement towards that country and its pervasiveness in the near future. Nevertheless, there are social and cultural factors accounting for the emergence of ethnic and labour enclaves, for example. Latin Americans—especially Mexicans— will further consolidate their role as the principal low-wage manpower reserve for the United States economy, as is the case in California. In addition, the presence of indigenous migrants from various regions and rural areas of Mexico, for example, such as the Mixtecos, has become more evident as another element in the multicultural make-up of the immigrant population (CEPAL, 2007).

Efforts to control all these flows are at odds with the needs of the United States labour market and with the upsurge in transnational and ethnic communities. Ambiguities of this sort far from contribute to reduce, in the future, the social exclusion of a considerable portion of immigrants, and this failure appears no to be recognized in the current presidential campaigns of the United States (2008).

The magnitude of the flow of immigrants coming in surreptitiously or overstaying their visas will keep on dominating the debate on the immigration problem in the United States, and it is not clear whether it will no longer be associated with threats to national security. The rise in the number of undocumented immigrants from the region has solidified public perception of the stereotype of Latin Americans as a low educational and social status population (Portes, 2004). But at the same time, immigrant communities have gradually been recognized as key players in the development of their countries of origin, especially because of their remittances, but also as key players in the sociocultural transformations evidenced by the introduction of new lifestyles, values, customs and consumption patterns (Guarnizo, 2004). They have also expanded their presence and importance in all spheres of the social, economic, cultural and political life of the United States. Analysts agree that their influence on culture and politics in the cities and regions of the United States has become quite significant, which is not inconsistent with their necessary integration into local society (Portes, 2004).

The counterpoint between the growing presence of Latin Americans in the United States and the problems they face in their social and labour insertion will seal the living conditions of many migrants and their descendants, interweaving social disadvantages with work opportunities.

## **Spain**

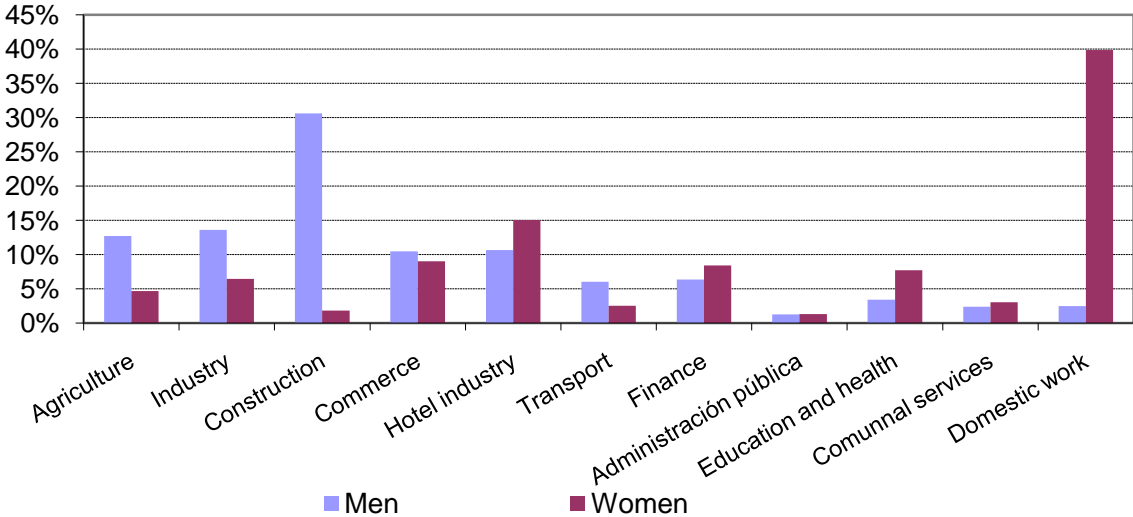
In the case of Spain, it is first worth remarking that, after the immigration of nearly 3.5 million Spaniards to various countries in the region between 1850 and 1950, (Gil Araújo, 2004), the migration trend reversed. Initially there was a small trickle of migrants and asylum applicants that turned into a considerable flow after 1990 (Pellegrino, 2004). The number of persons born in Latin America counted in the census grew from 210,000 in 1991 to 840,000 in 2001. According to the Municipal Register of Inhabitants, in January 2004 there were 1.2 million persons who were born in and nationals of Latin American countries and the figure had climbed to over 2 million at the beginning of 2007 (CEPAL, 2008a). This contingent continues to grow, representing nearly half of all foreigners entering the country since 2000 (Domingo, 2004). As a result, Spain is now the second most popular destination for emigrants from the region and, although it is not wise to conjecture figures, it is very unlikely that the situation may change in the next decades.

The current flow of Latin American migrants to Spain also shows a different generational return pattern: for some people, immigration to Spain has been made possible by measures designed to encourage the recovery of the citizenship of their forbears who emigrated to Latin America between the end of the 19th century and the later years of the first half of the 20th century. Not all Latin American immigration to Spain is directly associated with the recognition of citizenship; on average, nearly a third of Latin American migrants to Spain have become naturalized citizens, but for some groups as many as 40% have done so. The latter groups have the highest percentages of naturalizations granted by the Spanish Government, and have also benefited the most from regularization and normalization measures. This reflects an effort on Spain's part to integrate them. Despite these initiatives, Spain has seen an increase in the number of Latin Americans "without papers". By

comparing the number of people listed on the Ongoing Register of Inhabitants and the number of Residency Permits issued by the Interior Ministry, it can be estimated that in 1999 4% of all foreigners in Spain were undocumented. In 2000 the picture changed, and the figure climbed to 15% (Izquierdo, 2004). In 2001 32% of Latin Americans were unauthorized, and in 2004 about 51% were. Foreigners born in Latin America are more likely than any others to be undocumented (Izquierdo, 2004).

By country of birth, Ecuadorians are the fastest-growing group of immigrants, and their cumulative total is exceeded only by that of Moroccans. Latin American immigration to Spain has traditionally been led by women, and while in recent years there has been a trend towards more male immigrants, this group of foreign residents is still the only one composed primarily of women. The predominance of women emigrating from the region to Spain is closely tied to the existence of an unprecedented demand for immigrant labour in niches traditionally reserved for women, such as domestic service and elder care (Martínez Buján, 2000; Pérez, 2004). More than 40% of immigrant women work in domestic service, while most men tend to work in construction (a third of those employed), industry and agriculture. Should these trends persist, and in the context of the demographic ageing of the Spanish population, Latin Americans will continue to be necessary for the Spanish labor market, even despite the initiative on return that is being implemented in 2008. Also, in spite of networks, potential migrants may decrease due to immigration restrictions in Spain, and the question is raised about the incidence of undocumented migration.

**Figure 1**  
**SPAIN: DISTRIBUTION OF LATIN AMERICAN WORKERS,**  
**BY SECTOR OF ACTIVITY AND SEX, 2001**



**Source:** Andreu Domingo and Rosana Martínez, *La población latinoamericana censada en España en 2001: un retrato sociodemográfico*, inédito, 2005.

**3. Intra-regional migration and its persistence**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, intra-regional migration is a function of the stage of development in which each country finds itself, just as internal migration was in past decades. Today, the main

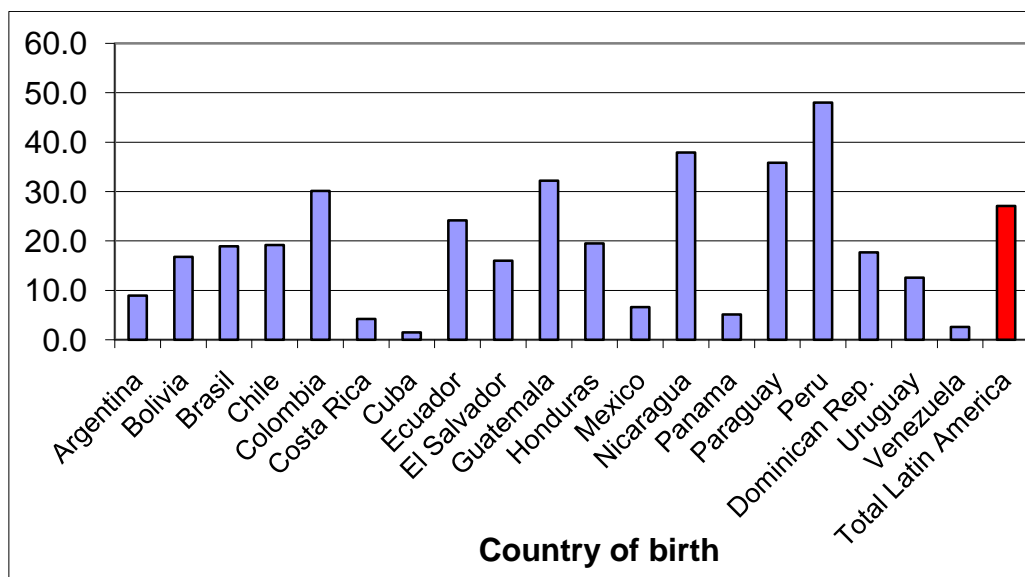
destinations for migrants are Argentina, Costa Rica and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, but there are some little signs of change in the future. Some countries are both recipients and senders of migrants, both transit points and home to returnees (this is true of several Central American countries as El Salvador and Guatemala, and some Southern Cone nations). In contrast to the 1980s, mobility within the region underwent a resurgence in the 1990s. Intraregional migrants now total nearly three million, and they tend to go primarily to countries bordering their own or to nearby countries. At the same time, efforts at subregional integration have included the issue of freer mobility. In 2000, people from within the region accounted for more than 60% of all registered immigrants, and the cumulative total for that year of nearly three million reflected a recovery of the growth rate in the 1990s after very small increases in the 1980s. In the countries receiving the most regional immigrants, the number stabilized in Argentina and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, but rose significantly in Costa Rica and most especially in Chile (Martínez, 2003). Regional immigrants are more likely to be women than men (CEPAL, 2007).

In the Caribbean, Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic and intraregional migrants among the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) make up a significant share of the national population. There is a marked circular pattern to the movement, which means that migrants return in stages to their countries of origin. In nearly all cases, there is a combination of emigration, hosting and transit. Thomas-Hope (2005) maintains that intra-Caribbean migration cannot be separated from the pattern of extraregional emigration; in this regard, the Caribbean is experiencing a wide variety of movements (for reasons of work, education, accompaniment) characterized by a combination of temporary stays, permanence, returns, irregularity and lack of documentation.

The immigrant stock will continue to concentrate in Argentina and the Venezuela, while Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico will present the highest stocks of migrants. It is worth considering the social and economic impact of these patterns in some of these countries, for example, the recent efforts to promote the integration of immigrants into social networks in Argentina (with the example of a new migration law), or how emigration has created a “transnational” country in El Salvador through linkages with migrants.

We can assume that intraregional mobility will remain fully active and with its own dynamics (Villa and Martínez, 2004), without involving massive volumes of people. Therefore, it shouldn't be seen but as a source of opportunity, for example, for integration among countries, such as the Andean nations and the State-members of MERCOSUR have conceived it at times. One of the main topics should be monitoring the labor insertion of a considerable portion of women employed as domestic workers, who have faced unquestionable risks, problems and discrimination of all kinds in the countries of destiny.

**Figure 2**  
**LATIN AMERICA: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN DOMESTIC SERVICE, BY**  
**COUNTRY OF BORN. CIRCA 2000**



**Source:** Centro Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Demografía (CELADE) – División de Población de la CEPAL, Proyecto Investigación de la Migración Internacional en Latinoamérica (IMILA).

#### 4. Demographic trends and the demographic bonus

Regarding the changes and challenges in the migratory map, we recognize that the region will reach an advanced phase of the demographic transition that will lead to a phenomenon sometimes referred in Latin America to as the *demographic bonus or dividend*. It is expected that demographic bonus will increase the participation of young people, and in particular women, in the labour force. Emigration will maintain or increase if this phenomenon is not accompanied by a required increase in employment.

Latin American demographic situation has changed considerably in the vast majority of the region's countries. Fertility rates are down to levels far below those anticipated even in the 1970s and 1980s: Latin American women today have, on average, 2.4 children. Life expectancy at birth for both sexes now stands at 73.3 years, which means that, without substantial improvements in living conditions or major medical breakthroughs, improvements in this indicator are unlikely to be anywhere near as spectacular as they have been in the past 20 years.

Recent studies of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center, CELADE (CEPAL, 2008b), through an overview of the demographic situation of the region's countries between 2005-2010, show a clear picture of the population. Based on the different stages of the demographic transition, we distinguish four categories: very advanced, advanced, full and moderate.<sup>iv</sup>

- *Very advanced transition:* countries with very low fertility and mortality rates. Although no country in the region fully meets both these conditions, Cuba is conditionally classified in this group because it meets the “very low” fertility rate condition (more than half a child below the replacement rate) although their mortality rate is still only “low”.
- *Advanced transition:* countries with low fertility and mortality rates. This category includes Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay. The other countries placed in this group on a conditional basis because they do not meet the mortality requirement are: Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina. These countries need to make more concerted efforts to increase the life expectancy of their inhabitants.
- *Full transition:* countries and territories with intermediate fertility and mortality rates. The countries that fully meet these criteria are the Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru.
- *Moderate transition:* countries with moderate fertility and mortality rates. Bolivia and Guatemala comprise this group, together with Haiti, which is placed in this category conditionally because it is the only country with a “high” mortality rate (today life expectancy is more than 10 years lower than the regional average).

Four factors affect population growth: fertility, mortality, migration and the growth potential inherent to the age structure. Remarkably, towards the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, high fertility rates (of six or more children per woman) and falling mortality rates were the main factors fuelling population growth in the region. In some cases (Argentina, for example), large inflows of migrants, mainly from outside the region, also affected the age structure of the population. However, in general this is not the case of the current impact of emigration on the mentioned structures. The impact of international migration has also waned and now has only a moderate effect on population sizes. Fertility has been the main factor driving population growth in every country except Cuba, and it when reaches replacement levels (2.1 children per woman) in all the countries of the region, populations will continue to increase for several more decades as a result of the growth potential of the age structure created by past high fertility rates (CEPAL, 2008b).

The expected future increase in the countries’ populations (growth recorded between 2005 and the year at which population growth peaks) varies considerably. Larger relative increases will be recorded among the countries in full transition, although the situation will vary considerably from country to country. Those expected to witness the least growth include Peru, Dominican Republic and Nicaragua (45.6%; 48.9% and 51%, respectively), followed by Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela and El Salvador (56.7%; 57.3%; 58.6% and 68.9%, respectively). Paraguay and Honduras, by contrast, will experience higher levels of growth (82.6% and 92.4%, respectively). When their population growth peaks, these two countries will have practically doubled the population they had in 2005, as will two countries undergoing moderate transitions: Haiti (94.1%) and Bolivia (88.1%). Guatemala, meanwhile, is the country that will experience the largest increase in population (151.8%).

Following CELADE’s analysis, as demographic transition advances, the impact of fertility on population growth declines. Its effect is not completely lost, however, until fertility reaches

replacement levels. From that moment onwards, as shown in the cases of the countries in the more advanced stages of transition, growth depends mostly on age structure in the countries that still have a more or less important proportion of women of child-bearing age.

### **Demographic change: ageing and the demographic dividend**

The most notable feature of countries moving into the more advanced stages of demographic transition is the increase in the proportion of older persons and the decrease in the proportion of younger persons in the population, at a time when the potentially active population remains relatively stable before beginning to decline slightly. In the region as a whole, the expansion of the older adult population is picking up speed and is not projected to slow down before 2010-2015. Even then the growth of this population segment will far outpace the growth of the other two large age groups (CEPAL, 2008b).

From another perspective, the size of the young population in Latin America and the Caribbean, – among whom the majority of potential migrants can be found– has stabilized in the current period (2005-2010). The working-age population is growing but at a slowing rate, and the older adult population is expected to continue expand until the end of the period. This undoubtedly confirms the well-acknowledged fact that population ageing is the main Latin American demographic phenomenon of this era and will become increasingly important in years to come, both for society as a whole (population ageing) and for the elderly themselves (individual ageing), as the relative and absolute weight of older persons in the population exceeds that of other groups.

And what can be said about international migration? The growth of the older adult population will not have the same impact or manifest itself at the same time in all countries. In some countries or groups of countries, child and youth populations, as well as the working-age population, will still play a major role and will continue to be a considerable source of demand for social sectors and to pose a challenge to public policy for the generation of opportunities in their countries of origin. The countries of the region need to come up with specific policies to tackle the consequences of population ageing, bearing in mind the increasing fragility of the family support network, the inadequate supply of social services and the need for new strategies that can guarantee acceptable living conditions for all persons in the future (CEPAL, 2008b).

### **The demographic bonus**

Together with the ageing process, there is a period during the demographic transition when the young population is declining and the segment of older persons is just beginning to expand, in which the proportion of working-age people steadily increases in relation to the rest of the population. This creates particularly favourable conditions for economic development because the possibilities of generating savings and investing in economic growth increase, while the pressure on public spending on education decreases. This period is commonly referred by CELADE to as the demographic “bonus”, “dividend” or the “demographic window of opportunities” because of the theoretical possibilities this stage offers for improving per capita economic growth and the living conditions of the population. The demographic dividend may last for several decades, but the steady increase in the proportion of older persons eventually pushes the dependency ratio back up again, and the window is then closed (CEPAL, 2008b).

The benefits associated with this dividend or bonus are not automatic. The opportunity that the dividend poses for speeding up development can only be successfully exploited by implementing macroeconomic policies that stimulate investment in production, increase job opportunities and promote a stable economic and social environment that paves the way for sustainable development. If, during the dividend, countries improve social protection, invest in education and health and promote the creation of productive well-paid jobs, the ensuing economic benefits can help reduce the burden that the growing proportion of older persons will pose in the future.<sup>v</sup> These represent enormous challenges for Latin American nations, and go hand in hand with their insertion in global economy. Nowadays, many countries seriously lag behind in terms of human capital, and show severe deficiencies in the social protection of their workers. However, we cannot ignore that, for example, in the case of social services such as the education sector, the long-term decline in fertility dramatically lowered the ratio between the school-age population and the working-age population. This freed up financial resources for investing more in the scope and quality of education: i.e., it produced a demographic dividend in education. This occurred in all the region's countries and represented, on average, an important increase in the resources available for each school-age child in the region over the past decade. Another substantial increase (15% on average) is projected for the forthcoming decade, which will make it possible to economically sustain the efforts to increase secondary and tertiary education coverage (CEPAL, 2008b).

How will changes in the dependency ratio between age groups eventually impact on international migration? Although it is possible to identify opportunities for reallocating resources, the observations above suggest that it is very difficult to profit from all the benefits demographic trends will provide. Hence we cannot discard a continuity of migration abroad under the old figure of the “escape valve”, this time with two fresh nuances: a lesser relative expansion of the work force, and a higher qualification.

## **5. Emerging issues**

The end of the decade of 2000s has witnessed the emergence, consolidation and relevance of new facts related to trends, decisive factors and consequences of Latin American international migration, that reveal a migratory complex nature. For the countries conforming Latin America, this occurs at several scales and with various demographic impacts<sup>vi</sup>, within the framework of continuities that relate to the “*longue durée*” of migratory processes, to put it in Braudelian terms, with the asymmetries and inequalities inherent to today's world, manifested in all of the world's economic analyses.

The following emerging issues will be significant within this context: migratory transnationalism and transnational communities, the consolidation of migration feminization, a strong visibility of indigenous peoples' mobility, a specific dynamic of skilled migration, and the increasingly obvious human rights problems of migrants. These factors will probably contribute to less skilled migration in poor countries such as Haiti and Guatemala, and to higher skilled migration in Brazil and Argentina.

### **Transnationalism**

A first issue, of a general nature though very relevant in terms of national specificities, is *migratory transnationalism*. In spite of the fact that this phenomenon does not bear much evidence about its complexity, expressions and specifics, and that not all migrants –but just a minority– participate in the

so-called transnational practices, particularly in the United States, transnationalism emerges as a trend that cannot be counteracted.

Transnationalism has spurred an abundant and sometimes dispersed literature in the region. The concept aims at explaining what went unnoticed by traditional theories, i.e. the exchange of practices, habits and resources between migrants' destination areas and their communities of origin. These exchanges have been on the rise in Latin America, particularly in Central America and Mexico, to such an extent that countries such as El Salvador have defined themselves as "transnational nations".

Transnationality is also a new approach that accounts for the creation of new spaces. For Latin American migrants, a new migratory pattern appears, which differs from the traditional definitive settlement or temporary migration associated, for example, with agricultural cycles. It implies the coexistence of various practices and ways of experiencing migration, whether circular, definitive or transnational, depending on the conditions surrounding migratory flows. Remarkable examples include the cases of Mexicans and Guatemalans, in which even indigenous communities are involved.

We agree that transnationalism does mark a suggestive turning point, particularly for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; however, because its practices are the expression of migrants' forced survival strategies that derive from the systematic exclusion they live in, we are compelled to take a cautious look at their irruption. What therefore becomes apparent is the risk of reproducing social inequalities from the countries of origin, since upper class sectors emigrating to a specific location do not tend –may be with the exception of the Spanish situation– to have much interaction with immigrants coming from popular sectors or rural areas arriving at those same cities (Guarnizo, Sánchez and Roach, 2003).

The perspective of transnationalism opens up the debate on the so-called transnational families, namely, those which keep part of their members abroad, and impose distant filial bonds, redefining traditional gender roles and affecting children's sociability and numerous learning processes. There is great concern in Latin American countries about this issue. It is not a negative phenomenon, since it shows aspects of personal growth, cultural enrichment and bond strengthening. Neither does this mean that, in the past, migration –mainly male– did not have an impact on the family. Rather, the underlying idea is that, given the restrictive framework in which migratory movements occur, numerous problems loom. The study of the transnational family is completely novel, considering the context in which it takes place and the fact that it was inexistent in the past. It clearly challenges research and public policies, and makes the idea of any migratory intervention being strictly related to the control of migrants' entry and permanence appear obsolete, thus urging for regional and global cooperation.

### **Feminization of migration**

A second issue relates to the growing visibility of women's participation in migration, which has been outstanding in the region. Even though the term *feminization of migration* is commonplace in public debate and, therefore, bound to become void of meaning, the truth is that the specificity of female migration and the diversity of its consequences for Latin American women are still largely unknown.

The defining element of this denomination is a growing participation –and even a majority– of women in many migration flows, particularly in the most recent ones, although the most important impact of feminization is qualitative (Martínez, 2003). In the future, there may be changes in the meanings and

consequences of international migration entailing the mandatory consideration of gender in the analysis of migration processes and the design of migration policies. This translates into paying proper attention to the experience of women, without overlooking the masculinity perspective, i.e., also knowing what happens to men in their migratory experience.

While several migration-related mechanisms may represent emancipating conditions for women –so proved by some individual experiences– it is also true that they perpetuate collective asymmetries and subordination structures, independent from the successful perception that some migrants may have of their inclusion in the destination societies. It is essential to fully acknowledge this duality offered by international migration since it will continue to occur in the coming years, and therefore calls for the development of anticipatory skills.

In female migration, there are several cases where expectations are met, individual fulfillment is attained, and successful insertion in the destination society takes place. But the overall outlook tends to move further from this situation and rather approaches social vulnerability conditions, bearing specificities in each case. There is a high percentage of migrants employed as housemaids; in the intraregional scale it accounts for 27% of the migrant workforce, and in Spain, this proportion is even higher (40%) (CEPAL, 2007). A transnational female labor market is being created, comprised of women working as housemaids (and other occupations), attesting to the fact that the labor market makes use of labor identities anchored in gender relations in order to meet the demand for flexible and cheap labor.

Now, the important gravitation of housework among migrant women, as illustrated by intra-regional migration and migration to Spain, is strongly linked to a double concern of the international community regarding the vulnerability faced by migrant women and those who work in such occupations: the vulnerability of becoming victims to labor and sexual discrimination, and of the violation of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. A thorough analysis of this topic is the most productive means of reaching agreements among the countries of the region and of making good use of several initiatives already underway that seek migratory governance, including the protection of migrant men and women (Cortés, 2005).

During the Ibero-American Summit on Migration and Development (SEGIB, 2006), participants agreed on many of these aspects, according to what is stated in the conclusions of the event. Maybe, in that sense, it is worth pointing out what was stated: *“In destination countries, discrimination patterns associated to roles traditionally assigned to women are reproduced: detrimental labor conditions for the migrant woman, long working days, informal work, lower salaries, and low-qualified employment. In destination countries, migrant women also suffer difficulties accessing housing, regrouping their families and assisting people depending on them; due to the extension of working days, the family hiring a migrant woman reconciles its family and professional life at the expense of “unreconciling” the family and professional life of the migrant woman”*.

## **Indigenous people**

The *mobility of the indigenous people* is an issue that, though old, is much newer in its decisive factors and consequences. In Latin America, there are more than 650 indigenous peoples recognized by the

States and it has become increasingly frequent to mention them in debates on contemporary migration (CEPAL, 2007).

Research currently conducted at CELADE shows that only recently has there been a strong interest in tackling this subject and that it will undoubtedly be the topic of many debates. The momentum comes especially from the indigenous groups themselves, who have particularly underscored their situation of vulnerability and exclusion, and its implications in claiming their *collective* rights. The international community has also reacted by recommending the development of systematic studies –both quantitative and qualitative– of the dynamics, paths, decisive factors and impacts of international migration in the life of indigenous peoples.

The main assertion that should be highlighted is the fact that virtually all indigenous groups resort to migration as a practice inherent to their economic and social reproduction. However, migration destinations and volumes, temporalities, cycles and the activities performed in destination places vary from one people to the next, and their study becomes difficult due to the lack of information in said places and to the fact that indigenous peoples are not homogeneous groups.

The analyses by CELADE show that, according to census data available in those countries that identify indigenous populations, there is a lower tendency for international indigenous migration compared with non-indigenous mobility (CEPAL, 2007). Apparently, this is related to the indigenous unbreakable bond with territory and its resulting attachment to land, as well as to their structural disadvantage to face an uncertain and expensive strategy as international migration.

However, two facts must be highlighted. First, indigenous migration has increased, followed by the diversification of migrating peoples, places of origin and destination. Second, there are several mobility modalities, some of which are related to coercive displacements derived, among others, from de-territorialization. Among indigenous peoples there is a stylized international migration (traditional), a transnational one, and one that is qualitatively different, namely, the ancestral mobility taking place in territories of old occupation (CEPAL, 2007).

The major underlying question is to correctly determine whether migration will alter ethnic identity and under which circumstances it will not do so. In these studies, unlike others, the participation of indigenous representatives is an unavoidable condition.

### **Skilled migration**

Skilled migration bears traits of continuity but it also an emergent issue. This phenomenon and numerous debates about its consequences have been present in Latin America throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century at least since the sixties. Concerns have focused on emigration from *South to North*, especially to the United States, although reasons do exist for paying attention to intraregional exchanges, and many worries arise in relation to those headed to Spain.

The debate sparked early discussions over the prevailing perception of the losses for sending countries implied in skilled migration. Despite some economic-related views, contending that mobility entailed positive consequences for all players by reallocating resources, brain drain became a top agenda issue

among academics, politicians and international organizations interested in social and economic development (Martínez, 2005).

Skilled migration will be an essential chapter of Latin American migration. Several factors contribute to its persistence, related to both the deteriorating conditions of the labor market in the countries of origin and the limitations to the development of research, science and technology, and the pull factors present in developed countries, stemming from the demand for specific competencies in the sectors of technological innovation and healthcare (CEPAL, 2007).

What are the differences in the current debates and concerns that makes skilled migration an emergent issue? The adjustments imposed by the international economic context and the woes affecting Latin American economies and societies in the nineties brought along a general renewal that reflected in the idea – derived from the experiences in other regions– that skilled mobility would not only mean loss, but that it also admits many modalities, including a possible outflow and inflow of professionals, and the relationship of their countries of origin with their scientific diasporas.

Although evidence seems to support these views, which would encourage an optimistic stance, it must be noted that little knowledge exists about the specificities of the countries in the region, so that efforts should be made to understand the great complexity of the matter (Pellegrino and Martínez, 2001). The main point is to design active policies that, admitting it is neither possible nor convenient to "eradicate" migration in a world of huge asymmetries, are intended to operate within a framework that sets guidelines for circulating, relating and returning without sacrificing options for the development of a country, and taking into account the individual rights to decide where to live, study and work.

### **Human rights**

Human rights and migration are a central issue in the region, which currently experiences a *growing infringement of migrants' rights*. The evidence stems from various sources pointing, for instance, to the frequent allusion to the high incidence of irregular migration (and the subsequent undesirability and stigmatization of migrants), and the increase in the trafficking of people (including children) and the trafficking of migrants, all of which add to the discrimination and abuse that many immigrants have always suffered, especially in developed countries. This shows that the potential benefits of migration, highly contained in official statements, are eclipsed by the presence of these negative aspects that are increasingly known as a general factor.

Paradoxically, the region is among the most active in terms of protection –as evidenced by the thirteen countries that have ratified the convention for migrants, and the inclusion of these matters in multiple fora, at the heart of the Organization of American States, the Summit of the Americas and the Ibero-American Conference (with its recent approval of the Ibero-American Convention on Social Security for Migrant Workers, signed during the Santiago Summit in 2007, and the Santiago Declaration and considerations about the need to safeguard the rights of migrants). Furthermore, the region has vast experience in holding inter-governmental consultation fora. In 1996, the *Regional Conference on Migration* was held (Puebla, Mexico, 1996, gathering Central and North American countries), and the year 2000 witnessed the creation of the *South American Conference on Migrations* (Buenos Aires, grouping 12 countries of the sub-region). Both initiatives proposed an exchange of practices in specific migratory themes and gathered results suggesting institutional consolidation, especially the

Puebla Process, which attracts the attention of many other regional countries and the international community itself (CEPAL, 2007).

Nonetheless, according to studies by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, each country admits that their emigrants are discriminated against and subjected to exploitation, which serves as strong evidence of the vulnerability of migrants as a whole and the need for cooperation among the States of the region (CEPAL, 2007).

The United Nations Special Rapporteurs for Migrants and the Treaty Committees have stressed that discrimination is a frequent situation faced by Latin American and Caribbean migrants. Based on varied sources, in their reports, they point to the link between female migration and vulnerability, particularly in developed countries: besides discrimination and xenophobia, these people face risks of violence, human trafficking, low schooling, salaries below the minimum, forced labor and dangerous conditions of life, lack of access to basic welfare, among others factors that worsen gender inequalities.

These situations become more complex in the case of undocumented people or workers in the informal market and, in the case of women, stress is particularly placed on those who fall victim to pornography and forced prostitution, domestic workers and workers in the informal services sector (CEPAL, 2008a and 2007).

The situation of victims of trafficking constitutes a problem of high priority in the regional and global agendas on migration (IMO, 2006); however, this reality is hardly known and is not an isolated case of human rights violation. Research has begun to identify trafficking routes and operation networks of forced prostitution and labor exploitation as well as demand niches, almost always found in developed countries. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the main countries of destination for intraregional migration are not free from this problem, and it is worrying that some hints show this is being interpreted only as one side of irregular migration, that is to say, a situation that admits penalties for victims.

Thus concerns do exist over the victimization and de-victimization expressed in the emergence of stigmatizing speeches about migrants, since, on one hand, they are demagogically related to trafficking and deemed as victims of contemporary mobility, and, at the same time, are occasionally penalized due to deficiencies in the enforcement of international instruments and national legislation.

All in all, there are many reasons to worry about the human rights of migrants. Widespread concerns remain about the risk of discrimination and restricted enjoyment of migrants' rights, as stated by the United Nations Rapporteur for Migrants, Jorge Bustamante. For the time being, little evidence exists that technological breakthroughs are helping reduce informal migration and the risk of terrorist attacks. Even though the adoption of measures to reinforce the identification systems (biometry, fingerprints), the greater data exchange and the stronger entry control could be instruments that, if properly enforced, may preserve people's right to privacy and fulfil their intended purpose, this does not seem to be the rule.

That is why, for Latin American countries, one of the most pressing issues for the next decades is dealing with the risks and vulnerabilities confronted by many migrants, despite the apparent activism stated in the above-described contexts. How can the gap between intention and practice be bridged?

## **6. Towards migratory governance**

Some observations on migratory governance are stated as conclusion. In the light of the fast increase in international Latin American migration, its variations and multiple effects –for countries of origin, transit and destination–, States have raised the need for governance, bringing about great challenges, particularly within a context of incomplete and asymmetric globalization, whose trait of inequality in social, economic, political and cultural relations serves as a powerful incentive for people’s mobility (Martínez and Curtis, 2007).

Regarding governance agreements, as several analysts point out, it is important to admit that on the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, migration is no longer deemed a domestic issue as its scope has been considered of local, community, regional and transnational nature, and it has been conceived of as a continuous process changing “*from the bottom*” due to the daily practices of immigrants in the societies of origin and destination (Castles and Miller, 2004).

*Agreements on migration governance* have come into fashion, although our analyses reveal that, within the framework of the new paradox described above, they show no correlation with an approach oriented to transnationalism and the weakening of States’ barriers and borders. That’s why advances tend to be restricted, and even further in view of the Gordian knot of security and the anti-immigration attacks. If progress is made on the inclusion of migration on the international relations agendas, deeper and new issues around migration processes are also identified, forcing a decisive fight against the anti-immigrant and discriminatory attitude. All in all, Latin American countries are actively participating in the two intergovernmental fora launched some years ago, and have traced a path which includes achievements, advances, and challenges, and also within the same framework, rigidities and unfulfilled promises.

These experiences are spreading across the Ibero-American Community, and we will have to wait for more advances in the agreements reached at the *Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development* held in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador, in April 2008.

From a critical perspective, besides the strictness identified, it must be noted that the task of governance demands the active involvement of all countries and represents a challenge that begins at national level, with a series of reforms of all sorts that also reflect the interests of each country. Stating this in the current situation of Latin American democracies is complex and also means that many times the civil society does not actively participate in decisions that attain to it despite the significant role that some organizations may play.

Anyway, migratory governance should reside in certain common principles. One of these principles is the protection of migrants’ human rights. In order to exercise these rights, it is fundamental for all countries to adhere to the instruments of international law, both to the United Nations system as well as the Inter-American system, since the countries that subscribe international instruments can demand

reciprocity, benefit from a homogenous migratory legislation framework and strongly raise their concerns to the international community. The United Nations International Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990) is the main regime for the defense of migrant workers.

The International Convention is an instrument that extends the fundamental human rights of migrants to all migrant workers, documented and undocumented, without detriment to additional rights established for workers under a formal condition and their families. This instrument contains provisions tending to eliminate the exploitation of migrants and clandestine situations and movements. Considering its broad perspective –which integrates the migrant's family, the status of women and children while explicitly recognizing the rights of undocumented migrants–, the Convention constitutes an essential tool for the protection of the human rights of migrants.

**MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING MIGRATION FUTURE TRENDS AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES**

<b>Factors as continuities</b>	<b>Factor as changes</b>
<p>Development-driven global asymmetries and demand for migrant workers: motivations for international migration</p> <p>Emmigration pattern to United States and Spain: persistence of labour demand, networks and visibility of Latino communities</p> <p>All Latin American countries as source of labour with increasing skills but less job opportunities in their countries</p> <p>Social and economic impact in selected countries: potential integration of intra-regional immigrants in the case of Argentina will contribute to maintain migration; consolidation of El Salvador as a “transnational nation” would bring a succesfull model of links between migration and development</p> <p>Unsolved problems: trafficking and undocumented migration will persist as central part of the migratory agenda (regional, american and iberoamerican)</p> <p>Migration context to the First World will remain as an impediment to genuine governance of migration: mobility in the context of restrictions with some exceptions in the Ibero-American Community</p> <p>Increasing sense of responsibility among Latin American countries about their rol in migration governance: source of demands and negotiations</p>	<p>Advanced phase of demographic transition and reduction of social protection foster emmigration if benefits associated with demographic dividend are not exploited</p> <p>Incipient diversification of emmigration as source of human resources (brasilians in Japan); exchange of workers through intrarregional migration, specially to Argentina, Venezuela and Costa Rica (probable irruption of Chile)</p> <p>Migratory transnationalism and consolidation of transnational communities</p> <p>Consolidation of migratory feminization; irruption and visibility of indigenous peoples’ mobility; specific dynamics of skilled migration</p> <p>Increasing social vulnerability and severe human rights problems for migrants in the context of anti-immigration discourse</p> <p>Migratory governance opportunity: humanization of migration with ratification of international instruments</p>

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<sup>i</sup> The Montevideo Compromise on Migration and Development, signed by Heads of State and Government from the Ibero-American Community at the XVI Summit in 2006, states that “migrations will represent a fundamental factor in our future. Our peoples have enriched with the cultural, scientific, academic, economic, political and social contributions of migrants. It is our duty and our responsibility to keep on warranting the positive impact of migrations in our countries, in the light of the dispositions in the present Compromise”.

<sup>ii</sup> The World Bank, in the frame of its Knowledge for Change Program, KCP, identified ten priority issues for the period 2006-2008, among which brain drain was contemplated. The idea was to carry out research oriented to the formulation of policies and institutional reforms that will promote the positive impacts of migration for developed and developing countries. The studies seek to identify “win-win-win” policies for the three affected groups: developing countries, developed countries and migrants ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)).

<sup>iii</sup> It involves temporary workers, mainly agricultural ones. The program has been carried out since 2003 (CEPAL, 2008).

<sup>iv</sup> The analysis of demographic transition is based in terms of the total fertility rate and life expectancy at birth.

<sup>v</sup> The *demographic dependency ratio* is used to approximate the true economic burden on the working-age population. The ratio between the inactive and active members of the population shows that the demographic dividend can be increased and prolonged by factors that are not strictly demographic in kind. The increased participation of women in productive activities, for example, has been shown to have a decisive influence on prolonging the period of declining economic dependency beyond the period of decline brought about by demographic changes (CEPAL, 2008b).

<sup>vi</sup> Demographic impacts have been relatively low in number, though variable according to sub-regions and countries. By the early 2000, emigrants still accounted for a small fraction of the regional population, around 4%, even though growing figures can be observed (CEPAL, 2007).