

Foreword

This is the thirty-third edition of the annual report of the Continuous Reporting System on Migration (known by its French acronym SOPEMI). It is a special edition prepared for the first-ever OECD High-Level Policy Forum on Migration, held in Paris, June 2009. This forum was designed to address the economic crisis and migration, the management of migration to support economic growth and the integration of immigrants and their children in the labour market.

In the editorial “Addressing the present, preparing the future”, the OECD Secretary General, Angel Gurría, invites OECD member countries to implement policies to control and manage migration movements today, in order to be better prepared to respond to the increase in international migration that is expected to come with economic recovery.

This year’s SOPEMI is designed to help countries do just that. The first part of this publication concerns international migration and the crisis, analysing its impact on the labour market outcomes of immigrant workers. This is followed by the presentation of the changes in immigration policy to limit entries and to encourage the return of unemployed immigrants. This part also emphasizes the expected medium and long-term impact of the crisis on migration flows and the integration of immigrants, as well as its likely effects on origin countries. Finally, a series of recommendations are proposed to attempt to give a strategic response, taking into consideration both short-term adjustments as well what is at stake over the longer term.

The second part of the publication presents a road-map for the management of migration flows to support economic growth. It begins with a historical overview of migration flows and in particular, of labour migration. It reviews policies put in place to recruit labour migrants. Following this is a discussion of the evolution of irregular migration and its causes, as well as its impact on migration policies. This is followed by a number of measures aimed at a better management of labour migration, temporary or permanent, skilled or less skilled. Particular attention is accorded to the integration of immigrants and their children in the labour market, as well as on the links between migration and development. This work is the main result of an OECD project lasting two years, with financing from the Secretary General’s Central Priorities Fund, and which involved, in addition to the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, the Directorates for Science and Technology, for Education, and for Development Co-operation; the Development Centre; the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development; and the Policy Coherence for Development Programme.

Country notes, trend analysis and a statistical annex – traditionally an integral part of the SOPEMI – are, exceptionally, available only on line this year and are scheduled to return to the print edition in 2010. Readers can access them at www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo from October 2009.