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## The Southward Shift in International Migration: Social Challenges and Policy Implications

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### Abstract

Contrary to popular belief, the number of immigrants from developing countries is higher in the South than in the North and is likely to increase relatively faster in the next decades, due to a combination of political, demographic, environmental and economic factors. Although the growing number of immigrants represents an opportunity for the host countries, it also implies social challenges. Social exclusion, in particular, may have disruptive effects for immigrants themselves as well as for the society in general. In this respect, South-South migration requires a new approach on the way we think of integration, as it implies different issues than in the North. One important conclusion is that immigration in itself does not represent a threat to social cohesion. By contrast, high levels of discrimination and the lack of a comprehensive integration policy turn immigration into a social problem. This is why an efficient management of immigration involves the adoption of a set of measures aiming at fighting against the social exclusion of immigrants, at strengthening their social capital and at fostering their social mobility.

*JEL classification: F22, J15, O15, O24*

*Keywords: international migration, integration, discrimination, social cohesion*

## **The Southward Shift in International Migration: Social Challenges and policy Implications**

### **Introduction**

Immigration is increasingly perceived as a threat to social cohesion, as illustrated by Huntington's (2004) assertion that "*the persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages*". Anti-immigrant sentiments have been exacerbated by the global economic crisis, which has served as a pretext for political one-upmanship around migration and integration issues. Over the last two or three years, many OECD countries have thus changed their legislation to strengthen border controls, criminalise irregular immigration and foster returns. At the same time, discussions on the (lack of) integration of immigrants have flourished, for instance in Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom, around the concept of multiculturalism, or in France and the Netherlands, with public debates on national identity or the place of Islam in society. The recent civil unrest in Arab countries has contributed to feeding the myth of an immigrant invasion in Europe.

But immigration, and by extension integration, is not only an issue in OECD countries. The global shift in wealth of the 1990s-2000s has actually modified the geography of international migration. In this changing geography, South-South migration occupies a prominent place, not only because migration policies are increasingly restrictive in the North, but also because of growing opportunities in converging economies of the South.

Like most OECD countries, developing countries have to face the social challenges that come with an increasing inflow of immigrants:

- In many countries, and in particular in the Gulf States, immigrants face insidious forms of discrimination based on their origins and religious beliefs;
- In transit countries, like Libya, Mexico or Morocco, stranded and vulnerable migrants, many of which are unaccompanied children and women, are often the victims of human rights violations;
- In South Africa, anti-immigrant riots arose in 2008 as a consequence of the deterioration of economic conditions in deprived areas and the incapacity of the government to solve unemployment problems;
- In Côte d'Ivoire, the current economic and political crisis is partly the product of a long history of xenophobic pressures and immigrant scapegoating.

These few examples do not mean that immigration has disruptive effects *per se*, but rather serve to illustrate the importance of adopting a coherent policy framework aimed at fighting against discrimination and better integrating immigrants into the host society.

## I – Shifting wealth, shifting migration flows

The changing geography of economic growth has come with a marked shift in global wealth. The world's economic centre of gravity has moved both eastwards and southwards, and developing countries are playing a bigger and increasing role in international governance. Channels of interaction between developing countries have also been intensifying, especially with regards to South-South trade and factor mobility. Migration between developing countries, in particular, has significantly increased over the last two decades. South-South migration flows outnumber the flows between South and North, and they are likely to rise relatively faster in the future, not only because migration policies in developed economies are increasingly restrictive, but also because the fast-growing economies in the South represent new magnets for potential migrants.

### **Contrary to popular belief, migrants from developing countries mainly move to other developing countries**

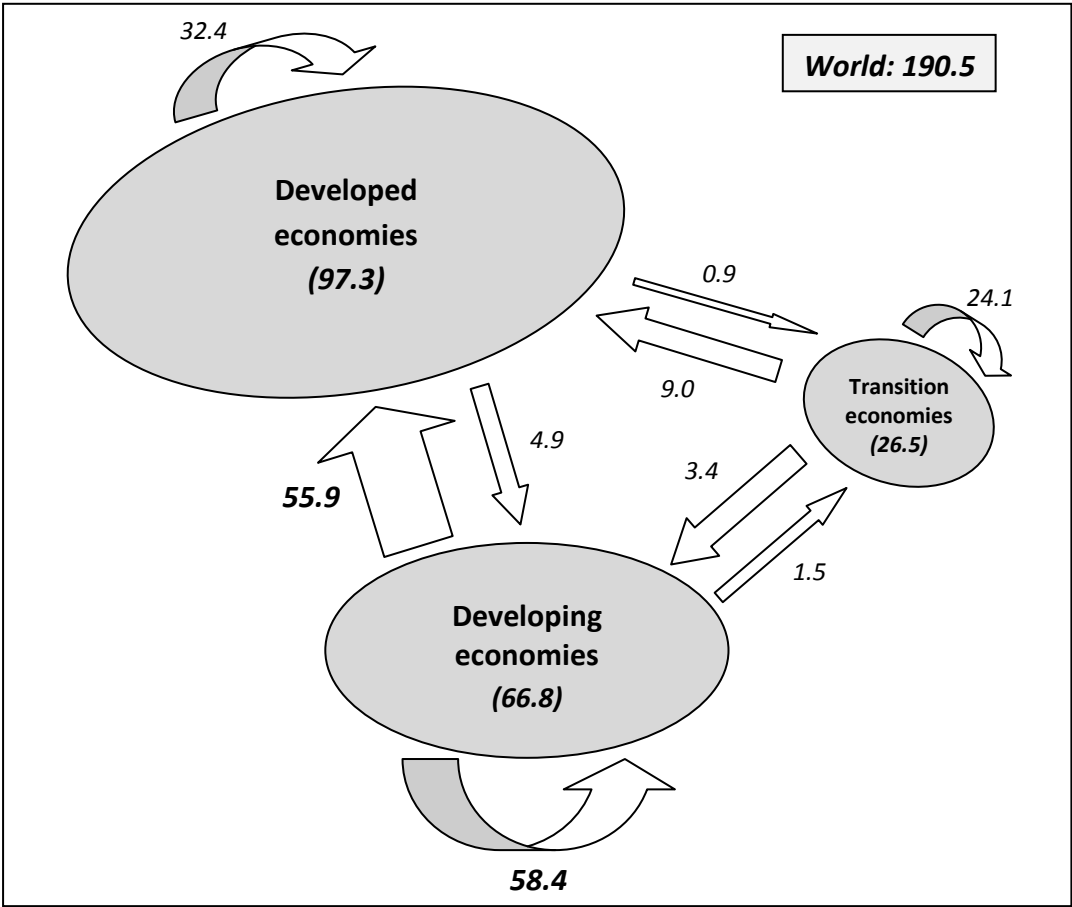
Taken globally, developed economies represent the primary destination for international migrants, with 51% of the global migrant stock in 2005 (see Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> There are two core reasons for this. First, a strong asymmetry characterises international flows: while nearly 56 million migrants from developing countries live in developed economies, only 5 million people from developed countries can be found in developing economies. Second, North-North migration itself represents a significant part of migration to developed economies: 32 million migrants, that is, 33% of the stock of immigrants in developed economies, originate from other developed economies.

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<sup>1</sup> The data used for this analysis originate from a joint venture between the University of Sussex and the World Bank to build a bilateral migration matrix with estimates of the stock of migrants by country of origin and destination (see Ratha and Shaw, 2007, for more details). Based on census data, these estimates are subject to the inherent limits of counting migrants (Dumont and Lemaitre, 2005; Dumont *et al.*, 2010). The number of undocumented migrants as well as the differences from a country to another in the definition itself of “immigrant” make the exercise more difficult. Estimating South-South flows is even trickier than in the case of developed countries as borders are generally more porous than in the North, and statistical systems subject to more deficiencies.

By contrast, migrants from developing economies (around 116 million) constitute more than 60% of the global stock of migrants. Most of them can be found in the South. In 2005, an estimated 58.4 million migrants from developing countries (50.5% of total migrants from developing countries) lived in another developing country, against 55.9 million (48.2%) in developed economies and 1.5 million (1.3%) in transition economies.

Figure 1. **Global stock of international migrants, 2005**  
Millions



Notes: "Transition economies" include Albania, the countries of the former Soviet Union (minus Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and of the former Yugoslavia (minus Slovenia). "Developed economies" encompass all European countries (with the exception of transition economies), plus Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and the United States (including Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands). "Developing economies" refers to all other countries.

Source: Own calculations based on Ratha and Shaw (2007), and World Bank (2010). The categorisation between developed, transition and developing countries is based on UNCTAD (2010).

South-South migration flows are dominated by a few major corridors (Table 1). With almost 12 million Mexican migrants living in the United States, the Mexico-US corridor is the largest. But most corridors (11 out of 20) concern migration between developing economies, mainly in Asia,

while only two corridors correspond to migration between developed countries (Puerto Rico to the US, and the UK to Australia). India is involved in six of these corridors either as a country of origin (in three cases to other developing countries, in one case to a developed economy) or as a country of destination (in two cases). The main country of final destination remains the United States (in 7 out of 20 cases).

Table 1. **Top 20 migration corridors (excluding transition economies), 2010**  
Millions of migrants

	<i>Between developing economies</i>	<i>From developing to developed economies</i>	<i>Between developed economies</i>
1		Mexico → USA 11.6	
2	Bangladesh → India 3.3		
3		Turkey → Germany 2.7	
4	China → Hong Kong 2.2		
5	India → United Arab Emirates 2.2		
6		China → USA 1.7	
7		Philippines → USA 1.7	
8	Afghanistan → Iran 1.7		
9		India → USA 1.7	
10			Puerto Rico → USA 1.7
11	West Bank and Gaza → Syria 1.5		
12	India → Saudi Arabia 1.5		
13	Indonesia → Malaysia 1.4		
14	Burkina Faso → Côte d'Ivoire 1.3		
15			UK → Australia 1.2
16		Vietnam → USA 1.2	
17	Pakistan → India 1.2		
18		El Salvador → USA 1.1	
19	Malaysia → Singapore 1.1		
20	India → Bangladesh 1.1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>2.9</b>

Note: Main corridors in transition economies are Russia-Ukraine (3.7 million migrants), Ukraine-Russia (3.6), Kazakhstan-Russia (2.6), and Russia-Kazakhstan (2.2).

Source: World Bank (2010).

### A significant number of developing countries receive more immigrants than they send

Table 2 classifies net immigration countries in the South according to their income group and their speed of growth.<sup>2</sup> The income level of receiving countries does not seem to play a prevalent role here, since 40% of the countries of net immigration are low-income economies (14 out of 36). By

<sup>2</sup> Based on Wolfensohn (2007), OECD (2010a) develops a “four-speed” world concept, dividing countries designated as affluent (high-income countries), converging (countries catching up to the living standards of the affluent), struggling (countries facing a middle-income “glass ceiling”), and poor (under the weight of extreme poverty).

contrast, the rate of growth matters, as 29 of the net recipients in the South are classified as either *affluent* or *converging* economies (*i.e.* classified as high income countries, or with a *per capita* growth rate over the decade of double the OECD rates). This confirms that beyond the wage gap between countries, migrants are more attracted by current job prospects.

Table 2 also includes sectoral categories like major manufactured goods and oil exporters. In this respect, labour demand for oil production is a significant driver of South-South migration. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, for instance, have many more immigrants (7.3 and 3.3 million, respectively, in 2010) than emigrants (187.7 and 55.9 thousand), and foreign population amounts up to 70% of the labour force in some Gulf countries. Altogether, 8 out of 34 net immigration countries are major oil exporters, five of them being both high-income and affluent economies. Exporters of manufactured goods, like Hong Kong and Singapore, also attract foreign workers, although not in the same proportion as oil producers.

Table 2. **Net immigration countries in the South, 2010**

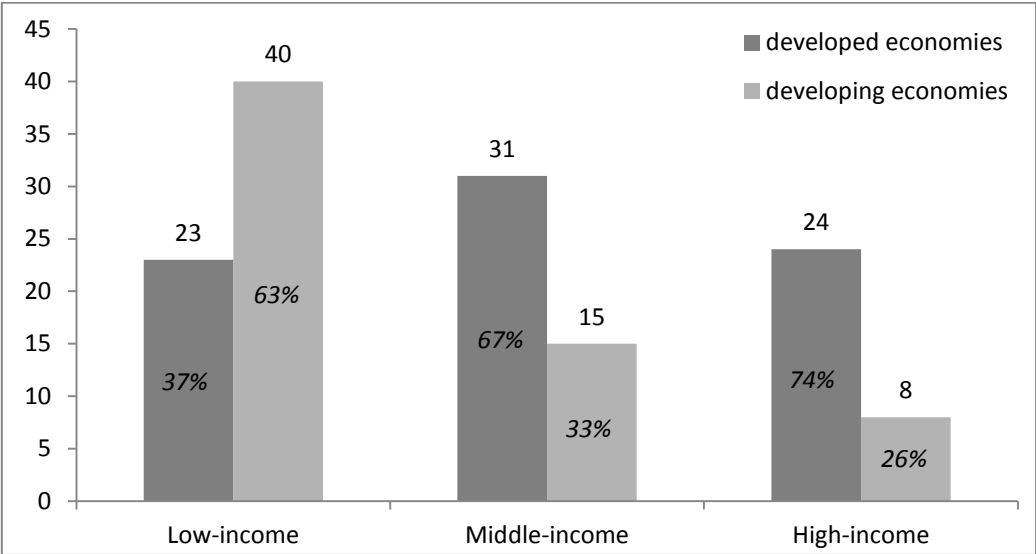
<i>Income group</i> <i>4-speed world</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>Low</i>	<b>Number of countries</b>
<b>Affluent</b>	Bahrain (O) Brunei (O) Kuwait* (O) Macao Oman (O) Singapore* (M) Saudi Arabia* (O) UAE* (O)			8
<b>Converging</b>	Argentina Venezuela (O)	Botswana Costa Rica Iran (O, R) Jordan* (R) Lebanon (R) Malaysia (M) Maldives Namibia South Africa* Syria* (O, R) Thailand (M)	Chad (R) Djibouti (R) Gambia Ghana* Nepal Nigeria (O) Rwanda Tanzania (R)	21
<b>Struggling</b>		Gabon (O)	Côte d'Ivoire*	2
<b>Poor</b>			Comoros Kenya (R) Malawi Solomon Island Zambia (R)	5
<b>Number of countries</b>	10	12	14	36

Notes: \* Top 10 net immigration countries (in volume); (M): major manufactured goods exporters (manufactured products represent more than 50 per cent of total exports); (O): major oil exporters (oil represents more than 50% of total exports); (R): major asylum countries (refugees represent more than 20 per cent of immigrants).

Sources: The four-speed-world classification comes from OECD (2010a); income groups, oil and manufactured goods exporters correspond to categories coined by the UNCTAD (2010); migration and refugees data come from World Bank (2010).

The fact that South-South outnumbers South-North flows does not mean that going to another developing country is always the first choice of migrants from the South. In many cases, the choice is not theirs to make. Administrative barriers in developed countries are so high, even for high-skilled workers, that most would-be migrants have no other option than to try their luck in other developing countries. In addition, the financial cost of moving to distant richer countries prevents most candidates from the South from doing so (Martin and Taylor, 1996). This explains why South-South migration often corresponds to movements between poor countries. As shown in Figure 2, while emigrants from middle and high-income countries mainly move to developed economies, migrants from low-income developing countries have as their first destination a developing country. In 26 out of 40 cases, the first destination is another low-income country.

Figure 2. First destination of migrants from developing countries by income group, 2005



Source: Authors' calculations based on Ratha and Shaw (2007).

**South-South migration is likely to increase at an accelerated pace during the coming decades**

A first reason is the growing trend by developed economies of hardening their immigration policies. The conjunction of administrative barriers (for instance with the external borders of the Schengen Area) and physical barriers, with the erection of walls (like at the US-Mexican or Spanish-Moroccan borders), has forced would-be migrants from developing countries either to abandon their plans and stay home, or, more likely, to move to another nearby developing country, or to try to cross borders through irregular channels. The result has been an increase in South-South migration,

in particular migrants stuck in transit. Even though international statistics are still unable to give an accurate account of this phenomenon, some countries, like Mexico, Morocco and Turkey, have become the focal point for thousands of migrants trying to reach developed economies. This restrictive trend has been strengthened by the global economic crisis, with the adoption of new measures to fight against unauthorised immigrants and to foster returns (OECD, 2010b). These measures may suffer from a *ratchet effect*, due to the difficulty that policy-makers typically face in removing previously passed legislation on immigration.

A second reason for the rapid increase in South-South flows is the demographic boom in Africa. Between 2010 and 2050, the still-in-motion demographic transition will contribute to expanding working-age population by 125%, from 0.58 to 1.3 billion (UNDP, 2009). This implies high levels of labour market competition for young adults, and consequently few economic opportunities and low real wages. Incentives to migrate out of Africa are very high, even more so when considering the wage gap with high-income OECD countries as well as the demographic imbalances in ageing developed economies. However, the restrictive nature of migration policies in the North has led to an increasingly selective migration process, which should translate into more intra-regional movements.

A third reason is that environmental changes, in particular those induced by global warming, will strengthen the impact of demographic pressures on migration. The deterioration of the natural environment in Sahelian countries, as witnessed in Burkina Faso and Mali, is already driving intra-regional migration in West Africa (OECD, 2009). But the volume of displaced people from developing countries may increase as disruptive phenomena such as deforestation, desertification and floods affect livelihoods dependent on the stability of the ecosystems they live in. Estimates of the number of migrants generated by climate change (between 200 million and 1 billion by 2050) are questionable, mainly because they do not consider the capacity of populations to adapt to new conditions, and above all, gradual environmental changes (UNDP, 2009). The number of migrants will notably depend on public policy responses to environmental challenges. In any case, low-income developing countries are likely to be more exposed to the consequences of climate change, both because of the higher degree of livelihood vulnerability of the poorest populations, and the lower responsiveness of public authorities.

A fourth reason is the rapid economic growth in converging economies, which should both decrease emigration from these countries to the North and increase immigration from other developing countries. Fast-growing developing economies offer more labour opportunities to their citizens, who also benefit from a rise in real wages. The incentives to migrate should then decrease

as working conditions improve in developing economies. Hatton and Williamson (2010) show that emigration from Latin America and Asia will significantly drop in the next two decades, while migration from Sub-Saharan Africa is likely to increase. The improvement in economic conditions in converging countries implies a widening of the wage gap with poor and struggling economies, which makes them increasingly attractive to would-be migrants.

A more diversified set of migratory flows should emerge as migrants from the South look for better employment opportunities in other developing countries from different regions. The Chinese diaspora, for instance, has significantly expanded over the last decade both in Africa and Latin America. In this respect, three categories of migrants have emerged: traders, temporary workers in Chinese multinational companies, and transit migrants on their way to Europe or North America (Ma Mung, 2009). In the same way, Sub-Saharan Africans have begun to emigrate to Latin America: first, because the wage differential between most African and Latin American countries is significant enough to convince would-be migrants to cross the Atlantic; second, because border controls are less stringent than in Europe and North America; third, because Latin American countries serve as a beachhead to the United States.

## **II – Social challenges of South-South migration**

While immigration is a hotly contested issue in both the media and political arenas, there is more of a consensus among economists on the benefits it yields. The immigration of workers helps relieve sectors suffering from labour shortages and solves mismatching problems on the labour market, hence contributing to strengthening labour supply and competitiveness. High-skilled immigrants generate positive output in terms of total factor productivity, but also in terms of research, development and innovation. The settlement of immigrants also benefits population-sensitive sectors, such as housing, transport and urban infrastructure, and helps firms generate economies of scale (Romer, 1996). As immigrant stocks grow in a country, they eventually become vectors for trade with their home country. Since workers are consumers too, immigration enables the expansion of the domestic market and spurs aggregate demand. In addition, foreign workers contribute to the financing of social protection and pay-as-you-go pension systems, and enable to solve, at least partly, demographic imbalances between active and inactive populations.

But as the number of immigrants in developing countries rises, problems related to social cohesion also surface. Like in more developed countries, where there is a longer tradition of immigration, local populations do not always view the arrival and settlement of foreign workers

favourably. Low-skilled immigrants, in particular, are often blamed for taking jobs away from locals and applying downward pressure on their salary and bargaining power. Foreigners then serve as scapegoats for the economic problems of the country, above all when there is no social safety net in place. They are held responsible for rises in unemployment and insecurity, and in extreme cases, can be victims of anti-immigrant riots, like those occurring in South Africa in 2008. Moreover, immigrants in developing countries often lack basic protection of their rights, especially at the social and civic levels. The situation of refugees and transit migrants is particularly worrying, especially in cases where their “temporary” status tends to become permanent.

### **Social exclusion worsens immigrants’ living conditions**

Resentment and opposition force immigrants to seek or create enclaves of poverty-stricken ghettos. Unbeknownst or ignored by authorities, many immigrants in India, Pakistan and Malaysia, for instance, live in slums outside of city limits, segregated from other neighbourhoods (Sadik, 2009). As immigrants continue to be marginalised into separate spaces of society, ghettos tend to be reinforced. But why do immigrants crowd together if it exposes them to finger-pointing? First, there is an aspect of familiarity. Migrants may not want to venture into the unknown and rather seek a certain level of comfort. Then, local perceptions against immigrants lead to stereotyping and eventually to discrimination. Within enclaves, immigrants have a greater chance of being treated as equals. Finally, enclaves may provide immigrants without legal documentation to live and stay in the country while being sheltered from authority. They may feel safer if everyone around them is also without proper identification. Conversely, they may feel that within an immigrant enclave they can blend easier into a larger group where there is a mix of regular and irregular workers.

In addition, immigrants are a potentially vulnerable group for discrimination and are blamed for a diversity of problems in the country. Their discrimination takes on a variety of forms: on their wages, access to social protection and religious freedom for example. When immigrants are deliberately discriminated against by locals, their place in society becomes frail. In preparation of the 2010 World Cup for instance, South Africa razed many of the slums surrounding future stadiums, leaving thousands of Zimbabweans without homes. This is most evident in times of crisis, when immigrants become the scapegoats for all that ails. Without proper integration and moreover facilitated by marginalisation, immigrants constitute one of the easiest targets for governments to blame, and for local workers to vent against. While primarily mediated in the North during the recent financial crisis, it was also an occurrence in the South. In 2008, for instance, the governments

of the Dominican Republic and Malaysia used the generally negative sentiment of the financial crisis as an opportunity to send home thousands of immigrants with irregular status. A similar political reaction occurred during the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis (Koser, 2009).

Some categories of immigrants are especially vulnerable. Stranded migrants en route to Europe or the United States, for instance, form a particular group at risk of human rights violations (UNHCR, 2010). Because of their irregular status in transit countries, they are subjected to a wide range of abuse committed not only by smugglers and human traffickers, but also by border guards, immigration and police officers as well as by regular locals. Violations committed include extortion and exploitation, arbitrary detention in inhumane conditions, lack of due process, deprivation of access to basic services as well as physical abuse and harassment. Unaccompanied children and women are the primary victims. In this respect, the lack of access to social networks and legal aid services increase the risks of being forced into commercial sex activity, contracting sexually transmitted infections and incurring unwanted pregnancies. Stranded migrants are also victims of xenophobia as well as racial and ethnic discrimination.

Refugees represent another case of vulnerability. The sporadic conflicts that occur in the South give rise to refugees fleeing to nearby countries, hoping to either one day return to their home country, integrate into their new country or resettle in a third country. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the primary international authority on decisions made for refugees; it is also responsible for their temporary and long term integration. While immigrants are, in most cases, aided by organisations like the UNHCR, which provides them with access to health care, education and specific skills-training, they often arrive in a hostile environment. Xenophobia arises naturally because nationals see the new arrivals obtain special treatment from the U.N. The fact that UNHCR normally organises refugees in camps also facilitates the formation of enclaves, thus limiting the possibilities of social inclusion.

### **The social exclusion of immigrants also produces domestic and international spillover effects**

The social exclusion of immigrants leads to rises in inequality, lost worker productivity and a boost in crime rate. Many people gain when immigrants are successfully integrated, and everyone loses when they are not. As ghettos develop, they tend to become increasingly exclusive as a result of a grouped protective measure against xenophobic attacks. They also deal a strong blow to the natural environment and eventually they become nests of extreme poverty, even as the country gets richer. In addition, because these enclaves form the rock bed of very low forms of sanitation, they act

as vectors for resistant and deadly diseases, such as influenza pandemics and HIV/AIDS. In addition, without schools and medical clinics, human capital development, and thus social and intergenerational mobility, is halted.

Pockets of extreme poverty not only breed disease and circular poverty traps but also growing negative sentiments against host native workers and government. The social contract erodes while organised crime and popular forms of justice develop. As the infringement of local laws and customs by immigrants rises, costs also increase for the receiving country in providing more administrative services (*e.g.* police) to maintain order. In many cases, these tensions escalate to violence, as recently witnessed in Mexico, Morocco and South Africa. In some cases, ethnic and racial tensions can even generate civil unrest and long-term political instability, like it has been the case in Côte d'Ivoire.

Failure to integrate immigrants can have an element of wider contagion: it can induce immigrants to go back (or forced back) to their countries of origin and spread conflict. For instance, migratory movements were partially to blame for the expansion and length of the conflict in the late 1990s: conflict in Rwanda quickly engulfed Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda into their own conflicts. In this regard, pressure to deport Zimbabweans back to their country from South Africa has incited arguments that it would lead to conflict in Zimbabwe, as many immigrants would certainly face persecution upon their return. Fearon and Laitin (2010) show that more than half (53%) of all wars from 1945-2008, according to them, were ethnic in nature.

Forced return, particularly in tense political climates, tends to erode social cohesion. But an intolerant stance on immigration is growing worldwide and deportations of immigrants with irregular status are on the rise, and not only from the North. In 2005 Malaysia ordered the deportation of 400 000 immigrants, mostly from Indonesia. The United Nations estimate that in 2009, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa and Libya were amongst the top countries of deportations in the world. In some cases, immigrants are not even returned to their home country but rather to a nearby country with which the host country has signed a readmission agreement, potentially fuelling additional conflict.

The increase in migration within the South can, in some cases, disrupt social cohesion. The exclusion of immigrants into mainstream society deteriorates their living conditions and generates negative effects on locals, on the country and can even spillover into neighbouring countries. While several aspects can be attributed to their non-inclusion, one of the primary reasons is the lack of

integration – and of integration policies. But integration may not mean the same thing in the South than in the North.

### III – Rethinking integration in the South

The notion of integration in the South needs to be analysed from a different angle than in South-North contexts. In many developing countries, even local populations do not have access to formal employment, decent housing or social protection. In these conditions, how can public authorities provide immigrants with services not even afforded to their own citizens? At the same time, the absence of a comprehensive welfare state in many developing countries lowers economic and social discrepancies between foreign-born and local-born populations and makes integration less of a central issue. But this does not mean that immigrants in the South do not face specific problems that affect their living and working conditions.

#### **The notion of South implies a diversity of situations, which affects the notion itself of integration**

The South is geographically diverse, and immigrants face very different challenges according to whether they settle in Africa, in Asia or in Latin America. Even within these regions, geographic and demographic differences are considerable. The dichotomy between rural and urban settlements, coupled with the population density in migrant-receiving areas, is particularly significant in terms of immigrant integration. In the same way, the geographic origin of immigrants has repercussions on the integration process.

The geographic diversity of the South is related to culture. Even though a significant share of migration between developing countries consists of intra-regional flows, primarily in Africa, cultural differences between countries of origin and destination remain significant. In particular, the diversification of flows and the subsequent increase in intercontinental South-South migration implies growing cultural differences between immigrants and native populations, which may deter integration.

The South is also characterised by strong economic diversity. “Developing economies”, as defined in section I, encompass a wide range of economic situations. High-income countries, in particular major oil and manufacturing exporters, are placed alongside extremely poor countries. Immigrants’ living conditions are therefore related to these differences, as migrants in rich countries

benefit from labour opportunities that those in low-income countries do not have. However, immigrants choose their destination according to their own characteristics. In other words, the poorest migrants tend to go to the poorest – and closest – countries, hence reducing the possibilities of socioeconomic mobility associated with migration. By contrast, the wealthiest migrants, characterised by high initial levels of financial and human capital, move to richer countries, and therefore benefit from the best opportunities. They also have a higher probability of integrating into host societies.

Finally, political diversity is particularly manifest in the South, and immigrants can equally be found in democracies as in autocratic regimes. The opportunities in terms of civil integration are obviously higher in the former than the latter. The fact that immigrants are more prone to head to politically stable countries, particularly refugees, does not mean that unstable countries do not attract immigrants. This is notably the case of resource-rich countries, where immigration coexists with civil unrest and low levels of freedom.

### **South-South and South-North migratory flows share similar characteristics**

Despite the many changes occurring in labour mobility around the world the primary motivation for migrating remains economic in nature. The immense and growing wage gap between the South and the North continues and will continue to draw potential workers to the North. But these cleavages are also growing between countries in the South, particularly between converging economies and the rest. In many cases, certain countries have emerged as regional leaders and their growing economies act as magnets for workers all around.

The emigration process also generates social costs, regardless of the destination. The positive notion of transnationalism, according to which migrants keep ties in both home and host country, is rising, and not just in the North. However, emigration also creates negative repercussions in terms of family disintegration, and as immigrants stay abroad their social capital with the home country erodes. For instance, if and when they return they may have trouble to re-establish social networks to find a job or launch a business. For this reason, migrants prefer maintaining ties back home as well as freedom to circulate.

Finally, the perception of migration is increasingly negative worldwide. Scapegoating immigrants is a phenomenon plaguing both North and South migrants. As countries become intolerant to immigration they also enact restrictive migration policies. For instance, it is much easier

today for a high-skilled rather than a low-skilled migrant to legally emigrate. This has led to class divisions, as high-skilled migrants can access better jobs, can move between countries more easily and enjoy the benefits of a social security system. It has also brought upon intense debates on brain drain and the ethics of stealing much needed skill from developing countries. For low-skilled migrants, the trend has rather been for countries to employ temporary migration schemes as opposed to permanent migration. The financial crisis has in effect re-enforced both of these trends.

### **Many aspects make South-South and South-North migration different**

Confounding South-South and South-North migration as one of the same phenomenon would be a mistake since integration policy in the North may not necessarily work in the South and vice-versa.

A first difference is that South-South migration is a relatively smoother process than South-North migration. For one, the formalities to enter a country are easier to circumvent or simply ignore in the South than in the North; what is regulatory and legal in the South is not necessarily reflected in reality. Governments in the South are often overcharged with other priorities that, with a limited administrative capacity, immigration controls are often overlooked. In cases where it is indeed dealt with, it is usually and increasingly done under the pretence of national security concerns. For instance, while the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has enabled the free movement of labour since 1979, national priority clauses have continuously ensured that truly free movement of labour has never taken place, contrasting it with regions like the European Union, where labour can move with minimal hassle between most countries. In the most fluid border crossing regions in West Africa, immigrants must declare their presence within three months of entering; but as their work remains largely informal and takes place in remote rural areas, registration seldom happens and workers are unaccounted for.

In addition, South-South migration flows between neighbouring countries are more prevalent than in South-North. Thus, 45 out of 63 developing countries (71%) whose emigrants have as their first destination another developing country share a border with this country. By contrast, only one developing country (out of 78), Mexico, has a common border with the first country of destination of its emigrants, the United States, when this country is developed. Even though transport costs are falling worldwide, a solid land border will always amount to easier travel and cheaper opportunity costs. This means that economic concerns are lessened: the amount of assets and in-kind cash required to emigrate is lower and informal labour markets have low entry costs. This

all equates to immigrants likely to be selected from the less privileged sections of society; more people can afford to make the choice to emigrate (Bakewell, 2009; Gindling, 2009).

It is also easier to emigrate and integrate to another Southern country due to cultural and social proximity between immigrants and locals. While language and colonial ties have often acted as facilitators for immigration to the North, their importance is slowly waning. For instance, many Southeast Asians look for work in the Gulf countries, and many Sub-Saharan Africans find opportunities in non-historically linked countries like Italy, Spain and the United States (OECD, 2009). However, migration within the South still relies primarily on physical proximity, as seen above, as well as on cultural and linguistic ties.

Language plays a primary role, particularly for lower skilled immigrants, not only in their decision to emigrate, but also in their integration. Thus, Bengali speakers from Bangladesh favour neighbourhoods in Delhi, where they can find people speaking their language, while the Ewe from Togo seek seasonal work in the Eastern regions of Ghana, where Ewe is the primary language. These two examples demonstrate that it is not necessarily the ability to speak the country's national language that facilitates migration and integration. International borders split groups with similar languages and cultures, and the migratory links that continue to bind them after decades, sometimes centuries, are international in nature.

These ties go beyond language: religion, food, working habits and family customs all help in forming immigration routes. Some languages have even evolved as primary migratory-route languages, joining together people with similar customs across large spaces. Such is the case with the Hausa language and Islamic faith, favoured for trade relations in West Africa for centuries.

A second difference is that immigrants face similar fundamental problems as locals. As such, expecting successful integration of immigrants on a number of aspects considered as luxuries even to locals may be unattainable, and even undesirable for fear of resentment from locals. An element that distinguishes developing country from developed is the level of informality in the economy and specifically in the labour market. In Africa and Asia, it is common to have informal employment reaching relative totals as high as 90% vis-à-vis formal jobs (IILS, 2009). Because of the informal manner of immigrating but also due to the lack of formal jobs in the destination country, immigrants usually work informally and many live in slums, like their hosts – whether they arrive with assets or not. This is consistent with the story that most immigration to the South is undertaken by low-skilled workers, often in seasonal timeframes. This means that differentiating between regular and irregular immigrants, is largely futile in the South.

The high prevalence of informality means that job insecurity characterised in the informal sector is true whether an individual is an immigrant or not. Moreover, the formal private sector has a smaller role to play in the integration of new workers than in the North. Multinational companies are few, and the few jobs they produce are often filled through international recruiting.

Amin (2010) finds that, in a survey of 350 informal businesses in Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Cape Verde, roughly half of the businesses are owned by immigrants. Immigrants find the informal sector convenient for the same reasons as native workers: low entry and exit costs, and little initial capital required to start an informal business. De Vreyer *et al.* (2009) also find that immigrants in West Africa are likely to work in the informal sector. The lack of good jobs for everyone also means that the lack of social protection is a common feature for all workers. When economic shocks hit the country, both immigrants and locals suffer from the lack of social safety net.

Because immigrants easily blend into the informal sector of their destination countries, authorities often have little capacity to count and manage their inflow. In many countries, identification cards do not even exist for natives, let alone immigrants. Although some countries in the South, such as Ghana, India, Mexico and South Africa are currently spending millions for such identification systems<sup>3</sup>, it is not clear whether this will help or deter the integration of immigrants. And the informality of flows means that illegal flows of people, such as child labour and human trafficking are often left undetected. Beyond, the level of informality of the economy, the locally-born population is also less likely to have full civil rights in many countries, such as freedom of expression. Granting greater civil rights for immigrants would discriminate against locals.

A third difference is that while cultural and linguistic proximity may reduce the amount of discrimination of South-South immigrants in comparison to immigrants going north some immigrants may in fact face more discrimination. In some cases, official discriminatory behaviour puts immigrants in difficult situations. Many Gulf countries, for instance, bar freedom of religious expression, which notably affects Filipino immigrants, mainly Christians, working in the oil industry or as domestic workers. In cases, where there is no blatant discrimination but large differences in cultural and linguistic ties, the lack of legal and administrative protection contributes to the non-integration of immigrants. In fact, discrimination can materialise in the form of lower wages and barred access to jobs and business operations, but it can also go beyond economic outcomes: access to services or to housing for instance.

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<sup>3</sup> These programs usually cost enormously to implement since they include expensive counterfeiting mechanisms such as biometric technology, including fingerprints and optical security features.

The challenges of enforcing laws against discrimination are exacerbated when the act is done in the informal economy. Amin (2010), for instance, suggests that, while immigrants may be as likely as locals to run informal businesses in West Africa, they are at a disadvantage in getting a job in an established business, are subject to higher crime and have difficulty in starting a large size business.

Considering the three primary elements of divergence between South-South and South-North flows, the approach to integration of immigrants in the South must be revised:

- As immigration is easier, the aggregate physical and human capital of the group of immigrants going south is lower. Integration is typically more difficult and longer for lower-skilled immigrants.
- Discrimination may be a bigger problem in certain contexts and the legal frameworks may not adequately protect immigrants. As such, the perceptions of the local population are the key to integration.
- Since everyone is in a precarious situation, integration must first aim to provide immigrants with the basic elements provided to the local population and avoid fighting for unattainable benefits (at least in the short term).

As a result, measures of integration in the North are hardly applicable in the South. For one, legal benchmarking indices are less relevant than in the North because laws and regulations are not enforced. Second, many of the outcomes measured for the integration of immigrants in the North are not applicable in the South, because they are also less likely to be achieved by locals. Measurement should rather focus on subjective surveys for both immigrants and locals on their views of integration, immigration and work and life satisfaction. Experimental testing can also help in revealing whether subtle discrimination exists. Econometric studies should also consider the spatial component of living arrangements of both locals and immigrants. Measuring outcomes may not be enough if the reason for differences is due to neighbourhood segregation between the two groups. Finally, because of the prevalence of informality, surveys must capture informal activities if the measurement of the integration of workers in the labour market is the objective.

#### **IV – How can migration-related social cohesion be enhanced?**

Most developing countries have, so far, conducted benign-neglect integration policies. Two primary reasons explain the situation:

- Lack of financial and administrative capacity: developing economies consider the management of migration and of immigrants a secondary priority as many other policy domains require more attention as well as the little resources they have;
- General lack of political will: public authorities do not perceive immigrant integration as a priority, or even as important, in the political agenda.

But neglecting integration comes with a cost. When immigrants are socially excluded, society as a whole suffers the repercussions through an unhealthy and insecure environment. In fact, the economic, social and civic integration of immigrants constitutes by itself a factor of social cohesion. This is why countries of immigration need to better take into account the specific problems faced by foreigners on their soil. They also need to consider the native working population: first, because they may feel like the ones being marginalised and paying the price of immigration; second, because many stereotypes linked to immigration are not true, and authorities have an educational role to downplay certain myths.

Considering the stretched budgetary limits of many countries in the South, integration policies should follow a strategy taking into account the particularities of developing economies. In particular, policies need to internalise the facts that migration flows are easier and attract immigrants with lower human capital, that discrimination may be more difficult to counteract and possibly more prevalent, and that not only immigrants but also the locally-born are mostly in a precarious situation. In essence, they need to fight the social exclusion of immigrants, foster social capital between immigrants and the locally-born, and facilitate the mobility of immigrants in society.

Furthermore, as integration plays out first at the local level, policies must be sufficiently decentralised to react adequately to the intricacies of local regions. This means that at the regional level, cooperation needs to be strengthened between traditional regions to increase the benefits of immigration and reduce its social costs. Regional policies can help better handle and absorb an influx of immigrants, tailored to the local economy and culture.

### **A coherent integration policy requires fighting against the social exclusion of immigrants**

Social exclusion remains the primary deterrent to a full integration experience by immigrants in the South. This implies the participation of the state (access to services), but also from the locals (perception) and immigrants themselves (separation through enclaves).

Many immigrants are isolated as individuals or within groups and do not participate fully in civic society. This is in large part because they lack formal access to the institutions of civil society, or the basic educational, health and financial levels necessary to adequately access them. As many immigrants arrive with employment-related motivations, freeing and facilitating access to short-term services, such as housing and health, is a primary requirement in raising the living and working standards of immigrants, particularly for those staying for short periods. Thailand in collaboration with the IOM, for instance, launched a program on migrant health in 2003, to deal with health issues and well-being of immigrants from neighbouring countries, regardless of their legal status.

Immigrants should also be free of discrimination on the labour market. There is no reason for an immigrant with certain characteristics to be paid less than a native with similar characteristics for the same job. In this respect, host countries should facilitate regular immigration and formalise and define various immigrant statuses. This is an issue that Mexico has been working for the last decade, by introducing a VISA programme that enables Guatemalans to access labour opportunities in the Southern Mexican state of Chiapas. Some countries have long established bilateral partnerships that facilitate legal migration to the country. Such is the case of India and Nepal, which have a long standing open border agreement.

Policies also need to ensure that immigrants, particularly those who are stuck in bad and/or informal jobs, are not further pushed away into unsafe and hazardous jobs. In August 2008, Côte d'Ivoire enacted a law against xenophobia. The United Arab Emirates has also moved to sign Memoranda of Understanding with several countries which include provisions for fair treatment and pay on the labour market and safety at work. But even in contexts of strong legislation against xenophobia and discrimination, the largely informal labour market ensures that unfavourable practices remain, and as such, local perceptions should be the primary target of policy makers. In South Africa, for instance, immigration from the North has alerted the upper echelons of government policy-making, due to a rise in xenophobia and violence against Zimbabweans but the government has taken responsibility in fighting the negative perception against them (see Box 1).

Countries of immigration also need to fight against the establishment and development of immigrant enclaves. This can be achieved first by extending the benefits of social security not only to immigrants but generally to informal workers. The integration of immigrants should be more about the challenge of lowering the incentives for forming enclaves rather than pushing for assimilation. Achieving social cohesion while integrating immigrants into society means creating an environment for immigrants to share and participate in the social, economic and political process of the country.

In addition, because discrimination legislation is difficult to enforce, governments of all levels as well as local leaders need to fight against negative public perceptions.

While integration should feature an element of learning and accepting the host country's culture, immigrants should also be granted the freedom to organise associations, practice their faith or follow particular eating habits, or other particularities uncommon in the host country's social norms. Failure to do so increases immigrant anxiety and may incite a backlash against those seeking to limit these practices.

**Box 1. Migration Policy and Social Cohesion in South Africa**

*In May 2008, a series of riots against immigrants in a township of Johannesburg spread to the cities of Gauteng, Western Cape, Cape Town, Durban and other provinces. The immigrants were from Mozambique, Malawi, Somalia and Zimbabwe and in the end, 62 had been killed, several hundred injured, thousands displaced and many of their properties were looted and destroyed. This wave of violence happened in a context of increasing migration flows (especially from Zimbabwe) and a deterioration of socioeconomic conditions in deprived areas.*

*The government immediately condemned these xenophobic attacks and deployed police forces to restore order and arrest suspects. It also created temporary camps and implemented reintegration plans. After this wave of violence against foreigners, social cohesion and integration policies became a matter of concern and a subject of study. A project linking migration and social cohesion was implemented by IDASA, an independent public interest organisation in August 2008 aims at fighting the negative perception of migration as a threat to social cohesion, and to show that migrants can be positively incorporated into society. The two main assumptions are that integration enhances migrants' contribution to the economic, social, cultural and political development of the host society, and that diversity is an opportunity and a source of enrichment.*

*To foster the participation of migrants into South African society, the Project promotes research and publication. After gathering policy-relevant information, the team organises workshops for the authorities, so that they can implement proactive programmes and change legal framework. The Project also encourages collaborative engagement and mutually-reinforcing relationships between migrants and locals. It finally improves public awareness of the role, status and contribution of immigrants.*

*The first recommendation based on commissioned studies is to work at all policy levels beginning at the local level, where the process of integration occurs primarily. The two city projects that have been implemented in Cape Town and Johannesburg have followed this advice, with the establishment of a loan and savings scheme in the first town and a Migrants Help Desk in the other (these initiatives encourage interactions between refugees and citizens and ease integration). A second way to enhance social cohesion is through partnerships between the government and other stakeholders, and to involve at each level a large range of actors. The IDASA project also presents legislation as a preferred tool to guarantee equality, non-discrimination and to fight against exploitation and abuse of migrants (in particular women, children and undocumented migrants).*

### **Building social capital implies generating social relations that can have productive benefits**

Fostering positive bonding between immigrants and local population and bridging the potential gaps that can arise when diverse sets of norms bisect is a key element of integration. The goodwill this generates positively affects productivity and social cohesion.

One policy dimension is through education and training. Indeed, immigrants often travel in families and child guardians are often over-burdened between work, providing food and watching over children that one of three scenarios play-out: children either work with their parents, are sold, trafficked or forced into child labour, or spend the day toiling unproductively in the ghettos. By extending, subsidising and making mandatory to send immigrant children to school, host countries avoid such situations. But it also increases potential human capital as children learn elements of local culture and language at school and foster ties with local children. Moreover, specific training of skills and languages improves the interaction between immigrants and locals, not only children, but also adults.

A second important element towards promoting social capital is to allow for freedom to practice and share elements of one's culture. This implies a two-way interaction, where immigrants practice and perhaps share cultural traits with locals, but also learn new ones from locals. This easily extends to elements of religion, food, festivals and other rituals linked to cultures and social norms. Of course education and training, as stated above, are good vectors of cultural learning and understanding.

A final component is the support of hometown, cultural and social associations (HTAs). Because messages need to come across quickly, particularly when tensions spiral out of control, HTAs help communicate messages quicker to large groups of immigrants. They also provide leadership for underrepresented groups of society. For the many immigrants who do not speak or read the local language, it brings an aspect of representation and communication, for information gathering or even for venting about encountered problems. In addition, cultural organisations become instruments of expression, helping share cultural traits within society.

### **Social mobility enables immigrants to increase their position in the host country's social hierarchy**

Immigrants are often deliberately pushed to the bottom of their host country's class system, often because of their low levels of material wealth and (perceived) human capital. Yet their ascension in society would permit a better and more efficient incentive mechanism and increase

productivity. Immigrant social mobility highly depends, however, on whether immigrants are low or high-skilled, whether they project to stay permanent or short-term, and whether they are working in a rural or urban region. This can be achieved through easing mobility within labour markets, facilitating entrepreneurship, better job and skill-matching and promoting education.

As labour markets are highly imperfect in the South, policies need to increase the benefits derived from working as well as the mobility between the formal and informal sectors, and the barriers to better jobs. This includes helping immigrants organise themselves in informal activities by promoting entrepreneurship through the provision of loans, the organisation of marketplaces and by targeting particular groups victims of higher discrimination (low-skilled, women). Because a lot of the benefits derived from working in the formal sector are non-monetary, social security measures should be extended to informal workers, to at least include housing, health and pension portability. In this respect, Chile has been one of the most active countries, by signing bilateral agreements on pension access and portability with 23 countries, mostly regional.

Job matching in and out of the immigration country can lead to generally better allocation of skills and jobs in the aggregate while it also reduces problems due to labour shortages in seasonally high labour demand periods, as well as the prevalence of unfair job allocation, by adding transparency to the allocation process. The porous borders and limited capacity to control flows in the South means that host countries have less control over who enters the country in comparison to countries in the North. As such, job-matching helps host countries steer immigrant labour flows to sectors with the highest demand and/or provide a flexible hiring mechanism so that the economy can easily absorb workers and quickly change according to the available supply of workers and structure of the economy. By creating job-matching centres outside of the country, host countries can already provide the information directly to immigrants before emigration decisions are made, further reducing labour market frictions. This is being done at the city level in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Breitbridge, Zimbabwe. Johannesburg has been developing a migrant policy since 2007, which has included the establishment of a migrants help desk. Conversely, a labour recruitment centre was created in Breitbridge in 2009, with information on jobs in Limpopo province in South Africa.

Finally, access to education and vocational skills-training can help promote social mobility. Training not only leads to better jobs but also safer, more organised and productive ones. Education should be extended to immigrant children, as already argued, as it accelerates intergenerational social mobility.

## Conclusion

Immigration in itself does not represent a threat to social cohesion. It is rather the lack of specific measures to fight against social exclusion and promote integration that makes immigration a problem. The primary victims are first and foremost the immigrants themselves, which have to suffer from violations of their human rights, from discriminatory practices and from xenophobic pressures. But society as a whole is also affected, as social tensions between foreign and native-born populations arise.

In this respect, Côte d'Ivoire is a good illustration of how the exacerbation of xenophobic nationalism, through the controversial concept of "ivoirité", can generate civil unrest and never-ending political crises. By contrast, a country like Ghana, whose economic success also relies on immigrants, has been spared from major migration-related social problems, at least in the last decades.<sup>4</sup> But nothing says that Ghana is impervious to discrimination and scapegoating against immigrants. Tensions have already surfaced in the last few years due to the increase in immigration, and the situation could rapidly worsen if public authorities do not react on time.

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<sup>4</sup> At the beginning of the 1970s, Ghana deported thousands of immigrants, mainly from Nigeria.

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