

# Migration Trends and Migration Policy in Europe

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## ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes information on both stocks and flows of migrants in Europe, focusing specifically on arrivals from developing countries. It starts out by setting this into its historical context by showing how flows of labour migrants were followed by flows of family members, and later by asylum seekers and refugees. Then it looks more closely at recent migration data, though it finds these to be frequently incomplete and inconsistent.

The most comparable cross-national data come from the OECD and Eurostat, which indicate that Germany had the largest flows of migrants in the 1990s followed by the United Kingdom. In addition to these arrivals there are probably between 2 and 3 million undocumented immigrants in Europe – accounting for 10 to 15 per cent of the total population of foreigners.

The paper also traces the countries from where migrants are leaving. Sources vary considerably from one immigration country to another, reflecting a number of factors, of which the most important are former colonial links, previous areas of labour recruitment, and ease of entry from neighbouring countries. In recent years, however, immigrants have been coming from a wider range of countries and particularly from lower-income countries.

The paper also examines changes in immigration policy. National policies were fairly liberal during the 1950s and 1960s, before becoming more

restrictive from the 1970s on. Recently, however, a number of governments have been revising their policies to take better account of employment and demographic needs. The paper also traces the emergence of a cross-national European response to immigration, as European Union (EU) countries have become more concerned about their common external frontier.

Thus far European countries have done little to try to control migration through cooperation with sending countries. They could, for example, direct Official Development Assistance to those countries most likely to send immigrants, though few appear to have done so in a deliberate fashion.

The paper concludes that in the future immigration to the EU is likely to increase, both as a result of the demand for labour and because of low birth rates in the EU. In the short and medium term many of these requirements are likely to be met by flows from Eastern Europe, particularly following the eastward expansion of the EU. But, the longer-term picture will probably involve greater immigration from developing countries.

## MIGRATION TRENDS AND MIGRATION POLICY IN EUROPE

If it were possible, an aerial snapshot of migrant flows across Western Europe in the early years of the twenty-first century would offer a complex and confusing picture. For the purposes of international comparison, the simplest form of classification of these diverse flows is by four broad categories of entry. First, labour migration, which would include long- and short-term immigrants and seasonal workers. Second, family reunification, which usually consists of close relatives of those with long-term settlement rights. Third, undocumented workers or “illegal immigrants” who have either entered the country illegally or have entered on tourist visas and have overstayed, usually in order to work. Fourth, asylum seekers who, once granted asylum, are classified as refugees.

To track these different flows and set the context for modern migration, a convenient starting point is the end of World War II. Since then, Europe has had four main phases of immigration.

### *Late 1940s and early-1950s – mass refugee flows*

The end of World War II saw dramatic population shifts as around 15 million people transferred from one country to another, many of whom were forced to relocate as a result of boundary changes, particularly between Germany, Poland, and the former Czechoslovakia. By 1950, refugees made up 30 per cent of the population of West Germany (Borrie, 1970). From the mid-1950s these flows started to slow, though they continued at lower levels until the building of the Berlin wall in 1961.

### *Early-1950s to 1973 – recruitment of contract workers*

The reconstruction of Europe ushered in an economic boom. Between 1950 and 1973 the economies of the OECD countries grew on average by 5 per cent per year. This created a huge new demand for workers, and Germany, France, and the UK started to run short of labour. At first they were able to recruit many of those displaced during the war. Then they looked to other European countries that had been slower to industrialize, including Italy, Portugal, and Spain. But as these countries too became more prosperous recruiters had to look further afield. Some countries drew on their colonial ties. France turned to North Africa, and the UK to the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent. Germany, without a colonial reservoir instead recruited short-term contract workers from countries adjacent to Western Europe, notably the former Yugoslavia and Turkey. Over this period net immigration for Western Europe reached around 10 million (compared with net outflows of 4 million for the period 1914 to 1949) (Stalker, 1994).

### *1974 to mid-1980s – the doors close*

Opposition to the arrival of large numbers of immigrants had already been growing in the late 1960s. In the 1960s this caused the UK, for example, to cut back the number of people who could come from the British Commonwealth. But it was the recession following the oil shock of 1973 that signalled a more general reversal across Europe and all governments effectively closed the doors to further labour immigration and expected guest workers to leave. These workers had, however, by now put down roots and preferred to stay. Even so, most governments shied away from the kind of punitive measures it would have taken to expel them and allowed family members of existing immigrants to join them. Before and during this period migrants had also started to choose from a wider range of destinations including Italy and other countries of southern Europe. The economic stimulus of joining the European Community also made Greece, Portugal, and Spain more attractive to immigrants.

### *Mid-1980s to 2001 – asylum seekers, refugees, and illegal immigrants*

This was a period of political upheaval, particularly in Eastern Europe during and after the collapse of communism. Eastern Europeans, with more freedom to travel, started to join the thousands of people fleeing conflict elsewhere in the world and sought asylum in Western Europe. But others who formerly might have travelled as contract workers were also deflected to the “asylum door”. This phenomenon had been evident as far back as 1980 when some 108,000 Turkish citizens applied for asylum in West Germany. From 1989-1998, more than 4 million people applied for asylum in Europe, 43 per cent of whom came from elsewhere in Europe, 35 per cent from Asia, and 19 per cent from Africa (Salt, 2000). As the pressure grew, however, Western European governments started to tighten up on asylum applications, and more people tried to enter illegally, either travelling on their own initiative or with the help of smugglers.

### Measuring migrant flows

Each country has developed a system of migration measurement based on its own particular requirements. This can make it difficult to aggregate data across Europe or make valid cross-country comparisons. The most up-to-date information typically comes from those countries that maintain full population registers – requiring that both nationals and foreigners register with the local authorities. But even these registers are not exactly comparable since they can be based on a different duration for the minimum length of stay required to qualify as an immigrant rather than as a visitor – three months in Belgium and Italy, for example, but 12 months in Ireland.

Moreover, some countries classify asylum seekers as immigrants while others do not. Data for Germany, for example, include some asylum seekers, but not all. Those countries that do not maintain population registers have to rely on other sources.

With this in mind, Table 1 combines the latest data available from the OECD's continuous reporting system on migration, SOPEMI, and from Eurostat (Eurostat, 2000), showing the extent of migrant inflows during the 1990s. As Table 1 indicates, Germany occupies first place, partly because of the inclusion of some asylum seekers, and has a peak in 1992. The United Kingdom is next, though it follows a different pattern with a steady overall rise.

Data on emigration are sparser and even less reliable than those on immigration; some countries, including France, do not collect such information at all. The latest available information on emigration is collected in Table 2. Again Germany accounts for the bulk of the flows, and comparison with Table 1 shows that in 1997 and 1998 emigration exceeded immigration.

To complete the picture, since these data may not include flows of asylum seekers and refugees, is it also useful to present these as a separate category. In the earlier years, Germany was the main destination but by the end of the decade the United Kingdom had taken the lead (see Table 3).

Combining outflows and inflows should give net migration, which will be positive if immigration exceeds emigration. But since emigration data can be missing or unreliable it may be better to arrive at net migration from another direction. One option is to monitor changes in overall population size, treating net migration as a residual. So the difference between the population at the beginning and end of the year minus the difference between births and deaths can be taken as net migration. Eurostat uses this approach to estimate net migration rates for the 15 countries of the European Union (EU) (Eurostat, 2002). These are shown in Figure 1, which shows that net migration for this group of countries peaked in 1992, fell until 1997, and then started to rise again.

TABLE 1  
INFLOWS OF FOREIGN CITIZENS TO SELECTED COUNTRIES  
1990-1999 (thousands)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Austria***	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	57	–	–
Belgium*	51	54	55	53	56	53	52	49	51	58
Denmark*	15	18	17	15	16	33	25	20	21	–
Finland*	7	12	10	11	8	7	8	8	8	8
France**	102	110	117	99	92	77	76	102	138	104
Germany*	842	921	1,208	987	774	788	708	615	606	674
Greece***	10	14	10	18	15	18	20	17	35	–
Hungary*	37	23	15	16	13	13	13	12	12	15
Ireland**	–	–	–	–	13	14	22	24	21	22
Italy****	97	71	59	51	53	68	143	–	111	268
Luxembourg*	9	10	10	9	9	10	9	9	11	12
Netherlands*	81	84	83	88	68	67	77	77	82	78
Norway*	16	16	17	22	18	17	17	22	27	32
Portugal**	–	–	14	10	6	5	4	3	7	11
Sweden*	53	44	40	55	75	36	29	33	36	35
Switzerland*	101	110	112	104	92	88	74	73	75	86
United Kingdom**	–	–	204	190	194	206	216	237	258	277

Sources: \*SOPEMI, 2001, based on national population register; \*\*SOPEMI, 2001, source other than population register; \*\*\*Eurostat, 2000; \*\*\*\*for 1990-1996, SOPEMI, 2001, based on national population register; for 1998-1999, SOPEMI, 2001, source other than population register.

### Migrant stocks

The other way of assessing the extent of immigration is to consider the total number of resident migrants, the "stocks". Data on stocks usually come from population registers of various kinds as well as censuses, though the UK arrives at this information indirectly from a regular sample survey of the labour force. Again there are differences in the way these data are collected. Most European countries make regular estimates of the citizenship of their populations. These will indicate the number of "foreigners" but they will not include all immigrants since some will have naturalized and by definition have ceased to be foreigners. The only way to count the stock of immigrants is to estimate the number who are "foreign born". Some countries gather this information as part of census surveys though they may not do so very regularly.

Table 4 collects some of the most recent data on the proportion of the population who are foreign citizens, along with the proportion who are foreign born.

TABLE 2  
OUTFLOWS OF FOREIGN CITIZENS FROM SELECTED COUNTRIES,  
1990-1999 (thousands)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Austria***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-
Belgium*	27	35	28	31	34	33	32	35	36	36
Denmark*	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	7	8	-
Finland*	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Germany*	466	498	615	710	622	561	559	637	639	556
Italy***	7	6	7	-	-	-	8	8	-	-
Luxembourg*	6	6	6	5	5	5	6	6	7	7
Netherlands*	21	21	23	22	23	22	22	22	21	21
Norway*	10	8	8	11	10	9	10	10	12	13
Sweden*	16	15	13	15	16	15	15	15	14	14
Switzerland*	60	66	80	71	64	68	68	63	59	58
United Kingdom**	95	102	94	89	82	74	77	94	88	130

Sources: \*SOPEMI, 2001, based on national population register; \*\*SOPEMI, 2001, source other than population register; \*\*\*Eurostat, 2000.

Although the data are not for matching years, they do confirm the expected result that there are more foreign born than foreign citizens. This difference will be greater in countries where it is easier to gain citizenship – as in France where the proportion of the population who are foreign born is 11 per cent but the proportion who are foreign citizens is only around 6 per cent. For most countries there were no significant changes between 1990 and 1999. The largest increases seem to have been in Austria and Denmark. Elsewhere the proportion of people who are foreigners has been static or falling, though this could also reflect a combination of high levels of immigration combined with high levels of naturalization. The data in the middle two columns show the citizenship of the workforce. These roughly parallel the patterns in the first two columns.

### Illegal immigrants

In addition to these immigrants there are also millions of other undocumented workers – whose numbers are thought to have increased substantially during the 1980s and 1990s. Since illegal immigrants tend to avoid being registered, any estimates of the total number in Europe are necessarily guesstimates. One of the best indications comes from regularizations when a country declares an amnesty for certain categories of illegal immigrants who then have an incentive to come forward. Italy, for example, has had a series of regularization programmes. The latest of these, in 1998, attracted 350,000 applicants, which combined with data on legal immigrants, indicated a total foreign population of 1.6 million, of whom around 20 per cent were there illegally (SOPEMI, 2000). Spain's regularization

programme in 2000 attracted 245,000 applicants which would indicate a total foreign population of 1 million, of whom around 25 per cent were there illegally (SOPEMI, 2001). Italy and Spain probably have higher proportions of illegal workers than other countries because they form part of Europe's southern border, are easier to enter, and are seen as transit countries for people heading further north. For Europe as a whole, the stock of illegal immigrants has been assumed to be between 2 and 3 million – which would constitute between 10 and 15 per cent of the total population of foreigners (IOM, 2000).

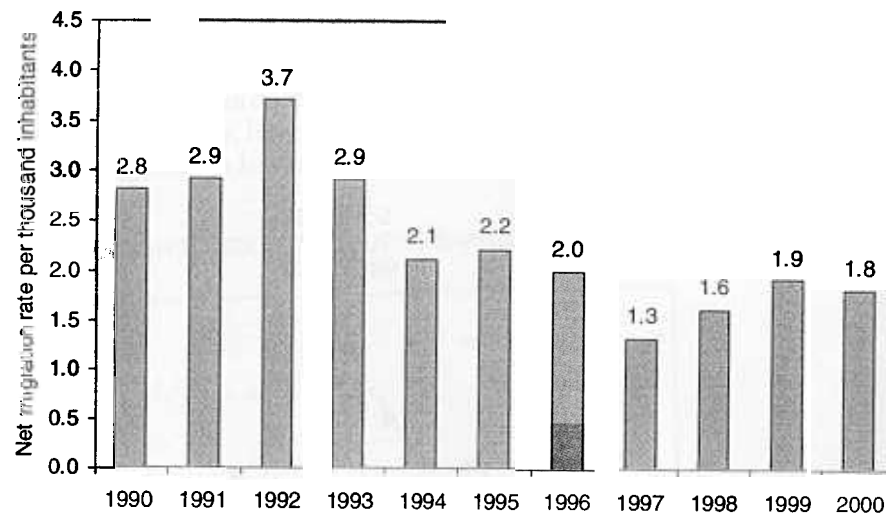
If stocks of illegal immigrants are difficult to count it is even more difficult to estimate the rate they are flowing into Europe. One of the most commonly quoted flow estimates was made in 1994 by Jonas Widgren of the Vienna-based International Centre for Migration Policy and Development. He started from the fact that, in 1993, 60,000 undocumented immigrants were apprehended at European borders. After talking to many border control authorities he estimated that perhaps four to six times as many people were not caught. This would mean that some 250,000 to 350,000 were getting through each year (Widgren, 1994).

TABLE 3  
INFLOWS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS INTO SELECTED COUNTRIES,  
1991-2000 (thousands)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Austria	27.3	16.2	4.7	5.1	5.9	7.0	6.7	13.8	20.1	18.0
Belgium	15.4	17.6	26.5	14.7	11.7	12.4	11.8	22.1	35.8	42.0
Denmark	4.6	13.9	14.3	6.7	5.1	5.9	5.1	5.7	6.5	10.0
Finland	2.1	3.6	2.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.1	3.0
France	47.4	28.9	27.6	26.0	20.4	17.4	21.4	22.4	30.9	38.0
Germany	256.1	438.2	322.6	127.2	127.9	116.4	104.4	98.6	95.1	78.0
Greece	2.7	2.0	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.6	4.4	2.6	1.5	3.0
Ireland	-	-	0.1	0.4	0.4	1.2	3.9	4.6	7.7	10.0
Italy	26.5	6.0	1.6	1.8	1.7	0.7	1.9	11.1	33.4	18.0
Luxembourg	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	1.6	2.9	3.0
Netherlands	21.6	20.3	35.4	52.6	29.3	22.9	34.4	45.2	42.7	43.0
Norway	4.6	5.2	12.9	3.4	1.5	1.8	2.3	8.5	10.2	10.0
Portugal	0.2	0.5	1.7	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Spain	8.1	11.7	12.6	12.0	5.7	4.7	5.0	6.8	8.4	7.0
Sweden	27.4	84.0	37.6	18.6	9.0	5.8	9.6	12.5	11.2	16.0
Switzerland	41.6	18.0	24.7	16.1	17.0	18.0	24.0	41.3	46.1	17.0
United Kingdom	73.4	32.3	28.0	42.2	55.0	37.0	41.5	58.0	91.2	97.0
Total	559.2	698.5	553.3	329.7	293.3	254.0	278.1	356.4	447.1	418.0

Sources: SOPEMI, 2001.

FIGURE 1  
NET MIGRATION RATE PER THOUSAND INHABITANTS,  
EUROPEAN UNION, 1990-2000



Source: Eurostat, 2002.

### Sources of immigrants

The data indicate the destinations of migrants to Europe in recent years. But, from where have they been coming? The national composition of the immigrant population varies considerably from one destination country to another and reflects a number of factors, the most important of which are former colonial links, former areas of labour recruitment, and ease of entry from neighbouring countries.

The simplest snapshot of source countries comes from data on the foreign born. For this group of countries, 47 per cent of the foreign born came from other European countries, 27 per cent from Africa, 10 per cent from the Americas, 14 per cent from Asia, and 2 per cent from elsewhere.

There are significant differences, however, between the proportions for individual countries. Switzerland, Ireland, and Luxembourg, which have the highest proportions of EU nationals, did not have colonies, so they are a less obvious choice for immigrants from Asia or Africa. At the other end of the scale are former colonizing countries: France, the Netherlands, the UK, and Portugal. In France, for example, 32 per cent of the foreign born came from Algeria and Morocco; in the Netherlands, 26 per cent came from Indonesia and Suriname; in the UK, more than 20 per cent came from the Indian subcontinent; and in Portugal, 49 per cent came from Angola and Mozambique (Salt, 2000).

TABLE 4  
STOCKS OF FOREIGN CITIZENS, FOREIGN WORKERS,  
AND FOREIGN BORN, 1990-2000

	Foreign citizens as a % of total population <sup>1</sup>		Foreign workers as a % of total workforce		Foreign born as a % of total population	
	1990	1999	1990 <sup>4</sup>	1999 <sup>1</sup>	Year	%
Austria	5.9	9.2	7.4	9.5	-	-
Belgium	9.1	8.8	7.1	8.7	-	-
Denmark	3.1	4.9	2.4	2.5	1999 <sup>2</sup>	6.3
Finland	0.5	1.7	-	1.2	2000 <sup>2</sup>	2.5
France	6.3	5.6	6.2	6.1	1990 <sup>3</sup>	11.0
Germany	8.4	8.9	7.1	8.7	-	-
Ireland	2.3	3.1	2.6	3.4	2000 <sup>2</sup>	6.8
Italy	1.4	2.2	1.3*	3.6	-	-
Luxembourg	29.4	36	45.2	57.3	1991 <sup>3</sup>	30.2
Netherlands	4.6	4.1	3.1	3.4	2000 <sup>2</sup>	9.8
Norway	3.4	4	2.3	2.9	1999 <sup>1</sup>	6.5
Portugal	1.1	1.9	1.0	1.8	1991 <sup>3</sup>	4.6
Spain	0.7	2	0.6	1.0	1991 <sup>3</sup>	2.2
Sweden	5.6	5.5	5.4	4.1	2000 <sup>2</sup>	11.1
Switzerland	16.3	19.2	18.9	18.1	1990 <sup>3</sup>	21.3
United Kingdom	3.2	3.8	3.3	3.9	1999 <sup>2</sup>	7.5

Note: \*For 1991.

Sources: 1. SOPEMI, 2001; 2. Eurostat New Cronos database, 2002; 3. Salt et al 2000; 4. SOPEMI, 2000.

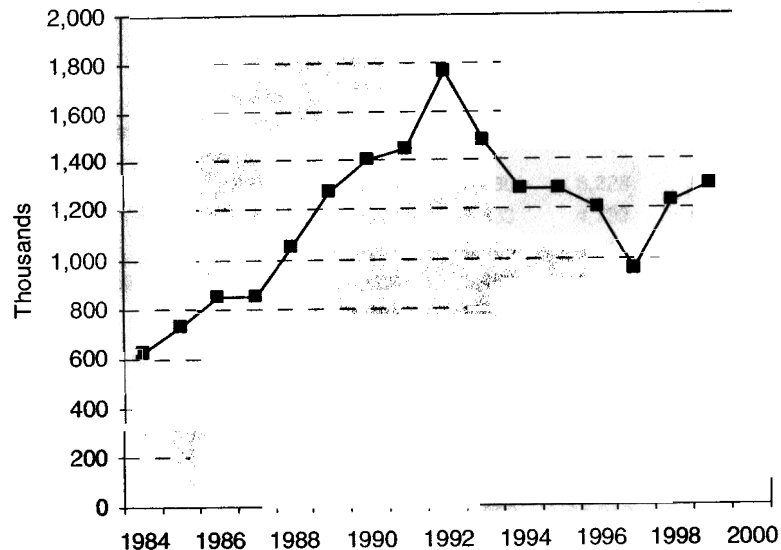
Spain is something of an exception in that the largest single source of foreign-born residents came from France, not former colonies. This is probably because in the early 1990s immigration to Spain was still relatively low and the foreign born were only around 3 per cent of the population. Belgium too is an exception; although Belgium had colonies in Africa, and during the 1960s and 1970s did require workers for its iron and steel industry, it largely recruited from other European countries, notably Italy (Stalker, 1994). Another way of looking at the same data is from the perspective of the sending areas. Of emigrants from Africa, for example, 66 per cent went to France, and from Asia 55 per cent went to the UK.

For more recent trends a better indication of source countries comes from data on flows. The overall trend is shown in Figure 2 for eight of the countries of the EU (SOPEMI, 2001). This shows a steep rise in immigration, peaking in 1992-1993, following the collapse of communism and the breakup of the former Soviet Union, which provoked a sharp increase in migration to Germany, particularly of ethnic Germans. As these crises abated somewhat, however, and European



countries became more restrictive, overall immigrant numbers started to fall, particularly for Germany. In the last few years, however, the total has been rising again. Table 1 also confirms that for a number of countries, including the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden, immigration has remained fairly stable. Although the inflows appeared to fall in 1999, this is thought to be the result of a "technical adjustment". But other European countries have seen significant increases from 1998-1999, including Germany, Italy, and the UK. In Portugal immigration has also been rising, though from a lower base.

FIGURE 2  
MIGRATION TO SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES,  
1984-1999



Note: Inflows of foreign citizens into Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Source: SOPEMI, 2001.

Migrants to Europe now seem to be entering via most of the immigrant categories, though the largest numbers are family members, followed by labour migrants and asylum applicants.

*Family reunification* – This is often the largest category of legal arrivals. In Denmark, for example, around 66 per cent of those given residence permits in 1999 for more than 1 year were family members, while 16 per cent were workers, and 8 per cent were refugees. In Sweden the proportion of inflows of non-Nordic or European Economic Area (EEA)<sup>1</sup> citizens arriving for family reunification was nearer 80 per cent. In Portugal 47 per cent of official arrivals were family members, a similar proportion arrived on work visas, and the rest were refugees. In the UK, however, the proportion of family members is lower –

around 43 per cent of non-EEA citizens (SOPEMI, 2001). The nationality of the newly arriving family members naturally follows the pattern of previous immigration. In Germany and Switzerland, therefore, most of the joining family members come from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia. In France and to a lesser degree in Belgium and the Netherlands, they come from North Africa, and in the UK they come most from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

*Labour migration* – After several years of economic expansion, Europe has seen a notable increase in labour migration. Some countries have actively been recruiting again at the higher end of the jobs market, yet they have also started to take on more unskilled workers, usually on a short-term or seasonal basis, particularly in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing, and also in services such as hotels and catering. For Europe as a whole, the majority of non-EU short-term workers come either from Eastern Europe or from Africa (IOM, 2000).

*Refugees and asylum seekers* – This is the most volatile category, ebbing and flowing, according to political and economic conditions. The largest flows in recent years were of refugees escaping the Kosovo crisis. Hundreds of thousands of Kosovans fled to the West in 1999, though by mid-2000 most of these had returned home. Table 3 shows the destination countries for asylum seekers in Europe. In 2000 the largest number of requests in Europe were going to the UK, followed by Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Where are asylum seekers coming from? Table 5 shows the main sources of close to 1.8 million asylum applications in Europe during the years 1994 to 1999 (UNHCR, 2001). Despite the violence in Europe in 1999 the largest number of applications over this period came from Asia. A similar pattern is also evident in more recent data. For October and November 2001 the top four source countries of asylum in Europe were Iraq, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, and Turkey.

### Diversity of immigrants

Another trend in recent years is that migration flows have become more diverse. Although the main destination countries continue to receive the bulk of their immigrants from traditional sources, they are also seeing people arrive from a broader array of countries. To some extent this is the result of political instability in many source countries, combined with falling costs of travel. One measure of this is to consider what proportion of the foreign population is accounted for by the top five immigrant groups. For most countries this proportion has tended to fall over the past decade. This is seen in Figure 3, which ranks countries according to the diversity of immigrant inflows in 1999. Of this group, the most diverse is the Netherlands where only 27 per cent of the 78,400 arrivals in 1999 came from the top five countries – in this case the UK, Germany, Morocco, Turkey, and the US. At the other end of the scale is Luxembourg where 55 per cent came from the top five countries: France, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, and the US. Ireland ranks in the middle of this figure, but in this case the proportion refers to only two countries: the UK and the US.

TABLE 5  
SOURCE COUNTRIES OF ASYLUM SEEKERS TO EUROPE, 1995-1999

Origin	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
Yugoslavia, FR	51,759	38,451	48,401	98,270	120,614	357,495
Iraq	18,198	26,288	40,434	40,821	35,129	160,870
Turkey	41,385	38,416	33,106	21,762	19,723	154,392
Afghanistan	11,669	12,513	16,343	18,633	24,220	83,378
Sri Lanka	12,765	13,084	14,118	12,345	12,785	65,097
Iran	10,994	11,644	10,148	10,315	16,157	59,258
Somalia	12,290	8,091	8,963	12,129	14,272	55,745
Romania	14,537	9,757	10,630	8,786	8,657	52,367
Bosnia and Herzegovina	17,231	6,484	8,226	10,207	6,679	48,827
Pakistan	9,825	7,838	8,270	6,596	8,163	40,692
Democratic Republic of Congo	7,761	7,847	8,726	6,959	7,249	38,542
Algeria	8,678	5,218	6,860	8,228	8,027	37,011
India	9,131	7,393	5,833	4,792	6,606	33,755
Armenia	5,746	6,957	6,086	5,345	8,645	32,779
Russian Federation	4,740	4,900	5,480	5,847	11,495	32,462
China	3,924	4,269	6,902	6,020	10,780	31,895
Nigeria	8,901	6,354	5,281	5,659	4,698	30,893
Albania	1,263	1,482	7,880	6,651	4,058	21,334
Stateless	3,120	3,550	3,650	3,661	4,227	18,208
Georgia	3,150	3,102	4,410	4,117	3,422	18,201
Africa	71,854	55,631	58,950	64,040	72,862	323,337
Asia	143,835	148,108	165,216	150,294	171,771	779,224
Europe	107,347	76,361	97,784	146,865	175,289	603,646
Latin American and Caribbean	3,131	4,018	4,820	3,874	4,975	20,818
Other/unknown	7,679	8,701	6,013	5,864	38,940	67,197
Total	333,846	292,819	332,783	370,937	463,837	1,794,222

Source: UNHCR, 2001.

For the majority of countries the proportion represented by the top five countries has tended to fall in recent years. The most striking difference in this figure is for the Netherlands, down from 49 per cent to 27 per cent, much of which is accounted for by declining numbers coming from Morocco and especially from Turkey, which was the leading source of immigrants in 1990 but had dropped to fourth place by 1999. Portugal too has seen a decline in immigration from Angola and Guinea-Bissau. Yet, some countries seem to have seen a greater con-

centration in the immigrant population. In Norway, for example, the 1999 figures were affected by a large inflow of refugees from Kosovo, though there has also been a notable increase in the number of people moving in from Sweden.

Apart from an increase in diversity, there has also been a tendency for the foreign population in Europe to come from lower-income countries. In the mid-1980s the majority of the foreign populations from EU and EFTA countries came from other high-income countries, and generally from other European states. The main exceptions were Germany and the Netherlands, which already had high numbers from Turkey, and Portugal which had many immigrants from its former colonies in Africa. But during the mid-1990s most countries that previously received a majority of their immigrants from high-income countries increased the proportion coming from lower-income countries. Even these are usually from the lower-middle income countries (per capita income in 1995 \$766 to \$3,035), rather than the very poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa or elsewhere. Italy's increase, for example, included many more people from Morocco, Tunisia, and the Philippines (Salt, 2000).

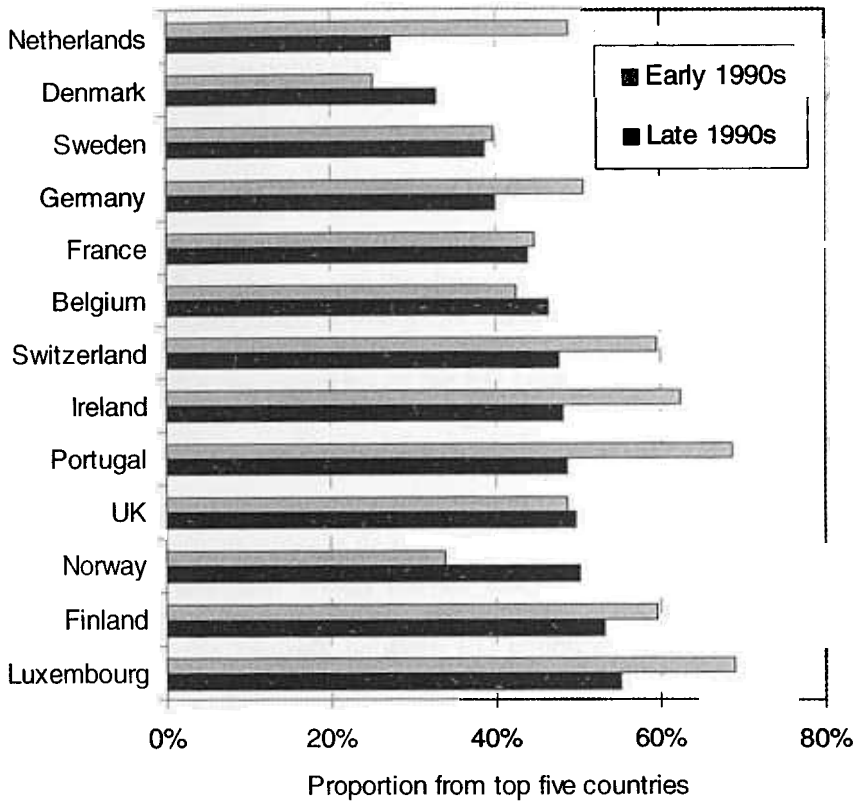
## IMMIGRATION POLICY

Patterns of immigration are also shaped by government policy which attempts to control immigration flows in the national interest. At its simplest this can be seen as an attempt to balance two conflicting objectives. On the one hand governments welcome immigrants as a valuable labour force, either as workers whose skills are in short supply, or as unskilled workers who are prepared to do some of the jobs that native workers shun. On the other hand they also try to dissuade immigrants if they believe they will bring social and political problems and they usually restrict immigration on the grounds of preserving "national identity" or maintaining social stability.

Similarly there are two main conflicting factors when it comes to accepting refugees. The main reasons for accepting are social and political – responding to humanitarian impulse to create a safe haven for those who have a "well-founded fear of persecution". The primary reason for trying to limit the flows of refugees is usually economic, since refugees can be seen as a drain on publicly funded welfare services, though there are also concerns about social stability. In reality, of course the situation is far more complex, and these and many other factors interact and mutate. In the receiving countries, governments have to respond to pressures from many different interest groups, some in favour of liberal immigration policies and others demanding stricter controls. Thus employers can be expected to be in favour of immigration which gives them a larger pool of potential employees. Workers' groups, on the other hand, may object to competition from immigrants who are prepared to accept lower wages. Nevertheless during times of economic expansion even workers'

representatives tend not to oppose immigration very strongly. Germany's guest worker programme, for example, was worked out in close cooperation with trade unions (Hollifield, 1992).

FIGURE 3  
PROPORTION OF INFLOWS OF FOREIGNERS FROM TOP FIVE COUNTRIES, EARLY AND LATE 1990s



Notes: Data are for inflows for 1990 and 1999, except Denmark (1992 and 1998), Finland and the UK (1992 and 1999), and Belgium (1991 and 1999). For Ireland they are 1994 and 1999 and the proportion is for the top two countries.

Source: Data from SOPEMI, 2001.

A further factor likely to favour more positive immigration policies is demographic change. In the EU, the total fertility rate, the average number of children a woman bears in her lifetime, is now down to 1.4, far below the figure of 2.1 required to maintain a stable population. As a result there have been suggestions in recent years that European countries should encourage immigration to offset the ageing of their populations, though the scale of immigration required to achieve this is dramatic. To maintain a stable population,

the UN estimates that from 1995-2000 the EU would need to boost its annual inflows by a factor of five, to around 1.6 million. And if it wanted to maintain a constant "support ratio", the number of working people for each person older than 65, the EU would need to achieve net annual migration of 13 million (UN Population Division, 2000).

There are similar fluctuations in attitudes to refugees. In principle the number of asylum claims that are accepted should be determined only by the number of people who have a well-founded fear of persecution. In practice, however, the proportion admitted also depends on the overall number of claimants since the stringency with which claims are tested tends to rise with the prospect of more arrivals.

**National policies on immigration**

Ultimately immigration in Europe is controlled by national governments. These policies can be quite diverse but during the 1950s and 1960s they were fairly liberal. The countries of northern Europe that had colonial histories needed more workers and were happy to accept them from their former colonies. In the 1950s the United Kingdom, for example, allowed people from the former British Empire to come to the "mother country" and accorded them the same rights as any other citizen, though it curtailed these settlement rights from 1962 on. France, concerned about falling birth rates, also gave citizenship rights to people not just from parts of the Caribbean that were administratively part of France, but also to arrivals from some former colonies in North Africa. The Netherlands and Belgium also had colonial links but actually recruited more guest workers from southern Europe, Morocco, and Turkey. West Germany also allowed free immigration to some extent, notably for "ethnic Germans" either from East Germany or from other countries in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union. Then during the 1960s, West Germany started actively to promote the temporary immigration of young male workers through inter-governmental agreements with other West European countries as well as with Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, and the former Yugoslavia. Switzerland also recruited guest workers over this period but always on a strictly controlled basis.

The position of the Nordic countries was somewhat different. From 1954, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway had established a common labour market, and from 1957 a common passport union, allowing people to work freely in each other's countries. This allowed Sweden, for example, to draw in workers from Finland, though later it also established a controlled system for foreign labour from other countries, including the former Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey. Here the first main attempt at control was from 1965 when workers had to obtain a work permit before arrival. Denmark also used guest workers during this period. Norway, during the 1950s and 1960s, had relatively little immigration.



Immigration policies that had been diverse suddenly converged after the oil crisis of 1973-1974. Most countries passed legislation to restrict further primary immigration. And countries with guest workers also encouraged them to return home. But such policies had little success. Many guest workers in Germany and elsewhere had already put down roots and started families.

Although Switzerland did deport some workers, other countries were reluctant to take measures that could be seen to infringe human rights. A similar concern for human rights also ensured that immigrants already in place would be allowed to bring in close family members. The effect of the controls was therefore to shift inflows from labour immigration to family reunification.

### The European dimension

This period also saw the slow emergence of a cross-national European response to immigration. Initially this was limited to agreements between members of the EU on travel and labour issues within European countries. But from the mid-1980s the countries of the EU became more concerned about their common external frontier and struggled to develop a common policy on non-EU immigrants. Some of the stages in this process are listed in Table 6.

One of the most significant moves was the adoption of the Schengen accords, originally signed in 1985. In 1990 these were formalized into the Schengen Convention which moved the EU closer to a borderless union and to common policies on immigration and asylum. This involves removing border controls between EU countries while hardening external frontiers, creating what is popularly referred to as “fortress Europe”. This has not yet been implemented completely.

Denmark, for example, will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to participate. And the UK and Ireland are not parties but can, with the approval of the EU Council, apply the Schengen Convention in whole or in part and participate in its further development. On the other hand two non-EU countries, Iceland and Norway, are now part of the agreement. Schengen also offers some freedom for non-EU nationals who can move between signatory countries if they have the appropriate visa or residence permit.

In the case of asylum seekers the most significant effort at establishing common frontiers has been the 1997 Dublin Convention which requires asylum seekers to apply in the first EU country in which they land. In practice this has proved very difficult to implement and relatively few people have yet been transferred (DRC, 2001). One of the most dramatic indications of its failure to work as planned is the gathering of asylum seekers at the French end of the Channel Tunnel hoping to gain asylum in the UK.

TABLE 6  
MIGRATION POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Year*	Event	Outcome
1958	Treaty of Rome	Set up the European Economic Community and established that a citizen of one member country could travel to another country to work or seek work.
1976	Trevi Group	A meeting of ministers to promote cooperation on issues of law and order (“Trevi” now stands for Terrorisme, Radicalisme, Extremisme, et Violence Internationale). After 1986 this becomes an ad hoc group of ministers responsible for considering immigration questions, particularly illegal immigration, among other things.
1985	Schengen Accords	An agreement to remove all border controls while attempting to strengthen the common external frontier. Originally signed by six countries in 1985, the current signatories are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.
1987	Single European Act	The member states of the EU declared their intention to create a unified market. The Act also amended earlier treaties to ensure further cooperation on foreign policy.
1993	Treaty on EU	The “Maastricht treaty” extended cooperation to political activities, including foreign policy. This treaty also lifted the remaining restrictions on migration from Spain and Portugal to other EU countries (SOPEMI, 1999).
1997	Dublin Convention	An attempt to harmonize policy by requiring asylum seekers to apply in the first EU country they enter; still not in effect.
1999	Treaty of Amsterdam	Placed issues relating to immigration and asylum under the jurisdiction of the EC and incorporated the Schengen Accords into the EU; included an agreement to achieve minimum standards in asylum policies and practices by 2004.
1999	European Council meeting in Tampere	Established the need for a common European policy on asylum and immigration and asked the European Commission to draw up proposals on asylum, refugees, and immigration.
2000	Nice Treaty	This included a Charter of Fundamental Rights that says that non-EU nationals with residence or work permits should eventually have the same freedom of movement as EU nationals.
2001	European Council meeting in Laeken	Failed to agree on greater cooperation on immigration or asylum policies.

Note: \*In the case of treaties this refers to the year in which they came into force

As far as immigration from outside the EU is concerned, governments still prefer national policies to supranational ones and have proved reluctant to transfer authority to European bodies such as the European Parliament or the European Court of Justice (Koslowsky, 1998). This determination to retain sovereign control over immigration was confirmed at a meeting of the European Council (heads of government) meeting at Laeken in December 2001 which, while calling for closer cooperation to protect external frontiers, rejected a proposal to create a common European border patrolled by EU border guards.

There was a similar impasse at this meeting when it came to policies on asylum. The UK, for example, was pressing for common standards on accepting asylum applications but Austria and Germany opposed such measures which would probably require them to accept higher numbers. The European Commission does now have more authority to propose laws on immigration and asylum, but still has to present these to the Council of Ministers where they are subject to close national scrutiny.

### National policies

At the national level the current trend seems to be for governments to make a more realistic assessment of the need, both economic and demographic, for immigrants while also trying to manage immigration more efficiently. National level policies on immigration involve efforts to: control immigration, which include measures to tighten up border controls and to simplify and speed up the processes for dealing with asylum applications; combat illegal immigration, which typically include sanctions against airlines or other travel operators, as well as heavy fines for employers of illegal immigrants – a number of countries have also had regularization programmes for current illegal immigrants; and better integrate immigrants, which include, for example, training for local authorities to make them more sensitive to the needs of immigrants, training and language classes for immigrants, systems of sponsorship to help immigrants settle, and special reception classes for children.

The following are some recent measures taken by individual countries:

*Denmark* – In 2000 the Government enacted legislation to deter any immigrant younger than 25 from bringing a foreign spouse to Denmark. And in 2001 the new-elected Government introduced measures to make the country less attractive to refugees and immigrants. Now refugees can be sent home up to seven years after being granted asylum if their home countries are by then deemed safe. And they must also wait seven years before being granted permanent residence permits.

*France* – In 1997 the new Government instituted a regularization programme that has granted residence to 75,600 foreigners. Three-quarters of these came

from Africa, with similar numbers from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. In 2001 France signed a bilateral agreement with Algeria on the status of Algerians in France.

*Germany* – In 2001 the Minister of the Interior said that “Germany is an immigration country”, a significant shift from the previous official stance. Germany is also considering a new immigration bill that would allow highly skilled people to qualify for permanent residence as soon as they arrive, and also introduced measures to integrate foreigners and tighten the asylum system. However the bill has met with some opposition from parties opposed to immigration and may not be accepted by the upper house of parliament.

*Ireland* – The situation here is somewhat different. Ireland, which has only recently become a country of immigration, and had the fastest-growing economy in Europe, was happy to welcome more workers. Here around three-quarters of immigrant workers are unskilled. Now Ireland is becoming more restrictive. Faced with rising unemployment it is tightening up on work permits. Employers now have to show that reasonable efforts have been made to recruit EU nationals.

*Italy* – So far Italy has granted residence permits to foreigners who have entered legally or illegally and found work. Early in 2002, however, there were plans for a tougher immigration law that would permit non-EU immigrants to remain in the country only for as long as they have a contract of employment, and also make it simpler to expel illegal immigrants.

*Sweden* – Sweden has always made efforts to integrate its foreign labour force and has never operated under the assumption that contract workers would go home. Here it is relatively easy to gain citizenship and around half the foreign-born are citizens. In 1998 the Government introduced a new policy on integration and in 2001 enacted a new citizenship law that recognizes dual nationality.

*United Kingdom* – During 2001 British policy on labour immigration shifted significantly in favour of allowing more foreign workers. From the beginning of 2002 a “Highly Skilled Migrant Programme” will use a points scheme based on educational attainment and salary to admit foreign professionals who do not have a pre-arranged job. And the opportunities for “working holiday makers” and seasonal workers have been widened. At the same time the penalty for smuggling or trafficking people has been increased from a ten to 14 year prison sentence (Koslowsky, 1998).

### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Thus far, European countries have pursued most of their migration policies within their own national borders by controlling the entry of foreigners and supervising

the integration of existing immigrants. They have done relatively little to try to control immigration through cooperation with the sending countries. In earlier eras, when the aim was to encourage labour immigration, Germany set up recruitment bureaus in the former Yugoslavia and Turkey, and France and the UK at various times established systems to encourage immigration from their former colonies.

Even today, a number of European countries have bilateral quota agreements with sending countries for unskilled workers, usually for temporary or seasonal labour. Germany has the largest number of seasonal workers, most of whom come from Poland, and France has bilateral agreements with Morocco, Poland, Senegal, and Tunisia (IOM, 2000).

There are also bilateral arrangements – “readmission agreements” – for the repatriation of various types of migrants, usually failed asylum seekers. Although most such arrangements are bilateral, some are multilateral. Most of the latter are through the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which among other activities, helps people who have to return home – rejected asylum seekers, trafficked migrants, stranded students, and some labour migrants. One project, for example, concerns the “Reintegration and Emigration of Asylum Seekers from Germany” which in 2000 assisted some 70,000 people to return to Bosnia, Kosovo, and elsewhere (IOM, 2002).

### Aid in place of migration?

Could the receiving countries also do more to prevent migration by addressing the causes of unwanted immigration rather than simply trying to control it? At times there have indeed been suggestions that the richer countries might target some of their development aid in this direction, using it to defuse potential conflicts that could trigger flows of refugees, for example, or to alleviate the poverty that causes people to seek work overseas.

Conflict prevention and resolution came to be seen as a more urgent task during the 1990s following a surge of internal conflicts in Europe and elsewhere. The European Community, for example, when preparing *Country Strategy Papers* for the countries to which it gives aid now assesses the potential for conflicts – looking at such issues as the balance of political and economic power, the nature of the security forces, the ethnic composition of the government, the representation of women, and the extent of environmental degradation.

There have also been efforts to focus on countries that have produced a large number of emigrants. In 1998 the EU created a High-Level Working Group (HLWG) on Asylum and Migration which has now developed Action Plans for Sri Lanka, Somalia, Albania, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Morocco, aimed at

comprehensively addressing the roots of displacement (European Commission, 2001). In what are always very complex situations, however, it will be difficult to prove whether such interventions really do have a significant impact on emigration.

It is equally difficult to judge the impact on emigration of aid given to reduce poverty. This was an issue raised explicitly at several international conferences in the early 1990s, and still remains largely unresolved (Böhning and Schloeter-Pareses, 1994). Many of the doubts concern whether aid can indeed reduce poverty – a much larger question beyond the scope of this paper. But even if development cooperation did reduce poverty it is questionable whether this would then immediately stem emigration. A number of studies have concluded that when people’s incomes and aspirations rise as their countries industrialize they will become more mobile both nationally and internationally and have the resources to emigrate.

Only later, when the labour market at home offers sufficient remunerative employment, will the more ambitious people be content to remain at home. This produces what has been called a “migration hump” as migration first rises and then falls (Martin and Taylor, 1996). How rich do people have to be before they do not feel impelled to emigrate? Some studies in the mid-1990s suggested that the transition occurred at an average real per capita income of around \$4,000. This is illustrated in Figure 4 which suggests that the transition occurs first for national migration, then for international unskilled migration, and finally for migration of the highly skilled (Fisher and Straubhaar, 1996).

Nevertheless it could also be argued that even if this is the case it might be useful to try more targeted interventions to boost employment, specifically in countries and areas that send large numbers of migrants. The evidence here is not very positive. The International Labour Organization (ILO), for example, has been involved with such activities in high-emigration areas in the Maghreb countries, which do have per capita incomes of around \$4,000. These have included “micro-level” targeted interventions such as support to small enterprise development. The ILO has concluded, however, that such interventions usually have no perceptible impact on migration pressure and argues that a more fruitful option would be for the richer countries to open their markets so as to enable the poorer migrant-sending countries to pursue the kind of export-led growth that could give a more substantial boost to both wages and employment (Abella, 2002).

### The empirical evidence

Do European countries, in practice, try to direct aid to reduce migration pressures? One indication would be if European ODA flows were concentrated on migrant-sending countries. Table 7 compares, for the countries with both sets of data available, the main developing-country destinations of ODA with the

main developing-country sources of immigrants (DAC, 2001). The developing countries listed here are the leading three, though countries that also figure highly in the top 12 or 15 in the other category are also asterisked. Thus for Belgium, Morocco is the leading source of immigrants, and is also ranked highly as an aid destination (number 15).

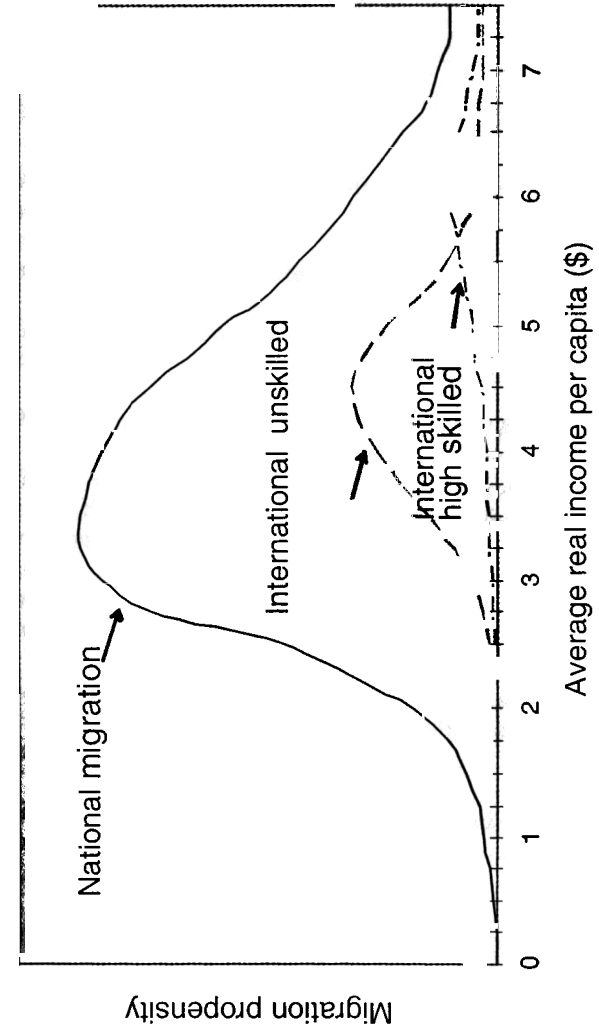
This table does indeed suggest a degree of correlation. However, in most cases this is because both immigration and aid flows reflect colonial ties. For the UK, India is the leading destination of ODA primarily because of a long historical association, rather than from an attempt to dampen emigration. The strongest colonial correlation is for Portugal, almost all of whose assistance goes to former colonies. Turkey also figures highly on the ODA lists, though again there are probably other reasons for this, since Turkey, particularly during the Cold War, was strategically important to Europe. On the other hand, Tanzania figures strongly as an aid recipient, though it is not a significant source of migrants. The lack of any clear connection between aid policies and migration is also implied from the published policies of donors. The DAC guidelines on poverty reduction, for example, do mention migration but only in the broader context of the ways in which development assistance could contribute to poverty reduction with the implication that this in turn might reduce emigration pressures.

### THE NEXT PHASES OF EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION

In the past most European countries have not considered themselves countries of immigration. Their first instinct has been to resist large numbers of new arrivals. Recent developments, however, suggest possible changes of direction. Although in the short term there can be switches in immigration policy in response to immediate political pressures, in the longer term immigration is likely to grow. This is partly because of labour demand, since even at times of slow economic growth, most European countries find themselves short of skilled workers and also of people prepared to do jobs that national workers shun. The longer-term picture will also be affected by demographic changes and the greying of the population. Immigration is not the answer to falling birth rates, since countering this would require immigration on a vast scale. What demographic shifts could eventually do, however, is erode popular resistance to immigration and encourage governments to accept more people, even if in a closely controlled fashion tailored as precisely as possible to national needs.

For the EU in the short and medium term many of these labour demands are likely to be met from the East, rather than from the South. As the EU expands eastward it will gain access to new sources of migrant labour, similar to those provided in the 1950s and 1960s by Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Yet, given the low birth rates in most of these countries too, the longer-term picture, even for an expanded EU, is likely to involve greater use of workers from developing countries.

FIGURE 4  
MIGRATION PROPENSITY AND DEVELOPMENT



Source: Fischer and Straubhaar, 1996.

TABLE 7  
LEADING SOURCES OF FLOWS OF IMMIGRANTS, AND LEADING  
DEVELOPING-COUNTRY DESTINATIONS OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ASSISTANCE (ODA), SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1998-1999

	Top Three Sources of Migrants, 1999			Top Three Destinations of ODA, 1998-1999		
Belgium	Morocco*	Turkey	Malawi	Tanzania	Congo	Rwanda
Denmark	Iraq	Somalia	Turkey	Tanzania	Uganda	Mozambique
Finland	Iraq*	Iran	China*	Mozam- bique	Nicaragua	China*
France	Morocco*	Algeria*	Turkey	Fr. Polynesia	New Caledonia	Côte d'Ivoire
Germany	Turkey*	-	-	China	Indonesia	Turkey*
Greece	Egypt*	Philippines	Turkey*	Palestine	Egypt*	Turkey*
Italy	Morocco	China*	Senegal	Madagascar	Mozam- bique	Haiti
Netherlands	Morocco	Turkey	Suri- name*	Neth. Antilles	Tanzania	India
Norway	Iraq*	Somalia	Iran	Tanzania	Mozam- bique	Palestine
Portugal	Brazil *	Guinea- Bissau*	Cape Verde*	Mozam- bique*	East Timor	Cape Verde*
Sweden	Iraq	Iran	China	Tanzania	Mozam- bique	S. Africa
Switzerland	Turkey	-	-	Bangladesh	Mozam- bique	India
UK	S. Africa*	India*	Pakistan*	India*	Tanzania	Bangladesh*

Notes: \*Also a leading source of migrants, or also a leading destination of ODA, though not necessarily in the top three.

This does not include European countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia, which are major immigrant sources, as well as destinations for ODA.

Sources: SOPEMI, 2001; Development Assistance Committee, 2000.

## NOTE

The European Economic Area includes the 15 members of the European Union plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.

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