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Turning the tide? Why 'development instead of migration' policies are bound to fail

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Abstract

Restrictive immigration policies and the militarisation of external border controls by the US and the EU have failed to significantly curb immigration from Latin America and Africa. Rather, they have led to greater reliance on increasingly risky and costly undocumented migration and have paradoxically encouraged permanent settlement. A commonly presented ‘smart solution’ to curb immigration is to address the perceived root causes of migration through increasing aid to or liberalising trade with countries. Recently, policies to stimulate remittances and promoting temporary and circular migration are often promoted as enhancing home country development, so that migration paradoxically becomes a medicine against migration. However, besides the limited scope and credibility of such policies, empirical and theoretical evidence strongly suggests that economic and human development increases people’s capabilities and aspirations and therefore tends to coincide with an increase rather than a decrease in migration, at least in the short to medium term. Under unfavourable conditions, trade, aid and remittances become complementary to rather than substitutes for migration in the long term also. At the same time, demand for both skilled and unskilled migrants is likely to persist. Trade, aid, return migration and remittances are not short-cut ‘solutions’ to migration and, therefore, sustained immigration seems to be likely.

Keywords: international migration, development, migration policies, aid, trade, remittances, temporary migration.

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Introduction¹

Migration is an issue that raises high hopes and deep fears. In the West, immigration of people from developing countries is increasingly perceived as a problem in need of control (cf. Castles, 2000:278; Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a: 35-6). Since the mid-1970s, opposition to immigration has been on the rise. With the slowdown in economic growth and significant unemployment, immigration from developing countries has come to be perceived as a burden, and even an outright threat to economic growth and the welfare state. In the post-9/11 era, latent feelings that non-Western immigrants also form an internal threat to social cohesion, cultural coherence, and security of Western societies seem to have increased.

The dramatic images of Moroccan and sub-Saharan migrants desperately trying to enter Ceuta and Melilla on Morocco's Mediterranean coast in the autumn of 2005 by scaling the tall border fences separating these Spanish enclaves from Morocco, their more daily attempts to cross the Strait of Gibraltar by small fishing boats (*pateras*) and the persistent attempts by Mexican migrants to cross the Rio Grande or the desert reinforce the perception of increasing pressure on the borders of wealthy nations. These images contribute to perceptions that migration is growing at an alarming rate.

In the past two decades, undocumented immigration and related phenomena such as human smuggling and trafficking has become a high ranking issue on national and international policy agendas. Politicians seem increasingly responsive to public fears of being engulfed by immigrants through reasserting the need to stem these flows. The issue has created considerable tension in relations between US and Mexico as well as the EU and its Mediterranean neighbours, in particular Morocco, being Africa's main migration passage to Europe. For instance, in 2002, the European Commission proposed to link EU development aid to the willingness to readmit (undocumented) migrants originating from these and also third countries (CEC,

¹ I thank Oliver Bakewell and Stephen Castles (University of Oxford) for their valuable criticism and suggestions.

2002). At an EU summit in Sevilla in 2002, British and Spanish Prime Ministers Tony Blair and José María Aznar proposed to no longer give aid to migrant sending countries that would not cooperate in containing undocumented immigration (cf. Bhagwati, 2003:98).

Despite increasingly restrictive immigration policies; South-North migration has shown an unforeseen persistence over the past decades and even witnessed an increase since the 1990s. Policies to curb migration or incite return migration have generally failed to meet their stated objectives (Castles, 2004). The increasing militarisation of border patrols on the Rio Grande, the Strait of Gibraltar and other Mediterranean crossing points has not significantly decreased the inflow of immigrants. Against all odds, both Mexico and Morocco are even evolving into increasingly important transit countries for migrants and asylum seekers from more distant Latin American and sub-Saharan African countries (Alba, 2004; Barros *et al.* 2002; de Haas, 2005b; Lahlou, 2005).

Conscious of the failure of restrictive migration policies and repression to curtail migration, scholars, development practitioners and politicians have regularly proposed ‘smart solutions’ to migration. It is often argued that only through promoting social and economic development in poor migrant sending countries, can migration be curtailed. In particular development aid and trade liberalisation are commonly advocated as more effective instruments to reduce migration than restrictive immigration laws and intensified border controls. For instance, in the aftermath of the dramatic events in Ceuta and Melilla in the Autumn of 2005, in which at least eleven sub-Saharan African immigrants died and hundreds were injured, several policy makers, while reiterating the need to intensify border controls and ‘combat’ undocumented migration, rushed to state that the ‘root causes’ of migration needed to be addressed in order to reduce migration through increasing aid and trade with sending countries.

In October 2005, president of the EC José Manuel Barroso stated that “The problem of immigration, the dramatic consequences of which we are witnessing, can only be addressed effectively [...] through an ambitious and coordinated development [plan] to fight its root causes”. African Union head Alpha Oumar Konare said that walls and

prisons would not solve the problem because people are migrating because of impoverishment. He therefore called on the EU to keep its promises to open its markets, cut subsidies and drop tariffs. Recently, politicians and researchers have put increasing hopes on temporary and circular migration. These would not only serve the interests of the receiving countries, but are also believed to boost development through remittances and investments by return migrants, thus eventually reducing migration pressures in sending countries.

At first sight, such prepositions sound laudable and seem to make more sense than policies that exclusively rely on repression. Yet the belief that aid, trade and migration-propelled development will reduce migration is more problematic than it seems. First of all, it reflects the implicit but contestable assumption that migration is undesirable and is therefore a *problem* – the *antithesis* of development – that subsequently can and should be ‘solved’. This is a doubtful assumption in the light of ample evidence that migration has been a universal feature of humanity.

Second, on the analytical level, this belief is ultimately based on the assumption that development in sending countries will reduce migration. The aim of this paper is to argue why such policies are bound to fail, primarily because they seem to be based on erroneous assumptions about the highly complex ways and often positive ways in which migration and development processes are reciprocally related. Although this insight is well-established in academic discourse, erroneous notions on development-migration linkages still persist in many policy circles.² The article will first point out why past policies to restrict migration have largely failed. Subsequently, it will analyse the practical and fundamental reasons why proposals to use aid, trade and temporary migration to reduce migration pressures are based on an inaccurate analysis of the dynamics that drive migration.

² I am indebted to Stephen Castles for drawing my attention to this point.

Deflating the migration boom

However, first of all, it is important to observe that the actual magnitude of contemporary international migration is by no means unprecedented. Modern mass media tend to magnify migration-related humanitarian crises such as the events in Ceuta and Melilla through suggestive and dramatic images and the common use of ‘aquatic’ metaphors such as ‘floods’ and ‘waves’. This contributes to exaggerated public perceptions in Western countries that a tidal wave of migration is about to crash on ‘their’ shores. Concomitant anti-immigrant public discourses of populist politicians tend to further strengthen and justify alarmist perceptions and fears that hordes of Africans or Latin Americans are waiting to swamp Europe and North America.

But academics also regularly contribute to such apocalyptic images through the use of tempting but inappropriate dramatic metaphors that blow the real magnitude of migration out of proportion. One striking example of such apocalyptic portrayal is the following grim forecast of global migration trends by Alexander King and Bertrand Schneider (1991:62-3), founder and secretary, respectively, of the Club of Rome:

“population pressures, opportunity gradients and conditions of tyranny will have generated waves of migration towards the North and the West, which it will be impossible to contain. Our successors are likely to see mass migration on an unprecedented scale At the extreme it is not difficult to imagine innumerable immigrants landing on the Northern shores of the Mediterranean and consisting of the hungry and the desperate. Similarly, massive emigration from Latin America to the United States is to be expected, while population pressure in China may seek relief by entering an empty Siberia”

A more recent example is Gallina’s (2006: 17) referral to a Mediterranean “demographic bomb” that would have “exploded and can be seen in the daily dramas along the Spanish and Italian coasts”. Environmental crises are also typically linked to mass populations movements (cf. Black, 2001; Castles, 2002; Homer-Dixon, 1991; Myers and Kent, 1995).

It is necessary to put the actual scale and magnitude of contemporary international migration into a more realistic perspective. Although it is commonplace to think that “globalisation” has led to unprecedented and skyrocketing migration, there is reason for scepticism. Between 1965 and 1990, the increase in the global international migration stock has almost kept equal pace with population growth. Although the share of international migrants on the world population witnessed a certain increase in the 1990s, there were periods of equal if not more drastic international migration over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a:6-7; Zlotnik, 1998:14).

While underestimating levels of past mobility, there is a tendency to overstate the current scale of international migration. In fact, an estimated 2.5 to 3 percent of the world’s population have lived outside their countries of origin for a year or more (IOM, 2000:1; Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a:6). Although it is commonplace to describe migration flows as “massive” (e.g., Böhning, 1994:169; Faini and Venturini, 1994:435), this inappropriate term evokes apocalyptic images which are generally far beyond reality.

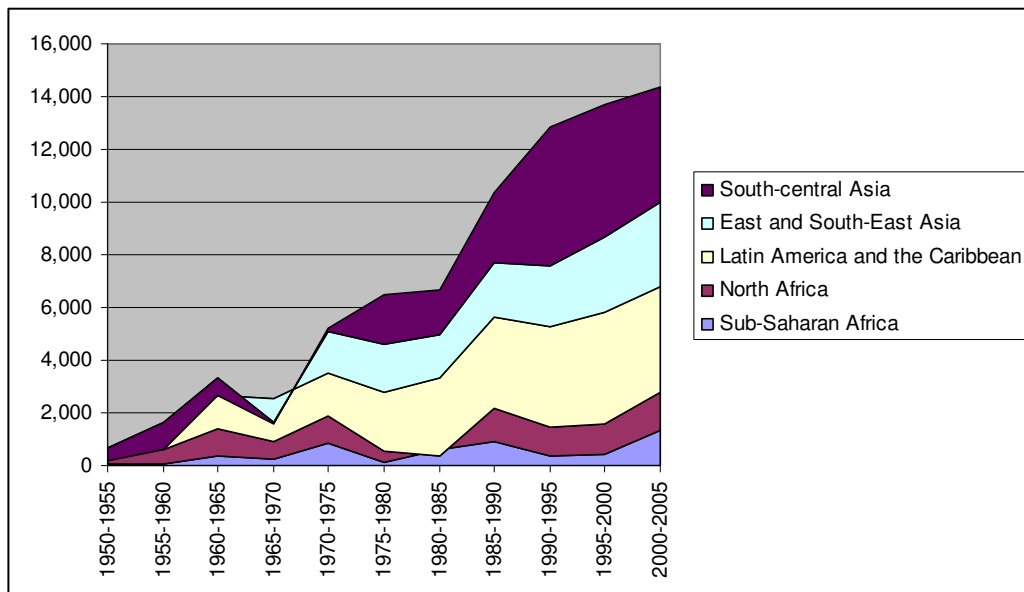
Instead of an overall increase in global migration, the most fundamental change in the second half of the 20th century has been the reversal of the dominant trans-continental migration flows. Whereas in the nineteenth and early twentieth century the main global migration flows used to be predominantly North-North (mainly from Europe to North America), South-South (e.g., migration of Indian and Chinese indentured labourers to British, Dutch, and French colonies), as well as North-South (from European countries to the colonies in the tropical world), South-North migration was fairly limited. This pattern has completely changed in the post-WWII period, with Western countries facing an unprecedented influx of non-Western migrants.

Thus, the most significant change in the global post-WWII international migration movements is the huge increase in South-North migration to the detriment of colonial North-South (partly settlers) migration (see figure 1). An increasing number of developing countries have become incorporated within migration systems that link them to industrialised countries. Rather than the relative number of international migrants, it is the number of countries involved in international migration that has

increased (Zlotnik, 1998). Nowadays, only few countries are not incorporated in international migration systems. Instead of being colonised, people living in non-Western countries have emigrated themselves to Western countries, and also several non-Western countries, such as the Asian Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) and the Middle-East oil states have become labour importers in their own right (Massey *et al.*, 1998).

This reversal of dominant global migration flows has literally brought other worlds to contemporary Western societies. Another fundamental change has been the increased possibility for migrants and their families to live transnationally and to adopt transnational identities through revolutions in communication and transport infrastructure (cf. Vertovec, 1999). This increasingly enables migrants to foster double loyalties, to travel back and forth, to relate to people, to work and to do business simultaneously in distant places. This de facto transnationalisation of migrants' lives has also challenged assimilationist models of migrant integration, as well as the modernist political construct of the nation-state and citizenship (de Haas, 2005c: 1273).

Figure 1. Net emigration from developing countries, by region, 1950-2005 (thousands)



Source: UNPD, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

This increasing visibility of phenotypically and culturally distinct immigrants, who foster dual links to countries of destination *and* origin, might explain why people in wealthy countries *perceive* that migration has also globally been on the rise, which is therefore very much a Western-centric vision. Now the settled populations of Western nation states are confronted with permanent settlement of relatively large groups of non-elite, increasingly transnationally oriented immigrants who obviously often do not share their culture and religion, international migration has become a major issue of public concern.

The failure of restrictionism

The primary response of governments to curb unwanted migration since the 1970s has been the imposition of increasingly restrictive immigration laws and regulations (restrictive issuance of visa and residence permits), intensified border controls, carrier sanctions, deterrent policies and return migration policies. These policies have generally failed most of their stated objectives, but they have also generated substantial counterproductive results by interrupting circular migration patterns and pushing people into permanent settlement, coinciding with increasing undocumented migration as well as the use of legal channels for family and asylum migration by people who basically migrate to work.

The West-European experience with “guest workers” from Mediterranean countries like Morocco and Turkey is particularly relevant in this respect. Largely because these workers were seen as temporary migrants, governments of receiving countries started to experiment with measures to discourage family reunification and to encourage and prepare migrants to return to their home countries. This included departure bonuses, mother-tongue teaching for migrants’ children, training programs before return, and investment programs for return migrants (Abadan-Unat *et al.*, 1976; Entzinger, 1985; Penninx, 1982). In the years following the 1973 Oil Crisis and the subsequent economic recession, northwest European governments started to implement increasingly restrictive immigration policies.

However, these return policies did not lead to a substantial increase in return migration. To a significant extent, this was related to the lack of opportunities for economic reintegration in most countries of origin. Moreover, return migrants were generally not allowed to go back to the receiving countries after a certain probation period if their investment project failed or if they failed to re-adapt to the society of origin. Increasingly restrictive (re)admission policies made migrants decide to stay “to be on the safe side” (Entzinger, 1985:263-275; cf. Fargues, 2004). Increasing restrictiveness even had the counterproductive effect in the form of ‘now or never’ migration. For instance, when the former Federal Republic of Germany tried to discourage family reunification in the late 1970s, family migration increased, as many migrants feared that family reunification might eventually be forbidden entirely (Entzinger, 1985:267). The ensuing distrust and anti-immigrant public discourse might have made immigrants extra prudent about giving up their hard-won rights.

After 1980 politicians in Europe started to acknowledge that many “guestworkers” would stay permanently, while generally hurrying to reassure their electorate that from then on no more immigrants would be allowed in.³ Until the late 1990s it was a political taboo in several West-European countries to state the fact that they had become immigration countries. However, restrictive policies mainly affected the arrival of non-skilled, non-Western labour migrants. Spouses and families of immigrants, legal residents of OECD countries, skilled workers of all origins, and recognised political refugees continued to receive residence permits (Weil, 2002:43). Others have continued to arrive without authorisation or on tourist visa and used various methods to stay, thereby drawing on established migrant networks.

As Bhagwati (2003:99) observed, “the ability to control migration has shrunk as the desire to do so has increased. Borders are largely beyond control and little can be

³ Immigration is probably not always as “unwanted” as politicians officially proclaim, as employers might benefit from cheap, undocumented workers lacking rights, and governments tacitly permit such movements (Castles and Miller, 2003:283; cf. Castles, 2006). In fact, “elected leaders and bureaucrats increasingly have turned to *symbolic* policy instruments to create an *appearance* of control” (Massey *et al.*, 1998:288; emphasis in original). Yet “harsh” political discourse on immigration can be a catalyst for the same xenophobia and the concomitant apocalyptic representations of a “massive” influx of migrants to which they seem a political-electoral response.

done to really cut down on immigration”. A higher-than-present level of migration control appears to be impossible without drastically curtailing civil and human rights at odds with enlightenment values and the open nature of modern capitalist economies. Near-total migration control is in fact only possible in totalitarian states like Saudi Arabia and the former Soviet Union (cf. Skeldon, 1997:202). Migration movements, once set in motion, tend to gain their own momentum over time through the establishment of transnational networks and have therefore become notoriously difficult for governments to control (Massey *et al.*, 1993:448-50). Migration networks tend to facilitate continuing labour, family and undocumented migration over formally closed borders (cf. Böcker, 1994).

This reveals that it is very difficult for receiving states to severely limit immigration flows as long as the political and economic root causes of migration remain in place (Bhagwati, 2003; Weil, 2002:43-4). Moreover, increasing border control and restrictive policies have significant perverse effects (cf. Massey *et al.*, 1998). These include the increase in undocumented migration; the professionalisation of people smuggling and the partial criminalisation of migration, and increasing financial and human costs and risks of border crossing (de Haas, 2005c; Massey, 2005).

Moreover, although highly restrictive migration policies and physical barriers do undoubtedly have an effect on the number of legitimate arrivals, they have the perverse effect of encouraging undocumented migration, pushing migrants into *permanent* settlement while interrupting patterns of *circular* migration (cf. Massey *et al.*, 1998: 289; Harris, 2002; Newland, 2003, Tapinos, 2002). Immigrants are inhibited from returning because they fear to lose the right to re-emigrate temporarily or permanently to the receiving host state or to freely circulate between sending and receiving countries (Weil, 2002:46-7). Or, as Harris (2002: 31) stated,

The migration of those without adequate documents was essentially a journey to work. But the tighter the immigration controls to prevent this, the greater the incentive to stay and settle in order to make access to work more secure. The worker was forced to become a citizen, to become an exile from his or her homeland as a means to make to right to work secure. The result was

paradoxical. Preventing people working so that they would not become citizens forced them to become citizens in order to work

Although it is important to note that factors such as employers' pressure to retain workers with training and experience and habituation to the life in host countries also played a major role in explaining migrants' settlement (Castles, 2006), the increasingly restrictive immigration policies implemented by West-European governments since the 1973 Oil Crisis have stimulated the permanent settlement of Turkish, Moroccan, and other "guest workers" through massive family reunification (de Haas, 2005b; Entzinger, 1985). Also in the case of Mexican migration, restrictive policies have decreased the probability of return migration, "thereby transforming a circular movement of workers into a settled population of families" (Massey, 2005: 12).

The irony is perhaps that undocumented migrants – the very product of restrictionism – seem the category that is least inclined to return temporarily but does everything to obtain citizenship (de Haas, 2005c). Among Mexican migrants, for instance, 95 percent of those attempting illegal entry succeed with the help of smugglers, but the increased cost of illegal entry encourages irregular Mexicans to remain in the US. In fact, the probability of returning to Mexico within one year of illegal entry fell from 50 percent in the mid-1980s to 25 percent today" (Massey, 2005; cited in Migration news, Vol. 12(3), July 2005).

The professionalisation of the profitable smuggling business and the concomitant diversification of migration strategies and migration itineraries have counteracted increasing repression⁴. Since the mid 1990s, intensified border patrolling in the Strait of Gibraltar has prompted Moroccan and other African migrants to cross from more eastern places on the Mediterranean coast and to explore new crossing points to Europe, such as the Canary Islands (de Haas, 2005b). At the US-Mexican border,

⁴ In fact, there is a striking but sad parallel between the 'war on drugs' and the 'fight against illegal migration'. As long as offer and demand keep matching, increasing repression will lead not to an end of the phenomenon, but to a spiral of increasing risks, soaring prices, an increasing dependency on smugglers who become increasingly professional using adaptive high-tech means to continue their trade; usually at the cost of the human dignity and marginalisation of the people involved.

increased border enforcement has pushed migration flows into more remote regions, which resulted in a tripling of the death rate and a dramatic fall in the rate of apprehension (Massey, 2005).

While the probability of being apprehended while trying to enter the US illegally from Mexico was 33 percent from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, this rate fell to between 20 and 30 percent from the mid-1980s until 2000 to reached a low of five percent in 2002 despite the addition of Border Patrol agents (Massey, 2005; cited in Migration News, Vol. 12(3), July 2005). A recent survey demonstrated that, among Moroccan migrant workers who reported illegal entry or overstay, the proportion reporting that they have been successful in their attempts to attain legal status is two-thirds or more (Schoorl *et al.*, 2000:xix)⁵.

At the US-Mexican border, after the launching of the new US strategy of prevention through deterrence in 1993, the cost of purchasing a smuggler's services rose from the previous rate of around \$400 to around \$1,200 in 1999, before levelling off (Massey, 2005). In 2003, the illegal crossing by boat from Morocco to Spain cost from \$200 for minors, to \$500 to \$800 for Moroccans up to between \$800 and \$1,200 for sub-Saharan Africans (Lahlou, 2003).

The human costs of increasing repression are considerable and increasing. Each year, large numbers of migrants and refugees die and get seriously injured while trying to enter the US and EU. Human rights organisations estimate that 3,285 dead bodies were found on the shores of the Straits of Gibraltar alone between 1997 and 2001 (Schuster, 2005). It has been claimed that more than 1,000 Africans have died over four months while trying to sail in traditional wooden fishing canoes (*pirogues*) from Mauritania to Spain's Canary Islands, about 600 miles away off the coast of northwest Africa (Washington Post, March 17, 2006). Between January 1995 and March 2004, at least 2,640 deaths were recorded in the US-Mexico border region (Cornelius, 2004; cf. Cornelius, 2001).

⁵ Nevertheless, this estimate is likely to be biased because of an overrepresentation of already legalised migrants in the sample.

Statistical analysis of the determinants of migration to West European countries has pointed to the dominance of economic determinants (GDP and employment) and the limited effect of migration policies on long-term migration trends (Jennissen, 2003; cf. Harris, 2002). The continuation of immigration has regularly forced Western governments to legalise undocumented migrants, confirming their actual status of permanent settlers (cf. de Haas, 2005b; Fargues, 2004). Restrictionist immigration policies therefore seem to have a limited effect as long as global disparities in life perspectives and the persistent demand for migrant labour in both the upper and lower ends of the labour market of wealthy countries persist.

Smart solutions to migration?

Confronted with the inability to manage (read curb) migration by legal and repressive means, politicians, academics and development NGOs have advocated development aid as a means to curb future immigration (cf. Stalker, 2002; Böhning and Schloeter-Paredes, 1994). In the same vein, people advocating trade liberalisation with developing countries typically assumed that this would boost development, and, hence, lower South-North migration. Trade policy has been considered by the European Union (EU) (e.g., association agreements with southern and eastern Mediterranean countries), the US (e.g., the North American Free Trade Agreement – NAFTA) and multilateral organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) as a means to reduce migration (Schiff, 1996:4; Martin, 2002:2). The underlying assumption is that aid and trade will policies will result in migration reduction (Böhning, 1994). This is supposed to

“generate rapid economic growth in the countries of origin. Broad-based and rapid development will induce potential poverty migrants to stay at home increased flows of FDI and trade, as well as more effective use of development aid, impact directly and indirectly on this process” (IOM and UNCTAD 1996).

Already back in 1994, the European Ministers for Development Cooperation requested the European Commission to investigate the possibility of using development aid to diminish migration pressures (DGIS, 1996). Similarly, at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference which was held in Barcelona in 1995, the developing countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean and the EU countries agreed to “strengthen cooperation in order to ease migration pressure” (DGIS, 1996; for other examples see Ghosh, 1992)

In more recent years, the EU has increasingly emphasised the importance to link migration and development policies through integrating migration (control) issues in its relation with third countries (CEC, 2002; Weil, 1999:42). The official EU approach rests on providing aid first, and liberalising trade and migration later in the expectation that migration will be minimal, because trade has become a substitute for migration (Martin, 2002:2). In Morocco, for instance, European funds channelled through the MEDA (*mésures d’accompagnement*) aid program target the stated goal of immigration reduction. Of the total MEDA aid budget of 426 million euros for 2000-2006, 115 million euros (27 percent) are being spent to “break out of the circle of weak growth, unemployment, poverty, and migration” through support for intensifying border controls, the fight against undocumented migration and smuggling and rural development programs (de Haas, 2005a).

Also at the national level, development aid and trade are seen as substitutes to migration. One decade ago, former Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark used the threat of immigration as an argument to increase foreign aid: “if you don’t help the third world ... then you will have these poor people in our society” (*Migration News*, April 1995). In a 2004 policy memorandum entitled “Development and Migration”, the Dutch government equally expressed its expectation that well-coordinated development policies would contribute to reducing immigration (DGIS, 2004).

Interestingly, besides aid and trade, politicians increasingly also portray *temporary and return migration* as a development policy. For instance, the Dutch government envisages intensifying existing voluntary and forced return migration programs as a means to promote development in migrant sending countries (DGIS, 2004). This coincides with the recent and remarkable renaissance of ‘developmentalist’ optimism

on the development potential of migration (de Haas 2005c). Through remittances and their know-how ('human capital'), return migrants are believed to become development actors in their own right. Such migration-driven development would then eventually take away incentives to migrate, so that migration paradoxically becomes a medicine against migration.

One concrete example of *de facto* "return and stay-at-home" policies are the French "co-development" programs. For instance, the French-Senegalese co-development program promotes the voluntary return of Senegalese by providing assistance to migrant workers for reinsertion, in the forms of credit funds, training-for-return programs, and so on. The program aims to "reverse the exodus of the Senegalese", by "explain[ing] to people the problems and hazards of emigration. . . . [and] demonstrate to them that their territory is full of gainful opportunities" (Diatta and Mbow, 1999:251). The hope is that they can exploit these opportunities in association with Senegalese living abroad. In order to convince the Senegalese that it is for their own good not to go abroad, and to urge migrants to "return and invest", they advocate, amongst others, the "publication of a brochure on business opportunities" in Senegal (*ibid*: 253).

In the Kayes region of Mali, which is highly dependent on remittances, the Malian government is open to co-development and cooperates with assisted return programs for unauthorised Malians in France, and works with international organisations to attract educated Malians back to Mali. About 500 unauthorised Malians in France agreed to return in exchange for \$3,600, and open various types of businesses (Martin *et al.*, 2002). Also recent EU policies seem to increasingly embrace the concept of "co-development", thereby employing a narrow focus on the "return potential" as a development factor (Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002b: 56).

Fundamentally, the argument that promoting development in sending countries is an effective means to reduce immigration is based on the underlying assumption that migration and development are negatively and linearly correlated processes and, hence, each other's substitutes. Following this logic, migration can be reduced by addressing the alleged "root causes" of migration, such as economic underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment. Boosting "development" in sending

societies seems the key, to quote the title of Böhning's (1994) article, to "helping migrants to stay at home".

However, the fundamental problem is that there is no evidence that aid and trade policies have any significant effect on reducing people's propensity to migrate (cf. Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a; Stalker, 2002). There are a number of practical reasons and one more fundamental reason why "aid and trade instead of migration" programs tend to fail, which will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

Development aid and co-development

First, with regard to aid and on a practical level, the very scope and duration of aid programs seem too limited to have any significant effect. For Central America, for instance, it has been estimated that aid would have to be almost US\$ 100 per person per year for the duration of 20 to 30 years to eliminate economic incentives to emigrate (Martin 1994:246; Weintraub and Díaz-Briquets, 1994:147). This partly relates to the more general doubts over the effectiveness of aid. Meanwhile, the willingness and stamina of rich countries to provide foreign aid seem to be declining (Gammeltoft, 2002:190).

Second, despite official intentions to create coherence between migration and development policies, there is a considerable gap between discourse and practice. Official Development Assistance is generally not concentrated on migrant sending countries. Poverty reduction remains the dominant goal of development cooperation (Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a: 35), while immigrants mostly do not originate from the poorest communities and countries. In general, there is a lack of any credible coherence between aid and migration policies (Stalker, 2002). Furthermore, development assistance has also often been a political instrument leading to "aid" in the form of weapons and other forms of support to autocratic regimes that often disregarded human rights. This increased insecurity, provoked armed conflict, created refugee problems and exacerbated rather than decreased problems of underdevelopment (Castles and Miller, 2003).

Third, one can raise doubts on the very credibility of certain “aid instead of migration” policies. Their stated development intentions often seem to camouflage a hidden agenda of forcibly returning undocumented immigrants or rejected asylum seekers after providing them some modest financial assistance or a rapid and often ineffective professional formation (Weil, 2002). Considerable suspicion remains that the goal is much more strongly to curb immigration than to contribute to development (Newland, 2003). For instance, of the 934 million Euros the EU programmed for external aid in 2000-2006, only 13 percent is allocated to ‘development’, and that for only two countries, Morocco and Somalia. The major share of the budget goes to “management of migration flows” (i.e., strengthening border control and the mitigating undocumented immigration) (Russell 2003).

Notwithstanding their official referral to development objectives, receiving countries have so far not shown any serious commitment to a veritable policy that addresses the linkages between migration and development beyond the narrow perspective of stimulating the return of unwanted migrants. This one-sided emphasis on (forced) return migration is obvious from the operationalisation of French (Weil, 2002:42) and Dutch (DGIS, 2004) migration and development policies. This is also exemplified by the built-in contradiction between voluntary and forced migration in the Dutch policy memorandum on migration and development:

“Effective return policies are a condition for policies to promote temporary labour migration and circular migration. It is important to encourage *voluntary* return through a combination of policy elements, such as *forced* return where necessary, agreements with countries of origin, support to or pressure on countries of origin, support to migrants and migrant organisations, support to activities of the Dutch civil society in the field of education and re-integration, support to temporary labour migration including effective return, and support to (temporary) return for the benefit of the (re)building of the country of origin” (DGIS, 2004:8; translated from Dutch and emphasis by author).

In 1998 the European Commission set up the High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration (HLWG) as a second path to developing a rather explicit *migration prevention policy* besides its development aid and ‘root causes’ policies. The HLWG

was charged with preparing Action Plans on countries from which large numbers of refugees and migrants come to Europe. Initially, the plans were meant develop measures for cooperation with sending countries regarding foreign policy, and development and trade. However, in practice the action plans emphasize measures such the readmission of rejected asylum-seekers and securing protection in the conflict region, without addressing the question how this coincides with human rights abuses in a given country (cf. Castles *et al.*, 2003; Council of the European Union, 2000; Crawley, 2004; Van Selm, 2002).

Moreover, the scale and funds allocated to such programmes are generally too modest to warrant any expectations on significantly diminishing immigration, increasing return migration, let alone “bringing development” and addressing the root causes of migration (cf. Olesen, 2002). For instance: is the mere dissemination of a brochure on business opportunities in Senegal or information campaigns to “reverse the exodus of the Senegalese” and convince emigrants to return and stay at home (Diatta and Mbow, 1999:251), really likely to have any significant effect without altering the structural conditions which make people want to leave the country? The new Dutch government policy on migration and development has been proposed even without allocating any additional budget for this purpose (DGIS, 2004).

Temporary migration: old wine in new bottles?

In recent years we have witnessed a resurgence in interest in “temporary” migration as a perceived solution to migration dilemmas (cf. Castles, 2006). Various bodies such as the Dutch government (DGIS, 2004:77-8), the European Commission (CEC, 2005) the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM, 2005), and the World Bank (2006) have suggested boosting temporary migration, in particular of the low skilled, as a kind of optimum strategy to reconcile the interests of the migrants, sending and destination countries.

The EC’s recent proposals focus on stimulating the ‘development potential’ of temporary migration through encouraging circular migration, by giving priority to temporary employment schemes, stimulating short-term and seasonal migration and

facilitating return migration through assisted return and reintegration programmes (CEC, 2005). It is striking that the analytically distinct concepts of circular and temporary migration are mostly used interchangeably. For instance, while the Dutch government aims at stimulating circular migration, it narrowly interprets circular migration as “temporary” migration, as an ideal solution to fill shortages on the domestic labour market while avoiding the nuisances of permanent settlement. Meanwhile it reassures the public that these temporary labourers shall return. Also the World Bank (2006: xv) recently expressed its belief in

“managed migration programs between origin and destination countries that combine temporary migration of low-skilled workers with incentives for return ... it is easier for destination countries to suspend temporary programs than to expel immigrants. Overall, however, such programs do represent a feasible approach to capturing the efficiency gains from labour migration.”

Sending countries are believed to benefit from the return of their migrants, whose financial and human resources are believed to contribute to development. Temporary migration is believed to create a ‘win-win-win’ situation from which both migrants, receiving and sending states would benefit: “TMPs [temporary migration programmes] can help host countries to manage the demand for migrant labour; help migrants to gain better legal access to the labour markets of high-income countries; and help sending countries in their efforts to maximize the developmental benefits from emigration” (Ruhs, 2005:20).

However, besides serious doubts on the proposition that temporary migrants would be better origin country development agents than integrated and settled migrants (cf. de Haas 2005c), this creates false hope by ignoring repeated past experience that migration almost inevitably goes along with the settlement of a significant proportion of migrants, and that enforcement of “revolving door” policies tends to be extremely difficult (Castles, 2000: 277-8; Castles, 2006; Ratha, 2003:168). Interestingly, this is somehow reminiscent of the efforts in the 1970s and 1980s to stimulate return of European “guest workers”. The belief that migrants will this time really return however reveals a certain level of amnesia of past experiences. The reasons for failure (i.e., lack of opportunities in the sending countries and circulation-decreasing effects

of restrictive immigration policies) are also likely to be similar. Castles (2006) observed that the enforcement measures and incentives necessary to ensure the return of workers require a regulatory role of the government which would mean a reversal of neo-liberal approaches and the general tendency towards de-regulation.

More in general, although it is clear by now that migration and remittances have a great potential to contribute to development in countries of origin, they are generally not able to remove general development constraints in sending countries. Migration is no panacea for development (Taylor, 1999), and, in fact, there is substantial evidence that development in migrant-sending countries is a prerequisite for return and massive investment rather than a consequence of migration. The recent migration and remittance 'euphoria' is not justified, because unattractive investment environments and restrictive immigration policies which interrupt circular migration patterns prevent the high development potential of migration from being fully realised (de Haas, 2005c).

Trade as an alternative to aid?

Confronted with the often disappointing effectiveness of aid policies, and corresponding with the general neoclassical turn in development thinking, boosting free trade and foreign direct investment has gained popularity as a perceived means to promote economic growth and hence reduce migration. For instance, the International Labour Organization (ILO) concluded that targeted interventions to boost employment in high-emigration areas in the Maghreb countries usually have no perceptible impact on migration pressure. It therefore argued that a more fruitful option would be for the richer countries to open their markets so as to promote export-led growth that could give a substantial boost to both wages and employment (Abella, 2002, cited in Stalker, 2002, p. 171).

However, there is a similar credibility problem as is the case with aid policies. The protectionist trade policies of wealthy countries that prevent migrant sending countries from exporting agricultural and industrial products are often inconsistent with their explicit policy aims of promoting development in poor countries (Faini and

Venturini, 1993; Russell, 2003; Russell and Teitelbaum, 1992). Besides directly impeding imports through trade barriers, subsidies and other forms of support to the agricultural sector in particular keeps world commodity prices artificially low, which harms economic growth in developing countries. For instance, the EU spent €1.1 billion on development aid to 77 poor ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries in 2002, against €47.6 billion, 49 percent of its total budget, in support of its own agricultural sector, mainly in the form of subsidies. While discouraging the expansion of labour-intensive exports in developing countries, protectionist trade policies foster growth in low-skilled labour-intensive sectors in industrialised countries and sustain the demand for new immigrant workers.

More development, less migration?

Besides their limited scope, consistency and very credibility, the more fundamental reason why ‘development instead of migration’ policies, even if they might encourage development, are unlikely to curb migration is that they are based on an inaccurate analysis of the developmental causes of migration. It is often implicitly or explicitly assumed that development has the effect of linearly decreasing emigration, which tends to be seen as the outflow of poverty, crises and general misery. However, the paradox is that the process of social and economic development in its broadest sense tends to be associated with generally higher levels of mobility and *more* migration at least in the short to medium term (Faini and Venturini, 1993; Martin and Taylor, 1996; Rotte *et al*, 1997; Russel and Teitelbaum, 1992; Skeldon, 1997; Vogler and Rotte 2000; Weintraub and Díaz-Briquets, 1994).

The idea that development leads to less migration is based on the popular notion that the poorest, “the hungry and the desperate” (King and Schneider, 1991:62-3) have the highest tendency to migrate. However, in reality, migration is a selective process. The poorest tend to migrate less than those who are slightly better off. This seems particularly true for relatively costly and risky international migration. International migrants generally tend to come neither from the most deprived and isolated communities within countries, nor from the most deprived families within communities. Labour migrants generally do not flee from misery, but move

deliberately in the expectation of finding a better or more stable livelihood, and of improving their social and economic status (Stark, 1991; cf. Appleyard, 1995:295). Moreover, in order to migrate, people need both the human, financial and social resources as well as aspirations to do so.

With regard to the considerable *resources* necessary to migrate abroad, Schiff (1994) demonstrated that in a labour-abundant economy, trade liberalisation, foreign aid, and remittances will increase income from labour and improve workers' ability to cover the costs of migration. Consequently, South-North migration will increase. Thus, the mistaken assumption of trade and aid policies to reduce migration is that development will lead to significantly decreased migration. More generally, migration is not just an (unwanted) by-product, but an integral part of broader processes of social and economic change and should therefore be considered as an almost inevitable outgrowth of nations' incorporation into the global economy (cf. Massey, 2000a).

Hence, the factual inability to “turn the tide”: As experience in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, North-America and East-Asia has shown, development processes not just facilitate migration, but the very process of development is even conditional on the transfer of rural labour to urban sectors within and across national boundaries (cf. De Soto, 2000; Skeldon 1997:196; Todaro 1969:139). Migration and development are functionally and reciprocally connected processes.

This seems to apply to international as well as internal migration. Rural development and infrastructure programmes – such as the proverbial road construction project – can have the contradictory effect of *stimulating* migration at least in the short to medium term (cf. Beauchemin and Schoumaker, 2005; Rhoda, 1983). In this light, it is not surprising that the attempts by urban-based elite groups, development NGOs and governments in developing countries to stop the *rural exodus* and to “fix” rural populations on their homesteads through development projects typically fail, or even have the opposite effect (cf. Bebbington, 1999; De Haan *et al.*, 2000). Similarly, urban-based *citoyens* and governments in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe – who equally perceived large-scale rural-to-urban migration as a threat to their established lifestyles – were unable to stop rural-to-urban migration because it was

intrinsically tied up with more general processes of industrialisation and urbanisation (De Soto, 2000).

With regard to the *aspirations* to migrate, it is important to observe that *relative deprivation* (cf. Skeldon, 2002) associated with global disparities in life perspectives rather than absolute or chronic poverty is a major drive behind migration. Therefore, “poverty reduction is not in itself a migration-reducing strategy” (Nyberg-Sørensen *et al.*, 2002a:35, see also Castles, 2000). Alleviating absolute poverty and some degree of ‘development’ in the form of increasing income, education and access to information not just enable, but also motivate more people to go abroad.

Besides the material and non-material benefits people expect to reap from migration, the propensity to migrate crucially depends on aspirations, which are typically *not* constant, but tend to increase with ‘developmental’ improvements in education and access to information. The level of aspirations determines perceived “overpopulation” in relation to local social and economic opportunities. Therefore, as long as aspirations increase faster than the livelihood opportunities in sending regions and countries, social and economic development tends to coincide with sustained out-migration.

This points to the fundamental importance of applying a broad concept of development in conceptualising migration. This goes beyond a narrow focus on income indicators and integrates the mutually related economic and social dimensions of development. Not only increases in wealth, but also improved education, infrastructure, security, access to media and other information sources tend to

stimulate migration because it both raises people's (1) aspirations and actual (2) capabilities to migrate⁶.

Through such development and the establishment of migrant networks, which lower the material and mental costs and risks of migrating, an increasing proportion of sending populations tends to be able and willing to migrate. This explains that the selectivity of migration, *ceteris paribus*, tends to decrease over time. Moreover, exposure to the relative wealth of international migrants and their families is likely to increase the relative deprivation of "staybehinds". Therefore, the process of "development" initially tends to lead to an increasing diffusion of migration across space and communities (Bauer and Zimmermann, 1998; Skeldon 1997; Zelinsky, 1971). This process normally starts with increasing internal migration. International migration, which is often preceded and facilitated by internal rural-to-urban migration, tends to take off only in a somewhat later stage.

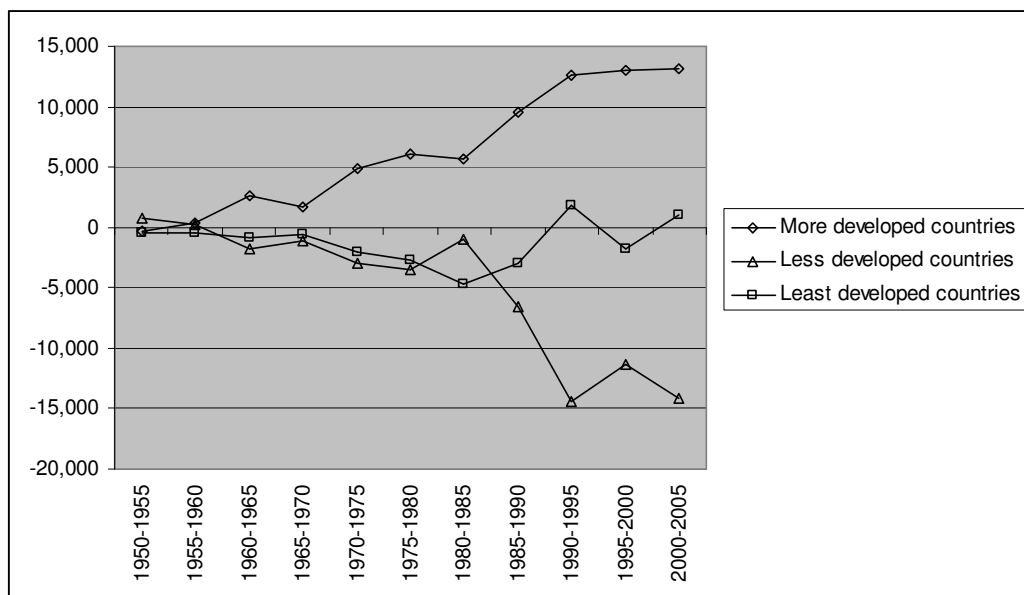
This initially positive association between development and migration processes seems valid both on a regional and national scale. It is striking that the countries with the lowest GNP and the highest population growth generally do *not* exhibit the highest rates of (trans-continental⁷) out-migration to the Western world (cf. Böhning, 1994; Olesen, 2002). Instead, the world's main labour exporters are typically upper-lower to lower-middle income countries (such as Mexico, North African countries, and the Philippines), which are generally located in a zone that Skeldon (1997:53,144-170) has conceptualised as the global "labour frontier". "Labour frontier" countries

⁶ Such a more comprehensive conceptual approach to development is offered by Amartya Sen (1999), who conceives development as "the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy". In order to operationalise these "freedoms", he uses the concept of human capability, which relates to the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have. Sen's capabilities approach contrasts with narrower views of development that are largely, if not uniquely, restricted to income indicators (e.g., GNP per head). Sen argued that income growth itself should not be the litmus test for development theorists, but more the question of whether the capabilities of people to control their own lives have expanded.

⁷ It should however be noted that there is significant "South-South" mobility of labour migrants and refugees between the poorest countries and between the poorest and middle income countries. The more costly and risky trans-continental migration to wealthy countries is generally more limited from the poorest countries. I am indebted to Oliver Bakewell for drawing my attention to this point.

generally experience falling birth rates but a high growth of their working age populations, at least moderate economic growth, urbanisation and de-agrarisation. From the poorest countries (less than \$1,500/capita in PPP terms) we see comparatively limited South-North migration, and if substantial trans-continental migration occurs, it often concerns refugee movements (Olesen, 2002:141). Figure 2 illustrates that most South-North migration occurs between the countries with moderate and high levels of development, and that the least developed countries tend to show slightly positive or occasionally even negative out-migration.

Figure 2. Net immigration by level of development, 1950-2050 (thousands)



Source: UNPD, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The migration hump

In an attempt to further conceptualise the fundamentally non-linear relationship between migration and broader development processes, Martin (1993) and Martin and Taylor (1996) have described the anatomy of the so-called “migration hump”. They argued that increasing migration during an initial period – a migration hump – has been a usual part of the process of economic development. Economic development in combination with a parallel demographic transition (cf. Zelinsky, 1971) and decreasing expected income differentials with destination countries tend to have a J-

curve or inverted U-curve effect on emigration, steeply increasing in the initial phases of economic development and only later gradually decreasing.

The migration hump reflects rather adequately past (Massey, 1991; Hatton and Williamson 1998) and contemporary (Olesen, 2002) migration patterns, in which countries witness accelerating out-migration in early phases of development and the subsequent transformation from net labour exporters to net labour importers. This is what happened in the past few decades in southern European countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece, and, recently, Portugal and Ireland as well as several southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, Taiwan, and South Korea.

In their analysis of European mass emigration between 1850 and 1913, Hatton and Williamson (1998) showed that emigration usually *increased* as wage rates in source and destination countries *converged*, because declining wage differentials initially tend to be outweighed by the mass arrival of cohorts of young workers (as a result of past fertility) on the labour market and the growth of emigrant populations. This leads to the accumulation of social capital in the form of migrant networks, which promoted substantial chain migration irrespective of the declining wage gap (Massey 2000b).

Only after a longer period of sustained growth and decreasing wage gaps with destination countries does labour migration tend to decrease (cf. Martin and Taylor, 1996; Rotte *et al.*, 1997). Emigration tends to decrease steeply if the income differential between sending and receiving countries declines to 4 or 5 to 1, provided that the emigration country is growing fast and offering hope and opportunity (Martin and Taylor, 1996:58). Others have determined that this “migration turning point” takes place at income differentials of 3 to 4.5 to 1 (Böhning, 1994:196; Olesen, 2002:141)⁸. It has been argued that this transition occurs first for internal migration, then for international unskilled migration, and finally for migration of the highly skilled (Fischer and Straubhaar, 1996, cited in Stalker, 2002:171)

⁸ However, it is not entirely clear whether this pertains to income gaps based on absolute income or income adjusted to purchasing power. Instead of using relative income gaps, some studies in the mid-1990s have suggested an average real per capita income threshold of around \$4,000 at which migration transitions would occur (Stalker 2002, p.171).

The result of the complex interplay of demographic, social and economic forces is a “stylized emigration curve characterized by an introductory phase of slow development, a growth phase of rapidly accelerating emigration, a saturation phase during which emigration approaches a peak and levels off, and a regression phase when rates of emigration rapidly fall” (Massey 2000b: 497, referring to Hatton and Williamson 1998).

The migration hump theory predicts that growth following trade liberalisation, foreign direct investment (FDI) or aid is likely to lead to more migration in the short to medium term. For instance, when Martin (1993) examined NAFTA’s likely impacts, he concluded that the flow of Mexicans to the US would *increase* instead of decrease in the first 15 years after implementation of NAFTA in 1994. Complying with expectation, Mexico-US migration rose in the 1990s with closer economic integration. Emigration from South Korea – which has experienced one of the world’s fastest migration transitions – to the US was 25 percent *higher* during the 1980s than in the 1970s, despite rapid economic growth (Martin and Taylor, 1996:46). Similarly, migration from most North African sending countries to Europe is likely to initially increase in response to further growth (Faini and Venturini, 1994).

Migration plateau

In an attempt to mitigate exaggerated hopes of “trade instead of migration”, Martin and Taylor (1996) put forward several compelling arguments why trade and migration can be complements in the short to medium run beyond the fact the economic development materially enables more people to migrate abroad. Higher productivity and efficiency, technological advantages, and economics of scale in the North may harm the competitiveness of the South even in the production of labour-intensive goods. Under such circumstances, trade liberalisation can lead to concentrations of highly productive economic activities in the North along with more immigration of labourers to support them. Furthermore, adjustment to new market and policy environments is never instantaneous. While the negative impacts of trade liberalisation (on protected sectors) are often immediate, the expansion of production in sectors potentially favoured by trade reforms always takes time. There may be a

long lag between investment and the creation of new jobs, which seems a recipe for a migration hump in the wake of trade reforms (*ibid*, 1996:52).

Migration is a constituent part of broader development processes and economic restructuring, because of the accompanying disruptions and factor movements between economic sectors and from rural to urban areas (Weintraub and Díaz-Briquets, 1994; Massey, 1991). If economic growth – whether driven by aid, trade or remittances – is accompanied by increasing income inequality, relative deprivation might even further increase people’s incentives to migrate abroad even if absolute incomes increase (cf. Martin and Taylor, 1996). Moreover, through the facilitating role of transnational networks, migration tends to become self-perpetuating over time (Massey *et al.*, 1998).

The exact size, length, and duration of the migration hump cannot be predicted since this crucially depends on many external factors notably the pace and character of economic growth. There is evidence that this process takes at least 15-20 years, but the period between the migration take-off and the in-out migration break-even point is likely to take several decades (cf. Weintraub and Díaz-Briquets, 1994: 141). This implies that the “long-term” is likely to imply at least a period of many decades or generations (cf. Russel and Teitelbaum, 1992:33).

It is also important to note that the relation between development and migration is not unidirectional, because a decreasing development level relative to other countries may also transform an immigration country into an emigration country, as the case of Argentina has recently shown. Moreover, the right tail of the migration hump is by no means inevitable: poor infrastructure and public services, political instability, failure of public policies to boost economic growth, and protectionism by developed countries’ trading blocks may discourage investments and retard expansion of new employment. Under such unfavourable conditions, a trade-induced migration hump may be extended or transformed into a semi-permanent “migration plateau” of sustained out-migration (Martin and Taylor, 1996:57) which might last for an undetermined period of several decades or even centuries. As we have seen, the protectionist trade politics of wealthy countries might indeed produce such a

“migration plateau” in sending countries, and migrants are unlikely to return and invest massively under such circumstances.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a significant decrease in South-North migration propensities is not to be expected in the short to medium term. The assumption that migration can be “managed” to a considerable extent seems overly optimistic. In particular through the inherently open character of Western societies and neo-liberal economies and the establishment of transnational migrant networks, migration movements have become notoriously difficult for governments to control.

Restrictive immigration policies are inefficient since they ignore and cannot address the root causes of migration. Instead of curbing immigration, restrictive immigration policies tend to have unintended effects by stimulating undocumented migration, discouraging migrants’ circular mobility and pushing them into permanent settlement. Similarly they may have a negative effect on the inclination of migrants to invest in their societies of origin. Moreover, restrictive policies and the anti-immigrant public discourses that usually accompany them might in fact contribute to the marginalisation of immigrants and stir up xenophobia, with potentially harmful consequences for social cohesion.

While in the developed world demand for skilled and unskilled immigrant labour will persist, the forces of globalisation and development in poor countries are likely to further increase people’s capabilities and aspirations to migrate. Persistent global disparities in social and economic opportunities combined with the increasing aspirations of people living in developing countries through the influence of media and education, are likely to maintain or augment their feelings of relative deprivation. Combined with the likely persistent demand for both skilled and unskilled workers willing to do jobs that the educated and ageing populations in the developed countries shun, this is not likely to result in a significant decrease in future migration. As long as Western economies keep growing, it is more likely that (documented and/or undocumented) labour migration will persist or perhaps even increase, facilitated by

extensive migrant networks, while highly skilled labourers will continue to be welcomed (Bhagwati, 2003; Harris, 2002; Martin, 2002).

Trade, aid, return migration and remittances are no short-cut ‘solutions’ to migration. There are serious doubts in the credibility of such policies. First, protectionist trade policies of wealthy countries are often inconsistent with their aims to promote development in poor countries. Second, receiving countries have not shown any serious commitment to a real migration and development policy beyond the narrow perspective of stimulating the return of unwanted migrants and fixating on temporary migration as the ideal solution to prevent permanent settlement. This ignores repeated past failure with “revolving door policies” and their perverse effects on circular mobility.

However, even if they were successful in bringing about development, ‘development instead of migration’ policies that try to use aid, trade and remittances as substitutes to migration are likely to fail to curb migration. Besides their limited scope, this is because they are based on the inaccurate assumption that (absolute) poverty breeds migration. In contrast to received knowledge, social and economic development, whether a result of economic integration and aid or not, tends to *stimulate* rather than reduce migration in the short to medium run. Thus, migration is *not* simply a linear function of global disparities in life perspectives

At a more fundamental level, South-North migration is an outflow of the progressive incorporation of societies in wider, often global, economic, political and social contexts, as well as increases in wealth and access and exposure to education, information and images, which increase both the *capabilities* and *aspirations* to migrate. In its own turn, migration itself tends to reinforce the very processes of global integration of which it is an outflow. So, migration is both cause and effect of broader development processes with which it is intertwined. Assuming continued globalisation and global economic integration, it is unlikely to expect a general decrease in mobility and migration. Migration will in all likelihood remain an intrinsic feature of our world.

In particular in the poorest countries (e.g., the sub-Saharan African target countries of much international aid), any “take-off” development is likely to lead to accelerating “take-off” emigration for the coming decades, which is the opposite of what many “development instead of migration” implicitly or explicitly aim to achieve. Of course this should be no reason not to promote development in poor countries. However, development is important in its own right because it improves people’s wellbeing and freedom, regardless of its impact on migration. Therefore, advocates of stay-at-home development policies seem to be right for the wrong reasons.

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