



Migration and Development

High-level European workshop
Paris, 29-30 March 2006

Summary

Preamble

1. On the initiative of the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chaired by the Minister for International Cooperation and Development, an informal workshop was held in Paris on 29 and 30 March 2006, bringing together the directors of cooperation or their representatives from several European countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom), representatives of the European Investment Bank, the French Development Agency, the European Commission, the French Ministry of Finance, the International Organization for Migration, and several specialists in migration issues and think-tanks. The aim of this workshop was to encourage dialogue between researchers and decision-makers in an informal setting on the priority development issues of the European agenda. The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) was responsible for the scientific organization of the workshop.

2. The conclusions presented in this summary are the result of discussions between qualified persons expressing their own points of view and in no way representing the position of their institution. Consequently, the elements put forward in this summary remain the responsibility of the organizers of the workshop.

Principal strengths

3. The countries of origin and destination of migrants are far from benefiting fully from the **positive effects** of migration, since migration policies are drawn up without taking development issues into account. An **interministerial dialogue** involving all the ministries concerned is essential in order to guarantee the **coherence of policies** concerned with migration, and consequently the **effectiveness of migration policies**. This dialogue is equally vital and undoubtedly easier to **promote at EU level**. An informal meeting between development ministers and ministers of the interior could be organized and devoted to developing a strategy.

4. **Co-development** policies cannot be return policies. The success of co-development projects relies on the strong involvement of migrants, making such **projects difficult to put into general use**. Migrants have unique knowledge and information concerning the country of origin and host country and are vital mediators in the development of lasting projects. Official development assistance can **support these initiatives** provided **means of funding are adapted** to the specific needs of these projects. Co-development cannot therefore constitute the sole element of an aid policy aimed at maximizing the positive impacts of migration. The **training and integration** of migrants in host countries provide the greatest chances of becoming entrepreneurs in their country of origin.

5. As with all aspects of globalization, countries are either winners or losers in terms of migration. The **migration of qualified workers** can have positive effects on the countries of origin, especially the most dynamic countries. The poorest countries, on the other hand, lose the most. The **movement** of migrants is essential for not only the follow-up of co-development projects, the transfer of knowledge and the **training of migrants**, including in the host country, but also for more effectively meeting the expectations of labor markets in the countries of origin and destination. These countries must **organize this movement of migrants** (dual nationality, multiple-entry visas, etc.).

6. The migration of qualified workers constitutes a **net loss** for the poorest countries of origin. The political leaders of the countries of origin react to these losses, which in fact represent a transfer of resources towards the richest countries. A **dialogue** on ways to deal with this growing tension and to create mechanisms for minimizing or even offsetting these losses is **inevitable**.

7. The **relationships between migration and training** are ambivalent. On the one hand, the migration of qualified workers may lead public authorities to withdraw investment in education. On the other hand, migration prospects may encourage those wishing to emigrate to seek training in order to have better opportunities in the host country. This incentive may lead to a general increase in the level of training where high-quality training structures exist. Migrants are able to take care of their training expenses, making it possible to develop private provision in the countries of origin.

8. We will now describe in greater detail the principal findings of this high-level workshop by grouping them according to diagnostic elements that take up the knowledge established today on the link between migration and development, and operational conclusions that can be drawn from the debates, and finally by summarizing the upcoming European and international agenda.

Diagnostic elements

9. **Consequences of migration:** general considerations

- Migration must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Migrations are not fungible due to the specific nature of local situations. Any global approach to migration issues is therefore unsatisfactory.
- Elite migration can have positive effects on the country of origin, with richest countries the winners and poorest countries the losers, especially countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The richest countries can become attractive once more to migrants, whereas the poorest cannot. Migration can provide a strong incentive for populations to invest in education.
- To ensure that the effect of the incentive to gain education generated by migration prospects (brain gain) outmatches the loss represented by the emigration of qualified workers (brain drain), the rate of emigration of qualified workers must not exceed a certain limit, which varies from country to country. This is even more so for demographically large countries. Large countries (China, India) with rates of brain drain between 2 and 5% are winners, whereas small countries (Caribbean or Pacific States and many small African countries) are losers, with rates of around 50%.
- The migration of workers is often due to the lack of development in countries of origin. Thus the brain drain is linked to the lack of prospects in poor countries (inability to exploit human resources in line with national needs) and not simply to the attraction of developed countries.
- In countries of origin and destination there is a need for construction workers and nurses, etc. Migrants must therefore have a sufficient level of training (and this does not only concern higher education), as do workers remaining in the country of origin. This approach makes it possible to break away from an overly dichotomous vision of elites and less-qualified workers.
- A majority of migrants (around two thirds) are trained in the host country. The skills acquired must also be able to benefit the country of origin by facilitating the movement of these people.

10. The **dynamic analysis** of migration makes it possible to highlight the considerable **increase in migrant flows**. It also makes it possible to understand the **long-term effects** of migration that are essential to development.

- The return of qualified migrants to their country of origin is more a consequence than a cause of growth in their country.
- Past migration can stimulate future foreign direct investment in countries of origin.

- In certain cases, migration can encourage the development of the country of origin and this development can go on to be a factor in the intensification of migration.
- Migrants today are different from migrants in the past, being more qualified and more urbane.

11. Certain **consequences of migration policies on development** are well known today.

- Experiments linking development and migration policies have often failed when they have been based on return policies. Return policies do not promote development, unlike circular migration: mobility is a factor of development. The idea of return migration as a means of promoting development must be abandoned.
- Demographic changes and labor problems must be taken into account in order to define a migration policy centered on development: the ageing European population generates unskilled jobs that unskilled migrants must be able to fill. Illegal immigration cannot meet this demand.

12. The weaknesses of migration policies are explained by the lack of coherence of public policies (migration, social, foreign and labor policies, etc.) in host countries.

- Policies restricting movement go against mobility as a motor of development.
- Europe has a limited capacity for attracting the most qualified migrants.
- A policy for integrating migrants in host countries is essential to allow them to play a part in their country of origin.
- When considering development, thought must be given to the way in which asylum applications and visa policies are dealt with (multiple-entry visas, dual nationality, etc.).

13. Today, **co-development** is essentially seen as an accompanying measure to migration policies, which raises the question of its impact on the country of origin.

- Numerous groups of highly qualified expatriates associated for their country of origin are currently in operation, providing a potential for cooperation.
- Individual remittances generally act as a safety net, whereas collective remittances are more aimed at productive investments.
- While there is a consensus of opinion on co-development in developed countries, it is problematic in countries of origin as it often leads to changes in power structures and local governance, which raises opposition from officials.
- The decentralization of aid in destination countries leads to greater involvement of migrants.
- Co-development actions target high-migration regions.
- The involvement of migrants in development policies is pointless if the labor market situation in the region of origin is not taken into account.
- The success of co-development initiatives is partly dependent on the information and knowledge migrants have of both their country of origin and their host country: they therefore have a better understanding of what can be done.
- Migrants sustain the initiatives. This appropriation gives them confidence in their country of origin and provides them with greater autonomy in their host

country. It implies greater flexibility from backers in methods of funding co-development projects.

- It is difficult to develop large-scale co-development projects. An aid policy based solely on co-development cannot be satisfactory.

14. There appears to be a shortage of **research works** to inform political decision-makers of the consequences of migration and its accompanying policies.

- Little research is done on political networks, especially concerning their effects on institutions in the country of origin.
- Data is lacking, especially concerning migrant remittances, return and illegal immigration.
- The issue of free trade agreements has not been studied: the increase in trade in goods, services and capital does not appear to lead to a reduction in migration.
- Are migrant remittances likely to cause Dutch disease in beneficiary countries?
- Can significant remittances lead to incentives for beneficiaries to take excessive risks or, on the contrary, to a reduction in initiatives?

Proposal for action

15. The **movement of migrants** must be organized between host countries and countries of origin in order to allow them to create and follow-up their projects.

- Encouraging dual nationality, which provides very positive consequences in terms of influence in the relations between the two countries, especially where development programs are concerned.
- Developing a visa policy permitting return journeys between host countries and countries of origin.
- Organizing the regular return of members of the diaspora to strengthen technical platforms making training and exchanges possible, etc.
- Encouraging the creation of European structures facilitating the constitution and action of groups of scientifically and technologically qualified persons to promote exchanges between host countries and countries of origin.
- Allowing migrants to receive pensions in their country of origin.

16. **Remittances:** remittances are mostly made by unskilled workers, often working illegally:

- Organizing these remittances according to an approach specific to each corridor (cf. EIB Report), protecting them and reducing their costs.

17. Elite migration

- Developing private higher education in Africa, centering it on disciplines linked to the needs of countries of origin.
- Linking migration and support to the improvement of human capital in countries of origin justifies the co-management of flows with the authorities of these countries in a win-win perspective, based on a detailed analysis of labor markets in host countries and countries of origin.
- Strengthening centers of excellence: the diasporas can take part in their (re)construction, but not take charge of all operations.

- Coordinating the contribution of diasporas with others by encouraging their participation in cooperation framework programs.

18. The coherence of policies

- Opening an interministerial dialogue in order to integrate development issues in migration policies. It is necessary to build the case in order to win it, as the British have done, even if the process is long.
- Developing a migration policy centered on the needs of the European labor market by encouraging integration in host countries. Better-integrated migrants participate more in the development of their country of origin.
- Opening a debate at the European level where national issues will be more balanced, making it possible to initiate a broader discussion on development issues. The challenge of this debate would be to examine for example a code of good practice with regard to skilled immigration, going as far as the use of compensation (the reimbursement of training costs for migrants in countries of origin).
- Increasing the accompaniment and training of migrants in host countries.

19. Co-development

- Pooling existing knowledge of the involvement of migrants in development projects.
- Involving migrants more in the definition of development projects.
- Adapting financial support procedures to migrants' projects.

Agenda

- Population Commission from 3 to 7 April 2006: the European Union supports the constitution of a global reflection group.
- African conference on migration in Algiers, 6 June 2006, covering the following themes: migration and development, migration and peace, migration and human resources (brain drain).
- Council of European finance ministers, Tunis, 26 June: part of the work will be dedicated to migrant remittances.
- Rabat conference, 11 and 12 July 2006.
- The EU is preparing for a meeting with African countries during the second semester.
- Ministerial segment of the United Nations General Assembly, September 2006.