

Jaroslav Bureš

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Main Characteristic and Development Trends of Migration in the Arab World

International migration is one of the key issues of the present globalized age. Enormous technological progress, along with the IT revolution, has little changed the causes of migration from the developing world, i.e. conflicts and poverty, arising from the huge economic gap between the developing and industrialised world. The dynamics of fundamental political, economic and social transformations, rapid population growth, large-scale urbanization and environmental damage catalyse migration processes. Another background factor encouraging forced migration are the Middle East conflicts, which often play a more important role than poverty. The roots of potential conflicts can also be seen in the artificial, political borders between countries, which do not reflect natural, ethnic boundaries. The tension between fragmentation and globalization in the Middle East may well assume a dramatic form in the future. According to most Arab specialists, migration results from agricultural and rural decline, a process which commenced, with various intensity, in nearly all Arab countries in the 1970s. The causes of migration have not changed for decades, but its scale, distribution and direction have specific characteristics, which must be analysed and evaluated on an individual basis.

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AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS
OF MIGRATION IN THE ARAB WORLD

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wall separating Gaza strip from Egypt at Refah crossing point January 2008

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Introduction

International migration is one of the key issues of the present globalized age. Enormous technological progress, along with the IT revolution, has little changed the causes of migration from the developing world, i.e. conflicts and poverty, arising from the huge economic gap between the developing and industrialised world. The dynamics of fundamental political, economic and social transformations, rapid population growth, large-scale urbanization and environmental damage catalyse migration processes. Another background factor encouraging forced migration are the Middle East conflicts, which often play a more important role than poverty. The roots of potential conflicts can also be seen in the artificial, political borders between countries, which do not reflect natural, ethnic boundaries. The tension between fragmentation and globalization in the Middle East may well assume a dramatic form in the future. According to most Arab specialists, migration results from agricultural and rural decline, a process which commenced, with various intensity, in nearly all Arab countries in the 1970s. The causes of migration have not changed for decades, but its scale, distribution and direction have specific characteristics, which must be analysed and evaluated on an individual basis.

Migration can be divided into several types: permanent settlement, temporary labour migration, illegal migration, refugees and homeless people, asylum seekers, family reunion immigrants. Migrants include travelling students and tourists who stay longer in the host country than their residence permit allows and apply for jobs or request asylum. Some Arab countries are both source and destination countries (Egypt, Yemen, Morocco, Jordan and Lebanon).

In terms of geography, Arab migration can be split into a number of areas: the Maghreb, the Mashrik, the Persian Gulf and peripheral areas. Since the 1940s, a dense network of contractual relationships has developed, including migration. In the first few post-war decades, migration was perceived as part

of a pan-Arab strategy focused on achieving political unity and economic integration. Maghreb migration was directed by the traditional colonial bonds to France, where the Maghreb migrants, especially Algerians, had a privileged position on the labour market. In the past few years, Maghreb has become a transit and destination area for Sub-Saharan migrants heading for Europe. The state plays a crucial role in the Middle East migration system. State-sponsored migration was characteristic of the area until 1973. In this period, government structures in the Gulf countries were developed, with massive support from Egypt and the industrialised countries. After 1967, Palestinians fled to the neighbouring countries on a massive scale. The remaining workers tended towards the Israeli labour market or migrated to the Gulf countries.

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, migration usually concerned unskilled workers. In the mid-1980s and especially after the Second Gulf War, oil prices declined and, at the same time, major development projects were accomplished in the oil-rich Gulf countries affiliated in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In the late 1970s, Asian labour started to aim for the Gulf oil countries.

In the second half of the 1980s, another major phase began, in which mainly highly skilled labour with good language skills was needed. Labour started to move from the construction industry into other areas (mainly services), where demand for labour with specific skills was rising. The First Gulf War started a period of massive labour transfers. The number of Palestinian and Yemeni migrants in the Gulf countries decreased significantly.

In the 1990s, workers were returning and the economies of all countries – whether labour migration source or destination countries – had to adapt to the new situation. The first group of countries made efforts to reform their economies in order to eliminate dependency on the wage transfers of the migrating workers (liberalization, privatization, pro-investment policy, regional integration, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership). The latter mainly sought to replace immigrant labourers with domestic labour. After the Gulf War, cheaper and easy-to-manage Asian migrants were favoured, and their stays were legalised on the basis of short-term employment contracts.

Many experts agree that a situation in which both the source and the host country benefited from migration (a win-win strategy) would be an ideal one. To achieve this, the best possible strategic co-operation among the countries was needed.

The respective EU Association Agreements concerning Euro-Mediterranean co-operation did not allow for free movement of people, i.e. labour, in the Euro-Mediterranean economic area. At present, the European Union is showing interest in organised, pre-defined migration in certain professions that have good opportunities on the European labour market. The purpose of such a migration scheme should be to retrain Arab labour in order to meet the needs of the source country when returning home. Some Arab migrants also started to look for new destination countries (Canada, Australia) but many Western countries have tightened their migration, visa and asylum policies after the 9/11 attacks.

At present, migration in the Arab world is being influenced by globalization. The neo-liberal economic approach increases economic inequality between the centres and peripheries, and restricts the role of the nation state and its elite in managing economic and, in many cases, political processes. In the Middle East, globalization of the geographical migration area is linked to social fragmentation and instability, caused by a continuous decline of the nation state. The Middle East nation states are also stepping up pressure on “insufficiently loyal” minorities, i.e. ethnic groups that reject centralization efforts of the national governments and demand broader autonomy (Kurds, Kabylis, Sudan’s black population).

The opportunities to implement Islamic universalism in practice have increased, using violent (terrorist) and non-violent methods (information technology), and this was reflected in linking Islamic migration with potential security threats. In my view, this trend is very alarming from a long-term perspective. Since 9/11, Arab countries have been blaming the EU for trying to criminalize migration, using the example of the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the Eurodac programme, designed to collect and check fingerprints. Following the terrorist attacks, the USA adopted even tighter measures. Since the mid-1990s, Western authors have often attempted to criminalize migration in their theoretical works, increasingly associating migration with the penetration of Islamist, terrorist structures into Western countries. This is an example of a changing attitude: in the 1960s and 1970s, migration used to be seen as a phenomenon related to socio-economic or environmental processes. At present, interest in its strategic and security aspects is increasing.

Every researcher aiming to study Arab migration has to deal with a lack of accurate information available in the host and source countries, due to

non-systematic monitoring and registration of basic labour data. Censuses, for example, are conducted on an irregular basis. Visa, passport and customs authorities as well as foreigner police also proceed in a highly unsystematic way when collecting the data needed. They prefer aggregated data to specific information and, in some cases, keep the data secret for political reasons. Many researchers deduct essential migration data from various statistical sources, designed to quantify other characteristics. Under the influence of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and limited liberal reforms that some countries were enforcing in the mid-1990s, the approaches to collecting essential quantitative statistical data changed. Nevertheless, the situation differs from country to country.

On-site research is a suitable method for studying migration trends as, in many cases, statistical data have not been officially published and distributed, but can be consulted on site. Apart from the ministries in charge of migration (ministries of planning, labour resource, migration etc.), most countries have specific institutes that collect migration records and are open to researchers in the field.

A study by the Institute of International Relations (IIR) describes and evaluates the historical roots of Middle Eastern and Mediterranean migration, which is, the authors say, a suitable method of understanding contemporary migration trends in the Arab world and in the Mediterranean region. Special attention has been paid to the specific Islamic, Arab view of migration, whose evaluation of phenomena and their causes has changed over the centuries.

The study of the Institute of International Relations represents a modified, extended and updated, funded research report for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic titled "Migration Movement from the Arab World: Causes, Consequences and Perspectives" which was drafted by a team of experts led by Dr Jaroslav Bureš (IIR) from 2003 to 2004.

The study consists of four "case studies" focusing on the Maghreb, Egypt, the Levant countries and the GCC countries. Its objective was to conduct a detailed analysis of the specific characteristics of migration and its cultural and historical context, and to predict the character and direction of future migration processes. Only marginal attention was paid to Iraq, although it is currently a highly relevant topic and would have deserved much more attention. This is given by the considerable length of the study and the lack of reliable information available to the authors in the given period. Minor attention was

also paid to the peripheral Arab areas (Sudan, Yemen) and Israel. The migration and demographic characteristics of the Palestinian territories and Israel differ significantly from other regions and countries due to the specific interpretation of the refugee and migrant statuses. Given the scope of the topic, including these areas in the study would change the entire composition of the work.

In view of the considerable dynamics of migration movements in the globalized age, the Mediterranean and Arab migration project needs more thorough research. The topic is also highly relevant for the Czech Republic, in particular since joining the EU, as the Schengen area borders were shifted to the Mediterranean region. The filter of several national borders, which protected the country from migration from the South has, to a large extent, disintegrated in the Schengen area, which will be open to Arab migration. Monitoring of Arab citizens settled in Europe with permanent or long-term EU residence, who will be allowed to travel between the Member States within the Schengen area, might be another security issue.

The Czech Republic is still a minor migration source. It should be considered a transit country rather than a typical European host country, which is given by a lower standard of living and lower salaries compared to other EU Member States. The numbers of Mediterranean, Muslim and Arab migrants are insignificant and have not caused any anxieties to date. However, this might dramatically change in the mid-term, in view of the expected economic growth and improving standard of living. Spain, Italy and some other European countries have experienced a similar transformation. Recently, Mediterranean migration has reached Austria and distant Scandinavia. Germany also faces major problems related to Mediterranean migration. In the near future, various security factors related to migration (terrorism, drug and people smuggling, organised crime) will be relevant for the Czech Republic.

Migration should be controlled in terms of its professional structure and the numbers that can be absorbed by the host country's labour market. Illegal migration and the organised crime that often goes hand-in-hand with it should be severely combated. We must take into account that illegal migration flourishes in countries with widespread grey and black economies.

Jaroslav Bureš

1. Maghreb Migration

The Maghreb countries have become the key source of Arab migration to the EU and are considered one of the main zones of demographic imbalance worldwide. Other critical lines separate the USA from South America and the EU from Eastern Europe. The demographic growth gap between Europe and the southern Mediterranean region is twice as wide as between the USA and South America, or Japan and the other Asian countries. This gap is even more serious as it is not limited to demography. Low demographic growth and the high standard of living in Europe and, on the contrary, high demographic growth and poverty in the southern Mediterranean region, sharply contrast with the objectives set by the Barcelona Declaration.

The 1989 Marrakech Treaty started the process of subregional Maghreb integration within a new grouping – the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA). However, the new group was stagnating because of political issues such as the Western Sahara conflict, Islamist resistance in Algeria and sanctions against Libya. This chapter focuses on three Maghreb countries – Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, often called the “Little Maghreb”. The countries in this region share similar characteristics: Islamic religion (Maliki School of Law – *Madhhab*), common languages (Arabic, French and Berber), and a common colonial past (French colonial administration). The EU also often approaches these countries as a group. France, and to a lesser extent Spain and Italy, significantly influence the EU position vis-à-vis this region. The “Latin Arch” countries (France, Italy, Malta, Spain and Portugal) have been showing interest in talks with the Maghreb as part of the Dialogue 5+5 initiative launched in the early 1990s and currently coordinated with the International Organization for Migration.¹ The Little Maghreb countries share similar migration characteristics, resulting from similar historical developments. In the 19th

¹ World Migration 2003, Managing Migration Challenges and Response for People on the Move, Volume 2, IOM World Migration Report Series, Geneva 2003, p. 247.

century, they were occupied by France and had acquired the typical features of its colonial system by the outbreak of World War I.

As many Frenchmen were enlisted and lost their lives during World War I, there was an urgent need to substitute them both in the military service and in civilian professions. The increased demand for labour at that time resulted in the first “voluntary” migration from the Maghreb. Until the mid-1920s, an immigrant was called *travailleur colonial* (colonial labourer) in France. After World War II, the official term “French Muslim working in the metropolitan territory”² was used to highlight their different identity.

In the 19th century, intensive migration started within the Maghreb area for political (from Algeria to Morocco and Tunisia) or economic reasons (from Morocco to Algeria and Tunisia). The latter had been the case until France established a protectorate in Morocco as colonial agriculture required a regular supply of seasonal workers in the harvest period. There are two historic periods: before World War II and from 1945 to independence.

Many people moved from the Maghreb to France before World War I and also up to the end of World War II. During the 1912 census, 5,000 people from the Maghreb were recorded who had left their home countries for France. Most of them settled in Paris, Marseilles or in the North and were involved in trafficking. During World War I, 150,000 Algerians and 40,000 Moroccans were mobilised. In April 1916, the Colonial Labour Organization Service (Service de l’Organisation des Travailleurs Coloniaux) was established to conduct occasional recruitments. The service registered about 130,000 Maghreb citizens.³

After the war, Algerian migration soared from 30,000 in 1921 to 73,000 in 1936. Most migrants came from the poor mountain areas of Kabylie. Morocco witnessed a rising outflow of people, too. The number of Moroccans in France rose from 15,000 in 1925 to 21,000 in 1930. At that time, there were disputes between the metropolitan government and the local French colo-

² Holm, Ulla: The Implication of the Concept of the French State-Nation and “Patrie” for French Discourses on (Algerian) Immigration, Working Papers 35/2002, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, pp. 12–13.

³ Migration Internationale Actes, Royaume du Maroc, Premier Ministre, Ministre Charge de la Population, Séminaire 1996, Centre d’Études et Recherches Démographiques, Rabat (CERED), pp. 144–145.

nies, which aimed to restrict migration of Maghreb labour to France. A law was adopted in 1924 for this purpose. However, it was not enforced and migration did not decline. During World War II, France re-introduced conscriptions (for the army and civilian professions).

For two reasons, the end of World War II marked a milestone in the development of Maghreb migration. As at the end of World War I, there was a growing need to revive an economy devastated by the war and to make up for the loss of the country’s own labour supply. In 1945, a long cycle of uninterrupted economic growth started, often called the “Thirty Glorious Years”. The end of the growth period also marked the end of Maghreb migration. The National Immigration Office (Office National de l’Immigration, ONI) was responsible for recruiting the immigrants. Since Algeria had the legal status of a colony and was part of France, its citizens had priority over citizens from the Tunisian and Moroccan protectorates. For Moroccans and Tunisians, migration remained limited to men and accounted for only about 7% of total Maghreb migration. The 1950s were a period of national liberation conflicts, and the development of migration was limited. In the early 1960s, migration movements revived. In 1963 and 1964, Paris signed bilateral migration agreements with the three Maghreb countries. Tunisia and Morocco signed similar agreements with Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. The recruiting activities of the French labour mission (ONI) were limited to Tunisia and Morocco. From 1962 to 1974, the number of Maghreb workers tripled. In terms of geography, Moroccan migrants were scattered over the largest territory, settling in Switzerland, Scandinavia, France, Spain, Gibraltar, Italy and Austria. The Tunisians headed mainly for France, Germany and Belgium. The Algerians concentrated on France, and their share in total Maghreb migration decreased from 85% in 1962 to 62% in 1974.

The migration process was extraordinarily dynamic. The number of migrants increased from 40,488 in 1946 to 1.11 million in 1975, and remained unaffected by the declarations of independence in all three countries. During this period, the highest number of emigrants came from Algeria (710,000), followed by Morocco (260,000) and Tunisia (140,000).

Most emigrants were men without families who, at first, stayed within the Maghreb countries. The practice of exchanging emigrants within the area diminished, and the pressure to unite families increased. At that time, emigrants of European origin who had settled down in the Maghreb were leaving.

The most frequent migration target was France, or Israel for the Jewish community. This exodus started when Morocco and Tunisia declared independence in 1956 and ended in 1967 after the Third Arab-Israel War broke out. In the end, out of two million Jews, only 40,000 stayed.⁴

After the declaration of independence, there was a massive drift of non-Arab Europeans, and the period of European presence in the Maghreb terminated. In Tunisia, for example, the proportion of non-Tunisians in the population dropped from 10% in 1946 to only 0.5% in 1984.⁵

After the political, colonial dependence terminated, a new type of economic subordination developed, which had a direct impact on the continuity of migration pressures. As the number of wage labourers increased and new norms and values extending Maghreb's dependence on France and other EEC countries were introduced, migration changed the traditional social balance in the Maghreb.

From the declaration of independence up to the 1970s, Maghreb migration showed several specific features. It was driven by the continuous growth of European economies and their demand for a high number of cheap workers to increase the competitiveness of the individual countries. As the unemployment rates in the Maghreb were high, the economies on both sides benefited from migration. After the declaration of independence, and under the influence of the war and French presence in Algeria, Maghreb emigration to France accelerated. From 1967 to 1975, the Maghreb community in France almost tripled. The number of emigrants from Tunisia and Morocco increased eightfold and fourfold respectively. In the early 1950s, Algerian migrants predominated in France, accounting for 90% of the total number of arriving immigrants. In order to prevent a chaotic influx of immigrants, France signed agreements governing labour matters with Morocco, Tunisia (1963) and Algeria (1964).

⁴ In Algeria, the number of foreigners (including Jews with French citizenship) dropped from over 1 million during colonial domination to 120,000 in the first few years of independence; 500,000 foreigners and Jews lived in Morocco (220,000 in 1956, but, in 1971, their number fell to 100,000 foreigners and 31,000 Jews). In Tunisia, the number of Europeans and Jews dropped to 40,000 and 15,000 in 1966, respectively, although ten years earlier 250,000 foreigners and 58,000 Jews were registered.

⁵ Al-Faḍlī, M. A.: *Sukkān al-jumhūrīya at-tūnīsīya*, in: Ar-Ruwayṭhī, M. A.: *Sukkān al-‘ālam al-‘arabī*, Maktabat al-‘Abīkān, Ar-Riyāḍ 2003, p. 676.

Before the declaration of independence, Maghreb migrants favoured France, but, from the early 1960s on, they also headed for other European countries (Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands). A number of migration agreements with European countries were signed (Morocco signed an agreement with Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands and Tunisia concluded an agreement with Germany). In the following decade, Moroccan emigrants heading for Europe favoured the Benelux countries. The number of emigrants arriving in Benelux increased from 3,000 in 1959 to 35,000 in 1974.

This period was brought to an end in 1974 when, after the beginning of the oil crisis, France voluntarily withdrew to isolation in order to protect itself against the Maghreb migration. In 1975, Germany, Belgium and other European countries closed their borders to Maghreb migrants. At the same time, the Algerian administration decided to ban migration to France. These events put an end to a 60-year-long period of continuous migration, which interconnected the Maghreb and European societies and was beneficial for both sides.

Decline of Migration to Europe in the 1970s and 1980s

After the first oil shock of 1973, migration and its directions changed both in terms of quantity and quality. Maghreb migration was divided into three basic forms: legal, illegal and seasonal. The number of migrating women and young people was growing. Urban residents in particular, who did not have so much difficulty in assimilating in a different culture, were heading for Europe. The family reunion process, which started in the 1960s and concerned mainly Moroccan families (58.5%), gained momentum. In the 1970s, the number of seasonal migrants increased, primarily Moroccans, followed by Tunisians.⁶ Each year, approximately 12,000 seasonal migrants arrived. After Western European countries closed their borders, illegal Maghreb migration soared.

The migration dynamics in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria began to change in the early 1970s, on different scales and in different ways. At the very beginning of this period, Tunisia adopted a policy to reduce the country's birth rate through family planning programmes. It is interesting and somewhat

⁶ For details see *Migration Internationale Actes*, Royaume du Maroc: op. cit., pp. 154–158.

ironic that this prudent and pioneering policy should be introduced by Tunisia, the least populous country in the region. The key promoter of the project was President Habib Bourguiba (1956–1987), who took an interest in the emancipation of women and the future of the entire population. Within several decades, the results of Tunisia's proactive policy became tangible. While the birth rate in Tunisia amounted to 7.0 in the mid-1960s, a value common in other Arab countries, it dropped to 5.5 in the mid-1970s. Ten years later, in the mid-1980s, the birth rate was still decreasing and, in the early 1990s, it amounted to 3.4, which was an acceptable result. Nowadays, Tunisia, along with the UAE, has the lowest population growth rate (1.8%), similar to the European average.⁷ According to UN data, the Maghreb is likely to face severe population ageing in the next four decades.⁸

In the 1960s, Morocco institutionalised its own population strategy, designed to curb demographic growth. In 1965, a royal memorandum was declared, which contained a general birth control plan. The plan was implemented in the following decades, producing, as in Tunisia, encouraging results. The total birthrate dropped, although there was a slight delay compared to Tunisia. The birthrate fell to 5.9 in the mid-1980s, and 3.17 in the early 1990s and in 1997.⁹ The results could have been even better were it not for some hesitation and inconsistency.

Algeria, the largest and, given its oil and gas fields, richest country, took a completely different course. From the early 1970s on, the policy of the governing FLN was aimed at accelerating demographic growth, based on the principles announced after the declaration of independence in the 1960s. The FLN promoted a policy confirmed at the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974, which pointed out that the best remedy against current demographic trends is development. Algeria did not start promoting demographic growth control until the 1980s. The turnaround was announced at the end of the 1970s in response to the failure to fulfil economic and social pol-

⁷ Martin, J.: *The Population Time Bomb*, The Middle East, November 2003, p. 9.

⁸ *Aging Populations*, Sources: United Nations (DESA); JAM Research. By 2050, the number of senior citizens per 1,000 is expected to rise three to four times compared to the current number, which is 4–6.

⁹ Guerraoui, Driss: *Les Grands Defis Economiques de la Méditerranée*, Encyclopedie de la Méditerranée, 10 EDM, Editions Toubkal, Casablanca 2001, p. 86.

icies. The strategy, aimed at redistributing oil rent to meet social needs, did not address the issue of demographic growth in the Maghreb. In 1997, the birth rate amounted to 3.41; in the first half of the 1990s, demographic growth was 2.3% and currently it is on the decrease.

In the 1970s, there was a clear dividing line between two economic growth models in the Maghreb. The first was a liberal model based on market regulation, favoured by Morocco and Tunisia. The second, influenced by socialist ideologies, relied on centralised control of the economic and social processes by the state (Algeria). The differences between the concepts remained vague up to the 1980s. After the Maghreb Permanent Consultative Committee was set up, efforts were made to co-ordinate economic policies of the Little Maghreb countries. However, due to political and ideological disputes, they did not produce any significant results.

In Morocco and Tunisia, liberal policies were adopted almost from the very beginning. Not having sufficient oil rents, these countries were forced to take measures to attract investment in export industries. Legal financial infrastructure was developed by the 1970s to attract investment that would help achieve higher growth. However, Morocco (in the late 1970s) and Tunisia (in the early 1980s) were affected by external financial instability and domestic tensions. The situation led to proposing further programmes focused on structural organization, which were defined in accordance with the requirements of the international financial institutions and were designed to provide for the needed influx of foreign investment. In general, Morocco and Tunisia were showing strong economic activity in the 1970s and 1980s. Their annual per capita GDP growth amounted to 1.4–2.7% in the period from 1965 to 1980, and 1.3–4.7% in the period from 1980 to 1992. Their reforms were accompanied by higher unemployment. The average unemployment rate of Morocco and Tunisia was 9% in the early 1970s and 16% in the late 1980s.

In Algeria, the growth regulation system, typical of the 1970s, was replaced by market-oriented economic policy. Algerian economic growth was influenced by the central regulatory role of the state, which formed the industrialization base. Industrialization, financed by the oil and oil derivate industries, was the strategy of choice. The ratio of investment to GDP was fairly high, amounting to 50% of GDP in the late 1970s, and, unsurprisingly, Algeria's growth amounted to 6% in the late 1960s. Due to a gap between the theoretical and real productivity levels, and underestimation of cultural and social

factors, radical attempts were made to change the political system at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. As a result of the oil price slump, the rentier economy collapsed and a crisis set in 1986, leading to the events of October 1988 and, eventually, to the victory of the FIS Islamists in parliamentary elections.

The 1970s and 1980s were marked by massive efforts of the European countries to stem Mediterranean migration. Their decision was driven by the consequences of the first oil crisis, which started in 1973. In that year, the development of relationships between the Maghreb and Europe was severely disrupted. This put an end to the “golden age” of Maghreb migration, which peaked between 1962 and 1974, when the migration levels from the Maghreb to Europe tripled.¹⁰ Irrespective of this change, official and unofficial Maghreb migration to Europe continued, while family reunions accounted for the major part of official migration. Feminization, good social mobilization and improved social integration through naturalization were among the dominant trends. From 1975 to 1992, the number of emigrating Maghreb citizens amounted to approximately 47,000: Algeria (14,000), Morocco (26,000) and Tunisia (7,000). From 1982 to 1992, the annual average numbers in Morocco and Tunisia dropped to 16,000 and 2,000, respectively. Algerians had a preferential status in France as they were granted French nationality both by French and Algerian authorities.

In 1970 and 1980, a strong Maghreb migration diversification process was taking place, arising from a split in the direction of Moroccan migration in Europe. At that time, the family reunion process started in those countries that had been receiving guest workers in the 1960s. The other two countries – Spain and Italy – started to accept higher numbers of Maghreb migrants. In Italy, for example, the number of Moroccan migrants increased from 7,490 (1971–1975) to 58,867 (1986–1990), i.e. almost eight times. The increase was based on residence permits issued by the Italian Ministry of the Interior in 1981. In the late 1980s, the Moroccan community in Italy, a rather distant country, grew to 100,000. Illegal migration played an important role in Italy and Spain. At the same time, Moroccan immigrants started to settle in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Libya, the USA and the GCC countries.

¹⁰ For details see Fadloulah, A.: *Les flux migratoires des pays du Sud vers l'Europe occidentale* in de Azevedo, R.C. (ed.), *Migration et coopération au développement*, Conseil de l'Europe: Strasbourg 1994.

Tunisia, which is much closer to Italy, never had a high share on the Italian labour market. In 1993, there were approximately 53,711 Tunisians in Italy, about half of the number of Moroccans. From 1984 on, Tunisian migrants headed for Libya.¹¹ Further migration was strongly driven by the emergence of the first communities of Moroccan migrants in Western Europe in the early 1960s. Nevertheless, there were many illegal Maghreb migrants coming to Europe.

Policies of the Maghreb Countries concerning International Migration

Although Algeria assumed a rather conservative position until the early 1970s, all three countries supported migration as they profited on two fronts: migration helped to reduce tensions on the labour market and improved financial budgets.

In the early 1970s, a period of steep economic growth and increased job creation started in Algeria. As a result of growing oil prices, the budget was enhanced by foreign currency influx. Within the French-Algerian relationships, migration turned into a strongly disputed topic. In the context of tense bilateral relationships with the former colonial power, the Algerian government decided to stop migration to France in 1973. Algeria justified its step as a reaction to a series of murders of members of the Algerian minority in France. Another possible reason was the decision of the government to nationalise all foreign companies involved in oil production. From that moment on, Algerian migration acquired a strong ideological feel and the Algerian government started to campaign for the gradual return of Algerian emigrants. In 1976, Algeria's National Charter declared the return of all Algerian emigrants as the main target of the socialist revolution. In the 1970s and 1980s, Algerian migration changed its direction as many guest workers found jobs in the oil-rich Gulf countries and in Libya. In 1983, the total number of emigrants amounted to 650,000 but, due to a higher standard of living

¹¹ For details on Tunisian migration see Abderrazak Bel Haj Zekri: *Tunisian Emigration to Western Europe: Recent Trends and Future Prospects*, Mediterranean Conference on Population, Migration and Development, Palma de Mallorca, 15.–17. 10. 1996.

in Algeria, was on the decline in the 1990s.¹² In general, from the 1970s on, Algeria's government neither addressed the complex migration issue nor developed the instruments needed for a proactive policy. A number of institutions was merely set up to monitor and control migration, without conducting a profound analysis of economic and social dependence.

Having no oil and gas reserves, Morocco and Tunisia had completely different issues to deal with. Therefore, they had to approach migration as an economic phenomenon that improved the budgetary balance and helping to reduce unemployment and social tension, although they shared Algeria's ideological position, and considered migration a necessary evil.

In August 2001, Muhammad VI introduced a directive to his government, addressing, among other things, migration. Regarding the migrating community, he declared a broad and integrated global policy, promoting the integration of new elites into politics, science, technology, culture and sport.¹³ The new mechanism was designed to strengthen the influence of immigrants' money transfers and their focus on direct productive investment and national development. Morocco set up a specific ministry for the issues of the Moroccan expatriate community.

In 1989, King Hassan II refused the right of Moroccan emigrants to vote in the host country.¹⁴ In his view, Moroccans should not get involved in France's domestic matters. Election voting was considered a betrayal of origin and identity. The administrative procedure of repatriation was simplified, and customs reductions were introduced. Under the influence of the deteriorating economic situation, both countries took a responsible approach to the problem, trying to steer the development in the right direction. At present, there is an interest in strengthening the immigrants' cultural identity and relationships to their home countries. To this end, a number of specific institutions were established. The home countries started to show interest in direct investments from their emigrants. In Morocco, the Hassan II Foundation was founded to deal with the administrative issues of the Moroccan community abroad. The Muhammad V Foundation organises summer returns of Moroc-

¹² Al-'Issawī, F.: *Sukkān al-Jumhūrīya al-jazā'irīya*, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A.: op. cit., 2003, p. 729.

¹³ World Migration 2003: op. cit., p. 224.

¹⁴ Nouvel Observateur, 12–18 January 1989.

can emigrants to the country (*opération de transit*). Both the Migration Ministry and Hassan II Foundation were involved in a broad range of activities, including strengthening bank networks in the destination countries of Moroccan migrants. In 2001, Morocco joined an international, integrated UNESCO system for migration research, training and archive activities. To that end, a migration and human rights chair was set up at the Hassan II University in Casablanca in co-operation with UNESCO. Morocco closely cooperates with the IOM (International Organization for Migration) on an "Observatory of the Moroccan Community Living Abroad" project. Its objective is to collect and document migration trends, and to develop an integrated research system to collect and disseminate information on Morocco around the world.

Tunisia's migration policy had long traditions. In 1963, the Tunisian government signed the first migration agreements with France, which was a step anticipating future development. In 1967, the Office for Vocational Training and Employment of Tunisians Abroad (Office de l'emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle) was established to deal with the possibilities of stabilising Tunisians on the domestic and international labour markets. Over the years, the office changed its status and mission and is currently called the Office of Tunisians Abroad (Office des Tunisiens à l'étranger). From 1970 on, the Tunisian government started systematically to support migration of Tunisian labour.¹⁵ The Office of Tunisians Abroad, which reports to the Ministry of Social Affairs, developed a widespread administrative and technical network abroad. It operates 17 regional delegations, located at major places of Tunisian migration. It employs 58 social counsellors and ten social workers at embassies and diplomatic missions worldwide. It supervises the operation of 16 forums for women and second generation Tunisians, located in the USA and Europe at places where many Tunisian families live. It supports the foundation and operation of 383 Tunisian companies. The office promotes strengthening of social and cultural relationships between Tunisia and the emigrants abroad. The aim is to preserve emigrants' identity and to support their integration into the host society. In their host countries, emigrants should promote dialogue and co-operation between the destination country and Tunisia. Great attention is being paid to families in order to form stable

¹⁵ For details see Al-Faqlī, M. A.: *Sukkān al-jumhūrīya at-tūnīsiya*, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A.: op. cit., p. 677.

social and cultural entities in Western countries. Strengthening relevant legislation represented another essential task. Since 1992, for example, a Tunisian woman may marry a foreigner and transfer his nationality to her children provided her husband gives prior consent. The fact that migration is a key issue in Tunisia is indicated by a speech of the Tunisian President, who said that the right to migrate was an integral part of human rights and a factor of stability and cooperation on both coasts of the Mediterranean Sea.¹⁶ Traditionally, Tunisia has supported the adoption of an international charter to guarantee the rights of migrating labour.

There are another two Tunisian institutions dealing with migration: The Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment and the Tunisian Technical Cooperation Agency, which controls the migration movements of skilled and unskilled Tunisian guest workers. They facilitate the acceptance and social and professional integration of the guest workers in their host countries.¹⁷ In 2000, a bilateral agreement with Italy was signed for that purpose. A computer database is available, containing data on 5,000 Tunisian migration candidates who are waiting for their opportunity. At present, twelve bilateral social security agreements have been signed, out of which eight are with European countries, and further agreements are being prepared. The government manages special programmes to inform immigrants about Tunisia's successes. It advises them of investment opportunities, advantages and incentives in various industries.

Tunisia was the first Mediterranean country to sign an Association Agreement with the EU, which mentions the migration issue. On the grounds of the Association Agreement, a working group on social matters was set up. Its first meeting took place in 2001 in Brussels. Its task is to encourage improvements in guest worker circulation, to provide for equal treatment of guest workers and to help them integrate into society.

At present, the source countries are trying to promote internationally the "ethnic minority" idea, addressing not only those migrants who have been granted host country citizenship but also illegal immigrants residing in the

¹⁶ Borowiec, A.: Europe Tightens Arab Migration Rules, *The Washington Times*, 14 November 2001, www.tunisiaonline.com/pressbook/wash-times111101.html.

¹⁷ World Migration 2003: op. cit., p. 232.

home country thanks to the benevolence of legislation.¹⁸ The Maghreb countries consider illegal immigration primarily an issue of the host countries, rather than the source countries. In their view, migration is one of the means to achieve balance on the Moroccan labour market. At best, they try to regulate migration according to demand, but no efforts are made to stop it.

Last but not least, European measures concerning Maghreb migration should be mentioned. A major change occurred in 1974, in consequence of the "first oil crisis" at the end of 1973, i.e. measures aimed at more stringent enforcement of restrictive strategies, which originated in France and some other countries in the 1960s.¹⁹ Within two years (1974 and 1975), most European countries, in particular those that were accepting Maghreb migrants (France, the Benelux countries, Germany) only allowed official entry to family members of the Maghreb migrants. In the 1980s, several anti-migration regulatory campaigns were launched, although they were in contradiction with the strong and real demand for cheap labour across various industries (agriculture, public works, textile industry and services).

In the 1980s, coordination between the individual European countries was improving, which finally led to the conclusion of the Schengen Agreement in 1985. The fact that most of the main Maghreb migrant recipient countries joined Schengen was crucial. The Schengen countries shared a joint outside border, which was to provide better protection against illegal Maghreb migration. The objective of the decision from 1974–1975 was to stop migration movements from outside Europe. The fall of the Berlin Wall brought other alternatives to the European countries and influenced the migration movements. An influx of migrants from Eastern Europe was expected. Although this was not a massive movement, Eastern European emigrants started to compete with Maghreb and Turkish labour in Western Europe, in particular in terms of their education. While the EU is developing a common strategy on illegal migration, the Arabs are attempting to achieve protection even for illegal migrants. They criticise the EU for refusing to grant right of residence

¹⁸ Giubilaro, Donatella: Migration from the Maghreb and Migration Pressures: Current Situation and Future Prospects, ILO 1998, International Labour Organisation, www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/papers/migmagh/index.htm.

¹⁹ For example, the annual quota for Algerian emigrants in France was reduced from 35,000 in 1962 to only 12,000 in 1971.

(*droit de cité*) to migrants, even though this would not involve the right of citizenship (*droit de citoyenneté*).²⁰

The 1970s and 1980s brought four major changes in the character of Maghreb migration. The idea of a possible return of the Maghreb's migrants from Europe and the illusion of the permanent prosperity of the European countries ended. Economic problems were accompanied by growing unemployment. Internal social changes in the Maghreb countries signalled tension and crises. Southern Europe offered new possibilities for Maghreb migrants.

The key factor was the failure of the EU governments to understand the immediate development needs of the Maghreb countries. In the middle and long run, the Maghreb politicians consider cooperation with the EU unattractive as it is likely to cause problems (business bankruptcies, unemployment, fall of customs income, etc.). For these reasons, they consider migration irreplaceable and favourable in economic terms as it helps to reduce pressure on the labour market and unemployment. The emigrants' money transfers strengthen an otherwise deficit budget during a transitional period of reforms aimed at creating a free trade zone in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

Migration Policy of Maghreb Countries

The formulation of migration policies of the Maghreb countries reflected the macroeconomic impact of emigrants' money transfers. Algeria's position was influenced by the political and ideological approaches of the leading party, rather than by economic calculations based on the need to accumulate capital for state purposes. In particular, this situation was typical of the 1970s and 1980s and resulted from the weakness of specialised institutions, which saw emigration more as an administrative problem than a farsighted mission. In the mid-1990s, the approach underwent some changes in relation to the establishment of a ministerial section (1996) focused on the Algerian community abroad. For the first time, its real importance for foreign policy formulation was acknowledged.

²⁰ Kchachani M.: Le Migration clandestine. Enjeux et perspective, Annuaire 2000. Méditerranée et modernité. Quels Défis au XXI^e Siècle? GERM, Editions Le Fenec, Casablanca 2001, p. 294.

For a long time, Algeria and Tunisia considered foreign migration policy a "necessary evil". In the 1980s, Tunisia became aware of the adverse effects of decreasing income from returnees from Libya and Europe and the insignificant development of migration to the GCC countries. As the EU closed its borders, Tunisian authorities were forced to start promoting other migration destinations (e.g. Canada).

At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, Morocco also realised that the unlimited influx of income from migrating labourers could not be expected to continue, but read the issue more in relation to redirecting the capital transfers from Moroccans living abroad into highly productive investment. At that time, proposals were made to create a fund for emigrants to help them integrate into the economy on returning to Morocco.

Irrespective of the migration policies and strategies of the Maghreb countries, migration, and particularly illegal migration continued.

Out of all the Maghreb countries, Tunisia and Morocco were most progressive when organising work abroad and guest worker returns. In 1975, the Office for Social and Professional Re-Integration of Labour was set up to supervise Tunisian labour offices abroad. These offices encourage Tunisian emigrants to return and invest their savings in their home country. To this end, the government issued a special decree (*marsūm*) remitting customs duties and some taxes to all permanently returning guest workers, and granting them and their families housing and schooling advantages. In order to regulate migration flows, the Tunisian government signed an agreement with Italy, specifying a migration quota. At present, Tunisia is negotiating with Spain with the aim of signing a similar agreement. In a speech in 1993 in the European Parliament, Tunisian President Zīn al-ʿĀbidīn bin ʿAlī urged adoption of the Maghreb-European Charter on Migrant Rights (*Mithāq maghāribī ʿarabī ḥawla ḥuqūq al-muhājirīn*), designed to form a framework for lawful co-existence of Mediterranean migrants without segregation.²¹ At various forums, the Maghreb politicians complain about unequal treatment of Arab and European migrants, the latter being favoured in various areas. In 1999, Tunisia

²¹ Mihannī, As-Sayyid al-Hādī, wazīr shuʿūn al-ijtimāʿīya, muḥādarat, nadwat ad-dawlīya ath-thālitha ʿashara: Ishkāliya al-hijra fī Al-Mutawassīṭ: at-tawajjuhāt al-mustaqbalīya, At-Tajammuʿ ad-dustūrī ad-dīmūqrāṭī, Manshūrāt markaz ad-dirāsāt wa at-takwīn, Tūnis 3.–4. 12. 2001, p. 55.

joined the International Organisation for Migration, and its mission and regional seminars were launched in Tunisia.²²

Traditionally, protection of human rights of the immigrants has been a priority of Morocco, the largest migration source among the Maghreb countries. At various forums, the Moroccan government has promoted the adoption of an international convention to protect immigrants and their families, which the industrialised countries refused to ratify. There was an interest in immigrants being represented in elected institutions.²³

The Algerian government was less generous in this respect, although it also supports returning and integration of immigrants into society. Algerians are also rewarded for returning to their home country: their taxes and customs duties are remitted and they receive support when building or buying a home. It must be pointed out that, at present, the EU supports this policy by various means, because it helps to reduce the number of immigrants in the Member States and at the same time is advantageous for the Maghreb countries when saved money transfers are invested.

Currently, the Maghreb countries are investigating the possibilities of using the skills and knowledge of students and experts who studied or study in Western countries, for example in some priority industries (communications, information technology, cybernetics, electronics). Some countries – India, Taiwan and South Korea – have already developed systems for transferring and systematically using information provided by their citizens – specialists who have gathered experience in Western research centres. Under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership programmes or at national levels, various “brain-drain to brain-gain” projects have been prepared.

Another issue is internal migration from poor rural areas to cities; for these reasons, it will be necessary to support the development of those peripheral areas with foreign help (water, electricity, communications, health-care and education).

²² Chouba, Samia: op. cit.

²³ Morocco Calls Industrialised Countries to Protect Immigrants, Morocco, Politics 24 November 1998, www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/981124.

Economic Dependence of Demographic Growth

In the 1980s, efforts were made to converge the demographic policies of all Maghreb countries, in particular after Algeria was forced to change its approach, which influenced the development in the following decade. In the 1990s, demographic transition became a reality and even conservative Algeria experienced a steep decline in demographic growth. Primarily, this development was caused by later marriages and increasing use of contraceptives. No revolutionary demographic growth control approaches were applied at the pan-Arab level, as the population conference held in Cairo in 1994 showed. The almost thirty-year long development of the approaches helped to change the demographic structure in the Maghreb countries, which, in this respect, have moved ahead of the Arab Mashrik countries. The demographic growth changes anticipated social and economic development.²⁴

The demographic policy, promoted at present by all three countries in a more or less explicit and formal way, aims to reduce demographic growth. Tunisia leads the others in this respect. Algeria, on the other hand, despite its oil wealth, faces the hardest economic situation for three reasons. First of all, problems are caused by the country's very high demographic growth, which has continued over a relatively long period, along with all its negative impacts. After two decades of centrally controlled economy, Algeria has to carry out painful economic restructuring. So far, the political crisis, which culminated in brutal violence in the mid-1990s, has not been fully overcome. Not only the Islamists, but also Berbers and secular citizens are dissatisfied. The precarious political situation could impair the economy of the country.

From 1990 to 1993, GDP growth amounted to only 2.2–2.5%. In the mid-1990s, Algeria launched talks with the World Bank and the IMF as well as EU partners, in particular France. In 2001, negotiations with the EU about new Association Agreements were concluded; their strategic aim is to create a free trade zone between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean region. Although Algeria introduced structural economic changes in the mid-1990s, it continued to face serious social problems. In the 1990s, the unemployment rate amounted to 20% and primarily included young people. Tunisia's

²⁴ For details see Courbage, Y.: Migration internationale et transition démographique au Maghreb, Les Cahiers du CERI, No. 8.

unemployment rate was also very high (15–20%). Its age structure was similar to that of Algeria. In the 1990s, very young people were most vulnerable to migration. In the short and middle run, the performance of the EU Association Agreements is expected to highlight social tensions. Labour productivity growth and industrial restructuring appear to be essential tasks.

Each country had different migration epicentres. In Morocco and Algeria, migrants from poor rural and mountain areas were heading for towns and cities; in Tunisia, migration started in towns, gradually gaining intensity and spreading to rural areas in the south. Towns, whether regional metropolises or mid-size towns, played a crucial role and became foreign trade centres. This development was supported by high urbanization levels as, in the 1980s, urban population in all three countries exceeded the critical threshold of 50%. This was also related to the precarious social situation. While in the early 1960s, migrants from Casablanca accounted for 5% of all emigrants, in the 1980s they made up 15–20%. In Tunisia, a quarter of emigrants came from the country's capital.

There are two prevailing scenarios. The first one concerns traditional migration regions – rural and semi-rural areas of Morocco and Algeria and their formal and informal structures based on traditional solidarity sources (family, group) in Europe. As in the Maghreb, these structures started to function and were successful in helping to maintain migration. Attention was also paid to new migration centres in towns, i.e. regional and central metropolises, where migration sources originated from new social environment forms connected with urban life (acquisition of education and vocational qualifications), which were European-oriented.

Present Migration Movement

It is extraordinarily difficult to identify Maghreb migration abroad from the early 1990s on, as most migration was of an illegal character. According to OECD data from 1995, the number of Maghreb citizens in the EU Member States and Switzerland amounted to 2.053 million. However, this number did not include dual citizens, who made up 11.3% of the total number of 18.2 million foreigners residing in the Member States. According to French statistics from 1999, only 540,000 applicants were granted French citizenship.

During the family reunion period, i.e. after the first oil shock of 1973, the number of children and women among Maghreb immigrants rose. After the Schengen Agreement was adopted in the mid-1980s, illegal employment of Maghreb immigrants, without proper social security, was on the increase, in particular in Southern European countries such as Italy, Portugal and Spain.²⁵ Immigrants worked in the illegal or semi-legal grey economy and were very popular as they were cheap, undemanding and flexible. Smuggling of little children as wage labourers to some EU Member States is the darkest chapter of illegal migration. This profitable business is in the hands of well-organised gangs. At the beginning of the 21st century, there were 639 vagrant Maghreb children from 1 to 18 years in Spain and Italy; many of them were wandering the streets and fell victim to organised crime and drug smugglers.²⁶ Many of them managed to come to the Spanish enclaves in Morocco – Melilla and Ceuta. Each year, thousands of them are returned to Morocco, but the country shows little interest in the situation.

Occasionally, the influx of illegal migrants from the Maghreb brought about xenophobic moods; in 2000, for example, they culminated in violent clashes between immigrants and local Spanish residents in El Jido. This was a spontaneous response to the social situation rather than racial attacks.

Tunisian migration started rather late – in the 1960s when the country signed labour agreements with France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, related to the lack of labour in those countries. From 1976 to 1995, the number of Tunisians abroad doubled and amounted to 600,000 in 1995. In 2000, their number rose to almost 700,000, out of which 85% lived in Europe.²⁷ In 1993, most Tunisians lived in France (339,795), accounting for 76% of all migrants in the country. After France came the following countries: Italy (68,705), Libya (42,272), Germany (31,000), Algeria (37,000), Saudi Arabia (18,000), Belgium (11,000), Morocco (6,000) and other Arab coun-

²⁵ Mihanī, S. H.: op. cit., *As-Sayyid al-Hādī*: op. cit., pp. 38–39.

²⁶ Saddās, Fathīya: *Ishkāliya al-hijra fi Al-Mutawassit*: at-tawajjuhāt al-mustaqbaliya: op. cit., p. 249.

²⁷ Chouba, Samia: *Improving Cooperation between Countries of Origin and Countries of Destination: What Concrete Measures Should Be Taken?* Conference on “Irregular Migration and Dignity of Migrants: Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region, Proceedings, Athens, 3–4 October 2001, June 2002.

tries (10,000).²⁸ In 1974, the family reunion process started in France and Germany. In the 1990s, illegal migration rose to significant levels and, in case of Tunisia, was also directed to France and Italy. The main reasons were work (56%) and family reunion (17.8%). Seasonal migration of Tunisians, primarily to meet the needs of French agriculture, was negligible, amounting to approximately 1,600 people a year on average.

The number of Moroccan migrants amounted to about 1.36 million in 1998. Out of these, 1.354 million lived and worked in Europe and 290,000 in the Arab world. There were small enclaves in Latin America (71,000) and Africa (5,000).²⁹ The main reason for migration was geographical and linguistic affinity, connections from colonial times, job offers and domestic economic pressures. Most Moroccans headed for France (795,000), the Netherlands (180,000), Belgium (170,000), Italy (130,000), Spain (80,000) and Germany (65,000) while the remainder were scattered in other EU Member States. In the Arab countries, Moroccan migration was distributed as follows: Algeria (100,000), Libya (90,000), Tunisia (15,000) and Saudi Arabia (11,000). According to surveys, economic reasons were crucial for 70% of migrants, followed by family reasons (12%), studies (9%) and social reasons (6%). The most important economic reasons were interest in a higher wage (43%), unemployment (31%), better living conditions (19%) and better work conditions (6%).

At present, the government and scientific community in Morocco monitor illegal migration, which started to rise after the EU adopted a number of restrictive measures following May 1991 and September 11th 2001. In 1991, the Spanish border was closed to Moroccans and, in accordance with the Schengen Agreement, Madrid introduced visa requirements for Moroccans and tightened the conditions for granting visas. Moroccans, longing for the European paradise, were trying by all means to pass the Schengen border illegally. For the most part they used long, light boats, *pateras* in Spanish, disparagingly called *qawārib al-mawt* (boats of death) by the Arabs. The Strait of Gibraltar

²⁸ Zekri, Abderrazak Bel Haj: Tunisian Emigration to Western Europe: Recent Trends and Future Prospects, Mediterranean Conference on Population and Development, Palma de Mallorca, 15–17 October 1996. Strasbourg 1996.

²⁹ Akādīmiya al-mamlakat al-maghribīya, silsilat an-nadawāt, Hijra al-maghāriba ilā al-khārij, An-Nāzūr, māyū 1999.

became the graveyard of unfulfilled hopes of African, Moroccan emigrants, disparagingly referred to as *dos mouillé* in French or *zuhūr mubalala* in Arabic (wetbacks). Arab sources mention thousands of drowned victims while Spanish sources talk about hundreds. The Spanish Ministry of the Interior keeps accurate statistical records of the number of detained ships and persons.³⁰

Melilla and Ceuta, Spanish enclaves in Africa, pose a major problem, complicating political relationships between Spain and Rabat, and, despite being severely guarded, form a gateway for illegal migration from Africa. Neither of the enclaves is a part of integrated Europe. Illegal migration is associated with organised crime as it is related to the activities of well-organised people-smuggling rings and, at times, drug smugglers. Therefore, the Spanish government announced a programme called Plan Sur, designed to improve illegal migration monitoring, using sophisticated electronic surveillance systems, a specially trained Guardia Civil coastal unit, speedboats and helicopters.³¹ In addition, Spain has signed readmission agreements with Morocco. In 1999, the Spanish government signed an agreement undertaking to provide temporary Moroccan migrants with equal working conditions and social benefits to local labour and promising to integrate them into society.

Credit Chamal, introduced in 1995, is another crucial scheme. With financial assistance from the EU, Groupement Professionnel des Banques du Maroc (GPBM), a consortium of Moroccan banks, launched productive investment activities in the northern provinces of Morocco, which suffer from high migration to Spain. Another target was to facilitate the repatriation of returning immigrants. The EU covered 40% of the project implementation costs by an interest-free loan, payable in 10–20 years. In the past, similar projects were in place, designed to provide the local population in Northern Morocco with alternative sources of livelihood to the defeated narcotics industry. According to the evaluation of the Moroccan side, this large-scale investment scheme produced only modest results. Only 820 jobs were created due to the

³⁰ In 1998, for example, 557 ships and 2,995 people were detained. Ministry of the Interior, Note on illegal migration by boat to the coast of Spain, 1996–1999, Madrid, General de Extranjería, Madrid.

³¹ For details see Pugh, Michael: Europe's Boat People: Maritime Cooperation in the Mediterranean, Chaillot Papers 41, July 2000, pp. 33–36.

scheme, and 81 projects implemented (fishing, leather processing, boat repair, textile factories).³² The investment came at the time of major cuts in public sector jobs, which impaired the real impact of the Credit Chamal scheme. Nevertheless, this appears to be the only way to reduce migration pressures on the Mediterranean border of the Schengen Area in the long term, as repressive methods only produced temporary results.

Maghreb Migration to Italy

In 1986, a massive rise in the number of Maghreb immigrants to Italy started. This was due to several basic factors.³³ First of all, restrictive measures, such as complicated visa procedures, were introduced in the traditional destination countries of Maghreb migration. At first, Italy was seen as a transit country to emigrate to other countries, which had closed their borders to the influx of immigrants. However, it turned into a destination country in the early 1990s. The interest in Italy was supported by ineffective restrictive legislation measures of the host country, which did not precisely define entry and residence conditions. Another factor was the increased demand in some sectors, which helped to create a functioning migration network. Under the pressure of other European countries, Italy and Spain had to adopt legislation restricting labour from Non-Member States.

After Spain closed its borders, Moroccan and, to a lesser extent, Tunisian and Egyptian migrants headed for Italy. Tunisian migration in Italy had a long tradition. From the 1960s on, Tunisian sailors and fishermen had been settling in Sicily. Italy was the second destination country after France, and 44 % of Tunisian immigrants live to this day in the South, especially in Sicily. The 1980s and 1990s saw an immense increase in the number of Tunisian and especially Moroccan immigrants. Given its scope and dynamics, the in-

³² Boussetta, M.: Financement européen et immigration clandestine l'expérience du credit chamal, La Migration clandestine, adre du colloque organisé à la Faculté de Droit-Agdal, Rabat les 29–30 avril 1999, AMERM Rabat 2000, pp. 203–210.

³³ Giubilaro, Donatella: Migration from the Maghreb and Migration Pressures: Current Situation and Future Prospects, ILO 1998, International Labour Organisation, www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/papers/migmagh/index.htm.

vasion of mainly Moroccan immigrants in Italy was an extraordinary event. While the annual increase in the number of Tunisian (5.4% of the total number) and Egyptian (2.6%) immigrants to Italy in the 1990s was negligible and both groups' share of the total number of immigrants was falling, the opposite was the case for Moroccan immigrants. From 1991 to 1998, their number grew by approximately 50,000 to 131,000. Moroccans had the largest share of total legal migration to Italy (10.3%). To reach Italy, Maghreb migrants went through Tunisia to Sicily or other parts of the Italian Peninsula further to the north. Sometimes, migrants passed through Malta and more recently Sardinia, from where emigrants also leave for other EU countries.

In the early 1990s, the family reunion process started to decline in the traditional destination countries due to repressions and the declining interest of the immigrants, but was gaining momentum in Italy. Moroccans take more advantage of legal family reunion opportunities in Italy than Tunisians. The highest number of family reunion applications is filed in Northern Italy, as its welfare system is more generous and the standard of living higher than in the central and southern parts of the Apennine Peninsula. Another interesting point is the professional breakdown of migrants in Italy. Less skilled workers tend to settle in the south, while highly skilled labour, university graduates and technicians settle in the north. The majority of the Maghreb migrants in South European countries are men. Another characteristic was increasing unemployment among Maghreb immigrants, which was traditionally highest in the 15–24 age group and among women. Traditionally, unemployment has been much higher among immigrants than in domestic populations. North Africans working in Europe tend to have lower education, which applies especially to the last migration destination countries. The importance of temporary and seasonal work in Europe has been rising. Maghreb guest workers often work in agriculture, in the construction industry and, in Northern Italy, in smaller, industrial, mainly metallurgical businesses.

Recently, Maghreb migrants' interest in North America and Australia has been on the increase; since the 1990's, Algerian elite migrants especially have been heading for these destinations. Compared to other directions, the number of immigrants in these countries remains low. Algerians are very conservative as they did not substitute other destination countries for France even after Paris cancelled some of their administrative advantages. Neither Spain nor Italy have become destination countries for the Algerians.

Maghreb migrants in France

Maghreb migrants in France are among the oldest and most numerous migrant groups in Europe. From the perspective of the host country, the recent history of migration from this region can be divided into four phases. Between the end of World War II and the late 1960s, there was a problem-free influx of migrants, which was not in any way controlled or regulated by the French government. The second phase came in the 1970s, when restrictions were imposed on migrants: opportunities for migrants to enter and settle in the country were limited. A law was passed that made it more difficult for the migrants to obtain residence permits, while another law allowed reunification of families, in a show of humanism of the French administration. The concealed agenda of reunification was to emphasize cultural differences. It was at this time that Arab migration was seen for the first time as a threat to French identity. The migrants were referred to first as Arabs and then as Algerians to emphasize that they were members of an unanchored, nomadic, Mediterranean people, and descriptions of them were often qualified by the adjective “illegal” to evoke stronger, more negative emotions³⁴. The third phase began in the early 1980s when the Socialists took over in France and migration policy was reformed, and it became more difficult for the authorities to expel immigrants (the so-called “October Law”). The immigrants were granted the right to establish their own organizations and to oversee working conditions. It needs to be said, though, that immigration was beneficial to France, as it allowed for stabilization of the local social system. In the 1960s, for instance, the government received 22.5 million Francs from the Algerian immigrants.³⁵ It can be proved by factual data that restrictive policies regarding migrants are adopted at times when economic and social conditions in the host country deteriorate and public opinion towards migrants takes a negative turn. The term “migrant worker” came into use in the 1960s. The extreme Right protested against migration and equated the adjectives “illegal” and “criminal”. They professed to protect the secular character of the state and their “Christian Fatherland”. Their main aim was to prevent migrants from obtaining French citizenship.

Currently, there is an evident tendency to impose restrictions on the labour

³⁴ Holm, Ulla: op. cit., pp. 16–17.

³⁵ As-Sayyid Idrīs al-Fāḍilī: *Ishkāliyat al-hijra fī Al-Mutawassit*: op. cit., pp. 94–95.

market, and educated, skilled workers are given preference, which has negative impacts on the source Maghreb countries. The Maghreb migrants made up 28.95% of the total number of immigrants in the Hexagonal (69,290) and their number was higher than the number of migrants coming from Europe, Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and America. Their exact number is not known as there were many ways in which these migrants got into the country illegally. In March 1996, for instance, a network of human smugglers, which had been significantly assisted by a senior police director, was cracked.

Another class is represented by Maghreb refugees whose number, however, varies from year to year. In 1991 there were 191 of these, but in 1994 there were as many as 2,385 such refugees, which reflected the increased instability in their countries. The Algerian community in France formed as early as the 1920s and in 1993 consisted of 614,000 people. In 1988, civil unrest broke out in Algeria, driven by the dissatisfaction of the local inhabitants with the economic, political and social situation in the country. A rebellion in the capital erupted in 1992 when the government annulled the results of a general election won by the Islamist party. The heightened crisis drove many people temporarily out of Algeria and forced them to seek refuge, mostly in France, where a numerous community of their countrymen was already established. Many of these people fled Algeria because of political concerns, as they, often members of a democratic movement, feared revenge from the Islamists or Algerian authorities. In his study, H. Bouderbala points out that the refugees included Islamists, army deserters, intellectuals, scientists, Leftist activists and supporters of women's emancipation, who faced death threats from the radical Islamists of the GIA (Groupe Islamists Armée). These political refugees were granted support by the International Committee for the Support of Algerian Intellectuals (Comité Internationale du Soutien aux Intellectuels Algériens). Another group of people had to leave Algeria because of Government repressions or Islamist terrorism and because they felt threatened. Some sought only temporary asylum, but others wanted to settle down in France permanently.³⁶

The situation of the Algerian community in France was rather precarious, even though many of its members had dual citizenship. Emigration was defined by bilateral agreements and, in 1994, the French Parliament passed

³⁶ Bourdebala, H.: *Vers une typologie des figures de l'exile Algérie*; a speech at the Miginter conference, Poitiers, February 2000.

a law that allowed the expulsion even of migrant-refugees with dual citizenship. In 1994, the situation in Algeria became critical. The French Embassy had to reduce its staff and the granting of visas was handled – with considerable delay – by the immigration centre in Nantes, France. Many Algerians paid with their lives for this. The total number of visas granted to Algeria was reduced from 800,000 in 1990 to 50,000 in 1997. In 1997, responding to the high number of civilian casualties, the French authorities agreed to speed up the granting of visas, even for those who lacked the appropriate documents if their lives were under threat. Refugee status, however, was granted only exceptionally.³⁷ It was quite evident that the French were quite prepared to protect their citizens in Algeria, but rather unwilling to take seriously the problem of Algerian refugees. Asylum seekers had to prove not only that their lives were under threat, but also that the Algerian forces were unable to ensure their safety – and this was not easy. The French authorities preferred to grant short-term refugee status, i.e. residence permits for periods shorter than ten years. The situation was so critical that refugee status for Algerians was discussed by the UN Commission for Refugees, which subsequently recommended granting refugee status even to refugees who had to flee the country not only under Government pressure, as defined in the asylum legislation of some receiving countries (including France), but also under militant Islamist pressure. What should be regarded as decisive, according to the recommendations, was the inability of the government to protect its citizens.³⁸

In 1997, the French Parliament passed a more flexible law, which required that asylum seekers prove only threat to their lives or their freedom in their country of origin. During these proceedings, it was examined whether a particular case was in contradiction with the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, but the applied interpretation of the Convention was too narrow. In 1998, 1,339 people applied for refugee status in France, 73% of whom were Algerians. The French au-

³⁷ In 1993, 14 Algerians were granted refugee status, compared to only 64 refugees in 1997. For exact numbers see Rapport d'activité 1997 d'Office Français de Protection de Réfugiés et Apatriés, April 1998, www.ftda.net/chiffres.html.

³⁸ Kāthī Lūyd: Al-Jazā'irūn fī al-manfā, Al-Hijra al-qasrīya (Forced Migration), No. 8/7, 2000/11, pp. 32–33.

thorities responded positively to one in six Algerian applications. In 1999, the number of applications grew by 16% and the number of refugee statuses granted doubled, accounting for 9% of the total number of applications.³⁹ Most of the Algerian refugees in France were granted the status of “pauper refugee” (*ludju ramadee* in Arabic), which meant they had no rights for protection provided by the state, particularly social welfare. In general, it can be said that in the mid-1990s the Algerians lost their hitherto exclusive position arising from the Évian Accords, and restrictions were introduced against them. Many, mainly young Algerians still dream of getting a job in France like their fathers and grandfathers did, but times have changed and the restrictions have become stricter again after 9/11.

The lone Maghreb migrants in France – called *zoufria*, which is an Arabic distortion of the French *les ouvriers* (workers) – who established families in the host country after the borders closed in 1973, gradually sent less and less money to their original, extended families in the home country.⁴⁰ Some members of the Algerian community began to live their own lives, separated from the traditional North-African environment. This was reflected in a more tolerant interpretation of the sacred texts, as well as in the institution of an “unofficial”, mostly lay *imam*, as the French Islamic scholar P. Roy describes.

Seasonal workers represent another category of Maghreb migrants to France – 96% of them are employed in agriculture (10,339 in 1994). In the mid-1990s, Maghreb workers made up half of the seasonal labourers in France, and their numbers kept growing. There are also significant numbers of Maghreb seasonal labourers employed in Italy and the Netherlands. In general, it can be said that the number of Maghreb migrants grew in the 1990s due to increased illegal migration and the influx of family members (family reunion).

The long-term experience allows us to summarize thus:

- Moroccan migration is predominantly to Europe;
- Moroccans are the largest migrant nationality in Europe (56%)
- France remained the main European target country for Maghreb migrants (around two-thirds of refugees);

³⁹ Ibid, p. 33.

⁴⁰ Koudiri, M.: Du Refus de l'Exil à l'Emigration Clandestine: Le Cas de l'Algérie, La Migration Clandestine, AMERM, Rabat 2000, p. 188.

- Because of the bilateral agreements, Algeria has been traditionally French-oriented, but since the 1980s, the number of Algerians in France has been decreasing, while the number of Moroccans and Tunisians has been growing;
- In some European countries the Maghreb guest workers face competition from East European labourers (especially in Italy and France);
- Moroccan migration is not only high in numbers but also widely dispersed geographically (France, the Benelux countries, Spain, Italy);
- Algerian migration is slightly weaker, but in the 1990s it was not directed solely to France, but was more dispersed (there was some migration to Australia, for instance);
- The United States and Canada were migrant destinations only to a limited extent, with the exception of Quebec;
- In the 1990s, Spain and Italy became major recipients of Maghreb immigrants;
- Maghreb migrant families united and their social situation improved;
- Migrants settled in Europe maintained high demographic growth, which, however, contrasted with demographic trends in the Maghreb, as both Tunisia and Morocco managed to regulate demographic growth in the 1990s and Algeria is also striving to do so.

France took a supportive step towards the Algerian migrants. In 2001, France and Algeria signed an agreement that gave the Algerians the same rights as other migrants in France. The waiting period for granting of legal status has been shortened to ten years and the process of family (parent and child) reunion has been simplified⁴¹. The impact on the visa policy, however, still remains unclear. In 1989, France granted visas to 800,000 applicants, while in 1997 only 57,000 were granted.

It is interesting to look at the statistics of state citizenship granted to Maghreb migrants. In France, the Maghreb migrants are dominant, with 46% of all citizenships. Most citizenships were granted to Moroccans (24%), who were successful in other European countries, too. For instance, in the Netherlands the Moroccans were the second most numerous group (after the Turks) to be granted citizenship. The Maghreb citizens left also for Canada, partic-

⁴¹ Bryant, E.: Accord Seeks to Right Immigration Wrong, *Migration News*, 8. 8. 2001, migration.ucdavis.edu/sep_11.html.

ularly to French-speaking Québec, but many also settled in Arab countries (Libya, the GCC countries). Algerian migration flows were the least dispersed, though recently the situation has begun to change.

Moroccan migrants in Spain

Moroccans remain the largest expatriate community in Spain. In 2001, their number reached around 127,000, but job opportunities grew scarce as the Spanish Government gave preference to seasonal guest workers from Latin America and Poland when hiring labour for harvest in Andalusia. Great droughts in Morocco from 1998 to 2001 led to higher unemployment and poverty. According to statistics by the Spanish authorities, 70% of the illegal Moroccan migrants who were arrested in Spain had been unemployed in their home country. Morocco is the source country of most legal migrants to Spain and, at the same time, a major transit country for migrants heading for Spain. This can be explained by huge differences in the standard of living. The average Spanish income is twelve times higher than the average income in Morocco and there are considerable differences in per capita GDP, which is four times higher in Spain. Given the average GDP growth of 3% per annum, Morocco would need a hundred years to catch up with Spain. In terms of comparison of GNI per capita and GNI PPP per capita, the contrast between the two countries is one of the highest in the world (8th and 9th place respectively). It is evident that the much trumpeted influx of funds, for instance from the EU's MEDA programs, is rather weak. From 1995 to 2001, foreign direct investments amounted to EUR 8,354 million while money transfers from Moroccan emigrants abroad amounted to EUR 18,700 million.⁴² This means that Morocco receives annually twice as much money from transfers sent by its emigrants in Spain than it gets via the MEDA programmes. A prognosis of the future demographic and economic situation in Morocco clearly shows that the contrasts between the South and the North in the Mediterranean area are likely to sharpen and also to become a security risk. It is evident that Morocco is highly dependent on money transfers sent by immigrants in

⁴² Moré, I: The Economic Step between Neighbours: The Case of Spain-Morocco, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2004, p. 186.

EU countries, and economic cooperation between Morocco and Spain cannot replace this dependence.

There are several routes to Spain and other European countries, but most migrants travel across the Strait of Gibraltar in the direction of Algeciras. They sail the strait on long boats called *pateras*, on rubber dinghies and makeshift rafts. Data published by the organization Friends and Families of the Victims of Clandestine Immigration (Association des Amis et Familles des Victimes de l'Immigration Clandestine, AFDVIC) state that from 1997 to 2001, the bodies of 3,286 refugees were recovered in the Strait of Gibraltar. Taking into account that usually one in three bodies of people lost at sea is found, it can be estimated that about 10,000 people drowned during this period in the Strait. Illegal migration from Morocco to Spain is very difficult to estimate: most of the assessments, however, quote numbers of 200,000 to 400,000, with annual growth of 5,000 to 10,000. The situation remains critical. The AFDVIC published results of a survey which showed that 70% of young Moroccans wanted to leave their country.⁴³

Morocco and some other Maghreb countries have become recently major transit centres of African, Sub-Saharan migration. Most migrants passed through Morocco to the EU from the Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries such as Nigeria, Mali and the Democratic Republic of Congo, but there were also Iraqis, Algerians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Chinese and others. Many of these people asked for refugee status in the EU. The High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration analysed the sources of this condition in 1999 and quoted the following causes:

- Poverty, hunger, armed conflicts and little likelihood of finding a permanent job are the main drivers of migration from Sub-Saharan Africa;
- The all-too-easy entry of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa to Morocco, as the transit country, was caused by the approval of the Moroccan authorities of visa derogation;
- Insufficient efforts of the Moroccan authorities and the police against organised smuggling gangs, which exploit the trust of immigrants;
- Due to economic and political concerns, Morocco hesitated to sign non-admission agreements with the appropriate source countries.

⁴³ Alami, Youmes: Loft Story vu de Casablanca, Le Monde Diplomatique, Juin 2002.

At the turn of the 21st century, the Canary Islands became a major transit point on the route of Maghreb and African migration to Europe. The *pateras* started landing on the shores of the islands as early as 1997, with most immigrants heading for the islands of Fuerteventura and Gran Canaria. The drawback to this route is that the islands are rather distant from the African shore. On the other hand they allow for direct access to the Spanish mainland, free of the rigorous checks that migrants arriving from the Moroccan shore from Melilla or Ceuta must undergo.

The enclaves or *presidios* of Melilla and Ceuta became a part of the EU as early as 1986, but remained outside the EU's custom area – similarly to Gibraltar. Thanks to their location and status, they gradually developed into centres of Maghreb migration⁴⁴, which can be divided into several groups. The first group consists of people travelling with tourist visas, or students, who cross the Schengen border and disappear in Spain with the assistance of friends or countrymen working there. They go into hiding, work for low wages and without job contracts until they are found by the police and their Spanish adventure ends. The second group consists of immigrants who enter Spain with false documents (passport, work permit, residence permit). They usually cross the Spanish border in summer when large numbers of North Africans set sail across the Strait of Gibraltar. The custom and migration officers do not have the capacities to check each and every case. The members of this group, however, often end up like those of the first. The third group is closely related to a well-organized Moroccan-Spanish network of smugglers dealing in tobacco, cannabis and other drugs. On the Spanish side, the members of this network recruit accomplices among the taxi drivers, bus drivers, fishing boat owners and businessmen of the Campo de Gibraltar and Almeria regions. The immigrants use *pateras* or the holds of fishing boats that set sail from the enclaves, as well as from Nador, Tanger and Ujdja. The charges range from USD 700 to 1,500, depending on the length of the route. The age of the immigrants is usually from 16 to 30 years but, in many cases, they are little children who cannot be legally employed or repatriated and end up in drug-dealing or prostitution.

The drawback to the enclaves is that if the immigrants are unsuccessful they end up imprisoned hopelessly in them, where there are no support cen-

⁴⁴ The Spanish police records show that in 1996, 86% of detained migrants came from Morocco and 10% from Algeria.

tres for immigrants (such as CETI on the Canary Islands). The monitoring of immigrants in the enclaves is problematic, due to the fact that Spain signed agreements with the Moroccan provinces of Nafar and Tétouan on visa-free movement of people, so that around 40,000 Moroccans pass through the enclaves, and smuggled African migrants mingle with them. Since the procedures to eject the illegal migrants were too complex, in 1997 the Spanish authorities erected a separation wall in the area.

The routes are used by immigrants in varied frequency. The Canary Islands report about 20% of disembarkations and 12% of detained migrants, who usually set sail from the shores of the Moroccan Sahara. The closest Spanish town is Algeciras (40% of disembarkations), followed by Almeria (20%), which is closest to Melilla. The statistics show that around 20% of illegal migrants detained in the Strait of Gibraltar in 2000 were of Sub-Saharan origin. There is interesting information that the Sub-Saharan migrants use the route via the Canary Islands or the Strait to Tarifa, while the Melilla-Almeria route is reserved for Moroccans and Algerians.

In August 2001, a new Spanish immigration act came into effect, which stipulates that all foreign nationals who can prove they had worked in Spain before this date would be granted a residence permit. Many of the Maghreb and African immigrants seized this opportunity and obtained a permit⁴⁵. The new legislation also allows for quick and easy expulsion of foreigners who lack such a permit, and this is further reinforced by repatriation agreements with Morocco, on the basis of which around 10,000 illegal immigrants are expelled from Spain each year.

African Migration to Morocco

At the meeting of the European Council in Tampere (1999) the EU countries were called upon to create true partnerships with the countries of origin and transit countries of migrants – partnerships that would include joint efforts aimed against migration, through repatriation of detained migrants. In 1999, Morocco became the first target of the new EU migration policy. The group

⁴⁵ Migration News, September 2001, Vol. 8, No. 9, migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/archive_2001-12mn.html.

for asylum and migration developed an Action Plan for Morocco. In compliance with Article 73 of the EU-Moroccan Association Agreements, a specialized group was established to focus on social matters and migration, and to evaluate to what extent the individual points of the Association Agreement governing migration (readmission and reintegration of a returnee, for example) are observed.

The group came up with recommendations to remedy the situation: signing of non-admission agreements, better supervision of airports and harbours, speedy seizures of false documents, better cooperation between police forces, technical and financial support to Morocco through Europol and programmes financed by MEDA II and implementation of a more rigorous visa policy in Morocco towards West African immigrants. Morocco was to establish a *cordon sanitaire* towards the south, similar to that of the Visegrad countries towards the east. The Spanish authorities suspect that Morocco regulates migration according to its own interests.⁴⁶ On October 9th, 2001, Morocco officially requested EU support in its fight against illegal migration as well as logistic means (radars, rapid response units) of monitoring the shore and inland border. Morocco's approach reflected a conviction that the problem of illegal, economic migration transcends the competencies of a national government.⁴⁷

The basic element of current EU strategy is its cooperative, multilateral character, and the strategy supports a stronger focus on criminal gangs smuggling and employing illegal migrants. Working closely with their Mediterranean partners, the EU will strive to support mutual development and cooperation in repatriation of immigrants. High priority will be put not only on facilitating migration between the country of origin and the EU host country, but above all on better circulation of economic entities between the two shores. The help provided to transit and source countries must be focused on strengthening of south-to-south integration.⁴⁸ It will be necessary to adopt a globally-tuned attitude, i.e. integrated cooperation on the source-transit-target country axis. It is for this purpose that the EU is thinking of initiating talks

⁴⁶ Le Monde, 27 septembre 2001.

⁴⁷ Ash-Sharq al-awsat, October 10, 2001.

⁴⁸ Readmission agreements signed: a) France (1983 – non-ratified), Spain (1992 – ratification pending); Germany – Agreement on Identification of Persons (1998 – non-ratified), Italy (1998 – non-ratified).

with the Maghreb countries and the source countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. It is expected that the NGOs (development organizations, charitable entities, trade unions) will exercise stronger activities across the migration axis. Any efforts to strengthen the basic rights of migrants and their protection must include two basic components: respect for individual rights and freedom, and reduction of the so-called “push-factor”, namely by fighting poverty and prevention of violence or conflicts.

The African migration is driven by a cultural-linguistic key. Migrants from the French-speaking countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Senegal) head via Spain for France, Belgium or Italy, while the English speaking migrants choose the route via the Maghreb countries and Spain to Great Britain or the United States. From the Moroccan perspective, there is a risk that migrants who are denied entry to Europe will not automatically return to their countries, but will attempt to stay longer in the transit country. This is already the case in Morocco, where African migrants look for jobs among private Moroccan companies, which leads to heightened social tensions in the overloaded Moroccan labour market.

A Moroccan-Spanish repatriation agreement has been in force since 1992, but the Spanish authorities and the police often have difficulties proving that the migrants arrived from Morocco, as the detained Africans usually claim to have lost their passports. Such migrants then end up in refugee camps in Ceuta or Melilla.

Most of the citizens of the African countries are required to show valid passports and entry visas on entering Morocco. However, passports without a visa are required from citizens of the less problematic countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Congo – Brazzaville, Guinea – Conakry, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia). There are some limits for immigrants arising from the fact that part of the Moroccan border remains closed: the border with Mauritania, due to conflict over the Western Sahara, and since 1994, the border with Algeria, due to concerns of an Islamist threat. The border with Algeria, however, is poorly guarded and most of the detained illegal African migrants entered Morocco by this route. The EU may find it necessary to engage the three countries of the central Maghreb in the matter and compel them to create a barrier against illegal immigration to the EU. Morocco, however, is reluctant to sign non-admission agreements with the individual EU countries, as the source of the transit route of illegal migration is mostly very difficult to ascertain and

prove. Another reason why Morocco does not want to sign such agreements is that the country has closed borders in the south and south-east.

Libya and Its Problems with Sub-Saharan African Migration

The Maghreb countries are not only source countries of migration heading for Europe or the Gulf countries, but often serve as destination or transit countries for Sub-Saharan migration. The Libyan leader has announced a “desert resurgence” project and stronger orientation towards Africa. It was for this purpose that the Sub-Saharan migration had been tolerated by the Libyan authorities since the late 1990s, but not legalized. Freedom of movement and the right to free choice of settlement in times of peace were confirmed in the so-called Green Charter of 1988.⁴⁹ At the summit of March 2001 in Libya, Gaddafi announced the African Union project and called for the return of expatriate Africans, intending to use the African labour for the cultivation of the provinces in south Sahara.⁵⁰ Two weeks after the summit, Libya witnessed a significant influx of African migrants. This caused complex social and cultural issues leading to violent clashes.

The Libyan strategy adopted vis-à-vis African migration was far from a spontaneous response, but rather the consequence of the long-term development and direction of Libyan foreign policy. It is well established that the Central and Eastern Sahara was, from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century, a region characterized by busy exchange of goods and people. The History Department of the Faculty of Arts in Benghazi has started a project, the main purpose of which is to outline the migration movement of tribes between Libya and Chad from the mid-19th century. Special attention is paid to the Ouled Slimane tribe, whose members live across the Sahara region. A series of forced migrations gave rise to a multinational tribal chain around Lake Chad, Kanu, Niameya and Algeria. Some tribe members emigrated to France and were granted citizenship there. The ongoing circulation, exchange, es-

⁴⁹ International Green Charter. A special edition on the 25th anniversary of the Libyan republic, Prague, Babylon 2002.

⁵⁰ Ali Bensaad: Voyage au Bout de la Peur avec le Clandestins du Sahel, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, septembre 2001, pp. 16–17.

tablishment and decline of alliances, or renewal of historical relations of the diaspora, became characteristic of this region. When Libya became independent as an important oil country, it repatriated a number of Libyan families dispersed across the neighbouring countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Niger, Sudan, Egypt). Since the 1950s, many of them have returned. The institution Markaz al-Jihad in Tripoli gathers information on all family and tribal ties and relations, and compares them to the current situation. Business relations have lasted especially between Chad and Libya.⁵¹

Libya, which is not exactly against the natural circulation of people, has become both a transit and destination country of African migration. At the beginning of the 21st century, foreigners made up 20 to 25% of the population.

Some experts say that what we see today is the renewal of old trans-Saharan migration routes and old merchant centres, but it seems that the main driver of this phenomenon is the forced migration from southern African regions to the north and then to Europe.

Agadez in Niger became a temporary stop for migrants from West Africa, including its English speaking part. During the space of a few years, the Niger town became a centre providing services and goods that the African refugees and migrants need to be able to travel further north. They usually continue via Arlit, Niger to Tamanrasset in Algeria. During the past two years, many “tour operators” were established on the market, specializing in transport of people to Libya.

Some refugees head for other countries of the Maghreb area. There is an old, traditional road from Senegal via Ghardaia, Algeria to Rif in Morocco. The migrants only need the obligatory “health card” and must be willing to bribe the local officials. Some of the refugees even get provisional visas.

The Libyans close and open their borders to African migration and by turns adopt repressive or supportive measures towards the migrants. Some cases of racist behaviour on the part of the Libyans, who allegedly treat the Africans like slaves, have been reported. The situation is especially difficult for women, who are often suspected of prostitution and prosecuted. In September and October 2000, there was a series of bloody conflicts between Lib-

⁵¹ Similarly Boubakri, Hasan: *Le Maghreb et les nouvelles configurations migratoires internationales: mobilité a réseaux: Correspondance – al-Murásalát*, Institut Recherche sur le Maghreb Contemporain, Mai-Juin 1999, Issue 56, pp. 10–15.

yan citizens and migrants, resulting in the massacre of 100 to 500 African refugees. These riots were not organized by the central power, but were rather the spontaneous response of Libyan citizens against the undesirable, culturally different “aliens”. The Libyans make efforts to contain the refugee wave to the south of their country and sometimes expel the unwanted migrants. In the 1990s, a number of refugee camps were established in south Libya.

Traditionally, most of the refugees come from Nigeria, Ghana and Niger. Some of the refugees continue on their way to Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco to get to Europe, but they have to pay smugglers. For instance, a route from Tunisia to Italy costs about USD 1,500 to 2,000. Most of the refugees are returned, after a short trial, back to their native countries.⁵²

So far, Libya is the only country that has been accepting migrants, but recently the role of the other Maghreb countries as a transit zone between Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Europe increased. A strong demographic growth has been reported from Sub-Saharan Africa, and three neighbouring countries of the Maghreb – Sierra Leone, Niger and Mali – actually have the highest growth in the world.

The closed Schengen border of the EU will force African migrants to settle – first temporarily and later perhaps permanently – in the Maghreb countries. In this case, the Maghreb will serve as the *cordon sanitaire* in relation to the EU, but it is very difficult to tell how long the Maghreb will be able to fulfil this function. It is thus very likely that in the near future Europe will have to protect the Maghreb countries against excessive migration from the south in the same way as the United States helped to fight against Guatemalan migration to richer Mexico, which served for a long time as a “bridge” for migrants travelling from Central America to the United States. The EU countries have recently shown interest in coordinating their migration policies with Libya.

Maghreb Migration to the Arab Countries

In the 1970s, when the price of oil went up, there was a growth of migration from the Maghreb to the Gulf and several agreements were concluded be-

⁵² Lire Bruno Callies de Salies: “Spectaculaire retour de la Libye”, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, janvier 2001.

tween the Arab countries to address this issue. In the mid-1980s, this trend faded away and Arab labour was gradually pushed out of the area, replaced by cheaper Asian and local labour. This trend reached its peak after the First Gulf War and was much contributed to by the gradual privatization of the public sector, the principal employer of Arab guest workers. The Maghreb countries responded to this development by stronger coordination of their migration policies. In January 1990, the Arab Maghreb Union declared collective responsibility for Maghreb migration but the initiative had little impact in practice. A lack of information and quantitative, statistical data has proved to be a major problem in monitoring migration between the Arab countries.

In the 1990s, there was strong migration from Tunisia to the Arab countries. In the late 1980s, only about 1% of Tunisian migrants worked in the GCC countries. A change occurred in 1994. In 1990, the Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation developed a plan to educate and train a sufficiently skilled and flexible workforce for the needs of the market in these countries. It was thanks to this programme that the number of migrants heading for the Gulf countries increased sixfold (to 7,100) in the 1990s. Tunisian migrants faced strong competition not only from Asian labourers, but also from Jordanians, Egyptians and Moroccans, whose governments also supported re-training courses for potential guest workers, targeted towards the needs of the host countries. Compared to the Tunisians, the salary requirements of the Egyptians were very low, which considerably limited the competitiveness of the Tunisian labourers in the GCC countries.⁵³

The migration to the GCC countries was much influenced by Arabization campaigns launched since the early 1980s, mainly in Algeria. The new generation of Arabic-speaking young people was more inclined to move to Arab countries, mainly the GCC countries and Libya.

In the case of Tunisia and Morocco, migration to neighbouring Libya was of key importance. In 1994, most of the Tunisian migrants headed for Europe (82%) and Libya was the second most frequently chosen destination (6.2%). As it was mostly cross-border migration, the exact number of Tunisians living in Libya cannot be ascertained. Given its geographical location,

⁵³ For detailed discussion see Donatella Giubilaro: Migration from the Maghreb and Migration Pressures: Current Situation and Future Prospects, ILO 1998, International Labour Organisation, www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrants/papers/migmagh/index.html.

Libya was seen as Tunisia's major economic partner. The migration dynamics were much influenced by the political situation and general relations between the two countries. The migrants stayed in the host country often for a short time and there were sudden mass expulsion campaigns (1969, 1972, 1985). These campaigns were usually accompanied by dramatic restrictions on the export of goods and money from the country, which was very painful for the Maghreb migrants. The reason for expulsion of migrants was often a drop in demand, mainly due to sanctions or political controversies with West-oriented Tunisia.

Most of the Tunisian migrants have only low standards of education. The largest number of migrants worked in Libya in the 1970s, but in the 1980s their number dropped significantly. As far as Maghreb migration to Arab countries is concerned, several conclusions can be drawn:

- Moroccan migration to Libya was much higher than Tunisian migration, despite the fact that Tunisia is much closer;
- Maghreb migration in the Gulf was low compared to other Arab countries (such as Egypt) and Asian migration;
- Gulf migration consisted mainly of young Maghreb people who were, since the 1980s, subject to intensive Arabization in schools. This focus replaced the former French-speaking orientation.

In the 1990s, the Maghreb countries became increasingly transit countries, rather than destinations of African migration (especially Morocco, Algeria and Libya). Migration in the Maghreb region has a long tradition. The French colonial administration supported circulation of labour from poor or overpopulated areas of Morocco and Tunisia to Algeria, where there were sufficient job opportunities in agriculture. Currently there are no more detailed statistics documenting these movements.

Money Transfers Sent by Maghreb Guest Workers to Their Home Countries

Wage transfers sent by migrant guest workers represent the second largest source of revenue – after oil – for the national budgets of developing coun-

tries. As far as the Maghreb countries are concerned, since the declaration of independence, the money transfers have proved the strongest inspiration for migration. There are, however, considerable differences between Tunisia and Morocco, on the one hand, and Algeria on the other. For the first two countries the transfer of capital from abroad is of macroeconomic importance, since it has a profound influence on the budget balance. Both countries have thus established financial institutions in the host countries that monitor and ensure cash flow to the destination.

Algeria is dependent on revenue from oil and partially natural gas, and therefore the country's authorities are much less interested in money transfers into the country. Money sent in by migrants represented 35% of domestic savings in Morocco's case and 22% in Tunisia's case.⁵⁴ This share has developed over time. As late as 1970, the ratio of money transfers to GDP was highest in Algeria (3.91% of GDP) and much lower in Morocco (0.68%) and Tunisia (1.6%). In 1993 it was the very opposite: in Algeria it dropped slightly (2.49%), but soared in Morocco (7.3%) followed by Tunisia (4.61%).⁵⁵ This shift had three primary causes: the growth of Maghreb migration, the growing importance of oil and natural gas in the Algerian economy and unofficial transfers of finances to Algeria.

Given the sheer size of the Algerian community in France, the volume of funds sent by guest workers to their home country was rather small (in 1992 it was only USD 4.2 million). Official money transfers were replaced by special practices such as contributions in the form of goods, French banknotes or a well-established system of compensations. However, the actual data on the "compensation business" have been distorted by the excessive exchange rate of the Algerian dinar. It is no wonder therefore that in 1981, the Algerian guest workers transferred USD 38 per capita, while Tunisians transferred USD 1,330 and Moroccans USD 2,464. It is clear that in Algeria most of the transfers had a different form. In the early 1990s, the so-called "suitcase business" was very popular, amounting, according to estimates, to USD 2.5 billion, i.e. 15 to 20% of all imports. Import of used cars was very popular and its share in unofficial business amounted to 39% in 1992. L. Fontagné explains this fact

⁵⁴ For details see: Fointagné, Lionel and Périody, Nicolas: *The EU and the Maghreb*, Development Centre Studies, OECD 1997, pp. 70–73.

⁵⁵ World Development Report, 1995.

by the aging of the Algerian migrants who arrived in France much earlier. Old migrants usually transferred less money to their home countries.⁵⁶

The CERED research institute in Rabat concluded that, oddly enough, most money was sent in by guest workers who had no contracts or who had only temporary jobs, but who live in dire economic conditions and tend to send their money to their country of origin where they actually intend to return. The settled migrants of reunited families, on the other hand, tend to send money irregularly and in smaller amounts.⁵⁷ The first generation of migrants, usually illiterate or half-literate, had stronger relations to their home country than the second or third, more educated generations, whose members assimilated better in the host country and severed some of their ties to their country of origin. The unfavourable exchange rate may have been another reason. In Tunisia, the money transfers significantly helped the state treasury, as they equalled 4.5% of GDP, 58.6% of tourist industry revenues, 47.5% of debt service and 74.5% of the country's oil export revenues.⁵⁸ In 1993, the transfers made up USD 590 million, i.e. 4.61% of GDP. In terms of volume, the money transfers sent in by guest workers to Tunisia were second after tourism revenues and what's more this revenue was not subject to significant fluctuations like oil prices.

The money transfers sent by Moroccan guest workers played a key role in the national budget, as they exceeded all other sources of revenue, i.e. both tourism and phosphate sales. In 1982–1990, the money transfers by guest workers represented 5.5 to 8.5% of GDP and in 1993 7.30% of GDP, which only confirmed the continuity of developments from the 1980s. In 2001, the money transfers amounted to 88.3% of the budget deficit reported in the same year – USD 3.3 billion. The overall volume of money transfers was subject to such influences as devaluation of the dirham, transition to the Euro, 9/11 and a series of terrorist attacks in Casablanca. Most money is sent by guest workers from France (46.6%) and Italy (11.8%).

⁵⁶ Fontagné, Lionel and Périody, Nicolas: *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁵⁷ *Migrations Internationales Actes*, Royaume du Maroc, Premier Ministre, Ministre Chargé de la Population, Séminaire 1996, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Démographiques, Rabat, CERED 1997, p. 438.

⁵⁸ Boubakri, H.: *La Coopération au Développement*, Conseil de l'Europe: Strassbourg (1994).

There are many studies analyzing the orientation and use of investment capital generated by the Maghreb guest workers in the countries of origin. A sociological study by M. Kharoufi unravels the roots of various investment forms opted for by the Moroccan migrants: around 75 to 85% of them come from the countryside and much of the capital is thus invested in purchase of farm machinery and in agriculture in general.⁵⁹ In Morocco, the funds were often used to build temporary, seasonal homes (25%). The money raised by the guest workers abroad and sent to the home country has helped to change its architecture, as new techniques and materials have been imported from Europe. Considerable investments were made in furniture and equipment of flats, for example electrical appliances. The money sent in by guest workers and used for investments even in rural areas spurred the service industry sector related to the construction industry and increased overall buying power, especially of migrants' relatives. The southern part of Tunisia and the northern part of Morocco (the Reef) were among the most heavily impacted.

The European Union and the Maghreb governments were interested in attracting the productive migrants' investments into the country. In Morocco, 75–85% of migrants came from the countryside, which determined their economic behaviour.⁶⁰ Migrants invested in farm machinery, fertilizers, equipment, houses and furnishing. Buying power increased significantly even in remote and undeveloped parts of the country, especially in extended migrant families. The migrants became the main drivers of Westernization and modernization of a traditional society, which, in some cases, provoked the protests of Islamists. Only occasionally did the migrants invest their savings in production industries.

In his study, Cassarino analyzed the activities of repatriate migrants who started businesses in Tunisia.⁶¹ He distinguishes the migrant-entrepreneurs into three categories: heirs, converts and new businessmen. Heirs were the offspring of the 1970s industrial businessmen, who returned from abroad to

⁵⁹ Kharoufi, M.: *Les Effets de l'émigration sur les sociétés de départ au Maghreb Nouvelles données nouvelles approches*, Institute de Recherche sur le Maghreb Contemporain, www.irmc-maghreb.org.

⁶⁰ Kharoufi, M.: *op. cit.*

⁶¹ For details see Cassarino, Jean-Pierre: *Tunisian New Entrepreneurs and Their Past Experience of Migration in Europe: Resource Mobilisation, Network and Hidden Disaffection*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2000.

take over the family-owned businesses. They were supported by their relatives and family in both the private and public sectors. Converts worked in Europe for government-owned companies or in public administration and brought appropriate experience with them. Having returned home, they started companies whose success often depended on good contacts with government and public offices. New businessmen returned to the country in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. They relied on a well-established foreign network, thanks to which they thrived and survived in competition. These businessmen focused on export and partnerships with European investors, with whom they struck relationships during their stay abroad. The offshore companies and joint-stock companies were dependent on foreign resources and did not form links with the local businesses. They were suspicious towards government institutions and trade unions.

It can be concluded that money transfers play both positive (a source of foreign currency, alleviation of pressure on the labour market, training and development of employees, higher buying power) and negative roles (growth of inequality and tension in society, strengthening of inflation trends). Investment-focus has some negative features (it is not directed into productive industries but rather into real estate), but positive too (growing demand for services). Various techniques and processes are being developed to direct investments from money transfers into regions and industries that need them – both on a national and Euro-Mediterranean level.

Migration Policy of the EU Countries Towards the Maghreb

Although each EU Member State had its own migration policy it can be said that at the same time the EU developed a common European policy on migration, based on the Maastricht Treaty. The EU has defined migration policies for the following issues: entry and residence of foreign nationals, visa administration, political asylum and combating illegal migration. The Schengen Agreements were of an inter-governmental rather than a Community character. The agreements were signed only by some of the EU countries, including those that had already been destinations for Maghreb migrants. The purpose of the agreements was to develop a common strategy against the pressure of migration waves arriving predominantly from the south. In this context, the

process was often understood as the building of fortifications against instability issuing from the south, including migration.⁶²

A general trend in the policies adopted by the EU countries was an effort to achieve an ideal zero migration in response to the “security convergence” which covered non-European countries including the Maghreb. France, for instance, adopted such a visa administration policy in the 1990s in order to achieve zero migration. In 1987, France issued 790,000 visas for the Maghreb countries but in 1994 only 223,000.⁶³

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) supports coordination of the Maghreb and EU migration policies and works closely with the Moroccan authorities.⁶⁴ Morocco became a member of the IOM in 1998 and it is interested in further partnership to ensure humanitarian protection of Moroccan guest workers abroad.

Maghreb Migration in the Globalized World

In 1989, the Arab Maghreb Union was established, although its activities were more or less paralyzed in the 1990s due to political controversies and the embargo on Libya. A Euro-Maghreb form of cooperation within the 5+5 initiative also failed due to controversies between the EU and Libya and due to civil war in Algeria. In 1995, the process of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was started in Barcelona, the aim of which was to establish a free-trade zone in the second decade of the 21st century. The Barcelona declaration naturally did not include establishment of a zone with free movement of people and labour, but was limited to free trade in industrial goods and partially in services. In 1987, the League of Arab States declared its intention to establish a “Great Arab Free Trade Zone” and the idea of free trade among the Arab countries is supported by the EU too. Morocco and Tunisia have gone furthest as they managed to sign association agreements with the EU and be-

⁶² Withol de Wenden, C. and de Tinguy, A.: *L'Europe et toutes ses emigrations*, Edition Complexe, Brussels 1995, pp. 29–30.

⁶³ Table published in *Le Monde*, April 5, 1996.

⁶⁴ Moroccan Human Rights Minister Meets Head of International Organization for Migration. Morocco Politics, February 3, 1999, www.arabicnews.com/ansub/daily.

came members of the Agadir Four, which passed a free trade agreement in 2001. It would benefit the Maghreb countries significantly if they could reduce their virtually absolute economic dependency on the EU. In the 1990s, the Tunisian orientation towards the EU increased both in export (80%) and import (70%) and similar trends can be observed in the other two countries. Europe became the place of residence of 90% of Algerian and 80% of Tunisian migrants. It is currently assessed that about 95% of all money transfers sent by guest workers comes from Europe.⁶⁵

In 2002, Algeria also signed the EU Association Agreement, which came into effect in 2005. Only Libya remained outside; after the abolition of sanctions, the country was officially invited to participate as an observer in the Barcelona process in Stuttgart in 1999, but showed little interest in becoming part of the process, since it was focussing its efforts on the establishment of a Pan-African Union. Libya's border is rather penetrable from the south and many refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa used Libya as the transit country on their journey to the rest of the Maghreb and the EU.

The examples of Japan in South-East Asia and the United States in Mexico clearly show that the best course for Europe in solving the migration issue will be to ensure stable economic growth in the Maghreb and an associated employment rate. It will be necessary to address the one-sided dependency of the Maghreb countries on the EU and to improve regional cooperation and trade, which is desperately low (only about 3–5% of foreign trade). From this perspective, there are several scenarios of possible development:

- The most likely scenario is the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone, although this will not be free of obstacles and delays, culminating in the creation of a single economic entity under the dominant influence of the EU;
- Political crises erupting in a number of the Maghreb countries simultaneously and freezing trade cooperation, which is not very likely;
- A very desirable, but for now unrealistic, scenario of common, simultaneous development of the Mediterranean south and north with prioritised integration of the area into the global economy.

⁶⁵ For details see: Testas, Abdelaziz: *Maghreb-EU Migration: Interdependence, Remittances, the Labour Market and Implications for Economic Development*, Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 6, Issue 3, Autumn 1991, pp. 65–66.

It is evident that the third scenario would be the best for mitigation of migration pressures, as it would create fundamental conditions for sustainable growth in the Maghreb area. If the first scenario takes place, the system of repression and containment is likely to prevail, targeted mainly on illegal migration from the south and supported by various bilateral agreements with seasonal migration quotas.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the “5+5” Euro-Mediterranean initiative was renewed. There was an initial round of dialogue in Rome in December 2001. In October 2002, a conference of ten states (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia) was held on migration. The purpose of the conference was to respond to a wave of xenophobia and hostility in Europe towards migrants from the Mediterranean region, which erupted after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in the United States. It was emphasized that mutual cultural understanding and sympathy are much needed. The Declaration of Tunis draws attention to current public opinion in Europe and its influence on strengthening of restrictions on migration. Migration is integrated into the process of North-South convergence that must include human and cultural dimensions.⁶⁶ At the same time, the League of Arab States suggested in late 2001 that a watchdog group be established to monitor the way migrants are treated in Europe.

The EU is currently considering implementing a strategy vis-à-vis the Maghreb countries of jointly combating illegal migration by means of a mechanism that would allow for quick repatriation of illegal migrants with the help of non-admission agreements, namely in the case of countries such as Morocco and Algeria. In Morocco’s case, a plan of support has already been developed, complying with the conclusions reached in Tampere. The purpose of this plan is to reduce the “push factor” in the poorer provinces of Morocco, with a special focus on youth.⁶⁷

Demographic Prospects

In the second half of the 1990s, the Maghreb entered the transition demographic phase. This stage can be defined by mid levels of mortality and a fall-

⁶⁶ Zahar, Taleb: La Declaration de Tunis, www.tunisieninfo.com/realities/878/edito.html.

⁶⁷ Aubarell, G; Aragall, X: Immigration and the Euro-Mediterranean Area, IEMED 2004.

ing birthrate. The Maghreb has embarked on a promising course of demographic development compared to the Arab Mashrik, which kept its high demographic growth well into the 1990s. Morocco, for instance, managed to slow down demographic growth from 3% in the 1960s to 1.7% in the late 1990s. In 1987–1997, the number of children per woman decreased from 6 to 3⁶⁸. Despite this, the positive development in the three Maghreb countries will be felt in the medium or long term. The direct and indirect impact of high demographic growth still has a profound effect. It is evident that the growth-curve is not the same in the South and North Mediterranean, as the growth of the Maghreb population is set to be much more dynamic in the next thirty years. The differences are clearly visible when analyzing the active population. In 1995, there were around 7.33 million active citizens in Algeria, but in 2020 this number is expected to rise to 16 million. This calculation took for granted low working activity of women (10.31% in 2020, while in 1995 it was only 4.7%).

The situation is more difficult in Morocco, which has an active population of 15.6 million, with 25.9% of women active in the economy. The active labour force in Tunisia is 4.9 million with 25.1% women active. The highest annual growth of active citizens in the next 25 years is expected in Algeria (3.16%), although lately the growth rate has dropped sharply. The lowest growth will be in Tunisia (1.95%), followed by Morocco (2.11%). On the other hand, migration can be perceived as a limited solution to the problems of the EU countries. In 2000, for example, the share of migrants in total EU population growth was 85% – and in Greece it was as much as 90%.

Demographic processes will no doubt have been influenced by environmental factors and urbanization. Given the still strong demographic growth, it seems likely that, besides economic growth, lack of water supplies will prove to be a source of tensions in the future. Damage to the eco-system is quite evident in the ongoing process of desertification in the 1990s, which has been reducing the area of ploughed land. In all three countries, agriculture fails to satisfy demand for agricultural commodities, especially cereals. The dependence on imports of agricultural commodities is of a structural character and some experts even warn that if the current trends continue into the future, the

⁶⁸ Morocco’s Population Growth Stands at 1.7 Percent, www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/981210.

Maghreb may suffer a famine. The situation is worst in Algeria, where cultivated land constitutes only 3.3% of the territory.

Lack of water supplies is likely to become another problem. According to data published in 1992, the volume of interior renewable sources of water per capita in cubic metres per annum amounted to 1,100 in Morocco, 700 in Algeria and 500 in Tunisia. In Tunisia's case, the volume is at the lowest possible threshold. If the situation does not improve, the rural population is likely to move to large cities, which will have a negative impact on living conditions and employment – and the overpopulated cities are likely to become a huge pool of potential migrants.

The Maghreb countries, with the exception of Libya, are interested in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and are making efforts to reform their economies. What is a problem, however, is huge economic inequality, which is much greater than that between the United States and Mexico.

Migration and Security Concerns

Especially in the South-European countries of the Mediterranean, there are still fears concerning the threat that Maghreb migration poses to their stability and security. Most of the migrants are Muslims, which naturally raises the issue of the status of Islam in Europe. The Islam communities in Europe have developed to such a phase that it is now necessary to take into account their social impacts. Islam has become the second largest religion in Europe.⁶⁹ Besides high numbers of Muslims, however, social reality needs to be taken into consideration, as Islam will become a crucial factor that will influence the future process of integration. The issue is not Islam as a religion, but rather the creation of a different cultural zone in Western society. The President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, emphasized in a speech in May 2003 in Bologna the need to associate immigration with the relations between different cultures as a key value of European citizenship.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ In Germany, there are 2.5 million Muslims, in Britain 1.7 million, in the Netherlands 400,000, in Belgium 200,000 and in France 3 million.

⁷⁰ Aubarell, G.; Aragall, X.: *op. cit.*, p. 22.

The Western perception of Islam is often rather dramatic, which reflects the threats of Balkanization, separatism and irredentism of the Muslim parts of the former Soviet Union after its collapse and the general strengthening of the Islamic world. The spillover of the Algerian war to France (terrorist attacks) and the capture of several likely Al-Qaida units in the European countries in the early 21st century raised many issues. There have been suggestions that Islam is little compatible with the Western value system, and former NATO Secretary General Claes even went so far as to claim that Islam was the biggest threat to the Western world since the collapse of Communism. Some Muslims, on the other hand, have started talking of a new “Crusader mentality” of the Western democracies. These are stereotypes that influence, to a certain extent, the character and dynamism of the Maghreb migration – despite the fact that these are minority opinions.

Europe could opt for the Japanese model, which supports “newly industrialized countries”, and this model could be applied to the South Mediterranean, although the cultural conditions here are not identical to South-East Asia. Higher unemployment in the EU could also prove to be a limiting factor. In the southern parts of Spain, for example, which are the principal destinations of Maghreb and African migration, unemployment exceeds 20%. The problem, however, is the low absorption capability of the Maghreb economies in view of the high growth of active population – this results in significant unemployment: Tunisia and Morocco (16 to 20%), Algeria (25 to 30%). These countries will have strong migration potential in the near future. The Maghreb economies must achieve stable economic growth that will allow them to create at least one million jobs annually. The economic results achieved so far, however, do not exactly indicate that all three countries are able to head in this direction. It would be therefore unjustified to expect that Maghreb migration to the EU countries will drop considerably in the next few years.

Among the three countries, Tunisia has perhaps the lowest migration potential, given its number of citizens and overall social and cultural characteristics. Relative political stability, with both direct and indirect impacts especially in the economic sphere, has influenced the migration flows too. In the long-term perspective, given the lack of water and of an efficient growth model, the migration potential of these countries can grow significantly.

Algeria has all the prerequisites to become a country with high migration potential: high growth of active population, unusually high unemployment

and relatively small chance of sustainable economic development independent from oil revenues. It will be difficult to find a way out of the crisis and it will prove necessary to undertake thorough restructuring both in the economy and in politics. Two factors can mitigate the migration flows to Europe. The first is the one-sided orientation of the Algerian migration to France and an evident inability to shift focus to other countries. However, economic dependency on France is, oddly enough, quite low.⁷¹ Secondly, and no less importantly, Algeria has a rather negative reputation in other European countries, due to a wave of violence that erupted across the country.

For more than thirty years, Morocco has been perceived as the country with the highest migration potential, which is a reflection of several factors: high demographic growth, high unemployment, deficiencies in social and cultural areas and little ability to influence and initiate an economic growth model. Migration potential can develop into a strong migration pressure directed at multiple European countries, in which the Moroccans have a sufficient support network, both formal and informal. The terrorist threat after the bomb attacks in Casablanca and Madrid contributed to the unwillingness of the Spanish government and public opinion to accept (especially illegal) migration from the Muslim South.

⁷¹ For example, according to estimates, about 3% of Algeria's GDP growth was associated with growth oscillations in France. For details see Testas, Abdelaziz: *op. cit.*, p. 65.

2. Egypt – The Principal Source of Arab Migration

From the 1970s on, Egypt was one of the principal source countries of Mediterranean migration and, to a limited extent, one of the host countries for refugees from the Horn of Africa. Wage transfers of Egyptian guest workers have become the key revenue for the national budget. It was for these reasons that the Egyptian government, as one of the first administrations in the Arab world to do so, developed various programs and established numerous institutions whose task was to strengthen migration trends. Egyptian labour is directed particularly to the Gulf countries, Jordan and formerly also to Iraq. To a smaller extent, there is migration to some European countries. The demographic, economic and environmental development can be taken as a signal that Egyptian migration is going to continue as long as there is a demand for Egyptian workers in the host countries.

Demographic Trends

In 2000, Egypt had around 60.5 million citizens, the largest population in the Middle East – and 15% of this number were children less than 4 years old. The Egyptian population is expected – according to rough estimates – to reach 80 million in 2010 and 90 million in 2035⁷². What is positive is that the

⁷² UN's estimates of 1989 for 2025 even forecast as many as 94 million inhabitants. Similarly Aḥmad 'Alī Ismā'īl: *Sukkān al-jumhūrīya misr al-'arabīya*, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A.: *op. cit.*, pp. 1003–1005.

population growth dropped from 2.8% in 1985 to 2.1% in 1995. A slow decrease followed in subsequent years and in 2002 the population growth was 2.04%, which is some progress, but compared to the zero growth in the developed countries is still quite high. The demographic pyramid has been expanding its base and, given the current level of demographic growth, it is expected that the Egyptian population will double in 35 years. The mortality rate has also fallen. Average life expectancy has increased from 39 years (in the 1950s) to 68.8 years (2002)⁷³. The positive trend has been much helped by family planning campaigns, supported by donors and accompanied by information campaigns in the mass media explaining the benefits of smaller families. Healthcare has improved too. The overload of the labour market by the new, young generation is a dominant trend that will, eventually, lead to migration pressures in future.

The density of population is average compared to other countries. In 1999, it was 65 people per square kilometre. More importantly, though, only 3% of Egyptian land is suitable for farming and 45% of the population lives in big cities, mostly in Cairo and Alexandria.⁷⁴

Poverty is a major problem. In the early 1990s, the proportion of people living under the poverty line (USD 30 per month) was 30%. The demand for labour and subsidies for consumption have dropped. In 2002, it was expected that the economically active population would grow by 4.5%, but the participation of women was negligible. In the same year, around one-third of the population was younger than fifteen years. The literacy rate of the population dropped from 53% (1982) to 35% (2000). In the mid-1980s, economic growth dropped four-fold compared to the previous decade. From 1975 to 1984, GDP per capita grew by 6% annually, but from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s dropped to only 1.6%. There was an improvement in the years 1990-1998, when the average GDP growth was 2.6%. Nevertheless, GDP per capita is low and in 1998 amounted to only USD 1,290.⁷⁵

⁷³ Al-Wasaf, 4 March 2002.

⁷⁴ Statistic data quoted by MidEast Web, Middle East Statistics at a Glance, Geography and Population, sources: Oriental Encyclopaedia, 1999 World Almanac and Book of Facts, IMF, Palestine, Central Bureau of Statistic Passia, Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, www.mideastweb.org/geopol.html.

⁷⁵ Guerraoui, Driss: Les grands défis économiques de la Méditerranée, Editions Toubkal, Casablanca 2001, p. 15.

Another interesting indicator is the number of foreigners in the country, which oscillated according to the economic and political situation in the country. In 1996, the number of foreigners rose slightly to 121,534, despite the fact that their share in overall population dropped to as low as 2%.⁷⁶

The total number of Egyptians living abroad is not clearly specified. In 1976, their number amounted to 1.425 million; in 1986 2.25 million and in 1996 2.16 million. There are statistical data on Egyptians who settled abroad permanently after they finished their studies or found new jobs. In 1962–1979, about 31,600 Egyptians lived abroad but only 17,000 of them were original migrants. Most of them headed for three countries: the United States, Canada and Australia.⁷⁷

Egyptian migration is focused mainly on the Arab world and it is usually men who migrate to find jobs abroad, leaving their families at home. The reason is quite simple – the directives and laws in the GCC countries do not allow for settling of complete families. Compared to other nationals, Egyptians are rather disciplined, and illegal behaviour is not commonplace for them (travelling without documents, breaching the time limits allowed by visas, etc.), which is related to the geographical focus of their migration. More women than men express interest in migration, as do people who have no previous migration experience.

A study published by Eurostat investigated the motivations for migration among Egyptians and found the following hierarchy of values: the level of wages, job opportunities in the respective countries, unemployment benefits and conditions for admission into the country. Egyptians paid most attention to social issues and most of the Egyptian migrants came from rural areas of Upper Egypt.⁷⁸

Money transfers of wages earned by Egyptian migrants can serve as a key indicator – in Egypt's case, they have become the decisive item in the country's budget. It's worthwhile to note that in 1992 to 1993, this revenue was higher than that of the oil industry.

⁷⁶ Isma'il, A. A.: op. cit., pp. 1022–1023.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 1023.

⁷⁸ Why Do People Migrate? Statistic in Focus, Population and Social Conditions, Theme 3, Eurostat, 2001/1.

In 1994, money transfers sent to the country by guest workers living and working abroad amounted to 23% of GDP. In 2001, money transfers sent by 1.3 million Egyptian workers abroad amounted to 4 billion USD a year and became the principal revenue item of Egypt's budget, again higher than oil revenues. Wage transfers are in practice conducted in three ways: the usual currency exchanges to Egyptian Pounds, bank deposits in foreign currencies made with Egyptian and foreign banks operating in Egypt and the "Own Exchange Import System", undeclared goods belonging to foreign workers. A common Egyptian guest worker saved about 50,000 to 60,000 Egyptian Pounds.

The migrants' consumer and investment habits prevented using their income to strengthen macroeconomic stability. Most of the money earned was spent on foreign goods imported into the country. For the rural population, living in adobe houses, the absolute priority was to have all the equipment needed to receive satellite programmes. Middle-class citizens who owned houses and lived mostly in cities preferred kitchen equipment, cars, perfumes and real estate. Most of guest workers' income was spent without any planning – which is, for example, in contrast to Koreans working abroad, who invested their earnings in local production. This trend is strengthened by a general distrust of Egyptians towards big investors. It needs to be stressed, though, that the overall situation in the country did not exactly provide a favourable condition for investments that would have had a positive influence on macroeconomic indicators. The wage transfers indirectly strengthened negative economic phenomena such as inflation, speculation in foreign currency and dependency on imports.

History of Egyptian Migration

In general, it can be said that the Egyptian labour force has been usually quite settled and rather conservative as far as migration was concerned – i.e. most of the people had no wish to move in order to get a job, which was given by Egypt's geography. Most of the people made their living by farming in the Nile Delta, surrounded by the inhospitable desert and the sea. Migration is a new phenomenon in Egypt.

From a historical perspective, Egyptian migration can be divided into several periods. In the first period (the 1960s) foreign migration (temporary, le-

gal and illegal) was rather limited. After the revolution of 1952, the exclusively agricultural economy gradually started to transform into an industrial one and it was due to this development that domestic migration from the countryside to the cities increased. In the 1960s, the government combated the spontaneous migration of highly-skilled labour to the United States, Australia, Canada and Europe. Currently there are 505,000 Egyptian migrants in the United States, 80,000 in Australia and 100,000 in Canada. Many of these migrants were Egyptian Christians, Copts, and many of them retained dual citizenship.⁷⁹ Students, whether on scholarships or paying for their studies, often settled abroad and never came back.

In the 1960s, highly skilled labour was leaving Egypt (teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers), looking for better working conditions and higher wages. Temporary migration was almost negligible and remained limited to the educational sector. At that time it was very difficult to obtain exit visas. In the first phase (1965–1975) many migrants were sent abroad on international temporary and official exchanges. Fewer left on the basis of individual contracts. These were most often university scholars and teachers. After the oil boom started, many teachers migrated to oil-rich Arab countries in the neighbourhood (Saudi Arabia, Libya). Migrants usually returned after two years.

In the early 1970s, Egyptian migration changed in terms of numbers, character and geographical orientation. More Egyptians left their homes to work on temporary contracts in oil-rich Arab countries. After two sharp increases in oil prices (in 1973 and 1979) the numbers of migrants rose steeply. In 1971, the Egyptian government allowed both temporary and permanent migration – pursuant to article 52 of the Egyptian Constitution amended in 1971. The government exercised considerable effort to eliminate all obstacles to migration. Article 51 guaranteed all Egyptians the right to leave the country and to return for. Act no. 73 even allowed Egyptian citizens to return within one year (this was later extended to 2 years) to their original jobs. In 1974, the exit visas were abolished and the government freed migrants of the duty to pay tax from income earned abroad. A law which compelled migrants to transfer 10% of their earnings at an unfavourable exchange rate to their home country was abolished, too. The government hoped to use migration to solve the problem of unemployment. The money transfers helped to balance the chronic budget

⁷⁹ Al-Ḥayāt al-lundunīya, 6 September 1998.

deficit and allowed for financing of social and economic projects; at the same time, they satisfied the demand of neighbouring countries for skilled labour and helped to alleviate the political tensions in the region.

In the late 1970s, the second phase of Egyptian migration started and lasted to the mid-1980s. It consisted mainly of unskilled labour migration. Until 1977, Libya was the main destination country but political relations cooled after Egypt signed the Camp David Accords with Israel and Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq became the main destination countries. Many Egyptians were hired for construction works in the Gulf and Jordan. The government started supporting the migration of doctors, laboratory and medical workers and nurses, which was reflected in the number of these professionals who left the country. Iraq, with its liberal migration policy and a labour shortfall during the war with Iran, became a popular destination of the Egyptian unskilled migrants in the second phase. However, rural migrants were not employed in agriculture, as they had expected, but in the construction industry. Due to the considerable geographical distance, the migration wave returned within four to five years.

Compared to the 1970s, Egyptian migration from the mid-1980s on had an altogether different character as there was a change in the global economy, politics and technical conditions. Egyptian labour faced new international and domestic phenomena, such as:

- 1) The end of the Gulf War;
- 2) Falling oil prices and slow-down of the GCC countries' economies;
- 3) Completion of planned projects in the GCC countries and lower demand for labour in the construction industry;
- 4) A tendency to replace foreign labour with domestic employees, who had managed to acquire the necessary skills and education in the meantime.

The third phase of the migration cycle, from the late 1980s to the present, has been parallel to changes in the political and economic atmosphere in the Middle East, which had an impact on changing migration flows. From the mid-1980s on, Saudi Arabia preferred skilled workers from Egypt, while the Asian countries and Yemen met the country's demand for unskilled labour. In 1974–1993, 11 bilateral agreements were signed with labour importing

countries. Some of these agreements include certain protection of the workers – the recipient country had to provide return transport and contracts and ensure that labour codes and anti-discrimination measures were applied to Egyptian workers. The agreements, however, did not include medical treatment and completion bonuses.

**Number of Egyptians living in selected Mediterranean countries
(as estimated by the Egyptian consulates as of December 31st 1998)**

	Country	City	Number of Egyptians	Note
1.	Italy	Rome Milan	60,000 150,000	approx. 210,000
2.	Spain	Madrid	1,000	
3.	Malta	Valetta	400	
4.	Turkey	Ankara Istanbul	26 100	approx. 126
5.	Greece	Athens	50,000	

Source: Vizārat al-khārijīya; vizārat al-quwā 'āmila wa al-hijra, qitā' ash-shu'ūn al-hijra.

Migration laws were put under the responsibility of the following competent ministries or institutions: the Ministry for Migration Affairs, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Labour and Training Ministry, migration officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration was responsible for the protection of Egyptian citizens abroad, applying the experience and skills of migrants returning from abroad, reinforcing socio-economic relations between migrants and their home countries and developing a comprehensive migration policy for Egypt. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a specialized department that coordinated cooperation with other ministries. Its task was to plan and implement migration policy. The Ministry of Interior issued work permits for migrants. The Ministry of Manpower and Vocational Training was, from 1979 on, responsible for the most efficient use of foreign workers' skills in compliance with Egypt's national priorities. CAPMAS published

various information, statistics and surveys on Egyptian labour. What makes analyzing the Egyptian migration more difficult is that it is being monitored by many, often-competing institutions, and the integration and correlation of information is often very complicated.

Analysis of Temporary Labour Migration (*hijra muwaqqata*)

The Egyptians work abroad mostly on the basis of contracts. Permanent migrants usually do not send their wages by money transfers and they do not return to their home country. Temporary migrants, on the other hand, usually sign contracts for a clearly specified period during which they work in the host country. In the 1990s, temporary migration was negotiated in four forms:

- Temporary secondment through a competent public or governmental institution or through personal contracts with government-owned or private entities in the Arab countries (for the duration of the development projects);
- Leaving the country and searching for jobs with the help of official channels;
- Searching for jobs through unofficial channels, such as tourism or visits;
- Jobs found through subsidiaries of Egyptian companies, especially in the construction industry.

In the host countries, Egyptians occupied jobs for which there was a lack of skilled local labour, or which were considered demeaning by the locals. For instance, the Saudis do not like to work in the construction industry or the Iraqis in agriculture.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Egyptian labour was directed mainly to Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Jordan. In the 1990s, the number of Egyptian workers in the GCC countries dropped (as the development projects were completed) and after the Gulf War, almost all the Egyptian guest workers left the region. The political tension with Libya in the first half of the 1990s dramatically reduced the number of the Egyptians working in Libya. In the mid-

1990s, Saudi Arabia still hosted about 70% of Egyptian migrants working abroad. Egyptians also took advantage of job opportunities in Kuwait, the UAE and Oman. The number of contracts signed with the GCC countries has been decreasing since the mid-1980s. Over 50% of Egyptians employed in Saudi Arabia were unskilled labourers, employed in production, the construction industry and agriculture. Around 20% of them worked part-time. In Jordan, Egyptians were employed as blue-collar workers in production, transport and agriculture, having replaced the Jordanians who left to work abroad. Most of them worked in agriculture together with Jordanian and Palestinian women. They were not respected by the Jordanian society and were exploited (given low wages)⁸⁰. Currently, their dominant position in the agricultural sector is being threatened by yet cheaper Bangladeshi labourers.

It is interesting to note that about one-third of the Egyptians who returned from Kuwait and Libya were engineers and scientists. Most of the migrants returned after 1982 to Egypt, as their job contracts terminated. Egyptians mostly invested their savings in real estate (houses in the country, flats in the city). A smaller number of Egyptians worked in other countries, such as Syria (90,000), Lebanon (50,000), France (36,000) and Italy (27,000). About 15,000 Egyptians worked in Israel before the *intifada*, but their number dropped to 2,000 after it terminated. Some of them married Arab women with Israeli citizenship there.⁸¹

The main incentive for migration is a desire to earn money. The dynamics of migration are influenced by centrifugal and centripetal factors: these are demand/supply, surplus of labour and relatives of migrants in the host country, who usually help the new arrivals to achieve a stable position on the labour market.

High inflation and decreasing buying power became the main drivers of migration. Young people worried about high costs of housing, limited income in the public sector and high unemployment of university graduates. High costs of living were responsible for the draining of many highly educated and highly skilled professionals (doctors, engineers, bankers, etc.). The

⁸⁰ Van Aken, Mauro: Egyptian Farm Labourers in the Jordan Valley: Hierarchy of Migrants, Hierarchy of Places, University of Milan, Bicocca, www.cermoc.lb.refer.org/migration/projetseng/maurovanAken.html.

⁸¹ Ishkālīyat al-hijra fi al-Mutawassīṭ: at-tawajjuhāt al-mustaqbaliya: op. cit., p. 132.

difference in wages in Egypt and some oil-rich countries played an important role, too.⁸²

The high unemployment which started in the 1950s due to a population boom was a key driver of migration. There was strong overpopulation especially in Cairo and therefore most of the migrating workers came from this city. In the 1990s, however, the government put more emphasis on the promotion of migration than on employment policy – which is a strategy that does not seem to be very successful at the moment. Globalization has emphasized some social problems that had been caused by the privatization process. One of the major problems is a lack of quality education, especially in technical professions, which are in most demand in Egypt.

Since the early 1980s, there have been several campaigns to reduce the demographic growth. The aim of these campaigns was to persuade people of the advantages of family planning. Demographic experts, nevertheless, expect that the demographic pressure could diminish in future. The Egyptian authorities are now trying to reduce the population growth in the cities and to shift some of the people to the rural, desert areas of the country. By 2020, it is expected that the habitable area of the country will grow from the current 5% to 15%.

In the early 21st century, it can hardly be expected that there will be a new boom for Egyptian foreign workers like in the 1970s and 1980s. After the Gulf War, Iraq, due to serious economic problems, severely limited the influx of foreign labour. In the late 1990s, only 100,000 Egyptians worked in the country, and when Saddam Hussein fell from power this number was reduced yet again due to instability and chaos. Libya, too, limits with some fluctuation the influx of foreign Arab labourers and gives preference to less-demanding African migrants, who are hired, for instance, for the irrigation works in the south of the country. The economic recession after the Gulf War and the long-term downward trend of oil prices (since the mid-1980s) made the GCC countries re-evaluate their migration employment policy. Many countries took measures to ensure that domestic workers were given preference. In the GCC countries, there were around 500,000 Egyptian guest workers at

⁸² For instance, in the GCC countries, university professors receive a five times higher salary than in Egypt.

the start of the 21st century, and 400,000 of them remained in Jordan.⁸³ There is still some demand for skilled labour, which, however, Egypt and other Arab countries cannot sufficiently supply.

Most of the GCC countries favour cheaper and more efficient labour from East and South Asia⁸⁴. For instance, Qatar completely halted the influx of Egyptian migration, although in this particular case it was due to political tit-for-tat over Egypt's refusal to take part in the MENA summit in Doha (November 1997). The unemployment issue will not be solved by the outflow of Egyptians into the EU countries, which have been imposing tight restrictions on legal migration since the 1970s. In the 1990s, there was demand in the EU countries for educated, elite labour, the influx of which is regulated by bilateral agreements with the Mediterranean countries (such as France) or by quotas (Germany). Seasonal jobs are another possibility but this is unacceptable for the Egyptians due to geographical distance.

The demographers predict higher demand for foreign labour in ageing Europe on the mid-term horizon. Europe, however, remains the principal destination of Maghreb and Turkish migration as the Egyptians traditionally favour jobs in the GCC countries. Recently, the Egyptians have shown some interest in the COMESA markets and Australia. At the start of the 21st century, the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Immigration showed interest in job opportunities in Scandinavia. A small number of Egyptians worked in Italy in the 1990s.

Due to the issues mentioned above, the once-profitable labour trade is falling into decline, which is reflected in the poor results achieved by some of the head-hunter agencies offering jobs in the Gulf. The Ministry of Manpower and Immigration refused to renew licences to many of them⁸⁵ – not only because of falling demand, but also because of frauds perpetrated against desperate Egyptian workers, who were exploited especially by illegal, temporary, short-term contracts with no financial guarantees or insurance.

⁸³ *Ishkālīyat al-hijra fi al-Mutawassiṭ: at-tawajjuhāt al-mustaqbalīya*: op. cit., p. 129.

⁸⁴ In 1999, there were about 700,000 Egyptians in Saudi Arabia, 25,000 Egyptians in Qatar and about 110,000 Egyptians in the UAE. Their exact number in Jordan, Libya and Lebanon are not known (data published by the Ministry of Labour and Training of Egypt). Fatemah Farag: Who Protects Migrant Workers? *Al-Ahram*, 25 November–1 December 1999, p. 457.

⁸⁵ Shaimaa Labib: Less Jobs in the Gulf, *Al-Ahrām*, 24 to 30 September 1998.

Money Transfers by Egyptian Labourers

In the last three decades, migration has been a key process with major macroeconomic and microeconomic impacts. Economic growth and migration are mutually conditioned by the following factors: transfers, exchange rates, state revenues, local interest rates, prices, domestic and international inflation, numbers of migrating workers, imports, trade balance and demand for foreign currency. Microeconomic influences depend on willingness to transfer wages, low tendencies to save and spending of the imported capital. In Egypt's case, wage transfers, savings and investment were not in proportion to the volume of migration as was usually the case elsewhere.

Surveys have shown that guest workers' use of earned income is determined by their education, since educated guest workers are often motivated to stay abroad as long as possible. Educated workers also have characteristic spending habits. The high taxes in Egypt proved to be an important hindrance for migrants to saving or investing their money in Egypt.⁸⁶ It's evident that such a pattern of behaviour had a negative impact on GDP growth. Frequent changes of bank rules and different interest rates at home and abroad increased distrust, resulting in a decrease in the volume of financial resources transferred to the home country. With their eccentric shopping habits (buying of scarce, luxury, foreign goods, for instance) the Egyptian guest workers transformed the shopping practice in their country, creating a preference for foreign goods. The difference in inflation rates at home and abroad also played a role to the advantage of guest workers, whose buying power was significantly higher. High inflation rates abroad usually reduced guest workers' savings and had an impact on the duration of their stay abroad or their decision to migrate.

The re-integration of migrant workers into the labour markets in their home countries proved to be a problem, too, due to high unemployment rates. The returning guest workers often invested in some minor business project in order to be self-employed or left their home country again. Much depended on the social integration of the individual. Some migrant workers married and assimilated into a society of the receiving country, which had a considerable impact on transfers to the home country.

⁸⁶ According to the World Economic and Social Survey (2004, p. 102), Egypt one of the countries with the highest costs on transferring the sum of USD 200 – amounting to 13.8%.

Money transfers sent by migrant workers is a phenomenon that strengthens the interdependence of host and source countries, which must reach a mutual agreement and define cooperation in the area. The situation compels them to accept some kind of migration policy. Transfers affect many sectors of the economy. Documents of the International Monetary Fund use the term “remittance country” to indicate a country in which the volume of money transfers amounts to 50% or more of exports of goods and services. In the early 1990s, Egypt became such a country, with money transfers accounting for more than 200% of exports, according to the IMF publication *The International Financial Statistics*.

The Egyptian government divides transfers into several categories: transfers in cash converted to Egyptian pounds, foreign currencies saved in the banks of the source country, imports financed by the Own Exchange Export System and undeclared goods brought in by returning migrants. In the 1970s and 1980s illicit trade boomed, strengthened by the influx of undeclared transfers – this undermined the efforts of the Egyptian government to make the Egyptian currency more stable and to achieve a more balanced budget. The government faced these pressures by issuing special, beneficial bonds and by establishing a major bank to attract official money transfers. Nevertheless, the government failed to disrupt the black market. Special import measures and a number of exchange rates were introduced, but all of this failed due to the guest workers' suspicious attitude towards government financial policies and ever-changing bank rules. Guest workers tended to buy foreign goods as local goods were of inferior quality or lacking. The so-called “suitcase trade” boomed.

The Egyptian workers in the Gulf saved on average about 55 % of their wages but only about half of this sum was transferred to Egypt. The data published by the Egyptian Central Bank shows that in 1993 wage transfers in cash almost doubled compared to 1983 and represented about 70% of earnings. This trend continued. Transfers in the form of goods, on the contrary, significantly dropped in the 1990s. Unification of exchange rates and an interest rate increase in 1991 only strengthened this trend.

In the 1970s and 1980s labourers could send their wages in foreign currency home and their families could exchange them for Egyptian pounds at an unfavourable rate. Everything changed after the exchange rates were unified in 1991 and the black market eliminated. In Cairo, specialised stores were

established that sold luxury goods and accepted not only dollars, but also other currencies of the GCC countries. These stores deposited their revenues in an official, state banking institution at the official exchange rate. Migrants could save their foreign-earned money in the banks and receive the kind of advantageous interest usual in the Euro-Dollar zone. Temporary migrants returned home after the contracts terminated with durable consumer goods.

Unofficial disposal of earnings was quite easy. The money were often exchanged on the black market, which operated on the principle of demand and not the exchange rate. Migrants often sold foreign currencies to Egyptian moneychangers. The demand was quite high: pilgrims to Mecca, people travelling abroad, businessmen. There was also speculation on the black market, which determined the demand for foreign currency acquired from transfers. Higher interests on savings in Pounds stimulated saving. In the 1990s, the income from money transfers rose to such an extent that it exceeded the total incomes from the Suez Canal, oil exports and the tourist industry. In the fiscal year 1992/93 they were around USD 7 billion. Egypt occupied 5th position in volume of remittances globally in 2002 (around USD 3.8 billion).⁸⁷ In the early 1990s, the income from money transfers helped to compensate for a temporary deficit in tourism incomes resulting from Islamic terrorist attacks.

The economic impact of the transferred money was dubious, as the financial transfers served mainly to increase families' standards of living rather than business investments and profit generation. Migration drew highly skilled labour from the market and these guest workers usually did not send their wages home. It significantly contributed to the growth of demand inflation in the 1970s and 1980s.⁸⁸ In some industries the lack of labour drove wages higher (the construction industry, electricity services, carpenters, etc.) and labour migration had an impact on education and healthcare, too. Due to the stronger buying power of the migrants, the prices of land (both for housing and agriculture) rose five-fold in the 1970s. Despite this, some sources claim that in the 1990s, the money transfers helped to increase productivity

⁸⁷ Source: UN/DESA, based on IMF, Balance of Payment Statistics Database.

⁸⁸ For details see Looney, R. E.: *Macroeconomic Impact of Workers' Remittance on Arab World Labour Exporting Countries*, International Migration, XXVIII (1), (1990), pp. 25–45.

and investment activity in Egypt's urban areas. GDP grew to USD 22 billion with a USD 10 billion increase in remittances.⁸⁹

Unemployment was on the rise in the 1990s as the prospects of a more massive migration faded away and the public sector companies fell into decline in the globalization era. There was a huge gap between agricultural production and consumption, which had several causes. Labour migration and unemployment in Egypt were partially caused by the inability of the economy to absorb workers released from the traditional agricultural sector into the "modern sector". The economy also had problems with reabsorbing migrant workers. High unemployment among returning migrant workers was another issue.

The last interesting trend in the Egyptian market was the import of unskilled foreign workers to replace local labour. Egypt has been slowly transforming into a foreign migration recipient country, although the export of labour still dominates. It is evident that labour migration has both positive and negative aspects, including excessive demand for imported goods and a profound change in consumer habits, as remarked above.

Sociological surveys have shown that labour migration also has an impact on family ties as it is mainly men who leave to work abroad (especially for the Gulf countries). Less frequently, both parents leave Egypt to work abroad, leaving the children in the care of grandparents. Rich guest workers' children who lack supervision are prone to problematic behaviour (e.g. drug abuse). Migration contributed to the feminization of the Egyptian family, which has given women greater freedom of choice.⁹⁰

Some sociologists have shown that migration leads to individualism and materialism and weakens traditional social goals and values. The migrants have an opportunity to compare Egypt's economic and social conditions with those in other countries, which leads to their increased dissatisfaction with life in Egypt. Returning migrants go through a longer cycle of frustration and are characterized by a sense of superiority with regard to existing institutions. Social and economic inadaptability often compel repatriated mi-

⁸⁹ World Economic and Social Survey 2004, Chapter IV: Economic Impact of International Migration, p. 110.

⁹⁰ For details see Cairo Demographic Centre (1996), *The Impact of Male Employment Abroad on the Lives of Wives and Children*, Cairo 1996.

grants to leave the country again. Dissatisfaction often stems from the considerably lower wages that the migrants receive at home for the same job. The migrants also accept the conservative Islamic values of the rich Arab countries in the Gulf and tend to introduce these at home. This trend gave rise to the category of “religious entrepreneurs” who sympathised in the 1990s with the claims of the Islamists.

Foreign and Domestic Events that had an Important Effect on Migration Flows to and from Egypt

First Gulf War and Migration

Before the Gulf invasion, the Egyptians in the Arab countries numbered about 1.9 million, of which roughly 83% worked in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. In the wake of the Iraqi invasion, more than a million foreign workers had to leave the Gulf countries. Half of these were Egyptians leaving Iraq and Kuwait. They left their property behind, often failing to collect their wages and savings. The massive transfer of people caused the Egyptian government enormous difficulties in incorporating the returnees in work and in the social system. Egypt’s statistics suggest that about half a million people returned to the country. The crisis was aggravated by a concurrent drop in oil prices and replacement of foreign workforce by local workers.

Egypt temporarily lost income from wage transfers. The estimated total loss incurred by Egypt as a result of the suspension of financial transfers was roughly USD 2bn in 1990. Allegedly, Egyptian workers from Kuwait lost savings worth USD 13bn.⁹¹

The situation improved after 1991, when Egyptian workers replaced (400,000) “disloyal” Palestinians in Kuwait, although many of them complained about bad treatment by Kuwaitis. In the 1990s, some 200,000 Egyptians were employed in Kuwait, although their number was decreasing. Kuwait also had illegal Egyptian immigrants, working largely in construction (about 30,000 people), but this type of migration was risky. Detained illegal immigrants were repatriated to Egypt and their transport costs had to be cov-

⁹¹ For more details see Wahba, Sadek: What Determines Workers’ Remittances? Finance and Development, Dec. 1991, 28(4), pp. 41–44.

ered by the Egyptian government. The reconstruction of Kuwait also relied on labour from Asian countries, which had been given preference since the mid-eighties, as it was two to three times cheaper than comparable Arab labour. Following the Iraqi aggression, Jordanians, Palestinians, Yemenis and Sudanese had to leave the GCC countries. Jordanian-Palestinian migrants were highly educated and, following the Israeli occupation in 1967, included entire families. Pursuant to the “Damascus Declaration”, this “disloyal labour” was replaced primarily by Egyptians.

Return of Egyptians from Libya

From the mid-1970s on, Egyptian workers gravitated to Libya. As transportation costs were low, this destination appealed to the poorer, less solvent Egyptian classes. September 1985 saw a political rupture between Tripoli and Cairo, which developed into expulsion of Egyptian labour from Libya. Subsequently, Egypt’s Ministry of Labour received about 18,000 complaints, which were not processed until 1990. In late 1993, Egypt’s relations with other Arab countries improved and Egyptian labour once again started streaming into Saudi Arabia, Libya, Kuwait, and Jordan. In 1993 Libya received approximately 23% of all Egyptian labourers, but in 1995 Egyptians were ousted from the Libyan labour market again, in retaliation for the opening of the peace process with Israel. At that time, Libya also expelled Palestinians and Sudanese. In the late 1990s, Egyptian labour was replaced by immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, working on irrigation projects in the south of the country.

Egyptian Migration to Jordan and Iraq

Iraq received half-educated or uneducated Egyptian workers and allowed them the same conditions as those enjoyed by the local population. They were supposed to fill the jobs left vacant by Iraqi soldiers who had gone to the front during the Iraq–Iran War.⁹² The working conditions were poor and further deteriorated in the course of the Gulf War. At that time, Egyptians’ savings also waned. Wage transfers dropped as a result of restrictions on foreign currency exchange. Tension and violence occasionally erupted between

⁹² Toth, J.: op. cit., p. 9.

Iraqis returning from the front after the war and Egyptians who were occupying their jobs and hampering their involvement in civilian life. In many cases Egyptians were even forced to serve in the Iraqi army.

The Jordanian boom of the early 1980s was brought about by massive wage transfers from Jordanian labourers in the Gulf, which made employment of unskilled Egyptian labour possible. Upon the return of Jordanians from the Gulf in the early 1990s, Jordan adopted a restrictive migration policy. Both Jordan and Iraq were perceived by Egyptians as unattractive host countries, owing to low earnings and poor working conditions.

Social Integration of Egyptian Guest Workers

Social contacts between Egyptians and the local population were almost exclusively confined to labour issues. Locals, as a rule, felt superior to immigrants, irrespective of their Islamic and Arab origin. Interpretation of law, too, placed the “second-rate” immigrants at a disadvantage. Political, economic and administrative laws were often used to discriminate against the foreign labour, which traditionally maintained loyalty to the host country’s regime.

It happened repeatedly that initial contracts were cancelled upon arrival in the host country and the unsuspecting migrants were required to sign new contracts, which offered considerably smaller advantages and were often discriminatory. There was no overall legal framework to protect immigrants, who often accepted the new offer for fear of being repatriated. In rare cases, they submitted the case to local courts, which usually decided against them.

Arab countries typically complain about segregation and harsh treatment of Arab immigrants in the EU countries, but considerably more drastic forms of social exploitation are faced by Arab, Islamic immigrants, for instance in the Gulf countries, Lebanon, Libya and Jordan.

Currently, another obstacle has emerged, which hinders less skilled labour from securing jobs on the demanding Gulf labour market. Egyptian labour is not trained to work with modern technologies (computers, fax machines, electronic devices), which became widespread in the second half of the 1990s. Koreans, for instance, are successful in securing jobs in the UAE, as they are better than Egyptians at using the above technologies. A similar situation could be observed in the late 1990s in Kuwait and Qatar. Capital-

intensive projects required highly professional management in terms of using modern electronic information systems.

Foreign workers in some countries had to face sophisticated rules restricting wage transfers to their homelands. Between 1986 and 1989, the Iraqi government introduced rules which substantially limited wage transfers to Egypt. Numerous labourers left Iraq due to these measures. The estimated loss incurred by Egyptian labour amounted to 1.2 billion dinars per annum. In 1993, Libya had 500,000 Egyptian workers who could transfer only 50% of their wages, i.e. about 100–125 dinars at the official exchange rate.

The political stance of Yemen during the First Gulf War (1991) led to a forced exodus of many Yemenis from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. Problems were encountered by Egyptians, too. Devaluation of the Yemeni rial against the US dollar on the free market was accompanied by a change in the official exchange rate. As only 50% of wages were paid in dollars, the measure contributed indirectly to a reduction in wages. Inflation led to a growth in the prices of goods and services by 400%, which was not accompanied by a growth in wages. Moreover, contracts in the private sector were subject to increased tax and social payments, which also led to a wage reduction.

From around the 1980s, the Gulf countries, unlike Iraq, started to give preference to Asian labour, which was due to two factors:

- Asian labourers accepted lower wages than Arabs;
- Asian labour was more precise, worked more intensively and was more disciplined than Arab labour;
- Asian labour was usually proficient in English, which is essential for modern business;
- recruitment of Asian labour was perfectly organized, which allowed for better selection according to profession and teamwork requirements. When Asian job seekers failed to get employment, they paid for their own return journeys to their homelands.

On the other hand, Egyptian labour was sometimes preferred to Asian labour because of their Arabic language, as computers often used Arabic software. The presence of Egyptian labour in Arab countries was due to political developments (bilateral relations or regional situations).

Egypt is not only a source of labour migration, but harbours numerous refugees from the surrounding countries. Most refugees came from conflict-ridden areas or places of humanitarian disaster. Little is known about the impact of severe ecological changes on the growth of migration.

Internal Migration

The characteristics of internal migration from rural areas to cities, which has considerable dynamics in Egypt, is also interesting. It did not stop during Nasser's import substitution policy, Sadat's open-door policy (*infitah*) or Mubarak's period of liberalization and structural reforms.

The high unemployment rate in rural areas and the prospect of higher earnings in cities is the main motive behind migration. The scope of rural migration into cities grew to enormous proportions. In the 1960s, rural migration to Cairo amounted to 700,000 people per annum. In the 1970s, the figure rose to one million and in the late 1980s it reached 1.4 million. Education has a decisive effect on the migration flow from rural or small-town locations to large cities. The cities that attract most people in Egypt are Cairo, Giza, and Alexandria, which had about 21.5% of the total population, while other cities, especially in the Canal zone, had another 43%.⁹³ The group most attracted by large cities is that of young adults (aged 15 to 34), while adults aged 35 and above return from cities to rural areas.⁹⁴ Urban agglomerations have been filling up since the 1980s with young and better educated citizens, which affects differences in labour productivity in rural and urban areas.

Conclusions

Experts disagree as to whether the restrictive migration policy will cause greater damage than constant temporary migration accompanied by poten-

⁹³ CAPMAS statistics, Egypt Statistical Yearbook 1996.

⁹⁴ These results are based on a detailed analysis by Barry McCormick and Jackline Wahba: Big Cities and Migration: Evidence from Egypt; in: Ismail Sirageldin: Human Capital, Population Economics in the Middle East, An Economic Research Forum Edition, The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo 2002, pp. 326–341.

tial losses. It is evident that reliance on income from migration has made Egypt's economy more vulnerable to the effects of political turbulence in the region. To help increase the demand for Egyptian labour, the government has to adopt certain measures in advance, such as organizing English courses for emigrants or increasing their ability to use modern technology in their respective professions. The ideal is to develop an education system that will adapt its orientation to current demand and pay much more attention to technical disciplines.

In the 1990s the Egyptian government adopted a number of useful measures, which made wage transfers to the country by workers abroad easier (unification of exchange rates and increased interest rates on deposits in the domestic currency). A widely discussed topic is the issue of establishing Egyptian companies in host countries to recruit Egyptian labour. Furthermore, it will be necessary to encourage returning workers to invest in small projects and to give investors tax breaks or provide other incentives. It will be necessary to predict more accurately the return of labour and the length of its stay, in order to prevent migration shocks. The problem is that data regarding labour migration are often lacking or intentionally distorted, so that an early warning system geared to rapid reaction does not really work.

3. Emigration Dynamics in the Levant Countries

Characteristics of the Region

Objective research into migration movements in the region has to take into account all economic, political and social aspects that affect migration. The Levant countries share some peculiarities which set them apart in terms of their regional or international involvement and their different degree of sensitivity to regional and international exposure. They are typically small and dependent countries with limited raw material resources. They are threatened by violent political conflicts and abrupt territorial or population fluctuations. Their economies are unstable and are considerably more interconnected, even when compared with countries absolutely dependent on migration (Egypt). Integration tendencies in the economic sphere are apparent between Lebanon and Syria on the one hand, and Palestine and Jordan on the other.

All the countries in the region have small populations, which means that any type and scope of migration has a very strong effect. The regional oil boom had a considerable impact particularly on Jordan and Palestine, becoming an “absolute indicator” that accounted for all aspects of life and economy. Small, irregular frontier and seasonal migration had its strategic importance. The ecological factor (such as desertification, shortage of water and arable land for farming, contamination threats etc.) has become very important.

The small population also translated to a small workforce. Another feature is an extremely young population in these countries, where nearly half of the population is under legal working age. The ousting of women from the labour market revealed the high degree of their dependency.

Migration patterns usually cannot emerge in situations with rapid changes, as they would not lead to a long-term change in the characteristics of the economy and population. It has been clear in practice that implementation of policies in these countries has more resembled crisis management than migration control. The only exception was Jordan, particularly from 1970 to 1990. In this period the strategy geared to educating “export” labour became a part of its three-year and five-year plans.

The chief objective of Lebanon’s development plan was to ward off social discontent. Reforms at the turn of the century were used to attract foreign direct investments, but resulted in impoverishment of rural areas. There was a massive relocation of population from rural areas to prosperous cities along the coast and abroad.⁹⁵ Rural areas have lost their elites, intelligentsia and young labour, who have been leaving for cities. As a result of the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and long-term conflicts, the local population dropped to one sixth of its previous size to the current 50,000.⁹⁶ Palestine did not have a national development plan or any other form of economic policy prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. The citizens of all the countries had compelling reasons for emigration and seeking a better life elsewhere. The governments had to address refugee problems and deal with internal population transfers.

History and Tradition of Migration

Due to a strong connection between the current forms of migration and traditional, past factors, it is important to consider the issue from a synchronous perspective. Successful migration waves and a broad geographic range of emigration have developed traditions for numerous families and regions. Family networks of the Levant population have spread around the globe, giving individuals a wide range of options in planning their future. A key factor has been forced relocation due to war.

⁹⁵ Information International’s Nov. 2001 survey “Lebanese Emigration: Characteristics of Emigrants” contends that the causes of migration are primarily economic rather than political or sectarian. About 20,000 people with higher and technical education emigrate annually.

⁹⁶ The size of internal migration from the south is not known, but this figure is consensually accepted. Lebanon Revisited: A Transition Strategy 2003–2005, USAID/Lebanon, August 2002.

A historical snapshot will clarify the interdependency of the region, which used to be a part of what was referred to as “Greater Syria”, until it divided into the nation states Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan. Before World War I, all emigrants from this region were called, or identified themselves as “Syrians”. They were occasionally referred to as Turks in summary statistics, owing to their affiliation to the Ottoman Empire. Numerous communities abroad now identify themselves with the Syrian or Syrian-Lebanese community, although new categories of identification have emerged.

In the case of Lebanon and Syria, there are two phases of emigration in the period prior to World War I:

- 1) From the mid-17th century till the mid-19th century a limited number of emigrants left for Egypt and major centres of trade between Europe and the Middle East (Livorno, Marseille and Manchester). They were mostly Christian and Jewish merchants from large cities such as Aleppo (Halab), Damascus, and later also Beirut.
- 2) From the late 19th century until World War I, unrestricted migration to North and South America occurred, although the Ottoman authorities occasionally attempted to reduce the outflow by administrative restrictions, such as lengthy procedures for issuing travel permits, which proved very effective. This emigration mostly involved Christians and the Druze. Most emigrants had limited education and very little skills, except perhaps farming.

Identically to the second Lebanese phase, there was Palestinian (especially Christian) migration from the cities and areas (Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Beit Jala) located in the West Bank. This process had its analogy in Lebanon, as it had the same starting points and almost the same migration trajectories. The 19th-century migration, whether from Lebanon or Palestine, may be described as a limited one. Most of the emigrants were young, single men who first journeyed to Europe and then on to the New World. Some of them returned.

The economic depression after World War I was a powerful stimulus attracting these people from the USA and Latin America back to their own countries. A great number of the emigrants returned in 1926 and in 1933. They confirmed their sympathies and connections to their homeland by

money transfers or by supporting charities in Lebanon and Syria. Families invested in their sons, transferred capital for them, and provided them with money for travel. Some professional organizations and agents were also busy persuading young people to emigrate and helping them organize the journey. The journeys were not always bound for America, but also for Algeria and French sub-Saharan Africa, which were also under French colonial rule.⁹⁷

After strong communities were formed in the destination countries, family members and relatives started emigrating more extensively. Some emigrants were denied entry to North America, and therefore headed to South America. After leaving European harbours, they often ended up on the coast of West Africa, instead of heading on to their American dreamland.⁹⁸ It is not difficult to explain the causes behind migration prior to World War I. The high population growth was not matched by the absorption capacity of the economies and the lack of openness towards the rest of the world.

A temporary stimulus to migration consisted of civil unrest in Lebanon in 1860. Other stimuli were subsequent restrictions on freedom of speech, poor relations between Muslims and Christians in Syrian cities, fear of conscription to the Ottoman army, attempts to achieve better education and the desire for prosperity abroad. A considerable role was also played by foreign missionary education institutions, which helped to isolate villagers from their culture without matching the education provided to the needs of local economies. In Palestine many Muslims even converted or passed themselves off as Christians, which allowed them to emigrate. The influx of machines for manufacturing goods in the 19th century dealt a heavy blow to local handicrafts, causing increased migration of artisans to villages or the desert inland (e.g. in Jordan). Emigration changed the characteristics of social relations and society as such, as it disrupted traditional patriarchal connections, gender relationships and the general population paradigm.

⁹⁷ Labaki, Boutros: The Role of Transnational Communities in Fostering Development in Countries of Origin, United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Beirut, 15–17 May 2006.

⁹⁸ Lebanese live primarily in the following African countries: Ivory Coast (70,000), Senegal (30,000) and Nigeria (25,000). Migration News, Dec. 2002, Vol. 9, No. 12.

Illicit petty trade became the main source of income for the emigrants upon arrival in a foreign country. In Brazil, for instance, they took over this “trade” from the Eastern Jews who had formerly conducted it. This type of livelihood also contributed to the Americanization of Arab migration. When these immigrants accumulated enough capital, they settled in cities as shopkeepers in groceries, ironmongers’ and clothes shops. Some became wholesalers, while others became manufacturers of textiles or other goods. An identical or similar development could be seen in the Caribbean and Latin America. Advancing capitalism isolated a majority of Arabs from manufacturing. Instead, they helped to sell consumer goods in different corners of the world. In this way emigrants helped to create “trade diasporas” in the New World, Australia and West Africa.

The question that arises is to what extent this development affected the initial regional migration patterns, given the considerable distance of the new emigration centres. In the 19th century, Maronites migrated to Tripoli, Latakia and to the Palestinian coast, while the Druze relocated from the mountainous area of Lebanon to Syria (Jabal ad-Duruz area). As early as the 18th century, Greek Catholics from the southern harbour Saida controlled a major part of Syrian maritime trade with Egypt. They operated using ships belonging to the French from their homeport of Damietta. The revolutionary wars weakened the French power, which further strengthened the trade prosperity of the Maronites. Their presence was strengthened in 19th century Egypt, where 50,000 Syrians would settle in the early 20th century. They played a leading role in Egypt’s press and trade and engaged especially in liberal professions.

At that time, there was a constant movement of peasants, merchants, artisans and urban labourers between Palestine, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Interestingly, demographic migration stereotypes did not cease to have an effect after the formation of nation states and fixed borders. Traditional migration routes started to take shape in the 19th and 20th centuries. They helped to single out some communities, regions and individuals, and determined the directions of migration.

Historical emigration cycles, combined with current migration movements and trends, had a decisive influence on the formation of Arab communities in many countries of the world: the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Brazil, Argentina, Honduras, Guatemala, Australia, Ghana, Senegal, Liberia,

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Gulf countries (GCC), France, Netherlands and Scandinavia. Integration of these emigrants within the communities in host countries is also proved by the participation of national leaders, politicians and prominent figures in many areas of social life.⁹⁹

The legendary founder of the Arab community in 1879 in Cuba was Antonio Farah of Lebanon. Lebanese and Palestinians emigrated to the island in two waves in 1902–1912 and 1920–1931, which was possible thanks to the willingness of the Cuban authorities, as they needed labour for agriculture after Cuba's civil war. The second reason was the passing of the Immigration Act in the USA (1924), which considerably lowered the quota of immigrants, compelling them to leave for neighbouring countries including Cuba. Some of the Arabs fled after the Revolution, whereas others became involved in the building of the new state. For instance, Cuba's first Minister of Justice after the Revolution was Alfredo Djahir Maalouf and the Cuban Ambassador to France in the second half of the 1990s was R. Khouri. Cuban Arabs included a number of well-known artists. Approximately 15,000 Arabs live on the island, 81% of them men.¹⁰⁰ The Arab community has formed the Arab Union of Cuba (UAC).

A large community of Arabs and Jews coexisted in peace up until the establishment of Israel (1947) and achievement of independence by Syria and Lebanon (1945). However, in 1947 Argentinean Jews demonstratively supported the establishment of Israel, while Argentina's Arabs supported the Committees for Defence and Support of Palestine. Later on, fierce street fighting erupted and several bomb attacks against Jewish and Arab targets were carried out. Conflicts recurred immediately after eruption of the Arab-Israeli Wars (1967 and 1973) and also after the launch of the peace process in the Middle East (1993 – bombing of the Israeli embassy). In the meantime, Argentina was witness to a cold war between the Jewish and Arab communities, while the Jews were suspected of leading a targeted anti-Arab campaign in Latin America.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ For instance, in the city of San Pedro Sula in Honduras, Palestinians owned 75% of shops in the main shopping area in 1979. They controlled 50% of ironmongers' shops in the city.

¹⁰⁰ Garcia, Jiménez Mayda: *Al-Hijra al-'arabiya ilā al-Kārib fī al-qarnayn at-tāsi'a 'ashara wa al-'ishrīn: ḥālat Kūbā, Al-ḥiwar ath-thaqāfi al-'arabī al-ibirū imrīkī, Al-Munazzamat al-'arabiya li at-tarbiyat wa thaqāfat wa al-'ulūm* (ALESCO), Tūnis 2003, pp. 335–347.

¹⁰¹ 'Abd al-Wahid Ikmir: *'Arab al-Arjantīn wa an-niza' al-'arabī al-isra'īlī*, op. cit., pp. 349–362.

These communities steadily grew, helping to integrate more immigrants in the given countries. Alongside their activities, rifts and conflicts inside the ethnic community were rife. Various proportions of nationals of different Arab countries are found in the different host countries. For instance, Deaborn, Michigan, has Muslim Lebanese, West Bank Palestinians and North Yemenis. Data from Zogby International from 1990 suggest that a total of 940,000 Americans of Arab origin lived in the USA, 56% of them Lebanese, 14% Syrians, 11% Egyptians, 9% Palestinians and 2% Iraqis; the rest was accounted for by the other Arab nationalities. By denomination, Catholics dominated with 42%, Muslims accounted for 23%, Orthodox Christians for 23% and Protestants for 12%. With regard to geographic distribution, most of them lived in New York City, New Jersey, Detroit, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Deaborn.¹⁰² Most Arabs came to the USA in the Great Migration period (approximately 1880–1924), largely from "Greater Syria" (Syrians, Palestinians, Jordanians, and Lebanese). Later, Arab migration was greatly restricted until 1965, due to legislation approved in 1917–1924. Beginning in 1965, the United States opened its doors to Arab immigration once again. While Arab Christians were the dominant group until 1965 (81%), it was Muslims in the years after (60%).¹⁰³ In the 1970s and 1980s Palestinians started settling in the USA, especially after they lost jobs in the Gulf. They mostly came to the USA to study, but later changed their status to immigrants, and the process of family reunion followed. Canada has about 160,000 Arab immigrants, of whom 45% are Lebanese, 15% Egyptians, and the rest from several Arab countries (Syria, Jordanians with Palestinian nationality, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria). It is clear that immigrants from the Levant dominate in North America, the majority among them being Lebanese.

Immigrants frequently have deep memories of their original homeland and a sense of common identity. Their original homelands often assert their connection with famous countrymen abroad. The grandfather of Argentinean President Carlos Menem emigrated from Syria.¹⁰⁴ Arab countries establish associations such as the Ramallah Hall, Bethlehem Society and the Gen-

¹⁰² Arab American Encyclopedia, Detroit, Gale Publishers 2000.

¹⁰³ Approximately 400,000 people immigrated to the United States in 1965–1992, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁴ After Menem became president, his birthplace organized extensive celebrations in his honour. The city authorities named a street after him.

eral Union of Palestinian Women. Graduates of an Arab American university provided a framework for expressing needs and for mobilizing solidarity with the objective of maintaining links with the countries of origin. A negative phenomenon is divisions in expatriate organizations in the wake of conflicts in their countries of origin. The immigrant communities also came to be influenced at an ideological and political level by alternative national concepts. The influence of the Lebanese diaspora is very significant, prompting the establishment of Lebanese political parties and movements across the denominations, which established branches in countries of Lebanese immigration.¹⁰⁵ These branches abroad usually raised funds for the respective Lebanese movement or party, but also for the support of militias built around the different denominations during the bloody civil war. Immigrants usually wielded lesser influence in parties subordinated to notables and family clans, such as Kamal Jumblatt's Progressive National Party (Druze) or the Lebanese Forces (Christian). Some communities formed supranational organizations uniting denominational followers from around the world: the World Maronite Union, the annual Druze congress, the Union of Lebanese Muslim Shiite Emigrants in the World, the World Union of Greek Catholics etc. Rich immigrants started to replace traditional notables and after 2004 promoted the spreading of European-style liberalism in urban and rural parts of Lebanon.

Arab communities around the globe have created an extensive network, which has helped towards migration between communities within the different countries, regions and continents. Arabs from the Caribbean seize every opportunity to emigrate to Europe. Similarly, Arabs from West Africa often settle in Europe, where living conditions are considerably better. Lebanese emigrants do not invest only in activities conducive to personal profit, but also finance projects of public interest and benefit. In his study, Boutrus Labaki gives a detailed description of a number of activities implemented by Lebanese emigrants in education, health care, funding of infrastructure and

¹⁰⁵ Pierre and Maurice Gemayel (born in Egypt) founded the right-wing Maronite Falangist Party. Antun Saada (Brazil), for his part, was behind the establishment of the Syrian National Party. Raymond and Pierre Eddeh of Egypt started the National Bloc Party. The Shiite Nabih Berry (Sierra Leone) became the founder the Amal Movement. The West African Lebanese diaspora gave strong support to Hizbollah. The Sunnite Rafiq al-Hariri represented the Lebanese diaspora in Saudi Arabia. The Western Christian diaspora, especially from France, was on General Aoun's side.

social welfare institutions. Lebanese emigrants have know-how and skills, which they try to spread in their homeland.¹⁰⁶

Regional Migration Stimuli

The regional framework of population movements in the past 50 years has been formed by wars and the oil economy. In the 1950s Lebanese guest workers transferred payments amounting to 5–7% of GDP to their homeland, but this income dropped sharply during the 15-year civil war (1975–1990), which happened to coincide with two oil booms.¹⁰⁷ In addition to Jerusalem, the issue of Palestinian refugees is probably one that will block or slow down the peace process and the quest for a final status settlement. Palestinians still insist on their right of return, even to Israeli territory on the basis of United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 191. This was indicated by the development of the Arab-Israeli high-level talks at Camp David in 2000. The Palestinian position is supported by the Arab countries, as shown by the peace plan from the Arab Summit Conference in Beirut (March 2002), the agenda of which included a demand to ensure the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

The populations of the countries in the region, irrespective of its division into nation states after World War I, are closely interconnected. Colonial wars and numerous regional conflicts have generated flows of refugees and internal population transfers, influencing structural changes of the economies. Numerous population transfers after World War I were of the nature of frontier migration and this trend has continued to this date: seasonal jobs, pastoral nomadism, blood connections and their related marriages across cities and villages and local trade in food and hand-crafted products. Globalization also contributes towards a gradual dismantling of the role of state structures. This may result in an intensive political, and later demographic, turbulence and considerable migration pressures.

In the last three to four decades, labour migration has been the dominant phenomenon in all the Levant countries. This situation is generally believed

¹⁰⁶ Labaki, Boutrus: *op. cit.*, pp. 7–9.

¹⁰⁷ Labaki, Boutrus: *ibid.*, p. 4.

to be a result of the combination of the following factors: high demographic growth, including the size of the workforce, inability of the labour market to absorb the growing number of skilled graduates, as well as the saturated public sector's inability to absorb the increased number of job seekers and dependency that is increased by the vast number of young people on the labour market. Of course, political instability and war play the main role in stimulating at least temporary migration, which would solve the situation for a limited period of time.

The dynamics of inter-Arab migration started slowing down in the mid-1980s, which was connected with the overall economic decline of the region, a decline in oil prices, falling demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, and replacement of Arab labour by that from Asia. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in particular became the major recipients of migration from Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and, after the Gulf War, from Syria. From the early 1980s both host countries began to favour Asian labour, as in the case of the other Gulf countries.¹⁰⁸ This policy was founded on precise economic and social calculations (wage differentials and, in the case of Arab labour, the influx of a great number of undesirable family members). The Gulf War even made possible the expulsion of a great number of guest workers from Palestine and Jordan on the grounds of the poor political loyalty to their host country they showed during the conflict. The ending of the Lebanese civil war and the Oslo Accords also allowed part of the Palestinian and Lebanese diasporas to return.

The economic recession and the beginning of emigrants' repatriation contributed to the decline of income from wage transfers, which had become the main budget revenue for the Levant countries. The level of financial aid provided to them by rich oil countries also declined.¹⁰⁹ Jordan's external debt rose to USD 8.6bn. During the Gulf crisis, 42,000 Lebanese returned to their homeland from Kuwait and 20,000 were relocated from Iraq. The number of Palestinian and Jordanian returnees was about 300,000, of which 60,000–70,000 came from the West Bank and Gaza. A census in 1994 found that 216,133 guest workers (5.2%) had returned to the country.

¹⁰⁸ ESCWA data suggest that the total number of Arab workers in Saudi Arabia was 60%, while in Kuwait until 1989 it was 46% of the total number of foreign workers.

¹⁰⁹ ESCWA data from 1994 found that aid from the GCC peaked in 1974–1981 and started declining in 1987.

The returning labour led to a considerable growth in unemployment, which put the national infrastructure under pressure. Cities were becoming overpopulated, which paralyzed the existing social, cultural and educational infrastructure (schools, hospitals). Enormous problems were posed by a shortage of flats for the returnees, who lived in squat areas and shanty dwellings.

Emigration Processes in Jordan

Jordan has been labelled the only “oil” economy owning no oil reserves. In fact, until the mid 1980s it posted miraculous results and stable growth, despite a lack of sufficient natural resources, the fact that it was a frontline country in the Arab-Israeli conflict, suffered from water shortages and was dependent on foreign financial aid. The majority of the most skilled workers left to work in the Gulf countries. In the 1990s Jordan was exposed to a recession and unemployment, while the percentage of people under the poverty line increased. The strategic objective to sustain growth became an illusion. One of the key reasons for stagnation was the high dependency on labour migration. Jordan enjoyed relatively stable growth from 1967. Nonetheless, it was described as a typical rentier state, owing to its dependency on wage transfers and foreign aid. In 1974–1991 Jordan received rent revenues (budgetary aid, credits, wage transfers) amounting to 38% of its total GDP, which placed it among the countries with the highest dependency on guest workers' income. In 2004 the proportion dropped to 25.2% of GDP.¹¹⁰ Money transfers from Jordanian guest workers abroad helped to balance the trade deficit and to improve the overall financial situation until the onset of the global recession in 1994. Jordan's traditional budget deficit increased following the Gulf War. The public sector was usually in deficit, but the private sector, dependent on money transfers from Jordanian guest workers, generated surpluses. Remittances from guest workers rose only in 1990, as returnees from the Gulf deposited their savings in Jordanian banks. In the 1980s and 1990s such transfers amounted to approximately JOD 300–700m.

¹¹⁰ As-šunduq al-‘arabī li al-inmā’ al-iqtisādī wa al-ijtimā’ī wa āchirūn: at-taqdīr al-iqtisādī al-‘arabī li ‘ām 2005, p. 16.

Jordanian labour was relatively scarce (about 20% of the population), which was due to the high number of Jordanians working abroad and a very young average age of the population (about 50% under 15). In 1985 the workforce was 502,000 strong. The number of foreign labourers working in Jordan reached 143,000 and Jordanian guest workers in the Gulf 339,000.¹¹¹ In the late 1970s Jordan, too, started importing unskilled and semi-skilled labour from the Arab world. In the 1980s the number of foreign workers grew, but the wages declined. Some sectors (agriculture, construction and services) were dependent on foreign labour. Construction industry saw stable growth, as it employed many Syrians and Egyptians. The domestic labour market faced a crisis in the wake of considerable emigration. As statistics suggest, in most cases workers in services were the only ones to stay.

Jordan has a small population (about 4 million), although it has increased about fourfold in the last 50 years. An additional problem is high demographic growth and the influx of foreign guest workers. Jordan is also highly urbanized, since more than 60% of its population live in the cities of Central Jordan (Zarqa and Amman). Internal population movements are also largely confined to these two key cities.

Illiteracy declined sharply in the last twenty years, helping to heighten economic expectations. The availability of cheap, educated labour was presented both by the government and the private sector as the main comparative advantage allowing for the influx of foreign investments, but skilled labourers and professionals compared the wage levels in Jordan and in the Gulf. The gap between the two spurred further emigration from Jordan.

The Israeli occupation of the West Bank deprived the kingdom of its industrial and agricultural resources and a great number of Palestinian refugees started flowing into the country. A key objective of development plans after 1973 was to create a great number of jobs. In the second half of the 1970s, i.e. in the period of the oil boom, many Jordanians left to work in the Gulf countries. Financial transfers from guest workers started flowing into the country, but in parallel with this, a considerable influx of foreign labour occurred.

¹¹¹ Collicelli C.: Poverty in Transformation, FEMISE research programme, March 2000. 70% of the total 300,000 Jordanian emigrants worked in the Gulf. A total of 120,000 registered guest workers worked in Jordan, of which 90% were Egyptians. The number of non-registered workers was double.

Due to the Iraq-Iran War, the Lebanese war and a decline in oil prices from the mid-1980s, it was difficult to achieve the expected government revenues. Foreign aid declined, export growth was slow and income from guest workers' wage transfers stopped rising.

A five-year plan (1986–1990) envisaged the creation of 97,000 jobs, the reduction of foreign labour by 50,000 and its replacement by Jordanians. The government endeavoured to boost the demand for Jordanian labour in Arab countries. There was also an interest in a more even distribution of employment levels in the different Jordanian regions.

The Gulf War in 1991 and the subsequent indebtedness of the country slowed down the government's efforts to restructure the economy. An enormous number of refugees headed for Jordan. A priority of the development plan in this period was to create new jobs and to build a more extensive social infrastructure. Some returnees had funds, but were not prepared to invest them into productive sectors during the crisis. The situation escalated as a result of five migration waves from August 1990 to mid-1991, which involved about five million people. The second and third waves included Arabs and Asian guest workers, stateless Kuwaitis (*biduns*), Palestinians and Iraqi Shiites and Kurds forced out of Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as a result of the conflict.

Most of the migration in Jordan was connected with the oil boom. The migration grew in the early 1960s and again multiplied in the 1970s, but declined with certain fluctuations from the mid-1980s to this date. Migration to the Gulf accounted for 80% of all the Jordanians working abroad and 97% of the total number of citizens employed in the Arab world. Initially the destination country was Kuwait, but after 1973 it was replaced by Saudi Arabia. In the early 1990s about 25,000 Jordanians lived in the USA, about 10,000 in Germany, 5,000 in Canada, and 3,000 in the UK and Australia. The migrant labour was typically highly skilled and educated, as 30% of guest workers had university and college degrees.

El-Khasawneh distinguished three stages of Jordan's labour market development.¹¹² In the first stage (1950–1975) migration grew due to the wars of

¹¹² El-Khasawneh: Labour Migration in Jordan: Politics, Flows, Organisations, paper presented to the ILO/UNDP Seminar on Migration Policies in Arab Labour Sending Countries, 14 May 1992, Cairo.

1948 and 1967. This primarily included Palestinians who fled and retained both their status of refugees and citizens. Their affairs were administered by the Department for Palestinian Affairs at the Government Office; they were granted a higher status than refugees from Iraq.¹¹³ The consequence was a rapid growth of unemployment. Agriculture, which was the most important sector, was unable to absorb such a large number of refugees. A number of Jordanians who were not interested in returning to their homeland studied in West Germany, Canada or the USA. Many others were in the neighbouring Arab countries. A number of related problems were dismissed as a necessary price for the government's liberal migration policy, which helped to reduce unemployment. The census in 1962 showed that 62,000 Jordanians lived abroad, half of them in one country – Kuwait. These were mostly Palestinian refugees. The desire to migrate was so strong in the mid-1970s that even farmers let their fields lie fallow and went looking for lucrative jobs abroad. Internal migration from villages to cities also increased.¹¹⁴

In the second stage (1976–1982), which saw another growth in oil prices (1979), unemployment dropped to a record 2% and the demand for labour in the construction industry was strong. Jordan became a receiving country, allowing the influx of foreign guest workers.

The third stage (1983 to this date) could be characterized by unemployment growth as a result of the Iraq-Iran War, the Gulf War, global recession and declining oil prices. Jordanian labour in the Gulf started to decline by 5,000 people annually. Before 1990, 605,000 Palestinians and Jordanians worked and lived in the Gulf, 270,000 of them Jordanian nationals. In the early stage most immigrants were Palestinians from the West Bank, but later guest workers from the East Bank constituted a considerable portion. In the late 1980s, 160,000 of them lived in Saudi Arabia and 81,000 in Kuwait, but their number substantially declined after the Gulf War.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Jordan became both a host and source country in terms of migration. In this period, Jordan had a great number of Egyptian workers and slightly fewer Syrian workers, who were not required

entry visa or work permits.¹¹⁵ This immigration was often illegal or semi-legal. Jordan also hosted workers from East Asia (several thousand). This migration increased in the longer term in connection with the establishment of “qualified investment zones” (QIZ), from which Arab-Israeli goods were exported without customs to the USA.¹¹⁶ It is evident that the influx of Arab and Asian labour did not result in an immediate loss of job opportunities for Jordanians. As in the Gulf countries, foreign labour was used in Jordanian households. Palestinian women, who had long carried out this work, were gradually pushed out of this profession by less demanding Asian women.

Before the Gulf War, 95.9% of Jordanian returnees were employed in Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE). Most were highly educated, with ages ranging from 20 to 49 years. Some returned due to the fact that their employment was terminated during economic recession, although 300,000 Jordanians and Palestinians were forced to leave as a result of the Gulf War. They were highly educated workers. The returned guest workers had an unemployment rate of 83% and only 47% had flats of their own. Most of them belonged to the lower middle class. In the period 1995–2000 the size of the workforce increased at an average annual rate of 30,000. Irrespective of the great number of returnees, the number of emigrants continued to follow a strongly upward trend. Wage transfers also increased in the period 1996–2000 by 19.5%.¹¹⁷

The returnees' losses were huge and could be accounted for by several circumstances: non-payment of wages, their money had not been transferred at all, loss of savings or destruction of accounts, theft, inaccessibility of assets and property. Two groups were clearly dominant among the returned guest workers: Jordanians and Palestinians living on the East Bank and Palestinians with Jordanian passports living in the West Bank. It should be emphasized that only 10% of the latter exiles had the required documents and could return to the West Bank. Although refugee repatriation was carried out under UNHCR supervision, refugees were regarded as nationals, although some of them had lived for two to three generations in the Gulf countries and had lim-

¹¹³ For more details see Chatelard, G.: *Incentives to Transit*: op. cit., p. 8.

¹¹⁴ Kardoosh, Marwan A.; Kanaan, Taher: *Employment and Labour Market in Jordan*, Amman 2000.

¹¹⁵ In the late 1990's, there were approximately 400,000 Egyptians. Chatelard, G.: *Incentives to Transit*: op. cit., p. 12.

¹¹⁶ In 1986, Jordan had 83% Egyptian and 15% Asian workers.

¹¹⁷ Kanaan, T. H.; Kardoosh, M. A.: op. cit., p. 8.

ited contacts with their former homeland. Few of them could take advantage of the refugee infrastructure.

Jordan was also a destination for Iraqi citizens, mostly Christians (Chaldeans and Assyrians). Shiites were received with animosity, as they posed a potential political and security problem for the Sunnite, pro-Western regime. As a result of cultural and linguistic problems, Kurds have always preferred Iran or Turkey. Analysis of the social composition of migration suggests that most of them were members of the middle class. About 30,000 Iraqis were granted long-term residence in the country. Most of them were highly skilled workers or rich traders who were willing to invest some of their capital in Jordan.¹¹⁸ Others were granted only short-term residence permits.

Jordan harboured some of the anti-Saddam opposition, but they were not allowed by Jordan to pursue anti-Iraqi political or resistance activity in the country, owing to the good economic relations with Saddam's Iraq. Others were only guaranteed a short-term stay without social guarantees, as Jordan was not a rich country and had long been struggling with its own high unemployment.¹¹⁹ The country does not receive any additional funds from abroad to address refugees' problems. Neither did Jordan grant political asylum, except to immigrants who had been granted the status of persecuted persons by the UNHCR, although even these were treated more strictly from 2003 on. Numerous Iraqi immigrants used Jordan as a transit station to flee to third countries. Government sources say they numbered 1–2 million.¹²⁰ It has become harder for them to emigrate following the 9/11 attacks. The EU did recognize the status of political refugees for Iraqis, but did not allow them to cross its borders. It tried to keep them in the region's host countries,

¹¹⁸ Chatelard, G.: Iraqi Forced Migrants in Jordan: Conditions, Religious Network and the Smuggling Process, Working Paper, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence 2002.

¹¹⁹ Chatelard, G.: Incentives to Transit: Policy Response to Influxes of Iraqi Forced Migrants in Jordan, Working Paper 2002/50, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence 2002.

¹²⁰ The main reasons for the choice of countries by Iraqi migrants included family relations, friends and fellow believers in the given country. A large number of Iraqi Kurds went to Germany, as they had relatives there; Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands became a refuge for Shiites (Shiite mosques and associations); Iraqi Christians emigrated to Australia, Canada, USA and UK, which have strong Christian communities and Assyro-Chaldean associations.

and provided technical assistance to Jordan for this purpose (e.g. for airport checks).

Iraqis took both skilled and unskilled jobs. Some of them started trading or manufacturing companies of their own. Iraqi women often worked as housemaids in Jordanian households. Numerous Iraqi emigrants hoped to return to their homeland after the political and economic situation changed.

Palestinian Migration and Refugees

Starting in 1948, the economy of the West Bank became connected with Jordan, and that of Gaza with Egypt. Considerable losses were caused by the Six-Day War of June 1967, which brought a sudden loss of Arab markets and the closure of the banking system. Approximately 200,000–300,000 inhabitants of the West Bank sought refuge in Jordan and the Gulf countries. After 1967, the Palestinian economy was fully incorporated into Israel's, and the only connection with the Arab world was the tolerated "open-bridge" policy with Jordan. The Palestinian economy was dependent on the economic development of Israel, Jordan and the GCC countries.

Gradually, the economic dependency on Israel (especially on industrial product exports) increased and the links with Jordan (in particular agricultural exports) were eliminated. The Palestinian economy became very dependent on labour exports to Israel. In 1970, 20,000 inhabitants of Gaza and the West Bank worked in Israel, which increased to 116,000 in 1992. The number of jobs in the autonomous territories increased during the Middle East Peace Process (1993–1996). The number of Palestinian guest workers working in Israel depended to a great extent on the overall political and security situation in the region. For instance, during the Second Intifada (which started in 2000), Palestinian labour numbers declined due to security reasons. A vast majority of the Palestinian migrants were employed as unskilled labour, mostly in construction, services or farming. Most Palestinians worked in Israel, the GCC countries or Jordan. A smaller number left for other Arab countries and the USA. The Palestinian economy was decisively dependent on the transfer of funds from abroad (30–40% of its national income). Any political turbulence, such as the repercussions of the Gulf War or closure of the Palestinian-Israeli border, had a highly negative impact on the coun-

try's economy. Industrial development in Palestine was negligible during the Israeli occupation, as there was no interest in establishing competitive manufacturing in these territories, which would have posed an economic threat to Israel.

Both popular uprisings, Intifadas, had a very negative impact on the Palestinian economy, since they were accompanied by Israeli repressions, including blockades, states of emergency and protectionism, which hit Gaza most heavily. The loss of income from wage transfers by Palestinian labourers in the GCC countries immediately after the Gulf War (1991) and the expulsion of Palestinians from the lucrative GCC markets caused a catastrophe. In 1991 and 1993, the Palestinian economy experienced negative GDP growth (−3.8 and −4.8 respectively). Although the signature of the Oslo Accords was followed by an increased influx of investments and capital from abroad, Israel's restrictive policy continued.

Migration from Palestine was brought about by the refugee exodus in the years following the First Arab-Israeli War of 1948 (750,000 refugees) and the Six-Day Arab-Israeli War of June 1967 (425,000). Migration movements started before 1948 and were related to the purchase of Palestinian land by Zionists, and rural-urban migration. The "coastal" Palestinian bourgeoisie (land owners, traders) did not reside in the actual territory prior to 1948 and their capital was transferred to Beirut, Damascus or Amman. Some Palestinians, mostly Palestinian Christians, were given Lebanese citizenship after 1948. Numerous Lebanese refugees who streamed into the USA after 1967 seem to have been largely of Palestinian origin.

The Palestinians' major host countries were Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. They were followed by Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The currently estimated number of refugees is 100,000 and they live in 20 camps in the West Bank (about 42% of the population, excluding East Jerusalem). Approximately 70% of Gaza inhabitants are Palestinian refugees. The flight of 750,000 of these refugees and an additional 250,000 from the West Bank to Jordan during the 1967 war was not recognized as a crossing of national borders, and therefore these refugees were included in the "displaced" category, rather than that of refugees. The paradox is that some of the Palestinians living in the territory of Palestine are classified as refugees, while a sizeable number living abroad are not. UNRWA and American agencies fund projects to settle Palestinians in the Jordan Valley, including vocational training

of workers. Qualification upgrading has helped the Palestinians settle more easily in the surrounding Arab countries.

The Arab countries apply their own specific policies to Palestinian refugees. In Jordan they are guaranteed citizenship and equal rights, and a containment policy is pursued.

In Lebanon, the influx of Palestinians disrupted the fragile balance of the denominations. Citizenship was only granted to Palestinian Christians, while others were exposed to restrictions making their residence and employment impossible. In Syria Palestinians were not granted citizenship, but specific laws made them equal with Syrians. They were provided with equal access to education, employment and military service, allowing their socio-economic integration. On the other hand, they were not allowed to start independent Palestinian mass organizations. The presence of Palestinians was useful for Lebanon, as their arrival strengthened the highly educated middle class. Another significant factor is the amount of Palestinian capital and profit from the transfer of earnings by Palestinian labourers abroad. As much as 80% of permanent refugee settlements were built in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Gaza. The camps in Gaza in particular were a centre of resistance against Israeli occupation during the First and Second Intifadas.

Geographic distribution of Palestinians in 1982 and 1998

Country	1982	1998	Percentage of local Population	Percentage of total
Israel	550,800	1,100,000	14%	12.6
West Bank	833,000	1,900,000	100%	21.7
Gaza Strip	451,000	1,200,000	100%	13.7
Jordan	1,148,334	2,500,000	52.3%	28.6
Lebanon	358,207	471,500	11.5%	5.4
Syria	222,555	400,000	2.5%	4.5
Iraq	20,604	45,000	0.2%	0.5
Egypt	45,705	66,000	0.1%	0.8
Libya	23,759	22,759	0.7%	0.4
Saudi Arabia	136,779	334,500	1.6%	3.8
Kuwait	229,710	3,500	1.7%	1.7

United Arab Emirates	36,504	98,000	3.5%	3.5
Bahrain	2,100	2,100	0.6%	0.05
Qatar	24,233	24,233	9.7%	0.5
Oman	50,706	150,000	6%	1.7
USA	104,856	147,000		1.7
Other	140,116	196,000		2.2
Total	44,448,838	8,731,000	–	100%

Source: *World Pop Data Sheet 1998; Alasdair Drysdale and Gerald Blake: The Middle East and North Africa, Oxford University Press, N.Y. 1985.*

Palestinian migrants became the first foreign labourers in the oil-rich Gulf countries, where they emigrated to both legally and illegally. A tragic attempt by a group of illegal Palestinian immigrants to get into Kuwait was portrayed in *Men in the Sun*, a short story by Ghassan Kanafani. From 1957, Jordan saw the arrival of some 50 refugees from Gaza every day. They tried to secure entry and exit visas on the pretext of a pilgrimage to Mecca. Kuwait was the destination country of choice, replaced by Libya after 1969. The Palestinian labour migration grew at an unusually fast rate due to considerable population growth and extraordinary desire for education. The process of resettlement continued, as about 150,000 people left Palestine after 1967. Interestingly, Libya attracted the more educated segment of the Palestinian population, whereas Kuwait hosted a high percentage of illiterate Palestinians before the Gulf War. However, this figure is misleading, as Kuwait was usually a destination for entire families and women usually had no education. Entry criteria varied a great deal from country to country. Palestinians mostly held an Egyptian *laissez-passers* (LP) permit (65.7%); much fewer were holders of a Lebanese (6%) or Syrian (2.1%) LP. Palestinians most frequently used Jordanian passports (19.7%) and more rarely Egyptian passports (2.3%). A high number of Palestinians left the occupied territory for periods longer than 3 years (70%). A majority from the West Bank left voluntarily for work, but 20% fled as a result of forced deportation or failure to obtain residence permits. Male migrants were single, as a rule, while women followed their husbands. After the war the number of Palestinian guest workers in Kuwait dropped from 350,000 to less than 85,000 (1992). The number of workers migrating to Israel was approximately 100,000–150,000. In the harvest period, seasonal mi-

gration was 250,000 strong. During the Intifada, Palestinians boycotted job opportunities and many of them were replaced by new Jewish immigrants from Russia. An interesting phenomenon was a steady migration wave of Palestinians from a single location in the West Bank (the triangle of the cities of Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala) to Latin America.

On the other hand, Arab-Israeli wars were also a reason for forced Jewish migration from Arab countries. Arabs do not usually provide the exact numbers of deportees or the value of confiscated assets and are reluctant to re-examine this issue for fear of demands for counter-reparations in the event of compensations being paid to forcibly expelled Palestinians. In September 2004 Libya expressed its willingness to pay compensations to expelled Libyan Jews unless they were settled on Palestinian land or Palestinian refugees' assets were allotted to them after their return. Israel monitored these movements very closely. In his paper, Professor Aharoni gives the following data.¹²¹ He states that, in total, approximately 850,000 Jews were expelled from the Arab countries. Most left for Israel (586,270), and 200,000 for the UK, USA and France.

In 1947, 881,000 Jews lived in the Arab countries, while there are only about 25,000 today. Most of them live in Morocco (17,000), which is perhaps due to the cultural and historical kinship and the common fate of Jews and Arabs during the Spanish *Reconquista*, as many of them left for Morocco. During World War II, the Moroccan king refused to transport Moroccan Jews to concentration camps. Syria has a total of 4,300 Jews, Egypt 200, Iraq 400, Yemen 1,000, Lebanon 150, Libya 20, Algeria 500 and Tunisia 2,000.

In 1948 only 70,000 Arab Jews lived in Israel, but a radical turn occurred in the 1950s, as the number of Arab Jews constituted 70% of the total population (about 1 million). Only a small number of them came to Palestine for spiritual reasons as early as the 19th century.

In 1948–1972, a total of 330,000 emigrants left the three Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), 35,000 left Libya, 29,325 Egypt, 10,000 Syria, 50,552 Yemen and 129,292 Iraq.¹²²

¹²¹ Prof Aharoni, J.: The Forced Migration of Jews from Arab Countries and Peace, The Neaman Institute, The Boren Foundation, Haifa, Aug. 2002, www.hsje.org/forcedmigration.htm.

¹²² For a detailed discussion of the life and exodus of Arab Jews, see Simon, Reeva Spector; Laskier, Michael Menachem; Reguer, Sara (eds): The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times, N.Y., Columbia University Press 2003.

Lebanon

From the 1950s until mid-1970s Lebanon's economy was regarded as the strongest in the region. The government took the least regulatory role compared with the other Arab countries. Lebanon played a leading role as an economic intermediary between the EU, the USA and the rest of the Arab world, which boosted the tertiary sector (i.e. finance, transport, education and health-care). Development of agriculture and industry was negligible. Starting in the period 1971–1981, financial transfers from abroad rose from USD 884m to 8,640m. Until 1982 agriculture employed 60% of the population and generated 20% of GDP. High indebtedness of small farms added to the growing flight of the rural population to cities. Lebanese industry was based on the existence of a multiplicity of small companies working in a very difficult environment. Growth of the economy was apparent until the Gulf War, featuring a strong inequality in incomes, which has remained to this day.

Lebanon's national budget was not actually published in the period 1975–1990. Nevertheless, the war economy could be divided into two stages. In the first stage, which lasted until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, a civil war continued, but the country was prosperous as it utilized private and national reserves accumulated before 1975. There was an influx of money from guest workers working in the Gulf countries (USD 2bn per year) and “political money” continued flowing to the different warring sides during the civil war. In addition, industrial and agricultural exports were at the same level as before the war. The volume of money transfers from guest workers fluctuated heavily. In the case of Lebanese guest workers in the Gulf it was stable, but there were fluctuations caused by instability in the West African countries, which forced Lebanese immigrants to transfer their savings to their homeland.¹²³ Physical damage caused during the civil war was incomparably lower

¹²³ Just before the eruption of the civil war in 1974, transfers amounted to USD 912m; when the war started, they dropped in 1976 to a mere USD 27m. The following year they rose to 1,114m and in 1980 to a record 2,252m. After the Israeli aggression against Lebanon in 1982 they steadily declined to a low of USD 400m in 1985. Afterwards, they gradually grew until 1988, when they reached a historical high of 2,600m, which was connected with the process of reconciliation in a Lebanon that signaled stability. The Gulf War led to a forced decline, but the development programmes by Hariri's government raised confidence in the recovery of Lebanon's economy once again. Data from The Banking Society, and The Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Beirut.

in 1975–1990, amounting to about USD 25bn. Loss of income and capital amounted to USD 18bn. Inflation deteriorated the standard of living. Damage due to the Israeli invasion is estimated at USD 2bn and a heavy impact was also caused by the collapse of the Lebanese pound and subsequently of national finance. Problems were caused by the public debt.

Population movements due to war grew to enormous proportions (about a quarter of the population). Emigration and war casualties resulted in a population decline from 3.2 million in 1974 to 2.8 million in 1992. Irrespective of the war, the size of the workforce in Lebanon grew. Although precise information about its national structure is unavailable, it consisted mostly of Palestinians and Syrians. In addition, an important portion was constituted of less skilled Asian guest workers, hired chiefly as household helpers.

Lebanon has had long-time experience with emigration, especially by Christians from mountainous regions. After World War I, migration may be divided into three stages.

- 1) In the 1920s and 1930s migration waves went chiefly to West Africa and Latin America, while the traditional migration to the USA and Australia started stagnating, as both countries adopted preventive restrictions. Conversely, the French and Britons made emigration to West Africa easier. Estimates suggest that 80,000 Lebanese immigrated to the area in that period. Lebanese Christians dominated, but the proportion of Shiites from southern Lebanon also increased.
- 2) In 1940–1970 the destinations changed as a result of the outbreak of World War II. In the 1950s a new wave of Lebanese migration headed to the Persian Gulf, particularly Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, increasing in the last two decades. The 1950s also saw increased migration to Australia and West Africa. In the late 1960s, however, migration dropped, especially to Africa. Emigration to the USA remained relatively limited as a result of the economic recession after the beginning of the Korean War. Nevertheless, it rose in the 1960s, especially after the adoption of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which replaced the system of quotas by one of careful selection based on precise, demanding criteria.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ The number of Lebanese immigrants in the USA reached 3,121 in 1950–1959; 2,355 in 1960–1964; 4,432 in 1965–1979. The proportion of Lebanese immigration in total US immigration was only 0.4% in 1980 and a mere 0.2% in the 1950's–1970's.

This stage was characterized by a high percentage of highly skilled and educated guest workers. The denominational structure was also much more balanced. In 1960, Lebanon's population stood at 1.5 million, while the number of its emigrants was 1.2 million.

- 3) The major events in 1970–1990 were the civil war and the “oil bonanza”. Lebanon, like the other countries in the region, was hit by extensive migration to the Gulf countries. In 1975–1990, 875,000 Lebanese emigrated. Migration was sparked even before 1975 by a lack of space, raw materials and natural resources. The economic structure was marked by the dominant service sector, unable to generate sufficient demand, especially from the mid-1960s onwards. The highly uneven income redistribution, social inequality between the different strata and classes, as well as between the sub-regions and districts, further contributed to migration.

Some documents analyze the causes behind the Lebanese migration without restraint. For instance, the 1994 ESCWA Report put the number of relocated Lebanese population at 700,000 and the number of emigrants abroad at some 900,000. Emigration during war was probably extensive, but it should be taken into account that numerous people, particularly from the Gulf countries, also returned to Lebanon. The war progressed in different parts of Lebanon during different stages, and therefore the emigrants returned comfortably from the Gulf for the summer to build houses where they intended to retire.

In the initial stage of the civil war, the emigration wave headed to the surrounding countries (Jordan, Syria, Cyprus). It involved traders and various specialists. They included a high percentage of construction workers and 32% consisted of industrial workers. On the other hand, numerous Palestinians moved to Lebanon after Black September (i.e. the Jordanian-Palestinian civil war).

When it became clear that the civil war would last longer than expected, some refugees changed temporary residence to permanent (USA, Australia). Moreover, Australia reduced some obstructions to immigrant families with children. Discontent with the business climate in Jordan forced Lebanese migrants to leave for Greece and Egypt. The next stages of the war involved resumption of fighting in 1978 and an Israeli invasion in 1982. Extensive population transfers occurred in 1984–1989.

Internal Lebanese migration was also significant. The population was escaping the war as it erupted in their areas (e.g. escaping from southern Lebanon). The refugees mostly settled in densely populated urban areas, around the southern suburbs of Beirut and along the northern coast. The number of relocated people was 125,000, nearly half of them living in Beirut.

Emigration during the war restricted the labour market and its mobility. It shaped new forms of informal labour in city districts. During the war, highly skilled professionals went abroad to work. For instance, as many as a quarter of all registered doctors moved abroad in 1988. Internal migration was caused by the relocation of some companies to other, safer areas. Christian entrepreneurs, for instance, moved their businesses from Beirut to mountainous areas. Nevertheless, manufacturing mostly continued throughout conflicts that were localized in certain areas only. A part of the banking system moved to France, advertising companies in turn settled in Dubai, while construction firms relocated to Saudi Arabia following an extensive expansion of the economy after 1973.

Upon signature of the Taif Agreement and the ending of the civil war, many Lebanese companies came back to the country, retaining branches in the original country. Some professionals also came back and made investments or purchased real estate. Some settled in Lebanon, once it was clear that the conflict would not escalate. Private investments largely went to the mountains and to Beirut, but infrastructure building projects were developed for the whole of Lebanon. The Israeli army did withdraw from southern Lebanon in 1999, but tensions on the border continued, especially after the eruption of the Palestinian Intifada and in the wake of the Israeli attack against the Palestinian Authority in 2002.

It is interesting to compare the volume of Lebanese migration during the war and afterwards. The war in 1975–1990 forced 895,000 people to emigrate, while another 639,000 people emigrated in the post-war period (1991–1997); 32% of this number were university graduates, although their percentage in the general population is only 16%.¹²⁵

In spite of a partial economic improvement from the mid-1990s (restored infrastructure, influx of Arab capital and post-9/11 investments), the social

¹²⁵ Labaki, Boutrus: *L'Emigration depuis la Fin des Guerres à l'Interieur du Liban (1990–1998)*, Travaux et Moura, No. 61, pp. 81–142.

situation did not improve. According to a demographic study published in 2001, 41% of young people would like to leave the country. The unemployment rate reached approximately 15–20% in 2001–2003, although Lebanon's labour market suffered from a shortage of cheap labour, which could face the fierce foreign competition. Lebanese labour, well organized in trade unions, refuses to carry out “demeaning” tasks and refuses symbolic, low wages. That was one of the reasons for the extensive involvement of foreign labourers, especially from Syria, particularly in seasonal jobs in agriculture and construction. In 2001, 85,405 foreigners held official permits, mostly Egyptians, Sri Lankans, Ethiopians and Filipinos.¹²⁶ In addition, from half a million to one million illegal guest workers worked in the country. They were unskilled blue-collar workers, mostly Syrians. Although this involved considerable tax evasions averaging USD 1.2bn a year¹²⁷, there was probably no other alternative, as foreign labour was half as cheap and was willing to do anything, including work regarded as demeaning by the Lebanese.

An important role is played by the Lebanese diaspora, which is scattered in different countries and numbers 16 million people, about five times more than today's population of Lebanon. Many of them retained close connections with their former homeland for several generations. This has created a broad economic and social network, which could support Lebanon in overcoming its problems in the most difficult of times. This second, grey economy, supported by external Lebanese migration, accounts for the country's traditional economic flexibility.

Connections have been maintained between the first, second and third generations of urban settlers who had roots in their native villages.¹²⁸ These people return at weekends to their villages, where they spend their time farming, doing business, repairing houses and fostering relations in their extensively

¹²⁶ The Business Handbook Overview (chap. 8), Info Pro Publication, Beirut 2003.

¹²⁷ Sayed, R.: Libanon: Přímé zahraniční investice do Libanonu na přelomu dvacátého a jednadvacátého století [Lebanon: Foreign direct investments into Lebanon at the turn of 20th and 21st century] (thesis), The University of Economics, Prague, Faculty of International Relations, Department of World Economy, Prague 2004, pp. 33–34.

¹²⁸ Lebanon Revisited: A Transition Strategy 2003–2005, USAID/Lebanon, August 2002. Although there are no official data about transfers and influx of capital from abroad, economists estimate that they amount to USD 3–7bn, while Lebanon's annual GDP is 16bn.

branched families. Their village connections are an important part of the Lebanese lifestyle and identity. The rural population also constitutes a *pied-en-ville* for their relatives living in cities.

Syria

The historic context of Syrian migration is similar to the Lebanese situation. Syrian migration started spreading to America and Australia in 1860. These people mostly consisted of the poor, rural classes. In 1900–1914 the annual number of Syrian emigrants averaged about 15,000. In 1953, Syrian migration to Kuwait (3,900) and Africa (23,000) was recorded.¹²⁹ The reasons behind migration were of an economic nature. The difficulty with researching these issues is, once again, a lack of information and statistics, as Syrian governments of the second half of the 1990s did not pay attention to this phenomenon and recorded at best some trends in internal migration. The census of 1976 revealed an influx of immigrants from abroad, but the number of emigrants was not quantified. In 1976–1979, net migration (the difference between the number of emigrants and immigrants) was 14.5%. By age, the largest proportion of foreign migration was accounted for by young people aged 15–19 (23% of all emigrants). The number of children aged up to 9 was high (25%). The majority of young single people did not return. According to UN data, long-term Syrian emigrants numbered 300,000 and short-term emigrants numbered 462,000 in 1981. In that year, 8% of the Syrian population resided abroad, which was a high figure. Currently, their number is estimated at 1.5 million. Most of them live in North America, Brazil, and Argentina. The number of Syrians in Africa and Australia is 7,000.¹³⁰

When the oil boom started, Syrian labour became involved in working in investment projects in the GCC countries and numerous Syrians were employed in services. What attracted them was the vast difference between wages in the rich oil countries and Syria. For instance, the wage of an ordinary construction worker in Saudi Arabia in 1977 was four times that of

¹²⁹ Nadwat al-ihsā'āt al-hijrat al-'ālamīyat al-'arabīya, Dimashq, 1995.

¹³⁰ Dūwaydirī, R.: Sukkān al-jumhūrīya al-'arabīya as-sūriya, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A.: op. cit., p. 236.

his Syrian counterpart. In industry this disproportion was even greater and reached a factor of seven.¹³¹

To trace migration in the GCC countries is very difficult, as only Kuwait, Bahrain and the UAE conduct censuses and publish their results. For this reason it is necessary to refer to documents held by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which monitors social and economic issues of the Middle East. Another source of information was the International Labour Organization (ILO), whose responsibilities include monitoring migration movements of labour.

In 1994–1998, 7.88 million Syrians lived in the Arab countries. Many of them resided in the oil-rich Gulf countries.¹³²

Traditionally, another regional centre of Syrian migration was Lebanon, where 33,800 Syrians were employed in the same period. In the mid-1970s an estimated 200,000 seasonal labourers worked in Lebanon, and in 1976 the country became the main destination country for Syrian migration. This migration route resulted from geographic proximity, historical links dating from the Ottoman Empire, the French Mandate and waiving of visas between the two countries. This seasonal labour migration ceased after the civil war erupted. In 1975 the number rose sharply to 183,900 (unofficial Syrian sources). Birks and Sinclair state that, in the same year, 50,265 Syrian guest workers worked there and the number of their family members was 86,505.¹³³ This sudden increase was probably connected with the deployment of Syrian military expeditionary forces following a decision by the League of Arab States, which affected the progress of the civil war in Lebanon. In 1997, 57.38% of all Syrian migration (7.9 million) reportedly lived in Lebanon – the figure seems to be an overestimation.¹³⁴ A total of 22,000 Syrians worked in Jordan.

In the second half of the 1970s Syrian migration to the Gulf countries started growing slightly. According to Birks and Sinclair, 89,000 Syrian guest

¹³¹ Onn Wincler: Syrian Migration to the Arab Oil-producing Countries, Middle Eastern Studies, London, Vol. 33, Issue 1, January 1997, p. 107.

¹³² In 1970, their number in the GCC countries was 58,821.

¹³³ Birks, J. and Sinclair, T.: Manpower and Employment Planning in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, ESCWA, Studies on Development Problems in Countries of Western Asia, 1975, N.Y.: UN Publications, 1977, p. 28.

¹³⁴ Dūwaydirī, R.: op. cit., p. 236.

workers worked in the Gulf in 1980. Just before the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, some 200,000 Syrian nationals lived in the GCC countries. In 1980, another 30,000 Syrians worked in Lebanon and the same number in Jordan. Five years later, in 1985, the migration wave once again focused on the Gulf countries and Libya, which had 173,444 guest workers from Syria, of which 105,548 were family members. The number of Syrians in Jordan slightly decreased (to 22,000). In 1990, a higher number of Syrians employed in Libya was recorded (8,748).

A great number of Syrians (672,000) worked abroad in 1998, most of them in Turkey (24%) and Argentina (24%).¹³⁵ This meant that 11.4% of the population emigrated for work, which was no negligible figure and 63% of the emigrants did not intend to return. A surprising aspect is the proportion of illiterate and semi-literate people in the migration (66%), most of them women. Syrian foreign migration was a male matter.

Syria joined the anti-Iraq coalition, becoming a founding member of the “Damascus Declaration” countries. In spite of this, about 110,000 Syrian guest workers and their family members left Kuwait. After the war in 1992, about 112,000 Syrians lived in the Gulf; 70,000 of them stayed in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Only 22,110 worked in the other GCC countries. Of all Syrian guest workers worldwide, 17% worked in Saudi Arabia and 3.68% in the UAE in 1997. The share of Syrian guest workers in the total labour in Syria was negligible when compared with typical high-migration countries such as Jordan (40%) or Yemen (24%). In Syria the share was only 2.9%, i.e. 50,000 of the 1.741 million local workers. In spite of this, migration was depleting both skilled and unskilled labour.

If Yemen and Jordan had to import labour from other countries to make up for its decrease due to emigration, Syria’s labour drain was not so sizeable. Difficulties were caused by the emigration of a number of educated professionals to the West in the first half of the 1970s. Some sectors suffered from a severe shortage of skilled labour. The migration source countries, including Syria, invested considerable amounts into training labour, which they exported without compensation to the rich oil countries.

The main reason was the prospect of promising financial transfers from the guest workers to their homeland to help balance its deficit budget. For

¹³⁵ Dūwaydirī, R.: op. cit., p. 237.

Syria the share of money transfers from abroad was an important, yet not decisive, component of its budget, as in the case of Jordan or Egypt. In 1980, the share was 36% of all income from trade and exports. For the sake of comparison, in Jordan the same figure was 124.3% and in Egypt 70%. Syria had difficulty recording “illicit”, non-registered transfers made on the black market. The main reason for the specific behaviour of Syrian guest workers was a considerable difference between the official exchange rate and that on the black market.

Syria, unlike Jordan or Egypt, used much tougher methods to prevent the uncontrolled draining of particularly skilled labour. Authorities refused to issue visas to some applicants, and all job seekers abroad required an official permit or would run the risk of severe sanctions. The Syrian authorities assessed the applications case by case and some professionals were allowed to go abroad to the GCC countries for a limited period of time (typically 4 years). The draining of unskilled and semi-skilled labour was hardly regulated at all. The relevant Syrian authorities went so far as to request labour-importing countries to refuse to accept and employ Syrians with certain professions on their labour markets.

Another problem was the illegal transfers of guest workers' money using unofficial institutions. To reduce the effects of this trend, the Syrian government phased in exchange rate reforms starting in 1982.

From the mid-1970s and in the 1980s Syria, unlike Egypt, Yemen and Jordan, pursued a strongly restrictive migration policy. A chief factor behind this attitude was the small population, totalling approximately 7.4 million in 1975. The annual population growth (3%) was high and the employment rate was very low (22.5% in 1988), while the average in developing countries as a whole was 50%. Low civilian employment was, among other factors, caused by considerable demand for labour from the security forces (army and police).¹³⁶ For economic and security reasons, Syria feared importing labour as Jordan and Yemen had. A liberal migration policy could bring certain income to the state treasury, but at the same time, as the Gulf War showed, considerable problems with returnees, because the country would most likely have been unable to offer so many jobs. These factors accounted for Assad's extraordinary caution with respect to the migration of Syrian nationals.

¹³⁶ Birks, J. and Sinclair, T.: op. cit., pp. 107–118.

The Gulf War showed that this strategy was certainly connected with the internal stability of the Baathist regime. As a consequence, about two million foreign labourers returned from the GCC countries. Syrian guest workers lived chiefly in Kuwait (107,000 of the total 110,000). Most returned home before and after the beginning of the war, but in the second half of 1991 and first half of 1992 they went back again. Their return had only a negligible impact on the country's economic stability.¹³⁷ In 1992 their number stabilized approximately at the 1970s level (about 111,000). When compared with Egypt and Jordan, the impacts of the war on the country's economy were limited, and the regime was not compelled to reconsider its economic strategy. The result was a cautious liberalization with retention of the government's strong control and regulation. Demand from the GCC countries was declining. Syrian economic strategists forecast this development and adapted to it promptly.

Syria became a host country and the number of incoming persons has increased lately, although this was mostly a matter of tourism and not migration per se. In 1997–1998 an increase of 7.74% was recorded. The most frequent visitors were the Lebanese, followed by the Jordanians and Saudis. Of non-Arab visitors, the dominant nationalities were the Turks, Persians and former USSR nationals.¹³⁸

The country became a host country for both individual and mass ethnic migration (Turkmen, Cherkess, Armenians, Assyrians, Chaldeans). In 1939, the Arab community moved out of the İskenderun Liva (a province that is now Hatay in Turkey) after France recognized its merging with Turkey. After the first Arab-Israeli War (1947–1948), approximately 180,000 Palestinian refugees from present-day Israel and the Palestinian territories settled in Syria. In 1997, they numbered 360,586. A total of 68% of all Palestinians in Syria live in the Damascus Muhafazah.¹³⁹ A small number of Algerians and Moroccans live in and around Damascus. The number of Sudanese and nationals of other Arab states is also negligible. In conjunction with the war against Iraq (2003), nearly a million Iraqis fled to Syria.

¹³⁷ Only 35% were guest workers and the rest were their family members. Syrian press and other sources did not mention any complications with flats or refugee repatriation.

¹³⁸ Majmū'at al-ihsā'īya li 'ām 1999, al-jadwal raqm 13/2, Majlis al-wuzarā', Al-Maktab al-mar-kazī li al-ihsā', Dimashq, 1999.

¹³⁹ Dūwaydirī, R.: op. cit., pp. 237–238.

Internal Migration

Syria's internal migration patterns are different from the other Arab countries, which is connected with the fact that Syria is not a country with a highly liberalized economy and its government has, to a great extent, retained its role in rectifying certain demographic and socio-economic trends. The government recently drew up a strategic national plan for internal migration in co-operation with the International Organization for Migration and the ILO. It describes Syria as a provincial country, which has not yet seen the onset of a rapid process of urbanization. For instance, the country has strived in recent years to narrow the gap between the city and the village. Since no real internal labour market with a fluctuating supply and demand has taken shape, temporary migration movements of the population are very low. This issue is discussed in detail in an excellent study published by the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research.¹⁴⁰ A stimulus for rural to urban migration is the ownership of, or rather shortage of land. In the long run, the largest reservoir of migration consists of the major urban centres of Damascus (half a million) and Aleppo. One in three Syrian immigrants has found refuge in the capital.¹⁴¹ The slowly changing size of the population in Damascus or Aleppo show that they have not become mass centres of internal immigration in spite of their significance. Conversely, the largest sources of migration are the *muhafazah* of Quneitra and Homs, which is due to unstable security and the economic situation. Indeed, the "push factor" plays a role, but it is considerably weaker than in the liberalized economies of Morocco or Egypt. As there are extensive projects in the Al-Hasakah Muhafazah, a major part of the workforce has temporarily relocated to this relatively poor, provincial area.

Migration Policies of Individual Countries

The Levant countries have no immigration policies or strategies in place; they have limited their activities mostly to crisis management, with no long-

¹⁴⁰ Khawaja, M.: Internal Migration in Syria, Findings from a National survey, FaFo Report No. 375, FaFo, Oslo 2002, www.fafono.no/engelsk.

¹⁴¹ Khawaja, M.: op. cit., pp. 44–45.

term approach or planning. Nonetheless, there has been a policy in use determining the movement of population and emigration in these countries. These procedures were based on the national and pan-regional framework. A number of conventions, agreements and recommendations were adopted by the Arab countries on the LAS level, dealing with the "Arab economic citizenship" principle.¹⁴² In practice, however, emigrants were deciding on migration or return based on their own considerations and irrespective of such agreements, which numbered around twenty.

Jordan

The export of labour is officially hailed in Jordan as the country's contribution to Arab unity (*wahda*) and economic integration, as many emigrants have sought to offer their services as qualified top experts in the Arab labour market. The Jordanian political strategy grew out of the conviction that pan-Arab economic integration is a crucial process. The promotion of Arab labour migration was explained as a brain-drain prevention measure and a boost for technological and economic co-operation between Arab countries. The migration of Jordanian guest workers to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was not perceived as negatively as the brain drain to the West. After the war, Jordanian emigrants began returning to the country, which helped to enhance the overall qualifications and expertise of the Jordanian labour; nevertheless, assimilating such huge numbers of people was quite difficult, sparking negative reactions among the general public.

Jordanian economic strategy, reflected in the country's development plans, included the export of educated, skilled labour. The state sought to gain control over migration and signed bilateral agreements with the Gulf states, obliging the latter to welcome teachers, doctors and various professionals. The government of Jordan was sought to regulate or reduce the labour drain in the country's public sector through salary increases for public servants. This campaign had a positive impact on the rising levels of Jordanian female workers in the public sector.

¹⁴² For details see El-Khasavneh, S.: Labour Migration in Jordan: Policies, Flows, Organization, paper presented to the ILO/UNDP seminar on Migration Policies in Arab Labour-Sending Countries, 1–4 May 1992.

“Jordanization” of the workforce did not target only Egyptian and Asian labour but also the Palestinians, the majority of whom were granted Jordanian citizenship from 1948 onwards. Immediately after announcing the plan to cede its claims to the West Bank of Jordan in 1988, Jordan introduced two-year passports for Palestinians from the West Bank, who were classified as non-Jordanians and could get jobs in some sectors only. Jordanian relations with the GCC countries have settled, but the migration volumes have not reached, and most probably will never reach, pre-1990 figures.

Palestine

Migration of Palestinian labour has not been much regulated by the Palestinian Authority, although it has been influenced by the positions of other countries. Wars have resulted in a massive movement of the Palestinian population, while the restrictive policies of Israel, i.e. deportations, imprisonment and obstacles to the return of Palestinian students studying abroad, also played a major role. Some 20,000 Palestinians are estimated to leave the West Bank every year. The above-mentioned Jordanian decision to introduce restrictions aimed at Palestinian guest workers in the 1980s had a major impact. The Gaza population was hit hardest, as most of them were not granted Jordanian citizenship and were therefore subject to tighter restrictions by Jordanian authorities.

Everyday trips of the Palestinian guest workers travelling to Israel were full of traumatic experiences: the risk-fraught journey began before the dawn, followed by searches at the border crossings, uncertainty about leaving, acceptance and finding a job and abrupt changes in Israel’s policies followed by border closures. Periodic and long-term closures of the border became a rule after March 1993 and then again from 2005 onwards, in particular between Israel and Gaza. Meticulous inspections have been introduced at border checkpoints.

The lives of Palestinians in various Arab countries depended greatly on the relations between the PLO or the Palestinian government and the respective country’s government. An agreement was made between the PLO and the relevant states on a quota for Palestinian refugees with their families, as well as for students and experts. Governments of these Arab countries pledged to provide safe haven and jobs for refugees.

What proved rather problematic, however, was the absorption capacity of the future Palestinian state, i.e. whether it would be able to take in the rel-

atively large diaspora from abroad. Since the Gulf War, Kuwaiti refugees have been forbidden by Israel to enter the occupied West Bank and only refugees who had lived in the territory in 1967 and had valid residence IDs were accepted. Many Palestinians sought at least temporary residence permits.

Lebanon

The Lebanese authorities had no specific plans, objectives, mechanisms, institutions or tools to regulate migration flows in a rational way. The long history and tradition of emigration from Lebanon has helped to cultivate a generally positive attitude to emigration, which has been celebrated in many myths, legends and a myriad of adventure stories. In fact, state institutions do not use the term “emigration” in their official documents, but prefer the term “expatriation”.

Lebanese expatriates travel back to Lebanon for their holidays, transfer their money to Lebanese financial institutions and sometimes invest in the country. The extreme liberalism and individualism of the Lebanese allow the government to more or less disregard emigrants’ social problems (e.g. unemployment) and keep no records of migration issues. No one was interested in the consequences of the Gulf War and the government did not consider any potential compensation or assistance to the exiles.

In Lebanon, migration is linked to religious sectarianism. Since 1948 the country has given preference to Palestinian Christians to manipulate the religious balance of power. On the contrary, Palestinian refugees from refugee camps often cannot even travel abroad for work as they do not have valid documents. During the War, the Minister of Labour issued work permits to foreign labourers only. What is also interesting is the impact that post-war reconstruction has had on the intensity of internal migration, change of residence and redistribution of the population. The reconstruction of some parts of Beirut has caused major population movement and it was quite difficult to ensure the return of the original inhabitants of, for example, the centre of Beirut or South Lebanon, as this often resulted in skirmishes.

Migration had a major impact on the integrity of families and local communities, an issue which has traditionally been at the bottom of the agenda in most Levant countries, except for Lebanon. The fact that attention has been paid to this issue stemmed from the already mentioned positive approach of

the Lebanese to migration, which has not given rise to frustration or nostalgia. Palestinian attitudes have been different, as in their case migration has been involuntary and not a matter of choice as in other countries. In Jordan, an ineffective economy and a lack of internal sources of skilled labour have become the main driving force of migration.

While migration to the Gulf countries has been perceived as temporary, migration to Western countries has been seen as permanent. The main reasons for migration to Saudi Arabia have included wage differences, anticipated escalation of the civil war and higher quality of life. For many, Saudi Arabia was but a stopover on their way to the United States and Canada, which provided a source of money for living costs in the final destination country. Potential emigrants thought that staying in the Gulf would help them improve their circumstances for travelling on to other countries. For example, the Canadian government based its decision-making on the belief that these migrants were screened by the Saudi Arabian government and found morally and politically acceptable. Language skills, expertise and potential foreign direct investment were also taken into account. This, however, changed in the post 9/11 period and much more caution has been exercised since.

Immigrants have used every opportunity to get to their dream country. One of the tricks often used by migrants was planning a visit to the USA on a tourist visa to coincide with the birth of a child. Children born in the USA automatically acquired citizenship on turning 21 and their parents thus also became citizens. Student and spouse visas have also been treated as “tickets to paradise.”

Family bonds and local emigrant networks have often played a key role in the migration of compatriots as well as providing an additional source of funding for them. This being said, migration has actually strengthened blood relations and solidarity – community and clan-based – due to mutual economic and social need.

Great expectations, however, can result in great disappointment, as demonstrated after the Gulf War. For security and political reasons, emigrants were displaced from the oil countries and became the recipients and not the providers of assistance to their families upon their return to their home countries. The migration process may change the demographic development of city boroughs, villages and entire regions over time, as other inhabitants typically want to follow those who have been successful as guest workers in the GCC

states or in the West. Households making a living from oil rent have gradually become isolated from the rest of the local population and interpersonal relationships fall victim to this estrangement. The number of households under matriarchal control, which is typical of Egypt but not for Lebanon, increased during the migration boom. With emigrants leaving the oil states after the Gulf War, the flow of oil rent into the region stagnated. This process was succinctly described by Seteney Sgami in an ESCWA study on Jordan.¹⁴³

Research has shown that irrespective of their country of origin, emigrants invest the money they transfer into real estate and consumption, and only a small portion is invested into productive areas. Money is often used to pay off debts incurred before or during the work visit abroad. Housing is another area of investment.

The ethnic and national structure of emigrants is another very interesting topic, which has not been studied in any serious research so far. For instance, the Jewish emigration from Lebanon started during the civil war, with the USA, France and Canada becoming the destination countries. On the contrary, Lebanese Armenians were very conservative, not leaving the country and adhering to traditional Lebanese sites. They refused even internal resettlement. Information on the emigration of Christians or Muslims is treated as sensitive data in Lebanon, often kept secret or subject to wilful misrepresentation.

Lebanon and Money Transfers from Emigrants

Money transfers are on the increase; in 1998 the figure stood at USD 1.2 billion while in 2003 the transferred amounts reached as much as USD 2.7 billion. This has made Lebanon the seventh largest recipient of wage transfers in the world, close behind high-population countries such as India, the Philippines and Mexico. In 2003, the total transfers represented 15.2% of the Lebanon's GDP, the eight highest proportion in the world. During the 1998–2001 period the transfers amounted to USD 1.6 billion, compared to a mere USD 250 million of direct investment.

¹⁴³ Seteney Shami: Emigration Dynamics in Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon, paper presented to the IOM/UNPA Policy Workshop on Emigration Dynamics in the Arab World, 1996.

The total figure may have been even higher, as official sources, such as the IMF, did not account for unofficial forms of money transfer outside the banking sector. The money flows into the country in cash as well as in the *hawala* system. Grobril therefore estimates the actual number as being double the reported figure.¹⁴⁴ Similarly to other Arab states, this money is most usually spent on consumer goods. Nonetheless, quite a large portion of the money is invested into health care and education.

Another interesting figure is transfers from the Lebanese diaspora, included in the Gross National Disposable Income category. And it is because of these transfers that the gross income of Lebanese residents is about 20% higher than the country's GDP.

The inflow of money into Lebanon was also due to high interest rates, amounting to 3.4% at the end of 2003, i.e. over three times higher than world average interest rates, which stood at approximately 1%. Lebanese deposits amounted to USD 43.5 billion in 2003, i.e. about 2.6 times more than Lebanon's GDP. Few countries can pride themselves on such a deposit-to-GDP ratio. Quite paradoxically, Lebanon has had no effective transfer regulation strategy. Attempts have been made to link the diaspora with the former homeland, but this approach is marred by a lack of unity, which reflects the divergent interests of the private sector. The Lebanese government only agreed to exempting the transfers from tax, due to fears that the money would flow into the country through unofficial channels.

The second policy, according to Ghorbil, was to increase the credibility and attractiveness of pension funds for Lebanese guest workers abroad. There are roughly 300,000 Lebanese in the Gulf who have not yet chosen any form of pension insurance. It has become typical for well-off Lebanese to choose American and European insurance funds. Favourable taxation, however, might redirect this money to Lebanese insurance companies.

Issuing securities and bonds is another method of attracting money from these transfers. The issue of profitable, mid-term bonds for the money transferred would certainly be an interesting option in this respect. There would

¹⁴⁴ Nassib Grobril, lecture at Saradar Investment House, Notre Dame University, under the auspices of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center, The Daily Star, 23. 4. 2004, www.MENAFN.COM, 27 May 2004, Middle East North Africa – Financial Network.

be not so much dependence on Eurobonds as the value of Lebanese securities would be increased.

To sum up, a functioning economy and a good investment-friendly environment are the key tools in attracting much-needed foreign investment. It seems, however, that the current security conditions in the neighbouring countries such as Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories, and in Lebanon itself, will have a negative impact on the Lebanese economy.

4. International Migration and Changing Workforce Structure in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries

Migration in the Persian Gulf countries is different from other regions. First and foremost, it is related to relatively deep-seated economic and demographic developments. The structure of the population and workforce in the Gulf countries has changed dramatically over the past few decades. The number of foreign workers has surged; indeed, in many GCC countries the majority of workers have been foreigners. International migration in the region has included migrants of many different professions coming from over a hundred countries of the world. In 1999, the number of immigrants in the GCC countries reached 5 million in a total population of 27.5 million, accounting for 30–40% of the region's population.¹⁴⁵ The most recent estimates from 2005 report 8.045 million immigrants. Most of them were from India (3.2 million), Pakistan (1.74 million), Egypt (1.45 million), Yemen (1.03 million), Bangladesh (0.82 million), Sri Lanka (0.75 million) and the Philippines (0.73 million).

GCC countries, perhaps with the exception of Kuwait, have often published anecdotal and misleading data on the population and emigrants, which was typical of the period up until the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Population census has been irregular and unsystematic. In some cases, the census results have differed from other official data. The domestic/foreign population ratio has become a very sensitive issue due to the small number of inhabitants.

Apparently, monitoring migration developments in the GCC countries is quite complicated, due to the fact that data is outdated and unrepresentative. The data is also often wilfully misrepresented or only summary figures rather

¹⁴⁵ Muḥammad Muḥammad Az-Zahra: *Sukkān ittihād al-imārāt al-ʿarabīya al-muttaḥida*, in: *Ar-Ruwayṭī*, M. A., op. cit., p. 71.

than itemised data get published. On account of this, anyone wanting to study migration must acquire data from various secondary sources.

History of Migration

In previous times, migration used to be fairly common on the Arab peninsula. Typically, it consisted of seasonal tribal migration, which was not subject to detailed analysis. Oman has an extremely rich history of migration, which also became reflected in the ethnic and anthropological composition of its population. In the past, a great number of Iranians and Baluchistanis came to Oman. In 1980, the Baluchistanis represented about 7% of the total population, and their cultural influence was quite apparent in the al-Batina coastal lowland and in Muscat. The main Baluchi centres, such as Makran and the Gwadar port, ruled by the Omani Sultans until 1959, were the main pillars of Baluchi migration. There used to be a lot of trading between Oman and these centres.

A substantial number of people of African origin also live in Muscat, Matrah and Salalah. Most of these come from Zanzibar and East Africa, which also used to be ruled by the Omani Sultans and linked by close trade relations. Many Omani traders returned to these old centres in the 1980s to start new lives in their former homeland. A small Iranian trading minority also settled in Oman and has been more or less assimilated. There is a larger number of Indians living in Oman. They have formed an isolated community and do not mix with the Arabs. Cities along the al-Batina coastal lowland, such as Sur, Muscat and Matrah, are the main centres of the Indians in Oman. In the past, the Indians traded with the British East India Company. Omanis also emigrated to foreign countries, representing one third of all immigrants to the GCC countries and constituted the largest pre-1965 immigrant communities in these states.

The second largest number of maritime emigrants were the Yemenis, who traded with South Mesopotamia and the North West Arab Peninsula (the Nabatean empire) in the Middle Ages, many of them settling there. As merchants, the Yemenis travelled to, and settled in South East Asia and East Africa. Aided by the monsoon winds, they sailed to India and beyond to Indonesia. From 1839 on, many Yemenis left for British, French and Italian colonies, in particular Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti, as well as to England.

Many of them settled in the USA, especially after World War II. Aden was the main centre and the starting point of the Yemeni migration. To this day, Yemen remains the only genuine country of origin in terms of Arabian Peninsula migration.

The GCC countries' current population structure is characterised by a high percentage of immigrants, mostly for work. In many countries, these immigrants represent a majority of the population. Omanis constituted 75.6% (1.79 million) of the GCC total population in 2005. The rest are foreigners who are fewer than in other Gulf countries. Indians represent 26.8% of Muscat's population and 16% of Dhofar's population. In 2002, there were 300,000 Indians in Oman in total, i.e. 13.4% of the total population. Apart from Indians, Oman has been a destination for migrants from Bangladesh (110,000 in 2002), Pakistan (70,000 in 2002) and East and South-East Asia (35% of immigrants). As for Arab immigrants, most of them come from the GCC countries, Sudan and Egypt.¹⁴⁶ The Omanis represent 73% of the population, the highest percentage of all GCC countries. Europeans working in the service sector, mainly in education and health care, stand at 0.5% of the total population.

The percentage of foreigners living in Qatar stood at 75% in 1995. Of this figure, 80% were Muslims and 10% Christians, which the Qatari government considered culturally and politically dangerous.¹⁴⁷ The country has been implementing a policy of Qatarization of its workforce (*takṭīr*) to increase the percentage of domestic workers.

In Bahrain, the number of emigrants was higher than the number of immigrants between 1941 and 1965. This began to change with the onset of the oil boom in 1974. In 1991, the number of foreigners (temporary migrant labour) reached an incredible 93% of the country's total population. Since 1985, Bahrain has implemented a policy of reducing its dependence on foreign labour. Most immigrants come from Asia (83% in 1991). Of these, 12% are Arabs and 3.2% Europeans. Migration accounted for 48% of the population growth between 1981–1991.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Ash-Shamsī, Mithā' Sālīm: Taqyīm as-siyāsāt al-hijra fī duwal Majlis at-ta'āwun al-chalījī, ijtimā' at al-chubarā' ḥawla al-hijrat ad-dawliya wa at-tanmiya fī al-mintaqat al-'arabiya, Bayrūt 15–17. 5. 2006, p. 56.

¹⁴⁷ For a detailed analysis see Nāsir 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A., op. cit., pp. 481–528.

¹⁴⁸ Muḥammad Tawfīq: Sukkān Mamlakat al-Baḥrayn, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A., op. cit., pp. 136–138.

Immigration to Kuwait soared in 1967 after the end of the June Arab-Israeli war; the Kuwaiti government wanted to demonstrate solidarity with the frontline countries and those who had suffered through the occupation. Migration, however, reached enormous proportions as immigrants continued to pour in, including the children, parents and grandparents of workers. Since 1969 the flow of immigrants has been regulated. A radical reduction occurred in the number of foreigners after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. In particular, citizens of the Arab countries that supported the Iraqi occupation, i.e. Palestinians and Jordanians, were expelled. In the 1990s, Kuwait gave preference to migrants from Asian countries (Korea, the Philippines and Thailand)¹⁴⁹ and favoured workers familiar with Western technology. At the present time, foreigners represent about two thirds of the population.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) depended heavily on immigrant labour. In 1995, foreign labour represented 75.7% (about 850,000 people) of the total population, compared to only 54% in 1970. In 2005, this share dropped slightly to 71.4%. The demand for labour has been growing despite government attempts to reduce the percentage of foreign workers. A total of 67% of guest workers in the UAE are of non-Arab origin and 29% are Arabs. In 1970, the proportion of Iranian immigrants (42%) still dominated the migrant population. This percentage dwindled, however, and in 1985 reached a mere 10.7%. On the other hand, the number of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (30.5%) as well as Indians (23%) increased. The number of Indians was very high indeed and totalled approximately one million in 2005. Immigration from Arab states was dominated by Palestinians and Jordanians (8%), followed by Omanis (6.5%), Egyptians (5%), Lebanese and Syrians (together 4%) and Yemenis (2%). Arab immigrants were employed mainly in the service, health-care and education sectors.¹⁵⁰

In 2000, immigrants had a 27% share in the total population of Saudi Arabia; five years later this number dropped to 25.9%. The migration structure is characterised by a large number of Arabs, who constituted 30–55% of the population in the second half of the 20th century, the highest figure for all the

¹⁴⁹ Amal al-‘Adhabī As-Ṣabāh: *Sukkān Dawlat Al-Kuwayt*, in: Ar-Ruwaythī, M. A., op. cit., pp. 542–543.

¹⁵⁰ For details see Muḥammad Muḥammad Az-Zahra: *Sukkān Ittiḥād al-Imārāt al-‘arabiya al-muttaḥida*, op. cit., pp. 72–77.

GCC states. Saudi Arabia would like to maintain its prestigious position in the Arab political system, and has therefore sought to implement pan-Arab resolutions at various levels with the objective of preferential employment of Arab workers. In 2000, 43% of the Saudi Arabian immigrant workforce consisted of Arabs, about 19% of whom were Egyptians. About 56% came from Asia and 1.8% from Europe or America.¹⁵¹ In numerical terms, the dominant proportion in 2005 consisted of Indians (1.4 million), followed by Pakistan, Yemen and Egypt with about one million guest workers each.

In summary, 20th century migration and migration associated with oil rents started in the 1940s, first in Kuwait and then in Bahrain. In a short time this type of migration spread over the entire Gulf region. Oman, which had previously been a migration source country, was the last Gulf state to become a recipient country.

Labour imports have been the single feasible option for boosting the economic growth of some Gulf countries, such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE, due to their excess capital and a shortfall of local labour in various professions, as well as a general low proportion of domestic labour in the workforce: 25% in Oman and Bahrain, 21% in Saudi Arabia, 18% in Kuwait, 17% in UAE and 19% in Qatar.¹⁵² Migration in the Gulf states has not only been linked to the oil boom, but also politically or ideologically conditioned. Gulf migration can be divided into three phases.

First Migration Phase

The first migration phase begun in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and continued into the early 1970s. This phase was characterised by a relatively slow but steady influx of migrants. In general, most migrants in the Gulf countries were of Arab origin, although this did not apply to the same extent in all the countries. Most of the workers were Yemenis, Egyptians, Jordanians and Pal-

¹⁵¹ Muḥammad Aḥmad Ar-Ruwaythī: *Sukkān al-Mamlakat al-‘arabiya as-sa‘ūdiyya*, Muḥammad Aḥmad Ar-Ruwaythī (ed): *Sukkān al-‘ālam al-‘arabī al-wāqī‘ wa al-mustaqbal*, Maktabat al-‘Abikān, al-juz’u al-awwal, Ar-Riyāḍ, 2003, pp. 168–181.

¹⁵² Looney, Robert E.: *Factors Affecting Employment in the Arabian Gulf Region, 1975–1985*. Population Bulletin of ESCWA, 1991.

estinians. The relatively well-educated Palestinians and Jordanians became a source of labour for the fast-developing social service sector – mostly education and health care. Palestinians were accepted mainly for political reasons, to show solidarity with their fight against the Israeli occupation. Egyptians were also made to participate in the social service sector. Together with the Yemenis, however, they worked mainly in construction.

There exist no exact numbers of the migrating population in Saudi Arabia at the end of the first phase. Only a rough estimate of the numbers of migrants in the Gulf countries is possible. The Ministry of Finance and the National Economy carried out a census in four major Saudi cities in 1962–1963, revealing that between 15% and 35% of their inhabitants were foreigners. About 30% of the total number of entrepreneurs (1–1.25 million in 1970) were foreigners. Modernization of the economies had begun in the Gulf countries. However, only Qatar and Kuwait were able to make perfect use of their income for this modernization. Almost all the Gulf economies used oil revenues in ways that required relatively high numbers of foreign workers to build economic and social infrastructure. By the mid-1960s, the percentage of foreigners rose to 53% of the total workforce in Kuwait and 25% in Saudi Arabia. A sharp demographic growth was reported in almost all the GCC countries; this growth was related not only to natural processes, such as the birth rate, lower death rate and increased quality of life, but was also attributed to the advancing naturalization process.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, foreign workers migrated to the Gulf along with their entire families. This, however, began to change in the late 1970s.

Second Migration Phase

The second phase began in the early 1970s, when oil prices and revenues soared, and ended in the early 1980s. The oil boom brought about massive economic growth. The GCC countries needed to build modern infrastructure within a short period of time, which required the influx of foreign labour for several reasons. The domestic workforce was relatively small and lacked the qualifications needed. Neither did the government provide any special incentives for employing domestic workers in the modernization projects. Migration in this phase was very high. Within a period of five years (1970–1975)

the number of foreigners doubled and again doubled in the following five years. The total migrant population reached 4.5 million. In 1980, foreign labour in the Gulf countries increased by 262% compared to 1975 levels. In 1980, foreign labour stood at 78% in Kuwait, 59% in Saudi Arabia and 90% in the UAE. The high oil rent enabled construction of new roads, schools, hospitals, ports, communication networks, banks, industrial plants and desalination facilities in line with development plans. The growth of non-CGG (domestic and foreign) labour was in line with the second five-year plan (1975–1980). It was meant to be much more dynamic than the growth of domestic labour, as development plans needed to be implemented very fast.¹⁵³ According to the Saudi Central Planning Organisation, meeting the goals of the five-year plan required between 180,000 and 250,000 qualified and semi-qualified guest workers.

The second phase was characterised by a changed ratio of the economically active population. The number of hired Asians increased greatly in comparison with Arab migrants in this period. In some countries, Asian labour had already constituted a majority even before the start of this phase. The ethnic structure of the workforce in all of these countries changed, however, with the number of Asian workers growing, even though total Arab labour in the GCC labour market remained dominant in the 1970s, remaining at two thirds of the total workforce. This was mainly due to religious, cultural and linguistic pan-Arab links rather than economic considerations. Arab workers preferred jobs in which they had a comparative advantage due to their language (i.e. teachers, lawyers, journalists, university professors, administrative staff and building contractors). Asian workers were getting highly qualified jobs requiring a good command of English and technical skills. Some also worked in domestic services provided to the local population. The GCC countries were even competing with each other in attracting Asian, European, American and Arab labour.

Saudi Arabia sought workers from the Western countries and the Maghreb, the latter being in special demand, as the Arabic-speaking Maghreb work-

¹⁵³ The second five-year plan forecast the Saudi workforce growing from 1.2 to 1.5 million and foreign worker numbers increasing from 300,000 to 800,000. Al-Farsy, F.: *Modernity and Tradition, The Saudi Equation*, Knight Communication 2001, p. 222.

ers were often educated in the West.¹⁵⁴ The rising unemployment levels in the Maghreb countries stimulated migration of workers to the more distant Persian Gulf countries.

Third Migration Phase

The third phase of labour migration started in the mid-1980s, i.e. when oil prices and revenues started falling. In effect, there was much less migration pressure. There was a rapid demographic growth in both the overall population of immigrants and immigrant labour, averaging 8% between 1980 and 1985. The number of non-resident inhabitants rose to 6.6 million and the number of workers reached 4.4 million. In 1985, the workforce had increased by 150% compared to 1980.

The post-1985 figures demonstrate a continuing decrease in the net growth of immigrants. The annual influx of immigrants averaged 3.3% during the 1985-1990 period, compared with 8% in 1980–1985. However, the number of migrant workers rose by 31% per annum between 1985 and 1994. In the late 1980s, the proportion of foreign labour in the GCC countries reached an incredible 72% of the total workforce. The importance of immigrant workers in the GCC countries is underlined by the demographic growth of the non-domestic population, which was even higher between 1975 and 1990 than the record growth of the local population.

GCC: domestic and foreign labour

	1975 nationals	1975 foreigners	1985 nationals	1985 foreigners	1990 nationals	1990 foreigners
State						
Bahrain	46,810	22,000	69,593	85,450	83,510	93,020
Kuwait	98,270	212,740	123,560	543,970	129,180	798,350
Oman	137,000	81,250	126,000	314,056	152,230	304,919
Qatar	12,500	53,800	16,249	70,511	19,810	65,431
Saudi Arabia	1,026,400	773,400	3,522,690	3,552,690	1,614,220	3,405,100

¹⁵⁴ Al-Farsy, Fouad: op. cit., p. 223.

UAE	45,000	251,500	620,550	620,550	85,351	688,349
Total	1,365,980	1,394,690	4,478,642	5,157,227	2,084,301	5,355,169

Source: Birks and Sinclair estimates.

GCC: nationals and foreigners

State	1975 nationals	1975 foreigners	1985 nationals	1985 foreigners	1990 nationals	1990 foreigners
Bahrain	224,650	70,530	272,900	120,229	313,400	134,420
Kuwait	522,750	522,700	684,330	1,016,010	577,650	1,549,140
Oman	550,000	N/A	856,581	390,973	1,023,500	370,892
Qatar	158,000	158,000	84,240	129,228	103,400	117,602
Saudi Arabia	4,592,540	1,562,400	4,549,550	4,549,550	7,646,000	4,437,165
UAE	200,000	455,940	966,600	966,600	490,692	1,146,624
Total	6,247,940	2,769,570	7,414,201	7,172,590	10,154,642	7,755,843

Source: Birks Sinclair estimates.

It is a moot point whether the post-Gulf War period can be considered a new phase of migration. The invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing events set in motion the greatest exodus so far. Over 5.5 million people relocated, 2 million of them on account of the invasion. Thirty countries were affected by the negative impact of such an enormous population movement immediately after the war, though the intensity of this impact varied. Egypt suffered most, with about one million migrants, along with Yemen and the Palestinian and Jordanian population. The civil war in Iraq forced a large number of Kurds to flee, mostly to neighbouring Turkey and Iran (650,000). The Shiites have found refuge in Iran (750,000).¹⁵⁵

Kuwait saw dramatic demographic changes at that time as several hundred thousand people had to leave the country during the occupation. They went to their homelands, fearing further escalation of the conflict. When the Kuwait

¹⁵⁵ Choucri, N.: Demography, Migration and Security in the Middle East, in: The Middle East in Global Change. The Politics and Economics of Interdependence versus Fragmentation. Ed. Laura Guarzzone, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1997, p. 104.

government returned, it expelled the remaining Palestinians, whose numbers had increased to about 300,000 before the occupation. Some immigrants from other states returned to Kuwait upon its liberation to help with recovery. Most of those who came back were single or childless Asians. The total number of returnees, however, was lower than the total number of immigrants before the occupation. Kuwait's post-invasion population dwindled by half.

The demographic change in other countries was less marked. Some 400,000 Yemenis and a smaller number of Palestinians had to leave Saudi Arabia after the occupation. Trends from the previous years continued: lesser demand for guest workers and the domination of Asian immigrants. Similarly to the pre-1973 period, political criteria were important for decisions on accepting foreign labour.

Since the 1980s oil rents decreased dramatically following a plunge in global oil prices, which prompted both the public and private sector to start cutting labour costs. The situation was somewhat alleviated by the fact that most major projects had been completed or were close to completion. Maintenance and repair were more important than new projects.

**GCC: domestic and foreign populations and workforce,
1992 and 1995 (in thousands)**

	1992 nationals	1992 foreigners	1995 nationals	1995 foreigners
Population	10,696	6,951	12,547	6,680
Workforce	2,121	5,144	2,378	5,232

Current Changes in the Structure of Domestic and Non-domestic Labour

The latest developments and population trends in the GCC countries show that the population is growing younger, with a record 60% under 25 years of age. The 0–14 age bracket in the GCC countries constituted 40% of the total population in 1970, although in recent years this figure has been declining. The estimate for 2005 was 33.7%, while a figure of 28.8% is forecast for 2025. The only exceptions were the UAE and Qatar with large percentages of immigrants. This demographic development is typical of the entire Arab world

and experts have regarded it as time-bomb, which may eventually destabilise the entire region, given the lack of jobs and sluggish economic growth.¹⁵⁶

The number of students in the GCC states is much higher than the working population. In 2002, about five million people were studying in the most populous of the GCC countries, Saudi Arabia, eight times more than in 1970. As few as 10,000 (8%) of all students chose technical fields of study between 1995 and 1999. The demand for educated labour with technical skills will presumably be growing.

Each and every GCC member state expects demand for jobs to rocket, as the local workforce will have doubled by 2020. In Saudi Arabia alone, for example, this figure is set to rise from the current 3.3 million to over 8 million. Countries with a low per capita income from oil (Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Bahrain) will have problems. Unemployment in these three countries continues to be relatively low, which can be explained by the high number of immigrant workers, but has been growing dynamically.¹⁵⁷ Only half of the 100,000 young people new to the labour market annually find jobs. The situation is worst in Bahrain.

Currently, jobs in the state sector are reserved for domestic workers. In Kuwait, for example, 93% of the total workforce (i.e. 200,000 people) have jobs in the state sector. In contrast, 98% of the total number of foreigners (900,000) work in the private sector. In 1993–1994 subsidies of their wages amounted to a total of 445 Kuwaiti Dinars (KWD) per capita. At the beginning of the 21st century a Kuwait worker received a KWD 120 state subsidy. The stalled economic growth in the GCC countries and enormous population boom (with the growth rate at about 3.4% between 1980 and 2000) limited the governments' capacity to offer jobs in the public sector. Most experts expect domestic unemployment rates to go up in the majority of these countries.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ For details see Laipson, E.: The Middle East's Demographic Transition: What does it Mean?, *Journal of International Affairs*, Fall 2002, Vol. 56, No. 1, pp. 176–187.

¹⁵⁷ Many young people aged 18 to 30 are jobless (20% in Kuwait, 14% in Oman, 14% in Bahrain and 15% in Saudi Arabia). *The Economist*, 23 March, 2002, p. 11.

¹⁵⁸ The Arab Human Development Report 2002, UNDP – Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS), N.Y. 2002, p. 92.

In order to prevent anticipated problems, the GCC countries have started a campaign aiming at replacing foreigners with domestic labour. The current system of generous social benefits does not really encourage domestic labour to enter the job market. Very low wages for foreign workers reduce company costs in the production cycle and improve the competitiveness of firms. Therefore, businesses are not interested in expensive domestic workers, who are not willing to work for similar wages.

Foreign workers accept low wages as they are usually completely untaxed, and some employers even provide free accommodation, paid holidays and sometimes even meals and tuition for children. Wages are therefore subsidised in part by the public sector. GCC citizens work in the state sector or government institutions, which pay much higher wages than private employers. Most experts propose that the government should end or substantially cut immigrant wage subsidies, which would make companies realise the real value of labour and act in an economically rational way. The governments of the GCC countries have been trying to avoid restrictions and rely instead on moral appeals. These tactics, however, have not borne fruit. The government has had to face the dilemma of whether to apply such incentives to jobs that the locals do not want (e.g. cleaners, cooks, drivers, servants, doorkeepers and watchmen), while avoiding the demotivation of lower wages for highly qualified foreign labour, which cannot be replaced by local labour in the foreseeable future. Funds saved in this way could be used to finance essential services (e.g. the police).

Most Gulf countries' laws ban the import of some specific professions for which there is enough reserve labour in the local labour markets. An additional problem is a shortage of recruitment agencies to enlist domestic labour, since the existing agencies have been focused on importing unskilled labour from abroad. A well-functioning information network offering vacancies has yet to be built.

Saudi Arabia's approach to migration is not only social and economic, but is also concerned with its cultural and civilization aspects as well. Foreign workers bring specific customs and lifestyles into the country, which are rather disruptive in terms of the Islamic, social roots of the system. Muslim migration is also greeted with some hesitation, as it is believed to be part of

this negative process.¹⁵⁹ In order to prevent this, work contracts are concluded for fixed periods, i.e. to cover the duration of specific projects.

The regional and geopolitical impacts of such an employment policy are hard to estimate as some countries in the region have learned to live off oil rents. The 1999 figures showed a total number of 7.8 million imported workers in the GCC countries, of which 3.5 million (i.e. about 45%) were of Arab, and only 4.3 million of Asian origin. Egyptians and, to a smaller extent, Palestinians and Sudanese dominated numbers of Arab workers. Indians, Pakistanis and, to a lesser degree Iranians dominated the second group. The average monthly wage, calculated on the basis of data from three countries of the region (Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait), was USD 564. Replacing 500,000 foreign workers would mean an annual loss of about USD 282 million if remittances amounted to 70% of average wages. Sending countries would lose approximately USD 2 billion annually.¹⁶⁰

In general, we can say that replacing Asian labour would be much more difficult, given the type of jobs Asian migrant workers occupy (i.e. low-skill jobs, mainly in services and agriculture). Replacing Arab workers (teachers, clerical workers, translators, lawyers, managers and salesmen) with domestic labour, however, might be much easier and faster. Higher reform costs need to be taken into account as Arab workers tend to be paid higher wages.

Current GCC population and labour statistics (in thousands)

Country	Total population in 2002*	Population growth between 1960-2000 (% p.a.)	Population < 15 as % of total population	Foreigners as % of total population	Emigrants as % of total labour
Bahrain	650	3.6	28.8	40	64
Kuwait	2,300	4.9	33.5	64	81

¹⁵⁹ Al-Farsy, F.: *Modernity and Tradition, The Saudi Equation*, Knight Communication 2001, p. 223.

¹⁶⁰ Borgis, Maurice: *National Versus Migrant Workers in the GCC: Coping with Change, Employment Creation Social Protection in the Middle East and North Africa*, edited Handoussa, Heda; Tzannatos, Zafiris, American University in Cairo Press, Cairo, N.Y.-Cairo 2002, p. 118.

Oman	2,400	3.9	44.5	26	55**
Qatar	720	6.5	26.8	80	90**
Saudi Arabia	23,000	4.1	43.4	27	55**
UAE	3,300	8.8	26.7	82	90**

* forecast ** estimate

Source: Dubai Inc. Gulf Investment Corporation; US State Dept; UNDP.

Since 1990, the percentage of domestic workers has risen from 10% to 20% in Omani private businesses. The “Saudization” programme seeks to increase domestic labour by 5% annually. The aim of the programme is to push foreign labour out of some sectors (e.g. finance). In 2001, the Saudi government published a decree banning foreign nationals from trading in gold, which is a very lucrative business. A percentage of the country’s young population continues to be supported by rich parents until such time as they find “decent” jobs, but children from less well-off families have been forced to take up jobs previously reserved for immigrants, such as taxi drivers, petrol station workers etc. The goals of the third development plan were more or less achieved and the fourth and fifth development plans counted on limiting foreign labour. The annual growth in the number of immigrants did in fact drop by 50% between 1985 and 1995, but in absolute numbers the number of immigrants rose from 2.9 million in 1975 to 7.1 million in 1995.

The state-pampered domestic labour found it hard to adapt to these new developments. Due to low work morale and the difficulty of dismissing incompetent domestic workers, Saudi Arabian businesses have little interest in employing local labour, which is moreover is too expensive. Foreigners from India or Lebanon, for instance, have much lower wage demands.

Foreign labour is lucrative not only for entrepreneurs and trading companies but also for local households. Estimates put the number of servants working under unfair and slave-like conditions in GCC households at about three million at the beginning of the 21st century. Accommodation and food were usually deducted from their wages. These servants had no access to social benefits and no free time. Some of them were forced to do this demeaning work because of debts. Their employees paid for their visas and work permit “fees”. It has become a fashion and an indispensable part of life for Arab families in the Gulf states to “own” cheap servants who are quick to learn.

Saudi Arabia has witnessed several scandals in which the “owners” of Philippine female servants prevented these women from leaving the country (by withholding their documents) and sexually abused them, which was reported by global human rights organizations in the second half of the 1990s.

The Kuwaiti government introduced several measures to make foreign and domestic labour equal in terms of the wage policy, but homeowners vehemently resisted this effort. The government was forced to yield to this pressure and make an exception with regard to servants. In order to achieve the same effects, the Kuwaiti government started reducing the numbers of immigrants to prevent the outflow of funds transferred to other countries. Estimates put the percentage of the GCC countries’ GDP irretrievably disappearing abroad at 10%. Irrespective of the above deficiencies, the foreign labour business has remained profitable in the GCC countries and there is little interest in a rapid change. Lucrative “sponsorship” deals or property rental was reserved for nationals only and foreigners were not allowed to do so. Moreover, some countries cannot do without foreign labour. Saudi Arabia, for example, used to employ 500,000 foreign drivers because Saudi women are not allowed to drive.

One category of the Kuwait population consists of neither nationals nor immigrants and foreigners. These people are called *biduns*, from the Arabic term *bidun jinsiya* meaning “without nationality” or homeless, or derisively *al-fuqū*, which means mushrooms, meaning that these people have no roots and thus no identity. The existence of these people was long overlooked and only began to be discussed in relation to the great demographic shifts coming after the end of the Gulf War.

The population of Kuwait included emigrants from neighbouring countries (Iraq, Iran, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia). In 1959 Kuwait passed a law recognising two kinds of citizenship. The first category included citizens who had lived in Kuwait since 1920 and therefore had the right to vote and to be elected to the country’s Parliament. The second category included citizens who had been in Kuwait since 1945 but who, unlike the first category, had no right to vote and be elected. Registration into both groups ended in 1966, and those who did not manage to register – due to old age, illness or early loss of their parents – became *biduns* in spite of several generations of their families living in Kuwait. Prior to the Iraqi invasion, 250,000 of these dispossessed people lived in Kuwait, representing 13% of Kuwait’s total population (1.9

million). In 1992, the number of *biduns* dropped to a mere 138,000 as many had left the country due to the occupation, and the Kuwaiti government forbade them to return after the country was liberated. These people now live abroad, having no passports or support. *Biduns* were not issued any IDs and could not therefore own any real estate, buy cars, open bank accounts or access medical care in cheaper clinics subsidized by the government. With no IDs, *biduns* could not be employed and unemployment was high in their communities. They worked either illegally, or relied on stealing or begging. A marriage between a Kuwaiti and a *bidun* could not be registered and was therefore null and void. Children could go only to very expensive private schools and could not enrol into universities. *Biduns* had no pension benefit entitlement either. With only a few exceptions, *biduns* were forbidden to travel around the country or abroad. When convicted of more serious misdemeanours, they were placed in a detention facility (*madrassa Dalhat*) for deportation candidates.

The segregation of *biduns*, mostly Muslims, was criticised within the country. One group of critics called for the easing out of these restrictions. These critics advocated citizenship for all people who had lived in Kuwait since 1965 (when the first statistics were published) and recommended investigating the nationality of the mothers of those who came after 1965.

The existence of a special *bidun* category of citizens was not specific to Kuwait only; to a lesser degree *biduns* could be found in other oil countries of the Gulf as well. Due to the lack of data, which was anxiously protected by the respective governments in order to avoid the criticism of international human rights organizations, it was impossible to monitor the fate of the *biduns*. *Biduns* were proven to exist in Bahrain, too, with about 30,000 of such people living there in the mid-1990s. Similarly to Kuwait, the population of Bahrain was greatly affected by migration waves flowing into the country from the neighbouring states during various periods and these migrants had no need to obtain any documents.

In 1939, Britain issued a Citizenship Act, which stripped some citizens, the Bahraini Shiites in particular, of their citizenship rights. They received no certificate of citizenship and the passport act of 1963 prevented them from obtaining a passport. Shiites who were, for some reason, unable to obtain documents by the date set by the authorities lost their citizenship and risked deportation: they too became *biduns*.

It is quite interesting to see that the GCC countries have been doing all they can to slow down the influx of labour, yet the measures adopted so far have been ineffective. The measures include:

- The requirement to obtain a work permit from the government before arriving in the country (except for the Jebel Ali free zone).
- The requirement of a declaration of no objection issued by a sponsor (*kafala*), required from all employees.
- A system of exact quotas limiting recruitment in various professions.
- Regularly issued and updated list of forbidden invitations inaccessible to foreign applicants.
- Various fees (work permit fee, annual residence fee, insurance fee, training fee).
- Nationalization of jobs, particularly in the oil industry and state-owned businesses.
- Subsidizing domestic labour.
- Industrial incentives (soft loans, import customs discounts, tariff protection), which differ substantially among the GCC countries.
- Restriction of change of employment for foreign labour – a change of job requires a special permit.
- Residency permits for workers' families issued only to highly qualified employees and as an exception.¹⁶¹

As already mentioned, the vast gap between the domestic and foreign labour is the most critical issue. Domestic labour is expensive and not very productive. Working hours are longer and wages lower in the private sector, which is not attractive to domestic workers. It is easier for a private company to dismiss a foreign worker than a domestic one. The labour market is not based on demand and supply, but is regulated by the state and government. An interesting 1999 poll in Saudi Arabia revealed why it was better for the representatives of 232 Saudi firms to hire foreigners. Most of the respondents cited the following reasons: Saudis lacking interest in this type of work (48.3%); low wages for non-Saudi guest workers (47.4%); Saudis being less experienced and less qualified (34.5%); available Saudis

¹⁶¹ Borgis, Maurice: op. cit., p. 100.

lacking required qualifications (25.4%); Saudis being unavailable (14.2%).¹⁶²

Since the 1990s, the demand for jobs has gone up, but the education system has not provided workers with modern qualifications, including computer and language skills and a background in mathematics and other sciences. This shortage was evident in almost every Arab country. It comes as little surprise that under-educated and expensive workers are not in demand among private employers.

Ousting the domestic labour from the state sector, which provides much more benefits to local labour than the private sector, will also be very difficult. For example, successive governments in Saudi Arabia have provided very attractive jobs in the national economy without considering qualifications and school results. Graduates are always sure of finding jobs in the public sector one way or another. Wage scales in public administration, almost without exception, are not adjusted according to qualifications and school results. The state sector employs university graduates whose education has cost the state budget huge amounts of money. On the other hand, even though the private sector demand for foreign labour is very high, foreign workers are less qualified compared to the local population. For example, the category of illiterate people and people with basic literacy and numeracy skills comprised one quarter of all immigrants in Bahrain (1991), one third in Kuwait (1996), one half in the UAE (1985) and 43.9% in Saudi Arabia (1992). A great number of immigrants had only basic education.¹⁶³

The pressure of GCC governments to employ domestic labour rather than foreigners will continue in the future. This pressure will be strongest in the private sector, as the public sector does not employ many foreigners. Arab guest workers will be most at risk, as the domestic workforce, unlike Asian workers, does not have sufficient technical and language skills. In the mid-1970s the League of Arab States endorsed an agreement on co-ordinating Arab migration, guaranteeing the preference of Arab labour in the Arab League member states' labour markets. Moreover, in the mid-1980s, the UAE introduced the principle of a 30% proportion of Arab workers in foreign labour. These principles, however, were not implemented and it is still the host

¹⁶² Reasons for Hiring Non-Saudis, Ministry of Planning, Private Establishment Survey, Table 16 March, 1999.

¹⁶³ Borgis, Maurice: op. cit., p. 22.

country governments (and their ministries of labour and social affairs) that decide on the quotas and structure of foreign labour. Jobs entailing some form of contact with the public, such as that of teacher, public official or journalist, will be under special scrutiny. Some Arab countries have already published internal lists of professions that may be carried out by domestic workers only. Guest workers from other Arab states will presumably be seeking less qualified jobs, but to a much lesser degree than, say, in the 1970s. The GCC states' demand for labour will depend on economic growth, stability of the region and oil prices. Economic prosperity will have a positive impact on the construction industry, which is a labour-intensive sector, and this will therefore increase the demand for foreign labour migration.

Geographic and percentage shares of foreign labour in Saudi Arabia (1996–2000)

Country	Number	%	Country	Number	%
India	1,228,652	19.7	Egypt	1,195,189	19.1
Pakistan	778,668	14.2	Yemen	424,398	7.8
Philippines	450,967	7.2	Sudan	242,508	3.9
Bangladesh	448,282	7.1	Syria	168,354	2.7
Indonesia	249,458	4.0	Jordan	155,410	2.2
Sri Lanka	135,246	2.2	Kuwait	122,519	1.8
Turkey	92,258	1.5	Palestine	110,611	1.8
Asian countries	3,381,531	56	Lebanon	52,560	1.8
USA	28,868	0.5	Nomadic tribes	61,246	1.5
UK	28,868	0.5	Somalia	24,585	0.4
Eritrea	26,667	0.4	Arab countries – total	2,557,380	
Ethiopia	25,818	0.4			
Total: USA, UK, Africa	114,063				
1969: total number	6,052,974	100			
1970: total number	400,000	+			
1980: total number	1,800,000	450			
1996–2000: total	6,052,994	339			

Source: *Al-Wizārat ad-dāchilīya* (Ministry of Interior, KSA), *Al-'Amāla al-wārida wa qadājā al-ihlāl (as-sa'ūdīya), rajab 1416–1997 m, Chuṭaṭ at-tanmīya al-chamsa 1–6*.

Yemeni Migration

Yemen is a typical source country with a long history of migration. Since the 1950s the number of long-term Yemeni migrants leaving for the Gulf countries, mainly Saudi Arabia, has risen quite substantially. The emigration dynamics accelerated after the Yemeni civil war ended in 1970. At the same time, long-term Yemeni emigrants returned to their homeland. As the security situation improved, they were expecting better jobs. Most of these migrants came from Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, the UK, Vietnam and Djibouti. Repatriated immigrants brought specific skills from their long-term exile; however, they could not really use them as the government severely limited investments at that time. They made their living operating small shops in the city and a small number of them went to villages and became farmers.

Between 1970 and the mid-1980s, when the oil prices started rising and major investments picked up in the Gulf states, the Yemeni guest workers started leaving for the Gulf states to take advantage of the oil boom. Since 1973, the demand for foreign labour has gone up in the GCC countries and a major part of the population was able to escape the difficult economic and social reality in their own country. In result of this, the number of skilled workers in Yemen started dwindling and immigrants from South-East Asia started pouring in to plug the gaps.

A census revealed that the number of Yemenis who left the country for work rose to 1.478 million, most of whom were short-term immigrants in the Gulf countries, particularly in Saudi Arabia. The majority of these immigrants came back to their homelands after the Gulf War. In 1994, when there was another census, the number of Yemenis abroad had reached 750,000, of whom 454,000 were men and the remainder women. The main reasons for migration were population growth, high unemployment, employment of a large part of the population in non-productive industries and sectors, slow annual economic growth, stagnating agriculture and the lack of a productive industry that could absorb extra workers.

The structure of Yemeni migration was not particularly different from other Arab source states. The typical emigrant was single and with no family, usually a male between 15 and 35. The number of Yemeni emigrants in various host countries reflected the demand for labour. A strong “push” factor existed in Yemen, reflecting a crisis in agriculture and the overall unem-

ployment rate. The high demographic growth will only continue to exacerbate the situation in the future.

Iraq and Key Migration Developments

International migration had only a very limited effect on the country's demography. The number of emigrants rose in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1965, the number of Iraqis abroad reached 0.6% but in 1977 it was already 1.2%.¹⁶⁴ Even though the number of emigrants was not high, migration had a negative impact on the country's development, as a high percentage of those who left were highly qualified workers and intellectuals. The government sought to bring back emigrant professionals. Act No. 154 of 1974 was passed to support this effort, allowing various support mechanisms and material compensation for returning emigrants.

Initially, immigration was quite low. In 1965, for example, there were 78,221 immigrants, most of them men. Later on, the numbers went up slightly. For Arab immigrants, entry into the country was made easier by a simplified visa procedure; for foreigners, the immigration procedures were more complex. Nonetheless, in fulfilment of the development plans, the percentage of foreign workers never went above 10% of the total workforce.

The migration dynamics changed during the Iran-Iraq war (1980–1988), during which a great number of Arab guest workers came to the country to replace Iraqi recruits who had gone to war. Most of the guest workers came from Egypt (about 800,000), finding jobs mainly in agriculture and construction. A number of Arab immigrants was also recruited by the Iraqi army and were involved in the battles. After the war and the declaration of international sanctions against Iraq, the economic situation in the country deteriorated to such an extent that most foreign workers had to leave. The Iraqi government limited money transfers to the workers' countries of origin and employers stopped paying guest workers the wages they had promised. This dire situation was further exacerbated by steep inflation, which devaluated long-term savings.

Highly qualified Iraqis, especially technicians, started leaving the country as well. There are no statistics available on these, however. Most of them

¹⁶⁴ ‘Abbās Fāḍil as-Sa‘dī: *Sukkān jūmhūrīyat al-‘Irāq*, in: *Ar-Ruwaythī*, M. A., op. cit., pp. 305–307.

went to Jordan and Yemen but many went to other countries outside the Middle East as well.

The ESCWA documents only stated that Iraqi migration had a negative trajectory between 1987 and 1997, i.e. that many more people were leaving Iraq than arriving. This was true for all age groups and both sexes.¹⁶⁵

Internal migration was also very strong. Iraqis from the countryside started migrating to big cities, particularly Baghdad. In 1997 (during the sanction period), a record 797,735 people, i.e. 21% of the total population of Baghdad, moved to the country's capital. Iraq was therefore affected by both internal and international migration, but the majority of migrants (654,000 people or 87%) moved from the villages to the capital.

Kurdish Migration

The presence of the Kurds outside the Middle East region can be considered a relatively recent phenomenon, compared to the traditionally migrating ethnic groups, such as the Armenians, Assyrians and Lebanese. Historically, Kurdish migration can be divided into three phases:

- prior to World War II, Kurdish migration was limited and political or cultural activities of the migrants were rather exceptional;
- from World War II to 1965, young people, mainly from Iraq, were leaving the Kurdish areas to study both in the East and in the West;
- after 1965, a great migration wave started, with the Kurds moving away from all parts of Kurdistan (including the Caucasus and Lebanon) to other countries as guest workers, refugees, students or for family reunion.

The number of Kurdish migrants went up from several hundred in the 1960s to 700,000 in the late 1990s. Many of these migrants were deported by force to Europe and other countries, especially after the anti-Kurdish campaigns in Iraq and Turkey. Some 150,000 Kurds left Iraq for Iran in 1971 and

¹⁶⁵ U.N. ESCWA, Demographic and Related Socio-Economic Data, sheets No 9, Amman 1997, table 3, p. 28.

1980. In Syria, a total of 120,000 Kurds were stripped of their citizenship in 1962 on the basis of a Syrian government decree. Recently, a deportation campaign has started in Iran as well. A great portion of the Kurdish population left Iraq and Iran in 1975, immediately after Barzani's uprising aimed at gaining autonomy was crushed. Most emigrants went to various European states as well as to the USA, Canada and Australia. In the 1980s, Kurdish intellectuals were the most frequent emigrants. They headed mostly to the UK or Sweden, with only a few of them going to France. Another phase in the exodus of the Kurds came in 1988, when the Iraqi government suppressed a Kurdish uprising using chemical weapons in Halabja, Karadagh and Badinan. About 180,000 Kurds were killed during the Iraqi army's Operation Anfal. A new wave of Kurdish emigrants swept the region after the Gulf War (1991), moving on to Iran, Turkey and Syria. Tens of thousands of Kurds were leaving every year.

In Turkey, about three million Kurds were ousted from their homes and pushed into the cities of West Turkey. The Turkish Army destroyed about 4,000 Kurdish villages.¹⁶⁶ The population was fleeing because of constant battles between rival Kurdish factions – the Kurdistan Democratic Party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Kurdish Islamists and the Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party (KADEK). The warring factions were guarding their own territory, preventing movement of the population around the territory of Kurdistan.

By far the largest numbers of Kurdish emigrants come from Turkey, followed by Iraq, Syria and other countries. The largest Kurdish community (350,000) has formed in Germany, followed by the UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Greece, Spain and Finland. The Kurdish situation, however, has improved to the extent that some European countries, such as the Netherlands and Sweden, have refused to admit future asylum seekers from Iraqi Kurdistan.¹⁶⁷ At the turn of the century, the migration of the Kurds to Italy and Greece went up. Much fewer Kurdish migrants settled in Eastern and Central Europe. Iraqi Kurds, along with

¹⁶⁶ For details see: Van Bruinessen, M.: Kurdish Society, Ethnicity, Nationalism and Refugee Problems in Philip G. Kreyenbroek and Stefan Sperl (eds) *The Kurds: a Contemporary Overview*, Routledge, London–N.Y., 1992.

¹⁶⁷ Chris Kutschera: *Exodus, The Middle East*, 2002/9, p. 56.

the Afghans, use the Czech Republic as a transit country on the way to the West. Some of them end up as far away as in the Northern Baltic and Scandinavian states.

The social structure of the Kurdish migration fits in the general pattern: single young men, the unemployed and students as well as guest workers. Immigrants do not form a homogeneous group, as the Kurds come from various countries with different cultural and political settings. They have different social, economic, demographic and political roots. The cultural and political “headquarters” of the Kurdish diaspora in Europe was in the German city of Wiesbaden, where a National Union of Kurdish Students in Europe was formed, acting as a diplomatic representation of the Kurds in Europe. Just like the Jews and Armenians, the Kurds consider themselves the victims of a forced and violent displacement and seek political asylum in their host countries. The non-existence of an international status is a major problem for the Kurds living abroad as they have never established a state of their own.

The Kurds had no passports and the only chance for them to leave the country was to buy fake passports from smugglers. The Kurdish region was considered by young Kurds as totally lacking in prospects, so they saw fleeing their respective countries as the only option. Up until recently, migration was the prerogative of young men only. Recently, however, many women have started migrating as well and seek refuge in Turkey. They were often forced to emigrate because of the aggression of Islamic activists, who made them wear Islamic attire according to their regulations forced them into arranged marriages. Political stability in Iraq, which is not a foreseeable prospect, may help to limit the Kurdish migration to the EU countries quite substantially, as attaining political asylum would become much more difficult under such circumstances.

Conclusion

After the end of the Cold War and the subsequent overall development of relations between states, we have also seen the globalization of migration. Borders have become the locus of legal and illegal exchange, of regional cross-border activities. A network of informal relations between the migration source countries and host states has been set up. In the 1990s, migration started to be seen as an issue of internal security and in France, for example, was also linked to issues of social cohesion, fears of internal instability and chaos, threats to sovereignty by supranational networks, associations and other global religious, cultural, economic and political flows crossing national borders. The term “securitization of migration” was coined in this context. This is related to the understanding of identity in the context of multiculturalism as a component of modern citizenship and of the separation of nationality and citizenship.

There have been several core models in Europe: British multiculturalism with its uncontrolled ghettoization, the French integration model and the German pre-1999 *ius sanguinis* model based on the recognition of blood relations. Extreme rightwing parties have proposed a discussion on social citizenship based on the claim that immigrants and their large families have been draining the social system.

The fear of the EU countries of terrorism, which often comes from the countries of the Muslim South, appears to be the single most critical issue today. In the mid-1990s, following the terrorist attacks in France, a large network of Algerian Islamic groups (GIA and FIS) was proven to exist in Europe, operating especially within immigrant communities in France, Germany and the UK. After 9/11, a number of active or sleeping Al-Qaida cells were identified and destroyed in Europe. The organization was planning lethal attacks against the USA from Hamburg. The attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq set off an explosion of terrorism, particularly in Iraq, which started to spread to the neighbouring regions. Islamist attacks in two NATO

member states, Turkey and Spain, brought a shock that was followed by a media campaign against Muslim, Arab immigrants. Fear of terrorism has had a negative impact on the general European public opinion on Muslim immigration.

The campaign translated into new social and labour law restrictions against immigrants in some member states. Immigrants and their families were stripped of some social guarantees after the Schengen agreements had been adopted. It became much more difficult to obtain permits for family visitors and to immigrate to these states. Asylum and visa policies were also tightened. The Italian government wanted to adopt a strict law to criminalize illegal migration, which sparked off protests by both Western human rights activists and defenders of Arab states alike. The Arabs have criticised the EU anti-terrorism measures, which have limited migration. They claim that the fight against terrorism has become an excuse for restricting migration, which had been planned long in advance.

To avert the threat of illegal migration from the South, the EU had to adopt a migration policy that would not rely on restrictions only. Joint development was the policy of choice in the neighbouring countries (e.g. Maghreb). The 1990s saw the internationalization and Europeanization of asylum policy in the Mediterranean region (the Dublin Agreements); the same applied to migration policy (the 1999 Tampere European Council), previously controlled by sovereign nation states only. Introducing the SIS and Eurodac systems reinforced security in the asylum process.

The number of well-prepared, qualified Arab workers – male and female – and their percentage in the EU labour market have grown. Motivation has played a key role: all available research has shown that Maghreb migration was primarily motivated by the migrants' quest for a higher standard of living, greater comfort and higher wages.

Migration is a vital issue for Arab countries, not only because of profits from the transfer of hard currency wages from Arab migrants working abroad, but also as a structural factor related to the current phase of globalization. Arabs found it unacceptable that not enough attention was paid to this issue during the negotiation of association agreements between the EU and South Mediterranean countries, in spite of the EU being an ardent promoter of the rapid establishment of a free trade zone in the Mediterranean region, with free movement of capital, goods and, to some extent, also services.

The concept of a broad partnership between countries on both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, based on the Barcelona Declaration, hides a contradiction between a long-term, positive vision and short-term risks to be faced by the Arab Mediterranean states, including bankruptcies of uncompetitive businesses, loss of customs tariff revenues, higher unemployment etc. Joint development, however, cannot be the mid-term alternative to labour migration, as some economists and politicians mistakenly believe, because the paradox is that greater development will provoke greater migration, given the change of sectoral priorities and restructuring processes. The number of migration candidates will probably grow. More positive changes are bound to come later in the future.

Mediterranean Arab countries have been focusing more and more on global Arab minorities in both their negotiations and their practical political and diplomatic actions. One of the reasons for this are the xenophobic and racist attitudes to foreigners, especially those of the Muslim faith, and towards the Arab ethnic group as a whole, which have become more widespread in the post-9/11 period. What is seen as important is, in particular, establishing the legal status of Muslims in these countries, guaranteeing social, economic and political rights and respecting the cultural autonomy of immigrant enclaves in the West. These requirements have been promoted with the help of nation states, international institutions and, recently, through pan-Arab initiatives. Immediately upon taking up the office of LAS General Secretary, Amr Moussa initiated consistent monitoring of the rights of Arab minorities in the world, similar to the Israeli monitoring of the Jews and anti-Semitism.

The most frequent objections to the status of immigrants in Western Europe include unequal job opportunities, exclusion from trade union membership and protection and segregation in education and training. This is evident from the high unemployment of immigrants in comparison to local labour. The Arab countries have emphasised social justice and equal opportunities in the Barcelona process.

The restrictive policy against labour migration has also been criticized by Arab countries as ineffective. The Maghreb Arabs have argued that the restrictions adopted by the EU (EEC) in 1974 and closure of borders have not been effective and have only made the situation worse. The fact that 60% of (mostly illegal) Maghreb immigrants came to the EU countries after these measures were introduced proves their point. Also, it is argued that restric-

tions have changed the structure of migration because of forced family reunion. There were more and more permanent immigrants seeking lasting solutions to their families' social situations, rather than the temporary immigrants typical of the 1960s. The current Arab foreign labour has started severing ties with their homeland, which was criticised by the source countries.

There is a number of Arab institutions and research institutes today studying in detail the legal status of emigrants/immigrants, guest workers in foreign countries and the application of international law. There are three ways of studying migration rights. The first group of laws consists of internal and international acts focusing on the organization of migration. Each of the Arab countries has its own law and institutions dealing with migration issues and implementing migration law. Egypt and Morocco, in particular, have very elaborate systems in place. The second group of legislation consists of laws that penalise migration. These types of legal instruments were strongly criticised by Arab states for breaching human right laws on many accounts. These laws include readmission agreements concluded over the past few years under political pressure between the Arab states and individual EU countries. Agreements on the mutual extradition of persons suspected of terrorism signed by Italy and Egypt, for instance, are of this nature. The third group of laws includes acts guaranteeing protection of all immigrants alike, whether legal or illegal. Great attention is paid to international laws and provisions for the protection of human, labour, social and humanitarian rights in relation to migration. There is a large body of international law and documents cited and referred to by Arab lawyers and human rights advocates: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1986 Strasbourg Declaration, the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention Against Torture, the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the Geneva Convention Relative to the Status of Refugees, along with the relevant protocols. The 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families has been ratified by only ten states. There is a number of documents issued by international organizations, such as UNICEF, UNESCO or ILO, addressing labour law issues in relation to immigrants. The documents of the Vienna Conference on Human Rights and many other legal texts can also be used. The agenda of the Third World Con-

ference Against Racism in Durban in September 2001 featured discussion of the rights of immigrants in their host countries. Some principles announced in Durban, however, have not been implemented.

Labour mobility has traditionally been the primary means of integrating Arab economies. A regional agreement on professional and technical services is key for the promotion of investments and transfer of technology and can be perceived as added value for other services. In order to improve labour mobility in an Arab free market, restrictions preventing the influx of professionals from other LAS member states will have to be abolished. General immigration policy co-ordination and simplification of visa and work permit procedures for temporary movement of legal entities will be necessary.

In terms of trade and capital influx, the Middle East appears to be the least integrated region of the world, which is in stark contrast with the empty proclamations about Arab unity. The only exception to this is labour mobility, as migration flows within the region are very intensive and guest worker money transfers have now exceeded in value the regional trade in goods as well as the officially recorded capital influx. Migration has actually become the most successful component of Arab integration. Labour mobility has become an instrument for transfer of part of the wealth of oil-rich states to poor countries in the Arab world. Some Arab states have designed specific pro-migration policies, such as flexible demand-meeting measures, training courses, protection of migrants, contract negotiation counselling etc. The 1980 Charter of National Economic Action even mentioned a binding principle of Arab economic citizenship guaranteeing equal treatment of Arab labour in all Arab states. The Arab Labour Organization endorsed a crucial document titled the Declaration of Principles, under which the Arab states agreed on preferential employment and protection of Arab workers. The long-term aim was to reinforce Arab identity and Arab citizenship. In this document, the signatory countries pledged to put an end to work migration to non-Arab states. In reality, however, host countries regulate labour demand according to their momentary economic, security and political criteria. Most GCC countries prefer Asian and domestic labour to workers from other Arab states.

The Middle East conflict, border disputes and ethnic frictions are the causes of forced population movements resulting in people becoming refugees. After the Gulf and Iraqi wars (1991 and 2003 respectively), hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees were forced to seek haven in neighbouring

countries (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia). This was sometimes caused by the government of the country, while at other times harsh sanctions were at fault. Quite surprisingly, no Arab state from the Middle East acceded to the 1951 Geneva Convention or its 1967 protocol. Most Arab countries have created no appropriate internal mechanisms, such as asylum laws, allowing them to deal with displacement issues. In 1994, the LAS discussed its Arab Convention on Refugees, which extended refugee status to include persons affected by natural disasters. This convention, however, has yet to be ratified. The Arab Charter on Human Rights of 1994 could be a key document in this respect. What stands out in terms of the application of refugee and asylum laws are the differences between individual Arab countries or between the UNHCR and Arab states, which affect the changing directions of migration.

In the long term, globalization era liberal reforms have created an environment fostering economic prosperity. In the short term, however, the same reforms have threatened to destabilise the social order. A highly uneven distribution of wealth (in Jordan, Tunisia, Mauritania, Morocco and Algeria) was a major problem. Migration was fuelled by uneven development in the Arab world. In 1998, the Arab diversified economies (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia) contributed a mere 2% of the overall GDP growth in Arab countries, even though they represented 48% of the total population in the Arab world. The oil-rich states of the GCC, on the other hand, contributed 29% of the GDP growth, while representing only 7% of the Arab world population.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region reported the second largest population growth in the world (2.2%), along with the lowest workforce age structure, as a result of lower child mortality and better medical care. This development began after World War II, along with some other trends, such as urbanization, migration from villages to cities and decreasing food self-reliance. Forced abandonment of agricultural farmland and the flight to cities is leading to gradual degradation and desertification of agricultural areas, which makes potential future solutions more expensive and hard to devise.

This situation started gradually changing in some countries in the 1990s. Birth control, long refused in the Islamic world as being in conflict with Islamic ethics, was adopted as a rational demographic growth-reduction mea-

sure. Since the early 1970s, orthodox views have slowly been losing ground and birth control has started to be admitted as being in the public interest.

The demographic growth of many countries of the world has changed, dropping to the critical level of 2.1 children per woman at the end of the century. This development has in the end affected Arab countries, too. In 2000, the average rate was 3.5 children per woman, which was high compared to the world average, but still a big step forward considering that in 1975, an average Arab family had 7–9 children. On average, Arab women today have only one third of the children their mothers had.

Demographic growth varies among the countries, with the Gulf states, Palestine and Iran retaining the top positions. This trend is most prominent in the Maghreb countries – including Libya – and in Lebanon. At 1.55, the birth rate in Tunisia is no different from Europe. The rate in Lebanon, too, has dropped below the critical 2.1 mark. The Libyan birth rate may have been influenced by long-term sanctions, while the Lebanese or Algerian birth rate could have been impacted by the long war. The reasons why global demographic development influences the Middle East only slowly are quite clear: oil-rent oriented economy, the Middle East conflict and (Islamic) cultural traditions. The oil-rentier economy reinforces and preserves patriarchal links in society, both in families and in the political system. This is often due to extremely generous social systems in GCC countries, promoting births through various subsidies.

Nevertheless, the relatively favourable demographic changes in Maghreb and some other countries will not be reflected in mid-term developments. Baby boomers from the 1980s (born between 1980 and 1985) have recently started entering the labour markets in Arab countries. This is bound to translate into high unemployment in the coming decade. The region suffers from the highest unemployment rate in the world with the current 15% at triple the world average. What does not bode well is the high number of young people and women among the unemployed, along with low labour productivity.

Higher female employment and better education for women might therefore contribute to an enhancement of labour supply. This is largely region- and country-specific. Higher female education is directly related to lower birth rates. University-educated women in the MENA region had half as many children than women with no schooling between 1975 and 1995. In Jordan, the difference is a factor of four. GCC countries report the lowest num-

bers of working women (15%), whereas Maghreb is traditionally at the top of the list with one third of women in jobs.

The Arab world has not paid enough attention to the slowly increasing share of the over-60 population, which is expected to grow over the next three decades, and has not established the services that this population needs. As a result of this, men over 60 must work until a very high age, blocking jobs for the young population.

There are 525 young people entering the productive age for every 100 people leaving the productive stage of life in the MENA region, whereas the ratio in the US is 84:100. Given the huge increase in both labour and the average unemployment rate in the region (15%), the number of jobs would have to grow by 50% by 2010 compared to the 1996 figures in order for the current unemployment rate to remain unchanged. Demographers expect further population growth in most MENA countries over the next 40 years but the dynamics will be slower. Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen have all included demographic growth issues into their long-term economic strategic planning, which is a positive development.

While more than 50 years ago large cities could be found almost exclusively in developed countries, the situation has changed. The young population in overpopulated cities is the main source of foreign migration in most Arab states.

Demographic growth is often discussed as a “push” factor for migration from the South Mediterranean countries to the EU. While this does certainly play a role, it is not the key factor. It is the growing gap between countries on the opposite shores of the Mediterranean Sea that is the main reason for migration. The dichotomy between economic liberalism and authoritarian rule in the Arab countries makes young people frustrated. Most Arab states have major problems attracting major FDI outside the oil sector to create more jobs and boost their economic growth.

Also, relatively little attention has been paid to “environmental migration”. Since the mid-1980s, interest in this type of migration has grown due to apparent climatic changes, droughts, floods, continuing deforestation and desertification, all of which act as push factors. Environmental issues may not have been the key reasons for intensification of migration, but they could have quite possibly played a role, although there was a lack of evidence to prove this. According to IOM and UNHCR, there were between 5 and 10

million environmental refugees in the Sahel and 4 to 11 million environmental refugees in the Horn of Africa in the mid-1990s, exerting pressure on the Maghreb and Egypt. However, it is impossible to provide a precise quantification of environmental migration as no international organization collects, evaluates or publishes such data.

The 2003 Arab Human Development Report pointed out a very dangerous development: the outflow of many qualified Arab professionals. The report characterised it as a haemorrhage. In this way, the West has been slowing down the economic development of the region and adding to migration pressure. This brain drain essentially reverses the flow of development aid from developed countries to developing states. Host countries benefit from Arab investments in the education and training of top Arab professionals, who then leave the country to work in the West without any compensation whatsoever for the source country. Some countries (e.g. Syria) have a long-term history of repressive measures against brain drain. Other countries, such as Jordan, tolerate this undesirable movement of professionals as they cannot provide enough jobs for such experts (e.g. Egypt). At the moment, incentive plans with various degrees of sophistication are being discussed to attract the professionals back to their countries. Luring the top professionals back to their homelands will require implementation of a human resource development project.

The character of Mediterranean migration has changed over the past ten years. If the 1960s and 1970s were characterised by single, young, unqualified men migrating from the Islamic Mediterranean region, nowadays the migration flow is more diverse. Migrants have included unaccompanied women, children, pensioners, the middle class, artists, athletes, students, entrepreneurs and qualified professionals. These people do not seek permanent residence but reside at several places at the same time, which makes the application of visa regimes more difficult. This is due to the growing effect of the “pull factor” and the weakening effect of the “push factor.” The centrifugal “push factor” has been limited to the political sphere, related, for example, to campaigns of oppression of some minorities in Muslim countries (the Copts, Cabyls and Kurds). Similarly, Islamic attacks against secular Algerians forced European countries to recognise repression by non-state structures as a reason for granting political asylum. The above-mentioned “pull factor” has an economic and social character. Access to welfare is a key mi-

gration incentive. Morocco is experiencing a deformed “migration culture” – although unemployment affects in particular low-skilled young workers, these people do not look for jobs in their homeland. The absolute majority of them seek their desired solution through migration.

Illegal migration is the greatest problem of the present day. Illegal migration is not dependent on the internal economic situation in Arab states only, but also on the strictness of measures adopted against all types of migration in Europe in particular, as well as on the ability of European economies to absorb excess labour. The highest illegal migration rates have been reported in European countries with the most developed “grey” or “black” economies. These are the South European countries, particularly Italy, Greece and, to a much lesser degree, Spain and Portugal. Ease of obtaining residence and work permits or a strong Arab Muslim community ready to help new illegal immigrants to settle also stimulate illegal migration. Paradoxically, thanks to its structure, illegal migration is much better accepted in developed countries than the previous, legal migration of uneducated Arabs.

Wage transfers became the single largest source of income for many Arab states in the 1990s. In most cases, they played a greater role than foreign aid. Some economies have developed extreme dependence on regional capital inflows. Wage transfers from Arab workers in the region have been crucial for Jordan, Egypt (following Sadat’s rise to power), Morocco and, until 1991, also for Yemen.

The Middle East experienced a surge in migration from East Asia (Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines), South Asia (Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka) as well as from East Africa (Ethiopia and Somalia) in the 1990s. Asian workers had the indisputable advantage of being apolitical and exhibiting much less interest in their economic rights. Apart from this, these workers came on the basis of short-term contracts. After these contracts expired and the specific projects were completed, they returned to their homelands without placing demands on the social system (housing, education or medical care) of the receiving country. These workers could not obtain residence rights.

Since 2003, there have been less guest workers coming from East Asia as they have started to take advantage of the labour markets in their own region, such as in Japan, Singapore or Hong Kong, which are more attractive for them for many reasons, such as better labour law protection or more qual-

ified jobs. This trend is not proceeding as fast as it might, since Arab borders are more porous, intermediary agencies are being legalised in the place of their operation, and Arab authorities are more lenient.

The rich Gulf oil states associated in the GCC are implementing a policy of replacing Arab labour with equally qualified, apolitical and cheap labour from the Indian subcontinent. The only problem is the language barrier in using Arabic-language software and in day-to-day communication at the workplace. The ousting of Iranian workers from some Gulf countries in the 1980s and 1990s has been quite an interesting development.

Another change happened on the East Europe (Russia) – Middle East axis. Since the 1960s, large numbers of Arab doctors and engineers studied or graduated in East European Communist countries, in particular the Soviet Union. Today, however, migration is moving more in the opposite direction, with Russian professionals going to Arab states. This direction of migration has received relatively little attention in terms of monitoring and statistics.

European researchers focus mainly on the Maghreb region because of its location, demographic development and cultural and historical links with Europe. Maghreb migrants head for the traditional host countries, such as Germany, France and Belgium. In the past two decades, however, growing numbers of Maghreb Arabs have settled in Italy and Spain, both of which have been source countries for emigration to other European states. The latest trend is migration in new directions to new destination countries outside Europe. Algerians, in particular, started to favour North America and Australia in the 1990s. Continuously increasing Sahelian and Sub-Saharan migration due to economic and environmental issues is a major problem for the Arab, Maghreb countries. For these migrants, the Maghreb countries serve as destination countries or as transit states on the way to Europe. The pressure from EU states has recently been stepped up, with the EU having requested the Maghreb countries to better guard their borders in the south and to sign readmission agreements with African states.

There are differences between the Maghreb countries. Algerian migrants mainly head for France, where many of their compatriots live and are helping the newcomers. Moroccans tend to go to France and Spain as well as to Italy and the Netherlands. The Tunisians have traditionally settled in Italy, Libya and France. Mauritanian migration is caused by severe weather

changes such as droughts or water shortage, or takes the form of seasonal nomadic moves to the neighbouring states during the rainy season. Major Mauritanian migrant communities can be found especially in Saudi Arabia (in Mecca in particular) and France. The GCC demand for qualified labour from the Maghreb countries has gone up over the last few years but only a small number of guest workers have taken advantage of this opportunity so far. Interest may grow, however, as the 1980s generation of patriotic, Arabized young people, with only a poor command of European languages and willing to emigrate, enter the Algerian labour market. Morocco continues to have the highest migration potential out of all the Maghreb countries. Following the lifting of sanctions against Libya and increased oil revenues, we may see the opening of the Libyan labour market to immigrants from the neighbouring countries.

There is a lot of discussion on whether the dependence of countries on exporting labour is of any benefit to the sending and receiving countries. It has not been quite proven that guest workers would use at home the skills they acquire abroad, as this depends on what kind of jobs they take abroad and the work they do at home. In Sudan, sending workers abroad has had a destructive impact on the country, as there are less and less qualified professionals in the country. In Jordan, Egypt and also to some degree in Yemen, some positive developments can be noted in terms of the influx of investments and a reduction in domestic unemployment. Jordan has traditionally exported skilled labour and imported unqualified workers, which can be explained by the fact that the country's private sector has not been able to provide jobs for qualified workers. The key argument against this trend is that work migration has a hand in delaying necessary reforms in source countries that would facilitate labour-intensive economic growth. This often results in a loss of competitiveness and stalled business dynamics.

Foreign immigration is not a source of social or political conflicts in the host countries (GCC states) as there are no trade unions or any other organised social movements in these countries. Trade union headquarters in the EU resist the import of cheap labour and often even refuse to defend immigrants in labour law disputes. They also deny membership to these immigrants. The local labour in the GCC states (i.e. migration recipient countries) has been degenerating, with the locals seeking jobs only in the state sector, which offers good wages but is hardly competitive.

The Czech Republic and Arab Migration

Arab labour does not seek the Czech labour market since the demand for less qualified workers is met by Ukrainians and other immigrants from East European countries and the Balkans. Local wages, which are below the European average, are not attractive either. Since the early 1990s, Arab immigration to the Czech Republic has been on a slight increase, with about a hundred people coming each year, which is a very small number compared to the European average.

Before joining the EU, the Czech Republic gradually had to make the asylum and visa system stricter and introduce more stringent requirements for the legalization of temporary work visits. These requirements got even harsher following the 9/11 attacks. Given the illegal migration from South Mediterranean countries and the Middle East, the Czech Republic has the advantage of not having to guard an external Schengen border neighbouring with the Mediterranean region.

In 2001 and 2007, the Czech Parliament passed stricter amendments of the asylum acts, which simplified the asylum procedure but made it more difficult to be granted asylum. The Czech Republic had already adopted more rigorous visa measures for immigrants from Arab countries in the mid-1990s. Since 1993, most Arab states have been included in the special visa regime or tighter regime category (requiring a deposit) and visa-free movement was out of the question for them. This provision has had a negative impact on trade relations and has been criticised by Arab states. In early 2007, there were 3,892 foreigners from the Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan in the Czech Republic, out of whom 1,165 were women. Most of these foreigners came from Algeria (526), Israel (431), Syria (394), Tunis (349), Libya (323) and Egypt (273). There are only a few immigrants coming from the South but the long-term trend is for the numbers to rise. Traditionally, most asylum seekers have come from Iraq and Afghanistan, countries with a strong conflict potential. The Afghanis and Iraqis dominated long-term statistics of successful asylum seekers between 1993 and 2006. They also top the list of successful Czech citizenship applicants. Egyptians have recently become the largest group of asylum seekers.

The chapter on migration, asylum and customs issues in the 2005–2007 Czech National Action Plan to Combat Terrorism warned that the risk of

a terrorist attacks against the country or the Czech Republic's interests abroad might be closely linked to the country's foreign policy. Illegal migration from Iraq between 2006 and 2007 posed a major risk in terms of potential infiltration of terrorists and extremists. Most of these immigrants had no documents or had forged EU documents. The 2006 annual report of the Czech Police Organised Crime Unit claimed that suspected terrorists used the Czech Republic as a country of transit and obtained their visas here. The Security Information Service (the Czech counter-intelligence) insisted that there are no indications that the Czech Republic faces an imminent terrorist attack threat but did not rule out the possibility of the terrorist threat growing in the future in relation to the escalating conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The European Union has been moving in the direction of a common asylum procedure and a uniform status for those who are granted asylum, as evident from the 1999 Tampere European Council conclusions. The use of the Schengen Information System, fingerprint database, close co-operation with Europol or Interpol and accession to the EU-wide arrest warrant are recognised as necessary to prevent migration from the South becoming a potential threat. Czech police units should start close co-operation with partners from source Arab countries and transition Balkan states, through which Arab migrants usually make their way to Central Europe.

Apart from adopting such restrictive measures, the Czech Republic must also co-operate with, and assist the EU in creating a common migration policy relying mainly on the prevention of migration. This policy must focus in particular on political, economic, social and cultural aspects. The Czech Republic should comply with the Tampere Council conclusions and the Euro-Mediterranean Valencia Action Plan by adopting a reasonable visa policy allowing Arab students and professionals to attain or extend qualifications so that they can assist in the implementation of development plans in their countries. The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership launched in Barcelona are aimed at providing the right trade, financial, social and investment strategies promoting steady growth in the region along with maximum employment, while preventing massive emigration due to unfavourable demographic developments. As an EU member state, the Czech Republic will be helping to implement these policies and will share the responsibility for future developments in this area.

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