

# INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION 2006

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**Introduction.** As the issue of international migration has moved to the forefront of national and international agendas, demands for accurate, timely and comparable information on international migration levels, trends and policies have increased markedly. However, the availability of reliable and timely data has not kept pace with these demands. In particular, the data needed to assess trends in international population movements and monitor changes over time are still deficient and incomplete. As part of its continuing efforts to address these deficiencies, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is releasing this year's *World Migration Report*, which presents estimates for 2005 of key international migration parameters and other recent information on international migration policies. The Population Division will issue a companion publication, *International Migration Report 2006*, which provides additional national, regional and global information on international migration for 1995 and 2005. The Division has also issued *International Migration and Development: The Concise Report* which provides an overview of migration levels, trends and policies, as well as a discussion of the demographic, social and economic aspects of international migration.

**Total population.** As of 2005, world population stood at 6.5 billion. The less developed regions account for 51 per cent of the world's inhabitants, with China and India together (2.4 billion) representing 37 per cent of the world total. The current annual increase for the world is 76 million. Seven countries account for half of the world's total population growth, i.e., India (22 per cent), China (11 per cent), and Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the United States of America (about 4 per cent each).

**Migrant stock.** In 2005, 191 million persons, representing 3 per cent of world population, lived outside their country of birth. The equivalent figure in 1960 amounted to 75 million migrants or 2.5 per cent of the world's population. Almost one in every 10 persons living in more developed regions is a migrant compared to one of every 70 persons in developing regions. Sixty per cent of the world's migrants currently reside in more developed regions. Most of the world's migrants live in Europe (64 million), followed by Asia (63 million) and

Northern America (45 million). Nearly half of all international migrants are female and female migrants outnumber male migrants in developed countries. Three-quarters of all international migrants are concentrated in just 28 countries and one in every five international migrants lives in the United States of America.

**Number of refugees.** The number of refugees in the world at the end of 2004 stood at 13.5 million, of which 9.2 million are under the mandate of UNHCR and 4.2 million under the mandate of UNRWA. Around 2.7 million of the refugees are in developed countries and 10.8 million in developing countries. The largest number of refugees was found in Asia, 7.7 million. Africa hosted the second largest refugee population in the world, 3.0 million.

**Net migration.** During 2000-2005, the more developed regions of the world gained an estimated 2.6 million migrants annually from the less developed regions, or 13.1 million over the whole period. Northern America gained the most net migration: 1.4 million migrants annually. It was followed by Europe with an annual net gain of 1.1 million and by Oceania with a more modest net intake of 103,000 migrants annually. The net migration rate was highest for Northern America, at 4.2 migrants per 1,000 population annually during 2000-2005. Oceania's net migration rate was lower at 3.2 migrants per 1,000 population, with Europe recording a low 1.5 migrants per 1,000 annually. The net migration rate was highest for Latin America and the Caribbean, where it amounted to a loss of 1.5 migrants per 1,000 population annually. For Africa and Asia, the net migration rates were estimated to be lower, at 0.5 and 0.3 migrants per 1,000 population every year, respectively.

**Remittances.** Migrants contribute to the economies of both the countries of destination and origin. In 2004, remittances worldwide amounted to US\$ 226 billion. Remittances to less developed regions are estimated to be US\$ 145 billion, representing 1.7 per cent of GDP for those countries, remittances are a major source of foreign exchange and are an important addition to gross domestic product. For example, in 2004, remittances

from abroad represented more than 20 per cent of GDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, Jordan, Lesotho, the Republic of Moldova and Tonga. Remittances benefit the low- and middle-income families that receive them and enable migrant households to invest in income-generating activities. Remittances can alleviate foreign exchange constraints and reduce the cost of borrowing for countries of origin. Through migrant associations in receiving countries, funds may be pooled to support development projects in the communities of origin and, by providing matching funds, Governments can enhance the development impact of such projects.

**Government policies on immigration.** Governments are increasingly recognizing the need and benefit of international migration and are now less inclined to reduce immigration and more likely to wish to maintain current levels. As of 2005, 54 per cent of the countries in the world wanted to maintain current immigration levels, 22 per cent aimed to lower immigration, 18 per cent reported no intervention and 6 per cent wanted to raise immigration. In receiving countries, migration policy reflects an evolution toward greater selectiveness, favouring the admission of migrants who meet specific labour needs. About 30 countries have policies promoting the immigration of the highly skilled. Countries are increasingly adopting policies that focus on the integration of migrants. In 2005, 75 countries reported programmes to integrate non-citizens.

**Government policies on emigration.** Despite the significant increase in the number of migrants, the proportion of countries wanting to lower emigration has remained steady at about one quarter since the 1980s. A sharp rise in the emigration of skilled workers has prompted some countries to address the challenge posed by the brain drain through initiatives to encourage the return of their skilled citizens living abroad. Seventy-one countries have policies promoting the return of their citizens.

**Parties to United Nations instruments.** The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, ratified by 143 countries, sets standards for the treatment of refugees. It prohibits the expulsion or forcible return of persons accorded refugee status. The 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, ratified also by 143 coun-

tries, extends the scope of the 1951 Convention by extending its application to persons who became refugees after 1 January 1951. The 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families establishes international definitions for the different categories of migrant workers and formalizes the responsibility of receiving States in regard to upholding the rights of migrants and assuring their protection. The Convention entered into force in 2003 and has been ratified by 34 States parties. The Convention has not yet been ratified by any major receiving country. In late 1990s, concern about trafficking in human beings and its close linkage to transnational organized crime have led to the drafting of two protocols supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, ratified by 95 countries, entered into force in 2003. Trafficking of migrants is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by improper means, as force, abduction, fraud or coercion, for an improper purpose, like forced or coerced labour, servitude, slavery or sexual exploitation. The Protocol aims to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, paying particular attention to women and children; to protect and assist the victims of such trafficking; and to promote cooperation among States parties to meet these objectives. The 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, ratified by 85 countries, entered into force in 2004. Smuggling of migrants is defined as the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State party to which the person is not a national or permanent resident. The Protocol provides an effective tool to combat and prevent the smuggling of human cargo, reaffirming that migration in itself is not a crime, and that migrants may be victims in need of protection.

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Country or area	Total population (thousands)		Migrant stock (thousands)		Net migration (average annual)		Remittances (average annual)		Immigration policy		Emigration policy		Parties to United Nations instruments (as of 31 December 2005)	
	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000
<b>World</b>	<b>6 464 750</b>	<b>5 720 415</b>	<b>190 634</b>	<b>130 469</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>225 810</b>	<b>19 155</b>	<b>0.6</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>More developed regions</b>	<b>1 211 265</b>	<b>1 157 397</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>2 701</b>	<b>2 622</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>80 803</b>	<b>0.2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Less developed regions</b>	<b>5 253 484</b>	<b>4 562 018</b>	<b>14 206</b>	<b>127 769</b>	<b>-2 622</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>145 007</b>	<b>1.7</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Least developed countries</b>	<b>759 589</b>	<b>10 460</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>2 022</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Africa</b>	<b>905 936</b>	<b>17 069</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>3 023</b>	<b>-455</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>19 155</b>	<b>2.4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Algeria</b>	<b>287 707</b>	<b>4 516</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1 515</b>	<b>-41</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Burundi</b>	<b>7 548</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5.5</b>	-	-	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	1963	1971
<b>Comoros</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-2.7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3.6</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>DRC</b>	<b>29 816</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>-32</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>3.7</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Ethiopia</b>	<b>4 401</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14.1</b>	-	-	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Egypt</b>	<b>77 431</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0.6</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Kenya</b>	<b>34 256</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>-42</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>3.3</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Madagascar</b>	<b>18 606</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0.4</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Malawi</b>	<b>12 894</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Lower	Yes	No intervention	Yes	1987	1987
<b>Mali</b>	<b>13 997</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>3.4</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Mozambique</b>	<b>19 792</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>0.9</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Reunion</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>9 038</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.4</b>	Maintain	No intervention	Yes	Maintain	Yes	1980
<b>Seychelles</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	Maintain	-	-	-	1980	1980
<b>Somalia</b>	<b>8 228</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4.5</b>	-	-	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Uganda</b>	<b>29 816</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>-32</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>3.7</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>United Republic of Tanzania</b>	<b>38 329</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>-69</b>	<b>-1.9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.1</b>	No intervention	No intervention	-	-	-	-
<b>Zambia</b>	<b>11 666</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	-	-	Raise	Maintain	Yes	Lower	Yes	1969
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	<b>13 010</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	-	-	No intervention	Raise	-	-	Lower	1981
<b>Asia</b>	<b>3 905 415</b>	<b>53 291</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>7 704</b>	<b>-1 297</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>85 854</b>	<b>0.8</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>China</b>	<b>1 524 380</b>	<b>6 497</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>-300</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>China, Hong Kong SAR<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>7 041</b>	<b>2 999</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>0.1</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>China, Macao SAR<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>480</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4.4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Dem. People's Rep. of Korea</b>	<b>22 698</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	-	-	Maintain	Maintain	No	Maintain	-	-
<b>Japan</b>	<b>128 085</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Maintain	Raise	No	No intervention	No	1981
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>2 646</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>-3.9</b>	<b>-5.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Maintain	Raise	Yes	Lower	-	-
<b>Republic of Korea</b>	<b>47 817</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>0.1</b>	Raise	Raise	Yes	No intervention	No	1992
<b>South-eastern Asia</b>	<b>1 610 896</b>	<b>17 776</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2 395</b>	<b>-878</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>29 863</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>16.0</b>	-	-	Maintain	-	-	-	Lower	Yes
<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>141 822</b>	<b>1 032</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-70</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>3 372</b>	<b>5.5</b>	Lower	Lower	No	Raise	-	-
<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>2 183</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	-	-	Lower	Lower	-	-	-	-
<b>India</b>	<b>1 103 371</b>	<b>5 700</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>-280</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>21 727</b>	<b>3.2</b>	Maintain	Maintain	-	-	-	-
<b>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</b>	<b>69 515</b>	<b>1 959</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>1 046</b>	<b>-276</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>1 032</b>	<b>0.6</b>	Maintain	Lower	Yes	Lower	Yes	1976
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>14 825</b>	<b>2 502</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-120</b>	<b>-8.0</b>	<b>1 677</b>	<b>0.4</b>	Maintain	Raise	Yes	Lower	Yes	1999
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	<b>5 264</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>6.7</b>	Maintain	Maintain	Yes	Maintain	Yes	1996
<b>Maldives</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	Lower	-	-	-	No intervention	-
<b>Nepal</b>	<b>27 133</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>-20</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>12.1</b>	Maintain	Maintain	No	Raise	Yes	-
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>147 026</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>-362</b>	<b>-2.4</b>	<b>9 845</b>	<b>4.2</b>	Lower	Maintain	No	Raise	Yes	1996
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>20 743</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-32</b>	<b>-1.6</b>	<b>1 564</b>	<b>8.1</b>	Maintain	Maintain	-	-	-	-
<b>Tajikistan</b>	<b>6 507</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-69</b>	<b>-10.9</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>13.2</b>	Maintain	Maintain	No	No intervention	Yes	1993
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	<b>4 833</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	-	-	Lower	-	-	-	Lower	1998
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	<b>26 593</b>	<b>1 268</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>-60</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	-	-	Maintain	Maintain	-	-	Maintain	-
<b>South-eastern Asia</b>	<b>555 815</b>	<b>5 664</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>-333</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Brunei Darussalam</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	-	-	Maintain	Raise	No	No intervention	No	-
<b>Cambodia</b>	<b>14 071</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>3.2</b>	Maintain	Maintain	No	No intervention	No	1992
<b>Dem. Rep. of Timor-Leste</b>	<b>1 247</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18.2</b>	-	-	Maintain	Maintain	No	No intervention	2003	2003
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>22 781</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-200</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>1 700</b>	<b>0.8</b>	Maintain	Maintain	No	Raise	-	-
<b>Latvia</b>	<b>5 924</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Maintain	Raise	No	No intervention	Yes	-
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>25 347</b>	<b>1 639</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>0.8</b>	Maintain	Maintain	Yes	No intervention	Yes	-
<b>Myanmar</b>	<b>50 519</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>0.7</b>	Lower	Maintain	No	Maintain	Yes	-
<b>Philippines</b>	<b>83 054</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-180</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>11 634</b>	<b>13.5</b>	Maintain	Maintain	Yes	Lower	Yes	1981
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>4 326</b>	<b>1 843</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	-	-	Raise	Raise	Yes	Maintain	Yes	1981
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>62 857</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>-62</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>1 623</b>	<b>1.0</b>	Maintain	Maintain	No	Raise	1.6	-
<b>Viet Nam</b>	<b>84 238</b>	<b>21</b>												



# INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION 2006

## The international response

International migration has been gaining relevance on the international agenda. In the 2002 report on "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/587), the Secretary-General characterized international migration as one of the main issues on which the United Nations had to deepen its knowledge, sharpen its focus and act more effectively. In 2005, the outcome document of the World Summit held during the 60th session of the General Assembly recognized the important nexus between international migration and development and called on Governments to deal with the challenges and opportunities that international migration presents to countries of origin, destination and transit.

Given their importance, international migration issues have been addressed by most of the United Nations conferences and summits held since 1990. The outcome documents adopted by these conferences, albeit non-binding, have contributed to shape the normative framework around which country activities on international migration have developed. In particular, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (United Nations, 1995) provides a broad and comprehensive set of objectives and recommendations on international migration, one of which is to encourage cooperation and dialogue between countries of origin and countries of destination, so as to maximize the benefits of migration and increase the likelihood that it may have positive consequences for development.

The United Nations and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have developed a comprehensive set of international legal norms and instruments related to international migration. These have dealt with a wide array of issues including the rights of migrant workers, the prevention of smuggling and trafficking, and the protection of refugees (see Introduction).

Bilateral agreements are widely used to formalize cooperative arrangements regarding migration. OECD member States have concluded 176 bilateral agreements on labour migration. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 84 bilateral agreements were signed between 1991 and 2000, over half with countries in other regions. Bilateral agreements aim to ensure that migrant flows take place in accordance with established rules and under conditions that are mutually beneficial to the countries involved. In addition to the bilateral agreements used to regulate flows of migrant workers, a growing number of agreements relate to the readmission of migrants in an irregular situation by their countries of origin. Readmission agreements have also been concluded between receiving countries and countries of transit.

Regional cooperation in relation to international migration has been growing, largely propelled by a number of regional processes started mostly since 1995. One of the first was the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC) established in 1985 to discuss asylum issues. The first regional process established in developing countries involved the countries of Central and Northern America and started with a meeting in Puebla, Mexico, in 1996. Today, there are two regional processes in the Americas, three in Asia and two in Africa. Europe has at least four. Most consultative processes provide a level of informality that facilitates dialogue and the exchange of information. By bringing together countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as delegates from different governmental departments, these processes foster coordination and cooperation not only internationally but also nationally. Although it is still early to assess the impact of these processes, they appear to be successful in building common understandings and fostering cooperation.

The United Nations system is addressing the various dimensions of international migration. For example, the United Nations Secretariat has focused on the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on the levels, trends and national policies of international migration. Other United Nations offices and specialized agencies have focused on issues related to their expertise and mandates, such as the human rights of migrants, labour migration, refugees and asylum-seekers, and trafficking in persons. A number of other initiatives aimed at ensuring better coordination and increased coherence at the global level are under way. For example, since 2002, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, has convened the United Nations Coordination Meeting on International Migration every year to bring together representatives of institutions working on international migration both within the United Nations system and among other international organizations.

Another important initiative has been the Global Commission on International Migration launched with the support of a number of Governments to provide, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Secretary-General and other stakeholders on how to strengthen the national, regional and global governance of international migration. The Global Commission, composed of 19 expert commissioners serving in their personal capacity, presented its report to the Secretary-General in October 2005.

In 2005, the General Assembly called for a high-level dialogue on international migration and development and in 2006 it decided that the dialogue would be held from 14 to 15 September 2006. The dialogue is expected to focus on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify ways of maximizing development benefits of international migration. As the international community prepares for the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly, the information on this chart provides the factual basis for the global deliberations.

## The national response

National and international issues related to migration such as the brain drain, the brain gain and brain circulation, remittances, transnational communities, asylum, trafficking and unauthorized movements have intersected with national concerns regarding low fertility and population ageing, unemployment, poverty, human rights, the rights of citizens, social integration, xenophobia and national security. These concerns have led to a re-examination of international migration policies and the potential benefits and disadvantages accruing to countries of origin and countries of destination.

When the United Nations began monitoring Government views and policies on population in 1976, international migration was not a topic of major concern for most Governments. Government perceptions of migration trends and policies began to change in the late 1970s, as the demographic, economic, social and political consequences of migration became more visible. Thus, while in 1976, only 7 per cent of Governments wished to lower immigration levels, by mid-1980s, 20 per cent wished to do so and 40 per cent expressed that view by the mid-1990s. Since 1996, a reversal of this trend has taken place, as explained below.

Key findings regarding national migration policies in 2005 are summarized as follows:

- Governments are increasingly recognizing the need and benefits of international migration by adopting policies and measures to tailor migration to national needs. Only one-fifth of all countries wish to lower immigration, down from two-fifths in 1996. The downward trend is even more pronounced among developed countries, where the proportion of countries with policies to lower immigration fell from 60 per cent in 1996 to 12 per cent by 2005.
- Migration policy in receiving countries reflects an evolution towards greater selectiveness, favouring the admission of skilled migrants who meet specific labour needs, such as those in science and technology, or of foreign workers destined to sectors experiencing labour shortages. About 30 countries have policies promoting the admission of highly skilled workers.
- Policies that focus on the integration of migrants are becoming more common. In 2005, 75 countries reported programmes to integrate non-citizens, up from 52 countries in 1996. Integration policies are found in 37 developed countries and in 38 developing countries.
- Despite the increasing volume of international migration, since 1986 a quarter of all countries have expressed the wish to lower emigration and this proportion has remained stable. However, countries of origin are increasingly concerned about the loss of highly skilled workers and its impact on the development process.
- Countries of origin have become more inclined to encourage the return of their citizens living abroad, to create links with their expatriate communities and to harness the positive impact of international migration on development and its potential contributions to poverty reduction. Seventy-two countries now encourage their expatriate citizens to return, up from 59 countries in 1996. Among the countries pursuing such a policy, 58 are developing countries.

Many Governments and intergovernmental organizations have called for greater coherence in international migration policies. However, migration policies often lack clear objectives and are not effectively implemented. These outcomes stem from the fact that policymakers are confronted with competing priorities from policies dealing with employment, trade, development and national security. By undertaking a systematic and forthright examination of migration policies and their outcomes, Governments may gain a better understanding of the policy options open to them.

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