

**TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division
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**ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATION, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT¹**

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN/ECLAC)

¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

Pursuant to resolution 615 (XXXI) adopted in 2006 by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development, international migration activities within the programme of work of ECLAC are carried out by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) – Population Division of ECLAC. In addition, CELADE follows up on mandates from the Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government.

Activities carried out in this regard in 2011 included research; specialized publications; training and technical assistance for countries in the region; support for intergovernmental meetings, conferences and seminars; and technical cooperation with civil society organizations and academic and labour institutions.

In general, CELADE activities benefited from the work of the inter-agency group created by resolution 615 (XXXI) and coordinated by ECLAC to monitor issues relating to international migration and development in the region. In 2011, this initiative was once again found to be a valuable mechanism for coordinating inter-agency activities and continuing to pursue joint efforts (with the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), the Organization of American States (OAS), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), among other agencies).

As may be seen on the CELADE website¹ three major documents on migration have recently been published:

- “*Migración internacional en América Latina y el Caribe. Nuevas tendencias, nuevos enfoques*” (International Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean: new trends and approaches). This publication is the result of activities carried out by ECLAC in the first year of the Development Account project on “Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact” and contains original studies, thoughts and conclusions presented at the regional workshop (2011).
- “*Viejos y nuevos asuntos en las estimaciones de la migración internacional en América Latina y el Caribe*” (Old and new inputs in the estimations of international migration in Latin America and the Caribbean), published in the ECLAC Población y desarrollo series (2011).
- “Development, institutional and policy aspects of international migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean”. This document, published as part of the ECLAC Project Documents collection (2012), contains the main studies prepared and presented at the Interregional Workshop on International Migration, held in Geneva on September 22-23 2011, in the context of the Development Account project on international migration.

ECLAC worked closely with the Organization of American States (OAS) on implementing the Continuous Labour Migration Reporting System for the Americas (SICREMI) and on drafting the first annual report, which was presented in Washington D.C. in July 2011.

ECLAC took part in intergovernmental and regional meetings and conferences in Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama and Uruguay, and carried out training and technical assistance and cooperation activities with Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Panama, and worked with civil society organizations and academic institutions by participating in a variety of seminars, meetings and specialized courses, such as: IV Congreso de la Red Internacional de Migración y Desarrollo (Ecuador, May 2011); Taller sobre Movilidad Humana y Derechos Humanos, jointly organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (Argentina, May-June 2011); Taller nacional sobre potencialidades y aplicaciones de los datos censales (Panama, September 2011); III Coloquio de Migración Internacional: “Las migraciones regionales y extra-regionales” (Mexico, November 2011);

and Conferencia Regional de Empleo “MERCOSUR y la Libre Circulación de Trabajadores” (Uruguay, December 2011).

For a one-year term ending in August 2011, ECLAC coordinated representation of the five regional commissions of the United Nations within the Global Migration Group. It contributed to the organization of the Symposium “Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development”, held in New York on 17-18 May 2011. Representing the regional commissions, ECLAC also contributed to the General Assembly “Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development” (New York, 19 May 2011) by assisting in the organization and chairing of the round table on “Enhancing Development through International Cooperation”.

Also of note were the activities undertaken in 2011 as part of the United Nations Development Account project “Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact,” in its third year of implementation, coordinated by ECLAC and executed in conjunction with the other regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)-Population Division. Two interregional (and one regional) workshops were organized during 2011 with technical support from DESA-Population Division. One interregional workshop was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Beirut (June 2011); the other was organized by ECLAC, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Geneva (September 2011). A regional workshop on migration statistics was organized by ECE in Antalya, Turkey (October 2011). The conclusions from these workshops will be published on the project website². A summary of the conclusions of the workshop organized by ECLAC-ECE-ECA is provided below.

Interregional workshop on “Strengthening capacities to deal with international migration: Examining development, institutional and policy aspects of migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean”

This workshop was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 22-23 September 2011. The main objective was to contribute to strengthening countries’ capacities to design national migration policies, maximizing benefits and minimizing negative aspects for the origin, transit and destination countries and the migrants. The meeting aimed to promote the exchange of national and regional experiences and good practices. The emerging dynamics of migration between the three regions were discussed, with an emphasis on those factors that have an impact on development, and innovative institutional and regulatory aspects of interregional migration were analysed. The sessions included the presentation and discussion of background documents prepared by selected experts invited by the regional commissions. The workshop was attended by government delegates from selected countries of the three regions, experts on diverse migration issues, and representatives from civil society and international agencies³.

Workshop topics

Discussion took place in a plenary session, including six working sessions and two round tables:

- Sessions 1 and 2 addressed African and Latin American migration to Europe;
- Sessions 3 and 4 addressed international migration in Africa and institutional frameworks;
- Sessions 5 and 6 addressed recent African migration to South America and institutional frameworks;
- The round tables brought together representatives from international organizations and civil society, government delegates and one representative of a regional commission to discuss “challenges and opportunities” and “advances and gaps in institutional arrangements” regarding migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Studies submitted

Four studies were prepared as part of the project and are available on the CELADE website. They were presented at the interregional workshop on “Strengthening capacities to deal with international migration: Examining development, institutional and policy aspects of migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean”, held in Geneva in September 2011.

- “Recent African immigration to South America: the cases of Argentina and Brazil in the regional context”
- “Africans in the Southern European countries: Italy, Spain and Portugal”
- “Migration patterns and immigrants characteristics in North-Western Europe”
- “International migration: trends and institutional frameworks from the African perspective”

The studies analyse African and Latin American migration to Europe; international migration in Africa and institutional frameworks; and recent African migration to South America and institutional frameworks. A publication containing the four studies and a final report on the interregional workshop is in the final phase of preparation.

The study by Marcela Cerrutti and Pedro F. Marcelino examines social, economic and geopolitical hypotheses that could explain the appearance of this new migration corridor, using a phenomenological approach combined with extensive historic and demographic overviews. The different sections shed light on —as far as is known— who the migrants are; paint an up-to-date socio-demographic picture; categorize Africans arriving in Argentina; consider how they may be impacting identity policies and, broadly speaking, migration policymaking; and establish ties between this particular migratory corridor and wider geopolitical concerns that condition it. The final two sections propose trends and policy recommendations for further analysis.

Another study, prepared by Andreu Domingo i Valls and Daniela Vono de Vilhena, highlights the characteristics of African immigration to Italy, Spain and Portugal. The report is organized into three chapters. The first focuses on the comparative analysis of the resident population in the three countries, its insertion in the labour market and the territorial distribution in each country. The second chapter specifically examines the case of African immigration to Spain, the country with the highest volume of Africans and the most detailed data. Finally, the conclusions offer a basis for further reflection.

The third study, prepared by Helga A. G. de Valk, Corina Huisman and Kris R. Noam, aims to provide an overview of migration patterns and immigrant characteristics in north-western Europe. Four countries were included: Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. The report starts with a general introduction and overview of migration and migrants in north-western Europe. The second section covers immigration to the selected countries. Recent statistical flow data from each of the countries are used. In the third part, settlement patterns and immigrant group characteristics are analysed. The fourth section focuses on children of immigrant origin.

Finally, the study prepared by John O. Oucho sheds light on African international migration trends and institutional frameworks. The first section provides an introduction to institutional frameworks for migration management. Section two delves into institutional frameworks that guide international migration into and from African countries. The third section explores demographic and socio-economic attributes of migrants in migration policies. The fourth section concentrates on contemporary issues in migration policies, such as remittances, policies pertaining to circulation migration and transnationalism, and the consequences of the global economic crisis for migration flows. The final section sets out conclusions and recommendations.

Project activities demonstrated the need for further work with national and regional institutions and structures to strengthen existing collaboration. Joint efforts by United Nations agencies to reflect the current debate and work on pending migration issues in the context of multilateral forums —such as the

Global Migration Group, the United Nations High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the Global Forum on International Migration and Development– should be built upon and repeated in the future. They gave value to the research and made it possible to draw on existing knowledge and resources. They also provided an opportunity for comparison and gave the debate policy relevance, although considerable work is still to be done in this area.

NOTES

¹ www.eclac.cl/celade/migracion/

² <http://www.cepal.org/celade/DAmigration.asp>

³ International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The consultants engaged to conduct the studies also attended.