



# Summary of the Trends of Skilled Migration from Latin America

Virtual Expert Group Meeting “Population, education and sustainable development” - The Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs



# Summary:

- The trends of skilled migration from Latin America during the two first decades of this century.
- Sources: for the first decade: Lozano and Gandini (2011) article “Skilled-Worker Mobility and Development in Latin American: Between Brain Drain and Brain Waste”. They used: 1) The database prepared by Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk (2008) on the stock of international migrants residing in OECD, and 2) The “American Community Survey (ACS) 3-year estimates”, 2005-2007 of the United States. For the second decade: regional studies.
- Definition skilled migration: high academic level from 13 or more years of education achieved by migrants.
- The global trends of skilled migration: 1) The unprecedented growth of qualified migration. 2) The growth pace of high-skilled migration faster than medium-skilled and low-skilled migration. 3) The increasing involvement of female migrants in the flow of skilled labor (Lozano y Gandini, 2011).
- In this presentation: the first and third trends for the Latin American case.

# First Trend in the Global Skilled Migration

## ► Growth of the skilled migration (in OECD countries)

**Table 1**  
Stock of highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD countries by region of origin, 1990, 2000 and 2007e

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.236.271</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>20.250.045</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>25.859.687</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>111,3%</b>
United States and Canada	716.742	5,9%	949.566	4,7%	1.112.543	4,3%	55,2%
Europe	4.869.045	39,8%	6.864.409	33,9%	8.261.164	31,9%	69,7%
Africa	723.907	5,9%	1.372.712	6,8%	1.826.875	7,1%	152,4%
Asia	3.781.331	30,9%	7.002.491	34,6%	9.257.303	35,8%	144,8%
Oceania	220.624	1,8%	379.067	1,9%	489.977	1,9%	122,1%
Latin America and the Caribbean	1.924.622	15,7%	3.681.800	18,2%	4.911.825	19,0%	155,2%

Data for 2007 are estimates based on the growth rates recorded during the period 1990 - 2000. (Lozano y Gandini, 2011)

Data for 1990 and 2000 can be seen in:  
[http://perso.uclouvain.be/frederic.docquier/filePDF/DataSetByGender\\_Aggregates.xls](http://perso.uclouvain.be/frederic.docquier/filePDF/DataSetByGender_Aggregates.xls)

# Trends in the skilled migration from Latin America

## ► 1) Growth of Latin American qualified migration

**Table 2**  
**Stock of highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD countries**  
**Region of origin in Latin America, 1990, 2000 and 2007e**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1990-2007
<b>Total Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	<b>1.924.622</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>3.681.800</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>4.911.825</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>155,2%</b>
Central America	603.674	31,4%	1.377.011	37,4%	1.918.347	39,1%	217,8%
Caribbean	783.176	40,7%	1.300.333	35,3%	1.662.343	33,8%	112,3%
Andean countries	317.243	16,5%	618.864	16,8%	829.999	16,9%	161,6%
Southern Cone	220.529	11,5%	385.592	10,5%	501.136	10,2%	127,2%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

Data for 2007 are estimates based on the growth rates recorded during the period 1990 - 2000. (Lozano y Gandini, 2011)

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# Growth of Latin American qualified migration by region

## ► Growth of qualified migration from Central America

**Table 3**  
**Stock of highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD**  
**Central America countries, 1990, 2000 and 2007e**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total Central America</b>	<b>603.674</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>1.377.011</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>1.918.347</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>217,8%</b>
México	366.783	60,8%	949.334	68,9%	1.357.120	70,7%	270,0%
Belize	8.770	1,5%	16.121	1,2%	21.267	1,1%	142,5%
Costa Rica	17.400	2,9%	27.403	2,0%	34.405	1,8%	97,7%
El Salvador	59.329	9,8%	134.072	9,7%	186.392	9,7%	214,2%
Guatemala	33.165	5,5%	71.480	5,2%	98.301	5,1%	196,4%
Honduras	21.967	3,6%	51.581	3,7%	72.311	3,8%	229,2%
Nicaragua	40.315	6,7%	68.958	5,0%	89.008	4,6%	120,8%
Panama	55.945	9,3%	58.062	4,2%	59.544	3,1%	6,4%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

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# Growth of Latin American qualified migration by region

## ► Growth of qualified migration from Andean Countries

**Table 4**  
**Stock of highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD**  
**Andean countries, 1990, 2000 and 2007e**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total Andean countries</b>	<b>317.243</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>618.864</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>829.999</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>161,6%</b>
Bolivia	18.807	5,9%	30.338	4,9%	38.410	4,6%	104,2%
Colombia	123.855	39,0%	233.073	37,7%	309.526	37,3%	149,9%
Ecuador	58.500	18,4%	110.477	17,9%	146.861	17,7%	151,0%
Peru	80.397	25,3%	163.932	26,5%	222.407	26,8%	176,6%
Venezuela	35.684	11,2%	81.044	13,1%	112.796	13,6%	216,1%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

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# Growth of Latin American qualified migration by region

## ► Growth of qualified migration from Southern Cone

**Table 5**  
**Stock of highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD**  
**Southern Cone, 1990, 2000 and 2007e**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total Southern Cone</b>	<b>220.529</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>385.592</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>501.136</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>127,2%</b>
Argentina	73.614	33,4%	112.429	29,2%	139.600	27,9%	89,6%
Brazil	63.018	28,6%	154.451	40,1%	218.454	43,6%	246,7%
Chile	61.141	27,7%	86.827	22,5%	104.807	20,9%	71,4%
Paraguay	4.906	2,2%	7.224	1,9%	8.847	1,8%	80,3%
Uruguay	17.850	8,1%	24.661	6,4%	29.429	5,9%	64,9%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

Data for 2007 are estimates based on the growth rates recorded during the period 1990 - 2000. (Lozano y Gandini, 2011)

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# Growth of Latin American qualified migration by region

## ► Growth of qualified migration from Southern Cone

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Argentina	73.614	33,4%	112.429	29,2%	139.600	27,9%	89,6%
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Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

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# Third Trend in the Global Skilled Migration

- The increasing involvement of female migrants in the flow of skilled labor

**Tabla 6**

**Stock of women highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD countries by region of origin, 1990, 2000**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.709.161</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>9.980.942</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>12.971.188</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>127,2%</b>
United States and Canada	381.714	6,7%	502.001	5,0%	586.201	4,5%	53,6%
Europe	2.288.289	40,1%	3.397.048	34,0%	4.173.180	32,2%	82,4%
Africa	260.177	4,6%	555.676	5,6%	762.525	5,9%	193,1%
Asia	1.714.092	30,0%	3.407.733	34,1%	4.593.282	35,4%	168,0%
Oceania	107.097	1,9%	192.028	1,9%	251.480	1,9%	134,8%
Latin America and the Caribbean	957.792	16,8%	1.926.456	19,3%	2.604.521	20,1%	171,9%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.

Data for 2007 are estimates based on the growth rates recorded during the period 1990 - 2000. (Lozano y Gandini, 2009)

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# Third Trend in the Global Skilled Migration

## ► Growth of qualified female migration from Latin America by region

**Table 7**  
**Stock of women highly skilled migrants 25 years or older, residing in OECD countries by region of origin in Latin America, 1990, 2000 and 2007e**

Region of origin	1990	%	2000	%	2007 (Estimates)	%	%Change 1900-2007
<b>Total</b>	957.792	100,0%	1.926.456	100,0%	2.604.521	100,0%	<b>171,9%</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	162.794	17,0%	448.010	23,3%	647.661	24,9%	<b>297,8%</b>
Central America	119.804	12,5%	221.869	11,5%	293.315	11,3%	144,8%
Caribe	408.724	42,7%	723.090	37,5%	<b>943.146</b>	36,2%	130,8%
<b>Andean countries</b>	157.005	16,4%	329.295	17,1%	449.898	17,3%	<b>186,6%</b>
Southern cone	109.465	11,4%	204.192	10,6%	270.501	10,4%	147,1%

Source: Data for 1990 and 2000 were taken from the database of Docquier, Lowell and Marfouk 2008.  
Data for 2007 are estimates based on the growth rates recorded during the period 1990 - 2000. (Lozano y Gandini, 2009)  
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# Brain waste in Latin America and the Caribbean?

- ▶ Brain waste: is a concept that refers to not taking advantage of the skills or education levels that have been attained. It occurs when individuals work in occupations whose qualification requirements are below their education levels (Mattoo, Neagu & Özden, 2005; Özden, 2005).
- ▶ Skilled migration LAC in USA: almost two-thirds of qualified immigrants from LAC residing in the United States are in positions in the labor market that do not allow them to make full use of their skills.
- ▶ Paradoxical situation: whereas the countries of origin lose these human resources, the economies receiving them do not manage to take proper advantage of them (Riaño, 2003), the immigrants can derive higher economic benefits than those they could obtain in their country of origin (Solimano, 2008), they are hindered by adverse effects such as nonactualization and the gain of knowledge and skills.



# Conclusions

- ▶ The increase in skilled migration from Latin America is a new characteristic aspect in the region, but there are specific features displayed according to the economic, social, and, even educational contexts in each Sub-region and each country.
- ▶ The increase in skilled migration does not mean that this population has a greater capacity for mobility, but this is motivated by the strong demand for professionals in certain sectors of developed countries associated with the expansion and consolidation of their economies.
- ▶ About skilled women migrants: their migration process opens up new opportunities for women, allowing them to renegotiate their gender roles within the family and society.
- ▶ For qualified women: life in another country may imply losses and additional burdens that affect women's capabilities and options. The process may also lead to an increase in financial demands on the part of families back home, as well as to new situations of dependency and abuse in workplace relations in the country of destination (CEPAL, 2014:8).
- ▶ Training waste brings about returns that are not taken advantage of, not only for the migrants and their families but also for society as a whole