



# International mobility of the highly skilled : a new perspective and policy options

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# Background

- Problems in the comparability of immigrant stocks
- Concerns related to the international mobility of the highly skilled :
  - among OECD member countries
  - from developing countries
- Limited availability of statistics on expatriates, especially by level of education and occupation



# An international database on Foreign-Born

## **Data collection and compilation**

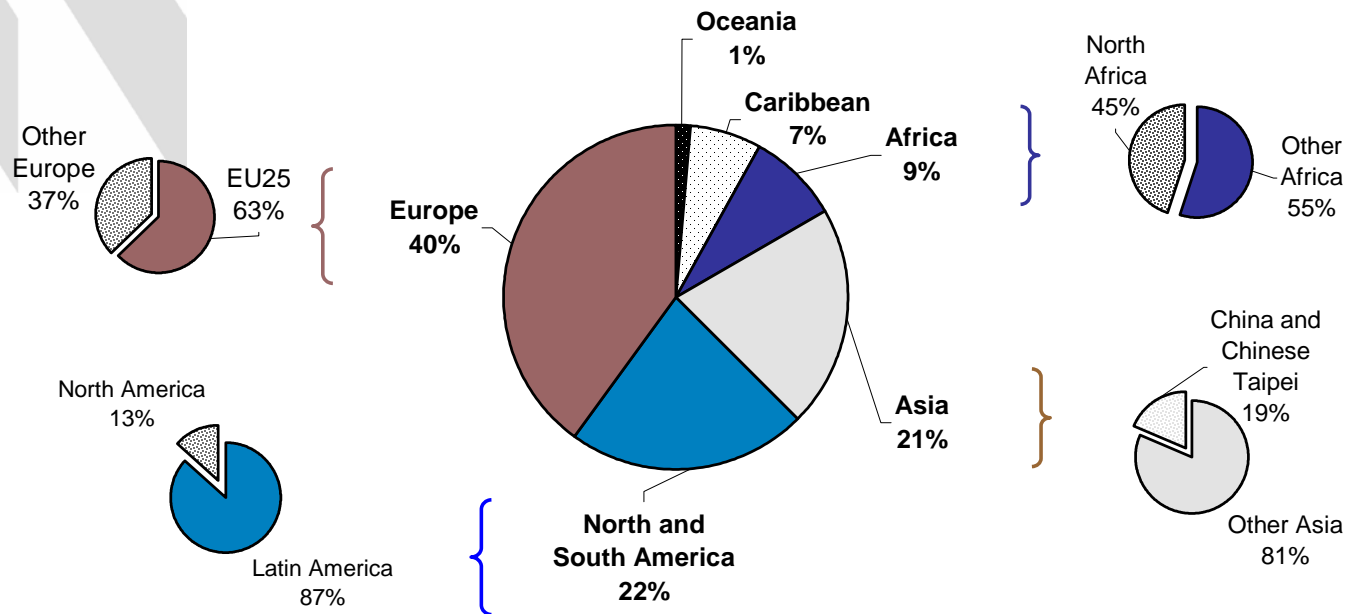
- 29 OECD National Statistic Offices and OECD
- Observers : UN Statistics Division, Eurostat, European Commission, ILO, UNECE

## **Data collection and compilation**

- Data are from OECD population censuses and population registers
- Data are compiled on :
  - Immigrant population in OECD countries
  - Expatriate population from OECD and non-member countries
  - Migrants by origin and destination and educational attainment

- A significant share of foreign born in OECD countries originate from outside the OECD (54% of all foreign born or about 42 million)

Foreign-born by region of origin in OECD countries, percentages

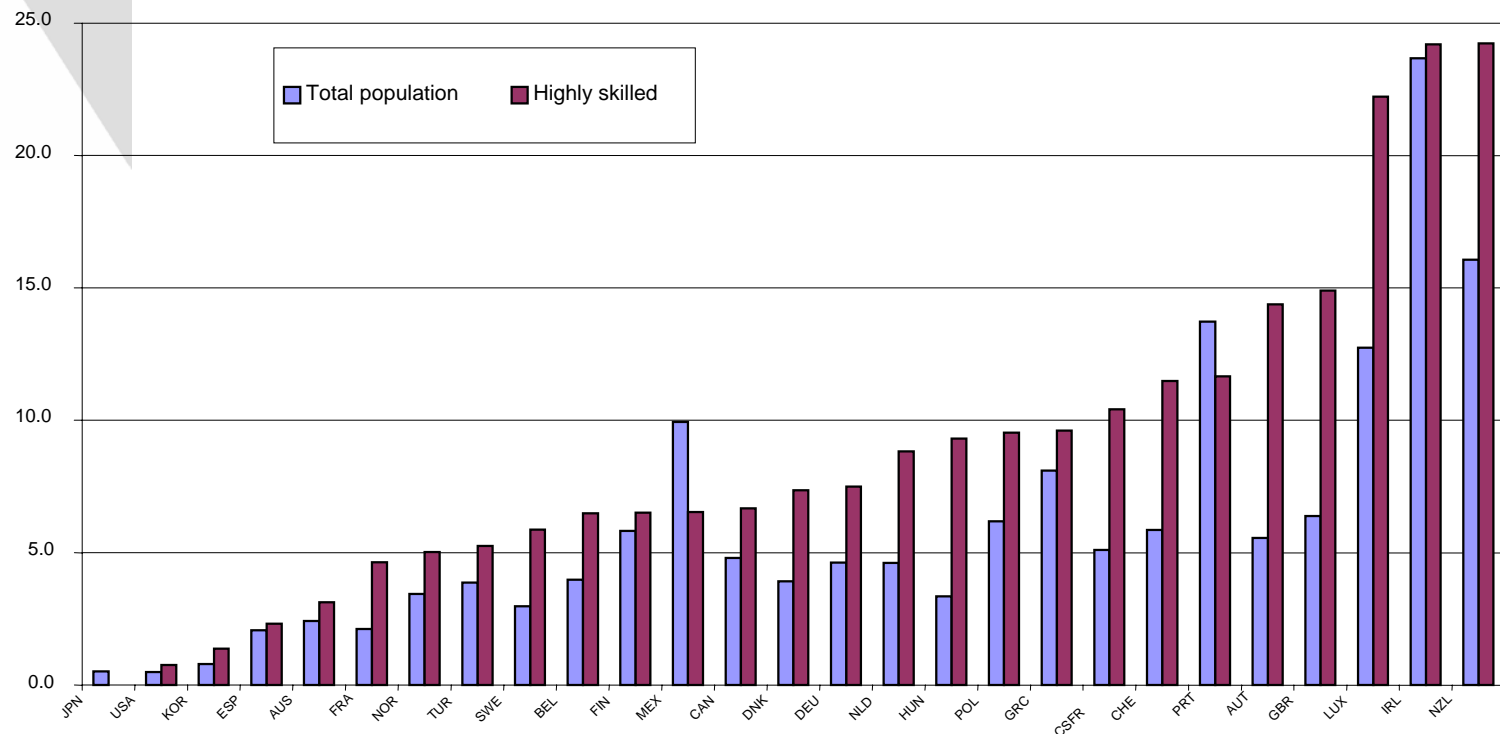


*Note:* "Other Europe" and "Other Africa" include data for not stated European countries and not stated African countries, respectively.

*Source:* *Trends in International Migration*, OECD, 2005.

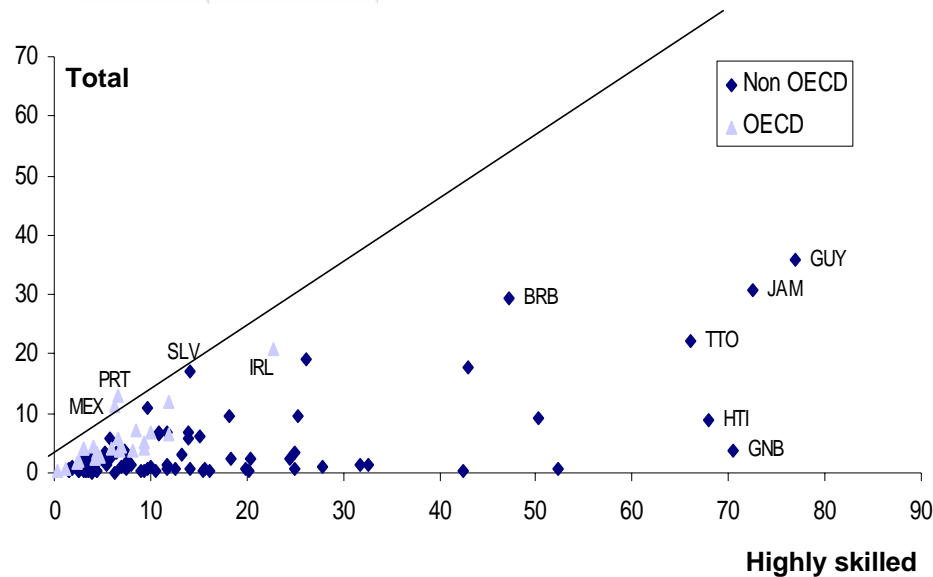
- The incidence of expatriation varies substantially from one country to another

Expatriates as a percentage of all native-born, OECD countries  
Total population and highly skilled



- Highly skilled international migration is an important part of all migration flows

Chart 3. Emigration rate of highly skilled 15+ and emigration rate of population 15+, ca 2000  
percentages



Percentage of persons with tertiary education by place of birth in selected OECD countries

	Native	Foreign Born	Expatriates
<b>CAN</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>
<b>CHE</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>38.4</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>40.4</b>
<b>HUN</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>30.0</b>
<b>KOR</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>43.6</b>
<b>NZL</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>42.9</b>
<b>SWE</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>38.9</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>47.2</b>

- Major source countries for highly skilled migration are:

### Number of highly skilled expatriates

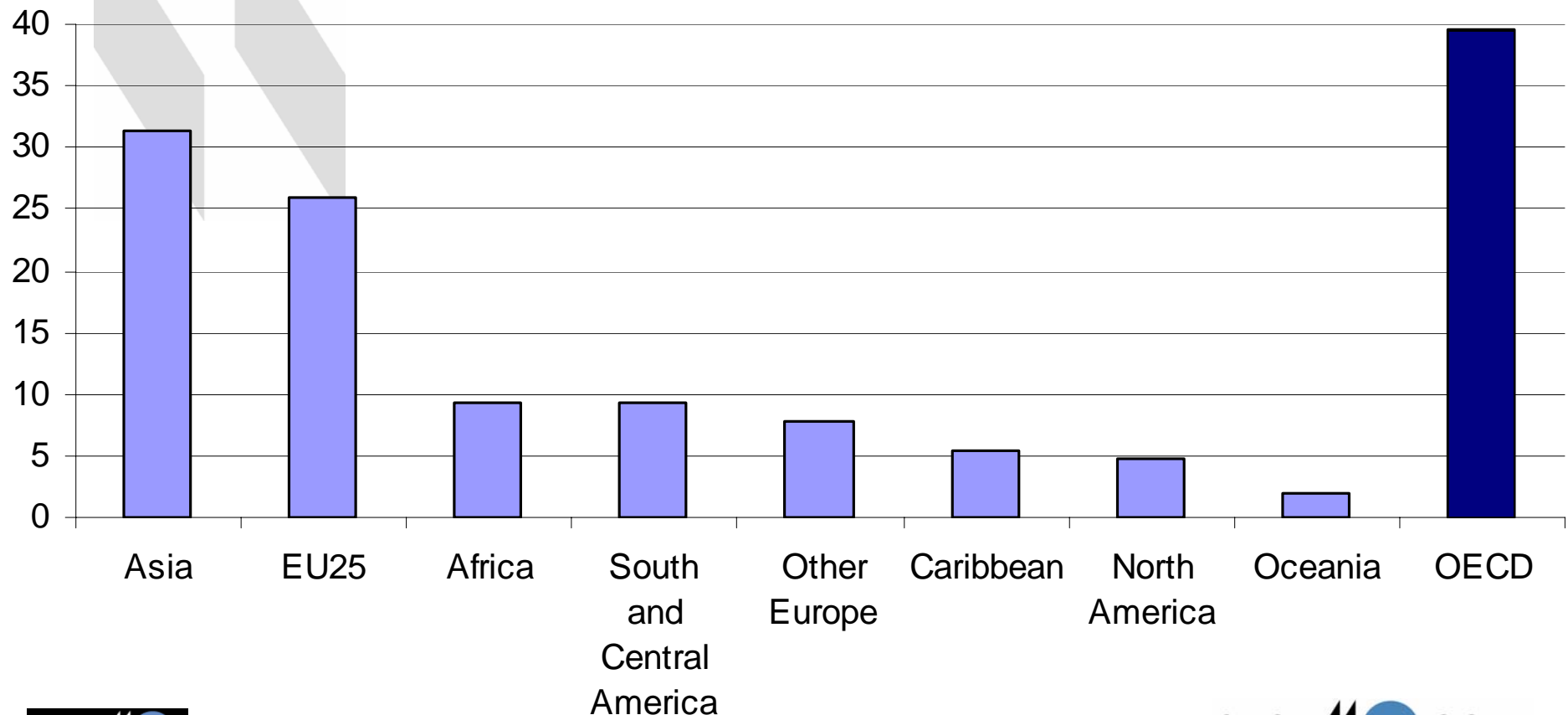
<b>Former USSR</b>	1300000
<b>United Kingdom</b>	1265863
<b>India</b>	1000162
<b>Philippines</b>	873331
<b>Germany</b>	865255
<b>China</b>	652900
<b>Mexico</b>	472784
<b>Canada</b>	417750
<b>USA</b>	390244
<b>Vietnam</b>	356049

### Percentage of expatriates highly skilled

<b>Taiwan, Prov. of China</b>	61.1
<b>Nigeria</b>	55.1
<b>India</b>	51.9
<b>Egypt</b>	51.2
<b>Malaysia</b>	50.8
<b>Zambia</b>	49.3
<b>Japan</b>	48.9
<b>USA</b>	48.2
<b>Philippines</b>	48.1
<b>South Africa</b>	47.9

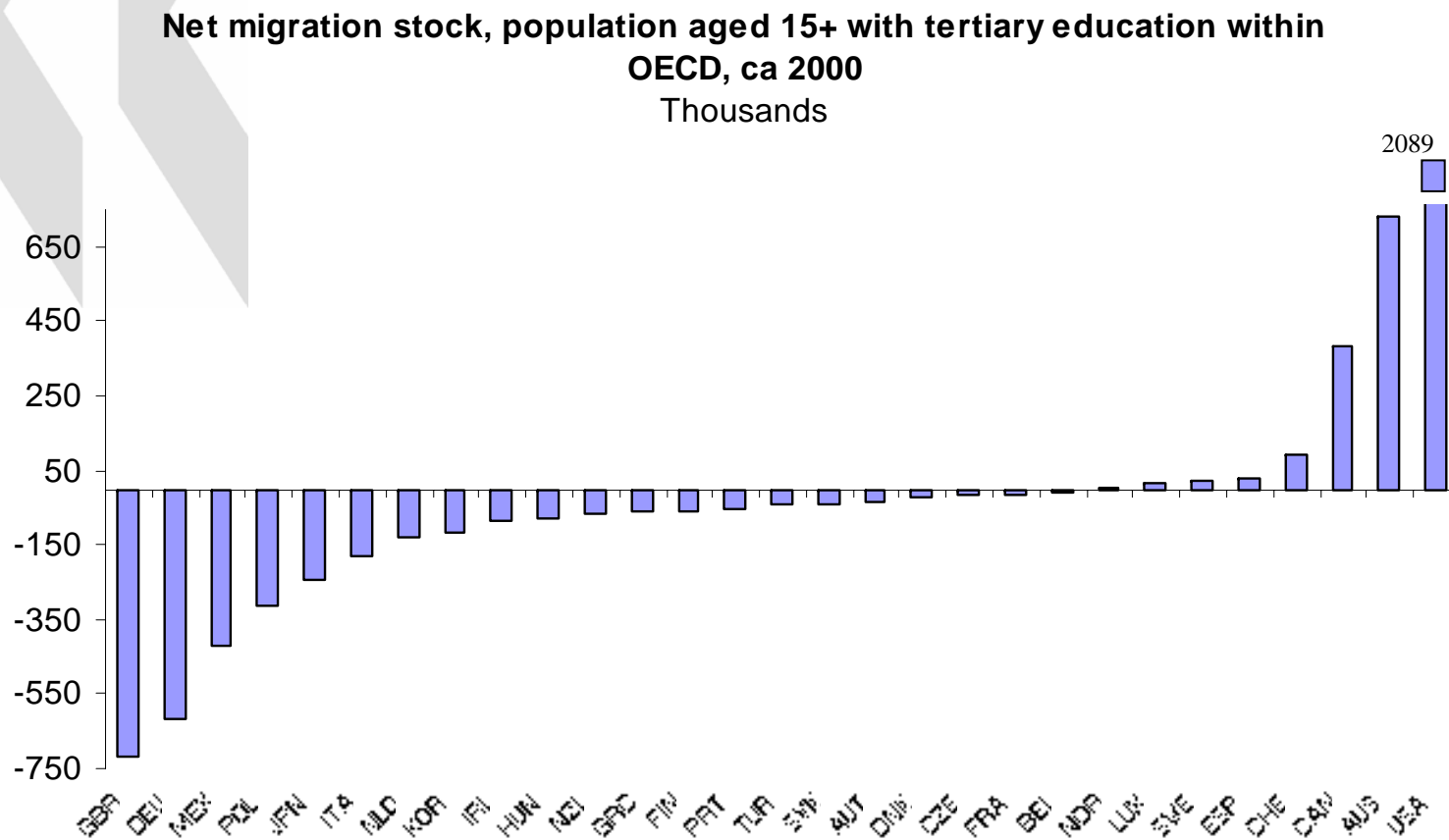
- Asia, Europe and Africa are the major regions of origin for highly skilled

**Distribution of highly skilled expatriates by region of origin**





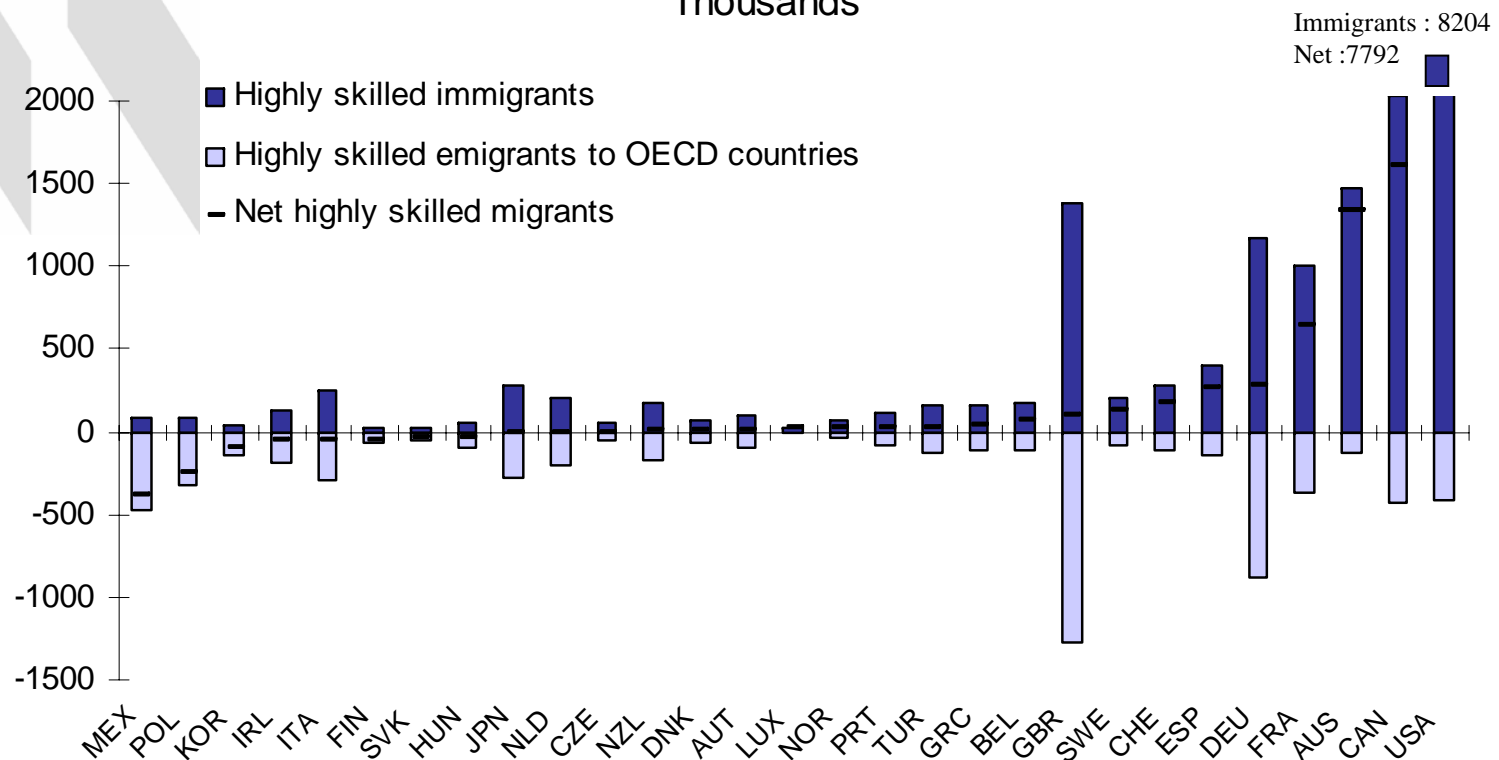
- Within the OECD area, only eight countries are net beneficiaries from the migration of the highly educated ...



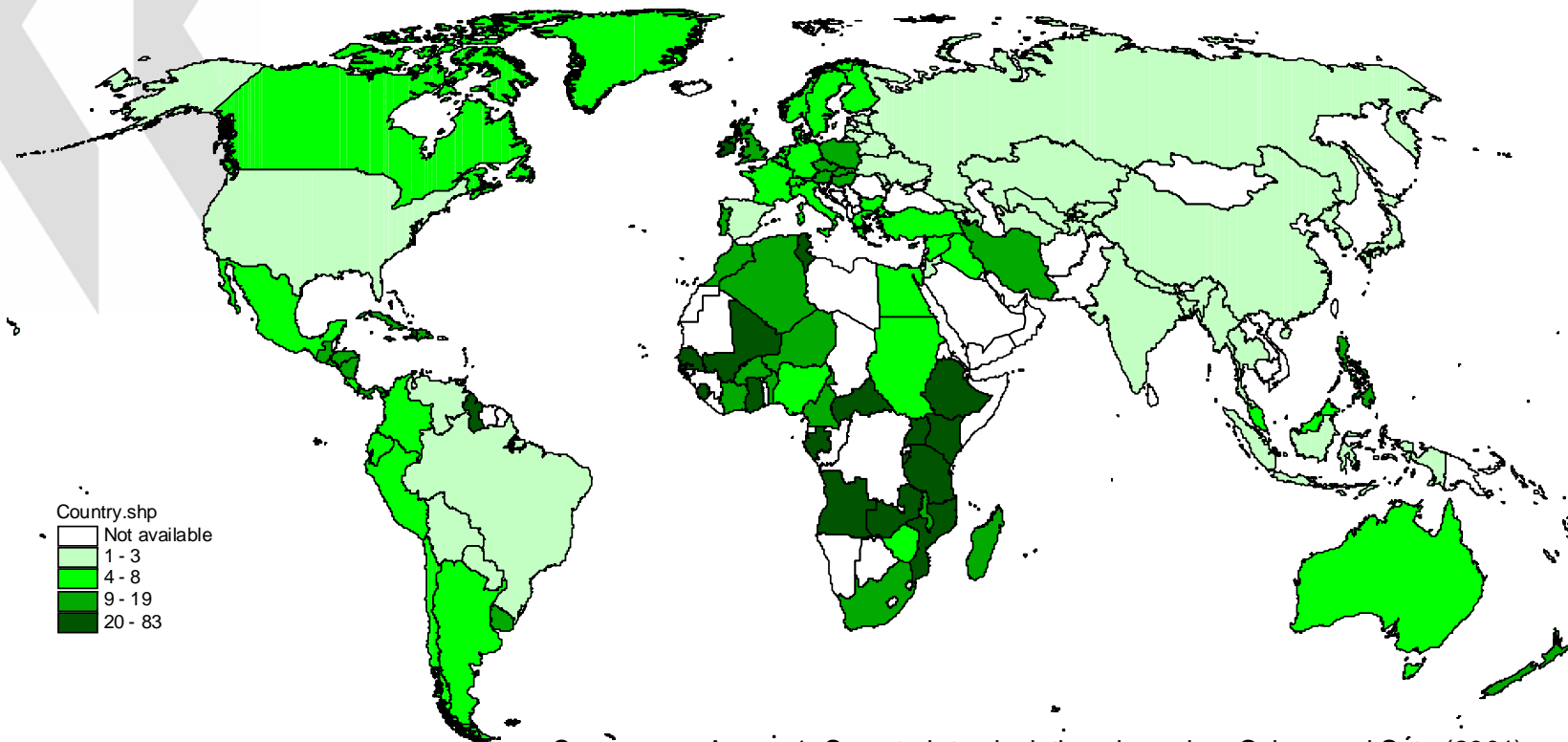
- ... but, as whole, most OECD countries benefit from the international mobility of the highly skilled

### Immigrant and emigrant population aged 15+ with tertiary education in OECD countries, ca 2000

Thousands



- Some countries, especially in the Caribbean and in Africa, face significant emigration rates of their elites (sometimes exceeding 50%)



Source: see Annex 1, Secretariat calculations based on Cohen and Soto (2001) for highly skilled stocks in countries of origin.

# International mobility of the highly skilled: new developments in OECD countries

- Stronger selection in favour of skills
- ✓ Adapting permanent and temporary migration policies (CAN, AUS, USA...)  
Facilitating transition from one status to the other
- ✓ Introducing specific migration scheme for highly skilled workers (DEU, GBR, NOR, CZE...)
- ✓ Easing labour recruitment for shortage occupations (GBR, IRL, FRA, NLD...)
- ✓ Increasing temporarily caps and numerical limits (CHE, USA ...)



- Fiscal incentives (BEL, FRA, FIN, KOR, NLD...)
- Student migration with work opportunities after completion (AUS, CAN, CHE, DEU...)
- International Service Provision (GATS mode 4)

## Increasing competition to attract and retain highly skilled workers ...

- ✓ Offering the possibility to immigrate is no longer a sufficient condition to attract highly skilled foreign workers (fiscal incentives, accompanying family, conditions and duration and stay ...).
- ✓ International mobility calls for active retention and return migration policies.
- ✓ It may be necessary to identify new sources of human resources (in non-OECD countries)

## ... does not necessarily mean a globalisation of the labour market *per se*

- ✓ Recognition of foreign qualification and work experience
- ✓ Language proficiency
- ✓ Labour market testing

# Better sharing the benefits of the international mobility of the highly skilled

- ✓ *Efficiency principle* : stimulating circulation and return migration
- ✓ *Equity principle* : better sharing the cost between receiving countries, migrants and countries of origin
- ✓ *Sustainability principle* : better managing human resources in both sending and receiving countries
- ✓ *Ethics principle* : identifying and promoting best practices in the international recruitment of highly skilled foreign workers and avoiding active poaching