

People in motion: who moves where, when and why



This chapter examines human movement across the world and over time. The patterns are consistent with the idea that people move to seek better opportunities, but also that their movement is strongly constrained by barriers—most importantly, by policies at home and at destination and by lack of resources. Overall, the share of people going to developed countries has increased markedly during the past 50 years, a trend associated with growing gaps in opportunities. Although these flows of people are likely to slow temporarily during the current economic crisis, underlying structural trends will persist once growth resumes and are likely to generate increased pressures for movement in the coming decades.

People in motion: who moves where, when and why

The aim of this chapter is to characterize human movement generally—to give an overview of who moves, how, why, where and when. The picture is complex and our broad brushstrokes will inevitably fail to capture specifics. Nevertheless, the similarities and commonalities that emerge are striking, and help us understand the forces that shape and constrain migration.

We start by examining the key features of movement—its magnitude, composition and directions—in section 2.1. Section 2.2 considers how movement today resembles or differs from movement in the past. Our examination suggests that movement is largely shaped by policy constraints, an issue that we discuss in detail in the third section (2.3). In the last section (2.4), we turn to the future and try to understand how movement will evolve in the medium to longer term, once the economic crisis that started in 2008 is over.

2.1 Human movement today

Discussions about migration commonly start with a description of flows between developing and developed countries, or what sometimes are loosely—and inaccurately—called ‘South–North’ flows. However, most movement in the world does not take place between developing and developed countries. Indeed, it does not even take place between countries. The overwhelming majority of people who move do so within the borders of their own country.

One of the reasons why this basic reality of human movement is not better known lies in severe data limitations. Background research conducted for this report sought to overcome this knowledge gap by using national censuses to calculate the number of internal migrants on a consistent basis for 24 countries covering 57 percent of the world’s population (figure 2.1).¹ Even with a conservative definition of internal migration, which counts movement across only the largest zonal demarcations in a country, the number of people who move internally in our sample is six

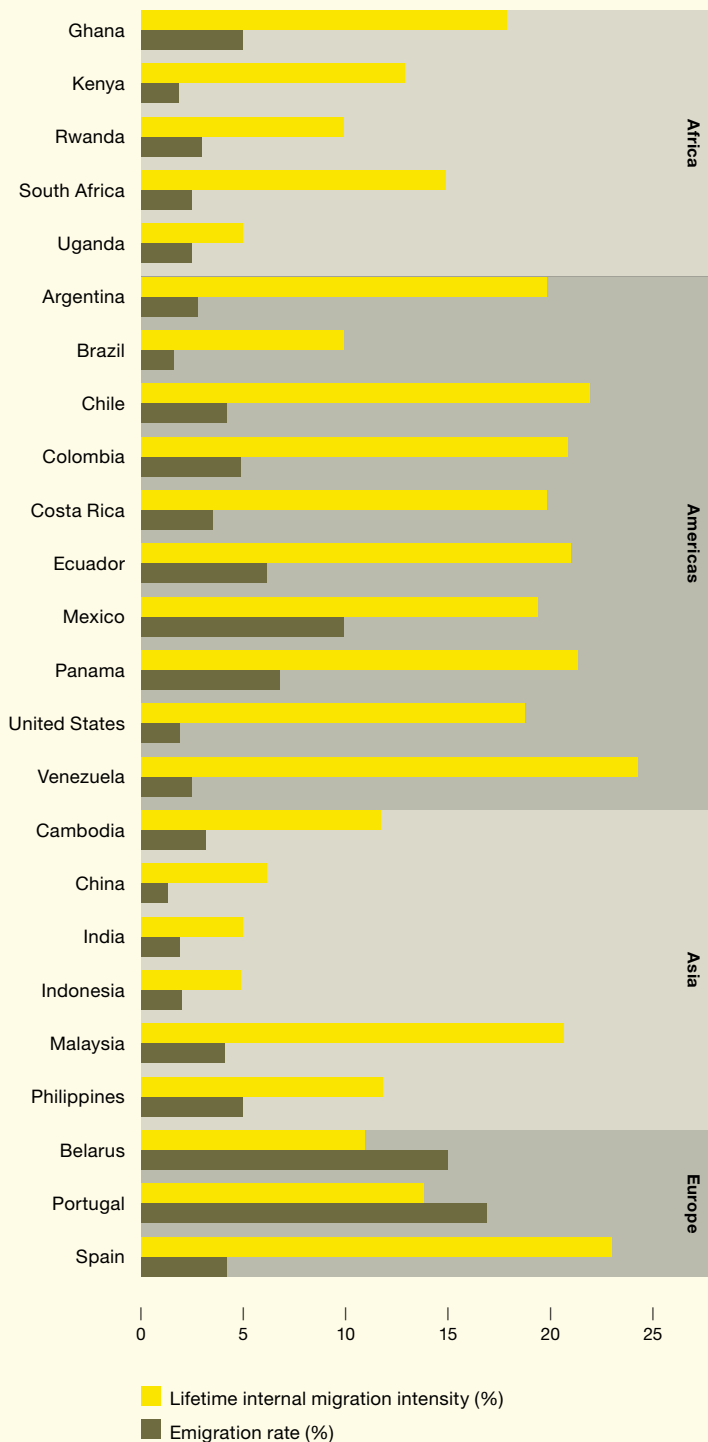
times greater than those who emigrate.² Using the regional patterns found in these data, we estimate that there are about 740 million internal migrants in the world—almost four times as many as those who have moved internationally.

By comparison, the contemporary figure for international migrants (214 million, or 3.1 percent of the world’s population) looks small. Of course this global estimate is dogged by a number of methodological and comparability issues, but there are good reasons to believe that the order of magnitude is right.³ Box 2.1 deals with one of the most frequently voiced concerns about the international data on migration, namely the extent to which they capture irregular migration is discussed below.

Even if we restrict attention to international movements, the bulk of these do not occur between countries with very different levels of development. Only 37 percent of migration in the world is from developing to developed countries. Most migration occurs *within* countries in the same category of development: about 60 percent of migrants move either between developing or between developed countries (the remaining 3 percent move from developed to developing countries).⁴

This comparison relies on what is inevitably a somewhat arbitrary distinction between countries that have achieved higher levels of development and those that have not. We have classified countries that have attained an HDI greater than or equal to 0.9 (on a scale of 0 to 1) as *developed* and those that have not as *developing* (see box 1.3). We use this demarcation throughout this report, without intending any judgement of the merits of any particular economic or political

Figure 2.1 Many more people move within borders than across them
Internal movement and emigration rates, 2000–2002



Source: Bell and Muhidin (2009) and HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) database.
Note: All emigration data are from the Migration DRC (2007) database and cover 2000–2002. The internal migration rates are based on census data from 2000 to 2002, except for Belarus (1999), Cambodia (1998), Colombia (2005), Kenya (1999) and the Philippines (1990).

system or seeking to obscure the complex interactions involved in increasing and sustaining human well-being. The countries and territories thereby classified as developed feature many that would normally be included in such a list (all Western European countries, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States), but also several that are less frequently labelled as developed (Hong Kong (China), Singapore and the Republic of Korea, in East Asia; Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, in the Gulf region). However, most Eastern European economies, with the exception of the Czech Republic and Slovenia, are not in the top HDI category (see Statistical Table H).

One obvious reason why there is not more movement from developing to developed countries is that moving is costly, and moving long distances is costlier than undertaking short journeys. The higher expense of international movement comes not only from transport costs but also from the policy-based restrictions on crossing international borders, which can be overcome only by those who have enough resources, possess skills that are sought after in the new host country, or are willing to run very high risks. Nearly half of all international migrants move within their region of origin and about 40 percent move to a neighbouring country. The proximity between source and destination countries, however, is not solely geographical: nearly 6 out of 10 migrants move to a country where the major religion is the same as in their country of birth, and 4 out of 10 to a country where the dominant language is the same.⁵

The pattern of these inter- and intra-regional movements is presented in map 2.1, where the absolute magnitudes are illustrated by the thickness of the arrows, the size of each region has been represented in proportion to its population, and the colouring of each country represents its HDI category. Intra-regional movement dominates. To take one striking example, intra-Asian migration accounts for nearly 20 percent of all international migration and exceeds the sum total of movements that Europe receives from all other regions.

The fact that flows from developing to developed countries account for only a minority of international movement does not mean that differences in living standards are unimportant. Quite the contrary: three quarters of

Box 2.1 Counting irregular migrants

The only comprehensive estimates of the number of foreign-born people in the world come from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and cover approximately 150 United Nations (UN) member states. These estimates are primarily based on national censuses, which attempt to count the number of people residing in a particular country at a given moment, where a resident is defined as a person who “has a place to live where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest.” In other words, national censuses attempt to count all residents, regardless of whether they are regular or irregular.

However, there are good reasons to suspect that censuses significantly undercount irregular migrants, who may avoid census interviewers for fear that they will share information with other government authorities. House owners may conceal the fact that they have illegal units rented to irregular migrants. Migrants may also be more mobile and thus harder to count.

Studies have used a variety of demographic and statistical methods to assess the magnitude of the undercount. In the United States, the Pew Hispanic Center has developed a set of assumptions consistent with census-based studies and historical demographic data from Mexico that estimate the undercount to be approximately 12

percent. Other researchers estimated under-coverage rates in Los Angeles during the 2000 Census at 10–15 percent. Thus it appears that the official count in the United States misses 1–1.5 million irregular migrants, or 0.5 percent of the country’s population.

Few studies of the undercount of migrants have been conducted in developing countries. One exception is Argentina, where a recent study found an underestimation of the migrant stock equivalent to 1.3 percent of the total population. In other developing countries, the undercount rates could be much higher. Estimates of the number of irregular migrants for a number of countries—including the Russian Federation, South Africa and Thailand—range from 25 to 55 percent of the population. However, there is huge uncertainty about the true number. According to the migration experts surveyed by the HDR team, irregular migration was estimated to average around one third of all migration for developing countries. An upper bound for the number of migrants omitted from international statistics can be obtained by assuming that none of these migrants are captured by country censuses (that is, an undercount of 100 percent); in that case, the resulting underestimation in the global statistics for developing countries would be around 30 million migrants.

Source: UN (1998), Passel and Cohn (2008), Marcelli and Ong (2002), Comelatto, Lattes, and Levit (2003). See Andrienko and Guriev (2005) for the Russian Federation, and Sabates-Wheeler (2009) for South Africa and Martin (2009b) for Thailand.

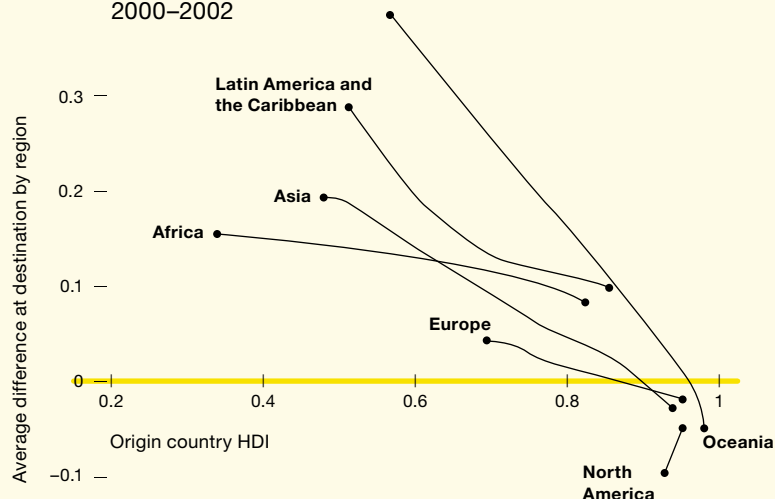
international movers move to a country with a higher HDI than their country of origin; among those from developing countries, this share exceeds 80 percent. However, their destinations are often not developed countries but rather other developing countries with higher living standards and/or more jobs.

The difference between human development at origin and destination can be substantial. Figure 2.2 illustrates this difference—a magnitude that we loosely call the human development ‘gains’ from migration—plotted against the origin country’s HDI.⁶ If migrants were on average emigrating to countries with the same level of human development as their origin countries, this magnitude would be zero. In contrast, the difference is positive and generally large for all but the most developed countries. The fact that the average gain diminishes as human development increases shows that it is people from the poorest countries who, on average, gain the most from moving across borders.

That movers from low-HDI countries have the most to gain from moving internationally is confirmed by more systematic studies. Background research commissioned for this

report compared the HDI of migrants at home and destination and found that the differences—in both relative and absolute terms—are inversely related to the HDI of the country of origin.⁷

Figure 2.2 The poorest have the most to gain from moving... Differences between destination and origin country HDI, 2000–2002



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) database. Note: Averages estimated using Kernel density regressions.

Evidence that poverty is a constraint to emigration has also been found in household-level analysis: a study of Mexican households, for example, found that the probability of migration increased with higher income levels for household incomes lower than US\$15,000 per annum (figure 2.3, panel B). A commissioned study found that during the *Monga* or growing season in Bangladesh, when people’s cash resources are lowest, a randomized monetary incentive significantly increased the likelihood of migrating.¹² The magnitude of the effect was large: giving emigrants an amount equivalent to a week’s wages at destination increased the propensity to migrate from 14 to 40 percent. These results shed strong doubts on the idea, often promoted in policy circles, that development in countries of origin will reduce migratory flows.

While many migrant families do improve their standard of living by moving, this is not always the case. As discussed in chapter 3, movement often coincides with adverse outcomes when it occurs under conditions of restricted choice. Conflict-induced migration and trafficking are not a large proportion of overall human movement, but they affect many of the world’s poorest people and are thus a special source of concern (box 2.2).

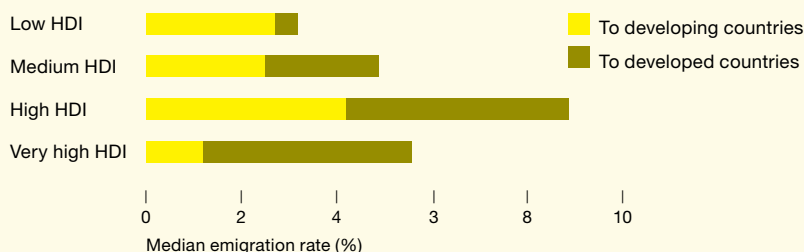
Another key fact about out-migration patterns is their inverse relation to the size of a country’s population. For the 48 states with populations below 1.5 million—which include 1 low-, 21 medium-, 12 high- and 11 very high-HDI countries—the average emigration rate is 18.4 percent, considerably higher than the world average of 3 percent. Indeed, the top 13 emigration countries in the world are all small states, with Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and Saint Kitts and Nevis having emigration rates above 40 percent. The simple correlation between size and emigration rates is -0.61 . In many cases, it is remoteness that leads people born in small states to move in order to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere—the same factor that drives much of the rural to urban migration seen within countries. Cross-country regression analysis confirms that the effect of population size on emigration is higher for countries that are far from world markets—the more remote a small country is, the more people decide to leave.¹³ The implications of these patterns are discussed in box 4.4.

The aggregate facts just surveyed tell us where migrants come from and go to, but they do not tell us who moves. While severe data limitations impede presentation of a full global profile of migrants, the existing data nonetheless reveal some interesting patterns.

Approximately half (48 percent) of all international migrants are women. This share has been quite stable during the past five decades: it stood at 47 percent in 1960. This pattern contrasts with that of the 19th century, when the majority of migrants were men.¹⁴ Yet despite recent references to the ‘feminization’ of migration, it appears that numerical gender balance was largely reached some time ago. However, the aggregate stability hides trends at the regional level. While the share of women going to the European Union has increased slightly from 48

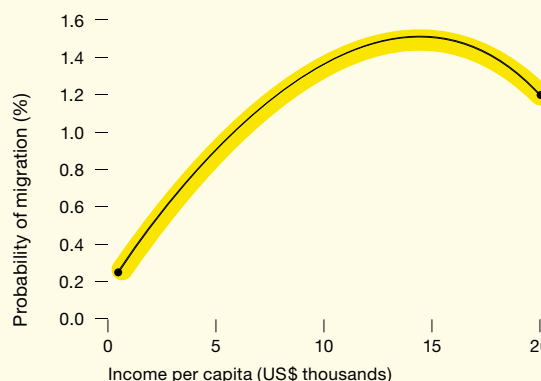
Figure 2.3 ... but they also move less
Emigration rates by HDI and income

Panel A: Median emigration rates by origin country HDI group



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) and UN (2009e).

Panel B: Probability of emigration by income level in Mexican households



Source: Meza and Pederzini (2006).

to 52 percent, that same share has dropped from 47 to 45 percent in Asia.

Of course, the relatively equal gender shares of the migrant population may hide significant differences in the circumstances of movement and the opportunities available.¹⁵ At the same time, a growing literature has challenged conventional views about the subordinate role of women in migration decisions.¹⁶ For example, a qualitative study of decisions taken by Peruvian couples moving to Argentina found that many of the women moved first by themselves, because they were able to secure jobs more rapidly than their partners, who would later follow with the children.¹⁷

The data also show very large temporary flows of people. In the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), temporary migrants typically represent more than a third of arrivals in a given year. However, since most leave after a short period while others transit towards more permanent arrangements, the number of people on temporary visas at any given moment is much smaller than the aggregate flows suggest. Indeed, 83 percent of the foreign-born population in OECD countries has lived there for at least five years.¹⁸ Almost all temporary migrants come for work-related reasons. Some enter into 'circular' arrangements, whereby they repeatedly enter and leave the destination country to carry out seasonal or temporary work, effectively maintaining two places of residence.¹⁹

It is important not to overemphasize the distinction between categories of migrants, as many migrants shift between categories. Indeed, the migration regime in many countries can perhaps best be understood through the analogy of the multiple doors of a house. Migrants can enter the house through the front door (permanent settlers), the side door (temporary visitors and workers) or the back door (irregular migrants). However, once inside a country, these channels often merge, as when temporary visitors become immigrants or slip into unauthorized status, those with irregular status gain authorization to remain, and people with permanent status decide to return.

This analogy is particularly useful for understanding irregular migration. Overstaying is an important channel through which migrants become irregular, particularly in developed countries. In fact, the distinction between regular and irregular is much less clear-cut than is often assumed. For example, it is common for people to enter a country legally, then work despite lacking a permit to do so.²⁰ In some island states, such as Australia and Japan, overstaying is practically the only channel to irregular entry; even in many European countries, overstay appears to account for about two thirds of unauthorized migration. In OECD countries, people with irregular residence or work status tend to be workers with low levels of formal education.²¹ The best estimates of the number of irregular migrants in the United States amount to about 4 percent of the

Box 2.2 Conflict-induced movement and trafficking

People affected by conflict and insecurity can suffer some of the worst human development outcomes of all migrants. The number of people who move as a result of conflict is significant: at the beginning of 2008, there were around 14 million refugees falling under the mandate of either UNHCR or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), accounting for roughly 7 percent of all international migration. The vast majority of refugees originate in and relocate to the poorer countries of the world: in Asia and Africa refugees account respectively for 18 and 13 percent of all international migrants.

Even more individuals displaced by violence and conflict relocate within the borders of their country. It is estimated that, in 2009, internally displaced persons number some 26 million, including 4.9

million in Sudan, 2.8 million in Iraq and 1.4 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is much harder to ascertain the magnitude of human trafficking. In fact, there are no accurate estimates of the stocks and flows of people who have been trafficked. Among the reasons for this are the fact that trafficking data are commonly mixed with data on other forms of illegal migration or migrant exploitation, the inherent challenges in distinguishing between what is voluntary and forced, and the very nature of human trafficking as a clandestine and criminal activity. Many of the frequently cited figures are disputed by the countries concerned, and there is a significant gap between estimated numbers and identified cases.

Source: IDMC (2009b), Carling (2006), Kutnick, Belsler, and Danailova-Trainor (2007), de Haas (2007) and Lazcko (2009).

population or 30 percent of total migrants.²² A recent research project funded by the European Commission estimated that in 2005 irregular migrants accounted for 6–15 percent of the total stock of migrants, or about 1 percent of the population of the European Union.²³ Some of these migrants are counted in official estimates of migration, but many are not (box 2.1).

The over-representation of skilled, working-age people in migrant populations is one aspect of migrant selectivity. Not only do migrants tend to have higher income-earning capacity than non-migrants but they often also appear to be healthier and more productive than natives of the destination country with equivalent educational qualifications. Migrant selectivity usually reflects the effect of economic, geographical or policy-imposed barriers that make it harder for low-skilled people to move. This is most evident in terms of formal education. Tertiary graduates, for example, make up 35 percent of working-age immigrants to the OECD but only about 6 percent of the working-age population in non-OECD countries.²⁴ Immigrants to the OECD from developing countries tend to be of working age: for example, over 80 percent of those from sub-Saharan Africa fall into this group.²⁵

What do we know about migrant selectivity in developing countries? When the migration process is more selective, individuals of working age (who have higher earning capacity than those out of the labour force) form a large proportion of movers. Using census data, we compared the age profiles of migrants to people in their countries of origin in 21 developing and 30 developed countries. We found a significant difference between the age profile of immigrants in developed countries and that of their countries of origin: 71 percent of migrants in developed countries are of working age, as opposed to 63 percent of the population in their origin countries; in contrast, the difference is negligible in developing countries (63 versus 62 percent).

New evidence on internal migration paints a more complex picture of migrant selectivity. In Kenya, for example, commissioned research found a positive relationship between measures of human capital and migration,²⁶ which tends to diminish with successive cohorts of migrants over time,²⁷ a result that is consistent with the development of social and other networks that

facilitate movement. In other words, poorer people may decide to take the risk of migrating as they hear news of others' success and become more confident that they will receive the support they need in order to succeed themselves. Other commissioned research generated education profiles for internal migrants across 34 developing countries. This showed that migrants were more likely than non-migrants to complete secondary school, reflecting both selectivity and better outcomes among migrant children (chapter 3).²⁸

What else do we know about the relationship between internal and international migration? Internal migration, particularly from rural to urban areas, can be a first step towards international migration, as found by some studies in Mexico, Thailand and Turkey, but this is far from being a universal pattern.²⁹ Rather, emigration may foster subsequent internal migration in the home country. In Albania, migration flows to Greece in the early 1990s generated remittances, which helped to finance internal migration to urban centres; in India, international movers from the state of Kerala have freed up positions in their areas of origin and their remittances spurred a construction boom that has attracted low-skilled migrants from surrounding areas.³⁰

Comparisons between internal and international migration can yield useful insights into the causes and implications of human movement. For example, background research for this report analysed the relationship between the size of the place of origin (as measured by its population) and skilled labour flows and found that the patterns were broadly similar across countries as well as within them. In particular, emigration rates for skilled workers are higher in small localities than in large ones, just as they are higher in small countries than in large ones.³¹ These patterns reflect the importance of human interaction in driving movement. Movement both within and between nations is predominantly driven by the search for better opportunities, and in many cases—in particular those involving skilled labour—opportunities will be greater in places where there are other people with complementary skills. This is one of the reasons why people gravitate to urban centres, and why high-skilled professionals often move to cities and places where their profession is already well established.³²

Movement both within and between nations is predominantly driven by the search for better opportunities

Unfortunately, migration data remain weak. It is much easier for policy makers to count the international movements of shoes and cell-phones than of nurses and construction workers

Despite our ability to establish these broad contours of movement, what we know is dwarfed by what we don't know. Unfortunately, migration data remain weak. It is much easier for policy makers to count the international movements of shoes and cell-phones than of nurses and construction workers. Most of our information is based on censuses, but these do not provide time series of migration flows that would enable trends to be recognized nor key data for assessing the impact of migration, such as the income and other characteristics of migrants at the time of admission. Population registers can produce such time series, but very few countries have registers with that capacity. Policy makers typically require information about migrant admissions by type (e.g. contract workers, trainees, family members, skilled professionals, etc.), so administrative data reflecting the number of visas and permits granted to different types of migrants are important. Yet none of these data sources can answer questions about the social or economic impact of international migration.

Advances have been made in recent years. The OECD, the UN, the World Bank and other agencies have compiled and published census and administrative databases that shed new light on some aspects of global flows of people. But public data still cannot answer basic questions, such as: how many Moroccans left France last year? What are the occupations of Latin Americans who took up United States residency in 2004? How has the number of Zimbabweans going to South Africa changed in recent years? How much return or circular migration occurs globally, and what are the characteristics of those migrants? For the most part, migration data remain patchy, non-comparable and difficult to access. Data on trade and investment are vastly more detailed. Many aspects of human movement simply remain a blind spot for policy makers.

While some data limitations are difficult to overcome—including the problem of accurately estimating the number of irregular migrants—others should be surmountable. A logical first step is to ensure that national statistics offices follow international guidelines, such that every census contains core migration questions.³³ Existing surveys could be slightly expanded, or existing administrative data compiled and disseminated, to increase public information on migration

processes. Adding questions on country of birth or country of previous residence to the national census would be a low-cost way forward for many countries. Another would be the public release of existing labour force data, including country of birth, as Brazil, South Africa, the United States and some other countries already do. Yet another would be the inclusion of standard migration questions in household surveys in countries where migration has grown in importance. These improvements are worthy of government attention and increased development assistance.

2.2 Looking back

We now consider how human movement has shaped world history. Doing so sheds light on the extent to which earlier movements differed from or were similar to those of today. It will also reveal the role of migration in the structural transformation of societies, the forces that drive migration and the constraints that frustrate it. We then present a more detailed discussion of the evolution of internal and international movements during the 20th century, with a focus on the post-World War II era. The analysis of trends during the past 50 years is key to understanding the factors causing recent changes in migration patterns and how we can expect these to continue evolving in the future.

2.2.1 The long-term view

Despite the widespread perception that international migration is associated with the rise of globalization and trade in the late 20th century, large-scale long-distance movements were prevalent in the past. At the peak of Iberian rule in the Americas, more than half a million Spaniards and Portuguese and about 700,000 British subjects went to the colonies in the Americas.³⁴ Through the brutal use of force, 11–12 million Africans were sent as slaves across the Atlantic between the 15th and late 19th centuries. Between 1842 and 1900, some 2.3 million Chinese and 1.3 million Indians travelled as contract labourers to South-East Asia, Africa and North America.³⁵ At the close of the 19th century the fraction of foreign-born residents in many countries was higher than today.³⁶

Going back further in time, we find human movement has been a pervasive phenomenon throughout history, present in nearly every

Population movements have played a vital role in the structural transformation of economies throughout history

community for which historical or archaeological evidence is available. Recent DNA tests support previous fossil evidence that all human beings evolved from a common ancestor from equatorial Africa, who crossed the Red Sea into Southern Arabia approximately 50,000 years ago.³⁷ While encounters among different societies often led to conflict, the peaceful coexistence of immigrants in foreign lands is also recorded. An ancient Babylonian tablet from the 18th century BCE, for example, talks about a community of migrants from Uruk who fled their homes when their city was raided and, in their new home, met little resistance to their cultural practices, with their priests being allowed to inhabit the same quarters as those venerating local gods.³⁸ The idea that migrants should be treated according to basic norms of respect is found in many ancient religious texts. The Old Testament, for example, states that “the alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born,” whereas the Koran requires the faithful to move when their beliefs are in danger and to give *aman* (refuge) to non-Muslims, even if they are in conflict with Muslims.³⁹

Population movements have played a vital role in the structural transformation of economies throughout history, thereby contributing greatly to development. Genetic and archaeological evidence from the Neolithic period (9500–3500 BCE) suggests that farming practices spread with the dispersal of communities after they had mastered the techniques of cultivation.⁴⁰ The British Industrial Revolution both generated and was fuelled by rapid urban growth, driven mainly by movement from the countryside.⁴¹ The share of rural population has declined markedly in all economies that have become developed, falling in the United States from 79 percent in 1820 to below 4 percent by 1980, and even more rapidly in the Republic of Korea, from 63 percent in 1963 to 7 percent in 2008.⁴²

An interesting episode from the standpoint of our analysis was that of the large flows from Europe to the New World during the second half of the 19th century. By 1900, more than a million people were moving out of Europe each year, spurred by the search for better conditions in the face of hunger and poverty at home. The size of these flows is staggering by contemporary standards. At its peak in the 19th century, total

emigrants over a decade accounted for 14 percent of the Irish population, 1 in 10 Norwegians, and 7 percent of the populations of both Sweden and the United Kingdom. In contrast, the number of *lifetime* emigrants from developing countries today is less than 3 percent of the total population of these countries. This historical episode was partly driven by falling travel costs: between the early 1840s and the late 1850s, passenger fares from Britain to New York fell by 77 percent in real terms.⁴³ There were other determining factors in particular cases, such as the potato famine in Ireland. These population movements had sizeable effects on both source and destination countries. Workers moved from low-wage labour-abundant regions to high-wage labour-scarce regions. This contributed to significant economic convergence: between the 1850s and World War I, real wages in Sweden rose from 24 to 58 percent of those of the United States, while, over the same period, Irish wages rose from 61 to 92 percent of those in Great Britain. According to economic historians, more than two thirds of the wage convergence across countries that occurred in the late 19th century can be traced to the equalizing effect of migration.⁴⁴

Remittances and return migration were also very important in the past. Remittances were sent by courier and through transfers and notes via immigrant banks, mercantile houses, postal services and, after 1900, by telegraph wire. It is estimated that the average British remitter in the United States in 1910 sent up to a fifth of his income back home, and that about a quarter of European migration to the United States around that time was financed through remittances from those already there.⁴⁵ Return migration was often the norm, with estimated rates of return from the United States ranging as high as 69 percent for Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro and 58 percent for Italy.⁴⁶ In Argentina, Italian immigrants were often referred to as *golondrinas* (swallows) because of their tendency to return, and a contemporary observer wrote that “the Italian in Argentina is no colonist; he has no house, he will not make a sustenance... his only hope is a modest saving.”⁴⁷

These population movements were enabled by a policy stance that was not only receptive to migration but in many cases actively encouraged it. This is as true of origin countries, which often

subsidized passage in order to reduce pressures at home, as it was of destination governments, which invited people to come in order to consolidate settlements and take advantage of natural resources. For example, by the 1880s about half of migrants to Argentina received a travel subsidy, while a law passed in Brazil in 1850 allotted land to migrants free of charge.⁴⁸ More generally, the late 19th century was marked by the absence of the plethora of mechanisms to control international flows of people that subsequently emerged. Until the passage of restrictive legislation in 1924, for example, there was not even a visa requirement to settle permanently in the United States, and in 1905, only 1 percent of the one million people who made the transatlantic journey to Ellis Island were denied entry into the country.⁴⁹

One key distinction between the pre-World War I period and today lies in the attitudes of destination governments. While anti-immigrant sentiment could run high and often drove the erection of barriers to specific kinds of movement, the prevailing view among governments was that movement was to be expected and was ultimately beneficial to both origin and destination societies.⁵⁰ This is all the more remarkable

in societies where intolerance of minorities was prevalent and socially accepted to a far larger extent than today.⁵¹ It is also a useful reminder that the barriers to migration that characterize many developed and developing countries today are much less an immutable reality than might at first be supposed.

2.2.2 The 20th century

The pro-migration consensus was not to last. Towards the end of the 19th century, many countries introduced entry restrictions. The causes were varied, from the depletion of unsettled land to labour market pressures and popular sentiment. In countries such as Argentina and Brazil the policy shift occurred through the phasing out of subsidies; in Australia and the United States it came through the imposition of entry barriers.⁵² Despite the introduction of these restrictions, estimates from the early 20th century indicate that the share of international migrants in the world's population was similar if not larger than it is today. This is especially striking given the relatively high transport costs at that time.⁵³

There was nothing in the area of migration policy even remotely resembling the rapid multilateral liberalization of trade in goods and movements of capital that characterized the post-World War II period.⁵⁴ Some countries entered bilateral or regional agreements to respond to specific labour shortages, such as the United States' 1942 Mexican Farm Labour (*Bracero*) Program, which sponsored 4.6 million contracts for work in the United States over a 22-year period,⁵⁵ the 1947 United Kingdom–Australia Assisted Passage Agreement, or the flurry of European labour movement agreements and guest-worker programmes.⁵⁶ But early enthusiasm for guest-worker programmes had fizzled out by the 1970s. The United States phased out its *Bracero* Program in 1964, and most Western European countries that had heavily relied on guest-worker programmes ceased recruitment during the 1970s oil shock.⁵⁷

This lack of liberalization is consistent with the observed stability in the global share of migrants. As shown in table 2.1, this share (which excludes Czechoslovakia and the former Soviet Union for comparability reasons—see below) has inched up from 2.7 to 2.8 percent between 1960 and 2010. The data nonetheless reveal a

Table 2.1 Five decades of aggregate stability, with regional shifts
Regional distribution of international migrants, 1960–2010

| | 1960 | | | 2010 | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | Total migrants (millions) | Share of world migrants | Share of population | Total migrants (millions) | Share of world migrants | Share of population |
| World (excluding the former Soviet Union and former Czechoslovakia) | 74.1 | | 2.7% | 188.0 | | 2.8% |
| BY REGION | | | | | | |
| Africa | 9.2 | 12.4% | 3.2% | 19.3 | 10.2% | 1.9% |
| Northern America | 13.6 | 18.4% | 6.7% | 50.0 | 26.6% | 14.2% |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 6.2 | 8.3% | 2.8% | 7.5 | 4.0% | 1.3% |
| Asia | 28.5 | 38.4% | 1.7% | 55.6 | 29.6% | 1.4% |
| GCC states | 0.2 | 0.3% | 4.6% | 15.1 | 8.0% | 38.6% |
| Europe | 14.5 | 19.6% | 3.5% | 49.6 | 26.4% | 9.7% |
| Oceania | 2.1 | 2.9% | 13.5% | 6.0 | 3.2% | 16.8% |
| BY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY | | | | | | |
| Very high HDI | 31.1 | 41.9% | 4.6% | 119.9 | 63.8% | 12.1% |
| OECD | 27.4 | 37.0% | 4.2% | 104.6 | 55.6% | 10.9% |
| High HDI | 10.6 | 14.2% | 3.2% | 23.2 | 12.3% | 3.0% |
| Medium HDI | 28.2 | 38.1% | 1.7% | 35.9 | 19.1% | 0.8% |
| Low HDI | 4.3 | 5.8% | 3.8% | 8.8 | 4.7% | 2.1% |

Source: HDR team estimates based on UN (2009d).
Note: Estimates exclude the former Soviet Union and former Czechoslovakia.

remarkable shift in destination places. The share in developed countries more than doubled, from 5 percent to more than 12 percent.⁵⁸ An even larger increase—from 5 to 39 percent of the population—occurred in the GCC countries, which have experienced rapid oil-driven growth. In the rest of the world, however, the fraction of foreign-born people has been stable or declining. The declines are most marked in Latin America and the Caribbean, where international migration has more than halved, but are also evident in Africa and the rest of Asia.

An important caveat is that these trends exclude two sets of countries for which it is difficult to construct comparable time series on international migrants, namely the states of the former Soviet Union, and the two components of former Czechoslovakia. The independence of these new nations generated an artificial increase in the number of migrants, which should not be interpreted as a real increase in the prevalence of international movement (box 2.3).⁵⁹

Where are recent migrants to developed countries coming from? We do not have a full

picture of bilateral flows over time, but figure 2.4 displays the evolution of the share of people from developing countries in eight developed economies that have comparable information. In all but one case (the United Kingdom), there were double-digit increases in the share of migrants from developing countries.⁶⁰ In many European countries, this shift is driven by the increase in migrants from Eastern European countries classed as developing according to their HDI. For example, during the 1960s only 18 percent of developing country immigrants into Germany came from Eastern Europe; 40 years later that ratio was 53 percent.

In developing countries, the picture is more mixed, although data are limited. We can compare the source of migrants today and several decades ago for a few countries, revealing some interesting contrasts (figure 2.5). In Argentina and Brazil, the decline in the share of foreign-born people was driven by a fall in those coming from the poorer countries of Europe, as those countries experienced dramatic post-war growth while much of Latin America

Box 2.3 Migration trends in the former Soviet Union

When the Soviet Union broke up in 1991, 28 million people became international migrants overnight—even if they hadn't moved an inch. This is because statistics define an international migrant as a person who is living outside their country of birth. These people had moved within the Soviet Union before 1991 and were now classified as foreign-born. Without their knowing it, they were now 'statistical migrants'.

At one level, the reclassification makes sense. A Russian in Minsk was living in the country of her birth in 1990; by the end of 1991, she was technically a foreigner. But interpreting the resulting increase in the number of migrants as an increase in international movement, as some authors have done, is mistaken. Hence we have excluded them, together with migrants in the former Czechoslovakia, from the calculation of trends in table 2.1.

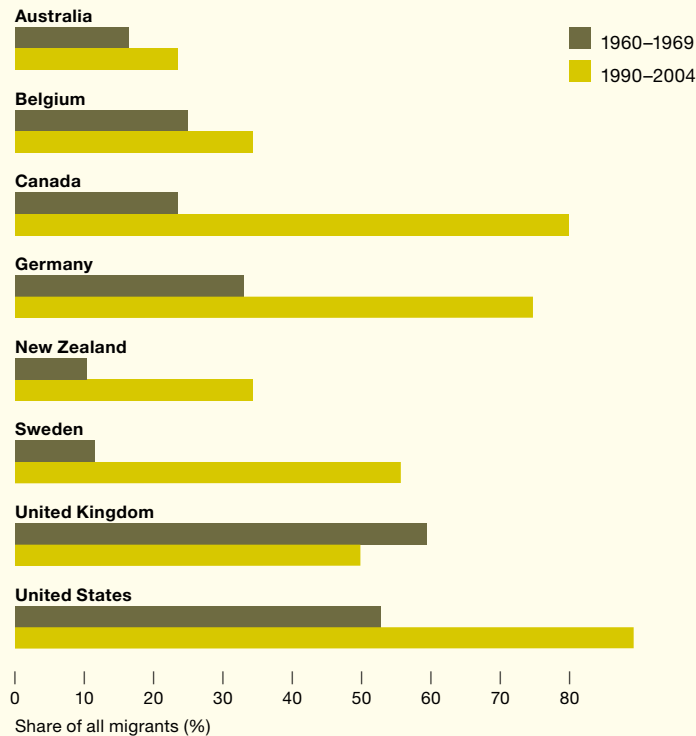
Has human movement increased in the former Soviet Union since 1991? On the one hand, the relaxation of *propiska* controls increased human mobility. On the other, the erection of national boundaries may have reduced the scope for movement. The picture is further complicated by the fact that many movements after 1991 were returns to the region of origin: for example, people of Russian origin returning from central Asia.

Any attempt to understand trends in the former Soviet Union should use comparable territorial entities. One way to do this is to consider inter-republic migration before and after the break-up. In this approach, anyone who moved between two republics that would later become independent nations would be considered an international migrant. Thus, a Latvian in St. Petersburg would be classified as an international migrant both before and after 1991.

In background research for this report, Soviet census data were used to construct such a series. Thus defined, the share of foreign-born people in the republics of the USSR rose slightly from 10 percent in 1959 to 10.6 percent in 1989. After 1990, there were divergent trends across the different states. In the Russian Federation, which became something of a magnet in the region, the migrant stock increased from 7.8 to 9.3 percent of the population. For Ukraine and the three Baltic states, migrant shares declined, as large numbers of foreign-born people left. In all the other states of the former Soviet Union, the absolute number of migrants declined until 2000 and in most cases the migrant share of the population also declined. Thus, while 30.3 million foreign-born people lived in the territory of the Soviet Union at the time of its dissolution, the aggregate number fell to 27.4 million in 2000 and to 26.5 million in 2005, as many in the post-Soviet space chose to return home.

Source: Heleniak (2009), UN (2002), Ziolkik (1998), and Ivakhnyuk (2009).

Figure 2.4 An increasing share of migrants come from developing countries
Share of migrants from developing countries in selected developed countries



Source: HDR team estimates based on UN (2006a).

stagnated. In contrast, the rise in the immigration rate in Costa Rica was driven by large flows of Nicaraguan migrants, while the reduction in Mali reflects significant declines in immigration from Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mauritania.

Many countries have experienced increases in internal migration, as shown in figure 2.6. However, this trend is far from uniform. For the 18 countries for which we have comparable information over time, there is an increasing trend in 11 countries, no clear trend in four, and a decline in two developed countries. The average rate of increase for this set of countries is around 7 percent over a decade. However, our research has also found that the share of recent migrants (defined as those who have moved between regions in the past five years) has not increased in most countries in our sample, indicating a possible stabilization of internal migration patterns.

A levelling off or even a decline in internal migration flows is to be expected in developed and high-HDI countries, where past flows were associated with rapid urbanization that has now abated. But in many developing countries urbanization has not slowed and is expected to continue. In fact, estimates from UNDESA suggest that the urban share of the world's population will nearly double by 2050 and will increase from 40 percent to over 60 percent in Africa. Urbanization is spurred in part by natural population growth in urban areas, alongside migration from rural areas and from abroad. Although it is difficult to determine the precise contributions of these different sources, it is clear that migration is an important factor in many countries.⁶¹

Urbanization can be associated with major challenges to city dwellers and the government authorities responsible for urban planning and service provision. The most visible of these challenges is the 2 billion people—40 percent of urban residents—who are expected to be living in slums by 2030.⁶² As is well known, living conditions are often very poor in the slums, with inadequate access to safe water and sanitation and insecure land tenure. As we discuss in chapters 4 and 5, it is important that urban local authorities be accountable to residents and adequately financed to tackle these challenges, since local planning and programmes can play a critical role in improving matters.

In sum, the period since 1960 has been marked by a growing concentration of migrants in developed countries against a background of aggregate stability in overall migration. How do we explain these patterns? Our research shows that three key factors—trends in income, population and transport costs—tended to increase movement, which simultaneously faced an increasingly significant constraint: growing legal and administrative barriers.

Divergence in incomes across regions, combined with a general increase in incomes around most of the world, is a major part of the explanation of movement patterns. The evolution of income inequalities shows remarkable divergence between most developing and developed regions, even if the East Asia–Pacific and South Asia regions have seen a mild convergence (figure 2.7, panel A).⁶³ China presents an exception to the broad pattern of lack of convergence, with

national per capita income rising from 3 to 14 percent of the developed country average between 1960 and 2007.⁶⁴ Overall, the data indicate that income incentives to move from poor to rich countries have strongly increased.⁶⁵

Attempts to account for this divergence have generated a vast literature, in which differences in labour and capital accumulation, technological change, policies and institutions have all been investigated.⁶⁶ Whatever the ultimate driving forces, one of the key contributing factors has been differing population growth rates. As is well known, between 1960 and 2010 the spatial demographic composition of the world population shifted: of the additional 2.8 billion working-aged people in the world, 9 out of 10 were in developing countries. Because labour became much more abundant in developing countries, wage differentials widened. This meant that moving to developed countries became more attractive and patterns of movement shifted as a result, despite—as we shall see—the raising of high barriers to admission. At the same time, average income levels in the world as a whole were increasing, as shown in panel B of figure 2.7 (even if some developing regions also saw periods of decline). Since poverty is an important constraint on movement, higher average incomes made long-distance movement more feasible. In other words, as incomes rose, poorer countries moved up the ‘migration hump’, broadening the pool of potential migrants to developed countries.

Recent declines in transport and communication costs have also increased movement. The real price of air travel fell by three fifths between 1970 and 2000, while the cost of communications fell massively.⁶⁷ The real cost of a 3-minute telephone call from Australia to the United Kingdom fell from about US\$350 in 1926 to US\$0.65 in 2000—and, with the advent of internet telephony, has now effectively fallen to zero.⁶⁸ Such trends have made it easier than ever before for people to reach and establish themselves in more distant destinations.

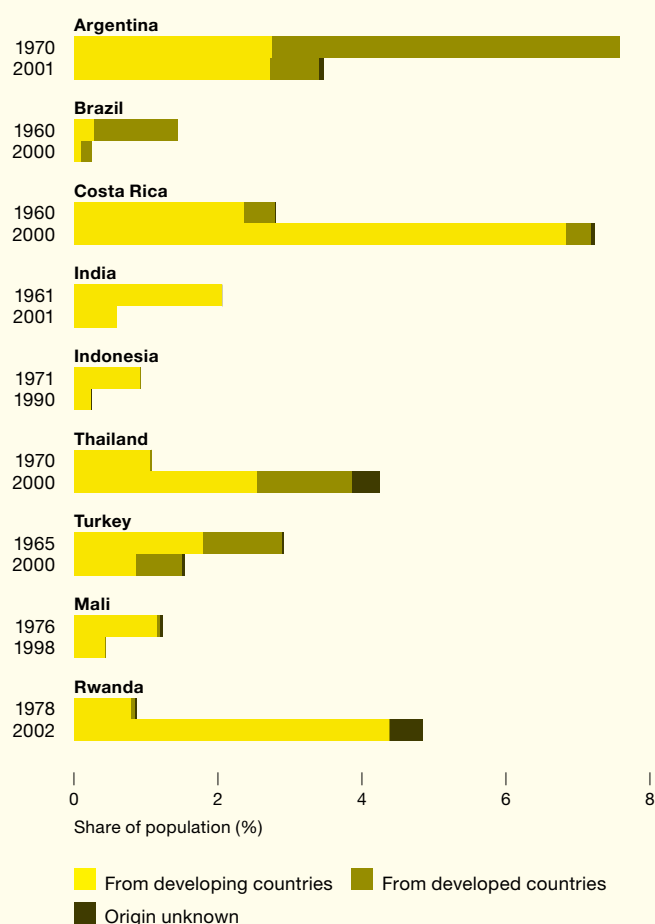
Given these drivers, we would expect to see significant growth in international migration in recent decades. However, this potential has been constrained by increased policy barriers to movement, especially against the entry of low-skilled applicants. We turn now to a more in-depth

examination of the role that these barriers play in shaping and constraining movement today.

2.3 Policies and movement

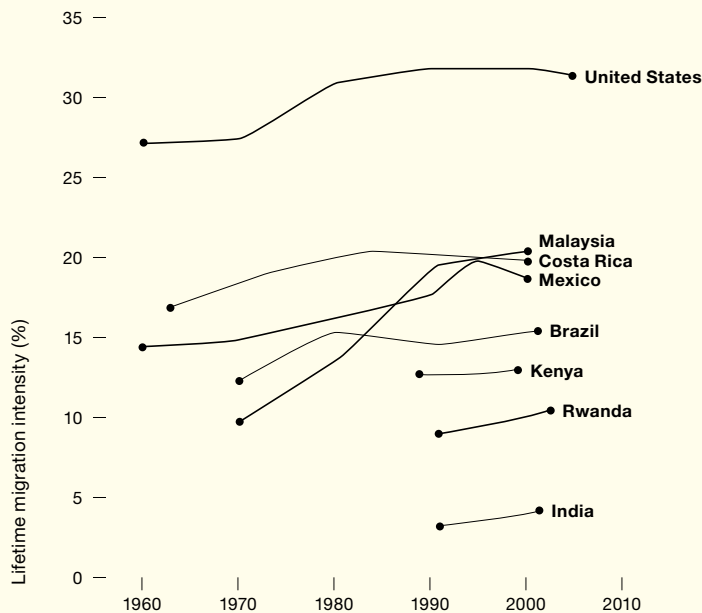
Since the emergence of modern states in the 17th century, the international legal system has been built on the bedrock of two principles: sovereignty and territorial integrity. Within this system, which includes a series of norms and constraints imposed by international law, governments police their country’s borders and enforce their right to restrict entry. This section discusses the different ways in which government policy determines how many people to admit, where these people come from, and what status is accorded to them.

Figure 2.5 Sources and trends of migration into developing countries
Migrants as a share of total population in selected countries, 1960–2000s



Source: HDR team estimates based on Minnesota Population Center (2008) and national census data for indicated years.

Figure 2.6 Internal migration rates have increased only slightly
Trends in lifetime internal migration intensity in selected countries, 1960–2000s



Source: Bell and Muhidin (2009).

Table 2.2 Policy makers say they are trying to maintain existing immigration levels

Views and policies towards immigration by HDI category, 2007

| HDI categories | Government's view on immigration | | | | Policy on immigration | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------|
| | Too high | Satisfactory | Too low | Total | Lower levels | Maintain levels | Raise levels | No intervention | Total |
| VERY HIGH HDI | | | | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 7 | 26 | 6 | 39 | 7 | 24 | 7 | 1 | 39 |
| Percent (%) | 18 | 67 | 15 | 100 | 18 | 62 | 18 | 3 | 100 |
| HIGH HDI | | | | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 6 | 40 | 1 | 47 | 9 | 37 | 1 | 0 | 47 |
| Percent (%) | 13 | 85 | 2 | 100 | 19 | 79 | 2 | 0 | 100 |
| MEDIUM HDI | | | | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 17 | 62 | 4 | 83 | 18 | 47 | 3 | 15 | 83 |
| Percent (%) | 20 | 75 | 5 | 100 | 22 | 57 | 4 | 18 | 100 |
| LOW HDI | | | | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 4 | 22 | 0 | 26 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 16 | 26 |
| Percent (%) | 15 | 85 | 0 | 100 | 15 | 23 | 0 | 62 | 100 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 34 | 150 | 11 | 195 | 38 | 114 | 11 | 32 | 195 |
| Percent (%) | 17 | 77 | 6 | 100 | 19 | 58 | 6 | 16 | 100 |

Source: UN (2008b).

While there is a wealth of qualitative country-level analysis of policies—especially for developed countries—severe data limitations impede comparisons of policy across countries. Measurement is intrinsically difficult because the rules take many forms and are enforced in different ways and to varying degrees, with results that are generally not amenable to quantification. In contrast to most aspects of economic policy, for example, national statistical bureaux do not measure the effects of migration policy in ways that are consistent across countries. Most of the measures used in this report have been developed by international research and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), not by national public-sector agencies.

The measure that covers the largest number of countries and the longest time span comes from a periodic survey of policy makers conducted by UNDESA, in which governments report their views and responses to migration. The survey covers 195 countries and reflects the views of policy makers regarding the level of immigration and whether their policy is to lower, maintain or raise future levels. While it is a self-assessment, and official intentions rather than practice are indicated, some interesting patterns emerge (table 2.2). In 2007, some 78 percent of respondent governments viewed current immigration levels as satisfactory, while 17 percent felt them to be too high and 5 percent too low. A similar picture emerges when governments are asked to describe their policies. On both questions, developed country governments appear to be more restrictive than those of developing countries.

These patterns indicate a significant gap between the policies that the public appears to favour in most countries—namely greater restrictions on immigration—and actual policies, which in fact allow for significant amounts of immigration.⁶⁹ While explanations for this gap are complex, several factors likely come into play.

The first is that opposition to immigration is not as monolithic as first appears, and voters often have mixed views. As we show below, in many countries, concerns about adverse employment or fiscal effects are mixed with the recognition that tolerance of others and ethnic diversity are positive values. Second, organized groups such as labour unions, employer organizations and NGOs can have a significant effect on the formulation

of public policies; in many cases these groups do not advocate for tight restrictions to immigration. Third, many governments implicitly tolerate irregular migration, suggesting that policy makers are aware of the high economic and social costs of a crackdown. For example, in the United States employers are not required to verify the authenticity of immigration documents, but must deduct federal payroll taxes from migrants' pay: through this mechanism, illegal immigrant workers provide around US\$7 billion annually to the US Treasury.⁷⁰

For the purposes of this report, we sought to address existing gaps in knowledge by working with national migration experts and the IOM to conduct an assessment of migration policies in 28 countries.⁷¹ The key value added of this exercise lies in the coverage of developing countries (half the sample), which have typically been excluded from such assessments in the past, and the rich information we collected on aspects such as admissions regimes, treatment and entitlements, and enforcement.

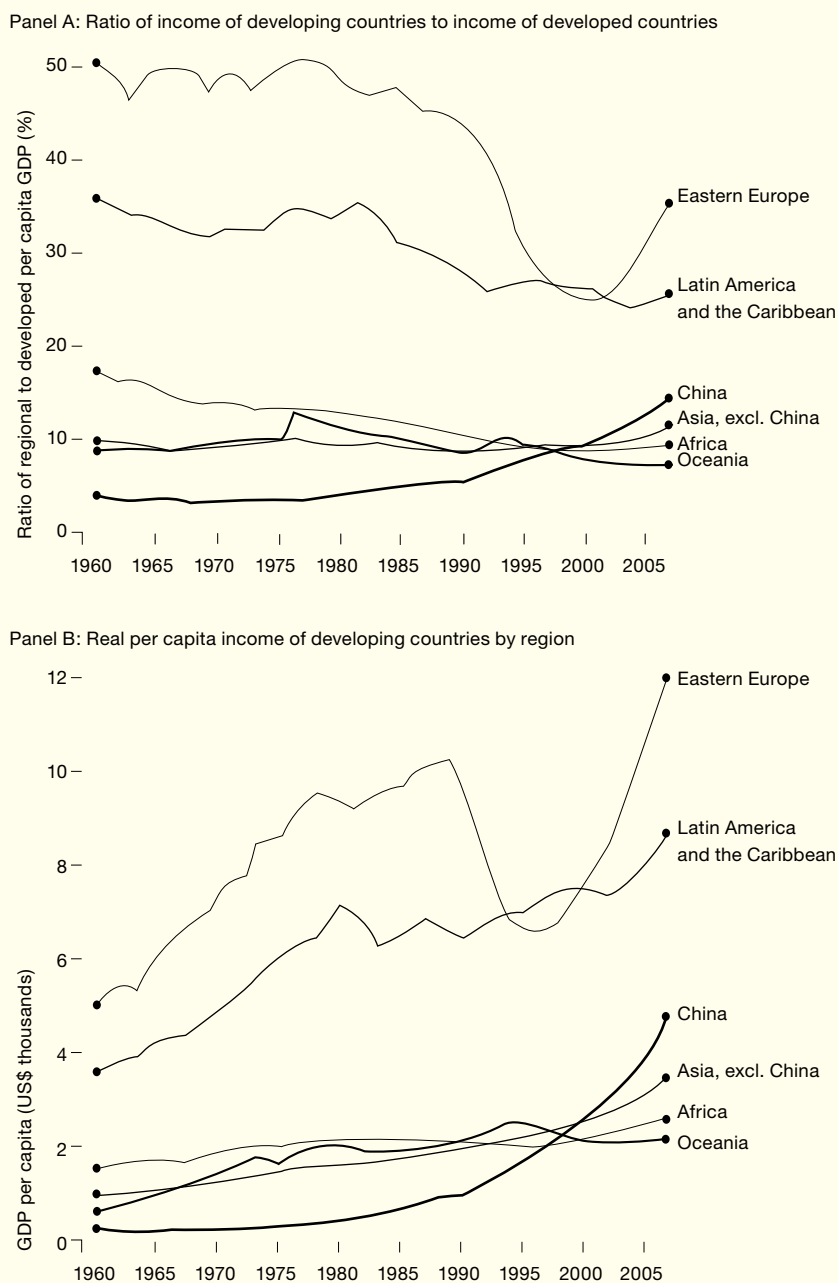
Comparing the migration policy regimes of developed and developing countries reveals striking differences as well as similarities. Some of the restrictions commonly noted (and criticized) in developed countries are also present in many developing countries (figure 2.8). The regimes in both groups of countries are biased in favour of high-skilled workers: 92 percent of developing and all of developed countries in our sample were open to temporary skilled migrants; for permanent skilled migration, the corresponding figures were 62 and 93 percent. In our country sample, 38 percent of developing and half of developed countries were closed to permanent migration of unskilled workers.⁷²

Temporary regimes have long been used and most countries provide such permits. These programmes stipulate rules for the time-bound admission, stay and employment of foreign workers. The H1B visas of the United States, for instance, grant temporary admission to high-skilled workers for up to six years, while H2B visas are available for low-skilled seasonal workers for up to three. Similarly, Singapore's immigration policy has Employment Passes—for skilled professionals—and a Work Permit or R-Pass for unskilled or semi-skilled workers.⁷³ Among the countries in our policy assessment,

developing countries were much more likely to have temporary regimes for low-skilled workers.

Rules concerning changes in visa status and family reunion differ widely across countries.⁷⁴ Some temporary schemes offer a path to

Figure 2.7 Global income gaps have widened
Trends in real per capita GDP, 1960–2007



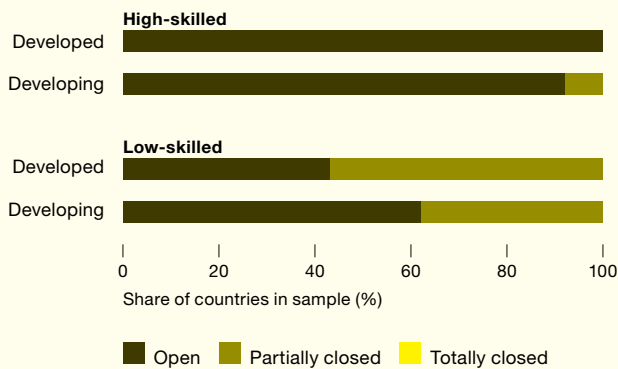
Source: HDR team estimates based on World Bank (2009b) and Heston, Summers, and Aten (2006).

Figure 2.8 Welcome the high-skilled, rotate the low-skilled
Openness to legal immigration in developed versus developing countries, 2009

Panel A: Permanent immigration



Panel B: Temporary immigration



Source: Klugman and Pereira (2009).

long-term or even permanent residence and allow foreign workers to bring in their dependents. An example is the US's H2B visas, although their annual number is capped at a low level and the dependents are not entitled to work. Other governments explicitly prohibit status change and family reunion, or severely restrict them.

The temporary worker or *kafala* (literally meaning 'guaranteeing and taking care of' in Arabic) programmes of the GCC countries are a special case.⁷⁵ Under these programmes, foreign migrant workers receive an entry visa and residence permit only if a citizen of the host country sponsors them. The *khafeel*, or sponsor-employer, is responsible financially and legally for the worker, signing a document from the Labour Ministry to that effect.⁷⁶ If the worker is found to have breached the contract, they have to leave the country immediately at their own expense.

Kafala programmes are restrictive on several counts, including family reunification. Human rights abuses—including non-payment of wages and sexual exploitation of domestic workers—are well documented, especially among the increasing share of migrants originating in the Indian subcontinent.⁷⁷

In recent years, some countries in the region have taken moderate steps in the direction of reforming their immigration regimes. Saudi Arabia recently passed a series of regulations facilitating the transfer of workers employed by companies providing services (e.g. maintenance) to government departments.⁷⁸ Other initiatives have also been implemented to monitor the living and working conditions of foreign migrants. In the United Arab Emirates, the Ministry of Labour has introduced a hotline to receive complaints from the general public. In 2007, the authorities inspected 122,000 establishments, resulting in penalties for almost 9,000 violations of workers' rights and of legislation on working conditions. However, more ambitious proposals for reform, such as Bahrain's proposal in early 2009 to abolish the *kafala* system, have floundered, reportedly in the face of intense political opposition by business interests.⁷⁹

In some developed countries—including Australia, Canada and New Zealand—the preference for high-skilled workers is implemented through a points system. The formulae take into account such characteristics as education, occupation, language proficiency and age. This confers some objectivity to what otherwise might seem an arbitrary selection process, although other countries attract large numbers of graduates without a point-based system.⁸⁰

Points systems are uncommon in developing countries. Formal restrictions on entry include requirements such as a previous job offer and, in some cases, quotas. One aspect on which developing countries appear to be relatively restrictive is family reunification. About half the developing countries in our sample did not allow the family members of temporary immigrants to come and work—as opposed to one third of developed countries.

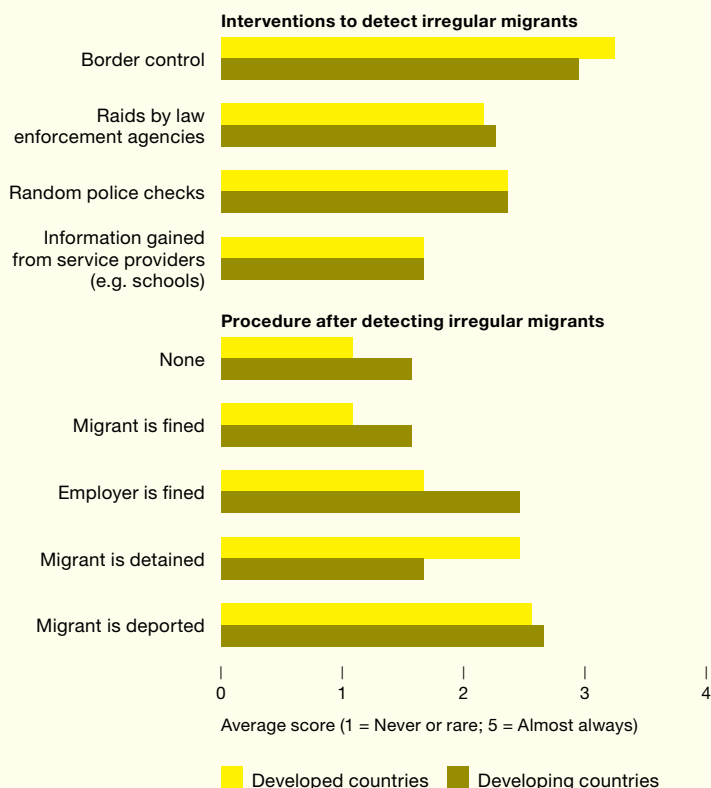
Family reunification and marriage migration represent a significant share of inflows into virtually all OECD countries. Indeed, some countries are dominated by flows linked to family ties, as in

France and the United States, where these account for 60 and 70 percent of annual flows respectively. While it is common to distinguish between family reunification and labour migration, it is important to note that family migrants often either have or can acquire authorization to work.

Of course the stated policy may differ from what happens in practice. Significant variations exist in migration law enforcement across countries (figure 2.9). In the United States, research has found that border enforcement varies over the economic cycle, increasing during recessions and easing during expansions.⁸¹ In South Africa, deportations more than doubled between 2002 and 2006 without a change in legislation, as the police force became more actively involved in enforcement.⁸² Our policy assessment suggested that while developing countries were somewhat less likely to enforce border controls and less likely to detain violators of immigration laws, other aspects of enforcement including raids by law enforcement agencies and random checks, as well as fines, were at least as frequent as in developed countries. Lower institutional capacity may explain part of this variation. Even after detection, developing countries are reportedly more likely to do nothing or simply to impose fines on irregular migrants. In some countries, courts weigh family unity concerns and the strength of an immigrant's ties to a country in deportation procedures.⁸³ Further discussion of the role of enforcement in immigration policies is provided in chapter 5.

One question that emerges from these rules on entry and treatment, which can be investigated using cross-country data, is whether there is a 'numbers versus rights' trade-off. It is possible that countries will open their borders to a larger number of immigrants only if access to some basic rights is limited. This could arise if, for example, immigration is seen to become too costly, so that neither voters nor policy makers will support it.⁸⁴ Data on the treatment of immigrants allow us to empirically examine this question. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has created an accessibility index for 61 countries (34 developed, 27 developing) that summarizes official policy in terms of ease of hiring, licensing requirements, ease of family reunification and official integration programmes for migrants. The Migrant Integration

Figure 2.9 Enforcement practices vary
Interventions and procedures regarding irregular migrants, 2009



Source: Klugman and Pereira (2009).

Policy Index (MIPEX) measures policies to integrate migrants in six policy areas (long-term residence, family reunion, citizenship, political participation, anti-discrimination measures and labour market access).

Our analysis suggests that there is no systematic relation between various measures of rights and migrant numbers (figure 2.10). Comparison with the EIU index (panel A), which has a broader sample of developed and developing countries, reflects essentially no correlation between the number of migrants and their access to basic rights, suggesting that the various regimes governing such access are compatible with both high and low numbers of migrants. Restricting the analysis to the smaller sample of countries covered by the MIPEX allows us to take advantage of OECD data, which distinguish the share of immigrants with low levels of formal education from developing countries. Again, we find essentially no correlation (panel B). For example,

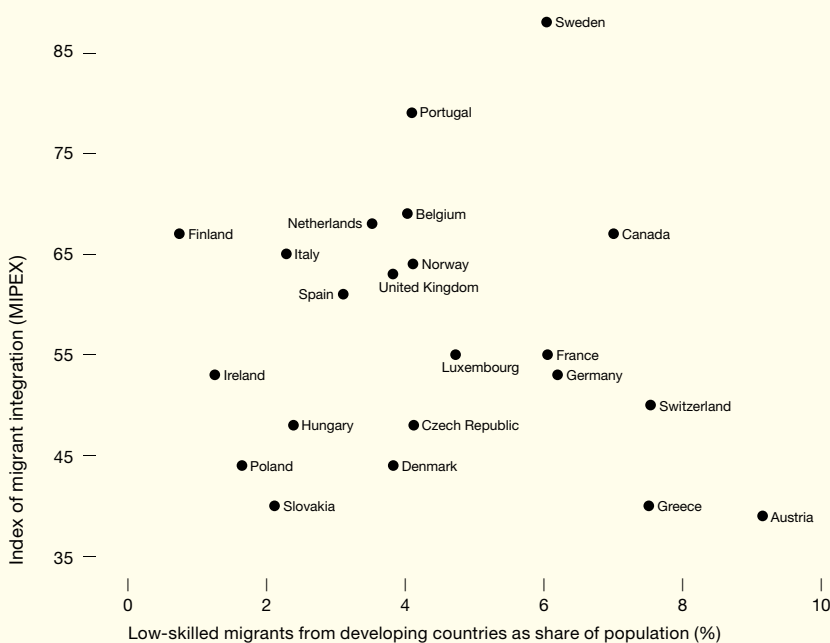
Figure 2.10 Cross-country evidence shows little support for the 'numbers versus rights' hypothesis

Correlations between access and treatment

Panel A: Foreign-born migrants and EIU accessibility score, 2008



Panel B: Low-skilled foreign-born migrants in OECD and MIPEX aggregate score



Source: UN (2009d), The Economist Intelligence Unit (2008), OECD (2009a) and Migration Policy Group and British Council (2007).

countries like Poland and Ireland have very low shares of low-skilled workers from developing countries, yet score poorly in the MIPEX. We have also found that countries that have seen increases in their migrant shares over time did not curtail the rights and entitlements provided to immigrants.⁸⁵ For example, between 1980 and 2005 the share of immigrants in Spain increased from 2 to 11 percent; during the same period the Spanish government extended the provision of emergency and non-emergency health care to irregular migrants.⁸⁶

Similar results were found in our policy assessment, which allowed us to distinguish between different components of migration policy. In fact, if there was any indication of a correlation, it was often the opposite of that proposed by the numbers versus rights hypothesis. What the data reveal is that, in general, across many measures, developing countries have lower median shares of foreign-born workers and lower protection of migrant rights. Developed countries, which have more migrants, also tend to have rules that provide for better treatment of migrants. For example, India has the lowest score on provision of entitlements and services to international migrants in our assessment, but has an immigrant share of less than 1 percent of the population; Portugal has the highest score while having an immigrant share of 7 percent.

Policies towards migration are not determined solely at the national level. Supra-national agreements, which can be bilateral or regional in nature, can have significant effects on migration flows. Regional agreements have been established under various political unions, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union and the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR), while a good example of a bilateral agreement is that of the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand. These agreements have had significant effects on migration flows between signatory countries. They are most likely to allow freedom of movement when participating member states have similar economic conditions and when there are strong political or other motivations for socio-economic integration. For the countries in our policy assessment, about half of the special mobility agreements of developed countries were with other developed

Box 2.4 Global governance of mobility

Beyond a well-established convention on refugees, international mobility lacks a binding multilateral regime. The ILO has long had conventions on the rights of migrant workers, but they are heavily undersubscribed (chapter 5). The IOM has expanded beyond its historic role in the post-war repatriation of refugees towards a more general mission to improve migration management and has increased its membership, but it is outside the UN system and remains largely oriented towards service provision to member states on a project basis. Under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), some 100 member states have made commitments to the temporary admission of foreign nationals who provide services, but these mostly involve business visitor visas for up to 90 days and fixed-term intra-company transfers involving high-skilled professionals.

The lack of multilateral cooperation on migration has been attributed to several related factors. In contrast to trade negotiations, where countries negotiate over the reciprocal reduction of barriers to each other's exports, developing countries are in a weaker bargaining position on the migration front. Most migrants from developed countries go to other developed countries, so there is little pressure from developed country governments to open channels for entering developing countries. This asymmetry, as well as the political sensitivity of the migration issue in most developed destination countries, has led to a lack of leadership from these states in international

negotiations. International discussions have also been characterized by lack of cooperation among sending countries. These obstacles have so far defied the best efforts of international organizations and a handful of governments to promote cooperation and binding international commitments.

Further liberalization is currently being canvassed in the Doha Round of trade negotiations, which began in 2000 but have long since stalled. Existing commitments under GATS are limited, referring mainly to high-skilled workers. GATS also excludes "measures affecting natural persons seeking access to the employment market of another country [or] measures regarding citizenship, residence, or employment on a permanent basis". Nor does GATS apply to permanent migration: most WTO members limit service providers to less than five years in their country.

During the Doha Round it became clear that developing countries want to liberalize the movement of natural persons, whereas industrial countries prefer trade in services. It could be argued that the importance of GATS to labour migration does not lie in the relatively small amount of additional mobility facilitated thus far, but rather in the creation of an institutional framework for future negotiations. However, better progress might be made if the WTO took a more inclusive and people-centred approach, which allowed greater participation by other stakeholders and linked more closely with existing legal regimes for the protection of human rights.

Source: Castles and Miller (1993), Neumayer (2006), Leal-Arcas (2007), Charnovitz (2003), p. 243, Mattoo and Olarreaga (2004), Matsushita, Schoenbaum, and Mavroidis (2006), Solomon (2009), and Opekin (2009).

countries, while more than two thirds of those of developing countries were with other developing countries. There are examples where mobility is granted only to some workers, such as the higher skilled. For example, the migration system of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) covers only nationals of Canada, Mexico and the United States who have a B.A. degree and a job offer in another member country. Box 2.4 briefly overviews the multilateral arrangements related to human movement.

However, there can be large differences between the letter of these agreements and actual practice, particularly in countries where the rule of law is weak. For example, despite the provisions for comprehensive rights of entry, residence and establishment provided for in the ECOWAS agreement signed in 1975 (which were to be implemented in three phases over a 15-year period), only the first phase of the protocol—elimination of the need for visas for stays up to 90 days—has been achieved. The reasons

for slow implementation range from inconsistency between the protocol and national laws, regulations and practices to border disputes and full-scale wars which have often led to the expulsion of foreign citizens.⁸⁷

We also find restrictions on human movement within nations as well as on exit. One source of data on these restrictions is the NGO Freedom House, which has collected information on formal and informal restrictions on foreign and internal travel as a component of its assessment of the state of freedom in the world.⁸⁸ The results are striking, particularly given that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees the right to move freely within one's country and to exit and return to one's own country: over a third of countries in the world impose significant restrictions on these freedoms (table 2.3).

Formal restrictions on internal movement are present in many countries with a legacy of central planning, including Belarus, China, Mongolia,

Table 2.3 Over a third of countries significantly restrict the right to move
Restrictions on internal movement and emigration by HDI category

| HDI categories | Restrictions on mobility, 2008 | | | | | Total |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----|----|----|-------------------|-------|
| | Most restrictive | 1 | 2 | 3 | Least restrictive | |
| VERY HIGH HDI | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 0 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 38 |
| Percent (%) | 0 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 81 | 100 |
| HIGH HDI | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 2 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 27 | 47 |
| Percent (%) | 4 | 9 | 9 | 21 | 57 | 100 |
| MEDIUM HDI | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 2 | 13 | 24 | 27 | 16 | 82 |
| Percent (%) | 2 | 16 | 29 | 33 | 20 | 100 |
| LOW HDI | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 2 | 5 | 13 | 5 | 0 | 25 |
| Percent (%) | 8 | 20 | 52 | 20 | 0 | 100 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | |
| No. of Countries | 6 | 25 | 42 | 45 | 74 | 192 |
| Percent (%) | 3 | 13 | 22 | 23 | 39 | 100 |

Source: Freedom House (2009).

the Russian Federation and Viet Nam.⁸⁹ These restrictions are costly, time-consuming and cumbersome to maintain, as are informal barriers, albeit to a lesser extent. Although many people in these countries are able to travel without the proper documentation, they later find that they cannot access services and jobs without them. In several countries, corruption is a key impediment to internal movement. Checkpoints on local roads, where bribes are levied, are commonplace in parts of sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, in Côte d'Ivoire, people living in northern areas controlled by rebel groups were routinely harassed and forced to pay US\$40–60 when attempting to travel south to government-controlled areas.⁹⁰ Examples of corruption were also reported from Myanmar, the Russian Federation and Viet Nam, where bribes were required to process applications for changes in place of residence. In several South Asian countries, migrants living in urban slums face constant threats of clearance, eviction and rent-seeking from government officials.⁹¹ Internal movement is also impeded by regulations and administrative procedures that

exclude migrants from access to the public services and legal rights accorded to local people (chapter 3).

Countries can limit exit by nationals from their territory by several means, ranging from formal prohibitions to practical barriers created by fees and administrative requirements. Exorbitant passport fees can make it all but impossible for a poor person to leave the country through regular channels: a recent study found that 14 countries had passport fees that exceeded 10 percent of annual per capita income.⁹² In many countries, a labyrinth of procedures and regulations, often exacerbated by corruption, causes excessive delays and compounds the costs of leaving. For example, Indonesian emigrants have to visit numerous government offices in order to acquire the necessary paperwork to leave. Not surprisingly, these exit restrictions are negatively correlated with emigration rates.⁹³

A handful of countries have formal restrictions on exit. These are strictly enforced in Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and are in place in China, Eritrea, Iran, Myanmar, and Uzbekistan.⁹⁴ Eritrea, for example, requires exit visas for citizens and foreign nationals and has reportedly denied the exit visas of children whose parents (living abroad) had not paid the 2 percent tax on foreign income.⁹⁵ Twenty countries restrict the exit of women—including Myanmar, Saudi Arabia and Swaziland—while eight impose age-specific restrictions related to the travel of citizens of military service age.⁹⁶

2.4 Looking ahead: the crisis and beyond

The future of the global economy is a central concern for policy makers. Like everyone else, we hold no crystal ball, but we can examine the impacts and implications of the current crisis as the basis for identifying probable trends for the coming decades. Demographic trends, in particular, can be expected to continue to play a significant role in shaping the pressures for movement between regions, as we have seen over the past half-century. But new phenomena such as climate change are also likely to come into play, with effects that are much more difficult to predict.

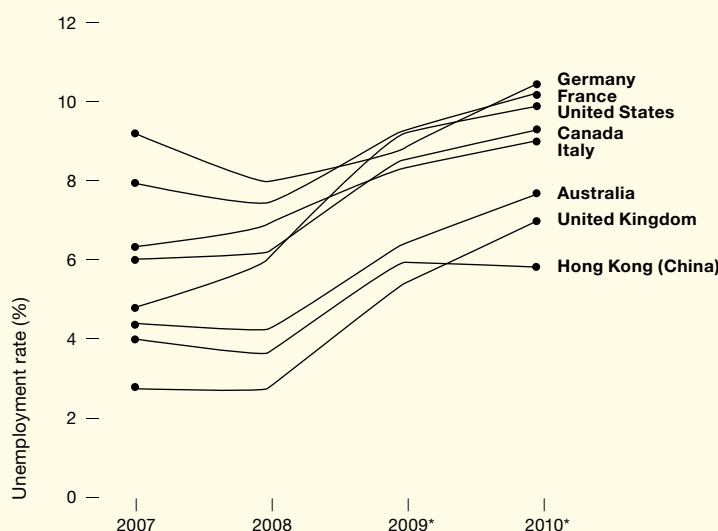
2.4.1 The economic crisis and the prospects for recovery

Many people are now suffering the consequences of the worst economic recession in post-war history. At the time of writing, world GDP was expected to fall by approximately 1 percent in 2009, marking the first contraction of global output in 60 years.⁹⁷ This year's contraction in developed countries is much larger, approaching 4 percent. However, initial optimism that emerging economies might be able to 'decouple' from the financial crisis has been dampened by mounting evidence that they too are, or will be, hard hit. Asian countries have suffered from collapsing export demand, while increases in the cost of external credit have adversely affected Central and Eastern Europe. African countries are battling with collapsing commodity prices, the drying up of capital liquidity, a sharp decline in remittances and uncertainty concerning future flows of development aid. Some of the largest emerging economies, such as Brazil and the Russian Federation, will dip into negative growth, while others, notably China and India, will see severe slowdowns.⁹⁸

Typical recessions do not have a large impact on long-run economic trends.⁹⁹ However, it is now clear that this is anything but a typical recession. As such it is likely to have long-lasting and maybe even permanent effects on incomes and employment opportunities, which are likely to be experienced unequally by developing and developed countries.¹⁰⁰ For example, the recession set off by the Federal Reserve's increase of interest rates in 1980 lasted just 3 years in the United States, but the ensuing debt crisis led to a period of stagnation that became known as the 'lost decade' in Africa and Latin America, as the terms of trade of countries in these regions deteriorated by 25 and 37 percent respectively. As commodity prices have fallen significantly from the peak levels of 2008, a similar scenario is probable this time round.

The financial crisis has quickly turned into a jobs crisis (figure 2.11). The OECD unemployment rate is expected to hit 8.4 percent in 2009.¹⁰¹ That rate has already been exceeded in the United States, which by May 2009 had lost nearly six million jobs since December 2007, with the total number of jobless rising to 14.5 million.¹⁰² In Spain, the unemployment rate climbed as high as 15 percent by April 2009 and

Figure 2.11 Unemployment is increasing in key migrant destinations
Unemployment rates in selected destinations, 2007–2010

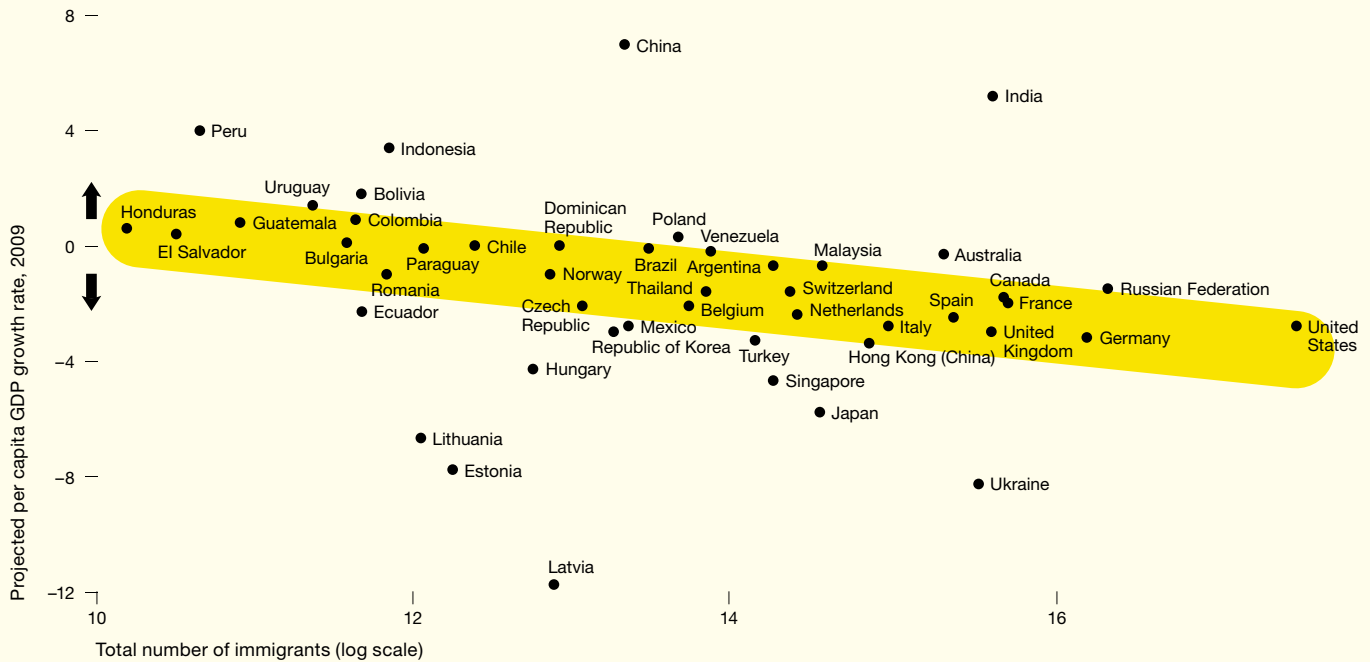


* Forecasts
Source: Consensus Economics (2009a,b).

topped 28 percent among migrants.¹⁰³ The places hit hardest by the crisis thus far are those where most migrants live—the more developed economies. The negative correlation between numbers of immigrants and economic growth suggests that migrants are likely to be badly affected not only in OECD countries but also in the Gulf, East Asia and South Africa (figure 2.12).¹⁰⁴

A jobs crisis is generally bad news for migrants. Just as economies tend to call on people from abroad when they face labour shortages, so they tend to lay off migrants first during times of recession. This is partly because, on average, migrants have a profile typical of workers who are most vulnerable to recessions—that is, they are younger, have less formal education and less work experience, tend to work as temporary labourers and are concentrated in cyclical sectors.¹⁰⁵ Even controlling for education and gender, labour force analysis in Germany and the United Kingdom found that migrants are much more likely to lose their job during a downturn than non-migrants.¹⁰⁶ Using quarterly GDP and unemployment data from 14 European countries between 1998 and 2008, we also found that, in countries that experienced recessions,

Figure 2.12 Migrants are in places hardest hit by the recession
Immigrants' location and projected GDP growth rates, 2009



Source: HDR team estimates based on Consensus Economics (2009a,b,c,d) and UN (2009d).

the unemployment rate of migrants tended to increase faster than that of other groups. Within the OECD, migrants were concentrated in highly cyclical sectors that have suffered the largest job losses—including manufacturing, construction, finance, real estate, hotels and restaurants—sectors that employ more than 40 percent of immigrants in almost every high-income OECD country.¹⁰⁷ The decline in remittances from migrants is likely to have adverse effects on family members in countries of origin, as we discuss in greater detail in chapter 4.

Several factors come into play in determining how the crisis affects—and will affect—the movement of people. They include immediate prospects at home and abroad, the perceived risks of migrating, staying or returning, and the increased barriers that are likely to come into place. Several major destination countries have introduced incentives to return (bonuses, tickets, lump sum social security benefits) and increased restrictions on entry and stay. Some governments are discouraging foreign recruitment and

reducing the number of visa slots, especially for low-skilled workers but also for skilled workers. In some cases these measures are seen as a short-term response to circumstances and have involved marginal adjustments rather than outright bans (e.g. Australia plans to reduce its annual intake of skilled migrants by 14 percent).¹⁰⁸ But there is also a populist tone to many of the announcements and provisions. For example, the United States economic stimulus package restricts H1B hires among companies that receive funds from the Troubled Asset Relief Program;¹⁰⁹ the Republic of Korea has stopped issuing new visas through its Employment Permit System; and Malaysia has revoked more than 55,000 visas for Bangladeshis in order to boost job prospects for locals.¹¹⁰

There is some evidence of a decline of flows into developed countries during 2008, as the crisis was building. In the United Kingdom, applications for National Insurance cards from foreign-born people fell by 25 percent.¹¹¹ Data from surveys carried out by the US Census

Bureau show a 25 percent decline in the flow of Mexican migrants to the United States in the year ending in August 2008.¹¹² These trends can be expected to continue in 2009 and 2010, as the full effect of the crisis plays out in rising domestic unemployment. There are reasons to be sceptical, however, that major return flows will emerge. As the experience of European guest-worker programmes in the 1970s demonstrates, the size of return flows are affected by the prospects of re-entry to the host country, the generosity of the host country's welfare system, the needs of family members and conditions back home—all of which tend to encourage migrants to stay put and ride out the recession.

Whether this crisis will have major structural effects on migration patterns is not yet clear. Evidence from previous recessions shows that the outcomes have varied. A historical review of several countries—Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom—showed that, between 1850 and 1920, declines in domestic wages led to tighter restrictions on immigration.¹¹³ Several scholars have argued that the 1973 oil crisis, which heralded a prolonged period of economic stagnation, structural unemployment and lower demand for unskilled workers in Europe, affected migration patterns as a wealthier Middle East emerged as the new destination hub.¹¹⁴ During the 1980s, the collapse of Mexican import substitution set in motion an era of mass migration to the United States that was unintentionally accelerated by the 1986 United States immigration reform.¹¹⁵ In contrast, there is little evidence that the East Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s had a lasting impact on international migration flows.¹¹⁶

At this stage it is impossible to predict the type and magnitude of the structural changes that will emerge from the current crisis with any confidence. Some commentators have argued that the origin of the crisis and its fierce concentration in certain sectors in developed countries may strengthen the position of developing countries, particularly in Asia, even leading to a radically different configuration of the global economy.¹¹⁷ However, there are also reasons for expecting a revival of pre-crisis economic and structural trends once growth resumes. It is certainly true that deeper long-term processes, such

as the demographic trends, will persist regardless of the direction taken by the recession.

2.4.2 Demographic trends

Current forecasts are that the world's population will grow by a third over the next four decades. Virtually all of this growth will be in developing countries. In one in five countries—including Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation—populations are expected to shrink; whereas one in six countries—all of them developing and all but three of them in Africa—will more than double their populations within the next 40 years. Were it not for migration, the population of developed countries would peak in 2020 and fall by 7 percent in the following three decades. The trend evident over the past half century—the fall in the share of people living in Europe and the increase in Africa—is likely to continue.¹¹⁸

Aging of populations is a widespread phenomenon. By 2050, the world as a whole and every continent except Africa are projected to have more elderly people (at least 60 years of age) than children (below 15). This is a natural consequence of the decline in death rates and the somewhat slower decline in birth rates that has occurred in most developing countries, a well-known phenomenon known as the 'demographic transition'. By 2050, the average age in developing countries will be 38 years, compared to 45 years in developed countries. Even this seven-year difference will have marked effects. The global working-age population is expected to increase by 1.1 billion by 2050, whereas the working-age population in developed countries, even assuming a continuation of current migration flows, will decline slightly. Over the next 15 years, new entrants to the labour force in developing countries will exceed the total number of working-age people currently living in developed countries (figure 2.13). As in the past, these trends will put pressure on wages and increase the incentives for moving among potential employees in poor countries—and for seeking out workers from abroad among employers in rich countries.

This process affects the dependency ratio—that is, the ratio of elderly and young to the working-age population (table 2.4). For every 100 working-age people in developed countries, there are currently 49 who are not of working

Current forecasts are that the world's population will grow by a third over the next four decades

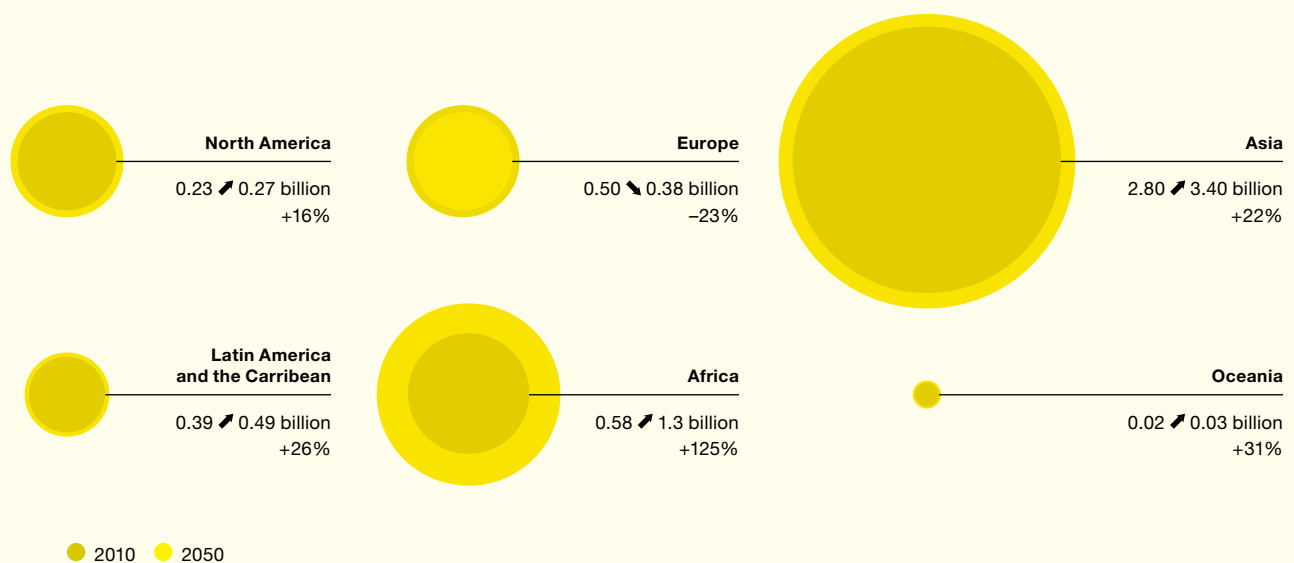
age, roughly half of whom are children or elderly. In contrast, in developing countries, the ratio is higher, at 53, but three quarters of the dependents are children. Over the next 40 years, as the effect of lower birth rates is felt and the proportion of children falls as they reach working age, the dependency ratio will remain roughly stable in developing countries, reaching just 55 by 2050. However, the proportion of elderly will rise markedly in developed countries, so that there will then be 71 non-working-age people for every 100 of working age, a significantly higher fraction than today. These dependency ratios would increase even more rapidly without the moderate levels of immigration included in these scenarios: if developed countries were to become completely closed to new immigration, the ratio would rise to 78 by 2050.

As is well known, this scenario makes it much more difficult for developed countries to pay for the care of their children and old people. Publicly funded education and health systems are paid with taxes levied on the working population, so that as the share of potential taxpayers

shrinks it becomes more difficult to maintain expenditure levels.

These demographic trends argue in favour of relaxing the barriers to the entry of migrants. However, we do not suggest that migration is the only possible solution to these challenges. Greater labour scarcity can lead to a shift in specialization towards high-technology and capital-intensive industries, and technological innovations are possible for services that were traditionally labour-intensive, such as care of the old. The sustainability of pensions and health care systems can also be addressed, at least in part, by increases in the retirement age and in social security contributions.¹¹⁹ Growing dependency ratios will occur sooner or later in all countries undergoing demographic transitions—and migrants themselves grow old. Nevertheless, the growing labour abundance of developing countries suggests that we are entering a period when increased migration to developed countries will benefit not only migrants and their families but will also be increasingly advantageous for the populations of destination countries.

Figure 2.13 Working-age population will increase in developing regions
Projections of working-age population by region, 2010–2050



Source: HDR team calculations based on UN(2009e).

2.4.3 Environmental factors

The environment can be a key driver of human movement. From nomadic pastoralists, who follow the favourable grazing conditions that arise after rain, to the people displaced by natural disasters such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina, environmental conditions have been intimately linked to movements of people and communities throughout human history. Some are now expecting that the continuing warming of the earth will generate massive population shifts.

Climate change is projected to increase environmental stress in already marginal lands and to raise the frequency of natural hazards. Continued greenhouse gas emissions are likely to be associated with changes in rainfall patterns, desertification, more frequent storms and rises in sea level, all of which have implications for human movement.¹²⁰ Changing rainfall patterns, for example, will affect the availability of water and hence the production of food, possibly increasing food prices and the risk of famine.

Existing estimates indicate that several developing areas will be strongly affected by climate change, although the range of estimates is still very wide and predictions are subject to considerable uncertainty. At one extreme, by 2020 it is expected that the yields from rainfed agriculture in Southern Africa could be halved by drought.¹²¹ Over the medium term, as glacial water banks run down, river flows are expected to diminish, severely affecting irrigated agriculture, especially around major massifs such as the Himalayas.

Rises in sea level most directly affect people in coastal areas. One scenario suggests that 145 million people are presently at risk from a rise of one meter, three quarters of whom live in East and South Asia.¹²² In some cases, rises will imply the relocation of entire communities. The government of the Maldives, for example, is considering buying land in other countries as a safe haven, given the probability that their archipelago will become submerged.¹²³

Some estimates of the numbers of people who will be forced to move as a result of climate change have been presented, ranging from 200 million to 1 billion.¹²⁴ Regrettably, there is little hard science backing these numbers. For the most part, they represent the number of people

Table 2.4

Dependency ratios to rise in developed countries and remain steady in developing countries

Dependency ratio forecasts of developed versus developing countries, 2010–2050

| Year | Developed countries | | Developing countries | |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Baseline scenario | No Migration scenario | Baseline scenario | No Migration scenario |
| 2010 | 49 | 50 | 53 | 53 |
| 2020 | 55 | 56 | 52 | 52 |
| 2030 | 62 | 65 | 52 | 52 |
| 2040 | 68 | 74 | 53 | 53 |
| 2050 | 71 | 78 | 55 | 54 |

Source: UN (2009e).

exposed to the risk of major climatic events and do not take into account the adaptation measures that individuals, communities and governments may undertake.¹²⁵ It is thus difficult to know whether such inevitably crude estimates facilitate or obstruct reasoned public debate.

The effect of climate change on human settlement depends partly on how change comes about—as discrete events or a continuous process. Discrete events often come suddenly and dramatically, forcing people to move quickly to more secure places. Continuous processes, on the other hand, are associated with slow-onset changes like sea level rise, salinization or erosion of agricultural lands and growing water scarcity. In many cases, continuous change leads communities to develop their own adaptation strategies, of which migration—whether seasonal or permanent—may be only one component. Under these conditions movement typically takes the form of income diversification by the household, with some household members leaving and others staying behind.¹²⁶ This pattern has been observed, for example, among Ethiopian households hit by severe and recurrent droughts.¹²⁷

Given the uncertainty as to whether climate change will occur through a continuous process or discrete events, the extent and type of resulting adaptation and movement are difficult to predict. Moreover, environmental factors are not the sole determinants of movement but interact with livelihood opportunities and public policy responses. It is often the case that natural disasters do not lead to out-migration of the most vulnerable groups, because the poorest usually do

Movement largely reflects people's need to improve their livelihoods... this movement is constrained by policy and economic barriers

not have the means to move and natural disasters further impair their ability to do so. Empirical studies in Mexico have found that the effects of changes in rainfall on migration patterns are determined by socio-economic conditions and the ability to finance the cost of moving.¹²⁸ Background research on migration patterns in Nicaragua during Hurricane Mitch, carried out for this report, found that rural families in the bottom two wealth quintiles were less likely to migrate than other families in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch.¹²⁹

More fundamentally, what happens in the future is affected by the way we consume and use our natural resources today. This was the key message of the 2007/2008 HDR (*Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*): catastrophic risks for future generations can be avoided only if the international community acts now. The demand for increased energy in developing countries, where many people still lack access to electricity, can be met while reducing total carbon emissions. The use of more energy-efficient technologies that already exist in developed countries needs to be expanded in developing countries, while creating the next generation of still more efficient technologies and enabling developing countries to leapfrog through to these better solutions. At the same time, energy consumption in developed countries needs to be rationalized. The policy options for encouraging a transition to a low-carbon energy mix include market-based incentives, new standards for emissions, research to develop new technologies and improved international cooperation.¹³⁰

2.5 Conclusions

Three key findings have emerged from this chapter's analysis of global trends in human movement. First, movement largely reflects people's need to improve their livelihoods. Second, this movement is constrained by policy and economic barriers, which are much more difficult for poor people to surmount than for the relatively wealthy. Third, the pressure for increased flows will grow in the coming decades in the face of divergent economic and demographic trends.

Ultimately, how these structural factors will affect the flow of people in the future depends critically on the stance taken by policy makers,

especially those in host countries. At present, policy makers in countries with large migrant populations face conflicting pressures: significant levels of resistance to increased immigration in public opinion on the one hand, and sound economic and social rationales for the relaxation of entry barriers on the other.

How can we expect policies to evolve in the next few decades? Will they evolve in ways that enable us to realize the potential gains from mobility, or will popular pressures gain the upper hand? Will the economic crisis raise protectionist barriers against immigration, or will it serve as an opportunity to rethink the role of movement in fostering social and economic progress? History and contemporary experience provide contrasting examples. Acute labour scarcity made the Americas very open to migration during the 19th century and allowed rapid rates of economic development despite widespread intolerance and xenophobia. This is analogous in some ways to the situation in the GCC states today. However, the tendency to blame outsiders for society's ills is accentuated during economic downturns. Recent incidents across a range of countries—from the Russian Federation to South Africa to the United Kingdom—could presage a growing radicalization and closing off to people from abroad.¹³¹

Yet none of these outcomes is predetermined. Leadership and action to change the nature of public debate can make a crucial difference. Shifting attitudes towards internal migrants in the United States during the Great Depression provide us with a compelling example. As a result of severe drought in the nation's southern Midwest region, an estimated 2.5 million people migrated to new agricultural areas during the 1930s. There they met fierce resistance from some residents, who saw these migrants as threats to their jobs and livelihoods. It was in this context that John Steinbeck wrote *The Grapes of Wrath*, one of the most powerful indictments of the mistreatment and intolerance of internal migrants ever written. Steinbeck's novel sparked a national debate, leading to a congressional investigation into the plight of migrant workers and ultimately to a landmark 1941 decision by the Supreme Court establishing that states had no right to interfere with the free movement of people within the United States.¹³²