

## Introduction

Each country of emigration, and in fact each country of immigration, too, is a unique case in the historical context of international migration, where economic and political migratory movements alike have played, are playing and will continue to play different – sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting – roles against a background of changing situations. The status of each of the countries concerned (in terms of area, population, economic structure and level of economic development), and its geographical, geopolitical or geostrategic situation, make it unique; its case may be described and analysed, making it very interesting, but cannot be easily extrapolated to that of other countries, near or far, or that of components of other geopolitical units (North or South America, Africa, Asia, etc.). This does not mean that the question should not be examined: each case is in practice likely to provide original – successful or failed – experience of migration management and of efforts to find development methods appropriate to national, regional and/or local conditions.

Thus experiments aborted before they came into effect, or which partly or completely failed, are as interesting and educational as collections of good practice or successful experiments. Provided that a critical analysis has been made, pointing to the mistakes and inadequacies noted, thought can be given to those procedures which are not advisable or should be avoided in any new experiments. On the basis of more conclusive or truly successful experiments, tailored to the local social and economic environment, conclusions may be drawn which are in principle more positive, but not in every case, as they can rarely be transferred unadapted from one economic area to another.

The idea of concerted development involving country of origin and country of immigration is not a new one. It first emerged in the 1960s, when international migratory movements of labour reached their peak, and has resurfaced almost cyclically, in line with changes in the international migration situation, in both receiving and sending countries. The questions currently arising are divided between the two groups of countries, often for contrasting reasons. They were already on the agenda at numerous international institutions (UN, OECD, Council of Europe, etc.) in the 1970s, after the onset of the enduring economic crisis which brought to an end the thirty-year “golden era” of growth described by Professor Jean Fourastié as the *Trente Glorieuses*. The relevant literature was abundant, both for the general public and aimed at a more limited (non-commercial) readership, spanning a wide range of disciplines (includ-

ing economics, sociology, business management, international relations and economic geography) and geographical areas (such as the Maghreb, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Mexico, China and sub-Saharan Africa). For a number of years, at the prompting of institutions such as the OECD and World Bank (which seem to have the most consistent record in this field), now joined by the UN, the same type of studies have been available again, in an updated framework, while the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and some national ministries are again turning their attention to this kind of development.<sup>1</sup>

My main aim here is to give readers a critical overview of existing literature on what is now termed co-development (based on sources I have consulted in French, English, German, Turkish, Spanish and Dutch), with a selection of items likely to be of interest both to countries of immigration and countries of origin, and looking at the questions raised by experts both in the 1970s and 1980s and between 2000 and 2005. As a geography student at Strasbourg's Louis Pasteur University, I wrote a thesis (which I defended in 1984) focusing on Turkey, but comparative studies were already looking at experience in the Maghreb and, more generally, in the Mediterranean region. Numerous academic studies had been written then, or have been subsequently, including several theses by students now lecturing in Germany, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, France, the Netherlands or Mexico on various subjects relevant to international migration. Contemporary literature has covered South America, Africa and China in detail, but often seems to ignore the already highly instructive lessons learned in the 1970s and 1980s. Several subsequent colloquies or conferences have been wholly or partly devoted to the new issues, in the current context of globalisation (OECD, 2005a; OECD, 2005b; Özden and Schiff, 2006). I have personally taken part in several recent university colloquies (CEPED, MIGRINTER),<sup>2</sup> and Recommendation 1718 (2005) on co-development policy as a positive measure to regulate migratory flows was adopted recently by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, showing how topical the problem is. In 1981, the Council of Europe published the proceedings of the First Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs, which had taken place from 6 to 8 May 1980, and which had considered "European migration in the 1980s. Trends and policies". The second theme of the conference (co-operation between countries of origin and receiving countries) was subdivided into two sub-themes. One was the maintenance of the cultural links of migrants with their country of origin, and the other was social

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1. See, for instance, the recent report by the UN's Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), available at [www.gcim.org](http://www.gcim.org), more particularly Chapter 2, on "Migration and development: realizing the potential of human mobility", and the workshops held in Lisbon by the Council of Europe and its North-South Centre.

2. Among them the 2004 colloquy in Nogent-sur-Marne jointly organised by the CEPED (Population and Development Centre) and the IRD (Development Research Institute), which discussed international migration from the viewpoint of the countries of the South.

and professional reintegration of voluntarily returning migrants in their countries of origin, and promotion of new employment opportunities.

So is it right to think that this issue is a cyclical one, or is it just that the work done by committees and experts is often left gathering dust on archive and library shelves? This would be going too far, an insult to the generations which have gone before, and which have, with great competence and motivation, worked hard to come up with solutions to complex problems. The world is constantly changing, and migration evolves in socioeconomic and geostrategic contexts which never stay the same for long. In other words, previous findings, however valid, need to be reconsidered again and again, but previous experience, good and bad practice, good and less good governance, all need to be regarded as deserving in-depth analysis with a view to improvements acceptable to all, and either economically viable or fostering truly sustainable human development.

According to Kofi Annan, then UN Secretary-General, when he presented the report on "International Migration and Development" (UN, 2006),<sup>3</sup> the time has come to give very serious thought to the implications of international migration in the sphere of economic development and of concerted action between economically developed and developing countries (the latter often being, as Brunel pointed out (pp. 60-61) in 2004, increasingly in debt to the international financial organisations). The UN held an important meeting on this subject in conjunction with the General Assembly of autumn 2006 (14-15 September, New York). Although this meeting was an interesting one, it did not seem to receive much media attention, probably because of international political events at the time. We know not only that the sums transferred are rising to unprecedented levels, but also that a large proportion of migrant workers' remittances goes on the subsistence of their families and relatives who stayed behind, meeting just their most urgent needs (food, housing, health care, schooling, etc.), and a not insignificant portion of the money ends up in the coffers of the private or public bodies effecting the transfers, as recently reported by the OECD and World Bank. This is nothing new, but has been made clearer by the work of some research scientists investigating this specific subject. We therefore hope that the Council of Europe, which has discussed this issue and already published reports and other documents about it, will also be able to play its part.

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3. Available in several languages on the UN website:  
[www.un.org/esa/population/hldmigration](http://www.un.org/esa/population/hldmigration).