



## MAKING THE MOST OF MIGRATION

MORE CONSIDERED MIGRATION POLICIES WILL ENHANCE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



### OVERCOMING BARRIERS

In October 2009 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) called for widespread reforms in migration policy in both source and destination societies, with the aim of strengthening economic development for everyone involved.

These reforms were the key recommendation of the UNDP's annual Human Development Report (HDR). The HDR is a long-running series, which aims to frame the debates on some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity. The latest report, 'Overcoming Barriers: mobility and development', focused on the potential impacts of migration.

'Overcoming Barriers' aims to fix migration firmly on the agenda of policy makers around the world. The report is published in over a dozen languages, simultaneously reaching out to destination governments, governments of origin, the private sector, unions, non-governmental organisations and individual migrants themselves.

### THE ROLE OF THE IMI

The International Migration Institute (IMI), part of the 21st Century School, was involved closely in the 'Overcoming Barriers' project, contributing evidence and data to this contentious and often poorly understood debate.

Rather than approaching migration as an independent issue, the IMI analyses it as an

intrinsic part of broader development and global transformation processes. This ground-breaking model provides the basis for the development of more effective and development-friendly migration policies, such as those championed in the 2009 Human Development Report.

Senior IMI researchers played a key role in the development of the 'Overcoming Barriers' report, compiling background papers and consulting regularly with the UNDP team to provide ongoing advice and support with regard to the detailed analysis of migration patterns and the formulation of effective policy responses.

### A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED?

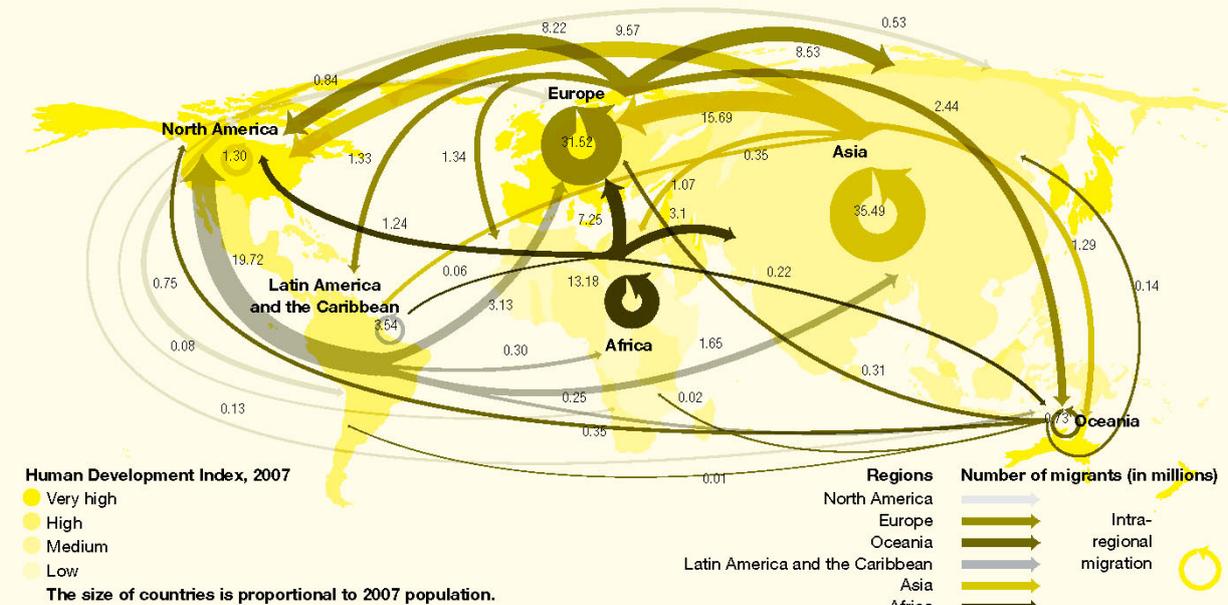
The key message of the IMI's contribution to the 'Overcoming Barriers' report was that, far from posing a problem, migration is an intrinsic component of the broader development process. In fact, migration creates benefits across the board:

- ▶ **Host communities** typically experience enhanced economic outputs, as migrants give more than they take, boosting employment rates, investment and innovation. As populations age, industrialised societies are likely to become increasingly reliant on migrants.

Map 2.1

**Most movement occurs within regions**

Origin and destination of international migrants, circa 2000



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) database.

- ▶ **Migrants** themselves benefit enormously, enjoying up to 15-fold increases in incomes. In addition, education and health care opportunities rise sharply, while child mortality rates plunge.
- ▶ **Source societies** can benefit from cash remittances, reductions in fertility and higher school enrolment rates. According to the report, any exodus of highly skilled workers is more a symptom, than a cause of failing public systems.

**IMPACT**

There is an urgent need for better policy responses from both destination and source communities in order to optimise these potential gains. Warning that the current global economic crisis has induced some countries to pressure migrants to leave or to cut their intake of new arrivals, 'Overcoming Barriers' encourages governments to look on the global recession as an opportunity for migration reform.

The report proposes a package of core policy reforms aimed at expanding opportunities for migration and ensuring that migrants are treated fairly by their host communities. These recommendations are set out in the report itself:

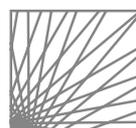
[www.hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009](http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009)

**CHALLENGING MISCONCEPTIONS:**

- ▶ Nearly one billion – one in seven of the world's population – are migrants.
- ▶ However, just 214 million – 3.1% of the world's population – migrate internationally.
- ▶ Of those that do move internationally, less than 30% move from developing to developed countries.
- ▶ There is little connection between migrants and unemployment or wage decreases in host communities.

The IMI is committed to developing a long-term and comprehensive perspective on the dynamics of global migration: [www.imi.ox.ac.uk](http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk).

For more information about the 21st Century School and its work on the challenges of the future visit: [www.21school.ox.ac.uk](http://www.21school.ox.ac.uk)



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