OEI

AGENDA ITEM :

The Mass Emigration of Skilled Youth from Ibero-American States

UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL

Tuğçe Duru Şişman

KAYSERİ FEN LİSESİ MUN

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Letter from Secretary General:

Esteemed participants of MUNKFL'25,
As the Secretary General of MUNKFL'25, I warmly welcome you all to the fourth edition of Model United Nations Kayseri Fen Lisesi. First of all, I am pleased to say that we are continuing our work successfully, knowing that we are the pioneers in the MUN culture in Kayseri. We are truly honored to be able to present this precious conference that we have worked on for months. My organizing team has worked tirelessly for this conference, and of course, they did well. Also, special thanks go to my academic team, who also worked tirelessly to make your committees exceptional and engaging. It is with this spirit of dedication and pioneering achievement that we turn our focus to the crucial global challenges facing us today.

The 21st Century has brought about tensions between nations, unprecedented dangers, changes, and challenges that continue to plague the world. However, the United Nations offers a promising path forward. As members of the Model United Nations community, we recognize the imperative of active global engagement and the pivotal role we play in shaping a better future. Therefore, MUNKFL will simulate United Nations committees, providing a platform for delegates to engage in collaborative, competitive, conciliatory, and compromising decision-making processes. Through these simulations, we aim to foster dialogue, diplomacy, and a prioritization of societal needs in addressing pressing global issues.
May this experience leave you more prepared to lead, more committed to dialogue, and more confident in the role you can play in shaping the world around you.

Sincerely,
Taylan Emir Tav

Letter from Under-Secretary-General:

Dear Delegates of the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to this committee of MUNKFL'25. My name is Tuğçe Duru Şişman and I'm more than honored to serve as the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education Committee's Under-Secretary-General during this conference.

I'm looking forward to guiding you through this conference under our agenda item, which is "The Mass Emigration of Skilled Youth from Ibero-American States". And if you will examine this study guide thoroughly, I'm sure that you'll reach a certain level of information about our committee's topic.

You each will be present in this committee as representatives of the member states of the OEI and will dive into meaningful and open-minded debates, respectful collaborations and finally produce solutions regarding our agenda item.

My expectations of you delegates are extremely high. Perhaps, you will manage to bring the organization one step closer to its goal which is to promote collaboration among the Ibero-American countries through education, science, technology and culture.

I'm eagerly waiting to meet you on our committee for a qualitative debate regarding the issues at hand and hope that you will have a great time at this conference.

Lastly; if you have any kind of questions regarding the topics or Rules of Procedure of the committee, I'd be more than happy to help you. So please don't hesitate to contact me anytime.

Looking forward to seeing you all in MUNKFL'25!

Best Regards,

Under-Secretary-General

Tuğçe Duru Şişman

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Introduction to the Committee:

The Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), founded in 1949, is a governmental international organization for cooperation among 19 Ibero-American countries in the fields of education, science, technology and culture. The member States of the OEI are: Andorra, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Equatorial Guinea, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Under the motto "We make cooperation happen", the OEI simultaneously undertakes an average of 600 cooperation projects each year which have a direct effect on 12 million beneficiaries. It works in five fields: education, science, culture, language and human rights.

In terms of education, it carries out projects within the context of infant through to higher education, as well as in the spheres of career training and adult education. It is committed to improving the quality of education, promoting digital transformation and thus promoting teacher training. Each year it provides assistance to an average of 450 000 students and trains 40 000 teachers. Support for science takes the form of the development of public policies to further scientific and technological development, as well as the transfer of knowledge, so that all this can be implemented by public administrations. The average number of research studies amounts to 200 per year.

Highlighting the cultural richness and diversity of Ibero-American communities is another of the OEI's priorities. One of the tools to further this goal is the Ibero-American Cultural Charter, which especially focuses on all things related to intellectual property rights and digital culture. As regards language, the organization encourages the promotion and dissemination of Portuguese and Spanish, in addition to supporting the hundreds of languages native to the region.

Finally, the Ibero-American Programme for Human Rights, Democracy and Equality seeks to strengthen sound democratic institutions that guarantee human rights and promote "responsible citizenry, fostering citizen empowerment and engagement". Allocating some 160 million dollars per year in project management, the OEI is funded through the fees and contributions made by the twenty-three Member States, as well as contributions from institutions, foundations and organizations for specific projects.

In 2023, the UN General Assembly declared the OEI an associate observer member and UNESCO decided to maintain it as Ibero-America representative member of the senior management committee of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), which focuses on equitable quality education.

2.2 Introduction to the Agenda Item:

Today, there are more young people in the world than ever, 1.8 billion, the largest generation in history. Of the 258 million international migrants, approximately 11 percent of them were under 24 years of age in 2017. The tendency to migrate tends to be highest among young people.

Connected to each other like never before, young people today live in a world of unlimited potential, where they create tremendous and essential assets worth investing in, opening the door to an unparalleled multiplier effect. When young people are empowered and prepared, they can use their energy, creativity and talent to turn an uncertain landscape into a world of opportunities. If engaged in their communities through meaningful participation and sustained involvement, they are more likely to support their communities. They can play a key role in policy discussions, rising up for their rights and better opportunities, demanding a seat at the table in decision-making processes. An example of this is the world youth movement against climate change.

The reasons for leaving behind their homes are varied: study, work, setting up a business, joining their families, escaping poverty or violence. Whatever the reason, international migration can bring an opportunity for them to achieve better lives for themselves and their families, and to achieve educational aspirations, and improve skills, perspectives and personal development. Increasing opportunities to move for young people are an important driver for development and empowerment. As many speakers concurred, it is easy to reach for migration as a solution to these and other challenges, and to find better opportunities overseas. Many are willing to take extensive risks to do so. Some participants highlight the fact that, while risk-taking is a characteristic of the young, and one that drives societies forward with each new generation, such risks should not be taken at the cost of lives or livelihoods. Instead, youth migrants face specific challenges and often find themselves in vulnerable situations, even if their hopes, dreams and ambitions are similar to other youngsters all over the world.

Evidence was made about the fact that discussions about migration and youth require understanding the pull and push factors of migration and how this affects youth in general (both migrants and those from receiving communities). In fact, part of the answer is that many of them do not have enough opportunities in their countries of origin, and this situation needs to be changed.

The Ibero-American Youth Organization's Secretary General, Max Trejo Cervantes, stressed the strategic role of young people and how much they can contribute, particularly when it comes to the SDGs. He called for identifying young people, empowering them, increasing their social and digital capacity, building their access to knowledge and giving them a role to play in sustainable development.

Available data show that youth make up 11 per cent of all international migrants, representing the most mobile group of all (up to half of those changing residence each year are between 18 and 29 years of age), a total of 28 million

from 15 to 24 years of age in 2017. Their needs will directly depend on the reason for moving, such as study, work, family reunification, seeking refuge and escaping from poverty.

Migrant youth face risks compounded by their age, gender, migration status or cultural identity so when it comes to youth migrants, they need to be considered as a vulnerable group and we must find ways to protect and empower them.

More than ever before, migration has become the subject of intense policy debates, not only in the developed world but increasingly in Latin America. Typical migration topics in countries of origin include the effects of family separation on those left behind, the role of diasporas in the development of the home country, and the impacts of migrants when they return.

The benefits and impacts of migration depend on the context and policies that are implemented. An appropriate set of actions to tackle the main challenges posed by migration can reduce the potential negative impacts while leveraging good developmental outcomes.

KEY WORDS

Ibero-America: The region in the Americas comprising countries or territories where Spanish or Portuguese are predominant languages (usually former territories of Spain or Portugal).

Emigration: The act of leaving one's own country to settle permanently in another; moving abroad.

Brain Drain: The emigration of highly trained or qualified people from a particular country.

Tertiary Education: Education for people above school age, including college, university, and vocational courses.

Northern Triangle: A triangular region composed of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Push Factor: A factor that motivates a person to migrate away from their country or region of residence.

Pull Factor: A motivating cause that attracts a person to migrate to another region or country.

Sending Country: A country which a person leaves to find work or to study in another country

Receiving Country: A country that accepts immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers from other countries.

Remittance: A sum of money sent in payment or as a gift.

The Darién Gap: A remote, roadless, and dangerous area of rainforest on the international border between Colombia and Panama.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As the World Bank explains, brain drain is increasing globally. His report shows that migrants increased from 14 million in 1960 to 60 million in 2000. At the same time, the percentage of migrants with tertiary education increased dramatically. Salary scale, employer prestige and professional development opportunities are decisive factors when deciding whether to stay in their home countries or go abroad. Latin American professionals who go in search of better opportunities abroad generally opt for richer countries since these have the greatest capacity to attract highly-qualified candidates. Figures on college-educated professionals in Latin America vary by country, ranging from 5% in Costa Rica to 14% in Argentina. In Canada, the United States and Spain, rates exceed 15%. According to the World Bank, 30 million Latin Americans live abroad, representing 5.2% of the total population, whereas some 70% of college-educated professionals from the Caribbean emigrate in search of better opportunities.

4.1. The Emigration Process:

Each year, thousands of people leave their homes in Latin America, the Caribbean and other regions in an effort to secure futures that have become practically unattainable in their countries of origin. Economic dispossession, lack of access to education and employment, violence, and other structural and personal factors have motivated people from all over the world, but mostly from Central American countries, to seek a new life in the United States or other countries within the region. Many will have successfully gone through visa application processes to start a new phase of their lives. Some aren't so lucky, and will be setting off on journeys they know will be long and dangerous, with a risk of failure.

People who migrate irregularly from Central America to North America must face dangerous river and desert crossings, remote terrain and unsafe forms of transport to reach their destinations, such as traveling on top of freight trains over long journeys or inside overcrowded trucks. They may also be exposed to different forms of violence including being robbed, extorted, assaulted, trafficked and even killed. The true number of people who have died while transiting through the region is not known, but records compiled by IOM's Missing Migrants Project (MMP) indicate that at least 3,015 people lost their lives between 2014 and 2018 in the Central and Northern American region.

So why do people who migrate decide to risk everything, including their own lives?

4.2. Reasons of Emigration in Ibero-American Countries:

Before moving on to the results of these mass emigration we should first discuss the push factors of it. A study published July 2019 by the Central American Integration System (SICA), IOM and UNHCR details some of the main causes of displacement and migration in Central American countries. According to the study, in the seventies and eighties, Central Americans migrated mostly because of the socioeconomic exclusion and political conflict that occurred in some countries of the region. For the following decades, the main driving factors included the lack of job opportunities, as well as the risk caused by violence and crime.

Similarly, in 2019, the international NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) Creative commissioned a similar research study on the municipalities that have the highest rates of outward migration from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. They identified the 60 municipalities that combined account for more than half of all the region's emigration, and the triggers that led people to make the choice to migrate. These were divided in three main categories: economics, victimization and transnational ties.

The principal factors that differentiate those who do intend to migrate from those who do not in the municipalities surveyed fall under the category of economics. When asked what their primary reason for migrating would be, more than 60 percent of respondents cited economic-related concerns. Migration from the Northern Triangle happens against the backdrop of a vulnerable regional economy, where many of those who are working do so in an informal capacity with few protections or opportunities for advancement.

Transnational ties – defined here as the existence of family in the U.S., receipt of remittances, and prior migration to the U.S. – is an important pull factor in the migration equation, although far less impactful than economics and victimization.

Victimization in Central America is an important push factor, since regionally, having been a victim of a crime or having a family member or someone close who has been makes an individual 1.5 times more likely to consider migrating. However, this reason for migration varied greatly depending on the country and municipality in Central America. For example, in El Salvador, 38% of respondents cited it as a primary factor, as opposed to the 14% in Guatemala and 18% in Honduras.

SICA's (Central American Integration System) study details how violence in the region is aggravated by organized crime and drug trafficking, creating a climate of insecurity that creates an increase in mixed intra and extra-regional

migratory flows. For example, 87% of internally displaced Salvadorians had to move due to victimization. Climate change, natural disasters and access to education were also cited as significant factors in deciding to migrate.

Migration decision-making processes before, during and after migration continue to be shaped by broader economic, social and cultural conditions. Furthermore, there is a wide variation in the ability of migrants to make choices, depending on the constraints and options they face. These depend on the specific factors that push people to emigrate from one area as opposed to another. For these reasons, it is important that solutions for irregular migration be tailored for each location and are supported from migrants' perspectives. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, but responses should be sustainable, and protect migrants both before and during their journeys.

4.3. Potential Rewards of Emigration:

IOM's (International Organization for Migration) World Migration Report points out that, aside from the risks, the potential rewards for migration need to be taken into account when discussing the migration decision-making processes. For some communities, the rewards can be long term, allowing the next generation and their children access to better education, health services and living standards, while at the same time supporting family members and communities in origin countries.

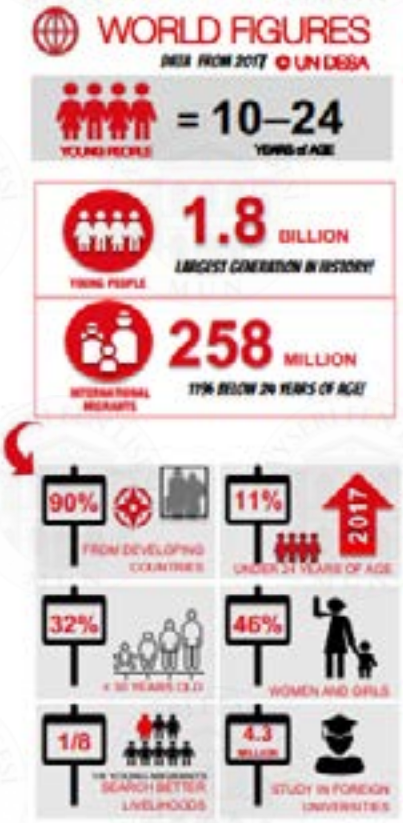
For other groups, including those that may have been marginalized economically, socially or politically in their home countries, international migration has become a survival strategy where family and community members engage in migration to access resources and safety. Additional findings on the development of long-term labour migration corridors point to an increasing reliance on remittances as key components of household incomes, which in turn locks people into specific migration patterns.

Nearly a quarter of those who say they have thought of migrating receive remittances across the Northern Triangle's high-migration municipalities, in comparison to 15 percent of those who haven't thought of migrating but receive remittances.

5. CURRENT BRAIN-DRAIN FROM IBERO-AMERICAN COUNTRIES:

5.1. Overall Migration Pattern:

The vast majority of migrants from Latin America move to the United States. So it is natural that a large portion of the highly educated and skilled migrants go to the United States as well. Thus, children, retirees as well as people who are not currently in the labor force are excluded. The sample has a total of 8.4 million migrants with 4.6 million having arrived since 1990. As can be clearly seen, the largest portion of migrants came from Mexico which is followed by El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Guatemala. The migration rate shows a high degree of variation. For some of the smaller countries in Central America and the Caribbean, such as Guyana, Grenada, Dominica, close to 30% of their labor force is currently in the US. The same number, according to some estimates, is 10% for Mexico. When we look at all of the Latin American countries, 8.4 million migrants to the US represent close to 3.5% of their total labor force.



Moving to the ratio of migrants with Bachelor's and Graduate degrees. For comparison purposes, the same number from four other large migrant-sending countries - China, India, the Philippines and Russia are also included. This is the first measure of brain drain and we see large variation here as well. For example, close to 17% of migrants arriving in the 1980s have at least a college degree – 10.4% has Bachelor's and 6.5% has a Graduate degree. However, the same numbers are 2.3% and 1.4%, respectively, for Mexican migrants. On the other hand, 27% of migrants from Brazil, 33 % from Argentina, 40% from Venezuela and 30% from Chile arriving in the 1980s have at least a college degree. The same numbers are astoundingly different for migrants from the rest of the world. For example, 63% of migrants from India and 58% from the Philippines have at least a college degree.

The same patterns are maintained for the 1990s. 18% of all migrants from Latin America have at least a college degree. The relative ratios of college educated migrants from different Latin American countries are roughly the same. It is relatively high for Brazil, Argentina and Chile and relatively low for Central American countries.

When we observe the overall migration patterns into the US, we see that migrants are concentrated at the extremes of the education spectrum – they are overrepresented at the low and high end. Since it is relatively easier for all migrants from Mexico and Central America to enter the US whether illegally or via family preferences, they make up the bulk of the migrants at the low end of the education spectrum. In short, the ratio of the educated people is higher among migrants compared to the native populations but the same ratio is even higher for Asian countries.

5.2. Brain Drain:

Once again, we see wide variation. A very large portion of the college educated migrants from smaller and poorer countries in the Caribbean and Central America are in the US. For example, close to 80% of college educated people born in Jamaica, Haiti, Guyana, Belize, Grenada are currently living in the US. The rate is also relatively high for some medium-sized countries in Central America. Around 30% of the college educated from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama are also in the US. The levels are much lower for larger and wealthier countries. For example, the ratio of the college educated among the migrants is less than 5% for Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Venezuela.

We should point out the following divergence between smaller and larger countries. Smaller and poorer countries, such as the ones in Central America and the Caribbean, also have lower shares of college educated workers in the labor force. A very large portion of their population tends to migrate if given the chance since the economic opportunities seem to be rather limited for everyone, not just for the highly educated. As a result, highly educated migrants make up a smaller portion of the migrant population but they form a large portion of the overall educated labor force.

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6. OUTCOMES OF MIGRATION:

International migration, the movement of people across international boundaries, continues to be one of the most important issues of the global policy agenda for it generates enormous economic, social, and cultural implications in both sending and receiving countries. According to a recently published report of Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), today, there are nearly 200 million migrants internationally, around 60 % of which are in developed countries, and the other 40 % in developing countries. The report also acknowledges that almost one of every 10 persons living in

developed countries is a migrant. The more developed regions receive each year about 2.3 million migrants coming from the less developed regions, accounting for two thirds of their population growth

The increase in the total number of migrants boosted the flow of formal remittances from migrants to their relatives in their country of origin as well. The remittance flow has doubled in the last decade, reaching 216 billion US Dollars in 2004, with 150 billion US Dollars going to developing countries. It surpasses foreign aid and is the largest source of foreign capital for dozens of countries.

Winters and Walmsley, in their recent publication of Liberalizing Temporary Movement of Natural Persons: An Agenda for the Development Round, estimated that an increase of inward movements of equivalent to 3% of developed countries' skilled and unskilled work forces would generate an estimated increase in the world welfare by 156 billion US Dollars, shared almost equally between developing and developed countries.. This estimation is based upon a hypothesis which assumes that by allowing workers to move to areas where they are more productive and valued, migration leads to a direct increase in global output and income.

In the light of Winters and Walmsley's estimation and extensive analyses put forward by some others, it is safe to say that international migration can have positive impacts on both the communities of origin and the communities of destination, providing the former with remittances and the latter with needed human resources. International migration also has the potential of facilitating the transfer of skills and contributing to cultural enrichment. This said, one should also maintain that international migration entails the loss of human resources for many countries of origin and may give rise to political, economic or social tensions in countries of destination.

6.1. The Impact of Migration on the Economies of Sending Countries:

The increasing volume of remittances generated by the migrant workers and the impact of this financial flow on the development and poverty reduction in the sending countries seems to justify Winters and Walmsley' assumption. According to the World Bank, the annual value of formally transferred remittances in 2004 was about 150 billion US Dollars, representing a 50 % increase in just five years. Almost half of these remittances are transferred between countries in the developing world. The leading recipients of remittances in 2004 were Mexico with 16 billion US Dollars a year, India with 9.9 billion US Dollars and the Philippines with 8.5 billion US Dollars. Remittances are now close to triple the value of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to low-income countries and comprise the second-largest source of external funding for developing countries after Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Significantly, remittances tend to be more predictable and stable than FDI or ODA.

In short, remittances now play an essential role in sustaining national and local economies in many recipient countries. Remittances provide an important source of foreign exchange to recipient countries, boost the capacity of the

financial sector and help to attract subsequent investment. Remittances evidently provide the most direct and immediate benefits to the people who receive them, many of whom, the World Bank has established, are amongst the poorest members of society. Remittances help to lift recipients out of poverty, increase and diversify household incomes, provide an insurance against risk, enable family members to benefit from educational and training opportunities and provide a source of capital for the establishment of small businesses.

Recognition of the positive impact of remittances on the economies of developing countries is important and must be promoted. In this context, the governments of sending countries must adopt sound exchange rate, monetary and economic policies, and facilitate the provision of banking facilities that enable the safe and timely transfer of migrants' funds. They should also promote the conditions necessary to increase domestic savings and channel them into productive investment.

Migration can, however, also result in the loss of the most skilled and best educated human resources of the developing economies. In other words, brain drain deprives the state of revenue and prevents countries of origin from gaining an early return on the investment they have made in the education and training of those people. Most seriously, when it involves the departure of professionals in sectors such as health and education, migration can adversely affect the supply and quality of essential services.

Mostly, the problems caused by the brain drain in poorer sending countries are enormous. Migrants from developing countries are generally more likely to stay in the host country than migrants from advanced countries. Survey evidence on the share of foreign PhD graduates in science and technology who stay abroad show that 79% of 1990-1991 doctoral recipients from India and 88% of those from China were still working in the United States in 1995. In contrast, only 11% of Koreans and 15% of Japanese who earned science and engineering doctorates from US universities in 1990-1991 were working in the United States in 1995. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), some 300 000 professionals from the African continent live and work in Europe and North America. By some estimates, up to a third of research and development professionals from the developing world are believed to reside in the The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) area.

The sending countries will have to attract back these emigrants in order to assure that their fragile economies will be able to maintain a sufficient number of highly skilled professionals for development. Regaining them can also bring valuable management experience, entrepreneurial skills and access to global networks. However, experience shows that such efforts have, for most of the time, been fruitless.

One way for sending countries to alleviate the negative impact of brain drain is to facilitate the return of migrants and their reintegration into their home communities, and to devise ways of using their skills. To encourage the return of qualified migrants who can play a crucial role in the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology is also a well recognized way of tackling the issue of brain drain.

The receiving countries can also play an important role in this respect. Use of short-term and project-related migration, as a means of improving the skills of nationals of sending countries can be a very helpful instrument. Bilateral or multilateral agreements can be signed and implemented for this purpose.

6.2. The Impact of Migration on the Economies of Receiving Countries:

There are conflicting views on the impact of immigration on the economies of receiving countries. Opponents of immigration believe that migrants steal the jobs and depress the wages. Another argument that the critics of immigration relies on is that immigration has the potential of producing conflict among ethnic groups. The reasoning behind this assumption is the possibility of emergence of such an environment in which low-income native-born groups regard the migrants as competing for jobs and resources. Finally, the opponents of immigration argue that increasing the number of migrants may destroy the local community's identity and its institutions.

Proponents of immigration, on the other hand, contend that immigrants are not the cause of job loss on the side of the local population as they mostly do those jobs which are considered too menial by their host societies. The proponents also add that migrants create added value to the economy since they are also consumers and stimulate the economy which in turn creates new jobs. International migration, proponents add, has the potential of facilitating the transfer of skills and contributing to cultural enrichment.

The governments of the receiving countries seem to give credit to both the opponents and proponents of immigration. Indeed, there is a growing tendency on the part of receiving countries to be more selective in their immigration policies which restrict immigration to highly skilled workers. Countries like Switzerland, United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand have already either introduced such policies or are envisaging to introduce.

Another mechanism commonly used by the receiving countries to control the flow of migrants is to receive migrant workers on a temporary basis. This type of immigration is generally related to international study, "working holiday making" (movements of young persons allowed to work part-time in generally low-skilled jobs while vacationing) and to intra-company transfers in multinational corporations. Australia, Germany, Canada, France, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United States are countries which attract this type of migrants.

However, there is still not enough evidence to conclude that these mechanisms are or will be producing the desired outcomes. In the case of temporary migration, there seems to be a consensus among the experts that this type of migration, in the long run, bears the potential of transforming itself into permanent migration. There are deficiencies and adverse effects of selective policies as well. It may encourage the potential migrants to seek asylum to be able to reach the labor

markets of the developed countries. It also has negative implications on the economies of developing countries as it creates the potential of a bigger loss of skilled human resources for their economies.

6.3. Migration as an Answer to the Aging Population of the Developed Countries:

Population aging is defined as the process by which older individuals become a proportionally larger share of the total population. It is a result of demographic transition in which mortality and then fertility rates decline. According to the UN statistics, the total fertility rate decreased globally by almost half, from 5.0 to 2.7 children per woman in the last 50 years, and it is expected to drop to the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman in the next half century. Presently, the total fertility rate is below the replacement level in all industrialized countries. This development has tripled the number of older persons in the last 50 years. It is also expected that this number will more than triple again in the next 50 years, raising serious concerns over sustainability of social security systems.

Aging population has significant implications on labor markets as well. Older people today are significantly less likely to participate in the labor force than they were in the past. Labor force participation of persons aged 65 or over declined by more than 40 % at the global level in the last half century. In 1950, about 1 in every 3 persons aged 65 or over was in the labor force. In 2000, this ratio decreased to just less than 1 in 5.

This is an alarming situation for the developed countries for it creates serious labor shortages for their economies. According to the OECD, in the medium term, as early as 2015, the increasing number of retirees will in some occupations lead to a replacement labor demand that may be hard to fill from domestic labor supplies for some developed countries.

Does this imply a more favorable environment for international migration? The answer of the proponents of immigration will certainly be a positive one. Their conclusion is based upon the assumption that the resident labor supply is/will be insufficient to meet the increasing labor demand. However, governments of the developed economies are still resisting an increased inflow of migrants with a view that the unused resident labor supply is sufficient to solve the present and future labor shortages. Instead of opening their borders, they tend to only facilitate the immigration of highly skilled workers for occupations where the national labor market cannot supply sufficient labor.

It is too early to make a meaningful prediction on whether the strategy of these governments will be successful to address their future labor market shortages. Further analytical studies and broader data are necessary to be able to see a clearer picture of the future. However, even in the absence of such information, it is safe to assume that the developed economies will be forced to open their borders to the migrant workers should the current trends concerning aging and fertility rates continue to rise.

6.4. Integration of Migrant Workers into the Labor Market:

Another issue that begs for attention is certainly the integration of current stock of immigrants, their children and future arrivals into the labor markets of the host societies. Here, integration means that as migrant workers learn the language and work practices of host countries, they tend to acquire the necessary ability to meet the requirements of the labor markets that they wish to participate in.

There are certain barriers which make it impossible for the migrant workers to integrate with the labor markets of the host societies. Non-recognition of diplomas attained in the country of origin, discrimination with respect to access to employment, low wages and additional barriers for immigrant women's participation in the labor markets are the most cited ones. Needless to say, selective immigration policies positively influence integration since the migrants in question are selected to ensure a better and faster integration. However, there are millions of migrants who are recognized asylum seekers or admitted on the basis of family reunification and generally recognized human rights. These are the groups of migrants who need special attention to assure their integration.

Language training, more favorable regulations with respect to the recognition of certificates and diplomas attained in origin countries, creation of special networks which assist migrants in their search for jobs, designing and implementing programs targeted to the elimination of discrimination against immigrants and broadening education opportunities for the children of immigrants, the so-called "second generation" are some of the measures that can be taken for better integration of migrants.

6.5. Challenges Faced by Migrants:

Refugees and migrants often come from communities affected by war, conflict, natural disasters, environmental degradation or economic crisis. They undertake long, exhausting journeys with inadequate access to food and water, sanitation and other basic services, which increases their risk of communicable diseases, particularly measles, and food- and waterborne diseases. They may also be at risk of accidental injuries, hypothermia, burns, unwanted pregnancy and delivery-related complications, and various noncommunicable diseases due to the migration experience, restrictive entry and integration policies and exclusion.

Refugees and migrants may arrive in the country of destination with poorly controlled non-communicable diseases, as they did not have care on the journey. Maternity care is usually a first point of contact with health systems for female refugees and migrants.

Refugees and migrants may also be at risk of poor mental health because of traumatic or stressful experiences Many of them experience feelings of anxiety and sadness, hopelessness, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, irritability, anger or aches and pains but for most people these symptoms of distress improve over time They may be at more risk of such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than the host populations. Refugee and migrant health is also strongly related to the social determinants of health, such as employment, income, education and housing.

Refugees and migrants remain among the most vulnerable members of society and are often faced with xenophobia; discrimination; substandard living, housing and working conditions; and inadequate or restricted access to mainstream health services.

Migrants, particularly in an irregular situation, are often excluded from national programmes for health promotion, disease prevention, treatment and care, as well as from financial protection in health. They can also face high user fees, low levels of health literacy, poor cultural competency among health providers, stigma and inadequate interpreting services.

Barriers are even greater for people with disabilities. Women and girls may find difficulty in accessing sexual and gender-based violence protection and response services. Refugee and migrant children, especially unaccompanied minors, are more likely to experience traumatic events and stressful situations, such as exploitation and abuse, and may struggle to access health care.The ability to access health services in humanitarian settings is usually compromised and complicated by shortages of medicines and lack of healthcare facilities.

Hundreds of thousands of migrants from Haiti, Venezuela, and elsewhere risk their lives each year to cross the Darién Gap between Colombia and Panama. The Darién Gap is an imposing obstacle on one of the world's most dangerous migration routes. The remote, roadless crossing on the border between Colombia and Panama consists of more than sixty miles of dense rain forest, steep mountains, and vast swamps. It is the only overland path connecting Central and South America. Over the past few years, it has become a leading transit point for migrants in search of work and safety in the United States, as authorities have cracked down on other routes by air and sea.

However, migrants face many challenges on this land journey northward, including treacherous terrain, exposure to disease, and violence at the hands of criminal groups. As the number of migrants grows—with more than half a million making the trek in 2023—so too does the impact on the Indigenous communities whose lands they often traverse. International aid organizations have sought to manage the crisis by setting up temporary housing and providing basic services to those arriving in Panama, even as the Panamanian government has announced new measures to crack down on migrants and asylum seekers entering the country.

7. APPROACHES TO ADDRESS MIGRATION CHALLENGES:

Populations across the globe are aging at an unprecedented pace, making many countries increasingly reliant on migration to realize their long-term growth potential, according to a new report from the World Bank. The World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies, identifies this trend as a unique opportunity to make migration work better for economies and people. Wealthy countries as well as a growing number of middle-income countries—traditionally among the main sources of migrants—face diminishing populations, intensifying the global competition for workers and talent. Meanwhile, most low-income countries are expected to see rapid population growth, putting them under pressure to create more jobs for young people."Migration can be a powerful force for prosperity and development," said World Bank Senior Managing Director Axel van Trotsenburg. "When it is managed properly, it provides benefits for all people — in origin and destination societies."

Current approaches not only fail to maximize the potential development gains of migration, they also cause great suffering for people moving in distress. About 2.5% of the world's population—184 million people, including 37 million refugees—now live outside their country of nationality. The largest share—43%—lives in developing countries.

The report underscores the urgency of managing migration better. The goal of policymakers should be to strengthen the match of migrants' skills with the demand in destination societies, while protecting refugees and reducing the need for distressed movements. The report provides a framework for policymakers on how to do this.

Origin countries should make labor migration an explicit part of their development strategy. They should lower remittance costs, facilitate knowledge transfers from their diaspora, build skills that are in high demand globally so that citizens can get better jobs if they migrate, mitigate the adverse effects of "brain drain," protect their nationals while abroad, and support them upon return.

Destination countries should encourage migration where the skills migrants bring are in high demand, facilitate their inclusion, and address social impacts that raise concerns among their citizens. They should let refugees move, get jobs, and access national services wherever they are available.

International cooperation is essential to make migration a strong force for development. Bilateral cooperation can strengthen the match of migrants' skills with the needs of destination societies. Multilateral efforts are needed to share the costs of refugee-hosting and to address distressed migration. Voices that are underrepresented in the migration debate must be heard: this includes developing countries, the private sector and other stakeholders, and migrants and refugees themselves.

8. QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

1) What factors are increasing the numbers of individuals -especially skilled workers- to emigrate from Ibero American countries?

2) In what ways does mass emigration from the Ibero American countries affect both the receiving and the sending countries?

3) What policies can be implemented by the governments that will reduce the amount of brain-drain and encourage the skilled individuals to stay in their homeland instead of migrating?

4) How can the receiving countries clear the way for the effective integration of immigrants into their labor markets and societies?

5) What strategies should be followed to encourage the return of the skilled migrants to their homelands?

6) How can the educational system in Ibero-American countries be strengthened in order to reduce the amount of migrants who leave their homeland to seek a better education?

7) What roles and responsibilities should "The Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI)" take while addressing the challanges regarding migration?

8) What are the difficulties that migrants face while trying to reach another country**?**

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