

AMERICAS

- In 2005, there were 51.1 million migrants in the Americas, the vast majority, namely 44.5 million, in North America, and a further 6.6 million in Latin America and the Caribbean. Migrants accounted for 13.5 per cent of the total population in North America and for 1.2 per cent of the total population in Latin America (UN DESA, 2005).
- South-North migration continues to be the dominant migration trend in the Americas. According to the migration data gathered by the University of Sussex, in the United Kingdom¹ (Ratha and Shaw, 2007), South-North migration accounts for 87 per cent of total migration in the region, representing the highest rate of South-North migration in the world. Migration to other Latin American and Caribbean countries accounts for the remaining 13 per cent, which means that there is no significant migration to other developing regions beyond the Americas, such as to Africa or Asia.
- In 2005, 25 million Latin American and Caribbean

citizens lived outside their country of origin, accounting for nearly four per cent of the population of their home countries, and 74 per cent of whom were thought to be living in the United States (ECLAC, 2006a).

- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of Latin American and Caribbean migrants increased by four million (UN DESA, 2005). Economic crises, social conflicts, violence, gradual economic and political change, environmental disasters and the diversification of destination countries have all shaped new migration patterns throughout the region.

NORTH AMERICA²

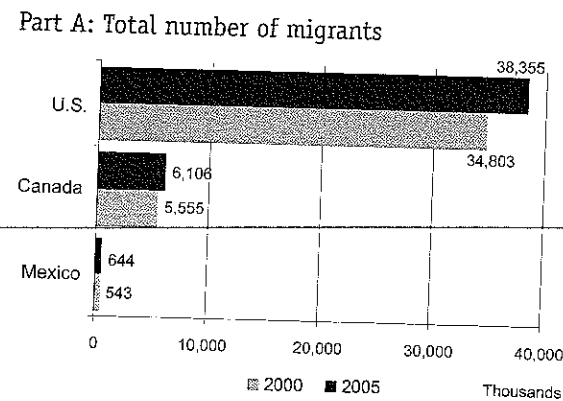
- The United States remains the principal country of destination in North America, hosting 38.3 million migrants in 2005, three million more than in 2001 (see Figure 1). However, relative to the size of its population, Bermuda has the

¹ The University of Sussex database gathers information from individual country censuses. Although available data is not up-to-date, it is the latest comparable information for the region, gathered from 2000 to 2002 country censuses, with the exception of Barbados (1990), Colombia (1993), Peru (1993) and Uruguay (1996).

² This section covers Canada, Mexico, the United States and three dependent territories or overseas departments (Bermuda, Greenland, and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon). In keeping with the UN DESA Population Division practice, Mexico is considered under the sub-region North America for reasons of geographical consistency.

highest number of migrants (29.4%), followed by Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon (22.4%) and Greenland (21.4%). Compared to 2001, all countries and territories in North America have seen an increase in immigration in both absolute and relative terms.

Figure 1:
Stock of migrants in North America, by destination, 2000 and 2005



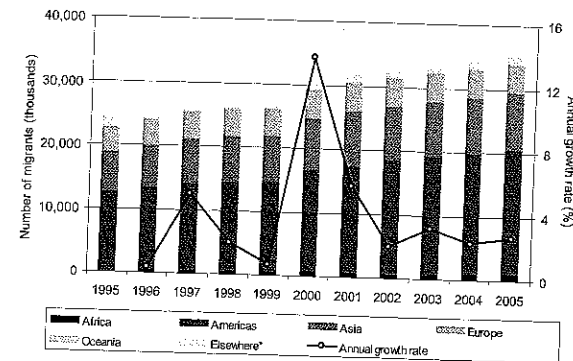
Source: UN DESA, 2005.

UNITED STATES

Intra-regional migration accounts for more than half of total immigration in the United States

- In absolute numbers, the United States remains the dominant country of destination in the Americas and in the world. In 2005, of the 38.3 million migrants living in the U.S., 55 per cent were from the Americas: 10.8 million from Mexico, 4.6 million from Latin America, 3.2 million from the Caribbean and 692,000 from Canada and other parts of North America (see Figure 2).

Figure 2:
Stock of foreign-born population in the U.S., by region of origin, 1995 to 2005



Note: *Includes region not known.
Source: Urban Institute tabulations from public-use files from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 1995 to 2005.

- Persons of Hispanic origin are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S., becoming the largest minority group in 2004.

Changes in settlement patterns have profoundly affected migration in the U.S.

- The impact of immigration on the United States has also been influenced by changes in the settlement patterns of immigrants in recent years (MPI, 2004). California and New York continue to be the

top receiving states of migrants, hosting 27 and 11 per cent of the total foreign-born population, respectively. From 1990 to 2005, however, their combined percentage of total migration fell by 9.3 per cent (California losing 6% and New York 3.3%). The loss of the big "gateway" states was partially compensated by non-traditional immigration states like Arizona, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, Colorado and Nevada. In these new immigration states, the foreign-born population grew on average by over 200 per cent with some states experiencing even higher growth rates (North Carolina and Georgia led with a growth rate of 412% and 382%, respectively - MPI, 2004).

- Finally, it is important to mention that while in the past agriculture was the main sector employing migrant labour, new arrivals are now distributed more widely, notably in the food and service industries.

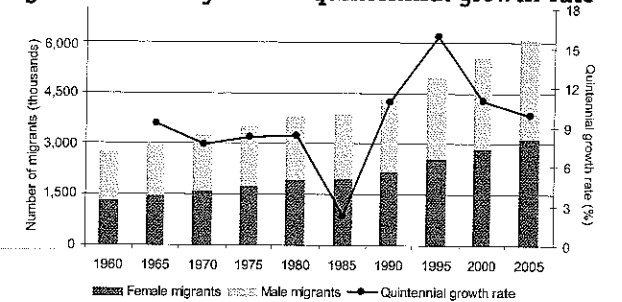
CANADA

Canada is not only a country of destination but also has a long history of emigration to the U.S.

- Immigration trends in Canada from 2000 to 2005 show a rise in the foreign-born population of 0.55 million. Immigration to Canada has grown at a 9.2 per cent average quintennial rate since 1960. In 2005, Canada's foreign-born population of 6.1 million represented 18.9 per cent of the total population, a figure higher than in the U.S. (see Figure 3).
- Nearly one-quarter of the 235,808 new permanent residents admitted in Canada in 2004 were selected through Canada's "points system" that tests them inter alia for skills and education (see Chapter 11). Family members accompanying these migrants account for a little over another quarter of admissions, with subsequent family reunification and humanitarian migrants making up the remainder (O'Neil et al., 2005).

- Canada is not only a destination country but has a long history of emigration to the United States. In 2005, the foreign-born from Canada, 674,000 people, made up the ninth-largest immigrant group in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

Figure 3:
Estimated number of migrants in Canada by gender at mid-year and quintennial growth rate



Source: UN DESA, 2005.

MEXICO

Mexico is not only a significant country of origin but has also become an important country of transit

- Mexico is characterized primarily by the mass emigration of Mexicans to the United States. With 10.8 million migrants, or 90 per cent of the country's total emigration, Mexico is the top country of origin of the foreign-born population in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). In addition, one in every five immigrants who obtained U.S. permanent residence status in 2002 was from Mexico (Grieco, 2003).
- Immigrants do not represent a large proportion of Mexico's population. In 2005, the percentage of the foreign-born population in Mexico was around 0.6 per cent, or 644,361 (UN DESA, 2005). Of these, the majority (69% in 2000) were from the United States (Castillo, 2006). Most are thought to be

the U.S.-born children of Mexican migrants or of Mexican border residents; however, an increasing number of U.S.-born senior citizens are settling in Mexico after their retirement. In 2000, the Mexican census showed 28,247 U.S.-born senior citizens in Mexico, representing an increase of 17.3 per cent over 1990 (MPI, 2006). There are also temporary workers from Central America, for example, from Guatemala, who tend to work in border areas in sectors such as agriculture, construction and domestic service.

- Over the last two decades or so, Mexico has become a significant country of transit, especially for Central American migrants. In 2006, over 270,000 Central Americans entered Mexico through its southern border trying to reach the U.S. Around 216,000 were detained and returned to their countries of origin. A smaller number of transit migrants originate from South America (mainly Ecuador and Brazil), China, Cuba, other Caribbean countries and Africa (around 3,000 for all nationalities) (CONAPO, 2006).

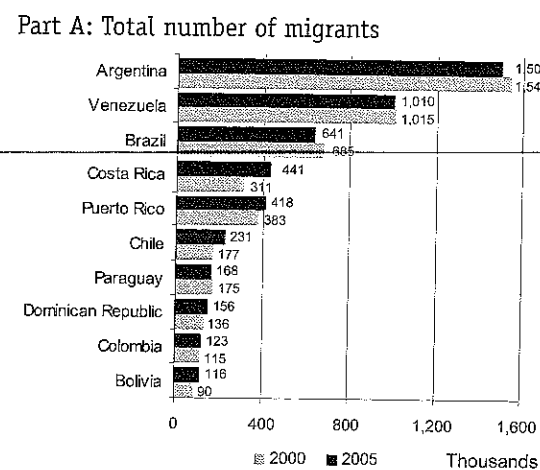
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN³

- Argentina, hosting 1.5 million migrants in 2005, is the top country of destination in Latin America and the Caribbean, followed by Venezuela (one million) and Brazil (641,000) (see Figure 4). These countries remain as the top three destination countries of the sub-region despite a decrease in the stock of migrants relative to 2000. Costa Rica, ranking fourth as country of destination in 2005, experienced the greatest increase in the stock of

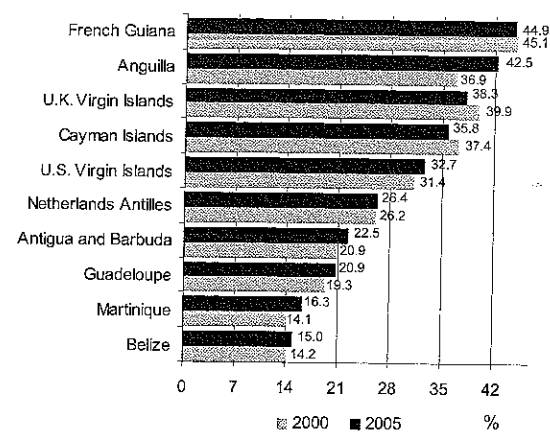
³ This section covers 14 Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Grenadines, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago); seven Central American countries (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama); 12 South American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela), and ten dependent territories or overseas departments (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, United States Virgin Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands).

migrants (130,000) compared to 2000. Dependent territories or overseas departments of larger countries, have the highest number of immigrants relative to the size of their population. French Guiana is at the top of the list with 44.9 per cent, followed by Anguilla (42.5%) and the British Virgin Islands (38.3%) (UN DESA, 2005).

Figure 4:
Stock of migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean, top ten destinations, 2000 and 2005



Part B: As a share of total population



Source: UN DESA, 2005.

The U.S. continues to host the highest number of Latin American and Caribbean migrants ...

- According to the Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the number of Latin American and Caribbean migrants increased considerably from an estimated total of 21 million in 2000 to 25 million in 2005,⁴ accounting in 2005 for four per cent of the population of their home countries (ECLAC, 2006a). Relative to the approximately 191 million international migrants in the world in 2005 (UN DESA, 2005), this sub-region accounts for over 13 per cent of all international migrants worldwide. In 2001, half of those migrants resided in the Americas (70% in the U.S. and 30% within Latin America and the Caribbean) and half in other parts of the world.

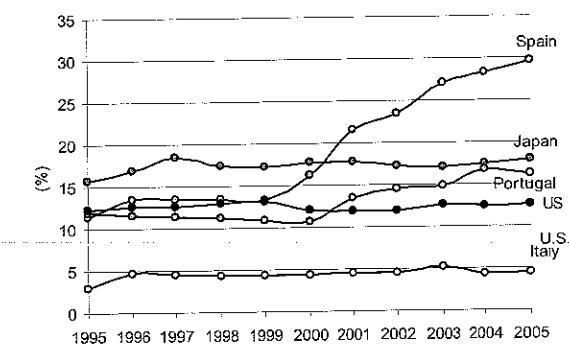
... and yet the flow of Latin American and Caribbean migrants towards Europe has increased during the last 15 years

- In geographical terms, the destinations of Latin American and Caribbean migrants have been expanding and diversifying. Owing to push factors, the demand for specialized workers and the emergence of social networks, the flows of migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean towards Europe (particularly Spain, Portugal and Italy), as well as Japan and Canada, increased over the period 1990-2005 (ECLAC, 2006a). According to ECLAC estimates, approximately three million people from Latin America and the Caribbean are living outside the sub-region in countries

⁴ The 2000 and 2005 figures of the total number of Latin American and Caribbean migrants include the number of migrants from Mexico, which accounts for around half of Latin American and Caribbean citizens living outside their country of origin. The importance of including Mexico as part of Latin American migration is that, in terms of migrant characteristics (reasons for migrating, migration conditions, living conditions in the host countries, etc.), Mexican migrants are more similar to the rest of Latin American and Caribbean citizens living outside their country of origin than to U.S. and Canadian citizens living outside their country of origin.

other than the U.S. Figure 5 shows the evolution of Latin American and Caribbean migration as a percentage of total immigration in some of the main countries of destination.

Figure 5:
Volume of Latin American and Caribbean migrants as a percentage of total migration, by main destination, 1995-2005



Source: OECD, Stocks of foreign population by nationality and stocks of foreign-born population by country of origin, online database.

- The changing migration patterns affecting Latin America and the Caribbean are complex. However, some of the larger trends in the sub-region have been shaped by natural and economic crises, gradual economic and political change, the feminization of migration flows and the diversification of countries of destination for Latin American migrants (O'Neil et al., 2005).

The importance of crises and economic change in migration trends

- Emigration trends from Latin America and the Caribbean can sometimes be traced clearly to specific crises, but flows triggered by general economic and cultural changes are more difficult to identify. Natural disasters and conflicts are the most obvious causes of migration, especially in Central America where natural disasters have

contributed to maintaining emigration flows, originally provoked by political violence two or three decades earlier. This migration is often between fairly close neighbouring countries, as in the case of Costa Rica, which hosted 296,461 migrants in 2000; 75 per cent of those migrants came from Nicaragua. But it can also occur at the sub-regional level as in the case of Panama, where most migrants come from South America (especially Colombia which contributed 26 per cent of the total migrant stock for 2000) and the Caribbean (O'Neil et al., 2005).

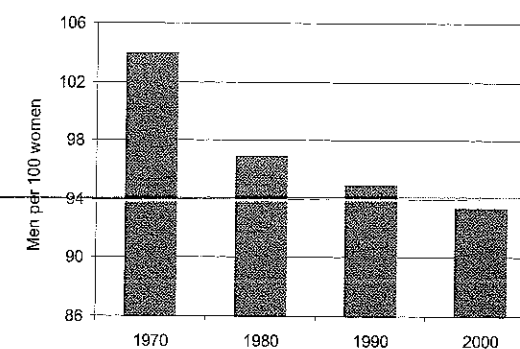
- Economic crises have played a powerful role in migration in Latin America, shaping new migration trends in some countries and even reversing migration patterns in some others. In Argentina, the economic crisis of 2001 caused a dramatic reversal in migration flows. Originally a magnet for migrants during the 1990s, Argentina experienced an exodus of 255,000 people from 2001 to 2003, nearly six times as many as during the period 1993-2000. Argentine emigration slowed down as the country recovered from the crisis (O'Neil et al., 2005).
- Two other countries, Venezuela and Brazil, show evolving migration trends due to changing economic circumstances. Venezuela, a net destination for migrant labour from other countries in the sub-region and southern Europe since the oil boom 50 years ago, has started to experience some migration outflows, especially to the U.S. and Spain. As to Brazil, the number of Brazilians in the U.S. and in Portugal has been rising to reach 356,000 in 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005) and 70,400 in 2005 (OECD, online datasets, 2007), respectively. In addition, Brazilians numbering 302,100 in 2005 accounted for the third-largest foreign group in Japan (OECD, online datasets, 2007).
- Ecuador provides another example of the importance of economic crises in shaping migration trends in Latin America, and also of the emergence of new migration patterns in the

sub-region. After the crisis that began in 1998, 550,000 Ecuadorians left the country (O'Neil et al., 2005). The Ecuadorian case shows two interesting transformations in emigration that can be observed in other Latin American countries as well. First, the major country of destination of Ecuadorian migrants has changed, with Spain receiving a yearly average inflow of 69,453 Ecuadorians from 2000 to 2004, compared to fewer than 1,000 migrants per year before the crisis in 1998, replacing the U.S. as the top destination (OECD, online datasets, 2007). Other countries where emigration patterns have shifted away from the U.S. as the top destination are Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and Venezuela.

- The second significant new trend observed in Ecuador, and that can be extended throughout Latin America, is the increased importance of women in intra-regional migration. According to ECLAC estimates, on the American continent as a whole, there has been a shift replacing predominantly female migration in the 1970s and 1980s by mainly male migration thereafter (González and Sánchez, 2002). However, if the analysis is restricted to cross-border migration between Latin American countries, there is a strong increase in the number of women relative to total emigration. Figure 6 shows the trend in gender balance among international migrants in Latin America between 1970 and 2000. Latin America records the highest proportion of women among international migrants in the developing parts of the world (ECLAC, 2006a). Female migration in Latin America and the Caribbean has also been characterized by the increased participation of women in the labour market, which confirms the increase in the feminization of migration in this sub-region. In addition, according to the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN INSTRAW), 54 per cent of Latin American migrants are women, and the majority of their remittances (30% of their income, compared to 10% for men)

is used for education, health care and small businesses that benefit their families. The amount of money female migrants send home accounts for more than half of total remittances transferred (LP, 2007).

Figure 6:
Gender ratio of the stock of intra-regional migration from Latin America and the Caribbean, 1970-2000



Source: ECLAC, 2006a.

SOME TOPICAL ISSUES IN MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN THE AMERICAS

Irregular migration in the region is substantial and rising

- In the Americas, as in many other parts of the world, irregular migration is substantial and rising (see also Chapter 8). In the U.S., for example, although the irregular migration problem has been felt for some considerable time, rising numbers during the last decade have pushed the topic towards the top of the national agenda. According to the OECD (2006), net irregular immigration to the United States is estimated to be in the vicinity of 500,000 persons per year, which amounts to around 0.15-0.20 per cent of the total population per year. The Pew Hispanic Center (Passel, 2006) estimated the stock of irregular migrants at between 11.5 and 12 million persons in March 2006, and suggests that

most irregular migrants arrived since 1990. These numbers concur broadly with the estimates of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, according to which the volume of the irregular migration flow increased from 120,000 per year in the 1980s to 440,000 per year during the period 1990-1994, and to 650,000 per year during the period 1995-1999, to reach 850,000 migrants per year during the period 2000-2005 (Passel, 2006). Mexico is the major country of origin and transit for irregular migration to the U.S. (over 450,000 a year). This flow has become more pronounced since the 1990s, even though Mexico has strengthened its migration control measures. According to Mexico's National Migration Institute (Instituto Nacional de Migración, 2005), the number of apprehensions and deportations of irregular migrants increased from 215,695 in 2004 to 240,269 in 2005 but decreased to 167,437 during the first ten months of 2006.

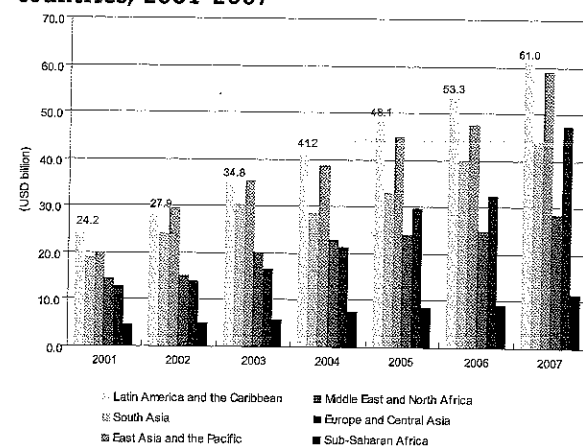
- During the last ten years, South America has become characterized by intensive outmigration towards North America and Europe, while traditional intra-regional movements have declined. The most important source countries for irregular migration to Europe are Ecuador and Peru, but also traditional destination countries like Argentina and Brazil. In Spain, for example, in 2003 a majority of irregular migrants came from Latin America (the top three source countries being Ecuador - 20%, Colombia - 8% and Bolivia - 7%). The same is true of Portugal, where six per cent of irregular migrants came from Brazil in 2004 (Kostova Karaboytcheva, 2006).

Remittances are increasing in the region and play a central role in economic development

- An important emerging migration issue in the Americas is the increasing role of remittances in economic development. According to the World Bank (2008), in 2007 the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean received USD 60.7

billion in remittances, over 16 per cent more than in 2006, with this sub-region receiving 24.14 per cent of total remittances sent to developing countries in 2007 (World Bank, 2008) (see Figure 7). Moreover, the Inter-American Development Bank (2003) estimates that the actual impact of remittances on local economies can be enhanced by a factor of three through their multiplier effects. At the national level, the country with the highest remittance inflows in the region is Mexico (41% of total flows) (World Bank, 2008), which is estimated to have received USD 25.1 billion in 2007, making it the third largest recipient of remittances in the world, after India and China and followed by the Philippines. In addition, in 2006, in seven countries in the region remittances accounted for more than ten per cent of GDP (World Bank, 2008): Honduras (25.6%), Guyana (24.3%), Haiti (21.6%), Jamaica (18.5%), El Salvador (18.2%), Nicaragua (12.2%) and Guatemala (10.3%) (World Bank, 2008).

Figure 7:
Workers' remittances sent to developing countries, 2001-2007



Note: Workers' remittances, compensation of employees and migrant transfers.

Source: World Bank (2008), based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2007.

Brain drain is a growing concern in the region

- Brain drain in the Caribbean has become an issue of particular relevance, given the rate of emigration against the size of the pool of highly qualified persons. While in South America and Mexico brain drain accounts for ten and five per cent of the college and high-school educated population respectively, in the case of Caribbean countries nearly one-third of college and high-school educated citizens live in the U.S. (Lowell and Suro, 2002). Jamaica and Haiti have some of the highest rates of emigration of the highly skilled in the world, with two-thirds of their college graduates abroad (O'Neil et al., 2005). Even if the emigration of highly skilled persons is considered to yield some direct beneficial effects to countries of origin, Beine et al. (2002) argue that in the case of Jamaica and Haiti they are made unambiguously poorer.

The movement of refugees and displaced persons is no longer a concern on the scale of the previous two decades

- Finally, the movement of refugees and displaced persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, while still of significance, is no longer experienced on the scale of the previous two decades. The number of refugees leaving the sub-region has fallen considerably compared to the 1980s and 1990s. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of the end of 2005, there were 2.51 million "persons of concern" from Latin America and the Caribbean, compared to 8.86 million in Asia, 5.17 in Africa, 3.68 million in Europe, 716,806 in North America and 82,492 in Oceania (UNHCR, 2006). However, the estimated number of displaced people in some Latin American countries is substantial. For instance, according to one reliable source,

there were in 2007 between 2.39 and four million internally displaced persons in Colombia, the second highest IDP figure in the world after Sudan (IDMC, 2008). In addition, more than 400,000 Colombians have refugee status within the region and in the U.S. (O'Neil et al., 2005), and the number of asylum applications by Colombians in Ecuador has increased from 36 in 1999 to 11,388 in 2003 totalling 37,143 applications during the period 2000-2005 (UNHCR, 2006). This trend represents a significant challenge not only for Colombia, but also for all host countries in the region.

Textbox Reg. 1

Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Care and Treatment: Targeting Migrants and Mobile Populations in the Americas

Many socio-economic and psychosocial factors that drive migration, such as poverty, unemployment, political instability and conflicts, are also closely associated with the proliferation of HIV infections, as their spread traces rural-urban migration paths within countries and subsequent return migration to areas and communities of origin. At the global level, the spread of HIV is often associated with the flow of people fleeing armed conflicts and civil unrest, but also accompanies the growth of international tourism, business travel and commercial activities, while the rise in international criminal activities, such as the smuggling and the trafficking in human beings, has also become an important factor in the spread of the disease. In the destination country, migrants can be perceived as potential sources of HIV infections, while they themselves face important obstacles in accessing health services and advice on either prevention or care and support in living with HIV, and are frequently barred from permanent residence status if mandatory tests show them to be HIV positive.

Young, lonely and isolated adult migrant men living and working far away from home, from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, with little or no knowledge of the local language, frequently undocumented, are particularly vulnerable to becoming infected with HIV, a situation further compounded by exploitative working conditions, lack of access to health and social services and a high number of sexual partners, including same-sex partners and prostitutes, as well as excessive drinking, substance abuse and risky conduct under stress (Hirsch et al., 2002; Organista and Kibo, 2005). Studies have shown that on the Mexico-Guatemalan border, 70 per cent of truck drivers (*trailereros*), who are either married or in a stable relationship, neglect the use of condoms to protect themselves and their partner, even though 40 per cent would have engaged in extramarital sex, including prostitution (Bronfman-Pertzovsky and Leyva, 2000). Female migrant workers are especially vulnerable to abuse, including trafficking, forced labour and prostitution. An estimated 60 per cent of undocumented migrant women would have been exposed to some kind of sexual activity during their migration experience, ranging from sexual abuse, coerced sex or new sexual partners (Aguilar, 1996). Different cultural factors and attitudes to sexuality in the destination country contribute to a migrant's vulnerability, as do the different approaches to healthcare and medical practice, together with unfamiliar legal and administrative rules.

In the Americas, a major risk factor for HIV transmission is unprotected sex between men, though the heterosexual transmission of HIV has also become a major risk factor for the wives and female partners of returnees. In the Caribbean, the high HIV prevalence reflects the significant level of population mobility and poses a major challenge for the control of the epidemic (Borland et al., 2004).

Unmet health needs are common among migrant workers and their access to healthcare is often affected by a migrant's legal status. Some of the most frequently reported obstacles to healthcare cited by Latino migrants in the U.S. is their irregular

status and fear of deportation (Brown et al., 2002; Cunningham, et al., 2000), insufficient economic means, lack of health insurance and competing essential needs (e.g. housing, food, transportation) as well as language, cultural factors and stigma (Solorio, et al., 2004). According to a 2006 New York City Department of Health report, foreign-born adults with low incomes are less likely to have Medicaid than others born in the U.S. (29% and 42%, respectively) and foreign-born adults under the age of 65 who speak only Spanish are nearly twice as likely to be unable to obtain medical care when needed as those who speak English (15% and 8%, respectively). They are also less likely to use preventive measures, and low-income migrants in New York are less likely to have tested for HIV during the past year (Kim et al., 2006).

Because of the higher vulnerability to HIV infection among migrants and other mobile populations, a number of countervailing initiatives have been launched throughout the region. Thus, since 2001, the HIV/AIDS Mobile Population Project for Central America, Mexico and the U.S., developed under the auspices of the National Institute of Public Health, Mexico, and the IMPSIDA project¹ of the United Nations, have been active at eleven border-crossing points throughout Mesoamerica with educational initiatives, access to free condoms and to HIV counselling and testing services (Bronfman-Pertsovsky and Leyva, 2000). Similar HIV-testing initiatives were launched in El Salvador at the San Cristobal border-crossing point, providing guidelines for the care of mobile populations as well as pamphlets, posters and other tools to raise general awareness and knowledge about HIV and AIDS among mobile populations (Bortman et al., 2006).

Another example of effective practice in the region is the 1990 AIDS Law in Argentina, which guarantees full access to healthcare and treatment regardless of the migrant's status (Art. 8),² and various programmes, services and guidelines are being offered and implemented in response to this political mandate (Vásquez et al., 2005).

Among the positive examples of prevention exercises for highly mobile populations is an innovative programme in Brazil aimed at truck drivers. As they wait for customs clearance at the Brazil-Argentina-Paraguay border, two outreach educators hand them educational material and invite them to a mobile trailer for health services, including testing and counselling for HIV and syphilis, as well as the management of sexually transmitted infection (STI) syndromes. In addition, they have their blood pressure taken, are screened for diabetes and asked to return for a follow-up visit two weeks later. Interviews were conducted with a random sample of 1,775 male truck drivers before the screening exercise and with another 2,408 eighteen months later. Of the truck drivers interviewed during the post-intervention period, half had participated in the programme; one-third had participated in HIV testing and counselling; and only around 13 per cent were unaware of the project. Nearly 2,000 truck drivers participated in pre-test counselling for HIV and syphilis. Of the 1,795 who gave blood samples, 83 per cent returned for post-test counselling and results. Only 0.3 per cent tested positive for HIV and 4.7 per cent for Syphilis.

However, examples of successful initiatives are few and far between, and regular and large-scale services for HIV/AIDS testing, prevention, care and treatment, and systematic and reliable information for mobile populations, in particular irregular migrants, on how to access them are lacking or, at best, uneven throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and North America. In order to combat and control the spread of HIV/AIDS, governments and policymakers need to devote more attention and means to the issues at stake and strive towards universal access to prevention, care and treatment for mobile and hard-to-reach populations, such as migrants. To be effective, such service outreach must also aim to breach the social isolation and stigma frequently experienced by migrants, and to gain an insight and understanding of their social networks, relationships and dynamics, and not limit itself to the mere handout of condoms and HIV/AIDS testing and education.

By the end of 2008, IOM Washington and the HIV/STI Unit of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) will publish research on migrants' access to health in the Caribbean, with a particular focus on HIV, as a follow-up to a Baseline Assessment on mobile populations, conducted in 2004 (Borland et al., 2004).³

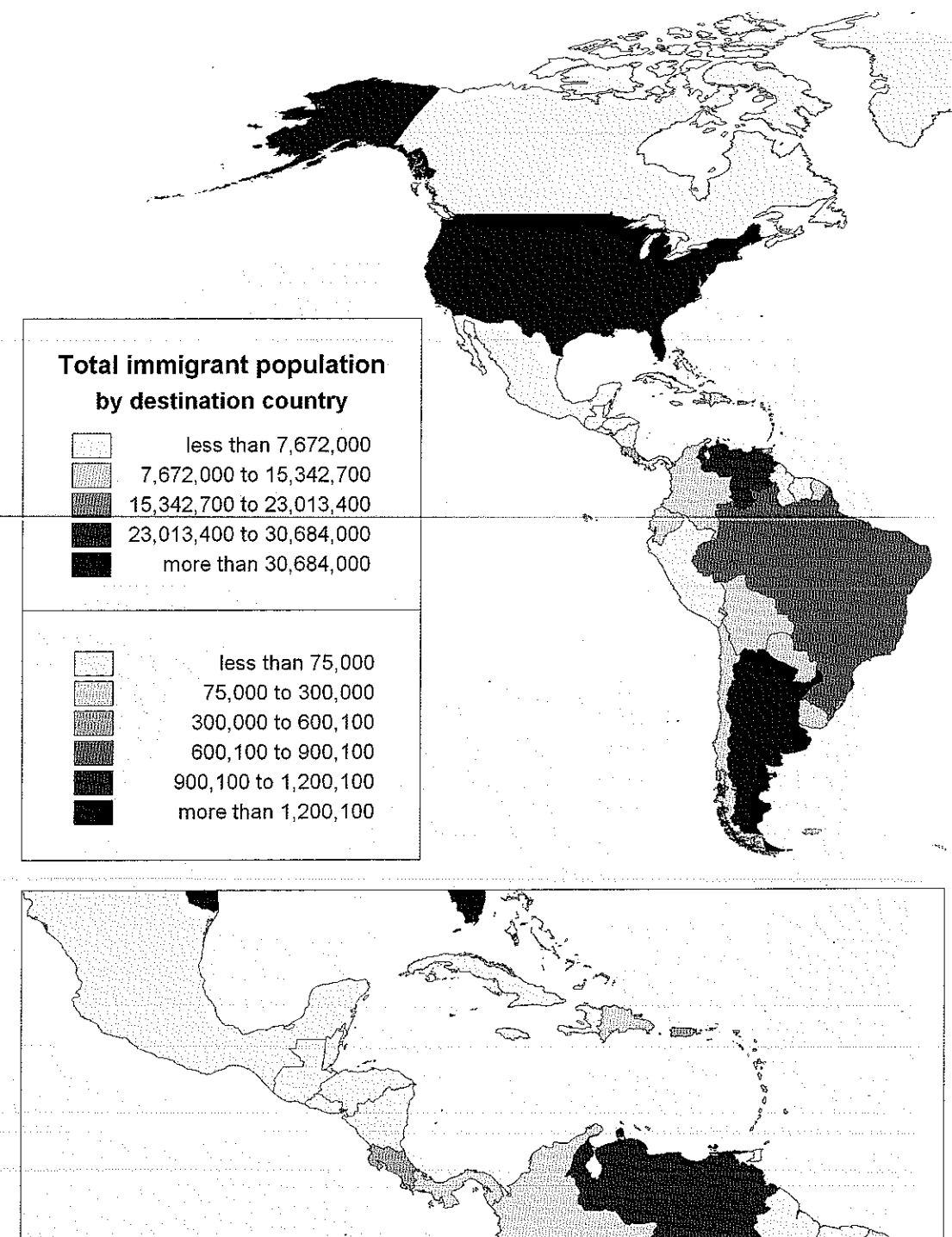
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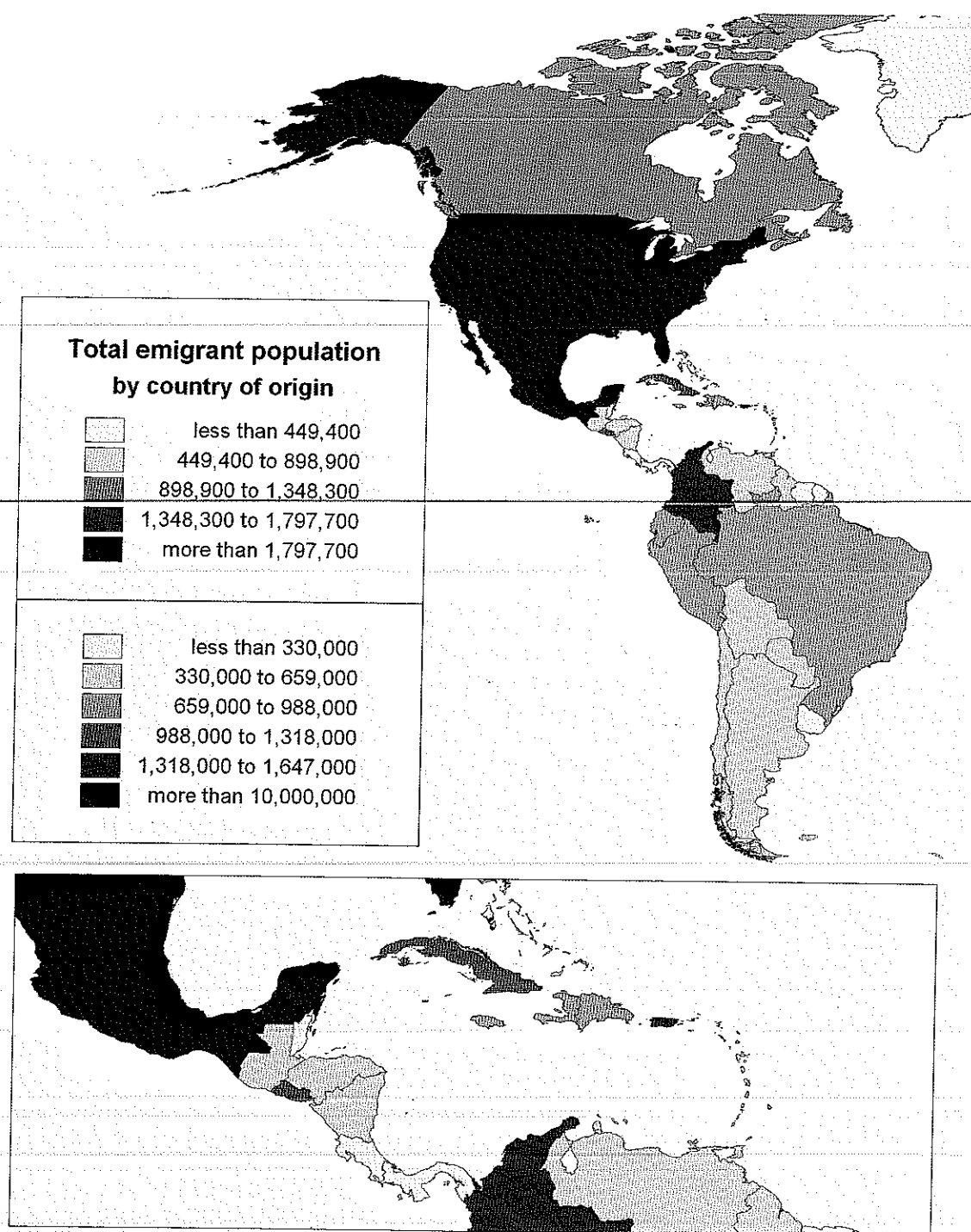
¹ Iniciativa Mesoamericana para Prevenir la expansión del VIH-SIDA [Mesoamerican Initiative for Prevention of the Spread of HIV/AIDS].

² Argentina, Ley Nacional de SIDA [Aids Law] No. 23.798, Republic of Argentina, Buenos Aires, 16 August 1990.

³ *HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean* (forthcoming). On the basis of a comparison between five countries (Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago), the study covers the different facets of the relationship between HIV/AIDS and migration in the region. It includes an analysis of vulnerability factors in the migration process, dynamics and impact of health workers' migration, and legal and political responses to the phenomenon.

Source: HIV/STI Unit, PAHO, Washington, D.C.





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