



**International Migration Institute**  
James Martin 21st Century School  
University of Oxford



# Turning the tide?

## Why development will not stop migration

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**Workshop Migration and Development:  
Policy and Practice  
Thursday, 6th December 2007  
London**

# Background

- Concerns on (regular and irregular) migration of low skilled migrants to Europe and North America
- Generally perceived as a *problem in need of control* (in contrast to high skilled migration).
- Policy response: Restrictive policies and increasing border controls
- However, immigration of the lower skilled has not stopped, but rather changed its face
  - Tendency towards permanent settlement
  - Reliance of *de facto* labour migrants on other legal migration channels
  - Increasing irregular character of migration
  - Diversifying migration methods and migration routes





(AP PHOTO)



AFP







# Overland and maritime migration routes to North Africa, the Middle East and Western Europe

**Countries**

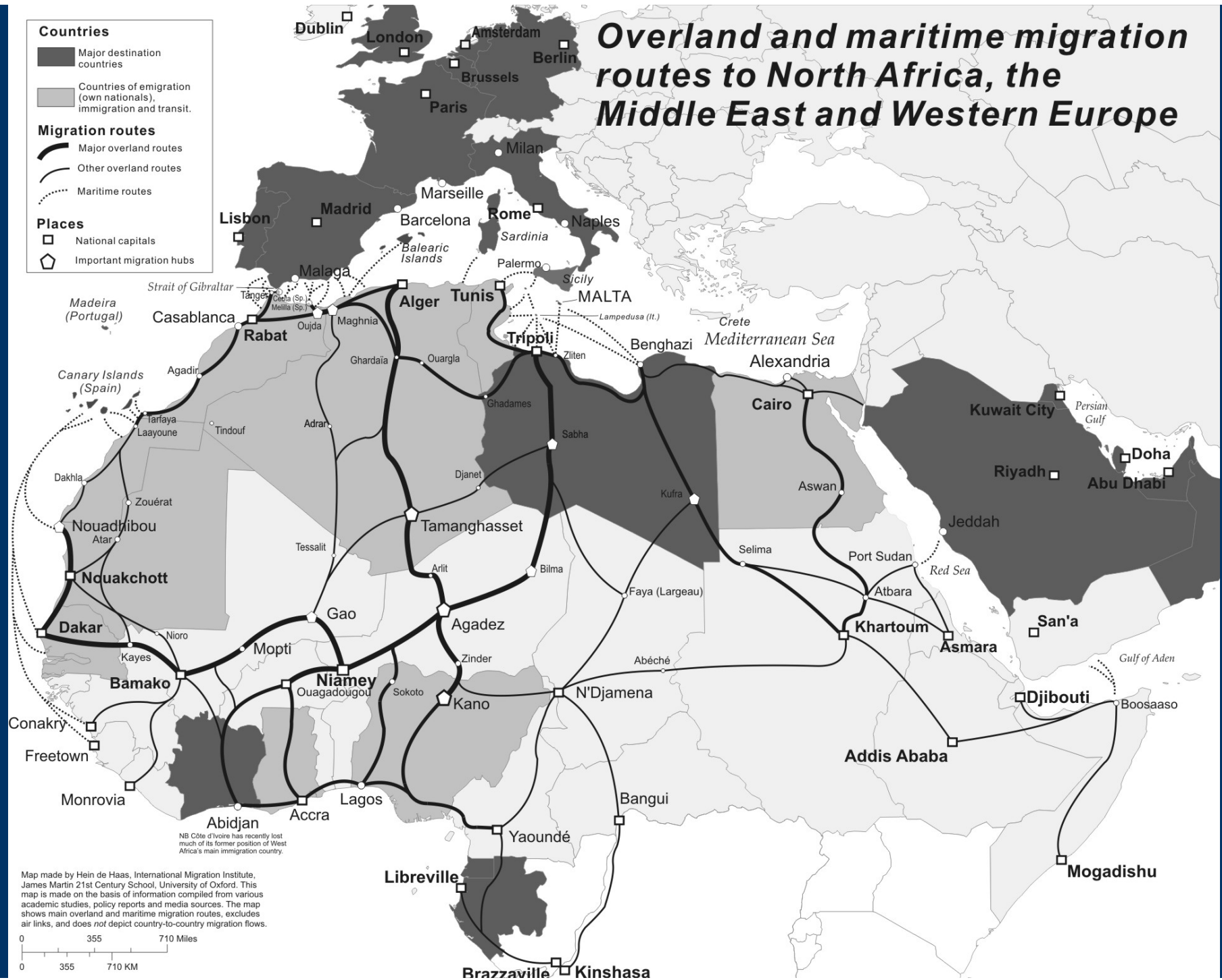
- Major destination countries
- Countries of emigration (own nationals), immigration and transit.

**Migration routes**

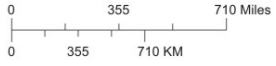
- Major overland routes
- Other overland routes
- Maritime routes

**Places**

- National capitals
- Important migration hubs



Map made by Hein de Haas, International Migration Institute, James Martin 21st Century School, University of Oxford. This map is made on the basis of information compiled from various academic studies, policy reports and media sources. The map shows main overland and maritime migration routes, excludes air links, and does not depict country-to-country migration flows.



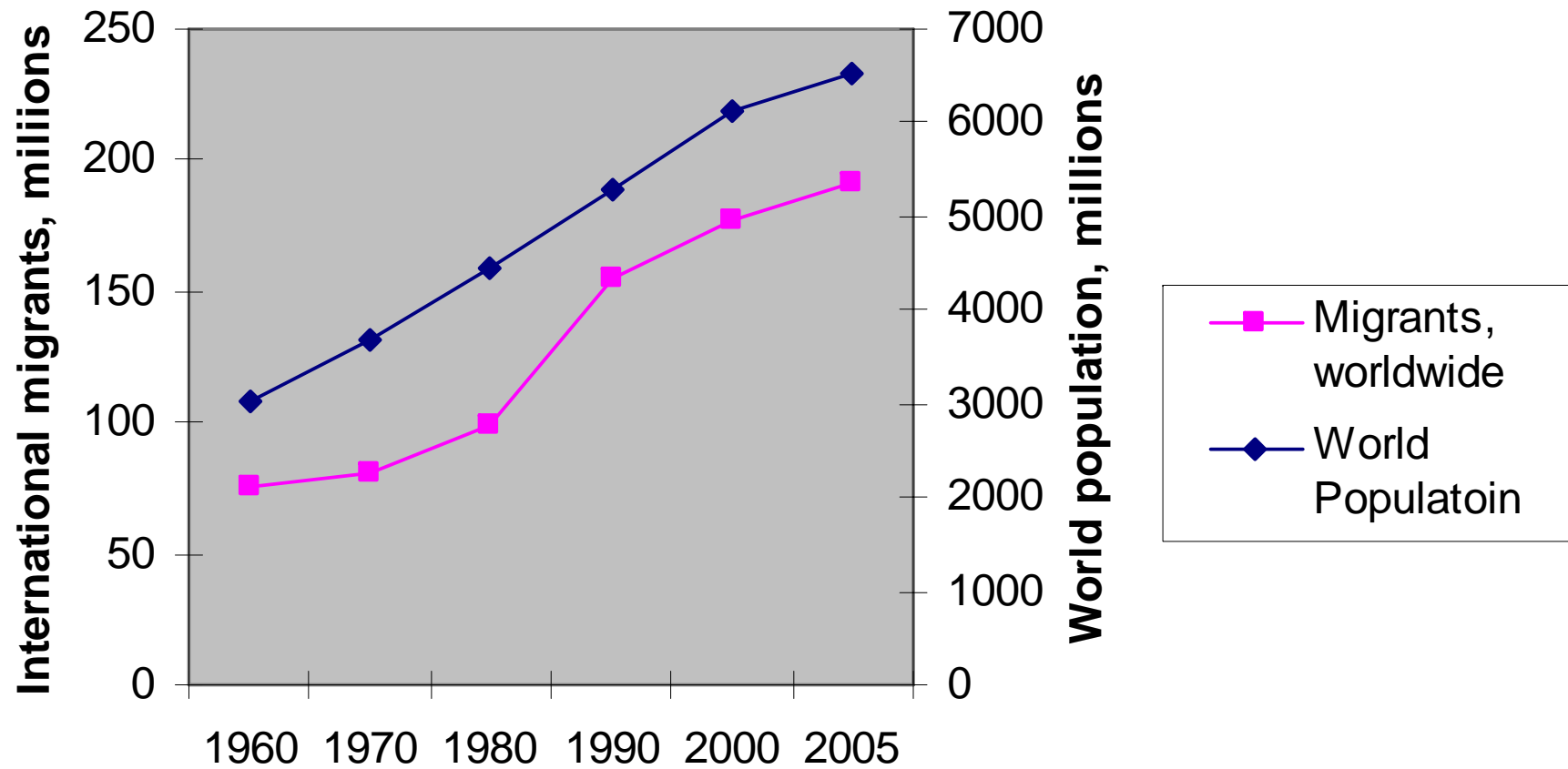
# First of all: A reality check

- In relative terms, there has *not* been a major increase in world migration



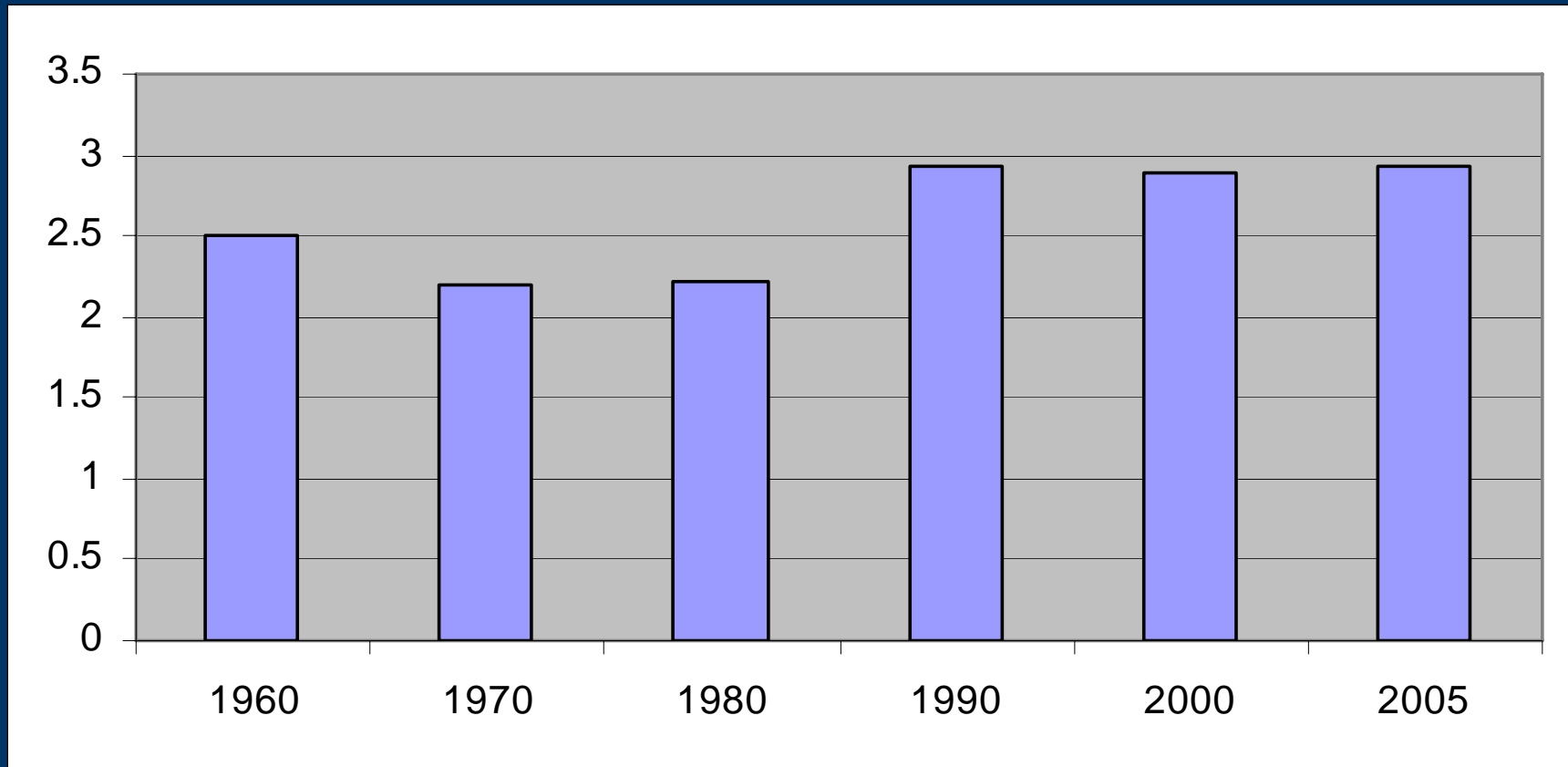
# Global migration trends

(Source: UNPD)



# International migrants, as percentage of world population

(Source: UNPD)



# First of all: A reality check

- In relative terms, there has *not* been a major increase in world migration
- There has been a reorientation of global migration flows, with a major increase in South-North migration
- Irregular migration is not “massive”.
- However, concerns about (irregular) migration are legitimate  
→ hence, the interest in identifying policies to address the phenomenon.

# Smart solutions?

*The argument:*

The only way to reduce migration from poor countries is to address its “root causes” by promoting development.

“if you don’t help the third world . . . then you will have these poor people in our society” (Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark, 1995)

“Broad-based and rapid development will induce potential poverty migrants to stay at home” (IOM and UNCTAD, 1996).

“The problem of immigration, the dramatic consequences of which we are witnessing, can only be addressed effectively [. . .] through an ambitious and coordinated development [plan] to fight its root causes” (José Manuel Barroso, 2005)

# Smart solutions?

## *Perceived instruments*

- Aid
- Trade
- Return migration and “Diaspora involvement”
- Circular migration as a “win-win-win” strategy  
(remittances, *co-développement*)

# Practical concerns

## *Aid*

- Limited scope and effectiveness of aid.
- Limited credibility of ‘aid instead of migration’ policies

## *Circular migration*

- Old wine in new bottles?
- Enforcing return? (“Safeguards which prevent overstaying and ensure return are key elements” – EC Council Nov 07).
- Chicken is to egg as development is to return (Agunias)
- Temporary migration as a “win-win-win” strategy?

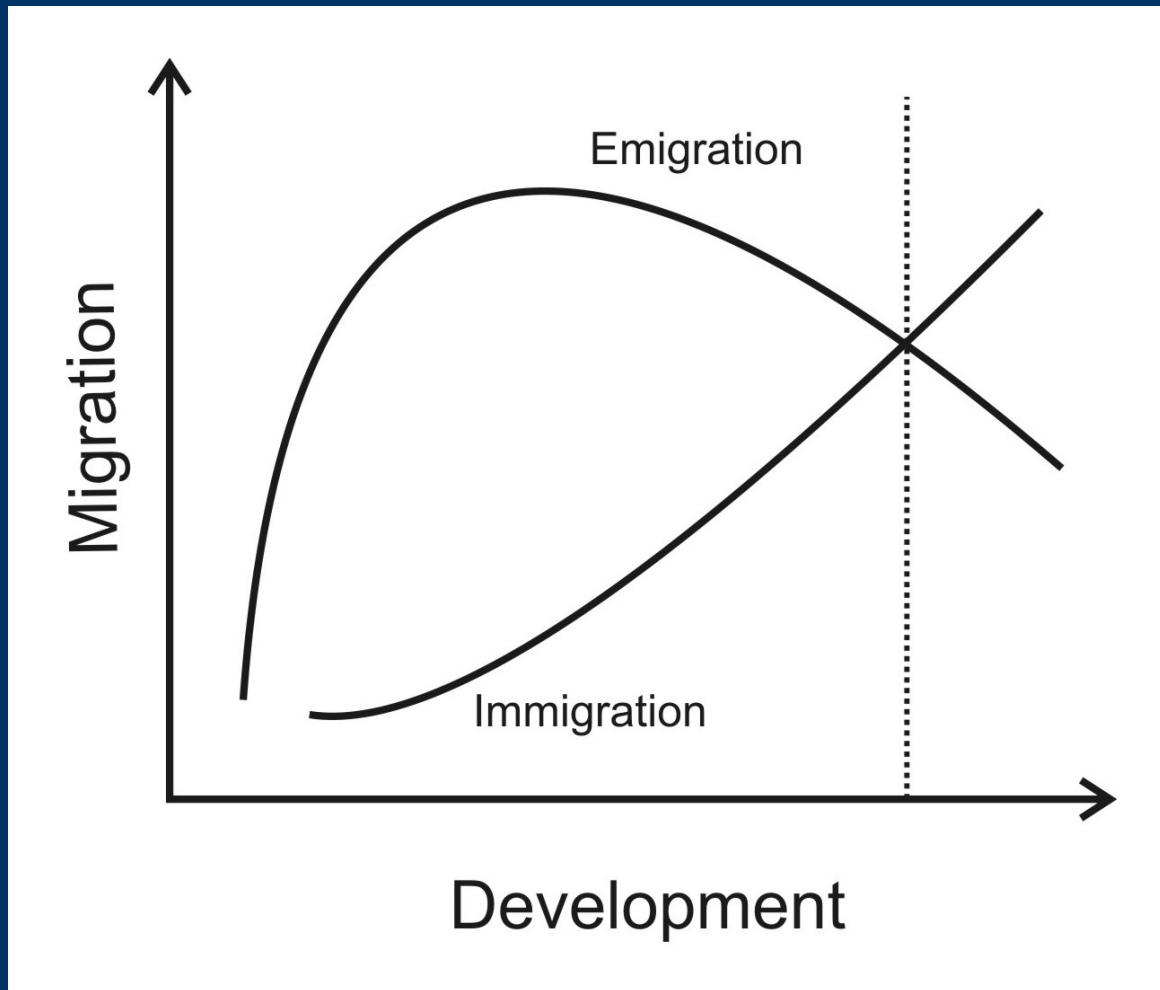
## *Trade*

- Protectionist policies are inconsistent with development aims.

# More development, less migration?

- Most international migrants do not come from the poorest communities and poorest countries
- Development and migration complements rather than substitutes
- Social and economic development is generally associated with *higher* levels of mobility and migration due to its effects on people's (1) ability and (2) aspirations to migrate
- Hence, the relationship between development and net emigration is neither linear nor inversely proportional.

# Migration transitions





# Being right for the wrong reasons

- “Take-off” development in the poorest countries may well result in increasing migration to Europe and elsewhere.
- Sustained demand for low en semi-skilled migrant labour in Europe → continuing immigration is likely.
- Reframing the question: We should learn to see migration as an integral part of development processes rather than as a problem to be solved, and maximise its development benefits, and minimise its negative effects.

# Questions

1. Should migration be incorporated in development policies as a *goal* or a *tool*?
2. How can development policies enhance the positive development impact of migration in origin countries?
3. How can (im)migration policies contribute to improving the development impact of migration?



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