

## Economic and Environmental Aspects of Migration<sup>1</sup>

### *Migration and Security*

Over the past 45 years, the world has witnessed increasing interconnectedness and globalization, largely as a result of the liberalization of the international movement of goods, capital, and services. Over the same period, the number of people living outside their country of birth has more than doubled, from an estimated 75 million in 1960 to nearly 191 million in 2005.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the growing liberalization of the international movement of goods, capital, and services, the cross-border movement of people has been an area that states have wished to control. Uncontrolled, irregular migration on a large scale is often perceived as a threat to national security and sovereignty, while regular, legal migration is welcomed and supported. However, migration is increasingly viewed in terms of a more comprehensive security concept that takes into account political, economic, environmental, and social aspects, thus making the linkages between international migration and security more evident.

1. Migration may influence social stability, which is an important factor in internal security, when the inflow of immigrants is significant and the host population is not well informed about the positive contributions the newcomers are making to the local economy and cultural life. Ineffective or entirely absent integration policies hinder immigrants from learning the local language and settling into a new society – factors that may give rise to negative reactions on the part of the host population.
2. Immigrants are sometimes perceived – particularly during periods of high unemployment – as a problem for economic security in the host country, and an economic burden on schools, housing, and social security systems.
3. Increasing irregular migration and ineffectual migration management policies can negatively influence bilateral relations between countries of origin and destination.
4. Various international agencies, such as the Red Cross,<sup>3</sup> the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),<sup>4</sup> and the United Na-

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1 The views expressed in this paper are made in a personal capacity and do not necessarily reflect the views of the OCEEA or the OSCE.

2 Cf. OSCE/IOM/ILO, *Handbook on Establishing Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination*, 2006, p. 1.

3 Cf. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *World Disasters Report 2003*, which estimates that 25 million people have become “environmental migrants”.

tions University<sup>5</sup> note growing numbers of displaced persons as a result of environmental problems such as drought, desertification, deforestation, natural and man-made disasters, and climate change. Environmental degradation is thus one more push factor that leads to increased and involuntary migration, which in turn may aggravate the social, economic, and inter-state tensions mentioned above in points 1-3.

#### *Migration and the OSCE's Second Dimension*

Comprehensive security has been a central and integral element of the OSCE's philosophy and activities since the Organization's inception in 1975. Migration was already included as a component of its comprehensive security approach in the Helsinki Final Act (1975), which identified freedom of movement as one of its founding commitments. In a number of follow-up documents, including those adopted at the Ministerial Councils of Maastricht in 2003 and Sofia in 2004, the OSCE participating States reaffirmed migration as a comprehensive security issue. Until 2005, the OSCE dealt with migration mainly from a human dimension perspective (combating discrimination against migrants, promoting the human rights of migrants, providing assistance in reforming legislation, addressing internally displaced persons). Only since 2005, the year of the Slovenian OSCE Chairmanship, have economic and environmental migration issues been introduced into the work of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA). The Slovenian Chairmanship chose to make migration one of its priorities, recognizing the added value the OSCE could bring to the topic by using its three-dimensional nature to address the complexity of migration in a more comprehensive manner.<sup>6</sup> The 2005 Economic Forum and its preparatory conferences – the main platforms for dialogue in the second dimension – were devoted to “Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities: Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE area”. The outcome of the Economic Forum was the adoption of the Ministerial Decision on Migration<sup>7</sup> in December 2005, which laid the foundation for the OCEEA's migration activities. The Minis-

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4 Cf. UNHCR, *The State of the World's Refugees 2006, Human displacement in the new millennium, April 2006*, p. 27.

5 Cf. United Nations University, UNU-EHS, Institute for Environment and Human Security, Control, Adapt or Flee: How to Face Environmental Migration? in: *InterSecTions 5/2007*.

6 Cf. Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, the Chairman-in-Office, *Food-for-Thought Paper on the Strategy on Managing Migration*, CIO.GAL/122/05, 5 September 2005.

7 Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, *Thirteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, 5 and 6 December 2005, Ljubljana 2005*, MC13EW66, 6 December 2005, Decision No. 2/05, Migration, MC.DEC/2/05 of 6 December 2005, pp. 20-21.

terial Decision encouraged the OSCE to make use of its comprehensive approach, including by:

1. developing a stronger partnership and exploiting synergies with international bodies that have a specific focus on migration;
2. facilitating dialogue and co-operation between OSCE participating States, including countries of origin, transit, and destination in the OSCE area, as well as the OSCE Partners for Co-operation and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation; and
3. assisting participating States, upon their request, in developing effective migration policies.

The commitment to migration and the wish to continue work being done on migration and integration issues in all three dimensions were re-affirmed by the Ministerial Statement on Migration adopted under the Belgian Chairmanship in 2006. This statement also encouraged the OSCE institutions and structures to facilitate the positive impact of migration on development in countries of origin.<sup>8</sup>

The Slovenian Chairmanship can also be credited for having put environmental migration on the agenda of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. In the same year, upon request of the Chairman-in-Office, Dimitrij Rupel, the Panel of Eminent Persons gave the following recommendation to the OSCE's Permanent Council: "Environmental problems have important security aspects in fields that the OSCE could address, *inter alia* the growing problem of environmental refugees and internally displaced persons".<sup>9</sup> The topic has also been addressed under the 2007 Spanish Chairmanship and is explicitly mentioned in the 2007 Madrid Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Security.<sup>10</sup>

By emphasizing the link between the environment and migration/forced displacement, the Slovenian and Spanish Chairmanships have placed environmentally induced migration – a topic that has not received a lot of attention in UN circles – on the OSCE's agenda. Key questions that remain contentious are the legal status and categorization of those displaced by environmental factors. The term environmental "refugee" has so far failed to achieve general recognition, because there is a risk that use of the term "climate/en-

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8 Cf. Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, *Fourteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, 4 and 5 December 2006, Brussels 2006*, MC14EW79, 5 December 2006, Ministerial Statement on Migration, MC.DOC/6/06 of 5 December 2006, p. 10.

9 Common Purpose – Towards a More Effective OSCE. Final Report and Recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons On Strengthening the OSCE, 27 June 2005, reprinted in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2005*, Baden-Baden 2006, pp. 359-379.

10 Cf. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Fifteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, 29-30 November 2007, Madrid 2007, Declaration on Environment and Security*, MC.DOC/4/07, point 2: "Environmental degradation, including both natural and man-made disasters, and their impact on migratory pressures, could be a potential additional contributor to conflict."

vironmental refugee” would dilute the viability and utility of the term for those who are currently eligible for protection under the legal definition of refugee provided by the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Furthermore, politicians and the public may judge “economic” or “environmental” refugees to be taking illegitimate advantage of refugee protection mechanisms. Nevertheless, environmentally displaced persons do not fall entirely through the cracks of international law, as some do qualify under the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) framework.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, under the UN’s “cluster system”, the UNHCR has the lead responsibility for providing assistance to victims of major natural disasters (earthquake, tsunami). However, what remains unaddressed to date is how to deal with victims of “creeping” disasters like desertification and other effects of climate change, particularly those who have crossed international borders in search of a more sustainable resource base.

To date, understanding of the interconnections between environment, economy, and migration remains marginal and the topic has been under-researched, leading only to vague numerical estimates and woolly definitions of who would actually come under an “environmentally displaced persons” protection mechanism. It is for this reason that the OSCE Chairman-in-Office made the following statement at the 2007 Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague: “Migration resulting from environmental factors – whether within a State or between extensive geographical areas – represents an important issue for the future of the OSCE area. Our task should be to consider the role of the Organization in the promotion of good practices and in the co-ordination of research methods in order to increase knowledge regarding migration flows brought about by environmental circumstances, a task that affects the OSCE area and in which the contributions of our Partners for Co-operation will be decisive.”<sup>12</sup>

#### *Migration Trends in the OSCE Area*

In general, the root causes of international migration can be said to derive from economic, demographic, and social disparities as well as conflicts, climate change, and environmental degradation or disasters. Since the 1990s, following the break-up of the former Soviet Union, issues of involuntary mi-

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11 Internally displaced persons are defined as “persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man made disasters, and who are within the territory of their own country”, *Analytical Report of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons*, UN document E/CN.4/1992/23, 14 February 1992.

12 Opening Statement by OSCE Chairman-in-Office Miguel Ángel Moratinos at the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum – Part 2: “Key challenges to ensure environmental security and sustainable development in the OSCE area: Land degradation, soil contamination and water management, EF.DEL/49/07, Prague, 21-23 May 2007, 22 May 2007.

gration and displacement<sup>13</sup> have faded into the background in the OSCE area. Migration flows have mainly been motivated by regional economic disparities. However, some worrying environmental trends in the OSCE region both East and West of Vienna, notably desertification and climate change, may yet again lead to “forced” displacement, especially in economically vulnerable areas.

From a geographic point of view, the OSCE countries span a number of regions displaying quite different characteristics in terms of migration. First, the OSCE area includes two countries that have traditionally attracted large numbers of immigrants, Canada and the United States. In terms of numbers, the United States, with 39 million foreigner residents, has the largest number of immigrants.<sup>14</sup>

Second, the OSCE encompasses the whole of the European Union (EU), for which a common asylum and immigration policy has increasingly become an important area of co-operation. There are mainly three reasons for this: The challenges resulting from increased migration flows to the European Union, including a significant rise in all forms of irregular migration and the asylum crisis in the 1990s, made it clear that unilateral measures undertaken by individual states were insufficient. In addition, the process of European integration and the effects of EU enlargement led to co-operation in fields considered to be part of migration policy, such as border control and visa issues, asylum policy, and family reunification. And finally, there is a growing understanding among EU member states that well managed migration can compensate for the negative economic impacts of population ageing and labour force decline that affect many EU countries.<sup>15</sup>

Net migration to the EU rose between 1998 and 2005. Today, the estimated numbers of migrants in the European Union is 42 million, most of whom live in Germany, France, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, and Austria. Of the 42 million, 14 million emigrated from other EU countries, and the remaining 28 million from outside the EU. In terms of the typology of migration flows,<sup>16</sup> labour migrants constitute only a fraction of the total. In most

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13 The number of people emigrating from Armenia and Azerbaijan doubled during the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (1988-1990) and a similar increase was observed in Georgia during the worst years of armed conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (1990-1993). In Tajikistan, outflows tripled during the civil war (1992-1993). For more details, see OSCE, *Background Paper, Second Preparatory Seminar for the 13th Economic Forum*, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 24-25 January 2005.

14 Cf. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, *Implementation of OSCE Commitments, Report for the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment*, Sixteenth Annual Session in Kyiv, 5-9 July 2007, p. 1.

15 In its Communication on a Community Immigration Policy in November 2000, the European Commission stated that the migration policy of the EU member states since 1970 does not represent an adequate answer to current demographic and economic challenges. In its Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment in June 2003, the European Commission repeated the need for migration management to meet the challenges facing the EU market.

16 Four broad types of migration can be distinguished: labour migration, including short- and long-term migrants and seasonal workers; family-linked migration; asylum seekers, who,

EU member states, labour migrants make up between ten and 35 per cent of the permanent immigration flow (2004 figures), as a significant numbers of entrants arrive via family reunification or as asylum seekers.<sup>17</sup>

The third OSCE region, which is rapidly gaining in importance with regard to labour migration, is the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). During the last 15 years the nature of migration flows in the CIS region has shifted from primarily forced migration as a result of strong political push factors, to voluntary economic migration.<sup>18</sup> Growing economic disparities among the newly sovereign states led to large waves of labour migrants, with the Russian Federation as the main destination country, followed by Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Official statistics cannot capture the significant growth of irregular labour migration within and from the region. According to some estimates, up to ten million undocumented migrants could be spread throughout the region, mainly in the Russian Federation, pushed by low living standards and poverty in their countries of origin.<sup>19</sup>

Widespread human trafficking is an additional common challenge for both origin and destination countries in the CIS region.

Considering the lack of institutional capacity and experience of controlling large cross-border movements in the CIS countries, current migration flows have presented the governments of the region with many new challenges related to effective migration policy and border management.

As mentioned above, studying environmentally induced migration is hampered by a severe lack of reliable regional and global data, as well as an absence of fully developed methodologies for analysis. As such it is hard to estimate the numbers of environmental migrants. However, there are two examples in the OSCE region that illustrate the types of problems the region faces.

The first notable case of environmental migration is the Aral Sea. During Soviet times, the two main rivers, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya, which fed the Aral Sea, were diverted for agricultural irrigation in the 1960s. As a result, the sea level has dropped over 16 meters in the past 30 years; the volume of water has decreased from 1,062 to 278 km<sup>3</sup>, and, in the late 1980s, the sea was effectively split into two parts. Studies have shown that over 60,000 people have left the area due to increasing desertification and a lack of

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once they are granted asylum, are classified as refugees; and undocumented/illegal immigrants.

17 Cf. Nuria Diez Guardia/Karl Pichelmann, *Labour Migration Patterns in Europe: Recent Trends, Future Challenges*, Economic Papers, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, European Commission, September 2006, p. 12.

18 Cf. Irina Ivakhnyuk, *Migration in the CIS Region: Common Problems and Mutual Benefits*. International Symposium "International Migration and Development", June 28-30, Turin, p.1.

19 Cf. IOM, *World Migration Report 2005*, p. 154. Studies have estimated that there were between three and 5.5 million irregular migrants in the Russian Federation in 2005, but only 300,000 migrant workers with proper documentation. An estimated two million of these undocumented workers are from Central Asia, including some 600,000 from Tajikistan and up to 500,000 from Kyrgyzstan.

income-generating opportunities as a result of the collapse of the fishing industry.<sup>20</sup>

The second example relates to the Chernobyl disaster. In Ukraine, some 6.7 million hectares of land have been contaminated by radioactive fallout from the defunct reactor and more than three million people live on contaminated land. Radioactive contamination has affected about one fifth of the territory and one sixth of the agricultural land of Belarus.<sup>21</sup> People living within a radius of 30 km around the reactor site were evacuated; within ten days of the accident, 130,000 people from the 76 settlements in this area were evacuated, with many more having migrated voluntarily and permanently.

Looking to the future, notably Central Asia, with its extreme weather, vast drylands and often unsustainable agricultural practices, is at risk of further ecosystem degradation that could cause displacement. Similar scenarios from the most recent IPCC reports predict water shortages and rapidly expanding deserts in northern and sub-Saharan Africa and southern Europe.<sup>22</sup>

### *Rethinking Migration on a Global and EU Level*

When the context is made clear, as above, it becomes more obvious that migration, particularly as a result of growing economic differentials, but also increasingly as a consequence of environmental degradation and climate change, continues to present a challenge in the OSCE area, and warrants greater attention and the application of effective migration management measures. In recent years, the international debate on migration has largely focused on identifying common, comprehensive approaches and means for co-operation among states in regulating, what is by definition, a phenomenon requiring international co-operation. We can detect a change of thinking among policy makers, international organizations, and academics, which emphasizes the positive impacts of migration on both countries of origin and destination. Indeed, the UN High-Level Dialogue on International Migration in 2006 gave considerable attention to the issue of migration and development at the global level. Traditionally treated as separate policy portfolios, migration and development are today increasingly viewed with an eye to the many links that exist between the two fields. In their countries of origin, migrants help to alleviate pressures on labour markets and contribute to development through remittances, and the transfer of skills and knowledge ac-

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20 Cf. Alexander Shestakov/Vladimir Streletsky, *Mapping of Risk Areas of Environmentally-Induced Migration in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and Refugee Policy Group (RPG), 1998.

21 Cf. *ENVSEC Eastern Europe Assessment Report 2007*, available at: [http://www.envsec.org/docs/envsec\\_eastern\\_europe.pdf](http://www.envsec.org/docs/envsec_eastern_europe.pdf).

22 Cf. IPCC, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, Working Group II, Contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report.

quired during work abroad. Also, investments made by diasporas can positively impact development. In countries of destination, migrants contribute to economic growth by filling labour shortages, increasing demand for goods and services, and contributing to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Migration issues also became an area of common policy during the EU accession and integration process. After the longstanding preoccupation with asylum issues, the focus in the EU has recently shifted to economic migration,<sup>23</sup> irregular migrants, and integration. Under the Finnish Presidency in 2006, the Council of the European Union agreed on important components of a comprehensive migration strategy.<sup>24</sup> These include strengthening and deepening international co-operation and dialogue with third countries, integrating migration and development issues in aid policies and programming, establishing country-specific co-operation platforms, improving measures on return and readmission with third countries, as well as incorporating legal migration opportunities into the EU's external policies. However, given the controversial nature of migration issues, there still appears to be some way to go before a common and coherent EU migration policy exists. Still, migration and development issues remained on the policy agenda under the Portuguese Presidency during the second part of 2007.

#### *A Comprehensive Migration Management Strategy and the Contribution of the OCEEA*

The Slovenian OSCE Chairmanship in 2005 emphasized the need for a comprehensive migration strategy in order to maximize its development-related benefits and minimize its negative effects in the OSCE area. Indeed, against the background of freedom of trade and globalization, it is inconsistent to encourage the circulation of goods without encouraging the mobility of persons. At the same time it is evident that migration without restriction may jeopardize the social stability of receiving countries. Thus, migration policies and practices have to respond to the concerns and needs of the countries of origin (e.g. enhancing the benefits of migration for development and mitigating brain-drain effects), the countries of destination (e.g. assessing demand for both high- and low-skilled migrant labour; developing permanent and temporary migration channels) and the migrants themselves (e.g. enhancing the legal framework to avoid exploitation and abuse). It goes without saying that the envisaged “win-win-win” situation as a guiding principle is not easy to achieve and requires a lot of patience and co-operation – bilaterally, regionally, and inter-regionally.

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23 Economic migration includes migration for self-employment in addition to employment, regular as well as irregular migrants seeking economic opportunities, and those who wrongly use the asylum track in the absence of other legal schemes.

24 Cf. Council of the European Union, *Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council*, 14-15 December 2006.

Several recommendations developed in the discussions and documents produced under the Slovenian and Belgian Chairmanships have been taken up by the OCEEA in its work:

#### *Assisting in the Management of Labour Migration*

The OCEEA sees effective migration management as an important element of overall good governance and an essential building block for sustainable development. The OCEEA tries to assist in intensifying the exchange of best practices and the sharing of innovative policies and initiatives in the area of effective labour migration management as tasked by the 13th Economic Forum in 2005. It therefore took the lead in producing a “Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies of Countries of Origin and Destination” in English and Russian, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The handbook addresses, in particular, the international legal framework for the protection of migrant workers, policies for optimizing the benefits of organized labour migration for both countries of origin and countries of destination, ways to reduce irregular migration, and the importance of inter-state co-operation and partnerships. The first regional capacity-building workshop, which focused on introducing examples of good practices cited in the handbook, was held in Moscow in December 2006 and attracted over 100 representatives from ten CIS countries. Based on the positive feedback received and interest expressed in further such events, additional regional and national capacity workshops are being planned for 2007-2008.

In response to the recommendations made at the OSCE Mediterranean Partners Seminar in Sharm El-Sheik in 2006 as well as in recent OSCE migration-related Ministerial documents, the OCEEA is working together with its partners, the IOM and ILO, to produce a Mediterranean edition of the Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies. The aim of the new edition is to facilitate the better exchange of best practices and innovative approaches in labour migration management, particularly between the northern and southern Mediterranean countries. The Mediterranean edition of the handbook will be produced in both Arabic and English. A launch seminar will be held in December 2007 in Morocco.

#### *Migration and Economic Development*

In recent years, a greater focus has been placed on improving the understanding and awareness of the nexus between migration and development. In this context, remittances<sup>25</sup> constitute the most tangible contribution of mi-

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25 For the work of international organizations, migrant remittances are defined broadly as the monetary transfers that a migrant makes to the country of origin or, in other words, financial flows associated with migration. Most remittances are personal cash transfers from a

grants to poverty alleviation. In many poorer OSCE countries of origin, remittances are a significant part of the income of many rural households – often the only cash income available. Five of the world’s largest recipients of remittances as a portion to GDP are in the OSCE region (Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Tajikistan, and Armenia).<sup>26</sup> In Armenia, for instance, remittances make up 80 per cent of average household income and appear to go to some of the most vulnerable households, while in Tajikistan, they keep many struggling families above the poverty line.<sup>27</sup> However, in order to make full use of the remittance flows, measures are needed to make remittance channels and/or services more cost-effective and accessible to the poor, and especially to compensate for the very limited banking infrastructure in rural areas. Second, the investment of remittances in financial instruments is still limited. This may be considered a reflection of poorly developed markets and institutions, inadequate access to financial options and services on the part of remittance-receiving families, as well as a weak enabling environment, limited capacity, and poor economic governance.<sup>28</sup> Thus, to enhance the positive impact on economic activity and rural development, incentives should be put in place by governments, in co-operation with private sector institutions, to facilitate and encourage saving and the investment of remitted funds and migrant capital in income- and employment-generating activities. In this respect, the OCEEA is supporting the OSCE field presences in developing specific remittance and development projects that build upon its experience in entrepreneurship development and the economic empowerment of women and vulnerable groups in rural and border areas.

#### *Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration*

There are a number of reasons why irregular migration should be reduced or prevented: to ensure that migration is successfully managed and the credibility of legal immigration is obtained; to ensure satisfactory salary levels and working conditions of lawful resident migrant workers; to avoid the creation of entire employment sectors and enterprises wholly dependent on irregular migrant labour; and, finally, to prevent exploitation of irregular migrants by employers, employment intermediaries or agents, smugglers and traffickers.<sup>29</sup> It is clear that the involvement of organized crime in irregular labour migration, and particularly in the highly exploitative context of trafficking, can

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migrant to a relative in the country of origin, but they can also be funds invested, deposited, or donated by the migrant to the country of origin. However, remittances should always be seen as private funds and are therefore not be viewed as a substitute for official development assistance. For more details on the role of remittances in national economies, see: OSCE/IOM/ILO, cited above (note 2), p. 71.

26 Cf. World Bank, *Remittances. Development Impact and Future Prospects*, 2005.

27 Cf. Global Forum on Migration & Development, Session 2.2: *Increasing the micro-impact of remittances on development*, Background Paper, Brussels, 9-11 July 2007, p. 4

28 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 6.

29 Cf. OSCE/IOM/ILO, cited above (note 2), p. 161.

constitute a national security concern. Similarly, the irregular entry and presence of a large number of foreign nationals in a country may jeopardize bilateral relations.

At the capacity-building workshops based on the handbook, measures to combat irregular migration are discussed and concrete examples are showcased. Examples include improved temporary migration channels and better monitoring of recruitment process.

The OCEEA also actively supports economic activities that address the socio-economic root causes that make people vulnerable to trafficking. Projects are being carried out that aim at the economic empowerment of vulnerable groups via the provision of vocational and entrepreneurship training and business start-up support, and by establishing public-private partnerships and institutional mechanisms that can reduce susceptibility to trafficking.

To increase the awareness of migrants and their family members about legal means of migration, destination country requirements, and the dangers of irregular migration, including human trafficking and exploitation, the OCEEA is supporting the OSCE field presences in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in establishing a network of migrant information-resource centres.

### *Addressing Environmental Migration*

In order to fill the current void on research regarding interlinkages between the environment and migration, the OCEEA is seeking to assist in building research capacities and will provide a platform for discussion of this topic. The OCEEA has developed a partnership with EACH-FOR,<sup>30</sup> a research consortium under the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme, consisting of five interlinked research sequences: forecasting the natural and anthropogenic causes of forced migration; analysing direct (e.g. desertification) and indirect (e.g. conflicts) environmental effects on livelihoods; predicting potential forced migration flows, with an emphasis on environmental refugees; contributing to the preparation of statistical indicators to measure environmental refugee flows; and finally disseminating its results.

The OSCE is supporting EACH-FOR's North African and Central Asian research components. The final results of the EACH-FOR project will be presented at an international conference in Bonn in 2008.<sup>31</sup> At the legal and policy levels, it remains to be seen if increased research and evidence on the links between environment and migration will stimulate more intense political discussions among the OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. It seems not only inevitable but desirable that participating States address the legal status and of

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30 Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios, cf. <http://www.each-for.eu/index.php?module=main>.

31 The conference is entitled: Environment, Forced Migration and Social Vulnerability; for more information, see: <http://www.efmsv2008.org>.

an increasingly relevant group of people for stability and security in the OSCE area.

### *Human Rights and Integration*

It should be noted that the OCEEA does not directly deal with human rights and integration issues due to its more narrow mandate. However, the protection of the human rights of all migrants has to be seen as a legal, political, and ethical imperative in its own right, regardless of economic, financial, or other considerations.<sup>32</sup> Protection of migrants, campaigns against discrimination, equality of treatment and encouragement of integration – all issues promoted by the ODIHR – are demonstrably essential measures for ensuring that migration does indeed contribute positively to sustainable socio-economic development, in host and home countries alike.

### *Conclusion*

There are many good reasons for the OCEEA to continue its work in the field of migration – both economic and environmental. Given its geographical coverage, the OSCE can provide a useful regional and sub-regional forum for advancing dialogue, exchanging experiences, and discussing policies on migration management. Its extensive network of field presences with economic and environmental officers can also assist in carrying out concrete result-oriented project activities in the regions of the CIS and Western Balkans. In addition, the production of the Mediterranean edition of the handbook and its launch seminar in Rabat in December 2007 are good examples of how the work with OSCE Partners for Co-operation can be intensified – particularly as concerns migration to areas bordering on OSCE States.

Given the OSCE's strong track record in environmental security issues, notably through pioneering the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), as well as the above-mentioned experience in migration issues, environmentally induced migration seems to be an ideal issue to address via OSCE structures.

However, the long-term involvement of the OSCE and the OCEEA will also depend on other factors, including the need for a stronger political commitment from the participating States and Partners for Co-operation. In order to ensure continuity in its activities, the OCEEA would certainly benefit from some sort of institutionalization that establishes migration as one of the core topics to be dealt with by the Economic and Environmental Committee and/or at the Economic and Environmental Forum. Constantly changing the theme of the Forum, combined with inadequate funding from the OSCE uni-

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32 Although it has perhaps lost force through being quoted too often, the trenchant statement of the Swiss writer Max Frisch, "We asked for manpower, and we got human beings," reminds us of our obligation not to lose sight of the human dimension of labour migration.

fied budget for migration-related projects, would hinder the Organization's effective performance and make implementation contingent on the availability of sufficient extra-budgetary contributions.

The authors sincerely hope that future Chairmanships will continue to give prominence to a topic that ideally embodies the many facets of the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. The increasing importance of economic and environmental migration push factors in the OSCE area and the relevant experience gained by the OCEEA fully justify the OCEEA's ongoing and intensive long-term engagement with this topic.