

# Migration in Morocco: History, Current Trends and Future Prospects

Paper Series: Migration and Development Country Profiles

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Map 1 Morocco Country Profile Map



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section, 2008.

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## **1. Introduction**

Morocco is a country of the Maghreb located on the extreme North-West of the African continent and only 14 kilometers away from Spain. It has become one of the most important emigration countries in the last few decades (Collyer et al., 2009). The emigration flows from Morocco are considered to be highly diverse because the Moroccan migrants, who belong to various ethnic groups and socio-economic positions, are found in many different countries all over the world (De Haas, 2007). Accordingly, Moroccan migration occupies an important place in the overall picture of world migration (Sasin, 2008). The country has played an especially major role in labor migration to Europe over the past six decades (De Haas, 2007). Consequently, Morocco provides a perfect example where the dynamism caused by international migration can be observed.

Migration is an important socio-economic process and has thus intrinsically influenced the country's development and the livelihoods of the migrants and their families. Considering that international migration will continue to be prominent in Morocco, this paper will give a comprehensive overview of Moroccan migration. More specifically a general country profile will be provided, and focus will be placed on the migration history and the current migration flows in Morocco. In the respective chapters, the Moroccan Diaspora, the effect of migration on development, and the migration policies which influence Moroccan migration will be discussed. Moroccan migration in the Netherlands will then be elaborated on, followed by a final section on the future prospects of international migration in Morocco.

## **2. General Country Profile**

### ***2.1 Brief Historical Overview of Morocco***

The Kingdom of Morocco (Al Mamlakah al Maghribiyah) has a long history dating back to the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when North Africa was conquered by the Arabs (CIA Factbook, 2009). Since then successive Moorish dynasties ruled in the region, which subsequently characterized Morocco as an independent nation-state for many centuries (CIA Factbook, 2009). Different from many other North African countries, Morocco was never conquered by the Ottoman Empire, yet the region attracted a lot of attention from the colonial European powers in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During this century, France's influence especially played an important role in the country's history. The sovereignty of Morocco was interrupted during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when Morocco became an official protectorate of France by the Treaty of Fez (signed in March, 1912). The same treaty also gave protectorate power over the northern and southern Saharan zones to Spain (CIA Factbook, 2009). The dependence did not last for long, however, because under the French protectorate the Moroccan nationalists arose and claimed independence based on the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they live. As a result in 1956 Morocco successfully declared its independence from France. In a short period of time, the country was released from foreign control (World Bank, 2009). Since Morocco established its independence, it developed relatively strong partnerships with the western world. Accordingly, the European Union is now one of Morocco's main political partners.

While strengthening its relationship with the western world, Morocco still has a unique unresolved territorial problem in the Western Sahara (World Bank, 2009). After recovering from political dependence, Morocco aimed at restoring control over the regions where Spain was the protecting power. Morocco therefore reintegrated Tangier and Ifni in the two decades following independence. The situation in the Western Sahara was more complicated, however. In the late 1970s, bilateral negotiations were made with Spain leading Spain's withdrawal from the region. In 1975, with the Madrid Agreement, it was decided that two-thirds of the northern part of Western Sahara would be granted to Morocco while the lower third would be given to Mauritania. Spain's mandate over the

Western Sahara thus ended officially in 1976. At this time, however, Polisario<sup>1</sup> proclaimed the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic as a government in exile in attempt to create an independent Western Sahara. This resulted in violent tension in the region for decades. In the 1990s a bicameral legislature was established as part of gradual political reforms in the region (De Haas, 2009). Even today, however, this issue has major significance in domestic politics.

Beyond territorial problems, since the 20<sup>th</sup> century Morocco has been dealing with several problems in political, economic, and social domains. As a result, and despite its relative stability, Morocco is considered to be a developing country that is still undergoing reforms in many different fields.

## ***2.2 Political Reforms & Human Rights in Morocco***

In the last few decades political reforms have characterized the country. Morocco, which has been a strongly centralized monarchy, is evolving toward a political system dominated by the power of the parliament (De Haas, 2009). Although the King still maintains a large proportion of the executive power, today most of the government and the Parliament are elected by democratic means (De Haas, 2009). Next to reforms of governance, Morocco has taken decisive measures concerning human rights. During the time of King Mohammed VI, who has been in power since 1999, considerable improvement in human rights has been observed. More specifically, in the last two decades Morocco has placed specific emphasis on the improvement of human rights in the fields of torture, discrimination against women, and on child rights by ratifying a number of United Nations conventions (World Bank, 2009). Moreover, the King set priorities of the government's political agenda in many different fields in an attempt to help the Moroccan state raise itself to international norms. This implies that many reforms will speed up in Morocco on the issues of justice, education, agriculture, industry, energy, and water.

In spite of the continuing reforms, however, there are still sensitive subjects that are hardly tolerated in the country (World Bank, 2009). For instance, even though the

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<sup>1</sup> Polisario, a Sahrawi rebel national liberation movement, is the Spanish abbreviation of Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro ("Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro"). Polisario has the target of liberating the Western Sahara from Morocco.

press is relatively free in the country, criticism of Islam, the monarchy, or Morocco's presence in the Western Sahara is hardly tolerated. It is also important to mention that although there have been improvements in the recent years, there are still many problems regarding equality of opportunity and rights for the peoples in Western Sahara. Finally, following the success of all the political and economic reforms, the modernization of the justice system is viewed as the next indispensable step toward state evolution. Morocco has been dedicated to political reform in the past, and it seems that it will continue to do so in the next decades.

### ***2.3 Reforms Crucial for Economic Development***

One of the main reasons the government has been willing to create essential reforms in Morocco is to create the proper conditions for economic development. Morocco's increased political independence and the judiciary system's integrity and modernization are seen as conditions that can stimulate economic development and investment (World Bank, 2009). It is argued that by the support of these reforms, Morocco can overcome its various economic problems and achieve accelerated growth, faster employment creation, and sustained economic development. It is expected that the living conditions of the population would thus improve, and a larger middle class could emerge in the society.

Next to political and social reforms, Morocco has initiated many economic reforms. The Moroccan government has been pursuing an economic reform program since the early 1980s. These programs, initiated by the IMF and the World Bank, restrain costs, revise the tax and the banking system, and liberalize the foreign exchange regime (World Bank, 2009). Within a decade these reforms brought macroeconomic stability to the country. Per capita income increased, lower inflation rates were observed, and the fiscal and current account deficits decreased. More concretely, within a few decades the gross national income per person almost quadrupled, increasing from \$550 in the 1970s to \$2,770 in 2007 (World Bank, 2009). Furthermore in 2008 Morocco was able to recover from a drought in 2007, and its GDP growth even rose 5.9% (World Bank, 2009).

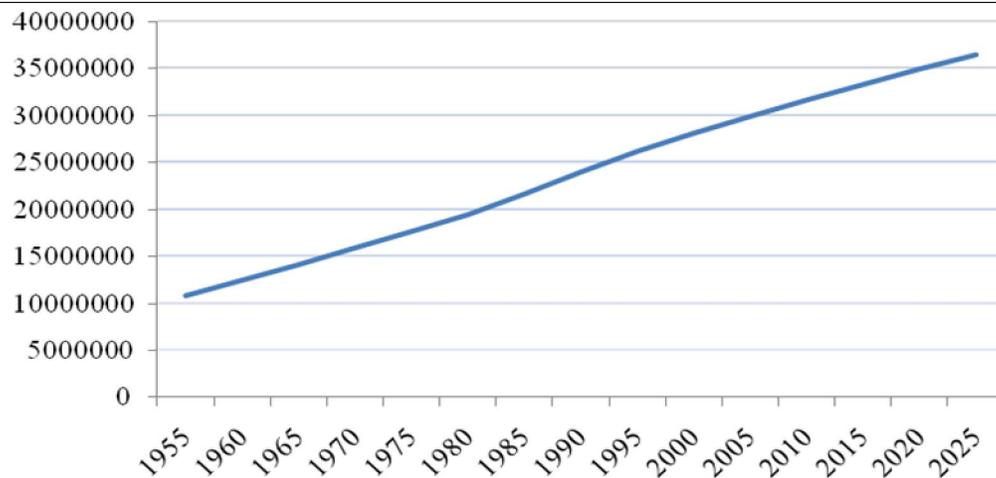
Recently-observed economic growth combined with the other economic reforms is not strong enough to reduce unemployment, however. Although the Moroccan

government has invested in diversifying the economy, which would consequently create employment opportunities, Morocco still confronts formidable challenges (World Bank, 2009). Morocco must deal with volatile economic growth, social inequalities that persist despite the income increase, high unemployment rates, and increasing pressure on natural resources. Morocco is responsive to central challenges of domestic security and economic development, yet managing these problems will continue to be difficult.

#### ***2.4 Demographics in Morocco***

Morocco's total population has almost tripled since the 1950s (Van der Erf and Heering, 2002). According to World Bank data, in 2008 the total population of Morocco was 31.23 million, yet the annual population growth has been significantly decreasing in the last few decades. In 2008 the annual population growth was observed to be 1.2%, compared to more than 3% in the 1950s. The United Nations projects that Morocco's population will reach 40 million people by 2025, and the annual population growth will be less than 1%.

Figure 1 *Population Size for Morocco*



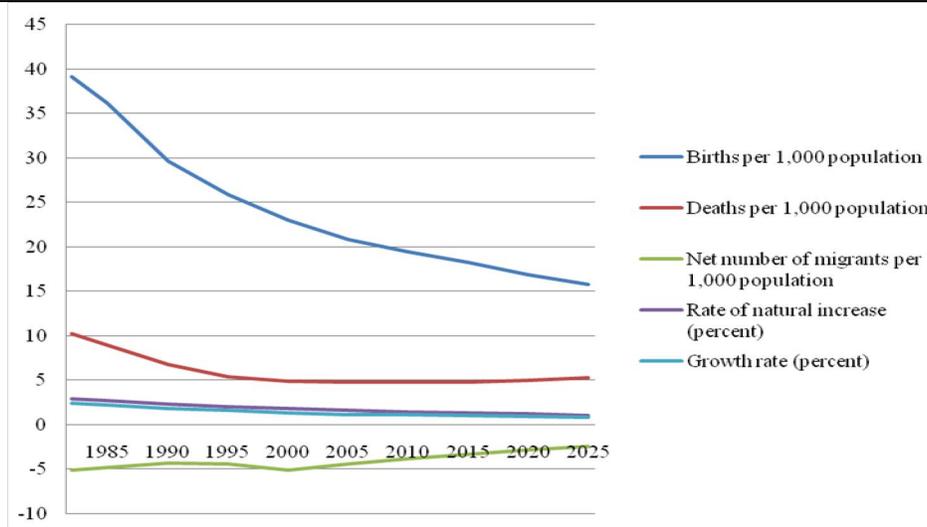
Source. U.S. Census Bureau, International Database, 2009

Note: For the projection of the population, the UN has used medium variation levels.

There is a net population growth in Morocco that is a result of positive natural increase, although its effect is compensated to a certain extent by several factors. In 2007 there was a net migration of approximately 550,000 people. There has also been a considerable decline in the total fertility rate: in 2007, the total fertility rate was 2.4

children per woman, which is just above the replacement rate (Van der Erf and Heering, 2002; World Bank, 2008). Finally, there has been a decrease in mortality rates: in 2007, the mortality rate was .034 (World Bank, 2008). All of these indicators suggest that the Moroccan population will be increasing at a slowing rate in the following years.

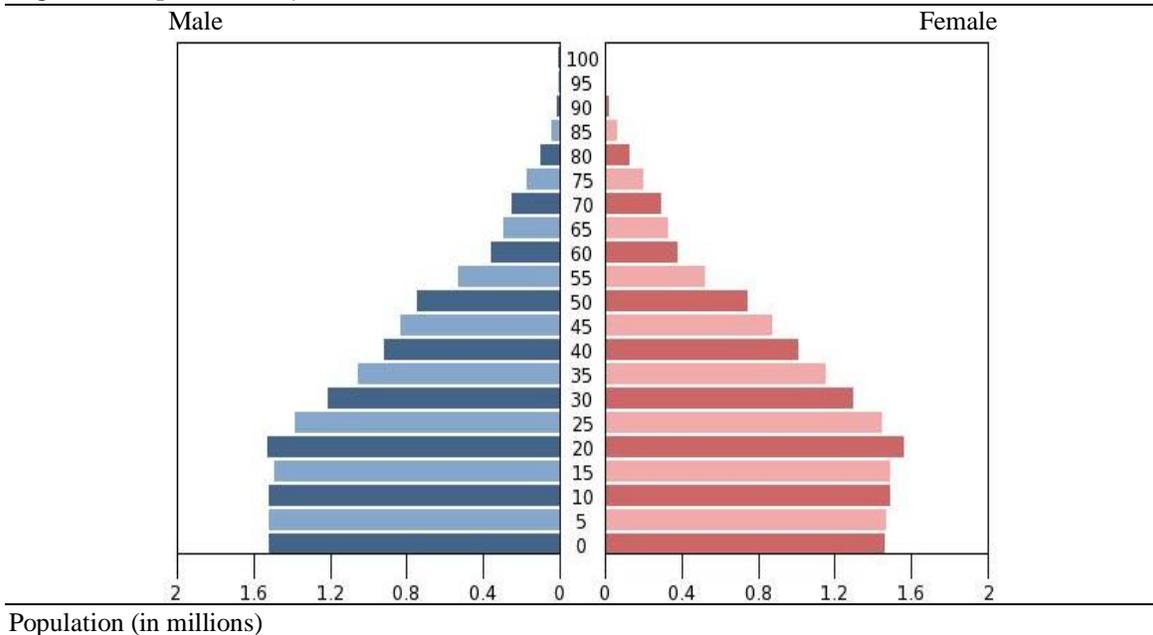
Figure 2 *Demographic Trends in Morocco*



Source. U.S. Census Bureau, International Database, 2009

When looking at the age pyramid in more detail, it can be observed that as a consequence of lower fertility and mortality levels, the age distribution will change: the relatively young age structure will shift as the result of an aging Moroccan population (Van der Erf and Heering, 2002). This means that in the near future, the number of young people will slightly decrease as a percentage of the total population. The share of young people will fall from 43% to 31% of the total population while the share of older people will rise from 12% to 23% per cent (Van der Erf and Heering, 2002).

Figure 3 *Population Pyramid Morocco*



Population (in millions)  
Source. U.S. Census Bureau, International Database, 2009

Another demographically-relevant change that Morocco will undergo in the coming years is urbanization. It is estimated that between 2005 and 2010, the urbanization rate of Morocco sat at 1.8% (CIA Factbook, 2009). It is argued that since rural Morocco is characterized by higher poverty rates, there is an increased level of outmigration from these regions to urbanized areas. As a result in the near future most of the Moroccan population will be living in urban rather than rural areas.

Finally, on a more socio-cultural level it is important to mention that all native Moroccan citizens belong to either the Arab or the Berber ethnic group. Both of these ethnic groups are predominantly Muslim. There are several languages spoken in the country: the official language is Arabic; the language of business, government and diplomacy is French; and some groups speak several Berber languages (CIA Factbook, 2009).

### **3. Historic Overview of Migration**

#### ***3.1 Early Migration***

The Moroccan migration boom, which led to Moroccans being among the most prominent Diaspora groups in Europe, started with the “guest worker” programs in the 1960s. Migration has a long tradition in the North African country: seasonal and circular migration patterns between some rural areas and towns in Western and Northern Morocco, as well as trans-Saharan caravan trade, have existed for centuries.

A first complement to the traditional migration patterns emerged after the colonization of Algeria by the French in 1830, which was also the start of economic and political restructuring of the area. It was the starting point for migration from rural areas in Morocco to Algerian cities like Algiers or Oran and to farms of the French colonialists where wage laborers were needed. When the French-Spanish protectorate was established in Morocco in 1912, the integration of autonomous tribes into the economy occurred. Workers on road construction and other infrastructure works were engaged at large scale, and the growing cities along the Atlantic coast became a destination for rural-to-urban migration (de Haas, 2007b).

In World War I between 34,000 and 40,000 Moroccan men were recruited for the French army, and many more were recruited for work in mines and industry, predominantly from Agadir and Tiznit in the South-Western Sous region. With the intention to curb political unrest, workers were recruited from areas that had shown a strong resistance to the French colonizers (de Haas, 2007b).

During World War II Moroccan men were recruited in the French occupied zone to offset labor shortages. Moroccan men were again recruited into the French army, and as many as 126,000 served the French during WWII and subsequent wars in Korea and French Indochina (de Haas, 2009 with reference to Bidwell 1973). After the end of WWII, especially as a result of the end of French recruitment in Algeria<sup>2</sup>, Moroccans increasingly migrated to France to work in factories and mines. The Moroccan population in France increased from around 20,000 to 53,000 between 1949 and 1962 (de Haas, 2007b). Moroccan circular migration to Algeria stopped when the Moroccan-Algerian

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<sup>2</sup> France stopped recruiting workers from Algeria during the Algerian war of independence between 1954 and 1962 (de Haas 2007:45).

border was closed in 1962 due to political and military tensions between the two countries that had intensified after Morocco's independence from France in 1956. Migration to Algeria had often been the first step to a subsequent migration to France, and some of the Moroccans who had worked in Algeria followed their French employers when they left Algeria after independence (de Haas, 2007b). After this period Moroccan emigration was characterized by labor migration to Europe, which was triggered by agreements between Morocco and several European governments.

### ***3.2 The Moroccan Migration from the 1960s to the 1990s***

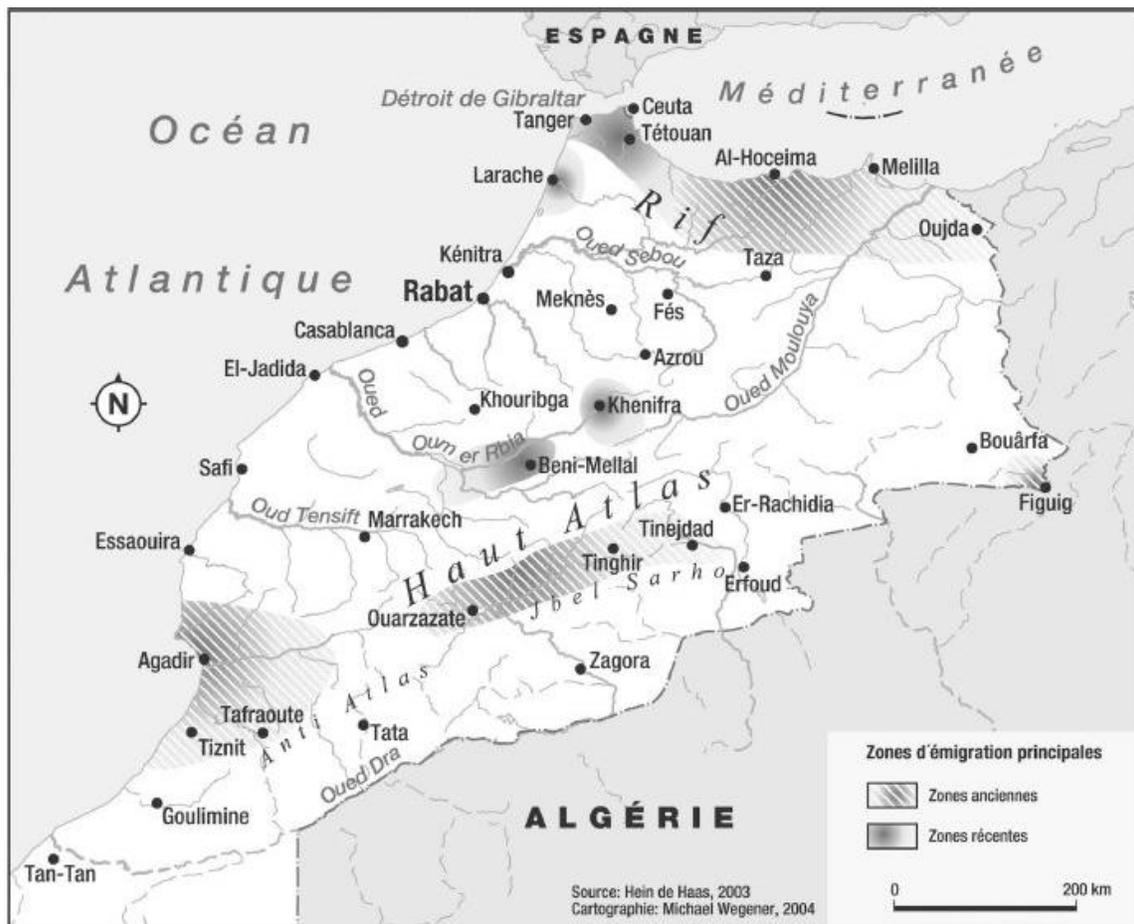
The so-called 'guest worker programs' were the starting point for a numerically important outmigration from Morocco to several European countries. Between 1963 and 1969 Morocco signed labor migration agreements with France (1963), Germany (1963), Belgium (1964), and the Netherlands (1969). These initiated the diversification of Moroccan emigration away from France and established Europe in general as the dominant destination (Collyer et al., 2009).

Formal recruitment through agencies in Morocco was only important at the beginning stage. It was gradually complemented by network migration, spontaneous settlement, and informal recruitment by companies. In many cases family or friends who had already moved to Europe supported potential new migrants and acted as intermediaries between their compatriots and potential employers. In this way administrative obstacles, long waiting lists, and necessary bribery could be avoided (de Haas, 2009). The fact that in many cases migrants belonged to Berber peasant communities explains the efficacy of village migration networks. The existence of these networks often led to the relocation of people from one village in Morocco to the same region, or sometimes even in the same town, in the new European destination (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008).

International migration from Morocco has been spatially selective and mostly involved rural areas and regions at the periphery, where a big gap existed between natural resources and population needs. Out-migration from these specific regions was not simply an autonomous process, however, but was stimulated by the Moroccan state for political and economic reasons (De Haas, 2007a). In encouraging migration from particular regions, the Moroccan government continued a policy that had already been

used by the former French colonizer. Both the Moroccan state and the French colonial power stimulated migration from mostly Berber-speaking regions that had formerly been independent. The aim was to prevent poverty as well as political unrest.

Map 2 Main Zones of International Outmigration in Morocco



Source: De Haas 2007c

The first sending regions in Morocco were the Souss in the South West of the country and the Rif Oriental in the North East (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008). The oases located in the south of the High Atlas soon became an area of international outmigration as well. As a result those three regions (the Sous, Rif, and the oases near the High Atlas) can now be identified as the three principal migration belts in Morocco (de Haas, 2007b). They belong to those parts of Morocco where insurrection had taken place after independence as a result of economic crisis, political discontent, and perceived

discrimination. Giving young men the opportunity to work abroad and earn good money was seen as a means to reduce rebellious tendencies and contribute to prosperity (de Haas, 2007a). Those early departure zones of international migration have also been the regions with established traditions of seasonal and circular migration within Morocco and towards Algeria.

The Sous is a dry region in which traditional economic activities are based on different irrigation technologies, and it is inhabited mostly by a Berber population (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008). Next to the strong tradition of internal migration, the Soussi migrated to Algeria very early and later on oriented their migration activities mainly to France, the former colonizer. Migration from another important Moroccan sending region, the Saharan oasis, has been mainly oriented towards France and, to a small extent, to the Netherlands and Belgium. Moreover, cities of Atlantic Morocco were destinations (de Haas, 2007b). Both the Sous region and the oases southeast of the Atlas belong to areas where inhabitants were relatively independent from the sultan's power prior to colonization and tribes were only dominated by state power in the 1930s (de Haas, 2007a). This explains the concern for political tensions in these areas and the government's intention to stimulate migration from those regions.

The Rif area is, from a quantitative point of view, the most important region for migration to Europe. This very densely populated and dry rural region was colonized by the Spanish, and the population thus does not generally speak French. History helps explain why migration from the North East of Morocco was mainly directed towards the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium rather than to France. The Moroccan state had directed Dutch, German, and Belgian recruiters to this northern region after low harvests at the end of the 1950s and a rebellion in one of the cities in 1958-59 (de Haas, 2007a).

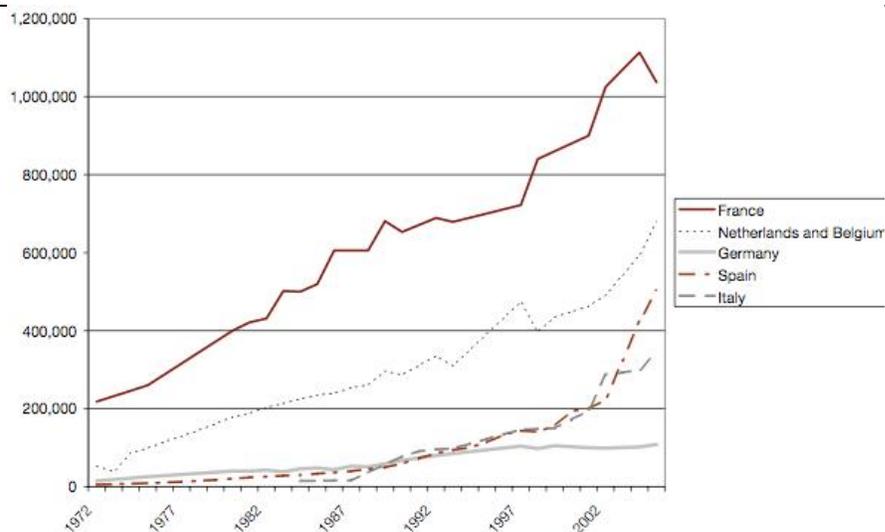
In sum, until the mid 1970s the Moroccan migration to Europe was characterized by male migration from only some selective regions and by efficient migration networks. Migrants typically had relatively low educational/skill qualifications and a strong attachment to their families and their home country (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008 with reference to Simon 1979).

### 3.3 Family Reunification

The nature of Moroccan migration to Europe started changing after the oil crisis of 1973, when European countries experienced growing unemployment and economic stagnation and were no longer in need of unskilled laborers from abroad. European countries successively closed their borders to further labor migrants and implemented policies supporting family reunification and return. Only few migrants actually returned to Morocco, however, where rising oil prices and worldwide economic downturn had even more severe consequences than in Europe (de Haas, 2009).

The majority of migrants opted to stay and make maximum use out of the possibilities for family reunification. This choice translated into a profound change of demographic and socio-professional structures of the Moroccan communities in Europe, which are no longer dominated by male migrants (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008). While Moroccan migration to Europe up to the 1970s was essentially circular, the large-scale family reunification translated into a shift to more permanent settlement. The scope of family reunification can be seen from the change in the number of Moroccan residents in Europe: between 1975 and 1992 the registered population in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Germany increased from 400,000 to around 1 million people (de Haas, 2007b with reference to Muus, 1995).

Figure 4 *Evolution of population with Moroccan citizenship in main European destination countries 1972-2005*



Source: De Haas 2009, with reference to Moroccan Consular Services

## **4. Current Migration Patterns**

### ***4.1 New Characteristics of Moroccan Migration***

Since the 1990s Moroccan migration has been characterized by the diversification of patterns and destinations. A first new characteristic was the increased appearance of family formation. After family reunification was to a large extent completed by the end of the 1980s, marrying a partner in Europe became the only legal way of migrating to the classic European destination countries for many Moroccans. Family formation thus became an important means of migration, which was also triggered by the fact that many second-generation Moroccans in Europe prefer to marry someone from their family's home country (de Haas, 2007b).

A second new development is the increasingly-undocumented nature of Moroccan migration to Europe. Moroccans were attracted by working possibilities in agriculture, construction, and the service sector, and they often obtained a regular status after marrying in the destination country or through legalization campaigns (de Haas, 2007b). Spain and Italy are the most important destinations for irregular migrants, particularly because they are the countries that closed their borders the latest. The new migration flows also reflect the emergence of new regions of outmigration from Morocco, namely the central region that shows a clear orientation to Italy (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008). Among the new regions are Khenifra (in the Middle Atlas), the region of Laârache (south of Tangiers), and the Tadla plain (south of Khouribga) (de Haas, 2007b). The recent flows are also characterized by the fact that not only low skilled people are migrating, but increasingly those with a certain educational background and sometimes even university education are also leaving. Women, executives, technicians, and qualified workers are increasingly present within the new emigrant cohort (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008).

A further new characterization can be seen in the diversification of destinations. Next to Spain and Italy, Canada and the United States have also seen an increasing number of (often highly skilled) Moroccan migrants coming to their territories. The scope of these new migration flows is considerable: according to the Spanish Statistics Institute, the number of Moroccans legally residing in Spain was 5,817 in 1985, 378,979 in 2003, and 511,294 in 2005. This corresponds to an 87-fold increase within 20 years (Mghari, 2009). In some years Moroccans accounted for more than 40% of all individuals who

were legalized in the regularization campaigns that took place in Spain since 1991<sup>3</sup>. In Italy the numbers of Moroccans taking part in legalization programs were considerable as well: 19,000 people were legalized in 1986, 50,500 in 1990, and 48,000 in 2004 (Mghari, 2009).

Taken together, family reunification, family formation, natural increase, undocumented migration, and new labor migration to Spain and Italy explain the increase of Moroccan migrants in Europe after the recruitment stop at the beginning of the 1970s (de Haas, 2007b).

#### ***4.2 Migration to and through Morocco***

While Moroccan migration has changed in nature in recent years, there are also new developments to be observed in migration to and through Morocco. Since the mid-1990s Morocco has become a transit and a destination country for Sub-Saharan migrants. Between the time of Moroccan independence and the beginning of the 1990s, some students and highly-qualified migrants from Sub-Saharan countries (Senegal, Mali, and Zaire, to name a few) came to Morocco, but their numbers remained limited (de Haas 2009). This changed in the 1990s when an increasing number of migrants came to Morocco, often with the intention to continue their journey to Europe. Reasons for those flows may be political unrest, civil wars, and economic downturns in some West African countries as well as in anti-immigrant “movements” in Libya from 2000, where many Sub-Saharan migrants had formerly found working possibilities (de Haas, 2009).

While some of the Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco aimed to continue their journey to Europe, an increasing number also stayed in Morocco, either for studying or for work in, for example, call centers (Lahlou, 2008). Estimates of the number of irregular migrants in Morocco range between 10,000 and 20,000 people, and most of those migrants are from Sub-Saharan countries. The most prominent countries of origin according to the Moroccan Ministry of Interior are Mali, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Nigeria, and Ghana (Mhgari, 2009). The number of deportations or refoulement at the borders has been estimated to be around 15,000 in 2005 (Mhgari, 2009), which is also an

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<sup>3</sup> It should be taken into account that not all individuals presenting their files for legalization are actually granted legal residence status. For example, in 2000 59,249 Moroccans presented their files in Spain, but less than 45% of them (26,436) were accepted as legal residents (numbers in Mghari 2009:221). It is not probable that all of those not being accepted left the country.

indicator of the increasingly strict Moroccan policies toward the flows of irregular migrants.

Since the middle of the 1990s, the number of Europeans emigrating to Morocco is also on the rise. Europeans migrate to live in Morocco, to establish a business, or to have a second residence, often in the old medians of cities. A similar process applies to foreign pensioners who go to Morocco to spend their retirement age at the sunny south of the Mediterranean. Statistically, this migration is not yet a major phenomenon, but the trend is rising (Berriane and Aderghal, 2008).

## 5. The Moroccan Diaspora

The Moroccan Diaspora is not only large but also one with the most dispersed population across Europe (de Haas, 2009). More than three million Moroccan nationals currently live outside of Morocco, and more than 90% of them reside in European countries. After the Turkish community the Moroccans are the second-largest group of non EU-migrants in the European Union (GTZ, 2007). While the immigration of Turkish nationals to the European Union is currently stagnating, Moroccans are expected to take the role of the biggest non-EU group living in Europe within the next decade (de Haas, 2009).

France hosts the largest group of Moroccans, over a million (1,1301,000). As a consequence of the former labor migration agreements, large Moroccan communities also exist in the Netherlands (278,000), Belgium (285,000), and Germany (130,000). Spain and Italy have become destination countries for Moroccans in recent years and now host a considerable number of Moroccans (Italy 379,000/Spain 547,000). A smaller number of often highly-qualified Moroccans live in the US (100,000) and in Canada (60,000). Other Maghreb countries and countries of the Middle East host around 281,613 Moroccans, with 120,000 in Libya and 80,000 in Algeria. A little more than 8000 Moroccans live in Sub-Saharan African countries, and around 4000 live in Asia and Oceania (numbers apply to 2007, quoted in Fargues, 2009).<sup>4</sup>

The relationship between the Diaspora and the Moroccan government has not always been an easy one, as will also be shown in Section 7. Up until the beginning of the 1990s, the Moroccan government strongly aimed at controlling Diaspora members and strived to prevent them from integrating in the destination countries and from participating in the political field (de Haas, 2007a). This aim was pursued by a network of Moroccan embassies, consulates, mosques, and government-controlled migrant associations, the so-called “amicales”. One of the concerns of the Moroccan government was the country’s image abroad as well as the possibility that returning migrants could

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that comparison of data is problematic, because often the data offered by receiving countries, organisations and the Moroccan government differ. Moroccan figures normally include migrants and their descendants who now have European citizenship and sometimes include undocumented migrants. The way European countries generate their data on Moroccans differs: some, like Spain, refer to foreign nationals, others refer to persons born in Morocco, and still other, like the Netherlands, refer to persons with at least one parent born in the Netherlands (de Haas 2007, Collyer et al. 2009).

eventually import forms of activism that were not tolerated in Morocco. They also worried that migrants could form opposition movements from abroad (Brand, 2002). While officially the amicales' role was to help Diaspora members in developing social and cultural activities, they, like the consular authorities, in fact helped in denouncing Moroccans abroad who were active in labor union struggles. This often resulted in problems for the Diaspora members when they returned during holiday seasons, and some experienced harassment or threats (de Haas, 2007a, Brand, 2002). Participation in local elections in European countries was equally discouraged, and the King, Hassan II, expressed his dislike of granting voting rights for foreigners in the Netherlands and in France (de Haas, 2007a).

The Moroccan state's relation to its citizens abroad changed in the beginning of the 1990s. During this time political changes took place in Morocco, which led to less repressive policies and an improvement in the country's human rights record. At the same time, remittances stagnated in the early 1990s, and the fear of a decline in remittances caused the government to revise its attitude towards its emigrants. The focus shifted from controlling the Diaspora to including it in a Diaspora engagement policy (de Haas, 2007a) (see also section 7). The changes in the relation between the state and the emigrants can also be seen in the restructuring of the institutions bearing responsibilities to the expatriate community.

One of the newly created institutions is the Foundation Hassan II for Moroccans Abroad (created in 1995), which is assigned to promote and protect Moroccans residing abroad. It is financed by remittance revenues (de Haas, 2007a) and its principal missions include facilitating the summer holiday return of Moroccans abroad and participating in teaching Arabic, national culture, and religion to children of emigrants (Brand, 2002). One of its operational divisions that was created after a restructuring in 1997 is devoted to studies and analyses and is intended to publish studies on the development among Moroccans residing abroad. Today, some 22 publications can be found on the foundation's website about topics ranging from the use of remittances in Morocco to traditional art and Berber culture and the experiences of retirement of Moroccans in Europe. The foundation also introduced "Opération Transit", a program that provides assistance to migrants returning to Morocco during summer holidays. The efforts to

attract and support Moroccan visitors have, among other things, resulted in less corruption and abuse of migrants at the borders, accelerated various administrative procedures, and attracted advertisements (de Haas, 2007a).

The “Opération Transit”, which was taken over by the “Fondation Mohammed V pour la Solidarité” in 2000, is one of the measures indicating a change in the Moroccan state’s attitude towards its emigrants and its recognition of their importance. The shift can also be seen in the royal speeches in which migrants are continuously celebrated and in the fact that the creation of an emigrant council (Conseil Supérieur de la Communauté Marocaine à l’Etranger) is envisaged. A special working group to facilitate the establishment of the emigrant council was created in 2006. This group is comprised of some former exiles and opponents of the monarchy as well as publicly-critical scholars. This would have been an unacceptable form of civic activism in the past, but it is widely acknowledged today (de Haas, 2007a).

### ***5.1 Divisions within the Diaspora***

There are a number of divisions within the Moroccan Diaspora based upon, for example, age, the religious or non-religious point of view, or gender aspects. The characteristics give an indication of where differences in the Moroccan community may lead to tensions or hamper cooperation, or simply where existing differences should be taken into account when working with Diaspora organizations.

The default lines described below have been observed in the Moroccan Diaspora in Germany, and the examples given draw on a study by the German Technical Cooperative (GTZ, 2007).

- **Religious- non religious:** One default distinction within the Moroccan Diaspora in Germany can be observed between religious and non-religious associations. Mosque-based associations tend to be seen as better organized and receive more funding. A possible explanation for this could be that the religious aspect tends to unite people and encourage them to donate and to volunteer. The popularity of such associations is boosted by activities like Arabic courses and social work, which go hand-in-hand with religious activities. Non-religious associations sometimes distance themselves from religious associations by pointing to the danger of Islamic extremism. The unease of working

together with associations that have a religious focus and put emphasis on this aspect may actually lead some non-religious associations to stop cooperation with religious ones.

- **Berbers – Arabs:** Social, cultural, and language differences can be observed between Berber migrants stemming from the north-east of Morocco and migrants with a primarily Arab background who migrated after 1980. An indicator for this can be found in the existence of Amazigh cultural groups. There do exist associations with members from both backgrounds, however.
- **Participation of women (low):** In many associations the members and the boards of management are predominantly male. There are some associations that encourage the membership of women and criticize the conservative attitude of other associations, but only few associations for women only exist.
- **Relations with the Moroccan government:** There are certain tensions between those associations that cooperate with the Moroccan Embassy and those that do not.
- **Generation gap:** In most cases members of boards of directors belong to the same generation. In general only few young people are involved at advisory-committee level or on the board of directors. Preferences for meeting places also differ between generations.

### ***5.2 The Moroccan Diaspora Activities***

The Moroccan Diaspora is involved in a variety of activities, ranging from charitable activities to political, developmental, scientific, and cultural activities. Some associations focus their activities mainly on the host country whereas others gear their activities exclusively to Morocco. The size of the organizations also differ very much; organizations ranging from small, informal groups to larger NGOs that are associated with up to 250 partner organizations exist.

### *5.2.1 Associations with collective transfers: The Example of “Migrations et Développement”*

A widely-known example of Moroccan Diaspora engagement is the work of “Migrations et Développement” ([www.migdev.org](http://www.migdev.org)). This NGO was founded in 1987 by a group of dismissed Moroccan factory workers in the south of France who invested their return allowance and redundancy payment in the provision of electricity to a village in Taroudant province (Lacroix, 2009:1671). This first project at the end of the 1980s has been followed by a large number of infrastructure projects, including irrigation projects that improve agricultural production, income-generating projects targeting women and youth, and the creation of cooperatives for agricultural products. Technical and management training is conducted by members in Morocco, and visits to France are organized to teach about production methods (Schüttler, 2008:6).

“Migrations et Développement” has been involved in projects in more than 200 villages in Southern Morocco (Lacroix, 2009), and around 250 organizations are affiliated with the NGO (Schüttler, 2008). There are four staff members who work in Marseille, France and 11 who work in Morocco. The organization also engages support offered by volunteers who are often retired French professionals (Schüttler, 2008). The work of “Migrations et Développement” provides an example of the use of migrant collective donations in development-oriented activities. It has grown out of a demand that was expressed by the communities of origin in Morocco, and it developed into an organization that is able to provide a link between grassroots project organization, public administration, and international donors. Funding for the organization’s projects was received from, among others, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU (Lacroix, 2009).

### *5.2.2 Charity and Investment Activities*

There are numerous other Moroccan associations that are active in a variety of fields. Many associations are engaged in charitable activities. These activities may not necessarily occur on a regular basis, but donations are often collected on a one-off or irregular basis, or the Diaspora may respond to a request from organizations, villages, or individuals. The activities are often organized by a non-formal association comprised of groups of friends or family members. Activities may consist of donations of goods or

equipment like school materials, an ambulance, a wheelchair, the financing of road resurfacing, or in the organization and payment of surgery for needy individuals. The support of orphans is considered important for religious reasons. As has been observed for the Moroccan Diaspora in Germany, charitable activities are usually implemented in rural areas rather than in towns or cities since emigrants have a stronger connection to their region of origin rather than to other towns or cities (GTZ, 2007).

The Moroccan Diaspora is also active in investment in entrepreneurial activities. The key investment still is the construction or purchase of property, either for the migrant and their family or for rental. There is a growing trend away from property investment, however, with services and other sectors increasingly invested in. Money that is invested in enterprises mostly goes into small- or medium-sized projects. Investment is often made, for example, in the service sector for cafés, restaurants, call shops, taxis, or bakeries. There is also investment made in engineering services, agriculture, or the tourist industry, which is thought to be a promising sector. Some of the factors hampering investment are problems with administration, availability and cost of finance, corruption, and inflated taxes (GTZ, 2007). The Foundation Hassan II for Moroccans Abroad, however, is trying to stimulate the Diaspora's investment by providing information, and it has published 18 guides for investment in different sectors on its website ([www.alwatan.ma](http://www.alwatan.ma)).

### *5.2.3 Knowledge Transfer Activities*

In recent years an increasing number of highly-skilled Moroccan emigrants established associations that are specialized in certain scientific areas. Examples of these associations include “L'Association des Informaticiens en France” (Association of computer scientists in France), “L'Association Marocaine des Biologistes en France” (Moroccan Association of Biologists in France), “L'Association Marocaine des Biologistes aux États-Unis” (Moroccan Association of Biologists in the United States), “Moroccan Academic Research Scientists” (US based), “Réseau des Intellectuels Marocains en Europe” (Network of Moroccan Intellectuals in Europe), and “Savoir et Développement” (Knowledge and Development) (Khachani, 2005). Scientists belonging to different disciplines such as mathematics, computer sciences, economics, and business administration created this last association in 1999 in France. Today it counts around 200 members who are mainly based in France, but its membership also includes Moroccans

resident in other European countries and North America. The association's aim is to foster scientific and technological transfers that will benefit Morocco. In this context it maintains a database of skilled Moroccans living abroad and in Morocco, which will help finding partners for envisaged projects.

The projects implemented by "Savoir et Développement" are said to be very concrete and practically oriented. For example, some projects aim to help small- and medium-sized Moroccan enterprises with innovation or finding partners for innovation in order to stimulate profitable innovation. Among the projects that are planned or have already started are implementation of an international laboratory for molecular chemistry, creation of a Euro-Mediterranean competence pool in micro-technology and nanotechnology, purification and preservation of Moroccan water resources, and a project on urban waste treatment in Morocco (Khachani, 2005, Bouoiyour, 2006).

Another point of action of this association is the collaboration with national research institutions. The aim is to implement interdisciplinary and multi-sector working groups unifying personnel from scientific associations, enterprises, and university-based research institutes to foster the implementation of a genuine policy of science and technology. In this context "Savoir et Développement" signed a cooperative agreement with the "Centre National pour la Recherche Scientifique et Technique" (National Centre for Scientific and Technical Research) in Morocco (Bouoiyour, 2006).

## **6. Migration and Development**

International migration is argued to optimize development if its positive effects are stimulated while the negatives are mitigated. There are several channels through which international migration influences development. In this paper the focus will be placed on return migration, remittances, and migration of the highly skilled as the main channels. It is important to focus on these channels because the Moroccan government has seen these channels as an instrument for development from the early stages of migration.

When looking at the different channels mentioned, researchers have focused mainly on their economic impacts. Migration effects go beyond pure financial terms, however. The social and cultural context is also highly influenced by migration, and the Moroccan case shows that the link between migration and development encompasses not only the economic sector but also the social and cultural domains (Khachani, 2009).

### ***6.1 Return & Circular Migration***

The issue of return migration to Morocco has initially been driven by two forces. On the one hand, Morocco has always seen migration as a long-term project that would eventually benefit the country's development. From the Moroccan perspective, migrants are potential contributors to the country's socioeconomic development (Gubert and Nordman, 2008). Because of this anticipated role, the Moroccan government took measures to prevent assimilation in the host countries to attract migrants back to Morocco in the long term (Sasin, 2008). On the other hand, for Europe, the discussion on return migration only rose to importance when migrants' presence became "visible" due to their relatively important number in the host countries (Khachani, 2006). Given the increased levels of unemployment in Europe and the public discourse scapegoating migrants, making the migrants return was seen as a possible solution (Khachani, 2006). In this way Europe could limit the number of migrants living in its societies and avoid potential problems related to the social cohesion of a heterogeneous, multicultural society. These two dynamics enforced by both Morocco and the European host countries has led to the adaptation of return migration policies.

As already discussed in the section on Moroccan migration history, the labor migration which started in the early 1960s was followed by migration due to family

reunification. France, Belgium, and the Netherlands allowed migrants to bring their families with them. Only in Germany were labor migrants considered to be temporary migrants who would eventually turn back to their origin country (Khachani, 2008). In Germany as well as other European countries, by the time the migration influx had increased beyond what labor-importing governments had planned, return migration policies were being developed to mitigate the potential problem. Consequently, the pioneers of return migration in Europe have been Germany, the Netherlands, and France (Khachani, 2008).

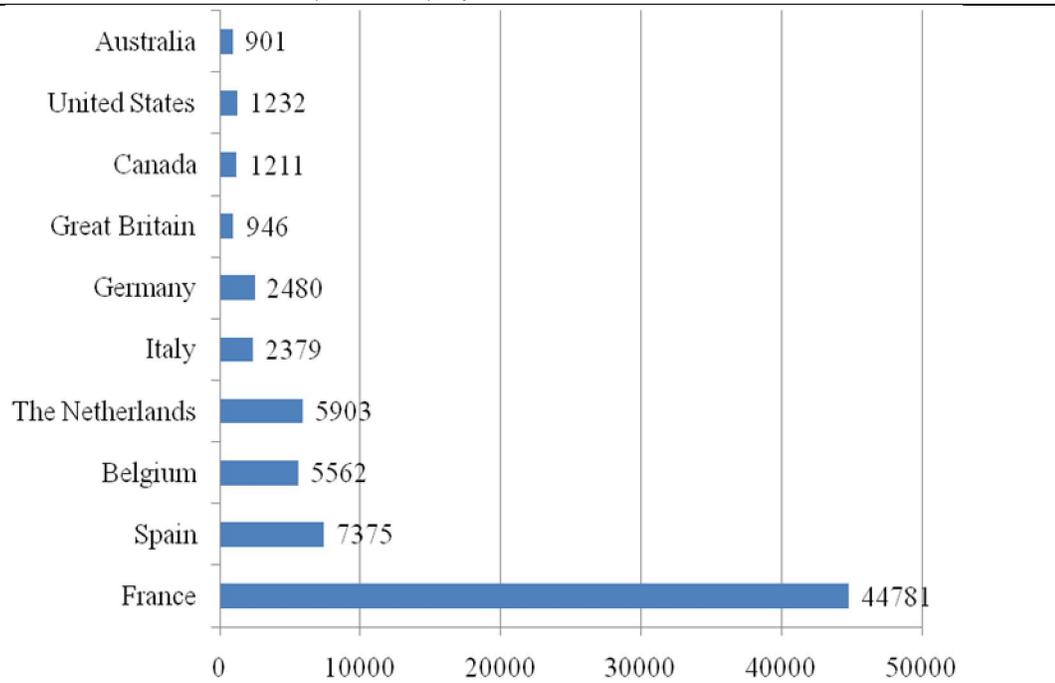
There is not much available data on return migration to Morocco. The existing data is too fragmented to provide an overall picture. Based on several studies, however, some conclusions can be drawn about return migration to Morocco. The most significant data to this end is based on the general population census (RGHP) of 1994.<sup>5</sup> In this data a return migrant is defined as someone who declared his country of residence as a different country than Morocco, who had been living in Morocco for at least six months, and who intended to stay for at least six more months. According to this definition about 68,000 international migrants returned between 1975 and 1982, showing that approximately 10,000 immigrants returned to Morocco each year (Gubert and Nordman, 2008). This number had increased to 117,132 in 1994.

Next to these data, De Haas (2006) states that between 1985 and 1995, almost 315,000 Moroccan migrants returned from the main European immigration countries. The number of return migrants was the highest in 1991, when 40,000 Moroccans returned. Since 1994, however, this number has been decreasing. According to OECD sources, there were 3,500 returnees from Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands in 1991. This number has only increased to 3,700 in 2000, indicating that there is not a considerable increase in return to Morocco (Lahlou, 2006). It is even argued that the Moroccan return migration is amongst the lowest in Europe (De Haas, 2006). Looking at Figure 4, however, it can be observed that most of the migrants returned from France.

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<sup>5</sup> Recensement General de la Population et de l'Habitat, 1994.

Figure 5 Moroccan Returnees by Country of Former Residence, 1994

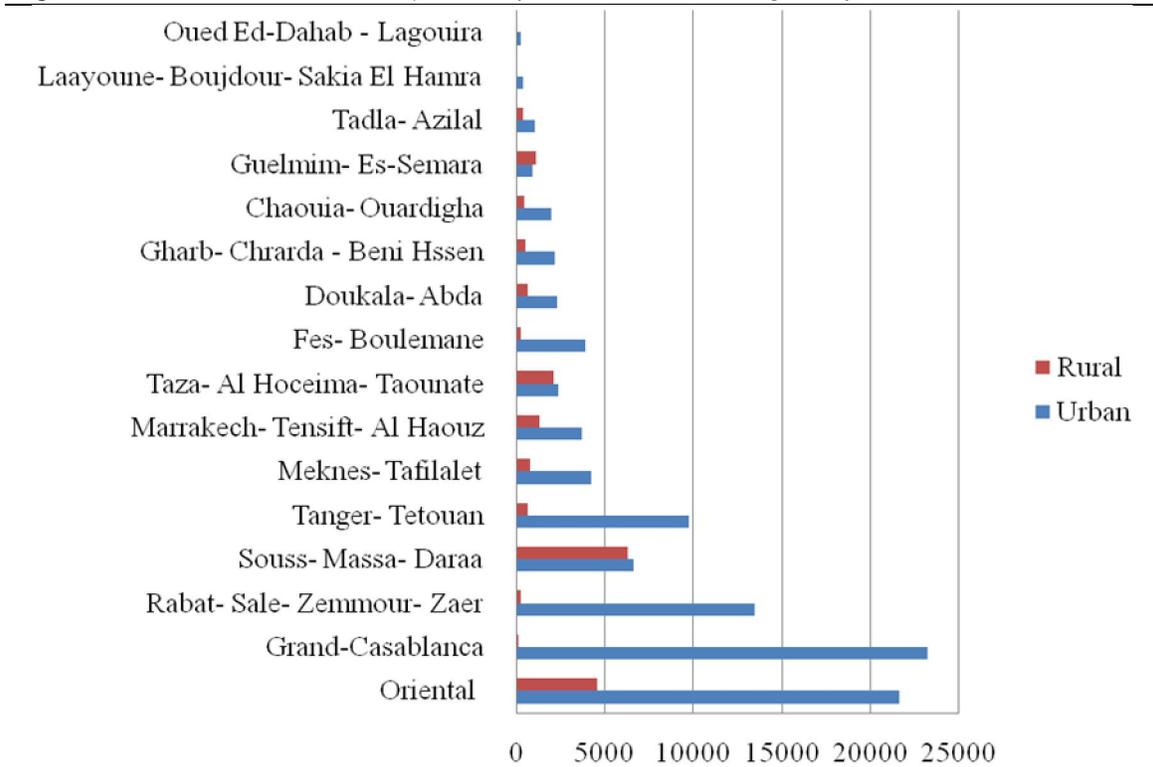


Source. MIREM, 2009

Once they are back in Morocco, return migrants often resettle in the big cities and the urban areas. As can be seen from Figure 5, the return migrants mainly reside in the urban regions of Rabat, Grand-Casablanca, and Oriental. Next to where the migrants return, it is also important to investigate under what conditions migrants return to their origin country. The survey conducted by INSEA<sup>6</sup> (2000) among 1467 Moroccans in Casablanca and Souss-Massa-Draa indicates that more than half of the respondents were in favor of permanent return to Morocco if the investment conditions in Morocco would be favorable. Moreover, almost 45 percent of the respondents stated that they would like to spend their retirement time in their home country.

<sup>6</sup> The National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics

Figure 6 Moroccan Returnees by Area of Settlement and Region of Residence, 1994



Source. MIREM, 2009

One of the most recent studies conducted by MIREM (2008) on return migration to the Maghreb aims to explain who returns to Morocco and how the reintegration process goes for return migrants with different socio-economic backgrounds. This study shows that returnees who are not compelled to return (who return on their free will) are more likely to invest in Morocco and less likely to re-emigrate. Those with higher education, self-financing, family support, and social networks have an easier time reinstalling themselves in the origin country. In addition to the personal effort given by the individuals, however, for return migration to be beneficial this study showed that the origin and destination countries must forge joint cooperation (Cassarino, 2008).

### 6.1.1 Limited Success of the Return Migration Projects

Looking at the origins of return migration projects, the 1973 Oil Crisis can be seen as an initial influence. The crisis caused economic stagnation and recession leading to a decrease in the demand for low-skilled labor migrants. European countries expected

that during this time migrants would return to their home country. The crisis had affected Morocco even more drastically, however, which caused both economic and political instability (De Haas, 2006). The incentives of the Moroccan migrants to return on a voluntary basis were consequently low, and many of them thus preferred to stay in Europe permanently. As a response specific return migration programs were developed to encourage return.

Different measures to encourage migrants to return to their origin countries have been taken. For instance in 1977 France offered 10,000 Francs (approximately €1,525) to migrants to compensate for their return expenses (Khachani, 2008). The results of this program were not very substantial, however. This is mainly explained by the argument that, compared to the financial subsidy given by the government, the cost of losing social benefits and rights in the host country due to permanent return were perceived to be too high (Khachani, 2008). The REMPLOD<sup>7</sup> program, advocating “more development for less migration”, was initiated by the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation, and it also was not successful, confirming the limit of return migration policies (Collyer et al., 2009; Khachani, 2006; de Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008).

Return migration policies have been on the political agenda for a long time, but given the unsatisfactory results, destination countries have begun to look for new approaches that could be beneficial for both destination and origin countries. As a result circular migration has been introduced as a new approach that could stimulate co-development (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2009). According to this approach, permanent return is not expected from the migrants. Instead it implies a temporary mobility of migrants between the origin and the destination countries. There are two sides to this approach. From a destination-country perspective, seasonal mobility is initiated; from an origin-country perspective, highly-skilled migrants’ investments in the origin country and migration associations are encouraged (Khachani, 2006). Circular migration aims to ameliorate the job market in both countries and answer the needs of both sides.

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<sup>7</sup> Program REMPLOD refers to Reintegration of Emigrant Manpower and the Promotion of Local Opportunities for Development in Morocco.

### *6.1.2 Reasons for Low Tendency to Return*

Both return and circular migration are considered to be channels through which migrants can contribute to Morocco's development. There are challenges that make the successful outcomes of these channels difficult to achieve, however. It is clear that although the destination countries encourage return migration, as long as the economic and political environment in the home countries is not good enough, it is very difficult to make migrants go back (De Haas, 2009). Moroccans have a very low tendency to return, which indicates that Morocco is not the most attractive environment to live and invest in (Collyer, 2004; De Haas, 2006). For the realization of the conditions under which return migration would occur, Morocco must experience constant growth followed by stable economic development. South East Asia and Taiwan stand out as significant examples of this process. In this region attracting back highly-skilled immigrants was successful only when the job market was adequate and the investment in research and development was politically supported (Khachini, 2006). For return migration to take place at wide scale, the Moroccan economy should thus improve.

The situation is no different for stimulation of circular migration, which is considered to contribute to the economic, scientific, and technological development of Morocco by encouraging the transfer of skills, competencies, and capital of migrants based on specific agreements and projects (Khachani, 2006). Although in this more pragmatic approach no permanent physical return to the home country is necessary, there should still be a convenient environment in the origin country (Khachani, 2006). Pure attachment to the home country is not a sufficient condition for migrants to invest in it. Circular migration demands accountable and efficient organization of the expatriate networks, which are unified around the same objective.

TOKTEN<sup>8</sup> is a significant example of a program aiming to make use of migrants abroad to provide short-term service in their origin countries for economic and social development. With this project the UNDP and IOM promote incentives to volunteer in various projects without enforcing government service or commitment to permanent return. Such programs are inspiring more and more positive reactions in Morocco, suggesting that circular migration will stay on the political agenda in the coming years.

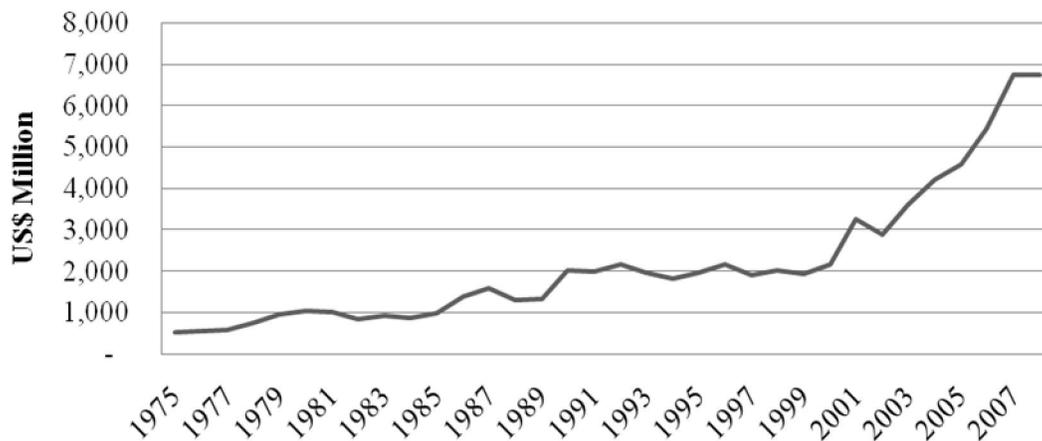
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<sup>8</sup> TOKTEN Program stands for Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals.

## 6.2 Remittances

For less-developed emigration countries, remittances sent home by migrants constitute an important source of income (Van Dalen, Groenewold and Fokkema, 2005). As one of the most significant emigration countries, Morocco is also receiving relatively large inflows of remittances (De Haas, 2007c; Bilsborrow, 2009). If remittances are measured in relation to the size of the remitting population, Morocco is second only to Lebanon, which receives the most remittances from abroad (Khachani, 2005). In 2007 Moroccans living abroad remitted around 55 billion dirham (US \$6.7 billion) back home (see Figure 6) (Sasin, 2008). The establishment of large Moroccan communities in “new” destination countries like Spain and Italy and large-scale regularization schemes have encouraged a rapid growth of remittance flows (Sasin, 2008).

Figure 7 *Yearly Remittance Inflows to Morocco*



Source. U.S. Census, International Data, 2009

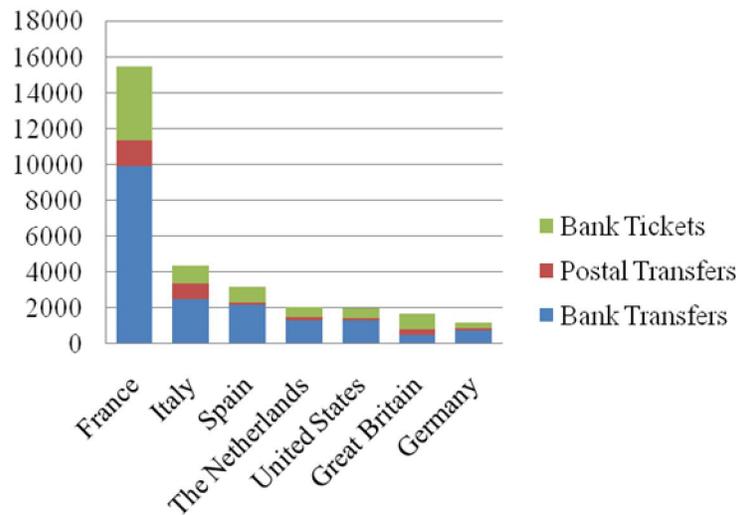
It is clear that the remittance flow is very large; however, not all characteristics of remittances are easy to observe and quantify (Khachani, 2005; Sasin, 2008). On the aggregate level, only remittances sent through formal channels can be observed, and transfers made in kind or money sent via informal means are missing in the data (Khachani, 2005). The same problem applies for observing the impact of remittances. It is difficult to analyze what part of the socio-economic changes in Morocco is influenced by the remittances. In spite of such inherent difficulties, in this section an overview of the remittance patterns and their effects in Morocco will be given.

### 6.2.1 Remittance Characteristics in Morocco

Based on several different studies, some general characteristics of the remittance inflow to Morocco can be summarized as follows:

- The main source of economic remittances for Morocco is France, Spain, and Italy, where the Moroccan migrant communities are the biggest. Figure 8 indicates the different channels used to send remittances.

Figure 8 Remittances Amount by Channels Used, 2003

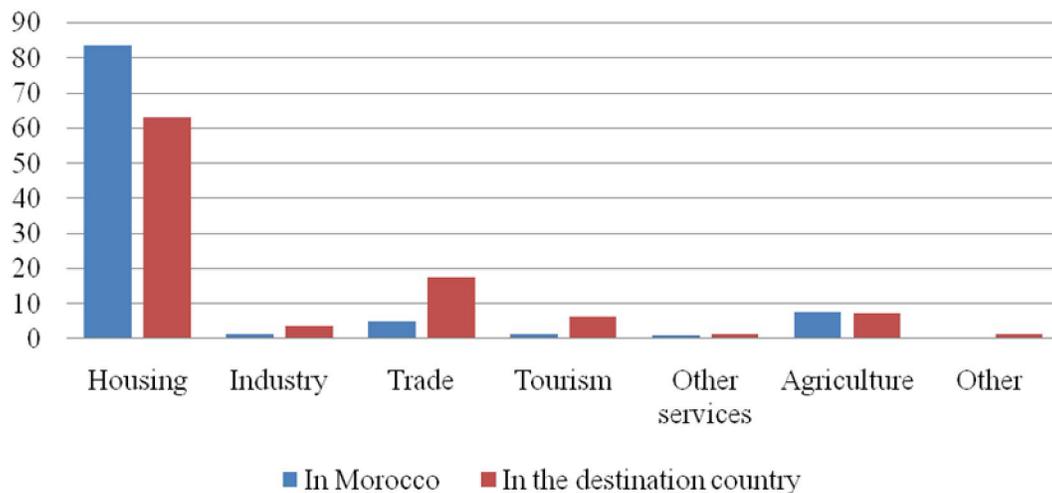


Source. Office des Changes 2007

- A study done by INSEA (2000) shows that almost all of the participants in the research had remitted in the last five years preceding the survey.
- 15% of the sample remitted more than 50% of their total incomes, and 40% of the sample remitted less than 25% of their incomes (Khachani, 2005).
- Low-educated migrants remit more than the highly-educated migrants as a percentage of their incomes (Khachani, 2005).
- Between 25% and 33% of the total transfers are in-kind remittances. Migrants bring a significant amount of goods and gifts to their families and friends back home (e.g. electronics, household appliances, furniture, cars, spare parts, and clothes) (Sasin, 2008).
- Next to economic remittances measured by cash flows and good transfers, migrants' investments in the origin country constitute an important share of total remittances (De

Haas, 2007c). In recent years migrants have also invested in their destination countries, but investment in the origin country is still more significant. Figure 9 shows that housing stands out as the main investment in the home country. Khachani (2005) argues that investment in housing is essential in Morocco because it is a sign of higher social status and success for migrants in the eyes of their community.

Figure 9 *Share of Moroccan Migrants' Investments in Morocco and in the Destination Country*



Source. INSEA 2000

- It is also observed that the economic remittance inflows increase significantly during summer months, when many Moroccan migrants return home for their holidays (Sasin, 2008).
- Some research evaluating the motivations behind these remittances has shown that altruism and attachment to homeland are important factors behind remittances to Morocco (Sasin, 2008).

### 6.2.2 Moroccan Government's Role in Remittances & Use of Formal Channels

It is important to mention that, in addition to individual motivations, the Moroccan government's careful management of remittances transfers also created a suitable context for remittances. Accordingly, one of the aspects characterizing remittances sent to Morocco is the use of formal channels to transfer money. The official

statistics demonstrate that around 60% of remittances are sent through banking systems, only 15% of the remittances are sent by post, another 15% is handled personally, and the remaining 10% is transferred through other mechanisms such as money transfer operators (Sasin, 2008). This is a fundamentally important issue for understanding the remittance flows in Morocco because it indicates the role that is played by the Moroccan government (Sasin, 2008).

The Moroccan State clearly has a positive attitude toward remittances and has facilitated flows of remittances by providing migrants with flexible financial instruments (e.g., foreign exchange accounts and wire transfers), a fair exchange rate, and a stable macroeconomic framework (Khachani, 2005). An efficient and convenient network of Moroccan bank offices abroad that is entirely geared to Moroccan migrants had been created early in the migration process (De Haas, 2005).

More specifically the Moroccan government's measures concerning remittances go back to the early 1970s. In 1971 the government attempted to maintain the parity of the Moroccan dirham with the French Franc by adding three per cent to all funds deposited by emigrants in Moroccan banks (Collyer et al., 2009). In 1989 the Banque Al Amal was created with the aim of helping to finance emigrants' projects (Collyer et al., 2009). In the first few years, the bank was considered to be responsible for more than a thousand new jobs a year, and even today it continues to co-finance investment projects with adequate loans (Collyer et al., 2009). In 1990 there were further significant institutional developments: a minister with responsibility for Moroccans abroad was chosen, and the Foundation Hassan II for Moroccans Abroad was created (Collyer et al., 2009). These state-level interventions show to what extent the Moroccan government is keen to encourage remittances.

### *6.2.3 Effects of Remittances on Development*

Next to studying what conditions influence remittance flows, another fundamental question in the remittance literature is the effect of remittance inflows on development. Given that remittances are the biggest component of non-labor income and account for 10% of the household budget in Morocco, since the 1990s there has been a lot of research about the impact of remittances on development in Morocco (De Haas, 2005; De Haas,

2007c). It is essential to take into consideration the fact that many studies on this subject are criticized for being non-representative or biased, which consequently makes them difficult to generalize. As a result there are diverse points of views on the effect of remittances on development in Morocco.

Some studies suggest that there is not a large-scale return on remittance investments, and remittances may cause increased levels of intra-community inequality (Collyer, 2004; De Haas, 2009). Some researchers also focus on the inadequate infrastructure and absence of public services, especially in rural areas, which lower the propensity to invest or encourage investment in relatively low-risk sectors such as housing and retail trade (De Haas, 2007c). As a result it is argued that development is not a consequence of migration but rather a prerequisite for investment in the home country (De Haas, 2009).

Contrary to this pessimistic approach, there is also a lot of research pointing at the fundamentally positive effects of remittances in the origin country. From a macroeconomic perspective, the magnitude of remittances in Morocco has guaranteed that remittances have contributed to economic stability in the country (Sasin, 2008). Thanks to remittances trade deficits are compensated at least to a certain extent, and national savings are improved (World Bank, 2006). From a microeconomic approach as well the stable character of the high levels of remittance inflows plays a positive role in the lives of Moroccans. Remittances lead to an improvement in the living standards of recipient households, investment in housing, agriculture, private investments, and education (De Haas, 2007b). It should also be mentioned that although remittances can be spent only on consumption, because money is fungible, remittances enable the use of other income resources for different purposes.

Remittances not only affect the lives of the migrant families but also those of non-migrant families that benefit from the job opportunities and higher income in the regions (Herrera, Dudwick & Murrugarra, 2009). Furthermore, through remittances migrant families capitalize on economic activities in urban centers located inside or nearby migrant-sending regions called “migration belts”. Household relocation and urban business investments consequently lead to urbanization in Morocco, higher consumption, and wage increases. According to the World Bank report on poverty (2008), many

households invest in migration because of a positive image of migration's effects. Nevertheless, it is crucial to relativise these effects because the impact of remittances on poverty is moderate (Sasin, 2008). It is suggested that this moderate effect can be explained by factors such as the informal transfers that migrant families receive, the unequal distribution of remittances, and the positive selection of migrants. These ideas imply that more research needs to be done on the impact of remittances on development (Sasin, 2008).

In conclusion de Haas (2009) argues that even though remittances stimulate economic and social development, their impact is heterogeneous across space and time as well as across socio-ethnic and gender groups. This relative and heterogeneous effect of remittances on development is highly influenced by regional and national factors but also by international factors such as migration policies and political and economic conditions prevailing in the sending and the receiving societies (De Haas, 2009). Accordingly, when evaluating the effect of remittances on development, attention should be paid to the fact that the tendency to remit and invest, as well as the sectoral and spatial allocation of such activities, depend strongly on contextual factors (Van Dalen, Groenewold & Fokkema, 2005).

### ***6.3 Migration of the Highly Skilled***

Moroccan migration is traditionally characterized by the emigration of the low skilled to Europe. Although this type of labor migration to Europe continues, there are also new types of flows. Migration of highly-skilled Moroccans to Northern America and Europe is an interesting phenomenon. For Morocco the migration of the highly skilled has increased by 78% in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 2000 the emigration rate of the population with tertiary education reached 10.3% (World Bank, 2009). More specifically, according to Docquier and Bhargava (2006) 6.7% of the physicians trained in Morocco (953 people) emigrated in 2000; Clemens and Pettersson (2006) claim that the proportion is even higher with almost 32% of the physicians trained in Morocco (6,506 people) emigrating. An estimated 14.9% of Moroccan nurses (5,176) also emigrated abroad. Overall, a considerable part of the highly-skilled population from the MENA region lives in OECD countries.

Overall educational performance in Morocco is significantly low, but compared to other countries in the region, Morocco's spending on education is considerably high (Herrera, Dudwick & Murrugarra, 2009). Investment in tertiary education is particularly high in both absolute and relative terms. The highly-educated population faces a serious problem, however. Emigration of the highly skilled is explained to a large extent by the unemployment problem in the country (De Haas, 2009). A significant share of the highly-educated population in Morocco lives abroad, and when student migration is also counted, highly-skilled migration becomes an even more interesting topic for understanding Moroccan migration. In 2007 there were 41,501 students studying abroad (UNESCO, 2007). It is worthwhile to mention that next to more common education emigration regions like the UK and North America, Moroccan students also go to France, Belgium, Germany, and Spain for higher education (Collyer et al., 2009).

Compared to some other emigration countries, "brain drain" is not considered to be a big issue in Morocco. A survey done among MENA<sup>9</sup> country nationals has shown that Moroccan nationals do not believe that Morocco is affected by "brain drain". The highly-skilled migration group found mainly in Northern America, in the United Kingdom, and in France forms a new "bourgeoisie" (Khachani, 2005). Especially in contemporary societies where knowledge is increasingly appreciated, this group is seen as potential contributors to new types of development strategies for Morocco. Moreover, the highly-skilled Moroccan community living abroad is expected to contribute to country's development through skill, knowledge, and technology transfer as well as through sending more remittances back home.

In conclusion, it is difficult to observe the effect of highly-skilled migration on development. As already discussed in the Moroccan Diaspora section, highly-skilled Moroccan migrants constitute a Diaspora of knowledge. There is an increase in the organization and activities of these groups; however, it is too early to conclude on their effects. Considering that recent circular migration policies are mainly targeting the highly skilled, it can be stated that highly-skilled migration will be considered as a development tool for Morocco in the coming years as well.

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<sup>9</sup> The term MENA is an acronym for the Middle Eastern and North African Region.

## **7. Policies Regarding Migration**

### ***7.1 Migration policies in Morocco***

Since the 1960s the Moroccan state has considered emigration to Europe as a strategic tool for national economic development and for the prevention of political tensions in the Berber areas (De Haas, 2005). It was argued that the remittances sent by migrants could improve the economic situation in the regions of origin. The Moroccan government mainly stimulated emigration from specific regions, such as the Berber-speaking areas of the southwestern Sous valley, the oases of southeastern Morocco, and the northern Rif Mountains, where political tensions and rebellious attitudes to central authority were seen as problematic. Based on these motivations Morocco signed bilateral formal recruitment agreements with France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Given that European employers were interested in a cheap labor force, informal recruitment and spontaneous settlement took place even in the early 1960s. Establishment of a Moroccan community in Europe led to family reunion and chain migration, which continued over the years even after the first formal recruitment agreements were established (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008).

While Morocco had a positive attitude towards labor migration, the country had a much more prudent attitude towards the settlement of Moroccans in the European countries (De Haas, 2007a). Morocco saw migration as a long-term project that would eventually contribute to the economic development and political stability of the country, and Moroccan migrants were seen as the subjects of this project rather than individuals who were migrating from their free will.

From the mid-1970s onward, Moroccans obtained permanent residence through a series of legalization campaigns. The Moroccan government was still having strong control over its citizens, however, and tried to discourage their citizens' integration into host societies through several means (De Haas, 2007a). From a legal perspective the Moroccan government fought against the naturalization processes of migrants abroad. From a socio-cultural perspective, the Moroccan government stayed involved in the lives of Moroccans living in Europe by encouraging the new generations to learn Arabic and Islam and by sending teachers and imams to destination countries (De Haas, 2005; De Haas 2007a). The alienation of the Moroccans abroad from their culture and sense of

belonging to their state was seen as a threat to the state's objectives in encouraging migration. Finally, from a political perspective, through embassies, consulates, mosques, and state-created offices for migrants, the Moroccan government actively discouraged migrants from establishing independent organizations and joining trade unions or political parties.

Also when they were in Morocco, many immigrants did not perceive that they were welcome in their own country. There were various types of controls over the immigrants, and many did not feel that they were protected. Migrants did not trust the government because there was limited state tolerance of criticism. The immigrants who explicitly criticized the Moroccan government's attitude towards the state's immigrants were frequently harassed or threatened once they entered Morocco (De Haas, 2007). Such practices caused alienation instead of binding the Moroccans more to their home country.

Realizing this, in the early 1990s Morocco had to change its attitude toward its citizens living abroad. In line with Europe's expectations, naturalization and dual citizenship issues were dealt with via a more positive approach (CARIM, 2004; De Haas, 2005). Furthermore a ministry for Moroccans residing abroad was created in 1990. In the same year the Moroccan government established the Foundation Hassan II for Moroccans Abroad, which aims to foster links between Moroccan migrants and Morocco (De Haas, 2005). This foundation helped migrants in various ways, both in Europe and during summer holidays in Morocco. The foundation sought to inform and guide migrants on investment opportunities. With these measurements Morocco was able to find a "balance between courting and controlling its expatriate populations" (De Haas, 2007).

As a result of this more positive attitude and a more general liberalization of Moroccan society in general, the Moroccan Diaspora expanded, a considerable increase in remittances was observed, and protection of emigrant rights were prioritized (De Haas, 2005). One can argue that the encouraging migration policies in Morocco has resulted in the establishment of Bhagwati's "Diaspora model", defined as integrating past and present citizens into a web of rights and obligations in the extended community with the home country as the centre (De Haas, 2007)

## **7.2 Moroccan & European Relations Regarding Migration Policies**

Given Morocco's geographical closeness to Europe, immigration issues between Morocco and Europe have been mainly dominated by concerns about border control, security, and irregular migration in the last a few decades (Sadiqi, 2004, 2005; De Haas, 2007a). Spain has become the main gateway through which African immigrants can enter the internally-borderless Schengen region. Many Moroccans as well as people from other African countries pass through the intensified border controls in Morocco to reach Europe. In spite of these controls, many undocumented migrants from Morocco have been able to cross the Mediterranean Sea and enter Europe.

In this situation Europe envisions Morocco as the transit migration country that is responsible for preventing undocumented migrants from entering Europe (Sadiqi, 2004), and there is tension on this issue between the two sides. Europe argues that Morocco is readmitting undocumented migrants while it should be preventing them from migrating without documents. Morocco states that it has prevented many irregular migrants from entering Europe in the last a few years. Moroccan authorities claim that in 2004 they prevented more than 26,000 irregular attempts to emigrate, of which 17,000 concerned sub-Saharan immigrants (De Haas, 2005).

Despite the tension there is already a high level of bilateral cooperation with some EU Member States, chiefly with Spain. In 2003 Morocco passed a new law regulating the entry and residence of foreigners. The law includes heavy sanctions for undocumented immigration and human smuggling but largely ignores migrants' rights. According to critics these policies give the role of Europe's "policeman" to Morocco (De Haas, 2005).

To reduce immigration flows from Morocco, the EU is also seeking to boost Morocco's development. In 1996 Morocco signed the European Mediterranean Association Agreement (EMAA) with the European Union, which will lead to the establishment of a free trade area in 2010 (De Haas, 2005). Morocco's economic transition is also implemented through the MEDA program<sup>10</sup>, through which the private sector is developed and good governance is promoted. (De Haas, 2005).

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<sup>10</sup> MENA Program is the central financial instrument of Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The main objective of this program is to support Mediterranean countries' economic development, and establish a free trade zone.

The MEDA program's funds support the control of illegal immigration and rural development programs. The funds specifically target the Northern provinces where poverty levels are high and human smuggling and irregular migration take place (De Haas, 2005). Morocco has an active role in distributing the funds on these issues; however, there are also serious doubts about the credibility and effectiveness of these policies (De Haas, 2005). Policies between Morocco and Europe are not adequate to target the root causes of migration; they are also not sufficiently developed to fight against the professionalized smuggling techniques and rapidly-adapted migration strategies. Finally, these policies put Morocco's relationship with other African countries in danger, which consequently decreases Morocco's incentives to be engaged in these policies. Given all of these issues, Morocco–Europe relationships will continue to be challenging in the coming decades.

### **7.3 New Trends in Migration Policies**

Looking at the migration policies developed in the last few years, a new trend can be observed concerning the bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Morocco and Europe. The new policy field focuses more on the relationship between migration and co-development. An important dimension of this new approach is the participatory role of migrants and their associations in the development of their home country (Øsgtergaard Nielsen, 2009). In the process of engaging migration and co-development, migrants are encouraged to actively participate in projects. Regional and local governments as well as NGOs aim to facilitate migrant participation. Recent policies emphasize migrant incorporation by treating migrants as collective actors who can contribute to their home country's development from a distance (Øsgtergaard-Nielsen, 2009).

Migrant agency and the incorporation of the transnational dimension to development policies can be clearly observed in Catalonian policy documents. This new trend can be criticized from different angles, however. In this transnational approach many different actors such as migrants, local populations, and government actors are supposed to work together. The conflicting interests of these groups may slow down the realization and fruitfulness of the projects (Øsgtergaard-Nielsen, 2009). Moreover, such policies may unnecessarily make migrants responsible for development issues that the

state should actually take responsibility for (Øsgtergaard-Nielsen, 2009). Finally, given these complications, it may be hard to implement such co-development projects. It seems that in the short run, however, this new transnational approach that gives a more active role to migrants residing abroad may be improved and welcomed by the Moroccan government as well.

## **8. Moroccan Migration in the Netherlands**

### ***8.1 Moroccan Migrant Community Formation in the Netherlands***

Moroccan migration to the Netherlands is strongly characterized by recruitment of unskilled workers. The Dutch government regulated the recruitment practices by bilateral agreements with Morocco in the 1960s (Heering et al., 2002). Thanks to these formal agreements Moroccans could obtain work permits for the Netherlands and enter the Netherlands officially (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008). Moreover, from the time that the Netherlands opened itself to foreign labor in 1960, many Moroccan migrants entered the Netherlands first as tourists and obtained the necessary documents for a working permit upon arrival while looking for a job (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008).

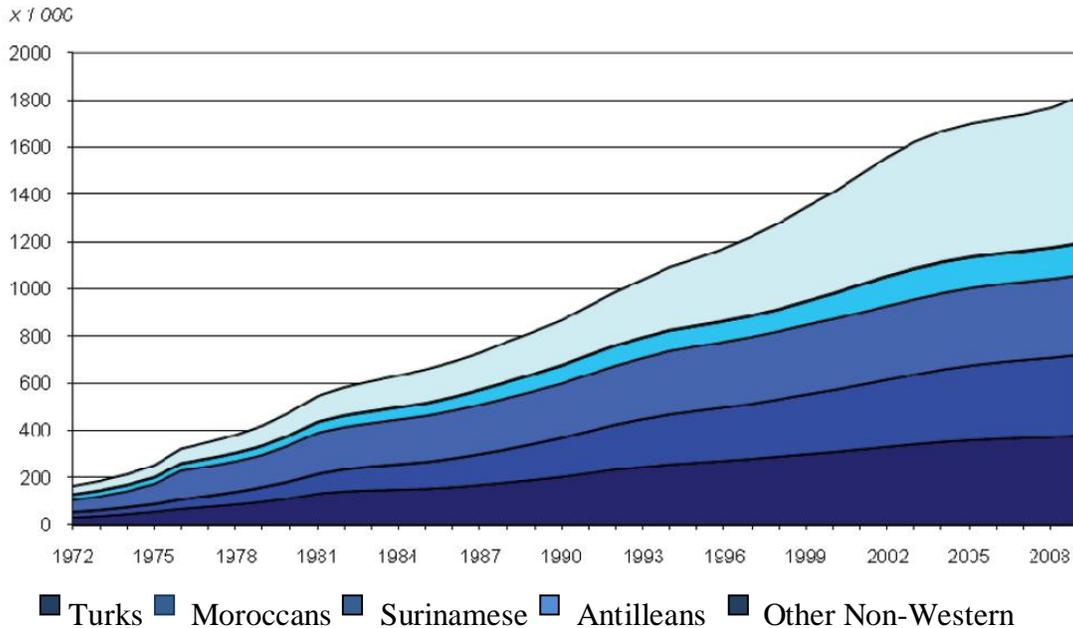
The recruitment policy stopped during the first oil crisis. From the beginning of 1970s, the effects of migration in the Netherlands became more of an issue both in the political agenda and in the mass media. During this decade it was observed that although the demand for foreign labor was decreasing, the number of immigrants in the country was increasing. The Netherlands also tried to stimulate return migration in that period, yet such programs were too costly compared to their success. The Moroccan community thus grew larger in spite of the Dutch government's efforts to limit migration.

Immigration from countries from which labor was recruited continued as chain-migration, at first in the form of family reunification throughout the 1970s and later on in the form of family formation in the 1980s and 1990s (Zorlu & Hartog, 2001). Moroccans in the Netherlands predominantly came from the rural Rif region, which is characterized by high population density and a shortage of agricultural resources. (Esveldt et al., 2000).

According to the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics' population statistics, almost 47% of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands lives in the four main cities of the Netherlands (the Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht) (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008). The Moroccan migrant community is gradually growing due to continuous immigration and relatively high birth rates in the group (Zorlu & Hartog, 2001). Moroccans were the fifth largest migrant group in the Netherlands in 2007. Figure 10 shows how the Moroccan migrant population increased in the Netherlands since the

1970s. As a result the Netherlands has considered itself an immigration country since the 1980s.

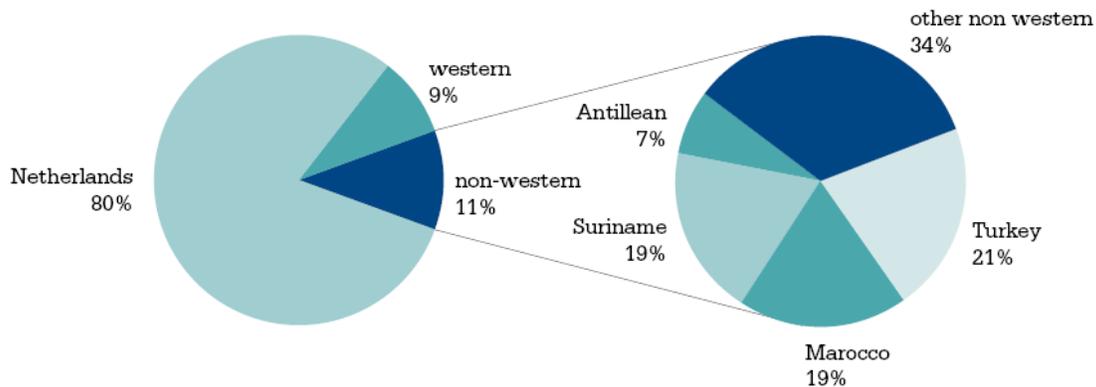
Figure 10 *Non-Western Immigrants in the Netherlands by Country of Origin*



Source. SCP, Annual Report Integration 2009

As can be seen in Figure 10, 11% of the population in the Netherlands is composed of non-Western migrants. Moroccans make up 20% of this non-Western population in the country. In the Netherlands there were almost 330,000 people in 2007 who are considered to be of Morocco origin. Of this group almost 168,000 are first-generation immigrants (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008). In terms of naturalization, it is important to mention that in 2006 the number of Moroccans, including those holding dual citizenship, was almost 314,000. If individuals with dual citizenship are excluded, there were around 86,000 Moroccan nationals in the Netherlands. These numbers indicate that although naturalization rates have increased in the last years (Esveldt et al., 2000), a considerable share of all Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands still do not hold Dutch citizenship (CBS in Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008).

Figure 11 *Number of Non-Western Ethnic Minorities in the Netherlands*



Source. SCP, Annual Report Integration 2008 in FORUM, 2009

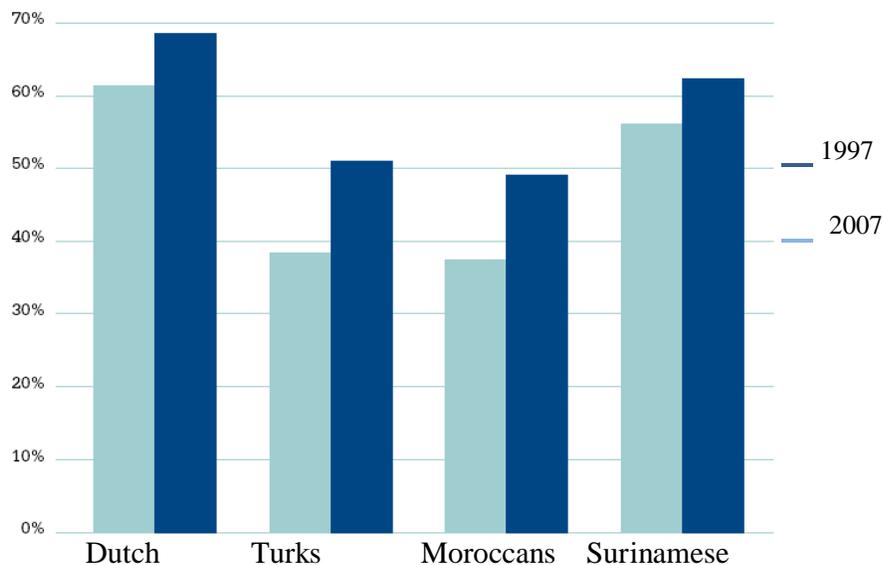
Given the increased levels of migration from Morocco as well as other origin countries, the Netherlands increasingly wrestles with the integration of migrant communities into mainstream Dutch society. The integration of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands compared to the other main migrant communities will be examined in the next section to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the settlement experience of Moroccans.

### ***8.2 Integration of Moroccan Migrants in the Netherlands***

Moroccan immigrants who initially arrived as guest workers strongly differ in their social careers from members of the other bigger migrant groups in the Netherlands (Heering et al., 2002). Compared to the migrants from former Dutch colonies, Moroccans have a different migration history; they lack the language proficiency in Dutch and are considered to be more distant from Dutch society and culture. These differences negatively influence Moroccans' socioeconomic integration in the Netherlands (Zorlu & Hartog, 2001). The socio-economic position of the Moroccan migrant population is generally worse than that of the indigenous population (Neubourg, Beckers & Hercog, 2008). It can be observed that 30% to 40% of the Moroccans in the Netherlands belong to the low-income group whereas this percentage is only between 6 and 10 for the native Dutch (CBS, 2007).

When looking at several indicators of economic integration, the lower performance of Moroccan migrants compared to other groups can be observed; however, it is worthwhile to state that compared to previous decades, Moroccan migrants have improved their situations significantly (Forum, 2009). Figure 12 illustrates the employment rate of different ethnic groups in the Netherlands. Although the employment rate of Moroccans is the lowest for all groups, there has been a considerable increase in their employment rates in the past decade.

Figure 12 *Employment for Different Ethnic Groups (Employed (15-65 Years))*



Source. CBS Annual Report Integration (2008) in Forum, 2009

The SCP Annual Report on Integration (2007) shows that the degree of youth unemployment (ages 15-24) is very high for the Moroccans. Compared to 9% of youth unemployment for the native Dutch, Moroccan youth experience an unemployment rate of 26% (Forum, 2009). Additionally in 2005 the average standardized annual income for Moroccans was €14,100 while the income level for the native Dutch was €21,000. Finally, entrepreneurship as a percentage of the labor force has more than doubled from 3.4% to 7.3% for Moroccan migrants between 1998 and 2005 (CBS 2007 in Forum, 2009). This percentage has increased from 10.5% to 11.5% for the native Dutch population. In sum,

even though the economic position of Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands has improved, the gap between this group and the native population persists.

On the socio-cultural level it is important to look at social contacts of Moroccans, their proficiency in the Dutch language, and their feelings of belonging. The Social Position of and Use of Services by Migrants (SPVA) data shows that in the last few years, the social contact between Moroccans and the native Dutch has been increasing. Second-generation Moroccans in particular interact more with the Dutch compared to the elderly, who probably lack the language proficiency in Dutch (Esveldt et al., 2000). There is also evidence indicating that new arrivals from Morocco are more prone to learn the Dutch language. Data from the 1990s indicates that the increase in the use of the Dutch language at home for the Moroccans has had fundamentally positive effects on overall language proficiency (Esveldt et al., 2000).

Finally, compared to Surinamese and Antilleans, a larger proportion of Moroccan migrants identify themselves with their ethnic group rather than with the Dutch society (Table 1). One can relativize this statement by looking at differences in age, generation, and educational level, however. It can be argued that younger and better-educated Moroccans are less likely to identify themselves with their ethnic group, and second-generation Moroccan migrants are also less prone to identify themselves with their ethnic group. When interpreting the socio-cultural integration of Moroccan migrants, it is thus important to consider the heterogeneous character of the group.

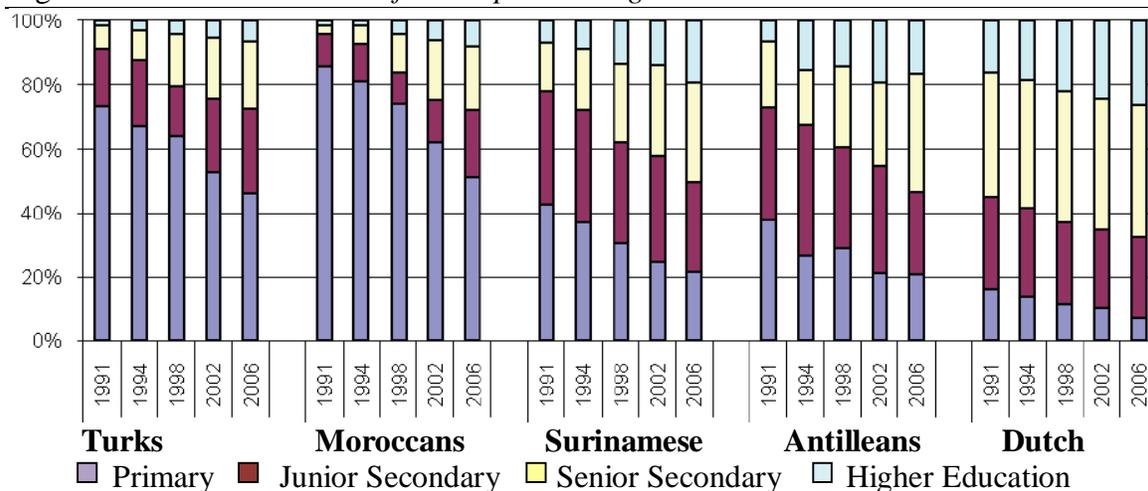
Table 1 *Share of Ethnic Minorities Who Identify Themselves with Their Ethnic Group*

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans
Total	58%	46%	20%	35%
Males	55%	46%	21%	34%
Females	61%	47%	20%	37%
15-24 year	45%	35%	20%	35%
25-44 year	57%	44%	19%	36%
45-64 year	73%	63%	21%	33%
> 65 year	85%	65%	28%	34%
First generation	66%	50%	24%	42%
Second generation	36%	33%	11%	9%
Primary school education	72%	60%	19%	42%
Prevocational education	56%	36%	23%	38%
Vocational education	48%	37%	22%	31%
Higher or university education	34%	37%	16%	35%

Source. SCP, Annual Report Integration 2008 in FORUM, 2009

Despite improvements in the socio-cultural embeddedness of Moroccans in the Netherlands, there are still remaining issues that negatively influence the group's well-being in the Netherlands. One of the main factors in this context is the educational level of Moroccans. Although improvement in educational attainment can be observed, Moroccans' average highest educational level is considerably lower than that of the native population and the other main migrant groups.

Figure 13 *Educational Level of the Population Aged 15-64 in the Netherlands*



Source. SCP Annual Report on Integration, 2009

In conclusion, a steady improvement in all indicators of socioeconomic integration can be observed for the Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands, but members of this group still lag behind the average performance of the native population significantly. It is important to mention that the lower socioeconomic status of Moroccans has a spillover effect on other dimensions of integration. Many Moroccan migrants live in ethnically-segregated neighborhoods, for example. This kind of segregation may make it more difficult for Moroccans to overcome the existing challenges that they must face. Furthermore, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the public discourse has shifted and come to emphasise migration and integration issues. “Muslim” Moroccans now attract special attention. As a result it is not unrealistic to expect Moroccan migration and the existing Moroccan migrant community in the Netherlands to continue to be one of the most “visible” groups in the Netherlands.

## **9. Future Perspectives of Migration**

There seems to be a consensus that in the near future Moroccan migration will continue to play an important role, and there will not be a decrease in numbers in the two coming decades (eg. Fargues, 2008, de Haas, 2007b). As mentioned in Section 5, the Moroccan Diaspora is expected to become the biggest non-European Diaspora group in Europe in the next decade. Propensity to migrate is likely to remain high in the near future due to demand for migrant labor in Europe, unemployment and lack of opportunities in Morocco, increasing aspirations as a result of intensive media exposure, and improved education (de Haas, 2007b, 2009).

Several factors could contribute to a change in Moroccan outmigration in the long run, however. The Moroccan population is currently undergoing a demographic transition resulting from a declining fertility rate (Lahlou, 2008). This is expected to lead to a reduction of labor supply and restructuring of the labour market, which could translate into lower migratory pressure (Lahlou, 2008). The extent to which this will happen depends, among other factors, on job creation, political stability, and economic growth (de Haas, 2007b). The growth of the urban population in Morocco accompanying the decline in rural population also means that rural migration movements will continuously decrease. These movements constituted major emigration factors. The increasingly high share of urban population is also believed to lead to increased access to healthcare and schooling, which could change the characteristics of migrants. Levels of education would rise and “match thus the current trends of European migration policies which are increasingly focusing on the concept of ‘chosen migration’ or ‘selective migration’ (Lahlou, 2008).

What seems to be certain is that Morocco will become a destination country for migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa. While some of the migrants coming to Morocco will continue to Europe, an increasing number might opt to stay in the North-African country. While in the past the picture of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco was one of people living from charity, there are now more people integrating into society through regular work and commerce, and the state’s policy of attracting students from Sub-Saharan countries completes this modern picture.

Implications of the world financial and economic crisis on Moroccan migration are still speculative at this point of time. One likely consequence is that the number of employment opportunities offered to migrants will be reduced and could generate a growth in return migration while also reducing new emigration (Fargues, 2009). The growing unemployment in Europe may support the trend of natives taking the jobs that had previously been occupied by migrant workers. This has already been observed in Spain in the agriculture and service industries (Fargues, 2009).

The number of highly-skilled migrants of Moroccan origin is on the rise, however. A certain number of students stay in destination countries after finishing their studies to look for jobs or continue their university careers (Khachani, 2005). The increasing number of Diaspora organizations with scientific backgrounds equally testifies to the rising trend of highly skilled out-migration from Morocco. The destination countries are not only European but increasingly on the North American continent.

## **10. Conclusion**

Migration plays an important role in Moroccan society. A considerable number of Moroccans either migrate or wish to do so, and after some years of a rather complicated relationship with its migrants, the Moroccan state now shows a positive attitude toward its citizens abroad. The size of remittance flows are considerable and are recognized as indispensable by the Moroccan government, which now tries to foster the relationship between Moroccans abroad and their or their parents' home country by several measures.

It seems that migration from Morocco will continue at a steady rate in the next two decades and will also stay on policy makers' agendas. Public authorities have shown new interest in the management of migration; this not only includes the relationship with their own nationals but also the construction of a legislative framework to regulate the entry and stay of foreign nationals and encourage their integration. Moreover, it can be concluded that migration's potential role on development will be emphasized more in the future. Accordingly, researchers as well as policy makers will focus on the lives of Moroccans living in Morocco as well as those living abroad.

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