

# MIGRANT LABOUR IN WESTERN EUROPE

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STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS / 3

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## Introduction

Migration before World War II was characterised by movement from East to West, i.e. from Europe to America. Since the 1960s the movement has been from South to North. Within the continent of Europe, large numbers of migrants left the Mediterranean countries where labour surpluses existed, and moved to the more highly industrialised countries. In 1973-74, however, a turning point was reached when most of the receiving countries suspended immigration. Large numbers of people have been involved in these movements and this has undoubtedly had a significant impact on the international division of labour.

The discussion begins by looking at the causes of migration and the impact of European unification. I then proceed to look at the characteristics of foreign labour, the economic contribution made by foreign workers and the different policies pursued by the receiving countries. The paper ends with an analysis of the costs and benefits of migration for host and emigration countries and suggestions of measures to solve the current problems and contribute to economic justice.

Because of limitations of time and scope, this report is confined to a consideration of the situation of migrant workers within certain representative immigration countries. Nevertheless, the international trade implications of migration have been considered wherever possible.

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## 1. Causes of Migration and the Impact of European Unification

This report deals primarily with 'economic migration', i.e. migration where the principal goal is economic gain. While the subject of political refugees is an interesting one, this problem seems to call for different policies. However, we must recognise that the distinction is not clear. Many individuals migrate for both reasons, especially when political discrimination leads to economic discrimination. This is particularly true for most of the Mediterranean countries with recent experience of dictatorships, or for minorities like Armenians or Kabylies. With these limitations in mind we can now proceed to the study of labour migration.

### 1.1 Reasons for migrating

The potential migrant will presumably select the locality offering him the greatest benefit (change in locality may also involve a change of occupation and/or industry). Each alternative locality will offer certain costs and benefits. Put very simply, if the discounted value of the expected earnings abroad, minus the costs of migration, exceeds the value of expected earnings at home, the worker will have a strong incentive to migrate. As this gap increases, more workers will be inclined to move. This is not to say that two individuals facing the same conditions will make the same choice: perceptions of gains and costs, and attitudes towards the uncertainty surrounding migration may be different.

Expected gains depend mainly on the difference between wages at home and abroad and the unemployment rates. The latter measures the likelihood of getting the wages hoped for abroad, though it may not be very important where great differences in wages exist. In the past, Mediterranean and North African countries have been characterised both by high unemployment rates and low wages relative to the highly industrialised countries. By taking a global measure, gross domestic product per capita, and by comparing it with rates of migration for some representative countries, we can illustrate these observations. Table 1 deals with the period 1960-70 when migration was relatively easy and the demand for labour in industrialised countries was high. All the countries in the table are ranged by net average annual rate of migration in decreasing order. Gross domestic product per capita follows this ranking, except for France and Belgium. Belgium favoured a policy of permanent establishment for specific nationalities during this period to make good the losses of the war, while West Germany ranks after France because it had benefited from important in-flows from the DDR in the late 1950s. In any case other factors, such as the number of unfilled vacancies, the female labour force participation rate, etc. must be taken into account for countries with similar gross domestic products per capita. Similar results are obtained for the period 1970-74, i.e. before restrictions were introduced in host countries.

Table 1  
Net average rate of migration (1960-70) in relation to per capita GDP (1965)

	CH	F	D	B	NL	UK	I	E	GR	P
Net average annual migration rate per 1000 inhabitants	+6.8	+4.5	+3.5	+1.6	+0.8	-0.3	-1.5	-1.7	-4.3	-14.0
Gross per capita domestic product (US \$) in 1965 (1975 prices and exchange rates)	7139	4387	5209	4360	4412	3393	2252	1802	1344	959

Source: 30 and 33.

### 1.2 Enlargement of the EEC

What effect will the enlargement of the EEC and the extension of free movement of workers have upon migration patterns? Greece recently joined the EEC (free movement of Greek workers will take effect in 1988), and the entry of Spain and Portugal is under study. Turkey has also expressed a desire to enlarge its relations with the EEC. The comparison of past trends and examination of the current situation in these countries (i.e. unemployment and wages) will enable us to see to what extent free movement of workers will favour further migration.

In order to reveal the underlying trend, data from before 1974 will be studied. Free movement of Italian workers was introduced in 1968 but emigration from Italy to other Community countries continued to fall, even though the situation was fairly favourable in most of these countries until 1973 (see Table 2). This movement

Table 2  
Italian migration to and from France and West Germany in thousands

	1971	1972	1973	1974
Italian emigrants to France and West Germany	63.1	52.0	47.8	39.8
Italian emigrants returning from France and West Germany	45.1	50.6	45.5	43.4

Source: 29.

continued later, with the number of Italians returning home, especially from Germany, being one of the highest national figures largely because Italians do not lose any acquired rights. From 1974-78, 366,126 Italians entered West Germany but some 459,000 left the country. Table 3 shows a similar trend for Greece: the number of Greeks moving into other European countries and Germany was steadily decreasing up to 1974, despite the fact that this was a black period for Greece.

Table 3  
Emigration from Greece to Europe in thousands

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Emigration from Greece to Europe	68.1	42.5	29.1	15.1	10.9
Emigration from Greece to West Germany	65.3	40.1	26.7	12.8	8.3

Source: 30.

Spain has also experienced net immigration since 1975. Even if a large number of these people were forced to return because of restrictions in host countries, the downward movement was noticeable before such measures were introduced and while the economic situation was still good in Europe. Greece, Spain and Italy have all become net importers of labour in recent years, attracting North Africans or Pakistanis for unskilled manual jobs. This confirms previous studies ( 9 p.31 ) which argue that when a country reaches a GDP of about \$ 2,200 it becomes a net importer of labour. Certainly the GDP per capita is a measure of development and hence labour shortages in some sectors.

By contrast, Turks, Yugoslavs and Portuguese were experiencing an upward emigration flow up to 1974. Given the low GDP per capita, the high unemployment rates and the significant proportion of people unemployed in the agricultural sector, free movement within an expanded EEC is likely to lead to high levels of emigration from Portugal and Turkey. This is particularly true if we take account of the under-employment existing in the agricultural sector.

In the light of these observations, it seems that Greek migrants have been placed in a disadvantaged position in comparison with other European workers inside the EEC in order to set a new precedent and provide the Community with additional bargaining power against Spain, Portugal and Turkey in negotiations over the rights of their nationals inside the EEC.

Table 4

Economic situation of certain representative emigration countries and the EEC

	EEC	I	E	P	GR	TK
% labour force in agriculture (1966)	14.1	25.2	30.0	36.4	47.6	70.4
% labour force in agriculture (1979)	8.4	14.8	19.5	30.6	30.8	60.7
GDP per capita (US \$) in 1979	6061	3921	3113	1809	2672	954
Unemployment rates (1979)	5.5	7.5	9.9	8.1	1.9	13.9

Source: 33 and 34.

The regional and agricultural policies of the EEC may also help to explain the downward trend of Italian emigration in the past and the likely further decline of Greek emigration in the future. Consider in the first place a situation in which this policy is absent: the existence of an institutionally-determined urban minimum wage greater than rural earnings favours rural → urban migration. Rural migrants move in the belief that they will be sporadically employed in the traditional sector (e.g. construction) until they find a permanent job in the more advanced sector. If their expectations are not realised they leave the country. Policies to absorb urban unemployment in such cases may lead to higher urban unemployment (19 p. 132) and further migration out of the country. New jobs in fact imply for the potential rural migrant a shorter period during which he will be unemployed or under-employed and hence a strong incentive to move. If the number of rural migrants is higher than the number of new jobs, urban unemployment increases. The regional and agricultural policy of the EEC, however, works in the opposite direction. The common agricultural policy of the EEC, in particular, by stabilising farmers' income, reduces the expected gains from migration (rural → urban → international). While such a policy may not increase real rural earnings, it does drastically moderate fluctuations. This is extremely important for people on low incomes. Hence the migratory chain (rural → urban → international migration) is reduced.

## 2. Characteristics of Migrants

### 2.1 Age

The median age of immigrants in Europe is between 24 and 27 years but it is generally lower for women, varying from 23 to 26. The host countries prefer to admit young healthy workers who can easily be sent back home if labour surpluses

appear. As far as workers are concerned, young people are more mobile and the psychological costs of moving are lower for them. They have fewer family ties and adapt to a new environment better than older people. Young people may also be more prepared to take risks, have higher expectations about training abroad and are optimistic about returning home again. Since 1974 the average age has increased, as only the relatives of foreigners settled abroad can enter host countries. Also since 1974 there have been relatively more women migrants.

## 2.2 Skill level

This important characteristic is dictated by the needs of the host countries and is controlled through work permits. The serious labour shortages for unskilled manual labour can be seen in Table 5, although the percentage of skilled workers is not insignificant.

Table 5  
Entry of workers into France and West Germany by nationality and skill level

	France 1971		West Germany 1973	
	Total entrants (000s)	Skilled %	Total entrants (000s)	Skilled %
Spanish	12.9	35	27.3	10
Greek	0.3	67	4.98	15.5
Italian	5.4	44	3.7	19
Portuguese	64.3	20	28.3	33
Turkish	5.7	33	101.3	30
Yugoslav	7.2	26	67.2	36
Moroccan	20.7	16	-	-
Tunisian	10.0	37	2.7 (1971)	33

Source: 12 p.231 and 2 p.38.

A number of points should be emphasised. Firstly, for West Germany the percentage of qualified Italians was much higher before 1973. For all other immigrants entering West Germany, except Turks, the percentage of those qualified was generally lower. This reflects the higher selectivity of West Germany, where only workers with specific skills are permitted entry. (Since 1973-74 this policy has also been pursued in other countries.) Secondly, these statistics are based upon entrants' declared skills, and we have to examine to what extent they reflect effective



skills. So for France, half of those claiming to be skilled have a qualification related to the building sector ( 12 p.230 ). The majority of Turkish migrants have qualifications related to traditional sectors which may not be relevant to a technologically advanced European country with its division of labour. Surveys in Turkey also report that employers do not have difficulty in replacing them ( 2 p.42). Yugoslavs, on the other hand, do have genuine qualifications: a Yugoslav census in 1971 found that over 36% of Yugoslav migrants had graduated from schools for skilled or highly skilled workers or had completed eight years of elementary school ( 5 p.91 ). However we should remember that they will not necessarily occupy the position for which they received training. Bock and Tiedt's survey of Yugoslavs in West Germany found that only 2.2% of those interviewed had attended a specialised preparation course in Yugoslavia for their work in West Germany ( 8 p.54 ). Even if there is no direct correspondence between skills abroad and at home, this demonstrates that most of them under-utilise their real qualifications, a phenomenon which is highly profitable for an employer. The desire to accept any job in order to get a visa must also play a part.

The low percentage of skilled workers among Greeks and Spaniards reflects the labour shortages for skilled workers experienced at home, particularly since the mid-seventies.

In contrast to the Yugoslavs whose principal incentive to migrate is unemployment or under-employment (about 40% in Bock and Tiedt's study, p.45) the Turks are motivated by the difference in wages, as already noted. Thus in 1970 about 80% of emigrants had a job before leaving Turkey ( 2 p.40 ). This is understandable when we compare GDP per capita in different countries, as above.

As for education level, Yugoslav and Turkish migrants are better educated than those who stay behind, but for Greeks the difference is small. Men are generally better educated than women.

### 2.3 Nationality

In the **UK** and **The Netherlands** the composition by nationality is related to the special ties these countries have with their former colonies. In these cases geographical distance is outweighed by historical links. Generally speaking, large movements took place before and during the time that the colonies were negotiating for independence, as restrictions were expected to be imposed later. In both countries many migrants go unreported in the statistics as they hold British or Dutch passports. This entitles them to participate in the political process, but this has not lead to any significant changes in their socio-economic situation.

Table 6  
6.1 Foreign workers in SOPEMI countries, 1980 (thousands)<sup>1</sup>

Country of residence Country of origin	A	B	F	D	L	NL	S	CH	UK <sup>2</sup>
Algeria	-	3.2	382.1	2.7	-	-	-	-	0.6
Austria	-	-	-	87.2	-	-	-	19.45	-
Finland	-	-	-	3.6	-	-	108.0	-	-
Greece	-	10.7	-	138.4	-	1.3	7.5	4.78	50.0
Italy	2.1	90.5	157.6	324.3	11.2	10.0	-	233.80	56.5
Morocco	-	37.3	171.9	16.6	-	34.2	-	-	2.0
Portugal	-	6.2	434.6	59.9	13.7	4.3	-	7.46	10.0
Spain	0.2	32.0	128.9	89.3	2.3	10.6	-	62.10	37.0
Tunisia	-	4.7	73.2	-	-	1.1	-	-	0.2
Turkey	30.1	23.0	-	623.9	-	53.8	-	20.70	3.0
Yugoslavia	120.9	3.1	-	367.0	0.6	6.8	24.0	30.70	4.0
Other EEC countries	12.2	172.0	49.4	149.8	21.9	55.0	93.7	83.70	700.0
Other non-EEC countries	18.6	40.0	194.2	315.0	2.2	33.9	32.4	38.40	-
TOTAL	184.1	332.7	1591.9	2168.8	51.9	211.0	234.1	501.20	863.3

Where no figures are given this nationality is not counted separately. West Germany: foreign workers, including frontier workers, employed or unemployed in West Germany at June 30, 1980. Figures do not therefore include self-employed. Figures relating to Austrians, Finns and Algerians do not include those unemployed. Austria: figures based on current work permits, including the unemployed. Belgium: estimate by the Ministry of Employment and Labour, at December 31, 1980. Figures include the unemployed and the self-employed. France: estimate of the active population, including unemployed and self-employed, in October 1979. Luxembourg: workers in employment. Figures include 600 Italian frontier workers and 11,200 frontier workers from other EEC countries. Netherlands: estimate on the basis of work permits. Includes unemployed but not the self-employed. Sweden: figures obtained from surveys of the active population. Average for 1980. Switzerland: holders of annual permits or residence permits in a "lucrative occupation" at December 31, 1980. Seasonal and frontier workers not included.

Source: Intersocial, no. 80, 1982.

<sup>1</sup> SOPEMI is the OECD Continuous Reporting System on Migration.

<sup>2</sup> Figures for 1975. Source: W.R. Böhring 11.

## 6.2 Resident foreign population in selected countries, 1980 (thousands)

Country of residence	F	D	NL	S	CH
Country of origin					
Algeria	808.2	5.0	0.4	0.6	-
Austria	-	172.6	-	3.3	31.7
Finland	-	9.9	-	181.5	-
Greece	-	297.5	4.1	15.5	8.8
Italy	469.2	617.8	21.6	4.8	420.7
Morocco	421.3	35.9	85.1	1.4	-
Portugal	857.3	112.3	9.5	1.6	10.7
Spain	424.7	180.0	23.8	33.8	97.2
Tunisia	181.6	22.6	2.5	1.0	-
Turkey	103.9	1462.4	140.2	18.3	38.1
Yugoslavia	68.2	631.8	14.6	39.2	43.9
Other EEC countries	168.9	293.7	118.2	46.8	159.6
Other non-EEC countries	644.6	611.8	96.2	64.9	82.1
TOTAL	4147.9	4453.3	537.8	421.7	892.8

Where no figures are given this nationality is not counted separately. West Germany: situation at September 30, 1982. Figures from Federal Statistical Office. France: figures provided by Ministry of the Interior. Current residence permits. Netherlands: estimate by Intersocial Dutch correspondent. Sweden: foreigners counted in the national census at December 31, 1980. Switzerland: all holders of annual permits and residence permits at December 31, 1980.

Source: Intersocial, no. 80, April 1982.

## 6.3 Foreign workers as percentage of civilian active population (1980)

A	B	F	D	L	NL	S	CH	UK (1975)
5.9	8.2	7.0	8.3	32.4	4.1	5.4	16.9	3.4

Source: Table 6.1 and 6.2 and 33.

**Switzerland** and **Austria** favoured immigration from neighbouring countries because geographical proximity allowed them flexibility during recessions. Cultural links and a desire to favour their trade with these countries were also important factors. Switzerland therefore favoured Italians while Austria Yugoslavs. As the Italian "reservoir" was drying up and there was a desire to avoid too great a concentration of the same nationality, both countries later favoured diversification, but no fundamental changes took place.

**France, Belgium** and **West Germany**, both for cultural reasons and because of the Common Market, favoured Italian immigration. Early emigration of Italians and high rates of growth in Italy during the sixties sharply decreased the rate of emigration from Italy. So while they represented 44% of the foreign workers in West Germany in 1961, 40% of the permanent foreign workers in France in 1960 and 47% of the active foreign population in Belgium in 1961, these percentages dropped to 20.4%, 3.3% and 35% respectively in 1970. A similar change occurred in the case of Spanish migrants in the wake of Spain's successful export drive. Due to the large labour shortages that emerged in the late 1960s, all three countries turned to other Mediterranean countries for labour. Labour shortages were so high that Germans pressed the Turkish authorities to speed up applications for emigration ( 2 p.45 ). France favoured Portuguese emigration when immigration from Algeria was suspended as a result of a series of racist killings in 1973.

In **Sweden**, the Finns are the main group to benefit from the common labour market established between Nordic countries. Differences in wages and the high proportion of Finns employed in the agricultural sector, and thus under-employed, prompted many of them to seek work in Sweden during the 1960s.

Generally speaking, migrants will be drawn to places with established colonies of their compatriots, as there will be better information and reception for new arrivals. In his study ( 1 ) Adler finds that half of the Yugoslavs interviewed had emigrated with the help of relatives, while the same was true for an estimated one third of Turks in Germany.

#### 2.4 Sex

The sex distribution of foreign workers varies as a result of many factors. In Belgium the number of women is high due to Belgium's policy of allowing foreign workers to settle. In Switzerland and Germany a work permit was easier to obtain if both husband and wife were economically active.

Table 7.1 Foreign population in the Netherlands  
by nationality and sex, 1976 and 1978

	1978		
	Total	% female	% change in female ratio 1976-78
Total	225,800	37.0	9.8
Greek	4,200	38.1	0.0
Italian	20,700	34.8	0.9
Yugoslav	13,600	46.3	3.1
Moroccan	55,400	29.1	34.7
Portuguese	9,400	45.7	3.2
Spanish	25,000	39.5	4.5
Tunisian	1,700	23.5	17.5
Turkish	95,000	39.6	12.2

Table 7.2 Foreign population in West Germany  
by nationality and sex, 1974 and 1978<sup>++</sup>

	September 1978		% change in female ratio 1974-78
	Total	% female	
All nationalities	3,027,951	40.3	14.5
Nationalities listed below	2,195,023	39.3	10.7
Greek	223,005	46.2	1.1
Italian	439,343	33.9	6.1
Moroccan	22,970	17.7	115.9
Portuguese	81,599	44.2	19.5
Spanish	145,448	40.3	8.9
Tunisian	15,481	25.9	87.7
Turkish	774,278	39.4	-0.5
Yugoslav	492,899	41.3	15.0

<sup>++</sup> Excluding children under 16 years of age.

Table 7.3 Foreign workers in Switzerland by nationality and sex, 1974 and 1978

Nationalities	1978		% change in female ratio 1974-78
	Total	% female	
Total	285,889	34.3	-3.3
German	27,377	32.7	-3.8
French	41,961	40.6	-0.5
Italian	98,302	30.3	11.3
Austrian	8,921	32.6	-1.5
Spanish	42,052	34.3	18.7
Other	67,276	35.5	1.4

Source: reproduced from 24

Much of the migration since 1974 can be explained by family reunions, hence the increase in the percentage of women migrants shown in Table 7. The increase is particularly high for Arab migrants, though the percentage of women remains low in all countries. The low numbers of Moslem women is thought to be due to discrimination and the desire to discourage the permanent establishment of these nationalities, who are considered "unassimilable". They are discouraged from joining their husbands abroad.

### 3. Employment and Unemployment of Foreign Labour

#### 3.1 Sectoral Distribution

In West Germany in 1979, around 60% of foreigners were concentrated in the manufacturing sector, 10.3% in construction and about 15% in "other services" (see Appendix 2). Within industry as a whole they represented 9.4% of total employment, with over-representation in chemicals (19.2%), foundries (26.3%), iron and steel (17.7%) and catering (22.1%).

In France, over 29% of foreigners (310,000) are concentrated in the building sector where hourly earnings matched the average for the non-agricultural sector. The accident rate, however, is higher than average, there is high sensitivity to cyclical fluctuations and the conditions of work are judged undesirable by nationals. As in West Germany, large concentrations are to be found in road vehicles (97,000 or 18.6% of all salaried employees), foundries and metal work (63,700, or 14.2%), textiles and clothing (50,000, or 9.7%), and finally specialist shops (92,000, or 7.2%). In Sweden and Belgium they are concentrated in sectors such as mining (see Appendix 2). Finally, within the tertiary sector, they are often concentrated in sectors such as catering, transport, health services and domestic work, all of these being considered "low status" jobs.

It is often argued that foreign labour retards technological progress. Because migrants accept low wages, labour intensive methods are retained where these could be replaced by capital intensive methods. If this is true, then industries with high elasticity of substitution between labour and capital ought to have a large share of foreign labour. But in West Germany<sup>1</sup> the share is high in sectors where this elasticity is low, such as vehicles (20%) and textiles (19%), and low in industries where this elasticity is high, such as precision engineering (15.4%), or

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1. Figures refer to the percentage of foreign workers in the total workforce for 1970 (9 p.35). Compare with 12 p.183.

stone and earthenware goods (15%). A related argument is that foreign labour is concentrated primarily in unproductive sectors. Again data for West Germany does not support this, except in the case of textiles. Thus we find large concentrations in industries such as road vehicles and aircraft, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering, i.e. the most competitive industries.

### 3.1.1 Female Migrants

Women are often concentrated in the textile and clothing sector, catering, health services and domestic work. These sectors are characterised by the lowest wages and are often rejected by nationals.

High rates of employment both for national and foreign women are also found in electrical engineering and the manufacture of precision instruments, especially the latter, where the qualities required are those attributed to young women. Generally, the distribution is similar to that of national females, as would be expected.

### 3.1.2 Distribution by nationality

In France, Moroccans, Portuguese and Algerians are more concentrated in the building sector than other nationalities. So in 1975, 31% of Algerians were employed in this sector compared to 27% of all foreigners and 9% French. Portuguese and Spanish women are over-represented in domestic work.

In West Germany about 10% of the total number employed in foundries were Turks, 6% Italians, and foreigners together represented 27% (1972) while they represented only 9% of the total active population. In the same country, Turks are relatively over-represented in stone and earthenware goods, iron and steel, and non-ferrous metals. Greeks are relatively over-represented in rubber and asbestos, iron and steel, and metal goods.

In general, Yugoslavs are more evenly distributed between industries while Greek women are concentrated in capital goods industries, in contrast to all other women who are concentrated in textiles, clothing and the traditional sectors.

Finally in the UK, where foreign labour comes mainly from Asia and the West Indies, Pakistani workers are more concentrated in textiles than other nationalities, and all nationalities except Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in transport. The high percentage of West Indians in professional and scientific services is explained by the fact that many West Indian women do secretarial jobs or work in the national health service (see Appendix 2).

### 3.2 Job Qualifications

In all European countries, foreign labour is concentrated in low-skilled jobs. As noted at the beginning of this report, this may not be due to lack of education since many migrants do have an effective qualification, even if the reported numbers overestimate this.

So in France about 56% of migrants are manual workers or occupied in the domestic service sector compared to 26.5% of the French population (see Table 8). However, 23% are said to be qualified compared to 16.2% of nationals. Further study is needed to explain these results. E. Perat's study ( 12 p.160 ) reveals that only 14% of foreign workers have jobs which require more than 3 months training, and 78% received a training of less than 3 weeks. Since this is probably the time needed to adapt to the job, we can conclude that an important part of those reported as qualified do not possess an effective skill. Furthermore, 7% of foreigners possess a formal qualification, but 95% of these do work requiring physical exertion in a dangerous environment.

With the exception of Algerians, early migrants are more qualified. Italians are at the top, while 68% of Algerians are semi-skilled or labourers. The highest percentage of skilled workers is generally to be found in the building sector and the lowest in the service sector.

Only a small percentage of migrants from EEC countries have unskilled manual jobs and a high percentage are in middle and top management. Border workers are a special case. Thus 88% of Alsatian border workers in Germany and 70% in Switzerland have blue collar jobs. Their distribution by sector is different as it depends on which industries are located in border areas (44% in the chemical industry in Switzerland) ( 42 p.400 ).

In West Germany, 52% of foreigners are unskilled and 33.5% semi-skilled compared to 33.3% and 27.3% respectively for Germans (see Table 8). Of all foreigners employed in the mechanical and vehicle industries 30.5% are skilled compared to an average of 14.5% for all industries ( 21 Table 11 ). On the other hand, in leather and clothing industries the percentage of skilled workers is only 7.3%, reflecting the low skill level of foreign females. The skill level of foreigners is shown by the fact that 33.3% of skilled foreigners work on a "single piece" type of production. For West Germany, the study by Bock and Tiedt reveals that only 7% of those interviewed said that they had received further training, and for only half of them did it last more than 6 months.



Table 8.1 Distribution of workers in West Germany by skill level (1977)

	Total	Germans	Foreign
Unskilled	36.1	33.3	52.0
Semi-skilled	28.8	27.3	33.5
Skilled	35.1	39.4	14.5
Total	100	100	100

Source: 21 Table 10.

8.2 Distribution of workers in France by socio-professional status (1975)

	Foreign	French
Agriculture	4.4	1.72
Clerical workers	5.4	17.64
Skilled workers	22.9	16.24
Manual workers	49.0	20.94
Domestic services	6.9	5.71
Others	11.4	37.75
Total	100	100

Source: reproduced from 1 p. 39.

8.3 Job level analysed by country of origin, UK (1974)

	White	West Indies	Pakistan Bangladesh	India	Africa Asia
Men in job market who have worked (unweighted)	996	634	495	508	226
Men in job market who have worked (weighted)	1594	2896	1391	1867	1050
Job level (socio-economic group)	%	%	%	%	%
Professional/management	23	2	4	8	10
White collar	17	6	4	12	20
Skilled manual	42	59	33	44	44
Semi-skilled manual	12	23	38	27	24
Unskilled manual	6	9	20	9	2
Not classified	1	1	1	-	-

Source: 40 p.64.

In the UK we find slightly different results, with differences existing between nationalities. We should point out that data is based on a survey using workers' own declarations rather than effective occupation (see next section.) In any case, two conclusions can be drawn: there is a high proportion of West Indians in skilled jobs, because they speak the language, and a high percentage of Indians and African Asians (mainly Indians) in top jobs. This is the result of the brain drain that India has experienced. India, like Greece which also suffers from a brain drain, is characterised by small-scale traditional plants, which are often family concerns. These offer few opportunities for advancement and their investment in research and development is low.

### 3.2.1 How do migrants consider their jobs?

In surveys, migrant workers tend to over-estimate their qualifications. This is understandable as it is connected with people's perceptions of status and success. Thus a survey undertaken by W. Albeda for The Netherlands found that all of those interviewed considered themselves to be over-qualified (see Table 9). This is, of course, partly explained by the fact that migrants take as a reference point jobs at home, where the division of labour is more traditional. However, the relatively high declared over-qualification of Moroccans should perhaps be seen as a form of protection against the hostility they experience in certain European countries ( 4 p.29 ). The high number of skilled foreign workers in Britain is also open to question as it is based upon declaration. On the other hand, it is quite possible that some migrants do a skilled job and are paid for an unskilled one. In any case other surveys ( 41 p.284 ) demonstrate that migrant workers are not "fooled". Many of them, especially Turks in Germany, are aware that nationals consider their jobs inferior.

Table 9  
Distribution of foreigners in The Netherlands by skill level (percentages)

	According to own declaration		According to employer's declaration	
	not qualified	qualified	not qualified	qualified
Italians	46	51	83	17
Spaniards	64	36	89	11
Turks	74	25	87	13
Moroccans	68	29	96	4

Source: 5 p.139.

The overwhelming majority of foreigners claim to have acquired no new knowledge or further training on the job and say that they have no prospect of gaining a more skilled job within the firm.

### 3.3 Mobility

Vertical mobility for those who establish themselves permanently may be high and increases with the length of stay. Thus a longitudinal study carried out in the Haute-Garonne in France ( 5 p.158 ) found that Portuguese workers who arrived in 1962 and were still in the same area in 1970 experienced a high rate of vertical mobility, passing from 21% of qualified to 80%. Similar rates of skill improvement were found for North Africans, but later departures of this group were higher.

Longitudinal studies in the US support the above ( 14 p.22 ). Initially migrants may experience a deterioration in their situation. But as time passes they learn to transfer the schooling and skills they acquired at home. Hence, their occupational mobility shows a U-shaped pattern.

The problem is, of course, that recent policies in many countries have worked against permanent establishment of migrant workers (see section 4.2). Rotation of workers helps explain the low percentage of qualified workers among foreigners, though on average this has slightly increased for many countries. Foreigners are prevented from obtaining qualifications and competing with nationals, and thus the high rates of unskilled foreign workers are maintained. The vertical mobility of nationals is thereby artificially improved as employers have to choose between unskilled nationals and newly arrived foreigners often disadvantaged by language and legal restrictions.

A number of other factors work against any improvement in their skills:

- The recruitment process is one determining factor. An employer generally has to prove that nationals are not available to fill the job vacancy. During periods of labour shortage nationals leave those jobs which offer no prospect of on-the-job training or mobility, so migrants are pushed into this segment of the labour market.
- The uncertainty surrounding their future is a disincentive to invest in human capital as it may take several years to recover the costs - for example if the worker has to take courses and hence earn less during the period of training. Furthermore, the skill gained will not necessarily bring rewards in the home

country if the worker returns as it may not correspond to that country's needs. Emigration countries commonly experience important shortages of highly skilled workers, middle and higher management.

- If the foreign worker perceives discrimination he will not be motivated to invest because the expected earnings will be low. This is the case when priority is given to nationals for job vacancies.
- Finally the employer may prefer to employ a national because an unemployed national will have to be supported by the employer through transfer payments (higher taxes), while a foreigner may not have his work permit renewed.

### 3.4 Conditions of Work

Migrants' jobs share certain common characteristics in most countries: jobs are dirty and dangerous, require physical effort and often involve piecework. (Yugoslavs in West Germany are an exception as they are more evenly distributed between sectors and have higher skills so they do not have high rates of piecework.) These common characteristics are apparent from Table 10. In the UK Pakistanis are the most disadvantaged and in France Algerians. Furthermore, in Germany the accident rate among migrants is 25% higher than for nationals, while in France it is higher still ( 12 p.146 ). No generalisation can be made about night work. For example in France the percentage of those who work during the night is lower for migrants than for nationals. This is perfectly normal given that an important percentage of migrants work in the building sector. On the other hand the opposite is true for the UK.

Table 10.1

Conditions of work in France by nationality of employee (both sexes) in percentages

Nationality	Dirt		Humidity		Ventilation		Total in 000s
	Dirt	Dirt + xx	Humid- ity	Humid- ity + xx	Vent.	Vent. + xx	
French	43.1	33.4	22.7	20.6	42.0	30.3	6588.1
Total foreigners	55.8	41.7	31.1	29.4	48.7	39.4	834.6
of which:							
Algerians	60.3	47.7	37.3	35.3	57.7	47.1	160.7
EEC	44.9	33.0	35.2	31.5	54.2	40.5	106.4

xx represents one or more disagreeable feature

Source: 27 p.83.

Table 10.2  
Rating of working conditions in West Germany (Yugoslavs)

	Very bad	Bad	Neither good nor bad	Good	Very good	No reply
Noise	17.0	20.9	27.3	20.9	11.0	2.8
Dirt	21.3	21.6	29.1	14.5	12.4	1.1
Heat	11.3	15.2	40.1	21.3	9.9	2.1
Danger	12.8	22.7	24.5	25.9	12.1	2.1
Ventilation	11.3	16.0	33.7	24.8	12.1	2.1
Piecework pressure	7.4	9.6	20.9	11.3	30.9	19.9

N.B. All percentages add up to 100 across the table. Number surveyed = 282.

Source: **8** p.98.

### 3.5 Wages

Table 11 shows the relative earnings of different nationalities in Germany, Belgium and the UK. The following factors help to explain the low wages of migrants:

- The recruitment process, as noted, pushes them into low-skilled jobs.
- The rotation of migrants often prevents them from achieving seniority and experiencing vertical mobility where this is possible. As noted above, their occupational mobility is characterised by a U-shaped pattern which also applies to wages. In the US the estimated duration of this pattern varies from 11 to 15 years ( **14** p.22 ).
- If we compare the average income of foreigners with that of nationals we understate the difference. In West Germany, for example, in March 1972, foreign male workers worked on average 210 hours while Germans worked less than 200 hours ( **17** p.486 ) so the real difference is understated by 5%. For women the difference is even greater (8%). This explains the relatively low income of German women seen in Table 11.1.
- The reported figures may understate differences between nationals and foreigners. They give an instantaneous picture not a comparison over the life-cycle. Uncertainty about their future may cause some migrants to take advantage of immediate differences in wages between sectors (hence the high turnover) rather than differences on a life-cycle basis. Nevertheless, in the long run the following fact must be stressed: nationals are, on average, more skilled than foreigners. Thus the national labour force is complementary to capital while

Table 11.1 Average income of foreign and German employees  
according to sex (amounts in DM)

Sex	Greek	Italian	Yugoslav	Spanish	Turkish	German
Male	1366	1306	1377	1439	1412	1522
Female	969	856	936	936	878	903

Source: **39** p.111.

Table 11.2 Relative wage of blue collar workers by sex, etc.  
in Belgium (1972)

	Males	Females
Nationals	1.00	0.79
EEC (minus Italians)	0.92	0.76
Other non-nationals	0.86	0.62
<u>Of which:</u>		
Spanish and Portuguese	0.90	0.62
Greeks	0.89	0.66
Italians	0.88	0.65
Turks	0.83	0.56
North Africans	0.81	0.59

Source: Survey Research, Haex, a.o., 1976 in **39** p. 206.

Table 11.3 UK Earnings analysed by country of origin (1974)

	Median gross weekly earnings
White (males)	£ 40.20
Minority (males)	£ 36.70
West Indians	£ 37.10
Pakistanis	£ 35.40
Indians	£ 38.10
Africans/Asians	£ 34.10

Source: **40** p. 83.

foreign labour is a substitute. Technical progress and labour-saving innovations require higher levels of skills for nationals. Further training then leads to higher wages. Foreigners, on the other hand, as a substitute for capital, are facing a decreasing demand for labour, which in turn maintains low wages. Thus differences will increase unless minimum wages are increased.

- Finally, discrimination cannot be ruled out a priori, even if it is illegal. This is particularly true when contracts are verbal rather than formal. The survey by Bock and Tiedt (p.83) found that only 37.6% of Yugoslavs interviewed had a written contract of employment. A second form of discrimination is the under-assessment of their abilities by placement officers for the unemployed. A study undertaken in the UK by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys ( 5 p.178 ) found that placement officers classified as above average a significantly higher proportion of whites than West Indians, despite the matching in terms of qualification (see also 16 p.268 ).

Differences in wages among foreigners result from: different qualification levels, different sectoral distribution and different length of service.

Foreign female workers have lower wages than foreign males, reflecting the trend among nationals. One striking feature is the high wages of Greek women in West Germany. This is due to their high concentration in sectors like iron, steel, metal goods and mechanical and electrical engineering, where wages are above the national average. A second factor is the low variability of working hours in these capital intensive industries and hence the low rate of part-time work relative to other nationalities, and in particular native women. Figures probably understate the differences between migrants' and nationals' wages because they do not fully take account of the higher accident rate and bad conditions of work in jobs held by foreigners. If the wages compensated for these risks then nationals would not reject them. The fact that they do reject these jobs, for example in mining, where wages are high, means that the net gain in terms of welfare must be higher elsewhere even if the reported wage is lower.

### 3.6 Activity Rates

In all countries the activity rate of both male and female foreigners is higher than the national rate (the only exception being France in the case of foreign women compared to nationals). Generally Greek and Yugoslav women have the highest female activity rate while Moslem women have the lowest ( 39 p.171 and p.205 ). Because of their age composition and the low wages of their husbands, large

numbers of immigrant women are forced to seek employment. The low activity rate of Moslem women, on the other hand, is due to their lower education and hence lower expected earnings. These act as a disincentive to entering the labour market. Their age structure may also mean that they have more young children and therefore the opportunity cost of working is greater.

Table 12

Activity Rates of Nationals and Foreigners (total male and female percentage)

Age group 25+	Belgium	France	Germany	Sweden	Switzer- land
Nationals	49.0	54.8	52.4	63.5	47.4
Foreigners	55.5	64.6	73.8	78.8	75.7

Source: 35 p.20.

### 3.7 Unemployment

Foreign workers are particularly susceptible to unemployment for the following reasons:

- lay-offs and recruitment are less costly for an unskilled worker than a skilled one. As the majority of migrants are unskilled or low-skilled, they are easily affected by cyclical fluctuations. This is particularly true if they only have verbal contracts, as noted above;
- foreign workers are concentrated in the manufacturing sector which is more susceptible to cyclical variations than the tertiary sector, and within the manufacturing sector in certain branches;
- discrimination in lay-offs probably affects foreign workers who are not permanent residents. If they are unemployed they will not have their work permit renewed, whereas an unemployed national must be supported through transfer payments.

Two factors work in the opposite direction to reduce the level of unemployment of foreigners:

- as unemployment for some of them means their work permit will not be renewed, they are likely to accept any job at any wage rate;
- the geographical mobility of migrants is high as many of them are not accompanied by their families.

In France in 1980, the rate of unemployment among foreigners was similar to that of nationals. In Germany and Switzerland the difference is insignificant but both



countries have in the past used various incentives to encourage resident foreigners to leave the country. A French attempt to encourage foreigners to leave the country was a failure since it applied to foreigners who qualified for unemployment benefit and had acquired substantial rights. The amount they were given if they left the country was low in comparison to the benefits they would receive if they stayed (10.000 FF plus additional sums for children or wife in some cases). Only 3% to 4% of those eligible for the scheme took advantage of it. ( 25 p.40 ). Generally it was young Europeans who exercised this right (not applied to EEC migrants).

Table 13

Unemployment of nationals and foreigners in selected immigration countries

Country	Nationals (%)	Foreigners (%)
West Germany (1980)	3.8	5.0
Belgium (1977)	6.7	13.8
Switzerland (1979)	0.3	0.2
Sweden (1979) <sup>++</sup>	0.7	1.4
The Netherlands (1975)	4.3	6.3

<sup>++</sup> = males unemployed for more than 12 weeks

Sources: 22, 32, 33, 38, 39.

The unemployment rate among foreigners is highest in Belgium where, in the past, the majority were employed in the declining metal and extractive industries (see Appendix 2). However this is similar to the rate for unskilled nationals. If they are not permanent residents they lose their unemployment benefit 60 days after the expiry of their work permit. Moroccans, who have the highest unemployment rate, are at a disadvantage as no bilateral agreement exists between Morocco and Belgium. So many of them, especially young Moroccans of the second generation entering the labour market, join the pool of unemployed and do not receive unemployment benefit. Young foreigners and females show the same pattern as nationals, experiencing higher rates of unemployment.

#### 4. Policies on Migration

##### 4.1 The Recruitment Process and Current Restrictions

Free movement of workers within the European Community was finally established

in 1968, although there is a transition period of 7 years for free movement of Greek workers. A similar common labour market exists in the Nordic countries. Before 1973-74, when most European countries suspended immigration, recruitment was organised by official agencies transmitting the demands of employers through their network in the Mediterranean countries.

In Switzerland employers were allowed to contact foreign workers directly. It had to be shown that nationals were not available to fill the vacancy, and a medical certificate and minimum level of education were also required. The rights of migrants were covered by bilateral agreements which varied between countries. There was cooperation between national agencies in the countries of recruitment and agencies in the receiving countries. Both had the power to select, but the power of sending countries was limited because of their nationals' right of free movement. Algeria had a preferential agreement with France but suspended emigration after several Arabs were killed in France in an outbreak of racism (1973). Another reason given was the discrimination experienced by Algerians in training and housing.

Generally a one-year work permit was granted with restrictions as to the job and geographical area (not applied for EEC nationals within the EEC). Further renewals were granted for 2 or 3 years depending on the country of origin. Restrictions were progressively dropped. The renewal of permits usually depended on the migrant being employed. But in some countries like France a limited time was allowed for job search. The employer had to pay a fixed amount which increased substantially in 1973-74, for example in France it can amount to 1000 FF and in West Germany 1000 DM. After eight years of residence in West Germany or ten in Switzerland (but only two in Sweden), the migrant could obtain a residence permit giving him the same rights as nationals.

The following restrictions have now been established ( see 15 and 22 ):

In **West Germany** a foreign worker must have been in residence for eight years in order to be joined by his spouse. If both parents are settled in the country then children under 16 years can join their family. Many Länder established quotas for foreigners, and the wife of a migrant may obtain a work permit after 3 years only if labour shortages appear in their area.

In **France** family reunion was suspended for 3 years in 1977, but did not apply to the Portuguese. If the new migrant is accepted he must fill in a guarantee of repatriation, although this does not apply to persons "who can render important services to France".

In the **UK** a foreign woman does not have the automatic right to join her husband. In rare cases children over 18 years can join their family. Temporary status cannot be changed into permanent status, and many hundreds of migrants have been threatened with removal on the basis of irregularities alleged to have taken place years ago in relation to their work permit applications. (A hundred have been sent back.)

**France** differed from the majority of other countries in permitting the regularisation of illegal workers. In contrast to West Germany, which does not consider itself as an immigration country (the label "guest workers" for immigrants is significant), France and **Belgium** in the past favoured the permanent establishment of migrants. Both countries abandoned their policy after the recession.

Finally in **Switzerland** migrants with limited time contracts cannot be joined by their families and priority in filling job vacancies is given to nationals and permanent foreign workers.

#### 4.2 The rotation of migrants

Migration before World War II was primarily one-way migration. Since the 1960s, however, Europe has experienced two-way migration, i.e. while large numbers of people were entering the immigration countries large numbers were also leaving. In Switzerland the departure rate of foreign workers per 100 new arrivals ranged from 53% in 1961 to 100.4% in 1965. In Belgium 3,700,000 persons "visited" the country from 1945 to the present but only 900,000 settled. In West Germany in 1980 only 32.2% had stayed for more than ten years (for Turks the figure was only 18%). For the period 1957-1973 the estimated average stay was less than four years (7 p.485).

Before the establishment of free movement within the EEC, the ratio of Italian repatriation to emigration from Italy averaged about 75% in the period 1959 to 1968. It is difficult to determine how many people return home because of unfavourable socio-economic conditions and legal restrictions on job mobility and family reunion, and how many freely choose to leave. It seems likely that the majority of those who return would, under better conditions, have been candidates for permanent establishment, especially if we take into account that the median age of immigrants was between 24 and 27 years old.

There are advantages to the receiving country in admitting guest workers rather than permanent migrants which explain the policy of rotation pursued by host countries:

- A constant flow of young, healthy workers who have made use of education and other public services paid for by the sending country. Estimates exist for West Germany, which show that savings on child-rearing and education resulting from immigration amount to at least 19% of net investment for the period 1969 to 1973 ( 7 p.495 ). Of course these savings may not all be invested, but whether invested or consumed they do make possible a higher standard of well-being than could be achieved if the host country had to bear the expenses itself.
- The old, who use public services such as health care more often than young people, are under-represented, while young foreigners finance these public services for nationals.
- Rotation leaves inactive members of the family at home and hence avoids the need for investment in public services such as schooling and health.
- While temporary migrants make financial contributions to social security in the same way as nationals through direct and indirect taxation, they do not benefit to the same extent if their family remains at home, unless they are EEC nationals (for details see below section 5.1).
- It is a flexible tool for regulating the national labour market.

These reasons explain why France admitted 76,000 new workers from outside the EEC during the period 1975-80, and offered subsidies to unemployed foreigners to leave the country rather than training them (not applied to EEC nationals). Similar policies were pursued by West Germany.

#### 4.3 Migration as a tool of economic policy and vertical mobility for nationals

During the 1960s and early 1970s, with the exception of the short period 1967-68, most countries experienced a large number of unfilled job vacancies. The resulting excess demand for labour (see Table 14.1 for West Germany) and the competition between employers for the limited number of nationals forced them to demand fewer skills for a given job and/or provide higher wages. As all employers were offering higher wages, most of them attracted new workers by lowering skill requirements. Large numbers of nationals therefore left unskilled manual jobs (see Table 15) and received further training. Unskilled manual jobs, dangerous jobs, and "low status" jobs were filled by immigrants. As we noted before, many immigrants accepted unskilled jobs in order to get a work permit.

Table 14.1  
Foreign labour and unemployment in West Germany

	1971	1972	1974	1975	1977
Notified vacancies unfilled (annual average, 000s)	648.1	545.8	315.4	236.2	231.2
Unemployed (000s)	185.0	246.0	582.0	1074.0	1030.0
Foreign labour <sup>++</sup> (000s)	2169.0	2317.0	2386.6	2227.0	1977.7

<sup>++</sup> The number of those leaving the country is understated as young foreigners enter the labour market.

Source: Eurostat Regional Statistics 1980 and 34.

Table 14.2  
Foreign labour and employment in Switzerland

	1974	1975	percentage change		1978
			1976	1977	
Economically active foreigners	861,000	-12.5	-11.2	-2.8	2.0
Civilian employment	3,187,000	-5.5	-3.3	0.0	0.6

Source: 33 and 34.

The contribution made by foreign labour during these prosperous years (i.e. up to 1974) includes not only what they produced directly, but also a multiplier effect by preventing bottlenecks from arising. A shortage of unskilled labour leads to a lower level of production in one industry which in turn provides limited inputs to other industries. On the other hand, the better utilisation of existing capital permits higher profits which in turn favours new investment. During this period (1960s and early 1970s) it makes no sense to talk of competition between foreign labour and unskilled national workers, as the number of unemployed was lower than the number of job vacancies. The effect on wages will be discussed later.

But the prosperous years did not last. In 1973-74 labour surpluses appeared and migrants were forced to return home. This was usually achieved by non-renewal of work permits, and essentially affected non-resident foreign labour. This policy helps to explain why Switzerland and West Germany had the lowest unemployment rates. In Germany foreign labour decreased from 1974 to 1978 by about 400,000

Table 15  
Changes in employment in West Germany (Sept 1961 - Sept 1970)

Branch	Manual Workers	German manual	Total employees	Foreign employees
Chemical industry	+29,225	-14,877	+109,645	+44,102
Road vehicles and aircraft	+170,161	+62,400	+228,725	+107,761
Mechanical engineer	+38,218	-70,813	+146,189	+109,031
Electrical engineering	+115,491	-31,399	+218,371	+146,890
Iron, steel, sheet & metal goods	-3,341	-100,871	+20,033	+97,530
All industries	-155,941	-1120,574	+346,617	+964,633

Source: 9 p. 32.

workers (see Table 14.1), while in Switzerland the decrease was of the order of 12.5% in 1975 and it continued up to 1978. In Germany, not surprisingly, one of the main groups to leave were Italians as they did not lose any acquired rights. So from 1974 to 1978, 458,891 Italians in total left West Germany compared to 581,265 Turks and 385,722 Yugoslavs ( 21 p.7 ). Turks and Yugoslavs were either forced to leave (by non-renewal of work permits) or induced, by means of economic incentives. This contrasts with Italians, whose departures can be seen as voluntary. Some of them, however, are "induced" through the threat of discrimination (even though this is illegal). Yet another factor is the possibility of looking for work at home and then emigrating again if they are unsuccessful. It would be interesting to see whether those who remained despite these restrictions can be replaced by nationals, as is often argued.

#### 4.4 The economic implications of further restrictions

It is important here to consider whether foreign labour is a complementary or a substitute factor. If nationals would accept the jobs held by migrants at the existing wage rates, then foreign labour is a substitute factor; if not, it is complementary, in which case it creates jobs for skilled nationals and prevents an under-utilisation of capital.

Indirect displacement of nationals may take place if foreign labour maintains low wages and hence forces nationals to leave some jobs. Taking a non-recessionary

world, G. Johnson (23 p.338) finds that the indirect displacement rate of nationals per one hundred new immigrants varied from 12 to 33, using realistic values for the behaviour of workers and entrepreneurs for low-skilled jobs. He concludes that the main effect is on wages. This means that a small number of unskilled or low-skilled nationals voluntarily leave their jobs as they find it more profitable to look for a new job or opt for more leisure. The effect on wages is as follows: with a given capital stock the increased labour supply of unskilled/low-skilled workers reduces their wage rates and increases the return on capital and the wage rate of skilled workers. Both these factors are more intensively used. In the real world the effect on skilled workers will presumably lead to higher wages and the creation of new jobs.

The effect of lower wages for nationals may be offset by the induced increase in the rate of investment. The creation of new jobs will partly benefit unskilled workers. The initial and induced increase in skilled jobs will enable unskilled nationals to enjoy vertical mobility through training. In this case new immigrants are required for the unskilled jobs. As there is a large Mediterranean reservoir of unskilled labour, no pressure will be put on wages. The downward pressure on wages for unskilled jobs is felt principally by existing migrants rather than nationals who desert these jobs (see Table 15). This seems to have been the way the labour market functioned before 1973-74, but foreign labour is now a complementary rather than a substitute factor.

French studies 13 and 29, show that if we progressively reduce the foreign labour force by 50,000 each year, a total of 250,000 departures would only create a maximum of 80,000 jobs for nationals. The model was simulated for the period 1975-80 and assumes that the jobs vacated by foreigners in each region are filled by existing unemployed workers from the same region. This assumes substitutability in the sense that nationals will accept these jobs if they receive the going wage for nationals. As foreigners' wages are lower, this implies an initial increase in wages: in the building sector, for example, an increase of 7%.

This model also does not take account of bottlenecks or the fact that an increase in wages in some sectors, such as textiles, where foreign female labour is concentrated, would cause firms to go out of business rather than simply reduce their output. The same holds for other industries which are protected. In their case, even if the proportion of migrants is small, the increase in wages required by nationals would lead firms to move out of the country.

In the present situation, where recession results from a combination of insufficient demand in some sectors and high costs in others, further restrictions on migration will have a negative impact on the employment of nationals. Current low levels of supply, due to high costs, will be aggravated by the departure of migrants. The resulting increase in wages for unskilled/low-skilled jobs would lead to higher prices and a drop in exports. As in most countries the unemployment benefits are high relative to perceived wages, nationals will require large wage increases if they are to replace migrants in jobs. Is the answer then to decrease unemployment benefits and thus induce nationals to accept jobs now held by foreigners? This seems unlikely to work. It is unrealistic, for example, to expect that 35% of Stockholm cleaners can be replaced by nationals. A more important point is that unskilled or low-skilled nationals will not respond significantly to current increases in wages, because they are not short-sighted actors. They know that low-skilled jobs provide few training opportunities and low increases in wages over time. Looked at over the whole life cycle they will face a deterioration in their position relative to other occupations and would thus require major wage increases at the present time. On their side, employers will use more capital intensive methods wherever possible if faced with such wage increases. It is thus doubtful whether further restrictions on migration will reduce unemployment among nationals.

Consider now the case of sectors experiencing low levels of employment due to insufficient demand. The departure of foreigners will sharply reduce the amount of money sent out of the country in remittances. At first sight this implies an improvement in the country's current account. But what happens to the level of exports? Most emigration countries have huge deficits with host European countries (see Table 16). The loss of remittances from migrant workers will simply reduce their imports from immigration countries.

Table 16

Trade between selected emigration countries and the European Community (1980)

	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Turkey
Exports of EEC to:	3030	7598	1979	1528
Imports of EEC from:	1775	7490	1446	822

(M ECUs; 1 ECU = US \$ 1.39)

Source: Eurostat, Statistiques de base, 1981.



Remittances are often considered as a cost for the host country. This is true if the emigration country exchanges workers' remittances for other currencies to pay for its imports from countries other than the immigration one. This reduces the foreign reserves of the immigration country and hence its capacity to finance imports. But the table presents a different picture. Emigration countries (except Spain) use remittances to close their trade gap with the immigration countries.

#### 4.5 Illegal Migrants

Illegal immigrants in Western Europe are estimated to form between 10% and 15% of the total legal foreign population ( 28 p.329 ). In 1974 the EEC estimated that there were 600,000 illegal migrant workers inside the Community, i.e. 10% of the legally employed foreign population.

Measures to regularise the position of illegal migrants have been taken in the past by The Netherlands, France and Belgium. A recent French measure is intended to regularise the position of some 100,000 migrants (family members included) ( 15 p.1), mainly employed in the textile sector. The main conditions were: entry before January 1, 1981 and a labour contract for at least one year.

Illegal migrants are generally young, male, unmarried and unskilled. They find jobs in the service sector or in small plants where verbal contracts are common. This can be advantageous to the employer as workers do not require high wages while they are not paying taxes. Generally they help to keep alive small unproductive businesses; their replacement by nationals is not probable, as this would lead to these businesses closing down. The provision of medical services for undocumented aliens seems to be absolutely necessary. Such an attempt did not succeed in the US because of confidentiality between patient and doctor.

### 5. Costs and Benefits of Labour Migration

#### 5.1 The receiving country

In the labour market the following benefits (+) and costs (-) occur for the host country:

- (+) migration overcomes bottlenecks in the labour market and moderates cyclical fluctuations;
- (+) because migrants accept low-skilled and low-status jobs, vertical mobility for nationals is improved, i.e. migrants create jobs for skilled workers (complementarity);
- (-) coexistence of unemployed nationals with employed foreigners (substitution).

With respect to technical progress:

- (+) migrants accept piecework pressure and hence permit automation;
- (+) migration permits the full utilisation of capital and hence increases profits which in turn favours investment;
- (+) migration may smooth and ease structural adjustments; the longer the period of adjustment the easier the financial burden on the firm;
- (+) during expansion the full utilisation of capital permits a higher level of production of investment goods and makes accumulation easier. During a recession migration prevents certain sectors, such as textiles, from moving to less developed countries;
- (?) many consider that migration maintains bad conditions of work ( 29 p.8 ). This is a cost for migrants but a benefit to nationals, who perceive a pure transfer, i.e. the cost of health which is not compensated by the wage;
- (?) there is no evidence to support the view that migration discourages capital intensive methods.

With respect to international competitiveness:

- (+) Migration keeps down wages for unskilled jobs and hence makes the country competitive abroad while also moderating cost-push inflation. Workers' remittances sustain high levels of exports to the emigration countries.

Public Services:

- (+) the host country receives young healthy workers without having to educate them or support them as children. These savings on infrastructure costs free investment for other sectors. Blitz ( 7 p.496 ), looking at the period 1957-73, calculated that these savings would have generated additional capital of 27,721 billion DM at 1973 prices in West Germany.

- (+) all foreign workers help to finance the social security system and all related services in the same way as nationals. But only those whose family is established in the host country benefit as nationals and, contrary to what is commonly believed, family reunion primarily involves families with few children ( 12 p.140 and 7 p.501 ). For workers whose family remains at home the benefits to the host countries are considerable.

Firstly, these workers, though contributing in the same way as nationals, do not benefit equally. For example, a worker in Belgium with four children from outside the EEC received in 1977 2,700 BF monthly, while if these children were settled in Belgium he would have received 10,200 BF ( 38 p.159 ). Restrictions are put on the maximum number of children and differences exist

between nationalities. Similar discrepancies are to be found in France ( **12** p.151 and **17** p.152 ). We must also point out that the percentage of single foreigners is high. Thus in 1979 in West Germany it stood at around 50% ( **21** p.8 ).

In the UK, social security rights for children depend on the nationality of the parents, even if the children were born in the UK ( **26** p.17 ). In West Germany, foreigners enjoy full social welfare protection provided that they remain in the country, but this protection generally ceases at the frontier (except for EEC nationals). For children living abroad (except EEC), family allowances are maintained at the 1975 level ( **21** p.40 ). So the real value of the payments decreases each year by 4.75%, the yearly average inflation rate.

Secondly, the costs of education and other public services used by the family at home are borne by the emigration country. The cost of education of young foreigners living in the host country is small by comparison to nationals because of their low participation rate. Migrants therefore seem to help to finance the public services of nationals, especially when we take into account their high activity rate and hence high contributions.

## 5.2 The country of origin

The major benefits to the country of origin are (1) reduction in the unemployment rate (this was particularly the case during the 1960s), and (2) remittances by migrants.

The first benefit is diminished by the highly selective policies of immigration countries. Because they accept workers whose education level is generally higher than that of those staying behind, the long term result is lower productivity growth for the sending country. Given the restricted financial markets of most Mediterranean countries, the remittances have not been put to productive uses. This and the high inflation rates in these countries lead migrants to invest in housing or durable goods. The failure to acquire skills abroad, on the other hand, means that those who return often invest in small service-oriented businesses, adding to the large unproductive service sector. In addition, remittances have not been sent as regularly as the countries of origin expected. Many of these countries (e.g. Turkey) maintain artificially high exchange rates in order to favour domestic production. Migrants then rationally act like speculators, postponing transfers in the expectation of a devaluation. This clearly does not support the policy pursued by the home country.

Transfers certainly do finance part of the Mediterranean countries' deficit. However, it seems that these transfers sustain a higher demand for durables than

for investment goods. A trade deficit due to high demand for investment goods is sustainable as the new investment will create the necessary income to offset the cost. In this way, the financing of a trade deficit becomes easier. This is not the case for imported durables.

Policies to direct remittances to productive use have been implemented by Turkey and Yugoslavia. In Turkey migrants were encouraged to finance new plants and cooperatives. In Yugoslavia plants were permitted to issue bonds in "hard" currencies. In both countries migrants or their families had priority in filling vacancies inside these plants ( 32 p.31 ).

Finally, during recession periods immigration countries, through different incentives, encourage foreigners to leave the country. Those who return home are generally unskilled or low-skilled and join the large pool of unemployed. So while migration reduces cyclical fluctuations in the receiving country, it acts in the opposite direction during recessions for emigration countries.

## 6. Policy Proposals

From this assessment of the major costs and benefits it appears to be the case that the receiving country gains disproportionately from migration. This is largely due to emigration countries' dependence on the movement of both labour and capital. Emigration countries cannot effectively control labour migration, as this would conflict with the fundamental right of free movement. Similarly, the direction of capital flow depends upon the industrialised countries, since governments generally bear the political risk of investments abroad. We believe that the following rules, which at present only apply to EEC nationals, should be implemented more generally:

- equal duties and rights for nationals and foreigners;
- maintenance of acquired rights. This implies the harmonisation of work and insurance periods related to two or more countries. This would grant rights which otherwise would not be acquired if every period was taken separately.

In relation to political rights, permanently established foreigners must be given the right to participate in local elections. Some measure of progress has already been achieved in this area in Sweden.

In order to establish distributive justice between sending and receiving countries, W. R. Böhring **10** has proposed migration controls and an international compensation scheme. This control should not restrict the rights of potential migrants but must seek to effectively control migration flows. This proposal, in the light of past experience, gives some indication of what might be possible in the future.

An effective European scheme should adopt a twofold approach. The first element should be to cooperate with national labour offices to disseminate information on job vacancies in emigration countries. This information will enable migrants desiring to return to choose an adequate training. Existing centres for vocational training in European countries could provide such a training by taking account of the specific problems that migrants face. This would enable young people or low-skilled workers to acquire new skills in a relatively short time.

A second element should be to set up a fund to finance the acquisition of skills which involve long training or which can only be acquired on the job, and to subsidise housing for returnees. Funds should be raised as follows:

- Each immigration country must pay an amount equal to the cost of educating the immigrants permanently established in the host country. In the case of temporary migrants, the sum would be proportionately reduced.
- Since a migrant worker's family remaining at home does not benefit as much as the family of a national worker, yet both pay the same contributions, the difference should be paid into the fund.
- Taxes not related to the above, but levied in order to finance services that the returning migrants do not benefit from, should be paid into the fund.
- At present, immigration countries require a lump sum from the employer for the few who continue to come. In West Germany it amounts to 1000 DM. The effective cost of recruitment is lower, and therefore the difference should go into the fund.
- Firms in the emigration countries may also contribute, if the migrant agrees to work for a determined time in this firm. In this case wages should be supervised by the fund in order to prevent exploitation. On the other hand migrants who break their contracts should reimburse the cost.

These funds may also finance projects in emigration countries. In such cases immigration countries should provide the required technical advice. Even if these projects fail to create jobs for returning migrants, the increased income generated will enable the country of origin to support the returnees. If employment is increased in the sending countries the expected differential earnings of potential migrants will decrease. This, in turn, will slow down emigration from these countries.

The experience of Turkey and Yugoslavia in relation to remittances demonstrates that these funds may be used productively when technical advice is provided. Such schemes, once integrated into a regional plan, may help solve the problems of poor areas, since many migrants originate from such areas. Experience shows that migrants have strong incentives to use their transfers in this way provided that employment priority is given to their families.

To conclude, if European countries really wish to bring about an improvement in the relations between poor and wealthy countries, a first step would be to improve the situation of migrants and redistribute more fairly the gains from migration.

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Appendix 1  
 Changing composition of foreign labour in selected European countries

	Belgium <sup>1</sup>		West Germany <sup>2</sup>		France			U.K. <sup>5</sup>	
	1961	1970	1961	1970	1961 <sup>3</sup>	1970 <sup>3</sup>	1961 <sup>4</sup>	1970 <sup>4</sup>	1971
Italian	64,693	90,303	207,609	374,981	700,985	592,737	30.2	3.3	480,720
Spanish	6,671	27,853	48,352	165,854	362,966	601,095	50.2	9.0	188,075
Greek	3,384	8,487	40,758	229,379	10,592	10,190	-	-	81,620
Portuguese	-	3,075	656	40,222	53,365	607,069	8.5	50.9	209,145
Turkish	63	7,112	5,193	327,985	3,331	15,027	-	5.0	37,035
Yugoslav	-	-	12,858	388,953	13,314	56,091	-	6.1	694,280
Algerian	81	1,988	-	-	425,000 <sup>6</sup>	697,316	-	-	1,690,875
Tunisian	-	-	-	-	29,116	96,821	-	6.4	-
Moroccan	119	13,677	-	-	36,957	170,835	5.0	13.8	-
Others	62,948	102,019	160,296	311,485	76,976	546,297	6.1	5.5	-
Total	137,959	256,514	475,722	1,838,859	1,712,602	3,339,457	100	100	-

<sup>1</sup> Economically active population

<sup>2</sup> Foreign workers in employment

<sup>3</sup> Foreign population

<sup>4</sup> Permanent foreign workers by nationality (%)

<sup>5</sup> Economically active persons born outside UK

<sup>6</sup> 1962

Source: 5 p.57 and pp.78-85.

## Appendix 2

1. West Germany: Foreign employment by branches: structure and shares  
percentages 1979

	Structure 1979		Shares
	Total	Foreign- ers	1979
Agriculture, etc.	5.5	0.9	1.2
Mining, gas, water, electricity	2.0	1.8	6.9
Manufacturing industries	36.0	58.7	12.0
Construction	7.1	10.3	10.6
Distribution	12.0	6.1	3.7
Transport, communications	5.8	3.7	4.7
Insurance, banking	3.2	0.7	1.5
Other services	16.6	14.7	6.5
Organisations without economic aims, private households	1.8	0.7	2.7
Public administration, social insurance	10.1	2.4	1.7
Total	100	100	7.3

Source: adapted from 21, Table 7.7.

2. Sweden: Number of persons in work, 1979, by industry and nationality

Industry	Swedish nationals		Foreign nationals		% of foreign national- als among total workers in sector		
	000s	%	000s	%	Men	Women	Both
Fisheries, mining	983	25	93	43	8	11	9
Manufacturing: of which engineering	421	11	46	21	9	14	10
Construction	276	7	8	4	3	2	3
Trade	491	12	18	8	4	3	4
Hotel/restaurants	55	1	13	6	33	11	19
Others	1734	44	41	18	( )	( )	( )
Total	3,960	100	219	100	5	5	5

Source: adapted from 36, p.160.



3. Switzerland: Foreign workers by sex and employment sector, 1978<sup>++</sup>

Employment sector	Total	Percent female
Total	285,889	33.9
Agriculture	6,233	10.9
Forestry, fishing	327	2.1
Mining	709	1.3
Food, tobacco	9,750	42.9
Textile industry	10,437	52.4
Clothing industry	14,431	81.5
Wood, cork	4,648	9.2
Paper	2,128	37.9
Graphic arts	2,934	29.7
Leather crafts	484	58.5
Rubber, plastic	2,275	31.8
Chemical industry	10,096	33.6
Stonework	3,670	7.6
Metalwork, machines	48,502	18.5
Watchmaking	5,872	56.9
Other industries	2,403	36.2
Construction, civil engineering	54,748	1.0
Commerce, banking	28,089	40.5
Transportation, communications	7,040	21.4
Hotels, restaurants	29,581	45.5
Health services	21,498	73.0
Teaching, science	5,405	47.5
Housework	3,246	93.6
Other	11,383	58.4

<sup>++</sup> Figures include seasonal, annual and frontier workers.

Source: Annuaire statistique de la Suisse, 1978.

4. Foreign workers in the total male working population Belgium 1977

Employment sector	Belgium
Mining	36.9%
Chemicals, rubber	11.7%
Glass, china, cement	15.0%
Metal industries	23.2%
Metal products	13.2%
Construction, building	12.9%
Other activities	9.1%
Total foreign working male population	12.7%

Source: I.N.S. Enquête socio-économique, April 1977.

5. Type of industry (selected categories) analysed by country of origin - men and women UK 1974.

	West Indian	Pakistani/Bangladeshi	Indian	African Asian	General pop.
Those who are in job market and have worked (unweighted)	1068	515	644	306	
(weighted)	5274	1470	2536	1505	
	%	%	%	%	%
Shipbuilding & vehicles	7	12	12	6	4
Textiles	1	26	10	6	2
Construction	7	1	4	7	7
Transport & communication	10	5	12	11	7
Distributive trades	3	7	9	15	13
Professional & scientific services	19	2	6	3	12

**Source:** 40 p.74.

6. Breakdown of total working population and foreign workers by economic activity France October 1979

Economic activity	Total employment (000s)	% of foreign workers	Foreign workers (000s)
Minerals, ferrous metals steel processing	177.9	13.6	24.2
Foundries, metalworking	448.9	14.2	63.7
Mechanical construction	497.4	8.0	39.8
Electrical and electronic construction	448.9	7.5	33.7
Motor vehicles and transport equipment	520.9	18.6	96.9
Textiles and clothing	517.1	9.7	50.2
Rubber, plastics	217.1	14.6	31.7
Construction	1107.2	28.0	310.0
Hotel, catering	192.6	13.5	26.0
Transport (excluding SNCF and RATP)	421.6	6.9	29.1
Business services	559.7	6.4	35.8
Personal services	1281.1	7.2	92.2
Others	4086.6	( )	228.0
Total	10477.0	10.1	1061.3

**Source:** adapted from 43 p.53.

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