



Financed by the European Commission - MEDA Programme

**Cooperation project on
the social integration of immigrants,
migration, and the movement of persons**



Fatima Sadiqi

***The General Profile of
the Migrant in Morocco***

CARIM

In November 1995, the European and Mediterranean Ministries of Foreign Affairs met in Barcelona in order to establish the basis of a new partnership, which is described in the Barcelona Declaration. The main goal is to transform the Mediterranean region in a peaceful and prosperous area, and to progressively establish a Euro-Mediterranean free-market zone. The Barcelona process includes three main sub-processes: a dialogue on political and security issues aiming to create stability and to promote democracy and human rights in the region; a dialogue on financial and economic cooperation intended to increase partners' welfare and to create a free-market zone; dialogue on social, cultural and human issues improving mutual understanding and strengthening civil society links.

The Valencia Ministerial Meeting in April 2002, went a step further by outlining a 'Regional cooperation programme in the field of justice, in combating drugs, organised crime and terrorism as well as cooperation in the treatment of issues relating to social integration of migrants, migration and movement of people' (referred to in the document as the JHA-Regional MEDA programme). This programme has been adopted by the European Commission on the 16/12/2002 (PE/2002/2521).

The 'Cooperation project on the social integration of immigrants, migration and the movement of persons' (EuroMed Migration) is a MEDA regional initiative launched by the European Commission (EuropeAid Cooperation Office) in February 2004 as part of the above programme. It aims at creating an instrument for observing, analysing and forecasting the migratory movements, their causes and their impact, in Europe and in the Mediterranean partners.

The Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) has been set up in order to implement the EuroMed Migration project. The Consortium is composed of a coordinating unit established at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute (Florence), and a network of thirty scientific correspondents based in Mediterranean partner countries. External experts from the north and the south also contribute to its activities.

The CARIM carries out the following activities:

- Mediterranean migration database
- Studies and research
- Training

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: www.carim.org

For more information:

Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies-EUI
Villa Malafrasca
Via Boccaccio, 151
50133 Firenze (FI)
Italy
Tel: +39 055 46 85 878
Fax: + 39 055 46 85 755
Email: carim@eui.eu

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) was founded at the European University Institute to develop inter-disciplinary and comparative research and to promote work on the major issues facing the process of integration and European society. Research at the Centre is organised around a set of core themes, each of which is home to a number of research programmes and projects.

The results of the Centre's research are disseminated in the form of academic publications, working and policy papers, and research reports.

Details of this and other research can be found at: <http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Research/>

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinion expressed by the author(s).

CARIM
Euro-Mediterranean Consortium
for Applied Research on International Migration

Analytic and Synthetic Notes – Political and Social Module
CARIM-AS 2007/06

Fatima Sadiqi
University of Fes, Morocco

The General Profile of the Migrant in Morocco

Background

During the last two decades, the migratory movement has increased and at the same time, the migrant profile has undergone an evolution on the demographic, economic and socio-cultural levels. In this chapter, we will shed light on some of the principal characteristics of the migrant before migrating and the evolution of these characteristics from the sixties onward.

Moroccan migration to Europe has considerably evolved since the 1960s. In the 1960s, the official number of migrants was around 160 000. This figure raised to around 1.343.000 in 1992. Today, it is estimated at nearly 3 million people across the world, and well over two million Moroccan migrants are officially resident in Europe, and many more live there without legal documents (Erf and Heering, 2002). France is the European country where most Moroccan migrants (1.125.000) live, followed by Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and Germany.

Table 1: Number of Migrants in European Countries, 2004

Country	Number of Moroccan Migrants
France	1.125.000
Spain	400.000
Netherlands	300.000
Italy	280.000
Belgium	220.000
Germany	110.000

Source: Belguendouz, 2004

The above figures represent only legal migrants; as a result, the real number of Moroccan migrants in Europe is much higher if we take into account hosts of illegal migrants. In Spain, the number of Moroccan legal migrants has considerably raised in recent years. In the Netherlands, the number of Moroccan migrants was less than 400 in 1960; today it has dramatically increased to more than 300.000. In Italy, the first wave of Moroccan migrants did not appear until the 1980s. However, their number raised to 119.481 in 1997 and to 280.000 in 2004, 20% of whom were women (cf. Belguendouz, 2004).

Waves of Migration

We will first briefly shed light on the most important phases of Moroccan migration, which, as we mentioned in the introduction, has started during the French colonization of Morocco, and was geared mainly to France. Moroccan people at that time were not interested in migration; rather, it was the Europeans who encouraged Moroccan workers to join Europe because the latter was in need of a labour force.

At that time, migration was mainly male. After independence, Moroccan migrants started to diversify the countries of destination (Netherlands, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Italy...) in order to take advantage of the various job opportunities in Europe. The majority of these migrants stayed in Europe and their families joined them later on through the process of family reunification and family creation (marriage). The first waves of migrants left Morocco mainly for France in the 1950s and 1960s (Sadiqi and Ennaji, 2004: 2; Charef 2004).). It was basically “a migration of unskilled workers” (Erf and Heering, 2002: 18).

When the European Community began to restrict immigration in the 1970s, family reunification programmes offered this generation of male migrants the opportunity to send for their family members. Men in the rural areas generally preferred, however, that their wives and children stay in their home country, while financially supporting them from Europe. By the late 1980s, there was a diversification of countries of destination, and gradually migration became feminized (see Section below, and Chapter 7).

In the 1960s and the 1970s, Moroccan migrants were basically unskilled male workers. However, since the 1980s, migration concerns both unskilled and skilled persons, and women and men alike, because both sexes suffer from unemployment, marginalization and poverty. They turn to migration as a solution because it gives them new opportunities for employment and a decent living standard (Sharpe 2001, p: 1).

According to the investigation undertaken by Hamdouch et al (2000)¹, migrants of the rural origin stayed for a longer time in Europe than migrants from the urban area. The duration of the migratory residence was reduced among migrants who were responsible for the households. On the level of education, migrants who have received an education stayed for a relatively shorter period of time than illiterate migrants. The level of illiteracy was relatively low at the moment of migration, compared to the total Moroccan population of the same age group. The survey also reveals that nearly 6/10 of the migrants were born in rural areas and had transited through the city before migrating to Europe.

These characteristics have known important changes during the last decades. The average age of migration seems to have witnessed an important increase during the 1970s and the 1980s. The level of education and the degree of qualification of candidates to migration have improved during the last three decades (see Hamdouch et al, 2000).

Concerning the sectors of activity to which migrants belonged before their migration, it was found that some of them worked in commerce, services, building, industry and craftsmanship, while the majority worked in agriculture.

As far as the evolution of the numbers of migrants is concerned, the survey by Hamdouch et al (2000) reveals a continuing increase in the numbers of migrants looking for jobs and the decrease of those seeking a higher income or a stable job.

Concurrently to this evolution, we notice a considerable increase in the proportion of university graduates seeking to pursue their studies or looking for job opportunities abroad.

Women Migrants

Family reunification has led to a feminization of the population of immigrants as wives, mothers and sisters joined the male workers in the host country (Freedman and Tarr, 2000, p: 24). However, women have recently started to migrate on their own, especially educated ones, without being necessarily accompanied with any male migrant or family member (cf. Khachani 2005).

Thus, the composition of the migrant population is changing. Having started as an exclusively male phenomenon, this population includes an increasing number of Moroccan women emigrating to improve their living conditions. Nonetheless, until very recently, women and children were not taken into consideration in migration studies, as mentioned above. Charef (2004), in this regard, states that very little is known about how differently migration affects women and children, although women constitute approximately half of the documented migrants. These women may be housewives, workers or students. As we shall see in Chapter 8, women left behind by male migrants are equally very much affected by migration issues.

As stated in Charef (2004), women's migration may be divided into two types. The first type is called "direct migration" which concerns (i) women accompanying their husbands in the context of family reunification and (ii) women holding the migration project; this is the case of individual migrant women. The second type is "indirect migration" and it concerns (i) women left in the home country in the absence of the migrant male abroad, and (ii) women and girls born in the country of immigration known as "women of the second and third generation of emigration".

1 Hamdouch et al (2000) studied the various migration waves from the 1970s to 2000, on the basis of a survey carried out in the Moroccan urban area on a sample of 23.000 inhabitants from migrant and non-migrant households.

Women often choose to join their husbands abroad because (i) they want to eschew the burden of raising the children by themselves, (ii) they want to avoid living alone or with the parents-in-law, and/or (iii) because the money transfers they receive do not meet their needs and those of the children. Women also decide to migrate in order to participate in improving the living standard of their families. According to our survey, women (accompanying their husbands, mothers, or those left at the home country) do not usually instigate the migration project; they feel obliged to their husbands abroad.

Recently, Moroccan women have started to be involved in direct migration, i.e., they migrate alone because they have their projects to realize, not only for family reunification, and to better their lives. Alghali (2003) states that Moroccan women represent more than 40% of the migrants, especially in Spain and Italy.

Even 'brain drain' has been "feminized" in recent years as more and more women are as qualified and skilled as men; brain drain seems to be largely a women's issue, as stated by Sadiqi (2004), in spite of the fact that women are neglected in migration policies. The feminization of international migration is a global trend, as attested by many researchers (see Ennaji 2005, Sadiqi 2004, Fonseca & Ormond 2004, Elghali 2003).

These multiple facets of the female migration are the consequence of the changes that the Moroccan society has undergone and the result of the evolution of women in general. In 2004, the Family Code was reformed in favour of women's rights. In this code, women are treated as equal to men, and have the right to marry and file for divorce without the tutorship of her father or husband (see Ennaji 2004).

Moroccan Migrants and Pre-migration in Morocco

Networks have an impact on the intentions of future migration at the household and individual levels. At the individual level, perceptions and attitudes (or social norms) form the basis of intentions for future moves, but household and individual circumstances cause changes of intentions; socio-economic conditions determine whether intentions will be implemented.

The Characteristics of Current Moroccan Migrants

The investigation of about 600 Moroccan migrants in Spain undertaken by Erf and Heering (2002) from July to November 1997 in the regions of Madrid, Cataluna, Levant, Andalucia and Canarias confirms the widespread general findings that the majority of Moroccan migrants or potential migrants are young and single men.

According to Erf and Heering (2002), 85% of the immigrants from Morocco are men. Prior to their migration, over 54% of these men were aged between 20 and 29, and 65% were still single and living with their parents. Women migrants were fewer (15%), and at the time of their migration they were mostly in their teens. Very often women migrate for family reunion, marriage or recently for studies. Concerning education, 67% of men were illiterate, 24% had primary education level, 8% had secondary education level, and 2% higher education level. Contrastively, 79% of women were illiterate, 15% had primary education, 5% had secondary education and 1% had university level. In terms of economic activity, 47% of male migrants just before migration were employed; as to women, they were mostly housewives, and only 2% had a paid work and 3% were students. Finally, there were 60% of male migrants and 90% of females who had a network of relatives, or friends in the country of destination. In fact, for women, having relatives or partners in the host country is usually the only reason for their migration (cf. Schoorl et al. 2000; Erf and Heering (2002: 41).

In this survey, at the time of their own migratory move, more than half of the males and three quarters of the female migrants mentioned having relatives or friends in the country of destination. This contributes to the development of a culture of migration in the home community. That is to say,

migration becomes deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behaviour, and the values associated with migration become part of one's values.

Thus, for female migrants the picture is quite different. There are fewer female migrants, and they are generally younger than men. According to Erf and Heering (2002), almost 80% of female migrants were married just before migration and lived with their spouse and/or children. These findings reveal that Moroccan women migrate essentially for the purpose of family formation or family reunion.

Countries of Destination

According to Erf and Heering (2002: 45), the main countries of final destination for most Moroccan migrants are in the European Union. France is at the top of the list with 35% followed by Italy (22%) and Spain (17%), the Netherlands (9%), Belgium (5%), Germany (4%) and England (3%). Very few Moroccan migrants (4%) migrate outside Europe.

The preferred country of destination is strongly related to the region of origin. Those who migrate to France are often from big cities like Casablanca, Rabat, Fes, Meknes, Taza, Kenitra but also small towns in the south like Taroudant, Tiznit and Tata. The vast majority of potential migrants from Larache prefer to emigrate to Spain, while Italy is preferred by potential migrants from Beni-Mellal, Khouribga, Kelaa Sraghna and Skhirate. In Khenifra, both France and Italy are the most preferred countries of destination. Finally, the northern provinces of Al-Huceima and Nador are provinces with a variety of preferred destinations (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands and Spain). The distinction urban-rural does not apparently influence the migrant's decision about the country of destination (see Erf and Heering (2002: 46) and Berrada and Hamdouch (2000: 26).

The relevant factors in choosing a country of destination by Moroccans are:

1. The previous colonial links, a common language, well-established networks. There is also the lack of previous colonial ties. For example, most Moroccans prefer to migrate to France for historical, linguistic and cultural reasons. Because they already know French, Moroccan migrants feel more or less at home in Paris than in London. Other migrants prefer a country with no colonial links with Morocco, for instance Germany, Italy, Belgium or the Netherlands, where they hope to be treated fairly and given a chance to realize their aspirations.
2. The geographical proximity in comparison with other countries. Most Moroccans choose the European Union, especially France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and Germany for they are relatively geographically closer in comparison with Austria, Norway or North America.

Women Accompanying Migrants

Women of immigrant origin are generally portrayed as wives, daughters, or mothers, who are inactive outside the home (Freedman, J. & C. Tarr, 2000, p: 24). They are mainly women who joined their husbands, fathers or sons in the context of family reunification. Most of them are illiterate or semi-illiterate and suffer from loneliness and seclusion in the new society. Their relationships with the external world or the public sphere during the first years are only through television and through their husbands or children. This situation would change with time, usually after five years of stay when they start to cope with the culture of the host country.

As mentioned above, many of them do low-level jobs; some work as housemaids, others as cleaners, cooks, servants, or street vendors because they lack any qualifications. When they visit Morocco in the summer, they take and bring with them items and goods to do some commerce, just as their peers – men – do. Although these women had no experience in commerce before, they manage to assume the role of intermediaries between Morocco and the host country.

Women Migrating Alone

This phenomenon started mainly in the 1980s. Women today are no longer only followers of their husbands, fathers or brothers; they migrate in their own capacities as workers or students. The vast majority of them are predominantly employed in the European private sector doing low-skilled jobs, which are typically precarious and temporary in nature. (Ruspini, 2004) and Fonseca & Ormond, 2004). Some of them work without a contract as housemaids, nurses and factory workers (Oishi 2002).

Those of them who have migrated illegally try to legalize their situation by (marriage, studies, work contracts, etc.). These women are susceptible to gender-related violence; they may face problems of sexual harassment, rape, non-payment of wages, and verbal/physical abuse (cf. Salih 2002 and Alghali 2003).

The Overall Profile of the Male Migrant

The overall profile of the Moroccan migrant may be described by taking into account the variables of age, geographical origin, class, level of instruction, marital status, socio-economic situation before migration, skills, size of household, and duration of migration.

The duration of migration depends on whether migrants originate from rural or urban areas, whether they are heads of households, whether they are literate or illiterate, etc. Migrants originating from rural areas stay twice as long in Europe than those originating from urban areas because they are more disposed than the ones who originate from urban areas to do hard jobs. The level of education is pertinent here as illiterate migrants stay longer than literate ones.

The composition of the migrant households is subject to change in comparison to that of non-migrant households in the sense that the former contains less nuclear families. In migrant households, mothers seem to have children at a later age because of late marriages. A study of the activity of the populations of migrant households shows that 3% of women in both migrant and non-migrant households work (Charef 2004).

The decision to migrate from Morocco to Europe may be a matter of individual motivation. In principle, males migrate from regions that are variably rich or poor, and where production factors (work, capital and natural resources) are not distributed equally (Amin, 1974). Natural resources (especially land) are stable, but work and capital are mobile as a result of the adopted development policy. On the other hand, the decision to migrate may not depend on individual will; migrants may neither choose to migrate nor choose the place where they migrate.

Origin of Migrants

The majority of migrants originate from rural or semi-rural areas. Thus, according to a survey by Hamdouch et al (1981), 38,4% of migrants were born in urban areas of which 31,1% were born in the cities and 7,3% come from small towns. By contrast, 59,5% of migrants were born in rural areas, and their possible exodus to the city was just a step toward migrating abroad, while the number of migrants born abroad is very small. Thus, about 6 out of 10 migrants were born in rural areas and only transited to the city on their way to Europe. Concerning class, most migrants belong to the poorest sections of the Moroccan society (slums, poor districts, medinas). A great portion of migrants live in traditional houses. The average rate of migration per family is 1.72 in cities, 1.12 in slums and 1.00 in medinas (Chattou, 1998).

Marital status

Concerning the marital status of migrants, most of them were single before migration. Two thirds of candidates for migration were single. However, the proportion of widowers and divorced migrants did not exceed 2% (Berrada and Hamdouch 2000: 73). Among the migrants born in a rural area, more than 50% were married or engaged before migrating; this rate is higher than that of the migrants born in an urban area (42,2%). This important difference can be explained by the fact that rural migrants get married at an early age; in addition, marriage can be a factor encouraging migration.

After migration, the number of married migrants has considerably increased since 1980. This change can be explained by the evolution of the nature of migration and the facilities afforded to the migrants and their families by communication technologies and modern transportation. However, married couples face many difficulties particularly since the 1990s when the receiving countries have established complicated visa and administrative procedures concerning migrants. Today, 85.9% of migrants are married, 10.2% are single and 2.6% are divorced. Since 1990, however, migrants tend to get married later, as only 14.1% of them are married between the age of 20 and 29. The majority of married migrants are over thirty (source: Berrada and Hamdouch 2000: 73).

Age of the Migrant

Available studies show that so far as age is concerned, at the point of migration, migrants are usually young: their average age today is 27 years (Berrada and Hamdouch 2000:65); $\frac{3}{4}$ of them are between 20 and 39 (cf. Chattou 1998). The age of migrants varies in the sense that the youngest are younger than 15 and the oldest are over 40. For girls, the average age of migration is 16, which is accounted for by family reunification.

The age of migrants has also evolved over the decades. In the 1970s, the age group 20-24 years old represented the highest percentage (27%) of the migrant population, followed by those aged between 30 and 34, followed by those between 15 and 9 years of age (11.3%). This implies that the young generation is more willing to migrate than middle-aged people, due to the high unemployment rates among the youth. Those aged 45 and more represented 5.4% of the migrant population. This small percentage may be accounted for by the fact that people in this age are already married, have children, have stable jobs and may be own a house or run a business, which means that they are too stable to migrate.

It seems that migrants of the 1970s were very young and more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of them were less than 20 years. This rate decreased to 13.3% and 12.8%. For migrants of the 1980s and 1990s, the ratio of the migrants aged between 20 and 29 years has moved from 46.7% to 48.9%.

We can conclude that an aging of the migrants is taking place at the point of migration, and this can be explained by the socio-demographic mutation of the migrants (high ratio of married migrants, the migrant responsibility towards his family) but also by the exigencies of the job market.

Educational level

So far as the migrant's level of instruction is concerned, it is weak before migration in comparison to the total population of the same age in Morocco. Urban migrants tend to have a better level of education than rural ones. As for the professional activities of the migrants, migrants are from the agricultural sector, commerce, servicing, construction, industry, and traditional skills. The level of instruction, as well as the degree of qualification, have improved in the last decades.

In the 1960s, almost half of the migrants were illiterate before migrating and about 38% had received a primary or secondary education. Migrants with a Coranic education represented 15.4% whereas those with a technical education were very few, with a low percentage 0.3%.

According to Hamdouch et al (1981), the centre (region of Casablanca, Rabat, Fès) had the lowest proportion of illiterate migrants (36.1%) followed by the north (Tangiers, Tetuan, Nador region) (38.7%) and then the south (Marrakesh region) with 47.3%. The eastern zone (region of Oujda) comes last. Concerning technical or professional education, the central region had a low proportion of migrants (1.3%) compared with the eastern zone 0.7% and the south 0.5%, whereas the north had no technical level perhaps due to the fact that very few technical and professional schools existed there at that time.

A rapid decrease in the proportion of illiterate migrants was witnessed since the 1980s. The rate of the illiterate migrants has moved down to 36.4% in this period.

In addition to this, the rate of migrants with a Coranic education has rapidly diminished from 21.7% to 19.6% and 14.2% during the 1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s. On the other hand, the number of migrants with a primary, secondary and higher education has known a considerable increase from 6.1% for migrants in the fifties to 28.8% during the sixties, to 51% in the 1980s and to 63.6% in the late 1990s. Migrants who have taken advantage of the technical and professional education before migrating are a very weak percentage which did not exceed 1% (see Berrada and Hamdouch 2000: 82; Hamdouch et al 1981: 89).

Table 2: Level of Education of Migrants at the Moment of Migration. 1998

Level of Education	At the moment of migration	Now (date of the survey)
Illiterate	22.2	20.3
Coranic School	14.2	13.5
Primary	27.4	25.6
Secondary	28.3	27.4
Higher Education	7.9	13.2
Total	100	100

Source: Berrada and Hamdouch (2000:82)

The level of education and the qualification of migrants has evolved over the decades. For instance, in the 1960s, 53.2% of migrants were unqualified workers before migrating, 17.3% were agricultural workers and 8% were specialized workers, 14.3% were qualified migrants and very few were craftsmen while the employees represented 4.6% and the number of high qualified migrants was almost inexistent. These global data have known some changes through the migratory calendar, concerning the unqualified workers, their relative weight has decreased to 49.7% in the sixties and to 41.8% in the 1990s. However, the degree of qualification has improved during migration, as the proportion of unqualified workers has diminished to 17%. The rate of qualified workers has increased to over 35% (see Berrada and Hamdouch 2000: 91).

Table 3: Degree of Qualification at the Moment of Migration. 1998

Degree of Qualification	At the moment of migration %	Now (date of the survey) %
Unqualified	41.8	17.2
Specialized worker	35.5	38.9
Qualified worker	2.8	17.0
Technician	2.1	4.6
Specialized Technicien	0.6	4.0
Professional	1.3	5.1
Other (unemployed)	15.9	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Berrada and Hamadouch (2000:92)

The number of agricultural workers did not stop decreasing through the migratory process, from 28.1% for migrants of the pre-sixties to 19.1% for those who have migrated during the sixties and 13.8% for those of the 1970s. The number of specialized workers has increased since 1960 in comparison with the previous years.

The weight of qualified migrants has been increasing since the 1970s. Craftsmen migrants, who did not exist before the sixties, have appeared later on with a slight increase. In the same way, employee migrants have known a notable increase from 4.1% during the 1960s to 5.4% during the 1970s. As the table above shows, the number of highly qualified migrants, which was weak during the 1970s, increased considerably in the last two decades (see Berrada and Hamdouch 2000: 93; Erf and Heering 2002).

The big differences in income between Morocco and the receiving countries constituted an important factor encouraging the migration of workers who were qualified and had a high intellectual level. Similarly, the number of qualified workers has continually increased during the last decades because the needs of certain industries like building and tourism, as well as the needs of both the public sector and the private sector have multiplied.

Sectors of Activity and Qualifications

The migrant's qualifications vary in accordance with the area they originate from. There are more unqualified workers in the East (60%) and South (52%) than in the Centre (45%) and North (44%). Qualified agriculture workers are limited in number, especially in the urban area of Fès, Rabat, Casablanca (8.6%) because the economy in this area is more based on industry and trade than on farming (see Hamdouch et al (1981:75 and Berrada and Hamdouch 2000:35). However, the overall number of qualified workers who migrate to Europe is to be found in this central area of Morocco; they are often craftsmen, functionaries, employees and technicians. In fact, almost 44% of migrants from this area are actually qualified workers.

Migrants with qualified degrees represented a higher percentage in the central area, and this is explained not only by the economic structure of this zone but also by the nature of migration which attracted more workers living in this zone.

Employment

Migrant activities before migration are linked to agriculture and services. Most of them worked in these fields before their migration abroad. Others worked in trade and crafts industry especially in the region of Fès, which is well known for its rich craft industry.

Most workers had permanent or seasonal jobs before they started the migration process. According to Berrada and Hamdouch (2000:94), about 35% had a permanent job before they left for Europe in 1998, compared to 41% in the 1970s. This difference can be linked to the weight of unemployment which has skyrocketed in the 1990s.

Before migration, more than 1/3 of migrants worked in the sector of agriculture and forests. Almost 1/4 of migrants worked in the sector of business and services, and more than 16% worked in building and public works.

Table 3: Regularity of Work at the Moment of Migration (%). 1998

Work	Before 1960	1960-1969	1970-1974	1975-1979	1980-1989	1990-1998	Total
Permanent	53.8	45.5	41.4	35.2	34.1	34.7	38.3
Seasonal	15.4	13.0	19.6	12.8	6.6	11.3	12.7
Part-time	7.7	9.0	5.8	5.6	7.5	10.8	7.7
Unemployed	0.0	16.0	17.8	18.4	16.2	16.2	16.7
Inactive	23.1	16.5	15.4	28.8	35.6	27.0	24.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Berrada and Hamdouch (2000:94)

Migrants who worked in crafts industry represented less than 10% of migrants while the other sectors represented a weak rate (2%). The study of the evolution of activities during the different periods of migration showed a considerable decline of the migrants coming from the sector of agriculture.

Migrants who worked in agriculture prior to their migration decreased from 60% during the fifties, to 28.9% in the sixties, then to 31% in the seventies and to 19.8% in the nineties. The rate of migrants working in commerce and services has more than doubled, by moving from 12.8% in the fifties, to 21.2% in the 1960s, then to 27.7% in the 1970s and to 33% in the 1990s. This evolution could be accounted for by the development that the sectors of commerce and services have known in Morocco (cf. Erf and Heering (2002).

Concerning building and public works, as well as the crafts industry, the rate has equally increased in accordance with the need of Morocco and of European countries.

According to the survey carried out by Berrada and Hamdouch (*ibid*), less than half of the migrants had a permanent job and less than 20% of migrants were jobless or inactive, 11% had seasonal work. Since the beginning of the migratory process, the number of migrants with a permanent job had slightly regressed from 45.5% during the 1960s to 34.7% in the 1990s. This decrease is in correlation with the rise of unemployment which totals about 15% (The Department of Statistics, 2004).

Evolution of Migration and Return Causes

There are three major causes of migration. First, to search for a job, second, to secure a high salary, and third to find a regular job. Thus, we can state that looking for a higher salary is considered the most important cause of migration. This cause has known a noticeable evolution especially since the 1970s with 53.4%, while searching for a job is in the second position ranked 39.9% followed by looking for job security 6.8% (see Hamdouch et al, 1981: 77). According to Berrada and Hamdouch (2000: 38), the major reasons for migration are still: to find a better job (42.6%), to search for a job (31.1%), and to improve one's standard of living (8.6%). However, as we mentioned previously, migration may also have other motives like family reunification, family creation, studies abroad, etc., which may help us understand better the phenomenon of migration.

The major cause of migrants return to their home country is their decision to work permanently in Morocco. The second reason is unemployment in Europe or the non-renewal of the work permit. The third reason is the desire to be near the family and to look after the education of the children.

In the sixties, almost 8 migrants out of 10 returned definitively to Morocco; during the seventies, more than half of the migrants came back home because of the contract expiration or difficulties in finding a job. Today, the rate of returns is lower (2%) given the difficult socio-economic conditions in Morocco (see ElManar Laalami 2000:147).

Table 4: Intentions of Return to Morocco (%). 1998

	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Migrant	81.7	17.9	0.8	100.0
Spouse	73.3	24.1	2.6	100.0
Daughter	35	37.2	27.8	100.0
Son	35.5	37.3	27.2	100.0

Source *El Manar Laalami 2000:147*)

This table shows that the majority of parents (especially fathers) would like to return to Morocco; however, their children prefer to stay in the host country. This may be due to the fact that children were born in Europe, and that they think Morocco has less to offer them than Europe in terms of job opportunities and living standards.

Table 5: Conditions of Return to Morocco (%). 1998

Conditions	Yes	No	Total
At retirement	44.5	55.5	100.0
Infrastructure for children	13.0	87.0	100.0
Schooling	11.7	88.3	100.0
Training	9.3	90.7	100.0
Favourable conditions for investment	55.2	44.8	100.0
Other conditions	21.4	78.6	100.0

Source: *ElManar Laalami (2000:147)*

Thus, most migrants want to return to Morocco after their retirement to be near their families; however, those who refrain from returning claim that the infrastructure for children is weak in Morocco, or that the schooling facilities are insufficient, or that the job prospects are uncertain for their children in Morocco. More than half the respondents express their will to return because of the favourable conditions for investment in Morocco.

In the 1990s, Europe experienced a marked increase in immigration flows as a consequence of the demographic growth in Morocco in particular and in Africa in general, and as a result of the plague of unemployment. Despite the visa restrictions, the number of Moroccans and Africans who have entered Europe has increased. For instance, since visas were introduced under the "Schengen Agreement", the number of Moroccans in Spain has increased from 60 000 in 1970 to 400 000 in 2004 (Belguendouz 2004, Eurostat 2000).

Thus, understanding the characteristics of Moroccan migrants is important to assess the socio-economic impact of migration on women left behind, and overall on both sending and receiving countries. The many forms of migration -- family reunification, studies, work opportunities -- are driven by a host of very diverse social, political and economic motives. Economic research on migration tends to focus on migration as a form of human capital investment which is made to draw advantage of better income opportunities outside one's home country as well as to reduce income vulnerability.

Within this framework, some key variables have been identified and empirically proved to characterize Moroccan migrants relative to the average non-migrant worker. First, Moroccan migrants tend to be young. Second, migrants are better educated. Third, they are more frequently single men than their non-migrant counterparts (although family reunification still tends to drive female migration). Fourth, migrants tend to choose a close host country, or one with important cultural, linguistic and economic links like France, for example. Fifth, migrant networks tend to attract new migrants and perpetuate migration flows. Because of lack of policies of return and of family constraints, especially children's schooling, most migrants would like to return to Morocco only after retirement.