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**Highly-Skilled Migration
in the occupied
Palestinian territory (oPt):
Socio-Political Perspectives**

Yasser Shalabi

CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes 2010/26

**Highly-Skilled Migration Series
*Socio-Political Module***



CARIM
Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration

Analytic and Synthetic Notes – Highly-Skilled Migration Series
Socio-Political Module

CARIM-AS 2010/26

Highly-Skilled Migration in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt):
Socio-Political Perspectives

Yasser Shalabi

National Project Manager (Public Sector Development Program),
Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development

This publication is part of a series of papers on Highly-Skilled Migration written in the framework of the CARIM project and presented at a meeting organised in Florence: 'Highly-Skilled Migration into, through and from Southern and Eastern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Africa' (30 November – 1 December 2009).

These papers will be discussed in two other meetings between Policy Makers and Experts on the same topic in early spring 2010. The results of these discussions will also be published.

The entire set of papers on Highly-Skilled Migration are available at <http://www.carim.org/HighlySkilledMigration>.

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[Full name of the author(s)], [title], CARIM AS [series number], Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, [year of publication].

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European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy

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The Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) was created at the European University Institute (EUI, Florence), in February 2004 and co-financed by the European Commission, DG AidCo, currently under the Thematic programme for the cooperation with third countries in the areas of migration and asylum.

Within this framework, CARIM aims, in an academic perspective, to observe, analyse, and forecast migration in Southern & Eastern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Countries (hereafter Region).

CARIM is composed of a coordinating unit established at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) of the European University Institute (EUI, Florence), and a network of scientific correspondents based in the 17 countries observed by CARIM: Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Palestine, Senegal, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

All are studied as origin, transit and immigration countries. External experts from the European Union and countries of the Region also contribute to CARIM activities.

CARIM carries out the following activities:

- Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan migration database;
- Research and publications;
- Meetings of academics and between experts and policy makers;
- Migration Summer School;
- Outreach.

The activities of CARIM cover three aspects of international migration in the Region: economic and demographic, legal, and socio-political.

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)

Convento

Via delle Fontanelle 19

50014 San Domenico di Fiesole

Italy

Tel: +39 055 46 85 878

Fax: + 39 055 46 85 755

Email: carim@eui.eu

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/>

Abstract

Palestinians widely believe that highly-skilled migration in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) is increasing. However, this phenomenon and its consequences, have rarely, if ever, been examined. This paper attempts to address highly-skilled migration in the oPt and to assess its volume in light of available data and studies. It also reanalyses data provided by previous surveys. Most relevant studies have failed to accurately assess the volume of Palestinian migration to other countries. The Population Census though, published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in 1997, provides an important source on the examination and general features of return migration.

This paper demonstrates that the volume of Palestinian highly-skilled migration greatly outweighs return migration. Very difficult circumstances throughout the oPt have drained skills and competences. Certain circumstances are related to long-standing Israeli occupation, whilst others relate to socio-economic factors.

Official or non-official initiatives for identifying the scope of highly-skilled migration and for overcoming its negative effects are not in place. Clear policies have not yet been developed to control this phenomenon. Given the special status of the Palestinian territory, migration may also be positive. It may provide a temporary alternative for the recovery of the Palestinian economic situation. If regulated and guided on sound grounds, migration will also help create a strategy for future development. In this context, the establishment of both higher-education institutions and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) have highlighted a significant return of skilled Palestinians from abroad. Therefore, working towards creating the proper environment that reduces the migration of the needed and attracting others from abroad should be a priority for official and non-official Palestinian institutions.

Résumé

Les palestiniens sont nombreux à penser que l'émigration des travailleurs qualifiés ne cesse d'augmenter. Cependant, ce phénomène comporte encore de nombreuses zones d'ombres et ses caractéristiques comme ses conséquences doivent être évaluées plus rigoureusement. Cette étude vise à combler cette lacune en évaluant l'ampleur de la migration hautement qualifiée depuis et vers les territoires palestiniens occupés à la lumière des données et études disponibles. Elle analyse également les données provenant d'enquêtes précédentes.

Les études existantes ne sont pas parvenues à évaluer de façon satisfaisante le nombre d'émigrés palestiniens. Néanmoins, le recensement de la population, publié en 1997 par le Bureau Central des Statistiques en Palestine, permet de cerner les caractéristiques générales de la migration de retour. Or la présente étude démontre que l'émigration qualifiée depuis la Palestine est un phénomène qui, de par son ampleur, dépasse largement la migration de retour. Il est alimenté non seulement par les conséquences directes de l'occupation israélienne mais également par les conditions socio-économiques extrêmement difficiles des territoires. Actuellement, il n'existe aucune initiative publique ou privée visant à en limiter l'ampleur et les conséquences négatives. Or, étant donné le statut spécial des territoires palestiniens, la migration qualifiée pourrait également avoir des effets positifs sur leur développement. Convenablement gérée, elle pourrait notamment, au moins temporairement, contribuer à la reprise de l'économie domestique. Des chiffres récemment communiqués par des établissements de l'enseignement supérieur et l'Autorité nationale palestinienne (ANP) font état du retour d'un nombre significatif de palestiniens qualifiés depuis l'étranger. Par conséquent, il est indispensable d'accompagner cette tendance positive par le biais d'initiatives incitant au retour et limitant le départ des travailleurs qualifiés. La gestion de ce phénomène doit figurer au plus vite parmi les priorités des institutions palestiniennes, publiques comme privées.

1. Introduction

This paper addresses the socio-political dimensions of highly-skilled migration from and to the oPt. Within Palestinian society, there is a strong impression that massive highly-skilled migration is underway. Palestinians widely believe that this trend is increasing given current circumstances, including occupation, siege and declining living standards. In parallel, there is also a belief that the internal political crisis resulting from the fragmentation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as the conflict between Fatah and Hamas has also encouraged highly-skilled migration.

Examining and scrutinising the phenomenon, this paper reviews available studies and information on Palestinian migration and relevant socio-economic traits, including those of highly-skilled Palestinian migration.

“For the purpose of this research, Highly-Skilled Migration is defined as migration of persons with tertiary level education, whether they achieved that level before or after migration” (CARIM, 2009).

The scope of this paper is restricted by various factors. Most importantly, the literature and data on external and highly-skilled migration is particularly limited. Despite important studies on this phenomenon, as well as its far-reaching implications for other societal sectors, scholars have not yet addressed external highly-skilled migration. A mechanism that helps produce a precise estimation of external migration rates is lacking and available data does not enable respective bodies to examine and analyse this phenomenon. Also, these data do not assist interested researchers in drawing a map of demographic mobility from and into the oPt or, for that matter, in building models for mobility trends in the future.

This paper relies in great part on data provided by the 1997 Population Census, and also on the 2007 Population Census.¹ The paper also relies on certain family surveys conducted by the PCBS. It makes reference to surveys carried out by other institutions on family samples or qualitative surveys of case studies. In addition, the paper refers to previous studies and research papers, which provide estimations for migration and analysis of migration factors, incentives, characteristics of migrants, etc. In order to produce an analysis that serves the objectives of this paper, some data provided by studies entailing family surveys conducted over past years will be reanalysed.

It should be emphasised that migration, including highly-skilled migration in Palestinian society cannot be separated from the Arab-Zionist conflict: Palestinian mobility becomes both a direct and indirect product of systematic policies.

This paper will be divided into two main sections: (i) Addressing highly-skilled migration from the oPt to other countries, this section attempts to come up with estimations on the volume of highly-skilled Palestinian migration, countries to which Palestinians migrate and migration incentives. (ii) Tackling return migration to the oPt, the second section examines incentives that encourage skilled Palestinians to return to Palestine. We then conclude with results and recommendations.

2. Palestinian Highly-skilled Migration

Estimations for the Volume of Palestinian Highly-skilled Migration

As a point of departure, it will be logical to identify the volume of external migration and relevant trends over time. Unfortunately data that would help produce this estimate are not in place. Available

¹ Detailed information on the 2007 Population Census has not been published. Information on the Gaza Strip is still unavailable.

information does not provide an acceptable, concise estimation of external migration from the oPt. Therefore, it does not produce an estimate of the number of skilled Palestinians migrating. This is due to objective factors, including the Israeli occupying authorities' control of crossing points and restrictions on movement to and from the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967. Additionally, the Israeli authorities control the population register.²

In this context, external migration from the oPt leads to complications, which demand that a complex approach be developed in order to estimate migration volume. This approach will combine the registration of movement on crossing points; family surveys; as well as surveys on samples of local communities in order to monitor families that migrated and information on whom is not available by relatives (Ladadweh, 2009).

By the end of 2007, the Palestinian population was estimated at 10.4 million, more than half of whom lived outside historic Palestine (PCBS, 2008). According to estimates from previous studies and data released by the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for arrivals and departures through land crossings, including the Allenby (Al Karamah) Bridge between the West Bank and Jordan and the Rafah Crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt, 20,000-30,000 Palestinians are migrate each year. Over 2002-2007, more than 20,000 Palestinians migrated from the West Bank *per annum* (See Table (1) in the Annex). It should be emphasised, however, that this information does not cover a significant portion of Palestinian migrants who hold the Jerusalemite ID cards as they can use Israeli airports and crossing points. Therefore, the volume of Palestinian migration from the West Bank may outweigh data from crossing points under Israeli control where Palestinians are present.

According to available data, annual migration rates in the Gaza Strip stood at approximately 5,000 persons between 2005 and 2007 (See Table 2 under the Annex). Migration rates should be linked to the longstanding siege and closure of the Gaza Strip that prevents many Palestinians from migrating.

According to a family survey conducted by the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University,³ residential compounds covered by the survey show a high rate of migration. Results demonstrate that almost half of the families surveyed has one or more migrant relative. However, Hilal counters that this is inaccurate and does not reflect the real volume of migration from residential Palestinian localities over the past fifty years.⁴ Hilal cites estimates developed by FAFO's 1995 survey, which offer a higher rate of families with migrants, namely 57% of all Palestinian families (Hilal, in Taraki, 2008, p. 245).

² According to Ad Duridi, Mohammed, *Statistics of Internal and External Migration: Facts and Figures*, presented to the National Conference on the Population and Development, which was held by the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development on 19 October 2009 in Ramallah, there are several impediments to accessing migration-related information. These impediments are the following: (1) The Israeli occupying authorities control crossing points and borders between the oPt and neighbouring countries. As a result, information is not available for Palestinians who use Israeli crossings and airports (both arrivals and departures) to and from the oPt. Also, the population register is not linked with crossing points and the relevant data are not updated. (2) Israel, in an extension of the political-demographic conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, has made relentless attempts to preserve control over statistical information on the movement of populations. (3) Official and obligatory laws, including incentives, as well as imperative sanctions are not in place. These would help identify the movement of Palestinians within the oPt's administrative borders. This information could be used to upgrade the register on a regular basis. (4) Migration trends resulting from multiple travel documents are not completely monitored. Palestinians can hold and use either a Palestinian or a Jordanian passport at any time. (5) The Rafah Crossing has been officially closed since June 2006.

³ The family survey was conducted by PCBS for the Birzeit Women Studies Institute. It covers a sample of 2,000 Palestinian families selected from 19 residential locales in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1999.

⁴ Hilal hypothesises that the survey sample does not represent all villages in the West Bank. Additionally, the sample is restricted to existent families. It does not cover families, all members of whom have migrated to other countries. According to the survey, migrants are defined as "family members who reside outside the Palestinian territory and relative the householder with any of the following kinship ties: father, mother, son, daughter, wife or husband". (Hilal in Taraki, 2008, p. 243).

The Institute of Women Studies' survey has 30% of Palestinian migrants with an intermediate diploma degree or higher, indicating an increasing rate of highly-skilled migration among Palestinians (Hilal, in Taraki, 2008, p. 245). Results also indicate that householders' education plays an important role in shaping migration levels. Families, whose heads enjoy a higher level of education or are uneducated, typically include migrants. Accordingly, heads of 21% of families with migrant members hold a degree above secondary school education. This is the second highest percentage of families after families whose heads are illiterate (26%) (see Table (3) in the Annex). In relation to illiterate heads of households, these results might be linked to the earlier migration or displacement wave inflicted by the Israeli occupation. With regard to householders with a tertiary academic degree results are related to the new migration of skilled Palestinian persons, who are looking for employment opportunities or better living conditions.

According to a survey conducted in three Palestinian cities,⁵ families surveyed had 138 migrant members. Over 61% of these had departed from Palestinian territory following the outbreak of the second *Intifada* in 2000. Pursuant to the survey results, approximately 55.8% left the country after they obtained their high-school certificate and 14% had a BA degree. 27% decided to migrate before they completed their education. Regarding their current educational background, 3.6% of migrants held Ph.D. degrees, 9.4% MA degrees, and 26.8% BA degrees. Of the total migrants, results almost 8% were engineers, over 8% specialists in trade and economy, and 6% medical specialists (Mattaria, et al, 2008, pp. 77-78). This means that about 24% of migrants covered by the family sample were skilled.

The estimations above may indicate that highly-skilled Palestinian migration is approximately a quarter of annual migration. Hypothesising that the volume of annual migration is between 20,000-30,000 persons, 5,000-6,000 skilled Palestinians depart the country every year. This is not an insignificant figure for a small society of 4 million inhabitants on the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. External migration may benefit Palestinian society as it provides employment opportunities that are not available on the local market. However, results show that some skilled Palestinians migrate despite appropriate jobs being in place. Palestinian universities and institutions lack required skills. For example, several universities advertise more than once for the same vacancies in several specialisations, which means they do not receive applications. This is also the case for other institutions specialising in the fields of economy, public finance, monitoring and evaluation.

Destinations of Highly-skilled Palestinians Migration

Countries of destination seem to change. Table (4) in the Annex indicates changing trends according to migration phase. Although migration to Jordan has sharply dropped, 60% of the total number of Palestinian migrants departed for Jordan from 1948-1966. In 1967, a higher rate (77%) of Palestinians migrated to Jordan due to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 1994-1999, however, Palestinian migration to Jordan declined to 28%. It should be noted that most Palestinian migrants to Jordan comprised the displaced Palestinian population. Characterised as compulsory migration, departure for Jordan is not linked to educational background or highly-skilled migration as whole villages were displaced.

Following this phase, migration waves have been more associated with a pursuit of education, employment, better living standards, and an escape from harsh conditions and difficult living conditions imposed by the Israeli occupying authorities in the oPt. With Jordan's share decreasing, that of Arab countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), North America, European countries and Australia rose. It can be hypothesised that highly-skilled migration comprised a major portion of Palestinian migration. Migration to North America jumped from only 7% in 1948-1966 to 31% in

⁵ 850 families (with 2,730 members) were selected in major residential localities in the governorate of Ramallah and El Bireh, including the cities of Ramallah and El Bireh as well as the town of Beituniya. Persons holding university degrees (BA or above) comprised 21.5% of surveyed individuals (Mattaria, et al, 2008, p. 75).

1988-1993, but declined to 27% over 1994-1999. Migration to other (Western) countries increased from 14% in 1948-1966 to 24% in 1994-1999.

Drop in migration to the GCC states and to other oil-producing Arab countries following the outbreak of the first *intifada* in 1987 and the Gulf Crisis is associated with the decline of oil revenues as well as policies developed by the GCC states in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. GCC states devised measures that restricted Palestinian residence. In contrast, the rise of Palestinian migration rates to certain Western countries, including Canada, Australia and the US, is probably a result of relatively flexible migration policies, which grant higher points to holders of academic degrees and to skilled migrants. This means that a larger portion of Palestinian migrants to these countries are skilled.

In a study on the Palestinian brain drain in the health and education sectors almost 34% prefer to migrate to Europe; 21% to GCC states; 15% to the US; 14% to Canada; and 15% to other countries. The economic situation and relatives were the main reasons for selecting the country of destination (49% and 48% respectively). Other reasons include the country's language and culture (34% and 27% respectively). Moreover, easy access to a visa played a significant part in 19% of the cases of migration. It is also estimated that three quarters (78%) of migrants have friends in the countries where they plan to migrate. Friends usually help make a decision on migration as well as completing relevant procedures (Mattaria, et al, 2008, p. 68).

In general, indicators show rising migration among Palestinians, particularly skilled ones, to Western states. Meanwhile, migration to Jordan has declined. Although available data demonstrate a drop in migration to GCC states around 1999, highly-skilled migration to these countries might resume in light of the plethora of employment opportunities to be found there.

Factors Associated with External Palestinian Migration

Table (1) in the Annex shows that the period between 2002 and 2003 saw a large migration wave from the West Bank. Especially in 2002, the Israeli occupying forces made large-scale incursions into Palestinian cities, despite the fact they had evacuated them as required by the Oslo Accords and subsequent agreements. Table (1) also demonstrates a decline in the volume of annual external migration around 2006. In view of the conflict following Hamas' taking of control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, migration rates increased once again. Here Table (2) in the Annex indicates a sharp rise in the annual migration rate in 2007. As for Gaza, information on the years preceding 2005 are not, however, available.

The above information shows that security and political problems, a result of the Israeli occupation, are an essential factor that drives Palestinians to migrate. At the same time, however, Palestinian internal political crises has driven more Palestinians to migrate: it is clear that the Palestinian authorities should find a settlement for the current political crisis.

Regarding the Palestinian brain drain in the health and education sectors, a recent survey highlighted a sample of health and education practitioners.⁶ Approximately 31% replied that they considered migrating. Almost 80% of these noted that they wanted to migrate in light of the deteriorating political and security situation at home. 77% of those articulated their desire to pursue recent developments in their specialisations and 61% said they wanted to improve their financial situation. Another 48% of persons who considered migrating attribute the reason for migration to social factors and 44% to Israeli policies and measures. 19.5% (8 individuals) gave other reasons, including a search for freedom, mental relief and a better future for their children (Mattaria, et al, 2008, p. 67).

⁶ The survey covered a number of workers in the health and education sectors. 185 individuals filled out questionnaires. It should be noted that 240 questionnaires were distributed. In other words, responses were received from 77% of those surveyed.

A recent survey on brain drain in Palestine has a number of case studies of migrant Palestinians, i.e. those living abroad on a permanent basis. These included specialists in the health and education sectors.⁷ I have analysed these eight case studies in order to identify incentives behind migration decisions. According to these case studies, political-security, economic and social factors drive Palestinians to leave Palestine for other countries. These factors can be summarised as follows: feelings of insecurity given the deteriorated security situation; difficult access to workplaces in light of Israeli checkpoints, closure and curfews; harassment by the occupying Israeli authorities; low salaries and the hope of getting a better income; dissatisfaction with one's job; and the search for a better lifestyle. A number of surveyed persons have also migrated to pursue their higher education. Originally leaving for a temporary period, migration in the last category has become permanent. Those who returned to Palestine and worked for a while decided to migrate on a constant basis.

The reason for selecting a given country of destination includes considerations of that country's economic state as well as available employment and the chance of a good salary. The presence of some relatives was also an essential factor that encouraged persons to migrate to a given a country. Additionally, surveyed individuals stated that easy access to a visa and the right to reside in a selected country was another reason for migrating there.

3. Return Highly-Skilled Migration to the oPt

Estimations of Return Highly-Skilled Migration

According to results of the PCBS 1997 General Census of Population and Housing, a total of 267,000 Palestinians returned to the Palestinian territory from other countries. These comprised 10.5% of the total population of the Palestinian territory in 1997 (Al Maliki and Shalabi, 2000, p. 53). According to a PCBS survey in 2006, this rate dropped to 7.7% (Duridi, 2009).

The PCBS 1997 Census data show that the educational background of returnees was generally higher than that of Palestinian residents. Of the returnees above 10 years of age, 14% had completed the first phase of university education and 9.2% the intermediate diploma phase. In comparison to the total population, only 4.5% had completed the first phase of university education (Al Maliki and Shalabi, 2000, p. 58).

In the PCBS 2006 survey, percentage of returnees with higher-educational backgrounds was higher than in the general population of the Palestinian territory. Compared to 6.6% of the general population, returnees holding a BA degree or higher were at 12.6% (Duridi, 2009). This is due to two factors: (1) A number of students who had travelled to pursue their education returned; and (2) employees of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, a large number of whom held academic degrees, also returned to Palestinian territory.

By calculating the number of returnees (175,000 to 280,000 in 2006) as well as those holding BA degrees or higher (12.6%), approximately 35,000 returnees are skilled. However, this figure is still low when compared to estimations for external highly-skilled migration from the oPt.

In general, Palestinian returnees are better educated than oPt residents in terms of the numbers who have completed higher education. Especially over the first years of the PNA establishment, some skilled Palestinian persons returned to their homeland. The data above show a gap in education between Palestinian residents and returnees in two respects: (1) a higher-educational level within the

⁷ Though it does not provide analysis, the study features a summary of each of the eight case studies. For the purposes of this paper, I have reviewed and analysed these case studies. To view the said case studies, see Mattaria, Awad, et al. (2008), *Brain Drain in the Palestinian Society: A Pilot Study of the Health and Education Sectors*, Ramallah, Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), pp. 68-75.

ten years that separate the sources of data; and (2) a decline in the number of returning Palestinian skilled persons as well as a general drop in the return rates.

PCBS data indicates that fewer than 11% of returnees to the Palestinian territory came back over the past five years, i.e. 2% per annum. On the other hand, 31% of returnees did not reside in Palestine after they had returned from abroad 6 or 10 years earlier (6% a year). Those who returned 11 or 15 years ago comprise 24% (5% a year). Palestinians who returned 16 or more years ago made up 34% (Duridi, 2009).

Incentives for Return

Data released by the PCBS 1997 General Census for Population and Housing indicate that Palestinians' return was originally associated with political conditions in the region. Two major factors propelled migration waves. First, the establishment of the PNA brought back thousands of Palestinians, particularly PLO functionaries. Second, many Palestinians were expelled from some GCC states following the first Gulf war, causing a compulsory return to Palestine.

Certain studies indicate that most Palestinians who returned from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states were skilled. In 1993, Nour Masalhah developed a survey with a sample of 795 returnees. Most of these had spent 13 years or more in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and in other GCC states before they came back to Palestinian territory. According to the survey, the educational level of returnees was high. Approximately 67% of returnees to the Gaza Strip and 32% of those returning to the West Bank were physicians, engineers, teachers and nurses (Zureiq, 1997, pp. 82-83).

The PCBS 1997 General Census of the Population and Housing show that 55% of returnees accompanied their families back to the Palestinian territory, while accompanying the family relates to persons who didn't take the decision of return, it will not be dealt with. The paper will concentrate on other factors, which influence the decision to return. Political factors generated a return migration to the Palestinian territory of approximately 45% following the PNA constitution and another 10% in the light of displacement from other countries, particularly GCC countries. In addition, 25% returned for employment-related reasons: this is the most salient economic factor that has driven return migration. With respect to social factors, 16% returned due to marriages and 4% returned after they had completed their education.⁸

4. Conclusion

Despite the fact that external migration, in general, and Palestinian highly-skilled migration, in particular, are not new phenomena and also bearing in mind the special status of Palestinians and earlier displacement, studies of highly-skilled migration as well as studies of its consequences are practically non-existent. To this end, the present paper attempted to explain the phenomenon in relation to published data and studies. External highly-skilled migration greatly outweighs return highly-skilled migration to Palestine. Approximately 5,000-6,000 Palestinians are estimated to migrate per annum, while a total of 35,000 skilled Palestinians, holding BA degrees or higher, have returned to Palestine over the past years. Several factors prevalent in the oPt have played a role in draining skilled Palestinians. These include:

- Difficult political conditions, including the longstanding Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory as well as closure, siege, movement restrictions, etc. Factors include internal political crisis and fragmentation.

⁸ These figures are taken from Al Maliki and Shalabi, 2000, p. 110.

- Difficult socio-economic conditions including high unemployment and poverty, difficult economic conditions resulting from the Israeli closure and policies, a weak labour market, and the search on the part of certain skilled Palestinians for better living conditions.

Nevertheless, effective official initiatives have not been in place in order to identify the volume of highly-skilled migration and overcome any negative effects. Moreover, clear policies have not been developed to control this phenomenon. It is worth mentioning here that the borders of Palestine are still under Israeli control, which gives a very small margin to the PNA to develop migration policies. In addition to that, the hard economic and social conditions of Palestinians in the oPt and the financial crises the PNA itself suffers from, are also part of the main factors that limit the PNA in developing policies towards migration.

In regard of the special status of the oPt, migration may generate temporary positive impacts. It may provide a short-term alternative for internal economic recovery. If regulated and guided on sound grounds, migration will also help develop a strategy for future development. Practical experience has proven that a large number of skilled migrants are willing to return to Palestine and are waiting for the appropriate chance to do so. Therefore, creating a suitable environment for attracting skilled migrants and for a reduction in intensive migration of those whom the homeland needs remains a priority for national decision-makers.

Of particular significance, return highly-skilled migration contributed to establishing the PNA and preparing for the Palestinian state. In addition, return migration has provided employment opportunities for resident skilled labour forces, thereby preventing their migration in search for better chances.

It should be noted that Palestinian migrants are attached to their family in Palestine. Many studies show that migrants transfer money to their families there. According to the analysis of the abovementioned eight case studies (Mattariya, et al, 2008), all surveyed individuals transfer financial contributions to their family members in Palestine, considering it a familial and national duty. The majority of Palestinian migrants think positively about returning to their home when circumstances improve and security is established. Their willingness to return is associated with relentless nostalgia and homesickness.

Temporary highly-skilled migration is focused on the pursuit of education. The Palestinian territory lacks Ph.D. programmes. Until recently, MA programmes were also lacking. Therefore, migration for academic purposes will help promote and develop Palestinian society. Until the mid 1970s, successive occupying regimes had left the oPt without higher-education institutions. Returning skilled migrants formed the foundations for Palestinian higher education facilities.

Annex

Table 1: Data on Arrivals and Departures Through Al-Karameh Border Crossing (Between the West Bank and Jordan) for the Years 2002-2007

Net	Number		Year
	Departures	Arrivals	
35,524-	169,690	134,166	2002
58,674-	200,272	141,598	2003
9,580-	317,673	308,094	2004
6,245-	404,681	398,436	2005
4,592-	412,425	407,833	2006
14,972-	481,007	466,035	2007

Source: Mohammad Duridi (2009). *Statistics of Internal and External Migration: Facts and Figures*. Palestine Central Bureau Of Statistics (PCBS). Ramallah. Power Point presentation given at “National Conference on Population and Development: Population Issues and Development Implications”. Held on 9th October, 2009. Ramallah: Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development

This data was based on information from the General Directorate of Borders and crossings - Ministry of Interior.

Table 2: Data on Arrivals and Departures Through the Rafah Border Crossing (Between the Gaza Strip and Egypt) for the Years 2005-2007

Net	Number		Year Departures
	Departures	Arrivals	
4,577-	23,065	18,488	2005
3,953-	156,436	152,483	2006
5,299-	47,739	41,739	2007

Source: Mohammad Duridi (2009). *Statistics of Internal and External Migration: Facts and Figures*. Palestine Central Bureau Of Statistics (PCBS). Ramallah. Power Point presentation given at “National Conference on Population and Development: Population Issues and Development Implications”. Held on 9th October, 2009. Ramallah: Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development

This data was based on information from Rafah Borders - Ministry of Interior.

**Table 3: Households with or without Migrant Members
Level of Education by Head of Household (1999)**

Total Number of Surveyed Households	Households (%)		Head of Household Level of Education
	Households with no Migrants	Households with Migrants	
585	26	26	Illiterate
480	23	20	Elementary
436	21	18	Proprietary
347	16	15	Secondary
405	15	21	Above Secondary
2253	101*	100	Total

Source: Hilal in Taraki (2008), p 247.

* Due to Rounding Numbers.

Table 4: Palestinian Migrants by Country of Destination and the Period of Migration (%)

1994-1999	1988-1993	1968-1987	1967	1948-1966	Country of Destination
28	23	45	77	60	Jordan
21	23	28	13	19	Arab Gulf and Other Arab Countries
27	31	17	1	7	North America
24	23	10	9	14	Other Countries
100	100	100	100	100	Total

Source: Hilal in Taraki (2008), p 247.

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