



A Sothern perspective on the theory and practice of migration and development

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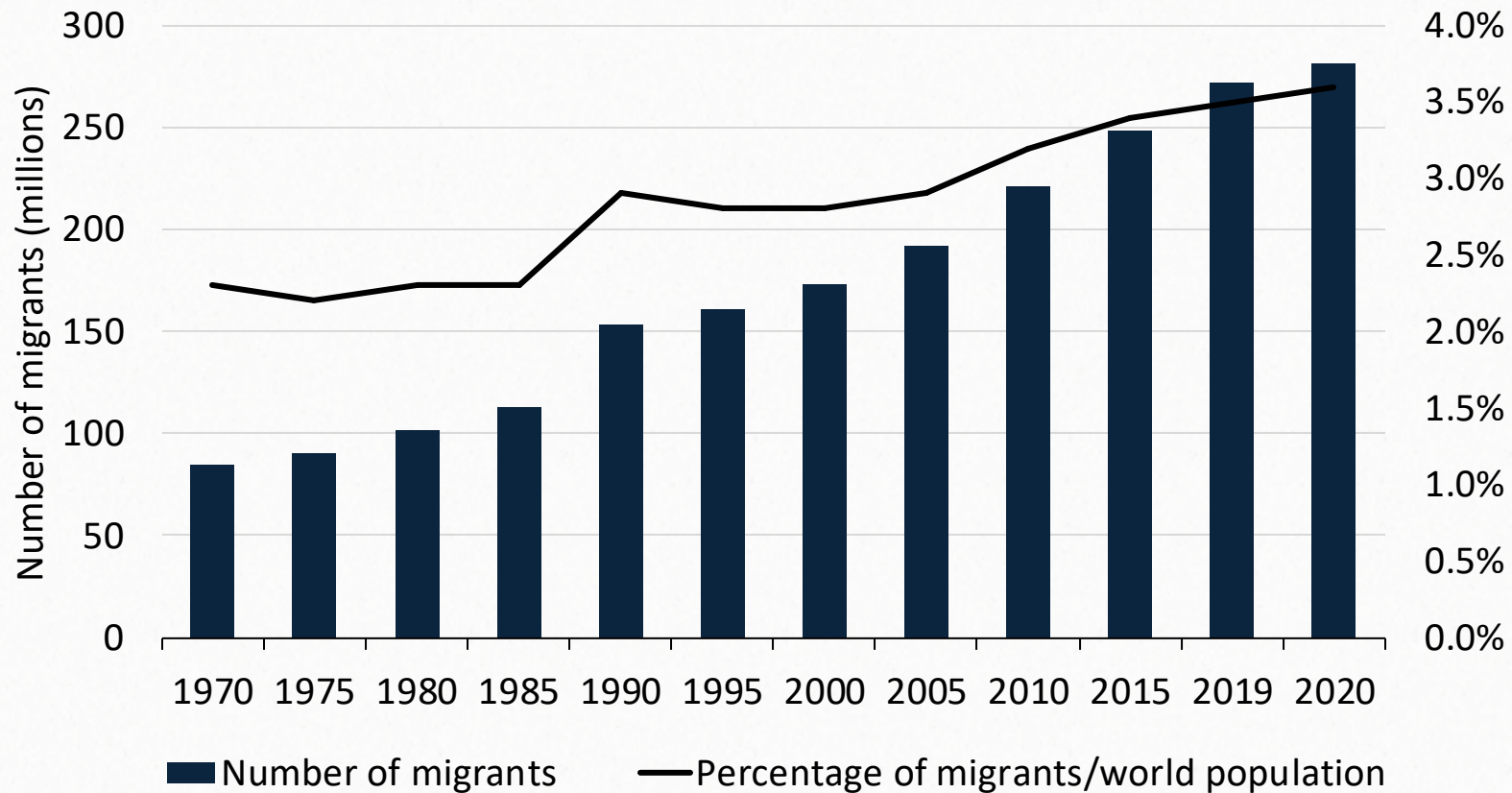
Content

- A theoretical and political battlefield: the mainstream perspective vs an alternative (southern) perspective
- Towards a reconceptualization of *forced migration*
- Changing the dominant narrative: *demystifying indicators*
- The global governance on migration under scrutiny
- Concluding remarks



The theoretical and political battlefront

International migration trends 1970-2020



Source. SIMDE-AUZ. Based on IOM, UN Migration. World Migration Report 2020.

The migration question today

- Migration has become a critical aspect of contemporary capitalism: 280 million international migrants + 750 million internal migrants.
- Regardless of the strategic importance of this phenomenon, migration studies and public perceptions of human mobility are fraught with myths that distort reality under a *unilateral, de-contextualised, reductionist* and *biased views*.
- Given the critical challenges propelled by human mobility, the global governance of migration has become a fundamental issue on the international agenda: HLD (2006 and 2013) + GFMD (2007-) + Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Secure migration (2018).

The mainstream position

- *National security* doctrine.
- *Criminalization of migration*: reduced legal channels for migration, far below actual labour needs of destination countries. Irregular migration a *State Policy*
- *Corporate-driven public policies*. Sanctification of *temporary workers* programmes
- The *remittances mantra*. Unidirectional relationship between M&D
- This position, promoted by the WB, fosters the prevailing mythology regarding migrants as *public enemies*.

The alternative (southern) position

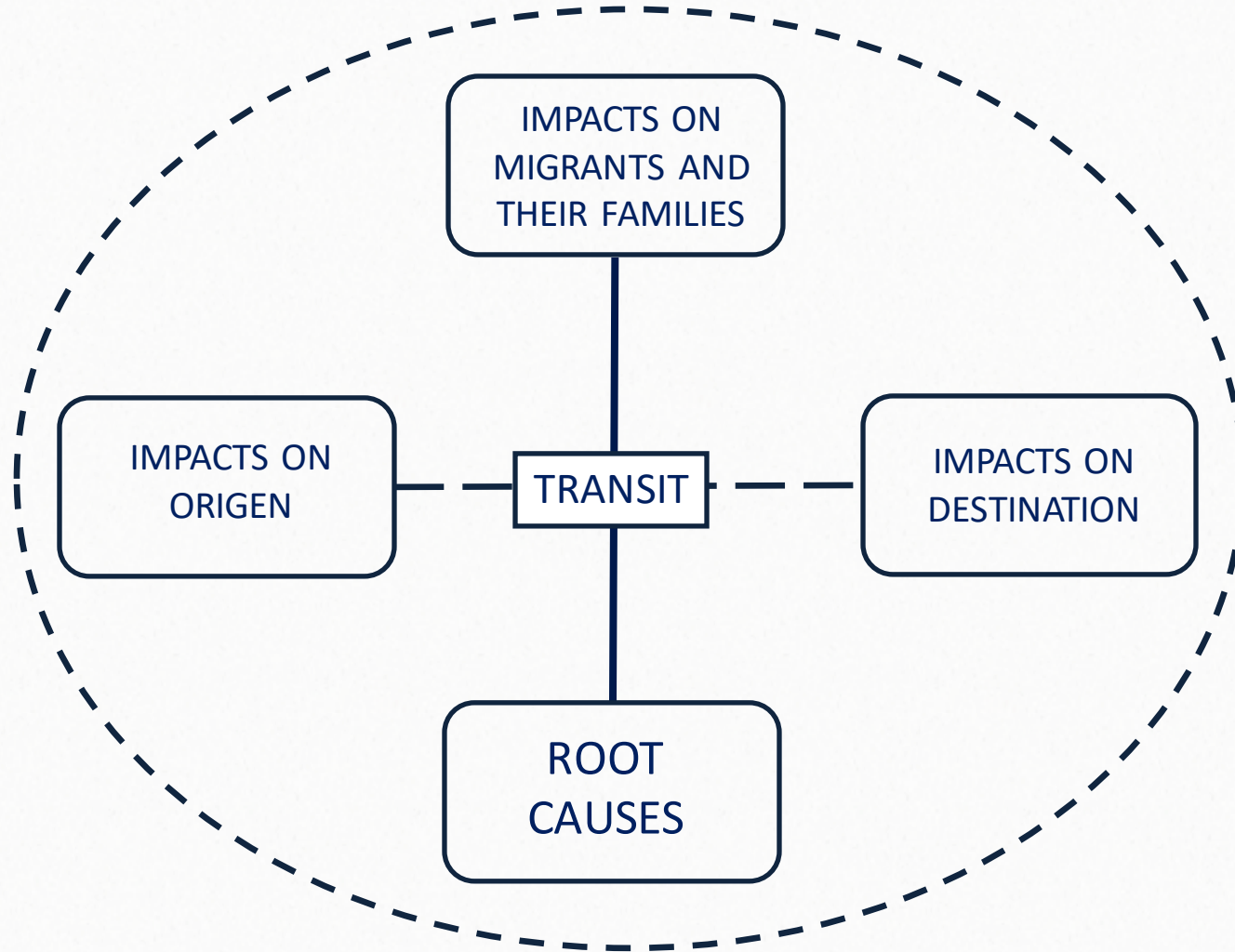
- *Human Security* vs. National Security
- *Human Rights* at the centre
- Makes visible the contributions of migrants to destination countries
- Address the *root causes* of contemporary migration
 - Reduction of social inequalities and asymmetries among countries, regions and within countries
 - Promote the expansion of free circulation regimes
 - Encourage universal decent work
 - Open pathways for full citizenship

The nature of the southern perspective

- It does not entail the negation of the North, but rather the *negation of the negation*
- Atempt to build an *integral, inclusive, emancipatory and libertarian perspective*
- A view grounded on a Critical Development Studies standpoint

Key analytical dimensions

Neoliberal Globalization



Neoliberal Globalization

The context: Key features of contemporary capitalism

- Extreme concentration and centralization of capital/ omnipresence of monopoly capital (the large multinational corporations)/ Samir Amin: *era of generalized monopolies*
- The largest companies in the world —those with more than one billion US\$ annual sales— account for 75 percent of global earnings (*McKinsey Global Institute, 2015*)
- Against the myth of “free market” (pillar of the neoliberal ideology), *monopoly capital* has become the key player in contemporary capitalism.

Root causes: the deepening of uneven development

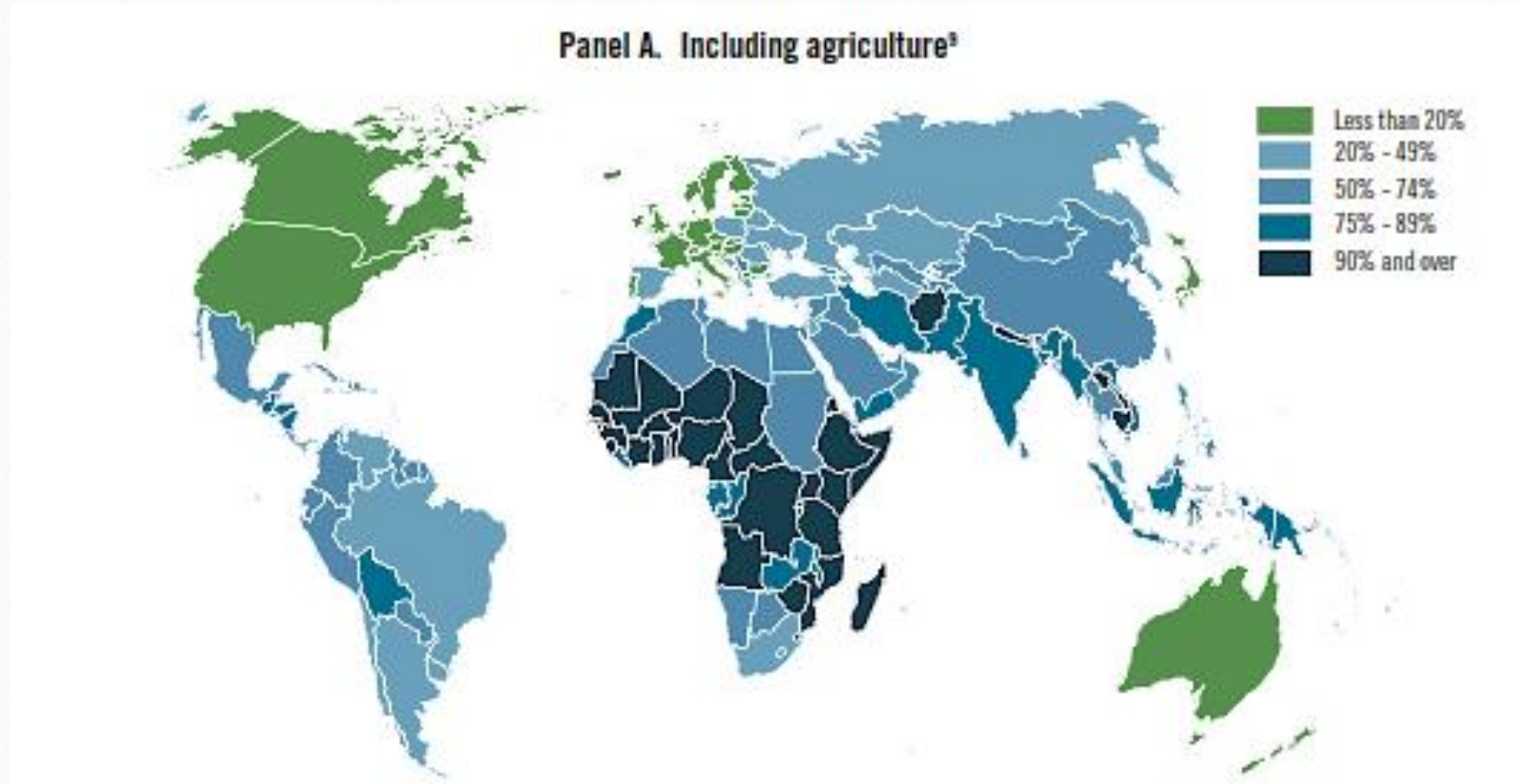
- Strong *shift* of MC toward the *periphery* in search of abundant *cheap and flexible labour (global labour arbitrage)* and the pillage of *natural resources* (imperialist “*re-colonization*”): 60% of the assets, employment and sales of the top 100 MNCs are allocated in peripheral (underdeveloped and emerging) countries.
- This has engendered a *new international division of labour* and *new modalities* of unequal exchange that have expanded and deepened uneven development and social inequalities to unbearable levels

Global offensive against the Working Class

- *Massive oversupply of labor*: supply of workers for capital doubled in two decades (The great doubling, Freeman, 2006)
 - 1.9 billion (58%) in *vulnerable labor conditions*
 - 617 million (19%) are *poor*
 - 188 million *unemployed* (youth unemployment rate doubles average unemployment rate)
 - 2 billion (61%) work in the *informal sector*
- ILO
2019

Uneven distribution of the reserve army of labour; informality: low income countries (90%) vs. high income countries (18%) = main driver of contemporary migration

Share of Informal Employment in Total Employment, 2016



Source: ILO. Source: ILO (2018[3]), Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture.

Metamorphosis of Monopoly Capital

- Financial Monopoly capital (financialization: fictitious capital)
- Extractivism and land grabbing

New

Global value chains/global networks of monopoly capital

Restructuring of innovation systems

Global value chains

- New geography of industrial production based on the new technologies (ICT + technoscience) + global labour arbitrage
- My central argument: New International Division of Labour based on *the Exportation of Labour Power* (the most valuable commodity)
- Indirect or *disembodied exportation of labour power* (key concept, fetish of industrial exports) + Direct: *labour migration*
- New modalities of *unequal exchange*

A key concept: the indirect exportation of labour power

- *Disembodied exportation of labour power*: Through the fetich of industrial exports in special economic zones —that operate as enclaves with imported inputs under tax exemption regimes— what actually is being exported is labour power without it leaving the country.
- It is estimated that there are ~100 million workers directly employed in *assembly plants (maquiladoras)* in the Global South and over 5,400 *export processing zones* or *special economic zones* established in 147 countries (UNCTAD, 2020).



Towards a reconceptualization of forced migration

The nature of contemporary migration

- Under contemporary capitalism human mobility adopts the general characteristic of *forced migration* (expanding this category beyond refugees and asylum seekers)
- It entails a regressive shift propelled by the deprivation of the means of production and subsistence, dispossession, violence and natural disasters that put at risk *the survival of large segments of the population* in places of origin.
- This massive compulsive displacement imposes structural and legal restrictions on the migrant workforce, depreciating and subjecting it to conditions of *high vulnerability, precariousness* and *super exploitation*.

Categories of Forced Migration

- *Migration due to violence, conflict, and catastrophe*: 79.5 million: 26 million refugees, 45.7 million internally displaced, and 4.2 million asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2019)
- *Smuggling and trafficking of persons* (40.3 million, ILO, 2017)
- *Migration due to dispossession, exclusion, extreme poverty, and unemployment* (at least 120 million 'economic' international migrants)
- *Migration due to over-qualification and lack of opportunities* (around 30 million)
- *Return migration in response to massive deportations*



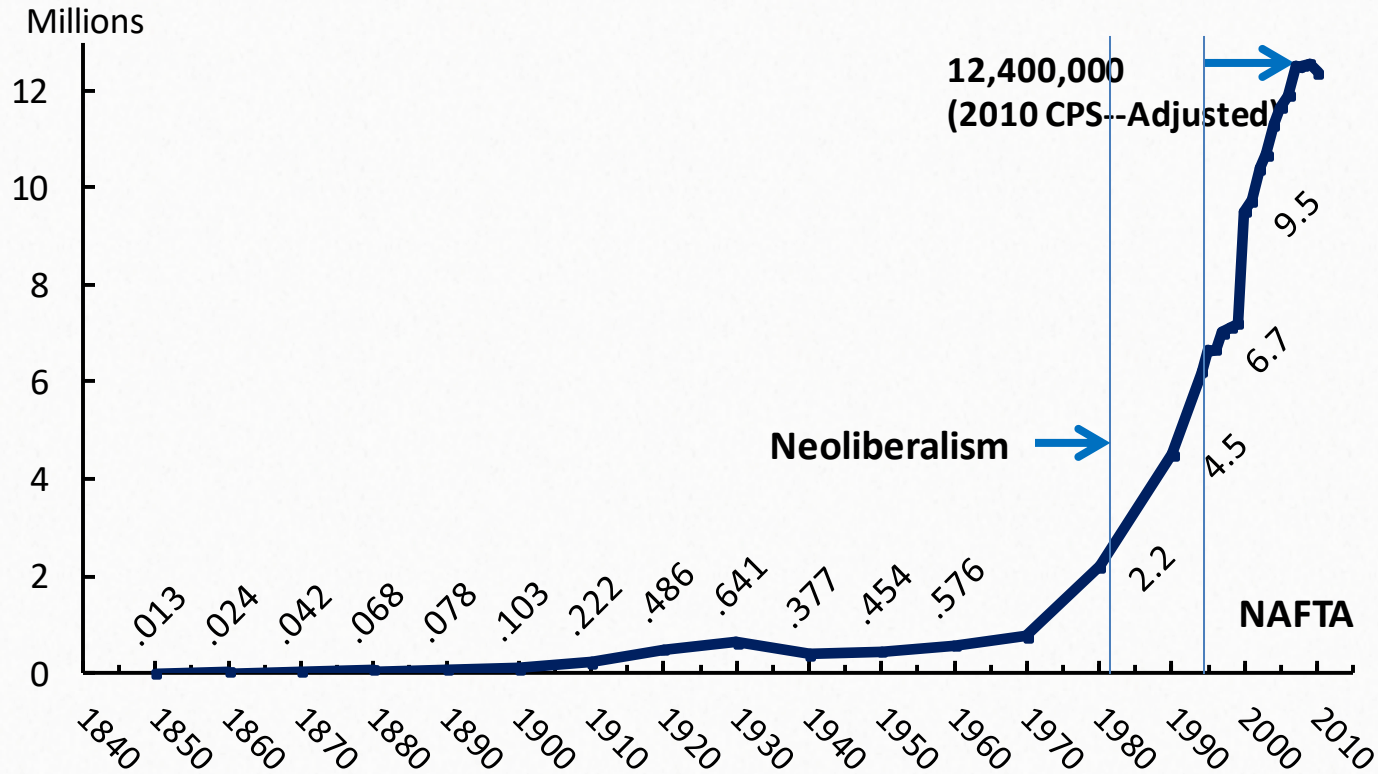
**Changing the dominant
narrative: demystifying indicators**

Top migration countries of origin (1990, 2000, 2010 y 2013)

1990			2000		2010		2020	
Rank	Origin	Migrant population	Origin	Migrant population	Origin	Migrant population	Origin	Migrant population
	World		World	174 515 733	World	214 199 193	World	280598105
1o	Russian Fe.	12 749 832	Russian Fe	10 702 336	Mexico	12 441 703	India	17 869 492
2o	Afghanistan	7 295 340	Mexico	10 040 849	India	11 398 091	Mexico	11 185 737
3er	India	6 845 565	India	8 120 278	Russian Fed.	10 725 449	Russian Fe.	10 756 697
4to	Bangladesh	5 635 489	Ukraine	5 714 739	China	8 432 427	China	10 461 170
5to	Ukraine	5 575 082	Bangladesh	5 695 075	Bangladesh	6 476 821	Bangladesh	7 401 763
6to	Mexico	5 043 269	China	5 493 899	Ukraine	6 356 532	Pakistan	6 328 400

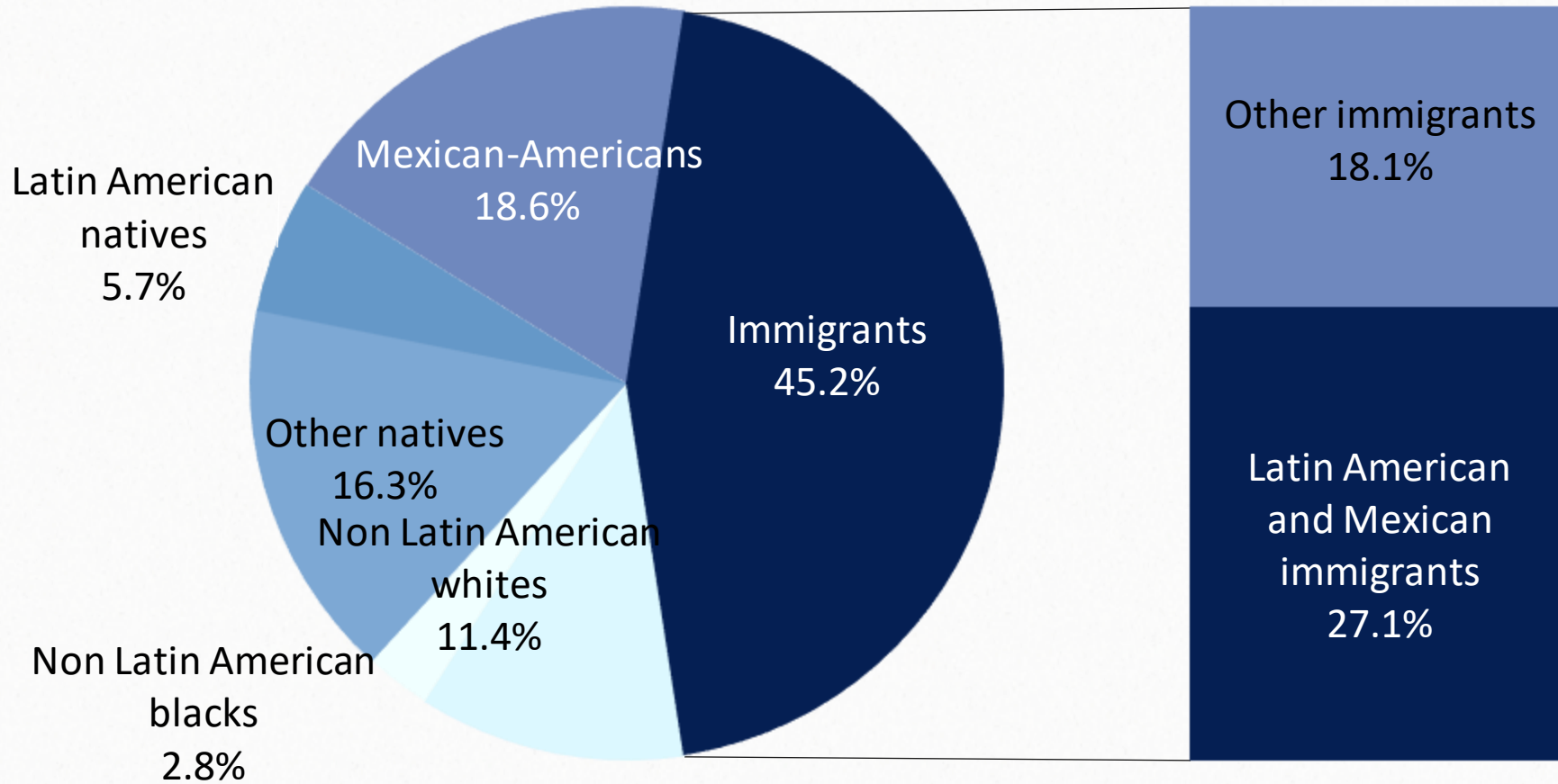
Source: *Tables of total migrant stock at mid-year by origin and by major area, region, country or area of destination. Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations 2012 and 2013.*

US: Growth of Mexican Immigrants



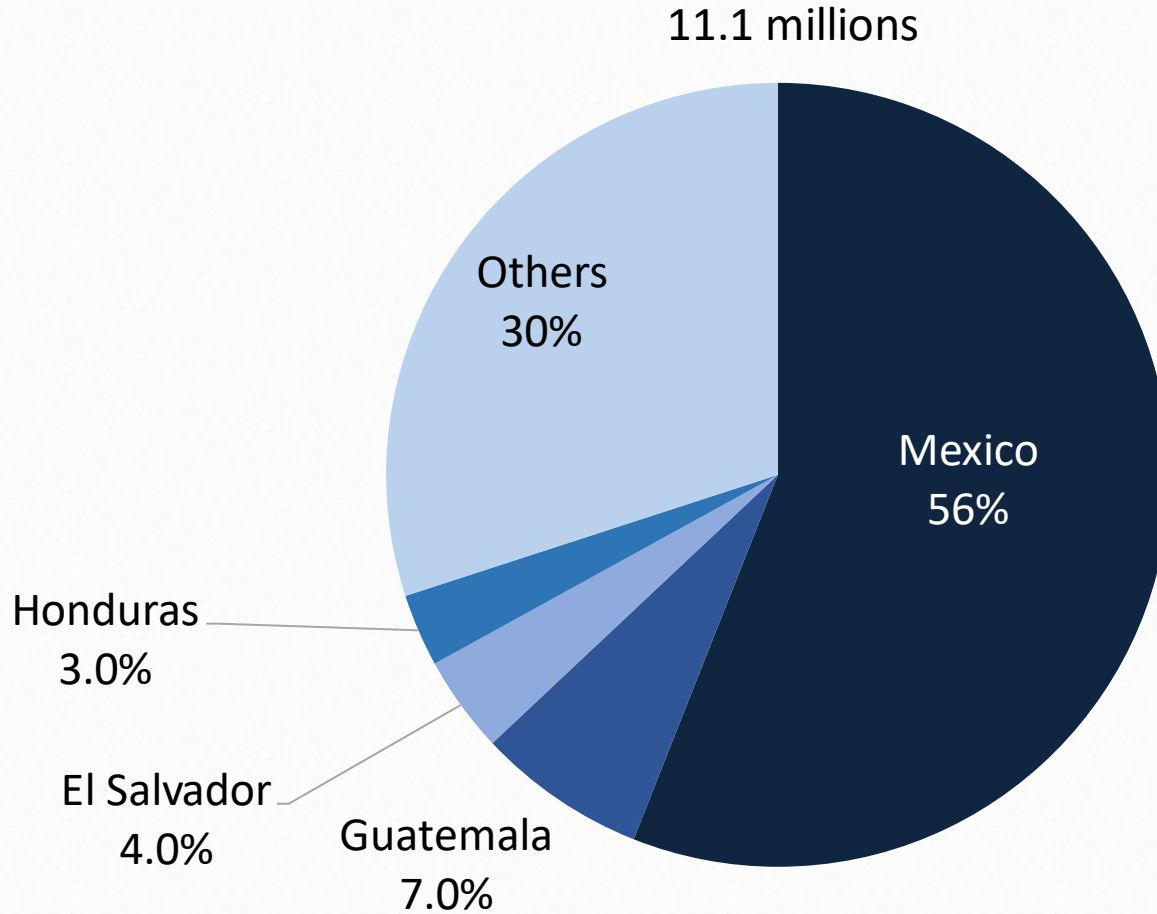
Source: Compilation from Decennial Censuses, 1850-1990; Pew Hispanic Center, 1994-2010 (Passel & Cohn 2011).

US: Labour growth 2000-2015



Source: SIMDE-UAZ. Estimations based on CPS-ASEC, March supplements 2000 & 2015

US: Country of origin of irregular immigrants

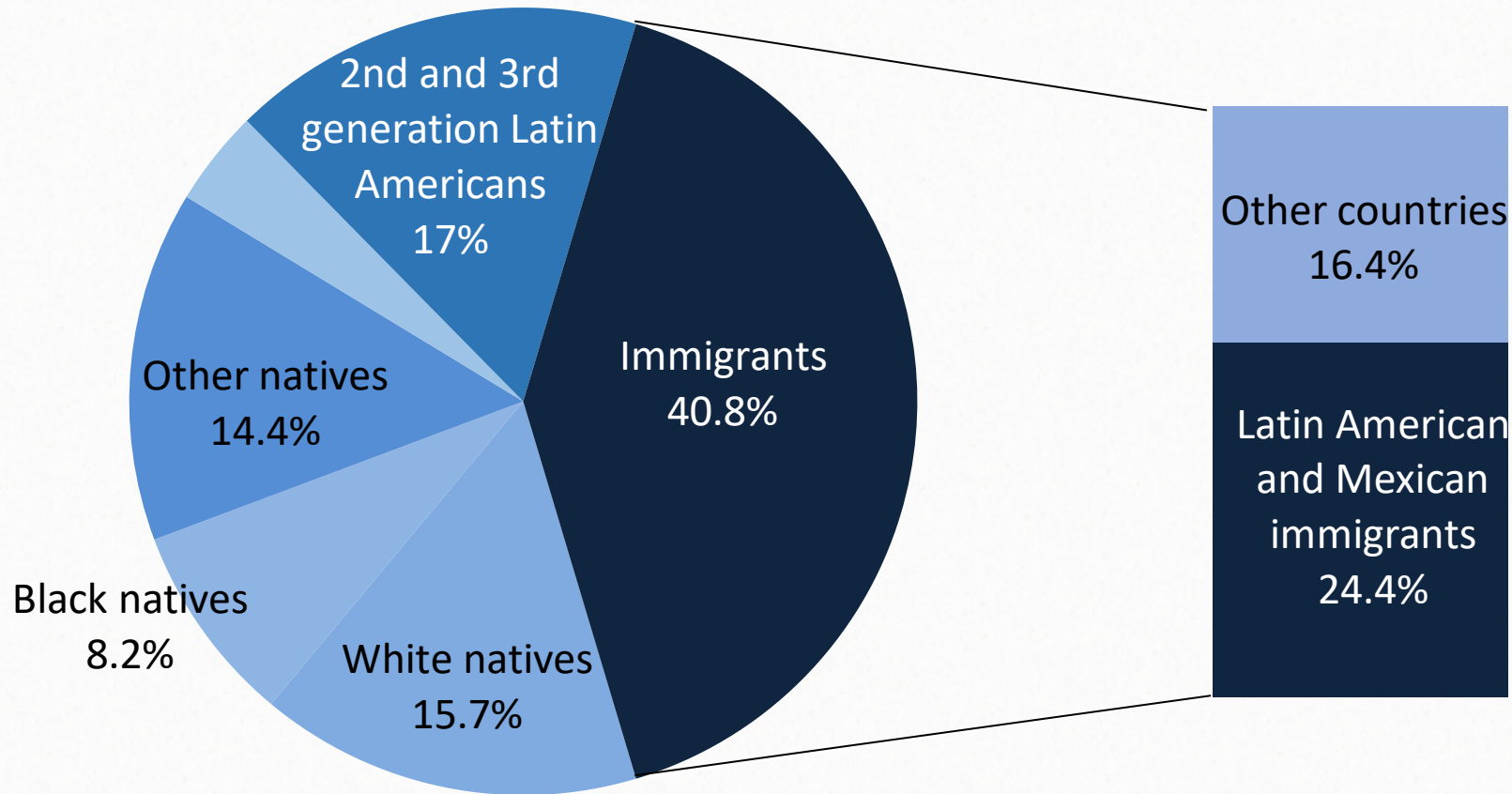


Source: SIMDE-UAZ. Elaborado con datos estimados de Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), 2010-2014 ACS pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) by James Bachmeier of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of The Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute

Irregular migration: a *State policy* or a criminal act?

- Between 2000 and 2015 the US labour market demand grew in 13 million. 5.8 million immigrants were needed to cover this demand.
- The increase of temporary migration visas was of 300 thousandth. This implies that 5.5 million permanent visas were required.
- However, the limit for yearly permanent visas established by the Homeland Security Department is 140 thousandth (~ a maximum of 2.1 million between 2000 and 2015).
- This State policy generated a deficit of 3.4 million visas in order to cover the US actual labour demand (assuming the US unemployment average rate was 5%).

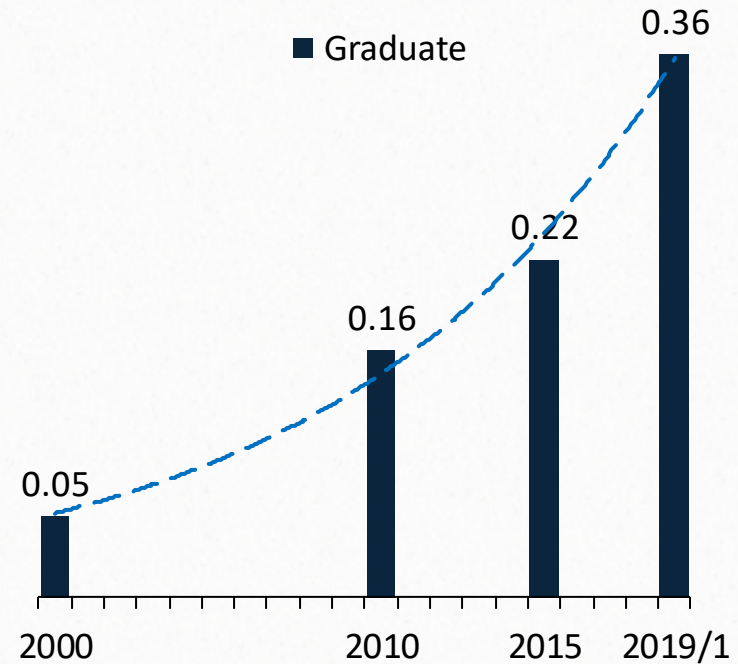
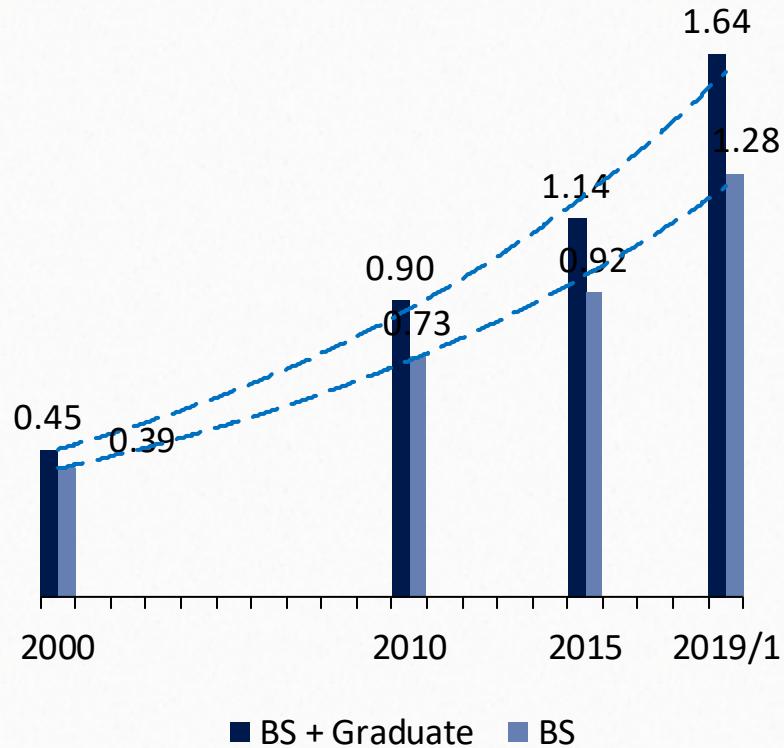
Contribution to US GDP *Growth* 2000-2010



Source: SIMDE-UAZ. Estimation based on U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product by Industry Accounts, 2000 & 2015, and U.S. Census Bureau, CPS-ASEC, March supplement, 2000 and 2015.

Mexican highly skilled migration trends

Millions



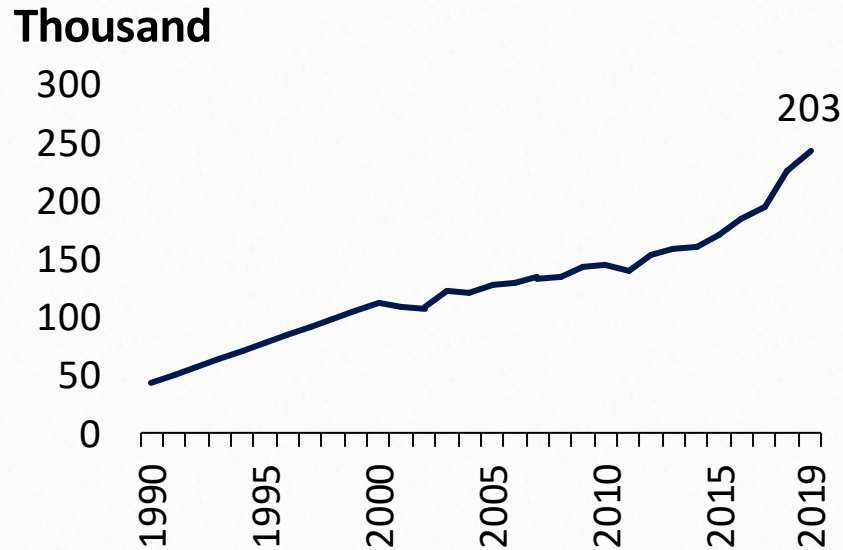
Source: SIMDE-UAZ. Own estimations based on IPUMS *International del Minnesota Population Center*, 2014 and UN-DESA, 2013; and *U.S. Bureau of the Census, Percent Samples 1990 y 2000, American Community Survey (ACS) 2010 and Current Population Survey march supplementary (CPS)*, 2015.

Mexican migrants with graduate degree living in the US

1990 Ninth place
2010 Sixth place
2013 Fifth place
2015 Third place
2019 Forth/Third place

2019: 165,994 Masters
37,169 PhDs

37,169 PhDs



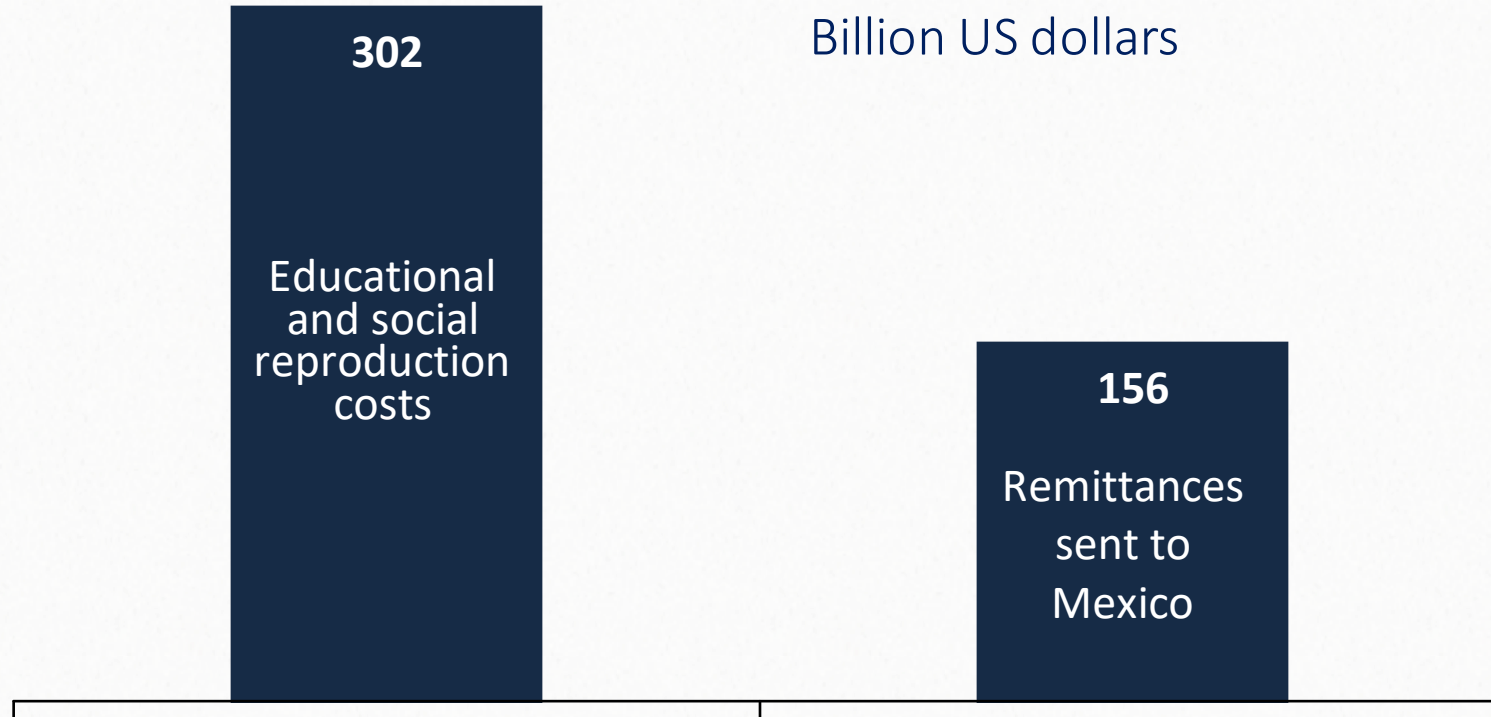
	Annual growth rate	
	Master	PhD
1990-2000	10.3	7.2
2000-2010	2.5	3.5
2010-2015	11.6	10.8
2015-2019	9.6	19.0

Source: SIMDE UAZ. Based on *U.S. Bureau of Census. Dataferret. Percent Samples 1990 y 2000*. From 2001-2017 based on *American Community Survey (ACS)*, 2018-2019 based on *Current Population Survey (CPS)*, 2018 y 2019.

US: Dynamics of generation and appropriation of patents

- 76% of patents in US universities by foreigners. Key role in cutting-age areas. *The Partnership for a New American Economy*
- The rate of patenting by foreigners in the US grew from 18% in 1963 to 54% in 2021. *Rand Corporation y US Patent and Trade Office*
- 91% of US patents were granted in 2014 to MNCs. *U.S. Patent and Trademark Office*
- 7 of the top 10 and 36 of the top 100 innovation firms are headquartered in the US. *Thomson Reuters*

Emigration cost for Mexico vs. Remittances, 1994-2008



Source: SIMDE, estimations based on CPS (1994-2008); CONEVAL , Línea de pobreza en México and Anuario de Estadísticas Educativas en México, 2008.



The global governance on migration under scrutiny

¿What is global governance?

- Institutional framework for building agreements, establishing principles and norms, and for settling controversies at a multilateral level on issues that transcend the nation-state.
- The UN has operated as a privilege space for global governance on critical topics of the international agenda, but there are also other powerful governance bodies such as the WB, IMF, WTO, WIPO that are directly controlled by imperial powers (and that are increasingly penetrating in the UN system).
- It is essentially an intergovernmental space with limited and constrained participation civil society.

Migration Governance

- IOM y UNHCR, 1950
- UN Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers, 1990
- International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994
- Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) 2003-5
- UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development 2006 y 2013
- Global Forum on Migration and Development 2007-2021
- NY Declaration on Refugees and Migrants, 2016
- Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, 2018
- International Migration Review Forum, 2022.

Participation of CS in the global governance of migration

- The global governance of migration is by definition an inter-governmental space. The participation of civil society has been recognised as both useful and necessary. Many contributions to the debate on migration and development, particularly in support of the counterhegemonic perspective have been made by the progressive wing of civil society participants. However, this possibility is structurally and institutionally limited.
- The result so far, following a balance of global migration governance made by Alexander Betts could be posited in the following terms: *‘the overall picture of global migration governance remains incoherent, poorly understood, and lacks an overarching vision’.*

The World Social Forum on Migrations (an alternative space)

- The WSF is a global process of, and by, social movements, mass organisations, civil society activists and advocates. It explores an *alternative world order*, and the building of societies and communities characterized by mutually-beneficial relationships among people and with the environment. WSF promotes and consolidates a *globalization of solidarity, collective analysis, discourse, and people's action.*”
- The WSFM was launched in 2005 in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The last three meetings were held in Ecuador, Manila, South Africa, Sao Paulo and Mexico 2018.

WSFM: Towards a global network of Sanctuary cities

- Cities that recognize migrants as persons with full human rights, regardless of their immigration status, and that promote local legislation in line with this principle.
- Cities that promote a discourse, a demystifying narrative about human mobility.
- Cities that contribute to forging a multicultural identity, and respect ethnic, gender and religious diversity.
- Cities that promote institutional solidarity based on a strategic alliance between social organizations and progressive governments.



Concluding Remarks



Concluding remarks

- Migration is a *key aspect* of contemporary capitalism.
- The dominant debate on migration and development is fraught with *myths* that distort reality under a *unilateral, de-contextualized, reductionist and biased view of human mobility*.
- Migration essentially represents a *South-North subsidy*.
- The strategic importance of migration (including highly-skilled migration) for northern countries is not recognized, nor the *superexploitation* conditions and ethnic and gender discrimination under which the majority of migrants are subjected and the significant *costs of migration* for sending countries.
- The *criminalization of migrants* is a *State Policy* promoted by destination countries.

The M&D question in the 21st century

Exportation of labour power

- First stage: low skilled, assembly plants and labour migration
- Second stage: *at full*, includes low and highly skilled labour, direct and disembodied
- New and extreme modalities of *unequal exchange*

Paradox: *growing S&T capacity in the South at the service of the North and against the South*

Civilizational crossroad

Possibilities raised by covid-19 pandemic

- *Transcend neoliberalism*
- Transit towards an *alternative modernity...*
- Could it be an *opportunity* for the *periphery*?