



2008



**Regional Report on
Arab Labour Migration**

Brain Drain or Brain Gain?

Series on Population & Development in The Arab Region

This Report:

This report is issued periodically (every 2 years) by the League of Arab States, and it aims:

- Participating in better knowledge of the Arab migration process and dimensions
- Activating dialogue between decision makers and researchers and other national and regional parties dealing with migration issues.
- Participating in crystallizing Arab vision and regional policies to maximize benefits from migration and to reduce its negative aspects within the framework of a broad partnership.

Highly skilled migration is a growing phenomenon:

- The number of highly skilled migrants in the world has doubled during the period of 1992 – 2000, as it increased from 9.4 million to 19.7 million, and from 2.5 million to 4.9 million in the European countries, also the number of Arab skilled migrants has doubled during the last decade (1990-2000)

Arab skilled migrants are important development potential of Arab regional integration: (Brain Gain)

- Considering their increasing number, and their acquired skills in the developed countries
- Considering their ability to play role of mediator role to accomplish development and to reinforce partnership for development through transferring knowledge and technology, supporting developmental initiatives and projects, and enhancing skills of youth competencies.
- Considering their unavoidable will in participation in development efforts in countries of origin within the fields of their specialization

But, Arab skilled migration is a reversed transfer of technology and knowledge "Brain Drain":

- Accumulative loss in their developing countries of origin, in terms of their cost of education, their required potential roles in the development efforts, and the absence of their role in building the new generations capacities. The percentage of skilled migrants born in the Maghreb countries out of the total similar competencies working in the Maghreb countries is around 20%.

Facts not reflected by Media:

- More than 1 million Arab born competencies are living and working in OECD countries, while it doesn't include the number of the generations born in OECD countries.
- Their number exceeds the number of Indians and Chinese.
- Around one fifth of Maghreb born competencies are working in industrialized western countries, and 40% of Arab skilled migrants are living in France
- Arab community in OECD countries has higher educational level than the native born: the percentage of highly educated persons has reached 21.6% among the Arab community and 19.9% among the native born.
- In France around one doctor out of each 10 doctors are Arab born in Arab countries, and they represent 63% of the total number of doctors residing in France and were born outside it.

“ Today, Human capital with its different skills and experiences is the most important pillar of development Scientific research and technological innovation are the main factors behind the progress in knowledge society ”

Distribution of Skilled Workers from Arab countries living in OECD countries according to nationality in year 2000 (naturalized – non naturalized)

Cities & peripheral provinces	Holders of high diplomas			Total
	Non-naturalized	naturalized	Not specific	
Maghreb countries				
Algeria	44338	162564	8445	215347
Libya	2794	5086	7661	15541
Morocco	49391	113241	44485	207117
Mauritania	1690	722	333	2745
Tunisia	15065	49465	3680	68190
Total	113278	361078	64584	508940
The Arab Mashreq countries – neighboring countries				
Egypt	35994	93392	18449	147835
Jordan	8892	14559	3189	26640
Lebanon	22755	80955	6980	110690
Palestine	1287	3764	1530	6581
Syria	12814	26643	4441	43898
Sudan	7289	5157	4620	17066
Yemen	1723	1987	2577	6287
Comoros	725	1164	12	1901
Djibouti	552	995	45	1592
Somalia	5063	6203	5250	16516
Total	97094	234879	47093	379006
Gulf Cooperation Council Countries + Iraq				
Kuwait	7144	7183	2215	16542
Qatar	635	515	315	1465
Saudi Arabia	6386	3833	2129	12348
Bahrain	872	801	1344	3017
Iraq	24318	35845	23302	83465
Oman	374	151	487	1012
United Arab of Emirates	1568	986	933	3487
Total	41297	49314	30725	121336
Grand total	251669	612311	142402	1009282

Source : www.oecd.org/database

The number of Arab born competencies living in OECD countries exceeds the one million, around half of them are from Arab Maghreb countries, and around 60% of them have the nationality of country of residence.



Percentage of skilled migrants in OECD countries of total skilled workers in origin countries (selected number of countries)

The percentage of skilled migrants from Maghreb countries reaches one fifth of the similar competencies living in countries of origin, and 6 times more than the percentage of similar Chinese or Indian competencies

Brain Drain in health sector

Number of doctors from Arab origins residing in OECD countries, and their percentage compared to their counterparts in countries of origin

Country	Doctors		Nurses
	number of workers in OECD countries	their percentage from total number of doctors in country of origin	number of workers in OECD countries
Maghreb countries			
Algeria	10793	23.4	8796
Libya	892	8.5	100
Mauritania	38	10.8	96
Morocco	6221	28	5730
Tunisia	2415	15.3	410
Total	20059	-	16132
%	46.3	-	76.1
The Arab Mashreq countries – neighboring countries			
Syria	4721	16.6	318
Sudan	778	9.3	183
Egypt	7243	15.8	1128
Yemen	248	3.5	231
Jordan	1014	8.2	363
Lebanon	4552	28.3	1400
Somalia	155	30.3	250
Comoros	20	14.8	64
Djibouti	25	18.2	—
Total %	18758	-	3838
%	42.7	-	18.8
Countries of Gulf cooperation council + Iraq			
Bahrain	74	8.4	77
Oman	23	0.6	18
Qatar	45	3.3	—
Saudi Arabia	421	1.2	151
Kuwait	495	11.5	152
Iraq	3720	18	415
United Arab of Emirates	44	0.7	11
Total	4802	-	824
%	11.1	-	4.1
Grand total	43389	-	19864
%	100.00	18.2	100.0

Source : International Migration Outlook OECD, Soperni

- The percentage of migration of doctors born in Arab countries is higher than the total percentage of skilled migrants: the percentage of doctors born in Arab countries out of the total number of doctors in Arab countries has reached 18.2%, and it is a higher than the similar percentage of other regions except Africa, while the percentage of Skilled migrants born in Arab countries compared to similar competencies living in Arab countries revolves around 12-14%
- Intensive demand on skilled workers of health sector: The number of skilled migrants working in health sector in the OECD countries is equivalent to or exceed the number of skilled workers of the health sector in all African countries
- Around half of doctors working in Australia and New Zealand are migrants born outside these countries, and this percentage has reached one third in Canada, England, Ireland, and Luxemburg
- In France where the Arab born represent half of the migrants, the increasing in the number of foreign doctors is more than 60% during 3 years (2002-2005)
- The European markets exert efforts verified to attract foreign competencies; providing incentives and utilizing specialized "chasseur de tetes" offices for bringing Southern countries competencies including competencies needed by these countries such as skilled health workers. This raises inquiries about the absence of respecting cooperation and partnership ethics, and calls urgently to adopt an "Ethical Code for bringing and employing foreign competencies"

Number of doctors from Arab origins residing in OECD countries, and their percentage compared to their counterparts in countries of origin

countries of origin	number of workers in OECD countries	their percentage from total number of doctors in country of origin	number of workers in OECD countries
Arab	43.369	10.28	18.2
India	55794	13.2	7.9
China	13.391	3.2	0.9
Pakistan	10.506	-	8.0
Africa excluding Northern African countries	30.700	7.8	22.6
Latin America	42.500	10.8	-

Developmental utilization of skilled migrants Lessons learned from experiences of developing countries

The recent study has a scientific definite goal which is: exploring experiences of some developing countries on benefiting from their competencies in development to get some lessons learned, that may help in reformulating Arab regional strategies and national policies, to maximize the participation of skilled migrants in transferring and producing knowledge, and competitive advantages that enable the Arab region from prominence on the global level.

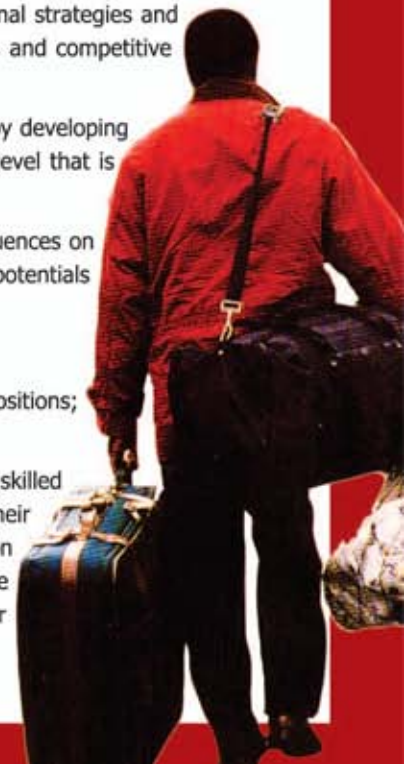
This has been encouraged and strengthened by the fact of growing numbers of Arab skilled migrants, and by developing awareness of their important potentials for development, and what they can achieve at the Arab regional level that is characterized by its important financial savings.

The study is driven from a very basic idea, which implies that: as much as the globalization and its consequences on knowledge and ICT has intensified its attraction of competencies towards the developed countries, it offered potentials and possible opportunities to positively benefiting from skilled migrants

This idea is supported by 2 important considerations:

First: competencies that emigrated have gained knowledge, experiences, and professional and managerial positions; this may not be possible if they remained within their countries.

Second: the rapid changes in communication and information technology and its stunning means; have freed skilled migrants from linking their contributions in developing their societies with their physical residence in their countries of origin. Communication technology has offered them several alternatives for this contribution without affecting their ambitious and what they gained from their professional and technical and administrative positions outside their country of citizenship, and enabled many developing countries from benefiting from their skilled migrants.



Some Promising Arab Initiatives

- The International Forum of Skilled Moroccan abroad (**FINCOME programme**), was established by the Moroccan government, and it aims to:
 - Carry out intensified activities to link between Moroccan skilled migrants and similar competencies in Morocco
 - Establish a database to facilitate cooperation with competencies and investing their skills in Morocco
 - Enhance scientific research for development and transferring and settling of the new technologies
- "**Connaissance et développement**" association, established in 1999, and aims to:
 - Establish developmental projects, especially micro- credit and medium projects, within the framework of partnership between skilled migrants and their counterparts or businessmen in Morocco
 - Establish networks for enhancing innovative micro-credit and grand projects
 - Cooperate with scientific research institutions in Morocco to transfer knowledge and new technologies
- The UNDP programme for transferring knowledge through skilled migrants – **TOKTEN** UNDP was implemented in many Arab countries in cooperation with governmental agencies and it succeeded in achieving many gains, like:
 - Establishing a database for national skilled migrants, and enabling governmental agencies from drawing on their expertise
 - Covering the travel costs and participation of the desired experts in developmental projects for short-run periods
 - The case of Palestine for instance: the programme has contributed in bringing 220 Palestinian expert migrants, among their achievements is the establishment of a renal treatment unit in West Bank, developing universities, establishing Gaza international airport, etc.....
- **Palestinian network "PALESTA"**:

It includes more than 1200 skilled Palestinians in Diaspora, and aims to:

 - Share information on development indicators, policies and programmes in the Diaspora.
 - Engaging Diaspora competencies in discussing issues of development and scientific research through electronic means, and activating dialogue and exchange with their counterparts in Palestine.
 - Fostering the contributions of Diaspora competencies in crystallizing new promising projects

Growing roles of networks and organizations of Arab Diaspora

- The number of skilled migrants' organizations and networks existing in OECD countries has increased during the recent years.
- These networks carry out several roles: exchanging, discussing, cooperating between Diaspora competencies and their similar counterparts in countries of origin, and seeking the transfer of knowledge and the new technologies, and enhancing partnership for development between countries of origin and receiving countries....
- Some examples are:
www.atuge.org/ www.techwadi.org/ www.astar.org

شبكة الكفاءات العربية العاملة في سبيلكون قاتي (مايزيد عن 2000 عضو)

Arab Medical Union in Europe (over 2000 members)



اتحاد الأطباء العرب في أوروبا (مايزيد عن 3000 عضو)

Arab Medical Union in Europe (over 2000 members)



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This report is issued by Population policies and migration department – League of Arab States supported by the United Nations Population Fund

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