

## WORK ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

### *International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP)*

#### A. BACKGROUND AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

As the international professional association of demographers, the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) works to advance understanding of international population trends and their determinants and consequences. In recent years, international migration flows have increased in scale and now involve many countries as senders and receivers of migrants. Most international migrants are legally admitted by receiving countries for reasons considered in the national interest —family reunification, permanent settlement, temporary work, skills and capacity, humanitarian, refugee, study and regional and international diplomacy, among others. Some migrants, however, arrive without documents or overstay their visas and countries seek guidance on how to deal with these migrants while protecting both the rights of their citizens and the migrants.

##### *1. Immigrant integration in developed countries*

The IUSSP Scientific Panel on the Integration of Migrants in collaboration with the Quebec Inter-University Centre for Social Statistics (QICSS) and the Institut national d'études démographiques (INED), with financial support from INED and the Department of Population and Migration (DPM) of the French Ministry of Social Affairs held a Seminar on Indicators of Integration in Social Statistics in Montreal, Canada, from 10 to 11 December 2007, to examine country practices toward integration.

Most scientific research on the integration of migrants makes extensive use of quantitative data, but few studies offer a critical assessment of the significance and the limitations of the indicators that are used. Unemployment rates, segregation indices, intermarriage rates, social networks, settlement patterns, linguistic maintenance or shift, discrepancies in health status, crime rates and cultural preferences are regularly used as benchmarks for assessing integration or assimilation processes. Typically countries gather data on these indicators through surveys and censuses but there is no agreement across countries in how to define and measure these concepts. Although integration statistics are vital for devising and

the discrepancy between the policy perspective,

social sciences perspective, which tends to be critical and relatively indicators, which are often unsophisticated and disconnected from s used to produce them. Participants stressed several topics that integration indicators, including:

tions, migrants face different structural and policy conditions. studies of integration are needed that look systematically at different d how differential practices affect migrant outcomes;

ally speaking, spatial indicators of integration are needed since es vary depending on where they settle;



households. The IUSSP expects 12 to 14 sessions to be held on these topics with four invited experts presenting papers in each of these sessions. In addition, the IUSSP will host a debate at the conference on the pros and cons of international migration and the Moroccan National Organizing Committee is preparing several sessions on international migration to, from, and within the Arab region.

### *3. Migration and co-development*

In 2006, the IUSSP launched a new initiative on international migration and co-development. In background proceedings for the United Nations High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and in a number of other events sponsored by international, regional and national organizations, the argument has been advanced that international migration can be mutually beneficial to both sending and receiving countries. The United Nations Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly in 2006 that “There is an emerging consensus that countries can cooperate to create triple wins, for migrants, for their countries of origin and for the societies that receive them” (United Nations, 2006, p. 5). While there is room for optimism regarding the positive impacts of international migration on sending and receiving countries, the empirical and theoretical basis for these contentions is weak.

The IUSSP has carried out work that sheds light on migration and co-development. In the 1980s, the IUSSP conducted an in-depth review of international migration in different world regions, which concluded that international migration is not a random process that stems from differentials between

