



Too Many Foreigners?
Crises and their Impact on Migration Flow
Book Presentation cum Panel Discussion

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Book Presentation

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First of all I would like to thank ASEF and its new Executive Director Ambassador Michel Filhol for the preparation of this presentation of the book *Perspectives on Migration Flows in Asia and Europe*; to the Spanish Ambassador, Federico Palomera, to Ambassador Barry Desker, my dean at the RSIS, to the distinguished discussants who kindly agreed to participate in the presentation of the book, other distinguished colleagues and friends who are present at this event and everyone attending this presentation.

The book is the result of a program sponsored by ASEF and other institutions, such as UNISCI, Complutense University in Madrid, and Korea Foundation who help organize our first meeting of Asian and European specialists in Seoul.

The book is the third in a series that the [ASEM Education Hub Thematic Network on Human Security](#) have prepared and published since 2007. I think this group of specialists and universities have fulfilled the objectives and goals that were set by ASEF in 2006, despite the economic difficulties of recent years.

The first program was launched in 2007 and we studied and discussed the question of energy security and the different visions from Asia and Europe. The [book was published in 2008](#).

The second program, launched in 2008, dealt with the complex question of Global Warming and climate change. This was a very difficult program, given the different approaches and many disciplines to be combined and many specialists involved. I confess that it was a difficult and time-consuming program. In the end, in record time, we published the book entitled [Global Warming and Climate Change, Prospects and Policies in Asia and Europe](#)—you can see the sample copy at the registration desk.

And in 2009 the third program, this time on Migration, was developed and took shape, but with many financial problems to be solved. Finding sponsors, given the economic crisis, was time consuming. The fourth program on food security is now in its preliminaries.

The present book entitled [Perspectives on Migration Flows in Asia and Europe](#) collects only the contributions of 15 specialists from the around thirty professors invited. The review process has been quite demanding and we have published the book, avoiding loss of consistency and unity. As in previous books the approach is multidisciplinary: Economists, Sociologists, Political Science specialists, Anthropologists, and Security specialists add their input and contribution to this book.

From a theoretical standpoint, the book does not invoke any general theory of migration. Migration was for many years a “domaine reserve” for the sociologists. As I said, we expanded and broadened the field of vision to present the complexity of this topic, and included the transformation of the international system in the analysis.

It is a challenge to identify the unresolved common causes that affect the various migration processes in states with different degrees of political, economic, social and cultural differences and also the impact of environmental issues in migration processes in different geographical areas.

The interrelation among the different theories and approaches on MIGRATION is also a pending issue. An overarching theory does not exist. Some theoretical approaches and theories developed by sociologists and economists are useful, albeit fragmentary and linked to specific contexts. This is the case of the neo-classical economics, the new economics of migration, the world system theory, the dual labour market theory, the network theory, the institutional theory, the cost-benefit approach, the gravity approach, the national identity approach, domestic policy models, the realist approach, the neoliberal institutionalism, or the theory of social choice and so on...

Each theory and approach tends to explain a different aspect of migration processes. They do not provide a general explanation.

In our view, a global and coherent theory implies the analysis of complex and multi-level drivers of migration processes linking social, cultural, political, economic and environmental trends with the present and future context or structure of the international and economic system and the technological advances that condition and shape the migration processes.

But a multi-level analysis implies connecting coherent processes at one level of aggregation to processes at other levels of aggregation, anchored in a unifying logical framework rather than based on loosely theoretical frameworks as many authors do for dealing with migratory processes.

The book emphasises from the beginning that at the global level there are many unknowns in the structure of the future international system and its transformation and thus it is premature to make bold assertions regarding the future migration processes.

For instance:

- the possible restrictions and regulations to the market economy,
- the limits in the globalization processes and its economic inclusion,
- the implications of an increasingly multipolar global system,
- the consequences of the decreasing importance of the Western countries in the conformation of the international system,
- the repercussions of the US, European and Asian changes in their economic system,
- or the progress in the economic development of different regions.

We discussed all of these questions in the steering committee. At the end of a brainstorm, we decided to explain the possible impact of the main “push and pull” migration drivers, selected for their relevant interest or exceptionality in the principal geographical areas. The main question to be solved that still divides researchers and politicians is the following: **Can migration flows be stopped? Do Governments have the option to shut the doors to migration flows in the short medium term?**

The answer is negative. Stopping the flows in the short medium term is fast becoming and unattainable goal for Asian and European States.

The main drivers selected for this explanation are the following:

- **Migration and Ageing Populations**
- **The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Migration Flows**
- **Environmentally Induced Migration**
- **Political Refugees**

A final section of the book discusses the developments made in the European Union for the control of migration flows and their integration. This last aspect is largely a pending task of the regional groups that have been formed in Asia and it is a factor of imitation. However, there are considerable differences especially in the integration processes that are still in their infancy in Asia.

Regarding integration the book emphasizes its importance. In the European case, the impact of migration flows, in particular massive flows from Muslim countries, on the multicultural models initially adopted by some countries has had devastating consequences: multicultural models and approaches have disappeared in Europe in the last decade given their political and social implications.

The book presents some general conclusions and I think that readers can find some useful information in order to understand this important domestic and international issue, affecting the security of the “people on the move” and increasingly securitized by the states.

Thank you very much for your attention.