

Chapter 3

Latin America and the Caribbean: Diaspora profile

This chapter looks at recent migration flows and diasporas from Latin American and Caribbean countries to the OECD area and a selected member of non-OECD destinations. The diaspora of the region living in OECD countries grew by 50% in ten years to reach 15.4 million in 2010/11. Almost all countries in the region saw their diasporas grow during the first decade of the 2000s. However, as of the middle of the 2000s, growth of the emigrant population from Latin America and the Caribbean stalled. The number of migrants increased strongly in Europe, going from 1.8 million to 3.8 million (mainly in Spain) and less strongly in North America, where there were 11 million migrants from the region in 2010/11 versus 8.3 million in 2000/01. The economic crisis interrupted the progress emigrants had made in the labour market in the first half of the 2000s.

This chapter also contains one regional note and 22 country notes for Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Key findings

- In 2010/11, there were 15.4 million emigrants from the region in the OECD area, an increase by more than 5 million persons over the last decade. Concurrently, the number of intra-regional migrants (excluding Chile and Mexico) increased at the same pace, reaching 2.5 million individuals in 2010/11.
- The size of the diaspora increased in almost every country in the region between 2000/01 and 2010/11, with the most visible change in countries with previously small diasporas, notably Paraguay and Bolivia, whose diasporas have more than tripled in ten years.
- Recent changes in the size of Latin American diasporas differ according to their geographic destination. The number of migrants increased strongly in Europe, from 1.8 million to 3.8 million (especially in Spain where the number of individuals increased from 0.7 million to 1.9 million) and more moderately in North America, with 11 million emigrants in 2010/11 compared to 8.3 million in 2000/01. The Latin American diaspora represents 4.9% of the resident population of Spain and 4.2% of the total population of the United States.
- While only one member of the diaspora in four was highly educated in 2010/11, i.e. 3.8 million emigrants from the region, this nevertheless represents a significant increase of 4 percentage points in the share of highly educated persons among all migrants from the region or 1.7 million individuals in absolute terms, compared to 2000/01. With an emigration rate of the highly skilled of 8%, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean has moved ahead of the Middle East and North Africa (6%) to become the region of origin with the highest emigration rate of highly educated persons behind Sub-Saharan Africa (13%).
- The economic crisis that hit hard some of the main destinations of migrants from the region interrupted the progress migrants had made in the labour market in the first half of the 2000s. The unemployment rate of migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean rose by 6 percentage points between 2005/06 and 2010/11 to 14%. Their participation rate stagnated and their employment rate declined by 4 percentage points between 2005/06 and 2010/11. Low-educated migrants were the most affected: their unemployment rose from 11% in 2005/06 to 20% in 2010/11.

1. Regional context

Latin American and Caribbean countries* have enjoyed a decade of economic growth that is exceptional in the region's recent history. Between 2000 and 2013, GDP per capita rose from USD 6 900 to USD 11 900; in 2013, it grew by 2.7%. Growth then hit a low in 2014, with a more visible slowdown in the Southern Cone. The percentage of the population living on less than USD 2 a day fell from 13.2% in 2000 to 6.6% in 2013. Although the

* For this purpose of this publication, Mexico and Chile are included in the chapter on OECD countries and are hence excluded from all analyses referring to the region of Latin America and the Caribbean.

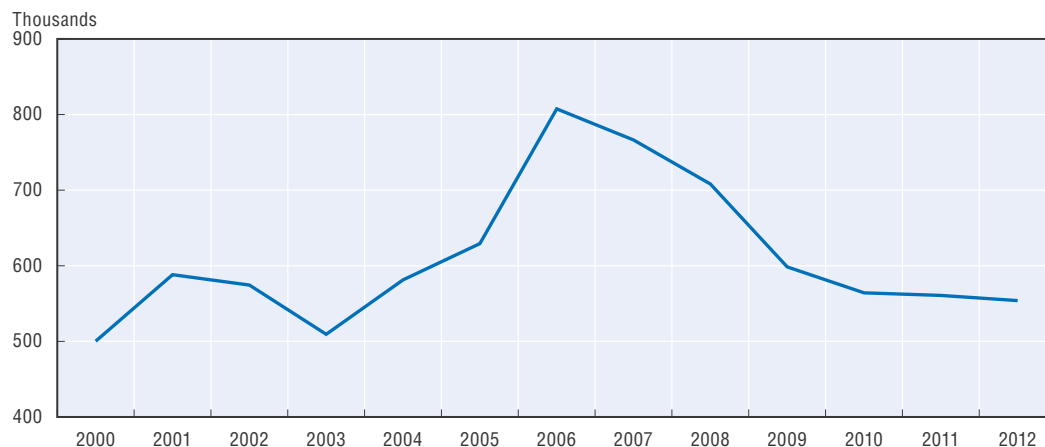
population of the region rose from 406 million to 475 million between 2000 and 2013, the rate of population growth slowed to around 1.0% per year in 2013, close to the growth rate in Asia (1.2%). Despite the increase in the population, the distribution of resources has improved (Renos et al., 2015).

In terms of social, demographic and economic indicators, the decade was very favourable for the region, in contrast to previous periods and notably the “lost decade” of the 1980s. Rather than curbing the migration trend, the region’s improved indicators are transforming the conditions of migration and the populations involved. These favourable conditions are also reshaping the spatial orientation of migration flows, with an increase in migration within the region of Latin America and the Caribbean.


2. Migrant flows and stocks

Every year, somewhere between 500 000 and 600 000 migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean settle in OECD countries (Figure 3.1), i.e. an annual emigration of two inhabitants per thousand. After peaking at over 700 000 migrants in 2006 and 2007, migrant flows fell back to their levels at the start of the decade when the effects of the economic crisis were first felt in OECD countries, especially in Spain.

Figure 3.1. **Inflows of foreigners from Latin America and the Caribbean in OECD countries, 2000-12**



Source: OECD Database on International Migration.

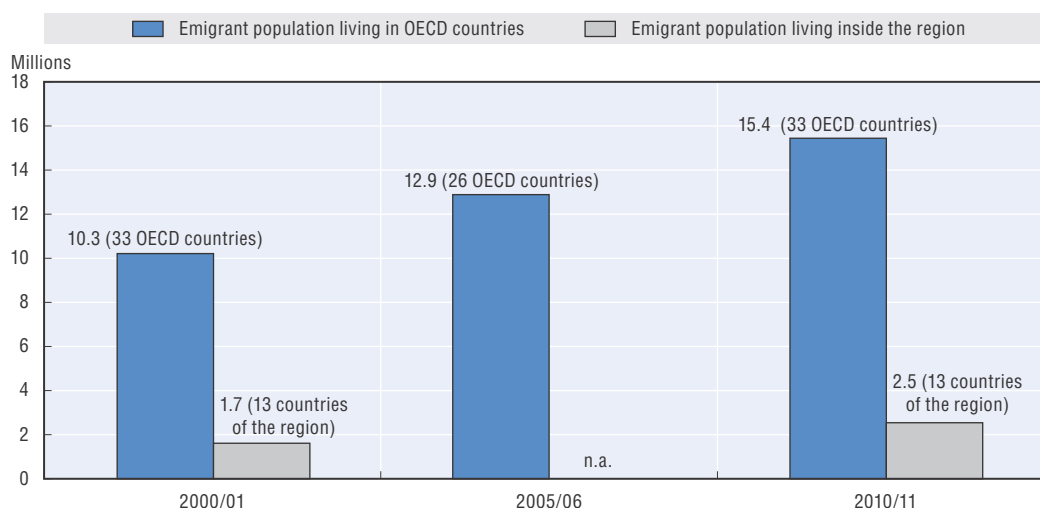
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Between 2000 and 2012, there was relatively little increase in the number of migrants from the region arriving in OECD countries, barely 10%, whereas flows from other regions to OECD countries in 2012 were at least 31% higher than in 2000, and almost doubled for non-OECD European countries and Central Asia. Nevertheless, arrivals from Latin America and the Caribbean in 2012 continued to outstrip arrivals from the Middle East and North Africa and from Sub-Saharan Africa. Departures towards the OECD area as a proportion of the population of the region, in 2012 almost returned to its 2000 level (1.6 compared to 1.8 inhabitants per thousand).

In total, there were 18 million migrants (of all ages) from the region in OECD countries and about 51 non-OECD destinations in 2010/11. 15.5 million (13.5 million if only persons aged 15 and above are considered) or 86% of all, were living in OECD countries. The emigration


rate from the region to the OECD doubled from 1.7% in 2000/01 to 2.5% in 2010/11. Over the period, the diaspora living in OECD countries gained 50%, as did also the emigrant population living inside the region of Latin America and the Caribbean (Figure 3.2). The number of migrants from the region in OECD countries increased by at least 26% in the first half of the decade and grew more slowly in the second half of the decade (less than 19%). Moreover, Latin America and the Caribbean is the region where the proportion of recent emigrants (those who have been in the destination country for five years or less) in the diaspora fell the most between 2005/06 and 2010/11, from 24% to 14%. As of the middle of the 2000s, growth of the emigrant population from Latin America and the Caribbean living in OECD countries stalled, while diasporas from all the other regions of origin continued to increase.

Figure 3.2. **Emigrant population from Latin America or the Caribbean living in the OECD or inside the region, 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2010/11**



Note: The population refers to persons aged 15 and over.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD and non-OECD countries (DIOC-E) 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2010/11.

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This specific trend for the region is attributable to the geographic concentration of Latin American and Caribbean migrants in the United States and the Iberian Peninsula, which felt the full effects of the economic crisis in the second half of the decade, with unemployment rife among migrants who had recently settled in Europe. The focus of migration activities then returned to Latin America, with both an increase in the number of returning emigrants as well as an increase in intra-regional movements (Bengochea et al., 2015).

The proportion of the population that lives abroad but in the same region rose from 0.60% in 2000/01 to 0.75% in 2010/11. Latin American migration, when it is not towards the OECD area, is mainly intra-regional. Population movements in the region are facilitated by four international agreements: the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Andean Community (CAN), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Integration System (SICA).

3. The countries concerned


Countries of origin

Peru, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Cuba were, on their own, responsible for over half of the new migrants with one of the region's 23 nationalities who settled in OECD countries in 2012 (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. **Inflows of foreigners into OECD countries and five main countries of citizenship, 2000-12**

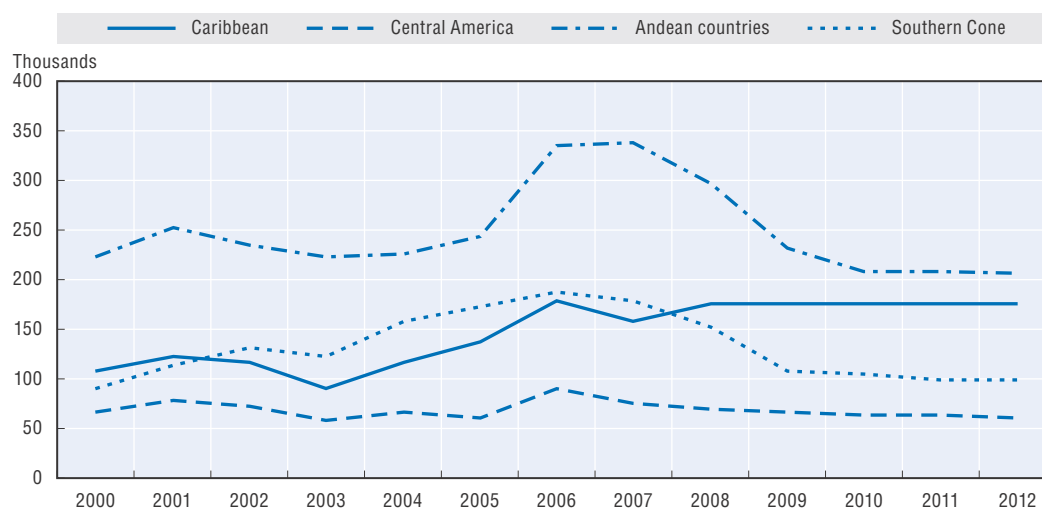
	Thousands						
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Peru	30	39	59	83	98	71	69
Brazil	72	65	90	111	87	63	66
Colombia	68	61	49	91	88	61	65
Dominican Republic	26	30	43	55	52	66	63
Cuba	29	37	30	58	64	45	46
Other countries	263	291	298	393	306	248	231
Total	488	558	569	791	695	554	540

Source: OECD Database on International Migration.


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The Southern Cone (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) represents under a fifth of migrant flows from the region to the OECD area (Figure 3.3). There was a surge in emigration from Argentina and Uruguay at the start of the decade, mainly in the wake of the economic crisis at the end of the 1990s, before it diminished significantly as the economy recovered. In 2012, Andean Community countries were the main source of migration towards the OECD area, with 38% of the region's total. Migrants settling in the OECD area from the Caribbean in 2012 were mainly from, in descending order of importance, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica. Only 11% of migrants from the region came from Central America in 2012, mostly from El Salvador and Honduras.

Figure 3.3. **Inflows of foreigners from Latin America and the Caribbean to the OECD, 2000-12**



Source: OECD Database on International Migration.

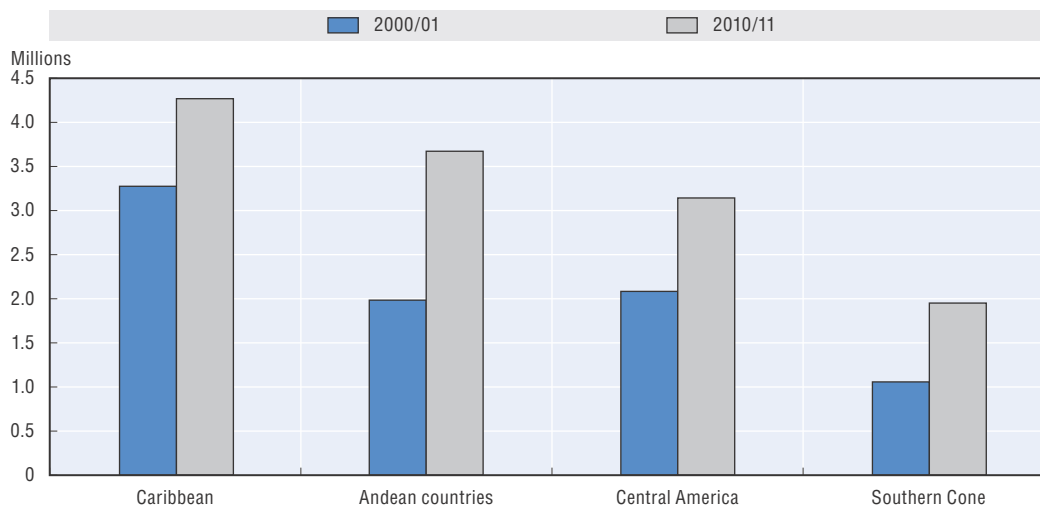
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Migration to the OECD area from the Latin American continent peaked mid-decade before returning to its 2000 level in the end of the decade, whereas there was a steady increase in migration from the Caribbean over the same period (Figure 3.3). This is partially due to the fact that most migrant flows from the Caribbean islands are towards North America, where the recovery kicked in sooner. It can also be explained in part by some specific migratory waves caused by the earthquake in Haiti, improved relations between the United States and Cuba, and the delicate economic situation in Jamaica (van Selm, 2015; and Mejia, 2015).

In 2010/11, the largest diasporas from the region in the OECD area, each with over 800 000 expatriates, were: El Salvador, Cuba, Colombia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Ecuador and Peru. The first six were already in the list of the countries in the region with the largest diasporas in 2000/01 (with over 500 000 emigrants). Peru owes its place in the top seven largest Latin American diasporas to the fact that its diaspora almost doubled in ten years.

There were different trends within the emigration of the different sub-regions between 2000/01 and 2010/11. Whereas the Caribbean and Central American diasporas increased by 31% and 50% respectively over the period, the diasporas of Southern Cone and Andean countries grew by 85% starting from a lower level in 2000/01 in comparison with the other sub-regions (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4. **Emigrant population born in the region and living in the OECD by sub-region of the country of birth, 2000/01-2010/11**



Note: The population refers to persons aged 15 and over.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (DIOC) 2000/01 and 2010/11.

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With the exception of Barbados, the diasporas of all the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean increased, by an average of 77% between 2000/01 and 2010/11 but in very variable proportions. Countries with previously modest migration levels, such as Paraguay, Bolivia and Uruguay, saw their emigrant populations more than double in ten years, whereas the more traditional countries of origin like Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Panama saw their populations in OECD countries rise by less than 30% over the same period.

The Caribbean had, and still has, the highest emigration rate, as nearly a fifth of the native-born population (19%) lives in an OECD country. Countries with the highest emigration rates in the Caribbean are Jamaica (32%), Barbados (27%) and Trinidad and Tobago (23%).

Emigration rates are very uneven among countries in Central America. Some countries can rival the rates in the Caribbean (El Salvador, 23% and Belize, 20%) while others are below the average for the entire region (Nicaragua, 7%, Panama, 6% and Costa Rica, 3%).

South America is marked by much lower emigration rates – 4% for the Andean countries in 2010/11, and 3% for the Southern Cone – even if they increased considerably over the decade, unlike in Central America and the Caribbean. Brazil still has the lowest emigration rate, with less than 1% of the population living in an OECD country.

Countries of destination

The geographic locations of the Latin American diaspora in the OECD area evolved rapidly over the decade 2000/01-2010/11. Its presence grew considerably in Europe, and especially Spain, which was home to 1.9 million individuals born in Latin America or the Caribbean in 2010/11, compared to 700 000 in 2000/01. As a result, in 2010/11 they represented 4.9% of the resident population of Spain compared to only 2.0% ten years earlier. Despite the steep increase in the number of migrants in Spain, the share of the Latin American diaspora in the total number of immigrants in the country fell from 35% in 2000/01 to 29% in 2010/11. Even though their numbers are smaller than in Spain, the emigrant populations from the region nevertheless still exceed 300 000 in Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In smaller destinations such as France, Austria and Ireland, their number more than tripled in ten years.

In the United States, the region's diaspora increased by 2.6 million or a third, reaching 10.4 million emigrants in 2010/11, and representing 4.2% of the total resident population. The 687 000 emigrants living in Canada also saw their diaspora swell by 31%. In 2010/11, Chile and Mexico were eighth and eleventh in the ranking of destination countries for emigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2010/11, Chile hosted 175 000 emigrants from the region, and Mexico 119 000, reflecting respective increases of 58% and 72%.

Despite the 2.5-fold increase in the size of the Latin American diaspora based in European OECD countries between 2000/01 and 2010/11, the 11 million immigrants in the United States and Canada mean that they remain far ahead of the European OECD countries (3.8 million). Attractive conditions partially explain the shift of flows towards European countries, which may also be attributable to a reconsideration of traditional bi-directional migration systems (Wihtol de Wenden, 2012).

These destination countries are also countries of origin for immigrants to the region. Immigrants born in Spain represent over 5% of all foreign-born individuals in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay. The highest proportion of Spanish-born migrants in the total immigrant population is found in Uruguay (17%). The two other main OECD countries of origin for immigrants in the region are the United States and Italy. Of these immigrants, some were born in the OECD area from immigrant households originally from Latin America and the Caribbean. Others, born in the south of Europe (Spain, Portugal and Italy), recently migrated to other Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking countries which were less affected by the crisis which started in 2007-08. Migrants originally from the same region also returned home (OAS/OECD, 2015). There are differences in the levels of

education of these two migrant categories, as best exemplified in Brazil: emigrants from the country have a relatively low level of education whereas immigrants settled in Brazil are frequently graduates of higher education, especially when they were born in an OECD country (Portugal, 14%, Spain, 25%, Italy and the United States, 29%).

Intra-regional migration


The crisis which has particularly affected the diaspora in European countries has undoubtedly had an impact on recent migration trends towards the region of Latin America and the Caribbean. In total, 2 million migrants aged 15 and above (or 2.5 million if persons of all ages are considered) from Latin America and the Caribbean were living in another country in the region in 2010/11, up from 1.7 million in 2000/01. One country stands out as a magnet destination for migrants: Argentina, which in 2010/11 hosted 911 000 migrants (aged 15 and above) from other countries in the region, three and a half times as many migrants as the next country in the list, Costa Rica (Table 3.2). Two-thirds of immigrants in Argentina were born in another country in the region, while this share reached 90% in Costa Rica, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic. In contrast, Brazil hosted 484 000 migrants aged 15 and above, the vast majority (76%) born outside the region.

Table 3.2. Intra-regional migrants, by country of destination and main countries of origin, 2010/11

Country of residence	Countries of destination			Country of birth	Countries of origin		
	Number of intra-regional migrants	Growth between 2000/01 and 2010/11	Share of intra-regional migrants out of all migrants in the country		Number of intra-regional migrants	Share of all intra-regional migrants	Share of all migrants from the country
Argentina	911 350	40%	66%	Paraguay	417 830	21%	84%
Costa Rica	247 650	59%	90%	Bolivia	276 030	14%	53%
Dominican Republic	210 050	334%	89%	Nicaragua	214 100	11%	46%
Paraguay	115 640	15%	90%	Haiti	196 230	10%	24%
Brazil	115 140	23%	24%	Peru	149 210	8%	17%
Puerto Rico	92 900	12%	37%	Colombia	136 200	7%	12%
Ecuador	88 830	86%	77%	Uruguay	131 480	7%	46%
Panama	70 710	81%	63%	Brazil	110 450	6%	11%
Colombia	33 850	37%	57%	Argentina	103 500	5%	15%
Uruguay	28 370	-7%	57%	Dominican Republic	63 610	3%	7%
Trinidad and Tobago	26 440	2%	79%	Cuba	40 430	2%	3%
Peru	19 530	0%	38%	Venezuela	37 630	2%	9%
El Salvador	16 800	-2%	79%	Ecuador	17 010	1%	2%
Nicaragua	8 740	-6%	71%	Honduras	14 840	1%	3%

Note: The population refers to persons aged 15 and over.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD and non-OECD Countries (DIOC-E) 2000/01 and 2010/11.

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Paraguay is the top country of origin when it comes to intra-regional migration. The 418 000 migrants from Paraguay living in other countries of the region represent 82% of all migrants from the country living in OECD and non-OECD countries covered in this publication and 21% of all intra-regional migrants. Close to half of the diasporas of Bolivia, Nicaragua and Uruguay live within the region (276 000, 214 000 and 131 000 persons respectively). Other large diasporas within the region, are those of Haiti (196 000 persons), Peru (149 000) and Colombia (136 000).

4. The profile of emigrant populations

In 2010/11, the diasporas from Latin America and the Caribbean were relatively older and better educated than in 2000/01. There was also a slight overrepresentation of women among emigrants.

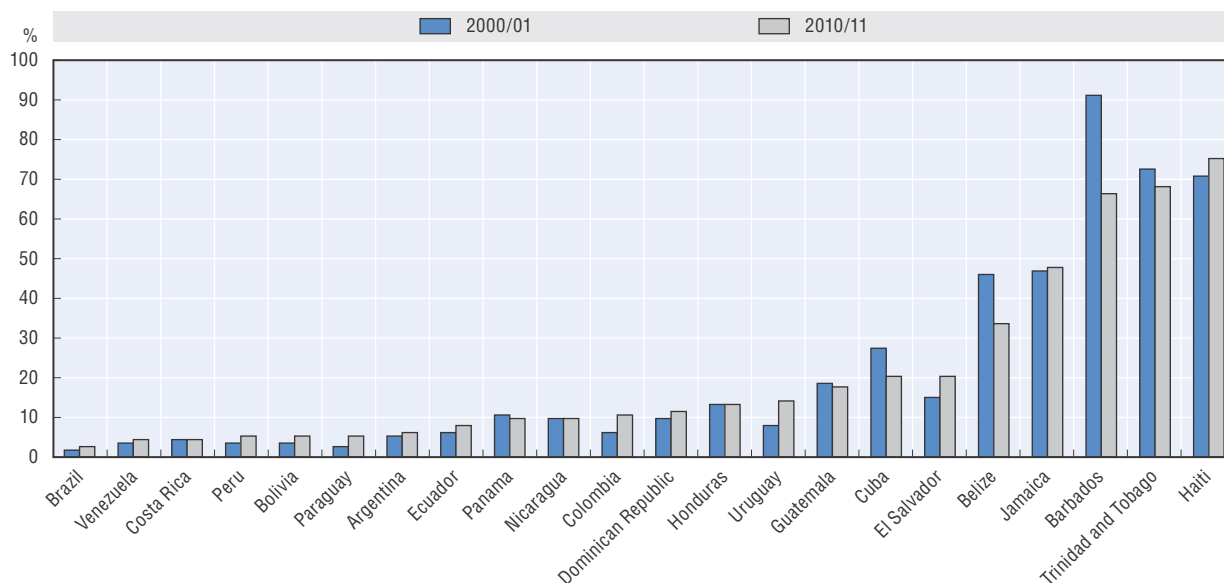
Between 2000/01 and 2010/11, the size of the diaspora of prime-age (25-64) from Latin America and the Caribbean living in OECD countries increased by 4 million individuals to 11.7 million. Over the same period, the share of migrants from the region in the 15-25 age group dropped by 2 percentage points whereas the shares of those aged 25-64 years old and those 65 and above increased. The diasporas with the highest proportion of older individuals were those of Barbados, Cuba, Jamaica and Panama. Between 2000/01 and 2010/11, the diasporas of Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua and Salvador aged more than the others, with an increase in the proportion of emigrants over 65 and a decline in the number of emigrants in the 15-24 age group. The size of the 15-24 age group fell in the diasporas of every country in the region between 2000/01 and 2010/11, with the exception of Paraguay, Nicaragua and Cuba. In 2010/11, the diasporas of Guatemala, Paraguay, Ecuador and Honduras were particularly young, with one migrant in six in the 15-24 age group.

Like the other regions of the world, the level of education of emigrant populations from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean increased between 2000/01 and 2010/11, with a relative reduction – but an absolute increase – in the number of low-educated migrants and a relative and absolute increase in the number of highly educated emigrants. There were 3.8 million highly educated emigrants in 2010/11, representing one emigrant in four, compared to 2 million in 2000/01. In 2010/11, the proportion of low-educated emigrants from the region was 34%, which is close to the average for the other regions. The proportion of highly educated migrants has risen sharply to 25% (by 4 percentage points) but remained below the 31% average for all other regions in 2010/11. However, in terms of the share of highly educated individuals in the countries of origin that this represents (i.e. the emigration rate of the highly educated), the figure in Latin America and the Caribbean (8%) is particularly high in comparison with other countries and regions.

The emigration rates of highly educated individuals vary between the countries in the region. They are highest in countries in the Caribbean (75% for Haiti, 68% for Trinidad and Tobago, 66% for Barbados, 48% for Jamaica) but low – albeit increasing, especially in Paraguay – in the Southern Cone countries (with the exception of Uruguay), in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Peru and Bolivia (Figure 3.5).


The emigrant population of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean has the highest proportion of women compared to other regions. The proportion of highly educated persons is greater among female emigrants (26%) than male emigrants (23%). This was already the case in 2000/01 and the trend became clearer over the decade, with the proportion of highly educated women increasing by 5 percentage points compared to a 3 percentage point increase among the men. The proportion of the highly educated among female emigrants increased in all countries between 2000/01 and 2010/11, with the exception of Paraguay, Bolivia and Uruguay. Female emigrants from Jamaica and Honduras have a particularly high level of education compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 3.5. **Emigration rates to the OECD area of the highly educated, by country of birth, 2000/01 and 2010/11**



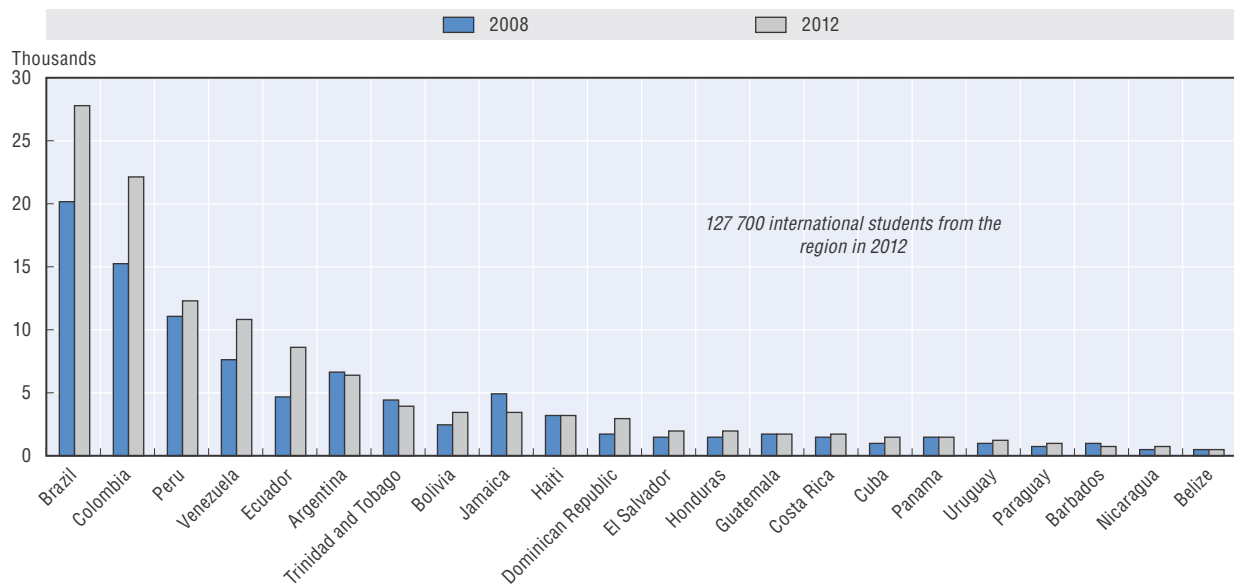
Note: The population refers to persons aged 15 and over.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (DIOC) 2000/01 and 2010/11.

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There are proportionally more women than men among migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean in OECD destinations (54%) than among intra-regional migrants (52%). Intra-regional migrants are primarily low-educated. More than two-thirds of the 2 million adult intra-regional migrants have low levels of education (1.3 million), while an additional 393 000 (or 20%) have a medium level of education. Only 11% of all intra-regional migrants have higher education, versus 27% of migrants from the region living in OECD countries. However, important differences exist among migrant populations in different destinations within the region. More than half of all intra-regional migrants in Peru have higher education, while this share is much lower in most other countries in the region. In Argentina, the share of highly educated persons among intra-regional migrants is only 4%, while that of the low-educated is 77%. In Brazil and Colombia in contrast, one in four intra-regional migrants has a high level of education.

Students make up an important share of the diaspora of highly educated individuals in OECD countries. In 2004, there were 76 000 international students from Latin America and the Caribbean in the OECD, and this figure rose to 127 700 in 2012, representing a 24% increase. There was a surge in the number of internationally mobile students between 2007 and 2009 (Figure 3.6). Even if Brazilian and Colombian students represent a growing proportion of students from the region in higher education institutions in the OECD area (40% in total), there has been a visible upturn in student mobility from Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia and Peru. 81% of international students from the region are in five main destinations: the United States (48 400 students), France (10 300 students), Spain (7 800 students), the United Kingdom (6 300 students) and Italy (4 800 students).

Figure 3.6. **International students by country of origin, 2008 and 2012**

Source: OECD Education Database.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933269313>

5. Impact of emigration

In the first half of the 2000s, the labour market situation of migrants from the region in OECD countries improved considerably, with a 10 percentage point increase in their participation rate, a 9 percentage point increase in their employment rate and a slight decline in their unemployment rate.

However, the economic crisis that began in 2007-08 had a disproportionate effect on the emigrant populations of the region (Table 3.3). Their unemployment rate rose by 6 percentage points between 2005/06 and 2010/11 to 14%. Their participation rate stagnated and could not help prevent a 4 point decline in the employment rate over five years.

Table 3.3. **Labour market outcomes of the native-born and emigrant populations from the region living in the OECD in 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2010/11**

	Native-born			Emigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean		
	2000/01	2005/06	2010/11	2000/01	2005/06	2010/11
Participation rate (%)	66.8	70.2	70.7	67.0	76.6	76.4
Employment rate (%)	61.6	64.9	64.2	60.7	69.9	65.5
Unemployment rate (% of the labour force)	7.7	7.6	9.2	9.3	8.7	14.3
Number of unemployed (millions)	29.0	28.6	35.5	0.6	0.8	1.5

Note: These results are based on 26 OECD destinations for which data were available in the three years (Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, the Slovak Republic, Turkey, the Czech Republic and Slovenia are excluded). The population refers to persons aged 15 to 64.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (DIOC) 2000/01, 2005/06 and 2010/11.

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Unemployment among highly educated emigrants from the region reached nearly 10% in 2010/11, up from 6% in 2005/06. Unemployment among low-educated emigrants almost doubled from 11% to 20% over the same period. Their employment rate went from 51% in 2000/01 to 62% in 2005/06 and then back to 55% in 2010/11. These trends were in sharp contrast to those in the first half of the decade when the most visible improvement in the labour market was for low-educated emigrants, with, an 11 point increase in their employment rate.

The repercussions of the crisis affected male and female emigrants to a similar extent, even though the deterioration in the situation for women was slightly less dramatic than for men due to the former's slightly improved labour market participation and the fact that they were working in sectors which were less affected by the crisis. Nevertheless, there is a persistent gender gap, with the employment rate of female migrants from the region at 60%, 12 points lower than that for men.

In 2010/11, the unemployment rate of the Latin American diaspora was much higher in Spain (40% among men and 38% among women) than in the United States (9% among men and 10% among women). In Spain, unemployment affected 40% of the foreign-born versus 28% of the native-born, but the people born in Latin America or the Caribbean were slightly less affected than other immigrants. In the United States, if the foreign-born (regardless of the region of origin) recorded on average lower unemployment rates than the native-born, female immigrants born in Latin America or the Caribbean recorded higher unemployment rates than other persons born within the country or in other regions of the world.

Although highly educated migrants have on average better labour market outcomes than low-educated ones, they still face a considerable risk of overqualification, or brain waste. The share of persons from the region holding university degrees and working in intermediate or low-skilled jobs was very high in 2000/01 (42%), and 10 points above the average of all other regions. In 2010/11, the situation improved and the overqualification rate of migrants from the region stood at 33%. Overqualification rates range between 24% for the Argentine diaspora, 32% for the Venezuelan diaspora and 55% and over for highly educated migrants from Guatemala, Ecuador and Honduras.

6. Future challenges

The Latin American and Caribbean diasporas grew during the first decade of the 20th century. All the countries in the region are now more attentive to them, as they are aware of their potentially important role in fostering development. National efforts and regional initiatives highlight their potential role in the economic and social life of their countries of origin (OAS/OECD, 2015 and MICAL). The challenge is now to implement public policies with suitable means to encourage connections between the diasporas, their countries of origin and their destination countries.

At the start of the current decade, migration flows from the region shifted towards other countries in the region and, to a lesser extent, the United States, while the Spanish-based diaspora stopped growing (OAS/OECD, 2015). Data from the Gallup World Poll Survey confirm this reorientation towards the Western Hemisphere, as they reveal that almost twice as many people would like to move to the United States as would like to emigrate to Spain. That said, slower economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean along with improvements observed in the Spanish labour market as of 2014 May lead to redirecting migrant flows into new configurations.

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