

**TREND IN INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION:
MIGRATION AMONG PROFESSIONALS,
SEMI-PROFESSIONALS
AND MINERS IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1970-1997.**

by

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INTRODUCTION

It is very important for each country to keep databases on information about the volume and characteristics of all its migration streams. With a view to be able to control international migration patterns, the government of South Africa has recently released a white paper on international migration. However, the emphasis of the policy is on controlling immigration flows into the country (Government Gazette, no. 19920). This study gives a brief overview of the trends in the general international migration, international migration among professionals and semi-professionals, and the trend in foreign migrant labour in the mining sector experienced by South Africa during the period 1970-1997.

The study is divided into several sections. Firstly, it gives a brief theoretical background of international migration. A definition of the phenomenon is given as well as its causes and consequences. The rationale of the study, its data sources and their limitations are then given. Secondly, it discusses the trend in the volume of immigration and emigration in the study period. After this discussion a synopsis of the magnitude of the volume of the migration streams is given. Data show that, in certain periods, when immigration is at its peak and emigration is at its trough. The data also show that the volumes of the immigration and emigration streams are not significant. Thirdly, an analysis of the trend in the total net migration is given. The results show that the country has generally been experiencing net immigration. Fourthly, a discussion on the trend in net migration among professionals and semi-professionals is made. Data show a trend similar to that of the total net migration. The study then turns to reviewing the trend in the proportion of professionals and semi-professionals in the number of immigrants and emigrants. The results show that generally, the country has been proportionately losing more of these people (through emigration) than gaining them (through immigration). They also show that these people constitute a significant proportion of emigrants.

The fifth part of the study reviews the trend in the proportion of foreign migrants employed in South African mines. Data show an initial increasing trend, then a declining one and lastly, a rather stable trend in the proportion of foreign migrant labourers employed in the mining industry. Lastly, a summary of the study and conclusions drawn from the data are given.

General Background

Migration is one of the three components of population growth, the others being fertility and mortality. According to Mkhwanazi (1993), a migrant is a person who moves a specified minimum distance or moves from one migration defining area to another. This person should cross a boundary and stay in the destination (receiving area) for a minimum specified time. If the boundary crossed is internal or a district, then the movement is referred to as internal migration and the person involved an internal migrant. In the case of crossing national boundaries, the resulting departure of a person is called emigration and the person an emigrant. A person entering from another country is called an immigrant and the move is called immigration.

The above definitions show that the scope of migration covers two main branches (internal and international migration). The focus of this study is on international migration in South Africa during the period 1970-1997. Mkhwanazi (1993) also observed that the above definitions have inherent limitations. These lie in that the minimum distance traveled and the duration of stay in the receiving area are not specified quantitatively. Hence, they vary from country to country causing problems with cross-country comparisons of migration trends.

According to the United Nations (1982), international migration (i.e. movement of people across national boundaries) can be classified into four categories. These are:

- permanent immigration / emigration
- labour migration
- illegal migration
- refugees

The UN definition shows that labour migration is a component of international migration. This means that one can not just use international migration data and assume that they are applicable for studying labour migration.

Theories that try to explain why people move from one country to another have been propounded. One of such theories is the "pull-push" factor theory (Massey et al, 1993; Rystad, 1992; Zinyama, 1990; Zopf, 1984). According to the theory, for people to leave their countries of origin, to other countries (receiving countries), there has to be push factors or disadvantages which influence them to move. Such disadvantages may include low wages compared to other countries, scarce employment opportunities, political unrests, lack of social amenities like good roads, piped water electricity, etc. On the other hand, in the destination (receiving) countries there has to be pull factors or advantages that tend to attract potential movers. Examples of pull factors are high prospects of getting a job, availability of job opportunities, higher wages, political stability, better social amenities, etc.

These advantages and disadvantages may exist in both the sending and receiving countries. Hence, before making a decision whether to move or not, the potential migrant weighs these against each other.

In between the sending and receiving countries, there exist obstacles which also influence the decision of the would-be migrant. These obstacles may include distance, travel expenses, availability and speed of transport, migration laws, etc. If, for example, the distance between these countries is too long, it is most likely that a potential migrant may decide not to move despite existence of pull factors in the country of destination.

Effects of international migration to both sending and receiving countries

Socio-economic effects

The migration of people in and out (immigration and emigration) poses problems for both the sending and receiving countries. This is more so because migration is selective of certain characteristics. For example, several studies have shown that it tends to favour certain age groups, occupations and is predominantly male selective when it comes to long distances (Hamilton, 1959; Massey et al, 1993; Todaro, 1994; Brockerhoff and Eu, 1993). This therefore means, to some extent, the sending country loses output as some of its citizens move to other countries. This emigration may, however, also serve to ease socio-economic pressures in the sending country. If, for example, as a result of the migration the emigrants get jobs that were hard to find in their country of origin, the migration would have helped reduce unemployment in this country. Benefits to the receiving country may come as a result of increased output as the immigrants come with their skills and experience. However, excessive immigration, has undesirable socio-economic consequences like increased crime rates, overcrowding, increased unemployment rates, etc.

Before discussing the demographic effects of international migration, it is worth mentioning that the international coexistence of rich countries and poor countries creates a chronic dependence of the poor on the rich (Todaro, 1994). This dependence in turn manifests itself in an international migration pattern characterized by traditional receiving countries, on one hand, and traditional sending countries on the other. One can also add that generally, the coexistence is such that within a region or continent, there are few of the rich countries surrounded by a host of poor ones. This creates what economists call the core-periphery relationship. Most of the migration streams are in the direction of the core countries making them traditional receivers of immigrants.

Demographic effects

In addition to the socio-economic effects, migration also affects the demographic characteristics of the countries involved. This effect results from its selectivity mentioned above.

The studies mentioned above reveal that migration is generally higher for males than for females especially when long distances are involved. Female dominance in migration streams is expected when the distance traveled is shorter. Reasons accounting for this are beyond the scope of this study. Clearly, this migration pattern has an effect of reducing the sex ratios in the sending country while increasing them in the receiving country. This also affects the headship of households. As a result of the mentioned pattern of international migration, female-headed households tend to increase in the sending countries - at least for the duration of absence of the male migrants. This situation has the potential of introducing extramarital affairs and, hence, distort the nuptiality status for both countries.

Also, by selecting certain ages, migration affects the age structures of the countries involved. Since migration is highest mainly among the young adults (Hamilton 1993), the result is a relatively younger age structure in the receiving country while it leaves a relatively older age structure in the sending one.

The selectivity of migration by education level also affects the composition of labour in the countries involved. The trend is such that, mainly, the highly educated and skilled people migrate out of their countries of birth. Migration of the lowly educated and unskilled usually takes place as a result of bilateral agreements between two governments especially when there is a shortage of such labour in one of the countries.

Religion, culture, racial and ethnic compositions are other aspects of the populations involved that are affected by international migration. This is because upon their departure, the migrants take with themselves all their personal attributes. The result is a highly polarized society in the receiving country.

By bringing with them their personal attributes, the immigrants have a direct impact on the population growth of the receiving country. This is because they apply their fertility behaviors onto this population. Their health practices may also affect the mortality situation of the receiving country.

In their study on the impact of immigration in the United States, Frey and Liaw (1998), found that immigration also affects population distribution within the receiving country. They found that, normally,

immigrants get concentrated in a few areas. This is caused by kinship ties which give rise to chain migration that links family members and friends to common destinations. The study also found that the level of concentration varies according to race and level of education. It showed race-specific migration destination choices to be most concentrated for Hispanics and least concentrated for Whites, with Blacks and Asians lying in between. Destination choices for immigrants with lower education were also found to be highly concentrated compared to those with higher education.

Frey and Liaw (1998) also found that the high immigration areas within the receiving countries also happen to be attractive employment centres for internal migrants. Hence, the population growth of these places is usually the result of the cumulative effect of both international migration and internal migration. The combination of the two streams (immigrants and in-migrants) results in overcrowding of the areas concerned and displacement of some people. Normally, the less skilled and lowly paid native-born residents are forced to migrate from the high immigration areas. Frey and Liaw (1998) identified some reasons causing this. The most prominent ones are: first, competition for jobs between low skilled immigrants, who are willing to take below market wages, and less educated native residents, who are not prepared to earn low wages. This results in the immigrants taking the job opportunities away from the native residents. Second, the perception by native residents that immigrants contribute to a variety of social costs including high crime rates, increases in taxes, reduction in services rendered by government all of which make life tougher for the lower and middle-class residents, forcing them to leave and seek opportunities elsewhere. In this regard, immigration serves as a push factor - causes out migration from the high immigration areas within the receiving countries.

This section has shown that international migration affects the social structures of the populations involved (ie. age-sex structure; labour force composition; cultural, religious and racial composition). It also showed that this type of migration has a direct impact on the growth rates of the populations involved. This of course depends on the magnitude of the migration streams and the duration of stay in the receiving country. If the volume of the migrants is large and their period of stay in the receiving country is long then their effect to the demographics of the two countries is significant. However, if the volume is low and their stay short their effect is negligible. It can also be argued that owing to the core-periphery relationship, the receiving countries suffer more demographic effects relative to each sending country. It has also been shown that immigration influences the internal movement of people in the receiving country.

Rationale of the study

The above discussion shows that international migration affects the social, economic and demographic structures of countries involved. This highlights the importance, for each country, to keep data bases for all its migration streams.

It is not disputable that South Africa is overwhelmingly, concerned with the numbers and characteristics of people entering and leaving. Among other reasons showing the magnitude of this concern is the media reports of increased xenophobia applied to foreigners, especially black foreigners. According to The South African Human Rights Commission (1999), in the past two years, more than 30 innocent refugees and asylum seekers have been killed, for simply being foreigners. The most recent case is the brutal killings of three African migrants in a train near Pretoria for allegedly contributing to the high unemployment rate in the country.

Another example reflective of the country's concern about international migration is government's actions to ensure that practitioners (especially in the field of medicine) serve the country for a minimum number of years before they could be allowed to practice outside.

This study provides an analysis of the observed international and labour migration trends. It also provides a brief overview of the factors responsible for the observed trends.

DATA SOURCES

This study utilized data from several sources. Data on the volume of general immigration and emigration were obtained from Statistics South Africa. Data on immigrant and emigrant professionals and

semi-professionals were also obtained from the same source. Information on foreign migrant labour in South African mines was obtained from Mining Statistics (1970-1983), and Department of Minerals and Energy Annual Reports (1984-1997).

Limitations of the data

The major limitation of the data is that they do not contain information about all the categories of international migration. For instance, there is no information about the numbers of illegal immigrants and refugees. Available information only show documented immigrants and self declared emigrants. As a result, it could be argued that these data underestimate the levels of international migration streams. Another problem is that these data do not show the ages and gender of the migrants for certain years in the period under study. This makes it difficult to arrive at a clear picture of the socio-economic and demographic impact of international immigration on the South African population.

The major problem with the data on miners was that they were obtained from different sources and were inconsistent. For instance, the Mining Statistics gave data on miners classified by type of mine until 1983. For 1984-1997 these data were found in the Department of Minerals and Energy annual reports. However, for the 1984-1997 reports, data on number of employees in Copper mines were classified under other mines making it difficult to determine the exact number of employees in the G.C.C mines during this period. Also, there are cases where these sources gave different figures. There was also a problem with 1996 data on total number of people employed in these mines - one publication (Department of Minerals and Energy, 1997) gives two different figures for people employed in gold and coal mines.

TREND IN IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

South Africa, like all countries, experiences cross border migration. Table 1 shows the trend in total annual migration volume as well as the annual volume among professionals and semi-professionals during the period, 1970-1997. The table also shows the trend in the volume of net migration (balance between total number of immigrants and emigrants) during the same period. It also shows the trend in the volume of gross migration (sum of the total number of immigrants and emigrants).

Table 1. Trend in the volume of immigration and emigration

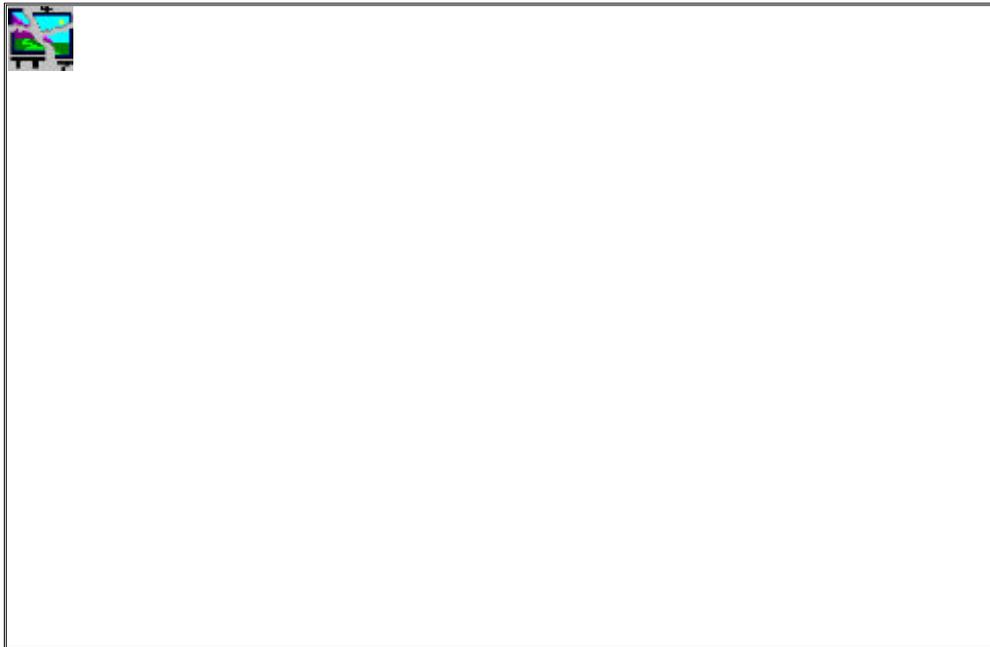
Year	Total		Net	Gross	Prof ,Semi Prof		Net	Gross
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Migration	Migration	Immigrants	Emigrants	Migration	Migration
1970	41 523	9278	32 369	50 677	5 076	1 088	3 988	6 164
1971	35 845	8407	27 554	44 136	4 282	907	3 375	5 189
1972	32776	7 884	-1 232	14 536	345	1 074	- 729	1 419
1973	24016	6 401	-1 040	11 762	273	872	- 599	1 145
1974	35910	7 428	935	15 791	829	475	354	1 304
1975	50464	10 225	1 573	22 023	5 183	1 242	3 941	6 425
1976	46 239	15 641	30 598	61 880	5 971	2 028	3 943	7 999
1977	24 822	26 000	-1 178	50 822	3 119	3 626	- 507	6 745
1978	18 669	20 686	-2 017	39 355	2 309	3 254	- 945	5 563
1979	18 680	15 694	2 986	34 374	2 310	2 479	- 169	4 789
1980	29 365	11 363	18 002	40 728	3 764	1 723	2 041	5 487
1981	41 542	8 791	32 751	50 333	4 974	1 322	3 652	6 296
1982	45 784	6 832	38 952	52 616	5 844	926	4 918	6 770
1983	30 483	8 247	22 236	38 730	3 926	1 126	2 800	5 052
1984	28 793	8 550	20 243	37 343	3 920	1 169	2 751	5 089

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1985	17 284	11 401	5 883	28 685	2 273	1 659	614	3 932
1986	6 994	13 711	-6 717	20 705	1 097	2 312	-1 215	3 409
1987	7 953	11 174	-3 221	19 127	1 071	1 973	- 902	3 044
1988	10 400	7 767	2 633	18 167	1 377	1 396	- 19	2 773
1989	11 270	4 911	6 359	16 181	1 410	1 043	367	2 453
1990	14 499	4 722	9 777	19 221	1 863	977	886	2 840
1991	12 379	4 256	8 123	16 635	1 834	803	1 031	2 637
1992	8 686	4 289	4 397	12 975	1 608	898	710	2 506
1993	9 824	2 013	7 811	17 902	1 454	356	1 098	1 810
1994	6 398	10 235	-3 837	16 633	1 103	1 960	- 857	3 063
1995	5 064	8 725	-3 661	13 789	798	1 680	- 882	2 478
1996	5 407	9 708	-4 301	15 115	843	1 970	-1 127	2 813
1997	4 103	8 946	-4 843	13 049	551	1 924	-1 373	2 475
Total	625 172	273 285	351 887	898 457	69 407	42 262	27 145	111 669

Sources: Central Statistical Service 1997 and 1998
 Statistics South Africa (unpublished data)

Figure 1. Trend in the volume of immigration and emigration



Sources: Central Statistical Service 1997 and 1998
 Statistics South Africa (unpublished data)

Figure 1 shows the annual volume of immigrants and emigrants for the period 1970-1997. One striking feature in this graph is that, there are peaks and troughs in the volume of immigrants and emigrants. Figure 1 also shows that emigration tends to decrease as immigration increases in certain periods.

The variations in the total numbers of people immigrating to and emigrating from the country seem to have been largely influenced by socio-economic and political events that were taking place in the country during this period. Government policies also played an important role in determining the immigration and emigration volumes.

Figure 1 also shows that a total of 26 000 people left the country in 1977, showing a (63%) increase over the previous year's level of 15 964. This 1977 figure is not surprising because in 1976 there was a serious political tension resulting from protests by Soweto students against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of teaching in schools. This episode sent panic and uncertainty to many people and, hence, an increase in the number of emigrants. Also, after this event, more people left the country fearing for their lives; others left to join liberation movements that were operating outside the borders of the country. On the other hand, the aftermath of this uprising significantly reduced the number of immigrants from a high figure of 46 239 in 1976, to a low figure of 24 822 in 1977 (almost 50% decrease over the 1976 figure). This could be attributable to uncertainty about the safety of migrants in the country.

Also, from Figure 1, it can be seen that for the 1990s, the annual number of immigrants into South Africa was far below that was experienced during the 1970s and 1980s. This may be associated with policy changes that took place during this period. According to the United Nations (1989) it was not until 1986 that the South African government perceived immigration levels too high and demanding policies that will lower them. Prior to 1986 government perceived immigration levels too low and was advocating for policies to raise them. The United Nations show that the post 1986 era is characterized by policies that either seek to reduce or maintain existing immigration levels. The low immigration levels in the early 1990s could also be associated with the increase in crime and political violence which was experienced during this period - all which could scare potential immigrants away.

Figure 1 also shows a small peak in the immigration volume in 1990. This peak can be associated with the return of political exiles that resulted from the release of political prisoners and upliftment of the ban on black liberation movements.

As it has been mentioned, when immigration increases, emigration, on the other hand, decreases. This is also true for the trends experienced in the 1990s. Emigration has been fluctuating at low levels but maintaining a generally increasing trend. This trend may also be associated with the socio-political events that have been occurring since the beginning of the 1990s. The political violence and the increase in crime rate seem to be major push factors for emigration in the country in this decade. A notable increase in the number of emigrants was in 1993, when it increased from 4 289 in 1992 to 8 078 (about 90% increase over the previous year).

Having discussed the trends in immigration and emigration volumes for the country in the study period, the paper now focuses on the magnitude of the immigration and emigration volumes. This will help appraise the perception that South Africa is currently experiencing very high immigration levels. It will also show whether there is reason to be concerned about the levels of emigration. To get a reliable appraisal of the magnitude of the immigration and emigration streams, the 1996 population census is used as a reference.

Tables 1 and 2 show that a total of 5 407 immigrants were recorded in 1996. This was only 0,013% of the total population of 40 583 573 (Statistics South Africa, 1998). This seem to suggest that immigration levels are not as high as perceived. However, this finding should be treated cautiously because the scale of illegal immigration is not known. Tables 1 and 2 also show that 9 708 people left the country in 1996 and this was only 0,023% of the total population.

TREND IN NET MIGRATION

As mentioned above, net migration is the balance between the total number of immigrants and that of emigrants in a particular period. This figure is either positive or negative depending on which is bigger. For instance, if the number of emigrants, in a particular period, is greater than the number of immigrants in the same period, then the sign is negative and vice-versa. Again, depending on the sign of the figure, a country is said to be facing either net-immigration or net-emigration at any point in time.

It is very important that each country keeps data bases for the volumes of immigration and emigration. These would give the trends in net migration and enable determination whether the country is losing or gaining people. These trends of net migration may also necessitate an inquiry about the socio-economic or even cultural characteristics of the immigrants and emigrants. Knowledge of these characteristics may be of great help in planning and policy decisions for both the sending and receiving countries.

Figure 2 shows the trend in net-migration in South Africa during the period 1970-1997. The graph shows that the country is mainly characterized by net immigration (net gain). On aggregate, the recorded number of people who came to the country during the twenty-seven year period was 625 172 while those who left over the same period were 279 350 (see tables 1 and 2). This is not surprising because, for decades, South Africa has been a major source of employment opportunities for all SADC countries as well as other sub-Saharan African countries, The Southern African Migration Project (SAMP, 1997; SAMP, 1999).

Even though the country has been generally characterized by net immigration, there were periods when it experienced net emigration. However, it is worth mentioning that it seems the country experienced net emigration during periods of political instability and uncertainty. For example, the graph shows that from 1977 to mid-1978 more people were leaving the country compared to those entering. This can again be attributable to the Soweto uprising discussed above. Another striking observation in Figure 2 is that from the second half of 1993, South Africa has been experiencing net emigration (net loss). This is probably due to uncertainty that prevailed (especially among whites) about the future of the country soon after the new political dispensation. This uncertainty coupled with the high prevalence of crime, could be attributable to the net loss of people in the country. Policy changes could also provide an explanation for the observed trend in net migration.

Figure 2. Trend in net migration



Sources: Central Statistical Service 1997 and 1998
 Statistics South Africa (unpublished data)

TREND IN NET MIGRATION AMONG PROFESSIONALS AND SEMI-PROFESSIONALS

As mentioned in the preceding section, it is very important for each country to keep data bases for the trends in net migration, as well as the characteristics of the migrants. In this section, a brief analysis of the trend for net migration of professionals and semi-professionals is given.

Figure 3 shows that the trend in net migration among professionals and semi-professionals is similar to that of the total population. Reasons accounting for this pattern are obviously the same as those discussed above.

The graph shows that South Africa has been generally enjoying the luxury of gaining more professionals and semi-professionals than losing them in the period under study. Tables 1 and 2 show that a total of 69 407 professionals and semi-professionals were recorded to have come to the country during the period 1970-1997 while 42 262 left in the same period. Like with the total population, figure 3 shows that since the early 1990s there was a change in the trend. At present, more professionals are leaving the country compared to those coming in. This does not augur well with the country's future economic prospects. This is because these people leave with all their experience and expertise that could be useful in the economy.

Figure 3. Trend in net migration for professionals and semi-professionals



Sources: Central Statistical Service 1997 and 1998
 Statistics South Africa (unpublished data)

TREND IN THE PROPORTION OF PROFESSIONALS AND SEMI-PROFESSIONALS IN THE NUMBER OF MIGRANTS

The paper now turns to reviewing the composition of the migration patterns experienced by the country during the period 1970-1997. Focus is on the proportion of professionals and semi-professionals in the number of immigrants and emigrants.

Figure 4 below shows the trend in the proportion of professionals and semi-professionals in the immigration and emigration streams. The graph shows that, generally, the country has been proportionately losing more professionals and semi-professionals (through emigration) than gaining them (through immigration). This is despite the observation that the emigration volume was generally less than the immigration volume (table 2 and table 1).

The graph also shows that the proportion of the professionals and semi-professionals in the emigration stream has been gradually increasing over the years. The lowest and highest values (6,4% and 21,5%) were recorded in 1974 and 1997 respectively. It should be mentioned that these people constitute a substantial amount of the recorded emigrants - on average they account for about 16% of recorded emigrants. This level is indicative of a considerable magnitude of brain drain and reason for concern.

With regard to immigration, figure 4 shows a more or less stable trend between 1976 and 1990, with a slight peak in 1986. The highest proportion of professionals and semi-professionals (18,5%) was recorded in 1992. In the years after, the values oscillated in a more or less stable manner.

The combination of low proportions of professionals and semi-professionals in the immigration streams and higher proportions in emigration streams could be explained by the following reasons:

- the country has been generally favorable to less skilled people;
- the effect of push factors within the country has been stronger than pull factors for professionals and semi-professionals. This may indicate that these people put much value to socio-economic and political stability. When conditions are against their expectations they are always willing and able to move to other places where they may find better conditions.

Figure 4. Trend in the proportion of professionals and semi-professionals in the number of immigrants and emigrants



Sources: Central Statistical Service 1997 and 1998
 Statistics South Africa (unpublished data)

MINERS IN SOUTH AFRICA (1970-1997)

From the preceding sections it has been mentioned that, for quite some time, South Africa has been a major source of employment opportunities for SADC and other sub-Saharan African countries. In this section focus is on the composition of workers in the mining industry of the country. The mining industry is one of the largest employers of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the country. The G.C.C mines, with the exception of copper, are the largest contributors to mineral export sales value, and hence the largest employers in this industry.

The mining industry of this country is composed of three types of workers. These are:

- non-migrant workers
- migrant workers from within the country (especially from the former homelands)
- African foreign migrants (from SADC and other African countries)

Statistics on the number of immigrant African foreign workers and that of all races working in South African mines, (1970-1997), are shown in Table 2. In the same table, the proportions of foreign migrant workers in the total workforce are shown. Figure 5 shows the trend in the proportion of foreign migrant workers employed in the mines during the study period.

Table 2. Miners in South Africa, by population group and type of mine (1970-1997)

Year	Foreign African migrant G,C.C	All races G,C.C	% foreign G,C.C
1970	291 052	513 818	56,6
1971	311 086	506 406	61,4
1972	319 117	502 851	63,5
1973	339 895	521 615	65,2
1974	319 971	491 509	65,1
1975	259 564	468 244	55,4
1976	233 026	498 320	46,8
1977	221 314	534 597	41,4
1978	215 810	568 108	38,0
1979	213 400	590 808	36,1
1980	208 943	618 877	33,8
1981	208 166	638 044	32,6
1982	202 653	610 042	33,2
1983	203 124	613 013	33,1
1984*	204 026	626 779	32,6
1985	217 554	643 295	33,8
1986	233 445	671 528	34,8
1987	224 126	673 050	33,3
1988	211 672	634 583	33,4
1989	196 884	623 088	31,6
1990	193 474	588 042	32,9
1991	179 956	509 620	35,3
1992	174 652	431 685	40,5
1993 ^{a**}	167 444	422 543	39,6
1994	166 122	398 366	41,7
1995	-	384 835	-
1996	-	359 174	-
1997 ^b	-	347 467	-

Notes:

G= gold, P= platinum, C.C= copper, coal
 (*) for 1984-1997 copper was included under other mining
 (**) for 1993-1997 data calculated from information on deaths and death rates ¹.
a the 1993 and 1994 reports gave different deaths and death rates for 1993
b the same report gave different numbers of people working in gold and coal mines
 Sources: Dept. of Minerals and Energy Affairs, Mining Statistics, 1970-1983
 Dept. of Minerals and Energy, Annual Reports, 1984-1997

¹ The number of people employed = ((deaths*1000)/ death rate): where the death rate equals the number of deaths per 1000 employed persons.

Data show that, in the early 1970s, the mining industry was mainly dependent on migrant workers from outside the borders of the country, (see Figure 5). During the period 1970-1975 the annual average proportion of foreign migrant workers employed in South African mines was around 60% of total workforce in the industry. The highest proportion of was recorded in 1973 (65,2%). This trend, however, changed in the second half of the decade. The proportion of foreign migrant workers in the mines decreased by close to 9% from 55,4% in 1975 to 46,7% in 1976. After this, the proportion of these workers continued to decline until it reached a low figure of 36,1% in 1979. This was mainly due to a policy of internalization which compelled The Employment Bureau of Southern Africa (TEBA) to recruit fewer foreigners in favour of more black South Africans, (Central Statistical Office, 1986; United Nations, 1982). During the 1980s the proportion of foreign migrant workers in South African mines stabilized around 33% of total employment. Figure 5 also shows that the proportion of foreign migrant workers showed a steady increase in the early 1990s. It increased from 32,9% in 1990 to 41,7% in 1994.

Figure 5. Trend in the proportion of foreign migrant workers employed in South African mines



Sources: Dept. of Minerals and Energy Affairs, Mining Statistics, 1970 - 1983
 Dept. of Minerals and Energy, Annual Reports, 1984 - 1997

Figure 6 below shows the employment levels (for all races and foreign African migrant workers) in the major South African mines for the period 1970-1997.

The graph shows that during the late 1980s, there was a significant decline in total employment levels in the industry. This decline resulted mainly from the mechanization that took place in the industry and poor economic performance of the industry in world markets. The combination of these factors made high levels of employment less profitable, hence, retrenchment of some workers took place.

Even though there was a significant reduction in total number of mine workers during this period, it is worth noting that the decrease in the number of foreign migrant workers was moderate as shown in Figure 6. The combination of dramatic decline in total employment levels and the moderate decline in employment levels for foreigners resulted in the increase in the proportion of foreign migrant workers in the early 1990s as discussed above. This seems to imply that the retrenchment has been hitting hard on South African workers and slightly sparing the foreign workers. Bilateral agreements between the South African government and the governments of the sending countries could be accounting for this observed pattern. These agreements are normally on contractual basis, therefore forbidding the receiving country from retrenching migrant workers anyhow - even if conditions so demand.

Figure 6. Miners in South African Gold, Platinum, Copper, Coal (G,P,C.C*) mines(1970-1997)



* includes platinum

Sources: Dept. of Minerals and Energy Affairs, Mining Statistics, 1970 - 1983
Dept. of Minerals and Energy, Annual Reports, 1984 - 1997

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the data limitations discussed above, the study managed to show the trends in the volume of immigration and emigration, trends in the volume of immigration and emigration among professionals and semi-professionals. The study also managed to review the trend in the total net international migration and the trend of net international migration among professionals and semi-professionals. It also showed the trend in the proportion of professionals and semiprofessionals in the immigration and emigration streams. A review of the trend in the proportion of foreign migrant workers employed in South Africa mines was also achieved.

The following key findings can be drawn from the report:

- Generally, the country has been characterized by net immigration in the period under study. However, between 1994 to 1997 it experienced net emigration and it is most likely that this trend continued after 1997;
- The migration trend among highly skilled personnel (professionals and semi-professionals) has been similar to that of the total population, with net emigration being experienced since 1994;

- The country has been proportionately losing more professionals and semi-professionals through (emigration) than gaining them through (immigration);
- Reliance on foreign migrant labour in the mining sector has diminished in recent years.

Conclusion

Although the scale of illegal migration is not known, available data seem to contradict the widely held perception that immigration levels in the country are too high. The data also show that professionals and semi-professionals constitute a substantial number of recorded emigrants - indicating that there is reason to worry about "brain drain".

Policy changes and socio-political events taking place in the country appear to have had great influence on the volume of migration streams experienced by the country during the period 1970-1997.

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