



Dynamics of Arab Youth Mobility for Work Abroad: *Challenges and Potentials*



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UNESCWA Expert Group Meeting on “Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth in the Development Process”

Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009



Introduction

- As a high origin and destination region, Arab countries offer a most complex and fluid human mobility scenario, marked by unprecedented scale and diversity of population movement due to evolving geopolitical and developmental factors and forces;
- Hosts a large number of migrants (22 million) with significant intra-Arab mobility (30 %, approx. 6 million). Third highest labor receiving region (after North America and Europe);
- Varied development experiences. Per capita GDP of Qatar 52,240 US\$, Yemen 920 US\$.HDI achievements differ widely (33-153 rank).



Introduction

- Demographic pressure and environmental degradation are likely to also influence human mobility:
 - High population growth till 2010 adding about 150 million of people to the region (50 million in 1950 to 212 million in 2005 to 400 million in 2020);
 - Climate change, particularly water shortages and desertification may act as a “threat multiplier” to human security.
- Conflict and instability in some countries not only hindering development, but also forcing people to move out of their homes, internally or externally.

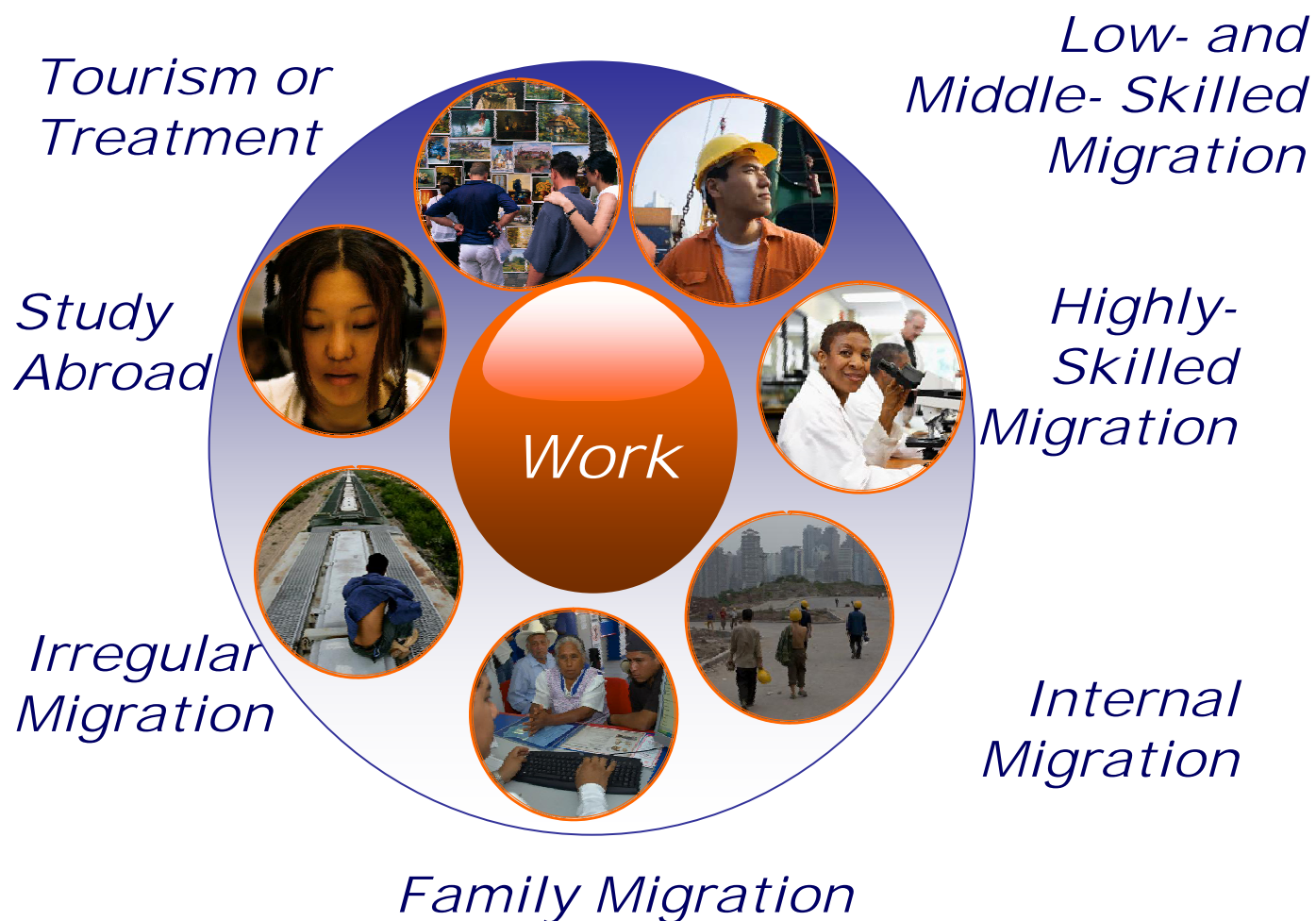


Introduction

- Arab Labour Market is experiencing high growth rate (labour force from 104 million in 2002 to 146 million in 2020). Arab region requires creation of 100 million jobs to absorb growing young labour force: high propensity to move abroad for jobs;
- Continuous presence of young foreign workers in Arab region (15-39 years) as rapid increase of young labour force in countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (328 million in 2050), followed by South Asia (157 million) and MENA (44 million by 2050);
- Presence of strong sub-regional mobility dynamics (Mashreq, Maghreb and GCC) with no corresponding regional dialogue or initiative.



Mobility and Work Nexus





Youth Population in Arab Region

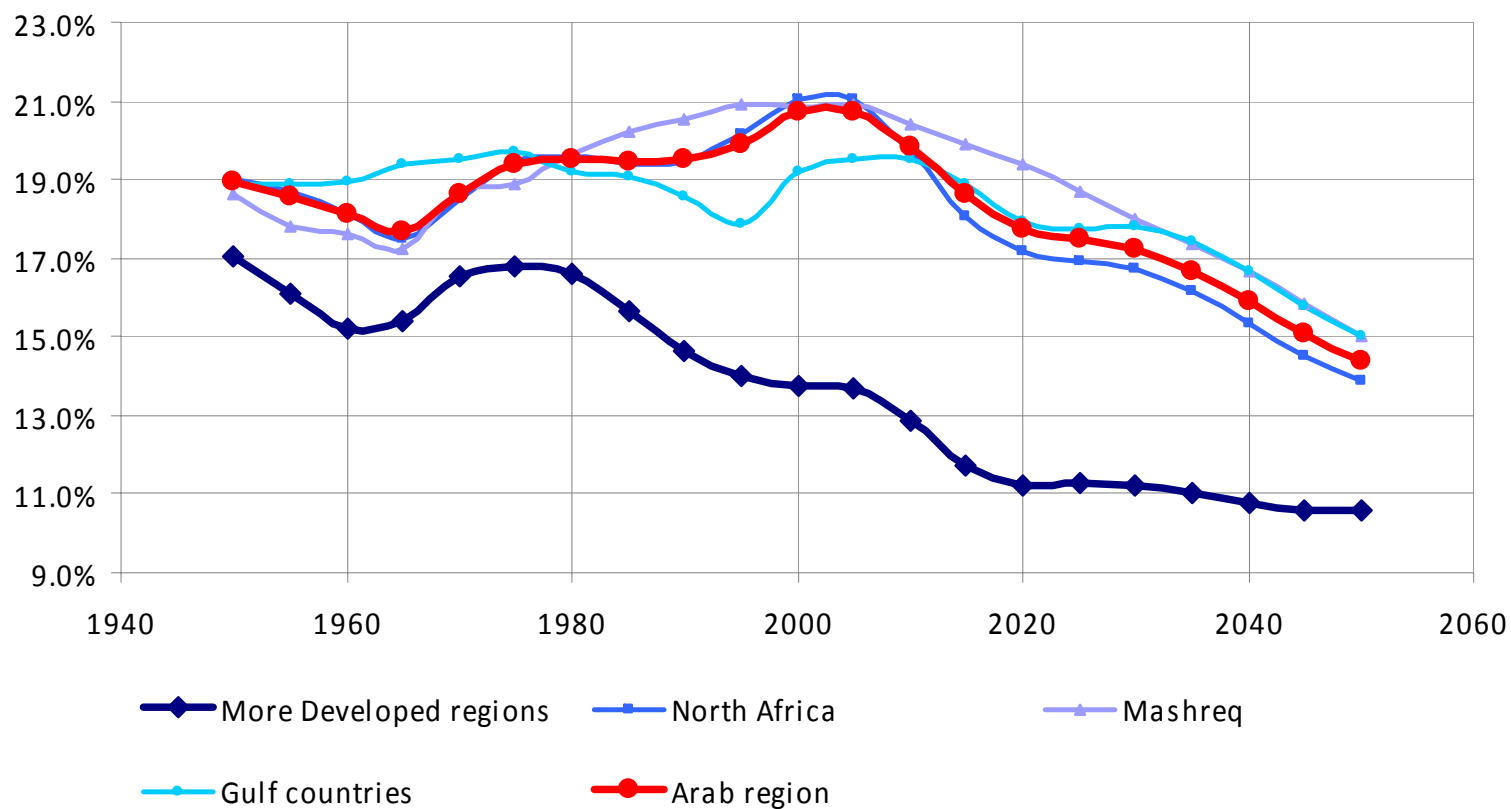
- Arab region has a large and growing young population*:
 - Between 0-24 years old: 55.7 %
 - Between 15-24 years old: 20.5%
- Significant proportion of population under 15 years: GCC (20 – 31%), Mashreq (25 – 42 %), Maghreb (23 – 30 %).
- MENA working age population continue to increase till 2050. Labour force will increase from 112 million in 2005 to 220 million in 2050 and then will experience ageing workforce.

* Source: UN Population Division (2006)



Youth Population in Arab Region

Evolution of the share of young persons (15-24 years old) as a percentage of total population

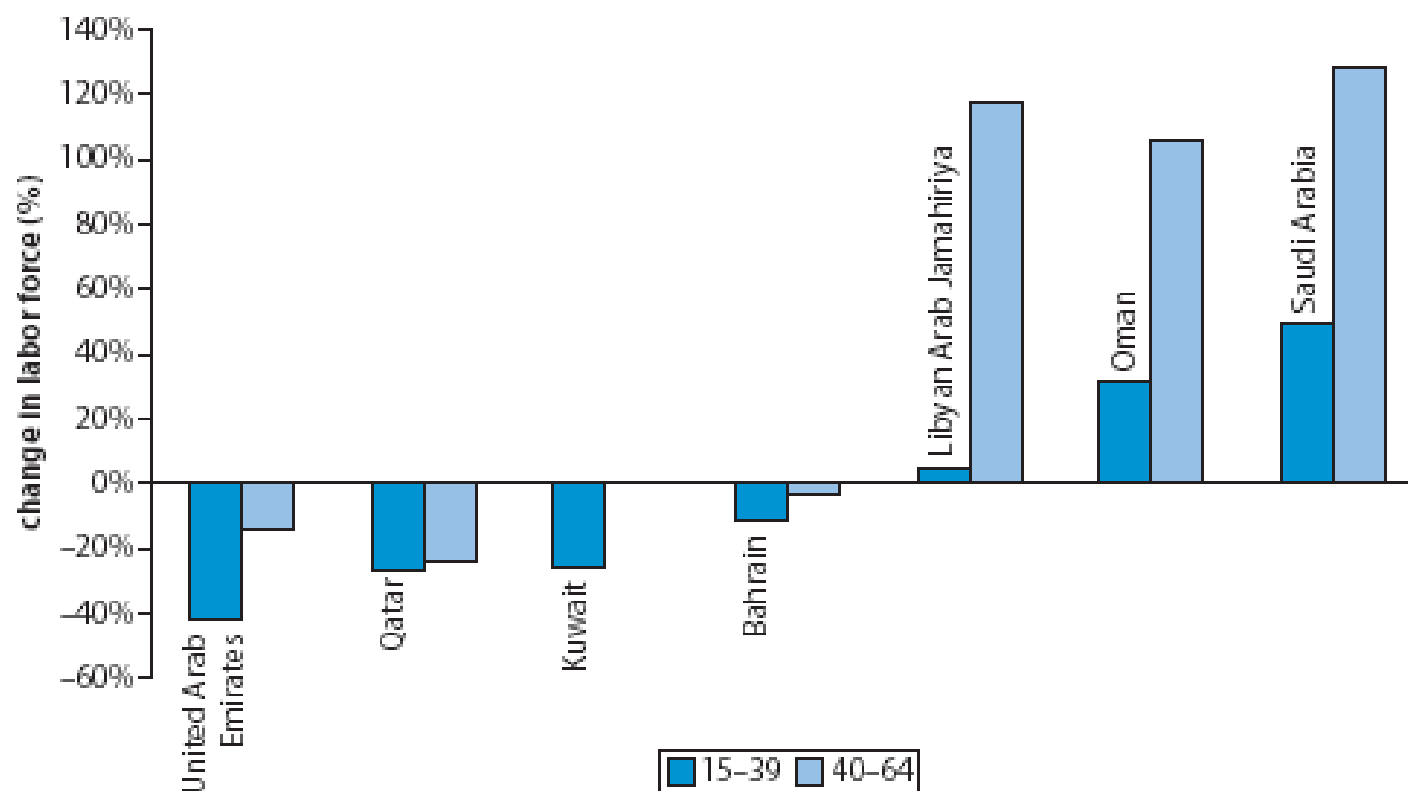


United Nations, Population Division (2006). World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision.



Youth Population in Arab Region

Projected Change in Labour Force between 2005 and 2050 in selected destination Arab countries

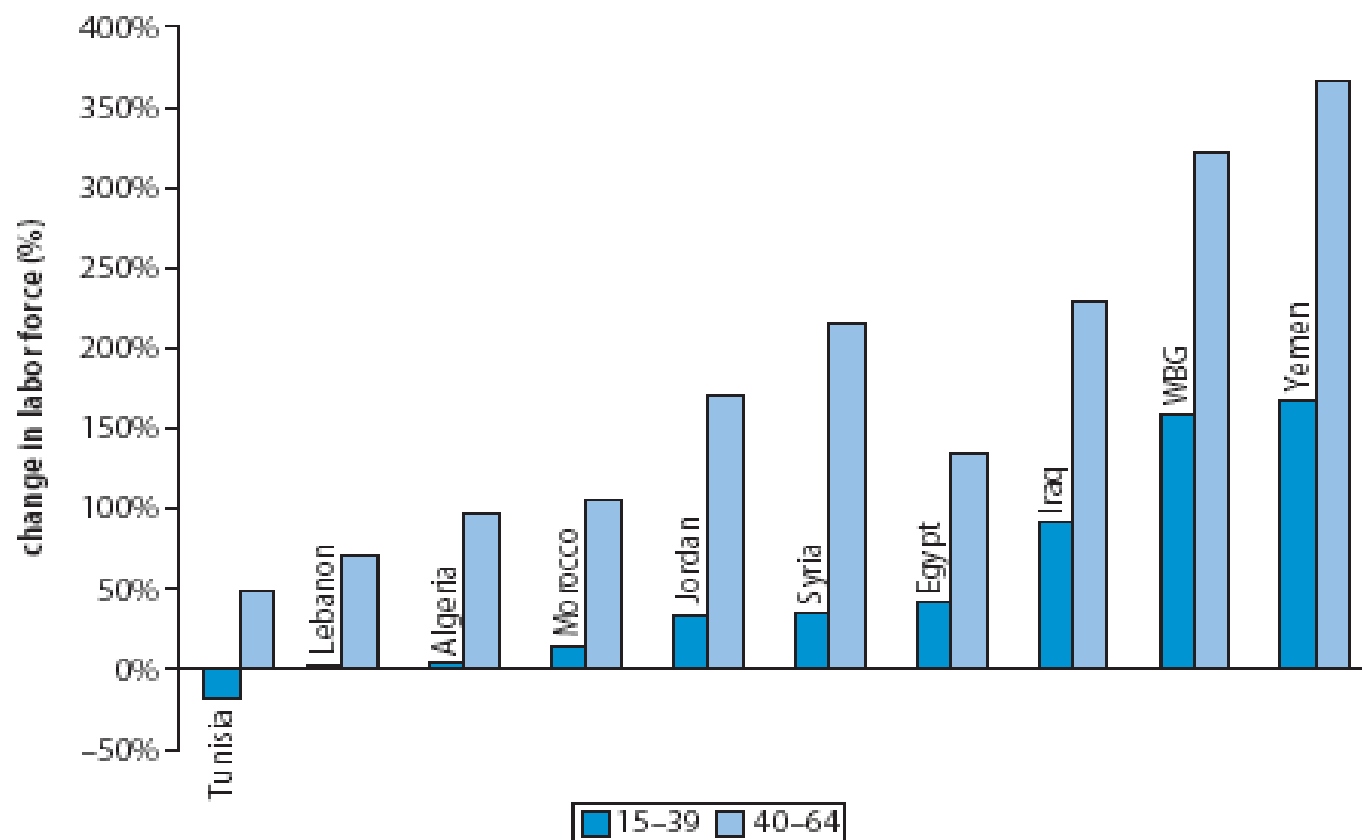


Source: World Bank (2009)



Youth Population in Arab Region

Projected Change in Labour Force between 2005 and 2050 in selected origin Arab countries



Source: World Bank (2009)



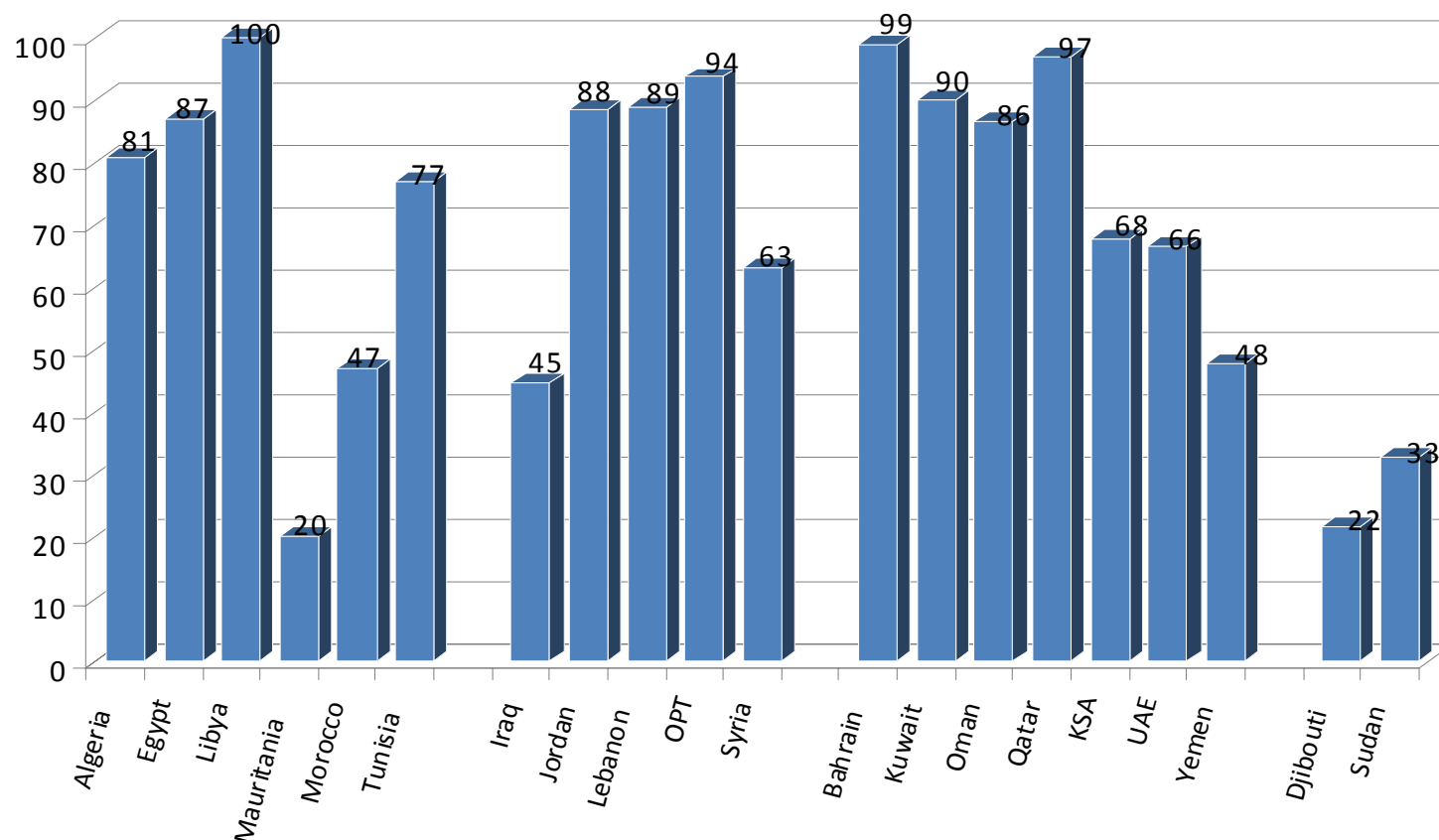
Youth Education in the Arab Region

- ↪ Literacy rate vary from universal coverage in GCC to Mashreq, Yemen and Maghreb (52 – 84 %);
- ↪ Mashreq and Maghreb have a larger professional/technical population: Maghreb (18-31%), Mashreq (18 – 28 %), GCC (17 – 20 %);
- ↪ School enrolment of women is lower than men in the Arab region.



Youth Education in Arab Countries

Percentage of Youth Enrolled in Secondary Education



UNESCO, 2006. Recueil de données sur l'éducation 2006: Statistiques comparées sur l'éducation dans le monde.



Employment Situation in Arab Labour Markets

- High dependency on public sector employment;
- Low unemployment rate in GCC (1.1 – 5.2 %) and high in Mashreq (11 – 26 %) and Maghreb (11-15 %).
- Average female youth unemployment rate is consistently higher than male unemployment in the Arab region (32% female and 26% male);
- Informal sector is predominant in Mashreq (22 – 45 %) and Maghreb (43 – 50 %) and high women presence;
- Labor market structural imbalances marked by high youth unemployment and a high propensity to migrate abroad;



Arab Labour Market for Foreign Workers

- ↪ Complex interplay between population growth, education (HDI) and labour market has impact on the mobility of Arab youth;
- ↪ “Mismatch” of local labour markets and supply of foreign workers create additional problems in the job market;
- ↪ Presence of foreign workers has a “rejuvenating” effect on the economy;
- ↪ Preference for Asian temporary workers in Arab labour market.



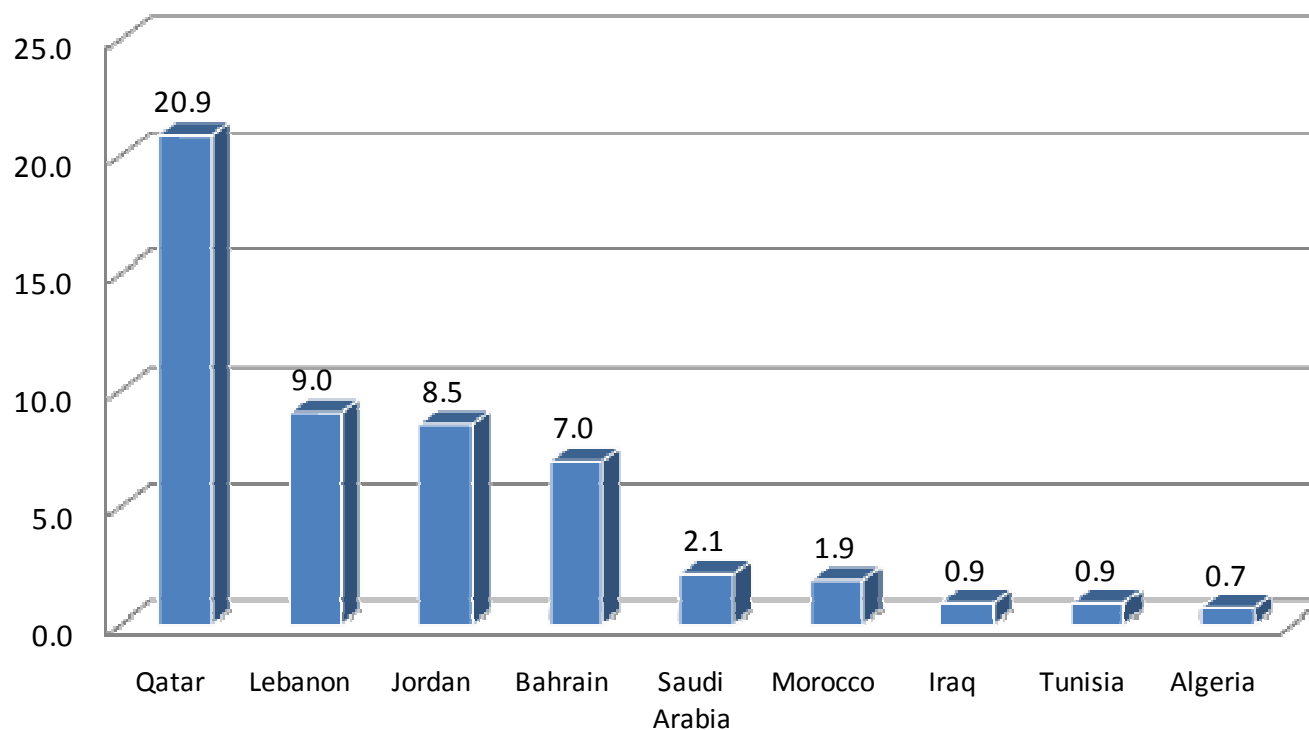
Youth Mobility in Arab Region

- In Arab region, mobility of youth is contextual, evolving and often not orderly.
- “Youth bulge” poses two challenges in terms of mobility:
 - Pressure on education systems, in particular technical and secondary (issues of quality vs quantity) - move to study abroad;
 - Pressure on domestic job markets – move to study abroad.
- Mobility of Arab youth, within Arab region for tertiary education is also significant (destination Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon and Bahrain).



Mobility for Education within the Arab region

**Foreign Students as Percentage of Students Enrolled in Tertiary
Education in Selected Arab Countries**

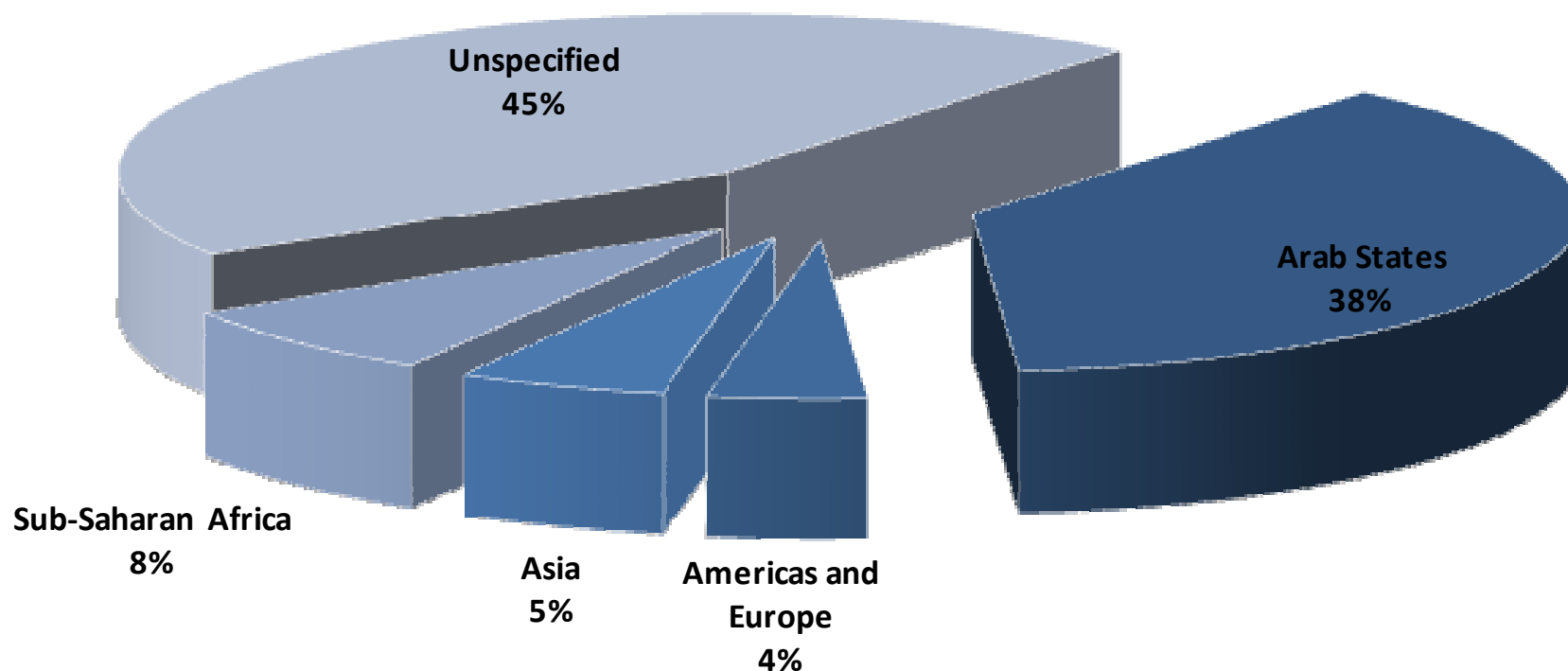


UNESCO, 2006. Recueil de données sur l'éducation 2006: Statistiques comparées sur l'éducation dans le monde.



Mobility for Education within the Arab region

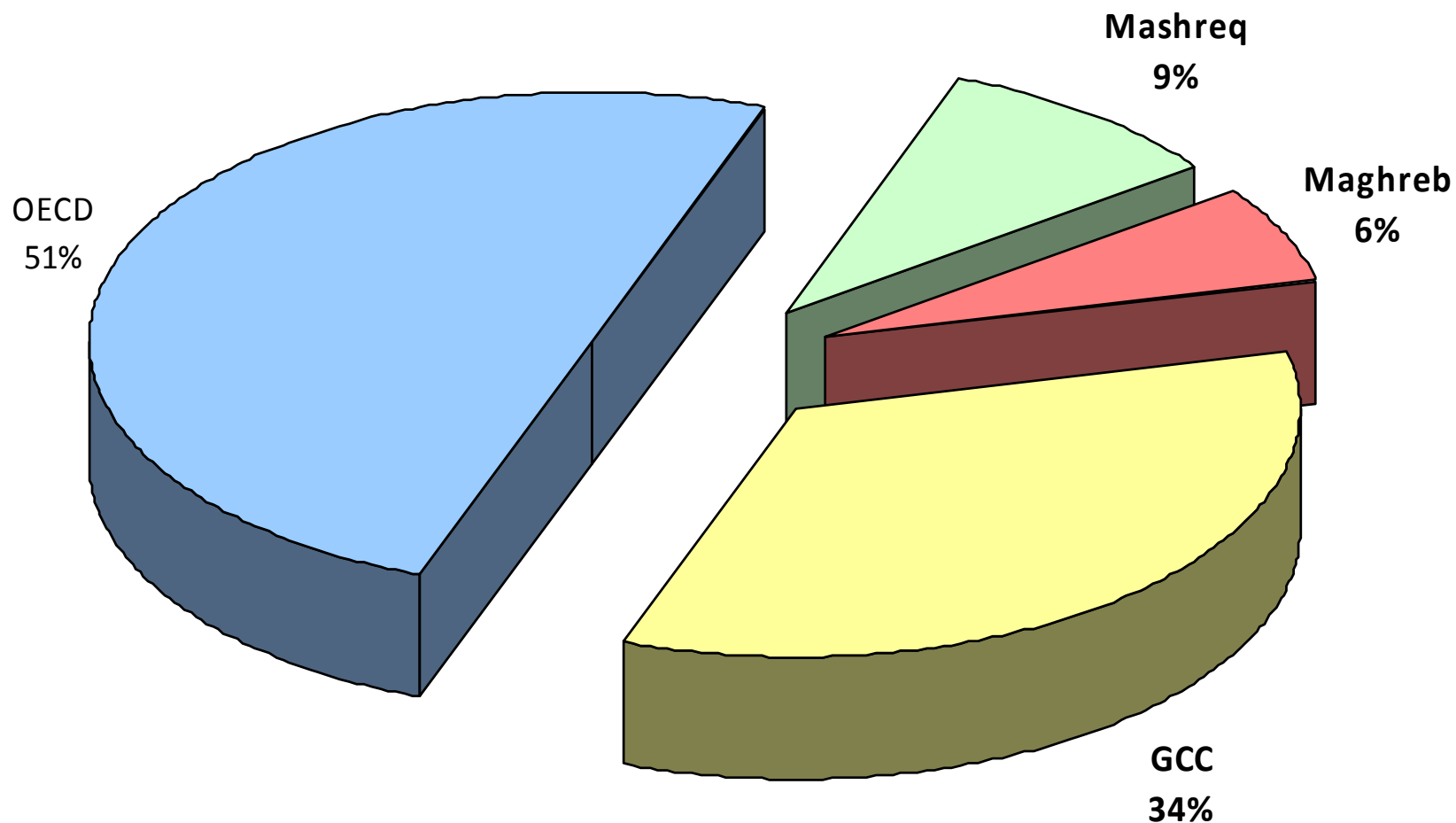
Students in the Arab World by Country of Origin



UNESCO, 2006. Recueil de données sur l'éducation 2006: Statistiques comparées sur l'éducation dans le monde.



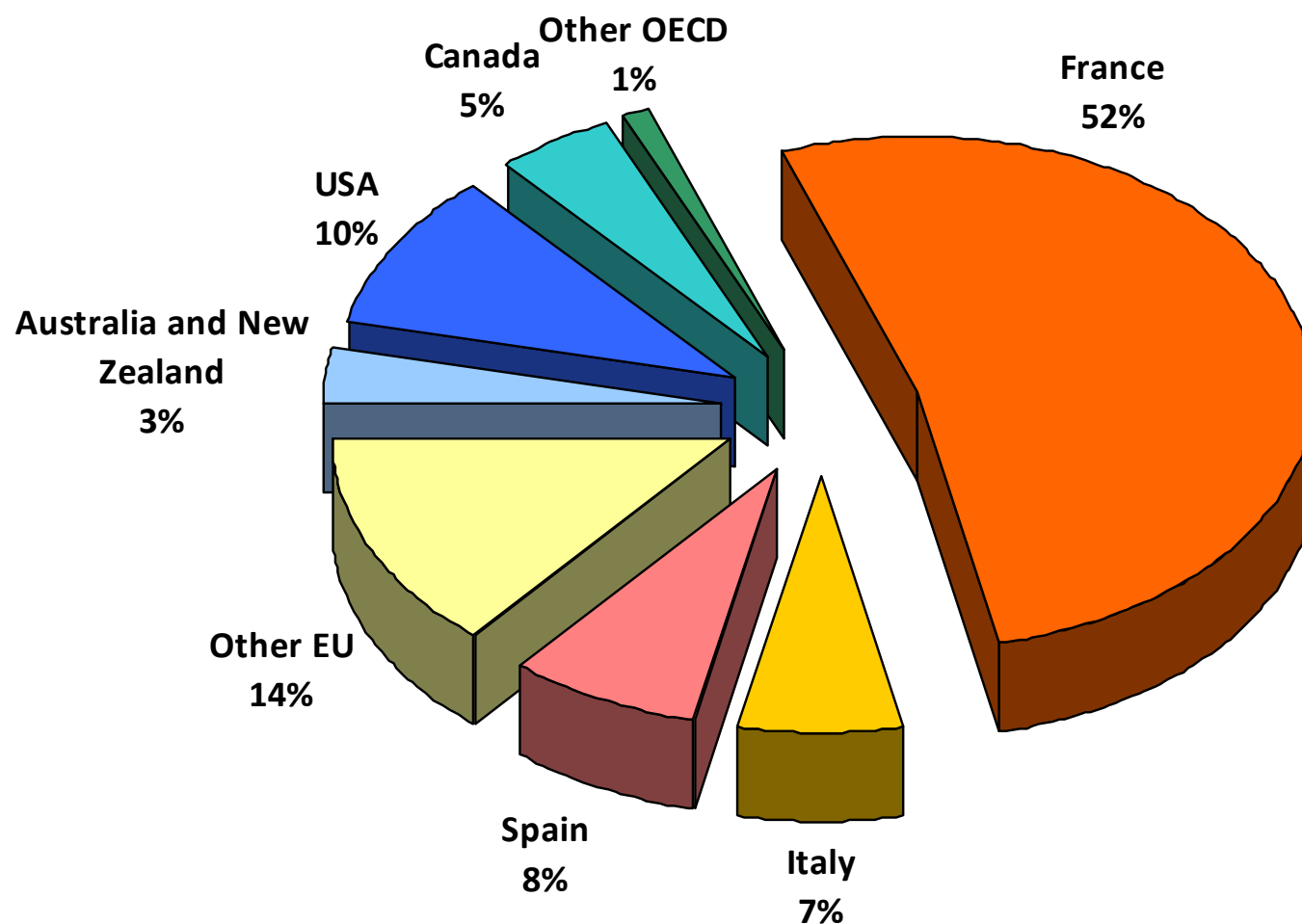
Distribution of Arab Migrants Globally



Source: Various sources compiled by IOM Cairo (2008)



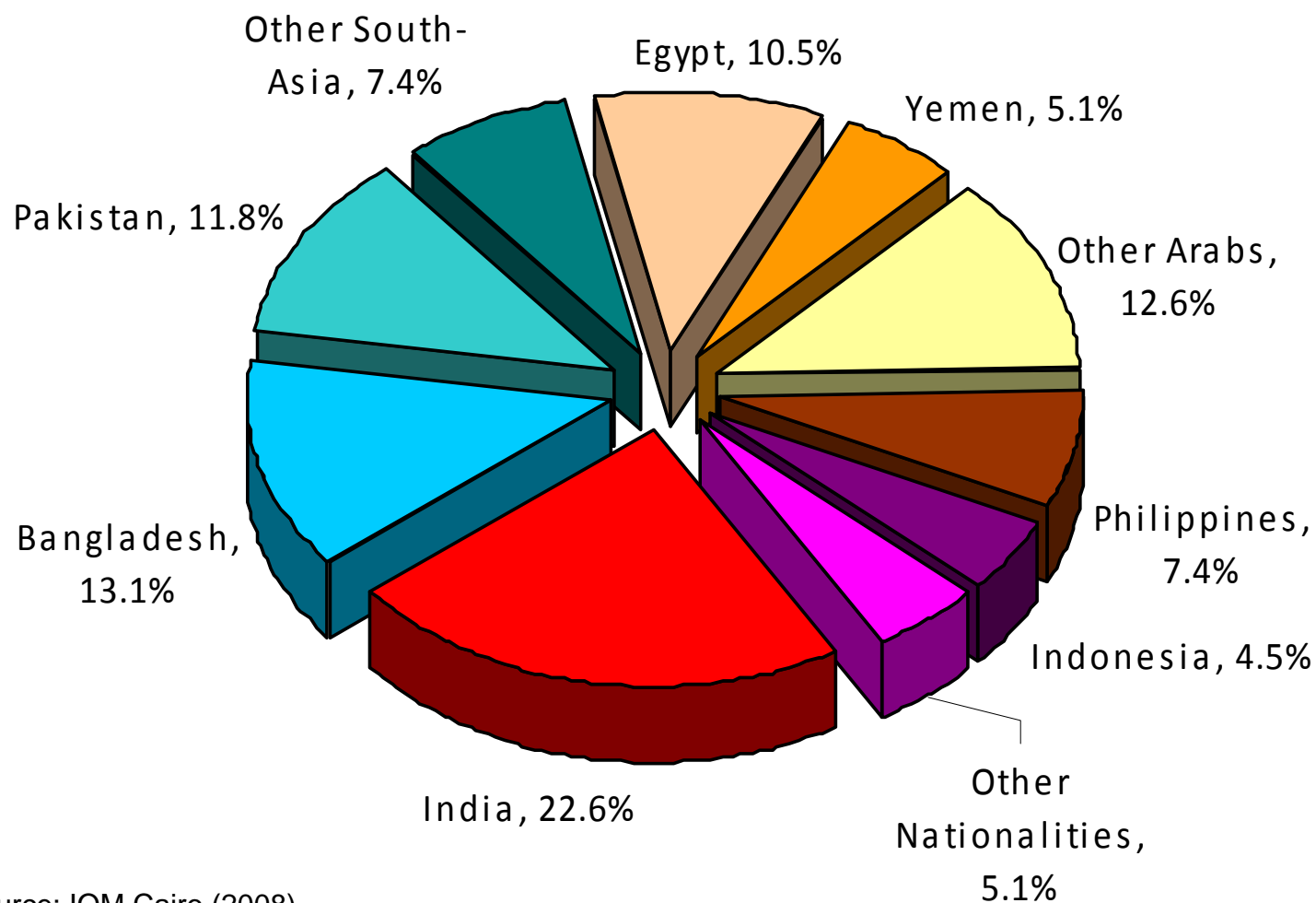
Distribution of Arab Migrants in OECD countries



Source: OECD compiled by IOM Cairo (2007).



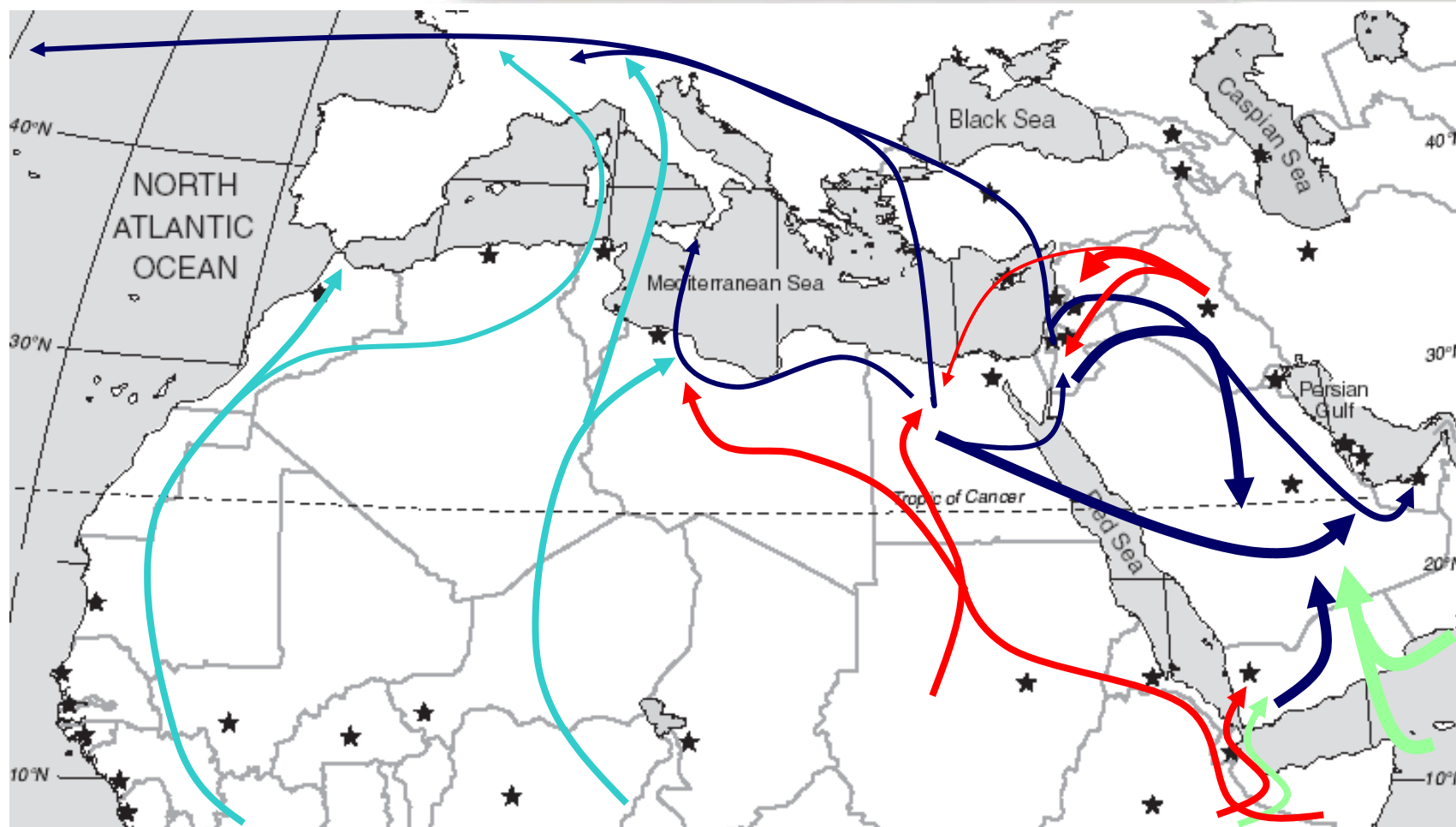
Foreign Workers in the GCC



Source: IOM Cairo (2008)



Migratory routes in the Arab Region



Irregular Migration from/through Maghreb



Forced Migration



Migration from Mashreq



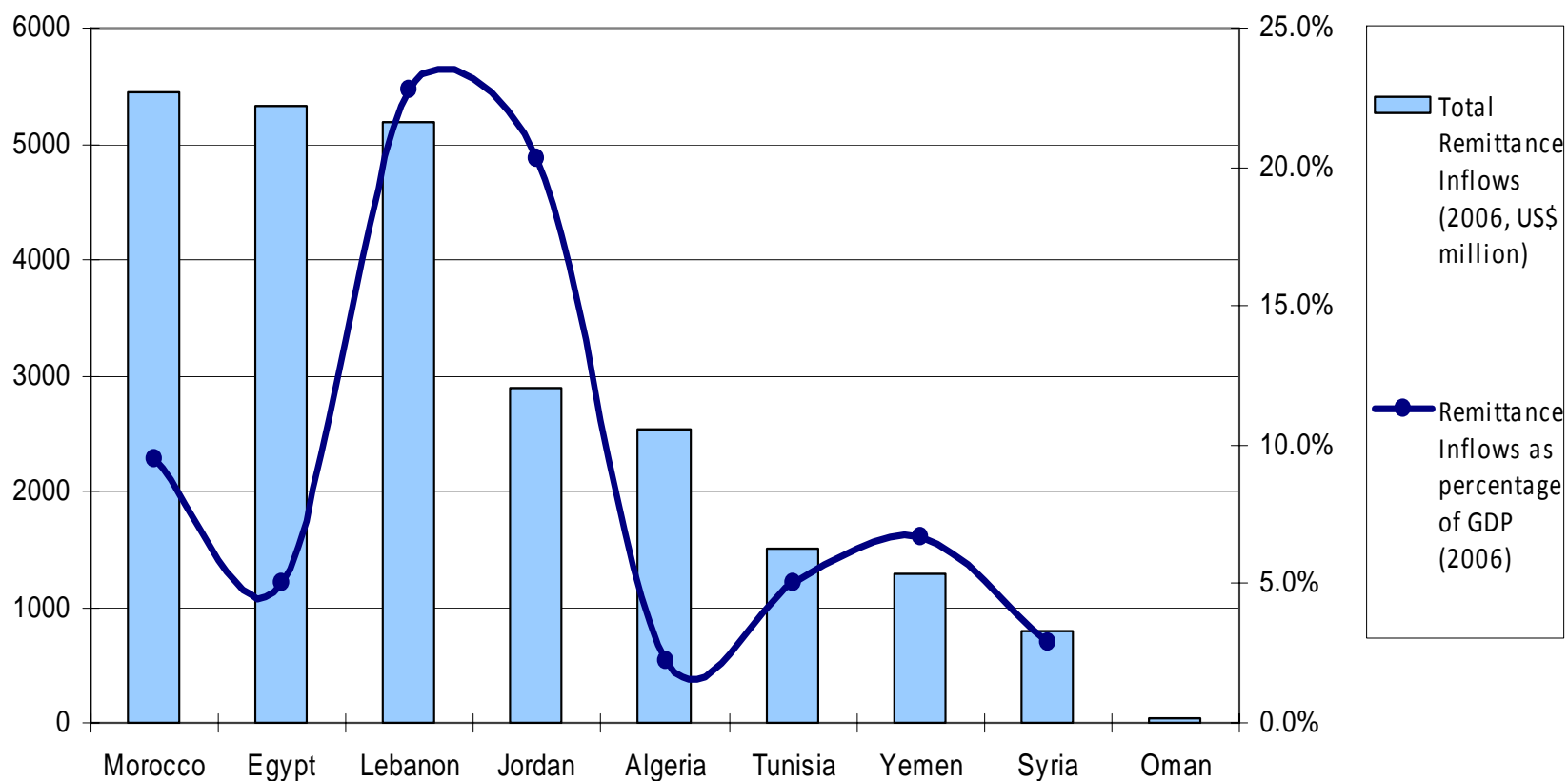
Labour Migration from other regions



Source: IOM Cairo (2008)



Remittances Inflows in Arab Countries

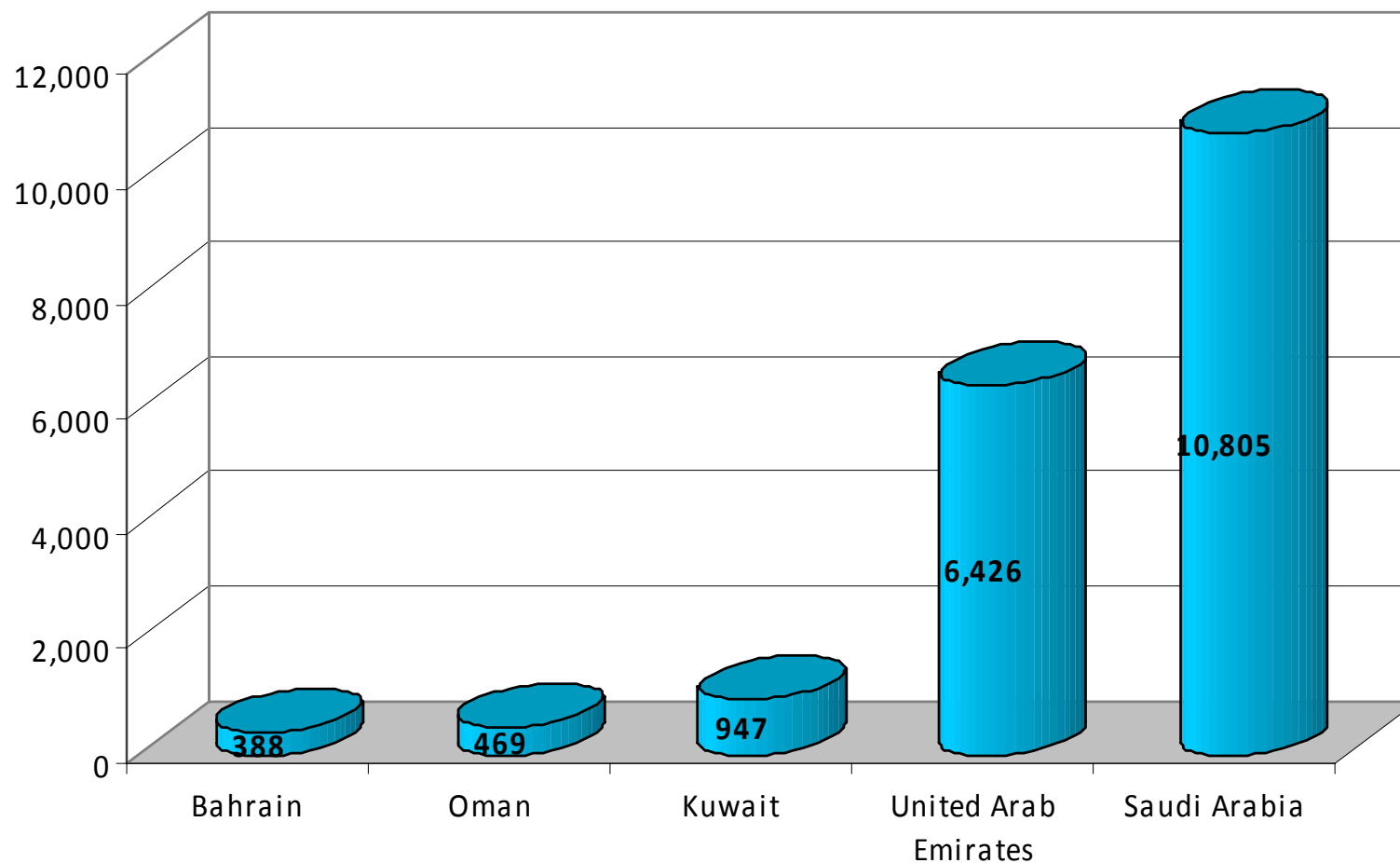


Source: World Bank (2008). Compiled by IOM Cairo.



Remittance Outflows from GCC

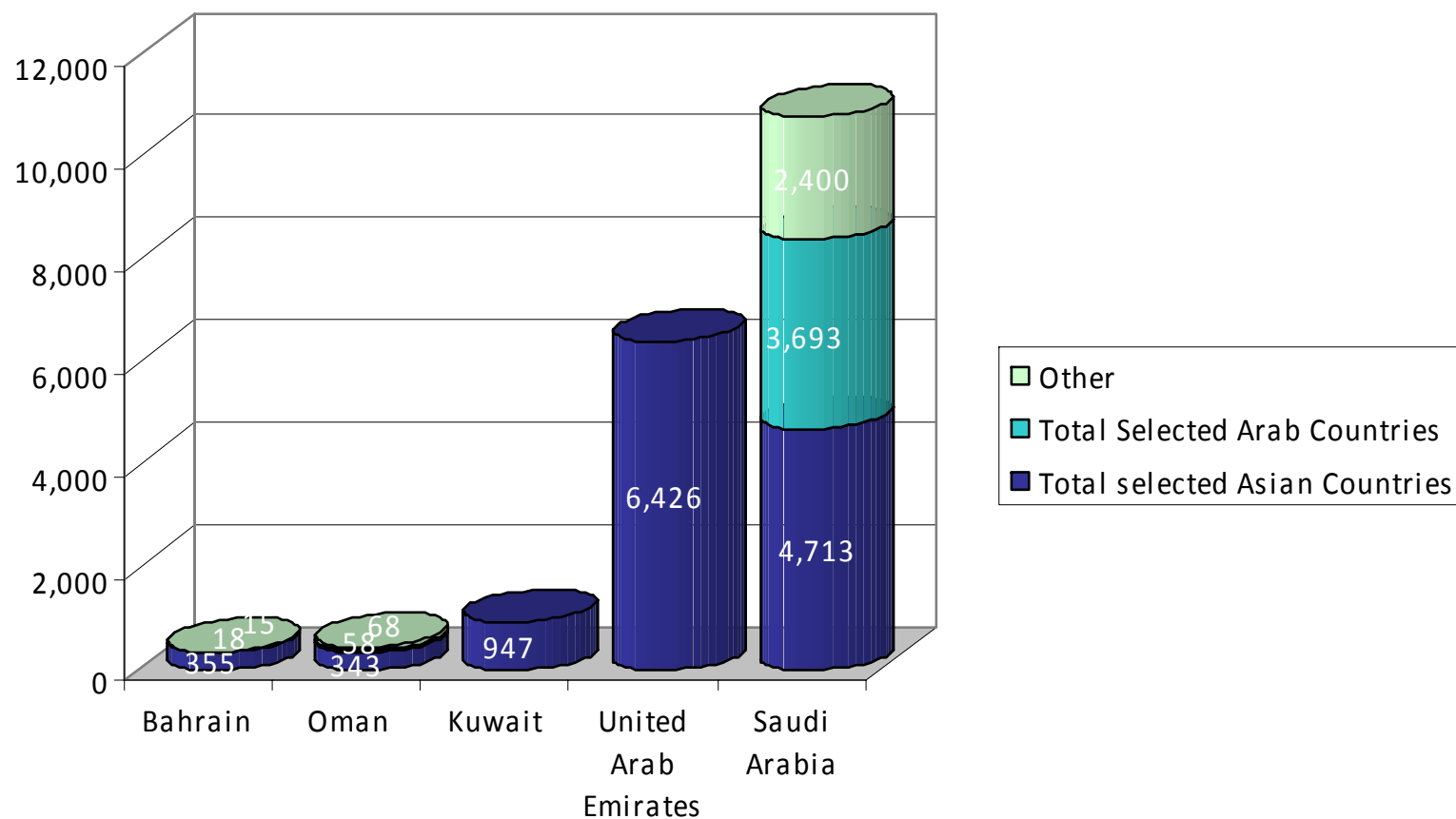
(in million USD)



Source: Refers to 2006. Estimates by World Bank (2008).



Destination of Remittance flowed from GCC



Source: In million USD. Refers to 2006. Estimates by World Bank (2008).



Challenges to Youth Mobility in Arab region

- Migration is yet to be considered as a development issue (not mainstreamed in policy/planning yet);
- Gaps in matching supply and demand of labour due to limitations of labour market;
- Limited choice to potential migrants from the region due to lack of individuals' capability and well functioning labour markets for migrant workers;
- Limited mechanism to ensure rights, wellbeing and protection of migrant labour;



Challenges to Youth Mobility in Arab region

- Addressing “imbalances” between nationals and non-nationals in GCC countries (policies of “localization”);
- Interactions between temporary contractual labour and host societies;
- Presence of large numbers of irregular migrants and inadequate data.



Mobility Management Structure

- Inadequate policy, legal instruments and administrative structure to manage migration/mobility in both origin and destination countries;
- Existence of two processes of mobility: one for the high-skilled and the other for low/semi-skilled creating gaps and “tensions”;
- Recruitment and placement (“Kafila” system) are primarily done by private sector which adds additional challenges;
- Regional dialogues are at a initial stage.



Conclusion

- Labour mobility across borders is a structural feature of the Arab economies, which has advanced regional integration over the past years;
- Arab region is experiencing great prospects for wealth creation, despite recent global economic crisis and recent slowdown in Arab economies;
- Centre of gravities of economic and population growth may move to Asian continent (GCC included);
- Global financial crisis adding further complexities;
- Mobility to and from Arab region expected to grow in the next two decades.



Conclusion

- These phenomena will affect Arab mobility system in general and individuals' migratory choices in particular (high demand of skilled/talented people);
- Wider and deeper Arab regional dialogue and initiatives for management of labour mobility could help addressing issues, priorities and concerns of both origin and destination Arab countries.



Thank You