

Labour Migration Patterns, Policies and Migration Propensity in the North African Countries

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Abstract

The phenomenon of migration expanded dramatically in the recent years, and this coincided with the rapid developments, which have defined the means of communication in various form. Migration has become pretence of significant challenges on many fronts - cultural, economic, demographic, political and social. Both the receiving and sending countries of migration take the migration phenomenon seriously and work hard on building policies to manage migration in line with the size of the data and figures. Expansion of migration processes and labor in the North African countries is getting more and more important for the European countries due to its long history and a large size. The article is aimed to explain the differences between the migration patterns of 5 North-African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) to explain the role of remittances for their economies and a rather different picture of migration based on thire history, culture and natural resources.

Key words: Labour migration North African countries, European Union

JEL Classification: F22, O15, R23

1 Introduction

Economists around the world have observed various different migration patterns recently. And those caused that the immigration and emigration movements have been developed and turned into a functional and active feature in terms of a number of various elements adding to incomparable quantities of migrants through extensive migration corridors in the world. On the other hand, the African continent has seen various significant migration transit patterns and corridors since the beginnings of human settlements. The movements comprise of legal and illegal ways of migration, which helped shape cultural, social and economic aspects of today's Africa. The inhabitants of the countries in North Africa have tendencies to migrate to the European Union territory because of its proximity and cultural and economi connestions. These countries form significant migration corridors also for transit migrants being at the same time receiving countries for the labour forces from the sub-Saharan Africa in the last years.

Moreover, all forms and patterns of the migration has recently become the scope of scientific examination and serious debates. The fast growing quantities of migrants and quick changes and evolution gave rise to communication channels. Migration has affected and influenced various aspects of society (e.g. culture, politics, social welfare and the like) in the countries of origin of the migrants and in the destination countries as well. Due to limited information on immigrants, transit and labour migrants, sometimes insufficient for assessment and sometimes

excessive to process, authorities and governments have been trying their best to set rules and make laws and policies to succeed in addressing, handling, dealing with and successfully coordinating the migration issue.

2 Theoretical Aspects of Migration

The concept of migration includes moving of residents from their home to another settlement or region based on their own will, done due to current situation and various other factors affecting the migrant's decision-making. Migration means a movement of residents from the place of their original domicile to another, usually in a country or region with higher standard of living. In other words, a migrant is an individual who is changing its place of usual residence and migrates to another state, region or city more or less often for various purposes and various lengths of stay in the receiving country.

Migration is one of the main aspects that vary and shape the demographics of a country. Fluctuations and variations in quantities and streams of migrants will cause the fluctuations and variations in **amounts** of inhabitants and other properties in the receiving and sending countries, states, territories. In general, migration can be classified in terms of two essential categories (Kc, 2003): internal and external (international).

The internal migration has a character of moving from one place (region, province, city, town, territory, settlement) to another inside the border of a state, country or territory. The concept of an internal migrant is assigned to an individual who changes his or her address of residence from a certain municipality to another one, or is moving from a city to rural area or vice versa. In general, the change in the number of inhabitants can be seen as a function of two variables. First variable is the natural increase of population/inhabitants in the designated region/country/state, which comprises of number of born children. The second variable is a number of people who died. Hence, the net value of migrants includes the relative quantities of immigrants and emigrants within the same country. Naturally, the total numbers of mortality and fertility usually vary gradually within a period and the number of inhabitants of a country or a region could rise or fall.

The external (international) migration is dealing with moving of citizens from one country to another one, so it means crossing international borderlines. The concept of an international migrant includes individuals who made a decision to leave their home country for a foreign country (Skeldon, 1997). International migration is a phenomenon that has impact on lives of inhabitants around the world. Why the people migrate? There are several categories of factors that contribute to world migration and the migration is at the same time a factor of host and sending countries, their economy, culture, politics, etc. Further, the international migration can be classified based on various criteria into three basic groups: legal, illegal migration and as a special case is usually considered the brain drain (OECD, 1998).

The migration as a settling down in another place means establishing a new home, social relations and business there. Legal migration is such a type of migration where migrants use official channels to migrate to a foreign country. It means that they gather all necessary data and documents required by authorities and laws, they follow the process according to the given rules and instructions and obtain visas and legal permission to stay in the foreign country (temporary or permanent residency permit). The immigration law is represented by

national rules, restriction and policies set by government agencies and authorities that have control over immigration to their territory. The immigration laws concerning foreign migrants or nationals are associated to nationality laws that regulate matters like status of an individual in terms of law.

Illegal migration is considered as a type of migration when migrants use unofficial channels to migrate to a foreign country without any legal documents permitting them to cross the borders of the host country or stay on its territory. There are various different definitions to describe an illegal immigrant. One of definitions describes an illegal migrant as a stranger who crosses the borderlines of a foreign country or resides there without any legal papers or status. Based on this definition, also the illegal migrants can be classified into two groups:

1. An illegal migrant who does not have any legal documents allowing him or her to enter the territory of the country of destination, but they do that in secret.
2. An illegal migrant who followed the regulations, passed all the procedures, obtained all the legal documents to enter the territory though, but he or she stayed there much longer than they were supposed to or broke certain migration condition and in the end, they live in the host country without any legal status or documents (Ahmad, 2007).

The Brain drain migration is not a matter of recent time, and it means a type of migration of professional and highly skilled labour forces from countries of worse economic and financial conditions to the foreign countries of better economic and financial situation. Levels of skills, education and literacy mean lower costs spent on investing in human resources migrating from poorer countries. Residents of poorer countries of higher level of education, literacy or expertise tend to migrate to richer countries with better working environment where there are higher salaries and social benefits. In other words, Brain drain is movement of skilled professional through international borderlines (Giannoccolo, 2004). People usually come from states in which they were offered only less-paid work opportunities and they decided to migrate to countries for a reason of more qualified and better-paid jobs. Flows of these professionals arrive in developed countries due to higher wages, better social benefits, better laboratory equipment, advanced technologies, grant opportunities, lack of specialists in developed countries.

Neoclassical economic theories of migration consider different wages as the basic reason for migration. It stands on assumption that people migrate so as they could enhance their living conditions. There is disequilibrium between need for and offer of workforces and salaries. The major claim of the neoclassical theory is focused on salaries. The newer theory of the new economics of migration is based on the existence of global imbalanced states in economy that allow people to decide in a rational way to take advantage of their social and economic capacity to the maximum extent. This theoretical proposal does not take into account the possibility that a person chooses the option on his or her own. Instead, it counts on involvement of family or the local community members in making it easy for migrants to cover the expenses and share the advantages (Terry-Ann J. 2009). The theory of world systems hints that migration has deep historical roots and dates back to colonial era and these relationships are kept by cultural and economic bonds between countries (OECD, 2009). The Social networks theory assumes that migrant networks present a system of bonds that link migrants, ex migrants and people who have never migrated abroad in the host and home countries by means of relationships between individuals and the descent of the community. Similar bonds rise the probability of international migration because they decrease expenses and risks of migration and rise the expected net earnings of migration. Network links create

certain type of social capital that migrants can turn to so that they could obtain a job in a foreign country. When the amounts of migrants are at a critical rate, boom of networks decreases the expenses and risks of migration. It increases likelihood of migration and leads to extra migration and the networks keep rising again (Massey et al, 2009).

3 The Migration and Demographics in the Countries of North Africa

There are distinct patterns in the demographic development of the countries of North Africa. Egypt and Algeria constantly deal with extremely fast growth of population, but Tunisia has already closed this chapter of its demographic development. The Egyptian population rose by 1.6 % each year from 2000 to 2010 and consisted of around 84.5 million inhabitants in 2010. The population of Algeria increased by 1.5 % during the same time and stood at over 35 million in 2010 in contrast to the population of Libya, over 6.5 million residents. Both Morocco and Tunisia went from 10.4 million in 2000 to 32.4 million in 2010. The official rates of population growth of North Africa countries move within a range of 0.9 and 1.6 %. The fertility rates of Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Morocco are higher than the one of Tunisia, which stands at 2 %. The infant and child mortality rates of the countries decreased by 30 to 40 per cent. Most of the Libya's population lives in urban areas, which is the highest rate of urbanization in comparison with other countries; it stood at 78 %. The rates of urbanization in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt were 68 %, 66.5 %, 59 % and 43.4 % respectively. The age distribution of population was quite similar in all countries. The population rate under 15 was fluctuating and it can be seen in Tab. 1.

Tab. 1 Demographic Indicators for North Africa countries in 2010

Index	Algeria	Egypt	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
Total population (million inhabitants, 2010)	35.4	84.5	6.5	32.4	10.4
Inhabitants of urban areas (percentage of total population)	66.5	43.4	77.9	58.7	67.3
Population growth rate (percentage, between 2000 and 2010)	1.5	1.6	1	0.9	0.9
Total fertility rate (number of children per woman)	2.5	3.2	3	2.5	2
Life expectancy at birth (2010)	72.9	70.5	74.5	71.8	74.3
Population under 15 years of age (percentage)	27	32	30	28	23
Median age	26.2	23.9	26.2	27.6	29.1
Infant mortality (per 1 000 live births)	36	22	17	36	16
employment to population ratio	39	44	49	45	41
Unemployment (percentage)	11.4	9.4	13.0	10.0	14.0
Number of emigrants (Thousand)	1,211	3,739	110,1	3,017	651,600
Number of immigrants (Thousand)	242,3	244,7	682,5	49,1	33,858

Own elaboration. Sources: Arab Human Development Report 2010, World Development Indicators 2010.

High rates of youth unemployment are also essential factors influencing willingness to migrate. The unemployment rates of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco were 14 %, 11.4 % and 10 % respectively in 2010. These data gives a hint on job opportunities in each region and residents are indirectly forced to leave their country for richer countries to get a job. Approximately 14 % of Egyptians and 20 % of Moroccans between 18 and 67 expressed their desires to migrate. There are vast Arab communities consisting of North African migrants around the world due to permanent emigration. The highest rate of emigrants is in Morocco,

counting for around 3.1 million people living abroad. Egypt is in the second place with its 2.7 million, Algeria has 1.4 million people and foreign Tunisians count for 840 thousand. The official statistics of the host countries estimates 40.4 % for Morocco, 23.9 % for Algeria, 47.6 % for Tunisia and 59.1 % for Egypt.

3.2 Labour migration to and from Algeria

France is the most favored destination for Algerian migrants (85% of the Algerian expatriates), other destination countries are Spain, Germany, Italy and Greece. Regional economic decline, conflicts and insecurity led also to a progressive reorientation of migrants' destination to Algeria, a context in which Algeria affirmed itself as a major alternative destination for people coming from West Africa (Atieno, Mitullah, 2010). Figure 1 shows the declining stock of migrations to Algeria from 1960 to 2010.

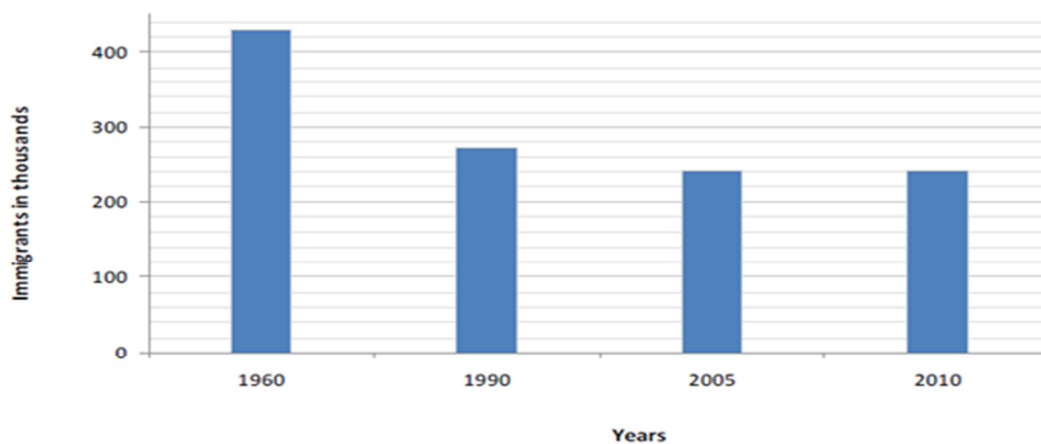


Fig. 1 Stock of migrations to Algeria from 1960 to 2010

Source: Human Development Report 2010

The remittances have played a major role in economic stability and economic policy for some time in Algeria. Estimates of the remittances sent to Algeria account for as much as 790 US\$ in 2000 increased to 2.460 million US\$ in 2004.

3.3 Labour migration to and from Egypt

Migrants in the Arab world represent more than two-thirds of the total Egyptian migrant stock. In the modern history of Egypt, the Egyptians interest in migration started in the mid-1950s. Egypt was a land of immigrants rather than emigrants. The contraction phase started by 1980, where more than one million Egyptians were laboring abroad and this number over than doubled by 1986 to an estimated 2.25 million. Nearly all Egyptian migrants in Iraq and Kuwait came back to Egypt because of the Iraq-Kuwait war in 1992 (Roushdy, Assaad, Rashed, 2009). Saudi Arabia is the largest host country for Egyptian migrants, with a share of 34 percent, followed by Libya (12 percent), Jordan, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Migration to the United States, Canada and Australia accounts for almost a fifth.

In terms of immigration, Egypt has been a destination for people escaping conflicts, persecution and natural catastrophes. The flow of refugees and asylum seekers started in the 1990s (Palestinian refugees and immigrants from Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea). Other nationalities come in smaller numbers from Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Yemen, and Burundi. In economic terms, Egypt is one of the top remittances receiving country in the world, it too has been classed among the top ten countries receiving remittances. Since mid-1970s to mid-1980s remittances witnessed a rising trend at a high rate (30.8% annually). This

rise reflected growth in oil prices (in 1974 and 1979) and corresponding demand for Egyptian workers (Roushdy, Assaad, Rashed, 2009). See Figure 2:

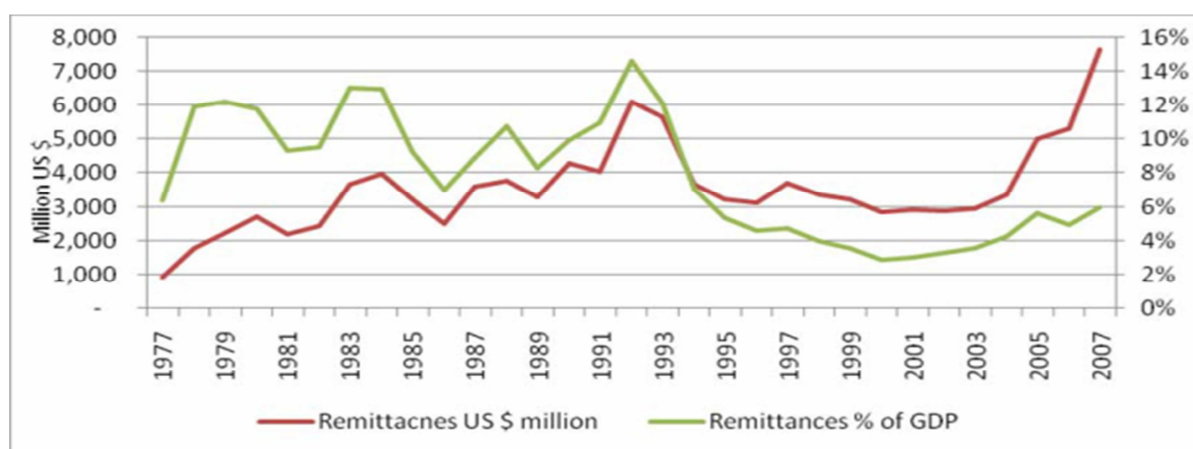


Fig. 2 Remittances trends in Egypt (Nominal and as percent of GDP)

Source: The World Bank 2010

After the second Gulf war In 1992/93, the remittances of Egyptian migrants amounted to more 6.1 million US\$ which constituted more than 14 percent of the GDP. The war caused a decrease for a period of several years, coming back to similar values in 2007 again, although representing only a smaller part of GDP.

3.4 Labour migration to and from Libya

Libya is not as migration country but it has been an important country of immigration, emigration was not an issue until the civil war. The largest host country for Libyan migrants is the United Kingdom (71 %), followed by the United States (8%) and Germany (7%) (Di Bartolomeo, Thibaut, Perrin, 2011). Since the 1970s the numbers of migrants have increased massively in Libya, the rise of the oil export revenue and implementation of economic and social programs, attracted immigrants, particularly those from Tunisia and Egypt. After 1995, Libya remained an important destination for Arab and African migrants, especially those attempting to reach Southern Europe, with a community worth 750,000-1.5 million people. In the year 2004, the highest number of foreigners residing legally and illegally in Libya, was from Egypt, Sudan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia [ICMPD , 2010, Abdelfattah, 2011). Estimates in 2010 suppose the stock of immigrants in Libya formed 10.4% of the total resident population in Libya.

Libya used to be a labor-receiving country what can be seen in the table 2 showing the volume of remittances inward and outward to Libya by their emigrants during the period 2000-2010 in US\$ millions.

Tab. 2 Remittances trends in Libya in US\$ millions/year

Remittances	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Inward	9	10	7	8	10	15	16	16	16	14	16
Outward	463	683	694	676	975	914	945	762	964	1	1,361

Source: the World Bank 2010

3.5 Labour migration to and from Morocco

Morocco stays a main sender country of migrants in North Africa. In 1960s the emigration of Moroccans was primarily oriented towards France, later to Netherlands and Belgium as well. The number of Moroccan migrants living abroad more than doubled from 1.5 million in 1993 to around 3.3 million in 2007. In Europe resided 86% of Moroccan migrants (France 34.3%, Spain 16.6% and Italy 11.5%). In 2010, the highest increase was in Spain and Canada. For Sub-Saharan migrants Morocco has become a main destination but the migrants aimed to cross the Mediterranean from the Moroccan coastline to reach Europe (mainly from Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Nigeria, and Ghana). It is clear that remittances have played a significant part in supporting domestic economies and infrastructure development. may it has had a substantial reflections and effects on economy, it is one way to ensure the continued flow of this capital, also it substantially contribute to income growth and foreign currency it have been a vital tool for poverty alleviation and decrease unemployment in Morocco. The main source of economic remittances for Morocco is France, Spain, and Italy, where the Moroccan migrant communities are the largest.

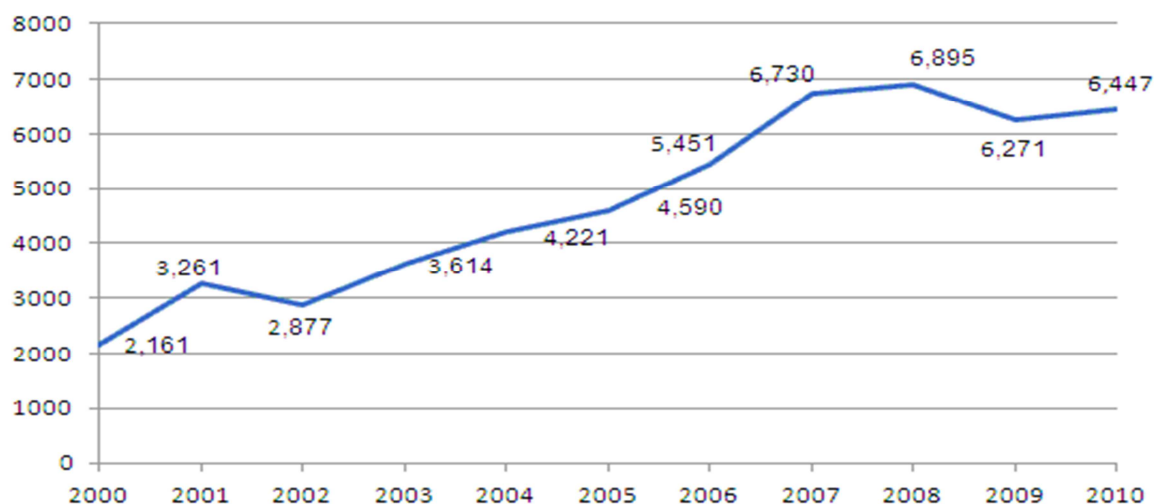


Fig. 3 Inward remittances flows to Morocco between 2000 to 2010

Source: The World Bank

It is likely that remittances will remain a vital source of income (for Moroccan households) and foreign exchange (for the Moroccan state) in the near future.

3.6 Labour migration to and from Tunisia

Tunisian emigration begun with the same as type of approach as Moroccan emigration in the end of 1960s, it was mainly directed to some European countries, and where France, Germany and Belgium was an important destination for the Tunisian emigration in that period. The agreements with some European countries in 1960s expected that persons will migrate temporarily to labour abroad and finally return to homeland to live with their families (Mesnard, 2004). Since the 1980s, with the prominence of new migrant generations, the installation of Tunisian emigration has changed too.

As regards immigration, Tunisia does not host large numbers of regular migrants. Indeed, they represent a very small proportion of the total resident population (0.4%) has not changed greatly since the 1970s. However, since the 1990s, Tunisia has evolved into an important transit country receiving flows – mainly from Sub-Saharan countries – attempting to reach southern Italy from the Tunisian coasts. Remittances play an important role in the Tunisian

economy, surging about 796 thousands US\$ in 2000 to over 1 million US\$ in 2002 and in 1,960 million in 2010. The migration brought in remittances estimated at 5 percent of GDP. On the other hand the outflows of remittances were equivalent to 0.1 percent of GDP in 2005.

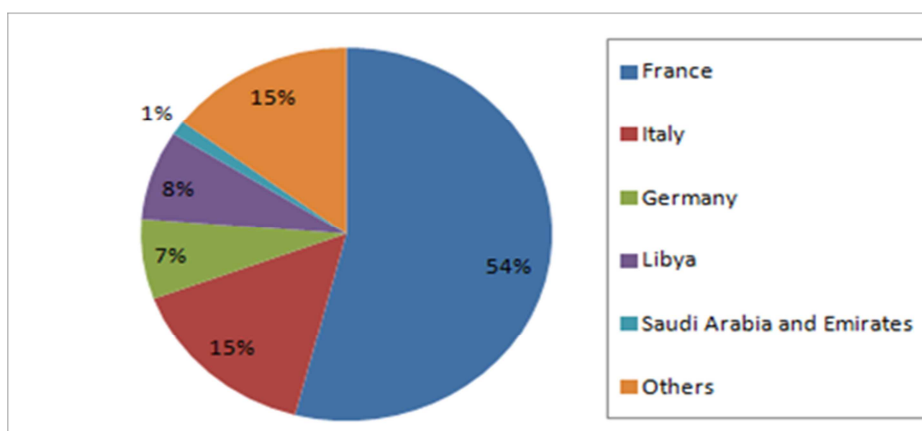


Fig. 4 Countries of destination of Tunisian emigrants 2009

Source: The World Bank

Regarding the use of remittances in Tunisia, the greatest impact is concentrated in improving conditions living conditions for migrants' families, and to the development of certain professions related to the housing sector, the sector also agriculture benefited from migrants' remittances in the form of increasing the cultivated area and renovation tools production used.

4 Conclusions

The phenomenon of international migration is seen as an issue concerning society, economy and ethnic structure and it is influenced by internal together with external determinants. The migration development in the North Africa is in a transformation during the last ten years due to Arab spring, attitudes to immigrants in the European Union. Also the immigration structure is characterized by rising rates of immigration from the states situated in the sub-sahara region to the countries of North Africa, which became a transit area for residents of the Sahara region and Asians whose main goal is to get to Europe.

The considerable diversity among the North Africa countries regarding changes of stocks of migrant residents abroad and the role of remittances has been described and demonstrated. Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia experienced significant increases in the stocks of their expatriates abroad. Libya recorded only a small number of citizens residing abroad in the studied period 1950-2010. However, this is changing because of one of the push emigration factors – war and social conflicts. A substantial share of the populations from North Africa countries lives abroad, prevalently in the European Mediterranean countries, United Kingdom and Germany. It is estimated that there are approximately 8 million people who were born in North Africa and are staying and working in a foreign country at the beginning of the 21st century; around 4.7 million North African workers are presently employed in the member states of the European Union and about 2.7 million are residing in the Arab oil exporting countries.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by grant of the Slovak Grant Agency VEGA No 1/0454/15: Redefining regional development - moving towards resilient regions.

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