

**Forum:** Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

**Issue:** Eliminating “brain drain” from developing nations.

**Student Officer:** Maria Karatoliou

**Position:** Deputy President

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## Personal Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Maria Karatoliou, I am a student in the 12th grade of the Anavryta Model Lyceum and it is my honor to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents of the Economic and Social Council on Eliminating “brain drain” from developing nations in the 8<sup>th</sup> session of CSMUN. I attended my first conference a little less than three years ago, and up to this day I have attended 10 conferences in total.

The institution of Model UN has played an important role in my everyday life. What I find most intriguing about MUN conferences is that one gets to take action on global issues in one’s own hands, one has the opportunity to interact with completely different people from all over the world, and learn from them as they learn from said person. MUN helps people step out of their comfort zone therefore evolve themselves as they broaden their horizons and strengthen their sense of unity and solidarity.

Therefore, I look forward to serving as Deputy President. I would like to remind you, that this study guide has been made to provide a comprehensive summary of most, yet not all, essential information on this topic, therefore you should make your own research in order to be fully informed about it. If you have any questions regarding this study guide, our topic, your delegation’s policy or the rules of procedure in general, do not hesitate to contact me via my email: [maria.karatoliou@gmail.com](mailto:maria.karatoliou@gmail.com)

With that being said, I would like to welcome you to the 8<sup>th</sup> CSMUN conference and assure you that it will be an unforgettable experience that you will look back to and cherish.

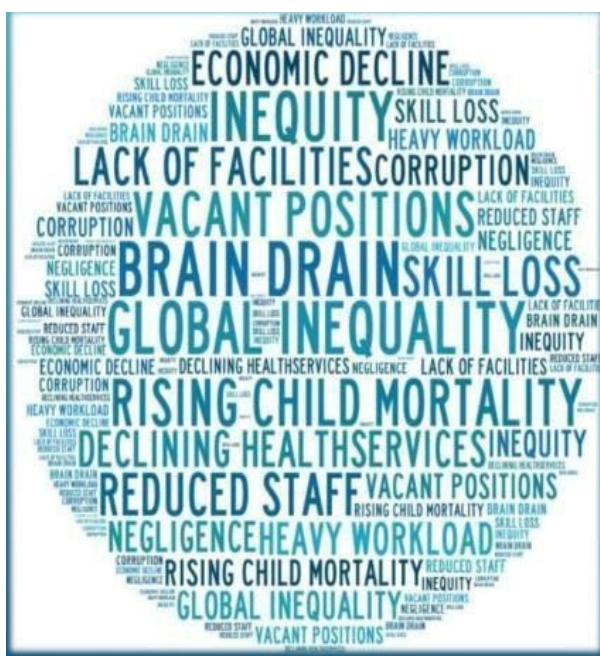
I'm very much looking forward to meeting you all in October!

Sincerely,

Maria Karatoliou

## Topic Introduction

Brain drain (also known as human capital flight's negative effects) , is the emigration of usually educated people from one country's economic sector, or field to another who usually offers greater opportunities, better pay and living conditions. The countries in which people emigrate, experience the benefits of the highly trained, foreign-born professionals



entering, brain gain (positive effects of human capital flight). Brain drain occurs because of a number of factors such as political condition, standards of living, employment and career opportunities and many more. <sup>1</sup>

When focusing on developing countries, brain drain can be a boon or a curse depending on the country's characteristics and policy objectives, but it's safe to say that for the developing countries the negatives outnumber the positives.

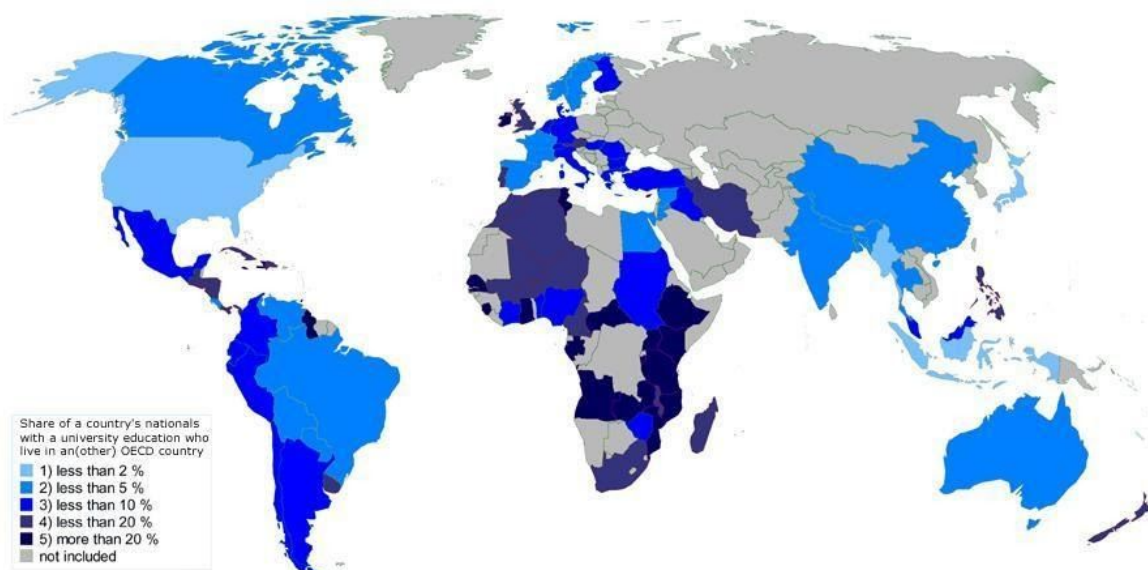
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<sup>1</sup> Darshit "Brain Drain." LinkedIn SlideShare, 31 Oct. 2015, [www.slideshare.net/darhit/brain-drain-54600214](http://www.slideshare.net/darhit/brain-drain-54600214).

Brain drain leads to loss of investment on education and a fall in the standard of education, which later leads to loss of revenue, leadership crisis in the country, loss of skilled labor and general reduction of chances of development in the country.

Some would ask how brain drain can have positive impacts when talking about developing countries. Brain drain could actually help maximize the income level, also it reduces international transaction costs, and generates benefits in source countries from returnees.

Summing up, brain drain actually provides the developed nations educated and qualified human capital while at the same time degrades the socioeconomic development of developing nations. It has reached an all-time high and not enough actions have been taken to combat this issue. Prejudicing about 100 countries, it has become a serious case on the world scale and it should therefore be gazed at with all attention needed.



### A world overview of brain drain

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<sup>24</sup> "Is the Brain Drain Phenomenon in the US Worse than Ever?" Quora, [www.quora.com/Is-the-brain-drain-phenomenon-in-the-US-worse-than-ever](https://www.quora.com/Is-the-brain-drain-phenomenon-in-the-US-worse-than-ever)

## Definition of key terms

### Brain drain

The loss of skilled intellectual and technical labor through the movement of such labor to more favorable geographic, economic, or professional environments<sup>3</sup>.

### Brain gain

An increase in the number of highly trained, foreign-born professionals entering a country to live and work where greater opportunities are offered.<sup>4</sup>

### Human capital

A measure of the skills, education, capacity and attributes of labor which influence their productivity.<sup>5</sup>

### Emigration

The act of leaving a resident country or place of residence with the intent to settle elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Human Capital Flight.” The Free Dictionary, Farlex, [www.thefreedictionary.com/Human+capital+flight](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Human+capital+flight).

<sup>4</sup> “Brain Gain.” Dictionary.com, Dictionary.com, [www.dictionary.com/browse/brain-gain#:~:text=brain%20gain.%20noun.%20an%20increase%20in%20the%20number.live%20and%20work%20where%20greater%20opportunities%20are%20offered](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/brain-gain#:~:text=brain%20gain.%20noun.%20an%20increase%20in%20the%20number.live%20and%20work%20where%20greater%20opportunities%20are%20offered).

<sup>5</sup> Pettinger, Tejvan, et al. “Human Capital Definition and Importance.” Economics Help, 28 Nov. 2019, [www.economicshelp.org/blog/26076/economics/human-capital-definition-and-importance/](http://www.economicshelp.org/blog/26076/economics/human-capital-definition-and-importance/).

<sup>6</sup> “Emigration.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 14 June 2020, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emigration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emigration)

## Immigration

The process through which individuals become permanent residents or citizens of another country. The main difference between immigration and emigration is that immigration focuses on the act of entering a country whereas emigration refers to the act of leaving the country.<sup>7</sup>

## Developing countries

Countries with a less developed industrial base and a low Human Development Index (HDI).<sup>8</sup>

## Developed countries

Countries that have a developed economy and advanced technological infrastructure relative to other less industrialized nations.<sup>9</sup>

## Reverse Brain Drain

Form of brain drain where professionals move from a more developed country to a less developed country.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> “Immigration.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 16 July 2020, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration)

<sup>8</sup> “Developing Country.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 6 July, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developing\\_country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developing_country)

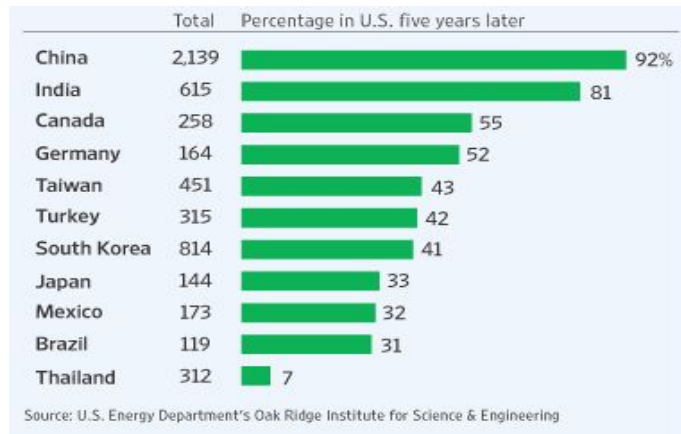
<sup>9</sup> “Developed Country.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 24 July 2020, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developed\\_country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developed_country)

<sup>10</sup> “Reverse Brain Drain.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 29 May 2020, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse\\_brain\\_drain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse_brain_drain)

## Background Information

### PART A: Brain drain through history

Each year there are over 180.000 well-educated individuals leaving their country of origin due to a poor job market or oppressive social conditions. In the year 2000, 65 million people were economically active outside their own country and over 60% of them were classed as ‘high-skilled’.<sup>11</sup> This human capital flight, also known as ‘Brain Drain’, has been a rising issue for many developing countries.



Percentage of foreigners receiving science and engineering diplomas who were in the U.S. in 2007

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Although the emigration of the leaving professionals has provided skilled individuals to the receiving country, also known as ‘Brain Gain’, it is commonly known that the developed countries do not need the rise of skilled labor as much as the developing countries. However, in some cases human capital flight has some benefits for the countries of origin due to remittances and return migration of individuals that have seen a growth in skills.

Brain drain as a term was first coined by the Royal Society to describe scientists and educated labor leaving war-torn Europe and immigrating to North America. Serious concerns came in the early-90s after the fall of the Soviet Union when a huge brain drain started from the Eastern European countries and since then brain drain has been present all around the world.

<sup>11</sup> “The Brain Drain from Developing Countries.” IZA World of Labor, 2014, <https://wol.iza.org/uploads/articles/31/pdfs/brain-drain-from-developing-countries.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Staying after School. 2010, [https://trak.in/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Reverse\\_Brain\\_Drain.gif](https://trak.in/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Reverse_Brain_Drain.gif)

Developing countries have been facing extensive human capital flight, since increased globalization created more ease and prevalence of migration. Brain drain can be divided in two main categories

#### Internal brain drain

When a professional leaves his profession and pursues a profession in a different, usually more lucrative labor sector .For example a teacher leaves his profession and joins a more lucrative establishment such as the banking industry.

#### External brain drain

When a professional leaves his country to live and work in a foreign country which usually offers him better job opportunities. External brain drain is the most common type in developing countries and is the main focus of this study guide. External brain drain also includes two different categories of brain drain, geographic and organizational.

Geographic brain drain happens when talented professionals flee one country or region within a country in favor of another due to environmental issues or unsafe areas they find themselves in. Whereas, organizational or industrial brain drain concerns the mass exodus of talented workers from a company, often because they sense instability, a lack of opportunity within the company, or they may feel that they can achieve their career goals more easily at another company.

### PART B: Push and Pull factors of brain drain

Brain drain usually occurs due to a variety of factors that we can divide in to push and pull factors. Push factors are those that force people to leave a country and pull are those that make them want to move there. Usually the

push and pull factors of brain drain are economic, political, environmentally and cultural based. Here are some examples.

#### Political instability

Political instability is a major factor that leads people to leave their country. They feel unsure about their future and they lack perspectives of professional development . Especially when focusing on educated and skilled people , they are looking for a stable environment to practice their skills and create a career so they tend to choose countries that have political stability which makes them offer the above perspectives. For example Nazism in Germany was a political push factor for the persecuted intellectuals.

#### Struggling economies and living conditions

With the developing countries already struggling with their economies, they have to deal with the mass exportation of individuals, who were contributing largely to their country's gross domestic product. Main reasons include higher income and better opportunities in the developed countries. In addition to that, the individuals moving into the developed countries now contribute to the gross domestic product of an economy that is already prosperous, thus further widening the difference of the GDP among countries. This course of action could lead to many more skilled individuals leaving their country of origin due to the negative effects the human capital flight has on the living conditions.

#### International wage gaps

International wage gaps (the difference in earnings between professionals of the same sector in different countries) are one of the most important pull factors for individuals to emigrate, resulting in a vicious circle. Subsequently there's less tax revenue, because of losing income tax, which results in a rise in dependency ratio (the number of pensioners to the working-age population).



### Low tax rate

Low tax rate countries are preferred by businesses as the economic costs of taxation are reduced. Countries with low tax rates such as countries of the middle east are usually the ones that attract huge numbers of professionals and educated people that are looking to start businesses.

### The role of gender in workplace

Gender plays an important role in the workplace and even today there can be discrimination between the two genders when searching for a job. Perfect examples of discriminatory behavior between genders in the workplace are the gender wage gaps , diminished responsibilities , the difference in interview questions , positional bias. Conservative gender based attitudes in certain countries push educated individuals away while less hostile and socially-liberal countries pull them in.

## PART C: Effects of brain drain in developing countries

### Economy

The reason why developing nations are having so much trouble becoming a developed nation is that they are being denied their biggest asset, which is their skilled people. Research on migration patterns between the 1960s and 1990s indicates that high levels of skilled migration contributed to slowing economic growth and development of sending countries, increasing inequality and poverty (UWN, 2017).

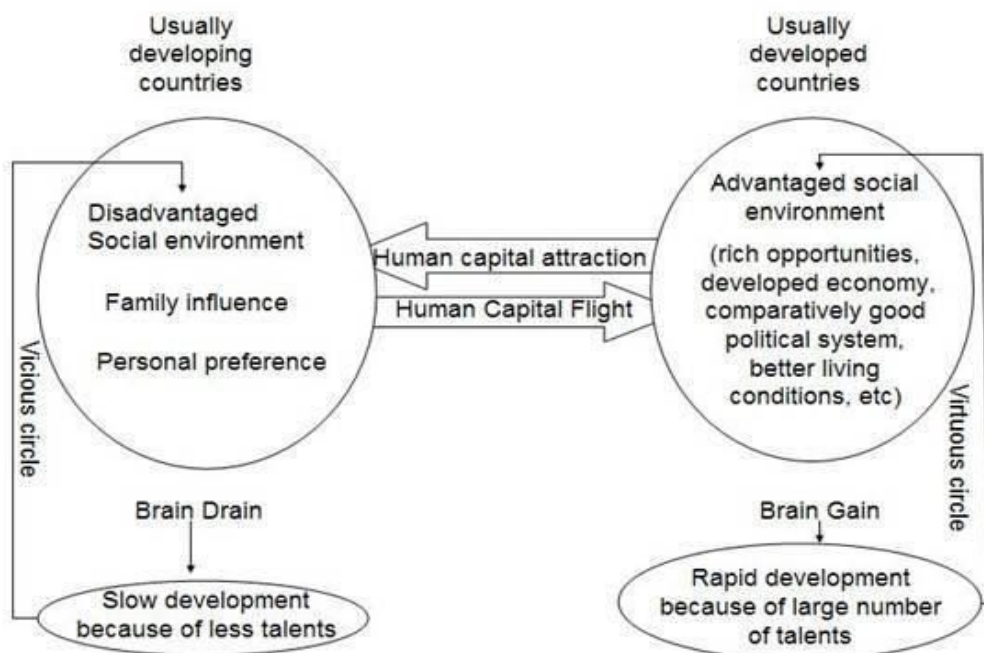
### Public services

Brain drain does not only impact the economy of a country but it also impacts the quality of its public services, taking for example healthcare , as a

huge percentage of the migrating human resources are skilled doctors and healthcare providers.

### Investment opportunities

With a lack of skilled doctors in a developing country, more diseases would spread and fewer people would be treated further increasing the death toll in a country and decreasing the number of its citizens as well. Brain drain plays a factor in almost every major issue in a developing country.



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Model of the 'brain drain/gain' phenomenon

<sup>13</sup> "Process of Brain Drain ." Wikipedia, 2016, [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/70/Diagram\\_showing\\_the\\_process\\_of\\_brain\\_drain.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/70/Diagram_showing_the_process_of_brain_drain.jpg)

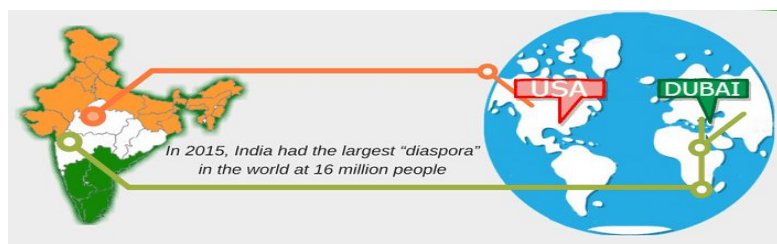
## Major countries and organizations involved

### United States of America

Probably one of the biggest countries that saw the benefits of ‘Brain Gain’. In the United States, the number of tertiary-educated residents born in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) rose by 78.7 percent between 2000 and 2010.<sup>14</sup> The United States of America has been the dream destination of many scientists and researchers from foreign countries. Although the United States of America has a net influx of talented, well-educated individuals, the risk is always there for the United States to also suffer from human capital flight due to recent policies.

### India

India is one of the most brain drain affected countries. Although it is not affected by the push factor of political instability, India is still the top country for the immigration of scientists and doctors with 9,50,000 professionals immigrating from India to the United States of



Brain drain from India 15

America out of Asia's total 2.6 million<sup>16</sup>. As well as being a developing country, India has problems such as unemployment, lack of opportunities

<sup>14</sup> U Nited N Ations Conferen c e on T Rade A Nd D Evelopment, 2012, pp. 1–136, *THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REPORT*, [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ldc2012\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ldc2012_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Honawar, Ashwin, et al. “Brain Drain from India: An Overview.” *Sure Job*, 21 June 2019, <https://surejob.in/brain-drain.html>

<sup>16</sup> Chaturvedi, Naina. “India Sends The Largest Number Of Engineers, Scientists To The US, Says Report.” *HuffPost India*, HuffPost India, 15 July 2016, [www.huffingtonpost.in/2016/01/14/india-engineers-us\\_n\\_8977074.html?guccounter=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2016/01/14/india-engineers-us_n_8977074.html?guccounter=1).

causing the skilled and educated people to leave the country in the hunt for better job opportunities.<sup>17</sup>

## China

China is the one of the biggest countries being negatively affected by human capital flight. Massive amounts of students coming from China have chosen to study abroad. However China appears to have successfully reversed a “brain drain” among high-skilled individuals who have gone overseas. Now many of China’s most qualified and best skilled individuals decide to stay as higher pay packages and changing perceptions of domestic scientists and researchers increase the appeal of local jobs.

## Syria

Syria who has been crucially affected by the Syrian civil war both in the economic and the social sector is now facing brain drain as the war leads all the educated and skilled people to leave the country. By 2014, a year before the exodus of Syrians to Europe, the UN figures showed that Syria’s per person GDP had regressed to \$1,820.<sup>18</sup> So, only the educated and wealthy could leave the country.

## African Union

Some African countries due to their tough living condition which include low salary, political instability and health crisis, have risen to the top of the list of the countries facing brain drain. It also has been estimated more African

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<sup>17</sup>Brain Drain From India. 2017, [https://surejob.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/brain\\_drain.png](https://surejob.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/brain_drain.png)

<sup>18</sup> Kramer, Leslie. “What Is GDP and Why Is It So Important to Economists and Investors?” Investopedia, Investopedia, 1 June 2020, [www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/what-is-gdp-why-its-important-to-economists-investors/](http://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/what-is-gdp-why-its-important-to-economists-investors/).

scientists and engineers live in the United States of America and the United Kingdom than anywhere else in the world.<sup>19</sup>

## Timeline of events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
1940	Human capital flight first emerged as a major public concern.
1945-1975	The emigration of many medicals from Europe has seen the World Health Organization set up a detailed report in the late 70's, which concluded that over 90% of medicals that emigrated from Europe moved to North America.
December 1951	Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (PICMME) creation nowadays IOM).
1963	Brain drain first used as a term by the Royal Society.
December 1991	The fall of the Soviet Union has seen the emigration of many highly skilled individuals from the Eastern European countries, which had gained sovereignty.
April 1979	The anti-royal revolution happened in Iran increasing the number of people leaving the country.
2000	First World Migration Report from the International Organization For Migration (IOM).
July 2003	UNESCO Project on the International Migrants' Rights Convention Established.
2006	The World Health Organization (WHO) published a report which assessed the effects of brain drain in the healthcare industry.
2009	Migration and Climate Change project established, Skilled Migration and Brain Drain project established.

<sup>19</sup> "More U.S. Scientists and Engineers Are Foreign-Born." Population Reference Bureau, 2011, [www.prb.org/usforeignbornstem/](http://www.prb.org/usforeignbornstem/).

June 2014	Syrian exodus which leads in increased brain drain in the country.
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## Previous attempts to solve the issue

There have not been many attempts in the past to solve the issue, due to many countries not recognizing how great of an effect this problem has on their economies.

## The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Several countries such as Canada and Germany that are part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) whose goal is “to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world” have made policies to deal with the brain drain crisis.<sup>20</sup> Several of those policies are related to immigration and visa rules. In January 2002, the UK government announced it would launch a skills-based migration program and similar schemes exist in Australia and New Zealand.

## United Kingdom Actions

In 2005 the United Kingdom, which is affected by brain gain, announced that they would toughen their code on international recruitment. This revised code restricts recruitment from over 150 developing countries. The code also prevents hospitals from actively recruiting nurses and other health-care professionals from developing countries and extends the obligations to the private sector as well as the UK National Health Service (NHS), thus closing a major loophole

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<sup>20</sup> OECD, [www.oecd.org/](http://www.oecd.org/).

## Reintegration of Qualified African Nations (RQAN)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) set up the Reintegration of Qualified African Nations (RQAN) in 1995. It was a program which helped eleven target countries in Africa tackle their emigration problem. One of their goals was to enhance the role and utilization of highly qualified and skilled African personnel in the development process of participating countries. In their program they focused on identifying priority employment sectors who needed strengthening, including self-employment opportunities as well as other main activities.

## World Health Report

The World Health Report 2006 - Working Together for Health, published by WHO, contains precise estimations of the current crisis in the global medical workforce. The study reveals an amount of 4.3 million doctors, nurses and support workers, with peaks of intensity in sub Saharan Africa's countries, where medical field employments need to be filled.<sup>21</sup>

## Relevant UN resolutions , Events ,Treaties and Legislation

### The World Health Report 2006 – Working Together for Health

Published by WHO, contains precise estimations of the current crisis in the global medical workforce. The study reveals an amount of 4.3 million doctors, nurses and support workers, with peaks of intensity in subSaharan Africa's countries, where medical field employments need to be filled.

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<sup>21</sup> World Health Organization, 2006, pp. 1–209, *The World Health Report*, [https://www.who.int/whr/2006/whr06\\_en.pdf?ua=1](https://www.who.int/whr/2006/whr06_en.pdf?ua=1)

### WHO Global Code of Practice & the EC Brain Drain to Brain Gain Project

The Global Health Workforce Alliance and the Health Workforce Department of the WHO launched a project, supported by the European Commission and co-funded by Norad. From Brain drain to brain gain - Supporting WHO Code of Practice on International Recruitment of Health Personnel for Better Management of Health Worker Migration has the main objective of improving the management of migration flows from sub-Saharan Africa and Asian countries towards Europe with a special emphasis on the management of labor migration of health personnel.

### The International Convention on Migrant Workers

The International Convention on Migrant Workers and its Committee held its first session in March 2004. It is formed by a body of independent professionals that monitors implementation aiming at safeguarding workers rights from potential violation

## Possible solutions

It is important to understand the issue of brain drain and how it affects the world and global prosperity. Long-term solutions are needed to make an actual difference in the condition of the nation.

### Long term government intervention

Government intervention is required to improve job prospects for highly educated youth in their country. New age, brain-based business sectors must be funded and encouraged by long-term public-sector policies.

Long term programs of intellectual exchange students and professionals between LEDCs and MEDCs, must be established by the governments, with total approval by the country's political sector, as to preserve their long-term



vitality. This will result in increased technical and scientific knowledge in the country in general, helping develop a stronger nation.

Investments in effective infrastructure, such as building science parks, that would have close relations with universities and their soon to become graduate students, will be another way of slowing down brain-drain. Another idea would be the improving of living conditions of many high-skilled individuals by means as providing areas of entertainment or showing an image of a future habitable environment.

### International cooperation

The usage of International Communication Technology (ICT) must be promoted in aspects of not only knowledge sharing but also developing job-opportunities on long distance terms (something that the current COVID-19 era proved efficient all over the world).

The affected countries could set up a network with emigrated men and women to prevent communication loss and help to regain contact, in hopes of receiving remittances for family members.

An international cooperation between the countries of origin and the countries of destination of Brain Drain population can limit the damage in the drained country.

This kind of improvement would need government intervention. There needs to be an overall improvement in the stability of the country's economic and social state as this breaks the limitless circle of economic stagnation.

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