

# Remittance behaviour among Latin American immigrants in the United States\*

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## Abstract

This paper analyzes the factors that influence remittance behavior in the United States of Latin American immigrants. Data for this study come from The National Survey of Latinos, conducted in 2002, and is analyzed using logistic regressions. Individual characteristics, financial ability to remit, and family obligations in the home and in the host country are hypothesized to affect remittance behavior. Results of the regression analyses confirm previous research findings, with the exception of one: those migrants who have a bank account in the host country are more likely to transfer remittances than migrants who do not have one. Therefore, having a bank account in the country of destination –regardless of their migratory status– has allowed migrants to better administer their economic resources, has increased their likeliness of sending remittances to their countries of origin, and has helped them with their process to consolidate their economic citizenship.

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major changes seen during the last quarter of the 20th century was the accelerated growth experienced in international migration on a global scale. In 1975, the total number of people residing in a country different from that where they were born was 85 million, but in 2000 that figure triggered to 175 million (United Nations, 2002). Although international migrants represent an apparently low percentage of the world population (2.1% in 1975 and 2.9% in 2000), they make fundamental contributions not only for the development of the economies and communities to which they emigrate, which are usually the “global cities” in the most developed countries of the world (Pellegrino 2003), but also for the economic development of their countries of origin, specifically through the transfers of remittances, which reached US\$ 90 billion at the global level in the year 2003 (IMF, 2004).

Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions of the world that has experienced a very dynamic growth in terms of international migrations and reception of remittances over the last few years. This paper examines the recent trends in remittances to the region, evaluates the economic and social importance of these resources for development in the region’s countries, and the remittance behaviour of Latin American migrants in the U.S.

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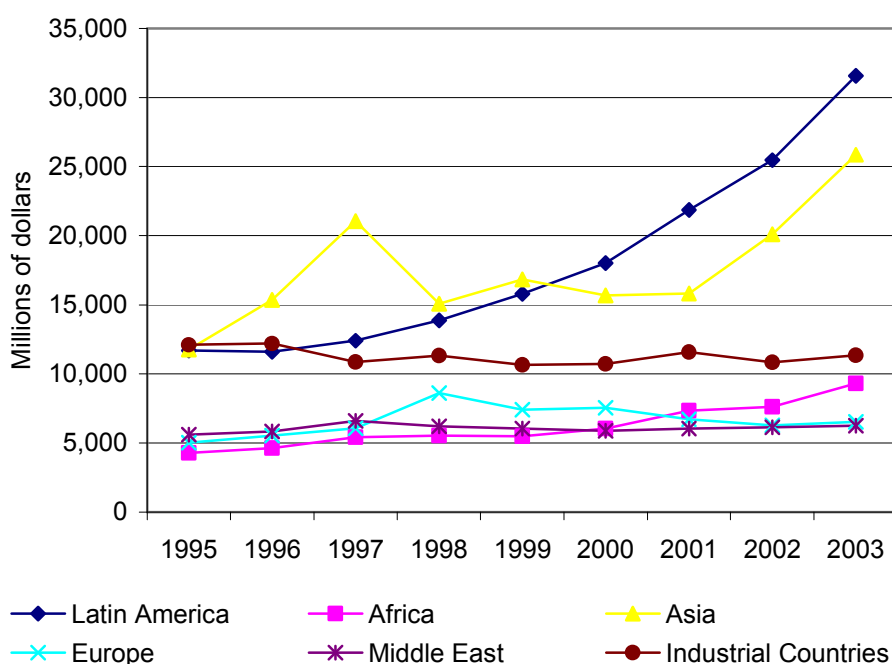
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## II. MAIN FLOWS AND TRENDS IN MIGRANTS' REMITTANCES TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In order to analyse the trends in remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), I will focus on the eight-year period from 1995 to 2003. The source of information used is the Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2004, of the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2004), with data updated to 2003. I have chosen to work with the IMF data –particularly with those under the heading *workers' remittances*– not only because they correspond to the figures that are reported directly by the central banks of each country to the IMF, but also, and most importantly, because they offer historic series that allow for comparisons with other demographic and economic indicators.

From 1995 to 2003, world remittances grew 80%, from US\$ 50 billion to US\$ 90 billion (Table 1). However, not all the regions of the world had the same performance. Of the six regions taken into consideration by the IMF, only Latin America and the Caribbean showed a steady and increasing growth of 170% in terms of reception of remittances, as they rose from US\$ 11.7 billion to US\$ 31.6 billion during the aforementioned period. Asian and African countries also experienced an important growth in the amounts of their remittances, although the flows of those resources were more erratic and less strong than in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean. European countries (excluding industrialised nations) and Middle East countries showed increasing flows of remittances, albeit more modest than those of the first three regions. The only group that showed an absolute decrease in remittances was that of industrialised countries (Chart 1).

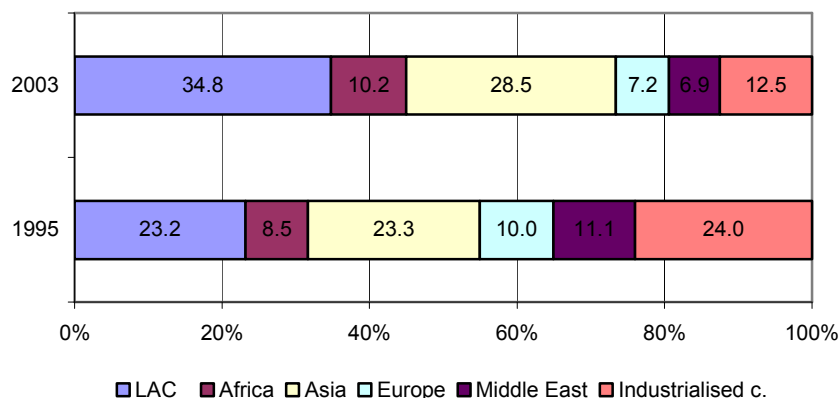
**CHART 1: Migrants' remittances in the world by receiving region, 1995-2003**  
(Millions of dollars at current prices)



Source: Table 1

These figures show that LAC is the region with the most dynamic growth in the world in terms of reception of remittances. This trend is also confirmed by the fact that in 1995 remittances to LAC accounted for 23.2% of the world total transfers, but by the year 2003 that share rose to 34.8% (Chart 2 and Table 2).

**CHART 2: Distribution of world flows of remittances by region, 1995 and 2003**



Source. Table 2

As far as the dynamics of remittances within the Latin American region are concerned, it can be seen that the main twelve receiving countries (with the exception of Brazil) showed substantial increases from 1995 to 2003. Remittances to Central American countries like Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua grew by more than four times; in Ecuador and Colombia they grew by more than three times; in Dominican Republic and Jamaica the increases were 159 and 118%; and in Peru remittances posted a growth of 48% (Table 3). Most likely, the figures corresponding to remittances to Brazil have been underestimated, not only in view of the growth seen in the number of emigrants from that country to the United States and Japan in the past few years, but also in light of the data provided by other organisations such as the IDB and the MIF (2003 and 2004a), which indicate an estimated flow of remittances of US\$ 4.6 billion in 2002 and US\$ 5.2 billion in 2003. In addition, Cuba is not included in the IMF statistics. In this regard, the IDB-MIF estimates that Cuba received US\$ 1.138 billion in 2002 and US\$ 1.194 billion in 2003.

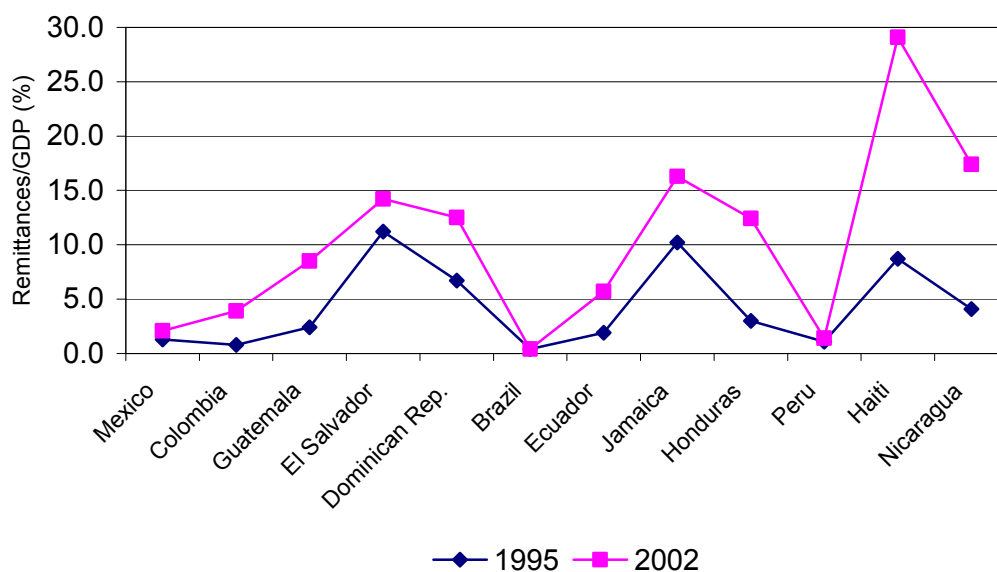
In spite of the substantial growth of remittances in many countries of the region, there is no doubt that the most substantial flow of money goes to Mexico: from US\$ 3.7 billion in 1995 –which accounted for 31% of total remittances sent to the region– to US\$ 13.7 billion in 2003, representing 42% of the region's remittances. It is important to mention that in 2004, remittances to Mexico surpassed US\$ 16 billion, and the Mexican Central Bank reported that only during the first four months of 2005 the country received US\$ 5.6 billion, which means a monthly average of US\$ 1.4 billion.

### III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF REMITTANCES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Historically, migrants' remittances have played a fundamental role in supporting millions of families in the countryside and cities in LAC. With the growth of transfers (which show a steady trend to increase), the social and economic impact of these resources goes beyond the sphere of households, as remittances have started to play an increasingly important role in the economic performance of many countries and regions within countries, particularly in those regions where there is a higher concentration of international migrants. In order to analyse the social and economic impact of remittances in Latin America and the Caribbean, we have selected the twelve countries receiving the greatest amounts of remittances which, according to the IMF data (2004), received 97% of the remittances to the region in 2003.

With respect to remittances share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) –an indicator that Martínez Pizarro (2003) calls *remittance efficiency index* –it can be seen that while remittances into LAC represented 0.7% of the region's GDP in 1995, that figure grew to 1.8% in 2002 (Table 4). Such an increase reveals that the efficiency of remittances doubled, at least as far as their share in the GDP is concerned. Nevertheless, in some Central American countries, such as El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, their share in the GDP surpassed 10% in 2003. A similar increase was seen in Dominican Republic and Jamaica, in the Caribbean. However, in the case of Haiti remittances represented the surprising figure of 29% of its GDP in 2003. In the cases of Brazil and Peru there were no substantial changes in this index between 1995 and 2003 (Chart 3). Therefore, the impact of remittances tends to be stronger in smaller countries, which allegedly are also poorer and have a less diversified productive structure.

**CHART 3: Share of remittances in the Gross Domestic Product, as percentage, in selected countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995 and 2002**

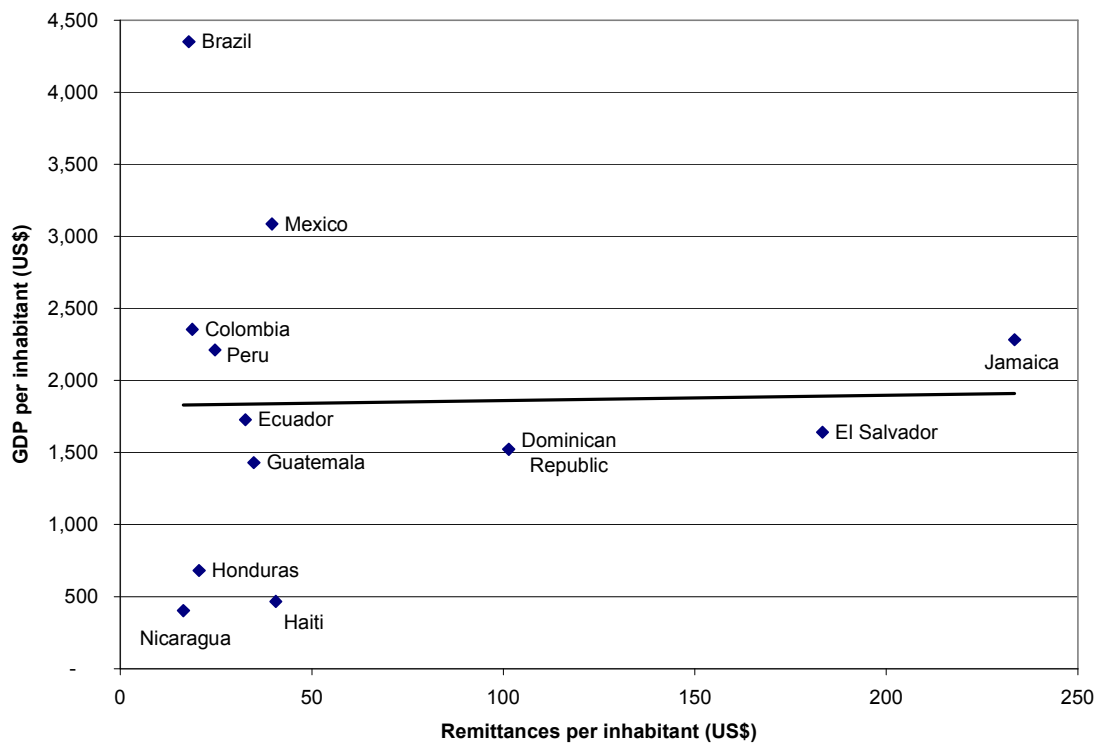


Source: Table 4

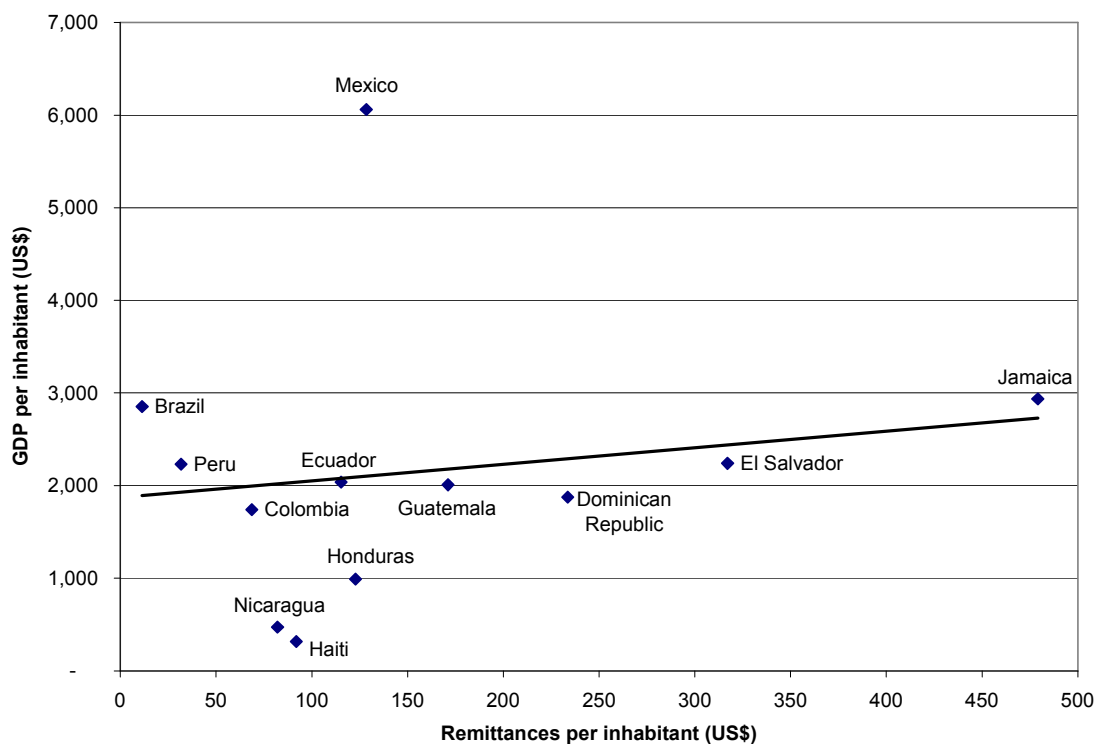
The share of remittances in the value of exports of goods shows a similar pattern. In those countries with a little diversified productive base, the amount of remittances surpasses the value of exports of goods by more than 50%. That was the case of Guatemala, El Salvador, Jamaica, Haiti and Nicaragua in 2003 (Table 4).

As far as the per capita indicators are concerned, remittances per capita rose from US\$ 24 to US\$ 58 in the whole region from 1995 to 2003, while the GDP per capita declined from US\$ 3,478 to US\$ 3,237 during the same period. These figures show that while remittances per capita grew 143%, the GDP per capita suffered an absolute decrease of -6.9% (Table 5). These two indicators show important variations from country to country. For instance, the variation range of remittances per capita in 2003 goes from US\$ 11.4 in the case of Brazil to US\$ 479 per inhabitant in the case of Jamaica.

These are extreme cases. Nevertheless, in all the countries of the region (with the exception of Peru and Brazil) remittances per capita surpassed the regional average of US\$ 58 in the year 2003. In short, the accelerated growth seen in remittances from 1995 to 2003 had a remarkable macroeconomic impact in LAC, particularly in the case of smaller countries with a weak productive base. Even though we are analysing data about only twelve countries, attention should be paid to the fact that in 2003 there was a clear trend towards a positive relation between remittances per capita and GDP per capita –a trend which was not clearly seen in 1995, because in that year the two indicators showed a very slightly positive relation (Charts 4 and 5). Working with data corresponding to the same countries (except Jamaica and Haiti), Martínez Pizarro (2003) found that in the year 2000 there was a relatively clear negative relation between remittances per capita and GDP per capita. Three years later, as our findings indicate, such a trend was completely reversed.

**CHART 4: GDP and remittances per capita in selected countries in LAC, 1995**

Source: Table 5

**CHART 5: GDP and remittances per capita in selected countries in LAC, 2003**

Source: Table 5

#### IV. REMITTANCE BEHAVIOUR AMONG LATIN AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

According to IDB estimates, of the total remittances received by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2002, 80% came from the United States and Canada, 9.2% from European countries such as Spain, Italy and Great Britain, 6.2% from Japan, and 4.6% were intra-regional remittances, which were sent by Haitians working in Dominican Republic, Nicaraguans in Costa Rica, Guatemalans in Mexico, and Bolivians in Argentina (IDB-MIF, 2003).

Even though the number of Latin American emigrants to Europe and Asia has substantially increased over the last few years, the United States continues to be the main destination country for LAC migrants<sup>1</sup>. This section of the paper presents a brief overview of the evolution of the Latin American and Caribbean population in the United States, in view that it is the main country of destination for these migrants, as well as an analysis of the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of Latin American and Caribbean migrants residing in the United States and sending remittances from there.

During the period analysed here, the Latin American and Caribbean population with regular residence in the United States grew from 11.8 million to 17.8 million people, which meant an annual flow of approximately 760,000 people and an annual growth rate of 5.1%. There is no doubt that the demographic group that contributed the most to such a growth were the Mexicans, with their number increasing from 6.7 to 9.9 million people during those years, which meant an annual flow of 412,000 people during the period (Table 6). The population of emigrants from countries such as El Salvador, Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras and Haiti grew at a rate that even surpassed the average registered for the whole region.

Even though the extraordinary growth in the population of migrants explains to a great extent the increase in the flow of remittances towards the countries of origin of migrants, one aspect that should be made clear is that not all migrants send remittances back home. Recent surveys reveal different percentages of the population of Latin American and Caribbean migrants residing in the United States who responded that they regularly remit money to their countries of origin: 69% in the case of the *Survey of Remittance Senders: U.S. to Latin America* (Bendixen & Associates, 2001), 47% in the *National Survey of Latinos (NSL) 2002* (Benavides, 2002), and 40% in the case the 2003 edition of the NSL (Suro 2003; Pew Hispanic Center/kaiser Family Foundation, 2004). In addition, these surveys and other studies have outlined more or less similar profiles of those individuals sending remittances. Traditionally, remitters are the most recent migrants, who have less expectations of permanently staying in the United States and who have family ties or any other type of links with their countries of origin.

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<sup>1</sup> Pablo Serrano (2002) points out that 88% of Latin American and Caribbean migrants goes to the United States.

It was deemed important to include an analysis of the profile of the population sending remittances in this paper, in order to identify the characteristics associated with the people who make transfers of money and those who do not. Below, we make a brief description of these characteristics, followed by the results of four logistic regression models that serve to predict remittance behaviour. The models take into account 18 variables and are based on information taken from the National Survey of Latinos (NSL) 2002.

This survey was conducted from April to June 2002 among a representative sample of 4,213 individuals aged 18 or older in the United States. Of that group, 2,929 claimed to be of Hispanic or Latino origin and 1,689 claimed to have been born in a Latin American or Caribbean country (excluding those who were born in Puerto Rico).<sup>2</sup> Of the latter group, 47% indicated they made regular transfers of money to their relatives in their countries of origin. The percentages of individuals who make money transfers, by country or region, are as follows: 45% in the case of Mexicans, 51% in the case of individuals born in Caribbean countries, 56% for those born in Central America, and 44% for those born in South America.

In order to create the profiles of migrants who send remittances and to conduct the logistic regression analysis to predict remittance behaviour among Latin American migrants, we have selected 18 variables, classified in four types of indicators: a) demographic indicators, b) economic indicators, c) indicators on the adaptation and/or assimilation of migrants into the U.S. society, and d) indicators on the links of migrants with their countries of origin (see Table 7).

As far as **demographic** indicators are concerned, the data from the NSL 2002 indicate that of the 791 individuals who claimed to send regular remittances of money to their countries of origin, 65% were born in Mexico, 60% are male, 70% are 30 years old or older, 70% are married or are living in unmarried cohabitation, 71% have nine or more years of education, and 67% live with at least one minor under 18. With respect to the selected **economic** indicators, the data indicate that 67% of the individuals who send regular remittances have an annual household income below US\$ 30,000, and 74% were employed at the time the survey was conducted.

With respect to the indicators that would hypothetically reflect the degree of **adaptation or assimilation** of migrants into the U.S. society, we found that 57% of the individuals who send regular remittances arrived in the United States after 1990, 23% had U.S. citizenship at the time the survey was conducted; 73% were slightly able, hardly able or completely unable to hold a conversation in English, 56% claimed to have a banking account in the United States, 43% had a credit card, and 27% owned the house where they were

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<sup>2</sup> The study included interviews with a representative number of Latinos in 6 ethnic groups, based on country of origin: Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, and Colombian. Interviews were conducted with 1,047 Mexicans, 317 Puerto Ricans, 343 Cubans, 204 Salvadorans, 235 Dominicans, and 214 Colombians. In total, 341 Central Americans and 394 South Americans were interviewed. The error margins for each group are +/- 3.31 points (Mexicans), +/- 6.65 points (Puerto Ricans), +/- 6.38 points (Cubans), +/- 10.11 points (Salvadorans), +/- 7.30 points (Dominicans) and +/- 10.45 points (Colombians). The error margin for Central Americans is +/- 8.08 points and for South Americans is +/- 7.95 points.



living in the U.S. Finally, the group of indicators on the **links** of migrants with their countries of origin show that 66% of remittance senders have visited their countries of origin, at least once, since their arrival in the United States, 20% have voted in the elections held in their countries since they arrived in the U.S., 49% plan to return to their countries of origin in the future, and 69% of remittance senders consider their country of origin to be their homeland (See third column of Table 7).

A more in-depth analysis of the profile of migrants who send remittances resulted from the logistic regression exercise, in which the dependent variable is a dichotomic variable valued 1 if the migrant sends remittances and valued 0 if the migrant does not send them. The exercise consisted in creating four models (Table 8) that use the 18 independent variables mentioned above.<sup>3</sup> The variables, according to the four types of indicators, were incorporated into the different models. The 18 variables were incorporated in model 4, on which we will focus our remarks, because the results from models 1, 2 and 3 do not substantially change the direction of the results from model 4 (last column of Table 8).

But what is the reason for conducting a logistic regression exercise in order to predict migrants' remittance behaviour? What is its use? There are two fundamental reasons. First of all, it allows not only for identifying the factors or variables associated with the behaviour that we want to evaluate (in this case, remittance behaviour), but also for measuring or quantifying the probability – or the reason for probability, to be precise – that an individual will send remittances, depending on the characteristics or variables intervening in the regression. The second reason is that the results of this type of exercise are fundamental input in policy-making and in designing programmes aimed at protecting and/or promoting the transfer of remittances from abroad.

As far as the demographic variables are concerned, the results of the full model indicate that Caribbean migrants are 80% more likely to send remittances from the United States than Mexican migrants (reference group); whereas Central American migrants are 72% more likely to transfer remittances than Mexicans. South American migrants are 10% less likely to send remittances than Mexicans; however, this difference did not turn out to be statistically significant. With respect to gender of migrants, men were 48% more likely to send remittances to their countries of origin than women. The odds ratio for rest of the demographic variables (age, marital status, education level and presence of minors in the house of the migrant) did not turn out to be statistically significant.

The results from the two economic variables included in model 4 indicate that those migrants with an annual household income below US\$ 30,000 are 29% less likely to send remittances than those with an annual household income above US\$ 30,000. Similarly, those migrants that have a job in the United States are 34% more likely than unemployed migrants to send remittances. The last variable was incorporated into the model because one-fourth of the migrants who were unemployed at the time the survey was conducted

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<sup>3</sup> Of the total of independent variables, only age is a continuous variable. The remaining 17 are dichotomic variables or dummy variables.

responded that they did send money remittances to their countries of origin (Table 7).

With respect to the variables included in the group of indicators on adaptation and/or assimilation of migrants into the U.S. society, we found that those migrants who arrived in the country before 1990 are 40% less likely to send remittances than those who arrived after 1990. Similarly, those migrants who have already been granted the U.S. citizenship are 30% less likely to send remittances than those who have not been granted it. With respect to the ability of the individuals surveyed to hold a conversation in English, it should be noted that those migrants with little, very little or no capacity at all to speak in English showed an extremely high probability to send remittances (145%), compared with those migrants who were able to speak in English. As far as owning a place to live in the U.S. is concerned, the results of the model indicate that those migrants who own a house in the U.S. are 25% less likely to make money remittances to their countries of origin than those who do not own a house.

There was an important finding –which will be dealt with in detail later– with respect to having or not having a bank account and its relation with remittance behaviour. According to our results, Latin American and Caribbean migrants who have a bank account in the United States are 60% more likely to send remittances than those who do not have an account.

Finally, with respect to the group of variables on the links that migrants have with their communities of origin, it can be seen that those migrants who have visited their countries of origin at least once since they arrived in the United States are 50% more likely to send remittances than those who have not done so. Similarly, migrants who have voted in elections held in their countries of origin since their arrival in the U.S. are 75% more likely to send remittances than those migrants who have not done so. Finally, those migrants who claimed to have plans to return to their countries of origin in the future are 76% more likely to send remittances than those who are planning to stay in the United States.

In general, this series of results confirm findings of previous research and studies on the remittance behaviour among Mexican, Latin American and Caribbean migrants in the United States (See, for instance, Massey and Basem, 1992; Durand et al., 1996; Menjívar et al., 1998; Lozano, 1998 and 1999; López, 2001; Sana, 2003). Nevertheless, one of our results contradicts previous findings. Specifically, we are referring to having or not having a bank account and its relation with the probability to transfer remittances. Using the database of the *Mexican Migration Project*, Louis DeSipio (2002) found in a regression exercise, which was similar to the one presented here, that having a bank account in the United States significantly reduces the probability that migrants send remittances to their countries of origin. Having a bank account could be interpreted as a sign of assimilation into the culture and society of the country of destination, which could possibly imply dissociation with the country of origin and a gradual decrease in the transfer of remittances. However, our results reinforces the notion that migration is an increasingly transnational phenomenon, which implies that even though migrants may decide to take up

their definitive residence in the country of destination, they do not lose their links with their countries of origin.

Therefore, it can be concluded that having a bank account in the country of destination –regardless of their migratory status– has allowed migrants to better administer their economic resources, has increased their likelihood of sending remittances to their countries of origin (though not necessarily through the banking system), and has helped them with their process to consolidate their economic citizenship in the United States.

## V. FINAL REMARKS

The conceptual scheme proposed by Sharon Stanton-Russell (1986) in the 1980s, which identified a series of factors that had an influence on the transfers of remittances from the country of destination to the countries of origin of migrants, has gradually broadened and turned itself into an increasingly complex scheme in which new actors and new processes have emerged. The current features of the “remittances system” (as Stanton-Russell calls it) are radically different, which has led some authors to posit the emergence of a new era in the history of family remittances on a global scale and particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean (Lowell and de la Garza, 2002).

Many factors could explain the accelerated growth of remittances over the past few years. A crucial factor, as mentioned before, has been the increase in the number of labour migrants (either on a temporary or a permanent basis) to those countries demanding labour force. There are, however, other factors that have played a key role – not only by boosting growth in remittances, but also by changing the way in which the transfer system works.

A serious problem that has been detected in migrants’ countries of origin is the poor penetration of financial intermediation agents in the communities of origin, with the purpose of facilitating not only the reception of money coming from abroad, but also the overall management of such resources. According to data from the IDB, 33% of the population receiving remittances in Mexico have a bank account, while in Central America that figure stands at 22% (IDB-MIF, 2004a). The IDB estimates that in all Latin America and the Caribbean, only 10% of people receiving remittances have a bank account (IDB-MIF, 2004b). It is obvious that large financial and banking institutions have not taken steps to develop a financial infrastructure in rural and peri-urban areas in Latin America, which explains the lack of financial culture in our countries. When the large banking corporations fail to meet the financial needs of the population receiving remittances, other type of micro financial organisations –such as credit unions, savings banks, solidarity funds, savings and loans cooperatives, and microbanks– start to do it, in spite of all difficulties. In Mexico, for instance, microfinancial organisations were not allowed to receive remittances from abroad. It was necessary to change the institutional regulations so that banks could start receiving electronic transfers of remittances in a safe and dynamic way (Robinson 2002). In this connection, the process that migrants undergo to consolidate their economic citizenship in the countries of destination should be

accompanied by a process to democratise the financial systems in the countries of origin.

During the last eight years, the flows of remittances sent by Latin American and Caribbean migrants to their countries of origin have changed the dynamics of continental financial flows. A significant aspect about these resources is that they do not entail future financial obligations, and in addition, they have a positive impact on the living standards of millions of recipient families. In spite of the accelerated growth of remittances and the fact that we are now going through a new era in the history of family remittances, there are still many issues to which attention should be paid. One of those issues is the need to promote policies to make strides with the “banking” process of migrant populations in the countries of destination. In this paper, it has been shown that Latin American and Caribbean migrants who have a bank account (at least in the case of those living in the United States) are more likely to make money transfers to their countries of origin than those who do not have an account.

At the same time it is crucial to foster “banking” programmes for the population receiving remittances. It is essential to promote financial markets and financial intermediation in migrants’ countries of origin, so that migrants’ relatives can receive their remittances and have access to other types of financial services, such as savings accounts and checking accounts, among others. Additionally, it is important to promote the expansion of microfinancial organisations for the reception of remittances. Microbanks have proved to be efficient bodies in offering financial services in rural poor areas and peri-urban areas in Latin America and the Caribbean. Other regions in LAC could learn from the experience in Mexico, where the financial legislation was modified in order to allow microfinancial organisations to receive remittances from abroad.

Finally, it is necessary to promote opinion trends that recognise remittances as essentially private flows of resources. The accelerated growth of remittances in LAC has aroused the interest of many governmental and non-governmental actors in obtaining some political or economic benefit from these astronomical amounts of money coming from abroad. However, it is important to insist on the fact that money remittances from a migrant to his or her relatives and, above all, the final use and destination of those resources, are a private matter.

**TABLE 1: Migrants' remittances in the world by receiving region, 1995-2003**  
(Millions of dollars at current prices)

REGION	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
World total	50,433	55,137	62,362	60,590	62,198	63,870	69,332	76,405	90,825
Latin America	11,676	11,581	12,389	13,870	15,797	18,015	21,859	25,465	31,569
Africa	4,283	4,636	5,424	5,535	5,481	6,049	7,322	7,620	9,288
Asia	11,760	15,359	21,062	15,074	16,838	15,680	15,815	20,100	25,858
Europe	5,024	5,524	6,052	8,597	7,397	7,548	6,720	6,260	6,527
Middle East Industrial Countries	5,590	5,837	6,583	6,196	6,041	5,865	6,045	6,137	6,240
	12,100	12,200	10,852	11,318	10,643	10,713	11,572	10,823	11,343

Source: International Monetary Fund (2004) *Balance of Payments Statistics*. Yearbook 2004.

**TABLE 2: Migrants' remittances in the world by receiving region, 1995-2003**  
(Percentage distribution)

REGION	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
World total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Latin America	23.2	21.0	19.9	22.9	25.4	28.2	31.5	33.3	34.8
Africa	8.5	8.4	8.7	9.1	8.8	9.5	10.6	10.0	10.2
Asia	23.3	27.9	33.8	24.9	27.1	24.5	22.8	26.3	28.5
Europe	10.0	10.0	9.7	14.2	11.9	11.8	9.7	8.2	7.2
Middle East	11.1	10.6	10.6	10.2	9.7	9.2	8.7	8.0	6.9
Industrial countries	24.0	22.1	17.4	18.7	17.1	16.8	16.7	14.2	12.5

Source: Table 1

**TABLE 3: Migrants' remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean by receiving country, 1995-2003**  
(Millions of dollars at current prices)

Country	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total for Latin America	11,676	11,581	12,389	13,870	15,797	18,015	21,859	25,465	31,569
Mexico	3,673	4,224	4,865	5,627	5,910	6,573	8,895	9,814	13,266
Colombia	739	745	758	788	1,297	1,578	2,021	2,454	3,060
Guatemala	358	375	408	457	466	563	592	1,579	2,107
El Salvador	1,061	1,084	1,199	1,338	1,374	1,751	1,910	1,935	2,105
Dominican Republic	795	914	1,089	1,326	1,519	1,689	1,808	1,960	2,060
Brazil	2,891	1,866	1,324	963	1,190	1,112	1,178	1,711	2,018
Ecuador	382	485	644	794	1,084	1,317	1,415	1,432	1,539
Jamaica	582	636	642	655	681	790	940	1,131	1,270
Honduras	120	128	160	220	320	410	534	711	860
Peru	600	597	636	647	670	718	753	705	860
Haiti	-	-	-	327	422	578	624	676	811
Nicaragua	75	95	150	200	300	320	336	377	439
Costa Rica	116	122	116	112	112	120	184	234	306
Argentina	40	41	41	43	29	50	156	171	236
Paraguay	135	137	141	143	148	152	140	99	110
Barbados	42	48	55	61	71	84	100	93	97
Bolivia	2	2	68	64	73	101	107	83	95
Panama	16	16	16	16	16	16	73	85	85
Guyana	-	15	15	15	20	27	22	51	64
Uruguay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	32
Suriname	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	21
Araba	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	3	3
Netherlands Antilles	4	9	12	10	16	6	12	20	1
Belize	14	13	18	19	21	22	16	14	-
Trinidad and Tobago	30	28	30	45	54	38	41	79	-
Venezuela	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	124

Source: International Monetary Fund (2004), Balance of Payments Statistic, Yearbook 2004.

**TABLE 4: Share of remittances in the Gross Domestic Product and in the value of exported goods by selected countries, 1995 and 2003**

Countries	Remittances (millions of US\$)		Remittances/GDP (%)		Remittances / Exports <sup>1</sup> (%)	
	1995	2003	1995	2003	1995	2003
Total	11,676	31,569	0.7	1.8	5.1	8.2
Mexico	3,673	13,266	1.3	2.1	4.6	8.0
Colombia	739	3,060	0.8	3.9	7.0	22.3
Guatemala	358	2,107	2.4	8.5	16.6	69.1
El Salvador	1,061	2,105	11.2	14.2	64.3	66.6
Dominican Rep.	795	2,060	6.7	12.5	21.0	37.9
Brazil	2,891	2,018	0.4	0.4	6.2	2.8
Ecuador	382	1,539	1.9	5.7	8.5	24.8
Jamaica	582	1,270	10.2	16.3	32.4	91.7
Honduras	120	860	3.0	12.4	8.7	41.4
Peru	600	860	1.1	1.4	10.7	9.6
Haiti <sup>(a)</sup>	327	811	8.7	29.1	109.3	243.4
Nicaragua	75	439	4.1	17.4	15.2	58.7

<sup>1</sup>This item refers only to exports of goods.

<sup>(a)</sup>The 1995 information for Haiti corresponds to 1998.

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of data from the IMF (2004) and ECLAC (2004)



**TABLE 5: Remittances per capita and Gross Domestic Product per capita by selected countries, 1995 and 2003**

Countries	Remittance/inhabitant (US\$)		GDP/inhabitant (US\$)		Percentage variation of Remittance/inhabitant	Percentage variation of GDP/inhabitant
	1995	2003	1995	2003	1995-2003	1995-2003
Total	24.0	58.2	3,478	3,237	143.0	- 6.9
Mexico	39.6	128.4	3,087	6,061	224.2	96.4
Colombia	18.8	68.7	2,355	1,741	265.0	- 26.1
Guatemala	34.9	171.2	1,431	2,009	389.8	40.4
El Salvador	183.3	317.1	1,641	2,241	73.0	36.6
Dominican Republic	101.4	233.6	1,523	1,876	130.3	23.2
Brazil	17.9	11.4	4,350	2,853	- 36.3	- 34.4
Ecuador	32.7	115.3	1,726	2,039	253.2	18.1
Jamaica	233.5	479.1	2,283	2,936	105.2	28.6
Honduras	20.6	122.8	681	991	495.4	45.5
Peru	24.7	31.7	2,211	2,232	28.1	0.9
Haiti <sup>(a)</sup>	40.6	91.9	466	316	126.3	- 32.3
Nicaragua	16.5	82.1	403	472	398.3	17.0

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of data from the IMF (2004) and ECLAC (2004).

<sup>(a)</sup> The 1995 information for Haiti corresponds to 1998.

**TABLE 6: Population stocks of Latin American and Caribbean migrants in the United States by selected countries, 1995 and 2003**

Country	Emigrants in the U.S.		Average annual growth rate 1995-2003
	1995	2003	
Total for Latin America	11,759	17,839	5.1
Mexico	6,668	9,967	5.0
Colombia	339	484	4.4
Guatemala	323	441	3.9
El Salvador	656	1,019	5.4
Dominican Rep.	530	719	3.8
Brazil	90	195	9.2
Ecuador	214	340	5.7
Jamaica	524	666	3.0
Honduras	178	283	5.7
Peru	256	283	1.3
Haiti <sup>(a)</sup>	294	497	6.4
Nicaragua	251	184	-3.9

Source: Urban Institute tabulations from public use file from the US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 1995 and 2003. Taken from:  
<http://www.migrationinformation.org>

<sup>(a)</sup> The 1995 information for Haiti corresponds to 1998.

**TABLE 7: Economic and demographic indicators on Latin American and Caribbean migrants in the United States, by transfers of remittance to their countries of origin, 2002**

INDICATORS	Total NSL population (%)	Remitters (%)	No remitters (%)
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS</b>			
<b>Region/country of birth</b>			
Mexico	68.3	65.4	70.9
Caribbean	13.9	15.2	12.8
Central America	10.4	12.5	8.6
South America	7.3	7.0	7.7
<b>Gender</b>			
Females	49.7	39.9	56.5
Males	51.3	60.1	43.5
<b>Age</b>			
Under 30	27.5	29.6	25.6
30 or more	72.5	70.4	74.4
<b>Marital status</b>			
Single, separated or divorced	31.3	30.0	32.4
Married or in unmarried cohabitation	68.7	70.0	67.6
<b>Education</b>			
Nine or more years of education	70.8	71.2	70.4
Up to eight years of education	29.2	28.8	29.6
<b>Presence of minors under 18 in the house of migrant</b>			
No	31.9	32.5	31.3
Yes	68.1	67.5	68.7
<b>ECONOMIC INDICATORS</b>			
<b>Household income</b>			
More than US\$ 30,000 per year	33.6	32.7	34.4
Less than US\$ 30,000 per year	66.4	67.3	65.6
<b>Currently employed in the U.S.</b>			
No	34.1	26.4	40.9
Yes	65.9	73.6	59.1

*See continuation of this table in the next page...*

## Continuation of Table 7

<b>ADAPTATION IN THE UNITED STATES</b>			
<b>Arrival in the United States</b>			
After 1990	47.6	57.0	39.2
Prior to 1990	52.4	43.0	60.6
<b>U.S. Citizenship</b>			
No	69.8	77.4	63.1
Yes	30.2	22.6	36.9
<b>Ability to speak English</b>			
Good, very good	35.5	26.8	43.1
Little, very little, does not speak English	64.5	73.2	56.9
<b>Bank account in the United States</b>			
No	45.1	44.2	45.9
Yes	54.9	55.8	54.1
<b>Credit card</b>			
No	54.8	56.8	53.0
Yes	45.2	43.2	47.0
<b>Own house in the United States</b>			
No	66.5	72.8	60.9
Yes	33.5	27.2	39.1
<b>LINKS WITH COUNTRY OF ORIGIN</b>			
<b>Visits to country of origin</b>			
No	33.9	34.4	33.4
Yes	66.1	65.6	66.6
<b>Voted in elections in country of origin</b>			
No	84.7	79.6	89.2
Yes	15.3	20.4	10.8
<b>Plans to return to country of origin</b>			
No	62.1	51.0	72.0
Yes	37.9	49.0	28.0
<b>Country considered as homeland</b>			
United States	38.6	31.4	44.9
Country of origin	61.4	68.6	55.1

Source: Prepared by the author, on the basis of data from the archives of the National Survey of Latinos 2002.

**TABLE 8: Results of logistic regression analyses to predict remittance behaviour among Latin American and Caribbean migrants in the United States, 2002**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Demographic variables</b>				
Mexico	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Caribbean	1.738**	1.818**	1.856**	1.803**
Central America	1.780**	1.689**	1.752**	1.721**
South America	1.116	1.107	0.996	0.899
Females	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Males	1.981***	1.751***	1.790***	1.483**
Age (continuous variable)	0.978***	0.975***	0.990	0.988
Single, separated or divorced	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Married or in unmarried cohabitation	1.167	1.026	0.979	0.926
Nine or more years of education	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Up to eight years of education	1.223	1.304*	1.072	1.004
No minors under 18 at home	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
With minors under 18 at home	0.885	0.852	0.861	0.809
<b>Economic variables</b>				
Annual income above US\$ 30,000		1.000	1.000	1.000
Annual income below US\$ 30,000		1.207	0.702*	0.708*
Currently unemployed in the U.S.		1.000	1.000	1.000
Currently employed in the U.S.		1.252	1.422*	1.345*
<b>Adaptation/assimilation in the U.S.</b>				
Arrived in the U.S. after 1990			1.000	1.000
Arrived in the U.S. prior to 1990			0.576***	0.609**
Does not have U.S. citizenship			1.000	1.000
Has U.S. citizenship			0.742	0.706*
Good ability to speak English			1.000	1.000
Little or no ability to speak English			2.688***	2.452***
Without bank account in the U.S.			1.000	1.000
With bank account in the U.S.			1.459*	1.580**
Without credit card in the U.S.			1.000	1.000
With credit card in the U.S.			0.916	0.879
Without own house in the U.S.			1.000	1.000
With own house in the U.S.			0.638**	0.746*
<b>Links with country of origin</b>				
Has not visited country of origin				1.000
Has visited country of origin				1.505**
Has not voted in country of origin				1.000
Has voted in country of origin				1.753**
No plans to return to country of origin				1.000
Plans to return to country of origin				1.764***
U.S considered as homeland				1.000
Country of origin considered as homeland				1.171

Notes: Statistical Significance: \*= $p < .05$ , \*\*= $p < .01$ , \*\*\*= $p < .001$ .

Source: Prepared by the author, on the basis of data from the archives of the National Survey of Latinos 2002.

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