Taking the Western Mediterranean region as an example, the present paper aims to contribute to the debate on the causes of migratory flows between world regions. To this end, population structures in three Southern European Mediterranean countries (France, Spain and Italy) and in three North African ones (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) are firstly compared, taking «replacement migration» and «demographic dividend» theories as the exercise's starting point. Results show that population structure differences do not seem to be the main cause of immigration flows. Therefore, other social and economic factors like education and labour participation differences are then analysed, concluding that the key factors explaining immigration between both Mediterranean shores would be, in a context of economic growth, younger generations¿ upgrading in the receiving countries, combined with high unemployment and underemployment in the sending countries.

Keywords
Mediterranean, migrations, population structure, education, labour market.