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International Migration and Sustainable Development

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Population Division

International Migration and Sustainable Development

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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

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Preface

This report, *International Migration and Sustainable Development*, examines the linkages between international migration and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is organized in four parts.

Part A, *Introduction*, provides an overview of key concepts, discusses how international migration is defined and measured, explores the growing scope and impact of international migration and reviews its relevance for sustainable development. Part B, *Evidence base: Trends in international migration and its demographic impac*t, examines levels and trends in international migration at the global and regional level and by income group, presents an overview of the sex and age distribution of international migrants using the latest available estimates and describes the contribution of international migration to population size and age structure in different parts of the world. Part C, *The Sustainable Development Goals and international migration*, focuses on the social, economic and environmental causes and consequences of international migration. Each thematic chapter focuses on one or more Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including poverty, health, gender equality and climate change. Part D, *International migration governance and sustainable development*, discusses the increased levels of international cooperation on international migration in the context of recent conferences, summits and meetings at the United Nations, with particular emphasis on the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The report is part of a series on major demographic trends being prepared by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Other reports in the series have investigated the linkages between population growth, social and economic development and environmental change and analyzed population ageing. The main purpose of the series is to provide informed analysis of population patterns and trends in the context of sustainable development in a manner that is accessible to a general audience and that can help to guide the policymaking of Member States and the deliberations of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development.

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The report was edited by Donna Culpepper, who also provided the cover design and final layouts for all text, tables and figures.

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Explanatory notes

Notes on regions, development groups, countries or areas

The designations employed in this publication and the material presented in it do not imply the expression of any opinions whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The term “country” as used in this report also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas.

In this publication, data for countries and areas have been aggregated in six continental regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania. Further information on continental regions is available from https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/. Countries and areas have also been grouped into geographic regions based on the classification being used to track progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (see: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups).

The designation of “more developed” and “less developed”, or “developed” and “developing”, is intended for statistical purposes and does not express a judgment about the stage in the development process reached by a particular country or area. More developed regions comprise all countries and areas of Europe and Northern America, plus Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Less developed regions comprise all countries and areas of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand).

The group of least developed countries (LDCs) includes 45 countries, located in Africa (33), Asia (8), Latin America and the Caribbean (1), and Oceania (3). Further information is available at: https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/least-developed-countries.

The group of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) includes 32 countries or territories, located in sub-Saharan Africa (16), Northern Africa and Western Asia (2), Central and Southern Asia (8), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (2), Latin America and the Caribbean (2), and Europe and Northern America (2). Further information is available at http://unohrlls.org/about-lldcs/.

The group of small island developing States (SIDS) includes 58 countries or territories, located in the Caribbean (29), the Pacific (20), and the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) (9). Further information is available at http://unohrlls.org/about-sids/.

The classification of countries and areas by income level is based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as reported by the World Bank (2022). These income groups are not available for all countries and areas. Further information is available at: https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every year, millions of people leave their countries of origin to move abroad. International migrants hail from all regions, with some settling in neighbouring countries and territories, while others cross the globe. For some, the experience of living abroad is of short duration, while for others, it extends over a lifetime. Migrants include some of the most highly educated and successful individuals in the world, as well as people suffering from multiple and intersecting forms of deprivation. The reasons and circumstances that motivate or compel people to migrate are also diverse, with some leaving in search of better work opportunities, to pursue educational goals, to reunite with family or simply for leisure, while others are forced to migrate to escape conflict, violence or persecution.

Over the past six decades, the number of international migrants worldwide increased nearly fourfold, reaching 281 million in 2020. The present wave of globalization—with the emergence and strengthening of transnational social networks, as well as the rapid diffusion and accelerating pace of technological innovations in communications and transportation—has made it easier and more affordable for people to move across borders. As the world's economic systems become increasingly integrated, the economic, social and political relevance of international migration is likely to continue to increase.

Throughout the world, labour needs and family relations are major forces shaping the process of international migration. Yet the demographic situation and the political context matter as well. Stark differences across countries and regions in the growth rate of populations, and in their distribution by age, influence migration patterns and trends and are likely to continue doing so in the future. For many high-income countries, migration has been an important component of population growth and is expected to become the primary source of growth over the next few decades, attenuating or counteracting a potential decline in population size due to a negative balance of births over deaths. Also, conflicts and crises, which have played a significant role in shaping migration trends in the past, are likely to keep international migration at the center of the global policy debate. Globally, the number of refugees and asylum seekers—persons forced to flee across international borders because of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations—has risen to its highest level in over seven decades.

People migrate for multiple and often overlapping reasons. The inability to build sustainable livelihoods at home, however, remains one of the dominant drivers in many parts of the world. Over the coming decades, the number of young people—between ages 15 and 24— who will be entering the labour force is projected to grow rapidly in countries and areas that are already confronting substantial barriers to sustainable development. Fostering opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income is critical for addressing some of the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to migrate. However, at the current pace, not enough jobs are being created to absorb all those who are entering the labour market in many locations where the population is growing rapidly. A lack of decent work in home countries, combined with unrealistic expectations about living conditions and job opportunities abroad and an inadequate understanding of the inherent risks and dangers associated with irregular migration, are likely to continue to motivate people to leave even when they do not have access to safe and legal migration pathways. Efforts to securitize borders have often proved ineffective at halting irregular migration flows and brought prohibitively high costs in terms of enforcement and loss of migrant lives.

Large inflows of migrants with an irregular legal status can have adverse effects in countries of destination. Communities, especially those near an international border or along transit routes, can be negatively affected by such flows, which can burden local services and infrastructure, straining resources and raising concerns about security and social cohesion. Irregular migration can also be accompanied by a flourishing of criminal activity centered around the smuggling of migrants. International migrants who are smuggled across borders can fall victim to human traffickers, with women and children—particularly those who are unaccompanied or have become separated from family members—being especially vulnerable. Enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for

regular migration, so that individuals can pursue their occupational or educational aspirations and, where applicable, reunite with family members in a safe and orderly manner, is necessary not only to protect the human rights of all migrants, but also to promote security and prosperity at the place of origin, along transit routes and in the final destination. Strengthening the evidence base on the positive contributions of safe, orderly and regular migration, while highlighting the risks associated with irregular and unsafe migration, can help to promote more informed policymaking and to address harmful and misleading narratives on migrants and migration in communities of origin, transit and destination.

In countries of origin, the earnings that migrants send home as cash or goods can reduce poverty and improve educational and health outcomes in their families and communities. However, remittances can also reinforce inequalities, create dependencies that stifle growth and lead to cycles of emigration and economic stagnation. More fundamentally, despite its many positive impacts, international migration alone cannot remove the structural constraints and impediments to sustainable development faced by many countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs). Migration cannot, for instance, address the multiple, often overlapping drivers that compel people to leave their countries, including political instability, corruption, poor governance, labour market inefficiencies, environmental degradation and vulnerability to climate change.

Creating opportunities for sustained and inclusive economic growth and decent work through investment, including foreign direct investment, preferential trade agreements, and other private or public sources of financing for development, is critical. To optimize the transformative impact of migration for sustainable development and fully harness the contributions of migrants and diasporas, countries of origin should also enact policies to strengthen governance and public institutions, enhance their economic competitiveness and facilitate migrant and diaspora investment and entrepreneurship. Supporting the reintegration of migrants upon return to their home countries by providing access to social protection, employment opportunities and financial services can lead to more inclusive and sustainable growth in communities of origin.

Over the past decades, the number of young people studying outside of their country of origin has grown rapidly and has fostered human capital accumulation and knowledge exchange. The emigration of some of their brightest and most successful individuals, however, can deprive countries of the skilled labour force needed for achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For example, in countries that face acute domestic shortages of qualified health-care personnel, the emigration of such workers can undermine efforts to ensure universal access to health care. Standards for the ethical recruitment of health-care workers and policies to retain them or encourage their circular or return migration can mitigate some of these negative impacts for countries of origin. Complying with ethical recruitment practices and actively investing in the development and training of skilled labour, especially in countries seeking to recruit workers from abroad, can also help ensure that the emigration of highly educated individuals does not stifle sustainable development in home communities or exacerbate inequality in access to human capital.

In host societies, international migrants often fill critical gaps in the labour market and enhance productivity by promoting technological innovation and fostering the transmission of ideas. Many high-income and upper-middle-income countries rely heavily on migrants for labour that cannot easily be outsourced or automated, such as agriculture, hospitality and the health or care sectors. Reducing the vulnerability of migrants in the workplace, protecting the rights of migrant workers, facilitating fair and ethical recruitment and recognizing the skills, qualifications and competences possessed by migrants are key steps that countries of destination should take to maximize the beneficial impacts of labour migration. Developing adequate care systems in host countries and strengthening protection mechanisms for the rights of migrants engaged as domestic or care workers, including by adhering to existing labour norms and conventions, can help address the adversity experienced by workers in such sectors, many of whom are women.

Because migrants are overwhelmingly of working age, they can play a significant role in easing, at least temporarily, the fiscal pressures on pension and healthcare systems often associated with population ageing in host countries. Many high-income or middle-income countries are projected to see the size of their working-age populations reach a plateau or even decline,-contributing to worker shortages in many sectors. For host countries that rely heavily on migrant labour, especially for those with ageing populations, planning for future labour market needs, investing in life-long education and training, and deploying new technologies to increase economic productivity, together with well-managed migration policies, are critical for mitigating labour shortages. Partnerships to foster skills development, including vocational training, are a promising way to respond to the changing demographic realities and labour market needs of countries of origin and destination.

International migrants are often agents of change, making positive contributions to sustainable development in countries and communities of destination. For instance, migrants can contribute to the revitalization of urban areas abandoned by native-born populations by launching new businesses and creating jobs. However, migrants are also among those most vulnerable to being left behind. Excluded from the benefits of development, they can become trapped in intergenerational cycles of poverty, particularly when they become segregated in low-income neighbourhoods. Cities can amplify the vulnerability and inequality experienced by migrants. Recognizing the contributions and place-specific vulnerabilities of international migrants is critical for more effective urban planning and governance. Promoting respect for diversity and inclusion, eliminating all forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and addressing misleading and harmful narratives around migrants and migration that permeate the public discourse in many countries are critical for combating the emergence of anti-immigration backlashes. Policies to promote the economic integration and social inclusion of migrants in countries of destination, including by combatting discrimination in the workplace, providing access to basic services, and addressing language and other barriers, can help mitigate some of these negative impacts. The inclusion of migrants in policymaking and development planning, as well as measures to ensure that migration policy is gender-responsive and child-sensitive, are essential for fulfilling the pledge that no one will be left behind, one of the key principles of the 2030 Agenda. Enacting such measures can ensure that migrants become more engaged, empowered and integrated members of society.

Due to the risks and challenges associated with migration, those who are willing and able to migrate tend to be younger and healthier, on average, compared to the rest of the population in communities of both origin and destination. Nevertheless, migrants often face adverse circumstances resulting in negative health outcomes. Migrants, for example, tend to be overrepresented in deaths from external causes, including those due to accidents, violence and suicide. In some countries, migrants are also at greater risk of dying from infectious diseases and from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Barriers in accessing health-care services and a lack of familiarity among health-care professionals with diseases and conditions that migrants may have acquired or been exposed to can lead to improper diagnoses and treatment. Providing migrants with access to essential or emergency health care is critical for their health and well-being. Addressing their needs for family planning services and information, including among refugees and asylum seekers, can help reduce the number of high-risk births and maternal deaths in migrant populations.

Migration can be an empowering experience for women, increasing their status in society and promoting gender equality. The emigration of male household members, for instance, can increase the decision-making power of female members who remain behind, giving them more control over

financial resources and facilitating their financial inclusion as they assume responsibility for decisions on the use and investment of remittances. However, migration does not always translate into greater equality or empowerment for women. Compared to other women in host societies, for instance, migrant women often face additional barriers that prevent or discourage them from seeking protection or recourse though the local justice system when they become victims of exploitation, violence or abuse. Migrant women with an irregular immigration status may be particularly reluctant to report such incidents for fear of being deported. Most victims of human trafficking worldwide are females. Much more needs to be done to protect migrant women against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence and to increase their participation in designing policies that affect their lives. Gender-responsive policies help to ensure not only that the human rights of women, men, girls and boys are respected at all stages of migration, but also that their specific needs are properly understood and addressed.

There is increasing attention to migration as an adaptive strategy to cope with environmental degradation and climate change, particularly in countries with high exposure to climate risks and low levels of adaptive capacity. While the available evidence suggests that the bulk of such movements take place within national borders, climate change may increase the intensity of international migration, particularly from nations that are extremely vulnerable to such impacts, including the small island developing States (SIDS). Longer and harsher droughts, desertification and rising sea levels linked to climate change could affect the safety, well-being and livelihoods of millions of people, providing an additional motivation to migrate within or across international borders in search of shelter, food, water or work.

Efforts to build adaptive capacity, including by achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, and by implementing policies aimed at ensuring safe and orderly movements of people within and between states, can enhance the positive impacts of migration as an adaptive strategy while minimizing its adverse effects. However, the most vulnerable members of society, including persons living in extreme poverty, older persons, children and persons with disabilities, may not have access to the resources required or may lack the human capital needed to migrate in a safe, orderly and regular fashion even if desired. They may thus become trapped in situations that perpetuate and amplify their vulnerability and exclusion. Such groups may benefit from targeted assistance to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation and to strengthen their own resilience.

Over the past decades, international migration has emerged as a critical policy issue that requires international cooperation among all relevant actors and stakeholders. The 2030 Agenda, for instance, recognized the contributions of migrants to inclusive and sustainable growth and called on Member States to strengthen cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with full respect for human rights. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, rooted in the 2030 Agenda, has further consolidated the importance of migration in the global policy agenda. Given the intrinsically transnational nature of international migration, bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and global partnerships are increasingly recognized as critical for its effective governance. A growing number of countries have also focused on providing options for safe, orderly and regular migration, with more than half of all Governments with available data reporting that they have such policies. Fewer Governments, however, reported policy measures to promote the human rights of migrants. Further progress is needed to enhance the respect, protection and fulfilment of migrant rights, regardless of their legal migration status. Ultimately, this will not only benefit the migrants themselves but also enhance the development potential of migration.

Reliable data on international migrants and migration are crucial for assessing current and future trends, identifying policy priorities, making informed decisions, promoting evidence-based discourse and dispelling misleading perceptions of migrants and migration. Yet there is often a lack of clarity about what international migration is, who should be considered an international migrant and how migration should be measured. Further, even when there is agreement on these issues, data on international migration and migrants are often incomplete or out of date. As a result, there can be

gaps or wide discrepancies in the numbers cited, leading to poor decision-making by policymakers and mistrust among the public.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration places a strong emphasis on addressing data gaps and strengthening statistical capacity for the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on international migration. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also recognizes the importance of increasing the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by migration status. Many countries lack up-to-date information on migration patterns and trends, on migrants and their basic characteristics and on the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development. More effort is needed to strengthen the evidence base on migrants and migration. Accurate, consistent, timely and disaggregated data on international migration and migrants are essential for monitoring progress towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration while ensuring that no one is left behind. A better understanding of the linkages between migration and the transformative transitions affecting education, food systems, jobs and climate change can also help to accelerate progress.

Part A:

Introduction

Kathmandu. Migration Resource Center (Niyama). ILO Photo/Marcel Crozet.

Key messages: Part A

- Throughout history, migration has been a human strategy to fulfil individual aspirations and respond to adversity or lack of opportunity.
- The economic, social and political relevance of international migration is likely to continue to increase, tied in part to other critical trends including climate change, population ageing, urbanization and conflict.
- International migration can support the achievement of many Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including those relating to poverty eradication, health, education and gender equality.
- The extent to which international migration benefits countries of origin, transit and destination depends on a multitude of interrelated factors, including the characteristics of the migrants themselves; the extent to which migration occurs in a safe, orderly, regular and responsible manner; the level of protection accorded to migrant rights; and the degree of migrant integration into host societies.
- International migrants frequently act as agents of change, making positive contributions to sustainable development in communities of origin and destination. However, migrants are also vulnerable to being "left behind" and excluded from the benefits of development.
- Many countries lack up-to-date information on migration patterns and trends and on migrants and their basic characteristics. Strengthening the evidence base on international migration would enable more informed policymaking.
- Objective information about the benefits and challenges of migration, besides dispelling misleading and harmful narratives on migrants and migration, can also help promote more realistic, humane and constructive policymaking based on evidence.

Policy recommendations: Part A

- Because international migration is a multidimensional phenomenon with important social and economic implications for societies of origin, transit and destination, it requires coordinated and coherent policy responses.
- To reduce the risks that migrants face, it is critical to enhance the channels for people to migrate in a safe and legal manner, while upholding and protecting the human rights of all migrants regardless of their migration status.
- It is critical to ensure that people who are seeking to emigrate are aware of the risks associated with irregular and unsafe migration and are informed about the requirements, costs and living conditions in countries of destination.

- It is critical as well, to strengthen capacities to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and to interrupt and dismantle the transnational networks that traffic in human beings, while protecting those who fall victim to trafficking.
- Measures to ensure that migration policy is gender-responsive and child-sensitive and that migrants are included in policymaking and development planning, are essential to fulfill the 2030 Agenda's pledge that no one will be left behind.
- Accurate, consistent and timely data on international migration and migrants are essential to monitor progress in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.
- Greater efforts and investments are needed to enhance the statistical capacity of countries to collect and disseminate comprehensive and reliable data on international migration and migrants.

Chapter I

Why is international migration so important?

Throughout history, migration has been a human strategy to fulfil individual aspirations and respond to adversity or lack of opportunity. Even though the scale of international migration is small compared to other major demographic trends, its social and economic ramifications are consequential not only for migrants and their families, but also for people in countries of origin, transit and destination who are not themselves migrants. The economic, social and political relevance of international migration is likely to continue to increase in the years ahead, tied in part to other critical trends including climate change, population ageing, urbanization and conflict.

Every year, millions of people leave their countries of origin to move abroad. They hail from all continents, with some settling in neighbouring countries and regions, while others cross the globe (chaps. 4, 5, 6). For some, the experience of living abroad is of short duration, while for others, it extends over a lifetime. Migrants include some of the most highly educated and successful individuals in the world, as well as people suffering from multiple, intersecting forms of deprivation (Massey, 1990; chaps. 13 and 14). The reasons and circumstances that compel people to migrate are also diverse, with some leaving in search of better work opportunities, to pursue educational goals, to reunite with family or simply for leisure, while others are forced to migrate to escape conflict, violence or persecution (United Nations, 2020a; chaps. 4, 5, 20 and 21). Owing to the complexity and diversity of these human experiences and characteristics, it is not trivial to offer a unified, synthetic explanation of why international migration is a "megatrend." Several overlapping aspects are at play, of which three are discussed below.

First, the sheer magnitude of the phenomenon is enough to qualify it as a megatrend. As of 2020, the number of international migrants worldwide stood at 281 million: a figure comparable to the size of the entire population of Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country (figure 1.1; United Nations, 2020a). Over the past six decades, the number of international migrants worldwide increased nearly fourfold, growing by around 78 million between 1960 and 1990 and then rising by 128 million between 1990 and 2020 (United Nations, 2009; 2020b). In absolute terms, the scale of international migration today is unprecedented (box 1.1).

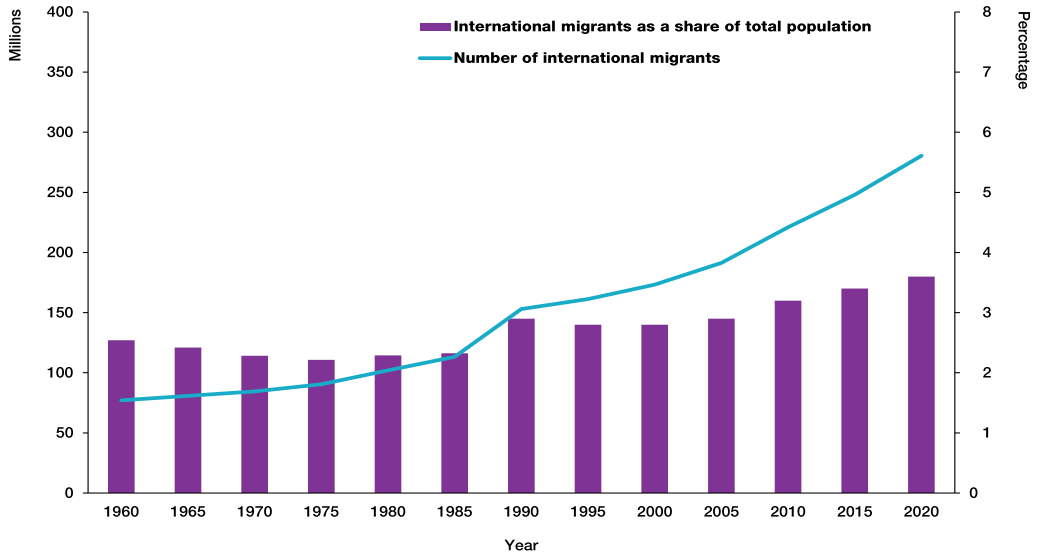
However, while the number of international migrants has continued to grow robustly in recent decades, the impact of international migration on population trends remains comparatively small in most regions (chaps. 9 and 10). The share of international migrants in the world's population was less than 4 per cent in 2020. This global figure, however, masks vastly different realities at the national and regional levels. Whereas in many parts of the world the number of international migrants relative to population size was less than 1 in 50, in Australia and New Zealand, Europe and Northern America, and in countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), at least 1 in every 10 persons hailed from another country (United Nations, 2020b; chaps. 9 and 10).

Second, beyond mere numbers of migrants, international migration has a major role in shaping the social, economic and political realities of people who are not themselves migrants. These effects are felt not only in the countries and areas where migrants reside—the so-called countries of destination—but also in those from which migrants originate or through which they transit. In host societies, for instance, international migrants often fill critical gaps in the labour market, promote technological innovation and foster the transmission and diffusion of cultural values and norms (Dustmann and Frattini, 2014; Lissoni, 2018; Kerr, 2018; Martinsen and Pons Rotger, 2017; Peri, 2012, 2016; chaps. 2, 9, 15 and 16). In countries of origin, the earnings that migrants send home in the form of either cash or goods can reduce poverty and improve the educational and health outcomes of members of their families and communities (Adams, 2011; Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2021; Meyer and Shera, 2017; Ngoma and Ismail, 2013; chaps. 11-14 and 16). However, the effects of international migration are not always positive. Under some circumstances, international migration can increase inequality or have negative impacts on economic growth in countries of origin or destination (Barajas and others, 2009; Chowdhury and others, 2022; Shen, Docquier and Rapoport, 2010; Sutradhar, 2020; Taylor, 1992; chaps. 11 and 16). The emergence of more diverse and heterogenous societies, combined with concerns around migrant integration, can also result in anti-immigration backlashes, with migrants becoming scapegoats for deep-rooted societal problems and fears (Demeny, 2002; Lecler, 2019; chap. 2).[1] When left unchecked, migration-

[1] Nativist and xenophobic reactions and responses to international migration are not new. In the past, many countries embraced anti-immigration rhetoric or had policies that explicitly sought to restrict immigration based on religious, ethnic, racial or other grounds (Fetzer, 2000; McNally, 2015).

related xenophobia and discrimination against migrants can erode universal standards of human rights in host societies (Crush and Ramachandran, 2010). It is critical, therefore, to dispel misleading and dehumanizing narratives and perceptions of migrants and migration to promote a more factual and constructive understanding of the benefits and challenges of migration based on evidence.

Figure 1.1
Number of international migrants worldwide and as a share of the global population, 1960 to 2020



Source: United Nations (2009, 2019, 2020b).
Note: Data for 1960-1985 are from the 2008 revision of *International Migrant Stocks*; data for 1990-2020 are from the 2020 revision of *International Migrant Stocks*.

Box 1.1.
International migration in an historical context

In discussing why international migration is one of the most pressing and relevant issues of our time, it is important to reiterate that, far from being a recent phenomenon, international migration has been intricately connected with the geographic diffusion of the human species and has also been one of the main responses linking economic opportunities, or the lack thereof, to population change[1] (Castles, 2000; Demeny, 2002; Games, 1999; Hatton and Williamson, 1998; Livi-Bacci, 2018; Strikwerda, 1999). Forced displacements across borders, often a critical component of overall migration trends in the past, have also had profound impacts throughout history, shaping the demographic, economic and cultural realities of societies around the globe (Harzig and Hoerder, 2013; chap. 3).[2]

While in absolute terms the scale of international migration today is unprecedented, in some countries, the current number of international migrants as a proportion of the total population is not new. For instance, in the United States of America—the country with the largest number of international migrants—the share of foreign-born persons in the total population has been comparable in recent years to levels recorded between 1870 and 1910 (Hirschman, 2005). In Australia, another country that historically has seen large migration inflows, the share of persons born overseas has been approaching although as of 2021 was still less than, the levels registered in the 1890s (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

[1] In Ireland, for instance, emigration helped reconcile large family size, widespread poverty and a land tenure system that made it difficult for tenant farmers to acquire land. Emigration from Ireland intensified as a result of the Famine of 1845-1849, when some 2 million people are thought to have left the country, and continued over the next seven decades, with another 4.5 million people leaving between 1850 and 1913 (Hatton and Williamson 1993; Mokyr, 2022).

[2] One of the most notorious examples of forced displacement was the transatlantic slave trade: between the 16th and 19th centuries, some 10 million to 12 million people were forcibly transported from Africa to the Americas (Lewis, 2022). Enslaved migrants and their descendants, many of whom suffered extreme violence, deprivation and discrimination, have contributed to the economic, social, political and cultural development of countries around the globe (Bay and Mann, 2013; Manning, 2010). The partition of India in 1947 is another significant example of forced displacement. Resulting in one of the largest and most rapid migrations in human history (estimates range between 14.5 million and 17.9 million people), the partition had wide-ranging demographic and social consequences (Bharadwaj, Khwaja and Mian, 2008; 2009).

Ultimately, the extent to which international migration benefits countries of origin, transit and destination depends on many factors, including the characteristics of the migrants themselves; the extent to which migration occurs in a safe, orderly, regular and responsible manner; the level of protection accorded to migrant rights; and the degree of migrant integration into host societies. The ability of countries of origin to leverage the contributions of their diaspora (through increased foreign investment and trade and greater financial inclusion) and to facilitate voluntary return migration is also critical (de Haas, 2011, 2021; chaps. 2, 11, 12 and 16). Managing these complex interlinkages requires coherent policies aimed at maximizing the positive returns of international migration while minimizing its costs (Baldwin-Edwards and others, 2019; United Nations, 2020c; Vitorino, 2021; chaps. 2 and 21).

Third, in many parts of the world, international migration remains an extremely polarizing and divisive issue. Compared to international trade and the flow of capital, which have become increasingly unrestricted, the movement of people across international borders remains more constrained, with each sovereign State having the prerogative to determine its own migration policy.[2] Indeed, national sovereignty[3] is one of the guiding principles of the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, the first negotiated global agreement that covers all dimensions of international migration in a holistic manner. However, the principle of sovereignty is sometimes at odds with individual rights and aspirations, including the right to leave one's own country[4] and the right that each person has to pursue his or her own economic, social and cultural interests in accordance with international human rights law[5] (Bosniak, 1991; Sassen, 1996). To bridge the tension that can arise between national sovereignty and individual rights, migration-related policy responses often aim to fulfill different objectives. On the one hand, they seek to reduce inequalities and promote development in home countries, so that international migration is a choice and not a necessity (Nyberg–Sørensen and others, 2002). On the other hand, the policies aim to expand opportunities for regular migration, so that individuals can pursue their occupational or educational aspirations and, where applicable, reunite with family members in a safe and orderly manner (Clemens, 2011; chaps. 2 and 21). Increasingly there is also a realization that state sovereignty is enhanced rather than diminished by adopting a more people-centered approach that upholds migrants' rights regardless of their legal migration status (Thompson, 2013). Given the intrinsically transnational nature of international migration, bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and global partnerships are increasingly recognized as critical for ensuring the effectiveness of migration policies (Börje, 2013; United Nations, 2020c).

In recent decades, the process of globalization has brought international migration to the forefront of policy debates in many parts of the world, with international migration being increasingly recognized as both one of its contributing factors and one of its manifestations.[6] In the future, it is likely that international migration will continue to be viewed as a "megatrend" of critical social, economic and political relevance. Forecasting future trends in international migration is notoriously difficult. However, it is likely that the volume and complexity of international migration flows will grow, shaped in part by other global trends including climate change (Bijak and Wiśniowski, 2010; Sachs, 2016; Sohst and others, 2020).[7] Longer and harsher droughts, desertification and rising sea levels resulting from climate change may degrade the safety, well-being and livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in countries with high exposure to climate risks and with low levels of adaptive capacity, encouraging or compelling them to migrate within or across international borders in search of better access to shelter, food, water or work (Cattaneo and Bosetti, 2017; Hugo, 1996; Maurel and Tuccio, 2016; McLeman, 2019; chaps. 17, 20 and 21).

[2] There are, however, exceptions. For instance, the principle of non-refoulement, recognized under international human rights, refugee, humanitarian and customary law, guarantees that no one should be returned to a country where they would face torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other irreparable harm. This principle applies to all migrants at all times, irrespective of migration status (OHCHR, 2018).

[3] See General Assembly resolution 73/195. Specifically, the Global Compact reaffirms the sovereign right of States to determine their national migration policy and their prerogative to govern migration within their jurisdiction, in conformity with international law. Within their sovereign jurisdiction, States may distinguish between regular and irregular migration status, including as they determine their legislative and policy measures for the implementation of the Global Compact, taking into account different national realities, policies, priorities and requirements for entry, residence and work, in accordance with international law.

[4] Article 13(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). See General Assembly resolution 217 A.

[5] For instance, Articles 22 to 27 of the UDHR.

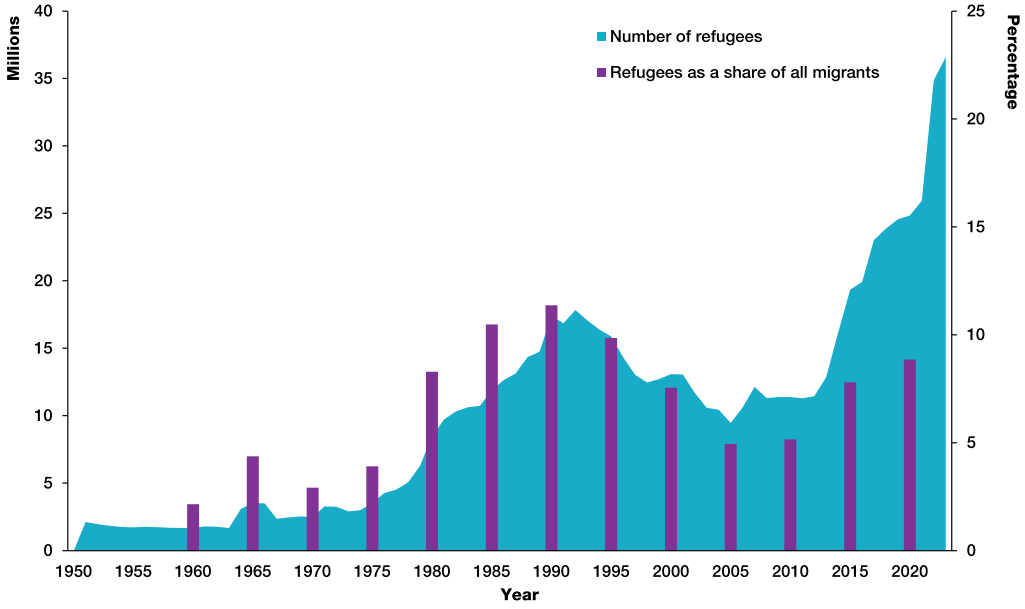
[6] While there is disagreement as to when the current process of globalization started, there is broad consensus that international migration, by promoting international trade and foreign direct investment, as well as social and cultural exchange, has contributed to the integration of economic, cultural, political, religious, and social systems across the globe (Castañeda and Shemesh, 2020; Solimano, 2010). Conversely, the increase in the flow of goods, services, and capital worldwide; the emergence of transnational social networks; and the acceleration and diffusion of technological innovations in communications and transportation, which have accompanied globalization, have made it easier for people to migrate across borders (Triandafyllidou, 2018)

[7] Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, which temporarily stalled human mobility due to the closure of national borders and severe disruptions to international land, air and maritime travel, provide an example of challenges of forecasting international migration trends, especially in the longer-term (United Nations, 2020a)

Stark differences in population size and age structure at the national and regional levels are also likely to drive future migrations. In the coming decades, the populations of many low-income countries are projected to grow rapidly. In such contexts, a lack of decent work and sustainable livelihoods at home may compel people, particularly young adults, to seek opportunities abroad. By contrast, many high-income and upper-middle-income countries are projected to see the size of their populations plateau or even decline in the absence of migration from abroad. Many of these countries are also facing rapid ageing of their populations. Worker shortages in healthcare and the broader care-economy may result in a greater demand for migrant labour, with important implications including for the gender composition of future migration flows (Dao and others, 2018; Hanson and McIntosh, 2016; Hatton and Williamson, 2003; chaps. 10, 14 and 16).

Given the close connections between internal and international mobility, it is also likely that urbanization will affect trends in international migration going forward. As the share of the world's population living in urban areas continues to grow, the concentration of economic activity in cities is likely to increase opportunities for international migration, while reducing some of the associated costs, making it easier and more affordable for people to migrate abroad if they wish to do so (Maurel and Tuccio, 2016; Royuela, 2015; United Nations, 2018; chap. 19).

Figure 1.2
Number of refugees and refugees as a share of total international migrants, 1950 to 2022



Source: United Nations (2009, 2020b) and UNHCR (2024).
Note: Refugees here includes asylum seekers and Venezuelans displaced abroad. Refers to refugees and asylum seekers under the mandate of UNHCR.

Conflicts and crises, which have played a significant role in shaping migration trends in the past, are also likely to keep international migration at the center of the global policy debate. The number of refugees and asylum seekers who have been forced to flee across international borders because of persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations has risen to the highest level in over seven decades (figure 1.2; chaps. 4-6 and 21). As of mid-2023, there were approximately 36.4 million refugees worldwide, of which, 30.5 million were under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and another 5.9 million under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (UNHCR, 2023; UNRWA, 2021). In addition, there were 6.1 million asylum seekers and 5.3 million other people in need of international protection (UNHCR, 2023). While it is impossible to anticipate the future magnitude of displacements across international borders, it is likely based on current trends that conflicts and crises around the globe will continue to compel refugees and asylum seekers to flee their countries in search of protection and safety, and thus, displacement will continue to be an important component of overall migration trends (chaps. 3-5).

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Chapter II

International migration and sustainable development

International migration and development are intrinsically interlinked, with migration being both a response to, and a determinant of, development. Because international migration is a multidimensional phenomenon with important social and economic implications for societies of origin, transit and destination, it requires coordinated and coherent policy responses. International migrants are important agents of change, making positive contributions to sustainable development in communities of origin and destination. They are also, however, among the groups most vulnerable to being "left behind" and excluded from the benefits of development. International migration can support the achievement of many Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

People migrate for multiple and often overlapping reasons (box 2.1). Some are compelled to do so because of extreme poverty, inequality, lack of decent work opportunities, environmental degradation, insecurity, violence, wars or human rights violations (Adepoju, 2011; Hatton and Williamson, 2003). Others leave their country to pursue educational aspirations; to find more fulfilling or better remunerated work; to marry, form a union with a partner or reunite with family members living abroad; or to retire to areas where the cost of living is lower, or the climate more agreeable. Regardless of the motivation, the aspiration to migrate as well as the ability to do so are profoundly shaped by the resources and networks that one has access to and the barriers that one faces, which vary within societies and among countries (Bakewell, De Haas and Kubal, 2012; De Haas, 2007, 2010, 2021).

Box 2.1.
International migration and development: different theoretical frameworks

Several different theoretical frameworks have sought to explain why international migration takes place, incorporating different hypotheses, perspectives and assumptions from a range of disciplines including economics, sociology, geography, demography and anthropology (Massey and others, 1993; O'Reilly, 2015). Several of these frameworks have focused on migration as a strategy to optimize utility, in terms of maximizing incomes or minimizing risks, at the individual (neoclassical economic theory) or family level (new economics of migration theory) (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Stark and Bloom, 1985). Others, including the dual labour-market theory and the world systems theory, view international migration as an expression of labour market segmentation or of structural differences in world markets and power among countries and regions (Piore, 1979; Portes and Walton, 2013). More recently, the aspirations-capabilities framework has sought to conceptualize migration as a strategy to improve opportunities within the broader context of promoting human development (De Haas, 2010, 2021).

Since the financial, social, psychological and physical costs of migrating are often high, most people, when given the choice, prefer to live, work and prosper in their own countries. However, when that is not possible, either because the opportunities for building sustainable livelihoods are not available or because the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to seek a future elsewhere are too great, international migration can offer a pathway for people to fulfill their aspirations and, in some cases, escape from deprivation and vulnerability. In making a decision to move abroad, individuals and families[8] weigh the

[8] Migration is often a household strategy to diversify risks and opportunities.

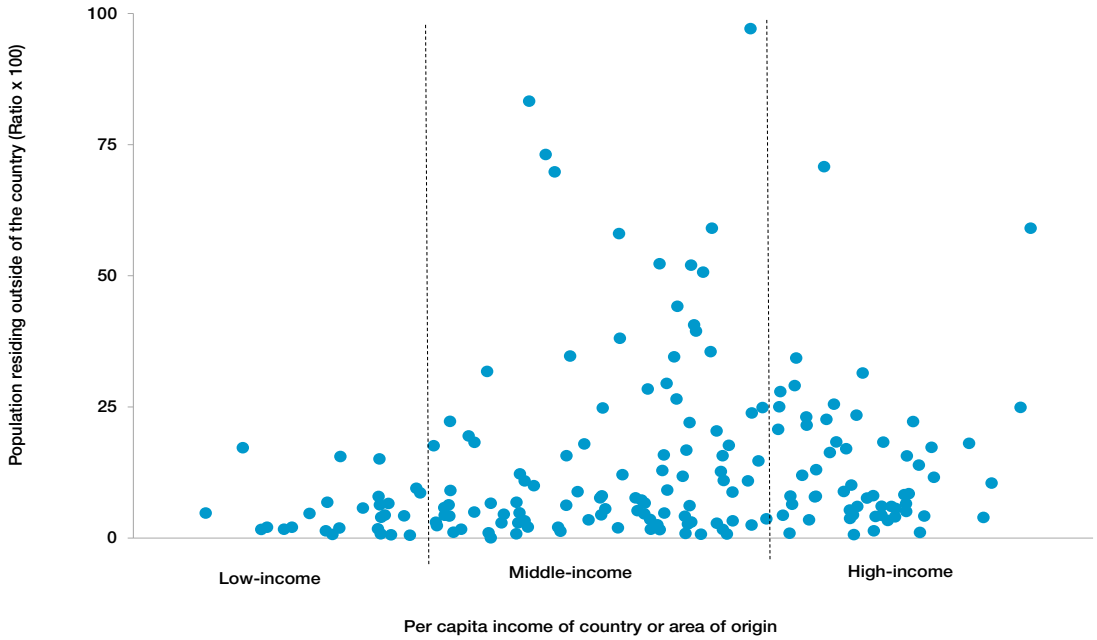
direct and indirect costs associated with migration, including forgone opportunities in their country of origin, against the economic and social benefits that they expect to enjoy in the place of destination. In some cases, the decision can be based on an informed and rational assessment of how the benefits outweigh the risks and costs, while in others it can be based more on anecdotes and hearsay (Akhigbe, 2021; Martell, 2016). Unfavorable political, economic, social and environmental circumstances in countries of origin, combined with unrealistic perceptions of the opportunities available abroad and poor understanding of the associated risks and dangers, can shift the balance in this decision-making process, leading people to leave their countries even when they do not have access to safe and regular migration pathways. Under such circumstances, migrants can become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, fall victim to human traffickers, or, in some cases, even lose their lives (Di Nicola, 2013). Since 2014, more than 4,000 fatalities have been recorded annually along migratory routes worldwide, with many more migrant deaths going unrecorded (IOM, 2022). To reduce the risks that migrants face, it is critical to enhance the channels for people to migrate in a safe and legal manner, while at the same time upholding and protecting the human rights of all migrants regardless of their migration status (Skeldon, 2012, 2014). It is also important to ensure that people who are seeking to emigrate are aware of the risks associated with irregular and unsafe migration and are informed about the requirements, costs and living conditions in countries of destination.

While migration has been a strategy to cope with adversity and fulfill aspirations throughout human history, the present wave of globalization—with the emergence and strengthening of transnational social networks, as well as the rapid diffusion and accelerating pace of technological innovations in communications and transportation—has made it easier and more affordable for people to move across borders (Castles, Miller and Ammendola, 2005; De Haan, 1999; Triandafyllidou, 2018; chap. 1). At the same time, as the world's economic systems become increasingly integrated, a heightened awareness of disparities in social and economic opportunities among countries has fueled people's aspiration to migrate (Czaika and De Haas, 2014). Around one in six adults worldwide, equivalent to roughly three times the number of international migrants in 2020, indicated in recent surveys that they would like to move to another country permanently if they had the chance to do so (Esipova, Pugliese and Ray, 2018). Some of the highest proportions of people reporting a desire to emigrate are found in low-income countries.

Most people from low-income countries, however, despite having the aspiration to emigrate, do not have access to the financial means, skills, social networks or information required. Within countries of origin, there is often a selection process whereby the first waves of migrants involve the wealthier, more educated and better-connected members of society, who pave the way for others to follow by establishing transnational networks and sharing information (Bakewell, De Haas and Kubal, 2012; Clemens, 2011; Massey, 1989). As levels of education and income increase, so does people's capacity to emigrate, while the costs and risks associated with migration tend to decline. This, in turn, can produce a temporary migration "hump" whereby more people who wish to migrate are able to do so (Martin, 1995; Martin-Shields, Schraven and Angenendt, 2017; Olesen, 2002; chap. 11). As the gap in opportunities declines, people tend to have fewer incentives to emigrate, leading to a stabilization in migration outflows (De Haas, 2010). However, it does not always follow that higher levels of development are associated with lower levels of emigration. To the contrary, many high-income countries have higher shares of the population residing outside of the country than do countries with low or intermediate levels of income per capita (United Nations, 2020a; figure 2.1).

While a country's level of development profoundly influences the propensity of its people to migrate, international migration itself is an integral part of the broader development process in countries of origin, transit and destination. In countries of origin, for instance, the earnings that migrants send home to their families and communities in the form of cash or goods—transfers commonly known as remittances—can boost household incomes; reduce poverty; increase school enrollments; improve access to healthcare including antenatal and postnatal care; increase agricultural productivity; support business creation and promote financial inclusion (Khan and others, 2022; Zlotnik, 2019; chaps. 11, 12, 13 and 15). In 2023, migrants sent home $860 billion in remittances, of which $669billion went to low-income or middle-income countries (figure 2.2). In countries of origin, international migration can also promote international trade, stimulate foreign direct investment and foster social and cultural exchanges, leading to technological innovation, improved infrastructure, job creation, gains in productivity and higher per capita incomes (Burns and Mohapatra, 2008; chaps. 13, 15 and 16). By creating opportunities for female formal employment and increasing the bargaining power of women within families, it can also contribute to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in communities of origin (Piper, 2005; UN Women, 2013; chap. 14).

Figure 2.1
Population residing outside a country or area of origin relative to those living inside, by level of per capita income, 2020

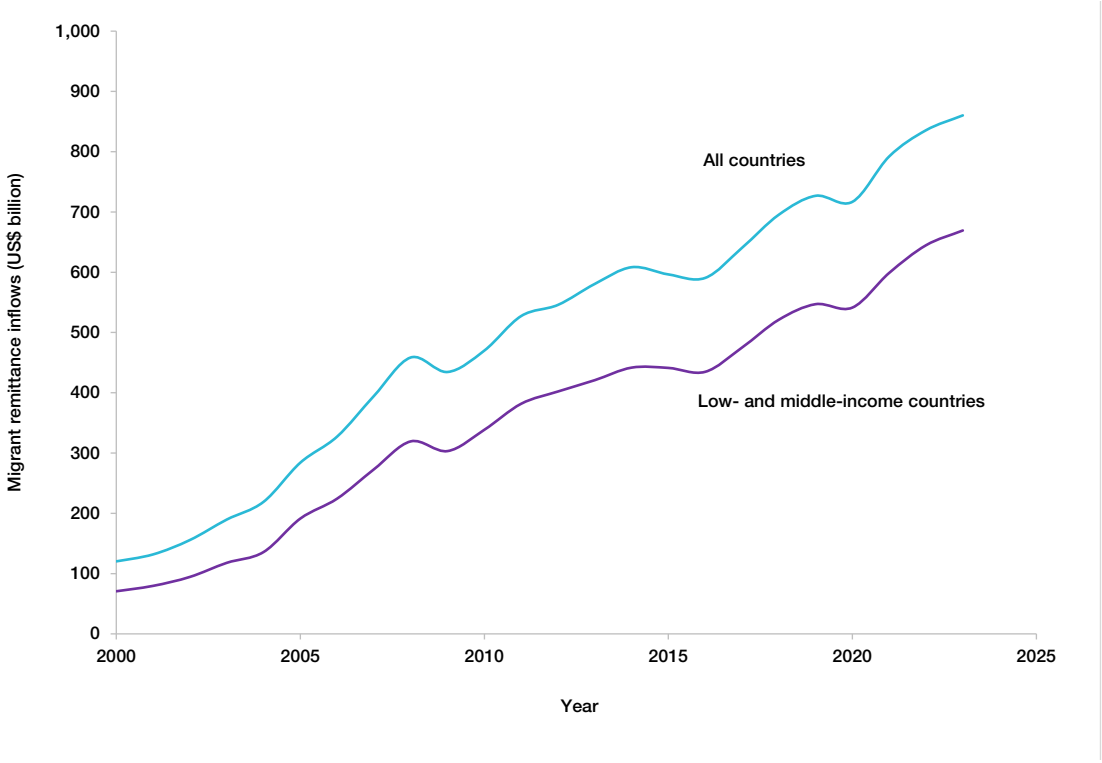


Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: Refers to native–born persons from countries and areas of origin with known values of income per capita. The classification of income group is based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, presented here in logarithmic scale. The ratio is per 100 native–born persons living in the country or area or origin.

At the same time, the effects of international migration on countries of origin are not always positive. Remittances can accentuate social and economic imbalances and inequalities, creating vicious cycles whereby more people feel compelled to migrate (Chowdhury and others, 2022; De Haas, 2012; chaps. 11, 15 and 16). Moreover, the emigration of young workers can deprive communities of critical human capital and resources (chaps. 13 and 15). The loss of people with elevated levels of educational attainment or training can have negative spillover effects on countries' productivity and prospects for sustained economic growth (chaps. 15 and 16). International migration can also create demographic and social imbalances in societies of origin, especially when children and other dependent family members are left in the care of older, predominantly female relatives (chaps. 7, 10 and 14).

More fundamentally, despite its many positive impacts, international migration alone cannot remove the structural constraints and impediments to sustainable development faced by many countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs) (Skeldon, 2008). Migration cannot, for instance, mitigate the multiple, often overlapping, drivers that compel people to leave their countries, including political instability, corruption, poor governance, elevated levels of debt, labour market inefficiencies, environmental degradation and vulnerability to climate change (De Haas, 2012). Instead, this requires a multipronged approach which leverages the potential of migration for fostering sustainable development in countries of origin, including by addressing the structural factors that hinder people's ability to fulfill their aspirations while remaining in their own countries. Creating opportunities for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work through investments, including foreign direct investment, preferential trade agreements, or other private or public sources of financing for development, are critical. In addition, developing financial products and instruments to encourage the productive investment of remittances, including matching grants or bonds; facilitating access to financial resources and financial literacy; and effectively tapping into the skills of transnational communities can expand and enhance the transformative power of migration for countries of origin (Adepoju, 2011; Pekmezovic, 2019).

Figure 2.2
Migrant remittance inflows, 2000-2023



Source: World Bank-KNOMAD (2023).

In countries of transit, the impacts of international migration depend, to a large extent, on the type of flows involved. Where such flows occur in a safe, orderly and legal manner, they can create income-generating opportunities and jobs along transit routes with positive spillover effects for local economies. However, where migration flows are largely irregular, they can be accompanied by a flourishing of criminal activities centered around the smuggling of migrants (Aniche, 2020; Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen, 2013; chap. 21). International migrants who are smuggled across borders can fall victims to human traffickers, with women and children—particularly those who are unaccompanied or have become separated from family members—being especially vulnerable (Di Nicola, 2013).

Communities, including those neighbouring an international border, are often negatively affected, placing an additional strain on local services and infrastructure. In addition, because migrant smuggling and human trafficking tend to occur alongside other illicit transnational activities, including the trafficking of drugs and firearms, and money laundering, communities along transit routes can experience grave security threats (Heine and Thakur, 2011; James, 2009; Solimano, 2010). It is critical to strengthen capacities to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and to interrupt and dismantle the transnational networks that traffic in human beings, while protecting those who fall victim to trafficking. Globally, 91 per cent of countries indicate that they have formal strategies to address trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, while 84 per cent report having provisions to assist unaccompanied minors or separated children, including specialized procedures for their legal assistance as well as specific measures for their identification, referral, care and family reunification (United Nations, 2021).

Countries of destination reap many economic, social, cultural and demographic benefits from international migration (Massey and others, 1999; Schiller, 2012). Migrants fill critical labour shortages and perform jobs that native-born workers do not want (Ottaviano, Peri and Wright, 2013). A striking illustration of this emerged during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Without the work of millions of essential migrant workers, vital sectors of the economy in many host countries, including healthcare, social services, agriculture, food production and transportation, would have been critically understaffed.

Because migrant workers tend to complement rather than substitute the skillsets of native-born workers, migration can foster specialization, which in turn can lead to technological innovation and gains in productivity (Koczan and others, 2021; Ottaviano, Peri and Wright, 2013; chaps. 15 and 16). International migrants, as well as their children and descendants, can also have a positive impact on the demographic characteristics of countries of destination, delaying population ageing and reversing or mitigating population decline, with significant fiscal implications in some cases (Dao and others, 2018; chaps. 9, 10 and 16).

However, large migration influxes, particularly when they occur in an irregular manner, can have adverse effects on host societies, straining resources and raising concerns about security and social cohesion (Cattaneo and Bosetti, 2017; Demeny, 2002). In host countries with low levels of labour market flexibility, large inflows of undocumented migrants or migrants with low levels of educational attainment can have small but negative effects on wages, technological innovation and productivity (chaps. 11, 15 and 16). Globally, 68 per cent of Governments indicate that they view irregular migration as a major concern, while another 25 per cent view it as a minor concern (United Nations, 2020c).

By creating more opportunities and channels for legal migration, countries of destination can increase the development potential of migration. This requires regularly assessing labour market needs and aligning them with migration policies. Globally, over 84 per cent of Governments report having a national policy or strategy for enhancing regular migration pathways, while 69 per cent indicate that they regularly align their migration policies with actual and projected labour market needs (United Nations, 2021). Policies to promote the inclusion and integration of migrants can also increase the positive effects of migration for host societies, while decreasing its negative impacts (De Haas, 2012). Globally, 78 per cent of countries report having policies to promote migrant integration (United Nations, 2021).

While international migrants are important agents of change, often contributing positively to inclusive growth and sustainable development, they can be extremely vulnerable owing to discrimination and other social or economic barriers to their inclusion (Dancygier and Laitin, 2014; Paasche, Skilbrei and Plambech, 2018; Röder and Mühlau, 2011; chaps. 10 and 15). Ensuring that no one is left behind is one of the key principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which affirms that the benefits of sustainable development must be shared by all members of society, including the most vulnerable. Without appropriate policy measures, however, international migration can make inclusive development harder to achieve.

Protecting the rights of migrants, providing access to basic services, including for health, addressing discrimination and promoting migrant integration can support inclusion in host societies (United Nations, 2020c; chaps. 12, 13 and 21). Measures to remove barriers in accessing education and training and to promote the recognition of qualifications acquired abroad can enhance the positive development impacts of migration and reduce its costs (chaps. 13, 15, 16 and 21). Addressing the vulnerability of migrant workers to employment and wage discrimination, facilitating the portability of social security benefits, promoting fair and ethical recruitment of migrant workers, and dispelling harmful and misleading narratives on migrants and migration in the media and other forms of public discourse are other critical policy measures that can advance the beneficial impacts of migration. Facilitating the reintegration of migrants upon their return by providing access to social protection and services, employment opportunities and financial services can have positive impacts for the sustainable development of communities of origin. The inclusion of migrants in policymaking and development planning as well as measures to ensure that migration policy is gender-responsive and child-sensitive are also central to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda's pledge that no one will be left behind (chaps. 21 and 22; box 2.2).

Box 2.2.
International migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes several targets related directly to international migration or migrants. The most explicit among them is target 10.7, which calls on countries to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies (Crush, 2019; Piper, 2017; chap. 21). Other migration-related targets in the 2030 Agenda include strengthening and retaining the health workforce in developing countries (target 3.c), providing scholarships for study abroad (target 4.b), respecting the labour rights of migrant workers (target 8.8), reducing the costs of transferring remittances (target 10.c), ending human trafficking (targets 5.2, 8.7 and 16.2), establishing legal identity including through birth registration (target 16.9), and disaggregating data by various characteristics including migratory status (target 17.18).

In addition to the targets related directly to international migration or migrants, international migration can support the achievement of other Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, including those relating to poverty eradication, health, education and gender equality (Dalby, Horton and Mahon, 2019; IOM, 2017). Migration can also play a critical role in improving resilience to natural and human-made disasters, and migrants can be at the forefront of developing strategies to mitigate and adapt to the negative effects of climate change (Black and others, 2011; Vinke and others, 2020; chaps. 19 and 20). International migration, however, can also have negative impacts on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The emigration of large numbers of medical personnel, for instance, can adversely affect the attainment of health-related targets in countries with limited access to healthcare and a shortage of trained healthcare professionals (chap. 12). In general, the emigration of skilled workers can lead to a "brain drain"[1] from critical sectors, with negative implications for economic growth in countries of origin (chaps. 12, 13 and 16). For this reason, it is important to adopt comprehensive policy approaches that maximize the overall benefits of migration, while addressing the risks and challenges that it can pose to individuals, families and communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. Recognizing the multiple interlinkages between migration and the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda is also critical, acknowledging that transformational change requires leveraging the synergies between different systems while managing tradeoffs (United Nations, 2023a). Better understanding the linkages between migration and critical transformative transitions such as education, food systems, jobs and climate change can also help to accelerate progress in achieving such Goals within and across countries (United Nations, 2023b). The ultimate objective, in line with the definition of sustainable development, is to ensure that people are not compelled out of necessity or desperation to seek a livelihood elsewhere but rather that people everywhere are able to lead peaceful, productive, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

[1] "Brain drain" refers to the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital. It mainly applies to the migration of highly educated individuals from developing to developed countries (Docquier and Rapoport, 2006; Pires, 2015).

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Chapter III

Defining and measuring international migration

International migration is a complex phenomenon that is difficult to conceptualize and measure in a coherent and consistent manner. Many countries lack up-to-date information on migration patterns and trends and on migrants and their basic characteristics. Strengthening the evidence base on international migration would enable more informed policymaking. Accurate, consistent and timely data on international migration and migrants are essential to monitor progress in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Reliable data on international migrants and migration are crucial for assessing current and future trends, identifying policy priorities and making informed decisions. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration places a strong emphasis on addressing data gaps and strengthening statistical capacity for the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on international migration identifying the "collection and utilization of accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies" as the first of its 23 objectives.[9] The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also recognizes the importance of increasing the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by migration status.

Reliable data on migration help ensure that discussions on migration at the national, regional and international levels are based on facts, not mere perceptions or myths. Objective information about the benefits and challenges of migration, besides dispelling misleading and harmful narratives on migrants and migration, can also help promote more realistic, humane and constructive policymaking based on evidence. Yet there is often a lack of clarity about what international migration is, who should be considered an international migrant and how migration should be measured (Bloom, 2019; box 3.1). Further, even when there is agreement on these issues[10] data on international migration and migrants are often incomplete or out of date. As a result, there can be gaps or wide discrepancies in the numbers cited, leading to poor decision-making on the part of policymakers and mistrust on the part of the public.

From a statistical perspective, international migrants are defined by the intersection of two key dimensions: space and time. To be considered an international migrant, a person must have moved across an international border[11] and changed his or her country of residence (United Nations, 1998, 2020a, 2021). In addition, a threshold, usually of 12 months, is used to specify the amount of time a person must have lived continuously in another country to be considered a migrant (United Nations, 2021).[12] The statistical definition of an international migrant makes no reference to the reason for migration or to the legal immigration status of persons changing their country of residence.

While space and time are critical for defining who is an international migrant from a statistical perspective, there are differences and exceptions in how the two dimensions are put into practice. Regarding space, for instance, it is not always necessary for a person to have crossed an international border to be considered an international migrant. When the political boundaries of a country change, people who had migrated internally can be reclassified as international migrants if their current place of residence and their previous place of residence become part of different sovereign states, as was the case after the dissolution of the former Soviet

[9] The United Nations Statistical Commission, which is tasked with promoting the standardization of concepts, definitions and methodology related to measuring international migration across countries and facilitating comparability of data, was called upon in the Global Compact to guide the process of elaborating and implementing a comprehensive strategy for improving migration data at the local, national, regional and global levels.

[10] The United Nations 1998 *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration* are being revised. The revised recommendations are due to be submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2025 (United Nations, 2021).

[11] A person who moves within the territory of his or her own country is considered an internal migrant, not an international migrant.

[12] Persons who travel between countries temporarily for a short-term holiday or work assignment (temporary absences), therefore, are not included in the definition. Persons who engage in temporary mobility include those who, for instance, cross borders daily for work or study, without changing their country of habitual residence. Seasonal workers, or people who travel to a country to attend a short-term training programme or to receive healthcare, are other examples. While such people are not considered international migrants from a statistical perspective, they are of interest to some countries owing to a range of logistical, fiscal or epidemiological considerations.

Union, the former Sudan or the former Yugoslavia.[13] Other differences stem from how the dimension of time is operationalized. Some countries, for instance, recognize having lived continuously for at least six months and one day as a reasonable threshold for measuring the duration of residence, instead of the threshold of at least 12 months (United Nations, 2017, 2020a, 2021).[14] Others use the intention to reside for a certain amount of time as a proxy, especially when information on the actual duration of residence is not available (United Nations, 1998, 2017, 2021).

Box 3.1.
Different typologies for classifying international migrants and migration

The term "international migrant" is not defined in international law. However, for policy or analytical purposes, international migrants are often categorized into distinct groups. Migrants, for instance, are frequently classified based on the purpose of their migration, which may include categories such as "for work or employment", "for education or training purposes", or "for family reasons", with the latter including "for family reunification", "for family formation" or "for international adoption". Many countries also seek to distinguish between migrants who undertook their journeys voluntarily and those who were compelled to do so because of force or coercion. The latter category includes refugees (people forced to flee persecution, war or violence and recognized under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees),[1] asylum seekers (people whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed) and, in some cases, victims of human trafficking.[2] International migrants are also frequently classified based on their legal status in the host country.[3] Migrants with an irregular legal status include those who entered a country's territory without authorization as well as persons who arrived in a country legally for work or study and overstayed their permits or visas (Kraler and Reichel, 2011).[4] Migration events can also be categorized according to additional typologies, including concepts such as stepwise migration, circular migration or return migration (for a more detailed discussion, see IOM, 2019).

While these categorizations are useful for policy and analytical purposes, they often intersect and overlap. It is increasingly difficult, for instance, to distinguish migrants based on the purpose of migration or whether migration was voluntary or forced (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018; Erdal and Oeppen, 2018). For this reason, any discussion of such categories should be undertaken with care, mindful of the context and purpose for which they are used.

[1] Because refugees have specific legal status and protection under international law, some experts have argued that they should be excluded from the umbrella category of "international migrant" (Carling, 2017).

[2] The reasons that compel people to leave a country are many; they include fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group, as well as conflict, generalized violence and human rights violations.

[3] A variety of terms, including illegal, unauthorized, undocumented and irregular, have been used to describe migration by persons who do not have the required documentation or authorization to enter or reside lawfully within a given territory (IOM, 2019). When applied to the person rather than the migration event or status, these terms are nonsensical (a person cannot be "illegal", for example) and tend to perpetrate or perpetuate negative biases against migrants and their communities.

[4] Persons who receive a negative decision in an asylum determination procedure or who lose their residency status because of a conviction for a criminal offence or following a review of their refugee or subsidiary protection status can also fall under this category.

Trends in international migration are usually monitored through two types of measures: migrant stocks and migration flows. These measures, which provide complementary insights, are essential for evidence-based policymaking and for monitoring progress in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.*

The international migrant stock is a measure of the number of persons who are considered international migrants at a given point in time. To identify who is an international migrant, either a person's country of birth or country of citizenship is used. When data on country of birth are available, they are generally given precedence because such data reflect a change in the country of residence more accurately than do data on country of citizenship.[15] Data on country of citizenship, however, are also used when data on country of birth are not

[13] Persons who had previously migrated internationally can also cease to be considered international migrants, as in the case of Germany or of Yemen, if the country in which they are residing and the one from which they originated subsequently unify.

[14] The revised conceptual framework on international migration allows for both approaches (United Nations, 2021).

[15] The advantage of using this concept is that it is relatively simple to measure and does not change over time, since a person can only be born in one place. While country of birth is suitable for collecting information on lifetime migration, it is not appropriate for capturing situations where migrants change country of residence multiple times.

available.[16] Cross-tabulating data on country of citizenship and on country of birth can provide important insights into migrants' access to rights and their integration within host societies (United Nations, 2021).[17] When data on country of birth or citizenship of a person's parents are available as well, the population can be further disaggregated to distinguish between those who are the children of one or more foreign-born or foreign persons and those who are not (UNECE, 2015).

While both country of birth and country of citizenship yield essential information on international migrants, the choice of which criterion is used can be particularly critical for data on children. When country of birth is selected, children born to migrants in a host country are not considered international migrants from a statistical perspective since they are natives of that country (chaps. 8 and 10). However, when country of citizenship is chosen as the criterion, whether the children are considered international migrants or not may depend on how citizenship at birth is granted in that country. In countries that apply the principle of *jus soli* without restrictions, children automatically acquire the citizenship of their country of birth, regardless of the citizenship or legal immigration status of their parents. However, in countries that apply the principle of *jus sanguinis,* this may not be the case, meaning that some children who are native-born in such countries may be foreigners, and, in some cases, even stateless.

International migrant stocks can be considered from the perspective of either the place of destination or the place of origin. At destination, the stock refers to the number of international migrants present in a country or region (immigrant population), while at origin, it refers to the number of international migrants originating from a given country or region who are residing abroad (emigrant population). The latter are sometimes also referred to as transnational communities or "diaspora".[18]

Data on migrant stocks are obtained from population censuses, or, in countries where such data are available, from population registers or nationally representative surveys. While most countries and areas have some data on the number of international migrants living in their territory, there is considerable variability across regions in terms of the timeliness and completeness of such data (box 3.2).

Detailed and accurate data on the size or characteristics of diaspora or emigrant populations are even more difficult to obtain than information on migrants residing in host societies.[19] Even when such information is available, differences in the definitions used—for instance, some countries include the children of migrants and their descendants—as well as issues related to the way migrants abroad are registered and counted can affect the comparability of data. Because it is easier to count people in the place where they reside, rather than "absent people living abroad", collaboration and exchange of data between countries of origin and countries of destination can provide a better understanding of the size, characteristics and geographical distribution of diasporas.

International migration flows refer to the number of persons entering a country (inflows) to become part of its resident population or leaving a country (outflows) to become part of another country`s resident population during a specified period, usually a calendar year (United Nations, 1998, 2021).[20] Data on flows are often collected through administrative records of residence or labour permits issued or of border crossings, and, occasionally, population registers or household surveys. Other sources, including "big data" and geospatial data, are being explored in some contexts to monitor cross-border flows of people, including those resulting from forced displacements (Heslin and Thalheimer, 2020; Gella and others, 2022; UNECE, 2022). The number of countries with the statistical capacity to collect complete and reliable data on international migration flows, however, remains quite limited: less than one fifth of countries and areas systematically collect and disseminate such information, with considerable variability in definitions used, data quality and timeliness of publication (United Nations, 2015).

[16] Country of citizenship can be used to identify who is a non-national, that is, a citizen of another country (a foreigner) or a stateless person. Although this information is important for measuring integration, country of citizenship has limitations for measuring migration. For instance, people can acquire the citizenship of another country without changing their place of usual residence. In addition, people can acquire or lose the citizenship of one or more countries over a lifetime, making it a more complex measure than place of birth.

[17] The revised conceptual framework on statistics on international migration distinguishes three critical resident sub-populations: foreign-born foreign citizens, foreign-born citizens, and native-born foreign citizens (United Nations, 2021).

[18] Some definitions of diaspora include the descendants of international migrants whose identity has been shaped by their ancestors' migration experience and background (IOM, 2019).

[19] While some countries collect census data on "absent persons living abroad" through an emigration module administered to household members who remain in the country of origin, censuses are generally not viewed as providing an accurate count of diaspora populations (UNECE, 2015).

[20] As with stocks, temporary mobility is excluded.

It is critical, therefore, to enhance the statistical capacity of countries to collect and disseminate comprehensive and reliable data on international migration and migrants. Partnerships among countries, including North-South, South-South and triangular collaboration, and data sharing among relevant government entities at the national and sub-national level are also vital to establish integrated migration data systems, enhance the harmonization of concepts and processes and overcome silos and duplication in data production and use.

Box 3.2.
Availability of empirical data on numbers of international migrants

Based on the 2020 revision of the international migrant stock produced by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, among the 232 countries and areas considered, 201 (87 per cent of the total) had at least one data source since 2005 on the *total number* of international migrants residing in the territory,[1] 165 (71 per cent) had at least one data source on the *age* of those migrants and 177 (76 per cent) had at least one data source on *their country of origin*.[2]

Data availability on the number and basic characteristics of the migrant population, however, differs greatly by region. In Central and Southern Asia, for instance, 43 per cent of countries and areas did not have recent data on the total number of international migrants, while 57 per cent lacked recent data on their age and 64 per cent on their country of origin. Similarly, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania, despite widely available data on total numbers of migrants, had significant gaps in data on their age and country of origin. Table 3.1.

Table 3.1.
Percentage of countries and areas with at least one empirical data source since 2005 on numbers of international migrants, by type of data

Region and number of countries and areas	Percentage of countries and areas with at least one data source		
	Total	By age	By country of origin
World (232)	87	71	76
Sub-Saharan Africa (51)	84	65	76
Northern Africa and Western Asia (25)	80	56	52
Central and Southern Asia (14)	57	43	36
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (18)	94	83	83
Latin America and the Caribbean (48)	88	73	77
Oceania (23)	96	70	91
Europe and Northern America (53)	92	87	89
Europe (48)	92	88	90
Northern America (5)	100	80	80

Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: The year 2005 was chosen because it marks the beginning of the 2010 census round, which covers the period 2005-2014.

In many countries, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an adverse impact on the availability, completeness and timelessness of data on international migrants, necessitating the postponement of population and housing censuses and gravely impacting other systems of data collection.

[1] Data on the total number of international migrants is often available disaggregated by sex.

[2] Collecting data disaggregated by age and sex is particularly important for designing and monitoring the implementation of gender-sensitive and child-responsive migration policies.

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Mauritania. Malian refugees help to re-green Mbera camp with tree project. UNHCR Photo/ Colin Delfosse.

Part B:

Evidence base: Trends in international migration and its demographic impact

Qatar. Nepali domestic workers enjoying their day off in the park. ILO Photo/Hemanth Madupu.

Key messages: Part B

- Over the past six decades, the number of international migrants worldwide increased nearly fourfold, reaching 281 million in 2020.
- International migration often takes place within regions, facilitated by geographic proximity and by the close economic, social and cultural ties that countries with shared borders or within the same region often enjoy.
- Most international migrants reside in high-income countries, with Europe hosting the largest number of migrants globally, followed by Northern America. Most international migrants come from middle-income countries.
- People from the poorest countries, many of which are also landlocked, frequently lack the social and economic resources needed to translate their aspiration to migrate into action.
- The number of refugees and asylum seekers, who have been forced to flee across international borders because of persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations, has risen to its highest level in over seven decades
- Most of the world's refugees and asylum seekers are hosted by a small number of mainly low-income and middle-income countries.
- Women and girls make up around half of all international migrants globally. Women and girls also comprise around half of all refugees and asylum seekers.
- In the future, immigration is expected to become the main driver of population growth in many high-income countries, attenuating or counteracting a potential decline in population size due to a negative balance of births and deaths.
- International migration can modify the age structure of a population, especially when the volume of migrant inflow or outflow is sizeable compared to the resident population in the country of origin or destination.

Policy recommendations: Part B

- In their host countries, working-age migrants can play a significant role in easing, at least temporarily, the fiscal pressures on pension and health-care systems that are associated with population ageing.
- Facilitating the transnational portability of social security benefits can encourage the return of migrants once they have reached pensionable age.
- Enacting policies to enhance the participation of young migrants in decisions that concern them, and to promote access to education and language training, remains essential for promoting their integration and empowerment.

Kraków, Poland. Valentina is 83 and has been living as a refugee in Poland since March 29. UNHCR Photo/ Anna Liminowicz.

Chapter IV

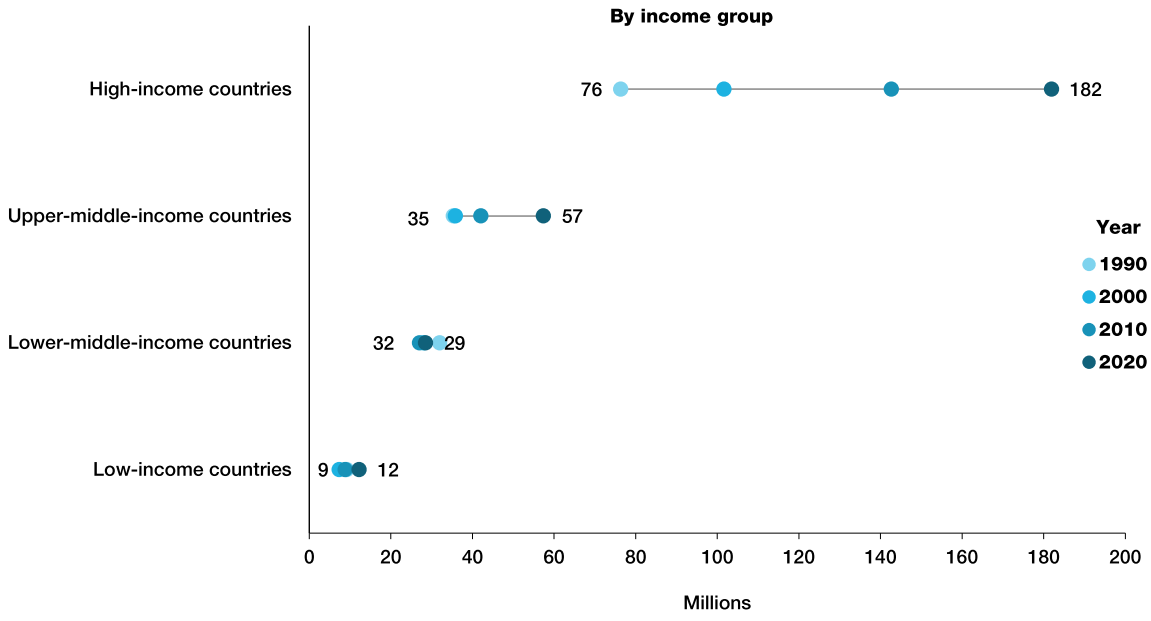
Where do migrants reside?

Most international migrants reside in high-income countries, with Europe hosting the largest number of migrants globally, followed by Northern America. In recent decades, nearly all regions have seen an increase in the number of migrants residing there. However, while a combination of labour and family migration explain most of the recent increase in the number of migrants living in Europe and Northern America, for Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, forced migration has been an additional important driver. Most of the world's international migrants live in a small number of high-income countries, whereas most of the world's refugees and asylum seekers are hosted by a handful of mainly low-income and middle-income countries.

International migrants overwhelmingly reside in countries offering the greatest social and economic opportunities (De Haas and others, 2019; United Nations, 2020a). As of 2020, 65 per cent of all international migrants worldwide lived in high-income countries, compared to 20 per cent in upper-middle-income countries, 10 per cent in lower-middle-income countries and 4 per cent in low-income countries. In terms of regions, Europe was home to the largest number of international migrants in 2020, with around 87 million (figure 4.1). Northern America hosted the second largest number of migrants, nearly 59 million, followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia, with nearly 50 million. In all other regions, the number of international migrants was considerably smaller.

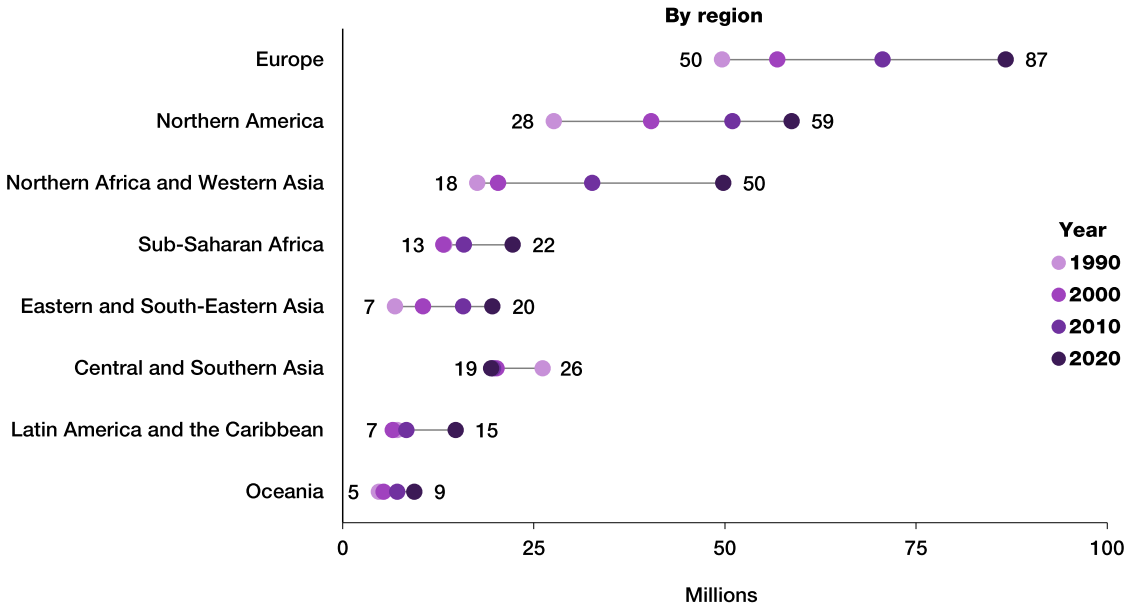
While international migrants tend to reside predominantly in high-income countries, low-income and middle-income countries tend to absorb most of those displaced across national borders due to conflict, persecution, violence or human rights violations (Fransen and de Haas, 2022). In 2020, nearly 40 per cent of all refugees and asylum seekers lived in Northern Africa and Western Asia, while 17 per cent resided in sub-Saharan Africa and 14 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean.[22]

Figure 4.1
Number of international migrants, by income group or region of destination, 1990 to 2020



[22] The data in this report predate the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine of February 2022. Since then, Europe has overtaken sub-Saharan Africa as the second largest region of destination of refugees and asylum seekers globally (box 4.1).

Figure 4.1 (Continued)



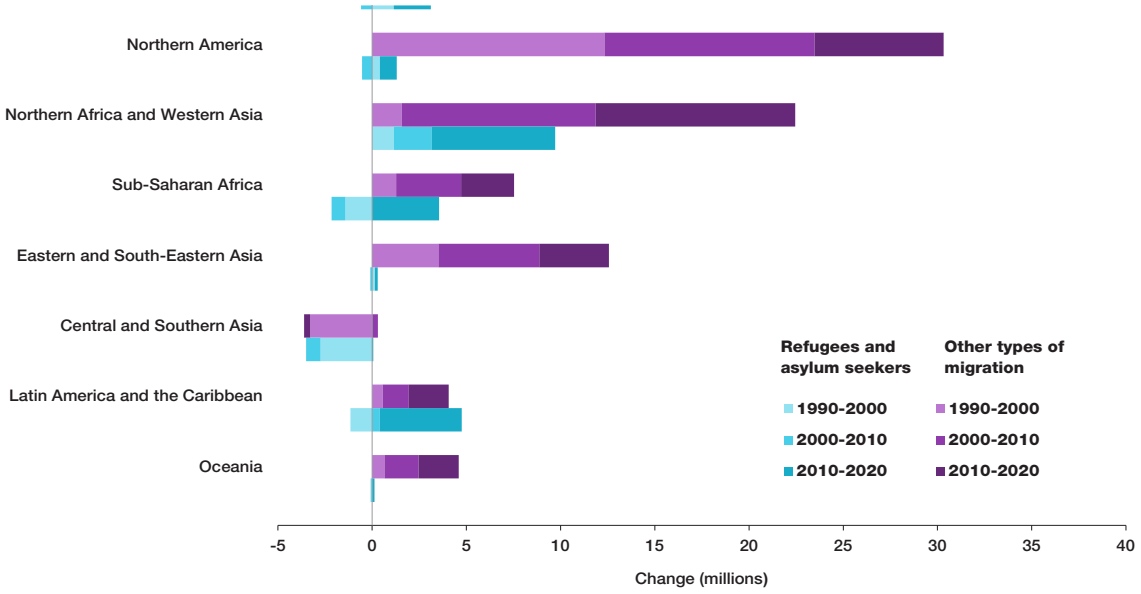
Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: Ordered by size of migrant population in 2020. The classification of countries by income groups refers to the year 2020.

In recent decades, the number of international migrants has increased across nearly all income groups and regions. High-income countries absorbed the vast majority (83 per cent) of the 127 million international migrants added worldwide between 1990 and 2020, with other income groups gaining comparatively fewer migrants. Among all regions, Europe added the largest number of migrants during that period (37 million), followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia (32 million), and by Northern America (31 million). However, the reasons for these trends differ (figure 4.2). In Europe, Northern America and Oceania most of the increase resulted from a combination of labour and family migration, driven by the demand for migrant workers and by other demographic changes, particularly changes in age structure (OECD, 2020, 2021; chaps. 9, 10 and 15).

By contrast, in other parts of the world, forced migration has played a more critical role in shaping recent migration trends. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for instance, which saw the size of its migrant population nearly double between 2010 and 2020, over two thirds of that increase resulted from the inflow of displaced people, mainly from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (figure 4.2; chaps. 5 and 6). Similarly, in sub-Saharan Africa, refugees and asylum seekers comprised more than half of all international migrants added between 2010 and 2020. Refugees or asylum seekers, many displaced in the wake of the conflicts in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, also contributed significantly to the increase in the number of international migrants living in Northern Africa and Western Asia. Over one third of all migrants added in the region between 2010 and 2020 were forcibly displaced across borders due to armed conflict, persecution, or human rights violations and abuses.

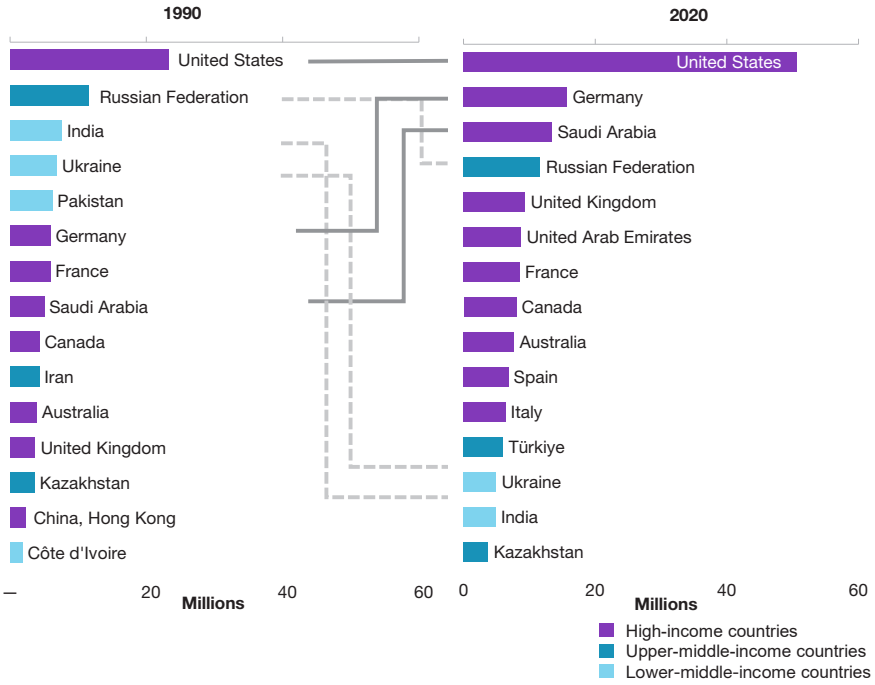
While international migration has become increasingly a global phenomenon, touching nearly every corner of the globe, most migrants live in a handful of predominantly high-income countries (figure 4.3; Czaika and De Haas, 2014). In 2020, the United States of America hosted, by far, the largest number of international migrants (51 million), equal to 18 per cent of the world's total and more than the next four major destinations of international migrants combined. Germany was home to the second largest number of migrants worldwide (around 16 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (13 million), the Russian Federation (12 million) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (9 million).

Figure 4.2
Contribution of refugees and asylum seekers and other types of migrants to the change in numbers of international migrants, by region of destination, for selected periods, 1990 to 2020



Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: The data predate the crisis in Ukraine started in February 2022. Ordered to be consistent with figure 4.1. Refugees and asylum seekers include other people in need of international protection as reported by UNHCR and refugees under the mandate of UNRWA.

Figure 4.3
Fifteen countries of destination with the largest number of international migrants, 1990 and 2020

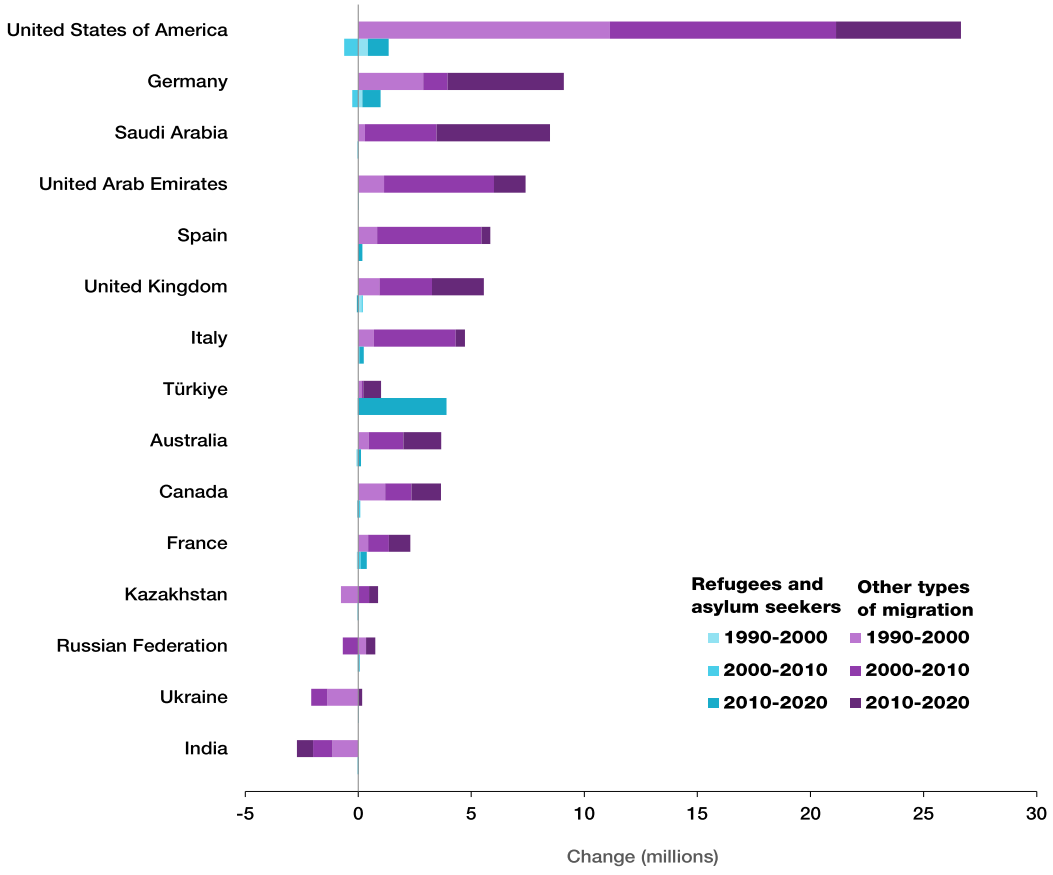


Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. The classification of countries by income groups refers to the year 2020. Ordered by size of migrant population in 2020.

Refugees and asylum seekers, similarl to other types of migrants, also tend to cluster in a small number of countries. Türkiye hosted the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers in the world in 2020: nearly 4 million. Other major destinations of refugees, asylum seekers or other persons displaced abroad in 2020 included Jordan (3 million), the State of Palestine (2 million) and Colombia (1.8 million).[23]

Between 1990 and 2020, most countries and areas witnessed an increase in the size of their migrant populations. In 93 of these, including Germany, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye, the pace of this growth has accelerated in recent decades. Between 2010 and 2020, for instance, Germany added around 600,000 migrants per year, seven times the number added during the period 2000 to 2010. Most of the increase was due to labour or family migration, while around one sixth was attributable to the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers, predominantly from Afghanistan, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic (figure 4.4). Saudi Arabia also gained around 500,000 migrants per year between 2010 and 2020, more than one and a half times the number added during the period 2000 to 2010. Most of those migrants were temporary labourers predominantly from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. By contrast, most of the increase in the size of migrant populations in Türkiye between 2010 and 2020 was due to forced displacements. Of the 15 countries of destination with the largest number of international migrants in 2020, only in Türkiye did refugees and asylum seekers contribute most of the recent increase in the size of its migrant population (figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4
Contributions of refugees and asylum seekers versus all other migrants to changing numbers of international migrants in fifteen countries hosting the largest numbers in 2020, for 10-year periods between 1990 to 2020



Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by size of change during the period 1990 to 2020. The data predate the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine in February 2022. Refugees and asylum seekers include other people in need of international protection as reported by UNHCR and refugees under the mandate of UNRWA.

[23] In 2022, several European countries emerged as major host countries for refugees (box 4.1).

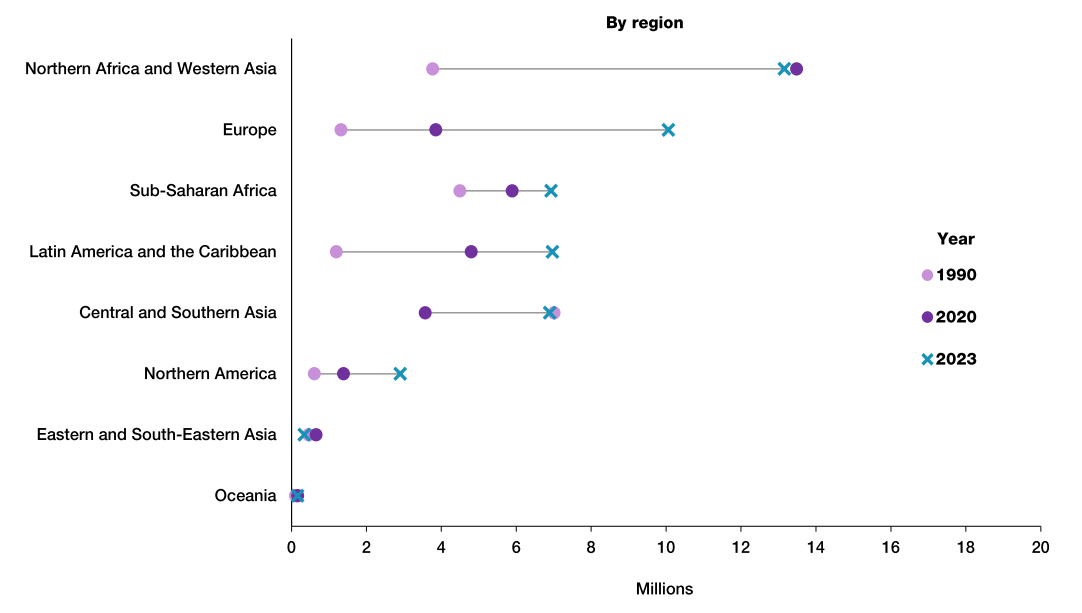
In 79 countries and areas the number of migrants added in recent decades was smaller than in previous ones, meaning that while their migrant populations continued to grow, they did so more slowly. The United States of America, for instance, added around 600,000 migrants per year during the period 2010 to 2020 compared to 900,000 per year in the period 2000 to 2010 and nearly 1.2 million per year in the period 1990 to 2000. Italy, Spain and the United Arab Emirates also added fewer international migrants during the period 2010 to 2020 than in the preceding decade. Several factors, including smaller immigration inflows, particularly of permanent immigrants and asylum seekers, as well as increased migrant returns or departures are thought to have contributed to this slower growth, driven in part by policy changes, the economic crisis following the Great Recession, and the ongoing global pandemic of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) (Billari, 2022; De Bel-Air, 2015; European Commission, 2021; OECD, 2021; Passel and Cohn, 2019; Prieto and others, 2018; Schachter, Borsella and Knapp, 2021).

Box 4.1.
Recent trends on the destination of refugees and asylum seekers

Since 2020, the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine has resulted in millions of people, mostly women and children, fleeing their homes to seek safety abroad (chap. 5). Most of these refugees crossed into neighbouring countries, namely Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation and Slovakia. From there, many moved to other countries, often within the European Union, including Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. As a result, in 2022, Europe overtook sub-Saharan Africa as the second largest region of destination of refugees and asylum seekers globally. Northern Africa and Western Asia continued to be home to the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers in the world in 2023 (figure 4.5; UNHCR, 2024).

At the country level, Türkiye was the largest destination of refugees and asylum seekers worldwide in 2023, followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Germany, the United States of America and Colombia. Other countries that emerged as major countries of asylum are Poland and the Russian Federation, where the number of refugees and asylum seekers increased more than a hundredfold between 2020 and 2023 (UNHCR, 2024).

Figure 4.5
Number of refugees, asylum seekers and other internationally displaced persons, by region of destination, 1990 to 2022



Source: United Nations (2020b); UNHCR (2024).
Note: Data include refugees, asylum seekers and other internationally displaced persons under the mandate of UNHCR and refugees under the mandate of UNRWA. Data for 2023 refer to end year. Ordered by size in 2023.

While 172 countries and areas saw the size of their migrant populations increase between 1990 and 2020, 56 countries witnessed a decline, meaning that the number of international migrants leaving the country or dying was greater than the number of new immigrants arriving.[24] In some of these, including Armenia, Belarus and Ukraine, the decline can be attributed in large part to the old-age structure of their migrant populations (chaps. 3 and 8).[25] In others, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Somalia, it resulted primarily from refugees or asylum seekers returning home or being voluntarily repatriated. Conflict, economic shocks, natural hazards and political instability have also led to a decline in the size of the migrant populations in several countries in recent years, including in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic.[26]

[24] Four countries and areas recognized after 1990 are excluded from the analysis.

[25] This type of situation is common in countries that have undergone state succession decades prior. In such countries, the age distribution among migrants can be heavily skewed towards older ages, resulting in a larger number of deaths (chap. 8). When the number of migrant deaths exceeds the number of new immigrants arriving in a country, the size of the migrant stock in that country declines.

[26] The war in Ukraine may have further accentuated the decline in the number of international migrants living in that country, as thousands of migrant workers and foreign students are known to have fled (Sarkar, 2022).

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Locals learned how to do their own go-bag with material available locally. IOM Photo/Amanda Nero.

Chapter V

Where do migrants come from?

The desire and ability to migrate are shaped by the context of people's lives, by the resources available to them and by the barriers that they face. Spatial patterns of international migrant origins reflect these underlying asymmetries, which in turn are an expression of differences in levels of development within and among countries, among other factors. Most international migrants today come from middle-income countries and not from the world's poorest countries. Among major regions, Europe still has the largest diaspora. In recent decades, however, the gap between Europe and other regions as a place of origin has narrowed, with numbers of persons living abroad rising more rapidly for some other regions than for Europe. For Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, much of the recent increase in the size of their diaspora has been due to forced migration. Over the past decades, the number of countries from which migrants originate has grown. However, 41 per cent of all international migrants worldwide still hail from just 15 countries.

Based on recent opinion polls, many of the poorest countries on the planet—where lack of opportunities for decent work and the barriers to accessing quality education and healthcare are most difficult to overcome—are also among those with some of the largest share of adults indicating they would like to emigrate permanently if they had an opportunity to do so (Esipova, Pugliese and Ray, 2018; Esipova and Ray, 2009; chaps. 2 and 11). These countries, however, are rarely the ones with the largest diaspora either in absolute terms or as a share of their total population (chaps. 2 and 9). People from the poorest countries, many of which are also landlocked, frequently lack the social and economic resources needed to translate their aspiration to migrate into action (de Haas and Rodríguez, 2010; de Haas, 2021; Laczko, Tjaden and Auer, 2017; McKenzie, 2017). By contrast, people from wealthier societies often have greater access to the information, established migration networks, human capital and financial means required to shoulder the high costs associated with migration, meaning that they are frequently in a better position to migrate if they wish to do so (Clemens, 2014; Gurak and Caces, 1992; Kanbur and Rapoport, 2005).[27] One exception relates to countries from which large numbers of people have been forced to flee because of violence, conflict, or human rights abuses. Such countries, despite often being extremely poor, tend to have large diasporas, frequently living in neighbouring countries or countries of first asylum where the prospects for safety and protection—but not necessarily for social or economic advancement—are better than in their country of origin (Fransen and de Haas, 2022; Van Hear, 2006).

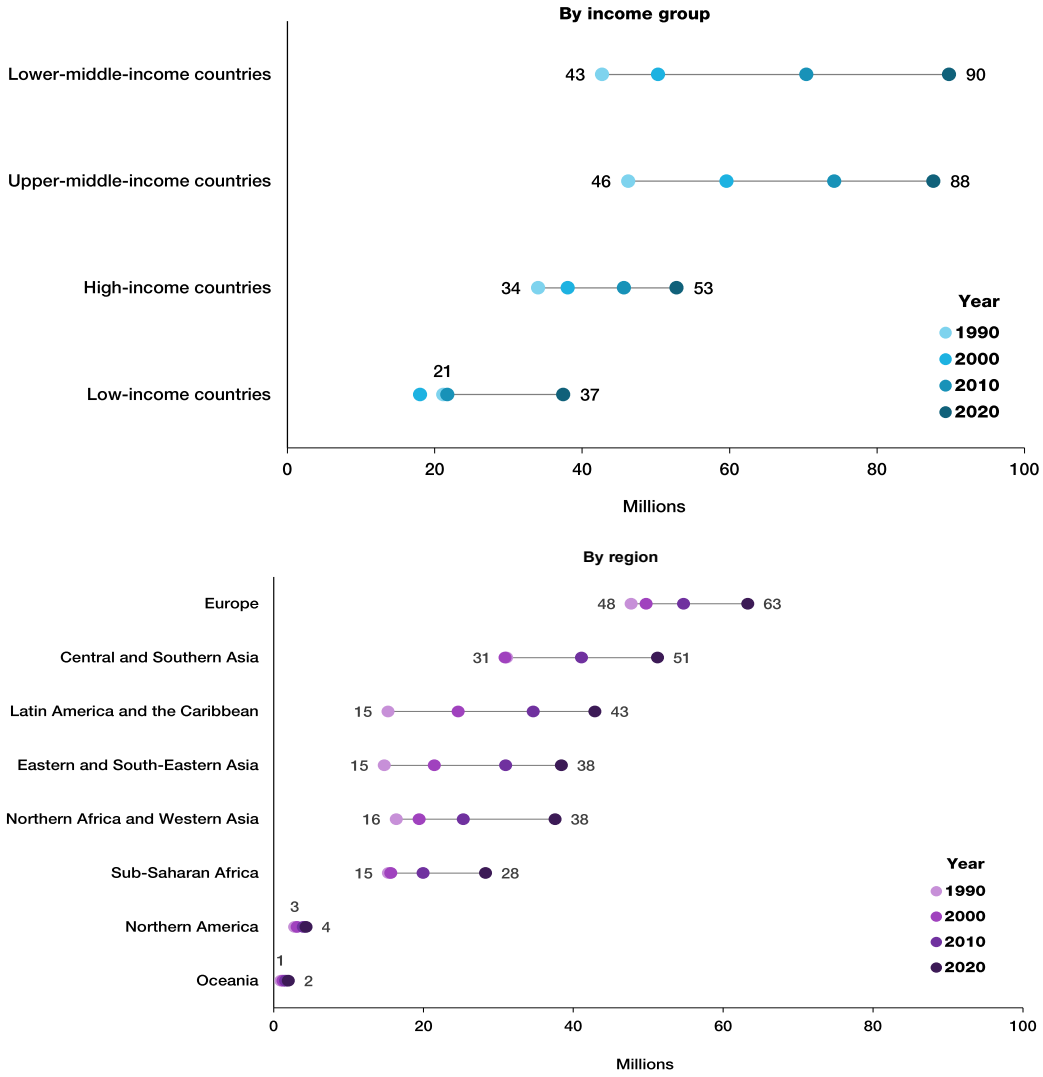
As of 2020, 63 per cent of the 281 million international migrants worldwide were from middle-income countries. Of these, 90 million were born in lower-middle-income countries and 88 million in upper-middle-income countries. In addition, 19 per cent of all international migrants, or 53 million, were from high-income countries; while 13 per cent, or 37 million, were born in low-income countries (figure 5.1).[28] Europe had the largest diaspora in the world in 2020, with 63 million international migrants. Central and Southern Asia had the second largest transnational population with 51 million, followed, in order of magnitude, by Latin America and the Caribbean with 43 million, and by Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and Northern Africa and Western Asia with 38 million each.

Between 1990 and 2020, all regions witnessed an increase in the size of their transnational populations. Latin America and the Caribbean experienced the largest absolute increase, with the number of international migrants originating from the region nearly tripling in size. The transnational populations of Central and Southern Asia, of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and of Northern Africa and Western Asia also saw robust growth, adding over 20 million migrants over the thirty-year period. The diaspora of Europe also continued to grow but more slowly than those of other regions. As a result, the gap between the size of the transnational population from Europe and other regions has narrowed and the share of migrants originating from other regions has increased.

[27] Within countries, there is also often a selection process whereby the first waves of migrants involve the wealthier and more educated members of society, who pave the way for others to follow (chaps. 2 and 11).

[28] For 13 million migrants, or 5 per cent of the total, their origin was unknown.

Figure 5.1
Number of international migrants, by income group or region of origin, 1990 to 2020



Source: United Nations (2020a).
Note: Ordered by size of the diaspora population in 2020. Data refer to international migrants of known country or area of origin. Migrants of unknown origin are not included. The difference between the total number of migrants compared to chap. 4 is due to the exclusion of migrants of unknown origin. The classification of countries by income groups refers to the year 2020.

Between 1990 and 2020, all regions witnessed an increase in the size of their transnational populations. Latin America and the Caribbean experienced the largest absolute increase, with the number of international migrants originating from the region nearly tripling in size. The transnational populations of Central and Southern Asia, of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and of Northern Africa and Western Asia also saw robust growth, adding over 20 million migrants over the thirty-year period. The diaspora of Europe also continued to grow but more slowly than those of other regions. As a result, the gap between the size of the transnational population from Europe and other regions has narrowed and the share of migrants originating from other regions has increased.

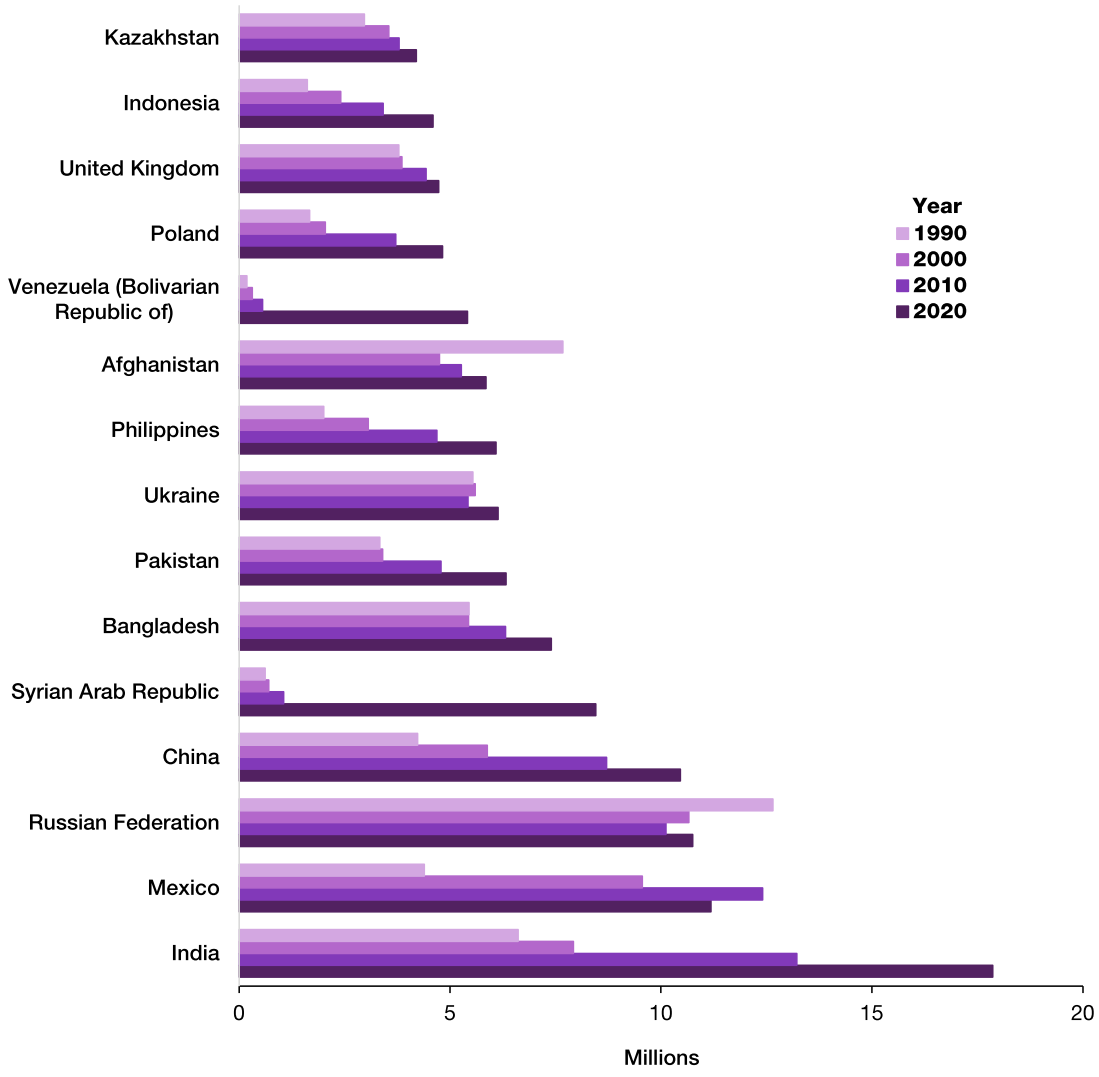
For several regions, humanitarian reasons account for a large share of the recent growth in the size of their diaspora.[29] In 2020, 38 per cent of all international migrants originating from Northern Africa and Western Asia were refugees or asylum seekers, many from the Syrian Arab Republic (United Nations, 2020b; UNHCR,

[29] Computed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division based on data from UNHCR.

2020; UNRWA, 2020). The diasporas from sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean also comprised a sizable proportion of persons forcibly displaced across national borders because of conflict, persecution, violence, or human rights violations: 26 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively (United Nations, 2020b; UNHCR, 2020).

In recent years, a growing share of all migrants have been originating from a larger number of countries. However, owing to several factors, including the role of migrant networks, bilateral and regional agreements aimed at facilitating labour or family migration, as well as regulatory and other barriers, most international migrants worldwide continue to originate from a relatively small number of countries. Nearly 41 per cent of all international migrants in 2020 were born in just 15 countries, slightly down compared to 46 per cent in 1990. India had the largest number of persons living outside of their country of birth in 2020, 18 million (figure 5.2). Other countries with a large transnational community included Mexico and the Russian Federation (11 million each), China (10 million) and the Syrian Arab Republic (8 million). Of the 15 countries and areas with the largest number of international migrants abroad in 2020, all but two, Afghanistan and the Syrian Arab Republic, were middle-income countries or high-income countries.

Figure 5.2
Fifteen countries of origin with the largest number of international migrants in 2020, 1990 to 2020



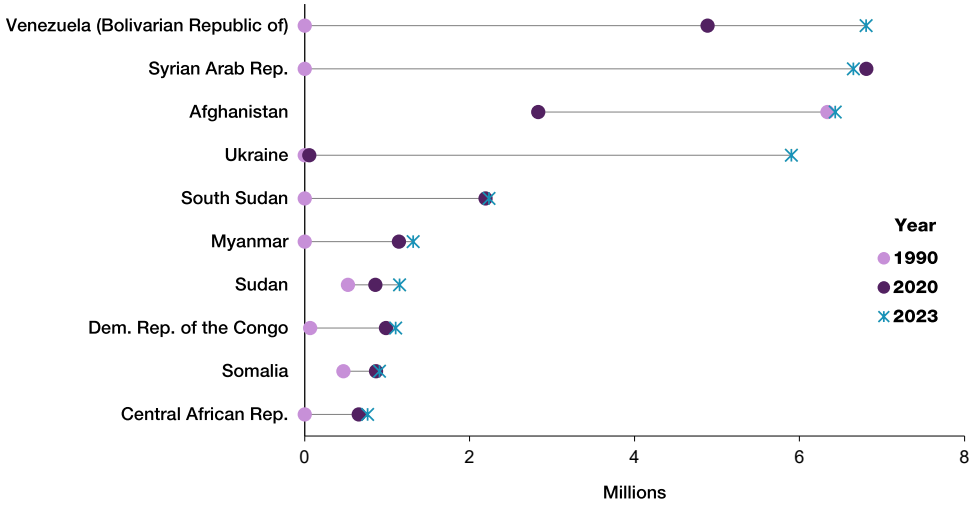
Source: United Nations (2020a).
Note: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by size of the diaspora population in 2020.

Between 1990 and 2020, 206 countries and areas saw the size of their diasporas grow. India experienced the largest gain during that period (11 million), followed, in order of magnitude, by the Syrian Arab Republic, Mexico, China, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the Philippines. For both the Syrian Arab Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the increase in the size of their transnational population was primarily due to the political situation in those countries which resulted in the large outflow of persons displaced across borders. In 2023, more than one in four of all internationally displaced persons because of conflict or persecution, was born in either the Syrian Arab Republic or the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers also came from Afghanistan, South Sudan and Ukraine (UNHCR, 2024). Ukraine, which was already among the countries with the largest transnational populations in 2020 (figure 5.2), saw the size of its diaspora increase further owing to the large outflow of people forced to flee their homes because of the recent escalation of conflict in the country (box 5.1).

Box 5.1.
Recent trends in the origin of refugees and asylum seekers

Since 2020, crises in many parts of the world have forced millions of people to flee their homes in search of safety abroad. In the Central African Republic, for instance, violence and insecurity in the wake of the December 2020 general election forced tens of thousands of people to flee to Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other neighbouring countries. People have also continued to escape from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela due to violence and insecurity as well as a lack of food, medicine and essential services. In 2023, there were 6.8 million refugees, asylum seekers and other people in need of international protection from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the vast majority residing in other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Ukraine, an escalation of the conflict in February 2022 has led to one of the largest external displacement crises in recent decades. As of the end of 2023, over 5.9 million people, equal to roughly one eighth of the total population before the start of the war, had fled their homes to seek safety, protection and assistance abroad (UNHCR, 2024).

Figure 5.3
Number of refugees and asylum seekers, by country of origin, 1990 to 2023



Source: United Nations (2020a); UNHCR (2024).
Note: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Refugees and asylum seekers include other people in need of international protection as reported by UNHCR. Does not include refugees under the mandate of UNRWA. Data for 2023 refer to end year. Ordered by size in 2023.

While most countries and areas saw the size of their transnational communities increase between 1990 and 2020, 26 countries and areas witnessed a decrease in the size of their transnational populations. For some, including Afghanistan[30] and Mozambique, this decline resulted from the voluntary return and repatriation of refugees and asylum seekers in post-conflict years. For others, such as Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia or the Russian Federation, the decline in the size of their diaspora was in large part due to the relatively high number of deaths resulting from the older-age structure of their transnational populations (chaps. 8 and 10).

[30] The number of refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan increased markedly between 2022 and 2023 (UNHCR, 2024).

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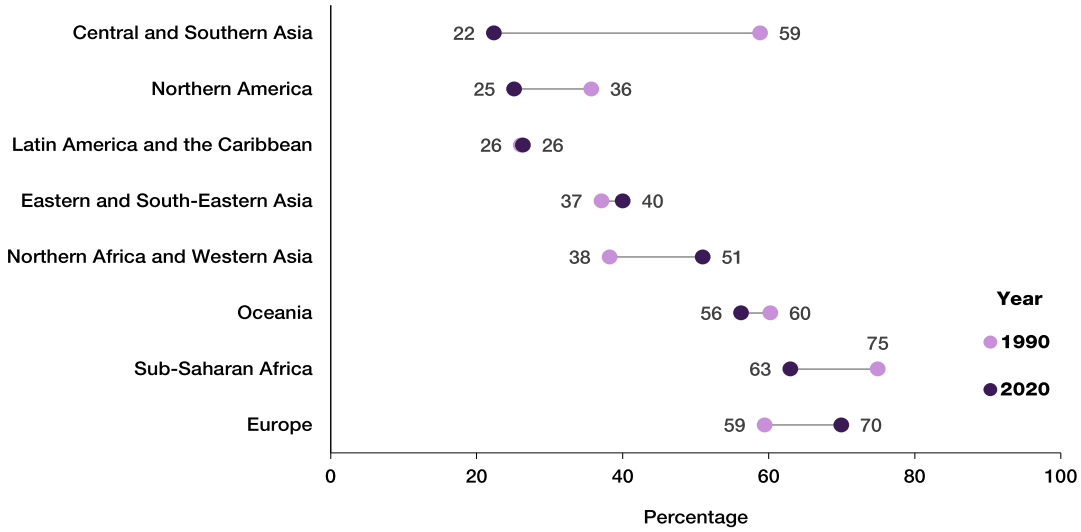
Chapter VI

Migration within and across regions

International migration often takes place within regions, facilitated by geographical proximity and by the close economic, social and cultural ties with shared borders or countries within the same region often enjoy. Yet there are differences between regions in the balance of intra- versus inter-regional migration. While nearly all international migrants born in Europe live in another European country, this is not the case for migrants born in Central and Southern Asia, in Latin America and the Caribbean, or in Northern America. The spatial distribution of transnational populations also varies, with some being highly concentrated in a small number of countries of destination and others dispersed across various countries and regions. Refugees and asylum seekers tend to cluster in neighbouring countries or in other countries of first asylum often located within the same region.

In 2020, nearly half of all international migrants at the global level were living in their own region of origin. Europe had the largest share of intra-regional migration, with 70 per cent of all international migrants born in Europe residing in another European country or area in 2020 (figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1
Percentage of international migrants living in the same region as their region of birth, by region of origin, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: Ordered by percentage in 2020. Data refer to international migrants of known country or area of origin. Migrants of unknown origin are not included.

The intra-European corridor, which was also the largest globally in 2020 with 44 million international migrants, grew by nearly 16 million persons between 1990 and 2020 (figure 6.2). The freedom of movement of persons, enshrined in the Treaty of Rome and consolidated by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993 as well as the subsequent enlargements of the European Union, particularly those in 2004 and 2007, was central to this rapid increase (Engbersen and others, 2017; Trenz and Triandafyllidou, 2017). Migration within the Commonwealth of Independent States Free Trade Area (CISFTA) also contributed significantly. Much of this migration occurred when the boundaries of the former Soviet Union changed and persons who had previously moved internally were reclassified as international migrants (United Nations, 2020a; chap. 3).

Sub-Saharan Africa had the second largest share of intra-regional migration in 2020, with 63 per cent of all international migrants born in sub-Saharan Africa living in another country or area in the region. Much of the international migration within sub-Saharan Africa occurs at the sub-regional level reflecting the close ethnic, linguistic and cultural ties among countries whose borders were often drawn-up arbitrarily by colonial powers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Adepoju, 2000; Flahaux and De Haas, 2016). While the share of intra-regional migration in sub-Saharan Africa remains high, it has declined in recent decades. Europe and Northern America—the second and third largest regional destinations of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in order of size in 2020—gained respectively 3 million and 2 million international migrants from that region between 1990 and 2020 (figure 6.2).

At the other end of the spectrum, Central and Southern Asia had the largest share of its diaspora residing in another region: 78 per cent in 2020 (figure 6.1). Between 1990 and 2020, the share of international migrants born in Central and Southern Asia and living outside of that region grew markedly. This increase was driven in part by the large outflow of migrant workers from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (Jain and Oommen, 2016; chap. 5). The number of migrants from Central and Southern Asia residing in Europe and in Northern America also rose sharply between 1990 and 2020, with around 5 million international migrants added to each of those regions during that period (figure 6.2).

Latin America and the Caribbean and Northern America also had large shares of their transnational populations living outside of their regions of origin. Nearly 60 per cent of all international migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean were residing in Northern America in 2020. The Latin America and the Caribbean-to-Northern America corridor was the second largest globally in 2020, with nearly 26 million migrants (figure 6.2). In recent years, however, the pace of growth of this corridor has slowed as a result of a combination of smaller immigration inflows and increased migrant returns (OECD, 2021; Schachter, Borsella and Knapp, 2021; chaps. 4 and 5).1[31] Nearly one third of the transnational population from Northern America was living in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020. Many of those migrants were descendants of migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean who had returned to their parents' or grandparents' country of birth (Alba, 2013; Hernández-León and others, 2020).

The spatial distribution of transnational populations varies greatly, with some being spread across many regions, and others being clustered in a handful of countries. India's diaspora, the largest in the world, is distributed across several countries and regions, with the United Arab Emirates (3.5 million), the United States of America (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million) hosting the largest numbers of migrants from India in 2020. Other countries with large diasporas from India include Australia, Canada, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. China and the Russian Federation also have spatially diffused diasporas. In 2020, large numbers of international migrants from China were living in Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and the United States of America. International migrants from the Russian Federation were residing in several countries of destination, many of which are member states of the CISFTA, including Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, as well as Germany and the United States of America.

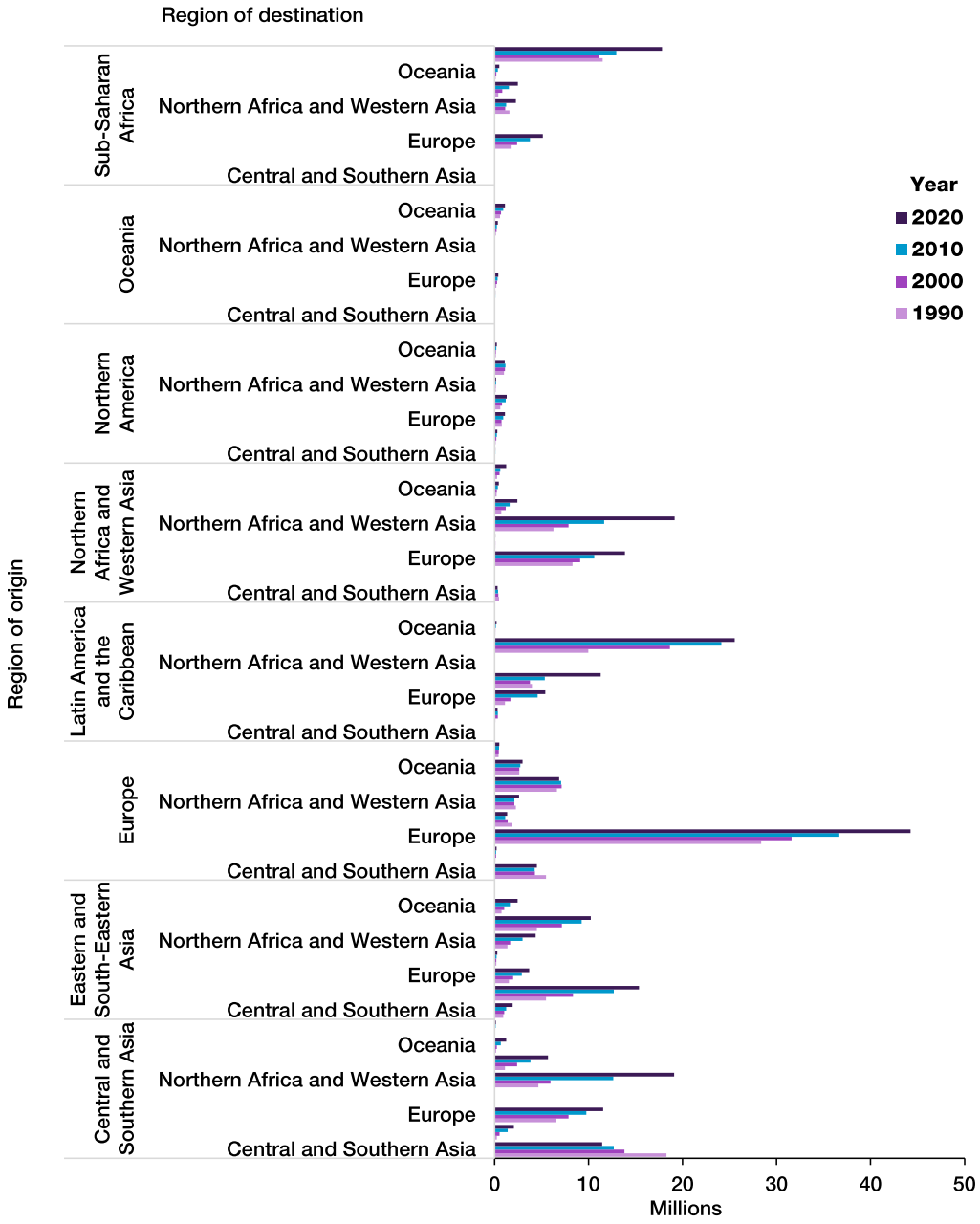
By contrast, the transnational populations of some countries of origin tend to concentrate in a single, or a few, countries of destination. International migrants from Mexico, the second largest country of origin of international migrants globally, were highly clustered in the United States of America. In 2020, the United States of America hosted some 11 million persons born in Mexico, or nearly 97 per cent of all Mexicans living abroad. Other examples of countries where 80 per cent or more of their diaspora settled in just one country include Algeria, with France as the main destination; Burkina Faso, with Côte d'Ivoire as the main destination, and El Salvador and Guatemala, both with the United States of America as the main destination.

For countries of origin where refugees and asylum seekers comprise a large share of their total diaspora, the spatial distribution of their transnational communities is often highly concentrated within their region of origin. In 2020, nearly two thirds of all migrants from the Syrian Arab Republic were living in the neighbouring countries of Türkiye, Lebanon and Jordan (chaps. 4 and 5). Germany hosted the largest number of Syrians outside of Northern Africa and Western Asia. The transnational population of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which increased dramatically in size during the last years owing primarily to displacement across borders, was also highly concentrated in Latin America and the Caribbean, with Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru hosting

[31] Estimates for 2022 indicate a rebound in international migration to Northern America (Knapp and Lu, 2022; OECD, 2023).

over two thirds of all migrants from Venezuela in 2020. The escalation of the conflict in Ukraine has led to one of the largest external displacement crises in recent decades (UNHCR, 2024). Preliminary data indicate that most of the persons displaced across international borders due to the conflict in Ukraine were residing in other European countries (chaps. 4 and 5).

Figure 6.2
Number of international migrants, by region of origin and destination, 1990 to 2020



Source: United Nations (2020b).
Note: Ordered alphabetically by region of origin. Data refer to international migrants of known country or area of origin. Migrants of unknown origin are not included.

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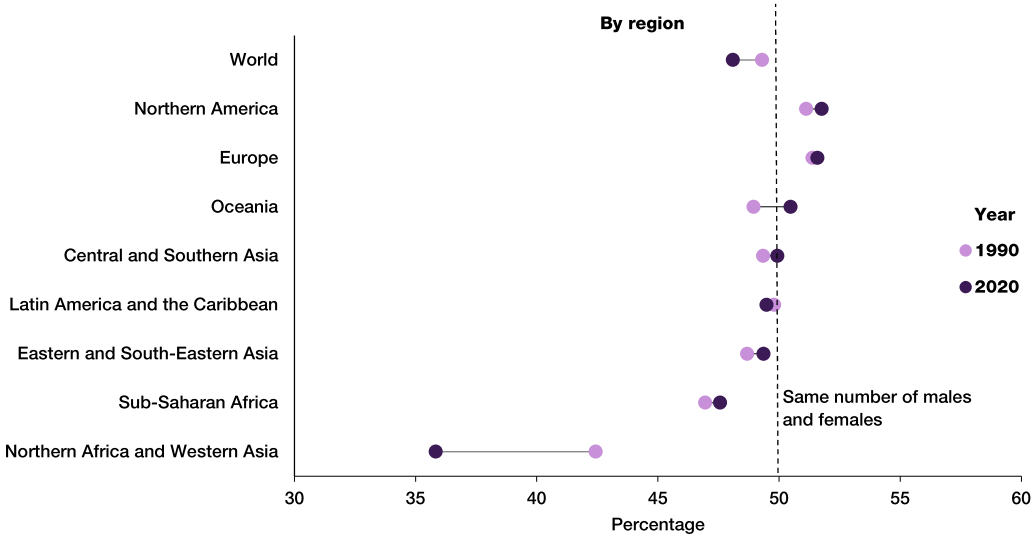
Chapter VII

International migrants and their distribution by sex

Women and girls make up around half of all international migrants globally. Women and girls also comprise around half of all refugees and asylum seekers. At the global level in recent decades, the number of male migrants has grown more rapidly than has the number of female migrants, mainly as a result of the large influx of male migrant workers to Northern Africa and Western Asia. The transnational populations of some countries are predominantly female while others are predominantly male. These differences have important implications, including for the flow of remittances, for patterns of return migration and for the provision of care to older persons and children in countries of both origin and destination.

Around half of all international migrants worldwide are women or girls (figure 7.1). Most regions mirror this trend, with the number of male migrants and female migrants being roughly equivalent. For some regions such as Europe, Northern America and Oceania, the number of female migrants slightly exceeds that of male migrants, while the opposite is true for Central and Southern Asia, for Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and for Latin America and the Caribbean. Northern Africa and Western Asia and, to a lesser degree, sub-Saharan Africa, however, differ from the other regions in that they host a significantly larger number of male migrants compared to female migrants.

Figure 7.1
Share of women and girls among all international migrants, by region of destination, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2020).
Note: Ordered by size of the share of women and girls in 2020. At 50 per cent, the number of male and female migrants is the same.

Over the past decades, many regions saw the number of female migrants grow more rapidly than the number of male migrants (figure 7.1). The increasing feminization of international migration flows, driven in part by the demand for care-related work, is one reason for the growing share of females among all migrants in some countries (Gabaccia, 2016; OECD, 2020; chaps. 12 and 14). Specifically, rapid population ageing and changes in the labour force participation and labour preferences of native-born women combined with gaps and shortages in the availability and quality of services for the care of young children or older persons have increased the demand for female migrant workers, particularly in some high-income and upper-middle-income countries (Barone and Mocetti, 2011; Cortés and Tessada, 2011; Pyle, 2006).[32] At the same time, the growing availability of social networks and various initiatives undertaken by countries of origin to support female labour migration have made it easier for women, especially those with higher levels of skills or training, to move abroad on their own (Boyd, 2006; Pande, 2022; chap. 14).

For some regions, the growing feminization of migrant populations is also linked to their migrant populations becoming older (chap. 8). Specifically, because women, including migrant women, live longer on average than men do, the ratio of female to male migrants tends to be higher in regions that have a history of permitting and, in some cases, encouraging migration for permanent settlement or for family reunification such as Europe, Northern America or Oceania. Compared to other regions, Europe, Northern America or Oceania tend to have a larger share of older persons among their total migrant population, due to a combination of larger inflows of older migrants, and of more migrants deciding to age in place rather than returning to their countries of origin once they retire (chaps. 8 and 10). In countries where most international migrants are classified as such because of changes in their international borders, the number of female migrants also frequently exceeds that of male migrants by wide margins (chaps. 3 and 8). Many of these migrant women also tend to be older.

While international migration has become progressively more feminized in many parts of the world, the region Northern Africa and Western Asia stands out for experiencing the opposite trend, with the number of male migrants growing significantly more than the number of female migrants over the past decades (figure 7.1). The increasing masculinization of migration in Northern Africa and Western Asia has resulted primarily from the demand for male migrant workers outpacing the demand for female migrant workers in countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).[33] Because in such countries migrant workers are often recruited through temporary labour migration contracts, they tend to move alone, without accompanying family members, resulting in a particularly skewed sex distribution. In countries such as Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, at least three in every four international migrants added between 1990 and 2020 were males. The rapid masculinization of the migrant population in Northern Africa and Western Asia over the past 30 years, combined with the growing share of international migrants residing in that region, explains the seemingly contradictory decline in the share of female migrants at the global level—from 49.3 per cent in 1990 to 48.1 per cent in 2020 (figure 7.1; chap. 4).

In addition to comprising half of all international migrants globally, around half of all refugees or asylum seekers in 2020 consisted of women and girls.[34] However, there are pronounced differences among countries and regions. For instance, most refugees and asylum seekers in Colombia, Germany, Pakistan and Türkiye in 2020 were male, while more than half of all refugees and asylum seekers in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda were female (UNHCR, 2022a). Europe, which was home to more male than female refugees and asylum seekers in 2020, saw that situation shifted following the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, since most of the adults displaced across international borders from Ukraine as of June 2022 were females (UNHCR, 2022b).

In terms of diaspora populations, for many regions, the number of female migrants living abroad exceeds the number of male migrants, with the share of women and girls ranging from 51 to 53 per cent (figure 7.2). For some, namely Central and Southern Asia, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, however, their transnational communities remain highly masculinized. In Central and Southern Asia, as well as in Northern Africa and Western Asia, the share of males in their diaspora has increased in recent decades. Most of the international migrants residing and working in the GCC countries hail from those regions. Conversely, in sub-Saharan Africa, where men traditionally migrated alone for employment while women stayed behind, this trend has been changing and there is evidence that women from the region are increasingly migrating for

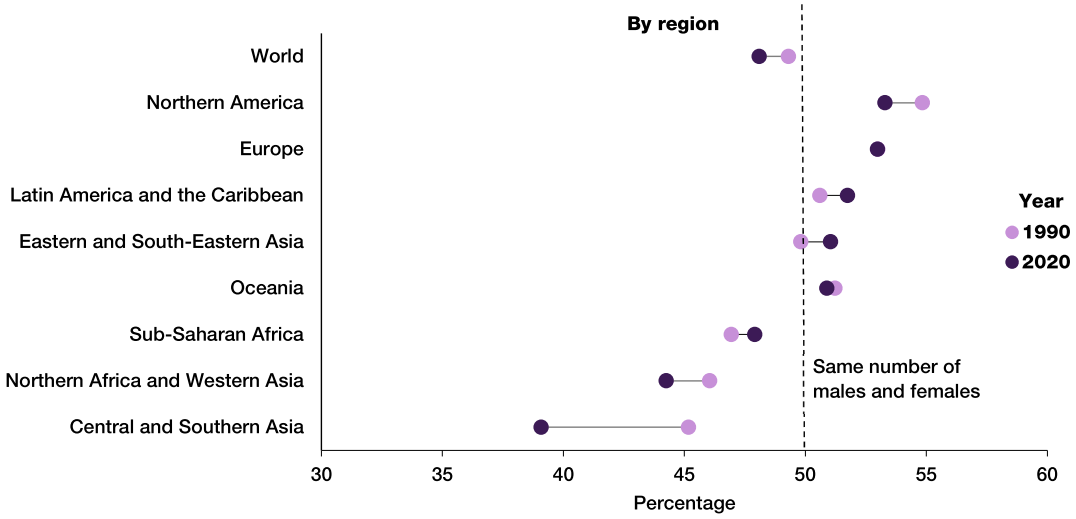
[32] In many countries, migrant women contribute to filling gaps in health and social care systems (WHO, 2017; chaps. 12, 14 and 15).

[33] In such countries, construction work and work in the public sector is often performed by male migrants, while female migrants tend to be employed in domestic work and nursing (Al Shehabi, 2015).

[34] Computation of regional shares were done by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division based on data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

work or study especially to destinations in Europe and Northern America (Oucho, 2006; Thomas and Logan, 2012). In 2020, for instance, more than half of the immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa living in France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or the United States of America were female; a major shift compared to thirty years prior when the African diasporas in those countries were still predominantly male.

Figure 7.2
Share of women and girls among all international migrants, by region of origin, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2020).
Note: Ordered by size of the share of women and girls in 2020. Data refer to international migrants of known country or area of origin. Migrants of unknown origin are not included. At 50 per cent, the number of male and female migrants is the same.

For several countries of origin, the share of males and females among their diaspora varies by country or region of destination. For example, among the Filipino transnational community living in Europe, females outnumber males by a factor of two to one. Many of these women are engaged in domestic work, hospitality or in the provision of healthcare services (Høgsholm, 2007). By contrast, GCC countries hosted nearly two males for every female from the Philippines. Many of these men were working in construction, desalination, petroleum production and processing, and transportation (Orbeta and Abrigo, 2009). The Indian diaspora, the largest in the world, is also characterized by a markedly different distribution of women and men across different countries or regions. In Europe and Northern America, the numbers of male and female migrants from India are roughly comparable, while in the GCC countries, male migrants from India outnumber female migrants from India by a factor of three to one, reflecting the segmentation of labour opportunities by gender and the impact of migration policies in such countries, with important implications for the transfer and use of remittances, return patterns, and for the provision of care to older persons and children (chaps. 12, 14 and 15).

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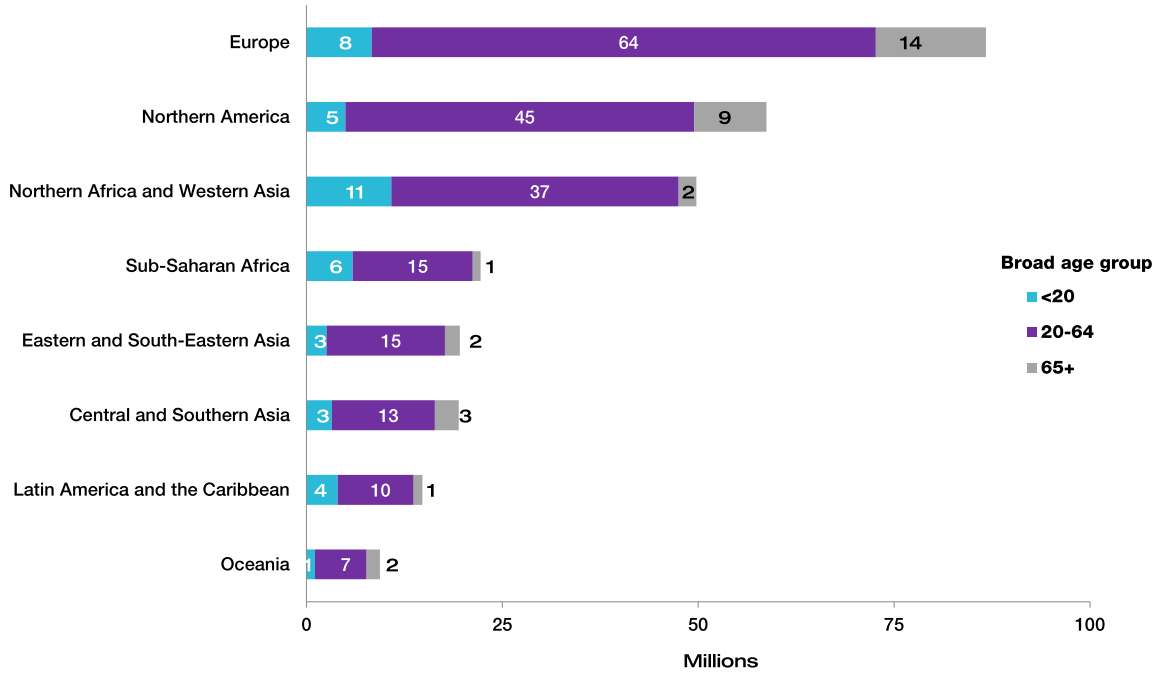
Chapter VIII

International migrants and their distribution by broad age group

Populations of international migrants have a distinctive age pattern that reflects both the timing of migration trajectories and how migrants are defined and counted. Most international migrants are of working age, meaning that they are between the ages of 20 and 64. Children and young people tend to be underrepresented among international migrants, with roughly five migrants of working age for every international migrant under the age of 20. International migrants aged 65 years or older comprise less than one in six migrants globally. Refugees and asylum seekers tend to include large numbers of children and thus to be much younger on average compared to other migrant groups.

International migrants are an extremely heterogeneous group with different social and economic characteristics (chaps. 1 and 2). One aspect that they have in common, however, is a striking consistency in age patterns, with most international migrants in host countries concentrated in the so-called "working ages"—that is between the ages of 20 and 64 (figures 8.1 and 8.2). In all regions, persons of working age comprised between two thirds and three fourths of all international migrants in 2020, while children and young people—defined here as those under age 20—and older persons—defined here as those 65 years of age or older—represented a minority of all migrants. The age distribution of international migrants differs markedly from that of the overall population in most countries, where children and young people usually comprise a much more sizeable share of the total (chap. 10).

Figure 8.1
Number of international migrants, by broad age group and region of destination, 2020

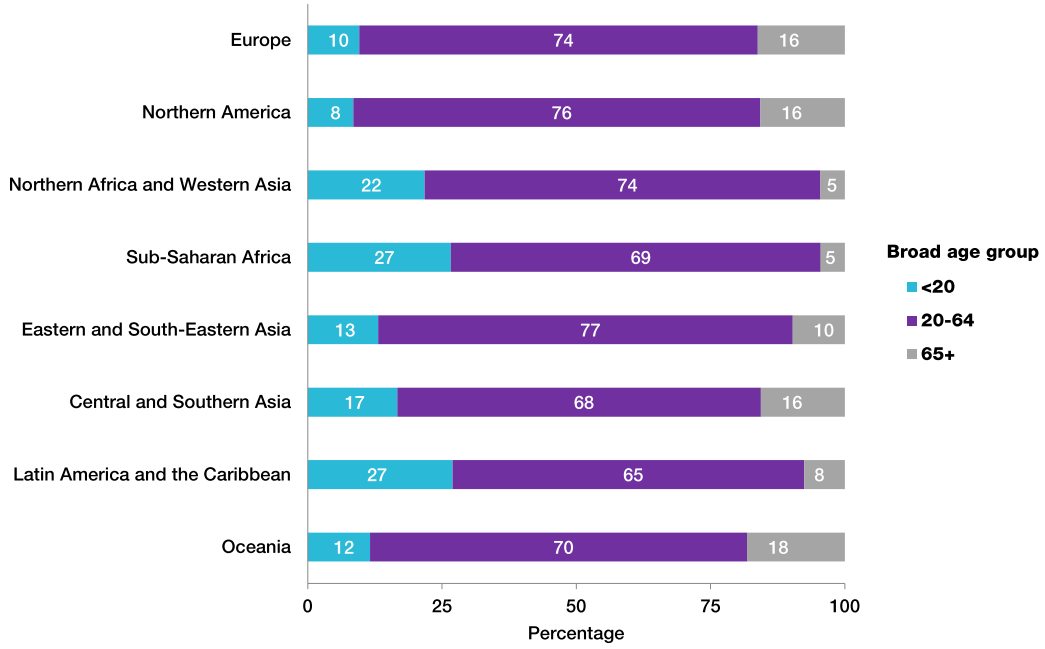


Source: United Nations (2020a).
Note: Ordered by size of the 20-64 age group.

The distinctive age pattern of international migrants in countries of destination stems from several interrelated factors. One such factor is that decisions to migrate, either temporarily or permanently, are frequently tied to life course trajectories and transitions (Bernard and Perales, 2022). The timing of migration, union formation and childbearing, for instance, are often closely linked (Adserà and Ferrer, 2015).[35] Since many of the milestones related to education, work, or family formation occur early in a person's adult life, people tend to be young adults at the time when they migrate for the first time (Castro and Rogers, 1984).

Another reason is that migration decisions are often taken as part of a family-wide risk-diversification strategy, whereby the members who remain behind, often children, middle-aged adults, or older persons, pool their resources to finance the emigration of a young household member and benefit, in turn, from the remittances and other transfers sent back by that person (Lauby and Stark, 1988; Rapoport and Docquier, 2005; chaps. 2, 11 and 14). Compared to older aspiring migrants, young adults are often in a better position to maximize the opportunities associated with migration, while minimizing the indirect and opportunity costs, including the loss of income and earnings in countries of origin, the underutilization or loss of recognition of skills and qualifications acquired before migrating, and the physical and psychological toll of leaving one's country and community behind (Massey and España, 1987; Ullah and Haque, 2020; chap. 2).

Figure 8.2
Age distribution of international migrants, by broad age group and region of destination, 2020



Source: United Nations (2020a).
Note: Ordered to be consistent with figure 8.1.

[35] For instance, since family formation and reunification are among the leading "pathways" for immigrants to obtain residence permits or citizenship in high-income countries, the timing of marriage and migration are often closely associated (OECD, 2017).

While young adults are "positively" selected in migration decisions and outcomes, the opposite is true for people in the oldest and youngest age groups. Children and older persons are not only less likely to migrate alone compared to persons of working age, but they are also often unable to accompany working-age family members as dependents because of administrative requirements that restrict their entry or stay or limit their access to services or care in host countries making the costs of residing in countries of destination too high (Enchautegui and Menjívar, 2015; Nakache, 2018; Zaiceva, 2014). As a result, migrants of working age are often compelled to leave their children or older family members behind and entrust them to the care of relatives or other caretakers while they are abroad. These types of arrangements, which are frequently temporary in nature, can last until the migrant family member is able to return home[36] or can sponsor the immigration of their relatives (Landale, Thomas and Van Hook, 2011; chap. 14).[37]

In addition to factors associated with the age of migrants upon arrival, the age pattern of international migrants in countries of destination is also shaped by the duration of their stay and by their age at departure. Migrants, even those who do not wish to emigrate permanently, often remain outside of their country of origin for years, or even decades—sometimes significantly more than they had anticipated—before accumulating enough savings, resources, or human capital to return (Adda, Dustmann and Görlach, 2022; DeWaard and Raymer; 2012; Kırdar, 2009). For some migrants, return to their countries of origin is closely linked to the age of retirement (Bolzman, Fibbi, Vial, 2006; Ciobanu and Ramos, 2016; Cobb-Clark and Stillman, 2013; Klinthäll, 2006). Since migrants who leave a country to return home are usually considerably older than the new waves of immigrants arriving, return migration often contributes to "rejuvenating" a migrant population in countries of destination (chap. 10).

Considerations related to how international migrants are defined and enumerated are also important for explaining the distinctive age distribution of migrants in host societies. Because both children born to international migrants in countries of destination and persons who return to their country of birth after having resided abroad are generally not considered international migrants from a statistical perspective, this increases the share of persons of working age among all international migrants (chaps. 3 and 10).

Global and regional trends reflect the age-selectivity of migration trajectories and processes. In 2020, there were 205 million international migrants of working age globally, equivalent to roughly the entire population of Brazil. Among regions, Europe hosted by far the largest number of international migrants of working age (64 million in 2020), followed by Northern America (45 million), and Northern Africa and Western Asia (37 million) (figure 8.1). Together, these three regions hosted 71 per cent of all international migrants of working age. International migrants of working age can play a vital role in easing the pressure on public pension systems in countries already in later stages of the demographic transition when most people survive to advanced ages (United Nations, 2020b; chaps. 10 and 16).

International migrants aged 65 years or older numbered 34 million in 2020, representing 12 per cent of the total. Europe and Northern America hosted the largest number of older migrants in 2020, 14 million and 9 million, respectively. Oceania had the highest share of persons aged 65 or older among all international migrants (18 per cent), followed by Europe, Central and South-Eastern Asia, and Northern America, each with 16 per cent. In recent years, several of those regions witnessed an increase in the number of older migrants. This increase is due both to more migrants deciding to remain in the country of destination after retirement and to a growing influx of older, often affluent international migrants who chose certain destinations to retire because of their favourable climate, opportunities to pursue leisure or access to better quality or more cost-effective healthcare (Dolberg, Sigurdardottir and Trummer, 2018; Egidi and others, 2020; Green, Evandrou and Falkingham, 2009; chap. 10).

Globally, 41 million international migrants in 2020 were under the age of 20, equal to nearly 15 per cent of the total. Northern Africa and Western Asia hosted the largest number of migrant children and youth[38] in 2020 (nearly 11 million), followed by Europe (8 million) and sub-Saharan Africa (nearly 6 million) (figure 8.1). Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa had the largest shares of those under age 20 among their total migrant populations, with refugees or asylum seekers comprising more than half of all migrants under the age of 20 in those regions.[39] Children make up around half of all refugees

[36] Having children or relatives back home is one of the main factors shaping migrant return plans (Djajić, 2008; Dustmann, 2003; Ganga, 2006; Gualda and Escriva, 2012; Wolff and de Coulon, 2010).

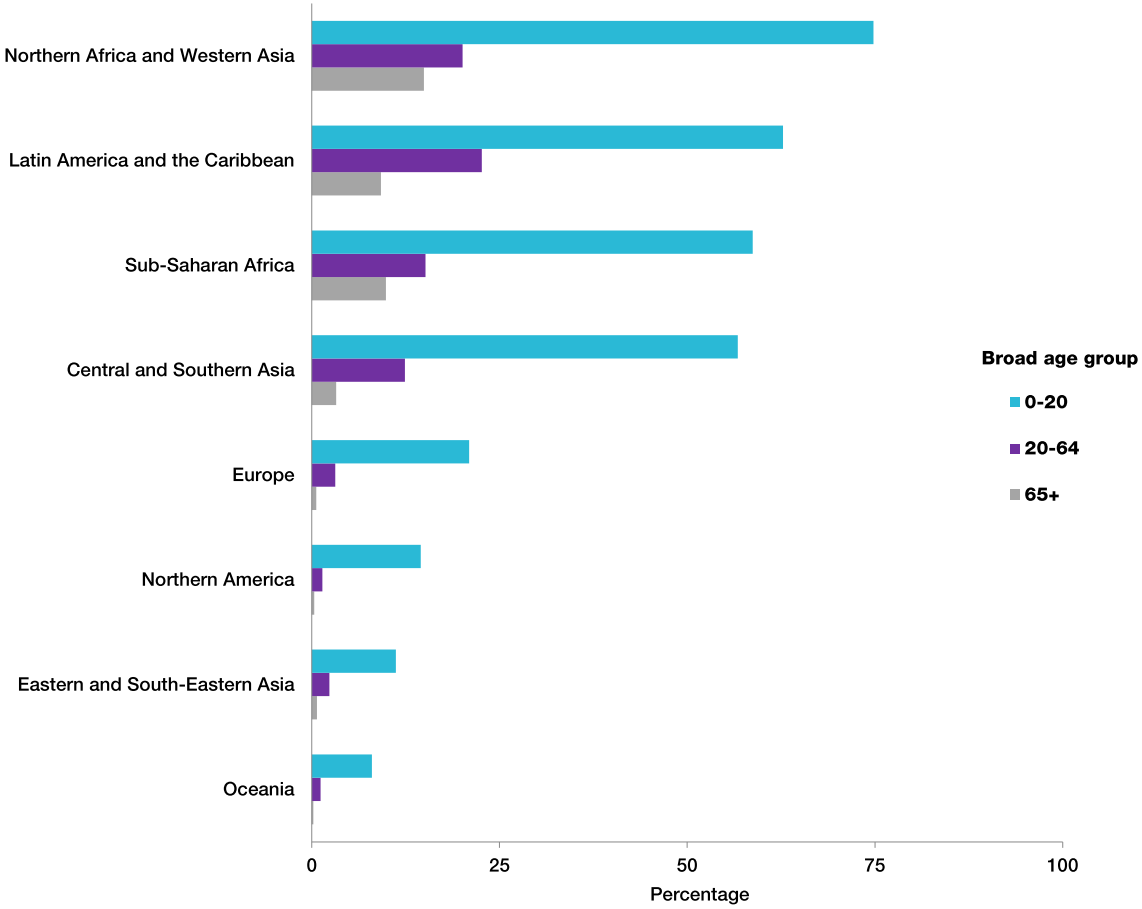
[37] The smaller share of children among international migrants can also be attributed to the fact that migrants frequently postpone marriage or childbearing until they have accumulated enough resources to start a family either in their new host country or back home (Andersson, 2004; Hakimi, 2020; chaps. 9, 10).

[38] Children and youth here refer to persons under the age of 20.

[39] Computation of these shares was done by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, based on data from the United Nations High

and asylum seekers globally (UNHCR, 2022). The large share of children among migrants forced to flee their countries due to violence, conflict or persecution poses a particular challenge not only for their protection and safety, but also in terms of meeting their specific needs for nutrition, shelter, healthcare or education (figure 8.3; chaps. 11, 12 and 13).

Figure 8.3
Share of refugees and asylum seekers among all international migrants, by broad age group and region of destination, 2020



Source: United Nations (2020a), UNHCR (2020).
Note: Ordered by share of refugees and asylum seekers among all migrants in the 0-20 age group. Computation by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division based on data from UNHCR.

Commissioner for Refugee and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

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Chapter IX

Contribution of international migration to population size

International migration contributes both directly and indirectly to changes in population size. Immigrants and their descendants increase the size of a population, while emigration has the opposite effect. In the future, immigration is expected to become the main driver of population growth in many high-income countries, attenuating or counteracting a potential decline in population size due to a negative balance of births and deaths. The impact of international migration on population size in most countries or regions of origin tends to be relatively small, especially for those where the population is growing rapidly.

International migration directly affects the size of populations both at origin and destination. As people migrate from one location to another, changing their place of residence, they add to the population counted at destination and are subtracted from the population in the location of origin. Between 1990 and 2020, 76 countries or areas added more people through immigration than they lost through emigration. In these countries—63 per cent of which were classified as having high-income levels in 2020—international migration contributed directly to population growth and, in some cases, even offset a tendency towards population decline. Regional patterns reflect these country-level trends (figure 9.1). In Northern America and Oceania, for instance, nearly half of the population growth between 1990 and 2020 can be attributed to immigration from other regions (United Nations, 2022). In Europe, all the population growth recorded between 1990 and 2020 was due to migration. Without immigration from countries in other regions, the population in Europe would have declined starting from the period 1990-2000 owing to its sustained low levels of fertility. In the future, immigration is expected to become the main driver of population growth in many high-income countries (United Nations, 2021).

In countries where the volume of immigration is large compared to the balance of births and deaths (natural change), international migrants often account for a large share of the total population size. International migrants comprised one fourth or more of the total population in around one in five countries and areas in 2020. Most of those were high-income countries with low or intermediate levels of fertility. Of the 10 countries with the highest shares of migrants in total population among countries hosting 1 million or more migrants in 2020, 6 were in the region of Northern Africa and Western Asia. These included several member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, namely Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, where the demand for migrant workers has fueled most of the rapid population growth experienced by those countries in recent decades. Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand and the United States of America are other countries where migrants accounted for one sixth or more of total population size (figure 9.2).

In addition to contributing to the population size and growth directly, international migration also does so indirectly (Coleman, 2008). Persons born in countries of destination to migrant parents, for instance, while not technically migrants themselves, can also affect the present and future size of a population significantly (Ediev, Coleman and Scherbov, 2014; Pew Research Center, 2015; chap. 3). In the United States of America, for example, births to foreign-born mothers are expected to contribute around one sixth of the total population growth projected between 2017 and 2060, while the direct impact of migration—namely the larger numbers of immigrants than emigrants—is expected to contribute around one fifth of that growth[40] (Vespa, Medina and Armstrong, 2018). When, in addition to the children, the grandchildren of migrants are considered, the indirect contribution of international migration to population growth is even greater (Pew Research Center, 2015).

The indirect impact of migration on population growth is often magnified by two factors.[41] First, because migrants tend to be highly concentrated between the ages of 20 and 45—the ages at which people also tend to have children—they modify the overall age structure in a country of destination, helping to sustain a higher birth rate[42] than would be observed in the absence of migration (Desiderio, 2020; Tromans, Jefferies

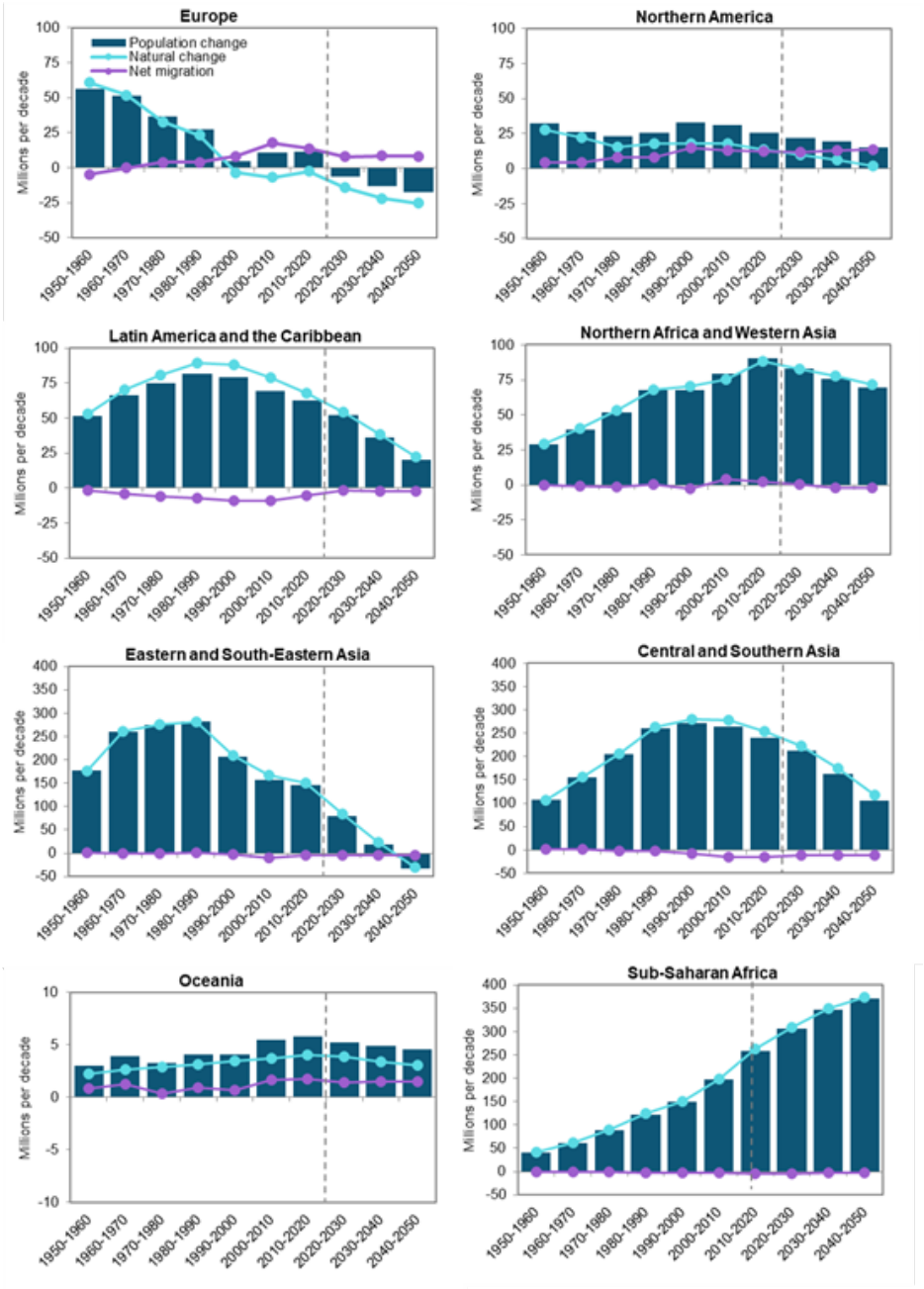
[40] The remaining two thirds of projected positive change is attributed to births to native-born mothers.

[41] In addition to the indirect contribution of international migration to age-specific birth rates, it can also have an impact on age-specific death rates. However, in most countries, migrants tend to enjoy better health and live longer than native-born populations (chap. 12). Further, because most immigrants are concentrated at ages where death rates are low, the contribution of migrant mortality to population size and change tends to be small (Coleman, 2008).

[42] The crude birth rate is the annual number of live births divided by the population size at the midpoint of the observation period.

and Natamba, 2009; Toulemon, 2004; chaps. 8 and 10). Second, while individual reproductive behaviours among migrants tend to converge to local norms over time, recent immigrants often have more children on a per capita basis than the native population, leading to higher fertility levels overall[43] (Adserà and Ferrer, 2015; Dubuc, 2012; Garssen and Nicolaas, 2008; Gebremariam and Beaujot, 2012; Pailhé, 2017).

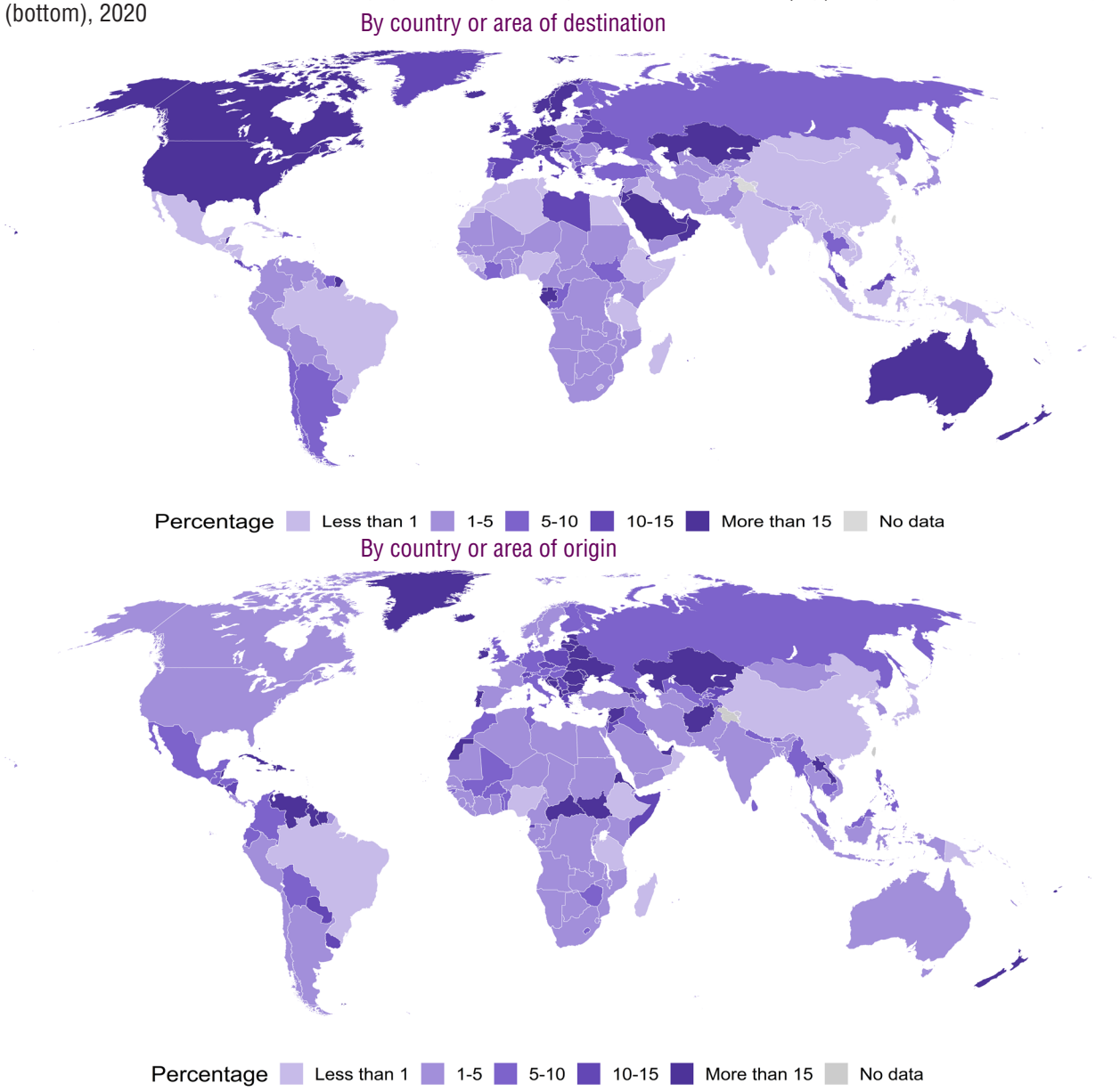
Figure 9.1
Contributions of the balance of births over deaths and of net migration to total population change, by region, from 1950-1960 to 2040-2050



Source: United Nations (2022).
Note: Ordered by size of population change to maximize comparability among regions.

[43] In some cases, higher observed levels of fertility are due to the timing of births, which is often also related to the age of migrants upon arrival or return (Kulu and González-Ferrer, 2014; Mussino and Strozza, 2012; Mussino, Wilson and Andersson, 2021; Parrado, 2011; chap. 8). For instance, migrants frequently postpone childbearing until they have accumulated enough resources to start a family either in their new host country or back home (Andersson, 2004; Hakimi, 2020).

Figure 9.2
Share of international migrants in total population, by country or area of destination (top) or by country or area of origin (bottom), 2020



Source: United Nations (2020a).
Note: For countries or areas of origin, data refer to the share of their diaspora in total native-born population residing in the country or area of origin.
Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

In many high-income countries, births to migrant parents comprise a growing proportion of the total. In France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands and Spain, for instance, more than one in five live births in 2020 was to a foreign-born mother (Eurostat, 2022). Migrants or children of immigrants also represent a significant share of all young people in several high-income countries (chap. 10). In Australia, Canada, Israel, Luxembourg, New

Zealand and Switzerland, for example, youth, who are either foreign-born or who are native-born with one or more foreign-born parents, accounted for 40 per cent or more of all persons between the ages of 15 and 34 (OECD and EU, 2018). Once these children and young adults start to have children of their own, they may contribute to maintaining a relatively stable population size or offsetting population decline in countries with low levels of fertility and an older age structure.

Whereas immigration contributes directly to increasing the size of a population, emigration has the opposite effect: it reduces population size. Between 1990 and 2020, 125 countries or areas lost more people through emigration than they gained through immigration. Of these, 85 per cent were low-income countries or middle-income countries. Rapid population growth and a youthful age structure in those countries often exert pressure on resources. The economic and social circumstances associated with rapid population growth, including poverty, lack of decent work and gender inequality, tend to "push" people to emigrate in search of better opportunities abroad (United Nations, 2020b; chaps. 2, 5, 11, 15 and 16). However, while poverty and lack of opportunities often compel people to emigrate, most people in low-income or lower-middle-income countries lack the resources needed to shoulder the substantial costs, both financial and non-financial, associated with international migration (de Haas, 2021; McKenzie, 2017; chaps. 1, 2 and 5). Restrictive immigration policies in countries of destination also tend to reduce the capability of people from low-income countries to emigrate (Clemens, 2014; Gurak and Caces, 1992; United Nations, 2020b; chaps. 1, 2 and 21).

As a result, in most low-income or lower-middle-income countries, the size of international migration outflows tends to be negligible compared to the other components of population growth, such as births or deaths. These country-level trends are reflected at the regional level. In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, the region expected to account for most of the increase in the world's population until the end of the century, emigration is likely to have only a modest impact on slowing that growth (figure 9.1; United Nations, 2021, 2022). Similarly, based on their present pace, migrant outflows from Central and Southern Asia—another region projected to contribute significantly to world population increase over the next decades—are not anticipated to curb or significantly moderate the rapid population growth projected in some countries in the region.

Given that the ability to migrate depends on a host of factors including the migrants' characteristics (such as age, sex, level of education, or income level); the types of barriers that migrants face in accessing economic and social resources; as well as how those characteristics intersect with different types of barriers, people from high-income countries often find it easier to migrate when they wish to do so than people from poorer countries (de Haas, 2021; chap. 2). Consequently, high-income countries often have higher levels of emigration as a share of their total population compared to poor countries. Nearly 10 per cent of native-born Europeans, for instance, lived outside of their country of birth in 2020, compared to less than 3 per cent of those born in sub-Saharan Africa or Central and Southern Asia. Among the countries with the largest diasporas (1 million or more) in 2020 and with at least one tenth of their native-born population living abroad, 45 per cent were in Europe and 24 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean (figure 9.2).

While for most countries and areas, the size of the diaspora living abroad is small relative to the size of the native population residing in the country of origin, for over 20 countries or areas their transnational population is equal to one third or more of the size of their native-born population in the country. In some countries and areas where out-migration is common, the loss of population due to emigration has been significant (Vezzoli, 2015). For some of these, many of which are islands in Latin America and the Caribbean or in Oceania, with administrative or other historic ties with larger countries, the size of the diaspora is larger than the size of the native-born population residing inside the country or area of origin, with important social and economic implications for the sustainability of those communities (United Nations, 2020b; chaps. 5, 11 and 16).

In addition to the direct impact of emigration on population, large outflows of people can also have indirect effects by reducing the size of population of reproductive age or limiting the number of partners available for marriage or union, which, in turn, can stymie the number of births taking place in the country or area (Ebanks and others, 1975; Gjonca and others, 2008; White and Potter, 2013). In countries that have experienced significant migration outflows, the transfer of attitudes and norms regarding family size and gender roles from their diasporas can also contribute to changing childbearing preferences and behaviours resulting in some cases in the deceleration of the pace of population growth (Beine, Docquier and Schiff, 2008, 2013; Bertoli and Marchetta, 2015; Fargues, 2011; Lerch, 2015). Migrants who acquire a greater knowledge of contraceptive or family planning methods while living abroad, for instance, might help diffuse such information in their home country if they return (Lindstrom and Saucedo, 2002; chaps. 12 and 14).

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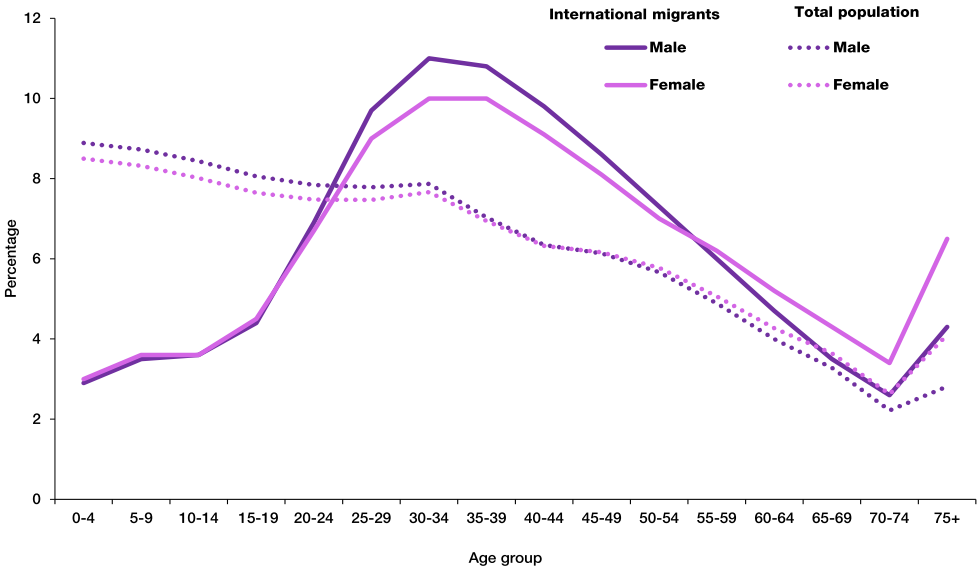
Chapter X

The impact of international migration on population age structure

International migration can modify the age structure of a population, especially when the volume of migrant inflow or outflow is sizeable compared to the resident population in the country of origin or destination. In their host countries, working-age migrants can play a significant role in easing, at least temporarily, the fiscal pressures on pension and healthcare systems that are associated with population ageing. However, because migrants often chose to continue residing in countries of destination after reaching retirement age, in some host societies international migrants comprise a large and growing share of the population also at older ages.

International migrants in countries or areas of destination have an age distribution that differs markedly from that of the overall population (figure 10.1). This distinctive age structure results from several interconnected factors including the age of international migrants upon arrival or at departure, and the way international migrants are defined and counted from a statistical perspective (chaps. 3 and 8).

Figure 10.1
Age distributions of international migrants and of the total population, for the world by sex, 2020

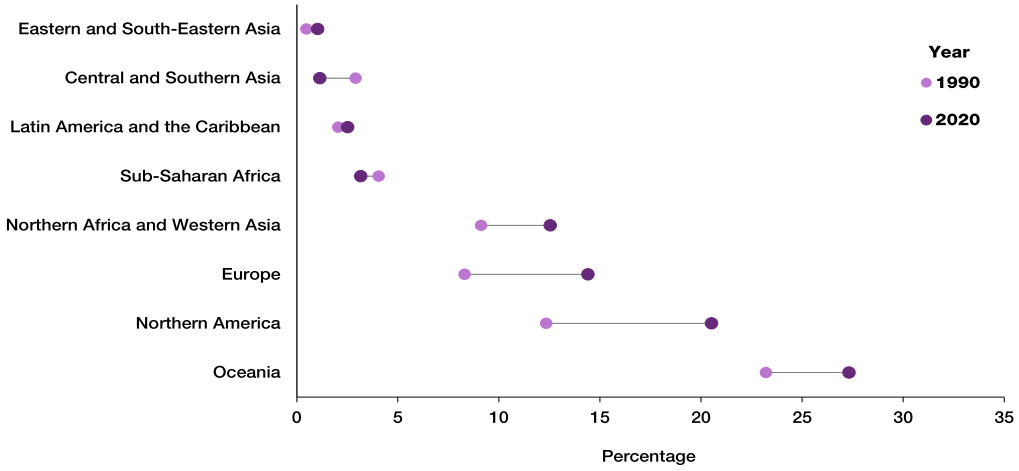


Source: United Nations (2019a, 2020a).

In countries or areas that gain more persons through immigration than they lose through emigration, international migration can increase the share of population of working age, namely persons 20 to 64 years of age, with important demographic, social and economic implications (chaps. 8, 11 and 16). These impacts tend to be most significant in countries or areas in the later stages of the demographic transition—when both fertility and mortality have fallen substantially and most people survive to advanced ages—and where the influx of migrants is large compared to the size of the population at destination (United Nations, 2019a; 2021). In such countries, international migrants often comprise a large share of the total working age population. In high-income countries, for instance, nearly one in every five people of working age in 2020 was an international

migrant. The share of international migrants among persons of working ages doubled between 1990 and 2020 in high-income countries, reflecting both the increase in the volume of migrant inflows and the slowing pace of growth among native populations of working ages (United Nations, 2019a; 2020b). Oceania had the highest share of international migrants in its working-age population among all regions in 2020, with 27 per cent, followed by Northern America, with nearly 21 per cent (figure 10.2). Northern America also experienced the largest increase between 1990 and 2020 in the share of people of working age who were foreign born.

Figure 10.2
Share of international migrants among persons of working age (20-64), by region of destination, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2019a, 2020a).
Note: Ordered by size of the 20-64 age group in 2020.

International migrants of working age can play a significant role in easing the pressure on public pension systems in host countries where population ageing is at a more advanced stage (Clements and others, 2018; Marinescu, 2017; Peri, 2020; chap. 16; box 10.1). In high-income countries, international migrants of working age contribute to lowering the old-age dependency ratio, an indicator which, despite its limitations,[44] is often used to assess the effects of demographic trends on the availability of social and economic support for older persons. In the absence of positive international migration—the positive inflows from other parts of the world—the old-age dependency ratio in high-income countries in 2050 would be 5 percentage points higher than if such flows continued at their present pace (United Nations, 2019a). In regions with more youthful populations, such as sub-Saharan Africa or Central and Southern Asia, the presence of international migrants of working age tends to have a negligible impact on such dependency ratios, mainly because they host fewer migrants as a share of their total population (chaps. 4, 8 and 9).

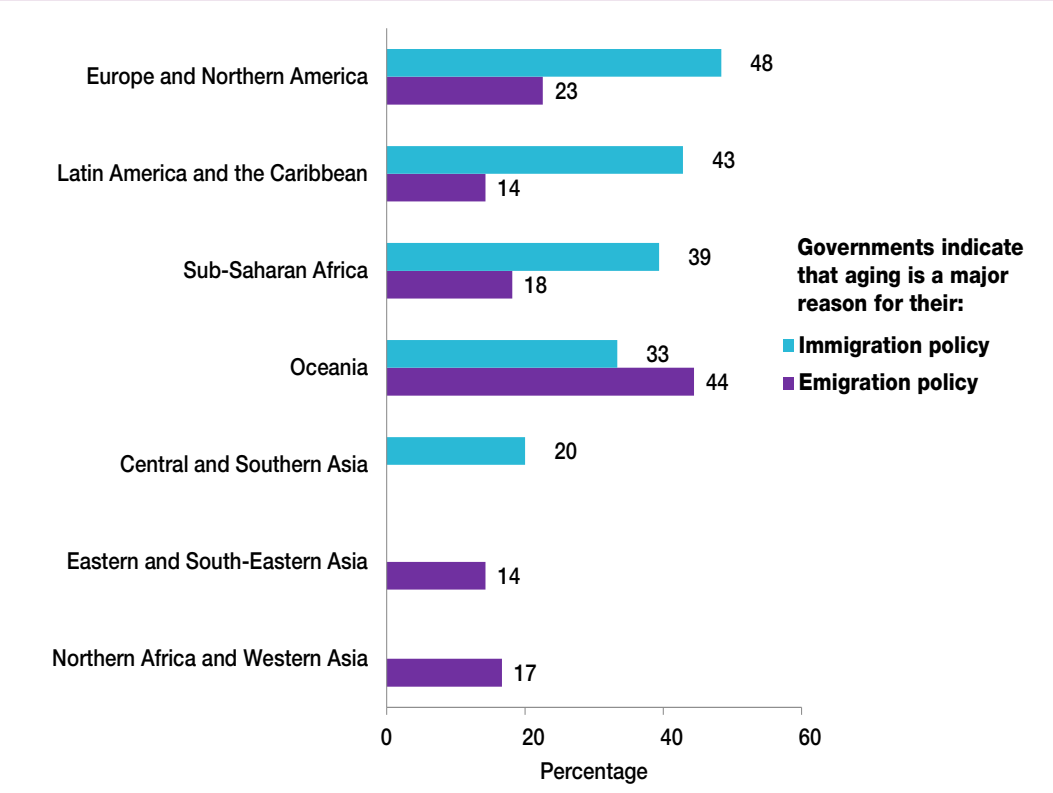
When migrants decide to remain in host countries after they reach pensionable age, they can contribute to increasing the number of older persons in those countries. In high-income countries, over 1 in 10 of those aged 65 or above in 2020 was an international migrant. In Oceania, international migrants comprised nearly one third of the population aged 65 or above, the highest share among all regions (figure 10.4). Northern America also had a relatively high share, with 15 per cent. Europe, Northern America, and Oceania have seen the share of international migrants among their populations aged 65 or older grow rapidly in recent years owing to a combination of larger inflows of older migrants and more migrants deciding to age in place rather than returning to their countries of origin.

[44] Indicators that assess population ageing from the point of view of changes in the age structure of a population are simple to compute and easily comparable across time and space. However, they do not account for the characteristics and behaviours of the older population, including that not all people stop working at age 65.

Box 10.1
International migration in the context of ageing societies

The world's population aged 65 years or above is projected to increase from 700 million in 2020 to 1.5 billion in 2050 (United Nations, 2019a). Because international migrants often comprise larger proportions of working-age persons compared to the overall population, and tend to have, on average, more children than the native-born population, international migration can contribute to temporarily slowing the pace of population ageing in some contexts (Desiderio, 2020; Sobotka, 2008; chap. 9). Contrary to the prevailing perception in many host societies that migrants are primarily beneficiaries of social transfers, migrants, particularly those with higher levels of educational attainment and training, contribute to alleviating some of the fiscal pressures associated with rapid population ageing (Gonzalez-Barrera and Connor, 2019; Han, 2013; Marois and others, 2020; Storesletten, 2000; chap. 16). Nearly half of the countries that responded to a recent survey in Europe and Northern America, and one third of those in Oceania indicated that addressing population ageing was a major underlying reason for their current immigration policy (figure 10.3; United Nations, 2020c).

Figure 10.3
Share of Governments that view addressing population ageing as a major underlying reason for their current immigration or emigration policies, by region, 2019

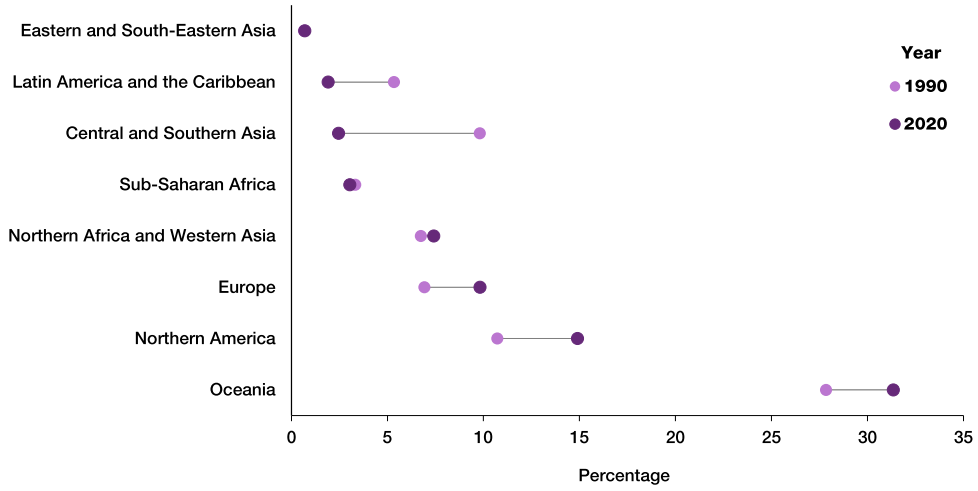


Source: United Nations (2019b).
Note: Based on 111 countries with available data (as of 1 September 2019). Europe and Northern America combined to maximise coverage. Ordered by share of Governments that view addressing population ageing as major underlying reasons for their current immigration policies.

The rising share of international migrants among persons of pensionable age creates opportunities and challenges for countries of destination. While older migrants continue to make important economic and social contributions to their families and to host societies, they can also be vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion at older ages, especially when they have an irregular immigration status (Ciobanu, Fokkema and Nedelcu, 2017; Gustafsson and others, 2021; Lee, Hong and Harm, 2014; chap. 11). Many face obstacles in accessing social

protection programmes including old age, survivor or disability pension schemes, health insurance, or social assistance to pay for food, housing or other basic living expenses. Seventy-one per cent of Governments in high-income countries, among those with data, indicate that they provide access to such services on par with nationals only for migrants with a legal immigration status (United Nations and IOM, 2021). Many Governments have adopted measures to facilitate the portability of social security benefits to encourage migrants' return to their countries of origin once they have reached pensionable age (United Nations, 2019b; 2020c). Ninety per cent of high-income countries reported having an agreement with at least one other country on the portability of at least one type of social security benefit in 2022 (United Nations and IOM, 2021).

Figure 10.4
Share of international migrants among older persons (persons aged 65 or over), by region of destination, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2019a; 2020a).
Note: Ordered by share of international migrants in the 65 or over age group in 2020.

Globally, international migrants represent a relatively small share of all children and youth (those under the age of 20), in part because the children born to international migrant parents in countries of destination are native born and therefore generally not considered international migrants from a statistical perspective (chaps. 3 and 8). In Oceania, the region with the highest share, international migrants comprised 8 per cent of all persons under the age of 20 in 2020 (figure 10.5). While the share of international migrants among all children and youth remains small, some regions, including Europe, Northern Africa and Western Asia, Northern America and Oceania, have seen this share grow rapidly in recent decades. This increase is related to the larger inflow of migrants under age 20 as well as the sustained, low levels of fertility in many of those countries of destination.

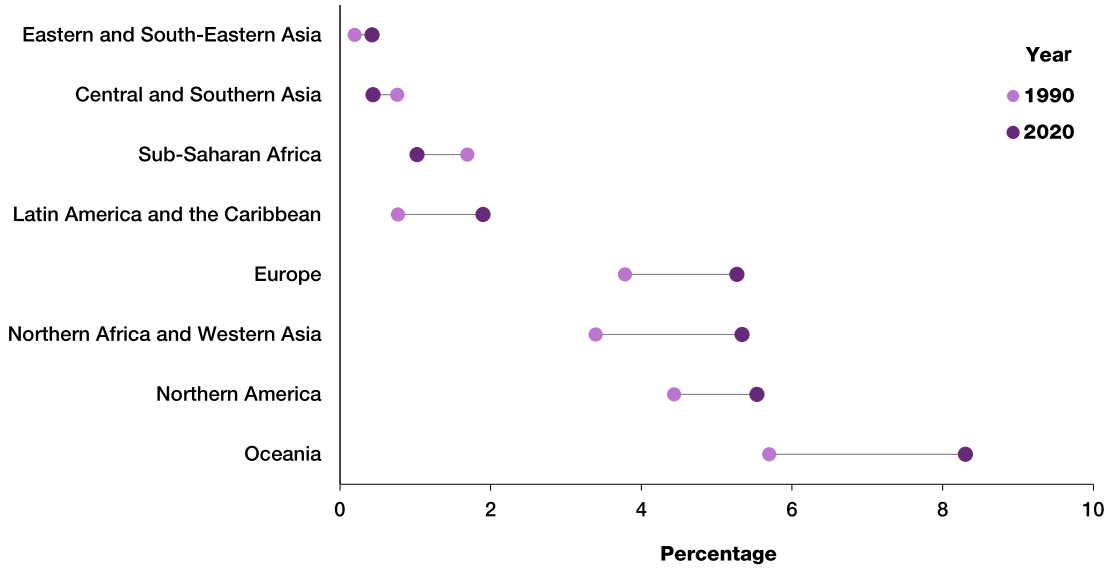
The growing share of migrants among children has important demographic implications for host countries. Specifically, when such children reach reproductive age, they may help sustain a larger number of births than would have been observed without them (chap. 9). This in turn can contribute to maintaining a stable population size and, in some cases, even to offsetting or slowing population decline. However, over a longer-term horizon, migration alone cannot reverse these demographic trends given that the scale of international migration is often small; that migrants tend to adopt the norms and preferences related to family size of the society of destination; and that the fertility of migrants tends to converge to that of the native-born population over time (Desiderio, 2020; chaps. 8 and 9).

The growing share of migrants among children in many host societies also highlights the importance of promoting their integration. Children who are migrants or live with immigrant parents can face economic, societal, institutional, and other types of obstacles in accessing education, healthcare services and social protection programmes, especially if they have an irregular immigration status, with negative implications for their development and wellbeing (Belhadj Kouider, Koglin and Petermann, 2015; Hook, Brown and Kwenda, 2004; Mendoza and others, 2017; Ruiz-Casares, and others, 2010; Sime and Fox, 2015; chaps. 11- 13). Enacting policies to enhance the participation of young migrants in decisions that concern them and to promote access to education and language training, remains essential for promoting their integration and empowerment and combatting the rise of xenophobia and political disaffection (OECD, 2022; Ribeiro, and others, 2012).

Migrant children are also disproportionately vulnerable to the risk of human trafficking, particularly when they migrate alone (Bhabha, 2014; box 10.2). Many countries have implemented policies to increase protection of child migrants, especially of those who are unaccompanied or are separated from their parents, by developing specialized procedures for their identification, referral, care and family reunification; as well as specific visa and asylum procedures (United Nations and IOM, 2021).

For countries of origin, the effects of international migration on the age structure of their population tends to be small, mainly because the volume of migration outflows is often negligible compared to the number of births or deaths taking place in the country (United Nations, 2021; chap. 9). However, in countries or areas that have experienced emigration on a large scale, the loss of young, working-age adults can have critical implications in terms of their economic and social development as well as for their demographic outlook (chaps. 9, 11, 15 and 16). For instance, while the emigration of large numbers of people of working age can help to ease pressures on the labour market in some contexts, it can also create skill shortages that drive up wages in some sectors (David and Marouani, 2016; Piyasiri, 2016; Thaut, 2009; chaps. 13 and 15). Because migrants are often young adults, their departure can affect the size and sex composition of the "pool" of persons eligible for marriage or union formation which in turn can reduce the number of births taking place in a country (Kröhnert and Vollmer, 2012; Tukhashvili and Shelia, 2012; chap. 9).

Figure 10.5
Share of international migrants among children and youth (persons aged less than 20), by region of destination, 1990 and 2020



Source: United Nations (2019a; 2020a).
Note: Ordered by size of the under 20 age group in 2020.

When international migrants leave older family members or children behind, this can also create demographic and social imbalances in societies of origin. Many countries have documented the vital role that women, particularly older women, play in caring for the children or other family members of relatives who are abroad (Dolbin-MacNab and Yancura, 2018; Lahaie and others, 2009; chaps. 7, 8 and 14). In some cases, however, this situation can place an undue burden on such caregivers, with negative impacts on their health and well-being (Chávez, Paige and Edelblute, 2021). The children who remain in the country of origin can also face challenges, which can result in higher school dropout rates and other adverse outcomes including depression, suicidal ideation, or substance use (Fellmeth and others, 2018; chaps. 12 and 13).

Box 10.2
Unaccompanied minors

While most migrant children arrive in a country with their families or other guardians, in recent years there has been an increasing trend of children migrating alone. Global figures are not available. However, some countries have recorded marked spikes in the number of such children at their borders. The U.S. (United States of America) Border Patrol, for instance, detected some 147,000 unaccompanied children arriving via the border with Mexico during fiscal year 2021 up from 81,000 in 2019 (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2022). The member states of the European Union also registered a sharp increase in the number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in 2021, around 23,000, an increase of 72 per cent compared with 2020 (European Commission, 2022). The escalation of the conflict in Ukraine in 2022 may contribute to further increasing the number of children forced to flee alone.

Compared to other migrant children, who already have specific needs compared to adults, unaccompanied minors are often at greater risk of harm at all stages of the migration process because they do not have the protection provided by a family or guardian (Corona Maioli and others, 2021; Markkula and others, 2018). Children who are unaccompanied or separated from their parents are also particularly vulnerable to human rights violations and abuses, including the risks of human trafficking.

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Part C:

The Sustainable Development Goals and international migration

Lebanon. ILO's Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme (EIIP) creates 200 decent jobs for Lebanese nationals and Syrian refugees, 15 per cent of whom are women, to help restore livelihoods and support the clear-up operation in Beirut. ILO Photo.

Key messages: Part C

- Poverty and inequality can be important drivers of international migration, leading individuals and families to seek better opportunities abroad. However, the poorest of the poor usually lack the means, information and access to networks necessary to migrate.
- Migrants play a key role in agriculture and food systems in countries of destination. Migrants, however, are often at high risk of experiencing food insecurity.
- The remittances that migrants send home tend to benefit the households, communities and economies that receive them. However, remittances can also create dependencies that stifle growth and lead to cycles of emigration and economic stagnation or decline.
- The number of young people who study outside of their country of origin has grown rapidly over the past decades and has helped to foster greater knowledge production and exchange.
- International migrants make important contributions as doctors, nurses, other medical personnel and caregivers in many countries of destination. However, for countries of origin that face acute domestic shortages of qualified health-care professionals, the emigration of such workers can undermine efforts to ensure universal access to health care.
- In countries of destination, the inflow of migrant labour and human capital can contribute to enhancing productivity and boosting the capacity for innovation, with positive impacts for economic growth. The fiscal contribution of migration is also important for host countries, particularly those with rapidly ageing populations.
- Migration can increase women's status, power and decision-making in society and help to reduce gender inequality. However, migrant women can also face barriers that prevent their full and equal participation in the social, political and economic life of host societies.
- Extreme weather events and slow-onset natural disasters are expected to become increasingly important drivers of migration and displacement, particularly in areas with high exposure to climate risks and with low levels of adaptive capacity.

Policy recommendations: Part C

- As the number of people living in the poorest regions of the world continues to grow, creating more opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income is critical for addressing some of the adverse drivers and structural factors that motivate or compel people to migrate.
- It is equally important to enhance the availability of pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and promotes decent work.
- To optimize the transformative impact of remittances for sustainable development and harness the contributions of migrants and diasporas, countries of origin should enact policies to enhance economic competitiveness, strengthen governance and social institutions, and facilitate migrant and diaspora investments and entrepreneurship.
- Countries that rely heavily on migrant workers, and particularly those with ageing populations, should plan for future labour market needs by investing in education and training both in their own countries and in

countries from which they may recruit migrant workers in the future to address deficits in the availability of decent work.

- Partnerships to foster skills development, including vocational training, are a promising way to respond to the changing demographic realities and labour market needs of both origin and destination countries.
- Reducing the vulnerability of migrants in the workplace, protecting the rights of migrant workers, facilitating fair and ethical recruitment, and promoting the mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences are steps that countries of destination should take to maximize the benefits of labour migration.
- Gender-responsive migration policies can address the specific needs of migrant women, reducing their vulnerability and promoting their empowerment and inclusion.
- Anticipating and planning for climate-related migration is imperative, in particular for vulnerable countries such as small island developing States. Building adaptive capacity and achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can reduce future risks of climate-related displacement.
- Curbing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting responsible consumption and production worldwide can help to attenuate some of the climate-related adverse drivers of migration and forced displacement.

Chapter XI

Poverty and inequality

Poverty and inequality can be important drivers of international migration, leading individuals and families to seek better opportunities abroad. However, the poorest of the poor usually lack the means, information and access to networks necessary to migrate. Migrants often contribute to reducing poverty in countries of origin, especially through the remittances they send back to their families and communities. However, remittances can also reinforce inequalities in countries of origin. In countries of destination, migrants can become trapped in intergenerational cycles of poverty, particularly when they become segregated in low-income neighbourhoods. Policies to promote the economic integration and social inclusion of migrants in countries of destination can help mitigate some of these negative impacts by reducing inequalities between migrants and host populations.

Migration is one of the strategies individuals and households can use to diversify their income sources and cope with economic risks and shocks (Black and others, 2005; Massey, 1990; Clemens and Ogden, 2014; Serrat, 2017).[45] For low-income households, who tend to be disproportionately excluded from decent work opportunities and denied access to financial services and credit, this can be one of the few pathways to secure a sustainable livelihood (Clemens and Ogden, 2014; Clemens, 2020a, 2020b). However, the poorest members of society—those struggling to fulfil the most basic needs for themselves and their families in terms of health, education, or access to food, water and sanitation—often lack the necessary human, social and financial capital to translate their aspiration to migrate into reality (Docquier and others, 2014; McKenzie, 2017). The costs associated with migration, including those related to recruitment, obtaining the necessary travel or work documents, and transportation, can be prohibitive,[46] especially for the poorest members of society (Sharma and Zarma, 2009; Martin, 2015; chap. 15). Because the barriers to accumulating human, social and financial capital are mutually reinforcing, the poor face additional, intersecting challenges when seeking to migrate, that are often compounded by migration policies enacted by countries of destination.[47] As a result, the poorest members of society may not have the possibility to migrate even when they wish to. For people with higher levels of education or income, the costs and barriers associated with migration tend to be smaller (Bazzi, 2017; Clemens, 2014; Dustmann and Okatenko, 2014; chaps. 2, 13, 20 and 21).[48] Over time, this situation can change. Diaspora networks and the intergenerational transfer of wealth through remittances, for instance, can make it easier for members of society who are less wealthy or educated to migrate (Adams and Page, 2003; Czaika and De Haas, 2012; Uprety, 2020).

The income-selectivity that shapes migration patterns at the individual and household level is also observed among countries. Low-income countries tend to have fewer persons living abroad compared to middle-income or high-income countries; a relationship that is often described as an inverse U or J (Martin and Taylor, 1996; Adams and Page, 2003; Clemens, 2014; chaps. 2, 5 and 6).

The finding that having a higher income—both at the household and at the country level—is often associated with a higher, rather than a lower propensity to migrate has important policy implications. First, interventions aimed at curbing emigration by promoting development may not produce the desired effect, at least in the short term, since economic growth tends to boost such flows rather than slow them (Clemens, 2014, 2020a, 2020b). Therefore, while accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is critical for addressing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin, in particular poverty, it is not sufficient. Expanding and diversifying the availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration for migrants at all skill levels is also required. Second, because the poorest of the poor often lack access to the minimum resources required to migrate, they may be "trapped" in situations

[45] In this chapter, poverty and inequality are framed in terms of income. In other chapters, the linkages between international migration and other forms of deprivation and inequality are discussed (chaps. 12-15).

[46] In addition to direct monetary costs, migrants may incur the psychological or opportunity costs of leaving their own country or family, or costs exacerbated by lack of safe and regular migration pathways. Averting the loss of life, exploitation, suffering and indebtedness that often accompany irregular migration is critical (Carling, 2017; chaps. 2, 20 and 21).

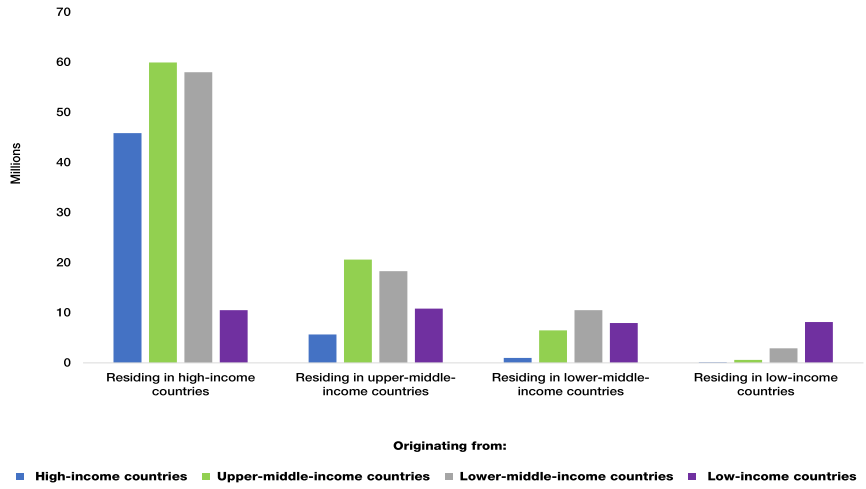
[47] Migration policies in countries of destination often favour workers with high levels of education and training, while providing limited opportunities for other types of migrants.

[48] In some contexts, the wealthiest members of society may have fewer incentives to migrate, although many do for work or study.

of abject poverty, conflict, natural disasters or environmental degradation. Under such circumstances, the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society may be most in need of humanitarian assistance and protection (chaps. 19-21).

Income, in addition to shaping the propensity to migrate at the household and country levels, also influences where people migrate to (chaps. 4-6). In general, people tend to migrate to destinations that have a similar or higher average income than their place of origin (figure 11.1). However, persons from low-income countries are frequently limited in their ability to reach wealthier destinations by restrictive policies and other barriers (Clemens, 2014; United Nations, 2020b).[49] The fact that international migrants from low-income countries, many of which are also landlocked, often reside in other low-income countries is consistent with the migration transition theory according to which persons from poorer societies tend to move shorter distances, often to countries that share borders or are within the same region as compared to more affluent migrants who tend to move over longer distances (Ratha and Shaw, 2007; Ravenstein, 1889; chaps. 6, 7 and 17).[50]

Figure 11.1
International migrants, by income groups at origin and destination, 2020 (millions)



Source: United Nations (2020c).
Note: Among countries and areas with available income classification and known country or area of origin.

International migration tends to have long-term impacts on poverty levels in countries of origin both at the aggregate and at the household level. The remittances that migrants send home contribute to increasing household incomes and providing an important financial cushion in times of uncertainty and crisis, reducing the depth and severity of poverty (Acosta and others, 2008; Adams and Page, 2003; Bertoli and Marchetta, 2014; Beyene, 2014; Brown and Jimenez-Soto, 2015; Gupta and others, 2009; Koczan and Loyola, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, many families came to rely on remittances as their sole or primary source of income (IFAD and World Bank, 2021). Remittances also contribute to enhancing the human capital and productivity of recipients, contributing to breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty (Giannetti and others, 2009; Pan and others, 2020; chaps. 12, 13, 15 and 16).

While remittances can play a critical role in mitigating poverty in countries of origin, their impact depends, in part, on who remits, who receives the remittances, and how the remittances are used (Bollard and others, 2011; Faini, 2007; Stark and others, 1986).[51] Migrant women, for instance, tend to remit a higher proportion of their earnings compared to male migrants (Fleury, 2016). Households headed by women also tend to spend more on the health and education of children and other family members and less on consumption,

[49] Migrants from low-income countries frequently engage in what is referred to as upward stepwise migration, acquiring the required resources, skills and qualifications during intermediary migratory steps before migrating to higher income countries (Paul, 2017).

[50] A disproportionate share. of those migrating from low-income countries are refugees and asylum seekers, most of whom are hosted by a neighbouring country (first country of asylum) which often has a comparable level of development as their country of origin (chap. 6).

[51] The duration of stay—the time migrants are abroad — is also critical since the amount remitted tends to decline over time (Gibson, McKenzie and Stillman, 2013).

with beneficial spillover effects in terms of human capital accumulation (Bui and Kugler, 2011; chaps. 12-14). The investment of remittances to promote the accumulation of human capital, support the creation of small businesses, enhance the productivity of farmland, or improve housing and access to safe drinking water and sanitation, contribute significantly to poverty reduction (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2023; Azam and Raza, 2016; UNCTAD, 2015, 2021; chaps. 12, 13, 15, 16 and 18). Promoting faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and fostering the financial inclusion of migrants—1 of the 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration—is critical to leveraging the transformative impact of remittances for migrants and their families, as well as countries of origin (box 11.1; chap. 16). Reducing remittance transfer costs in line with target 10.c of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can help ensure that more money reaches recipient families, with positive effects on their incomes and savings.

Migration and remittances tend to affect income equality in recipient countries. Depending on how remittances are allocated as well as the country's social or economic context and the prevailing policies, they can increase or decrease inequality (Stark and others, 1986). The temporal scale considered is also important. The relationship between migration, remittances and inequality—similarly to that between migration and income—is often characterized as an inverted U-shaped pattern: migration is often initially associated with growing levels of inequality. However, these effects tend to dissipate over time as migrant networks expand and the cost of migration falls (Black and others, 2005; Docquier and Rapoport, 2003; Koczan and Loyola, 2021; Shen and others, 2010).[52]

Because migration generally does not affect the average wages of native workers in countries of destination, it tends to have little or no impact on the poverty levels of native households (Foged and Peri, 2016; Peri, 2011, 2014; Ortega and Peri, 2009; chap. 15).[53] However, migration can increase the labour productivity of host economies, with small, positive, short-term effects on the gross domestic product (GDP) (Jaumotte and others, 2016; chap. 16). Since native populations at the higher end of the income distribution tend to benefit the most from such gains, migration can lead to greater income inequality in countries of destination (Blau and Kahn, 2015; Lin and Weiss, 2019).

In host countries, migrants often experience higher levels of poverty than natives (figure 11.3). Migrants, for instance, are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed[54] or employed informally compared to native workers, with negative impacts on their earnings and ability to accumulate wealth over their life course (chap. 15). Because of barriers to recognizing the qualifications and training acquired in home countries, the skills of migrants tend to be undervalued and underutilized, pushing them into lower-paid jobs (Bárcena-Martín and Pérez-Moreno, 2017; chaps. 13 and 15). Migrants, particularly those with an irregular migration status,[55] also tend to be vulnerable to competition from those who have arrived more recently as the influx of newcomers tends to reduce the relative earnings of other migrants (Blau and Kahn, 2015; Lin and Weiss, 2019). As a result of these and other factors, migrants are more likely to be among the so-called "working poor," that is people who live below the poverty line despite being employed (Crettaz, 2018).

Government regulations that tie eligibility for social protection schemes to a minimum number of years of contributions or length of stay in the host country can also have negative implications for migrants' poverty levels, especially at older ages (Eugster, 2018; Gustafsson and others, 2021; Lee and others, 2014; Paul, 2017). Legal immigration status can also be a barrier. Among Governments with policies to provide non-nationals access to social protection programmes on par with nationals,[56] for instance, 29 per cent indicated that they provide equal access for non-nationals regardless of immigration status, while 54 per cent indicated that they restrict such benefits to those with legal immigration status (United Nations, 2021b). Improving the long-term labor market outcomes and extending social protection benefits to migrants and particularly those that are in vulnerable situations, including families with children, in line with SDG target 1.3 is essential for lifting these groups out of poverty (Bárcena-Martín and Pérez-Moreno, 2017; De Trinidad Young and others, 2018; Lee and others, 2014, Hansen and Wahlberg, 2009; Hook and others, 2004).

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[52] Remittances tend to improve the relative income position of households with family members abroad (Stark and Taylor, 1989, 1991).

[53] Native workers, for instance, tend to respond to competition from migrant workers by upgrading their skills and taking up higher paying jobs, leading to economy-wide gains from specialization (Chassamboulli and Peri, 2014; chap. 15).

[54] The "unemployed" comprise all persons who are not in paid employment or self-employment but have taken specific steps to seek paid employment or self-employment. Underemployment reflects underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population.

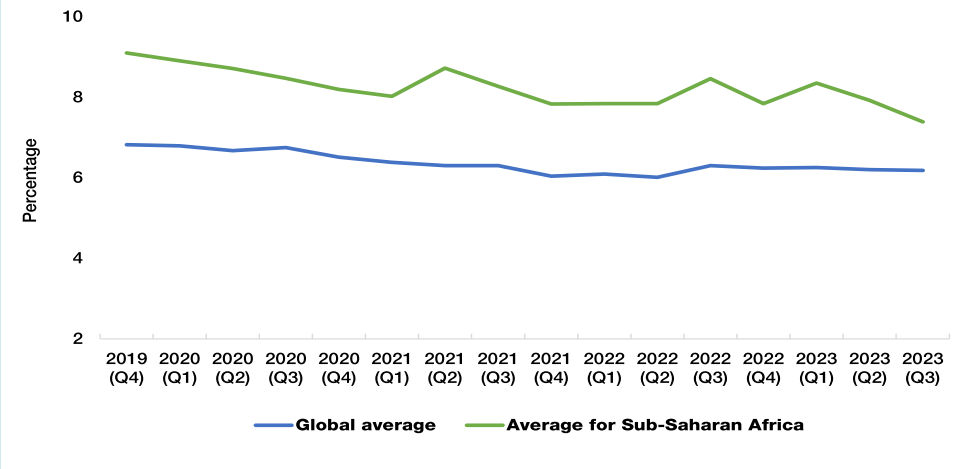
[55] In this report, irregular status refers to those who do not have the authorization to live or work in the country of destination.

[56] These programmes include contributory and non-contributory pension schemes (old age, survivor, disability), unemployment insurance, health insurance, workers' compensation, sickness benefits and basic social assistance.

Box 11.1
Reducing the cost of transmitting remittances

Over the past decades there has been considerable progress in reducing the transaction cost of remittances, with the global average cost of sending $200 falling from 9.3 per cent in 2011 to 6.2 per cent in 2023 (United Nations, 2021a; World Bank, 2023). Despite this progress, SDG target 10.c, which calls for reducing the global average transaction costs of migrant remittances to less than 3 per cent and eliminating remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent by 2030, is far from being achieved. Further, profound differences persist among countries and regions in the cost of transmitting remittances, with sub-Saharan Africa lagging behind other regions (World Bank, 2023; figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2
Average cost of sending US$200, global average and for sub-Saharan Africa, 2019-2023 (percentage)



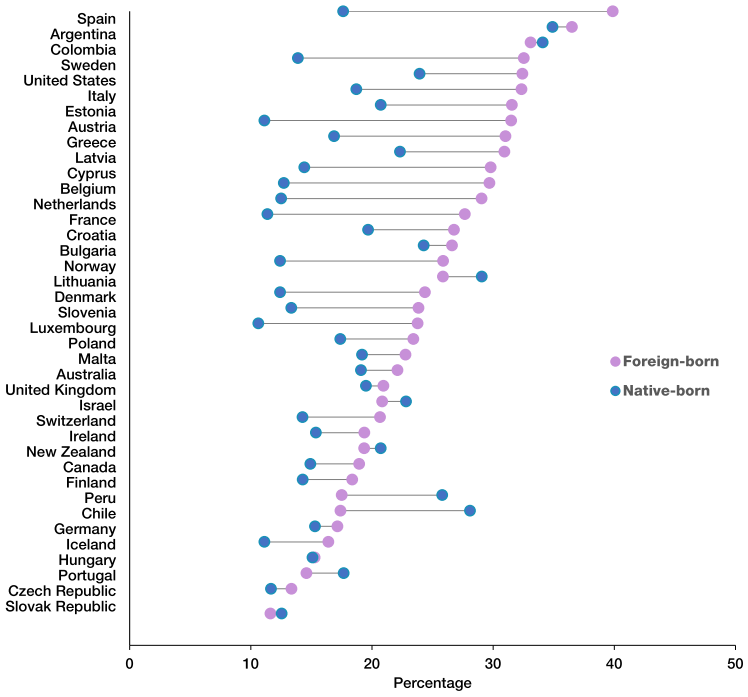
Source: World Bank (2023).

Remittance prices remain high for several reasons, including underdeveloped financial infrastructure, lack of transparency among providers, limited competition, regulatory obstacles, lack of access to the banking sector and difficulties for migrants to obtain the necessary identification documentation to access financial services[1] (United Nations, 2023; World Bank, 2006). Innovative digital financial services, including mobile payments, can contribute significantly to lowering the cost of remittance transfers, improving speed, enhancing security and increasing access to underserved populations, such as persons living in rural areas (chap. 18). Harmonizing remittance market regulations and increasing the interoperability of remittance infrastructure, including of central bank digital currencies (CBDCs)[2] could also contribute to reducing the cost of transmitting remittances (United Nations, 2023). Greater partnerships among public and private sector stakeholders are also needed to provide better access to, and develop banking solutions and financial instruments for, migrants, including low-income and female-headed households and their families (IFAD, 2013).

[1] The cost of compliance with anti-money-laundering or combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regulations also contribute to raising costs along some corridors. (United Nations, 2023).

[2] The three high-level arrangements for interoperability are: compatibility, interlinking, and single system (United Nations, 2023).

Figure 11.3
Relative poverty rates among native- and foreign-born persons in select countries, 2020



Source: OECD and European Commission (2023).
Note: Refers to persons aged 16 years or above. The relative poverty rate refers to the proportion of individuals living below the country's poverty threshold. Some names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by relative poverty rate among foreign-born persons in 2020.

Poorer migrants are often concentrated in specific destinations, such as cities or large metropolitan centers (Skeldon, 2003; chap. 17). The segregation of migrants in poor neighborhoods, combined with inadequate housing and transportation, can reduce their access to quality healthcare or education services or to well-paid work (Card and Raphael, 2013; OECD and European Commission, 2023; chaps. 12 and 13). Moreover, language barriers, compounded by discrimination based on race, religion or ethnicity, can perpetuate cycles of poverty, inequality and social exclusion among migrants and their descendants (Bárcena-Martín and Pérez-Moreno, 2017; Gustafsson and others, 2021; Hook and others, 2004; De Trinidad Young and others, 2018; Thiede, Brooks and Jensen, 2021). Strengthening service delivery in a culturally sensitive manner, facilitating access to affordable services, combatting discrimination in the world of work and reducing language barriers are important measures to address the needs of migrants. Fostering more inclusive and cohesive societies, empowering migrants to become active members of society and promoting their integration are critical for ensuring that migrants can contribute fully to host societies. To end poverty and reduce inequalities in line with the relevant Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Governments should pursue the inclusion of migrants at the national and local levels. Globally, 78 per cent of Governments reported having a national policy or strategy to promote the inclusion or integration of immigrants, 76 per cent indicated that they have formal mechanisms to engage civil society and the private sector in the formulation and implementation of migration policies, and 69 per cent reported having formal mechanisms to ensure that migration policies are gender responsive (United Nations, 2021b).

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Mauritania. Mbera Fire Brigade honoured for environmental activism. UNHCR Photo/Colin Delfosse.

Chapter XII

Health and well-being

Migrants are often healthier than the rest of the population. Nevertheless, they may also face adverse circumstances resulting in negative health outcomes. Providing migrants with access to both essential and emergency healthcare is critical to upholding the pledge of the 2030 Agenda that no one will be left behind. International migrants make important contributions as doctors, nurses, other medical personnel and caregivers in many countries of destination. However, for countries of origin that face acute domestic shortages of qualified healthcare professionals, the emigration of such workers can undermine efforts to ensure universal access to healthcare. Promoting the return of healthcare workers, supporting their reintegration into the labour force and facilitating the recognition and utilization of their skills are example of measure that countries of origin can take to mitigate some of the negative impacts of the emigration of such workers.

Comparing the health outcomes of international migrants and non-migrants can be challenging. However, many studies suggest that, on average, international migrants tend to be healthier and to live longer than non-migrant populations both in countries of origin and countries of destination. Several factors help explain this advantage. First, migrants tend to be positively selected based on their age and health status (chaps. 2 and 13). Individuals in countries of origin who are older or in poor health are less likely to emigrate compared to individuals who are younger, healthier or who have other characteristics frequently associated with better health outcomes, particularly higher levels of education or income (Wallace and Wilson, 2019; chaps. 8, 11 and 13). Second, because migrants often return[57] to their countries of origin when they are older or are in poor health, their departure can create a selection bias in host societies, with only the healthiest migrants remaining (Di Napoli and others, 2022; Wallace and others, 2019; chaps. 8 and 10).[58] Third, migrants who return to their countries of origin often fail to inform authorities in countries of destination about their departure. As a result, they can remain listed in population registers, artificially inflating the number of migrants residing in the country and distorting mortality rates (Guillot and others, 2018; Kibele, Scholz and Shkolnikov, 2008). For high-income countries of destination, these factors can produce an epidemiological paradox (Aldridge and others, 2018; Juárez and others, 2018).

Despite their mortality advantage, migrants can face a host of situations that can negatively impact their health and well-being. Lack of safe and affordable housing, poor living conditions, and inadequate access to sanitation, clean drinking water, or safe and nutritious food in countries of transit and in destination countries can result in poor health outcomes (Borhade and Dey, 2018; Moyce and Schenker, 2018). Refugees and asylum seekers can be particularly vulnerable, with precarious living conditions and other factors compounding their risk of contracting communicable, foodborne or waterborne diseases (Naja and others, 2019; WHO, 2018). The conditions surrounding the migration process, including separation from family members, social exclusion, stigma and discrimination, can also exacerbate mental health vulnerabilities and accentuate risk behaviours among migrants, particularly those arriving as children or adolescents[59] (Bauwelinck and others, 2017; Deckert and others, 2015; Joshi and others, 2018; Juárez and others, 2018; Schouler-Ocak and others, 2020; Zahid and Alsuwaidan, 2014). Because migrant workers are often engaged in jobs that native workers reject for being “dirty, dangerous or difficult”, they can be at greater risk of exposure to workplace injuries and occupational fatalities (chap. 15). As a result, migrants are often overrepresented compared to the rest of the population in host countries for deaths related to external causes, including those due to accidents, violence or suicide (Aldridge and others, 2018; McMahon and others, 2017; Moyce and Schenker, 2018; Ronda-Perez, 2019).

[57] Once migrants return to their countries of origin, they are no longer considered international migrants (chaps. 3 and 8).

[58] This type of out-migration selection is more common in countries that rely on temporary labour migration contracts. For countries that attract more permanent types of migration, the mortality advantage of migrants over non-migrants tends to dissipate over time (Bustamante and others, 2021; Trappolini and Giudici, 2021).

[59] In terms of addictions, migrants tend to have lower prevalence rates of alcohol abuse compared to native-born populations, but not necessarily for tobacco and other illicit substances. Duration of stay, age at arrival and cultural background are often critical (van Dorp and others, 2021).

Migrants can also be at greater risk of dying from infectious diseases and from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth compared to native-born populations in countries of destination (Aldridge and others, 2018; Bollini and others, 2011; Di Napoli and others, 2022; Philibert and others, 2008). Barriers in accessing healthcare services and lack of familiarity among host country medical personnel with some of the diseases or conditions that migrants may have been exposed to or contracted in countries of origin or during their migration voyage can lead to improper diagnoses and treatment (Aldridge and others, 2018). Ensuring that health professionals in host countries routinely screen patients for their migration history, cultural health practices and disease exposure, particularly for those originating from countries with a high prevalence of infectious diseases, can help reduce such excess deaths among migrants (Lassetter and Callister, 2009; McCarthy and others, 2013; Seedat and others, 2018). For migrant women, it is also critical to ensure that they have access to information about sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including for family planning, in host countries, are enrolled in prenatal and postnatal care during and after pregnancy, and receive regular care from qualified healthcare professionals (Schoevers, van den Muijsenbergh and Lagro-Janssen, 2010; chap. 14). Addressing the unmet need for family planning among international migrants, including among asylum seekers and refugees, in line with targets 3.7[60] and 5.6[61] of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can also help reduce the number of high-risk births, thereby decreasing the number of maternal deaths (Ivanova, Rai and Kemigisha, 2018; Thein and Thepthien, 2020).

In 2021, over 93 per cent of Governments globally reported having policies to provide non-nationals access to essential and emergency healthcare on par with citizens (United Nations, 2021). Nearly 90 per cent of Governments reported providing such services to all non-nationals, regardless of their immigration status. In addition, 4 per cent indicated that they provided such services only to those with a legal immigration status, with Latin America and the Caribbean and Northern Africa and Western Asia reporting the highest shares (figure 12.1). Ensuring that host countries provide equitable and non-discriminatory access to quality healthcare services to all international migrants, irrespective of their legal status is not only critical for achieving the target of universal health coverage by 2030 (target 3.8) but also the pledge contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that no one should be left behind (Tangcharoensathien and others, 2018; WHO, 2022). Addressing barriers related to language or cultural awareness, training healthcare providers on culturally sensitive service delivery, lifting exclusions due to eligibility requirements, and curtailing excessive fees and out-of-pocket costs are other important measures for ensuring that international migrants have full and equal access to essential healthcare and treatment (Jaeger and others, 2019).

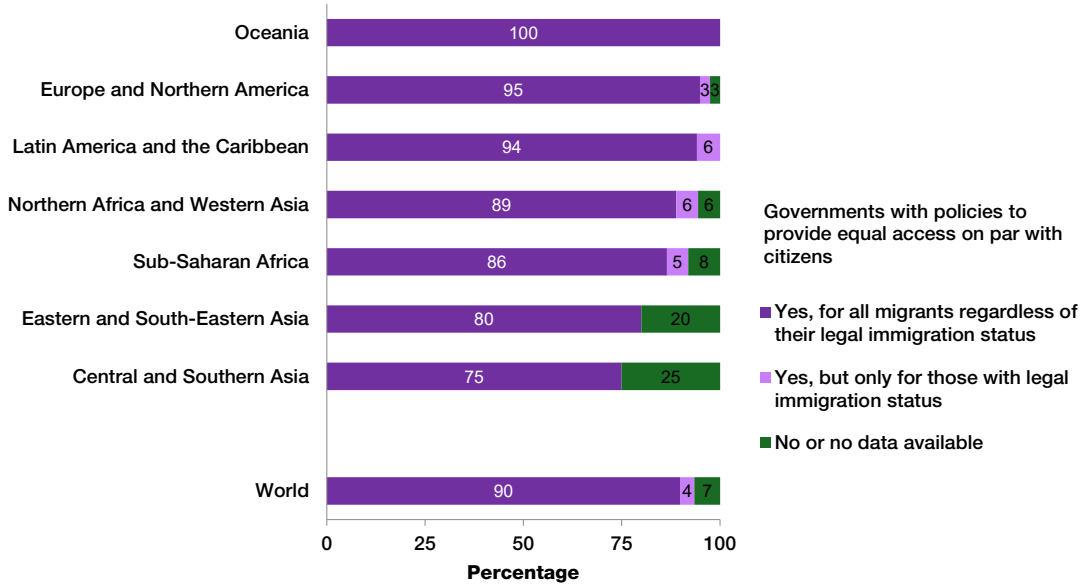
In some host countries there is a perception that international migrants are a burden to health systems (Gonzalez-Barrera and Connor, 2019). This sentiment, which is not supported by evidence on public health expenditures, is sometimes used as an argument to deny migrants equal access to essential or emergency healthcare (Abubakar and others, 2018; OECD, 2013; chap. 16). Excluding migrants from accessing healthcare, in addition to constituting a violation of their human rights, can also have negative impacts on the health and well-being of the overall population in countries of destination (Francesca and Petretto, 2019). For instance, even though the risk is generally found to be small, denying migrants treatment and care for communicable diseases can increase the risk of exposure and infection for the rest of the population (Castelli and Sulis, 2017; Legido-Quigley and others, 2019). Further, the direct and indirect costs associated with excluding migrants from accessing healthcare can also be considerable. Untreated mental health conditions, for instance, are often associated with higher levels of incarceration, homelessness and violence, which can have devastating impacts for migrants themselves, their families and communities, and the public at large (Derr, 2016; Rousseau and Frounfelker, 2019).

Migrant workers play a critical role in providing healthcare services in many countries, particularly in high-income and upper-middle-income ones. Without migrant workers, the healthcare systems in many such countries would be under serious strain. Data from some 80 countries—many of which are high-income or upper-middle-income countries—indicate that over a quarter of doctors and around one in eight of all practicing nurses are foreign-born or foreign-trained (OECD, 2019 and 2020; WHO, 2020). Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America were among the countries with the largest number of migrant health workers (OECD, 2019). In many countries with rapidly ageing populations, migrant workers provide critical care services to older persons (Beard and Bloom, 2015). During the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, as health systems in many of the highly affected regions faced severe staffing shortages, the reliance on foreign-born doctors, nurses and caregivers became even more apparent.

[60] Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.7 calls for ensuring by 2030 "universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes".

[61] SDG target 5.6 calls for "ensur[ing] universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences".

Figure 12.1
Proportion of Governments with policies to provide equal access to essential or emergency healthcare, by region, 2021



Source: United Nations (2021).
Note: Ordered by size of the category "Yes, regardless of their legal immigration status". Based on 138 countries with available data (as of 31 October 2021). Essential healthcare refers to essential services for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, and non-communicable diseases, as well as service capacity and access. Emergency healthcare refers to any medical care urgently required for the preservation of a person's life or the avoidance of irreparable harm to their health. Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

Box 12.1.
Migrant remittances and health outcomes

The remittances that migrants send home often have positive impacts on the health outcomes of recipient families and communities. Remittances, for instance, can contribute to reduce infant mortality and lower the risks of maternal death by, inter alia, increasing women's likelihood of receiving care during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postnatal period (Ali and others, 2019; Atake, 2018; Mahmood and others, 2022; Zhunio and others, 2012). Remittances can also positively impact health outcomes by enabling recipient households to increase their expenditures on needed medicines, vaccines, healthcare treatments and food (McKenzie, 2006; Ponce, Olivié and Onofa, 2011; chap. 18). However, in some contexts, migration and remittances can be negatively associated with health outcomes. Parental migration, for instance, can have adverse effects on children's mental health and nutritional outcomes and, especially when the extra income from remittances is used to purchase less healthy foods, remittances can increase rates of overweight and obesity (Graham and Jordan, 2013; Thow, Fanzo and Negin, 2016; Wickramage and others, 2015).

For healthcare workers, migration often presents opportunities as well as challenges. Working abroad may offer better remuneration, greater opportunities for professional training or career advancement, and, in some cases, a safer or more fulfilling working environment (Bofao, 2016; Connell, 2010; Crush, 2019). Nevertheless, migrant healthcare professionals may suffer disproportionately from workplace violence, discrimination and harassment. They also may experience lower levels of pay and higher levels of physical or mental strain compared to non-migrant medical professionals (chap. 15). During the COVID-19 pandemic, migrant health workers, who were often working on the frontline, had higher rates of coronavirus infections and worse health outcomes and burnout in many countries. Precarious employment conditions, understaffing and inadequate access to protective equipment were among the contributing factors (Gunn, Somani and Muntaner, 2021; United Nations, 2023).

While the immigration of healthcare workers can temporarily relieve pressures on the healthcare systems of host countries and can offer those workers a chance to improve their livelihood, the loss of qualified health professionals can have a negative impact on countries of origin, particularly those already struggling to meet the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development related to health (Aluttis and others, 2014; Yeates and Pillinger, 2019). Health systems in low-income and lower-middle-income countries often lack the specialized personnel and infrastructure needed to provide comprehensive healthcare to their own populations and the emigration of highly trained workers can exacerbate such shortages (United Nations, 2023). For such countries, the effects of losing highly trained healthcare professionals go well beyond the forgone returns on the investments in those workers' education and training (chap. 13).[62] More fundamentally, they include the adverse health impacts associated with acute shortages of medical professionals (Buchan, 2011; Dohlman and others, 2019; Mills and others, 2011; Saluja and others, 2020).

The World Health Organization's Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, a multilateral framework for tackling shortages in the global health workforce and addressing challenges associated with the international mobility of health workers that was adopted in 2010 by all 193 Member States, aims to ensure the international recruitment of health personnel is conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, fairness and sustainability of health systems (Siyam, Dal Poz and WHO, 2014). However, one of the Code's major weaknesses is that it is voluntary in nature, with Member states and other stakeholders being encouraged to apply the Code to their own practices (Aluttis and others, 2014). Going forward, it is critical to redress imbalances in access to healthcare by strengthening health systems particularly in the poorest parts of the world. Promoting circular migration or the return of healthcare workers, supporting their reintegration into the labour force and facilitating the recognition and utilization of their skills are examples of measures that low-income countries and lower-middle-income countries could take to mitigate some of the negative effects resulting from the emigration of such workers (Efendi and others, 2021). Encouraging high-income countries and upper-middle income countries, especially those facing major shortages of healthcare personnel, and those where the number of older persons is projected to increase rapidly, to invest in training larger numbers of healthcare workers and caregivers, both in their own country and in the countries of recruitment, is an additional measure that could be considered (United Nations, 2023; chaps. 10 and 13). This would entail substantially increasing health financing and supporting the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States in line with target 3.c[63] of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

[62] In some cases, workers may have acquired some or the entirety of their training abroad, at no expense to taxpayers in countries of origin (chap. 13).

[63] SDG target 3.c calls for "substantially increas[ing] health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States".

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Chapter XIII

Education

The number of young people who study outside of their country of origin has grown rapidly over the past decades and has helped to foster greater knowledge production and exchange. However, the emigration of highly educated individuals can deprive countries of the skilled labour force needed for achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. When the skills and qualifications that migrants carry with them are not recognized, this can lead to "brain waste". Facilitating the recognition of skills, qualifications and competences is critical to minimizing such waste. Many countries have explicit policies to attract migrant workers with high levels of human capital. Complying with ethical recruitment practices and actively investing in the development and training of skilled labour in countries of origin and destination can help ensure that the migration of highly educated individuals does not exacerbate inequality in access to human capital among countries. In host societies, children of migrant families can face economic, social, institutional, and other types of obstacles in accessing education, especially if they have an irregular immigration status. Addressing language and other barriers can improve migrant children's educational outcomes and promote their integration into host societies.

In recent years, the number of migrants who have gone abroad to study has grown rapidly. In higher education[64] alone, the number of internationally mobile students rose from 2 million in 2000 to 6 million in 2019 (UNESCO, 2022). Europe was the main destination for internationally mobile tertiary students in 2019, followed by Northern America (figure 13.1). Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and Central and Southern-Asia were the main regions of origin.[65] International student mobility can promote the transfer and exchange of knowledge, skills and technology, and support collaboration and partnerships between research and education institutions both regionally and internationally, including through South-South and triangular cooperation agreements (Ball, 2004; Gribble, 2008; Jonkers and Cruz-Castro, 2013; Lowell and Findlay, 2001; Teney, 2021; chap. 16). Recognizing these positive development effects, target 4.b of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for expanding the number of scholarships available to least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries for enrolment in higher education in developed countries or other developing countries. Scholarships in information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes are given particular importance in the target. However, while the number of tertiary students from low-income countries studying in high-income countries has increased in recent years, the percentage of young people from such countries who study abroad remains small (Teichler, 2017).

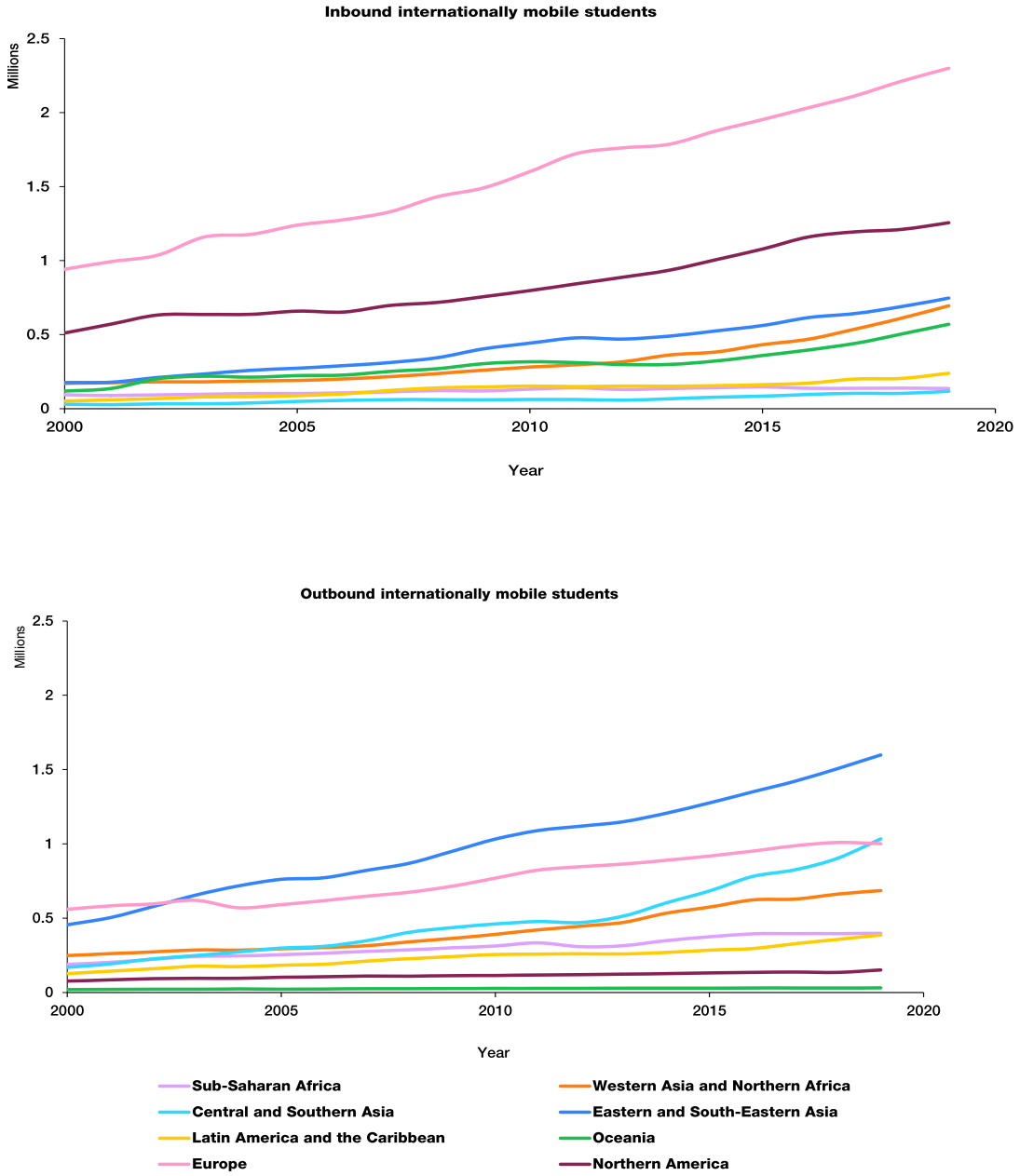
While many internationally mobile students return to their countries of origin after studying abroad, bringing back academic training, cultural competencies and communication and networking skills, others choose to remain in their country of study. In several high-income countries, large shares of their highly skilled foreign-born workers acquired at least some of their post-secondary education in the host country (Hanson, 2010). Differences in professional opportunities, wages and working conditions, as well as cultural, societal or personal factors influence these decisions (Alberts and Hazen, 2005; Mok, Zhang and Bao, 2022; Netierman and others, 2021). Several countries have implemented schemes to encourage international students and other highly skilled migrants to circulate or return by offering incentives and removing administrative barriers (Fangmeng, 2016; Gaillard, Gaillard and Krishna, 2015; Jacob and Meek, 2013). Ensuring that migrants find productive outlets for their skills by creating career or business opportunities, as well as conducive social and economic environments can play a role in shaping the extent to which migrants with elevated levels of human

[64] Higher education is also sometimes referred to as post-secondary or tertiary education.

[65] In a world where higher education is becoming ever more internationalized and the global marketplace is more competitive and interconnected, the skills, qualifications and competences acquired abroad have become increasingly sought after (de Wit and Deca, 2020; Knight, 2012; Sabzalieva, Mutize and Yerovi Verano, 2022). The flourishing of international branch campuses, the convergence of curricula in different parts of the world and the availability of exchange programmes have made it easier for students to attend foreign academic or training institutions, while rapid social and economic growth in many developing countries has increased the pool of students who are able to afford the often higher tuition fees and cost of living of studying abroad (European Commission, 2022; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2006). International students tend to self-fund their tertiary studies (Gribble, 2008).

capital are able to return and successfully reintegrate (Beine, Noël and Ragot, 2014; Piguet and others, 2020; chaps 12, 15 and 16). Migrants often express the desire to return home but also frustration at the lack of opportunities and barriers that they face there (Labrianidis and Vogiatzis, 2013; Staniscia and others, 2021; Tezcan, 2019; chaps. 12, 14 and 15).

Figure 13.1
Inbound internationally mobile tertiary students by region of destination and outbound internationally mobile tertiary students by region of origin, 2000 to 2019



Source: UNESCO (2022).
Note: Migrants of unknown origin are not included in the figure on outbound internationally mobile students. Internationally mobile students are individuals who have physically crossed an international border between two countries with the objective to participate in educational activities in the country of destination, where the country of destination of a given student is different from their country of origin. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also advanced vocational or professional education.

Box 13.1.
Migrant remittances and educational outcomes

Remittances often have a positive impact on educational outcomes. The remittances that migrants send home, for examples, allow credit-constrained households to increase investments in the education of their family members, boosting school enrolment and improving school attendance and educational attainment (Alcaraz, Chiquiar and Salcedo, 2012; Binci and Giannelli, 2012; Botezat and Pfeiffer, 2014; Zhunio and others, 2012). Remittances can also serve as a form of insurance for families, reducing their reliance on child labour and enabling them to cover school-related expenses during times of crisis (Hanson, 2010; Song and Glick, 2020). However, in some contexts, children whose parents are working aboard can experience worse educational outcomes in terms of school dropout, level of achievement and level of cognitive development compared to children whose family members are not abroad despite the positive economic effects of remittances (Giannelli and Mangiavacchi, 2010; Nguyen, 2016). Receiving remittances can also help perpetuate a "culture of migration" whereby young people have a disincentive to invest in their human capital formation since they expect to receive high returns abroad even from low-skilled labour (Kandel and Massey, 2002; McKenzie and Rapoport, 2011; UNESCO, 2018).

When highly educated individuals move from poorer to richer countries, their emigration can create a "brain drain" which can increase inequality among countries, by depleting the human capital in places where it is already scarce and by expanding it where it is more abundant (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; United Nations, 2020a, 2020b; chap. 6). Since having a higher level of educational attainment can make it easier for individuals who want to migrate to access networks and information, and secure the resources required for their journey, the effect of this selectivity can be particularly negative for least developed countries and small island developing States (Gribble, 2008; Massa and others, 2022; UNESCO, 2018; chaps. 2, 11 and 13).[66] In such countries, the emigration of highly educated individuals can undermine efforts to achieve the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG), particularly those related to health, education or economic growth (chaps. 2, 11, 12 and 16). For instance, when the outflow of human capital is large compared to the size of a country's population, as is the case for some small island developing States, this can lower productivity and economic growth on a per capita basis thereby hindering social and economic development (Beine, Docquier and Rapoport, 2001; chap. 16). It can also deprive countries of origin of the tax contributions needed to offset the costs of schooling and training of persons who moved abroad, especially where education is publicly funded (Bhagwati and Rodriguez, 1975; chap. 16). The emigration of large numbers of qualified teachers, doctors and nurses can also have a negative impact on the targets of achieving quality primary and secondary education for all (SDG target 4.1) and of ensuring universal health coverage (SDG target 3.8), particularly in countries where such highly trained workers are already in short supply (Beine, Docquier and Oden-Defoort, 2011; Brown, 2008; Mills and others, 2011; chaps. 12 and 15). In societies experiencing political instability or economic crises, the emigration of highly educated members can set in motion vicious cycles, resulting in even higher levels of poverty, weaker institutions and greater unrest (Akkad and Henderson, 2021; Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; Mualla, 2022; Riera and Acosta, 2022; Sassoon, 2012).

Under some circumstances, however, the emigration of highly skilled individuals can have positive social and economic impacts for countries of origin. The opportunity to reap higher returns abroad on investments in human capital can encourage people to devote more resources to their education and training than they would have done without the prospect of emigration (Beine, Docquier and Rapoport, 2008; Brücker and Defoort, 2009). This situation, sometimes also referred to as "brain gain", can create a virtuous cycle, whereby people become, on average, more educated, which in turn can increase wages and productivity resulting in higher per capita growth (Beine, Docquier and Oden-Defoort, 2011; Mountford, 1997; Stark, Helmenstein and Prskawetz, 1997; chaps. 15 and 16). The emigration of highly skilled workers, by strengthening diasporic networks, can also promote greater volumes of foreign direct investment and trade (Felbermayr and Jung, 2009; Gheasi and Nijkamp, 2017; Kugler and Rapoport, 2005; chap. 16). Fostering transnational entrepreneurship among highly skilled migrants can also contribute to offsetting some of the negative effects of brain drain (Gribble, 2008).

For highly educated people themselves, the opportunity to live, study and work abroad is often positive, opening prospects of higher remuneration and better living and working conditions (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011; Libanova, 2019; Okafor and Chimereze, 2020; chaps. 12 and 15). However, when the qualifications

[66] Because families with migrants abroad tend to be wealthier to start with and therefore are more likely to invest in education, it is difficult to attribute a causal nexus between emigration and educational attainment in low-income countries (Hanson, 2010). In countries of origin with higher income levels or more well-established transnational networks, the selectivity of migration by level of educational attainment tends to be less pronounced (Brücker and Defoort, 2009).

that migrants bring with them are not recognized in host societies, these migrants can be compelled to work in jobs for which they are overqualified; a phenomenon known as "brain waste". Facilitating the recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies, including skills acquired informally, is critical to minimizing the waste of migrants' human capital. Bilateral, regional or multilateral mutual recognition agreements can help promote equivalence or comparability among national systems. In 2021, 41 per cent of the Governments globally reported having some type of bilateral or regional policy measure to facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications acquired abroad, meaning that they had formalized criteria (accreditation) for recognizing foreign qualifications such as degrees, skills and competencies acquired abroad (United Nations, 2021). Multilateral agreements are less widespread. The Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, adopted in 2019, had been ratified by 16 States Parties as of July 2022 (UNESCO, 2018). The Convention establishes universal principles for fair, transparent and non-discriminatory recognition of higher education qualifications and provides a platform for national authorities to collaborate across borders and regions to develop better tools and practices for the recognition of higher education qualifications.

Policies implemented by host countries can help minimize some of the negative impacts associated with the migration of individuals with higher levels of education or training, including brain drain and brain waste (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012). Complying with ethical recruitment practices, particularly for professions that are vital for the development of countries of origin, such as healthcare workers or teachers, and actively planning and investing in the development and training of skilled labour in their own countries as well as in countries where migrant workers are recruited from are some examples of policy measures that can help ensure that the migration of highly educated individuals does not exacerbate inequality in access to human capital among countries (Teney, 2021; Yanbin, Latukha and Selivanovskikh, 2020; chaps. 12 and 15). Partnerships to foster skills development, including vocational training, are a promising way to respond to the changing demographic realities and labour market needs of countries of origin and destination (OECD, 2022). When their skills and expertise are not easily transferable to the labour markets of host countries, offering migrants opportunities to create their own businesses or to retrain can also help them from becoming deskilled (Creese and Wiebe, 2012; de Lange and others, 2021).

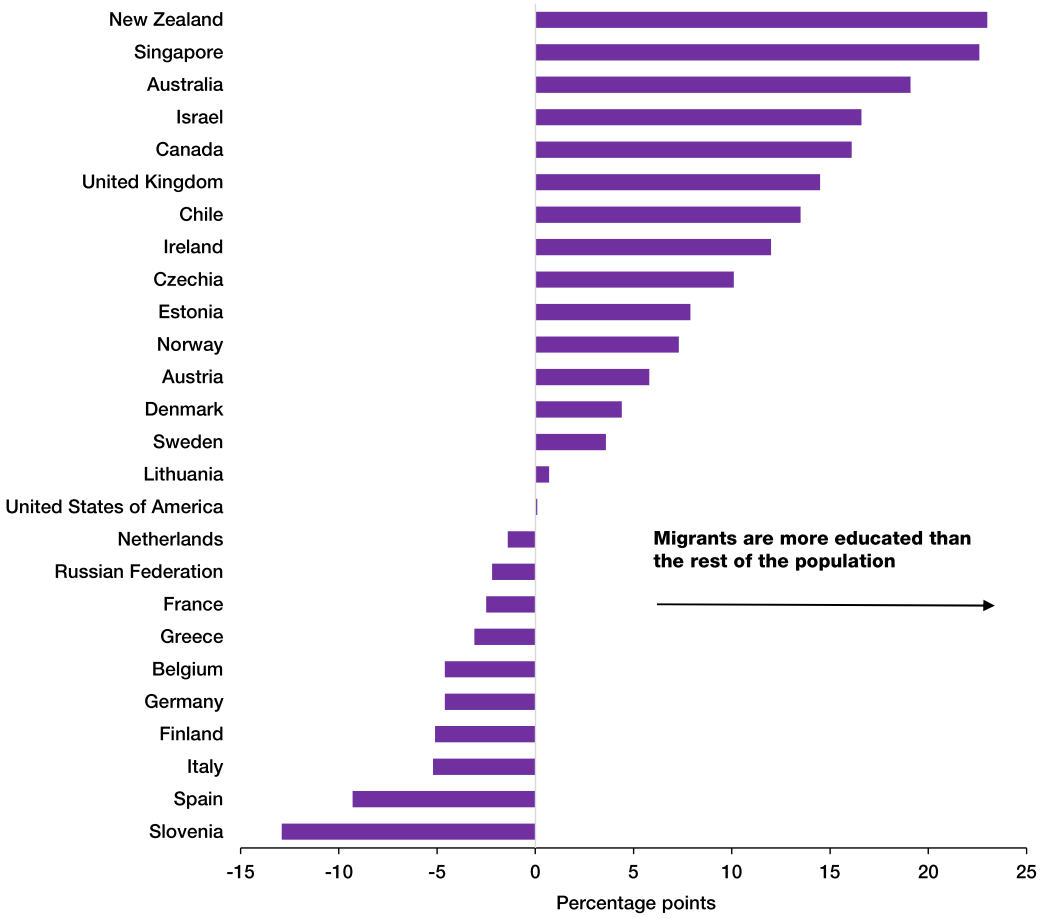
The immigration of people with higher levels of education or training tends to have positive impacts on the economies of host societies by filling skill shortages and promoting innovation, particularly in science, technology and engineering (Caviggioli, Jensen and Scellato, 2020; Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; Kerr and others, 2016; Nathan, 2014; chaps. 11, 15 and 16). The inventions and innovations pioneered by highly skilled migrants, evidenced, for example, by the disproportionate number of patents awarded to them and the economic value of those patents, tend to have positive spillover effects on the economies of host societies by boosting productivity and fostering entrepreneurship and the creation of new jobs (Bernstein and others, 2022; Gribble, 2008; Huber and others, 2010; Nathan, 2014; chaps. 15 and 16).

In part because of these positive effects, labour migration policies in many countries have become increasingly selective, favouring the admission of international migrants with skills considered to be in short supply (United Nations, 2020a). Governments in many countries have implemented skill-specific or skill-selective immigration policies aimed at attracting or facilitating the recruitment of persons with higher levels of education (Czaika and Parsons, 2017; OECD, 2009, 2019). These measures include giving highly skilled migrants preferential treatment or subjecting them to fewer restrictions compared to other migrants in admission, length of stay, freedom to change employment or right to be accompanied by family members. In 2019, 40 per cent of Governments reported having policies to raise the level of immigration of highly skilled workers (United Nations, 2020a). Partially because of such policies, international migrants in some host countries are more educated, on average, than the rest of the population (figure 13.2; Hanson, 2010; Clemens and Mendola, 2020).

Migrants and their children, even those children born in the host country, are often disadvantaged in terms of their educational outcomes compared to other members of society (van de Werfhorst and Heath, 2019; OECD, 2010, 2021; UNESCO, 2018). They are less likely to be enrolled in early childhood education programmes, are more likely to be in schools that are overcrowded and have fewer resources, and often face additional barriers and discrimination on the grounds of language, ethnicity, race or religion which negatively impact their ability to access inclusive and equitable quality education (Nicolai, Wales and Aiazzi, 2017; UNESCO, 2018). Persons with an irregular migration status tend to be particularly vulnerable. As a result, migrants and their children often fare worse than their non-migrant peers in terms of various educational outcomes such as academic scores and levels of completion (OECD, 2010, 2021; UNESCO, 2018). Measures to provide migrants access to inclusive and equitable education and schooling, including equal access to public primary and secondary schools, are recognized as critical in many countries (OECD, 2010; United Nations, 2020a). In 2021, 91 per cent of Governments globally reported having such policies (United Nations, 2021). However, of these, only 64 per cent reported providing the same level of access to public education to all migrants regardless of their legal

immigration status, while 28 per cent indicated that they provided access only for those with legal immigration status (United Nations, 2021). Central and Southern Asia, and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia had the lowest shares of Governments reporting equal access to public education for all migrants, regardless of immigration status, while Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania had the highest shares of Governments reporting such policies (figure 13.3).

Figure 13.2
Difference between the share of foreign-born population and native-born population with tertiary education, most recent available year



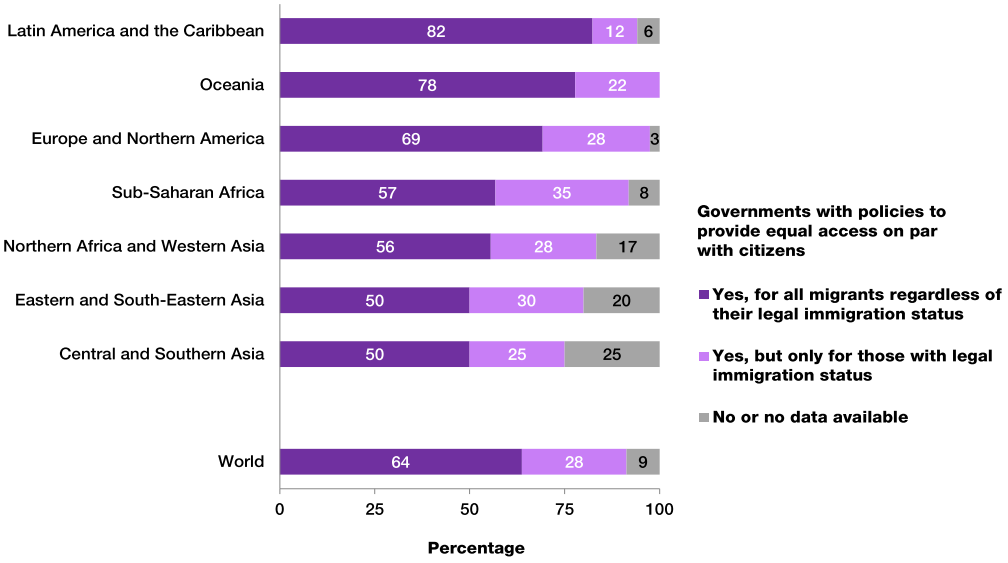
Source: OECD (2019).
Note: Ordered by size of the difference. Values less than zero indicate that the native-born population has a higher share of population with tertiary education than the foreign-born population. The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Data for Belgium refer to Flanders. Data for the United Kingdom refer to England and Northern Ireland.

Providing inclusive and equitable quality education to all migrant children and young people, including early childhood education, formal schooling and on-the-job and vocational training in line with the relevant targets of SDG 4[67] on quality education is critical. Committing additional resources to provide support and training, including language training, so that migrant children and youth can overcome social and economic barriers not only can improve their educational outcomes and well-being, but also can support their successful integration into host societies throughout their life course (Beck, Corak and Tienda, 2012; Duncan and Trejo, 2015; Ribeiro and others, 2012). Acknowledging the interlinkages between migration and education—one of the

[67] These include target 4.1 on free primary and secondary education; target 4.2 on equal access to quality pre-primary education; target 4.3 on equal access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education; and target 4.4. on increasing the number of people with relevant skills for financial success.

key transitions with multiplier effects across the SDGs—can help ensure that efforts to accelerate progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda are undertaken in a complementary and coherent manner and that policy interventions amplify each other (United Nations, 2023).

Figure 13.3
Proportion of Governments with policies that provide migrants equal access to public education by region, 2021



Source: United Nations (2021).
Note: Ordered by size of the category "Yes, regardless of immigration status". Based on 138 countries with available data (as of 31 October 2021). Public education refers to public pre-schools, primary schools and secondary schools. Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

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Chapter XIV

Gender equality and women's empowerment

International migration and gender dynamics are intrinsically linked, with each of them affecting and being shaped by the other. Migration can increase women's status, power and decision-making in society and contribute to promoting greater gender equality. However, migrant women can also face barriers that prevent them from taking part fully and equally in the social, political and economic life of host societies. In addition, they can be at high risk of suffering from exploitation, violence and abuse. Gender-responsive migration policies can address the specific needs of migrant women, reduce their vulnerability and promote their empowerment and inclusion.

International migration can create new opportunities for women, improve their status in society and enhance their ability to make decisions that shape their own lives and those of their family members, thus laying the foundation for a more inclusive, equitable and prosperous world (UN Women, 2017; United Nations, 2020b). The size and direction of these impacts, however, varies greatly based on the characteristics of those who migrate and those who remain in the country of origin, and reflect the gender norms prevailing in the societies of origin and in the societies of destination (UN Women, 2017; Hennebry and others, 2017).

The emigration of male household members, for instance, can increase the decision-making power of female members who remain behind, giving them greater control over financial resources and promoting greater financial inclusion as they assume responsibility for decisions on the use and investment of remittances (Antman, 2015; Benería, Deere and Kabeer, 2012; Hugo, 2002; Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2021; Lenoël and David, 2019; chap. 11).[68] The emigration of large numbers of male workers can also create new opportunities for women to enter the labour force, enhancing their autonomy and elevating their status in society (Ferrant and Tuccio, 2015; Lenoël and David, 2019). These changes can reduce the stigma and social barriers that women face in society and contribute to changing the prevailing gender norms and making it easier, in the long term, for other women to emigrate (Baudassé and Bazillier, 2014). In some contexts, however, receiving remittances or having family members abroad can reinforce prevailing norms regarding the division of unpaid care and domestic work within the household and the family instead of promoting more shared responsibility in line with target 5.4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[69] (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2006; Asiedu and Chimbar, 2020; Binzel and Assaad, 2011; Chami and others, 2018; Mendola and Carletto, 2012; Lokshin and Glinskaya, 2009; chaps. 11 and 15).

While abroad, migrant women are often exposed to different gender norms and values than those prevailing in their own countries. In some contexts, being immersed in a different value system can promote greater gender equality and can accelerate migrant women's empowerment, integration and ability to participate fully and equally in the social, political and economic life of host societies (Spierings, 2015). Migrant women's access and use of modern contraceptive methods, for instance, can be positively influenced by being in an environment that supports the right to autonomy in decisions about sexual and reproductive health and provides information on a range of family planning methods (Behrman and others, 2022; chap. 9). Migration can also contribute to a gradual transformation of gender dynamics in countries of origin through the transmission of social remittances—the norms, attitudes and knowledge that migrants transfer back to their countries of origin. Diaspora networks, for instance, have been critical in the diffusion of new preferences regarding age at marriage and desired family size (Bertoli and Marchetta, 2015; Fargues, 2011; Hugo, 2002; chap. 10). However, migration does not always translate into greater equality or empowerment for women (De Haas and van Rooij, 2010; Lenoël, 2017). In cases where international migrants are exposed to, and acquire, more conservative gender norms and attitudes while living or working abroad, migration can contribute to deepening gender inequality within diaspora communities as well as in home countries (Samari, 2021; Tuccio and Wahba, 2015). In addition, since migrants who are unable or are unwilling to adapt to the norms of host societies are

[68] This can have beneficial ripple effects on other household members, since women tend to allocate a larger proportion of remittances to improving educational, health and nutritional outcomes compared to men (Acosta, 2011; Antman, 2012; Gyimah-Brempong and Asiedu, 2015; chaps. 11-13 and 18).

[69] SDG target 5.4 calls for "recogniz[ing] and valu[ing] unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate".

more likely to return home, returning migrants may reassert the dominant gender norms of their own countries rather than transmit more progressive ones they might have been exposed to while abroad (Datta and others, 2009; Taylor and others, 2006).

Migration can have a profound impact on the work-life balance of women who are not themselves migrants. In countries of origin, for instance, migration can affect the intergenerational division of labour inside the home, with important gender consequences. The emigration of women can increase the amount of unpaid domestic and care work that other female household members are expected to perform with negative consequences for their educational attainment and labour force participation (Adhikari and others, 2014; Cortes, 2015; Dreby and Stutz, 2012; Gatskova, Ivlevs and Dietz, 2019; chaps. 2 and 7). In host societies, female migrant labour often enables native women to balance gendered expectations related to work and home (Barone and Mocetti, 2011; Benería, 2008; Cortés and Tessada, 2011; Duda-Mikulin, 2020; Farré and others, 2011; Hennebry, Williams and Walton-Roberts, 2017).[70] In countries where there is a shortage of quality, affordable care for young or older dependents, migrant women—often from low-income or lower-middle-income countries—perform the care-related work previously provided by native women often without pay (United Nations, 2020b). Migrant women who provide this type of care, however, are often employed under informal arrangements and with little legal recourse or protection, making them extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse (chap. 15). Developing adequate care systems in host countries and strengthening protection mechanisms for the rights of migrant domestic and care workers, including by adhering to existing labour norms and conventions and promoting greater coherence between migration, labour, care and social protection policies, can help address some of the vulnerabilities that such women experience (Altman and Pannell, 2012; Araujo and González-Fernández, 2014; Razavi, 2011; United Nations, 2023; WHO, 2017). Ensuring that migrant women engaged in domestic or care work are protected against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence, and have access to minimum wage coverage, normal hours of work, paid annual leave, daily and weekly rest periods, and, if they reside in the household of their employer, decent living conditions can also help promote greater equity in the so-called "global care chain" (Gammage and Stevanovic, 2019; Herrera, 2013; Parreñas, 2005; Pearson and Kusakabe, 2021).

In many parts of the world, growing numbers of women are migrating on their own for study or work, often becoming the principal wage earners for their families (Kanaiaupuni, 2000; chaps. 7-8 and 15). Despite this positive trend, gender dynamics continue to profoundly impact women's ability to migrate alone. Where women have less decision-making capacity or less access to the necessary resources, they may be unable to migrate independently even if they wish to do so, leading them to either remain in the country of origin or migrate as "tied" movers, namely as dependents of spouses or other male family members (Fleury, 2016; Ruyssen and Salomone, 2018). By contrast, in societies where women have greater financial decision-making power and access to broader social networks, it is often easier and more socially accepted for them to migrate across borders independently (Beine and Salomone, 2013; Benería, 2008; Farris, 2015; Pande, 2022). In some cases, however, gender inequality, rather than being an obstacle to international migration, can have the opposite effect. Gender-based discrimination and the lack of opportunities for full political or economic participation, for instance, can compel women, particularly those with higher levels of education or greater access to financial means, to leave their countries of origin and migrate abroad (Baudassé and Bazillier, 2014; Huh, 2017; Kanaiaupuni, 2000).[71]

While it is becoming easier and more socially accepted for women to migrate alone, prevailing gender norms underpinning marriage and professional advancement in many parts of the world still ensure that women are more likely to migrate as dependents of a male family member than men are to migrate as a dependent of a female, even if they have the same levels of education (Akee, 2010; Al-Rebholz and Apitzsch, 2021; Docquier and others, 2012; Khattab and others, 2020; Kim, 2010). As an accompanying household member, women are less likely than men to have the authorization to work in host countries, resulting in lower chances of obtaining paid employment (Boucher, 2007; chaps. 13 and 15). They are also less likely to benefit from structured integration programmes (OECD, 2023). Because of this and other barriers, migrant women can be pushed to accept working arrangements for which they are overqualified as well as low-paid jobs often concentrated in the informal sector (Hennebry and Petrozziello, 2019; Holliday, Hennebry and Gammage, 2019; Pande, 2022; chap. 15). This in turn, can reinforce inequality in the gendered division of work within the

[70] Rapid population ageing and changes in the labour force participation and labour preferences of native-born women combined with an inadequate provision of public welfare services for the care of young children or older persons have increased the gender-specific demand for care-related work (Benería, Deere and Kabeer, 2012; Farris, 2015; Gabaccia, 2016; Kofman and Raghuram, 2009; chaps. 1, 2, 10, 15).

[71] In the context of migration for family formation or marriage, having more conservative gender norms can also affect the ability of women to migrate alone (Lauser, 2008; Lee, 2008).

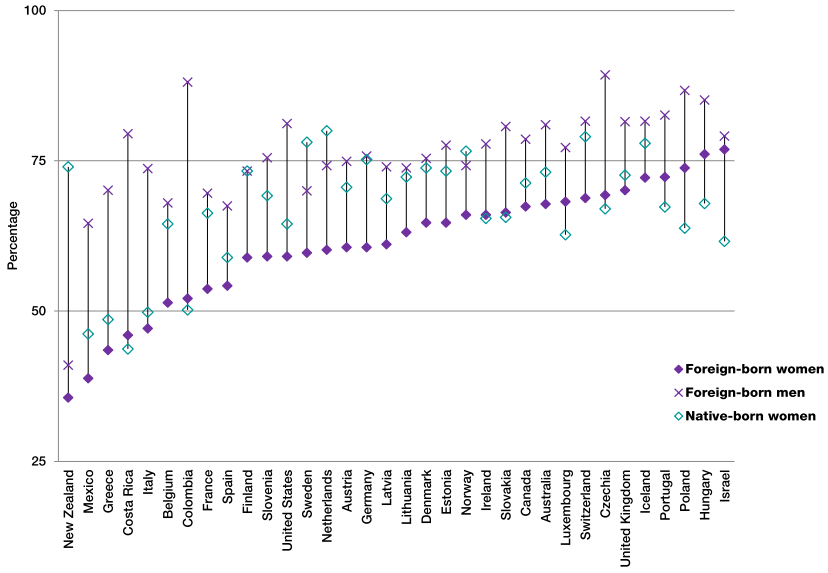
household, consolidating the status of men as the primary economic agents and lowering women's status and bargaining power within their families and in society (Khattab and others, 2020; Kofman and Raghuram, 2006; Zlotnik, 1990).

The ability of migrant women to integrate into host societies is affected by multiple factors, including the gender norms in their country of origin, and the attitudes towards migrants and towards women in countries of destination (Lee, Peri and Viarengo, 2022). Female labour force participation rates of migrants in countries of destination, for instance, often mirror those of women in their country of origin, suggesting that gender norms often accompany women throughout their migration trajectories (Blau, 2015; Blau, Kahn and Papps, 2011). While in some contexts, migrant women, including refugees, can outpace native-born women with similar levels of education in terms of employment and labour force participation, foreign-born women in many societies have lower levels of employment than both native-born women and foreign-born men (figure 14.1; Lee, Peri and Viarengo, 2022; OECD, 2022; Vijaya, 2020; chap. 15). Furthermore, migrant women are often paid less than their non-migrant female counterparts or than their male migrant workers, even after controlling for the type of work performed (OECD, 2019). Migrant women with young children often face additional challenges balancing employment and family responsibilities, with negative consequences for their lifetime earnings, career prospects and the accumulation of social security benefits (OECD, 2023).

As a result of various intersecting forms of inequality, lack of power and other factors that limit the enjoyment of their rights, migrant women are more likely to be vulnerable to discrimination and abuse compared to other women (OHCHR, 2014; chap. 22). This vulnerability is not intrinsic to migrant women themselves, rather, it stems from a multitude of circumstances and conditions that compel migrant women to leave their countries of origin in the first place, and shape their lives while they are in transit or in host societies (OHCHR and GMG, 2018). Compared to other women in host societies, for instance, migrant women may face additional barriers related to language or cultural practices that make it more difficult for them to seek protection or recourse from the justice system. Migrant women with an irregular immigration status may be reluctant to report violence, discrimination or abuse they experience for fear of being deported. (OECD, 2023; Pickering, 2011). Most of the victims of human trafficking worldwide, for instance, are females (box 14.1; UNODC, 2018 and 2021; chaps. 20 and 21).

As the share of women and girls among all international migrants continues to grow in many parts of the world, countries are increasingly recognizing the importance of implementing gender-responsive migration policies (United Nations, 2020b; chap. 7). Sixty-nine per cent of Governments with available data reported having formal mechanisms to ensure that their migration policies were gender responsive (United Nations, 2021). However, there are significant discrepancies at the regional level, with Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Northern America recording the highest shares of Governments reporting such formal mechanisms, and with Northern Africa and Western Asia and Oceania recording the lowest shares. Formal mechanisms are also missing in several countries where women and girls outnumber men and boys in the migrant population. Much more needs to be done, therefore, to ensure the protection of migrant women's rights and increase their participation in designing policies that affect their lives (Pande, 2022). Enacting gender-responsive policies is critical to address the structural causes of gender discrimination in migration and transform systems, norms, polices and structures that produce gender injustices and unequal outcomes (Gottardo and Cyment, 2019; Hennebry and Petrozziello, 2019). Gender-responsive policies not only help to ensure that the human rights of women, men, girls and boys are respected at all stages of migration, but also that their specific needs are properly understood and addressed, and they are empowered as agents of change. While having such policies is important, ensuring adequate resources and political support for their implementation is also critical.

Figure 14.1
Employment rate by place of birth and sex, selected countries, 2021



Source: OECD (2022).
Note: The employment rate is calculated as the share of employed persons aged 15-64 in the total population by place of birth of that same age. Employed people are those who worked at least one hour or had a job but were absent from work during the reference week. Countries are ordered by the employment rate of foreign-born women.

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Ecuador. Gabriela Davila is a Venezuelan entrepreneur who arrived in Ecuador 5 years ago. Thanks to the pastry knowledge she learned in Venezuela, she started a coffee and pastry business and today provides employment to refugees, migrants and locals. UNHCR Photo/ Omar Ganchala.

Chapter XV

Decent Work

In many parts of the world, people migrate because they are unable to build sustainable livelihoods at home. As the number of people living in the poorest regions of the world continues to grow, creating more opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income is critical for addressing some of the adverse drivers and structural factors that motivate or compel people to migrate. Given the demographic realities and development challenges these countries face, however, it is equally important to enhance the availability of pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and promote decent work. For host countries that rely heavily on migrant workers, and particularly those with ageing populations, planning for future labour market needs by investing in education and training both in their own countries and in countries from which they may recruit migrant workers in the future is critical to address deficits in the availability of decent work and lessen the negative impact on countries of origin resulting from "brain drain". Reducing the vulnerability of migrants in the workplace, protecting the rights of migrant workers, facilitating fair and ethical recruitment, and promoting the mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences are some additional steps that countries of destination should take to maximize the benefits of labour migration.

Migration is a strategy for individuals and families to cope with adversity and fulfil their aspirations (chaps. 1 and 2). At an aggregate level, however, migration also contributes to optimizing the spatial distribution of labour and human capital,[72] meaning that it often helps redistribute workers and skills from places where they are more abundant or in lesser demand to places where they are scarcer and the demand is greater (De Haas, 2010; Massey and others, 1993; Stark and Bloom, 1985). Over the coming decades, the number of young people entering the labour force—those between the ages of 15 and 24—is projected to grow rapidly in some parts of the world. Most of that growth is projected to occur in countries confronting substantial structural barriers to sustainable development, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and in Northern Africa and Western Asia (figure 15.1; United Nations, 2021a, 2022; chaps. 1 and 8-10). Creating more opportunities for decent work[73] in such regions is critical for reaping the benefits of the demographic dividend[74] (Fargues, 2011; Reher, 2011; United Nations, 2021a, 2023a; chaps. 8-10 and 15). However, at the current pace, not enough jobs are being generated to absorb all the new entrants into the labour market (ILO, 2022a). At the same time, many high-income or middle-income countries are projected to see the size of their working-age populations plateau or even decline, with population ageing and other factors expected to contribute to worker shortages in many sectors (ILO, 2013; Lutz, 2006; Mason, Lee and NTA Network, 2022; United Nations, 2021a, 2023b; chaps. 1, 9, 10, 14 and 16).

These rapid changes are likely to have profound implications for labour markets, requiring urgent responses that relate directly or indirectly to international migration (ILO, 2013; chaps. 1, 8 and 10). Three of these are described below. First, it is critical to create more opportunities for productive employment, with fair wages, decent working conditions and greater prospects for career development in home countries—and especially in those countries where the number of young people entering the labour market is projected to grow rapidly—so that migration can be a choice and not a necessity. Enacting sound macroeconomic policies—including fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies—and promoting institutional and regulatory reforms to enhance

[72] These can include level of education and training, language skills and work experience.

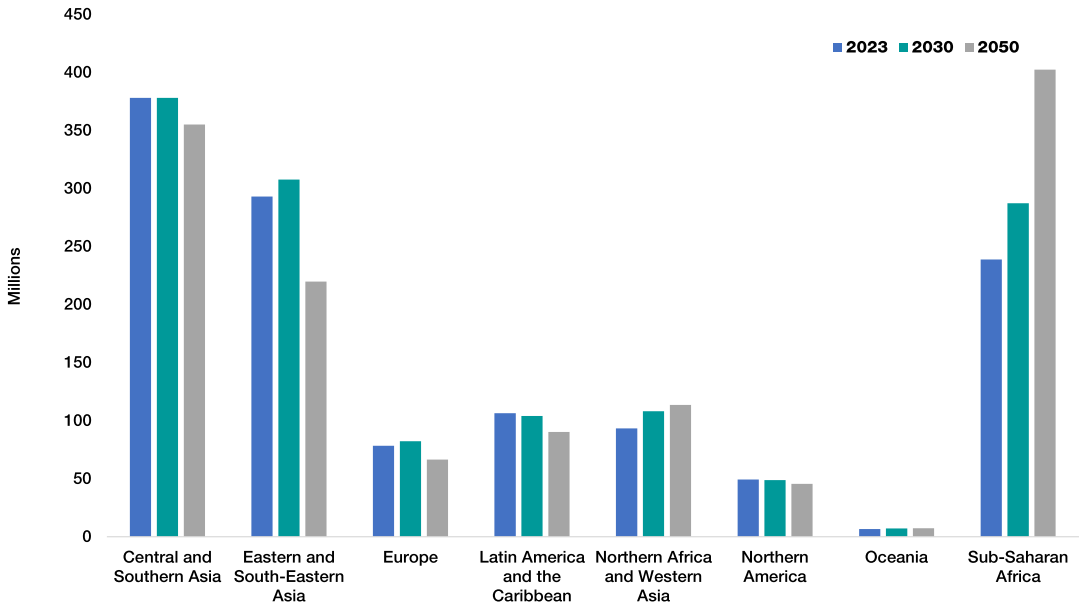
[73] Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for all, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. For additional information see https://www.ilo.org/topics/decent-work.

[74] The demographic dividend is usually described as a window of opportunity for countries with relatively youthful populations to accelerate their economic and social development by redirecting resources freed up by having fewer children, at both the societal and familial levels, towards improving educational and health outcomes and raising standards of living (United Nations, 2021a). While the demographic circumstances underlying the dividend are conducive to rapid economic growth on a per capita basis, reaping the maximum potential benefit requires sufficient improvements in education, health, gender equality and gainful employment.

productivity and create more decent jobs can help people fulfil their personal aspirations and lead productive lives at home. Investing in more sustainable and greener technologies and promoting a shift to higher value-added sectors and activities can also contribute to addressing some of the adverse drivers and structural factors that induce people to leave their country of origin.

Second, it is important to recognize that, while creating opportunities for people to live and work at home is a priority, this may not be enough to meet the rapidly growing demand. Currently, over one in every five people between aged 15 and 24 in Africa is not in employment, education or training (ILO, 2022a).[75] For many young people, migration is one of the few options available to secure a better future for themselves and their families (IMF, 2016; Liang, 2001; Prieto-Rosas, Recaño and Quintero-Lesmes, 2018; Villareal and Blanchard, 2013; Walton-Roberts, Rajan and Joseph, 2022).[76] The lack of decent work at home, combined with unrealistic expectations about living conditions and job opportunities available abroad, and a poor understanding of the inherent risks and dangers associated with irregular migration are likely to drive people to leave their countries even when they do not have access to legal and safe migration pathways (chaps. 1, 2, 11 and 21). Efforts to securitize borders often prove ineffective at halting irregular migration flows and come at prohibitive costs in terms of enforcement and loss of migrant life (Akkerman, 2023; Deleixhe, Dembinska and Danero Iglesias, 2019; Jaskulowski, 2019; Pritchett, 2023). Enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and decent work, therefore, is crucial (Crépeau, 2018). Expanding the availability of regular pathways for admission and stay will not only prevent migrants from falling into situations of vulnerability, but also contribute to reducing the flourishing of criminal activities centered around the smuggling of migrants in communities of origin and destination and along transit routes (chaps. 2, 20 and 21).

Figure 15.1.
Population aged 15-24, in 2023, 2030 and 2050 by region



Source: United Nations (2022).

Third, many high-income and upper-middle-income countries rely heavily on migrant workers in sectors that cannot be easily outsourced or automatized (United Nations, 2020a, 2020b; chaps. 2 and 8). As their populations continue to age, it will be important for those countries to adopt a proactive approach to migration policy, identifying and planning for their labour market needs across a wide spectrum of skill levels well in advance (Bloom, 2020). In line with objective five of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,

[75] SDG target 8.6 called for substantially reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training by 2020.

[76] The first option is usually to migrate internally, often to cities (chaps. 17 and 18). In some cases, however, especially when people have access to sufficient resources, skills or social networks, they may seek to migrate abroad.

countries should consider enacting rights-based and gender-responsive labour mobility schemes for migrants, in accordance with local and national labour market needs and skills supply, including through temporary, seasonal, circular and fast-track programmes. Partnerships, between countries of origin and countries of destination[77] to invest in skills development, including vocational training, in line with anticipated labour market needs, can help to provide training opportunities to young people throughout the phases of the migration, and contribute to unleashing their talent, ideas and entrepreneurial potential. Such partnerships can also help to ensure that the recruitment of migrants does not deprive countries of origin of workers and skills vital for development. Adhering to and strengthening the enforcement of recruitment policies under conditions that are fair and ethical and do not exacerbate "brain drain" are other steps that host countries should consider undertaking (box 15.1; chaps. 10, 12, 13 and 16).

Box 15.1
The cost of recruiting migrant workers

Recruitment costs,[72] which tend to disproportionately affect workers with lower levels of education and training,[73] negatively impact the amount of money migrants can save and send to their families (Abella and Martin, 2014; Hooper, 2022; Martin, 2015). Because migrants often borrow money, sometimes at high interest rates to cover the cost of their recruitment, such costs can also increase migrant workers' vulnerability to exploitation and forced labour (Walton-Roberts and others, 2022). For instance, some migrants may become victims of debt bondage and be forced to work for an employer to pay off debts related to their recruitment. Others, having invested heavily in securing a job abroad, may be reluctant to report exploitative or abusive working conditions for fear of being fired and sent back home (Fleury, 2016; Martin, 2015). Abolishing all recruitment costs borne by employees and eradicating forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking are critical for promoting orderly and regular migration, one of the commitments adopted by Member States as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (chaps. 20 and 21). Ensuring that recruitment agencies comply with international norms and guidelines, including international labour standards and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families as outlined in the General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, that prohibit recruiters and employers from charging or shifting recruitment fees or related costs to migrant workers, is also critical (ILO, 2019).

[1] Recruitment fees and related costs include those for advertising jobs and arranging interviews; medical costs, such as payments for medical examinations, tests or vaccinations; insurance costs; costs for skills and qualification tests such as language proficiency certifications; costs for training and orientation; equipment costs, such as those for uniforms and other equipment needed to perform assigned work safely and effectively; travel and lodging costs; and administrative costs such as the fees for preparing, obtaining or legalizing workers' employment contracts, identity documents, passports, visas, background checks, security and exit clearances, banking services, and work and residence permits (ILO, 2019).

[2] Employers usually cover the expenses for recruiting highly skilled workers, which makes recruitment costs regressive.

While the search for decent work is a core driver of international migration, it also shapes the labour market outcomes of persons who are not themselves migrants. In home societies, the large-scale emigration of workers can contribute to reducing unemployment and raising wages among those who remain by modifying the labour supply and by increasing the demand for certain types of goods and services[78] (Adams, 2003; Chami and others, 2018; Mishra, 2006; Škuflić and Vučković, 2018; chap. 16). The emigration of highly skilled individuals can also create a virtuous cycle, whereby people become, on average, more educated, increasing wages and productivity in home societies (Beine, Docquier and Oden-Defoort, 2011; chaps. 13 and 16). However, the effects of migration on labour markets in countries of origin are not always positive. In some countries, remittances can create a disincentive for people to work,[79] reducing overall labour force participation[80] (Asiedu and Chimbar, 2020; Fleury, 2016; Lenoël and David, 2019; Škuflić and Vučković, 2018; chap. 16).

[77] Such partnerships should also involve employers' and workers' organizations.

[78] The inflow of remittances often leads to an increase in the demand for non-tradable goods and services. Non-tradable goods and services are those where the producer and consumer must be in the same location, and those which have low value relative to either their weight or volume (Jenkins, Kuo and Harberger, 2011). Examples include public services, hotel accommodation, real estate, construction and local transportation.

[79] Remittances can hamper labour force participation by changing the so-called reservation wage—that is the lowest wage a person is willing to accept—creating a disincentive to work (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2006; chaps. 14 and 16).

[80] Labour force participation provides an indication of the size of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services, relative to the population at working age.

Further, the emigration of workers with skills that are already in short supply can undercut productivity, with negative effects on economic growth (chap. 16). The loss of qualified professionals such as doctors, nurses or teachers can undermine progress in the achievement of Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including those related to ensuring universal access to healthcare or quality education (chaps. 2 and 11-13). Countries of origin can mitigate some of these negative effects by creating decent working conditions and offering professional opportunities and higher wages to help retain such workers. Promoting the return from abroad of workers with skills that are in high demand but in short supply, and encouraging migrants and diasporas to invest in the creation of businesses and enterprises back home are other policy measures that countries can undertake (IFAD, 2013; Lissoni, 2017; Piguet and others, 2020; Rapoport and Docquier, 2006; United Nations, 2020a; Woodruff and Zenteno, 2001; chaps. 11-13 and 16).

In host countries, migrant workers tend to complement, rather than compete with native-born workers for jobs.[81] International migration can even have positive effects on the employment and wages of native workers by increasing the productivity and dynamism of local economies (Boubtane, Coulibaly and Rault, 2013; Burchardi and others, 2019; Chassamboulli and Peri, 2014; Dustmann, Fabri and Preston, 2005; Foged and Peri, 2016; Peri, 2016; Ottaviano, Peri and Wright, 2013; Rios-Avila and Canavire-Bacarezza, 2016; chap. 16). This is particularly the case for migrant workers with higher levels of educational attainment who tend to encourage the diffusion of information and knowledge, and foster innovation, especially in science and technology (D'Amuri and Peri, 2011; Peri, 2016; chap. 16). Negative impacts of immigration for low-skilled native workers tend to be more pronounced or lasting in labour markets where there are more barriers to occupational upgrading (D'Amuri and Peri, 2011; Ferrie and Hatton, 2015; Foged and Peri, 2016).[82] However, the initial negative effects on wages and employment levels of native workers, if any, tend to diminish over time, especially if other factors, such as increased capital inflows, contribute to raising productivity more broadly in the economy (Albert, 2021; Chassamboulli and Peri, 2014; Ferrie and Hatton, 2015; Hotchkiss and others, 2015; Peri, 2016).

One of the reasons why migrants tend to complement rather than compete with native workers is that they often fill jobs that natives reject, known for being "dirty, dangerous or difficult". Such jobs also tend to have lower wages, fewer benefits and less secure contracts and working conditions (Hudson, 2017; Kofman and others, 2009).[83] Another reason is that migrants, by choice or out of necessity,[84] tend to be highly entrepreneurial, often starting businesses and small enterprises (Duleep, 2015). As a result, migrants are more likely to be self-employed than native-born workers.[85] In countries of destination, the residential concentration of persons with the same national, linguistic, or ethnic background, often referred to as ethnic enclaves, can facilitate the creation of migrant-owned business (chaps. 16 and 17). These businesses take advantage of the existence of social support networks that may assist in securing capital and labour, often providing employment for new immigrants (Peri, 2016; chaps. 16 and 17). While migrants tend to benefit from the opportunities offered by such networks, they can also be exploitative, especially for those with an irregular migration status (Duleep, 2015; Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; chap. 17).

In countries of destination, migrant workers often suffer disadvantages, unequal treatment and discrimination in the labour market. Because credentials acquired abroad may not be recognized in countries of destination, migrants are more likely to accept work for which they are overqualified (chap. 13). They are also more likely to be paid less than non-migrant workers for performing the same job and have higher rates of unemployment (Beyer, 2016; Duleep, 2015; Ferrie and Hatton, 2015; ILO, 2020; Kofman and others, 2009; Massey and Gentsch, 2014). During economic downturns, migrant workers are often the first to lose their jobs and take

[81] Native workers, particularly those with lower levels of educational attainment and training, often respond to competition from migrant workers by taking up higher paying jobs that involve more communication-intensive or complex tasks, protecting themselves from downward pressure on their wages (Chassamboulli and Peri, 2014).

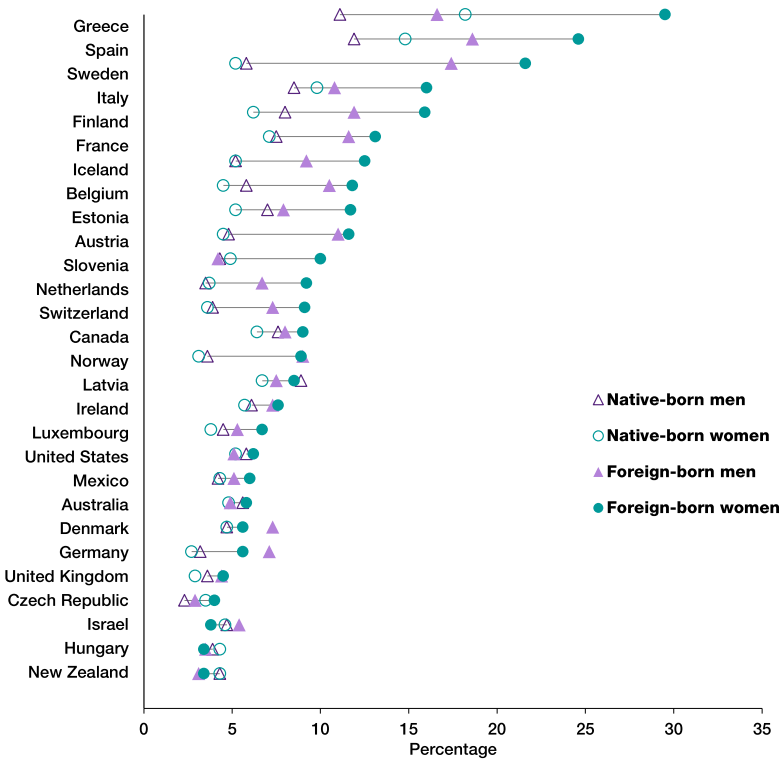
[82] In less flexible labour markets, where hiring and firing workers is more costly, immigration can have small but negative impacts on the wages of low-skilled native workers. Migration can also hamper innovation and productivity in some sectors, such as agriculture, as both native and migrant workers have fewer opportunities for reskilling and changing careers (chap. 18).

[83] An example is provided by migrant women employed, sometimes informally, in domestic and care work. The influx of migrant workers in such traditionally gender-segregated sectors has enabled native-born women to enjoy greater labour force participation, though sometimes at high cost to the migrant workers (Antman, 2018; D'Amuri and Peri, 2011; Walton-Roberts and others, 2022; chap 14).

[84] International migration is a highly selective process (chaps. 1 and 2). Migrants are often highly resilient, which contributes to making them more likely than natives to create a new business (Obschonka and Hahn, 2018; OECD, 2011). Because of discrimination and lack of familiarity with the local language, customs and norms, they may also struggle to find a job in host societies, pushing them towards self-employment.

[85] Self-employment is often associated with upward mobility, especially for those with lower incomes.

Figure 15.2.
Unemployment rates among foreign-born and native-born workers, by sex, 2021, for selected countries



Source: OECD (2023).
Note: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by unemployment rate among foreign-born women in 2021.

more time in finding work when labour markets improve (OECD, 2021). Migrant women tend to face a double disadvantage determined by their gender and their immigration status, with higher rates of unemployment than either migrant men or native women (figure 15.2; Fleury, 2016; Kofman and others, 2009).[86]

Migrant workers, especially those with an irregular status or lacking authorization to work in the host country, can be vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in the workplace (Massey and Gentsch, 2014; Duleep, 2015). Their vulnerability tends to be compounded by their demographic and social characteristics including sex, age, race, ethnicity or language as well as by other factors such as their living arrangements or household and family composition. Migrants housed in employer-provided accommodation, for instance, may have inadequate housing, little disposable income, and may find it more difficult to escape from abusive situations (ILO, 2022b; Scott, 2017). Migrant women in domestic work are particularly at risk of exploitation, as their work is often informal and not adequately protected under domestic employment laws (Fleury, 2016; ILO, 2007; chap. 14).

To ensure that migrant workers enjoy the full range of protection, rights and entitlements due to them, it is critical to ratify all relevant international labour standards.[87] Implementing relevant policies developed through tripartite social dialogue is another important step to ensure that all migrant workers can benefit from the fundamental principles and rights at work regardless of status[88] (ILO, 2022c; Pécoud, 2021). Promoting fair and ethical recruitment and equal access to adequate social protection and portability of social security benefits will also help address situations of vulnerability of migrants at work and contribute to combatting modern forms of slavery and human trafficking, ensuring migrant's rights and well-being, and boosting their contributions to sustainable

[86]This gap can, in part, be explained by differences in human capital and gender roles and attitudes. However, migrant women often face a particular set of regulatory barriers that make it difficult for them to participate in formal employment (Duleep, 2015; Ferrie and Hatton, 2015; Kofman and others, 2009; Tastsoglou and Preston, 2005; chap. 14). Specifically, because women are more likely to have immigrated as an accompanying spouse or family member, they may be allowed to reside but not to work in host countries (chaps. 7 and 14). Migrant women tend to have higher labour force participation rates compared to non-migrant women (ILO, 2021).

[87] For additional information see: https://www.ilo.org/international-labour-standards/conventions-protocols-and-recommendations.

[88] The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted in 1998 and amended in 2022.

development in countries of origin, transit and destination (Dancygier and Laitin, 2014; Rijken, 2018). Ending exploitative labour practices, however, is not straightforward since unscrupulous employers tend to benefit directly or indirectly from migrant workers' lower wages, poorer working conditions and lower degree of social protection (Joppe, 2012; Paret, 2014). Changing the status quo will require greater political commitment to promoting transparency and accountability through enhanced labour inspections and more frequent labour rights audits as well as strengthened bilateral,[89] regional and interregional cooperation, including through rights-based labour migration agreements (Crépeau, 2018; United Nations Network on Migration, 2022). Without this greater commitment, countries are unlikely to realize of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, and Goal 10 on reducing inequalities (chap. 21).

[89] Rights-based bilateral labour migration agreements can be effective tools to support safe, orderly and regular labour migration.

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Chapter XVI

Sustained and inclusive economic growth

International migration can contribute to promoting sustained and inclusive economic growth in both countries of origin and countries of destination. For instance, the remittances that migrants send home tend to benefit the households, communities and economies that receive them. However, remittances can also create dependencies that stifle growth and lead to cycles of emigration and economic stagnation or decline. To optimize the transformative impact of remittances for sustainable development and harness the contributions of migrants and diasporas, countries of origin should enact policies to enhance economic competitiveness, strengthen governance and social institutions, and facilitate migrant and diaspora investments and entrepreneurship. In countries of destination, the inflow of migrant labour and human capital can contribute to enhancing productivity and boosting the capacity for innovation, with positive impacts for economic growth. The fiscal contribution of migration is also important for host countries, particularly those with rapidly ageing populations.

Countries of origin are increasingly leveraging the contributions of migrants and diasporas to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth at home. Remittances, the private transfers that migrants send home to their families,[87] for instance, often have positive impacts on the economy of countries that receive them, especially when their inflows are large compared to the size of that country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (figure 16.1; Abdul-Mumuni, Vijay and Camara, 2019; Adams and Page, 2005). By boosting the income and savings of recipient families, remittances tend to increase the demand for domestically produced goods and services, with substantial multiplier effects for the recipient economies (Brown and Jimenez-Soto, 2015; Taylor, 1999, 2004; chap. 11).[88] They also promote growth by providing an alternative way of financing investments, particularly in countries with less-developed financial systems, stimulating entrepreneurship, supporting business formation, and promoting the financial inclusion of groups that are often excluded from accessing formal credit markets, including female-headed households or the poor (Acosta, 2020; Bargain and Boutin, 2015; Brunow and others, 2015; Chami and others, 2018; Giuliano and Ruiz-Arranz, 2009; chap. 11).

Remittances also contribute to enlarging the amount of funds in the banking system, serving as catalysts for financial market and monetary policy development, increasing efficiency in the allocation of capital and promoting greater economies of scale in financial intermediation services (Barajas and others, 2009; Shera and Meyer, 2013). Remittances can also have a substantial effect on the balance of payments and on foreign exchange revenues, helping countries to maintain a stable exchange rate (Adams and Page, 2005; Chami and others, 2018; Iqbal and Sattar, 2005). They also play a key role in stabilizing economies in times of crisis, contributing to reducing output volatility and alleviating some of the monetary and fiscal pressure that countries may experience (Chami and others, 2018; De and others, 2019; Frankel, 2011; Iqbal and Sattar, 2005; Kpodar and others, 2023).[89]

However, remittances can also create a culture of dependence among recipient families and communities, potentially leading to a "moral hazard" problem (Amuedo-Dorantes, 2014). Remittances, for instance, can reduce the incentive for people to work by increasing the so-called reservation wage—that is, the lowest wage at which a worker is willing to perform a particular type of job—resulting in lower labour force participation (Azizi, 2018; chaps. 14 and 15). Remittances can also amplify other problems such as poor governance or lack of fiscal responsibility that stifle economic growth. Because remittances tend to expand the size of the tax base

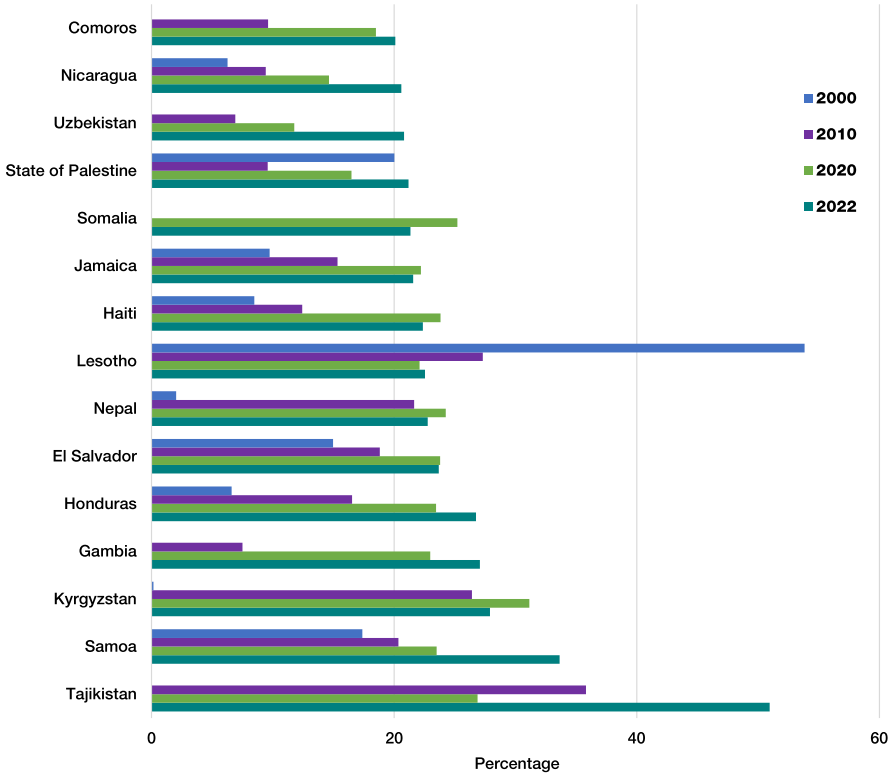
[87] While remittances can have beneficial impacts for development, they should not be equated to other international financial flows, such as foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance (ODA) or other public sources of financing for development.

[88] Because domestically produced goods are often insufficient to meet the increased demand, remittance-induced consumption can also be satisfied through imported goods which do not have the same beneficial effects for the home economy.

[89] Remittances tend to be countercyclical. Unlike private capital flows that tend to decrease during crises, remittances tend to increase under such circumstances, contributing, in some cases, to marked shifts in the share of remittances received as a percentage of GDP (Ratha, 2003; figure 16.1).

in recipient countries,[90] governments can allocate more resources to programmes that garner popular support but do not necessarily promote sustainable and inclusive development, delaying needed fiscal adjustments (Barajas and others, 2018; Chami and others, 2018). In addition, since remittances provide a social safety net for families and allow them to absorb some of the costs related to education and healthcare services, large inflows of remittances can also allow governments to shrink from their commitments and obligations to promote full and productive employment and decent work, to implement appropriate social protection systems and measures, and to provide access to quality services in line with the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) (Barajas and others, 2018; Chami and others, 2018; PRB, 2012; Ramachandran and Crush, 2021; chap. 12, 13, 15 and 18).

Figure 16.1.
Countries with the highest share of remittances received as a percentage of GDP in 2022, various years (percentage)



Source: World Bank (2023).
Notes: The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by size of remittance flows in 2022.

Remittance-induced-consumption can also lead to rising prices, contributing to inflation[91] and to higher real exchange rates[92] especially in countries under a fixed exchange rate[93] regime (Acosta, Lartey and Mandelman, 2009; Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2004; Ball, Lopez and Reyes, 2013; Barajas and others, 2011).[94] Inflation and higher prices tend to put upward pressure on wages and make the cost of borrowing money more expensive, which can lead to a reduction in the rate of investment, capital accumulation and output growth (Iqbal and Sattar, 2005; Lartey, Mandelman and Acosta, 2012; Lopez, Bussolo and Molina, 2007). As prices and wages rise, local products become less competitive and are substituted by cheaper imports, while exports decline. As a result, capital and labour tend to flow towards assets, such as dwellings or land, or other non-

[90] Even in countries where remittances are not taxed directly, they can be taxed through value-added taxes (VAT) on consumption.

[91] The effect of remittances on inflation tends to be more pronounced in countries with higher levels of debt and current account deficits (Narayan, Narayan and Mishra, 2011).

[92] The real exchange rate measures the value of a country's goods against those of another country, a group of countries, or the rest of the world, at the prevailing exchange rate.

[93] Under a fixed exchange-rate regime, a country's official currency exchange rate is tied to that of another country's currency or to the price of gold.

[94] In countries with floating exchange rates, exports can also become more expensive and less competitive when the domestic currency appreciates, leading to a decline in the demand for domestic products and greater reliance on imported goods.

tradable goods and services[95] at the expense of exportable products (Amuedo-Dorantes, 2014; Chami and others, 2018; Chege, Gholipour and Yam, 2023; Eromenko, 2016; Sapkota, 2013; chaps. 15, 17 and 18). This can lead to a vicious circle referred to as "Dutch-disease",[96] as a result of which more people emigrate to offset the growing cost of living in the face of declining economic opportunities (Chami and others, 2018; Lopez, Bussolo and Molina, 2007; Lartey, Mandelman and Acosta, 2012). It can also reinforce patterns of consumption that are unsustainable (SDG 12) and harmful to ecosystems and humans (SDG 14 and 15) (chaps. 18 and 19).

Steps to reduce some of the negative impacts of remittances on recipient countries and to stimulate local entrepreneurship include making local markets more business-friendly by streamlining bureaucracy; building better legal, regulatory and political institutions; and combatting corruption (Agrawal and others, 2011; Dos Santos and Postel-Vinay, 2003; Kerr, 2008; Piras, 2023; Rodrik, 2000). Governments can amplify these positive effects by extending additional forms of funding or financing, such as seed capital-matching, to stimulate the investments of remittances in creating new businesses rather than consumption; by providing targeted financial products to facilitate migrant and diaspora investments and entrepreneurship through, among others, diaspora bonds, development funds and foreign direct investment (FDI);[97] and by encouraging diaspora networks to support the transfer of knowledge, technologies and best practices. Strengthening education systems to improve the productivity of the domestic workforce, and promoting a shift to higher value-added industries and sectors, which offer better wages for workers and larger margins of profits for businesses in line with the relevant targets under SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 10 on reducing inequalities,[98] are other example of measures that countries can consider implementing (Adams and Page, 2005; Fayissa and Nsiah, 2010; Meyer and Shera, 2017; Piras, 2023; chaps. 12, 13 and 15).

In countries of destination, migration tends to be associated positively with economic growth on a per capita basis (Boubtane and Dumont, 2013; Boubtane, Dumont and Rault, 2016; Brunow and others, 2015; Huber and Tondl, 2012; Ozgen and others, 2010). This positive relationship is often greater for migrants with higher levels of education or training, who tend to promote greater innovation and investment and stimulate technological development, thereby increasing productivity and raising the rates of return on capital, benefiting host countries' economies (box 16.1; Chellaraj, Maskus and Mattoo, 2008; Hunt and Gauthier-Loiselle, 2010; Kerr and Lincoln, 2010; Oliinyk and others, 2021; chaps. 13 and 15). The cultural diversity that migrants bring to the workforce also generates product and process innovation with positive spillover effects in terms of economic growth (Borjas, 2014; Fassio and others, 2019; Kerr, 2013; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Ozgen and others, 2013; Rashidi and Pyka, 2013; Wadhwa and others, 2007). Because diaspora members have a good understanding of the institutional and legal arrangements, customs, and languages of home and host countries, their knowledge can also contribute to lowering transaction costs and risk, facilitating bilateral trade (Foley and Kerr, 2013; Genc and others, 2012; Wolf, 2000).

In many host countries, international migration also has a small but positive net fiscal impact, meaning that migrants pay more taxes, on average, than they receive in benefits (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Nowrasteh, Eckhardt and Howard, 2023; OECD, 2021).[99] Government per capita expenditure on migrants tends to be less than the per capita expenditure on native-born populations, with the gap being particularly pronounced for social transfers related to old age, health or education[100] (figure 16.2; box 16.1; OECD, 2021). Those lower expenditures stem, in part, from migrants' distinctive age distribution. Because migrants tend to arrive in host countries as young adults, and often return to their countries of origin

[95] Non-tradable goods or services are those that are exclusively produced and consumed domestically such as restaurant services, or hairdressing and barbers' services. Tradable goods are those which can be transported and include, among others, textiles, apparel, agricultural products, machinery and equipment.

[96] The phrase "Dutch disease" was coined to describe the decline in competitiveness of manufactured exports from the Netherlands following the discovery of natural gas reserves in the country in the late 1950s. Instances of "Dutch disease" can also be observed in countries that experience large increases in foreign direct investment (FDI), foreign aid or remittances (Amuedo-Dorantes, 2014).

[97] Diaspora networks can serve as catalysts for the flow of FDI to countries of origin (Kugler and Rapoport, 2011; Nijkamp, Gheasi and Rietveld, 2011; Phyo, Goto and Kakinaka, 2019).

[98] These include SDG target 8.2 on diversifying, innovating and upgrading for technological innovation; SDG target 8.3 on promoting policies that support job creation and growth of enterprises; SDG target 9.5 on enhancing scientific research and upgrading industrial technologies; SDG target 9.b on supporting domestic technology development and industrial diversification; and SDG target 10.b on encouraging official development assistance and investment in least developed countries.

[99] The extent of that impact depends on several factors, including, the size and composition of the migrant population, the duration of their stay in host countries, the structure of the host country's public budget, the degree to which migrants use public services, and the time horizon considered to estimate the impact.

[100] Including native-born children of immigrants and their descendants in the migrant population tends to increase the amount of education and social transfers received (OECD, 2021). Some countries also spend more, on a per capita basis, on migrants' unemployment, housing, poverty alleviation and social support (figure 16.2; OECD, 2021).

at older ages, most migrants are of working age, roughly between ages 20 and 64—an age when they are less likely to make use of public resources and services (chaps. 8, 10, 12 and 14).[101]

Restrictive legal frameworks, administrative regulations and other barriers that tie the receipt of social protection schemes to immigration status or to the duration of residence also contribute to making some migrants, especially migrant women, ineligible for accessing such public funds (ILO, 2021; Loganathan, Chan and Pocock, 2020; chaps. 8-11, 14 and 15). Establishing non-discriminatory national social protection systems, including social protection floors, in line with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Social Protection Floors Recommendation,[102] is critical to reducing poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion among migrants. Bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements on the portability of social security entitlements and accrued benefits of migrant workers, including pensions, healthcare or other earned benefits, are other critical policy measures that can improve migrants' access to social transfers, especially for those migrants who decide to return home (United Nations, 2019, 2020b; United Nations and IOM, 2021; chaps. 12, 14 and 15). Given the centrality of political economy issues to the public debate on migration in many countries, such agreements will likely only be possible if governments and other stakeholders make a concerted effort to document and explain in a factual and unbiased manner the costs and benefits of international migration to their economies and societies.

Even though migrants pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits, they contribute less in taxes, on average, than native-born populations (OECD, 2021). This lower contribution is due, in large part, to the multiple disadvantages that migrants face compared to native populations, including having higher rates of unemployment and being paid less for performing the same jobs (chaps. 11, 14 and 15). Promoting the labour market integration of migrants and closing the gap between migrants and non-migrants in labour market outcomes, including in terms of employment rates, wages, working conditions and types of contracts, could increase the total net fiscal contribution of migrants in many countries, in addition to improving their income and well-being (Marois, Bélanger and Lutz, 2020; OECD, 2021; chaps. 11, 14 and 15).

As the population in many countries becomes older and the number of native-born people of prime working ages shrinks, the role of migration in easing pressure on public pension and healthcare systems is likely to garner more public scrutiny (Belanger and others, 2020; Vargas-Silva, Sumption and Walsh, 2022; United Nations, 2020a; chaps. 8, 10 and 15). So far, the evidence suggests that the size and direction of these impacts is closely tied to the age of migrants, their duration of stay in the host country and their levels of education or employment (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; OECD, 2021; chaps. 8, 9, 13 and 15). In countries with larger shares of older migrants, the net fiscal contribution from migrants tends to be smaller, while in countries with younger and more educated migrants the contributions to government finances tend to be greater (Belanger and others, 2020; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; OECD, 2021; Vargas-Silva, Sumption and Walsh, 2022). Countries of destination, especially those with rapidly ageing populations and mounting pressure on public finances for healthcare and pensions, will need to consider these aspects carefully in designing their migration policies. Ensuring that public discourse is better informed about migrants' contributions to host societies, including in terms of social expenditures and transfers, can help dispel misleading narratives and perceptions about migration, leading to more informed policymaking (Gonzalez-Barrera and Connor, 2019).

[101] Children and older persons tend to consume on average more than they produce through their current labour, while for persons in the prime working ages the amount of labour income exceeds expenditures for consumption (United Nations, 2021). Children tend to be net beneficiaries of public education transfers, while older persons tend to be net beneficiaries of publicly funded healthcare, public pensions, or other forms of social insurance (United Nations, 2013).

[102] See, for example, Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) Available at https://normlex.ilo.org/.

Box 16.1
Human capital accumulation, migration and economic growth

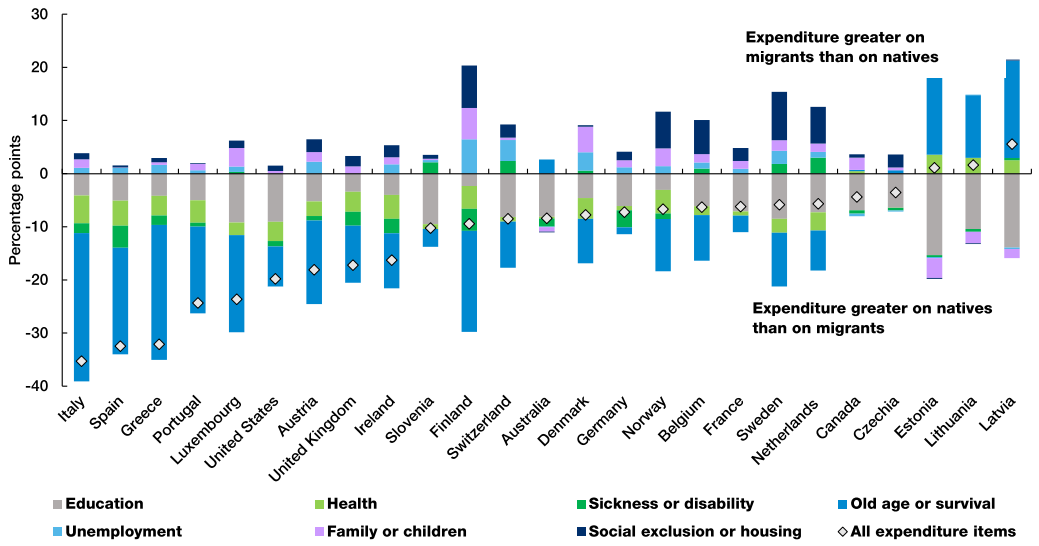
Countries of destination benefit from the innovation and skills that migrants, especially those with elevated levels of education and training, bring. For countries of origin, however, the loss of such workers can create critical skill shortages that lower aggregate productivity and reduce the economy's ability to diversify, leading to a decline in growth, especially when the outflow of skilled labour is large compared to the size of a country's population or workforce (Bhagwati and Hamada, 1974; Chami and others, 2018; Massa and others, 2022; McCulloch and Yellen, 1977; chaps. 13 and 15).

While the emigration of highly trained individuals can lead to a "brain gain",[1] it frequently accentuates inequality among countries, especially when it involves a net transfer of skilled labour from poorer to richer countries, raising important ethical consideration related to the funding of education (Beine, Docquier and Rapoport, 2008; Beine, Docquier and Oden-Defoort, 2011; chap. 13). When workers with high levels of educational attainment emigrate, for instance, countries of origin not only lose the tax revenues and the labour contributions that they would have accrued had such workers not moved abroad but also the public investments made to school and train them (Bhagwati and Rodriguez, 1975; Desai, Kapur and McHale, 2001; Gibson and McKenzie, 2011; chaps. 2, 12 and 13). Conversely, taxpayers in host countries tend to contribute little to finance the formation and training of the highly skilled migrant workers that they attract from abroad. Even international students who acquire their education in the country of destination often self-fund at least part of their studies, meaning that they rarely rely on public funding from host societies to defray those costs (chap. 13).

Countries of origin can mitigate these losses—in terms of human capital, productivity, investments and fiscal transfers—through a multipronged approach that supports the creation of productive employment opportunities, with fair wages, decent working conditions and greater prospects for career development at home (Chami and others, 2018; Docquier and Rapoport, 2011; Gibson and McKenzie, 2011; chap. 13 and 15). Policies to encourage the circulation or return of highly skilled migrants and to facilitate the reintegration of returning migrants by providing access to training, employment opportunities, recognition of skills acquired abroad, and financial services can also help promote better fiscal outcomes for countries of origin experiencing large outflows of human capital. Host countries also have a critical role to play by complying with ethical recruitment practices and investing in the development and training of skilled workers, both in their own societies and abroad, anticipating future labour market needs (chaps. 13 and 15).

[1] Brain gain can occur when the opportunity of reaping higher returns abroad on investments in human capital leads people to become, on average, more educated since not all those who acquire additional education will chose to, or be able to, migrate (chap. 13).

Figure 16.2
Difference in expenditure per capita between foreign-born and native-born population, by expenditure items, 2006-2018 (percentage points)



Source: OECD (2021).
Notes: Computed by OECD. The names of countries and areas have been abbreviated. Ordered by size of difference between the total expenditure per capita of the foreign-born and the native-born. The contribution of each expenditure item refers to the ratio of foreign-born to native-born ratio of total expenditure per capita is calculated as (the relative per capita expenditure on item j minus one) multiplied by the share of expenditure on item j on total expenditure for the native-born.

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Chapter XVII

Urbanization and sustainable cities

In countries of origin of international migrants, persons often move to large urban centers within their own country before acquiring the resources and skills needed to migrate abroad. At destination, international migrants are often drawn by the economic opportunities and social or professional networks present in cities. In host societies, international migrants can contribute to urban renewal, revitalizing areas that had been abandoned by native-born populations. The economic and social contributions of international migrants can reinforce the status of cities as centres of innovation and creativity. Cities, however, can also amplify the vulnerability and inequality experienced by migrants. Recognizing the contributions and place-specific vulnerabilities of international migrants is critical for more effective urban planning and governance.

Cities, metropolitan areas and urban agglomerations[103] are places where opportunity, activity and interaction are concentrated. They often serve as important social, economic, commercial, cultural, political and administrative hubs[104] and house major nodes of transportation and transit (Saunders, 2010; Skeldon, 2017). As such, cities are integral to the process of human mobility, both within countries and across borders, with internal migration sometimes leading to international migration; and international migration resulting in internal migration (Hickey and Yeoh, 2016; box 17.1). Since urban areas vary greatly in terms of population size and the economic and social opportunities they offer, movements from smaller to larger settlements within the urban hierarchy are also critical.

In countries of origin, for instance, people from small cities or rural places of origin often move first to larger urban centres within their own country, where they accumulate the necessary funds, resources, skills[105] and work experience to migrate abroad; a process sometimes referred to as internal-to-international stepwise migration (King, Skeldon and Vullnetari, 2008; Skeldon, 2017; Todes and others, 2010). As diaspora networks become more established, direct migration from rural areas or from small cities to an overseas destination tends to become more common (Lerch, 2020; Skeldon, 2017). The emigration of people from urban areas and cities to an international destination may create labour and skills gaps that are often filled by internal migrants or migrants from other countries (Skeldon, 2006).

International migration also frequently shapes internal migration patterns in countries of destination (Hugo, 2016). Migrants often settle in so-called gateway cities,[106] where they benefit from economies of agglomeration, including employment opportunities and access to social networks (Saunders, 2010; Skeldon, 2014, 2017). The arrival of new immigrants can encourage native residents and prior waves of foreign-born immigrants to move to other cities or towards the urban periphery, contributing to the process of suburbanization (Hickey and Yeoh, 2016; Skeldon, 2017).

Compared to native-born populations, migrants are often more likely to reside in cities (OECD, 2022). In 15 out of 22 countries with available data, more than half of the foreign-born population live in cities (OECD, 2022; figure 17.1). Many cities in high-income and upper-middle-income countries, where the pool of persons of working age is static or shrinking, have become dependent on migrant workers to meet some of their labour needs (Donnelly, 2020; chaps. 8, 10 and 15; box 17.2). Increasingly, cities are implementing policies designed to attract international migrants, particularly those with skill sets or training that are in high demand (Bernt, 2019; chap. 12-15).

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[103] A range of accepted definitions of "city" exist. In some cases, they are based on population data and extent of the built-up area. In others, they refer to administrative boundaries. Definitions of cities, metropolitan areas and urban agglomerations also vary depending on legal, administrative, political, economic or cultural situations in different countries and regions.

[104] In many countries, administrative documents such as passports, visas, work permits or health clearances required for migration can only be obtained in large urban centres.

[105] Because the main educational institutions of a country are often in cities, migrants with higher levels of educational attainment or skills tend to originate from urban areas (Skeldon, 2017).

[106] Gateway cities, in addition to serving as a point-of-entry to a particular country or region, also often serve as important economic, cultural, or political centers in that country or region.

Box 17.1.
Human mobility transition

Wilbur Zelinsky's "The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition" is often recognized as one of the most important frameworks for the study of population migration (Skeldon, 2012; Zelinsky, 1971). The approach builds on the demographic transition model and formulates a set of postulates about how patterns of mobility and migration change across space and through time owing to the diffusion of demographic, social and economic processes (Cooke, Wright and Ellis, 2018).

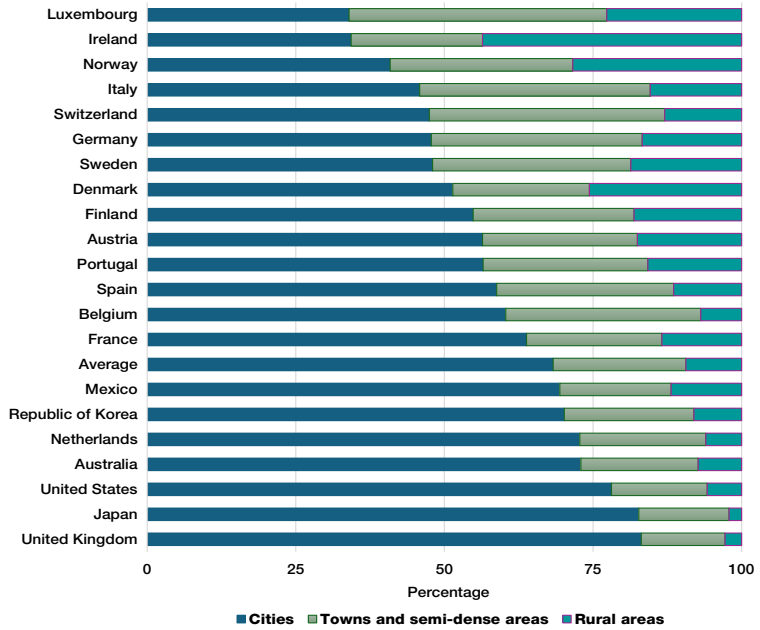
The mobility transition consists of four main phases:[1]

- Phase 1. The pre-modern traditional society where "little genuine residential migration" occurs;
- Phase 2. The early transitional society characterised by large movements from the countryside to cities, large outflows of migrants to attractive destinations abroad and significant growth in various kinds of circulation;
- Phase 3. The late transitional society marked by a reduction in the volume of rural to urban movement, a decline or cessation of emigration to other countries and a further increase in circulation;
- Phase 4. The advanced society where movements from rural areas to the city are further reduced in absolute and relative terms. This phase is also characterised by a robust movement within urban agglomerations or among cities; a significant net immigration of unskilled and semiskilled workers from low-income or middle-income countries; an increase in skilled migration; and a vigorous acceleration of circulation, particularly for economic activities and leisure.

One of the fundamental contributions of the mobility transition model is its recognition that internal and international migration are interconnected and, as such, should be considered as part of a unified system rather than in isolation (Hickey and Yeoh, 2016; Lerch, 2020; Skeldon, 2006). Criticism of the model has mostly focused on its inability to explain how the social, economic and political drivers influence the mobility transition. Its reliance on a theory of development (modernization theory) which regards development as a process that emanates from a "core" to a "periphery" of states has also been described as excessively simplistic or obsolete (Skeldon, 2012, 2014).

[1] The language and postulates listed below are simplified compared to Zelensky's original formulation.

Figure 17.1
The distribution of foreign-born population by the degree of urbanisation, 2020 or latest available year



Source: OECD (2022).
Note: Metropolitan areas of more than 1.5 million inhabitants. Ordered by percentage of foreign-born persons in cities in 2020 or latest available year.

International migrants tend to contribute greatly to the economic vitality of cities. The inflow of migrants with diverse levels of skill and education, for instance, generates economic growth while making the location more attractive to potential investors, producers and job seekers (chap. 16). That growth, in turn, generates further demand for labour, including migrant workers (King, Skeldon and Vullnetari, 2008). The increased multiculturalism that frequently accompanies new waves of immigration also tends to create demand for new goods and services. This demand is often met through migrant-owned businesses, which themselves contribute to the broader urban economy, making it more attractive to both current residents and potential migrants. Because new waves of immigrants sometimes settle in urban areas experiencing depopulation or economic decline, international migration can contribute to urban renewal, revitalizing cities or neighborhoods that had been abandoned by other residents and leading to improvements in housing stock and the revitalization of physical and social amenities (Skeldon, 2017). It is critical to involve local authorities, businesses and civil society in showcasing, in a balanced and evidence-based manner, the contributions of migrants to revitalizing cities and neighborhoods.

Box 17.2.
Urban growth, migration and sustainability

The world is becoming increasingly urbanized. In 2018, more than half of the world's population lived in urban areas, compared to around one third in 1950 (United Nations, 2019). By 2050, two thirds of all people are projected to live in cities. Natural increase—the larger number of births compared to deaths—along with internal mobility from rural areas to cities, and reclassification of urban boundaries are the main contributors to urban growth. However, international migration is also an important driver of city growth, particularly in large cities in Europe, Northern America, Oceania, and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (Balbo, 2005; Lerch, 2020).

Most of the world's projected population growth is set to occur in cities. Many of the cities projected to grow most rapidly are in low-income or lower-middle-income countries. As the world continues to urbanize, sustainable development depends increasingly on the successful management of urban growth in those countries (United Nations, 2019). Specifically, the needs of current urban populations will have to be addressed, while developing the urban infrastructure necessary to support growing populations and simultaneously mitigating the negative impacts of climate change (chap. 19). With these challenges, however, comes opportunity. The bulk of the infrastructure necessary to support growing cities in low-income countries is yet to be built (UNEP, 2020). Investing in sustainable technologies can simultaneously reduce the urban footprint and the vulnerability of city dwellers to natural disasters and climate change in line with SDG targets 9.1 and 11.b.[1] Moreover, because migration, both internal and international, is likely to contribute substantially to projected growth of urban populations, there is an opportunity to improve the governance migratory processes to ensure better outcomes for everyone (chaps. 20 and 21).

[1] SDG target 9.1 calls for developing "quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all". SDG target 11.b calls for substantially increasing by 2020, "the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels".

At the same time, the concentration of migrants in large metropolitan areas can strain the quality and availability of services and place additional pressure on resources and infrastructure already stretched thin from overcrowding. The inflow of migrants to low-income neighborhoods can exacerbate tensions between migrants and residents already suffering from housing shortages and high levels of poverty and unemployment, worsening tensions between communities (Crush and Ramachandran, 2010; chaps. 2 and 11). Migration, both internal and international, can also contribute to the growth of urban slums (Owusu, Agyei-Mensah and Lund, 2008; Awumbila, Owusu and Teye, 2014).[107] Lack of access to sanitation and clean water in such settlements can further compound vulnerability by exposing residents to significant public health risks (Krishna, Sriram and Prakash, 2014; Lerch, 2020). Policies designed to reduce the concentration of international migrants in large metropolitan areas and encourage a more balanced distribution across a range of smaller or intermediate sized cities can reduce some of the vulnerability migrants face while lessening the burden on larger cities and urban agglomerations (Fonseca, 2008; Tacoli, 2009). Almost 40 per cent of national governments reported having

[107] Slum households are those in which inhabitants suffer one or more of the following deprivations: lack of access to improved water source; lack of access to improved sanitation facilities; lack of sufficient living area; lack of housing durability; and lack of security of tenure.

adopted strategic plans or policies designed to manage the spatial distribution of their urban population. Such policies, mostly aimed at decentralization and incentivizing movement out of overcrowded or environmentally vulnerable areas, are particularly important for large urban areas or primate cities found in low elevation coastal zones (United Nations, 2018).

International migrants, particularly those with an irregular migration status, can suffer disproportionately from poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and social exclusion in cities (chaps. 11, 15 and 18). Recent immigrants are often among the most socially, economically and physically vulnerable, lacking in critical resources that would ease the transition to urban life, including the skills, training, or financial means necessary to secure decent employment or housing (Adger and others, 2020; Clemens, 2015). Asylum seekers and refugees, in particular, often arrive in cities without the necessary training or skills required to make an adequate living (Adamo, 2010; Adger and others, 2014; MacManus and others, 2021). New waves of immigrants are particularly affected by residential segregation, which can compel them to live in poorer neighborhoods with inadequate infrastructure, unhealthy living conditions and fewer educational resources and opportunities (chap. 12 and 13). Because recently arrived migrants tend to cluster in low-cost locations with inadequate housing, they are also more likely, compared to other groups, to lack adequate access to clean water, basic sanitation and consistent supply of energy, and can be exposed to environmental hazards, such as poor water or air quality or risks from landslides and floods (Adger and others, 2020).

Diaspora communities can mitigate some of the vulnerabilities experienced by more recent waves of immigrants. In many instances, the more established migrants assist new immigrants in the resettlement process by matching job seekers with potential employers or by helping to find housing and adjust to local living conditions, reinforcing the connection between host countries and communities of origin (Lerch, 2020). However, in some contexts this can also lead to further isolation, insulating new immigrants from the prevailing social and cultural norms of the host society and making their integration less pressing or attractive (Adger and others, 2020; Putnam, 2007; Skeldon, 2014).

Migrants may also be subject to dangerous and exploitative working conditions, arduous hours, and the risk of physical or sexual abuse, often at the hands of members of their own communities. Predatory and deceptive recruitment practices can leave migrants as de facto indentured servants, working to pay off the costs associated with their recruitment or relocation at rates that make it almost impossible to emerge from indebtedness (chaps. 14 and 15). It is imperative that cities and the international community engage to put an end to such practices by protecting migrant workers and prosecuting offending individuals or criminal networks, particularly those involved in human trafficking. Cities can also directly contribute to reducing the isolation and negative social and economic impacts associated with insular migrant neighborhoods by investing in welfare-type policies oriented around social and economic integration (Bauder, 2017). Investing in training programmes grants to support cultural and community initiatives, providing access to healthcare, and improvements in physical infrastructure can create positive feedback loops whereby migrant neighborhoods become vibrant contributors to the cultural and economic health of the city (Bernt, 2019; chaps. 12 and 21).

Cities can also play a critical role in protecting the rights of vulnerable migrants. So-called sanctuary cities can be found in many countries, where local policy makers have taken varying degrees of action to protect or provide access to services for migrants that lack legal status. Sanctuary cities often prohibit the use of public funds or resources to enforce immigration law and forbid cooperation with foreign governments in surveillance of foreign populations. Don't Ask, Don't Tell and other types of "firewall" policies are also practiced across many cities, prohibiting public agencies (including the police) from requesting information regarding legal immigration status. Some cities have made identification cards available to those that are unable to secure other forms of identification, such as a driver's license, and have introduced policies to ensure access to municipal services such as public health programmes, emergency services and education or recreational programmes regardless of immigration status (chaps. 12, 13 and 21).[108] Such policies are credited with contributing to a greater sense of unity and identity across all city residents, a vital component of social coherence (McDonald, 2012). Adopting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to migration governance, building upon the expertise of local governments and municipalities, is critical for ensuring the integration of migrants, including their access to reception facilities and affordable housing (OECD, 2023). Efforts to include migrants in decisions that concern them and ensure their full, equal and meaningful participation in the development of local solutions and opportunities in line with paragraph 78 of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, are also crucial.

[108] The lack of identification documentation can hinder migrants from gaining access to basic services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare services (Darebo and others, 2024; chaps. 12 and 14).

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Chapter XVIII

Food security and sustainable agriculture

Hunger and food insecurity remain important drivers of human mobility. In countries of origin, remittances-receiving households tend to be more food-secure compared to households that do not receive remittances from abroad. The remittances or savings accumulated abroad by migrants can be invested to improve the sustainability of food production systems. Promoting sustainable farming and aquaculture as well as other types of rural development can create opportunities and jobs in rural areas, ensuring that people migrate out of choice rather than necessity. Migrants play a key role in agriculture and food systems in countries of destination. Migrants, however, are often at high risk of experiencing food insecurity.

Hunger and food insecurity, often triggered or magnified by conflicts, climatic change, environmental disasters or economic shocks, can be important drivers of migration, both internally and across international borders (box 18.1; Choithani, 2017; Crush, 2013; FAO, 2017; FAO, IFAD, IOM and WFP, 2018; Smith and Wesselbaum, 2020; Vietti and Scribner, 2013). However, the relationship between hunger and migration is far from straight forward (Laborde and others, 2017). Even though there is often a strong positive association between the severity of food insecurity and the desire to migrate, the most food insecure countries at an aggregate level tend to have lower per capita rates of emigration than do countries with lower levels of food insecurity (figure 18.1; Sadiddin and others, 2019; Smith and Floro, 2020). This is because people living in countries with limited access to safe and nutritious food tend to also lack the means to transform their desire to migrate into action (chaps. 2 and 11).

Box 18.1.
Hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition: How are they defined?

Hunger is defined as an uncomfortable or painful physical sensation caused by insufficient consumption of dietary energy. The term "hunger" is often used as a synonym for undernourishment.

Food insecurity refers to the lack of secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal human growth and development and an active and healthy life. Food insecurity can result both from the unavailability of food and from the lack of resources to obtain, store or prepare it. Food insecurity is often experienced at different levels of severity.

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, imbalances or excesses in a person's intake of energy or nutrients. Undernutrition relates to a combination of factors including insufficient energy, protein or micronutrients. Overweight and obesity refer to excessive weight for height. Abnormal or excessive fat accumulation may impair health.

Remittances tend to have a positive impact on food security (De Brauw, 2011; Ebadi and others, 2018). As a risk-diversification strategy, remittances increase the ability of recipient households to purchase food, smooth consumption patterns, improve resilience to shocks and stresses, and reduce the likelihood that family members adopt unhealthy coping practices such as eating less nutritious food (Azzarri and Zezza, 2011). Such transfers are particularly critical for female-headed households, that tend to be more vulnerable to food insecurity during times of crisis (Obi, Bartolini and D'Haese, 2020).[109] In some cases, however, the extra income from remittances may compound trends toward purchasing less healthy types of food that are often associated with the nutrition transition[110] (FAO, 2017; Thow, Fanzo and

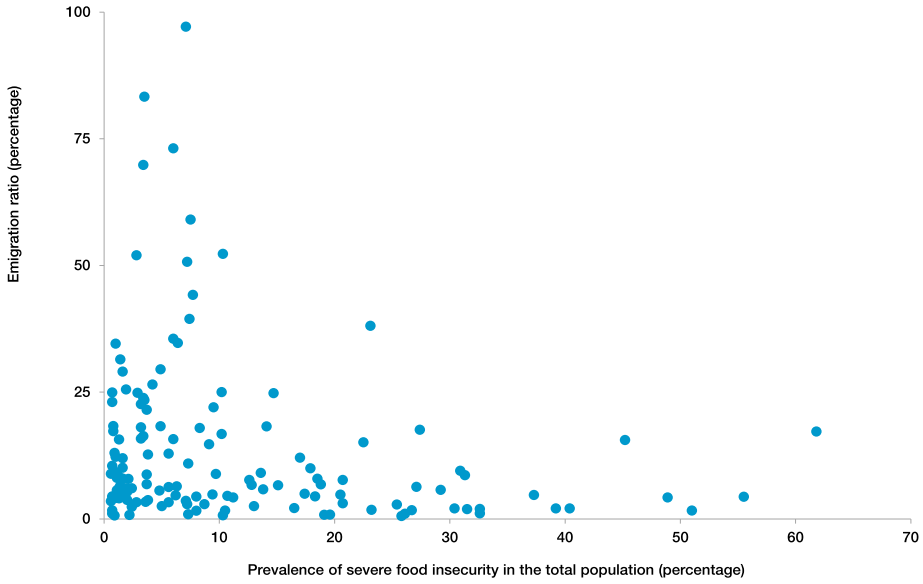
[109] Remittances can also have other important gender implications, leading to changes in the intra-household division of labour and decision-making power (Adhikari and Hobley, 2015; FAO, 2018; chaps. 14 and 15).

[110] The nutrition transition is used to describe a shift in dietary consumption from traditional diets high in plant-based food to diets high in sugar and fat and highly processed foods (Popkin, 2006).

Negin, 2016; chap. 12). These negative impacts can be particularly significant for children who remain behind in the country of origin while their parents or guardians are abroad[111] (Damon and Kristiansen, 2014; Graham and Jordan, 2013; Thow, Fanzo and Negin, 2016; Wickramage and others, 2015).

International migration can improve the productivity and sustainability of food systems in countries of origin (Cole and others, 2015; Garni, 2013). Households receiving remittances often use those resources to buy agricultural equipment or to make other investments that enhance the productivity of their farmland (Ratha, 2011; Sikder and Higgins, 2017; Taylor and Lopez-Feldman, 2020). When backed by appropriate conditions and policies, such investments can promote crop diversification, increase soil or water conservation, and support the sustainable intensification of crop production, with positive impacts for the environment as well as for the livelihoods, incomes and living conditions[112] of rural families (Böhme, 2015; Deshingkar, 2012; Musah-Surugu and others, 2018). Migration can also allow families engaged in agricultural occupations to diversify their livelihoods, with critical implications for limiting agricultural expansion and for halting or reversing deforestation and the loss of biodiversity (de Brauw, 2019; FAO, IFAD, IOM and WFP, 2018; Hecht, 2010; Obi and others, 2020; Peluso and Purwanto, 2018; Taylor and others, 2016). Food systems have been identified as one of the key transitions with multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals. It is critical to leverage the contribution of migrants and migration to food systems, taking into consideration the complex economic, social and environmental policy interlinkages (box 18.2; United Nations, 2023).

Figure 18.1
Emigration ratio, 2020, by prevalence of severe food insecurity in total population (in percentage), average value for the period 2019-2021



Sources: FAO (2023); United Nations (2020).
Note: The emigration ratio refers to the percentage of population residing outside of the country or area of origin (diaspora) relative to the population residing in that country or area (excluding any immigrants). Data on diaspora refer to international migrants of known country or area of origin. Severe food insecurity refers to when a person has run out of food and gone a day or more without eating.

Agricultural policies and land governance regimes that favour input-intensive agriculture can make it difficult for smallholders to produce enough food and generate enough income to support themselves and thrive. For people in these communities, migration is often one of the few available strategies to secure a sustainable livelihood and address food insecurity and persistent hunger (Carte and others, 2019). However, large outflows of people from rural areas in addition to eroding cultural identity and traditions, with particularly devastating effects for indigenous peoples, can also negatively affect agricultural productivity (Craven and Gartaula, 2015).

[111] The negative findings are often more pronounced for children who are left in the care of family members with low levels of educational attainment or in male-headed households.
[112] Remittances can be leveraged through local community projects to promote access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and affordable and clean energy (SDG 7) in remote rural areas.

When too many rural workers emigrate, the ensuing loss of labour, skills and knowledge can lead to a decline in agricultural production and productivity, compromising the ability of local households and communities to secure access to food autonomously, making them more dependent on purchased food and on income remitted from cities or from abroad (Atamanov and Van den Berg, 2012; Maharjan, Bauer and Knerr, 2013; chap. 17). Investing in sustainable agriculture and aquaculture can improve the nutritional outcomes and economic independence of rural households, contributing to reducing emigration from rural areas, particularly among young people (FAO, 2022b, 2022c; World Bank, 2019). Creating new job opportunities along agricultural value chains and improving access of smallholders to markets through public and private investments can also enable workers in rural areas to end hunger, while improving their chance of enjoying sustainable livelihoods in place (FAO, IFAD, IOM and WFP, 2018; Laborde and others, 2017; Milligan and others, 2011). Providing access to financial services and credit can allow communities to leverage remittances and returnee savings[113] to invest in more sustainable food production practices, and to achieve more equitable patterns of agricultural land distribution and tenure (Aguilar-Støen, Taylor and Castellanos, 2016; Carte and others, 2019; Sugden and others, 2022; World Bank, 2020).[114] Channeling remittances towards more sustainable practices such as more efficient use of water and energy, renewable energy generation, clean cooking fuels or wastewater management can also contribute to accelerating the development of rural areas while supporting the achievement of Goal 14 (life below water) and Goal 15 (life on land) of the 2030 Agenda.

Box 18.2.
International migration, remittances and the sustainability of forests and other ecosystems

Agricultural expansion is currently responsible for almost 90 per cent of global deforestation, with expansion for cropland and for livestock grazing being the main drivers (FAO, 2022a). When forest cover increases, it helps reduce surface temperature and mitigates the negative effects of climate change. Remittances can allow communities engaged in agricultural work to overcome their reliance on unsustainable approaches or technologies responsible for the degradation of land and the loss of habitats. The emigration of rural workers and their families can also alleviate pressure on agricultural lands allowing forests to recover (Oldekop and others, 2018).

However, migration does not always lead to the resurgence of forests since the loss of population may be accompanied by lower levels of protection of the natural environment or by new forms of land use and exploitation (Hecht and others, 2015). In some instances, remittances and migrant savings may increase the demand for agricultural land, particularly for cattle and pasture, leading to additional agricultural expansion and forest loss, complicating efforts to promote more sustainable agricultural practices (Angelsen and others, 2020; Davis and Lopez-Carr, 2014; Gray and Bilsborrow, 2014). Evidence suggests that refugee settlement has in some cases led to deforestation with forest land being used for settlement or for agriculture in areas hosting refugees or asylum seekers (Ahmed and others, 2019; Maystadt and others, 2020). Policies to support the investment of remittances in sustainable agricultural practices that do not promote crop or pasture expansion are critical (Davis and Lopez-Carr, 2014).

In communities that rely predominantly on agriculture, forestry or fishing, the degradation[115] of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems, brought about by human activities and amplified by the effects of climate change, can affect food production and lead to a loss of sustainable livelihood (Barange and others, 2018; Black and others, 2011; Comte, 2021; Dallmann and Millock, 2017; López-Carr, 2012; Prince and others, 2018; Viswanathan and Kumar, 2015; chaps. 19 and 20). Over three billion people, many in low-income countries, are already considered negatively affected by desertification, land degradation or drought (IPBES, 2018; chaps. 19 and 20). Rapid population growth can further accentuate the scarcity of agricultural land and increase food insecurity and pressure on resources (FAO, 2021; United Nations, 2021). The availability of agricultural land on a per capita basis is projected to decline rapidly in sub-Saharan Africa and in Northern Africa and Western Asia over the next several decades, while in Southern Asia, where the decrease is projected to be smaller, levels of land scarcity are already extreme (FAO, 2018).

[113] When the value of remittances or returnee savings is small, families tend to use such transfers for immediate consumption.

[114] Programmes to support the export of agricultural nostalgia products to diaspora communities can also be considered although they are not always successful (Bada, 2016).

[115] Land degradation is the result of human-induced actions, which exploit land, causing its utility, biodiversity, soil fertility and overall health to decline.

Land degradation, scarcity of farmland and a deficit of jobs in rural areas often compel people, especially young people, to migrate to cities or abroad (ILO, 2022; IOM and UNCCD, 2019; UNCCD, 2017, 2022; chaps. 8, 10, 11, 15 and 17). For low-income countries, which often lack the resources and capacity to remediate and build resiliency to the negative consequences of climate change or land degradation, emigration is often one of few coping strategies available (Hermans and McLeman, 2021). However, the outcomes for people that move or are relocated are often mixed (Barange and others, 2018; Pörtner and others, 2022; Yang, 2014; chaps. 19 and 20). Timely action to slow or reverse land degradation is required to alleviate some of the pressure to emigrate from highly impacted areas (IPBES, 2018). It is also critical to diversify opportunities for rural livelihoods. Promoting favourable institutional, environmental and market conditions to support the development of non-farm employment opportunities in rural areas, while limiting any harmful impacts of such policies on indigenous and local communities, can help people who do not want to leave to continue to stay in their communities.

In many host societies, international migrants play a critical role in supporting agriculture and rural development through their labour. For countries experiencing rural depopulation, international migrants can contribute to the revitalization and redevelopment of rural communities (FAO, 2018, 2022c). In many high-income countries, migrants help fill critical labour shortages in high-value agriculture activities that rely heavily on human labour and are difficult to mechanize. However, the conditions under which migrants in agriculture, forestry and fishing are employed are often exploitative. Persons with an irregular migration status or employed under seasonal contracts can be especially vulnerable. It is important to implement and enforce regulatory schemes and programmes to protect the labour rights of migrant agricultural workers and ensure that their working conditions and wages are decent and fair (FAO, 2018, 2022c; chaps. 14 and 15).

While migrants serve as the backbone of agricultural production in many host countries, migrants themselves can be at high risk of being food insecure (FAO, 2018). Migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, are often at higher risk of food insecurity compared to the general population partially because of poverty, language barriers and lack of familiarity with, and difficulties in adapting to, the food of host countries (Mansour and others, 2020). Providing information on food programmes and resources, as well as improving the accessibility and level of cultural appropriateness of such programmes can help ensure that migrants and their families have access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food in countries of destination (Vahabi and Damba, 2013).

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Chapter IXX

Climate change and responsible consumption and production

Natural disasters, environmental degradation and climate change are among the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to migrate. With the number of people displaced by weather-related events both within and across borders expected to rise, anticipating and planning for climate-related migration is imperative, in particular for vulnerable countries such as small island developing States. Building adaptive capacity and achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can reduce future risks of climate-related displacement. Curbing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting responsible consumption and production worldwide can help to attenuate some of the adverse drivers of climate-related migration and forced displacement.

Extreme weather events and slow-onset natural disasters are expected to become increasingly important drivers of migration and displacement, particularly in areas with high exposure to climate risks and with low levels of adaptive capacity (box 19.1). According to the most recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), approximately 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in contexts that are already considered highly vulnerable to climate change (IPCC, 2022, 2023). Countries that are economically or politically fragile, where people have limited access to basic services and resources, or where a large share of the population rely on climate-sensitive livelihoods may be disproportionately at risk of being displaced by the impacts of climate change.

Box 19.1.
What is climate change?

Article 1 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as: "a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods" (IPCC, 2018a). The burning of fossil fuels has increased the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG), leading to a warming of Earth's climate. The impacts of this change include slow-onset events and extreme weather events. Slow-onset events refer to the risks and impacts associated with increasing temperatures; desertification; loss of biodiversity; land and forest degradation; glacial retreat and related impacts; ocean acidification; sea level rise and salinization (IPCC, 2023). Extreme weather and climate events include droughts; tropical cyclones; floods; landslides or mudslides; dust storms and sandstorms; tornadoes and forest fires. Climate change can have adverse impacts on people's health and well-being and undermine their ability to secure sustainable livelihoods. People living in small island developing nations and other developing countries are more vulnerable to climate impacts. Limiting global temperature increase to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels would help to avoid the worst climate impacts and maintain a planet in which present and future generations can prosper (IPCC, 2018b, 2021, 2022, 2023). *Malnutrition* refers to deficiencies, imbalances or excesses in a person's intake of energy or nutrients. Undernutrition relates to a combination of factors including insufficient energy, protein or micronutrients. Overweight and obesity refer to excessive weight for height. Abnormal or excessive fat accumulation may impair health.

Vulnerability to extreme weather events and slow-onset natural disasters, and capacity to adapt, differ among countries. Small island developing States (SIDS) are disproportionately vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change. In such communities, coastal erosion, extreme flooding events and sea level rise, combined with saltwater intrusion on freshwater drinking supplies, may threaten lives and make some small islands uninhabitable, forcing whole communities to relocate (Locke, 2009; IPCC, 2022). The impacts of climate change on marine life, as well as more frequent and intense coastal storms, can also negatively impact critical industries such as tourism and fisheries, causing economic stress, undermining local livelihoods and compelling people to migrate in search of decent work opportunities (Connell, 2017; chaps. 15 and 18).

Climate change is already affecting the economic landscape in many nations, leading to substantial changes in the geographic distribution of opportunities, particularly in countries that are highly dependent on agriculture, fisheries and forestry (Moore and Diaz, 2015; Tol, 2018). Changes in average temperatures and rainfall can have significant impacts on agricultural productivity. Reduced agricultural yields from protracted droughts, floods, erosion, salinization or loss of soil biodiversity can lead to food shortages, a significant threat to the well-being of people living in extreme poverty and other groups that are highly vulnerable to food insecurity (Porter and others, 2014; chap. 18). People who are no longer able to feed themselves and their families may be forced to migrate to diversify their livelihoods and escape hunger (Cai and others, 2016; Falco, Galeotti and Olper, 2019; Hoffmann and others, 2020). Adverse climatic conditions and droughts may also increase the likelihood of armed conflict, leading to forced migration and displacement under certain circumstances (Abel and others, 2019; Missirian and Schlenker, 2017).

As the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events continues to increase, it is critical to enhance the adaptive capacity of countries, particularly of the least developed countries (LDCs) and SIDS. Meeting the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can help increase the resilience of such countries and reduce the risk of climate-related displacement (IPPC, 2022, 2023; chaps. 15 and 18). Implementing the Paris Agreement[116] and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030[117] and integrating mitigation, climate adaptation and resilience into development programmes are other critical steps countries can undertake to strengthen their preparedness and resilience to climate disruptions (Huq and others, 2004; Thomas and Benjamin, 2018). Wealthy countries and the international community can help to ensure that LDCs and SIDS receive the necessary technical and financial assistance so that their economies can grow using technologies that minimize carbon dioxide (CO2) and other GHG emissions (United Nations, 2021). Raising the productivity of crop varieties and animal breeds, improving land and water use and diversifying opportunities for rural livelihoods may also reduce the pressure to migrate from highly impacted areas in countries that rely heavily on climate-sensitive livelihoods (FAO, 2014, 2017, 2018; IPCC, 2019, 2022; Jarillo and Barnett, 2024; Zougmoré and others, 2016; chaps. 17 and 18).

Migration is increasingly being recognized as an adaptation response to mounting climate risks (Black and others, 2011; IPCC, 2022, 2023). However, migration as an adaptation strategy requires an improved ability to anticipate and plan for climate- and disaster-related relocation (Vinke, 2020; The Government Office for Science, 2011). Greater availability of fine-scale data to forecast the future impacts of climate change as well as robust models to quantify and predict the intensity and directionality of climate-induced migration, therefore, are urgently needed (box 19.2). Such information would give populations considered highly vulnerable to climate change greater agency in making decisions related to their mobility (Waldinger, 2015). It would also give localities that are likely to become destinations of climate-related migration the opportunity to plan for the infrastructure and services needed to support the integration of incoming migrants (Barnett and Webber, 2010; Gemenne and Blocher, 2017; Nishimura, 2015)

[116] Adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21.

[117] Resolution 69/283, annex II.

Box 19.2.
Quantifying and forecasting migration associated with climate change

While there is growing interest in climate-related migration, the evidence base remains limited and research findings are often difficult to compare (Beine and Jeusette, 2021; Berlemann and Steinhardt, 2017; Parrish and others, 2020; Veronis and others, 2018). Studies show that such movements predominantly take place within countries, are often of limited duration or are seasonal in nature (Hoffmann and others, 2020; Mueller and others, 2020; Nawrotzki and Bakhtsiyarava, 2017; Waldinger, 2015). When such movements take place between countries, they frequently involve countries in the same region (Beine and Parsons, 2017; Cai and others, 2016; Cattaneo and Peri, 2016; Coniglio and Pesce, 2015; Gray and Wise, 2016; Millock, 2015; Wesselbaum and Aburn, 2019).

Efforts to model the relationship between climate change and migration remain challenging due in part to difficulties in disentangling direct effects from other drivers of migration, including poverty, lack of decent work or conflict (Black and others, 2011; Beine and Parsons, 2015; Cattaneo and Bosetti, 2017; Choumert and others, 2015; Hoffmann and others, 2020; Moore and Wesselbaum, 2023; Obokata, Veronis and McLeman, 2014; chaps. 1 and 2). Inconsistencies in the way migration is conceptualized and defined, gaps in the availability of accurate and timely data on migration and migrants, differences in migration outcomes for fast-onset and slow-onset climatic events, and uncertainty about the pace and mechanisms through which climate change will unfold contribute to the dearth of accurate and reliable estimates and projections of climate-related migration and displacement (Cattaneo and others, 2019; Hauer and others, 2020; Hugo, 2011; McLeman, 2014; chap. 3). Because of these and other factors, global and regional estimates and projections of climate-related migration also tend to differ widely (Clement and others, 2021; Hauer, 2017; Myers, 2002; Rigaud and others, 2021). Despite these challenges and limitations, quantifying the impacts of climate change on migration remains critical. If migration is to be considered a strategy for adaptation, a better understanding of future exposure to extreme weather and slow-onset events as well as of the geographic variation in the intensity and directionality of migration are needed to help to inform policies and anticipate risks (Vinke, 2020).

Migration is not always appropriate or desirable as an adaptation strategy to climate change. Relocation and resettlement may increase the vulnerability of the people involved and undermine the social cohesion of affected communities. In cases where permanent relocation is unavoidable, the active involvement of affected populations in planning and decision-making is critical (Farbotko, Stratford and Lazrus, 2016; IPCC, 2022; Noy, 2017). In planning for adaptive mobility, it is important to recognize that the impacts of climate-related threats are not similar for all people (Boas and others, 2022). The most vulnerable members of society, such as people living in extreme poverty, older persons, women, children, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities may not have access to the resources to migrate in the face of mounting climate hazards. Such people may become involuntarily trapped, unable to move in deteriorating situations that exacerbate their vulnerability and social exclusion (Hauer, Jacobs and Kulp, 2024; McLeman, 2019; Vinke and others 2020; Wesselbaum and Aburn, 2019). Because climate change and natural disasters may reduce the ability of such groups to migrate, additional targeted assistance may be required to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on these groups (Black and others, 2013; Gray and Mueller, 2012). In cases of extreme weather or climate events, special humanitarian visas may also be required to address the specific, intersecting vulnerabilities of such groups as well as of those who are displaced, or unable to return, due to climate-related events (Matias, 2020). It is also crucial to uphold the commitment of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway[118] and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States[119] to support and strengthen contingency planning and provisions for disaster preparedness and response, emergency relief and population evacuation, especially of people in vulnerable situations.

Many of the countries that are at high risk of climate-related displacement, including many SIDS and LDCs, have contributed only to a limited extent to the GHG emissions responsible for warming the planet. To minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors contributing to migration from areas which are highly impacted by climate change, it is incumbent upon the high-income and middle-income countries that have been responsible

[118] See General Assembly resolution 69/L.6.

[119] See General Assembly resolution 78/L.80.

for most of the world's GHG emissions until now to reduce their material footprint,[120] decouple resource use from economic activities[121] in line with Goal 9 of the 2030 Agenda, and support adaptive capacity-building initiatives under the UNFCCC (IPCC, 2022; Marchiori and Schumacher, 2011). Meeting the commitment of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration is another measure that these countries can implement to ensure that when relocation and resettlement do occur, they take place in ways that respect the human rights of all migrants, do not exacerbate vulnerabilities, and harness the benefits of migration for communities of origin and destination alike (Asadzadeh and others, 2022; Gemenne and Blocher, 2017; IPCC, 2019, 2022, 2023; McLeman, 2019; United Nations, 2021).

Migration from countries with lower levels of consumption per capita to countries with higher levels typically often creates a greater demand for goods and services, resulting in more GHG emissions (Dedeoğlu, Koçak and Uucak, 2021; Liang and others, 2020; Morris, 2021). The remittances that migrants send home can also reinforce patterns of production and consumption that are unsustainable (Goal 12) and harmful to ecosystems and humans (Goal 14 and 15) (chaps. 16 and 18). However, the degree to which international migration has negative environmental impacts depends largely on the characteristics of those migrating and the technologies employed to satisfy changes in lifestyle. The scientific and technological innovations introduced by migrants, for instance, can boost economic productivity and promote greater energy efficiency in countries of destination,[122] offsetting the higher emissions associated with a net increase in consumption and production (Dedeoğlu, Koçak and Uucak, 2021; chap. 15 and 16).

One of the consequences of climate change may be that more people migrate to cities in their search for alternative livelihoods, both within their own country and abroad (Adger and others, 2020; Beine and Parsons, 2015; Black and others, 2011; Ionesco, Mokhnacheva and Gemenne, 2016; chap. 17). Because cities themselves are often highly vulnerable to climate-related hazards, adding more people to urban areas through migration might increase their climate vulnerability, exacerbating existing challenges or adding new ones (Adger and others, 2020; Huang and others, 2019). In planning for greener and more sustainable cities, it is critical to anticipate the potential impact of climate-related migration so that housing and existing infrastructure, including transportation, water and sanitation, and energy distribution systems, can be strengthened and public services, such as education, healthcare and social welfare can be scaled up and made more inclusive (Asadzadeh and others, 2022). Improving the resilience of urban areas to climate change in the face of these evolving migration dynamics is particularly critical in the LDCs, which are home to some of the world's fastest growing cities (Lerch, 2020; United Nations, 2019; chap. 17). Because financing sustainable urbanization remains a challenge in many countries, particularly the LDCs, it is critical to mobilize additional resources at the municipal level to support the investment needs of growing cities in line with the commitments of the Doha Programme of Action (United Nations, 2022).

[120] The material footprint of a country is the attribution of global material extraction to domestic final demand, measured in tons. The country's total material footprint is the sum of the material footprint for biomass, fossil fuels, metal ores and non-metal ores. It is calculated as the raw material equivalent of imports plus domestic extraction minus raw material equivalents of exports (United Nations, 2021).

[121] Examples of policies to decouple economic activity from environmental degradation and promote resource efficiency include lowering reliance on non-renewable, high-intensity resources; reducing emissions and waste from extraction, production, consumption and disposal; and promoting a shift of consumption habits towards goods and services with lower energy and material intensity (United Nations, 2021).

[122] Specifically, technological innovation can reduce the amount of energy consumed per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) and the amount of CO2 emissions per unit of energy consumed.

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Part D:

International migration governance and sustainable development

Syria. Hello. My name is Khaled Khalil Al-Hussein. I worked in the field of furniture. ILO Photo/Fatma Cankara.

Key messages: Part D

- Over the past decades, various meetings, conferences and summits at the United Nations have helped further the dialogue on international migration, building consensus and fostering cooperation between Governments and other stakeholders.

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the contributions of migrants to inclusive and sustainable growth and calls on Member States to strengthen cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with full respect for human rights.

- The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which is rooted in the 2030 Agenda, and the Global Compact on Refugees have placed international migration squarely at the center of the international agenda.

- A growing number of countries have focused on providing options for safe, orderly and regular migration, with more than half of all Governments with available data reporting that they have such policies. A much lower proportion of Governments, however, report having policy measures to protect the human rights of migrants.

Policy recommendations: Part D

- Respect, protection and fulfilment of migrants' human rights, regardless of migration status, are essential for ensuring that migrants become active, empowered and well-integrated members of society.

- Cooperation is needed among all relevant actors and stakeholders at the regional, national and sub-national levels to improve migration governance and ensure that migration contributes to the realization of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Enhancing partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders, including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, trade unions, national human rights institutions and the media, is critical for addressing migration in all its dimensions.

Qatar. Tina from Ethiopia. Newly married and just arrived IN Qatar. ILO Photo.

Chapter XX

Legal and normative framework for international migration

Over the past decades, international migration has emerged as a critical policy issue. Conferences, summits and meetings at the United Nations have helped further the dialogue on international migration, building consensus and fostering cooperation between Governments and other stakeholders. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognized the contributions of migrants to inclusive and sustainable growth and called on Member States to strengthen cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with full respect for human rights. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which is rooted in the 2030 Agenda, and the Global Compact on Refugees have placed international migration squarely at the center of the international agenda.

International migration has received increasing attention in United Nations conferences, summits and events.[123] Early discussions, mostly within the context of overall population dynamics at the 1974 World Population Conference in Bucharest[124] and at the 1984 International Population Conference in Mexico City[125] called attention to, *inter alia*, the need to respect the human rights of international migrants, to uphold labour standards for migrant workers and prevent discrimination, to regulate migration flows through bilateral and multilateral agreements, and to find lasting solutions to the situation of refugees.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994, built on these earlier negotiations and helped to move forward the discussion on international migration and development within the United Nations (figure 20.1). Chapter X of the ICPD Programme of Action,[126] the most comprehensive negotiated text on migration and development of its time, drew attention to the positive impacts of international migration for the development of countries of origin and destination; called on governments to address the root causes of migration, especially those related to poverty; and encouraged countries of origin and countries of destination to engage in cooperation and dialogue to maximize the benefits of migration for all. The Programme of Action also called for the social and economic integration of migrants, particularly those with the long-term right to residency in countries of destination, and for eliminating discrimination, racism and xenophobia against migrants. It also stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of forced displacement, strengthening protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers, and redoubling efforts to seek durable solutions to their plight.

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development[127] adopted in 1995 also reiterated the importance of measures to ensure the respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants and encouraged all countries to consider the ratification and full implementation of the relevant international instruments on migrant workers.

The Second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development[128] in 2013 adopted by consensus a landmark declaration acknowledging the relevance of international migration for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, and recognizing that international migration should be addressed in a coherent, comprehensive and balanced manner, considering the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development and respecting human rights.

[123] The following discussion draws on the report International Migration 2019: Report (ST/ESA/SER.A/438).

[124] Report of the United Nations World Conference on Population, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

[125] Report of the International Conference on Population, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8), chap. I, resolution A.

[126] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[127] Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development - A/CONF.166/9 Chapter I, Annex I.

[128] See General Assembly resolution 68/4.

Box 20.1.
Enhancing international migration governance and cooperation at all levels

There is broad recognition that, because of its multi-dimensional nature, no State can address migration alone. Instead, cooperation is needed among all relevant actors and stakeholders at the regional, national and sub-national levels to improve migration governance and ensure that migration contributes to the realization of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Regional consultative processes, for instance, have enabled countries to share information and practices on specific issues, such as procedures for enhancing the protection of migrants' rights, strengthening labour migration, or combatting migrant smuggling and human trafficking, contributing to more coherent policy approaches at the regional level and fostering greater cooperation and coordination among relevant ministries and agencies. Regional unions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union or the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), in addition to guaranteeing free mobility of people among participating States, have also contributed to promoting convergences in migration policies and practices.

At the national and sub-national levels, the involvement and participation of local, state or provincial governments and authorities is also critical since they are often responsible for implementing policies developed at the national, regional and international levels (chap. 17). The Mayors Mechanism of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, which aims to showcase and support city-led approaches to migration governance, for instance, has played an important role in strengthening policy coherence across levels of government. Addressing siloes in migration policymaking and governance, however, remains a challenge that requires enhanced capacity and foresight both horizontally (across ministries and departments) and vertically (among different levels of government) (Zickgraf and others, 2024). Enhancing partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders, including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, trade unions, national human rights institutions and the media, is also critical for addressing migration in all its dimensions.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[129] adopted in 2015, included several explicit targets related directly to international migration or migrants. Target 10.7, for instance, called on countries to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies (chap. 21). Other migration-related targets in the 2030 Agenda included providing scholarships for study abroad (target 4.b), respecting the labour rights of migrant workers (target 8.8), reducing the costs of transferring remittances (target 10.c), ending human trafficking (targets 5.2, 8.7 and 16.2), and disaggregating data by various characteristics, including migratory status (target 17.18).

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda,[130] the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development adopted in 2015, also recognized the multidimensional nature of international migration and its relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination. In the Agenda, Governments committed to increasing cooperation on access to and portability of earned benefits; enhancing the recognition of foreign qualifications, education and skills; lowering the costs of recruitment for migrants and combatting unscrupulous recruiters. The Agenda also reaffirmed the need to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, especially those of women and children, regardless of their migration status.

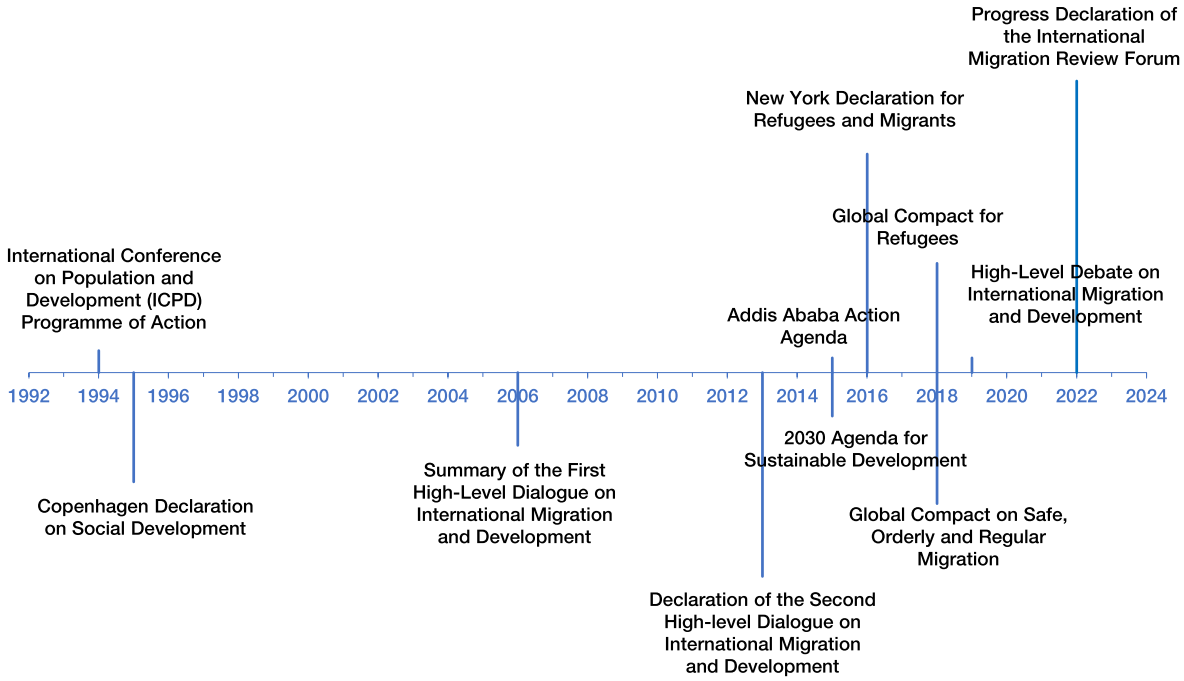
In 2016, Heads of State and Government came together at the United Nation General Assembly to discuss issues related to migration and refugees. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants[131] recognized the need for a comprehensive approach to human mobility and enhanced cooperation at the global level. The New York Declaration also reaffirmed the need to uphold the human rights of international migrants, respect labour standards for migrant workers and enhance the contributions of international migration to development.

[129] See Assembly resolution 70/1.

[130] See General Assembly resolution 69/313.

[131] See General Assembly resolution 71/1.

Figure 20.1
Timeline of key outcome documents related to international migration at the United Nations, by year of adoption



Source: Based on United Nations (2019).

In 2018, two global compacts related to international migration were adopted by a large majority of United Nations Member States. These two global compacts provided a framework for governments and stakeholders to promote more effective, cooperative and coherent responses to migration governance and to ensure that refugees and host communities receive the required support. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,[132] a milestone in the history of global dialogue on international migration, presented a non-legally binding, cooperative framework to foster international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration, while acknowledging that no State can address migration alone, and upheld the sovereignty of States and their obligations under international law.[133] The Global Compact for Migration, which reaffirmed the strong linkages between migration and sustainable development, recognized that migration has been a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in the world and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance. It set out "common understanding", "shared responsibilities", and "unity of purpose" for making migration work for all. It committed to addressing the special needs of migrants in vulnerable situations. The Global Compact for Migration established 23 objectives, each of which contained a commitment to be implemented through a range of actions deemed to be relevant policy measures or best practices (figure 20.2). The Global Compact for Migration was based on a set of ten cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles.[134]

The Global Compact on Refugees established a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility sharing, recognizing that international cooperation is key to achieving sustainable solutions to refugee situations. It aimed to benefit both refugees and the communities that host them. The Global Compact on Refugees had four key objectives: to ease the pressures on countries hosting refugees; to enhance self-reliance of refugees;

[132] See General Assembly resolution 73/195.

[133] The low level of ratification of some of the core international human rights instruments relating to migrants is sometimes attributed to the preference for voluntary, non-binding processes that avoid monitoring and oversight (Desmond, 2023). However, such informal processes can also contribute to making discussions on migration and its governance less politicized and polarized especially when complemented by robust factual, evidence-based information on the contributions of migrants to sustainable development (Adger and other, 2024).

[134] The 10 principles are: (a) people-centred; (b) international cooperation; (c) national sovereignty; (d) rule of law and due process; (e) sustainable development; (f) human rights; (g) gender-responsive; (h) child-sensitive; (i) whole-of-government approach; and (j) whole-of-society approach.

to expand access to third-country solutions; and to support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. It included guiding principles, a programme of action, and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

Figure 20.2
The 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

In 2022, the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which serves as the primary intergovernmental global platform for Member States to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the Global Compact for Migration at the local, national, regional and global levels, adopted a Progress Declaration. In the Progress Declaration, Member States requested the Secretary-General to propose a limited set of indicators, drawing on the Goals, to support them in their reviews of progress made in implementing the Global Compact for Migration.

Member States also recognized the contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development in the Political Declaration adopted by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2023.[135] In the Political Declaration, Governments recommitted to cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration, involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants, regardless of their migration status

As a result of these processes and negotiations, several countries have started to integrate international migration-related issues into their national development planning as well as into their voluntary national reviews prepared in the context of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Initiatives reported ranged from the implementation of well-managed migration policies and measures to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, to programmes aimed at facilitating the social and economic integration of migrants, at combating trafficking in persons or the smuggling of migrants, or at ending migrant labour exploitation. Several countries also documented their engagement in international cooperation on migration and in efforts to address the structural drivers of migration. Initiatives to reduce the costs of transferring remittances and to enhance

[135] See General Assembly resolution 78/1.

the contribution of remittances and diasporas to development are also widespread, including programmes to empower migrants as key development actors that can contribute to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its goals and targets, in particular, those related to the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

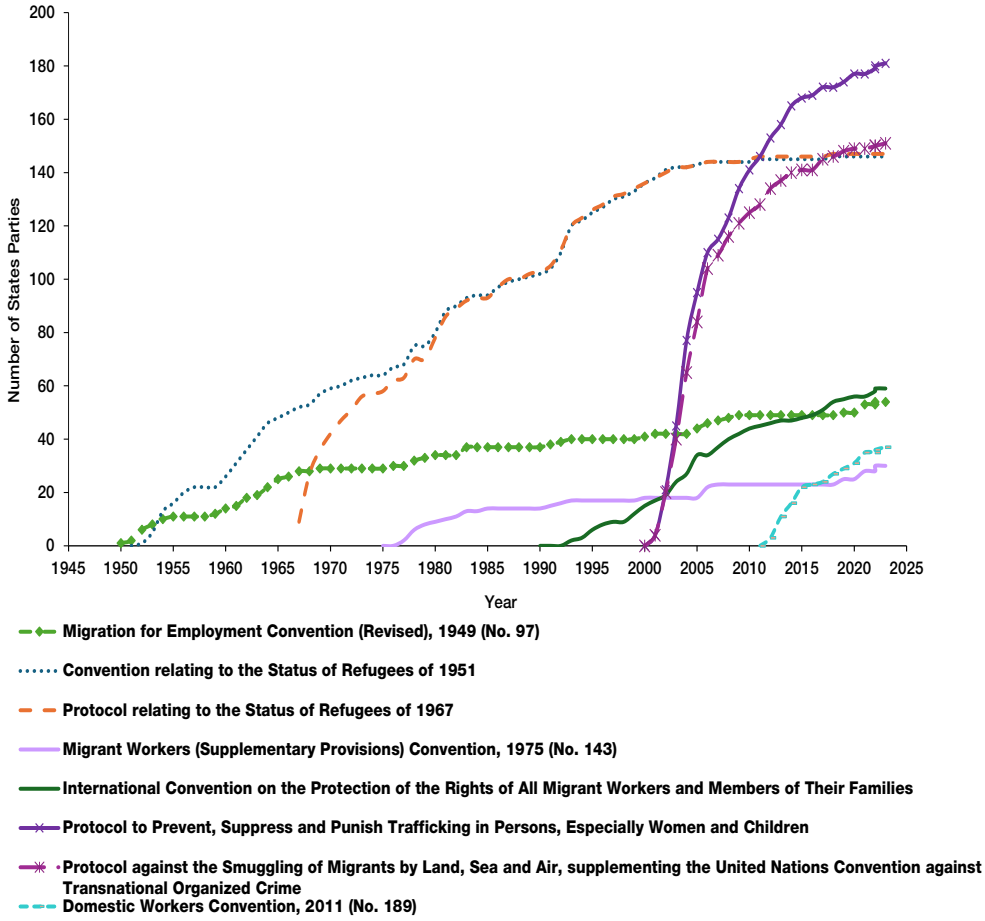
Another important indicator of countries' commitment to facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration is the ratification of internationally binding legal instruments related to migratory movements and migrants. The international normative framework related to international migrants and migration includes legal instruments designed to protect the rights of migrant workers and members of their families and to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons and other forms of forced labour, as well as various legal instruments to protect refugees and stateless persons. Over the past decades, States Members of the United Nations have ratified internationally binding legal instruments related to international migrants and migration in varying degrees (figure 20.3). The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which entered into force in 2003, is the most comprehensive international treaty on the rights of all migrant workers. As of April 2024, 59 Member States had ratified the Convention, collectively hosting less than one sixth of the global migrant population.

Within the framework of the International Labour Organization (ILO), four instruments are of direct and specific relevance to the protection of migrant workers. The Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), and its accompanying Recommendation No. 86, which set out conditions for fair recruitment of migrant workers; require equality of treatment between migrant workers with regular status and nationals in respect of conditions of employment, freedom of association and social security; and promote international cooperation, including through bilateral agreements. The Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) and its accompanying Recommendation No. 151, address irregular labour migration in abusive conditions and call for the respect of basic human rights for all migrant workers, irrespective of status, and equality of opportunity and treatment for migrant workers with regular status. Several other ILO conventions, recommendations and protocols are also relevant to migration, including the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), which establishes global labour standards for domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers, guaranteeing them the same basic rights as other workers. As of April 2024, the ratifications of these ILO instruments ranged from 54 Member States for the Migration for Employment Convention to 30 Member States for the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, aims to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, to protect and assist victims of such trafficking, in particular women and children, to prosecute perpetrators of such crimes and to promote cooperation among States parties (box 20.2). The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, seeks to prevent and combat that crime, while protecting the rights of migrants and promoting cooperation among States parties. The high rate of ratification of those protocols indicates the concern among Member States about linkages between transnational organized crime and irregular migration.

The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967 are key legal instruments at the international level to ensure protection of the rights of refugees. The 1951 Convention enumerates the rights of refugees and establishes the legal obligation of Member States to protect them. The 1967 Protocol extended the application of the 1951 Convention to persons who had become refugees after 1 January 1951, without any geographical limitation.

Figure 20.3
Status of ratification of legal instruments related to international migration, 1950-2022



Source: United Nations Treaty Series (http://treaties.un.org, accessed on 9 April 2024); NORMLEX Information System on International Labour Standards (www.ilo.org/normlex, accessed on 9 April 2024).

Box 20.2.
Human trafficking and migrant smuggling

Human trafficking involves the recruitment, movement or harbouring of people for the purpose of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or organ removal (UNODC, 2021). Human trafficking can take place both domestically (within a country) and internationally (across borders). Trafficking in persons is found in every country.

Migrant smuggling is a crime that consists in assisting migrants to enter or stay in a country illegally, for financial or material gain. International law requires governments to criminalize migrant smuggling, but not those who are smuggled. Smuggled migrants are often put in dangerous situations by smugglers, and might even become victims of other crimes, including human trafficking. Migrant smuggling is often a direct consequence of the lack of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The two main international instruments related to human trafficking and migrant smuggling are the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (also referred to as the Trafficking Protocol); and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (also referred to as the Smuggling Protocol). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes three targets related directly to human trafficking[1] (chap. 2).

Ninety-one per cent of Governments with available data reported having policy measures to prevent trafficking in persons, to protect or assist the victims of human trafficking and to prosecute or criminalize human trafficking (United Nations, 2021, chap. 21). While such policies have contributed to improving the identification of victims and the effectiveness of criminal justice responses, levels of victim detections and trafficker convictions remain low in many regions (UNODC, 2018, 2021).

Most of the victims of human trafficking worldwide are females, mainly adult women, but also girls (UNODC, 2018, 2021). These women and girls are often forced into domestic servitude or are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or have other sexual orientations or gender identities, are also highly vulnerable to being trafficked (UNODC, 2021).

[1] The three targets are: 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation; 8.7. Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms; and 16.2. End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

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Chapter XXI

Facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people

A growing number of countries have focused on providing options for safe, orderly and regular migration, with more than half of all Governments with available data reporting that they have such policies. A much lower proportion of Governments, however, report having policy measures to protect the human rights of migrants. Further progress is needed given that the respect, protection and fulfilment of migrants' human rights, regardless of migration status, are essential for ensuring that migrants become active, empowered and well-integrated members of societies.

When supported by appropriate policies, international migration can contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development.[136] The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes this critical interlinkage in target 10.7, which calls on countries to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, a non-legally binding framework for international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration, also explicitly recognizes the importance of effective, evidence-based migration policies and practices for optimizing migration's positive development outcomes (United Nations, 2019, 2020a; chap. 20).

At the time when the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted, the indicators to measure progress toward the achievement of target 10.7 had not yet been developed. Shortly thereafter, four complementary indicators were specified to monitor progress in achieving this target.[137] Of these, three seek to measure some specific features, barriers or impacts of safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, or the lack thereof. Indicator 10.7.2 is different in that it documents the existence of a wide range of national policies for orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration, and how such policies change over time (United Nations, 2020b).

As of 2021, 62 per cent of all Governments with data reported having policies to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration, as defined in SDG indicator 10.7.2 (box 21.1, United Nations and IOM, 2021). Central and Southern Asia, Europe and Northern America, and Latin America and the Caribbean had the highest share of Governments that met or fully met the criteria for the indicator (figure 21.1). In both Central and Southern Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, however, data coverage remains lower than for many other regions.[138] Oceania had the highest proportion of countries partially meeting or requiring further progress, followed by Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and Northern Africa and Western Asia.

Nearly all responding Governments indicated that they had a full range of measures to promote domain 6 "safe, orderly and regular migration" (figure 21.2). Among the 138 countries with data, 80 per cent reported that they met or fully met the criteria for domain 6. Specifically, 84 per cent of countries reported having provisions for the arrival of unaccompanied or separated minors or having information and awareness-raising campaigns for prospective migrants. Having a system to monitor international migrants who overstayed their visas (80 per cent of Governments) or pre-arrival authorization controls (78 per cent) were less common. Ninety-one per cent of Governments also reported having formal strategies to address human trafficking and

[136] The following discussion draws on the reports World Population Policies 2019 (ST/ESA/SER.A/442) and International Migration 2020 Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/452), which also provide additional discussion of international migration policies and sustainable development.

[137] The four indicators are as follows: indicator 10.7.1: Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination; indicator 10.7.2: Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people; indicator 10.7.3: Number of people who died or disappeared in the process of migration towards an international destination; and indicator 10.7.4: Proportion of the population who are refugees, by country of origin.

[138] For Central and Southern Asia, data are available for 52 per cent of countries, while for Latin America and the Caribbean, data are available for 57 per cent of countries. By contrast for Europe and Northern America, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, data were available for 70 per cent or more of countries.

migrant smuggling including policy measures to prevent trafficking in persons, to protect or assist the victims of human trafficking and to prosecute or criminalize human trafficking. While such policies have contributed to improving the identification of victims and the effectiveness of criminal justice responses, levels of victim detections and trafficker convictions remain low in many regions (UNODC, 2018, 2021). Greater efforts are also needed to expand and diversify the availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration, taking into consideration the demographic trends and labour market needs of countries of destination (Pritchett, 2023). Human rights-based and gender-responsive bilateral, regional and multilateral labour mobility agreements, in line with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, can be especially critical.

Box 21.1.
Measuring indicator 10.7.2

Indicator 10.7.2, developed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is comprised of six policy domains based on the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF).[1] Each domain is informed by one question with five subcategories. The subcategories aim to capture key aspects of migration policies at the national level, while allowing the indicator to detect variations across countries and over time. Indicator 10.7.2 is computed as the unweighted average of the values of the 30 sub-categories under the six domains, with values ranging between 0 and 100 per cent. For ease of interpretation and to summarize the results, country-level averages with values of less than 80 are coded as "requires further progress or partially meets"; while values of 80 or more are coded as "meets or fully meets". Regional and global values of indicator 10.7.2 refer to percentages of countries that "require further progress or partially meet", and "meet or fully meet" target 10.7 as conceptualised and measured by indicator 10.7.2.

Data for indicator 10.7.2 are collected through the United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development. As of November 2021, data were available for 138 countries. The data are self-reported by government entities. Indicator 10.7.2 is not designed to monitor the implementation of migration policies or to assess their impact or effectiveness (United Nations and IOM, 2019).

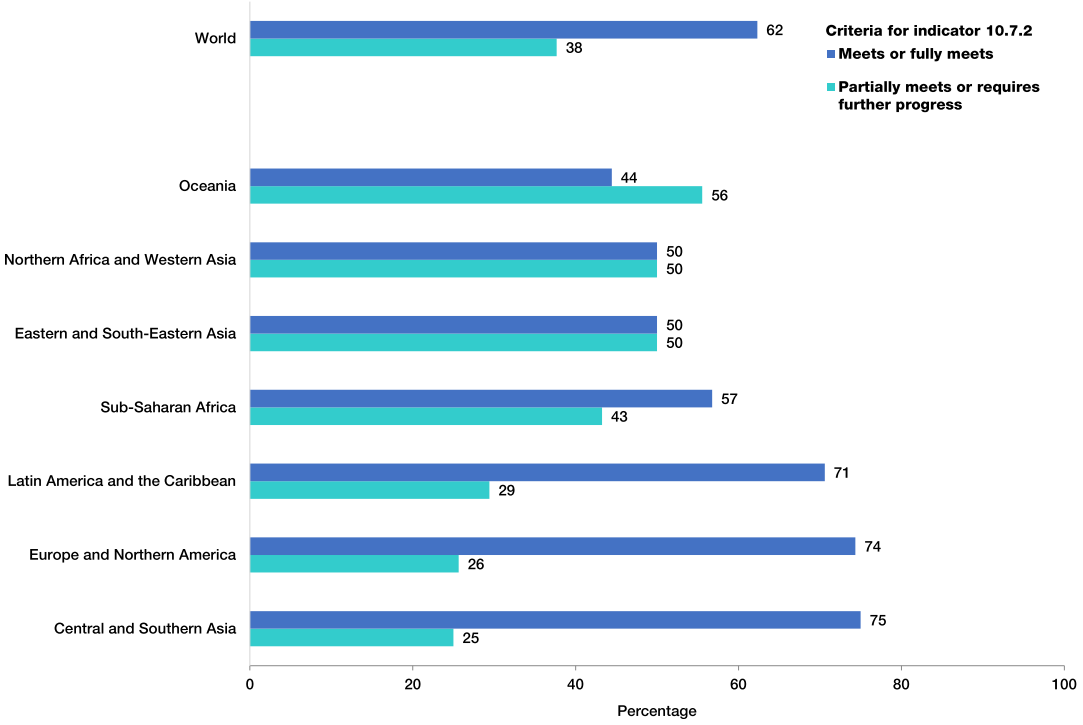
[1] The six domains are: (1) migrant rights, (2) whole-of-government/ evidence-based policies, (3) cooperation and partnerships, (4) socioeconomic well-being, (5) mobility dimensions of crises, and (6) safe, orderly and regular migration.

Globally, more than three quarters of Governments with data met or fully met the criteria for domain 3 "cooperation and partnerships" of indicator 10.7.2. A large proportion of Governments reported having policies pertaining to this domain. Ninety-two per cent of Governments stated that they had an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism on migration to promote coherence across levels of government and policy sectors. Ninety-one per cent of Governments indicated that they had bilateral agreements on migration, while 84 per cent stated having agreements for cooperation with other countries on return and readmission. Formal mechanisms to engage civil society and the private sector in the formulation and implementation of migration policies and regional agreements promoting mobility were less common, reported by 76 per cent and 74 per cent of Governments, respectively.

More than two thirds of countries with data met or fully met the criteria for domain 2 "whole-of-government or evidence-based policies". Ninety-three per cent of Governments reported having a dedicated agency to implement national migration policy. Over three fourths also stated that they had a national policy or strategy for regular migration pathways, had a mechanism to ensure that migration policy was informed by data, appropriately disaggregated, or had a national policy or strategy to promote the inclusion or integration of immigrants. Formal mechanisms to ensure that migration policy is gender responsive were less prevalent, with 69 per cent of Governments reporting such mechanisms.

The majority of Governments with data also reported having measures to address the "mobility dimensions of crises", with 68 per cent of countries meeting or fully meeting the criteria for this domain. More than four fifths of Governments indicated that they had a system for receiving, processing and identifying those forced to flee across international borders or for granting permission for temporary stay or temporary protection to those forcibly displaced across international borders. A smaller proportion of Governments (60 per cent) stated that they had a national disaster risk reduction strategy with specific provisions for addressing the displacement impacts of disasters.

Figure 21.1
Percentage of countries reporting policies that meet or fully meet the criteria for indicator 10.7.2, by region, 2021



Source: United Nations and IOM (2021).
Note: Based on 138 countries with available data (as of 31 October 2021). Ordered by share of countries that meet or fully meet the criteria for indicator 10.7.2. Countries that fully meet the criteria for indicator 10.7.2 are those that report having migration policy measures for 80 per cent or more of the 30 items used to define the indicator. Countries that partially meet the criteria or that require further progress are those that report having measures for 80 per cent or less of the items.

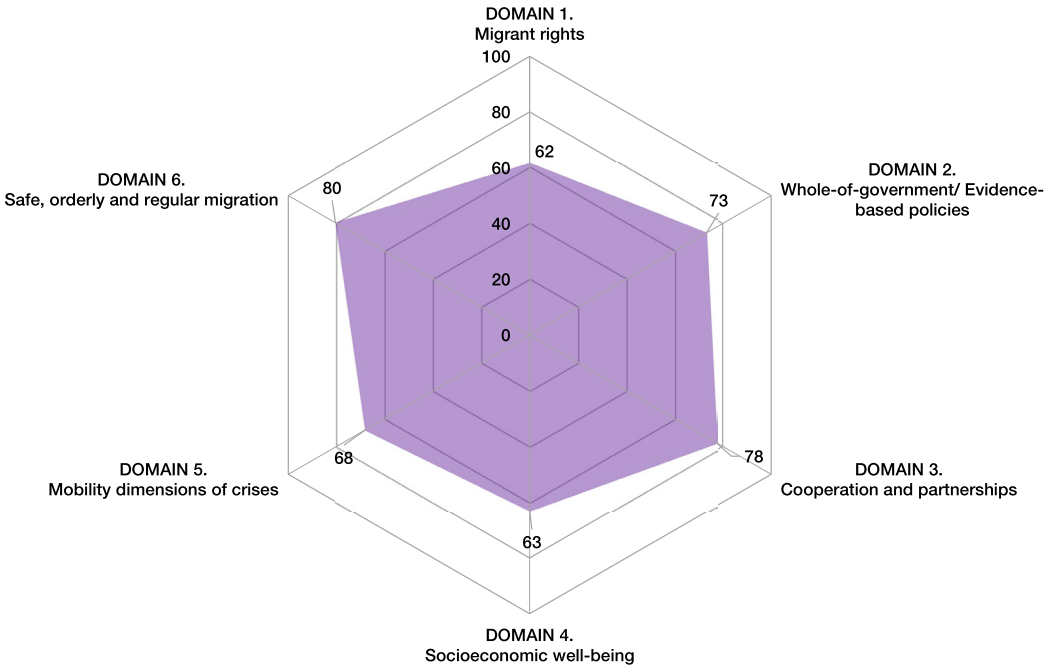
Sixty-three per cent of Governments with data met or fully met the criteria for the domain "socioeconomic well-being". Eighty-four per cent of Governments stated that they had policies to facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications acquired abroad. Measures to promote the recognition of qualifications acquired abroad can reduce "brain waste"[139] (Pires, 2015; chap. 13). A large share of Governments (81 per cent) also indicated that they had measures to promote fair and ethical recruitment of migrant workers. Such measures included combatting abusive and fraudulent recruitment practices such as deception about the nature and conditions of work, retention of passports, illegal wage deductions, debt bondage linked to repayment of recruitment fees, and threats to workers who want to leave their employers. Measures to align labour migration policies with actual and projected labour market needs were reported by 69 per cent of Governments, while 67 per cent indicated that they had measures to facilitate the portability of social security benefits. Sixty-six per cent of Governments had policy measures to facilitate or promote the flow of remittances, a critical step for maximizing the development impact of remittances (chaps. 11 and 16).

Domain "migrant rights" had the lowest proportion of Governments reporting a wide range of policy measures (62 per cent) among the six domains of indicator 10.7.2. The prevalence of policy measures to protect migrant rights was also uneven. More than four fifths of the responding Governments indicated that they provided non-nationals with equal access to essential or emergency health care or justice regardless of their legal immigration status. Most Governments also reported providing equal access to public education (64 per cent) regardless of immigration status. Government measures to promote equal work for equal pay regardless of immigration

[139] "Brain waste" refers to a situation where individuals are employed in a job that requires a lower level of skill than the one they are qualified for (Pires, 2015).

status, or to provide social security benefits to migrants on par with those received by nationals were less prevalent. Further progress in this domain will be needed to achieve target 10.7 and the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, considering that the respect, protection and fulfilment of migrant rights, regardless of migration status, are essential for ensuring that migrants become active, empowered and well-integrated members of societies (chap. 2).

Figure 21.2
Percentage of Governments with policy measures to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, by domain, 2021



Source: United Nations and IOM (2021).
Note: Based on 138 countries with available data (as of 31 October 2021). Data refer to countries that meet or fully meet the criteria for indicator 10.7.2 (reported having migration policy measures for 80 per cent or more of the five items in each domain).

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High-level Meeting on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. UN Photo Photo/Loey Felipe.

International Migration and Sustainable Development **examines the linkages between international migration and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It discusses how international migration is defined and measured, examines levels and trends in international migration at the global and regional level and by income group, explores the growing scope and impact of international migration and reviews its relevance for achieving internationally agreed sustainable development Goals and targets. The report also offers policy recommendations focusing on the social, economic and environmental causes and consequences of international migration.**

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