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Global Migration Increasing and Concentrating to Certain Countries

The United Nations (UN) migration data highlights the increase in the stock of international migrants in the world: the number of people living outside of their country of origin was 153 million in 1990 but reached 281 million people in 2020. The share of international migrants of the world population is nowadays 3.6 percent. A small majority (52 %) of the stock is men (Figure 1). According to the World Migration Report (IOM), it is possible to see that international migration is not uniform across the world but shaped by demographic, economic, geographic, and other factors resulting in distinct migration patterns.

When looking at the structure of international migration in more detail, according to the UN, nearly half of all international migrants reside in the global region from which they originated, with Europe accounting for the largest share of intra-regional migration: 70 percent of migrants born in Europe reside in another European country in 2020. A large majority of international migrants reside in countries offering the greatest opportunities for migrants and their families. Nearly two thirds of all international migrants live in high-income countries, in contrast to just 31 percent in middle-income countries and around 4 percent in low-income countries. The situation is opposite for refugees. They account for 12 percent of all international migrants, but 80 percent of them are hosted by low- and middle-income countries. The ILO has estimated that 164 million people were

migrant workers of the world's international migrant stock in 2017.

There are remarkable differences when looking at international migrant stock by global regions (Table 1). In Europe and Asia, the share of international migrant stock is around 30 percent of the global migrant stock in both regions, and 21 percent in the Northern America in 2020. The perspective on international migration is different when analyzing the share of international migrants in each global region's population. In Oceania, where the international migrants' stock is quite small (3.3% of the world migrant stock), the share of this stock in its population is, however, remarkable (22%), followed by Northern America (16%) in 2020.

Two thirds of all international migrants were living in 20 countries of the world in 2020 according to the UN. The United States was the largest country of hosting international migrants with 51 million migrant stock in 2020. Germany had the second largest number of migrants (around 16 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (13 million), the Russian Federation (12 million) and the United Kingdom (9 million).

Sources

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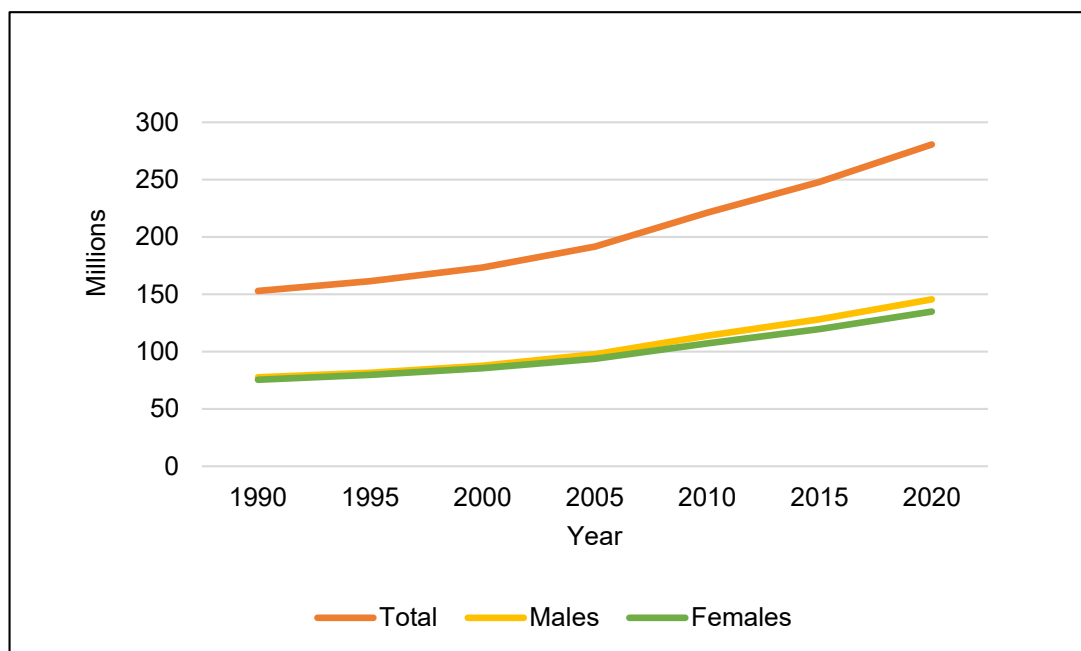


Figure 1. International migrant stock by gender in 1990–2020 (Data: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). International Migrant Stock 2020).

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Table 1. International migrant stock as a percentage of the population in the global regions in 2000 and 2020, and as a percentage of the world migrant stock in 2020 (Data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). International Migrant Stock 2020).

Global region	Year		
	2000 % of the population	2020 % of the population	2020 % of the world migrant stock
Africa	1.9	1.9	9.0
Asia	1.3	1.8	30.6
Europe	7.8	11.6	30.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	1.3	2.3	5.3
Northern America	12.9	15.9	20.9
Oceania	17.1	22.0	3.3
World total	2.8	3.6	100.0