

International migration flows in the global level

Elli Heikkilä



The international migrant stock in the world was approximately 214 million people in 2010. This means that the proportion of international migrants among the world population was 3.1 percent in 2010. There were 195 million international migrants in 2005 and 75 million in 1965. The migration pool is estimated to be around 5–10 million persons per year. This pool of international migrants is fluid; many migrants move back to their native country, while new migrants arrive. Europe is hosting almost 70 million international migrants, one-third of the global total in 2010. Asia is hosting the second largest migrant population (61 million), followed by Northern America (50 million). The clearly smallest amounts are found in Oceania and Latin America and in the Caribbean.

A different type of perspective of international migration is seen when the analysis is directed to look at the share of international migrants in each major area's population. In Oceania, where the international migrants' stock is quite small, their share of the population is, however, remarkable: in 1990 the share was already over 16 percent and it was around 17 percent in 2010. In Northern America, there has been growth in the share of the immigrant stock: the share was in 1990 approximately 10 percent and in 2010 around 14 percent. The share in Europe is lower than in Northern America, but clearly higher than the shares in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The United States is the largest recipient of international migrants and was hosting 42.8 million migrants in 2010. It is followed by the Russian Federation (12.3 million), Germany (10.8 million), Saudi Arabia (7.3 million) and Canada (7.2 million). A relatively small number of countries host most of the world's international migrants. In 2010, 29 countries with the largest

migrant stocks accounted for 75 percent of all international migrants on the global level. Between 2000 and 2010, nine countries gained over a million international migrants: the United States (8.0 million), Spain (4.6 million), Italy (2.3 million), Saudi Arabia (2.2 million), the United Kingdom (1.7 million), Canada (1.6 million), the Syrian Arab Republic (1.3 million) and Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (1.0 million each).

A large majority of international migrants are from less developed countries which is not surprising since about 80 percent of the world population lives in these countries. Most migrants move from one less developed country to another. Many people move to take advantage of better economic opportunities. Migration flows from less developed countries to developed countries have been around 2.7 million migrants on yearly basis during 2005–2010. Migration flows between industrialized countries are quite small. Refugees constitute an important share of the total number of international migrants. By 2010, the global refugee stock was around 16.3 million persons.

Sources

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