

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION LEVELS AND TRENDS

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Migration is the demographic process that has been integral and a salient feature of human history since time immemorial. It is an important means by which human civilization spreads out, enriching cultures, disseminating ideas and governing, social, political and economic change at the place of origin and destination. Migration has been continuously drawing the attention of policy makers and academicians interested in looking in to the various impacts of population mobility from place to place. Accurate, consistent and timely information on global levels and trends in international migration are critical for designing well-managed migration policies.

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Migration is the demographic process that has been integral and a salient feature of human history since time immemorial. It is an important means by which human civilization spreads out, enriching cultures, disseminating ideas and governing, social, political and economic change at the place of origin and destination. Migration has been continuously drawing the attention of policy makers and academicians interested in looking in to the various impacts of population mobility from place to place. This has been particularly so in the case of developing societies which are in the process of social transformation. At the present scenario the studies of migration occupies an important place in social science research. The characteristics of migrants at the place of origin and destination, reasons for out migration, emigration and process of assimilation at the place of destination and interrelationship between migration and economic have generally been focuses of such studies. Migratory movement of a voluntary nature acquired prominence in the wake of economic development which ushered in with the industrial revolution of 18th century. Since then, the movement of people in search of better economic prospects employment opportunities acquired momentum in various parts of the world. Side by side a shift of the population from the rural areas to the country side, to the urban centers where factories were opened leading to an urban growth ensured. In England, the industrial revolution had its beginning, the urban population which formed hardly 23% in 1801 increased to 32% percent by 1851. As Redford puts, "in England a great part of town population during the half century had been due to mushroom growth of the industrial centers". Another pattern which acquired worldwide significance was the large scales of migration of Europeans to the new world known as transland migration. According to an estimate, nearly 36 million aliens of European origin reached USA between 1820 and 1924. During the initial stages the overwhelming majority of migrants were from the central parts of the Europe, but subsequently from all other parts of Europe also joined the stream. They abandoned their traditional calling in the agricultural sectors and ended up as factory hands. The complexion of migrants and pattern and duration of migration underwent changes in the course of time. The empirical study conducted in china shows that migration positively affects the development of the urban sector. Cities with higher ratios of employment in the 2 manufacturing and the service sectors have experienced the higher growth in the urban non agricultural population from migration. Moreover the number of proprietors also has a significant effect on migration, suggesting an important fact that the development of private business not only provides a welcome environment to rural migrants but also sources of their employment. This result strongly that the policy which nurtures the developmental environment for private business is crucial for Chinese urbanization.

An international migrant, by definition, is a person who is living in a country other than his or her country of birth. International migrants are classified into different categories such as foreigners admitted for special purposes, settlers, migrant workers, economic migrants and asylum migrants. The foreigners admitted for special purposes are foreign students, foreign trainees and foreign retirees. Settlers are persons who are granted the right to stay indefinitely in the territory of a country other than their own and to enjoy the same social and economic rights as those of the citizens of that country. Migrant workers are persons admitted by a country other than their own for the explicit purpose of carrying out an economic activity. That category of migrant workers includes seasonal migrant workers, project-tide migrant workers, contract migrant workers, temporary migrant workers, established migrant workers and highly skilled migrant workers.

Data and Method

The aim of this paper is to undertake an empirical analysis on the trends and flows in international migrants. The paper focuses on the following main questions: is there any change in the number of international migrants? Where do international migrants come from?, what is the share of female migrants worldwide? and what is the Indian scenario at international emigration?. The study is made possible and worthwhile by access to a uniquely rich and reliable immigration data from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations. It presents key trends in the stock of international migrants from 1990 to 2017, analyses estimates and projections of net international migration for the period 1950 to 2050, and provides the latest information on the status of ratification of legal instruments related to international migration by Member States. This database provides actual statistics of immigrants not only by country of origin but also by the various immigration categories.

The paper begins with a brief discussion of the definition and type international migration, focusing on the theoretical foundations of why people migrate and the relationship between emigration and economic development. It then presents a brief explanation on the trends as well as an overview of international migration. The share of women emigrants' worldwide and trends in Indian emigrants are discussed at the end followed by some concluding remarks along with the summary findings.

LITERATURE

The first scholarly contribution to the migration literature consisted of two articles by the nineteenth-century geographer Ravenstein (1885, 1889) in which he formulated his 'laws of migration'. The chief motive for migration for majority migrants, especially from developed countries to developing countries, is the differences in returns to labour or expected returns across countries or markets (Harris & Todaro, 1970). The generally established understanding is that, both (or a combination of both) macroeconomic push factors in the migrant-sending country and macroeconomic pull factors in the migrant-receiving country are important determinants of migration motives. However, the actual migration event is an individual, family or household investment decision (microeconomic motivation). So both micro and macroeconomic factors play an equal role in determining the decision to migrate. (Bhagwati & Srinivasan, 1974; Harris. & Todaro, 1970; Sjaastad, 1962; Stark, 1984; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Stark, 1991; Todaro, 1976). some scholars and political leaders have often advocated the promotion of economic development in low income countries as a way of reducing the emigration pressure (drive/push), and hence addressing the root cause of migration and ultimately reducing the migrant flows from those countries (de Haas, 2006). Rone and Vogler (2000) used an unbalanced panel data-set on migration to Germany from 86 African and Asian developing countries for the period 1981-1995. They showed with fixed effects estimates that there is an inverse U-shaped relationship between migration and development. They argued that the relationship is due to the combined effects of 'migration-impeding factors' and 'migration re-enforcing factors'. Analysis on the latest migration data shows that all the strategies are relevant and in a way or the other migration and economic development are complementary to each other.

TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow over the past seventeen years, reaching 258 million in 2017, up from 248 million in 2015, 220 million in 2010, 191 million in 2005 and 173 million in 2000. Between 2000 and 2005, the international migrant stock grew by an average of 2 per cent per year. During the period 2005-2010, the annual growth rate accelerated, reaching 2.9 per cent. Since then, however, it has slowed, falling to around 2.4 per cent per year during the period 2010-2015 and to 2.0 per cent per year during the period 2015-2017.

High-income countries host almost two thirds of all international migrants. As of 2017, 64 per cent of all international migrants worldwide - equal to 165 million international migrants - lived in high-income countries. Thirty-six per cent - or 92 million - of the world’s migrants lived in middle- or low-income countries. Of these, 81 million resided in middle-income countries and 11 million in low-income countries. In comparison to 2000, the share of international migrants living in high income countries increased slightly, while the share of middle- and low- income countries fell (Figure 1).

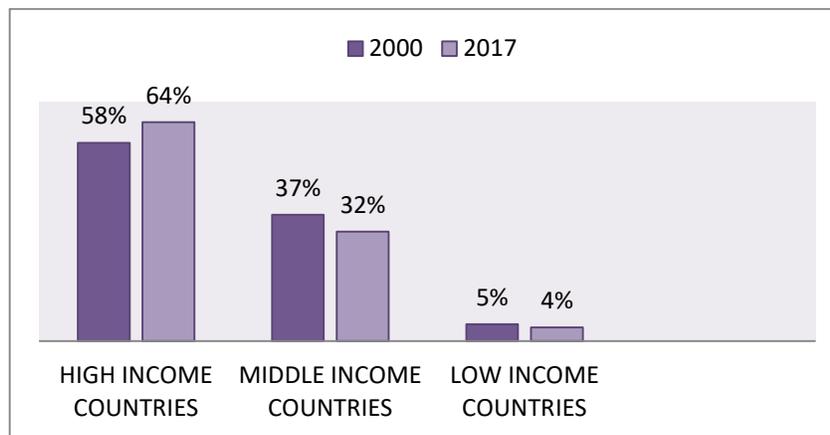


Figure 1. Percentage of international migrants by income group, 2000 and 2017

High-income countries have absorbed most of the recent growth in the global population of international migrants, gaining 64 million of the 85 million migrants added worldwide between 2000 and 2017. As a result, the rate of growth of the migrant population was highest during 2000-2017 (2.9 per cent per year) in high-income countries.

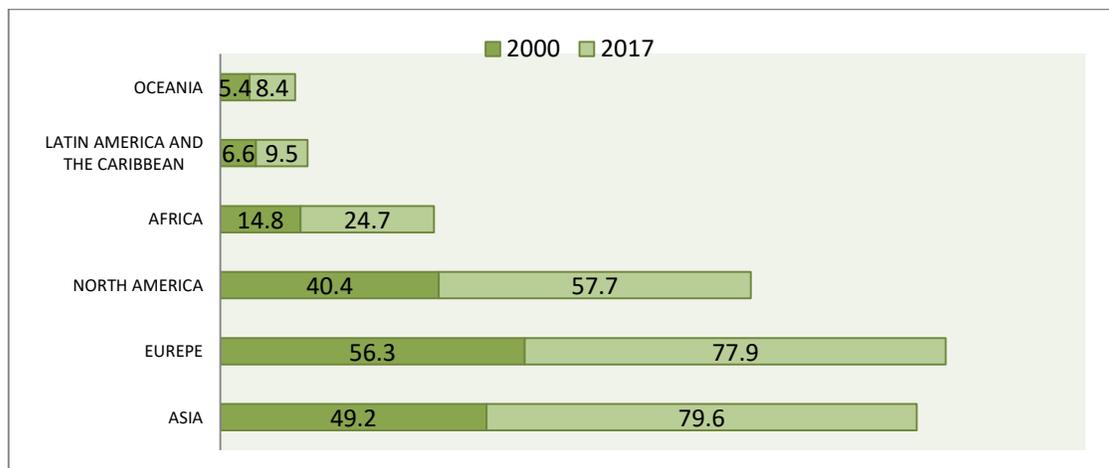


Figure 2. Number of international migrants (millions) by region of destination, 2000 and 2017

The average growth rate in low-income countries was around 2.4 per cent per year. After declining in the period from 2000 to 2010, the rate of growth of the migrant population in low-income countries accelerated to 6.6 per cent per year in 2010 to 2015, and slowed again, to 2.0 per cent per year, most recently (2015-2017). In middle-income countries, the growth rate was the lowest during this period (1.4 per cent per year). Analysing data by geographic region provides additional insights into current trends. More than 60 per cent of all international migrants worldwide live in Asia or Europe. In 2017, 80 million international migrants were residing in Asia, compared to 78 million in Europe. Northern America hosted the third largest number of international migrants (58 million), followed by Africa (25 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (10 million), and Oceania (8 million) (Figure 2.).

Between 2000 and 2017, Asia added more international migrants than any other region. Asia gained some 30 million international migrants during this period, representing a net increase of about 1.8 million migrants per annum. Europe added the second largest number of international migrants between 2000 and 2017 (22 million), followed by Northern America (17 million) and Africa (10 million). Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania added comparatively smaller numbers of migrants during this period (3 million in each of these regions). Despite this continued growth, international migrants accounted for two per cent or less of the total population of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. By contrast, in Europe, Northern America and Oceania, international migrants comprised at least 10 per cent of the total population.

The number of international migrants worldwide has grown faster than the world's population. Due to this faster growth rate, the share of migrants in the total population increased from 2.8 in 2000 to 3.4 per cent in 2017. The pace of growth in the migrant population varies significantly across regions. Between 2000 and 2017, the number of international migrants in Africa and Asia grew by an average of 3.0 and 2.8 per cent per annum, respectively. Oceania recorded the third fastest average annual growth rate in the international migrant stock during this period (2.7 per cent) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (2.2 per cent). Europe and Northern America, where the size of the migrant stock was already large, experienced a slightly slower pace of change, with an average annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent in North America and 1.9 per cent in Europe. Most of the world's migrants live in a relatively small number of countries.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS BY REGION OF ORIGIN, 2000 AND 2017

Between 2000 and 2017, the number of international migrants originating in Asia recorded the largest increase (40.7 million), followed by the migrant population born in Africa (14.7 million), in Latin America and the Caribbean (12.9 million), in Europe (11.6 million), in Northern America (1.2 million) and in Oceania (700,000). In relative terms, however, the number of international migrants originating in Africa experienced the largest increase since 2000 (+68 per cent), followed by the population of migrants born in Asia (+62 per cent), in Latin America and the Caribbean (+52 per cent) and in Oceania (+51 per cent) (Figure 3.).

In 2017, two thirds (67 per cent) of all international migrants were living in just twenty countries. The largest number of international migrants (50 million) resided in the United States of America. Saudi Arabia, Germany and the Russian Federation hosted the second, third and fourth largest numbers of migrants worldwide (around 12 million each), followed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (nearly 9 million). Migration occurs primarily between countries that are located within the same world region. In 2017, the majority of the international migrants originating from Europe (67 per cent), Asia (60 per cent), Oceania (60 per cent) and Africa (53 per cent) reside in a country located in their region of birth.

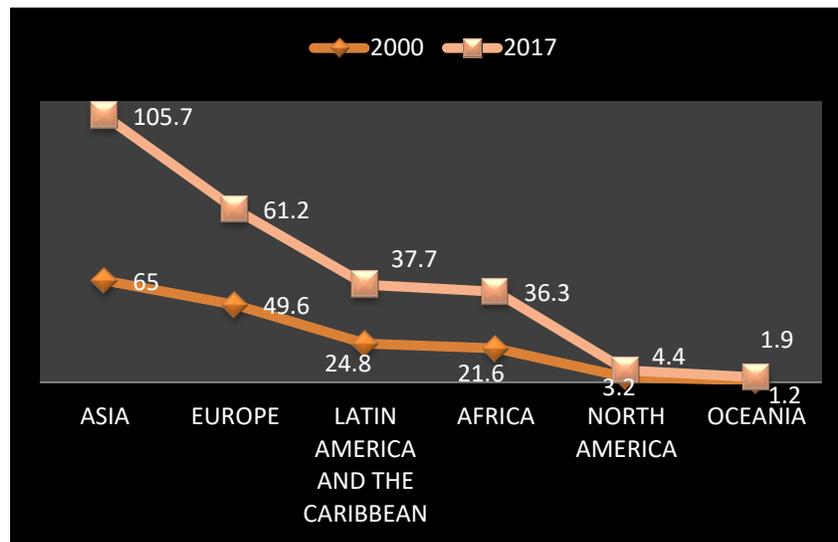


Figure 3. Number of international migrants by region of origin, 2000 and 2017

In contrast, international migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean (84 per cent) and Northern America (72 per cent) reside primarily outside their region of birth. Globally, the twenty largest countries or areas of origin account for almost half (49 per cent) of all international migrants, while one-third (34 per cent) of all international migrants originates in only ten countries. India is now the country with the largest number of people living outside the country's borders ("diaspora"), followed by Mexico, the Russian Federation and China. In 2017, 16.6 million persons from India were living in another country compared to 13.0 million for Mexico. Other countries with significant "diaspora" populations are the Russian Federation (10.6 million), China (10.0 million), Bangladesh (7.5 million), Syrian Arab Republic (6.9 million), Pakistan (6.0 million) and Ukraine (5.9 million). Of the twenty largest countries or areas of origin of international migrants, eleven were located in Asia, six in Europe, and one each in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND WOMEN

The proportion of women among all international migrants varies considerably across geographic regions. Since 2000, the proportion of female migrants increased in all regions except for Asia. In Europe, the share of female migrants raised from 51.6 per cent in 2000 to 52.0 per cent in 2017. Likewise, in Northern America, the percentage of women among all international migrants rose from 50.5 to 51.5 per cent during this period. The larger proportion of female migrants in those regions was mainly the result the aging of migrants who had arrived decades earlier and the fact that, in general, women have a higher life expectancy than men. By contrast, the percentage of female migrants in Asia dropped from 46.2 per cent in 2000 to 42.4 per cent in 2017 (Table 1.).

In Asia, the number of male migrants grew by 73 per cent, from 26 million in 2000 to 46 million in 2017. This increase was fuelled in part by the strong demand for male migrant workers in the oil-producing countries of Western Asia. The number of female migrants in Asia increased by 48 per cent, from 23 million in 2000 to 34 million in 2017. In all other regions, the increase in the number of female migrants outpaced that of male migrants. Despite the global increase in the median age of migrants, in some regions the migrant population is actually becoming younger. Between 2000 and 2017, the median age of international migrants declined in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania. In Asia, the median age of female migrants decreased by almost two years while the median age of male migrants decreased by only one year. Latin America and the Caribbean recorded the most substantial 'rejuvenation' of its migrant population during this

period with a reduction of the median age by about three years, owing both to the inflow of recent, younger migrants as well as the death or return of older migrants, many of whom had arrived from European countries decades earlier. This is because the population of international migrant includes not only immigrants who have recently arrived in the country, but also immigrants who have lived in a country for many years, the median age of immigrants when they arrive is, on average, considerably lower than that of all international migrants. Conversely, in Africa, Europe and Northern America, the median age of international migrants increased between 2000 and 2017. Northern America experienced the most pronounced increase (of more than six years) in the median age of migrants.

Table 1. Percentage of female migrants worldwide, 2000 and 2017

	Percentage of female emigrants		Median age of female emigrants	
	2000	2017	2000	2017
World	49.3	48.4	38.0	39.2
Europe	51.6	52.0	38.4	44.7
North America	50.5	51.5	44.6	43.9
Oceania	50.1	51.0	41.1	42.6
Latin America & the Caribbean	46.9	50.4	38.8	35.8
Africa	46.9	47.1	27.6	30.9
Asia	46.2	42.4	36.5	35.1

Women comprise slightly less than half of all international migrants worldwide. Globally, the proportion of women of all ages among all international migrants fell slightly, from 49.3 per cent in 2000 to 48.4 per cent in 2017. Much of this decline is due to the growing share of male migrants in high-income countries located in the less developed regions. Between 2000 and 2017, the proportion of female migrants in high income countries fell from 49.0 to 47.7 per cent. The share of female migrants also declined in middle-income countries, but increased somewhat in low income countries.

INDIA AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

During the post independence period, the oil price increases of 1973 – 74 and 1979 acted as an impetus for the massive expansion of emigration from India to oil exporting countries of Gulf. The total number of migrants from India in these countries rose from 800000 in 1972 to 2.82 million by 1980. Foreign workers' share in the total employment in the six Gulf- Cooperation Council (GCC) members' countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE) rose from 50.5 percent in 1975 to 70 percent by 1980.

Table 2. Total Migration from India, 1834 - 1937

Year	Emigrants
1834-35	62
1836-40	188
1841-45	240
1846-50	247
1851-55	357
1856-60	618
1861-65	793
1866-70	976

1871-75	1235
1876-80	1505
1881-85	1545
1886-90	1461
1891-95	2326
1896-1900	1962
1901-05	1428
1906-10	1864
1911-15	2483
1916-20	2087
1920-25	2762
1926-30	3298
1931-35	1940
1936-37	815
Total	30192

Source: Davis K, 1951

From 1979 to 1982, nearly 234064 persons per annum migrated from India to the Middle East for employment purposes. But the period 1983 to 1990 marked a slow growth rate in emigration rate due to the oil glut of 1980s. But during 1992- 2001 labour migration from to the Middle East picked up substantially and it was estimated that nearly 360000 persons per annum migrated from India to the Gulf countries. Data revealed that about 55 percentage of the total Indian emigration is directed to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

In 2017, India was the largest country of origin of international migrants (17 million), followed by Mexico (13 million). Other countries of origin with large migrant populations include the Russian Federation (11 million), China (10 million), Bangladesh (7 million), Syrian Arab Republic (7 million) and Pakistan and Ukraine (6 million each).

Table 3. Indian Emigration Scenario, 2000 and 2017

	2000	2017
Number of international migrants (thousands)	6411	5189
International migrants as percentage of total population	0.6	0.4
Females among international migrants (percentage)	48.5	48.8
Median age of international migrants (years)	50.7	45.6

Between 2000 and 2017, the proportion of female migrants increased from 48.5 to 48.8 per cent. Much of this enhancement is due to the growing share educated female migrants in high-income countries between 2000 and 2017. As observed in Asia, the median age of Indian migrants decreased by almost five years (Table 3).

To summarise, it is found that the number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow rapidly in recent years, reaching 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000. Over 60 per cent of all international migrants live in Asia (80 million) or Europe (78 million). Northern America hosted the third largest number of international migrants (58 million), followed by Africa (25

million), Latin America and the Caribbean (10 million) and Oceania (8 million). In 2017, two thirds (67 per cent) of all international migrants were living in just twenty countries. The largest number of international migrants (50 million) resided in the United States of America. Saudi Arabia, Germany and the Russian Federation hosted the second, third and fourth largest numbers of migrants worldwide (around 12 million each), followed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (nearly 9 million).

In today's increasingly interconnected world, international migration has become a reality that touches nearly all corners of the globe. Economic; social and political factors have led to an increase in the number of migrants worldwide with the chief objectives-in search of jobs, opportunity, education and quality of life. At the same time conflict, poverty, inequality and a lack of sustainable livelihoods compel people to leave their homes to seek a better future for themselves and their families abroad. Accurate, consistent and timely information on global levels and trends in international migration are critical for designing well-managed migration policies. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its commitment to leave no one behind, recognises that international migration is of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, requiring coherent and comprehensive responses. In the Agenda, Governments pledged to "facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies" (SDG target 10.7). The 2030 Agenda also seeks to reduce remittance transfer fees, to promote labour standards for migrant workers, and to eliminate human trafficking.

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