

International Migration: Facts and Figures

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Five key points

(illustrated by the following slides)

1. There is an internationally agreed definition of “international migrant”.
2. Migration is a rare event globally, but it is not so rare for some countries, populations, or locations.
3. Demographic impact of migration is relatively small for origin countries overall, and generally much larger for destination countries.
4. Economic impact for origin countries is more substantial, and migrant remittances are a key mechanism.
5. Important data gaps exist, especially in Africa and Asia.



Outline

1. Definitions and trends
2. Destination: where do migrants live?
3. Origin: where do migrants come from?
4. Disaggregation by age and sex
5. Demographic impacts of migration
6. Economic impacts: Migrant remittances
7. Data gaps



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Definition of an international migrant

- **International migrant:** someone who changes his or her country of **usual residence**, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status if duration is at least 1 year
(source: United Nations, 1998. Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1. Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 58, Rev.1)

- Reasons for migration may include:
 - To **study** or obtain training
 - To **work** or start a business
 - To join **family** members
 - To seek greater personal **freedom**
 - To seek **refuge** from persecution



Definition of a refugee

- **Refugee:** person outside his or her country of origin because of a *well-founded fear of persecution*, armed conflict, generalized violence or other circumstances that *require a person to seek international protection* (sources: United Nations, 1951, *Convention related to the status of refugees*; Organization of African Unity, 1969, *Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa*)
- In 2017, about **10%** of the world's international migrants were **refugees**



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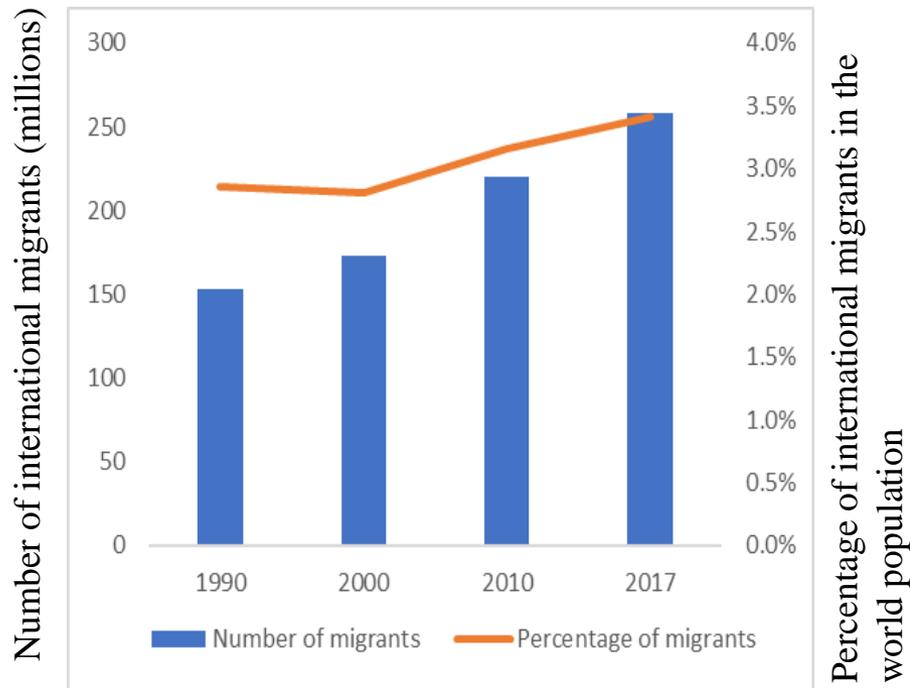
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Numbers of international migrants

How many international migrants are there in the world?

258 million or **3.4%** of the global population in 2017



As the world's population grows, so does the number of international migrants, albeit at a faster pace

Between 1990 and 2017:

- The global population grew by 42%
- The number of international migrants grew by 69%



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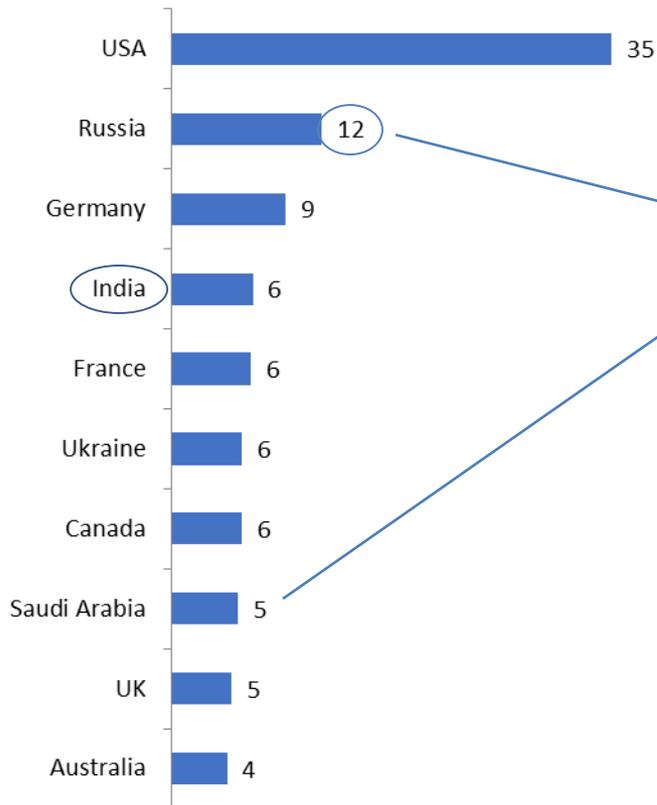
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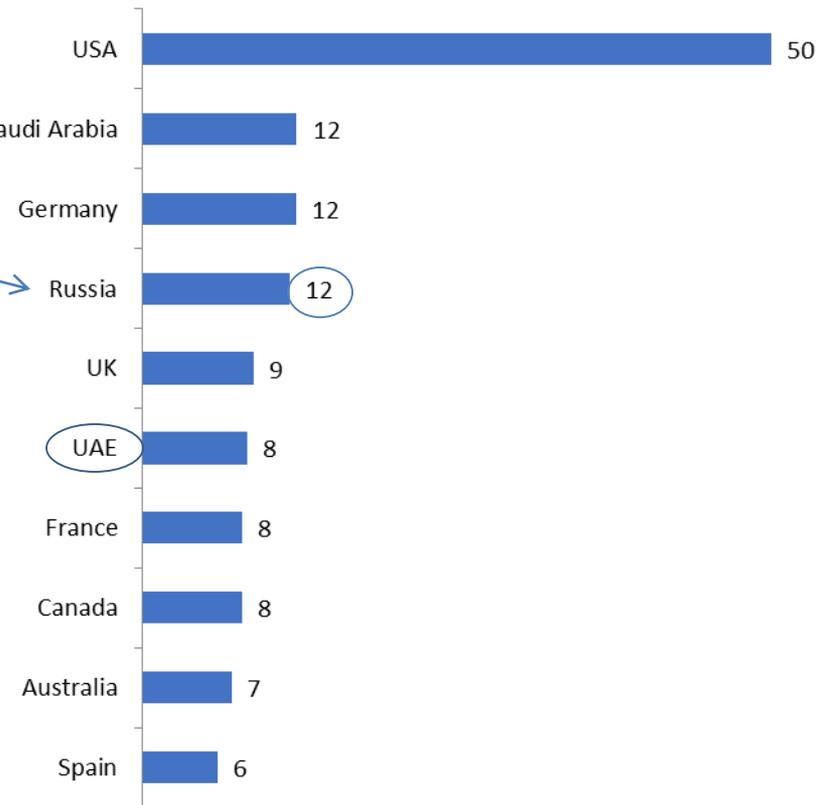
Where do migrants live?

Number of international migrants: top 10 receiving countries

2000
(in millions)



2017
(in millions)



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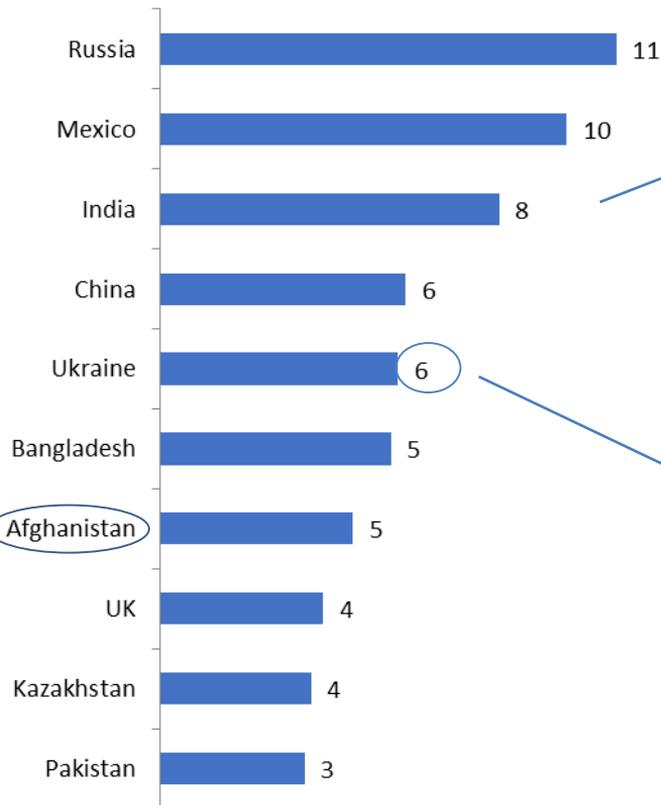
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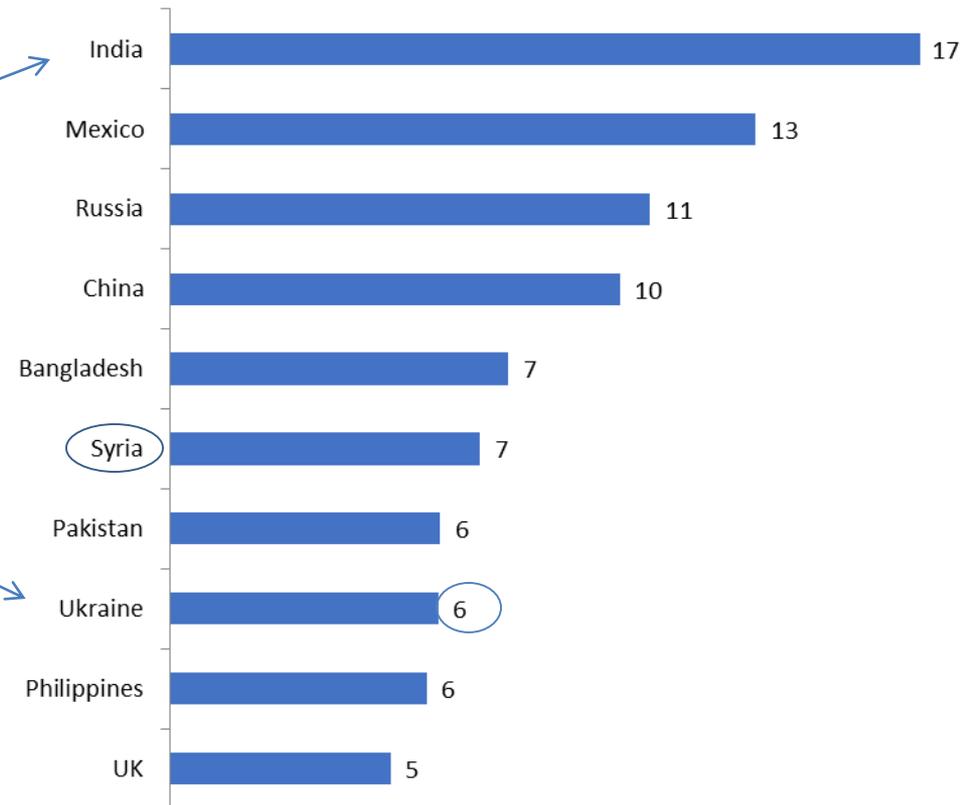
Where do migrants come from?

Number of international migrants: top 10 countries of origin

2000
(in millions)



2017
(in millions)



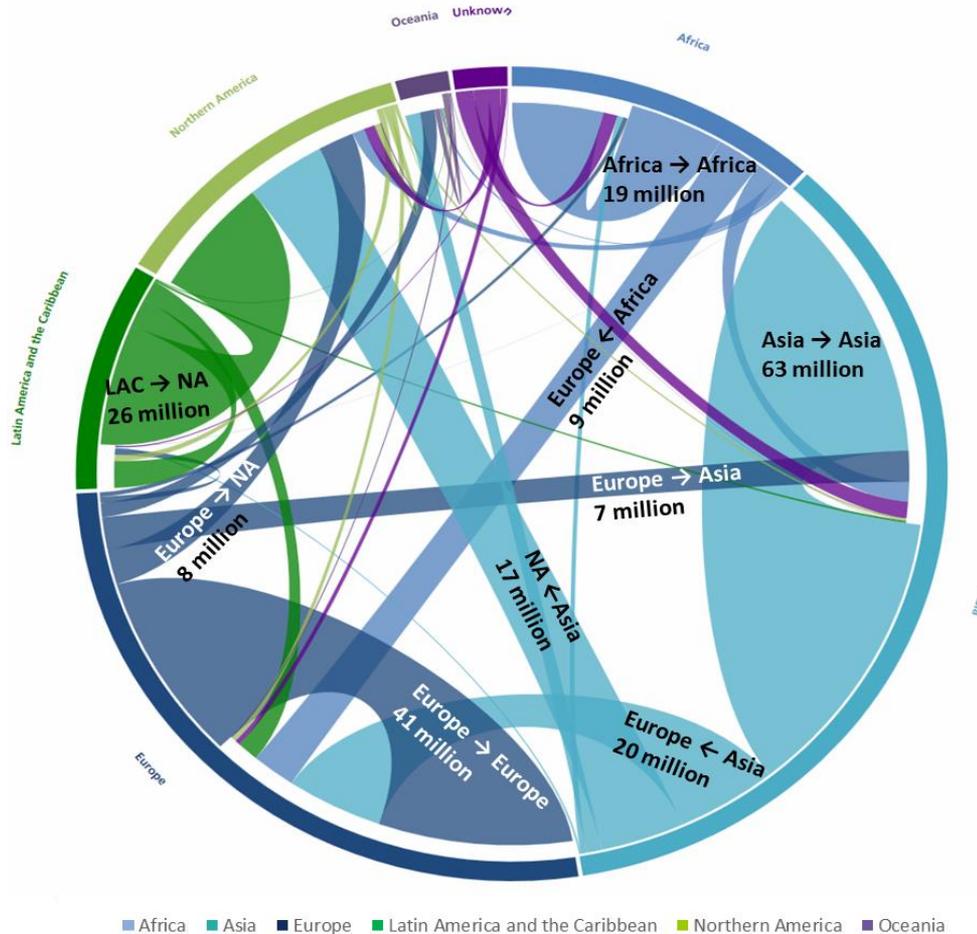
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Where are the largest flows?

Origin and destination of international migrants, 2017



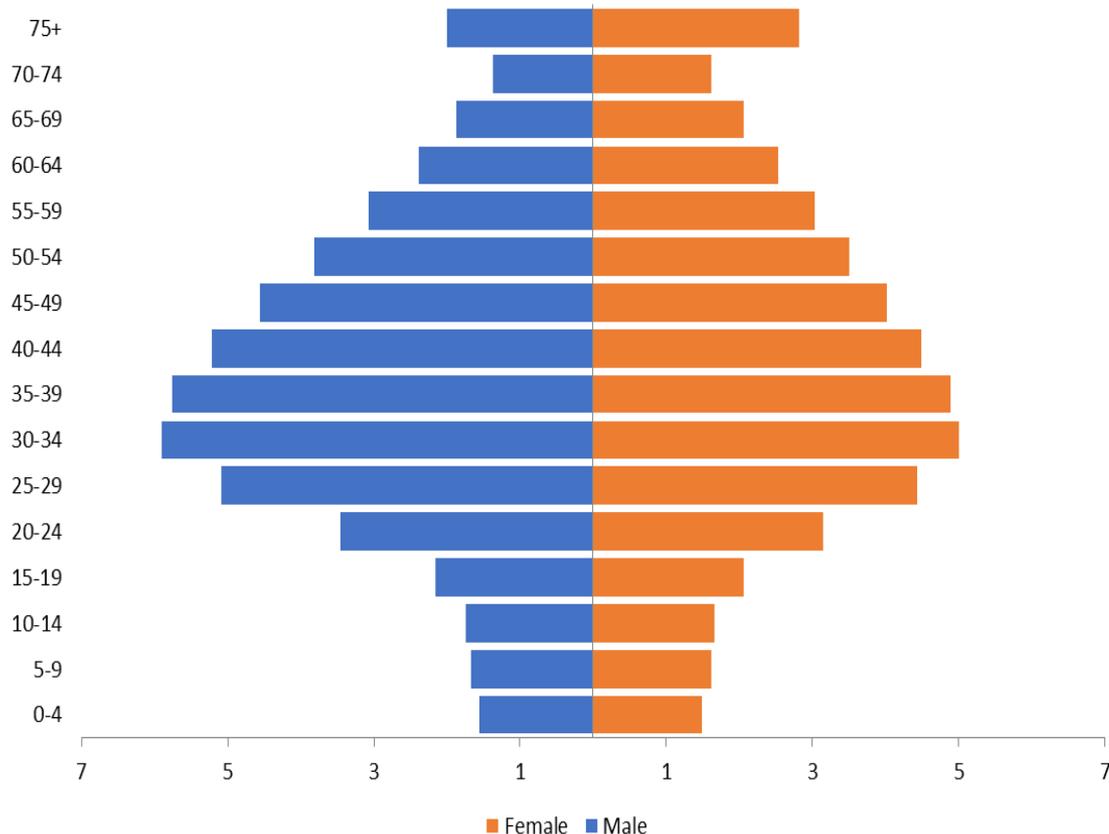
Migration occurs primarily between countries within the same region

Asia and Europe are the top two regions of origin and destination



Age and sex of migrants

Distribution of international migrants by age and sex, 2017



48% of migrants are female

70% of migrants are of working age (ages 20-64)

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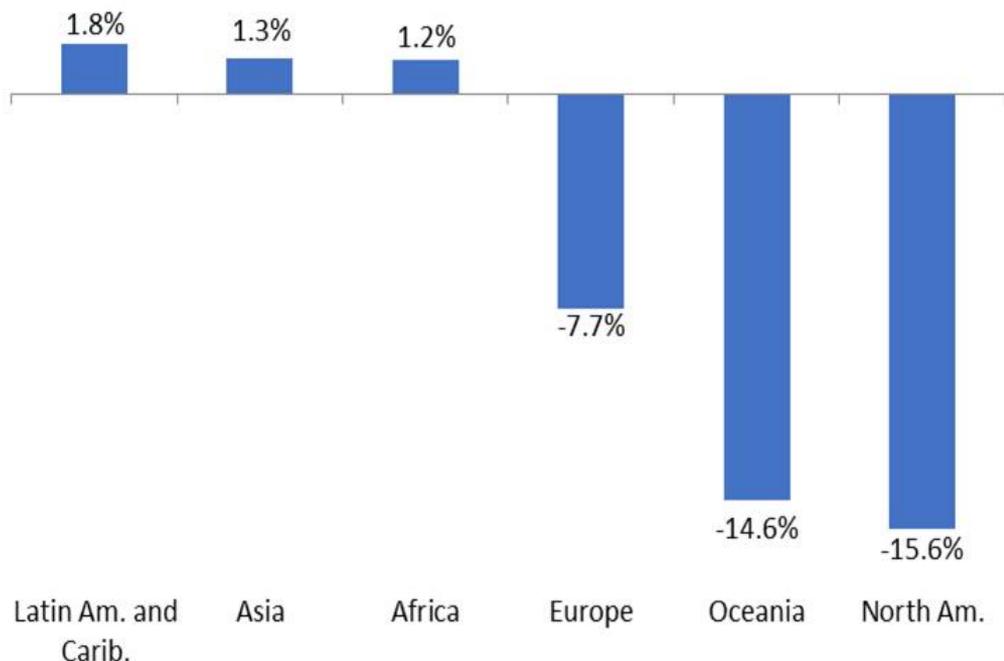


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Demographic impact

Immigration can slow the pace of population ageing

*Difference in percentage of working-age population in 2050:
zero-migration scenario vs medium-variant projection*

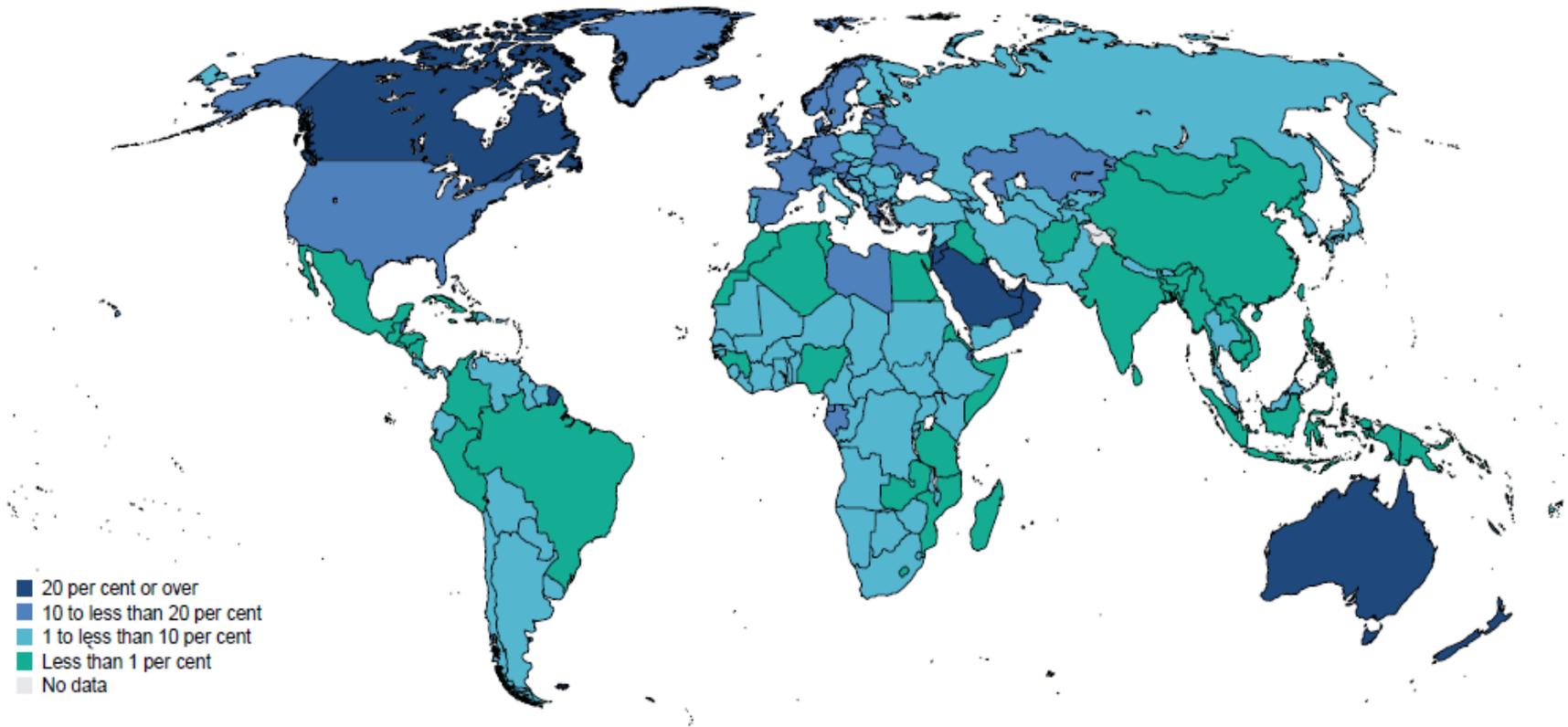


If international migration were to stop immediately instead of continuing at recent levels, the percentage of working-age population in 2050 would be much lower in developed regions and slightly higher in developing regions



International migrants

Percentage of total population, 2017

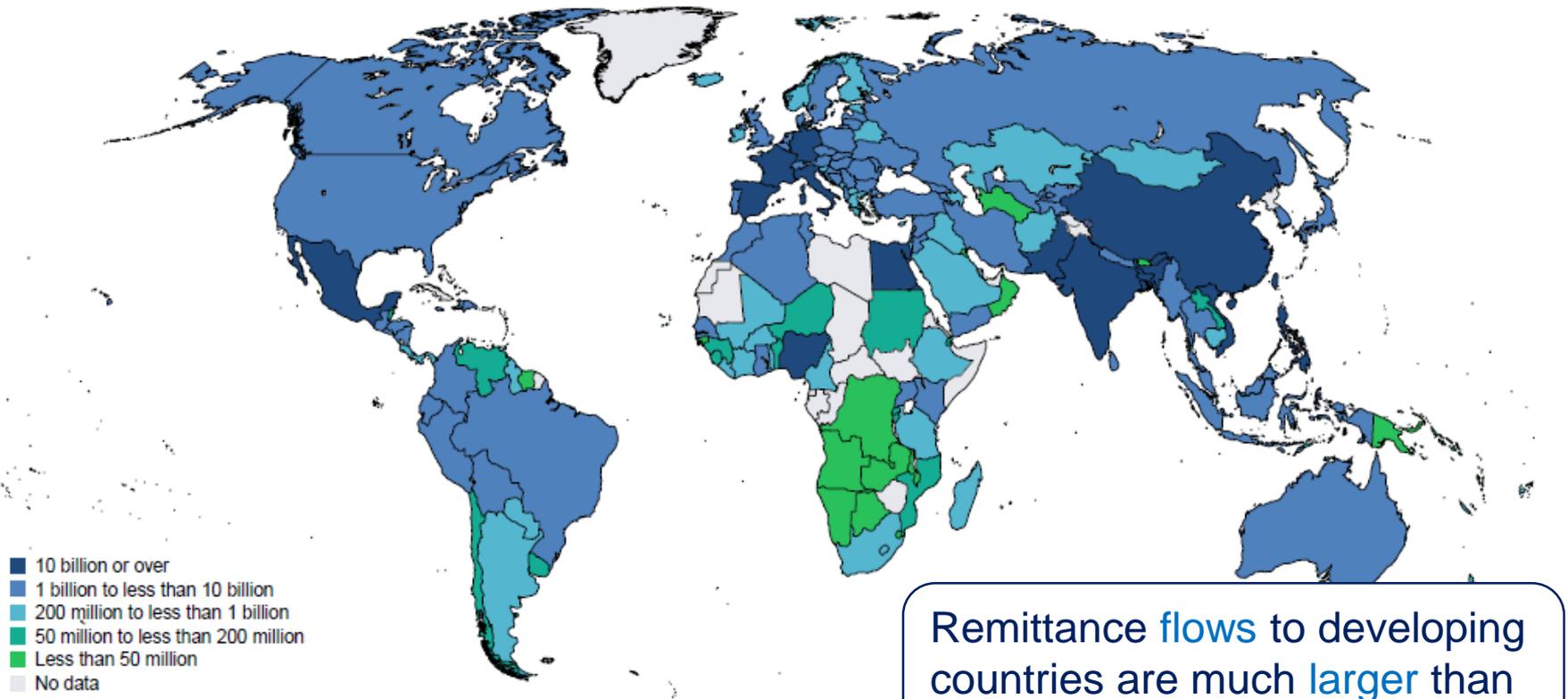


Note: "The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map [...]" (see slide 15)



Migrant remittances

Total inflow, 2016



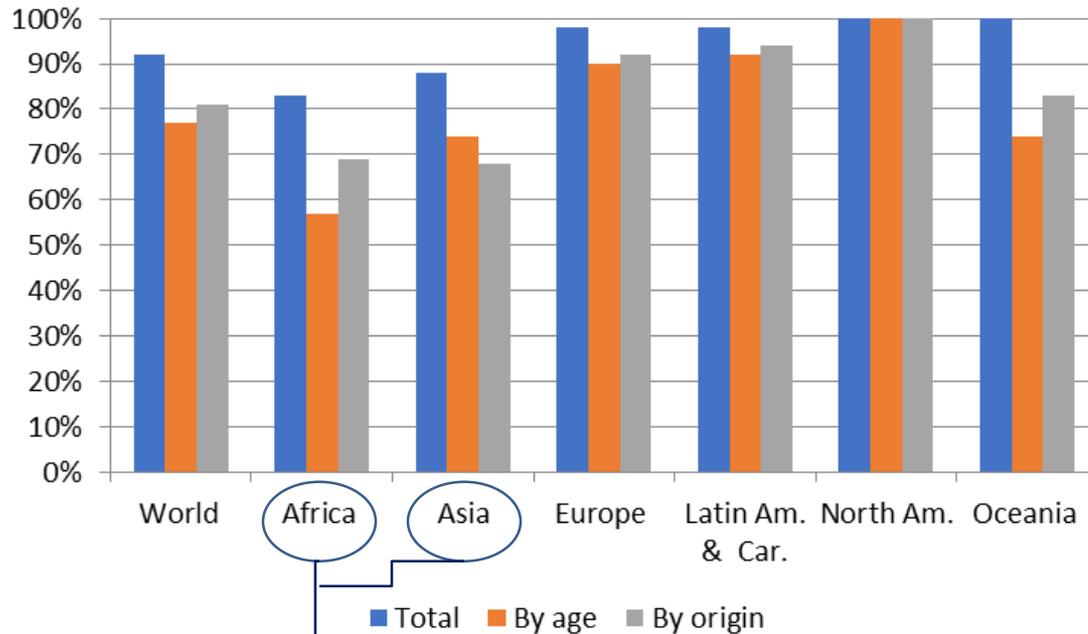
Remittance flows to developing countries are much larger than official development assistance

Note: "The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map [...]" (see slide 15)



Data availability

Percentage of countries with at least one data source on the number of international migrants since the 2000 census round



Data and evidence are crucial:

- To establish well-managed migration policies
- To maximize benefits and address challenges
- To dispel myths and misconceptions

For 17% of countries in Africa and 12% in Asia, there are no official statistics on the number of international migrants since the 2000 census

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Sources & note

- Data on [international migrants by sex, age and origin, availability of statistics since the 2000 census round](#):
United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *Trends in International Migrant Stock : The 2017 Revision*.
 - Used for figures on [slides 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14](#)
- Data on [total population](#):
United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*.
 - Used for figures on [slides 6 and 12](#)
- Data on [remittances](#):
World Bank (2017). *Annual Remittances Data: Migrant Remittance Inflows*.
 - Used for figure on [slide 13](#)
- With regards to the [maps on slides 12 and 13](#), the following [note](#) applies:
The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion 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. 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 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).

