

# Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

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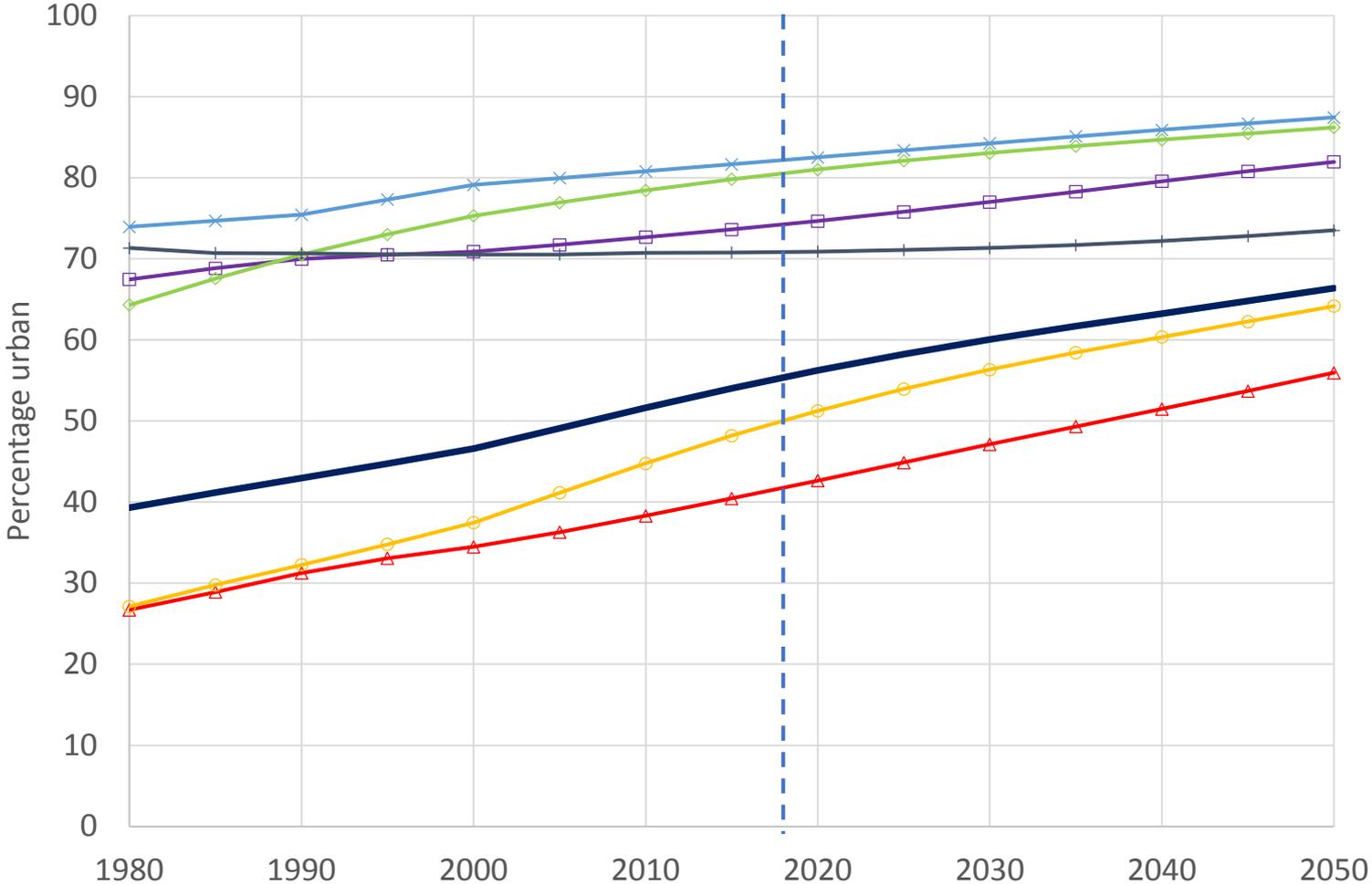
# Introduction

- Cities are centres of social, economic and political activity, and human mobility, that attract internal and international migrants
- The ICPD (1994) recognized urbanization as integral to development, and possible negative consequences of unbridled urban growth or excessive concentration of population in large cities
- The New Urban Agenda (2016) set out a new road map to make urbanization an engine of sustained and inclusive economic growth, social and cultural development and environmental protection
- International migration was featured in the ICPD PoA, and has gained more prominence since

# Introduction

- In 2018, a majority (4.2 billion of a total of 7.6 billion) of the world's population lived in cities and other urban settlements
- Almost all of the future increase in population, to 8.6 billion in 2030 and to 9.8 billion people in 2050 (UN medium variant) will be accounted for by the growing number of urban dwellers
- The proportion of the world population in urban areas is projected to keep rising, from 55.4% in 2018 to 60 per cent in 2030, and further to 66.4% in 2050 (figure I)

**Figure I. Proportion of total population residing in urban areas: world and geographic regions, 1980 to 2050**



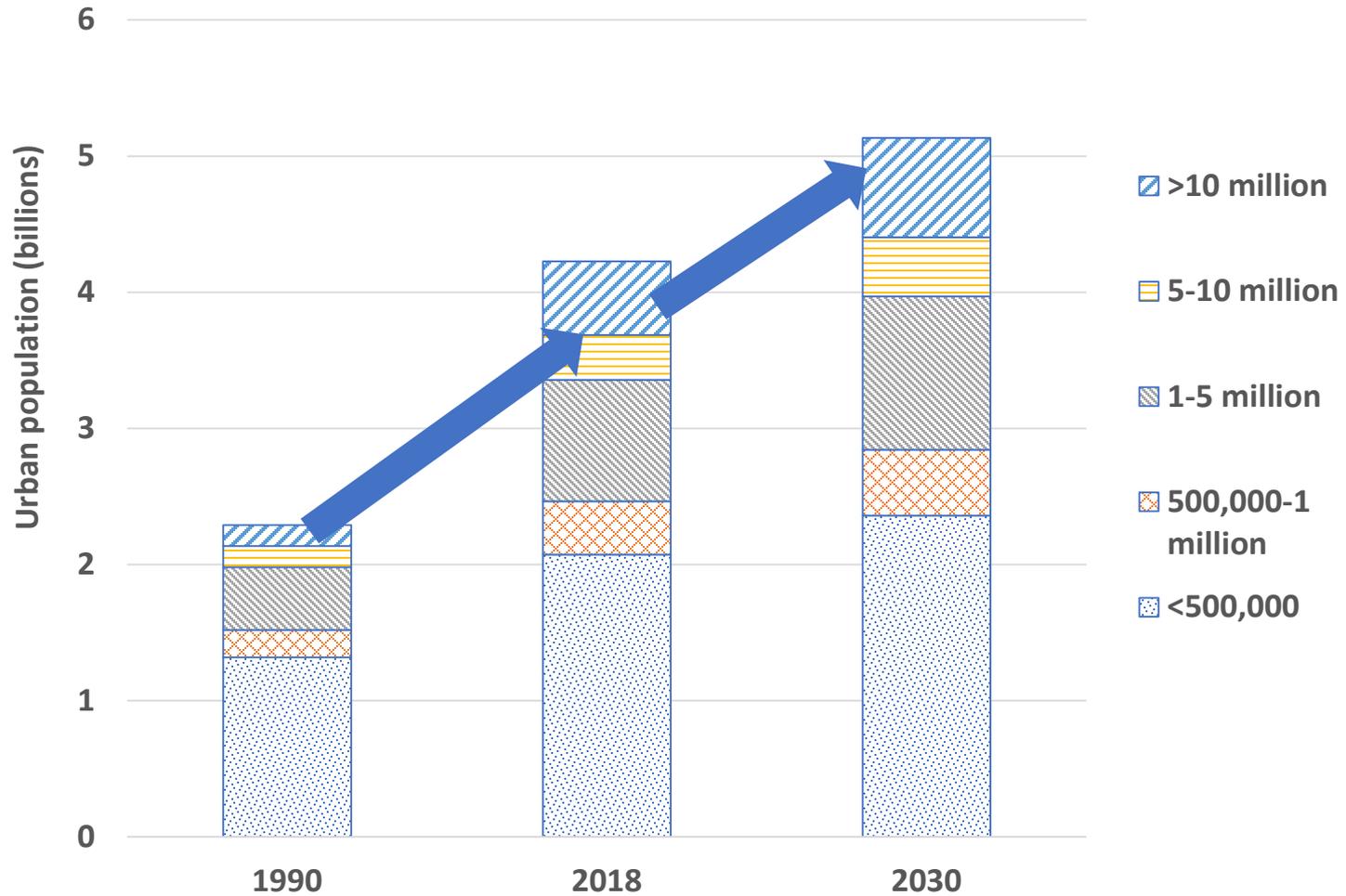
World Africa Asia Europe Latin America and the Caribbean Northern America Oceania

Source: United Nations (2014). *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*.

# Cities by size categories

- The number, and in many cases also the size of cities has increased considerably in the last decades.
- Cities of all sizes have contributed to urban growth since 1990 (figure II). Future growth is anticipated to be faster among cities with 1 million inhabitants or more.
- Megacities (with 10 million or more inhabitants), of which there were only 10 in 1990, number 33 in 2018. Projections suggest that there will be 41 megacities in 2030.

Figure II. Urban population by category of city size, in 1990, 2018 and 2030



Source: United Nations (2014). *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*.

# Sources of city growth

- Urban growth in developing countries has resulted primarily from natural increase (excess of births over deaths), with the exception of some countries in Asia, where rural-urban migration has played a major role. In Latin America and the Caribbean, intra-urban migration is main factor of urban growth
- In some cities of the Americas, Asia and Europe, *international migration* is a major factor of city growth, greater than natural increase or rural-urban migration

# Cities and international migration

- A large number and proportion of international migrants arrive and settle in cities, mainly in large metropolitan areas or “global cities”, which also serve as “immigrant gateways”, with at least 20% of their total population foreign-born.
- In 2015, 22 “global cities” hosted 44 million international migrants in 2015 (18% of world total). Together with 180 additional cities, 202 cities hosted around 1/3 of the total foreign-born population. Around 60% of refugees live in urban areas.

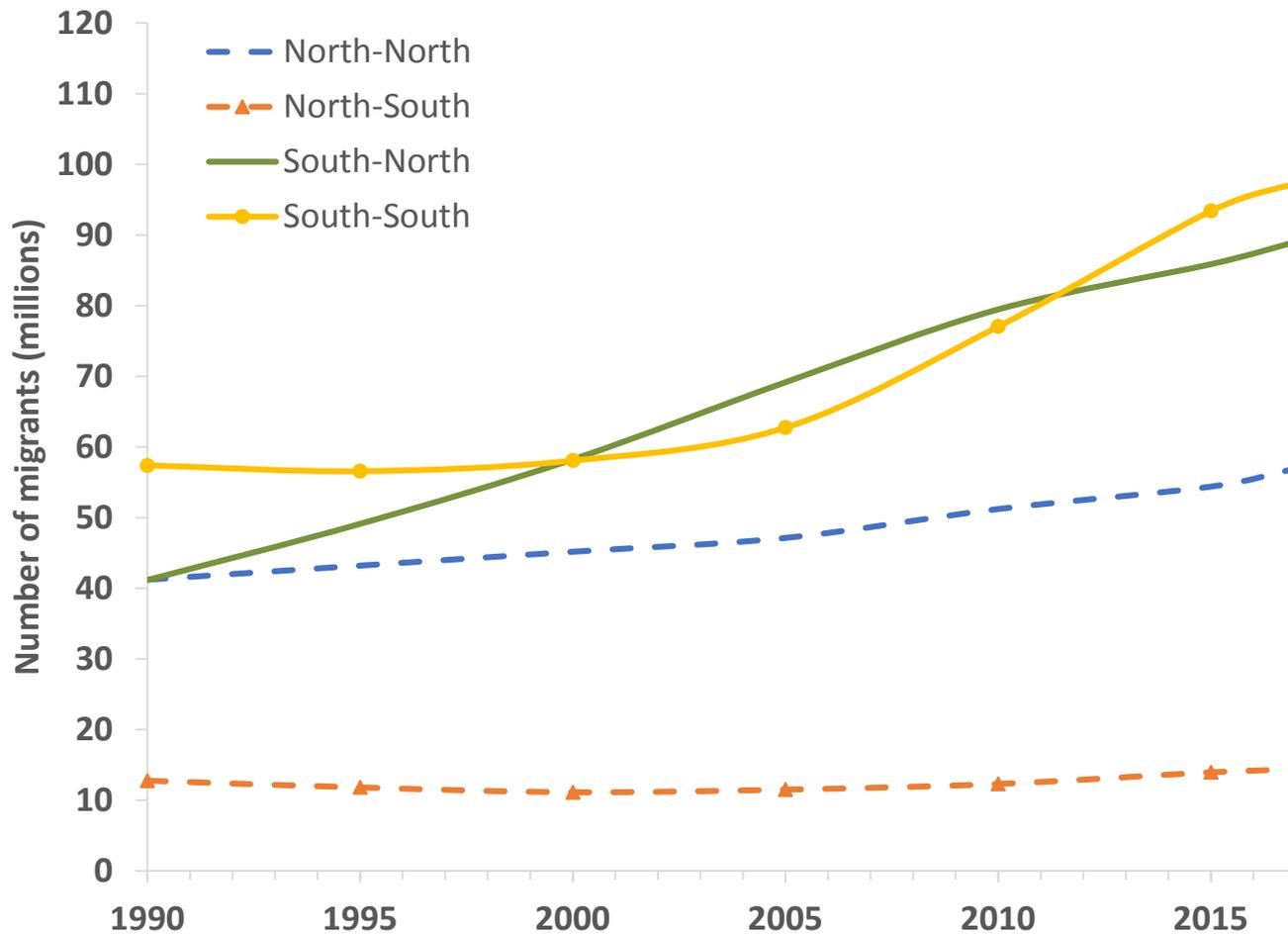
# Other forms of human mobility

- A significant number of migrants **return** to their place of origin; e.g., (6%-8% of the adult population of Central and Eastern European countries), nearly 1/3 of the migrants to the United Kingdom and Denmark
- Daily **commuting** has expanded thanks to cheaper transportation, with major aggregate consequences for urban sprawl, congestion and air pollution
- **Tourism** is a rapidly increasing form of mobility, with large economic implications (1.2 billion international arrivals in 2015, generating 1 in 11 jobs worldwide), attracting many migrant workers, especially in hospitality and related services

# International migration and development

- As countries develop, rates of emigration tend to rise -- emigration rates in middle-income countries can triple those of low-income countries.
- Global migration is a consequence and a driver of economic development, but the benefits do not accrue evenly for individuals or across countries.
- Maximizing and sharing the benefits of international migration requires regulation and policies to address: informality of labour markets, upholding labour standards, avoiding strain on social services, and address concerns about national security. With appropriate measures in place, however, safe, orderly and regular migration can indeed support global prosperity.

Figure III. Origin and destination of international migrants by development group, 1990-2017 (millions)

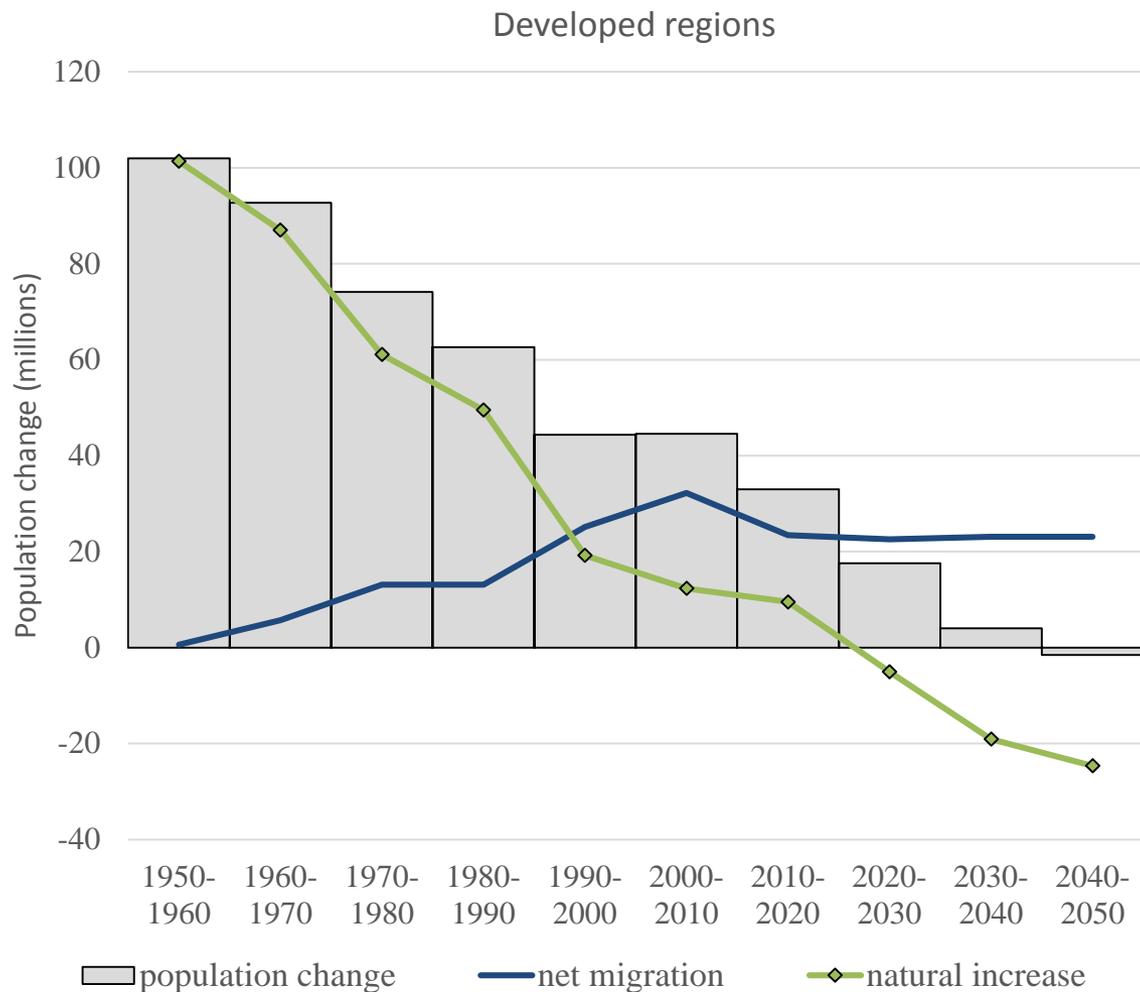


Source: United Nations (2017). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 Revision*. (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)

# Age and sex composition of international migrants

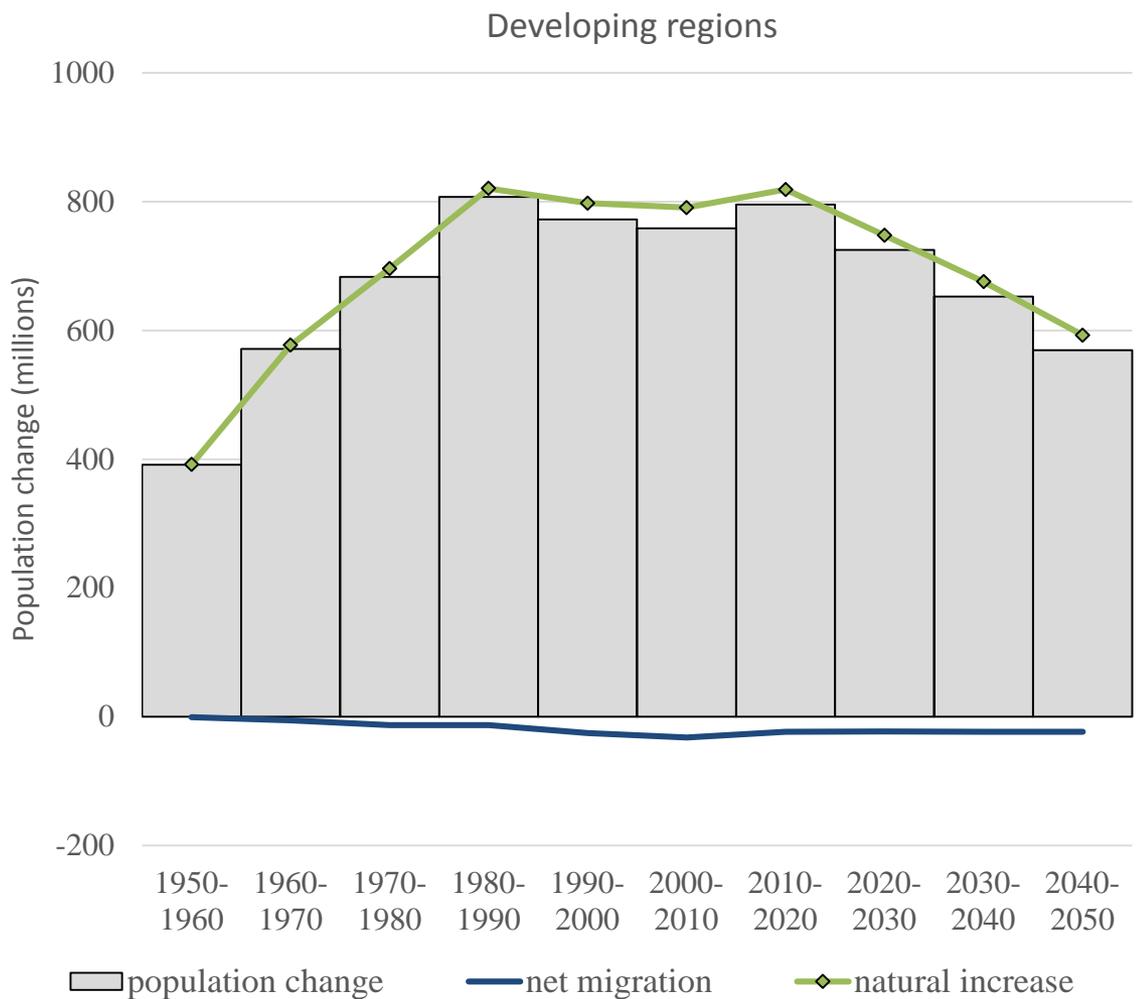
- A large majority (70%) of all international migrants are in the main working ages, 20-59 years, in the North and in the South. Older migrants, aged 60 years or over, vastly outnumber those under the age of 20 years in the North, while the opposite is true in the South
- Forty-eight per cent of all international migrants are women. The share of women among international migrants is higher in Europe and Northern America

Figure IV. Contributions of natural increase and net migration to population change for **developed regions**, from 1950–1960 to 2040–2050



Source: United Nations (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*.

Figure IV. Contributions of natural increase and net migration to population change for **developing regions**, from 1950–1960 to 2040–2050



Source: United Nations (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*.

# Policies on sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration (circa 2015)

Governments with policies in the past five years to	Per cent (%)
Reduce migration from rural to urban areas	72
Promote rural development to decrease migration pressures	75
Decentralize populations from large urban centres to smaller urban, suburban or rural areas	39
Relocate populations out of environmentally fragile areas	21
Increase energy efficiency in transport and buildings	72
Stringent environmental regulations for industries within or surrounding large urban centres	28
Improve solid waste management systems	87
Secure access to water and sanitation	75
Secure land tenure and adequate housing for the urban poor	81
Maintain the current level of immigration or did not have policies to influence it	75
Reduce the level of immigration	13
Raise the level of immigration	12
<b>Raise immigration for highly skilled workers</b>	<b>44</b>
Maintain the current level of emigration or did not have policies to influence it	59
Reduce the level of emigration	32

# Data Gaps

- Significant data gaps remain in regard to cities, internal and international migration, and other forms of mobility. Specifically:
- Internationally comparable **data, including definitions and measures of cities and urban agglomerations** are needed for an integrated monitoring of the SDGs related to sustainable urbanization;
- Internationally **comparable definitions and measures of migration, including multiple moves, return and circular migration**, based on censuses, surveys, administrative records, and new sources of “big data”, requiring national and international coordination and cooperation

# Data Gaps

Steps to improve migration data could comprise:

- The **inclusion of migration-relevant questions in the 2020 census round**
- **Use of administrative records** to produce and disseminate migration-related statistics
- Inclusion of a **question on the country of birth and of citizenship** in household surveys
- Creating **partnerships with the private sector to leverage “big data”** for measuring migration
- **Enhancing national capacities** for the collection and use of migration-related data and indicators to support policymaking

# Recommendations

- Planning for the delivery of services should consider scenarios of future growth of urban centres and surrounding rural settlements, internal and international migration, and mobility
- The needs of women for equal access to education, health care, decent work, property rights and political participation, should be considered in policy formulation and implementation. Priority to be given to improved access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, for all women, including migrant women.
- National and local governments should address the needs of the rapidly growing number of older persons in both urban and rural areas, including policies to promote healthy ageing and improve access to infrastructure and services
- Local governments, working in partnership with national authorities and civil society, should promote the integration of migrants and their families into the host society while ensuring the protection and fulfilment of their human rights

# Recommendations

- Migration policies should minimize the negative impacts of migration on countries of origin, including loss of human capital and separation of families, and maximize the potential benefits of reducing the transfer costs of remittances, promoting the recognition of skills and credentials, ensuring the portability of earned benefits and supporting the engagement of diaspora groups and communities
- The collection of data on urban and rural populations, on internal and international migration in censuses, including the 2020 round, should be supported. Data collection on internal and international migrants through household survey programmes, and the use of data from administrative records should be expanded
- International and regional organizations should coordinate efforts in developing programmes and methodologies, and providing technical assistance to improve data collection in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development