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Revisiting Global Immigrant Gateways:
Hyper-diverse, Established and Emerging Turnstiles of Human Settlement

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Globalization, the growth of cities and the global movement of people are increasingly interrelated processes (Sassen, 1999; Benton-Short, et. al. 2005; Price and Benton-Short, 2008).   For most immigration scholars the state is the container of convenience. The United Nations collects and publishes valuable state-level data estimating the world's migrant stock (2015). These data show an absolute growth in the number of immigrants, although proportionally migrant stock represent only 3.3 percent of the global population. All countries are both senders and receivers of immigrants, but the intensity of these flows and rates of net migration vary greatly. In developed countries immigrants represent a larger share of the population at 11.2 percent, versus developing countries where they are just 1.7 percent (Figure 1). Yet in many metropolitan areas in developed and even developing countries, immigrants account for a far larger percentage of the total population. Thus it is no wonder that concern about "mass migration is emerging as a permanent feature of geopolitical stress and global change" (Hassan 2017: 667) especially for urban areas. Consequently, there is a need for better collection of data on the impact that immigrants have on metropolitan areas.

Figure 1
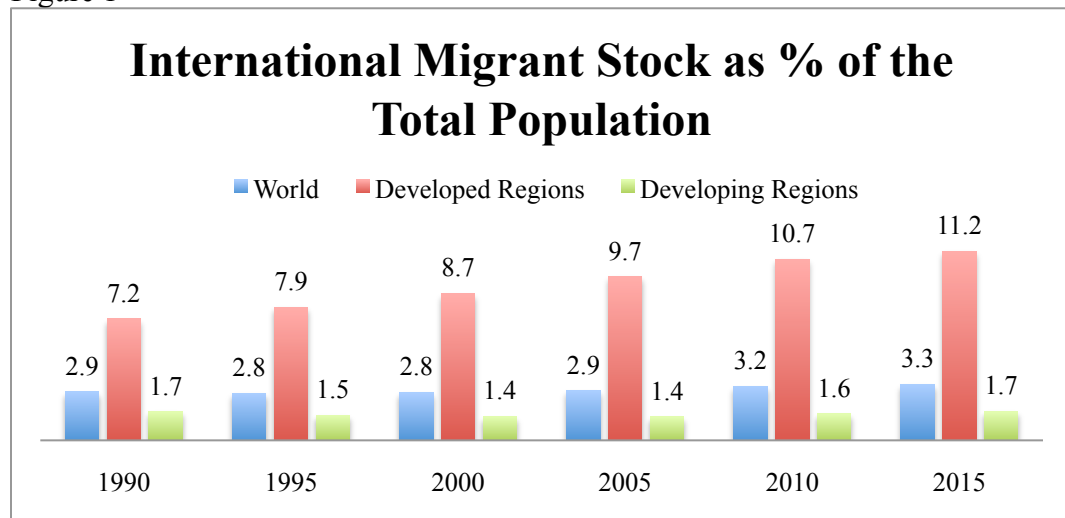
Source: UN, Population Division, Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision

This paper reviews findings from a global urban database that links immigrants and cities developed by the author with colleagues at the George Washington University. (Globalization, Urbanization and Migration website at https://gum.columbian.gwu.edu/). So much of our understanding of urban migration is based upon a handful of established destinations (Glick Schiller and Caglar, 2011; Winders 2014). Yet emerging destinations such as Dublin, Doha, and Seoul deserve greater attention along with established cities such as London, New York and Sydney whose mix of native and foreign-born populations is dynamic.

In cities around the world, but especially in Western Europe, Australia, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, and North America, immigrants play a fundamental role in the labor force and the social life of cities (IOM 2015). And for sending regions such as Africa, Asia, and Latin America the remittances from laborers living in these cities are increasingly viewed as an essential component in household livelihood strategies. By focusing on urban immigration and settlement in gateway cities it is possible to see how global processes become localized, from highly visible Chinese commercial districts to the enclaves of residential guest workers and the barely visible presence of foreign-born care givers in scattered suburban settings. By taking a global perspective on gateways, it becomes possible to distinguish established, emerging and even by-passed urban areas, how they are transforming the way people and places are linked, and also the uneven way in which immigrant groups are embedded in these urban settlements (Kaplan, 2018; Teixeira and Li, 2015).
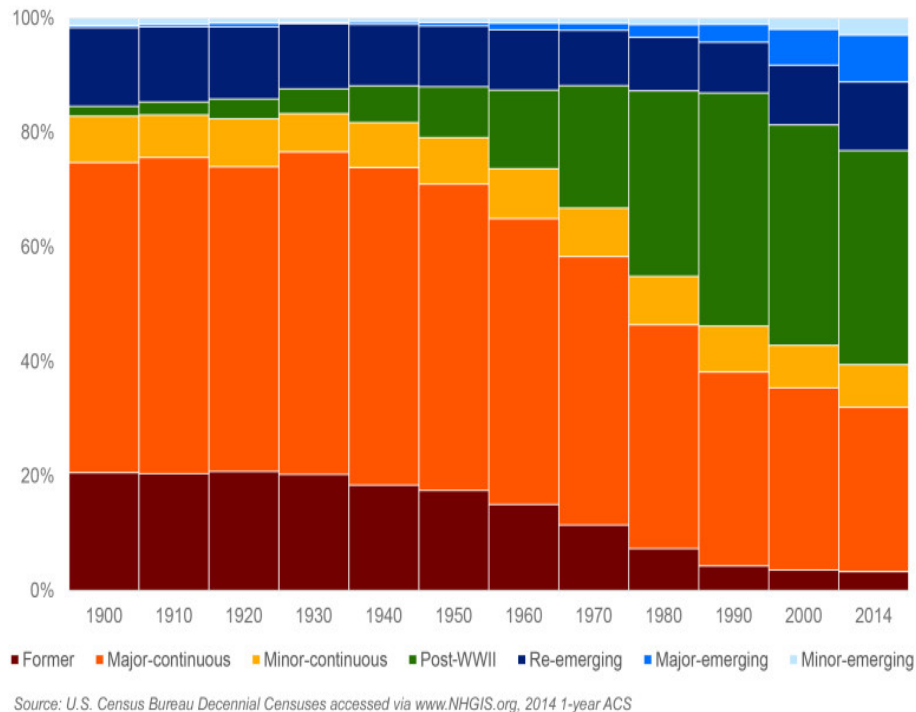
Immigrant Gateways

The absence of a comparative global data set on the relationship between a range of cities and immigration drives this work. There are important new destinations in East Asia (Vecchio 2013), emerging destinations in Sub-Saharan Africa (especially South Africa) and especially Southwest Asia that warrant consideration as urban immigrant gateways become more numerous, diverse and divided.

The term "gateway" is increasingly found in sociology, history and geography literatures in reference to major urban immigrant destinations (Singer 2004). Audrey Singer develops a useful typology to understand the *longue durée* of the US urban immigrant experience, focusing on established, emerging, and former gateways (Figure 2).[1] In this typology, the vast majority of the foreign born are in major continuous gateways (such as New York City and Chicago) or Post-WWII gateways (such as Los Angeles, Houston, and Washington). While 20th century immigrant flows biased settlement in the urban cores, 21st century gateways are experiencing more immigrant settlement in suburbs (Singer et. al. 2008, Wei, 2009). Still here is a tendency to view gateways as places of permanent settlement for immigrant newcomers, especially

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[1] Singer revised her 2004 typology, acknowledging seven gateway types in the US: former, major continuous, minor continuous post-WWII, re-emerging, major-emerging, minor-emerging (Singer, 2015)

because the literature on cities and immigrants draws from the experience of traditional countries of settlement such as Canada, the United States or Australia.

Figure 1. Share of immigrants living in named gateways, by type
1900 to 2014

Legend: Former, Major-continuous, Minor-continuous, Post-WWII, Re-emerging, Major-emerging, Minor-emerging

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Censuses accessed via www.NHGIS.org, 2014 1-year ACS

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Source: Singer, 2015—Immigrant Gateway typology for US Metropolitan areas.

It is beyond the scope of the data set to create an elaborate typology for the range or urban immigrant destinations in the world. And it may not be useful at a global scale. Today's gateways are viewed as critical entry points that draw from a wide range of sending countries, facilitate cultural exchange, and are nodes for the collection, circulation, and dispersion of goods, capital and people. While not all of these destinations are 'global cities,' immigrants in these gateways foster globalizing nodes of exchange, especially with countries of origin. Yet there is a darker side to these destinations, with foreign labor experiencing exploitation, vulnerability and residential segregation.

Although we don't offer a formal typology, there are tendencies worth examining as these global urban immigrant destinations grow in size and importance. These tendencies are not exclusive, but they are representative of the demographic changes observed. In particular, today's gateways can be both Hyper-diverse and Turnstiles of human settlement.

A *Hyperdiverse* gateway in this study have at least 11% of the total population is foreign-born, (2) no one country of origin accounts for 25% or more of the immigrant stock and (3) immigrants come from all regions of the world. Toronto, Copenhagen and

New York City are all excellent examples of such hyper-diversity. Metropolitan Toronto (Figure 3) has 2.5 million foreign born that account for 46% of the total population. Copenhagen (Figure 4) has 278,000 foreign born that account for 20% of the total population and metropolitan New York (Figure 5), the world's largest immigrant gateway has 5.5 million foreign born accounting for 28.3% of the total population.
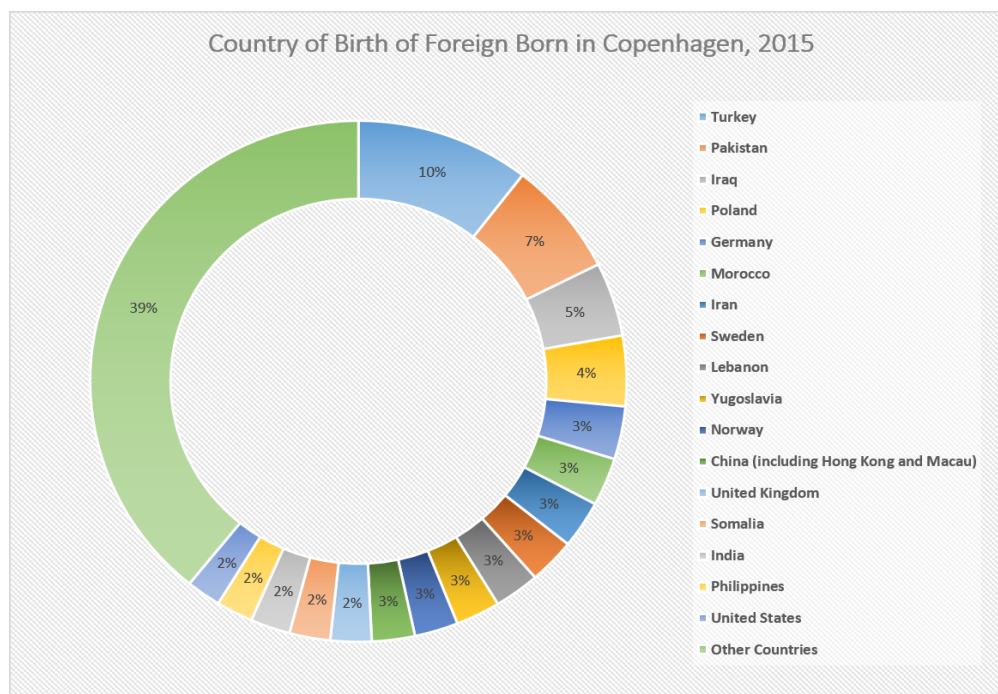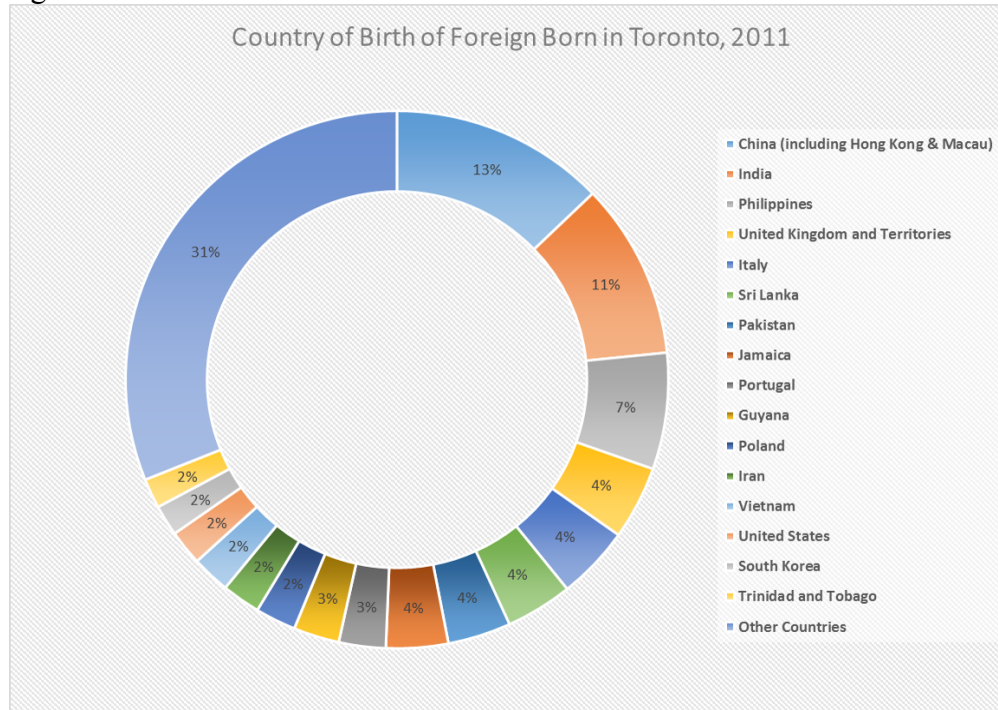
Figure 3

Country of Birth of Foreign Born in Toronto, 2011

Country of Birth of Foreign Born in Copenhagen, 2015

Figure 4

Country of Birth of Foreign Born in New York City, 2013

- Dominican Republic
- China (including Hong Kong and Macau)
- Mexico
- India
- Jamaica
- Ecuador
- Guyana
- Colombia
- Haiti
- Philippines
- Korea
- El Salvador
- Italy
- Poland
- Trinidad and Tobago
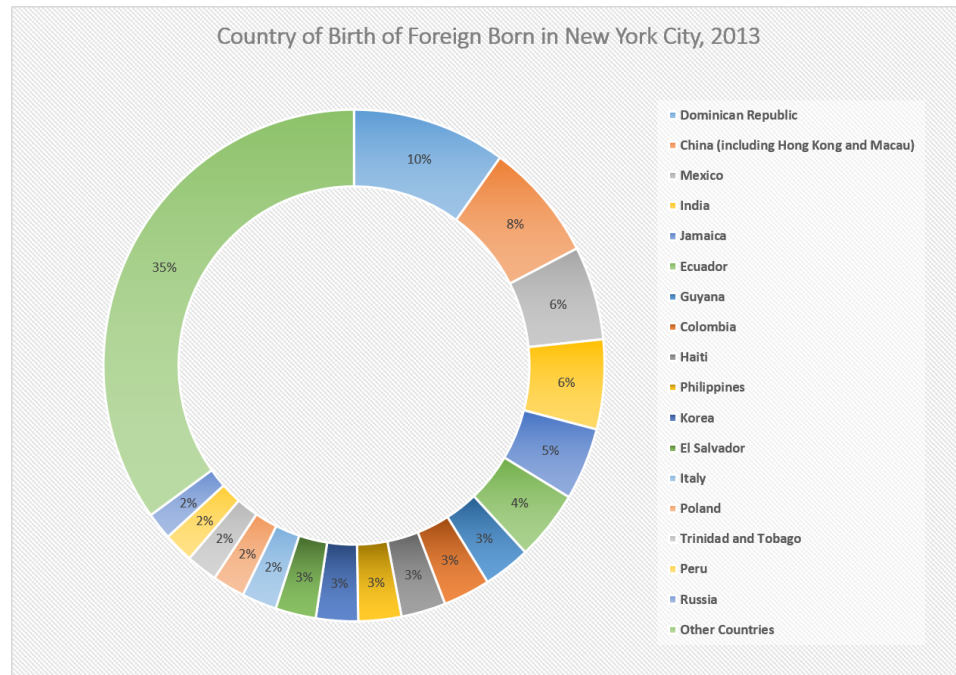- Peru
- Russia
- Other Countries

Figure 5

A *Turnstile* suggests a rotating cast of immigrant labor often allowed in temporarily or without authorization. In cities such as Doha, Abu Dhabi or Shanghai, immigrants regularly move through these urban turnstiles, often in highly precarious and temporary conditions. The turnstile function is observable by the labels given to the foreign born such as labour camp residents or temporary workers. Although it is difficult to track the individual movements of migrants into and out of these cities, the conditions in which they are admitted suggest temporariness.

A basic sorting of urban immigrant gateway types would include ***Established*** (or Continuous) cities that have been attracting immigrants for a half-century or more. These would include the obvious suspects: Los Angeles, London, Hong Kong, or Buenos Aires. There also are ***Emerging*** gateways, that saw their growth in the 1990s onward, as globalizing trends reorganized the world map and countries experiencing labor shortages set up mechanisms to recruit foreign workers. Examples in this category would include Dublin; Seoul; Santiago, Chile and Doha. And there are major world cities that 20th and 21st century immigrants have mostly *by-passed*, although internal migration may be significant.

Methodology

We limited our urban list to those metropolitan areas with a population of 1 million or more people based on country census data or UN urbanization data. In part this was due to limited resources and a desire to emphasize the role of immigrants in the major cities

of the world.[2] The dataset includes total population, total foreign–born population and a break down by the country of origin of the foreign born for over 200 cities. Collecting this information is challenging because the data are available for different years, the definitions of 'foreign-born' vary, and foreign born numbers are not reported at consistent urban scales. For most of the cities in the database, however, we have at least two and sometimes three data points from 1995 to 2015. This means we can also make observations about the relative growth or decline of the foreign-born in particular cities. Most countries do collect foreign-born data, but many do not report it at the urban scale, in part because the immigrant numbers are often small. Or especially precarious groups, such as refugees, do not always appear in census data. For this analysis, many major cities in Africa, China, India and Southeast Asian cities are not in the database.

We relied on national censuses and statistical yearbooks for some cities. Since census data is seldom collected annually we have a range of dates, mostly from 2010 to 2015. This sourcing makes for fairly reliable estimates for immigrants who settle for several years, but most likely undercounts the foreign born. Refugee populations, especially those living in camps or who are scattered in smaller urban settlements, are unlikely to be in this dataset. For example, the Turkish census reports only 155,000 foreign-born in Istanbul in 2014, which seems low given the refugee flows into and through this country.
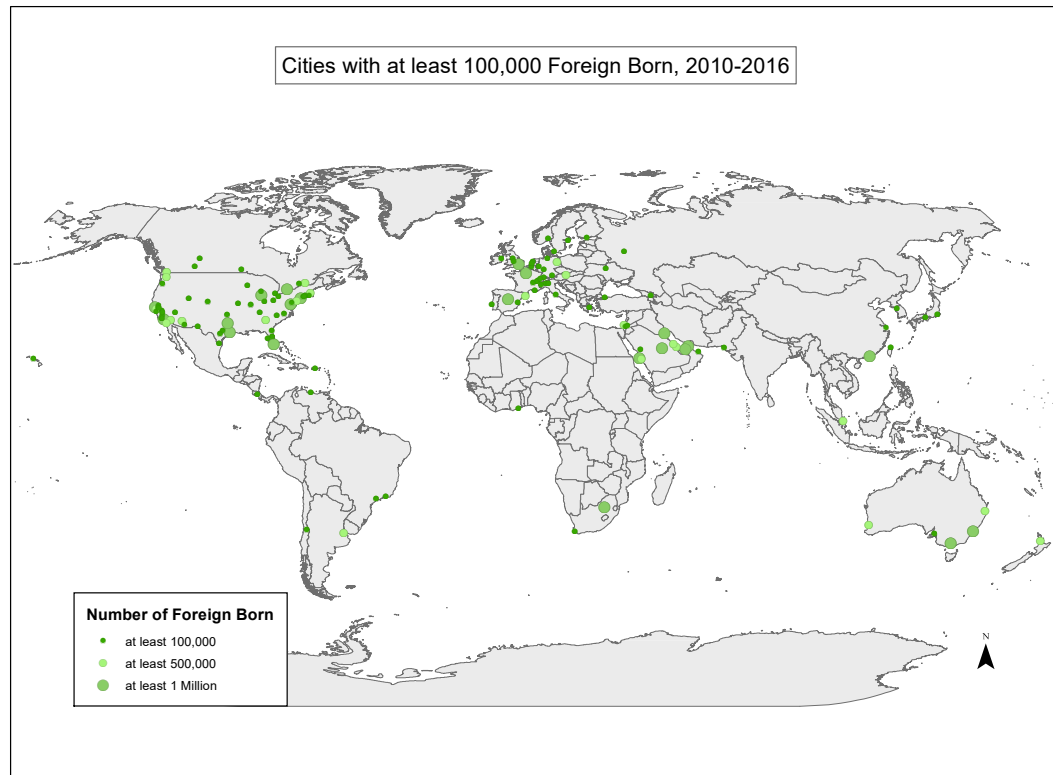
Findings

We estimate there are 22 metropolitan areas with over 1 million foreign-born residents. Nine are in North America (US and Canada), five are in the Middle East, three (or four) are in Europe, two are in Australia, and one each in Africa and East Asia. These 22 major destinations account for nearly one-in-five of the worlds the foreign-born stock in 2015 (18 percent). In 2005 our database had 18 cities representing 33.5 million immigrants. A decade later there are 22 cities with 44.3 foreign-born, with the most significant growth in the GCC states. The new additions include Abu Dhabi, Kuwait City, Madrid, Greater Johannesburg. The growth of GCC cities as immigrant destinations is striking, although it should be noted that in the early 2000s there was limited published data on the composition and origins of immigrants in these metropolitan areas. Unlike established gateways in traditional settler states, most foreign-born in the GCC countries do not have the option for permanent residence or citizenship—in fact the term immigrant is seldom used as foreign labor is categorized.

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[2] The designation of Metropolitan areas varies by country, and not all countries provide data at the metropolitan scale. When countries do, this larger geographical unit is used, rather than the city proper. Metropolitan areas reflect a functional area of integration, trade, and commuting that better capture the scale of cities today. Metropolitan areas of 1 million or more were selected for this analysis of urban settlements, although there are certainly much smaller settlements where immigrant settlement is impactful.

Metropolitan Areas With At Least 1 Million Foreign Born
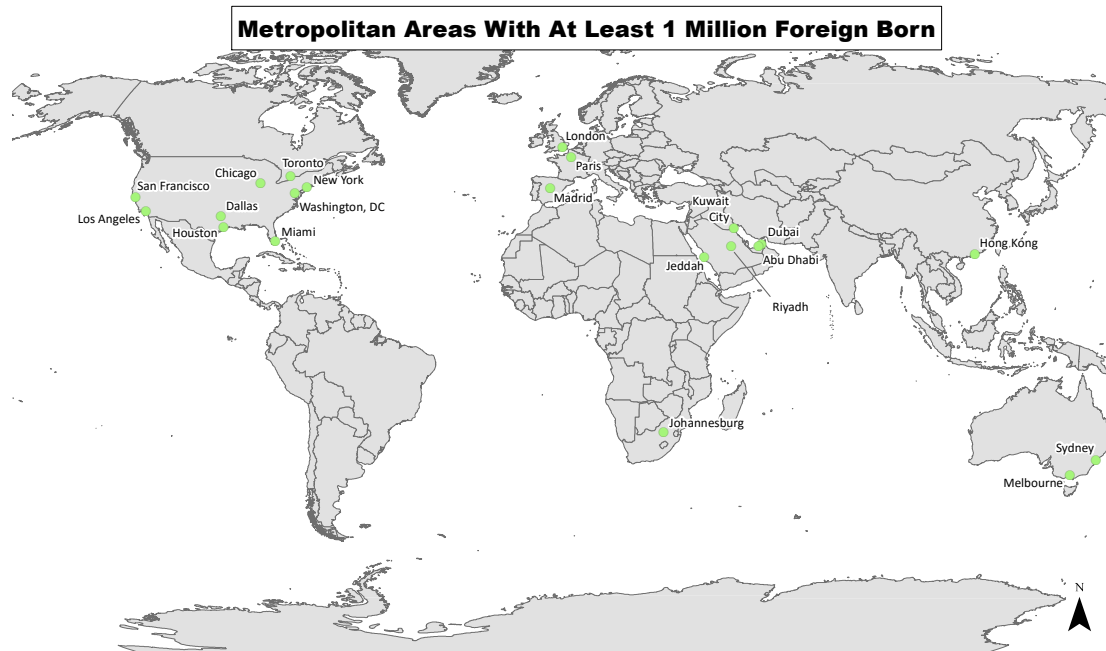
Two metropolitan areas were dropped from the 1-million-immigrants map: Moscow and Singapore. Moscow, and all of the Russian Federation, is problematic regarding the calculation of the foreign-born (Rozanova, 2016). Moscow's FB population could be well over 1 million, but this would include thousands who 'repatriated' groups after the break up of the USSR. Demographer Marya Rozanova makes the case that the migrant foreign-born Moscow is closer to 130,000 and figure is even lower for St. Petersburg. In Singapore the foreign-born population dropped significantly between 2000 and 2010, from 1.3 million to 860,000. We don't have an explanation for this.

In addition to the metro areas with 1 million immigrants, there are another 180 cities that range from having a few thousand immigrants to nearly one million foreign-born (such as Mecca, Vancouver and Buenos Aires). Combined these 200 metro areas contain 84 million immigrants or 34% of the foreign-born stock according to the UN 2015 estimates. For many North American cities, the increase of foreign-born residents counter balanced an outflow of native-born and foreign-born residents from these same cities. In the last two decades many European cities have seen their foreign-born grow sharply, both from economic migrants and refugees. Also major immigrant destinations in the Gulf continue to grow, most notably Abu Dhabi and Doha.

Cities with at least 100,000 Foreign Born, 2010-2016

Number of Foreign Born
• at least 100,000
• at least 500,000
• at least 1 Million

Conclusions:

Mapping global urban gateways reveals where migratory circuits that form and the importance of particular gateways in absorbing massive numbers of immigrants. There are limits to the data, as outlined, but by asking the questions of where immigrants go (at the urban scale) shows a dynamic system in which destination localities may quickly grow and also decline.

We are still collecting data and would welcome suggestions for improving and expanding data for the foreign born in major cities in the world.

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