

**COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
NEW TRENDS IN MIGRATION: DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS
E/CN.9/2013/3
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**FRANCESCA PERUCCI
POPULATION DIVISION/DESA
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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentleman,

It is my pleasure to introduce the report of the Secretary-General entitled “New Trends in Migration: Demographic Aspects” (E/CN.9/2012/4). The report presents an overview of trends in migration, examines some of its demographic aspects and discusses policies to enhance the benefits of migration while addressing its challenges. The report also provides recommendations for actions to promote the integration of migrants and to enhance the contribution of migration to development, which in turn contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Although the percentage of international migrants in the global population has changed only slightly over the past 20 years, the report shows major changes in the size, direction and complexity of migration. Since 1990, migration patterns have become increasingly diverse. Most countries are now concurrently countries of origin, destination and transit. Also, differences across regions in the stock of international migrants as a percentage of total population have continued to widen. The increase was more rapid in the developed regions, with Europe and North America each adding more international migrants than the other four regions combined. As a result, in 2000 Europe surpassed Asia as the area hosting the largest number of international migrants.

The report also highlights how people increasingly move across regions, while the percentage of migrants moving within the same region decreased. This was the case in the African region, in Europe and North America. In contrast, in Asia, Latin America and

the Caribbean, and Oceania, the percentage of migrants moving outside the region decreased.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Despite the increased diversification of migratory flows, international migration remains highly concentrated. In 2010, of the 214 million international migrants worldwide, 50 million (almost one in four) were living in North America and 70 million (one in three) were in Europe.

Yet, new countries have emerged as important destinations. Rapidly growing economies in East and South-East Asia, South America and West Africa have become new poles of attraction for migrants within their respective regions.

Moreover, the year 2011 saw the highest number in more than a decade of newly displaced people: over 800,000. At the end of 2011, the global number of refugees and asylum seekers reached an estimated 15.2 million persons. But durable solutions for refugees are increasingly being implemented, including repatriation, local integration and resettlement in third countries. In 2011, more than 500,000 refugees were able to repatriate—more than twice as many as in 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The report also notes how the 2008-2009 economic and financial crises caused a decline in immigration in several European countries. With the world economy continuing through a path of recovery, although weak, immigration in some of these countries rose again in 2011.

Turning to the demographic impact of migration, the report notes how net migration, has increasingly represented an important component of overall change in population size for many countries, especially those in the developed regions. In Europe, for instance, where the number of deaths has exceeded the number of births since the late 1990s, positive net migration has offset population decline.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me now to turn to recent trends in internal migration. Producing internationally comparable data on internal migration is difficult, mainly because of the diversity of geographical scales across which moves are recorded in different countries. Despite these limitations, national data sets clearly show large numbers of migrants moving within the borders of their country. In 2010, in China alone, 221 million people, or roughly 17 per cent of the country's total population, were residing in an area different from where they were officially registered. About 150 million of them were from rural areas.

Rural-to-urban migration is an important factor of population redistribution, including urbanization, although the relative contribution of internal migration to urban growth (versus natural increase) has changed over time and varies across countries and regions. Growing urbanisation, driven both by migration and natural increase, requires a balanced approach that includes sustainable urban planning while recognizing the important role played by rural communities in the economic development of many countries.

Governments are increasingly addressing issues related to the spatial distribution of their population. Among countries with available data in 2011, 79 per cent had policies to lessen rural-to-urban migration, an increase from 70 per cent in 2005.

Ladies and gentlemen,

More women are migrating on their own or as heads of households than before. This is evident in some countries of South and South-East Asia, where over 70 per cent of labour emigration permits are allocated to women. And while migration can represent an opportunity for economic empowerment, migrant women also face risks that require gender sensitivity in the formulation of policies and interventions related to migration, and to labour migration in particular.

The report also notes that more than 80 per cent of trafficked human beings are women—and 16 per cent of those are under 18. Cross-border human trafficking and migrant smuggling affect nearly all countries. As of September 2012, 152 countries had ratified the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, while 134 countries had ratified the 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

Mr. Chairman,

Most migrants are young adults when they migrate. While young migrants have a large potential to build social, economic and cultural bridges of cooperation and understanding, they also have specific needs and vulnerabilities.

And because international migrants tend to comprise higher proportions of working-age persons compared to the overall population, migration makes an important contribution to reducing old-age dependency ratios. This effect however is not sufficient to completely offset ageing in countries of destination. The old-age dependency ratios of developed countries are projected to continue to increase.

Many governments have taken steps to promote equal opportunities for internal migrants and to foster social integration. By 2011, a large number of countries had implemented programmes to promote the social and economic integration of international migrants, ensure non-discrimination and facilitate their access to citizenship. Family reunification is an important mechanism for ensuring the economic and social integration of long-term immigrants.

Let me now turn to the role of diaspora communities. Remittances continue to provide significant support to families and represent a significant and steady source of foreign currency in many developing countries. Officially recorded remittances to developing countries are estimated to have reached \$406 billion in 2012, up from \$381 billion in 2011— a 6.6 per cent increase in only a year.

Mr. Chairman,

Migrants are a very diverse group. Successful policies for migration and development will need to consider such diversity of experience and vulnerability, as well as the impact of migration on places of origin and destination and on families separated by migration.

Successful policies also require an adequate evidence base. Unfortunately, reliable and timely data on migration continue to be lacking. Progress in this area is urgently needed. The international community can make an important contribution to support

Governments in producing and analysing migration data, guided by internationally agreed standards and recommendations and in accordance with international principles of confidentiality and data protection.

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Over the last few months, the debate on the content and format of the post-2015 development agenda has repeatedly stressed the importance of considering migration issues in the new development framework. The recent report of the UN system-wide task team, *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, identifies migration as one of the important demographic trends that will influence the success of the new post-2015 UN development agenda. It is increasingly recognized that migration, when supported by appropriate policies, can be an important force for development. Issues related to the links between migration and development and to the needs and rights of migrants are crucial elements in the discussion.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, allowing me to emphasize that including migration issues in national development plans and strategies, as well as in the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and future sustainable development goals, will help us to realize the full potential of migration for development.

Thank you.