Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Report of the Secretary-General
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Outline of presentation

• Trends in urbanization, city growth and its sources
• Human mobility and role of international migration in cities
• Data gaps
• Recommendations
Background

- ICPD (1994): chapters devoted to urbanization and international migration

- Sustainable cities and migration well integrated into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)

- New Urban Agenda (2016) defined new road map to make urbanization an engine of sustainable development

- International migration has gained increasing prominence since ICPD, including New York Declaration (2016)
Global trends in urbanization

- In 2018, 4.2 billion of world’s population lives in cities
- Almost all of the future increase (to 2030 and 2050) in the world population will be accounted by urban dwellers
- The proportion of the world population in urban areas is projected to keep rising in all major regions of the world (see figure I)
Proportion of total population residing in urban areas, 1980 to 2050

Urban population by category of city size, 1990, 2018 and 2030

Megacities in 2018

Megacities in 2030

Sources of city growth

1. **Natural increase** (excess of births over deaths)

2. In many developing countries (especially in Asia and Africa), rural-urban migration has played a major role.

3. In Latin America and the Caribbean, most internal migration is between urban areas.

4. In some cities in the Americas, Asia and Europe, international migration is a major factor of city growth.*
Cities and international migration

- A large number and proportion of international migrants arrive to and settle in cities.
- In 2015, 22 “global cities”* hosted 44 million international migrants (18% of world total foreign-born population).
- 180 additional cities hosted more than 1/3 of the global foreign-born population.
- Around 60% of refugees live in urban areas.
Other forms of human mobility

- Many migrants “circulate”/return to their place of origin; e.g., 6%-8% of the adult population of Central and Eastern Europe, and nearly 1/3 of the migrants to the United Kingdom and Denmark.

- Daily commuting has expanded greatly, with significant environmental consequences.

- Tourism is a rapidly increasing form of mobility, with large economic impact -- 1.2 billion international arrivals in 2015, generating 1 in 11 jobs worldwide.
Trends in international migration

• Since 1990, the global number of international migrants has increased by 105 million, reaching 258 million in 2017

• These numbers represented 2.9% of the total world population in 1990, and 3.4% in 2017
Origin and destination of international migrants between North and South, 1990-2017 (millions)

Age and sex composition of international migrants

- **70%** are 20-59 years in the North and in the South
- “Older” international migrants (60+ years) outnumber “young” migrants (under 20 years) in the North, while the opposite is true in the South
- **48%** of international migrants are women; this share is higher in Europe and Northern America than in other regions
Contributions of natural increase and net migration to population change for developed regions, from 1950 to 2050

International migration and development

• 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
  – address concerns about national security

• With appropriate measures in place, however, safe, orderly and regular migration can indeed support global prosperity
Policies on sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration (circa 2015)

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

- Significant data gaps remain in regard to:

- Internationally comparable data, definitions and measures of cities and urban agglomerations, needed for an integrated monitoring of SDGs

- Internationally comparable data and measures of migration, including return and circular migration, based on censuses, surveys, administrative records, and new sources of “big data”

- All this requires national and international coordination and cooperation
Steps to improve migration data could comprise:

1. **Inclusion of recommended questions on migration** [and related issues] during the 2020 census round

2. Expanded **use of administrative records** to derive migration-related statistics

3. **Inclusion of questions on country of birth** and country of citizenship in household surveys

4. Creating and strengthening partnerships with the private sector to leverage “**big data**” for measuring migration

5. **Enhancing national capacities** for the collection and use of migration-related data and indicators to support policymaking

Recommendations

• Consider demographic scenarios of growth of urban centres and surrounding rural settlements

• Consider the needs of women and men for equal access to services, including access to sexual and reproductive health care services for all, including migrant women.

• National and local governments need to address the needs of the rapidly growing number of older persons in cities and rural areas, including policies to promote healthy ageing and accessibility to infrastructure and services

• Local governments working in partnership with national authorities and civil society to promote the integration of migrants and their families into the host society
Recommendations

• Migration policies to minimize the negative impacts of migration on countries of origin, e.g., loss of human capital and separation of families; and maximize the benefits by reducing the transfer costs of remittances, promoting the recognition of skills and credentials, and supporting the engagement of diaspora groups and communities

• Need to improve the collection of data on cities, urban and rural populations, on internal and international migration through the 2020 round of censuses, surveys and administrative records

• International and regional organizations to coordinate efforts in developing methodologies and providing technical assistance to improve data analysis in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
THANK YOU