

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General

11 February 2013

Original: English

Advance unedited version**Commission on Population and Development****Forty-sixth session**

22-26 April 2013

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Actions in follow-up to the recommendations of the
International Conference on Population and Development****New trends in migration: demographic aspects****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to decision 2010/101 of the Commission on Population and Development, in which the Commission decided that the special theme for the forty-sixth session in 2013 would be “New Trends in Migration: Demographic Aspects”. The report presents an overview of trends in both international and internal migration, examining demographic aspects and discussing policies to enhance the contribution of migration to development and to address the challenges posed by population mobility. The report also presents recommendations for actions to promote the integration of migrants and to enhance the benefits of migration. When implemented, these recommendations could contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in regard to migration.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. International migration: levels, trends and demographic impacts	4
III. Internal migration: levels, trends and demographic impacts	8
IV. Demographic aspects of migration	10
V. Enhancing the benefits of migration	12
VI. Data on migration and the need to strengthen data production	18
VII. Conclusions and recommendations	19
 Tables	
1. Number of international migrants and share of total population, by development group or major area of residence, 1990 and 2010	5
2. Top ten countries (or areas) of origin for international migrants, 1990 and 2010	7
3. Number of countries with policy measures to attract diaspora investments, by development group, 2011	15
 Figures	
I. Percentage of international migrants from the same major area, by place or residence, 1990 and 2010	5
II. Change in population size and primary component of change, 1990 to 2010	8

I. Introduction

1. The last twenty years have seen major changes in the size, direction and complexity of migration both within and between countries. Driven primarily by economic and demographic disparities, population mobility has continued to increase. The global stock of international migrants is estimated to have increased from 155 million in 1990 to 214 million in 2010.¹ The number of internal migrants is even larger, as most people move within their countries rather than across national borders.²

2. Migration is associated with the search for better educational and job opportunities; the pursuit of individual aspirations; the flight from poverty, political instability, conflict or human rights abuse; and displacement due to natural or man-made disasters and environmental degradation. Recent changes in the size, direction, and intensity of migration flows have been influenced by a wide range of economic, demographic, social, political, and environmental factors. In Europe, for example, changes of membership within the European Union, dissolution of the Soviet Union, and population ageing have all been powerful forces generating migratory flows in recent decades, though the demand for migrant labour has been dampened by the economic crisis of recent years.

3. Job opportunities and access to services have continued to draw rural migrants into cities, while increases in agricultural productivity have lessened the demand for rural labor. In the emerging economies of Asia, for example, rural-to-urban migration has been stimulated by increased trade and investment, expansion of manufacturing and creation of jobs.

4. With appropriate policies in place, migration can have positive effects in both places of origin and places of destination. In receiving areas, migrant labour can enhance the productive capacity of the economy. In sending areas, migration can alleviate the pressures of under-employment and, through remittances, contribute to economic growth and human development.

5. Many people move to seek relief from oppression, conflict or persecution. At the end of 2011, an estimated 42.5 million people worldwide were living in a place to which they had been forcibly displaced, including refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons.

6. The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development states that "... migrations are an important part of the economic transformations occurring around the world, and they present serious new challenges. Therefore, these issues must be addressed with more emphasis within population and development policies."³ A recent UN report, *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, identifies migration as an important demographic trend that will impact the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

7. Despite their important role in development, internal and international migration have proven difficult to analyse due to a lack of timely, reliable and accessible migration data for many parts of the world. Despite this limitation, some major trends are apparent. Recent decades have seen an increase in migration from developing to developed regions.

¹ United Nations, DESA-Population Division, *Trends in International Migration Stock: The 2008 Revision* (2009).

² M. Bell and E. Charles-Edwards, "Cross-national comparisons of internal migration: An update of global patterns and trends," Technical Paper, UNDESA-Population Division (forthcoming).

³ Paragraph 1.10.

At the same time, new poles of economic growth are emerging in the global South and are expected to stimulate new migratory flows.

II. International migration: levels, trends and demographic impacts

A. Levels and trends of international migration

8. The number of international migrants has grown from an estimated 155 million in 1990 to 214 million in 2010. Although this represents an increase in the number of migrants, the percentage of international migrants in the global population has changed only slightly in the twenty-year period—from 2.9 per cent in 1990, to 3.1 per cent in 2010.

9. Since 1990, migration patterns have become increasingly diverse and most countries are now at the same time countries of origin, destination and transit. In 2010, of the 43 countries hosting at least one million immigrants, 24 were the place of origin for more than one million emigrants. Countries that experienced large gains in migrant stock between 1990 and 2010, such as Malaysia, Nigeria and Thailand, also experienced a large increase in the number of their citizens living abroad.

10. While almost all countries experienced an increase in their resident populations of international migrants, this growth was more rapid in developed regions, with Europe and Northern America each adding more international migrants than the other four major areas combined (Table 1). As a result, in 2000 Europe surpassed Asia as the area hosting the largest number of international migrants.

11. The gap between major areas in the stock of international migrants as a fraction of total population has continued to widen. Large increases in migrant numbers, coupled with moderate population growth during the same period, has resulted in an increased share of international migrants in the populations of Europe, Northern America and Oceania. By contrast, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the overall population grew at a faster pace than the resident stock of migrants, reducing the share of foreign-born persons between 1990 and 2010.

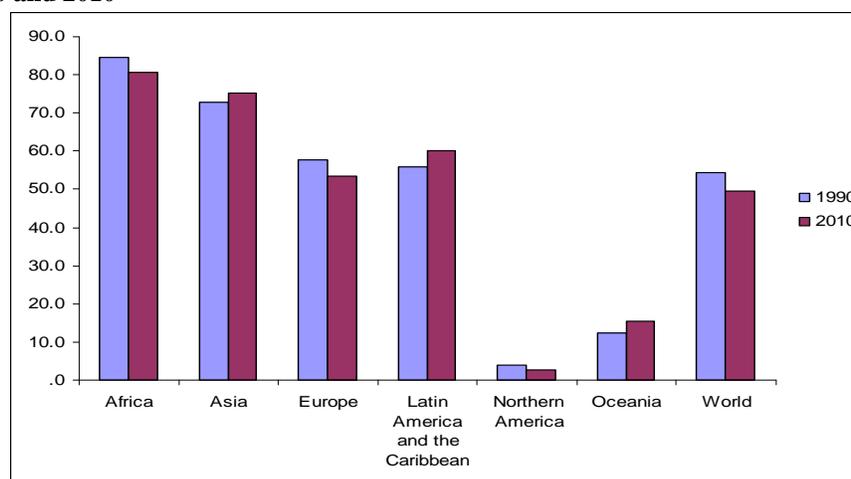
Table 1
Number of international migrants and share of total population, by development group or major area of residence, 1990 and 2010

Development group or major area	International migrants			International migrants as a percentage of the total population	
	1990 (millions)	2010 (millions)	Percentage change 1990-2010	1990	2010
World	155.2	214.2	38.0	2.9	3.1
Developed regions.....	82.0	127.8	55.7	7.2	10.3
Developing regions	73.2	86.4	18.1	1.8	1.5
Africa	16.0	19.3	20.6	2.5	1.9
Asia	50.9	61.3	20.5	1.6	1.5
Europe.....	49.1	69.9	42.3	6.8	9.5
Latin America and the Caribbean.....	7.1	7.7	8.2	1.6	1.3
Northern America	27.8	50.0	80.2	9.8	14.2
Oceania	4.4	6.0	37.8	16.2	16.8

Source: United Nations, DESA-Population Division, *Trends in International Migration Stock: The 2008 Revision* (2009).

12. International migrants are moving over greater distances than in the past. The percentage of migrants originating in a neighbouring country has fallen globally from 46 per cent in 1990 to 37 per cent in 2010. Increasingly, people move across major areas rather than within major areas. However, in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, a majority of resident migrants continue to originate from within the same region (see Figure I).

Figure I
Percentage of international migrants from the same major area, by place of residence, 1990 and 2010



Source: United Nations, DESA-Population Division, *Trends in International Migration Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin* (forthcoming).

13. Despite the increased diversification of migratory flows, international migration remains highly concentrated: in 2010, of 214 million international migrants worldwide, 50

million (almost one in four) were living in Northern America, and 70 million (one in three), in Europe. Furthermore, in 2010, the ten largest destination countries continued to account for slightly more than half of the global migrant stock. Yet over the last two decades, several new countries have emerged as important destinations. Many of the rapidly growing economies in Eastern Asia, South-eastern Asia, South America and Western Africa have become poles for migration within their respective regions. In addition, the oil-producing countries of Western Asia and some countries of Southern Europe (including Greece, Italy and Spain) experienced a rapid growth in the number of international migrants between 1990 and 2010.

14. Since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008, some of these trends have slowed or even reversed at least temporarily. According to the OECD, overall permanent international migration into OECD countries declined in 2010. More recent national data, however, indicate that migration into these countries rose again in 2011 with the exception of Italy, Spain and Sweden. For Spain, migration from Latin America declined considerably between 2005 and 2010, resulting in the redirection of some Latin American migration to other OECD destination countries.⁴ In addition, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain have recently experienced a modest increase in emigration.⁵

15. The origin of international migrants has become increasingly diversified over the last twenty years, with countries such as China, Mexico and the Philippines emerging as increasingly important places of origin. The number of migrants from China living in Africa, Europe, Northern America and Oceania more than tripled between 1990 and 2010, while the number of persons from Mexico or the Philippines living outside their country of birth doubled in the same period. By 2010, Mexicans formed the largest group of international migrants (see Table 2).

Table 2

Top ten countries (or areas) of origin for international migrants, 1990 and 2010

1990			2010			
Rank	Country or area	Migrant stock (millions)	Cumulative percentage of international migrants	Country or area	Migrant stock (millions)	Cumulative percentage of international migrants
1.	Russian Federation	12.7	8.2	Mexico	12.4	5.8
2.	Afghanistan.....	7.5	13.0	India	11.4	11.1
3.	India.....	6.9	17.5	Russian Federation.....	10.7	16.1
4.	Bangladesh	5.7	21.2	China.....	8.4	20.1
5.	Ukraine	5.7	24.8	Bangladesh.....	6.5	23.1
6.	Mexico.....	5.0	28.1	Ukraine	6.4	26.1
7.	China	4.3	30.8	State of Palestine.....	5.5	28.7
8.	United Kingdom	4.0	33.4	Pakistan.....	5.0	31.0
9.	Italy.....	3.7	35.7	Afghanistan.....	4.8	33.3
10.	Pakistan	3.6	38.1	Philippines	4.7	35.5

⁴ SICREMI (OECD, IDB, OAS), *International Migration in the Americas* (2012).

⁵ OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2012*.

B. Refugees and asylum seekers

16. At the end of 2011, the global number of refugees and asylum-seekers reached an estimated 15.2 million persons. More than 800,000 people were newly displaced during 2011, the highest number in more than a decade; post-election violence in Côte d'Ivoire, the "Arab Spring" uprisings and a deteriorating situation in Somalia were all contributing factors, especially in the first half of the year.⁶ After almost two years of unrest in the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported 612,000 Syrian refugees as of January 2013, including people who either had been formally registered in neighbouring countries as refugees or were being assisted as such.⁷ Several countries hosting large numbers of refugees experienced a significant decrease, including Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

17. Developing countries hosted four-fifths of the world's refugees. The 48 least developed countries hosted an estimated 2.3 million refugees. By the end of 2011, according to UNHCR's global estimates, there were close to 2.7 million Afghan refugees. Iraq was the second largest country of origin for refugees (1.4 million), followed by Somalia (1.1 million).

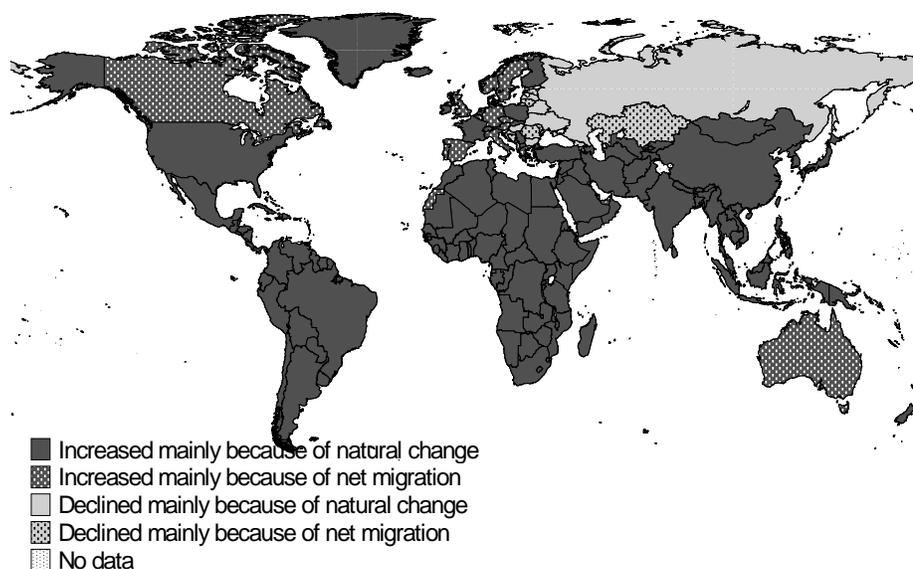
C. The impact of international migration on population composition and size

18. Between 1990 and 2010, natural increase was the main component of change in population size for the vast majority of the world's countries. Yet net migration, defined as the difference between numbers of immigrants and emigrants, has become an increasingly important component of overall change in population size for many countries, especially those in the developed regions (Figure II).

⁶ UNHCR, *Global Trends 2011*.

⁷ UNHCR, *UNHCR News Story* (11 January 2013).

Figure II
Change in population size and primary component of change, 1990 to 2010



Source: United Nations, DESA-Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision* (2011).
Note: The boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

19. In Europe, where the number of deaths has exceeded the number of births since the late 1990s, positive net migration has offset population decline. In 2010, the population of Europe was 4 per cent larger than it would have been without migration during 1990-2010. In Northern America and Oceania as well, net migration has contributed significantly to overall population growth. In 2010, the population of Northern America was 10 per cent larger than it would have been without migration since 1990, while the equivalent figure for Oceania was over 8 per cent.

20. Negative net migration has a limited impact on population size in most developing countries. Nevertheless, it has been a major factor for some small island states and other developing countries with small populations, in particular for certain subgroups like the highly educated.

III. Internal migration: levels, trends and demographic impacts

A. Levels and trends of internal migration

21. Although the United Nations Population Division produces comparable estimates of the number of international migrants by age, sex and origin for all countries and areas of the world, the development of global estimates of internal migration is still at an early stage. Despite this limitation, available data suggest that a far larger number of people move within their countries than internationally. In 2010, China's "floating population" alone was estimated to be 221 million, roughly 17 per cent of the country's total

population, of which about 150 million were from rural areas.^{8,9} In the same year, an estimated 8 million international migrants originated from China.

22. Although mostly driven by economic and political factors, internal migration is also influenced by environmental changes and natural disasters, including extreme weather events. Nevertheless, the causal relationship between environment and migration is complex, and data and studies on people who move or are displaced by environmental changes are limited.¹⁰

23. Every year, large numbers of people are also displaced within their own countries by conflicts or persecution. Globally, UNHCR estimates that there were 26.5 million internally displaced people in 2011. The same year, 3.5 million people were newly displaced within the borders of their countries, a 20 per cent increase from 2010. The increase was due in part to new or renewed displacements in Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Libya, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen.

B. Rural-to-urban migration as a driver of urban growth

24. Rural-to-urban migration is a key factor of the population redistribution associated with economic growth and industrialization and an important driver of city growth. Yet the relative contribution of rural-to-urban migration as a component of urban growth (versus natural increase) has changed over the course of the past several decades. In the developed countries, particularly in Europe, the bulk (on average two-thirds) of urban growth in the 1960s and 1970s resulted from rural-to-urban migration, with the remainder due to natural increase.¹¹ The situation was reversed for developing countries: about 60 per cent of urban growth was due to natural increase and the remaining 40 per cent to internal migration.

25. Estimates for the 1980s and 1990s indicate that, while natural increase continued to be the main driver of city growth in developing countries, substantial variation was observed over time and space.¹² For example, rural-to-urban migration was the most important factor of urban growth in China and Thailand (80 per cent), Rwanda (79 per cent), Indonesia (68 per cent) and Namibia (59 per cent). By contrast, in Latin American and the Caribbean, recent evidence confirms that while rural-to-urban migration plays a small and declining role in city growth, it continues to have a major impact on rural depopulation.¹³

26. As developing countries in Asia and Africa become more urbanized, the pool of rural inhabitants that feeds rural-to-urban migration will shrink, making migration a declining factor in urban growth. At the same time, the reduction of fertility in urban areas is putting downward pressure on natural increase, while fertility rates in rural areas remain high in some countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. In Latin America, fertility in urban areas has approached, or has already fallen below, replacement levels. In the near future therefore, rural-to-urban migration may play once again a more prominent role in the growth of cities.

⁸ K.W. Chan, "China, Internal Migration" in Immanuel Ness and Peter Bellwood (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Global Migration*, Blackwell Publishing (2013).

⁹ The "floating population" refers to people who are residing in a location that is different from the one in which they are officially registered.

¹⁰ *Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change*, Final Project Report, Government Office for Science, London (2011).

¹¹ United Nations, "Patterns of urban and rural population growth," Population Studies no. 68 (1980).

¹² G. Stecklov, "The components of urban growth in developing countries," manuscript, UNDESA-Population Division (2008).

¹³ ECLAC, "Population, Territory and Sustainable Development", 2012.

IV. Demographic aspects of migration

A. The sex and age of migrants

27. Migration is selective by sex and age. In developing regions, female internal migration tends to be higher than male.¹⁴ Among internal migrants, women are also highly concentrated in the 20-24 age group, whereas men are somewhat more evenly distributed by age. Among international migrants worldwide, approximately half are women—51 per cent in the developed and 45 per cent in the developing regions. Since women often live longer than men, they tend to be over-represented among older migrants.

28. Increasingly, women are migrating on their own or as heads of households and principal wage earners for themselves and their families. For instance, data from labour emigration permits in South and South-eastern Asia show that some countries, such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, allocate 70 per cent or more of such permits to prospective female migrants.

29. Migrants tend to be younger and healthier than their non-migrating counterparts. In a sample of seven European countries, the proportion of immigrants aged 20-29 constituted between one-third and one-half of all immigrants arriving in 2008 to 2009.¹⁵ Persons of working age, from 20 to 64 years old, accounted for 73 per cent of the global stock of international migrants in 2010 compared to less than 57 per cent of world population.

30. Internal migrants are also highly concentrated in the young adult ages. Data from developed countries show a predominance of migration amongst persons in their late teens or early twenties—for example in the United Kingdom and the United States, where the migration of young people is often related to the pursuit of higher education.¹⁶

31. Because international migrants tend to comprise higher proportions of working-age persons compared to the overall population, migration contributes to reducing old-age dependency ratios¹⁷ in many countries. Despite this effect, the old-age dependency ratios of developed countries are projected to continue increasing.

32. Similarly, for many developing countries where fertility has fallen rapidly, populations have begun or are beginning to grow older. These countries, including for instance China and the Republic of Korea, may see immigration as a tool for slowing the inevitable rise of old-dependency ratios. As a result, Europe and other developed regions in the future might need to compete with emerging economies to attract working-age migrants.

B. Migration, fertility and family formation

33. Besides contributing directly to changes in population size and its composition by age and sex, migration has broader demographic impacts on societies of origin and destination, especially when migrant populations have different levels and patterns of fertility and

¹⁴ M. Roig, K. Osaki and J. Singelman, "Internal migration in developing countries: Evidence from Demographic and Health Surveys," manuscript, UNDESA-Population Division (2008).

¹⁵ UNDESA (Population Division), "International migration in a globalizing world: The role of youth," Technical Paper Series, no. 2011/1 (2011).

¹⁶ United Kingdom, Office of National Statistics Statistical Bulletin, 25 September 2012; Molloy, Smith and Wozniak "Internal Migration in the United States" FEDS Working Paper No. 2011-30

¹⁷ Defined as the number of persons aged 65 or over divided by the number of persons aged 20 to 64.

family formation. In countries of destination, international migration often leads to an increase in the number of births, in part because migrant women are typically concentrated in the reproductive ages. In Europe, Northern America and Oceania, all net recipients of migrants from other major areas during 1990-2010, the number of births was, respectively, 3 per cent, 8 per cent and 5 per cent higher than if there had been no migration.

34. Births to migrants comprise an increasing proportion of the total in many host countries. For example, in the United States the share of births to foreign-born mothers grew from 15 per cent in 1990 to 23 per cent in 2010,¹⁸ and in Italy, from around 6 per cent in 2000 to nearly 19 per cent in 2010.¹⁹

35. Recent studies confirm that in developed countries, immigrant women tend to have higher levels of fertility than native-born women.²⁰ In the countries of Western, Northern and Southern Europe, which have received unprecedented numbers of immigrants in the last decades, migrant women have a higher average fertility than native-born populations, but this difference typically diminishes over time and with the duration of migrants' stay in a country.

36. In countries of origin, international migration typically reduces the number of births because of the outflow of persons of reproductive age. In the Caribbean and Polynesia, two regions characterized by high levels of emigration, the number of births would have been 5 and 16 per cent higher, respectively, in the absence of net migration between 1990 and 2010. Returning migrants may also convey new ideas and behaviours related to family formation and fertility preferences.²¹

37. Internal migration patterns, in particular migration from rural to urban areas, are also associated with distinct fertility changes. Fertility levels in urban areas of a country tend to be lower than those in rural areas, and the fertility of women who migrate from rural to urban areas tends to be lower than that of women who remain in rural areas. As with international migration, these differences reflect changes in childbearing behaviour due to new norms and revised costs and benefits of childbearing in a different setting, the selectivity of those who migrate, and the disruptive effects of migration on childbearing via separation of spouses and postponement of childbearing.

38. The empirical evidence is as varied as the context of migration. For example, in rural communities of Mozambique with large-scale labour migration of men, women had lower fertility if they were married to migrants than non-migrants and their lifetime fertility declined the longer their husbands were away.²² By contrast, a study in Mexico found that a higher level of male migration to the United States was associated with a greater likelihood of giving birth for women in the community of origin.²³

39. Migration also has important implications for family formation. Family migration is the main category of permanent migration in the developed regions, accounting for up to 45 per cent of international migration flows.²⁴ Those flows often involve persons who are seeking to reunify with a spouse or partner abroad, who in turn can be either a native-born

¹⁸ G. Livingston and D. Cohn, "U.S. birth rate falls to a record low," Pew Research Center (2012).

¹⁹ Istat, Comunicato Stampa, Indicatori demografici, Anno 2010.

²⁰ T. Sobotka, "The rising importance of migrants for childbearing in Europe", *Demographic Research*, vol. 19, no. 9 (2008), pp. 225-248.

²¹ P. Fargues, "International migration and the demographic transition: A two-way interaction," *International Migration Review*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2012), pp. 588-614.

²² V. Agadjanian, S.T. Yabiku and B. Cau, "Men's migration and women's fertility in rural Mozambique," *Demography*, vol. 48, no. 3 (2011), pp. 1029-1048.

²³ D.P. Lindstrom and S.G. Saucedo, "The interrelationship between fertility, family maintenance, and Mexico-U.S. migration," *Demographic Research*, vol. 17 (2007), pp. 821-858.

²⁴ OECD, *op. cit.*

resident or a migrant. Reunification with children and other family members and inter-country adoptions also comprise significant flows for a number of receiving countries.

40. In recent years the prevalence of marriages involving at least one foreign-born person has increased sharply. In Europe, at least 20 per cent of marriages in 2006-2007 were international, with this figure approaching 30 per cent for a few countries. International marriages are also widespread in some other major areas and countries. In 2010, marriages to foreigners (the majority to foreign brides) were around 25 per cent of the total in Singapore, 11 per cent in the Republic of Korea and 4 per cent in Japan.²⁵ Factors driving the increase of marriages to foreign brides in Asia include increasing proportions of native-born women electing to postpone or forgo marriage altogether and imbalances in the age distributions of men and women of marriageable age. An imbalanced sex ratio at birth in some Asian countries, driven by a traditional preference for sons, seems likely to increase the future role of international migration in family formation.

V. Enhancing the benefits of migration

41. International migration presents various opportunities and challenges for countries of both origin and destination. Reaping benefits while averting potential harms requires appropriate policies and programmes.

A. Promoting the integration of international migrants

42. As the number of international migrants continues to rise, destination countries are confronted with the challenge of promoting migrant integration. Racism and xenophobia, fuelled by the global economic crisis, have strained relations between immigrant and native communities in a number of countries. To facilitate migrant integration, many countries have implemented programmes to promote social and economic integration of immigrants, ensure non-discrimination, and facilitate access to citizenship. By 2011 the vast majority of countries in the developed regions and about one-half of 97 developing countries with available data had implemented programmes to facilitate migrant integration.

43. Legal measures to promote migrant integration often focus on granting access to citizenship. While nearly all countries have implemented policies that regulate access to citizenship, as of 2011, 63 countries had restrictive naturalization policies, meaning that access to citizenship (excluding by marriage) was granted only to immigrants belonging to a select category or who had resided in the host country for 10 years or longer. For example, countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines and Saudi Arabia require at least 10 years of residence, whereas others such as Nigeria, Uganda, Qatar and the Central African Republic require at least 15, 20, 25, and 35 years of residence, respectively. In countries such as Spain and Venezuela, the residence requirement varies depending on the immigrant's nationality, and in countries such as Yemen, the entitlement is restricted to Muslims or individuals of Arab origin.

44. Family reunification is another important mechanism for ensuring the economic and social integration of migrants. As of 2011, Governments of 71 per cent of countries with available data had policies to maintain or raise the flow of international migrants entering as part of family reunification programmes, whereas 9 per cent sought to lower these

²⁵ G. Lanzieri, "A comparison of recent trends of international marriages and divorces in European countries", manuscript, IUSSP seminar, Seoul (20-21 October 2011).

inflows by tightening requirements for admission, introducing language tests, and implementing income requirements and other types of restrictions (the remaining 20 percent had no policy to intervene).

45. Social integration is often best achieved at a young age. Several countries have introduced specific measures to promote the integration of children and youth through school and other venues. In Italy, linguistic and cultural mediators are used to tutor newly-arrived foreign pupils and help them integrate at school. In Japan, special “bridging schools” have been set up to help migrant children learn Japanese and to promote their integration into the host society.

B. Enhancing the positive impact of skilled migration

46. Countries of destination can benefit greatly from the inflow of skilled migrants, especially when their qualifications are recognized and utilized. Skilled migrants play an important role in creating entrepreneurial ventures and promoting innovation, notably in fields related to science and technology. Consequently, attracting talented young migrants has become an important policy goal in many parts of the world.

47. As of 2011, 67 countries had policies to encourage the immigration of highly skilled workers. Globally, the percentage of countries seeking to attract highly skilled migrants increased from 22 per cent in 2005 to 39 per cent in 2011. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of skilled migrants in member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nearly doubled, while China, India, Germany, Mexico, the Philippines and the United Kingdom were among the countries with the largest numbers of skilled persons living abroad.

48. Countries have adopted different approaches for attracting highly skilled migrants. In Canada, employers can recruit highly skilled migrant workers directly under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. In Australia, the Migration Program helps recruit skilled workers on either a temporary or permanent basis. Since the onset of the global financial crisis, however, several countries have sought to limit the number of highly skilled immigrants.

49. Migrants’ skills are often underutilized, due to difficulties in obtaining recognition for qualifications acquired abroad. In the European Union, migrants are more likely than native-born persons to see their qualifications underutilized. In particular, foreign-born women are twice as likely as their native-born counterparts to be working in jobs for which they are overqualified.²⁶ A number of countries have implemented policies to improve the recognition of qualifications and skills among migrants through bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements. For example, countries of the European Union have agreed to mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is studying the feasibility of a regional skills recognition agreement.

50. While skilled migration benefits countries of destination, the emigration of educated people, often the “best and brightest,” can have a negative impact on development in countries of origin. These negative impacts can be particularly detrimental for countries

²⁶ Eurostat (2011). *Migrants in Europe. A statistical portrait of the first and second generation. Population and Social Conditions.* Eurostat Statistical Books. Brussels: European Commission.

that already face severe skills shortages and for countries with relatively small populations. In 2010, the sixty-third World Health Assembly adopted a global code of practice, which aims to discourage the active recruitment of health personnel from developing countries facing critical shortages of health workers. The United Kingdom has adopted a voluntary code of practice regulating the international recruitment of healthcare professionals, which includes a list of developing countries from which active recruitment is discouraged. Norway has developed a framework on global solidarity, pledging a more responsible approach to the recruitment of health workers from developing countries.

C. Promoting migrant circulation and return

51. Schemes that favour the return or circulation of workers, especially those with needed skills, can be beneficial to development in countries of origin. The proportion of countries having policies to encourage the return of their citizens has increased from 51 per cent in 2005 to 63 per cent in 2011. For example, Ecuador and Georgia have recently implemented programmes to promote the reintegration of return migrants.

52. A number of initiatives have also been undertaken to promote the circulation and return of migrant students and researchers. The Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme provides funding for students from Africa to study abroad, provided that those students work in Africa for a minimum of two years after graduation.²⁷ In China, the Hundred Talents Programme encourages talented young researchers living abroad to return to China on a temporary or permanent basis by offering an attractive working environment.

53. As previous waves of migrants start to age, new approaches with regard to the provision of care and services, including transnational portability of pensions and other benefits, are being explored. These new approaches are particularly relevant for migrants who wish to return to their country of origin. For instance, Morocco, the Philippines and Turkey have concluded bilateral arrangements with host countries to facilitate the repatriation of benefits, such as social security and health entitlements, to countries of origin.

D. Leveraging contributions from diaspora communities

54. Diaspora communities are increasingly recognized for their contributions in promoting economic and social development, channelling resources, and transmitting knowledge and values to countries of origin. Although high unemployment has negatively affected the volume of remittances from some of the major senders in Europe (including the UK, Spain and Italy), migrants have continued to send money home despite the economic crisis of recent years. Officially recorded remittances to developing countries were estimated to have reached \$406 billion in 2012, up from \$381 billion in 2011—a 6.6 per cent increase.²⁸

55. Remittances continue to provide important support to families and an important and steady source of foreign currency in many developing countries. Several innovative policies have been implemented to harness this contribution. As of 2011, 77 developing countries and 37 developed countries had established governmental units to deal with matters of interest for diaspora. Examples of such governmental units are the Regional

²⁷ SARUA, *Building regional higher education capacity through academic mobility*, Leadership Dialogue Series, vol. 3, no. 1 (2011).

²⁸ World Bank, *Migration and Development Brief 19* (2012).

Integration and Diaspora Unit of Dominica, the National Secretariat for Migrants of Ecuador, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the Overseas Singaporean Unit and the Migration Development Unit of Zimbabwe. Several governments have implemented measures, including providing financial incentives, to facilitate investment by their nationals living broad. Among these, streamlined bureaucratic procedures for investment and providing tax exceptions or breaks were the most common (Table 3).

Table 3

Number of countries with policy measures to attract diaspora investments, by development group, 2011

	<i>Measures to attract investment by diaspora</i>						
	<i>Streamlined bureaucratic procedures for investments</i>	<i>Tax exceptions or breaks</i>	<i>Preferential treatment in providing credit</i>	<i>Reduction of tariffs on goods or import duties for diaspora companies</i>	<i>Diaspora bonds or mutual fund</i>	<i>Preferential treatment in allotment of licenses</i>	<i>None of these</i>
World	23	19	16	13	11	2	55
Developed regions	1	0	3	1	2	0	15
Developing regions	22	19	13	12	9	2	40

Source: United Nations, DESA-Population Division, *World Population Policies 2011* (forthcoming).

56. A serious obstacle to harnessing the development potential of remittances is the cost of sending money. In the third quarter of 2012, this was on average 7.5 per cent for the twenty largest bilateral remittance corridors and 9 per cent globally. The highest average remittance cost was for Sub-Saharan Africa, at 12.4 percent.²⁹

E. Promoting positive impacts of internal migration

57. Since the mid-1990s, a growing proportion of Governments have considered the spatial distribution of their population as unsatisfactory. Related challenges include rapid urbanization, rural depopulation, urban sprawl, increased density, slum dwellings, refugees and internally displaced persons, including environmentally-induced displacements.

58. In 2011, only 12 per cent of Governments were satisfied with the spatial distribution of their populations, and a majority (55 per cent) desired a major redistribution of population within their country. More governments of developing countries were concerned with the spatial distribution of their populations than those in the developed regions—64 versus 27 per cent, respectively. The proportion of Governments desiring a major change in the spatial distribution of population was particularly high among the least developed countries, at 75 per cent. This proportion ranged from zero in Northern America to 79 per cent in Africa.

59. Among countries with available data in 2011, 79 per cent had policies to lower rural-to-urban migration, an increase from 70 per cent in 2005. The proportion of Governments having policies to lower rural-to-urban migration was higher in developing (82 per cent) than in developed countries (69 per cent). This proportion has increased in recent years—between 2005 and 2011—for both developed and developing countries and for all major regions except Africa.

²⁹ World Bank, *op. cit.*

60. In 2011, 69 per cent of countries with available data had policies to reduce the inflow of migrants to large urban agglomerations. Similar to the pattern observed for rural-to-urban migration, a much greater proportion of developing countries (79 per cent) had policies to lower migration into urban agglomerations than of developed countries (38 per cent).

F. Women and their families

61. The entry of women into the labour force, combined with a rapidly ageing population, has resulted in an increasing demand for domestic workers and caretakers of the elderly, positions that are often filled by female migrant workers. In the developed regions, females account for nearly 85 per cent of foreign-born persons working for a private household and 74 per cent of those employed in the health or social services sectors.

62. While the work of migrant women may benefit their families as well as societies of origin and destination, those employed as domestic workers are often subject to exploitation and abuse. In June 2011, the International Labour Conference adopted Convention No. 189 and Recommendation 201 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers to improve the conditions of such work. The Convention applies to all domestic workers, regardless of their legal status. As of September 2012, the convention had been ratified by only three countries.

63. The absence of one or both parents can have a severe impact on the development and wellbeing of those who stay behind in countries of origin, particularly children. A number of countries of origin have devised programmes to address some of those negative consequences and provide support to children left behind as well as to their immediate caregivers, who are often elderly relatives. In the Republic of Moldova, for instance, the Government provides a range of social services and cash for vulnerable children whose parents have emigrated. In Sri Lanka, migrant workers registered with the Bureau of Foreign Employment automatically receive a foreign employment insurance policy that offers migrant workers life insurance, disability and repatriation benefits and medical benefits for families left behind. The insurance policy also covers scholarships for children of registered migrants.

G. Protecting irregular migrants

64. Migrants who have entered a country without authorization, have overstayed their residence permit or are working without proper documentation have become an increasing concern to host governments. In 2011, for 75 per cent of countries with available data, the Government considered irregular migration as a major concern. Migrants in an irregular situation are vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination and abuse. Countries have responded to these situations by reforming their immigration laws, promoting the return of irregular migrants and implementing regularization programmes.

65. Since 2006 in Argentina, the National Programme for the Standardization of Immigration Documents has regularized the status of approximately 13,000 international migrants from countries outside MERCOSUR.³⁰ Under the same programme, permanent or temporary residence permits were granted to more than 200,000 applicants from the region. In 2011, the Government of Thailand launched a regularization campaign for

³⁰ The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

migrant workers. During the course of one month, more than one million migrant workers in an irregular situation were reported to have registered.³¹

66. As a result of recent political, humanitarian and environmental crises, the plight of “stranded migrants” has come to the fore as an emerging policy concern. In 2011, the conflict in Libya triggered an outflow of migrant workers to neighbouring countries, namely Egypt and Tunisia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) led a joint operation to evacuate migrants stranded as a result of the Libyan crisis, which together with air and sea evacuations organized by individual governments, helped hundreds of thousands of migrant workers return to their homes. In many cases this assistance went beyond safely returning migrants to their countries of origin. In Bangladesh, for instance, migrants who were repatriated from Libya received cash grants from the World Bank to help support them while looking for new employment.

H. Implementing durable solutions for refugees

67. Over the past years, the international community has stepped up its efforts to secure durable solutions for refugees. Over 500,000 refugees were voluntarily repatriated in 2011, more than double the 2010 figure. Thousands of those refugees received support to reintegrate and find jobs in their countries of origin. For those unable to return to their home countries, efforts continue to promote their integration into host societies or resettlement in a third country.

68. In recent years, significant progress has been made in delivering reproductive health care and family planning to refugees living in camps. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with UNHCR, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners, is actively engaged in providing sexual and reproductive health care to refugees, particularly women, in a culturally sensitive manner.

I. Combating the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings

69. Trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants touch nearly all countries of the world. While quantifying the exact magnitude of these transnational crimes is difficult, it is estimated that at least 2.5 million persons were being exploited as victims of trafficking in 2005.³² Nearly 80 per cent of those trafficked are women, 16 per cent of whom are below 18 years of age.³³ Total illicit profits produced by the sexual or labour exploitation of trafficked persons were estimated by ILO at around US\$32 billion in 2005.³⁴ Similar data for migrant smuggling are difficult to obtain, since migrants can enter more than once while estimates often rely on apprehensions.

70. Between 2003 and 2008, the number of countries with anti-trafficking laws has more than doubled.³⁵ Countries of origin, transit and destination are increasingly working together to prevent trafficking in persons, protect victims and prosecute trafficking offenders. In September 2010, the Secretary-General launched a global plan of action to combat trafficking in persons, which seeks to integrate the fight against human trafficking into United Nations programmes. Coordinated efforts to combat transnational smuggling

³¹ IPSR, Thailand’s Low Skilled Migration Policy: Progress and Challenges, 2011.

³² ILO, *A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* (2005).

³³ UNODC, *A Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2009).

³⁴ ILO, *A global alliance against forced labour*, International Labour Conference, 2005.

³⁵ UNODC, *op. cit.*

of migrants are underway in a number of countries and regions. Considerable progress has also been made in promoting the ratification of relevant multilateral instruments. 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.

VI. Data on migration and the need to strengthen data production

71. There are serious limitations in the availability and comparability of data on migration. Two fundamental problems are a lack of internationally agreed definitions and inherent difficulties of surveillance. Unlike other demographic events such as birth and death, which are singular, well-defined events, migration can occur multiple times over the life course and can change in nature, for instance, from temporarily to permanent or vice versa. Moreover, data collection systems continue to focus on long-term resettlement and thus fail to capture the complexity of today's mobility. Major sources of data on migration include population censuses and registers, administrative records, and household surveys.³⁶

A. Data on international migration

72. Population censuses are basic systems for collecting demographic and socioeconomic data; they yield the most comprehensive and internationally comparable information on international migration. Typically, censuses include three pertinent migration questions, namely: (1) country of birth, (2) country of citizenship and (3) year of arrival. Population censuses have the drawback of being carried out at lengthy intervals, generally once per decade; moreover, the dissemination of results is often slow and lacks sufficient detail for policy formulation.

73. During the 2010 census round, of the 192 countries that had conducted a census by 31 October 2012, 126 countries provided results to the United Nations Statistics Division. Of these, 94 countries (75 per cent) included a question on country of birth, 86 countries (68 per cent) on citizenship, and 52 countries (41 per cent) on year of arrival. Considering that now most countries carry out a population and housing census that includes at least the basic questions on migration, there is a potential for expanded use of such data if international recommendations and standards are appropriately and widely adopted.

74. Administrative data derive from a variety of recording systems, usually aimed at controlling international migration. Examples include visas, work permits, residence permits and regularization systems. While potentially rich in information, statistics produced from administrative sources tend to lack comparability due to differences in concepts and reporting systems. Examples of good practices in using administrative data for migration policy analysis include the production of refugee statistics by UNHCR based on asylum application and refugee status determination, and the use of residence permit data by OECD countries. The main challenges in using such data are linked to difficulties in obtaining records from the responsible institutions and lack of capacity in compiling and disseminating such information by statistical offices especially in some developing countries.

³⁶ UNDESA, "Data and analysis: Partnering to better understand and address the human development implications of migration," manuscript, GMG Practitioners Symposium, Geneva (27-28 May 2010).

75. Household surveys are important for the collection of in-depth information on international migration, in particular for assessing the impacts of migration on development. Yet migrant surveys are costly and require large sample sizes, as international migration is a rare event to which few people are exposed. Another challenge is ensuring that migrants are surveyed along with non-migrants to enable meaningful comparisons. A third challenge is the *ad hoc* nature of specialized surveys, making them difficult to compare over time. To examine changes in patterns and characteristics of migration and impacts on development, a dedicated survey programme could be established in national statistical offices, charged with carrying out standardized migration surveys on a periodic basis.

B. Data on internal migration

76. There are inherent difficulties in obtaining internationally comparable data on internal migration, mainly because of the diversity of geographical scales across which moves can be and are recorded. The two main sources of data on internal migration are population and housing censuses and household surveys. There is increasing availability of information on the number and percentage of persons within the national territory who are living in a region different from where they lived five years ago (“5-year migrants”) or from where they were born (“lifetime migrants”).³⁷ Comparability could be improved by harmonising data collection standards, including the temporal and spatial frameworks used to capture migration. A more systematic collection of data on lifetime and five-year migration in censuses and surveys could contribute to a better understanding of patterns and trends in internal migration and of its impact on the spatial redistribution of population and on development.

VII. Conclusion and recommendations

77. Migrants are a diverse group including women and men of different ages, with a variety of migratory histories and legal statuses. Successful policies for migration and development will need to consider this diversity of experience and vulnerability, as well as the impact of migration on places of origin and destination and on families separated by migration.

78. Migrants whose rights are well protected are able to live with dignity and security and to contribute to their host and origin societies both economically and socially. Migrants in an irregular situation, especially women, children and youth, are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Care should be taken to ensure that all persons in need of protection, including refugees, are identified and assisted, especially within mixed migratory flows. States should protect the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their legal status, including by ratifying the various legal instruments pertaining to international migration.

79. A majority of migrants are labour migrants. Policies should seek to maximize migration’s contribution to human development, recognizing that the protection of migrant rights—including labour protections—is necessary for realizing the full potential of migration for social and economic development. In this regard, Governments should reduce the negative impacts of migration by improving access to regular migratory channels and by combating all abusive forms of migration, including migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Migration policies should be

³⁷ Bell and Charles-Edwards, *op. cit.*

aligned with the labour market needs of both sending and receiving nations, minimizing negative impacts due to loss of human capital and separation of families.

80. Shortcomings of policymaking are often linked to a lack of timely and comparable data, which should include adequate disaggregation by age, sex, geographical location and other characteristics. Effective policy making requires data on migratory stocks and flows, legal statuses, sectoral and occupational distributions, social protections coverage, working conditions and wages, safety and health conditions, and educational attainment. The Commission may wish to consider how the international statistical community can better support governments in producing and analysing migration data for evidence-based policy making, guided by internationally agreed standards and recommendations and in accordance with international principles of privacy and data protection.

81. In considering policy options related to internal migration, Governments may need to balance their concerns about competing issues. Possible negative impacts of the excessive concentration of populations in cities or metropolitan areas should be weighed, for example, against the benefits of mobility to persons who move in pursuit of education and employment or in the interest of family unity.

82. If governed fairly, migration can help to enable inclusive social and economic development and is an important element of a renewed global partnership for development. Migration can contribute to the human development of migrants and their families by enlarging access to decent work, education and health. These contributions can be enhanced by lowering the costs of migration, ensuring equal treatment with nationals, encouraging transnational portability of pensions and other social benefits, and promoting mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications.

83. In the process of defining the post-2015 development agenda, a broad discussion on the important linkages between migration and development has already begun. Migration will need to be fully integrated into this new agenda, with special attention to the most vulnerable and considering the important contributions of migrants to development.