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Global Migration Trends: an overview

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

GLOBAL MIGRATION TRENDS: AN OVERVIEW[1]

I. Main recent global migration trends

Stocks and trends

- Approximately one in seven people today are migrants: 232 million people are international migrants, or 3.2% of the world population, and 740 million are internal migrants.

- Since 1990, the number of international migrants increased by 65% (53 million) in the global North, and by 34% (24 million) in the global South (UN-DESA). While the number of international migrants has increased in absolute terms, the share of international migrants in the world population has remained fairly constant in the same period, oscillating around 3%.

- The share of international migrants in the total population varies widely across countries: it is above 50% in some of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) such as the United Arab Emirates (84%), Qatar (74%), Kuwait (60%) and Bahrain (55%) and is relatively high in traditional destination countries like Australia (28%) and Canada (21%). In main destination countries in Europe, namely Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy, it usually stands between 10 and 12%[2], but in Sweden it is 16%.

- Women account for 48% of the global migrant stock. Migrants in the North are on average older than migrants in the South (42 years as median age in the North, 33 in the South), and most international migrants are of working age (74% of the global migrant stock; UN-DESA).

Forced migration

- The number of forcibly displaced people has grown and the reality of global displacement is increasingly complex. The number of people displaced by violence and conflict today is the highest since World War II.

- Refugees were estimated at 16.7 million by the end of 2013, up from 15.2 million in 2011 (UNHCR, 2014).

- People internally displaced by conflict and violence were estimated at 33.3 million by the end of 2013, up from 26.4 million in 2011 (IDMC, 2014).

- Over 50% of the world's refugees live scattered in urban areas and rural communities, not in refugee camps or "protracted refugee situations." By 2013, an estimated two-thirds of the world's refugees had been in exile for over 5 years, and half of them were children (UNHCR, 2014).

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[1] Prepared by Marzia Rango, Research Officer at IOM's Migration Research Division, and Frank Laczko, Head of the Migration Research Division, Geneva.

[2] Authors' calculations based on data from UN-DESA and the World Bank.

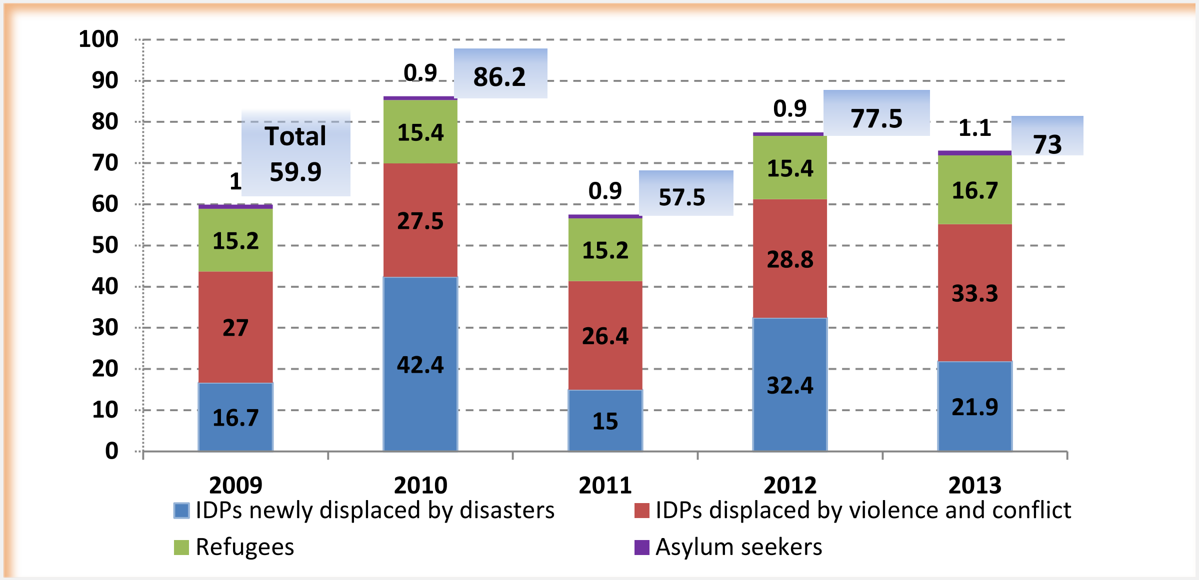
- Palestinians constitute the largest refugee group worldwide. Other main countries of origin of refugees in 2013 were Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic, Somalia, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic.

- At least 1,067,500 people submitted asylum applications in 2013. The main recipients of new individual applications were Germany, the United States of America, South Africa, France and Sweden. Syrian Arab Republic is the main country of origin of asylum-seekers in industrialized countries, followed by Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea (UNHCR, 2014).

- Over 86% of world's refugees were being hosted by developing countries at the end of 2013. Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are the main host countries in absolute terms (1.6 million and over 850,000 refugees respectively), followed by Lebanon (over 856,000), Jordan (over 640,000) and Turkey (almost 610,000; UNCHR, 2014).

- Situations change dramatically in a very short time span: 500,000 people were displaced in Iraq just in a few days in mid-June 2014 (IDMC, 2014). According to IOM data from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), over 1.7 million people were newly displaced by conflict in Iraq between 1 January and 28 September, 2014.

Figure 1 – Forced migration figures, 2009-2013 (million)



Source: UNHCR (2014) and IDMC (2014).

- 21.9 million people were newly displaced by disasters in 2013 (IDMC, 2014). The figure was 32.4 million in 2012, 15 million in 2011, 42.4 million in 2010, 16.7 million in 2009 and 36.5 million in 2008, meaning that 128.4 million people were newly displaced by disasters between 2008 and 2013, an average of 27.5 million people a year (Ibid.).

- 87.2% of disaster-induced displacement in 2013 occurred in Asia (19.1 million people), followed by 8.2% in Africa (1.8 million people) and 4.1% in the Americas (892,000). The countries with the highest absolute levels of displacement in the period between 2008 and 2013 were China (over 54 million people), India (over 26 million), the Philippines (over 19 million), Pakistan (over 13 million) and Bangladesh (almost 7 million).

- The great majority of displaced people have been uprooted by weather-related disasters, only a small minority by geophysical hazards.

- Data on the impact of gradual environmental change on migration is less often collected.

- Rising numbers of migrants are moving into urban areas which are vulnerable to climate change. The foreign-born population in Buenos Aires reached almost 400,000 people in 2010, and internal migrants were over 770,000. In Nairobi, international migrants make up almost 2% of the city population (3 million)[3]. According to the last population census conducted in China in 2010, over 1 million people from outside mainland China were residing in the country, including almost 600,000 foreigners[4]. In India, the migration rate in urban areas in 2007-2008 was 35%, and 2011 census data showed that for the first time India's urban population grew faster than its rural population, mostly due to rural-urban migration[5].

Irregular migration

- Difficulties remain to establish the extent of irregular migration, though this is believed to be significant. The most recent estimates suggest that there are at least 50 million irregular migrants in the world – over one fifth of all international migrants – a significant number of whom paid for assistance to illegally cross borders (UN). An estimated 3 million people illegally enter the US each year, mostly smuggled across the border (UNODC).

- Data on apprehensions along international borders, a proxy of the mismatch between desire to migrate and legal opportunities to do so, remain high. Detections of illegal border crossing at the European Union's external borders increased by 48% between 2012 and 2013, from 75,000 to over 107,000. Syrians, Eritreans and Afghans were the most commonly detected nationalities, with Syrians making up almost a quarter of all arrivals in 2013 (Frontex).

- In 2013, there were about 345,000 detections of illegal stay in the EU. The trend over the past five years has been generally stable if not slightly declining (Frontex). Some 55,000 migrants are estimated to be smuggled from East, North and West Africa into Europe every year (UNODC, 2010).

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[3] *Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, UNU-MERIT and the Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, 2014, available at http://thehagueprocess.org/publications/migrant-refugee-integration-global-cities-role-cities-businesses/

[4] Source: Brookings, 2011. See http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2011/09/08-china-immigrants-shen#_ftn1

[5] Source: MPI, 2014. See http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/internal-labor-migration-india-raises-integration-challenges-migrants

- The number of irregular migrants living in the U.S. was estimated at 11.1 million in 2011 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013).

- 92,500 people were detained for immigration reasons in the EU during 2013 (European Migration Network, 2014). France detained the highest number of non-nationals in the EU during the same year (38,266), followed by Spain (9,020), Hungary (6,469), Bulgaria (6,303), and Belgium (6,285). The highest increase in the number of detained migrants in 2009-2013 was registered in Bulgaria and Hungary, while the number decreased in Slovakia and the Netherlands. The average length of detention across EU Member States was 40 days.

Human Trafficking and Forced Labour

- According to the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons report, the number of identified victims of trafficking at the global level was over 44,500 in 2013. The lack of uniformity in national reporting structures makes it impossible to collect accurate figures.

- The number of identified victims has increased in all regions, and convictions represent only a small proportion of identified cases (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Identified victims of human trafficking and number of convictions by region, 2008 and 2013

Region	Identified victims in 2008 (of which convictions)	Identified victims in 2013
Western Hemisphere[6]	6609 (161)	7818 (446)
South and Central Asia[7]	3510 (342)	7124 (974)
Near East[8]	688 (26)	1460 (60)
Europe[9]	8981 (1721)	10374 (2684)
East Asia and Pacific	3374 (643)	7886 (1271)
Africa	7799 (90)	10096 (341)

Source: US State Department ***Trafficking in Persons Report 2014.***

[6] The region covers North, Central and South America.
[7] The region includes the following countries: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.
[8] The region corresponds to North Africa and the Middle East.
[9] Including the Russian Federation and Turkey, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

- An estimated 20.9 million people are victims of forced labour globally (ILO, 2014). This is twice the 2004 estimate of 12.3 million people (ILO, 2005). ILO estimates include victims of human trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation. The actual number of trafficked victims remains unknown.

- 11.4 million victims of forced labour are women and girls, 9.5 million men and boys. 4.5 million are victims of forced sexual exploitation, 98% of which are women and girls. The percentage of detected child victims has increased from 20% in 2003-2006 to 27% in 2007-2010 (Ibid.).

- Forced labour in the private economy – concerning 19 million individuals – generates 150 billion USD in illegal profits annually (ILO estimates). UN estimates for 2005 suggested the total market value of illicit human trafficking was around 32 billion USD.

Migrant deaths

- IOM estimated that between January and early December 2014 over 4,900 migrants died or went missing attempting to reach destinations around the world. This figure for the whole of 2013 was of 2,400 recorded deaths.

- Of the total recorded fatalities, over 3,200 occurred in the Mediterranean, making this the deadliest route worldwide (66% of the total). An estimated 11% of deaths globally this year occurred in the Bay of Bengal, 6% in the Horn of Africa (the vast majority during sea crossings in Yemen), and 6% along the U.S.-Mexico border. Over 85% recorded up to early December occurred along sea routes.

Figure 3 – Region in which death occurred, 1 January – 8 December, 2014

Region	Recorded deaths
Mediterranean	3224
North America	307
East Africa	251
Horn of Africa	265
Bay of Bengal	540
Southeast Asia	74
Caribbean	66
Sahara	56
Other Europe	51
Other Regions	34
TOTAL	4,868

Source: IOM calculations based on various sources including media reports, information gathered by IOM Field Offices, data from medical examiner offices, UNHCR (for figures on the Bay of Bengal), and US Border Patrol.

- Globally, migrants who lost their lives are mainly from Africa and the Middle East: 27% from sub-Saharan Africa, 19% from the Middle East and North Africa, 13% from the Horn of Africa. A large share of those whose region of origin is unknown is likely to be from Africa or the Middle East as well, so the above figures are likely higher.
- IOM estimates that over 40,000 migrants have died in transit since 2000. According to IOM calculations based on The Migrant Files data, over 22,400 of them have lost their lives trying to reach Europe.
- Existing figures may greatly underestimate the real number of dead migrants, given the number of people who go missing and are never found. Experts estimate that for every dead body found there are at least two others that are never recorded.

Figure 4 – Regional estimates of migrant border-related deaths as compiled by various sources

Region	N. of deaths	Period	Source
Sahara	1,790	1996-2013	Fortress Europe
US-Mexico border	6,029	1998-2013	US Border Patrol
European external borders	22,394	2000-2014	IOM based on The Migrant Files
Australian waters	1,495	2000-2014	Australian Border Deaths Database
Horn of Africa	3,104	2006-2014	UNHCR; IOM for 2014
Bay of Bengal	1,500-2000	2012-2014	UNHCR; Arakan Project
Caribbean	188	2012-2014	UNHCR; IOM for 2014

Source: IOM, 2014

Remittances

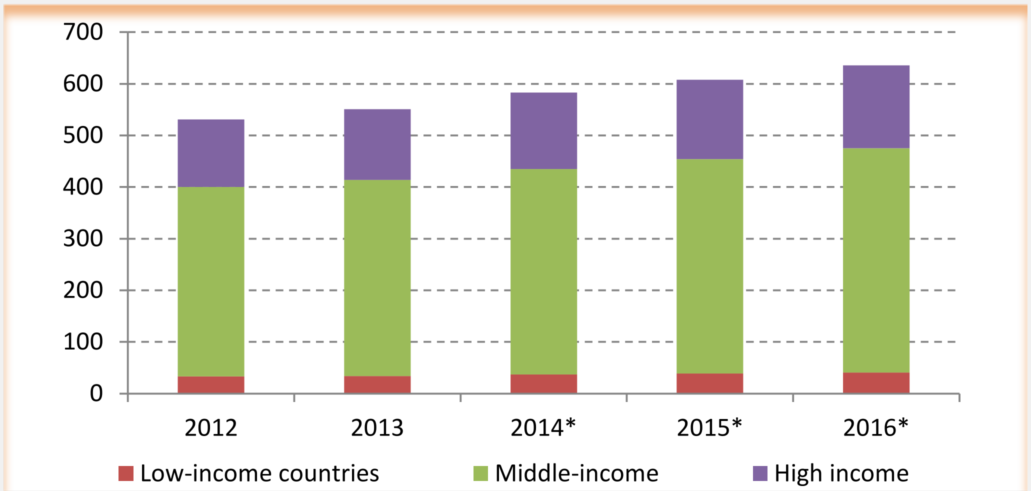
- There has been an exponential growth in remittances but transfer costs remain high. The link between rising remittances and the relatively stable stock of migrants needs to be explored.
- The World Bank estimated that remittances to developing countries amounted to 404 billion USD in 2013, up by 3.5% relative to the previous year (World Bank).
- Growth in remittance flows to developing countries is expected to accelerate at an annual average of 8.4% per year over the next 3 years. Remittances to developing countries are projected to grow by 5% and reach 435 billion USD in 2014, and increase further by 4.4% to 454 billion in 2015 (Ibid.).

- However, recent research suggests that much of the recorded increase in remittances to developing countries is due to better reporting systems and changes in the ways remittances have been measured over time, and might therefore not be as high as often claimed (McKenzie and Clemens, 2014[10]).

- The global average cost of sending remittances fell to 7.9% of the value sent in the third quarter of 2014 from 8.9% in the same period last year. Efforts to reduce the cost of remittances have resulted in estimated savings to migrants and their families of 42.5 billion USD over the period 2009-2013 (World Bank, 2013).

- Yet more remains to be done: in 173 corridors (78% of those surveyed), average costs of transmitting remittances are above 5%, while only in 47 corridors remittance costs are below 5%. Sub-Saharan Africa is the costliest region to which to send remittances (11.3% of value sent).

Figure 5 – Remittances to low-, middle- and high-income countries, 2012-2016 (US billion dollars)



Source: World Bank. *Forecast.

II. Changing geography of international migration

- South-South migration slightly exceeds South-North migration. In 2013, 82.3 million international migrants who were born in developing countries resided in developing countries, while 81.9 million international migrants born in developing countries were living in developed countries (OECD, UN-DESA, 2013).

[10] Clemens, Michael A.; McKenzie, David. 2014. *Why don't remittances appear to affect growth?* Policy Research working paper; no. WPS 6856. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2014/05/19457668/dont-remittances-appear-affect-growth

Figure 6 – Distribution of international migrants by origin and destination, 2013

Direction	Stock (million)	% of total migrant stock
South → South	82.3	36%
South → North	81.9	35%
North → North	53.7	23%
North → South	13.7	6%

Source: UN-DESA, 2013

- About 50% of international migrants reside in 10 countries. The U.S. is the first destination country (45.8 million in 2013), followed by the Russian Federation (11 million), Germany (9.8 million), Saudi Arabia (9.1 million), the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom (7.8 million each), France (7.5 million), Canada (7.3 million), Australia and Spain (6.5 million each; UN-DESA, 2013).

- Within OECD countries, permanent labour migration is falling, particularly due to recession in Italy and Spain. Germany is the second country of destination in the OECD after the U.S., and migration to the country is increasing. Intra-EU migration is also growing but migration trends vary widely across OECD countries (OECD, 2014).

- There are new countries of destination globally, and more and more migrants are concentrated in cities, often within the same region: India and China continue to be important countries of origin, particularly for immigration in OECD countries. China is increasingly a country of destination: the country's international migrant stock increased by more than 50% between 2000 and 2013. The annual rate of change of international migrants in China between 2000 and 2013 was 3.9%, compared to 3% in 1990-2000. The same rate was 0.7% for Germany IN 2000-2013, compared to 4.2% in 1990-2000, and 2.1% for the U.S., compared to 4% in 1990-2000.

III. Changing government approach to migration[11]

National immigration policies are arguably not increasingly restrictive

- In 2011, among 195 countries with available data, 73% of governments either had policies to maintain the current level of immigration or were not intervening to change it, while 16% had policies to lower it and 11% had policies to raise it.

- More and more governments have been increasingly open to regular migration in the last 2 decades. Globally, the share of governments with policies to lower immigration declined from 40% in 1996 to 16% in 2011, while those seeking to raise immigration increased from 4% in 1996 to 11% in 2011.

[11] This section is based on results from the UN-DESA report *International Migration Policies: Government Views and Priorities,* 2013.

- In developed regions, the trend toward greater openness to immigration is particularly pronounced. Only 10% of countries in 2011 implemented policies to lower immigration, down from 60% in 1996.

- In developing regions, the percentage of governments with policies to lower the level of immigration declined to 18% in 2011 from 34% in 1996.

An increasing number of countries have adopted policies to promote the integration of non-nationals.

- Integration policies were adopted by 62% of governments in 2011 (up from 44% in 1996). Such policies are more common in countries in developed regions than in developing regions – 91% against 47% of countries respectively. Also 29% of least developed countries adopted them.

Efforts to promote diaspora engagement are growing.

- Many governments are encouraging diaspora members to become involved in the development of their countries of origin – namely through mobilization of diaspora's financial resources, but also through promotion of investment in the origin country.

- Out of 144 countries with available data on diaspora units in 2011, 114 had special government units to deal with matters of interest to emigrants and their families abroad.

Countries are increasingly selective towards migrant workers.

- Many destination countries are adopting policies to attract highly skilled migrants through facilitated conditions for admission and family reunification, and fewer restrictions than for low-skilled migrants.

- 39% of governments globally had policies to encourage immigration of highly-skilled workers in 2011, up from 22% in 2005.

- In 2011, 60% of countries in developed regions had such policies (41% in 2005), against 32% in developing regions (14% in 2005). The growing trend can be seen even in the poorest regions (18% of countries in 2011, up from 6% in 2005).

- A growing number of governments have attempted to address irregular migration by reform of their immigration systems, promotion of return of irregular migrants or regularization programmes. 75% of 146 countries with available data in 2011 thought irregular migration was a major concern (developed and developing countries alike).

IV. Labor migration: labour and skill shortages globally

- Approximately 105 million people are international labour migrants (almost 50% of the global migrant stock; ILO, 2014).

- Immigrants from developing economies contributed an estimated 40% of labour force growth in advanced economies between 1980 and 2010 (McKinsey Global Institute, 2012).

- Particularly in the past few years, more workers have arrived with advanced skills; e.g. by 2008, foreign-born workers constituted 17% of all employment in science, technology, engineering and math occupations in the United States (Ibid).

- By 2020, there will be a 38-40 million potential shortage of workers with tertiary education (13% of demand), 45 million too few workers with secondary education in developing countries, and 90-95 million more low-skill workers than employers will need (11% oversupply; Ibid.).

- The gap between demand and supply of high-skill workers is estimated to be equivalent to 16-18 million workers in advanced economies, 23 million in China. The total shortage for medium-skilled workers for the next 20 years is estimated at 45 million workers – 10 million in India, and 31 million in Young Developing economies[12].

- There will be estimated surpluses of low-skill workers, 32-35 million in advanced economies, and 58 million in India and Young Developing economies. This means that millions of people will be trapped in subsistence agriculture or urban poverty in developing countries (namely India) if job opportunities at home or abroad are not created for them.

- According to research from the Boston Consulting Group[13], Germany could experience a labour shortage of up to 2.4 million workers by 2020. Australia could have a shortfall of 2.3 million workers by 2030. Brazil will have a shortage of up to 8.5 million workers by 2020. China is expected to have a surplus of 55.2 to 75.3 million workers by the same year, but by 2030 the surplus could turn into a shortage of up to 24.5 million people. The U.S. is expected to have a surplus of between 17.1 million and 22 million people in 2020. France, Italy and the United Kingdom are projected to have surpluses in 2020 but face shortages thereafter. South Africa has a projected surplus of 36% of the labour supply in 2020, and expectations are it will grow to 39% by the following decade.

[12] This group is composed of 11 countries out of the 70 considered by the McKinsey Global Institute report, from South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, with GDP at less than 3,000 US dollars in 2010. For more information, see http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/employment_and_growth/the_world_at_work (last accessed: 25 November 2014).

[13] See http://www.bcg.com/media/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?id=tcm:12-164660.

- According to the Hays Global Skill Index[14] (based on an analysis of main aspects of labour markets in 30 countries), the US and Mexico had a high level of talent mismatch in the Americas last year (available labour does not have the skills employers want); they were followed by Canada, Chile, and Brazil. In the Asia-Pacific region, Japan had the highest level of talent mismatch, followed by China. In Europe, high levels of talent mismatch were found in Ireland, Spain, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Hungary, but also moderately high in France, Denmark and Sweden.

- The Talent Shortage Survey 2014 carried out by the Manpower Group (obtained from a survey of 37,000 employers in 42 countries and territories) revealed that 36% of employers globally report difficulty in filling jobs, the highest proportion since 2007. Regionally, employers reporting having difficulties in filling jobs were 48% in the Americas, 45% in the Asia-Pacific region, and 27% in Europe, part of the Middle East and South Africa.

- Employers in the Americas are having difficulties in filling jobs as technicians, skilled traders, engineers, sales managers and labourers; in countries in the Asia-Pacific region, jobs as engineers, sales representatives, skilled traders, accounting and finance staff, and sales managers were reported as the most difficult to fill. In Europe, South Africa and part of the Middle East, employers listed skilled traders, engineers, sales representatives, technicians and management/executives as the most difficult positions to fill.

- As for leading global economies, employers reporting difficulties in filling jobs were 12% in the United Kingdom, 21% in France, 24% in China, 40% in Germany and the US, 64% in India and 81% in Japan. The top 10 countries that have difficulties in filling jobs are Japan (81%), Peru (67%), India (64%), Argentina, Brazil and Turkey (63%), New Zealand (59%), Panama (58%), Colombia (57%) and Hong Kong, China (56%; Manpower Group, 2014).

V. Better data needed

- The figures above present a snapshot of what we know about global migration trends. There is a need for a concerted effort to collect more and better quality international and internal migration data, in a systematic and consistent way, as well as make better use of existing data in both crisis and non-crisis settings, in order to enhance efforts to assist migrants, improve our understanding of the impact of migration on development of countries of origin and destination, as well as on migrants themselves, and our capacity to help countries design and implement evidence-based migration and development **policies.**

[14] See http://www.hays-index.com/introduction/ .

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