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Africa's population and migratory trends

Labor Migration Statistics Report in Africa Second edition

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International migration in Africa

International migration plays an important role in the socio-economic development of countries of origin, destination and transit. Across the world, migration, more specifically labour migration, has become increasingly prominent in policy discussions. An evidence-based debate on migration policies is necessary if the global development agenda is to be successfully implemented more especially in providing access to decent work and improving social protection for both native and migrant workers.

To achieve this, a greater engagement is required amongst all the stakeholders. To this end, greater engagement with the AU Member States was achieved through various meetings and validation processes leading to production of this second edition of the Report on Labour Migration Statistics in Africa which presents more comprehensive statistics than the first.

Accordingly, with the support from the AUC in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and as part of the Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP) under the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) contributed greatly to the development of the second edition having produced the first edition in 2017.

The report seeks to improve the understanding of labour migration dynamics in Africa and, as such, it should be useful to policymakers tasked with designing evidence-based labour migration

policies. The analysis presented in the report identifies past, present, and emerging trends in international labour migration in Africa.

The spatial distribution of Africa's population by Regional economic communities indicated that CEN-SAD was the most populous region with 646.0 million people, followed by COMESA with 509.6 million people, and ECOWAS with 371.4 million people. The other regions like SADC had 327.6 million people, IGAD with 249.8 million, EAC with 197.9 million people, ECCAS with 173.7 million while AMU had the least population of 95.2 million people.

Generally, men dominate the labour force in most African countries, which highlights the need for policies to improve gender parity. African women still face many obstacles preventing them from participating fully in the labour market. The data collected and analysed indicates that around two-thirds (65.5 per cent) of the Africa's working age population participated in the labour force in 2017. However, throughout the ten-year reporting period, the male labour force participation rate was consistently higher than the female rate: 74.5 per cent versus 56.6 per cent, respectively, in 2017, and 76.9 per cent versus 56.5 per cent, respectively, in 2008. The wide gender gap narrowed slightly from 20.4 percentage points in 2008 to 17.9 percentage points in 2017.

Migration Trends

There are various types of migration and mobilities that take place across the African geographical space which are greatly influenced by demographic, socio-economic and political factors. The incentive for migration is generally to take up a new job, to search for a job or to attain economic stability. In view of the possible impacts on countries of origin and destination, it is crucial to have reliable statistics on the international migrant stock in Africa.

International migration within Africa has intensified over the past ten years. Thus, the total number of international migrants in the continent increased from 13.3 million in 2008 to 25.4 million in 2017: a tremendous increase of 91.2 per cent, which translates into an average annual growth rate of 7.5 per cent.

The share of international migrants in Africa's total population increased from 1.4 per cent in 2008 to 2.0 per cent in 2017. In 2017, the leading countries of destination for migrants were South Africa (accounting for 16.5 per cent of the total migrant population in Africa), Côte d'Ivoire (8.9 per cent), Uganda (6.9 per cent), Nigeria (5.0 per cent), Ethiopia (5.0 per cent) and Kenya (4.4 per cent). The data show that, in any given year, the number of male migrants exceeded that of female migrants. Thus, in 2017, there were 13.51

million male migrants (accounting for 53.1 per cent of the total migrant population) and 11.93 million female migrants (46.9 per cent), while in 2008 there were 7.13 million male migrants and 6.17 million female migrants.

The spatial distribution of migrants per region in 2017, indicated that CEN-SAD had the largest migrant population at 11.1 million migrants, followed by COMESA, SADC and ECOWAS, with 8.7 million, 7.5 million and 6.6 million migrants, respectively. AMU had the smallest migrant population (1.4 million). CEN-SAD also exhibited the greatest difference between the numbers of male and female migrants (0.87 million).

The number of international migrant workers nearly doubled over the ten years considered, increasing from 7.5 million in 2008 to 14.4 million in 2017: an increase of 91.7 per cent. In any one year, less than half of the migrant workers were women: their average share was 41.6 per cent, with 3.1 million female migrant workers in 2008 (41.5 per cent of the total) and 6.1 million in 2017 (42.3 per cent). Male migrant workers accounted for an average of 58.1 per cent of the total migrant labour force over that period.





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