

## Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)



# Labor Migration Statistics Report in Africa *Second edition: Regional Migration Profile*

SECOND EDITION OF THE AFRICA LABOR MIGRATION STATISTICS REPORT |

# Introduction

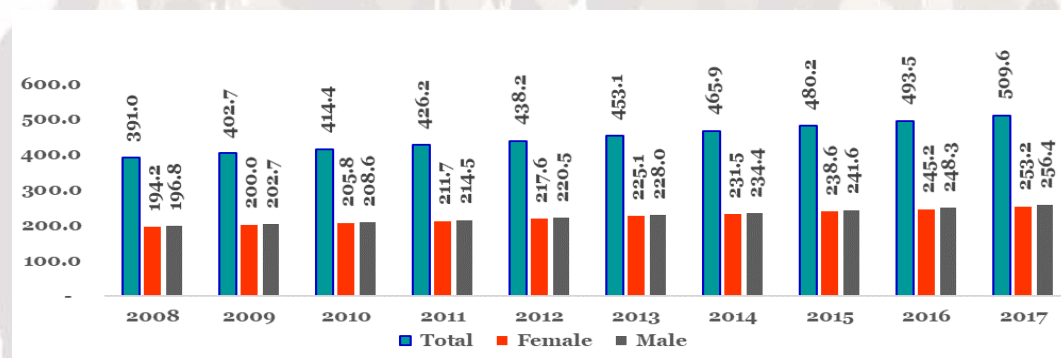
The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) was established as an organization of free independent sovereign states which have agreed to co-operate in developing their natural and human resources for the good of all their people. The main focus of COMESA has been on the formation of a large economic and trading unit to overcome trade barriers faced by individual States.

The region has a wide-ranging series of objectives based on its priorities including having a free trade area, a customs union and trade promotion to promote sustainable economic development and overcome trade barriers faced by individual States. The member States of COMESA are Burundi, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Sudan, Swaziland, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

## POPULATION

The total population in the region has increased significantly over the years. In 2008, the region recorded was 391.0 million people. This number has increased steadily over the years with 2017 recording a total population of 509.6 million people. This represents an increase of 30.3 percent in the year 2017 compared with the population in 2008 and an annual growth rate of 2.99 percent.

Figure 1. Population of COMESA Region by sex, 2008-2017(millions)



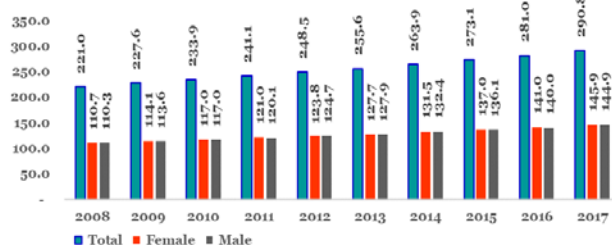
Source: JLMP Database, 2018

The number of females recorded in the region in 2008 was 194.2 million while in 2017 the region recorded a total of 253.2 million females in the population, this indicates an increase of 30.4 percent. Likewise, the number males in the population recorded in 2008 was 196.8 million while in 2017 the region recorded 256.4 million males in the population. This represents an increase of 30.3 percent in the number of males in 2017 as compared to that recorded in 2008.

## WORKING AGE POPULATION

The working age population for the COMESA region in 2008 was 221.0 million while in 2017 the region recorded 290.8 million people, which represents an increase of 31.6 percent (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Working-age population in COMESA region, by sex, 2008–17 (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

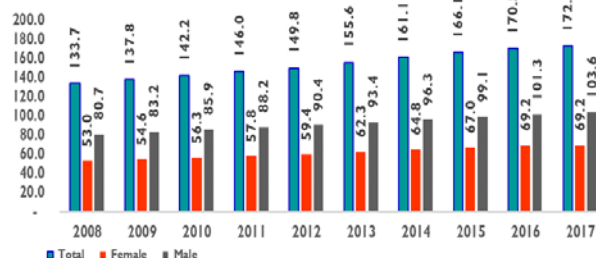
The proportion of males in the working-age population for the region increased from 110.3 million in 2008 to 144.9 million in 2017 (an increase of 31.4 percent). Likewise, the proportion of females in the working-age population in the region increased from 110.7 million in 2008 to 145.9 million in 2017 (an increase of 31.8 percent).

## LABOUR FORCE AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

The COMESA region recorded 133.7 million people in the labour force in 2008 while in 2017 the region recorded 172.7 million people, which represents an increase of 29.2 percent on the labour force in the region. The population of females in the labour force in 2008 was 53.0 million while in 2017 the number of females in the labour force increased to 69.2 million. On the other hand, the population of males in the labour force increased from 80.7 million in 2008 to 103.6 million. The number of females in the labour force increased by 30.5 percent in 2017 as compared to 2008, while that of males in the labour force also increased by 28.3 percent in the same period. There is a difference of 19.9 percent in 2017 on

the proportion of males in the labour force compared to that of females in the region. This indicates that there is need to put up measures that advocate for more females into the labour force so as to match with their male counterparts.

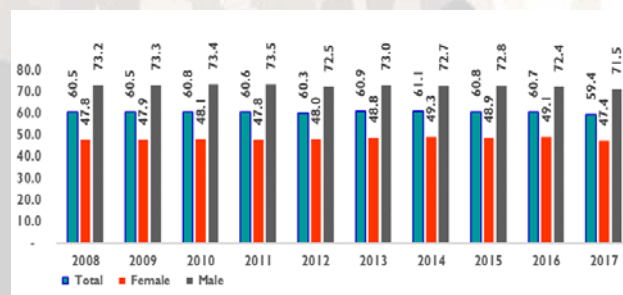
Figure 3. Labour force in COMESA region, by sex, 2008–17 (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

The labour force participation rate for the region for the year 2017 was 59.4 percent with males having a higher proportion of 71.5 percent while females recorded a lower proportion of 47.4 percent. This trend is consistent over the years evaluated in this report with 2017 recording a difference of 24.1 percent between males and females.

Figure 4. Labour force participation rate in COMESA region by sex, 2017 (%)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

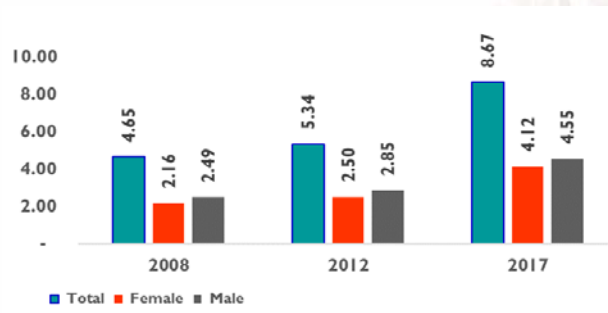
This shows that there exists a difference in terms of representation in the labour force between males and females in the region, more needs to be done to improve the representation of females in the labour force given.

# Stock of international Migrants

## TRENDS IN THE SIZE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT POPULATION

The number of international migrants in the COMESA region has increased over the years. In 2008 the region recorded 4.65 million migrants in the region while in 2017 the total number of migrants recorded in the region were 8.67 million. This represents an increase of 86.5 percent.

Figure 5. International migrant population in COMESA region by sex (millions)



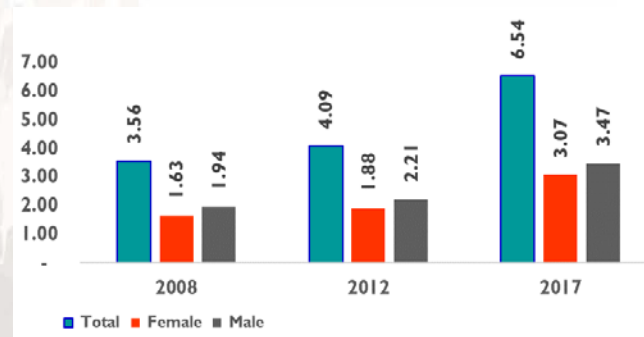
Source: JLMP Database, 2018

The disaggregation of migrant population by gender also depicted a similar trend. In 2008, the region recorded a total of 2.16 million international female migrants while in the year 2017 the region recorded a total of 4.12 million female migrants. The number of international male migrants recorded in 2008 was 2.49 million while in 2017 the region recorded 4.55 million. The number of migrants increased from 2008 to 2017 by 90.9 percent amongst the females while the males increased by 82.9 percent.

## WORKING-AGE INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS

The number of working age migrants in the COMESA region has increased significantly over years. In 2008 the region recorded a total of 3.56 million working age migrants in the region while in 2017, the region recorded 6.54 million working age international migrants, which represents an increase of 83.6 percent on the working age migrant population in the region.

Figure 6. Working-age international migrants in COMESA region by sex (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

Similarly, in terms of gender a similar trend was shown on both males and females. In 2008, the number of working age female migrants in the region was recorded as 0.77 million and this has increased over the years with 2017 recording 1.79 million working age population of international female migrants in the region. On the other hand, the working age international male migrants showed a similar trend over the years with 2008 recording a total of 0.79 million working age

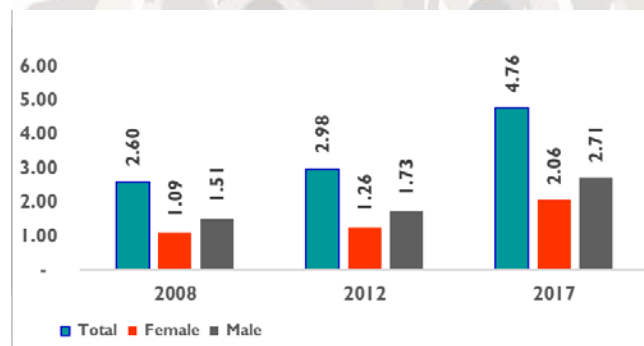


population of international male migrants while 2017 recorded a total of 1.82 million working age population of international male migrants in the region.

## INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

The number of international migrant workers in the COMESA region in 2008 was 2.60 million while in 2017 the region recorded 4.76 million international migrant workers, which represents an increase of 83.2 percent. A similar trend is shown when disaggregating the number of international migrant workers by gender. In 2008 the region reported 1.09 million international female migrant workers while in 2017 the region recorded 2.06 million. Similarly, the number of male migrant workers in the region in 2008 was reported as 1.51 million while in 2017 the region recorded 2.71 million international male migrant workers. The number of international female migrant workers increased by 88.8 percent while that of the international male migrant workers increased by 79.2 percent over the period.

Figure 7. International migrant workers in COMESA by sex, 2017 (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

In any given year, there were more international male migrant workers than females. Therefore, there is more that needs to be done to bridge the gender gap in the work force between males and

females for the international migrant workers in the region.

## YOUNG INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

Majority of the population in the region comprises of youths (15-35 years) spread across various member states. However, when assessing the number of youth migrant workers (15-35), many of the countries were not able to provide this information. For instance, in 2016, only Eswatini was able to provide the number of youth migrant workers. Many member states from the region have not provided information on this indicator.

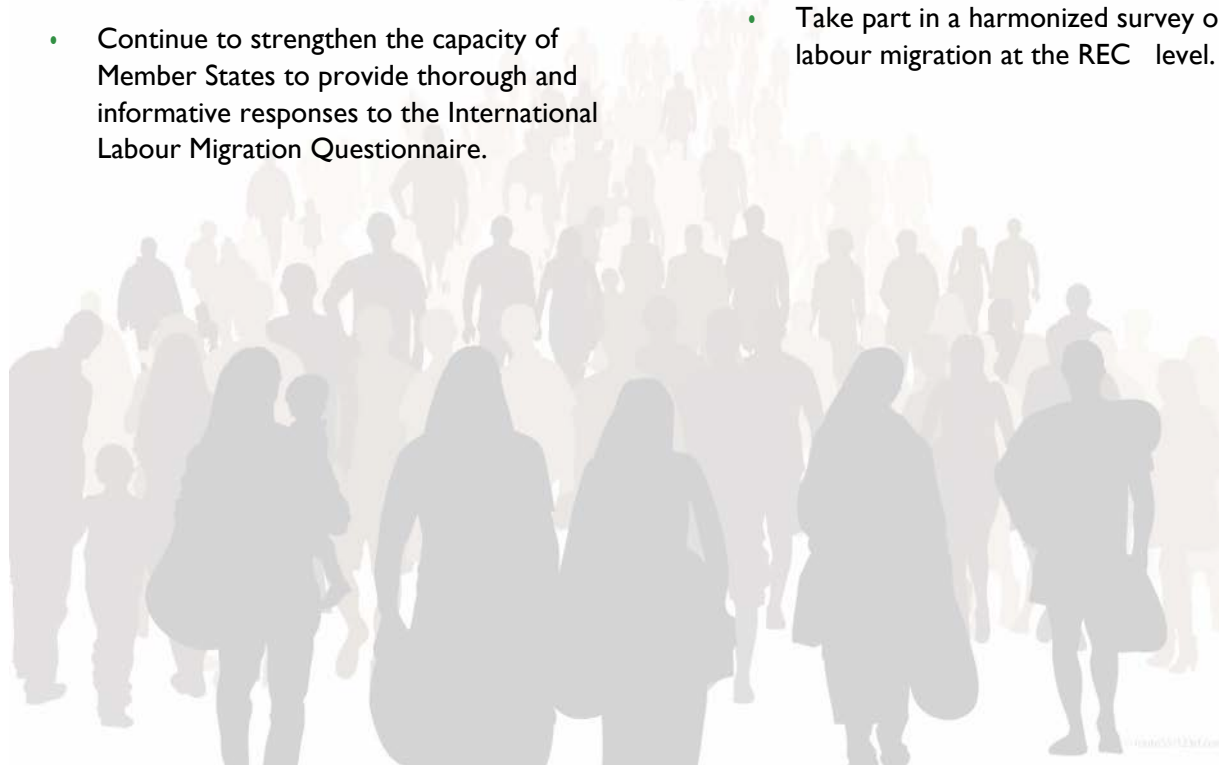
## ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

Additional migrant profiles were also assessed during the period 2008 to 2017. These include employment status, economic activity, occupation, and level of education. However, in the COMESA region many countries were unable to provide the information. For instance, in 2016, when disaggregating migrant workers by economic activities, only Ethiopia and Eswatini were able to provide this information. The disaggregation by occupation and professional categories of migrant workers was availed by Eswatini only in the year 2016. Also, in 2016, none of the COMESA partner states was able to provide information on international migrant disaggregation by education level. The need for these indicators is key to understanding migrant trends in the region given that the number of migrants continues to increase significantly. Therefore, more efforts and measures should be put in place to capacitate member states to produce data disaggregated by these key indicators for a better understanding of migrant needs, trends as well as their impact in the socio-economic aspect.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Bearing in mind the findings from this second edition of labour migration statistics report in Africa, but also the various constraints on the data analysis, the following recommendations were drawn up:

- Continue to strengthen the capacity of Member States to provide thorough and informative responses to the International Labour Migration Questionnaire.
- Monitor and coordinate the collection of data on labour migration within their blocs.
- Promote the use of administrative sources of labour migration data.
- Take part in a harmonized survey on labour migration at the REC level.



African Union Commission



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