



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency



## InfoSheet No 4

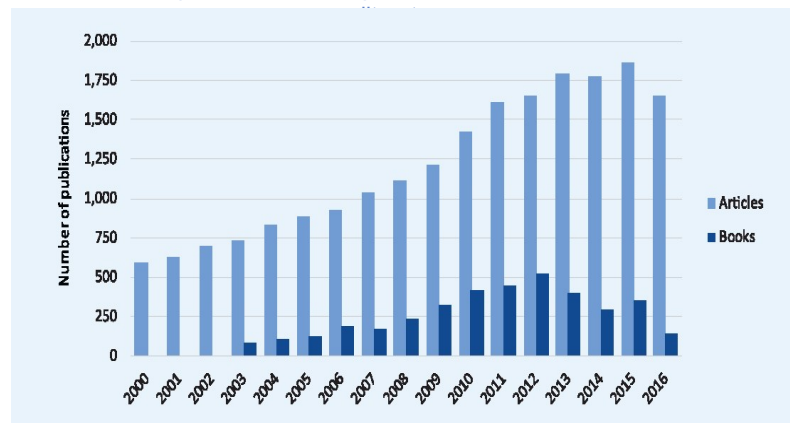
### Migration Research and Analysis: Growth, Reach and Recent Contributions

This chapter provides an overview of research and analysis on migration being undertaken and published by academics, governments, intergovernmental organizations and think tanks. The knowledge derived from rigorous analysis and research can and should play an important role in informing people, including policymakers and migration practitioners, about the changing world around us, including migration. Understanding the variety, nature and characteristics of the different types of research and analysis being produced on migration is important for people who may be studying migration, working on migration policies or in migration practice, or wanting to develop a better understanding of migration.

#### KEY POINTS

There has been a significant increase in the interest in migration as a topic over time, including by some of the major producers of research and analysis, reflecting the growing salience of the topic globally.

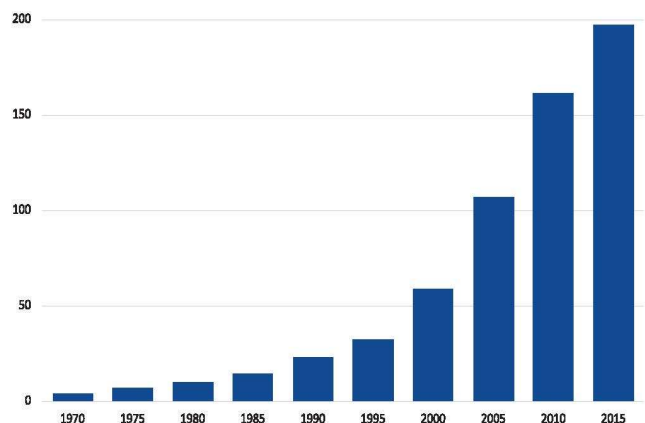
Number of journal articles and books on “immigration” and “emigration” available through Scopus, the largest database of academic peer-reviewed



Academic outputs on migration has increased and there has been a dramatic rise in the number of think tanks working on migration. The chapter also shows that different types of migration-related output have different strengths and weaknesses, which are important to understand when utilizing such material. Academic research and analysis, for example, may involve greater rigor than other forms; however, the long lead times involved can diminish their usefulness for policymakers, who often need material quickly.

There are fundamental differences in the publishing processes for academic and non-academic literature, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. The academic publishing system involves multi-stage reviews and most published academic research are behind paywalls (not freely accessible), and often managed by commercial publishers. In contrast, the production of research and analysis publications outside of academic publishing (“grey” literature) generally involves faster processes that have typically less rigorous review and are usually freely available.

Number of think tanks working on migration and publishing in English, 1970-2015



As part of this chapter we invited the chief editors of selected, leading migration journals to offer their reflections on their journal’s key contributions during 2015 and 2016. The editors’ responses are included in full in the chapter, and future editions of the world migration report will feature other journals. For this 2018 edition, the journals included are: African Human Mobility Review, the Asian and Pacific Migration Journal, International Migration, the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, the Journal of Refugee Studies, Mobilities, and Population Space and Place.

The information garnered for this chapter has shown that, somewhat surprisingly, some online migration-related research and analysis has had extraordinary reach. The fact that some material can be so widely viewed, read or downloaded confirms the need for the quality of published material on migration to be further strengthened.

There is also a case for playing to the strengths of the different types of material on migration. Some of the highest quality blogs on migration, for example, are based on carefully elaborated and conducted studies and insightful analysis drawing on years of research. Critically assessing material in terms of rigor, trustworthiness and relevance is important when drawing upon the growing body of published research and analysis material on migration.

Finally, we encourage policy makers, practitioners, researchers and others to explore and exploit the wealth of written material on migration with a critical eye. We also underscore the importance of activities and initiatives that bridge the gap between the research and policy spheres by bringing migration scholars, researchers, practitioners and policymakers together, including through workshops, conferences, briefing sessions, and related consultations. The opportunity to listen and share knowledge on migration can support new lines of thinking and help craft more effective policy responses.

To read the report, please go to <https://www.iom.int/world-migration-report-2018>

