

These COVID-19 Analytical Snapshots are designed to capture the latest information and analysis in a fast-moving environment. Topics will be repeated from time to time as analysis develops. If you have an item to include, please email us at research@iom.int.

Socioeconomic impacts on migrants

The socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 are progressively becoming a major area of [analysis](#) in recognition of the longer-term implications the pandemic will have. It is [estimated](#) that around 49 million people worldwide could be pushed into extreme poverty in 2020. The pandemic has already revealed and exacerbated pre-existing socioeconomic [inequalities](#), including those of migrants, and will affect as well their country and communities of origin. Despite [migrants' contributions](#) to the pandemic response worldwide, some migrants thus risks being particularly vulnerable to the longer-term effects of the pandemic.



International migrants

Some [migrants](#), including refugees, have returned to their country of origin because of the global slowdown, and are experiencing difficulties reintegrating in labour markets. The pandemic may reduce the attractiveness of some destination countries, it may also push some to [\(irregularly\) migrate](#) to wealthier countries comparatively less affected by the pandemic. [Sub-Saharan Africa](#) is expected to be the region hit hardest in terms of extreme poverty.



Displaced populations

Often in vulnerable situations prior to the pandemic, [refugees and internally displaced persons](#) risk further being marginalized. [Some countries](#) have closed entry to all foreigners, including asylum seekers. Poor and over-crowded living conditions may worsen if there are cuts in humanitarian [funding](#) due to the diversion of aid to fighting COVID-19 domestically.



Migrant workers

[Migrant workers](#) are often working in sectors that are the most affected by the pandemic, such as manufacturing and hospitality. With rising unemployment rates, they are particularly impacted, together with their relatives who may be reliant on the remittances they send back home. Some employed in [seasonal work](#) have also been unable to work due to travel restrictions



International remittances

According to the [World Bank](#), [international remittances](#) risk falling by 20% in 2020, the “sharpest decline in recent history”. This is a cause of [concern](#) for [smaller](#) but also larger economies that heavily rely on international remittances, as well as for migrants’ [relatives](#).



Inclusion and social cohesion

[Stigmatization and discrimination](#) have led to a rise in [xenophobia](#) against migrants that risks having longer-term implications for their socioeconomic inclusion and, more broadly, the social cohesion of their receiving society.

The UN Framework

On 19 March, the [UN Secretary-General](#) called for solidarity and an urgent and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As articulated in its report [Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity: Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19](#), this global response is to focus on 3 priorities:

- 1) Tackling the health emergency
- 2) Focusing on the social impact and the economic response and recovery
- 3) Helping countries to recover better

**SHARED
RESPONSIBILITY,
GLOBAL
SOLIDARITY:**
Responding to
the socio-economic
impacts of COVID-19

March 2020

A [UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#) has been launched by the Secretary-General to finance these [three objectives](#), especially for the poorest and most vulnerable communities in low- and middle-income countries.

Concerning objective 2 and the urgent socioeconomic response, the UN is focusing on [five critical pillars](#):

- 1) Protecting health services and systems
- 2) Social protection and basic services
- 3) Protecting jobs and small and medium sized enterprises
- 4) Macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration
- 5) Social cohesion and community resilience.

IOM's role

Recognizing that migrants will be among the most vulnerable populations to be socioeconomically affected, [IOM](#) expanded its appeal on 15 April from USD 116.1 million to USD 499 million for its COVID-19 [Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan](#). Immediate responses rolled out in various parts of the world include those in Bangladesh, Tunisia, Panama, Uganda, Italy, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (read more [here](#)).

Part of the IOM response is also focused on mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic on migrants (Strategy Priority 4). In this respect, the work of IOM includes:

- rapid analysis to assess the immediate socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19;
- monitoring the secondary impacts of the pandemic;
- identifying and piloting efficient and scalable mechanisms for mobilizing health migrant workers and broader migrant communities;
- enhancing employers' commitment to migrant workers' protection; and
- prioritizing livelihoods and job creation in displacement affected communities.

In this context, IOM staff in the field are contributing to rapid analysis of the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 on migrants to support inputs to UN country teams and resident coordinators.

This COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot has been produced by [IOM Research](#) (research@iom.int).

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