

*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](mailto:research@iom.int).*



**New research & analysis on social protection & COVID-19**

[Social protection for migrants during the COVID-19 crisis: The right and smart choice](#), by Mauro Testaverde

[Migrant farmworkers face heightened vulnerabilities during COVID-19](#), by Ella Haley et al.

[Social protection and jobs responses to COVID-19: A real-time review of country measures](#), by Ugo Gentilini, Mohamed Almenfi and Ian Orton

[Social protection response to the COVID-19 crisis: Options for developing countries](#), by François Gerard, Clément Imbert and Kate Orkin

**Did you know...?**

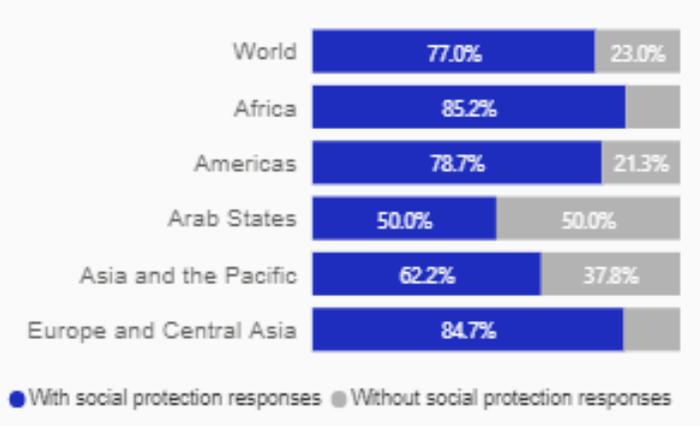
In 2017, it was estimated that only [45% of the global population](#) was effectively covered by at least one social benefit, with [4 billion](#) left without any such protection.

**The importance of social protection amid the COVID-19 pandemic**

With [projections](#) that the pandemic could push around 49 million people worldwide into extreme poverty, social protection has become an [essential component](#) of COVID responses to ensure access to health care, as well as job and income security. As noted by [ILO](#), evidence from past crises shows that countries providing robust universal social protection systems are better prepared to respond to crises such as the current pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts.

Between 1 Feb and 12 May, the [ILO Social Protection Monitor](#) recorded 915 social protection measures taken by 168 countries around the world to respond to the crisis (see figure below for regional shares).

**Share of countries with and w/o responses, by region**



[Migrants](#) are particularly at risk of being left out of these social protection measures, especially temporary/seasonal migrant workers, those self-employed, working in the informal economy and irregular migrants.

## Welfare and social safety net measures

Social safety nets involve direct provision of cash, goods or services (food or accommodation, such as [Indonesia's 'rice ATMs'](#)) to alleviate impacts of the pandemic. [Some countries](#) have extended eligibility of such programmes to migrants, including by temporarily regularizing migrants and asylum seekers who had applied for residency (Portugal).



Indonesia's 'rice ATMs' provide rice for eligible residents (Source: [AP](#) A. Ibrahim)

[Other countries](#), such as Italy, New Zealand, [Australia](#), Myanmar, and Uzbekistan, have adopted new programmes to respond to the pandemic which cover as well migrants, especially those with a residence permit or temporary working visa. Specific measures targeted at migrants have also been adopted in some countries, such as in [Panama](#) for some 2,500 stranded migrants through the provision of food and accommodation.

## Access to health care

With only [33 to 49%](#) of the world's population covered by essential health services in 2017, migrants often do not have or have insufficient access to health care, let alone health coverage. Recognizing the global health risks, migrants in some countries have been granted free access to COVID-19 testing and treatment, such as temporary migrant workers in [Kazakhstan](#), migrant workers in [South Korea](#) or irregular migrants in [Malaysia](#).

## Irregular migrants

The situation remains difficult for [irregular migrants](#) who often fall outside support programmes and measures. Some States and [local authorities](#) have however included irregular migrants in their COVID-19 responses:

- ⇒ The Pandemic Unemployment Payment in [Ireland](#) applies irrespective of migration status for “employees or self-employed people who have lost their job or have been laid off due to COVID-19”.
- ⇒ The US state of [California](#) is giving cash payments to irregular migrants affected by the pandemic as they were left out from the pandemic stimulus package.

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

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