

This snapshot updates #40. These COVID-19 Analytical Snapshots are designed to capture the latest research, 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).

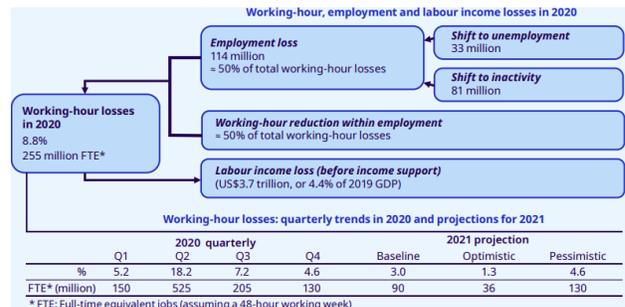
### Migrant workers among the hardest hit by COVID-19 pandemic

“As countries emerge from this crisis and lockdowns are lifted we have a really important opportunity to build back better. And that must be for migrant workers as well. They contribute so much to our societies. And we need to upgrade our labor migration policies and approaches to make them fairer, safer and more inclusive. And that means adopting policy frameworks that protect migrant workers, provide them with access to decent work and actively engage the social partners.”

**Guy Rider— ILO Director General**

### COVID-19 and the world of work

Globally, the pandemic resulted both in employment losses and a reduction of working hours. The [data](#) shows the impact has disproportionately affected sectors with a high incidence of migrant employment, such as [hospitality](#), [retail](#) and [construction](#). While there are strong indicators of [growth](#) for the second half of 2021, it is necessary to put in place the [right policies](#) to ensure an even recovery for migrant workers.



Source: [ILO](#)



### New research & analysis on COVID-19 and labour mobility

[“Disposable” and “essential”: Changes in the global hierarchies of migrant workers after COVID-19](#)

by Anna Triandafyllidou and Lucia Nalbandian

[Covid-19 and Systemic Resilience: Rethinking the Impacts of Migrant Workers and Labour Migration Policies](#), by Bridget Anderson, Friedrich Poeschel, and Martin Ruhs

[Being on the Frontline? Immigrant Workers in Europe and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) by Francesco Fasani and Jacopo Mazza

[The outbreak of Covid-19 in Malaysia: Pushing migrant workers at the margin](#) by Andika Wahab

[On occasion of the pandemic: Reflections on Egyptian Labour Migration](#) by Ibrahim Awad



## Social protection for migrant workers

Migrant workers face specific challenges in accessing social protection, including healthcare and income security.

Brazil, Japan, Trinidad and Tobago and Ireland are among countries which extended income support to migrants, including those undocumented during the pandemic. But in order to address its medium and long-term impacts more will need to be done to bring migrant workers and their families into the existing national social protection systems in order to prevent fragmentation. Countries can learn from this emerging practices and work towards a wider reach that incorporates those in the informal economy and in irregular situations.



## Putting food on the table

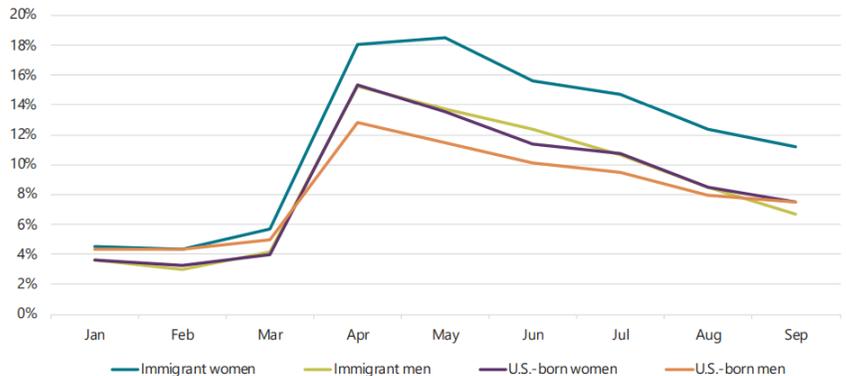
Migrant workers provide critical labor and skills in the agri-food sector. Impacts on mobility brought a shortfall of workers, obliging countries to rethink retention and recruitment strategies to ensure food supply chains remained unaffected. In Australia, seasonal workers' programs were extended for up to 12 months to cater for the required farm work. In Germany, farmers were allowed to organize charter flights for up to 40,000 Romanian and Bulgarian workers for the harvesting season. Meanwhile in Canada, requirements for labor market assessments were waived for the duration of the pandemic. Exceptional employment measures were also introduced in key sectors such as healthcare and other frontline services. France is fast-tracking access to citizenship for workers and similar campaigns for greater citizenship and residency rights are gaining traction in Ireland, Canada and the UK.



## COVID-19 and Women Migrant Workers

COVID-19 impacts men and women differently. Migrant women face an additional layer of vulnerability, often resulting from working in high-risk sectors such as care, cleaning and domestic work while at the same time facing difficulties in accessing appropriate healthcare. Studies have shown that immigrant women are among the hardest hit by the pandemic but it also presents an opportunity to 'build back better' as illustrated by initiatives that have sprung in the UK, Ireland, Australia and across Asia.

**Unemployment Rates of Adults (ages 16 and older) in the U.S. Civilian Labor Force, by Nativity and Gender, January–September 2020**



Source: [Migration Policy Institute](#)

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

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