

Who is a migrant?

There exists no universally agreed upon definition of a migrant. However, the common lay understanding defines a migrant as:

“ A person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

This definition covers both international and internal migrants. An international migrant refers to:

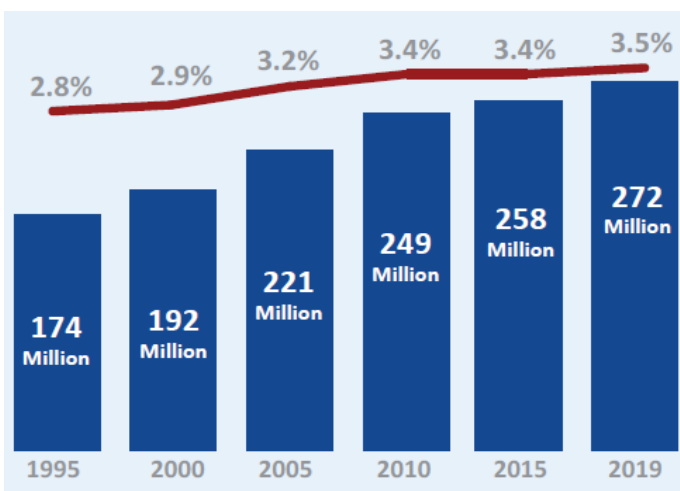
“ Any person who is outside a State of which he or she is a citizen or national or, in the case of a stateless person, his or her State of birth or habitual residence.

International migrants may intend to move permanently or temporarily, and/or be in an irregular situation because they have for instance entered the country irregularly or have overstayed their visa.

Did you know?

- ⇒ More than 40% of all international migrants globally were born in Asia (112 million).
- ⇒ Top emigration countries are otherwise geographically diverse, being located in all world regions except Northern America. 20% of the top 20 countries are European.
- ⇒ Data on international migrants do not reflect immigration status or policy categories. They thus cover migrant workers, refugees or any other category of international migrants.

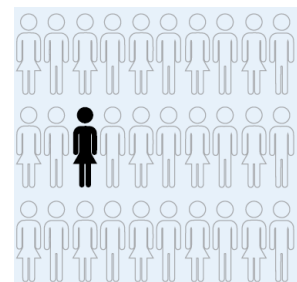
Number of international migrants worldwide



The international migrant population globally has increased in size but remained relatively stable as a proportion of the world’s population.

In 2019, there were 272 million international migrants, representing 3.5% of the global population.

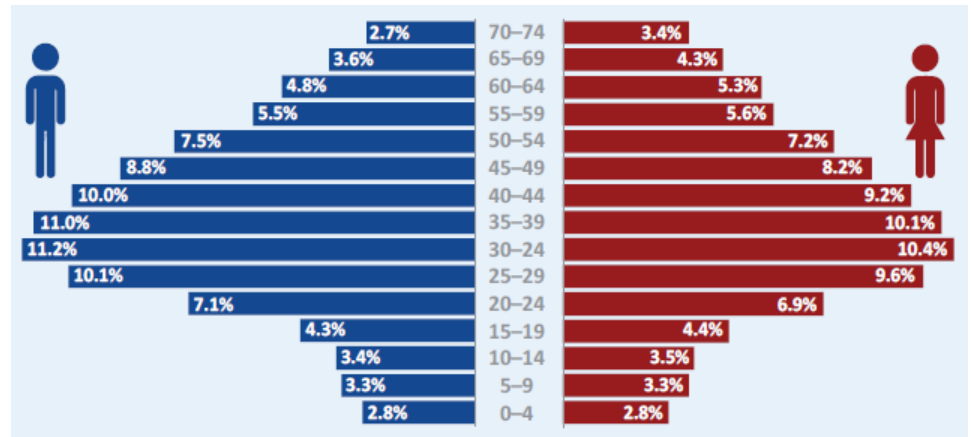
1 in every 30 people is a migrant



Migrants: age and gender

⇒ 52% of international migrants are male and 48% are female

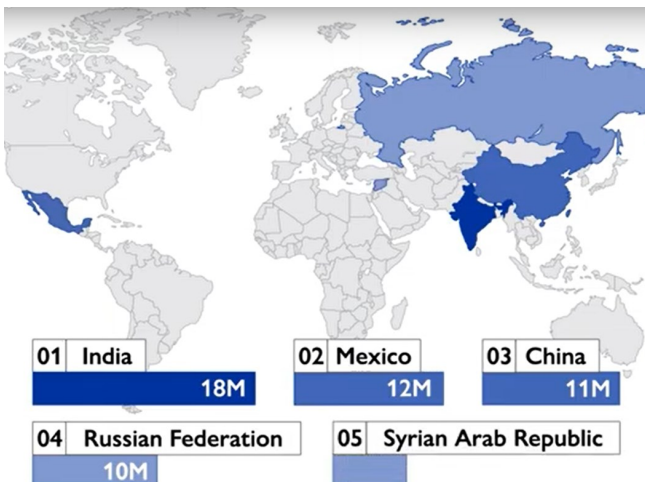
⇒ Most international migrants (74%) are of working age (20-64 years)



IOM, *World Migration Report 2020*

Top countries of origin

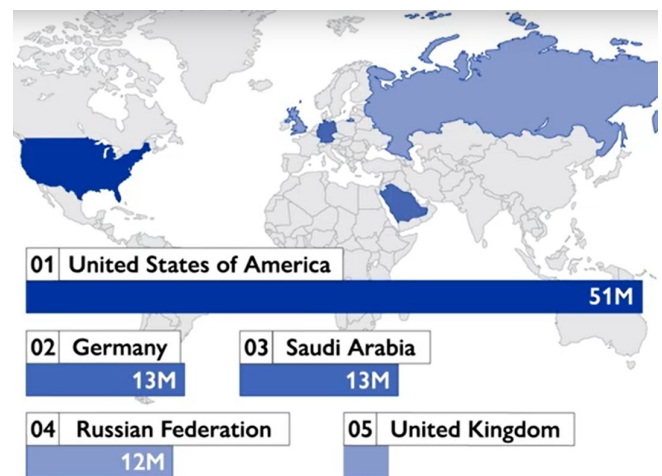
The latest estimates indicate that India is the first country of origin of international migrants, with 17.5 million. It is followed by Mexico (11.8 million), China (10.7 million) and the Russian Federation (10.5 million). The Syrian Arab Republic is ranking at the fifth place with 8.2 million nationals abroad due to displacement caused by long-term conflict.



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Top countries of destination

According to the latest figures, the United States remains the largest destination country, home to almost 51 million international migrants. It is followed by Germany (13 million), Saudi Arabia (13 million), the Russian Federation (12 million) and the United Kingdom (9.6 million). Nearly two thirds of international migrants reside in high-income countries.



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Find out more!

IOM Research – www.iom.int/migration-research

World Migration Report – www.iom.int/wmr/

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