Regional migration dimensions and developments
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This presentation with its focus on key regional migration data and trends seeks to assist migration policymakers, practitioners, researchers and students to make better sense of international migration globally by using a geographic perspective to present regional migration overviews. The analysis in this presentation focuses on six world regions as defined by the United Nations: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania.

This presentation is informed by Chapter 3 “Migration and migrants: Regional dimensions and developments” in the World Migration Report 2022.

**KEY FEATURES**

- Migration trends to, within and from the region
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Internally displaced persons
- COVID-19 related international travel measures

Note for presenters: There are four migration-related demographic slides featured for each region, followed by an analysis of COVID-19.
Migrants to, within and from Africa, 1990-2020

Key points:

- International migration within the African region has increased significantly.

- Since 1990, the number of African migrants living outside of the region has more than doubled, with the growth in Europe most pronounced.

- The number of migrants who were born outside of the region and have since moved there is very small. From 2015 to 2020, the number of migrants born outside the region remained virtually unchanged (around 2 million), most of whom were from Asia and Europe.
Key points:

• The African countries with the largest number of emigrants tend to be in the north of the region

• In 2020, Egypt had the largest number of people living abroad, followed by Morocco, South Sudan, the Sudan, Somalia and Algeria

• In terms of the number of immigrants, South Africa remains the most significant destination country in Africa, with around 2.9 million international migrants residing in the country
Top 10 African countries by total refugees and asylum seekers

Key points:

• Most refugees and asylum seekers on the continent were hosted in neighbouring countries within the region

• South Sudan was the origin of the largest number of refugees in Africa in 2020 (2 million) and ranked fourth in the world after the Syrian Arab Republic, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Afghanistan, with most being hosted in neighbouring countries such as Uganda

• Uganda remained the largest host country of refugees in the region and the fourth largest in the world after Turkey, Colombia and Pakistan, with around 1.4 million living in the country
Top 20 African countries by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict)

Key points:

- The largest new internal displacements in Africa in 2020 took place in sub-Saharan Africa, with the majority caused by conflict.

- The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia experienced the largest conflict displacements in the region.

- Somalia and Ethiopia had the largest and second largest disaster displacements, respectively with heavy rains and subsequent flooding driving many of the displacements in Somalia.
Key points:

- Asia – home to around 4.6 billion people – was the origin of over 40 per cent of the world’s international migrants in 2020 (around 115 million).

- Intraregional migration in Asia has increased significantly over time, rising from 35 million in 1990.

- Migration from Asia to Northern America and Europe drove much of the increase in the number of Asian migrants outside the region, reaching a total of more than 46 million extraregional migrants in 2020.
Key points:

- The two Asian “population giants”, India and China, have the largest absolute numbers of migrants living abroad.

- Migrants from China made up the fourth largest population of foreign-born migrants in the world after India, Mexico and the Russian Federation.

- In GCC countries, migrants make up high proportions of the total national populations.
Top 10 Asian countries by total refugees and asylum seekers

Key points:

- International displacement within and from Asia is a major feature of the region
- The Syrian Arab Republic and Afghanistan were the top origin countries of refugees in the world in 2020
- In 2020, the majority of refugees from Asian countries lived in neighbouring countries
- Origin countries such as Iraq, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are also themselves hosting refugees

Figure 13. Top 10 Asian countries by total refugees and asylum seekers, 2020
Key points:
• The largest new internal displacements in Asia resulted from disasters
• China had approximately 5 million new disaster displacements and the Philippines recorded nearly as many (4 million) at the end of 2020
• Conflicts also contributed to new internal displacements in Asia, with the Syrian Arab Republic recording the largest number (almost 2 million)
• The humanitarian crisis in Yemen is one of the most severe globally; two intense rainy seasons between February and September, which displaced over 200,000 people in 2020, exacerbated an already existing humanitarian crisis in the country

Figure 14. Top 20 Asian countries by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict), 2020

Notes: New displacements refers to the number of displacement movements that occurred in 2020, not the total accumulated stock of IDPs resulting from displacement over time. New displacement figures include individuals who have been displaced more than once and do not correspond to the number of people displaced during the year. The population size used to calculate the percentage of new disaster and conflict displacements is based on the total resident population of the country per 2021 UN DESA population estimates, and the percentage is for relative illustrative purposes only.
Key points:

- Nearly 87 million international migrants lived in Europe in 2020, an increase of nearly 16 per cent since 2015, when around 75 million international migrants resided in the region.
- A little over half of these (44 million) were born in Europe, but were living elsewhere in the region.
- In 2020, the population of non-European migrants in Europe reached over 40 million.
- In 2020, around 19 million Europeans were residing outside the continent and were based primarily in Asia and Northern America.
Top 20 European migrant countries, 2020

Key points:

- Many countries in the east of Europe – such as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland and Romania – have some of the largest emigrant populations within the region.

- With almost 16 million migrants in 2020, Germany had the largest foreign-born population of any country in Europe, primarily from Poland, Turkey, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and the Syrian Arab Republic.
Key points:

• In 2020, Germany continued to host the largest population of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe, ranking fifth in the world among the largest refugee host countries in the world.

• Most, around 50 per cent, came from the Syrian Arab Republic.

• The Russian Federation was the largest origin country of refugees in Europe at the end of 2020, at around 53,000.

• Other significant origin countries in Europe, but not included in the figure below, include Ukraine (around 35,000) and Croatia (around 23,000).
Top 20 European countries by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict)

Key points:

- Most new internal displacements in 2020 in Europe were the result of disasters, not conflict.
- Croatia had the largest number of disaster-related displacements, as a result of powerful earthquakes in 2020.
- Other countries impacted by disaster-related displacements in 2020 included Greece (13,000), France (10,000) and Spain (nearly 8,000), largely due to storms and intense flooding.
Key points:

- Migration to Northern America is a key feature in the Latin America and Caribbean region with over 25 million migrants making the journey north and were residing in Northern America in 2020.

- The total number of migrants from other regions living in Latin America and the Caribbean has remained relatively stable, at around 3 million over the last 30 years, comprising mostly of Europeans and Northern Americans.

- The ongoing Venezuelan situation has had a significant impact on migration flows in the region and remains one of the largest displacement and migration crises worldwide, roughly 85 per cent (approximately 4.6 million) have moved to another country in Latin America and the Caribbean.
Key points:

- Emigration remains a significant feature in Latin America and the Caribbean
- With around 11 million people living abroad in 2020, Mexico continues to be the country in the region with the most emigrants
- As a percentage of population, Jamaica has the largest emigrant population, followed by El Salvador and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
- Colombia had the second largest number of immigrants, followed by Chile
Top 10 Latin American and Caribbean countries by total refugees and asylum seekers

Key points:

- In 2020, Venezuelans constituted the second largest population of people displaced across borders in the world, following Syrians.
- Colombia continues to host the majority of Venezuelan refugees and migrants.
- At the end of 2020, around 450,000 people from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were seeking asylum in other countries.
Top Latin American and Caribbean countries by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict)

Key points:

• Most new internal displacements in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020 were due to disasters, not violence and conflict.

• Honduras recorded the largest number of internal displacements triggered by disasters (937,000), followed by Cuba (639,000), Brazil (358,000) and Guatemala (339,000).

• Colombia and El Salvador recorded the highest number of new internal displacements related to violence and/or conflict in 2020.
Migrants to, within and from Northern America, 1990-2020

Key points:

- Migration in Northern America is dominated by migration into the region, primarily to the United States.
- As of 2020, most of these migrants were from Latin America and the Caribbean (around 26 million), followed by Asia (18 million) and Europe (around 7 million).
- More Northern American-born migrants lived outside the region (around 3 million) than had moved elsewhere within the region (a little more than 1 million) in 2020.
Main migration countries in Northern America, 2020

Key points:

• In 2020, the United States had the largest foreign-born population in the world.

• The share of Canada’s total population that was foreign-born (at over 21%) was considerably higher than that of the United States in 2020 (15%).

• Canada also had a larger share of its population who had emigrated compared with the United States.
Number of refugees and asylum seekers in and from Northern American countries

Key points:

• The United States hosted nearly 341,000 refugees in 2020 and was home to close to one million asylum seekers

• Most asylum seekers in the United States came from Latin American countries such as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mexico and from countries in Northern Central America including Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras

• Canada, meanwhile, hosted nearly 110,000 refugees and more than 85,000 asylum seekers in 2020. A significant number of refugees in Canada came from countries such as Nigeria, Turkey and Pakistan
Northern American countries by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict)

Key points:

• All new internal displacements in Northern America in 2020 were due to disasters
• The United States recorded the largest number, with more than 1.7 million new displacements due to flooding and wildfires
• The United States consistently ranks first among the countries of the Americas and the Caribbean in terms of new disaster displacements annually
• Overall, Canada recorded 26,000 new displacements in 2020, with the major fire in Red Lake, Ontario accounting for 3,800 new displacements
Migrants to, within and from Oceania, 1990-2020

Key points:

• In 2020, almost 8.3 million international migrants from outside Oceania were living in the region, the foreign-born migrant population was primarily composed of people from Asia and Europe.

• Out of all of the six global regions, Oceania had the lowest number of migrants outside its region in 2020, partly a reflection of its smaller population size compared with other regions.

• Migrants from Oceania living outside the region mainly resided in Europe and Northern America.
Top 20 migrant countries in Oceania, 2020

Key points:

• The majority of international migrants in Oceania were living in either Australia or New Zealand

• Samoa and Fiji have high counts of emigrants, in comparison with their native population, and very low shares of foreign-born populations

• Australia and New Zealand have high shares of foreign-born populations as a portion of their total population, comprising around 30 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively
Numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in and from Oceania

Key points:

• In 2020, Oceania hosted over 150,000 refugees and asylum seekers
• Australia was the largest host country in the region, followed by Papua New Guinea and New Zealand
• Refugees originated from a range of countries including Afghanistan, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq

Source: UNHCR, n.d.
Note: “Hosted” refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); “abroad” refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The figures are based on 2020 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.
Top countries in Oceania by new internal displacements (disaster and conflict)

Key points:

- Most internal displacements in Oceania in 2020 resulted from disasters, not conflict.
- Vanuatu recorded the highest number of disaster displacements (80,000), largely triggered by Cyclone Harold.
- Other large-scale internal displacements triggered by disasters were recorded in Australia (51,000), Fiji (37,000) and New Zealand (almost 5,000).
- In Australia, the new displacements were largely pre-emptive evacuations due to the intense bushfire season between July 2019 and February 2020.
COVID-19 related **international travel controls**, variations by region

- **Oceania**
- **Northern America**
- **Latin America and the Caribbean**
- **Europe**
- **Asia**
- **Africa**
COVID-19 related **internal** travel controls, variations by region

Oceania | Northern America | Latin America and the Caribbean

Europe | Asia | Africa
End.