UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

UNCTAD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA REPORT 2018

Migration for Structural Transformation

CHAPTER 2

Patterns and trends of migration

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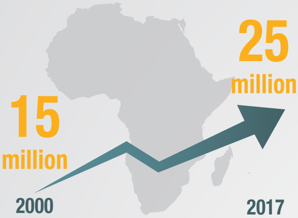
This chapter examines migration patterns and trends in Africa over the last 27 years, highlighting their evolution and configurations within and across regions on the continent. The first section examines migration patterns and trends in Africa in 1990–2017 at the interregional and continental levels. The second section provides an overview of regulatory frameworks that have shaped mobility on the continent. The last three sections examine migration patterns in terms of duration of stay, irregular migration and the gender component of migration.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN AFRICA IN 2017

53% of Africa's international migrants resided on the continent



International migration grew on average at
2.8% per year

4 out of 5
international migrants residing in Eastern, Middle and Western Africa were from the same African region

49%
of international migrants residing in Northern Africa were from the same region

of international migrants were women

Average age of an international migrant:
31 years old

Top destinations
for international migrants

South Africa

Côte d'Ivoire

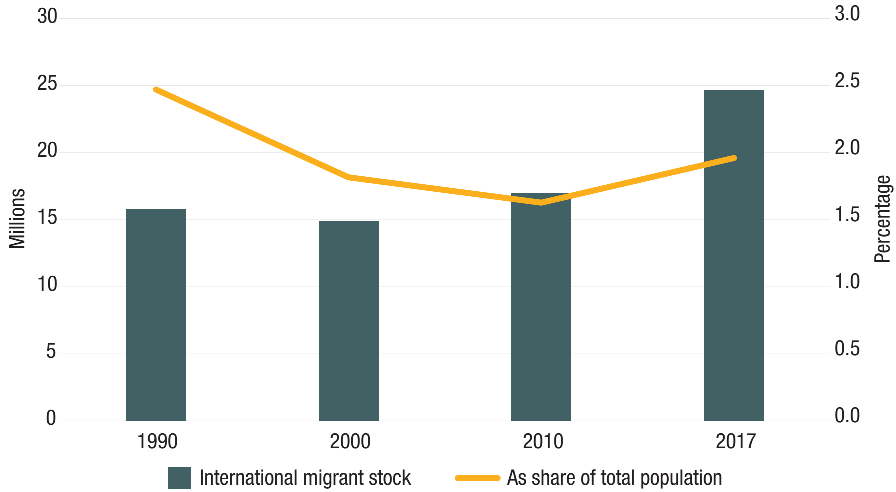
Migration hubs:
Abidjan, Johannesburg, Nairobi

2.1 Patterns of migration: Stylized facts

International migration in Africa expressed as a share of total population has been declining since 1990. It declined to levels below 2 per cent in 2017, which is lower than the global average of 3.4 per cent (figure 4). In 2000–2017, the number of international migrants in Africa increased from 15 million to 25 million, or by 67 per cent, at an average of 2.8 per cent per year. As a result, the percentage of all international migrants residing in Africa increased from 9 per cent in 2000 to 10 per cent of the global total in 2017 (table 3).

Figure 4

Africa: International migrant stock as share of total population



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

In relation to the population of Africa, the incidence of emigration, or the stock of its emigrants in the continent's total population, is among the lowest in the world, owing to Africa's high population growth rate. Africa also has the lowest median age of migrants in the world, at 31 years, and a faster rate of growth in its migrant stock than the global average (table 3), only Asia has a faster rate of growth.

In 2000 and 2017, the number of women migrants in Africa increased, yet as a share of total international migrants in Africa, remained stable at 47 per cent (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a). More women appear to be moving

Table 3
International migrant stock

DESTINATION	INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT STOCK AT MIDYEAR		INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT STOCK AS SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION (PERCENTAGE)		SHARE OF TOTAL INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS (PERCENTAGE)		WOMEN MIGRANTS AS SHARE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT STOCK (PERCENTAGE)		ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE OF MIGRANT STOCK		MEDIAN AGE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS (YEARS)	
	2000	2017	2000	2017	2000	2017	2000	2017	2000–2005	2015–2017	2000	2017
World	172 604 257	257 715 425	2.8	3.4	100	100	49	48	2.0	2.0	38	39
Africa	14 800 306	24 650 223	1.8	2.0	9	10	47	47	0.9	2.5	28	31
Eastern Africa	4 844 795	7 591 799	1.9	1.8	3	3	49	50	-0.4	4.6	29	30
Middle Africa	1 756 687	3 539 697	1.8	2.2	1	1	49	48	1.9	1.5	27	29
Northern Africa	1 885 650	2 410 056	1.1	1.0	1	1	44	42	-1.7	1.2	28	32
Southern Africa	1 222 314	4 338 205	2.3	6.7	1	2	41	45	3.3	2.7	35	34
Western Africa	5 090 860	6 770 466	2.2	1.8	3	3	47	47	2.0	1.2	25	30
Sub-Saharan Africa	13 716 539	22 975 988	2.0	2.2	8	9	47	48	0.8	2.8	27	31

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

due, in part, to population ageing and greater job opportunities in the North and in Eastern Asia and the Middle East in the health sector and the care and domestic service sector. There is also rising demand for care and domestic services in Africa, which is increasingly influencing patterns of women's migration both within and outside the continent (see section 2.5).

2.1.1 Patterns from, within and to Africa

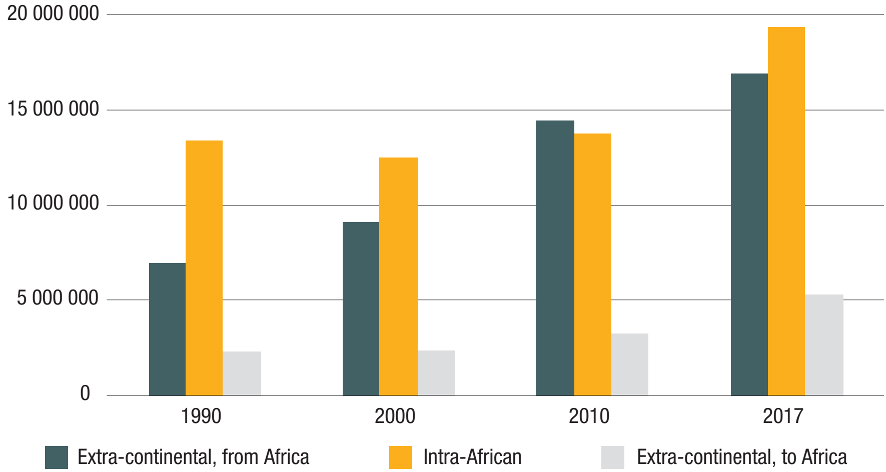
The evolution of migration from, within and to Africa is shown in figure 5. Migration under all three categories increased in 1990–2017.

In 2017, each stock exceeded the value in 2000, highlighting the growth in African migration in absolute terms. Three distinct trends may be observed.

First, in 1990, African migration was predominantly intracontinental, although the distribution has changed over time. The stock of international migrants originating from Africa and living in Africa was the main stock in 2000, at 12.5 million, highlighting that migration was foremost an intra-African phenomenon. This stock grew consistently, and reached 19.4 million in 2017.

Second, the stock of international migrants originating from Africa and living outside the continent was 6.9 million in 1990 and increased to 16.9 million in 2017. With the exception

Figure 5
Stocks of international migrants from, within and to Africa



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

Intra-African migration:
up from 12.5 million in 2000
to **19.4 million** in 2017

of the year 2010, since 1990, there have been more international migrants of African origin that lived within the continent than outside Africa, but the margin is narrowing. Extra-continental migration and migration to Africa experienced stronger growth than intracontinental migration in 1990–2017. The propensity to migrate outside the continent is significantly higher in Northern Africa than in sub-Saharan Africa (table 4). Of the total 16.9 million stock of extra-continental emigrants in 2017, the majority lived in Asia, Europe and North America. Within Asia, almost all of Africa's international migrants live in the Middle East, illustrating the importance of the region as a hub for the continent's migrants.

Third, the stock of international migrants as a share of population rose from 1.8 per cent in 2000 to 2.0 per cent in 2017, or from 18 to 20 migrants per 1,000 people (see table 3). In 2017, the countries with the highest stock of international migrants as a share of total population were Equatorial Guinea (18 per cent), Gabon and Seychelles (14 per cent each) and Djibouti (12 per cent).

2.1.2 Emigration trends characterized by growth and regional diversity

The stock of emigrants that stayed within Africa and those that moved outside the continent in 2017 are shown in table 4. Most international migration takes place within the continent. Around 53 per cent of emigrants reside within Africa and 47 per cent emigrate to extra-continental destinations.

Table 4
Intra-African and extra-continental emigrant stocks by region of origin, 2017

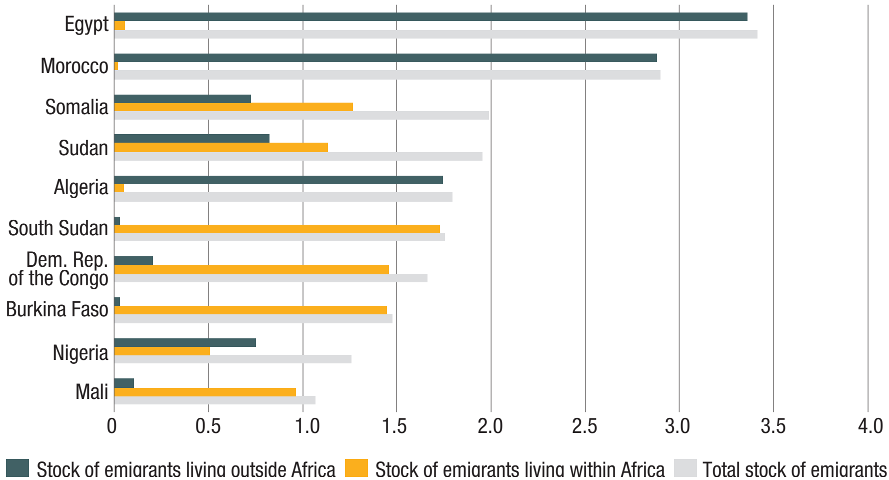
ORIGIN	TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS	TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS LIVING WITHIN AFRICA	STOCK OF EMIGRANTS LIVING WITHIN AFRICA AS SHARE OF TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS (PERCENTAGE)	TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS LIVING OUTSIDE AFRICA	STOCK OF EMIGRANTS LIVING OUTSIDE AFRICA AS SHARE OF TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS (PERCENTAGE)
Total Africa	36 266 428	19 359 848	53.4	16 906 580	46.6
Eastern Africa	10 533 239	7 475 553	71.0	3 057 686	29.0
Middle Africa	4 099 426	3 229 786	78.8	869 640	21.2
Northern Africa	11 175 732	1 477 069	13.2	9 698 663	86.8
Southern Africa	1 586 875	821 006	51.7	765 869	48.3
Western Africa	8 871 156	6 356 434	71.7	2 514 722	28.3

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

The main sending countries in Africa were Egypt (3.4 million) and Morocco (2.9 million), as shown in figure 6. Emigrants from Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Nigeria was primarily to extra-continental destinations. Emigrants from Somalia (1.9 million), Burkina Faso (1.4 million) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali were primarily to other countries on the continent.

In Northern Africa, geographical proximity to Europe and the Middle East, as well as the subregion’s colonial ties and established networks, have influenced extra-continental migration and high levels of youth unemployment have been a key driver of recent movements from the subregion to Europe (table 5). In terms of intra-African emigration, political instability in Somalia and the Sudan, as well as conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have been important drivers of emigration from these countries. Economic migration remains a key driver of mobility from Burkina Faso to Côte d’Ivoire.

Figure 6
Countries with largest numbers of emigrants, 2017
(Millions)



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

Table 5
Regional unemployment rate, total and among youth
(Percentage)

	TOTAL (15+)									
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Eastern Africa	8.3	8.6	9.0	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2
Middle Africa	9.9	9.9	9.7	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.3	9.4	9.4
Northern Africa	10.5	10.4	10.7	11.1	11.1	11.3	11.3	11.3	11.4	11.4
Southern Africa	24.3	23.6	23.8	24.4	24.6	24.6	24.5	24.5	24.4	24.4
Western Africa	8.3	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.8
	YOUTH (15–24)									
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Eastern Africa	13.7	14.5	14.4	13.6	13.4	13.8	13.9	13.8	13.8	13.7
Middle Africa	17.7	16.5	16.4	15.3	15.3	16.1	16.5	16.8	17.0	17.1
Northern Africa	26.9	26.4	29.2	31.3	30.8	31.7	31.1	31.1	31.3	31.4
Southern Africa	43.7	43.5	44.2	45.2	46.5	46.0	45.0	45.1	45.1	45.2
Western Africa	12.8	11.9	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.7	11.8	12.0	12.1	12.1

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on International Labour Organization (ILO) ILOstat database modelled estimates, November 2016.

Notes: The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons as a share of the labour force. Data for 2009–2016 are estimates and data for 2017–2018 are projections.

2.1.3 Rising immigration levels

In Africa, 78.5 per cent of all international immigrants were born in Africa (table 6). In other words, four of every five international migrants in Africa come from the continent. In contrast, with regard to subregions, around half the international migrants residing in Northern and Southern Africa were born on another continent. Africa recorded an increase in the stock of immigrants, including immigrants from outside and within the continent, from 12.4 million in 2000 to 19.3 million in 2017. Only 12 out of 54 countries in Africa experienced a decline in the stock of immigrants between 2000 and 2017.

Table 6
Immigrant stocks by region of origin, 2017

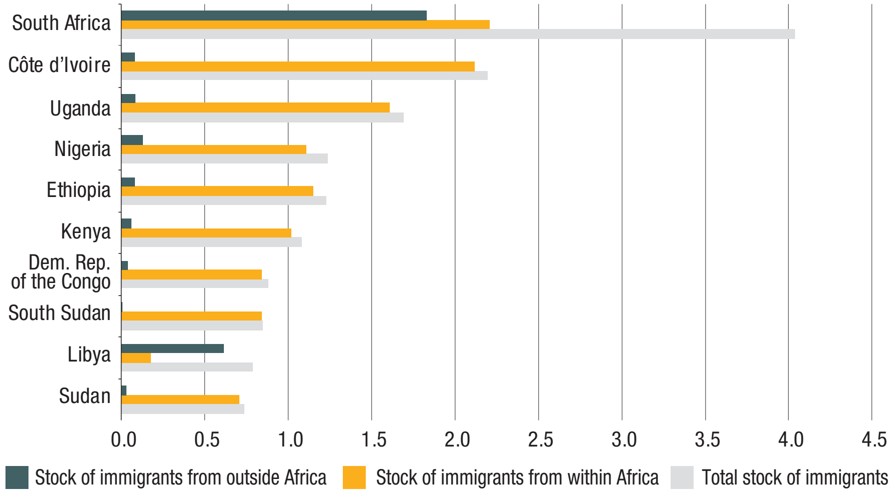
DESTINATION	TOTAL STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS	TOTAL STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS FROM WITHIN THE REGION	STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS FROM WITHIN THE REGION AS SHARE OF TOTAL STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS (PERCENTAGE)	STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION	STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION AS SHARE OF TOTAL STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS (PERCENTAGE)
Total Africa	24 650 223	19 359 848	78.5	5 290 375	21.5
Eastern Africa	7 591 799	6 731 752	88.7	860 047	11.3
Middle Africa	3 539 697	2 976 597	84.1	563 100	15.9
Northern Africa	2 410 056	1 194 386	49.6	1 215 670	50.4
Southern Africa	4 338 205	2 419 803	55.8	1 918 402	44.2
Western Africa	6 770 466	6 037 310	89.2	733 156	10.8

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

The absolute number of international migrant stocks reveals the main destinations of migrants in Africa (figure 7). In 2017, the main receiving countries were South Africa (4.0 million), Côte d'Ivoire (2.2 million) and Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya (each exceeding 1.0 million, in descending order). The main receiving countries of intra-African international migrants were South Africa (2.2 million) and Côte d'Ivoire (2.1 million), highlighting their importance as migration hubs. Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya (each exceeding 1 million, in descending order) were also major receiving countries of intra-African international migrants.

South Africa and Libya have the highest stock of immigrants in Africa. However, if we return to immigration within the continent, in South Africa, demand for labour in the mining and construction sectors remains an important driver of migration. Demand for domestic work and informal trade have also emerged as significant drivers of migration. Agriculture remains an important driver of migration to Côte

Figure 7
Countries with largest numbers of immigrants, 2017
(Millions)



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

d'Ivoire. More diversified economies such as Kenya attract labour from other regions. Since the 1980s, Libya has been a major destination for migrants from outside Africa, notably from Indonesia and Iraq, with demand in its oil industry fuelling economic migration. Since 2010, Libya has become a major transit country for migrants heading to Europe, due in large part to its strategic location on the Mediterranean Sea and as a destination for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Immigration has played different roles in countries. The countries in Africa that recorded the highest (exceeding 10 per cent) and lowest (0.5 per cent or lower) shares of international migrant stocks in total population in 1990 and 2017 are shown in table 7. Djibouti and Côte d'Ivoire recorded the highest shares of migrants in total population in 1990. In 2017, Equatorial Guinea recorded the highest share of migrants in total population, due largely to its offshore oil industry, which is driving migration to the country. The countries with the lowest shares of immigrants in both 1990 and 2017 were Egypt, Eritrea, Lesotho, Madagascar, Morocco and Tunisia. Political instability in Eritrea and Somalia likely contributes to the prevalent low levels of immigration.

Table 7
Countries with lowest and highest immigration intensity: International migrant stock as share of total population
(Percentage)

1990				2017			
< 0.5		> 10		< 0.5		> 10	
Madagascar	0.2	Djibouti	20.7	Madagascar	0.1	Equatorial Guinea	17.5
Morocco	0.2	Côte d'Ivoire	14.8	Morocco	0.3	Gabon	13.8
Angola	0.3	Gabon	13.4	Lesotho	0.3	Seychelles	13.6
Egypt	0.3	Gambia	12.9	Somalia	0.3	Libya	12.4
Mauritius	0.3	Malawi	11.9	Eritrea	0.3	Djibouti	12.1
Eritrea	0.4	Libya	10.3	Egypt	0.5		
Tunisia	0.5			Tunisia	0.5		
Nigeria	0.5						
Lesotho	0.5						

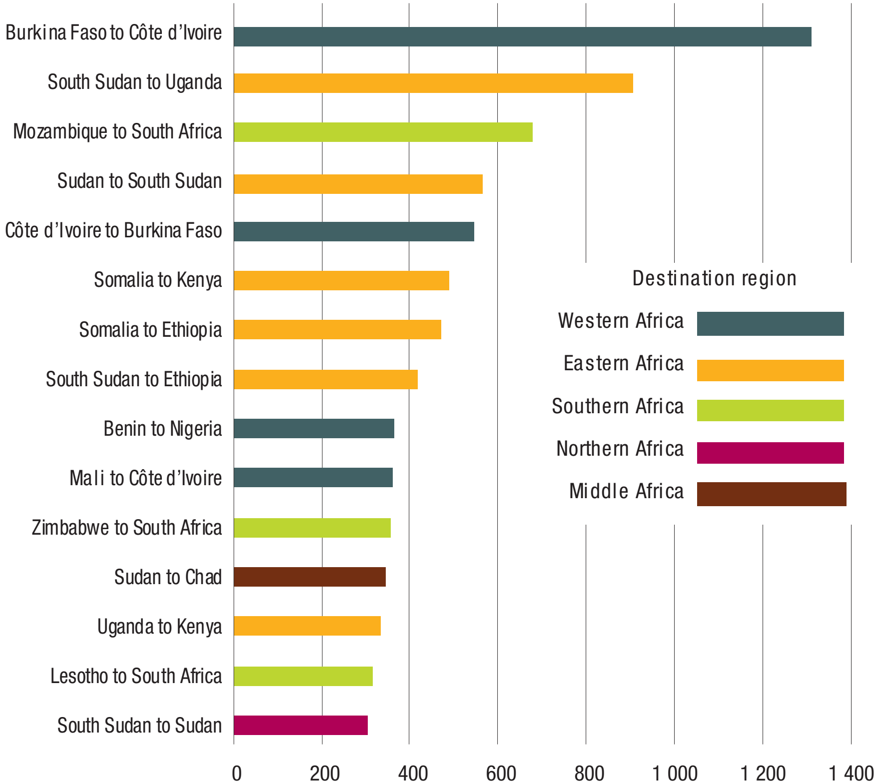
Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

2.1.4 Key migration corridors

The above data and analysis highlights the main migration corridors within and from Africa. The top intra-African corridors in 2017 were Burkina Faso–Côte d'Ivoire (1.3 million), South Sudan–Uganda (0.9 million), Mozambique–South Africa (0.7 million), the Sudan–South Sudan (0.5 million) and Côte d'Ivoire–Burkina Faso (0.5 million), as shown in figures 8 and 9.

The Côte d'Ivoire–Burkina Faso corridor serves as an important link for commercial agriculture and informal trade (International Centre for Migration Policy Development and IOM, 2015). Other corridors in which the stock of international migrants exceeds 200,000 include the Sudan–South Sudan (563,000), Somalia–Kenya (485,000) and Somalia–Ethiopia (467,000), with political instability and conflict in Eastern Africa driving forced migration in the region (International Centre for Migration Policy Development and IOM, 2015). The Mali–Côte d'Ivoire corridor (359,000; see figure 8) links migrants from Western Africa to resource-rich coastal countries, with demand in mineral extraction and commercial agriculture in Côte d'Ivoire fuelling migration. The Mozambique–South Africa (675,480) and Lesotho–South Africa (312,000) corridors are important for linking migrants to farms and mines and, for Lesotho, to domestic work in Johannesburg, South Africa (Crush et al, 2017). Other important corridors include Benin–Nigeria (362,000), the Sudan–Chad (344,000) and Burundi–United Republic of Tanzania (208,000). The

Figure 8
Stocks in top 15 intra-African migration corridors, 2017
(Thousands)



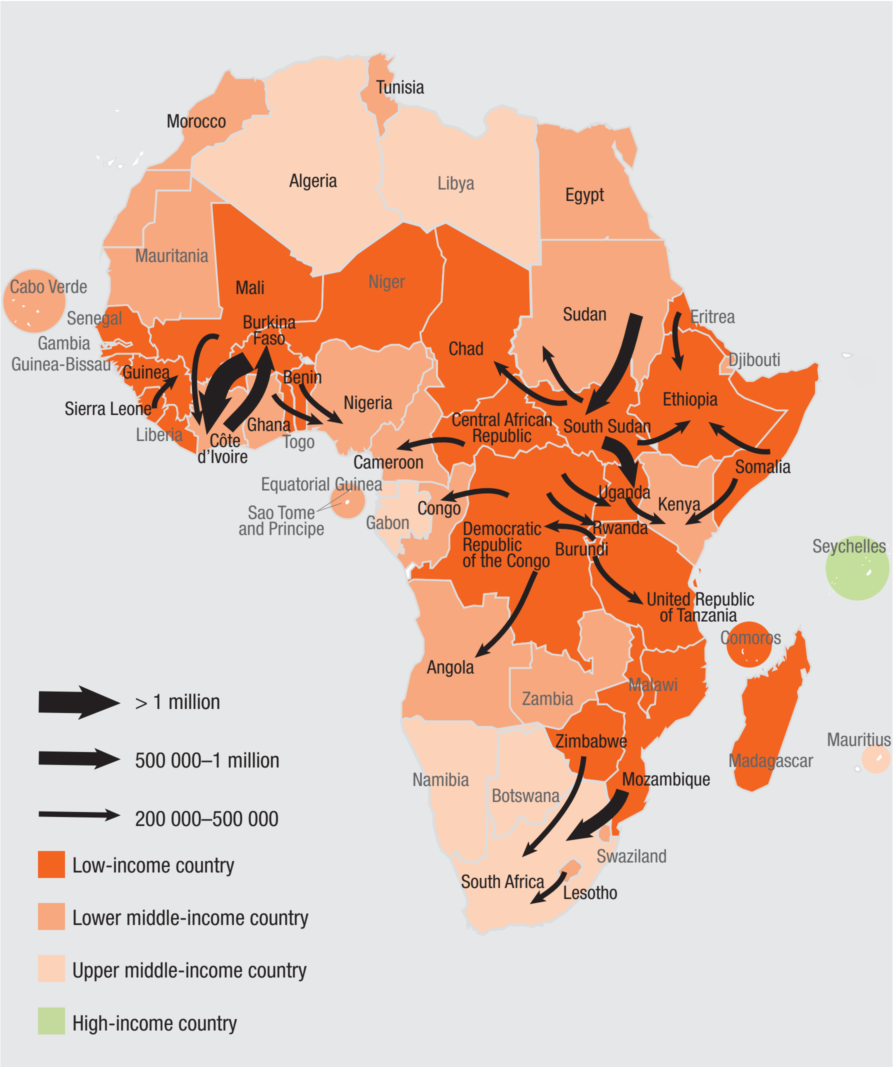
Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

outflow from Somalia is particularly evident, as is the fact that South Africa is a receiving country.

With regard to extra-continental migration, the importance of migration from Africa to Europe, the Middle East and North America is shown in table 8. Colonial, linguistic and cultural ties greatly influence these movements, along with geographical proximity and, increasingly, high levels of youth unemployment, particularly in Northern and Southern Africa, amounting to 31 per cent and 45 per cent in 2017, respectively (see table 5).

Figure 9

Main intra-African migration corridors, stocks in 2017



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

Table 8
Main extra-continental migration corridors, 2017

ORIGIN	DESTINATION	NUMBER OF MIGRANTS
Northern Africa	France	2 824 532
Northern Africa	Saudi Arabia	1 307 431
Northern Africa	United Arab Emirates	999 135
Northern Africa	Spain	771 382
Western Africa	United States	718 372
Northern Africa	Italy	715 371
Eastern Africa	United States	641 744
Eastern Africa	United Kingdom	610 959
Southern Africa	United Kingdom	217 524

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

2.1.5 Migration between regions

Interregional migration, or the movement of people between geographic subregions, is a key feature of migration patterns on the continent. In 2017, Eastern and Western Africa were the regions from which most African migrants originated (see table 3). Middle Africa recorded a strong increase with regard to international migrant stock, as the absolute number doubled, with political instability and conflict driving movements in the region. Eastern and Western Africa are the main destinations, and Southern and Middle Africa have recorded strong increases as destinations for intra-African migrants. Migration in Africa occurs primarily within the same region (table 6). For instance, in Western Africa, in 2017, more than 89 per cent of the international migrant stock originated from within the region. In Northern Africa, however, the international migrant stock originating from within the region was lower, at 49 per cent. The independence of South Sudan and the resulting migration that occurred from the Sudan to South Sudan, along with political unrest following the popular uprisings in Northern Africa and the Middle East in 2011, greatly influenced migration patterns within Northern Africa. Eastern Africa is the most diversified region with regard to the origin of international migrants from Africa, as it receives significant shares of migrants from all other regions except Western Africa. In addition to economic factors driving migration to diversified economies such as Kenya and Rwanda, the latter's visa for foreign workers may attract migrants to the region. In 2000–2017, conflict and political instability were a driver of forced migration from Middle Africa to the United Republic of Tanzania and from Northern Africa, mainly the Sudan, to Uganda.

With regard to regional net migration in 1985–2015, Northern and Western Africa consistently reported negative total net migration, that is, in these regions, emigration exceeded immigration. Eastern, Middle and Southern Africa alternated between being net sending and receiving regions, reflecting ongoing regional dynamics, with political instability in Middle Africa driving migration to Eastern Africa and, in Southern Africa, from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

2.2 Migration policies

Regional economic communities in Africa have frameworks to facilitate movements within regions, with freedom of movement being an important principle for most regional economic communities (table 9). This section examines regulatory frameworks at the continental level and regional economic community protocols on the free movement of persons and assesses their role in influencing migration patterns and trends.

2.2.1 Regulatory frameworks

Given the centrality of the free movement of persons to regional integration, and the aim of establishing a continental free trade area, the African Union has elaborated a draft protocol on the free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment, which foresees right of entry and the abolition of visa requirements, an African common passport, the free movement of border communities, the harmonization of national laws and policies on immigration, the free movement of students, researchers and workers, the mutual recognition of skills, right of residence, portability of social security, protection of property, remittances and right of establishment. The first 10-year implementation plan (2014–2023) of Agenda 2063 of the African Union emphasized, among others, the following: (a) the need to domesticate all free movement of person protocols; (b) that visa requirements for intra-African travel should be waived by 2018; (c) that opportunities offered to regional economic community citizens should be extended to non-community citizens; and (d) that legal frameworks for the issuance of an African common passport should be adopted by 2023 (African Union Commission, 2015).

However, the free movement of persons is only one aspect of migration frameworks and policies. In 2006, the African Union adopted the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, which provided comprehensive and integrated policy guidelines for consideration by its member States and regional economic communities in their efforts to promote migration and development and address migration challenges on the continent (see chapter 1). A series of other migration policies and frameworks followed that aimed to promote the better use of labour through greater liberalization and by ensuring safer conditions, such

Table 9

Ratification and implementation of protocols on the free movement of persons in regional economic communities

	RATIFICATION RATE	CURRENT ENTRY AND VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR FELLOW REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY NATIONALS	DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE RIGHT OF RESIDENCE AND RIGHT OF ESTABLISHMENT FOR FELLOW REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY NATIONALS	COMMON PASSPORT	LABOUR MOBILITY
AMU	Three of five member States have ratified the respective protocol on the free movement of persons	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 53 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 20 per cent of member States	Mauritania has not ratified the protocol, but is the only member State that guarantees freedom of establishment and equal treatment of nationals of Mauritania and foreign persons and legal entities	No	Visa reciprocity agreements for short-term mobility
CEN-SAD	In development: Draft agreement on free movement and establishment of persons within the territory of member States of CEN-SAD; protocol on free movement	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 51 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 22 per cent of member States; holders of diplomatic passports do not require a visa and plans ongoing to extend this privilege to students, business people, athletes and academics	No	No	No
COMESA	Two of 20 member States have ratified the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Labour, Services, Right of Establishment and Residence; 17 of 20 member States have ratified the Protocol on the Gradual Relaxation and Eventual Elimination of Visa Requirements	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 26 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 30 per cent of member States	No	No	Labour mobility is envisaged in the treaty; limited progress on implementation
EAC	All five member States have ratified the Protocol on the Establishment of the EAC Common Market	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 80 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 20 per cent of member States	Free movement of labour provisions for certain categories of professionals in member States; right to social security benefits and right of establishment; harmonization of employment policies and labour legislations is envisaged and mutual recognition agreements allow for cross-border practices among professionals and entitle professionals of member States to the same treatment as nationals	Yes; national identification is also used for entry in member States	Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have abolished work permit fees for their respective nationals; Rwanda has a temporary work permit for semi-skilled workers

Table 9

Ratification and implementation of protocols on the free movement of persons in regional economic communities *(continued)*

	RATIFICATION RATE	CURRENT ENTRY AND VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR FELLOW REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY NATIONALS	DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE RIGHT OF RESIDENCE AND RIGHT OF ESTABLISHMENT FOR FELLOW REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY NATIONALS	COMMON PASSPORT	LABOUR MOBILITY
ECCAS	Four of 11 member States have ratified the respective protocol on the free movement of persons	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 45 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 9 per cent of member States	The four member States that have ratified the protocol have also implemented the right of establishment	Yes; travel books and/or cards	Article 3 of the protocol addresses labour mobility
ECOWAS	All 15 member States have ratified the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment	Visa-free entry for all ECOWAS citizens	The Common Approach on Migration (2008) provides the overall framework for mobility within the region; residence cards; right of establishment granted; progress made towards harmonizing education certificates, but equal treatment of migrant workers and nationals still a challenge in areas such as security of employment, job loss, re-employment and training	Yes; travel certificates	Labour and Employment Policy (2009) addresses labour migration
IGAD	In development: Protocol on the free movement of persons	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 50 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 50 per cent of member States	Regional Migration Policy Framework (2012) envisages facilitation of labour mobility within the region	No	Migration Action Plan (2015–2020) identifies priority actions to better manage labour migration
SADC	Seven of 15 member States have ratified the Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons (2005) but it is not yet operational as it requires ratification by at least 10 member States	Nationals do not require a visa for entry in 65 per cent of member States; nationals are issued a visa upon arrival in 15 per cent of member States; provisions for member States to conclude bilateral agreements for visa exemptions	In line with the Protocol on Employment and Labour, member States are encouraged to ensure that fundamental rights (labour, employment and social protection) are granted to migrant workers and their families; Qualifications Framework aims to standardize recognition of training and qualifications within SADC	South Africa grants permanent and temporary work permits; border passes allow circulatory migration among cross-border traders	Botswana and South Africa grant work permits for certain workers; South Africa has bilateral labour agreements with several member States

Sources: International Centre for Migration Policy Development and IOM, 2015; UNCTAD, 2017a. See https://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/regional-economic-communities and http://migration.igad.int/.

as the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children (2006); the African Union Social Policy Framework (2008), which sought collaboration between social security schemes to ensure benefits from labour circulation; the Declaration of the Global African Diaspora Summit (2012); the African Union Youth and Employment Pact (2013), which aimed to develop an African Union and regional economic community labour migration plan; the African Union Horn of Africa initiative on human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants (2014); and the African Union Commission Strategic Plan (2014–2017), which contained a strategy to promote labour migration. In the Declaration on Migration (2015), member States committed to undertaking the speed up of the implementation of continent-wide visa free regimes, the expeditious operationalization of the African common passport, the mutual recognition of qualifications and skills, a mechanism for the empowerment of African women and youth in education and strengthened efforts to combat human trafficking.

Services trade through the temporary movement of natural persons, or mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, is the supply of a service by a service supplier of one member, through the presence of natural persons of a member in the territory of any other member, and this is closely related to regional and international migration, with regard to temporary migration. However, mode 4 is likely ill-equipped for managing labour migration, which is increasingly driven by the interaction of migration-related agreements at the following three levels: multilateral opening up of labour markets via mode 4 and similar African Union and regional economic community initiatives; European Union mobility partnerships; and bilateral migration management agreements. It may be argued that the latter represent the most comprehensive regulation of migration currently available in treaty law. Such regulations and treaties on migration divide horizontally by skill levels. For example, non-trade, bilateral migration agreements are the main channels for recruiting low-skilled migrants, whereas trade agreements, including under mode 4, tend to address highly skilled segments of the labour market.

Finally, the African Union Commission, ILO, IOM and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa are implementing the Joint Labour Migration Programme for Africa, which was formally adopted in 2015 by African Heads of State and Government as a comprehensive programme on labour migration governance for the region. Some processes regarding facilitating migration and making it more secure are therefore already under way.

2.2.2 Regional economic community protocols on the free movement of persons: Ratification and implementation

Right to work and establish

Since gaining independence, most African countries have embraced regionalism as a framework to increase intra-African trade (UNCTAD, 2013). Africa, in comparison with other regions, has therefore had a unique experience in terms of nation building and regional integration, as both processes occurred almost in parallel (Agadjanian, 2008).

As countries developed national frameworks for trade and labour movements, regional organizations established frameworks aimed at facilitating the flow of goods, services, labour and capital across borders.

The free movement of persons is fundamental to facilitating labour mobility to areas where it can be more productive. However, with the exception of those in EAC and ECOWAS, regional integration agendas in Africa have progressed slowly. All regional economic communities except CEN-SAD and IGAD have adopted such protocols, yet the rate of ratification of the protocols has been highly uneven (see table 9). EAC and ECOWAS member States have ratified the respective protocols; only two members of COMESA have ratified the respective protocol. Each member State of ECOWAS grants visa-free entry for ECOWAS citizens, and all EAC and IGAD nationals can travel to member States without a visa or can obtain a visa upon arrival. EAC and ECOWAS also issue common passports, and ECCAS issues travel books and/or cards. Entry into several regional economic communities is facilitated through special immigration counters. In most regional economic communities, however, visa regimes remain far from the African Union target of the abolishment of visa requirements for all African citizens in all African countries by 2018. Progress has been made in eliminating restrictions related to visa regimes, yet progress in the implementation of provisions on the right to reside and establish are often restricted to highly skilled professionals. Lack of progress in the mutual recognition of skills and certificates not only discourages the cross-border movement of labour but constrains labour mobility (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Union and African Development Bank Group). EAC has made progress towards the mutual recognition of professions for accountants and architects and ECOWAS has made progress towards the harmonization of education certificates. Provisions on the right to reside and establish do not apply to low-skilled and semi-skilled migrants, as regional economic community member States differ greatly with regard to economic development, and high unemployment rates in countries often raise concerns about foreign workers competing with nationals for similar positions. In some regions, migration is regulated through bilateral agreements. For example, in SADC, several member States regulate economic migration through bilateral labour agreements. Botswana grants work permits for certain workers and South Africa has bilateral labour agreements with several member States.

Migration within regional economic communities

The above section discussed the relevance of regional integration for migration within regional economic communities. The trajectory in intraregional migration in regional economic communities has been upward, with a notable increase in 2000–2010. In 2017, the share of migrant stocks within regional economic communities was substantially higher, when compared with interregional shares, with the exception of AMU and the EAC (table 10). In EAC, deepening integration, with the implementation of the EAC Common Market regulations on the free movement of workers, eased mobility barriers in the region. The recent upsurge in immigration can also be linked to the growing influx of migrants from Asia, including to Eastern, Southern and Western Africa.

Table 10

Shares of international migrant stock within and between regional economic communities, 2017
(Percentage)

	DESTINATION							
ORIGIN	AMU	CEN-SAD	COMESA	EAC	ECCAS	ECOWAS	IGAD	SADC
AMU	16.8	45.2	5.8	0.0	1.4	29.2	0.5	0.9
CEN-SAD	1.6	33.4	14.3	3.5	7.3	25.8	11.9	2.2
COMESA	0.4	8.8	30.5	16.7	8.1	0.1	22.8	12.7
EAC	0.0	7.7	29.4	23.4	9.3	0.1	15.9	14.3
ECCAS	0.1	5.7	22.4	16.0	26.0	2.1	7.8	20.0
ECOWAS	1.2	46.7	0.3	0.0	3.6	47.1	0.2	1.0
IGAD	1.0	15.0	33.7	15.0	2.7	0.0	31.7	1.0
SADC	0.0	1.0	22.0	13.0	12.3	0.0	6.2	45.5

Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

2.3 Patterns with regard to duration and status

The duration of migration varies considerably. While some migrants move for a definitive period, others migrate without prior knowledge as to when they might return. Migration in Africa is predominantly circular in nature and characterized by an emigration-diaspora-return continuum or origin-destination continuum (Adepoju, 2008; Oucho, 1990). Demand for labour has been a driver of circular migration in some regions. For example, contract migration for the mining sector in South Africa, which until recently relied on the large-scale recruitment of migrants from neighbouring countries, has been a driver of circulatory labour mobility.

The household surveys under the Africa Migration Project show that the share of returning migrants is low, ranging from 2 per cent in Uganda to 25 per cent in Burkina Faso (table 11; World Bank, 2013). Most migrants who return do so in less than five years, except in Senegal, where most migrants stayed abroad for more than 15 years, suggesting that trans-border migration, in particular its temporary and circular pattern, is largely influenced by immediate and specific economic needs to relieve households of economic pressures (Agadjanian, 2008).

Table 11

Returning migrants and distribution of duration of stay abroad, 2009–2010

(Percentage)

	MIGRANTS WHO RETURNED	MIGRANTS WHO RETURNED IN < 5 YEARS	MIGRANTS WHO RETURNED IN 5–15 YEARS	MIGRANTS WHO RETURNED IN > 15 YEARS
Burkina Faso	25	67	16	16
Kenya	3	57	31	12
Nigeria	4	63	28	9
Senegal	9	32	2	66
South Africa	19	68	28	5
Uganda	2	77	23	

Sources: Shimeles, 2010 (data for Burkina Faso and Senegal); World Bank, 2013.

Note: Return rates are based on internal and international migrants.

2.4 Irregular migration

The migration data in the previous sections are based on regular migration. Irregular migration, a feature of movements in Africa, is defined as movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of origin, transit and destination countries (IOM, 2013; see Glossary). Immigration in large parts of the continent is irregular (Lucas, 2006). Owing to its widespread nature, irregular migration is difficult to quantify.

Globally, the magnitude of irregular migration is estimated at 10–15 per cent of international migration flows (IOM, 2010). Estimates of irregular migration are often based on arrest records in the receiving country and/or country from which a migrant has been deported. Estimates on the magnitude of irregular migration in Africa are few and vary widely (Karagueuzian and Verdier-Chouchane, 2014).

The main intra-African flow of irregular migration is trans-Saharan migration in the Agadez, the Niger–Sabha, Libya corridor, with an estimated 90 per cent of migrants on the route planning to migrate to Europe (Karagueuzian and Verdier-Chouchane, 2014). Irregular migration flows and stocks in Northern Africa are on the rise (Fargues, 2009; IOM, 2008). Studies find that within Northern Africa, the main irregular migrant receiving country is Libya, mainly because of its long border along the Sahara and its pan-African migration policy.[11] Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and South Africa are also major destinations for irregular migrants in Africa.

2.5 Gender component of migration

Men migrants dominate, yet women's migration is growing in importance in Africa and is reflected in the growing number of women migrating for work and education and to pursue other economic opportunities. Women migrants are concentrated in particular niches (International Centre for Migration Policy Development and IOM, 2015). For example, in Southern Africa, the growing number of women migrants from Zimbabwe in cross-border trade and other migratory niches is due in large part to ongoing dynamics in socioeconomic structures, the decline in traditional, men-centred forms of livelihood and a rise in women-headed households, in response to structural adjustment polices (Andall, forthcoming; Muzvidziwa, 2001). At the same time, women are increasingly

[11] Karagueuzian and Verdier-Chouchane (2014) define the pan-African migration policy of Libya from the 1990s to the mid-2000s as "a diplomatic move consisting at first of official declarations, as a response to the international embargo against Libya (1992–1999) and the rapprochement with the Organization of African Unity (former African Union), and subsequently friendly laws towards sub-Saharan migrants".

engaging in formal contract migration, for example women from Lesotho in contract agricultural employment in South Africa. Other evidence points to changes in labour market dynamics in developed countries, arising from ageing populations, with demand for highly skilled labour from the developing world, including from Africa, creating new opportunities for women doctors, nurses, teachers and other professionals (BBC News, 2002; Katseli et al, 2006).

Some recent studies refer to a feminization of migration (see Pfeiffer et al, 2007), defined as an increase in the number of women migrants, including as a proportion of the total, yet this is not as evident in Africa compared with developed regions. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs data shows that the feminization of migration based on the share of women migrants in the total international migrant stock has only been observed in developed countries. The stock of women migrants increased slightly and stood above 50 per cent in 1990–2017, as shown in figure 10.

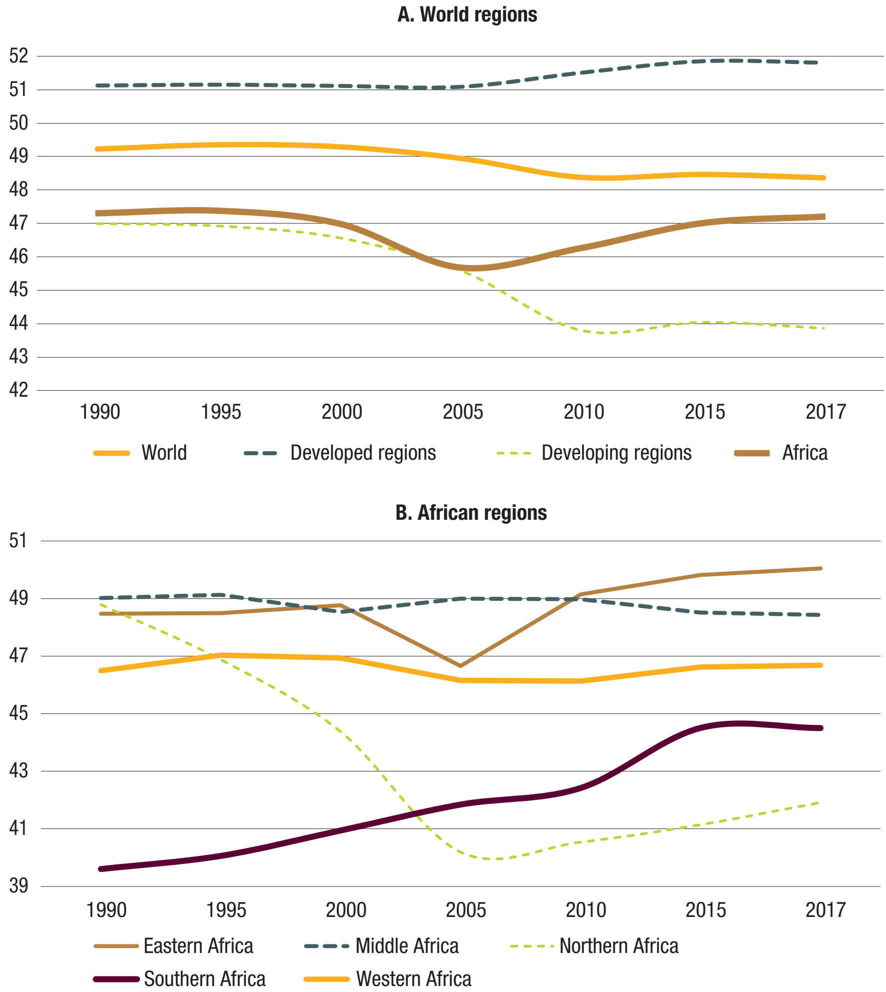
At the global level, however, there has been a slight decline, as women constituted 49 per cent of the total international migrant stock in 1990 and 48.4 per cent in 2017. A similar trend has been observed in developing countries, as the share of women migrants in the total international migrant stock declined in 2005–2015. Africa recorded a slight decrease, from 47.2 per cent in 1990 to 45 per cent in 2005, recovering to 47 per cent in 2017. However, the data are based on the gender distribution of international migrant stocks in countries in Africa and do not reflect the gender distribution of migrants that have left the continent. In addition, comparatively, Southern Africa has consistently reported a much lower share and Northern Africa experienced a significant decline in women's migration in 1990–2005. The data suggest that although there have been increasing numbers of African women migrating, the share of migrants has not increased at the continental level.

Chapter 3 explores the dynamics of men's and women's migration in selected countries in Africa in more detail, to better understand these trends and what has triggered these developments.

Figure 10

Women migrants as share of international migrant stock in (a) world regions and (b) African regions

(Percentage)



Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017a.

2.6 Conclusions

Migration is integral to Africa. With regard to the magnitude of migration, international migrant stocks have increased since 1990 and remain primarily intra-African.

Youth unemployment levels on the continent are high and there is therefore a higher propensity to migrate among youth, as evidenced by the fact that Africa has the lowest median age of migrants in the world. Without accessible opportunities for decent work at home, youth will continue to move, seeking job opportunities wherever they can reasonably access them (see chapter 3).

Distinct patterns have emerged between regions. Migration in Northern Africa is distinctly extra-continental, as reflected in its relatively higher level of extra-continental emigration in comparison with all other regions. Rising levels of migration in Western and Southern Africa may be linked to demand for labour in major economic hubs in the two regions. Intra-African migration in Eastern Africa is comparatively more diversified with regard to the origins of international migrants from Africa, with economic factors, as well as conflict and political instability, being key drivers of migration to the region.

Women's migration is growing in importance in Africa, yet gender-related data show that migration in Africa is men-dominated, with the trends suggesting that the feminization of migration is not as evident in Africa as in other regions.

The potential implications of the observed patterns for future migration in Africa are as follows:

(a) Intra-African migration is expected to increase with the deepening of regional and continental integration and the facilitated movement of people. Economic development and increased trade and transportation will enable more people to migrate, for shorter periods of time. This could facilitate greater migration both within and outside Africa.

(b) Given historically well-established migration zones and increasingly integrated regional economies, sending countries can potentially harness established networks and diasporas for growth and investment. Such networks are also important facilitators of migration.

(c) If conflicts continue and the negative impacts of climate change are not addressed through climate change adaptation and mitigation financing, it is likely that some distress-push migration will continue.

(d) With regard to extra-continental migration, long-term demand for migration from Africa may rise in line with ageing populations in Europe. Owing to a combination of low fertility rates and a large informal sector in Southern Europe that typically employs many migrants, demand for low-skilled and skilled migrants, including from Africa, may increase.

(e) Migration to Africa has recently reverted to growth and it is expected that economic growth and opportunities in Africa will continue to attract migrants from outside the continent.

This chapter provided an overview of contemporary migration patterns and trends in Africa. The following chapters further explore the characteristics and motivations of African migrants and the impact that migration has had on economies in Africa.