

WORLD MIGRATION REPORT

Update

Migration and Migrants: Africa

www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018

This *World Migration Report* update provides an overview of the latest data on international migrants in Africa. It is based on the most recent estimates from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Released in December 2017, the international migrant stock datasets estimate the number of international migrants by age, sex and origin.¹ In addition to presenting current data on international migrants in Africa, the update briefly discusses trends in African migration.²

Migration in Africa involves large numbers of migrants moving both within and out of the region. As shown in figure 1, in 2017 over 19 million Africans were living in another African country, a significant increase from 2015 when 16 million Africans were estimated to be living within the region. The number of Africans living in a different region only grew moderately during the same period, from around 16 million in 2015 to around 17 million in 2017.

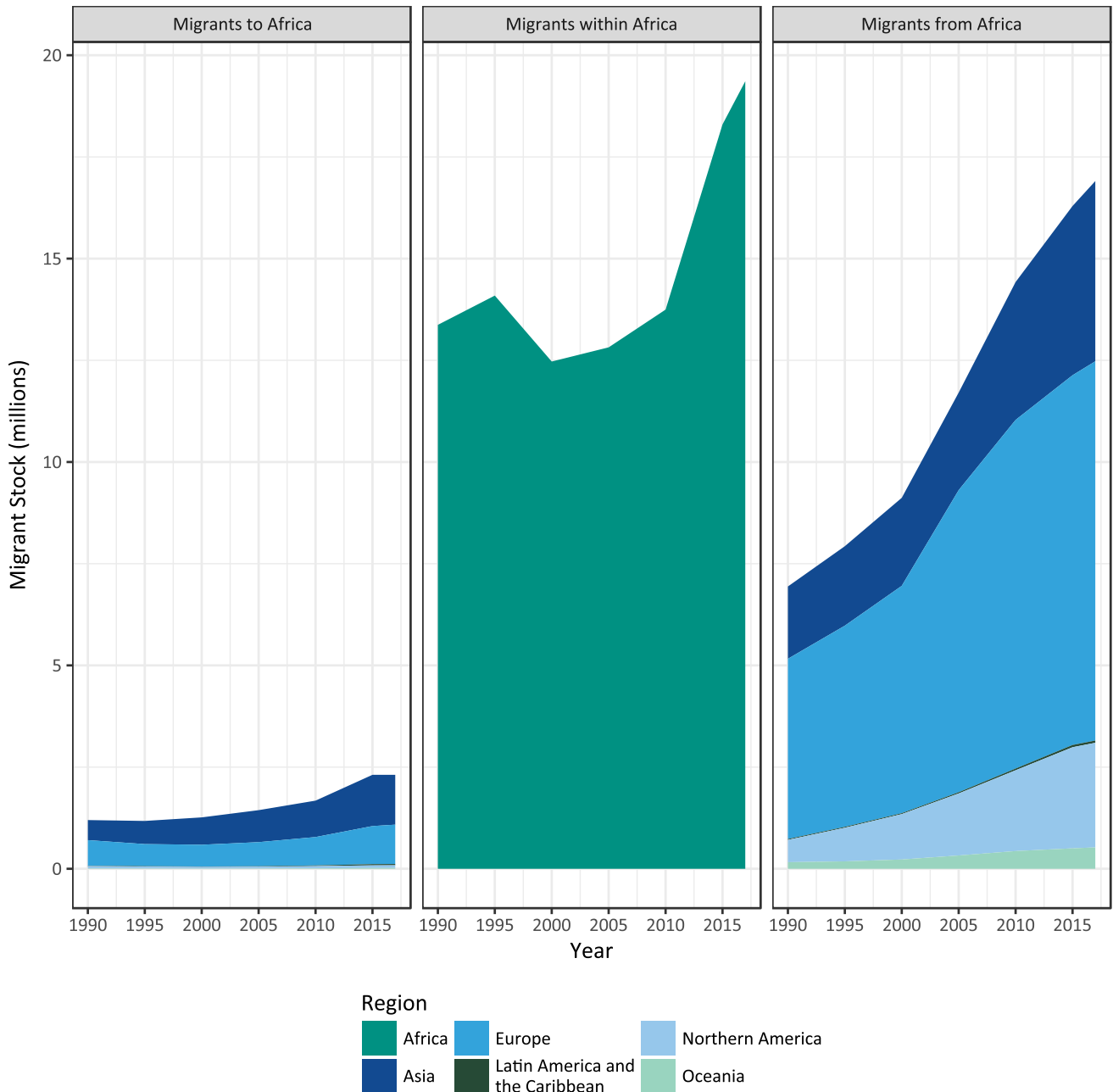
Figure 1 reflects that since 2000 international migration within the African region has increased significantly. And since 1990, the number of African migrants living outside of the region has more than doubled, with the growth to Europe most pronounced. In 2017, most African-born migrants living outside the region were residing in Europe (9.3 million), Asia (4.4 million) and Northern America (2.6 million).

One of the most striking aspects to note about international migrants in Africa, as shown in figure 1, is the small number of migrants who were born outside of the region and have since moved there. Between 2015 and 2017, the number of migrants born outside the region remained virtually unchanged (around 2 million), most of whom were from Asia and Europe.

¹ UN DESA, 2017.

² For details on the composition of Africa, see World Migration Report 2018, Appendix A (page 310). https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf.

Figure 1. Migrants to Africa, within Africa and from Africa between 1990 and 2017

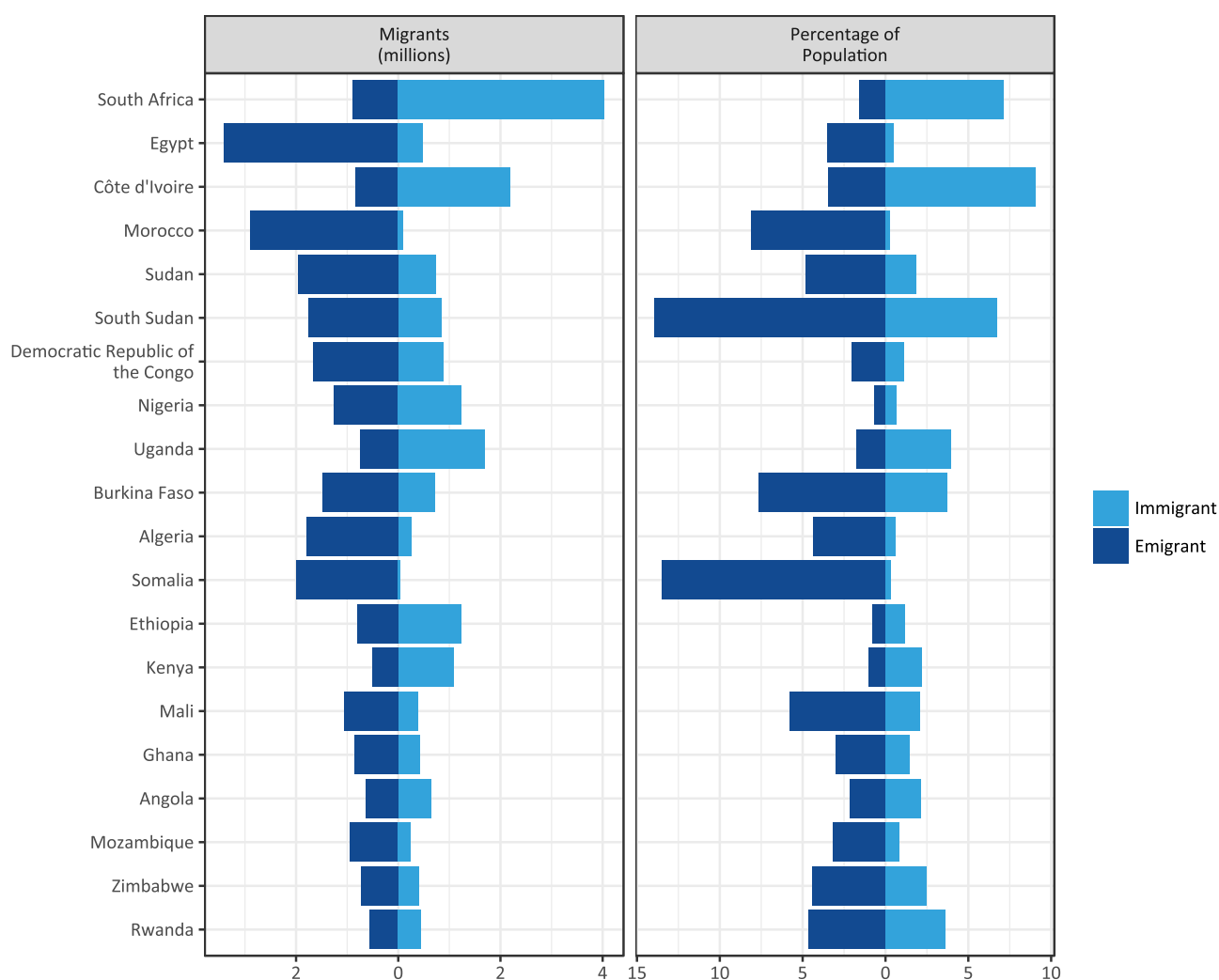


Source: UN DESA, 2017.

Note: "Migrants to Africa" refers to migrants residing in the region (i.e. Africa) who were born in one of the other regions (e.g. Europe or Asia). "Migrants within Africa" refers to migrants born in the region (i.e. Africa) and residing outside their country of birth, but still within the African region. "Migrants from Africa" refers to people born in Africa who were residing outside the region (e.g. in Europe or Northern America).

The African countries with the largest number of emigrants tend to be in the north of the region. These are shown on the left-hand side of figure 2, where countries are ranked by their overall numbers of migrants (i.e. the combination of immigrants in the country and emigrants from the country). In 2017, Egypt had the largest number of people living abroad, followed by Morocco, Somalia, Sudan and Algeria. In terms of the number of immigrants, South Africa remains most significant destination country in Africa, with around 4 million international migrants residing in the country (or around 7% of its total population). The number of migrants moving to South Africa increased by nearly 1 million between 2015 and 2017. Other countries with high immigrant populations as a proportion of their total populations included Gabon (14%), Libya (12%), Djibouti (12%), the Gambia (10%) and Côte d'Ivoire (9%).

Figure 2. Top 20 African migrant countries in 2017



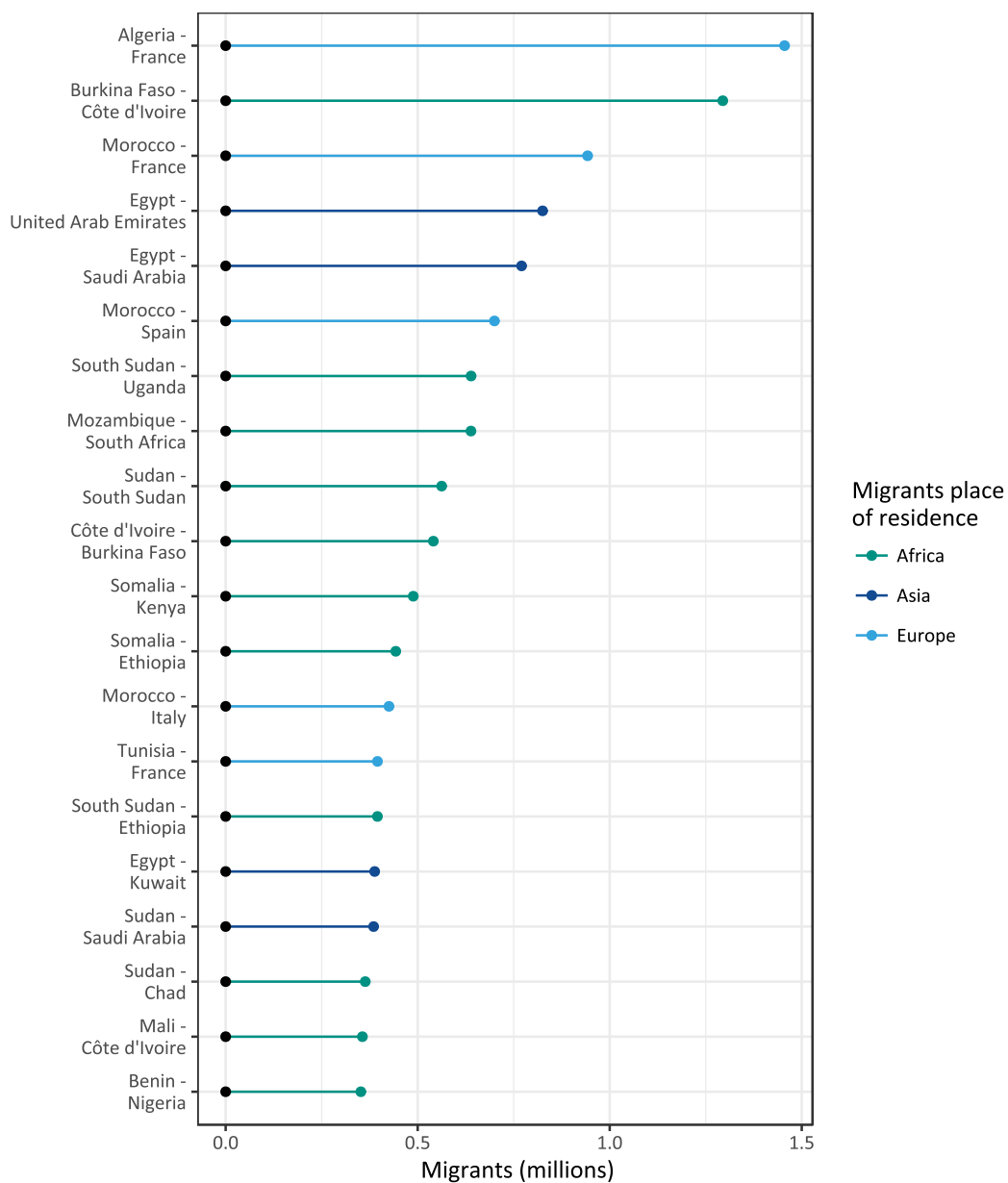
Source: UN DESA, 2017.

Note 1: The population size used to calculate the percentage of immigrants and emigrants is based on the UN DESA total resident population of the country, which includes foreign-born populations.

Note 2: "Immigrant" refers to foreign-born migrants residing in the country. "Emigrant" refers to people born in the country who were residing outside their country of birth in 2017.

There are significant migration corridors within and from Africa, many of which are related to geographic proximity and historical ties, as well as displacement factors. The size of a migration corridor from country A to country B is measured as the number of immigrants from country A who were residing in country B in 2017. Migration corridors represent an accumulation of migratory movements over time and provide a snapshot of how migration patterns have evolved into significant foreign-born populations in specific destination countries. Some of the largest migration corridors involving African countries, as shown in figure 3, are between North African countries such as Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to France, Spain and Italy, in part reflecting post-colonial connections. There are also significant labour migration corridors to Gulf States – see Egypt to United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia for example. Importantly, just over half of the main migration corridors shown in figure 3 were within Africa, with the corridor between Burkina Faso to neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire constituting the second largest for Africa overall.

Figure 3. Top 20 migration corridors involving African countries



Source: UN DESA, 2017.

Note: Corridors represent an accumulation of migratory movements over time and provide a snapshot of how migration patterns have evolved into significant foreign-born populations in specific destination countries.

For more information, please refer to *World Migration Report 2018* or UN DESA websites below:

- *World Migration Report 2018*
www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/index.shtml