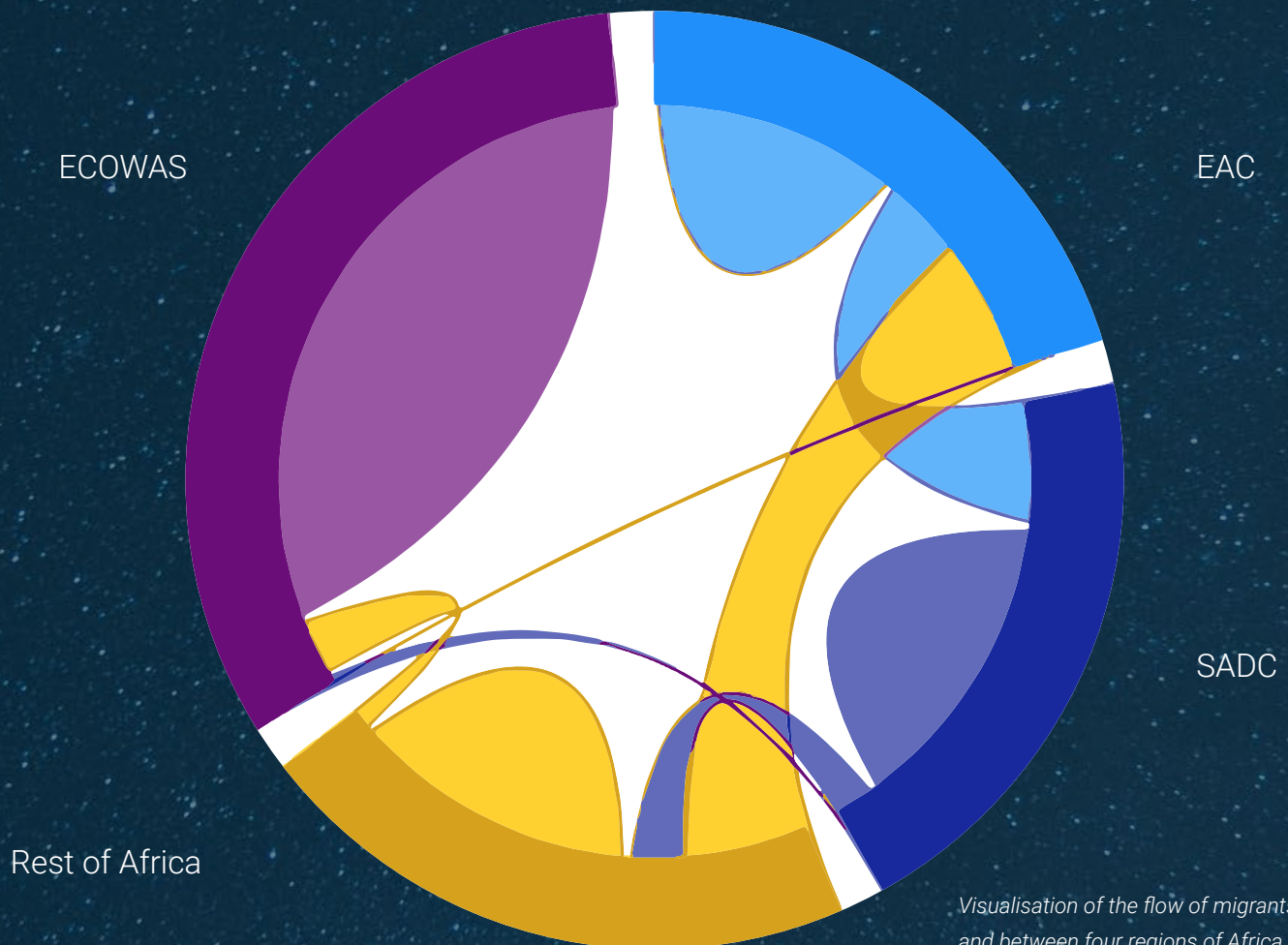


# AN ANALYSIS OF TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA



*Visualisation of the flow of migrants within and between four regions of Africa – the East African Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and the rest of Africa which includes much of Central Africa and all of North Africa.*

**n** **s** new south  
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# List of Abbreviations

<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AEC</b>	East African Community
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>MIGRA</b>	Migration Governance Reform in Africa
<b>REC</b>	Regional Economic Community
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# Executive Summary

**Africa is a continent of origin, transit, and destination for migrants. There are many reasons for migration in Africa – such as conflict, poverty, environmental degradation, and education opportunities – but the most important drivers are economic. Migration can contribute to economic growth and development, both in origin countries and in destination countries, by facilitating the transfer of skills, knowledge, and remittances.**

In 2020, African countries accommodated a total of 25.4 million international migrants, including many who originated in other African countries. This reflected a 62% increase from 1990, when the continent's immigrant stock stood at 15.7 million people. Over the same period, the stock of international migrants who originated in Africa increased by 97% from 20.6 million to 40.6 million. The number of intra-African migrants – those who had migrated between African countries – rose by 56%, from a low of 13.4 million to a high of 20.9 million. 82% of all African immigrants are intra-African migrants, as are 52% of all African emigrants. Most migrants are young, and male migrants marginally outnumber female migrants – in 2020, 53% of international migrants in Africa were male. By global standards, the proportion and number of Africans migrating is small.

Africa is generally a negative net migration zone – more migrants have left Africa than have come to Africa – and intra-regional migration predominates in all of the continent's major regional economic blocs. In most African countries, immigrants are a small and shrinking minority of the population: in 2020, on average, they comprised only 2% of the population in their destination countries, and only 3% of the working-age population. Most migrant workers in Africa are young, and 61% are male; they typically have no more than a basic education and find work in the services sector.

The intention and structure of this paper is not to cover Africa comprehensively and evenly. While it considers the whole continent, it draws out greater detail for three regional economic communities (ECOWAS, EAC and SADC) and four countries: Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique and Kenya. These RECs and countries will be the subject of deeper studies by the Migration Governance Reform in Africa (MIGRA) research programme for which this paper forms one of the introductory works.

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# PART 1:

## AFRICAN MIGRATION: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

This paper is the second in a series of papers being produced for the Migration Governance Reform in Africa (MIGRA) research programme of the New South Institute. The purpose of the programme is to map viable pathways for improving the ease of movement and settlement by Africans (and potentially by visitors) across African borders and for improving the quality of management of such migration. There are nine more papers to come: eight regional and national case studies and a synthesis paper. This paper takes a continental view, highlighting broad trends across the countries and regions that will become the subjects of our forthcoming case studies.

The African Union (AU) Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons sets out the reasons for free movement in this way:

...the free movement of persons, capital goods and services will promote integration, Pan-Africanism, enhance science, technology, education, research and foster tourism, facilitate inter-African trade and investment, increase remittances within Africa, promote mobility of labour, create employment, improve the standards of living of the people of Africa and facilitate the mobilization and utilization of the human and material resources of Africa in order to achieve self-reliance and development...<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the mobility of Africans across African borders arguably promotes cultural exchange and helps mitigate the legacy of colonial boundaries for communities which now find themselves on two sides of an international border. All these advantages can also help reduce political tensions and instability.

The purpose of this paper is to map out the current state of migration in Africa, as reflected primarily in the number of people living – and the number of people working – in countries other than their country of birth. The data limitations are considerable: we have had to rely on stock data rather than flow data, which means that

we have no indication of how recently migrants arrived in their destination countries. There is a good deal of estimation too. However, we feel that the data is sufficiently consistent over time to help us understand migration trends at a fairly high level of analysis.

The intention and structure of this paper is not to consider Africa comprehensively and evenly. While it covers the whole continent, it draws out greater detail for three regional economic communities (ECOWAS, EAC and SADC) and four countries: Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique and Kenya. These RECs and countries will be the subject of deeper studies by the Migration Governance Reform in Africa (MIGRA) research programme for which this paper forms one of the introductory works.

Africa has made significant progress towards integration, notably through an agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area, which was adopted in 2018 and ratified in 2019. Stakeholders understand the need to deepen intra-African trade. Yet the pace of integration remains lacklustre. One obstacle consists in the fact that, while trade integration has been prioritised, key trade and economic “enablers” have been ignored. Migration is such an enabler, but in Africa, as elsewhere, it is often resisted rather than encouraged. Political instability – including conflicts, fragile governance structures, and weak institutions – often impedes the development of coherent migration policies and enforcement mechanisms. Additionally, the economic strain faced by many African nations (exacerbated by high unemployment rates, limited resources, and inadequate social services) encourages the perception that migrants compete for scarce resources, potentially burdening local economies. Security risks, including the spread of transnational organised crime, terrorism, and human trafficking, further contribute to authorities’ concerns and their desire to exert greater control over migration flows. Lastly, cultural differences, competition for jobs and resources, and fear of social upheaval can all create social tensions, which make policymakers reluctant to embrace migration as a positive force.

<sup>1</sup> AU, Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment (Addis Ababa: AU, 2018), p.4.

The complex tapestry of African migration holds transformative power for individuals, communities, and nations across the continent. It could also play a powerful role in unlocking the region's economic potential. Yet, except for in a few reports (IOM 2020, UNCTAD 2018, AU 2019), there has been scant analysis of the phenomenon, in part due to the paucity of accurate reporting. This paper presents an up-to-date and broad-ranging study of migration patterns and trends in Africa. An understanding of specific migration trends and patterns is useful in identifying opportunities and policy gaps that can be addressed, as well as in countering myths, such as the notion that Africa is a continent of mass exodus from poverty, war, and bad governance.

## 1.2 Methodological Approach and Data Sources

The study is a unique exposition of general migration trends and labour migration patterns on the African continent. Using historical time-series data, we consider broad trends across the continent and in each of four African regions. Three of these regions correspond to regional economic communities (RECs): the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The fourth region is a residual category, which we name the "Rest of Africa"; it mainly comprises countries in North Africa. Table 1 lists the members of each region. Our regional analysis in Part 2 also includes four country case studies: we use Nigeria as a case study in ECOWAS, Kenya in EAC, and South Africa and Mozambique in SADC.

*Table 1: Regions of Africa*

EAC	ECOWAS	SADC	Rest of Africa
Burundi Kenya Rwanda South Sudan Uganda <b>United Republic of Tanzania</b>	Benin Burkina Faso Cabo Verde Cote d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia Mali Mauritania Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone Togo	Angola Botswana Comoros Democratic Republic of the Congo Eswatini Lesotho Madagascar Malawi Mauritius Mozambique Namibia Seychelles South Africa Zambia Zimbabwe <b>United Republic of Tanzania</b>	Rest of Africa Algeria Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Congo Djibouti Egypt Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Ethiopia Gabon Libya Mayotte Morocco Reunion Saint Helena Sao Tome and Principe Somalia Sudan Tunisia Western Sahara

Source: Author aggregation

*Note: The United Republic of Tanzania is a member both of EAC and of SADC, which leads to double-counting in some of our region-to-region summations. The Democratic Republic of Congo has similarly been a dual member of EAC and SADC since it joined EAC in 2022, but we do not count it as a member of EAC because our data terminates in 2020. Mauritania left ECOWAS in 2000 but nonetheless is included in the region.*



The main data sources for this study are population registers, secondary data publications, and labour databases. Specifically, to evaluate general migration trends, we use data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). UNDESA's International Migrant Stock dataset records migration by origin and destination and has comprehensive global coverage. UNDESA uses standardised definitions and methodologies for data collection and analysis, so the data is reliable and lends itself to comparison across different countries and regions. Estimates of the number (or "stock") of international migrants are conveniently disaggregated by age, sex, and country or area of destination. This data is based on national statistics, typically obtained from population censuses, and the dataset is also enriched by information from population registers and nationally representative surveys. Finally, the temporal span of the dataset is attractive: it covers the 30-year period between 1990 and 2020, which allows us to identify long-term trends and migration patterns. We understand that the most recent observations in the data, from the year 2020, may reflect distortions introduced by the Covid-19 pandemic, and that we may therefore see some temporary departures from long-term trends.

Although the UNDESA dataset has attractive qualities, it also suffers from gaps. Some fields are incomplete – in particular, some countries and regions may not be covered comprehensively – and that may affect the accuracy of our overall picture of international migration trends. Data gaps are often caused by lags in data collection. Indeed, when the recent Africa Migration Report was prepared, 14% of African countries had not conducted a national census since 2000 (IOM, 2020, p. 16). Furthermore, data is collected from national statistics offices that may use differing methodologies and definitions, leading to inconsistencies and inferior data quality. Finally, the UNDESA data may not be disaggregated at a sufficiently granular level to capture the various aspects of migration patterns – such as migrants' skill level and occupation – that matter in policy-making.

The last part of the study uses historical and cross-sectional country data to analyse labour migration trends in Africa. The data and methodology underlying that analysis are outlined at the outset of Part 3.

# PART 2:

## AFRICAN MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW OF KEY MIGRATION TRENDS IN AFRICA

Migration occurs when people move from one place to another with the intention of changing their usual place of residence. Bearing in mind this definition, migration can be measured either at its starting point – in which case it is “migration by origin” – or at the terminal point – as “migration by destination”. The act of coming to live in a region from another place is called “immigration” and the act of permanently leaving one’s usual place of residence is “emigration”. Africa has both emigrants and immigrants and therefore is both an origin and a destination for migrants. Intra-African migration occurs when migrants who originated in Africa migrate to other African countries.

Part 2 outlines key trends in African migration, viewing Africa both as an origin and as a destination. We begin by comparing African migration to migration in other continents and regions of the world; afterwards, we proceed to an in-depth analysis of intra-African migration.

### 2.1 Africa in the Context of the World and Other Development Regions

As of 2020, there were 280.6 million international migrants in the world, a considerable increase

from 153 million in 1990. This represents an 83.4% rise in the global migrant stock over 30 years. Over the same period, world population increased by 46%, from 5.3 billion to 7.8 billion. Thus, since the stock of migrants grew faster than the population, global migrant density – the share of immigrants in the total population – increased over the same period, from 2.9% to 3.6%.

At the same time, the stock of immigrants resident in Africa (including those who originated in other African countries) increased by 62% from 15.7 million in 1990 to 25.4 million in 2020. This modest increase in destination migration is below the global average and pales in comparison to Africa’s overall population growth: during the same 30-year period, the African population more than doubled, increasing by 112% from 630 million to 1.3 billion. On the other hand, the stock of African emigrants grew more quickly than did the global migrant stock; the number of African emigrants (including emigrants to other African countries) increased by 97% from 20.6 million in 1990 to 40.6 million in 2020. Given the explosion in the African population and slow immigration growth, it is unsurprising that average migrant density in Africa decreased from 2.5% in 1990 to 1.9% in 2020.

Table 2: Comparison Between Africa and the World

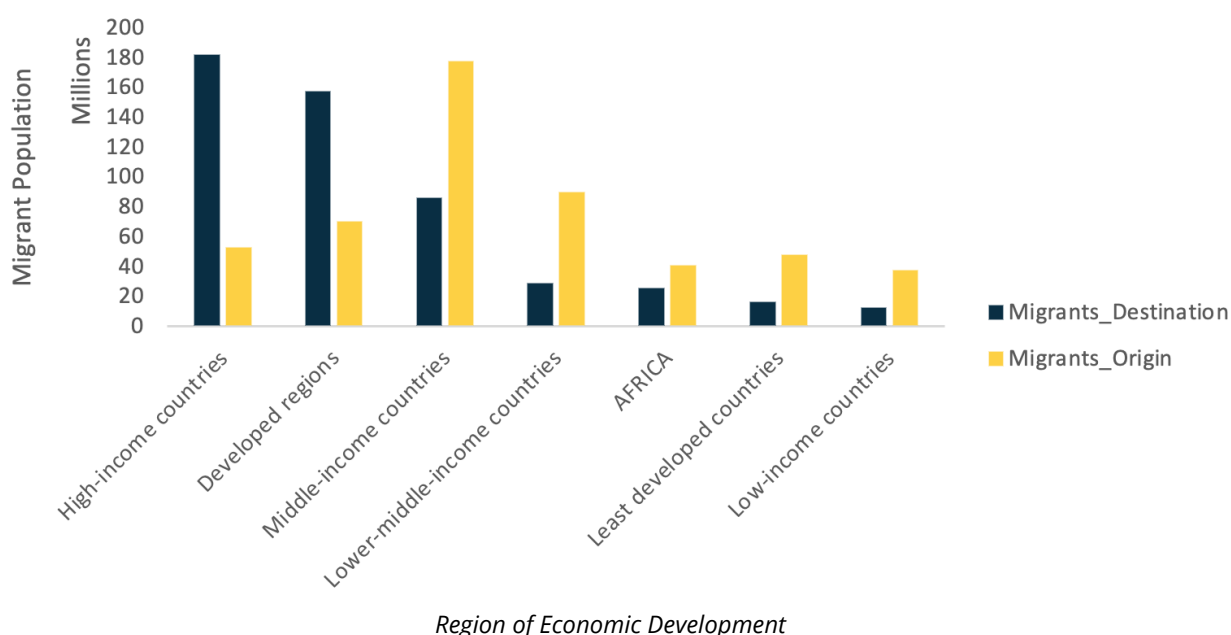
	AFRICA	WORLD
<b>1990</b>		
Population	630 349 685	5 327 231 041
Migrants Destination	15 689 666	152 986 157
Migrants Origin	20 621 464	152 986 157
% Share of Population	2,5	2,9
<b>2020</b>		
Population	1 340 598 113	7794 798 729
Migrants Destination	25 389 464	280 598 105
Migrants Origin	40 567 163	280 598 105
% Share of Population	1,9	3,6
<b>% Increase</b>		
Population	113%	46%
Migrants Destination	62%	83%
Migrants Origin	97%	83%

Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

One way to contextualise African migration is to compare trends across regions of differing levels of economic development. Figure 1 shows that high-income countries and developed regions have more immigrants than emigrants. Conversely, middle-income, low-income, and least-developed countries have more emigrants than immigrants.

Moreover, there is steady emigration growth in low-income, lower-middle-income, and middle-income countries. It appears that, in developing countries, growth in per capita income is typically accompanied by higher emigration rates, though new emigration slows or declines once the country achieves a high income per capita.

**Figure 1: Level of Migration by Region of Economic Development (2020)**

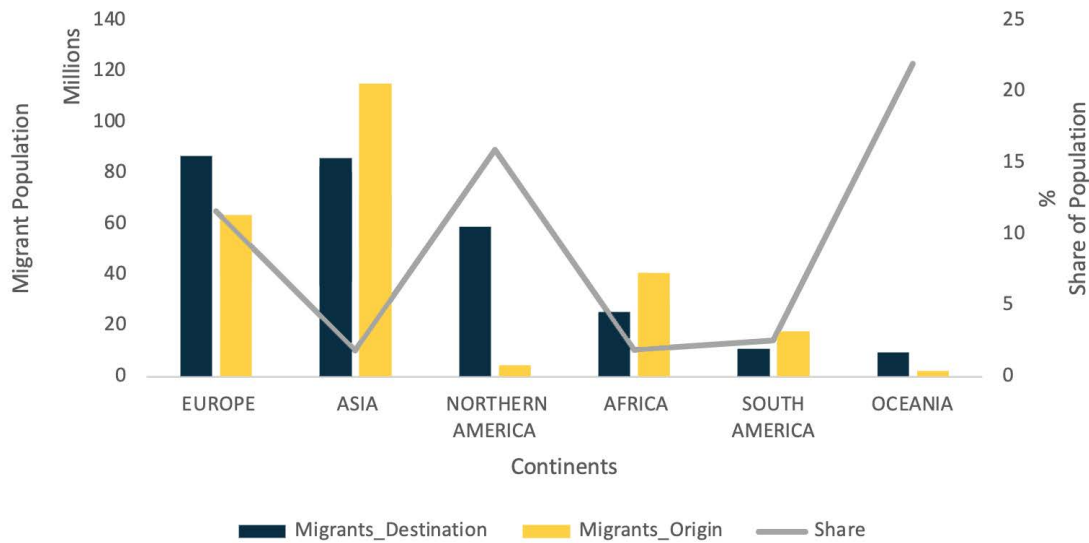


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 2 confirms that wealthier continents, such as Europe, Northern America, and Oceania, have more immigrants than emigrants. South America and Asia have more emigrants than immigrants, as does Africa, which is generally a low-income zone. However, levels of economic development vary across the African continent. Both emigration and immigration are scarce in the poorer nations.

We may be misled by comparisons between regions and continents which have populations of vastly different sizes. Migrant density is a better estimate of the prevalence of migrants in any given region or country. Figure 2 shows the migrant density – the share of immigrants in the population – in each region, as well as the size of that region’s populations of emigrants and immigrants respectively.

Figure 2: Origin Migrants, Destination Migrants, and Share of Destination Migrants in Population (2020)



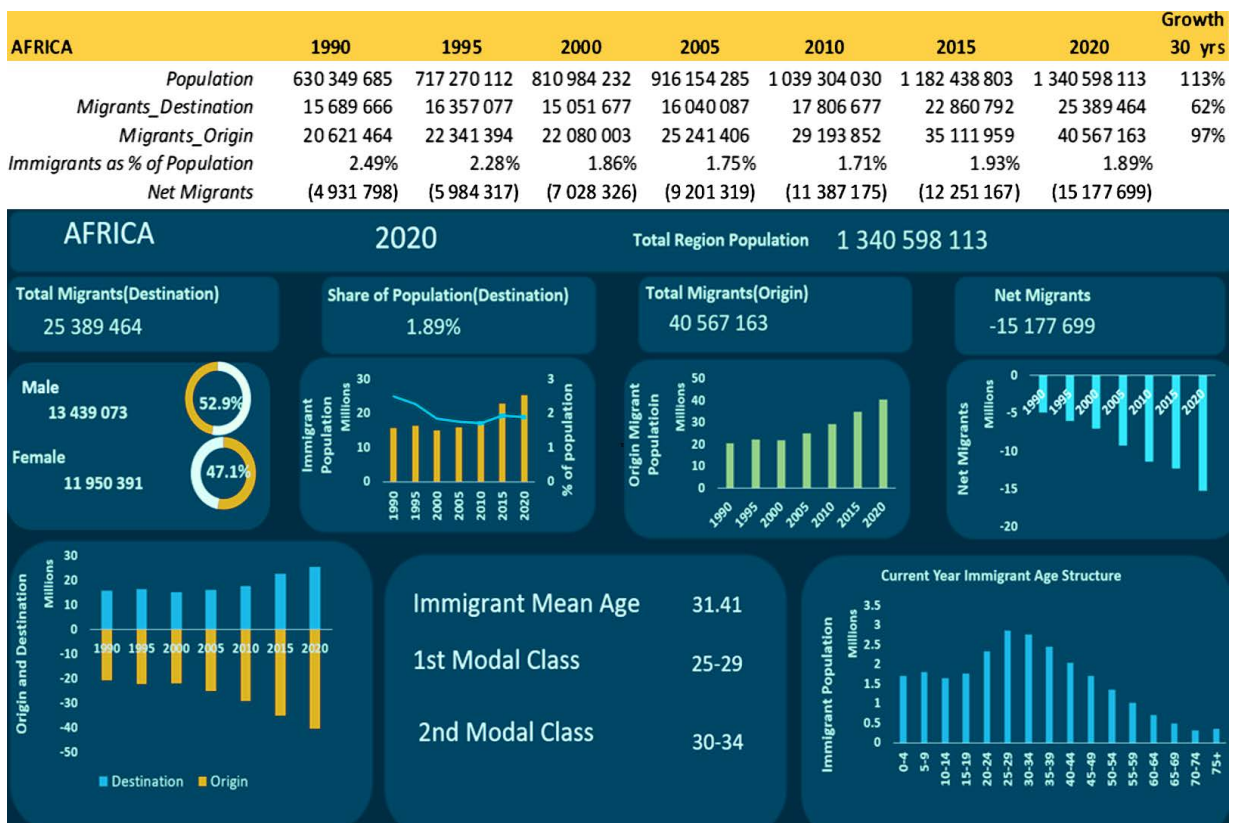
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

According to Figure 2, migrant density tends to be lower in low-income regions than it is in the high-income regions of Europe, Oceania, and Northern America. The case of Asia illustrates

the importance of considering migrant density. In absolute terms, Asia has a high number of international migrants, but its migrant density is extremely low – lower than Africa’s – at 1.8%.

## 2.2 Stylised Facts: African Migration

Figure 3 : Visualisation of Key Africa Statistics and Trends

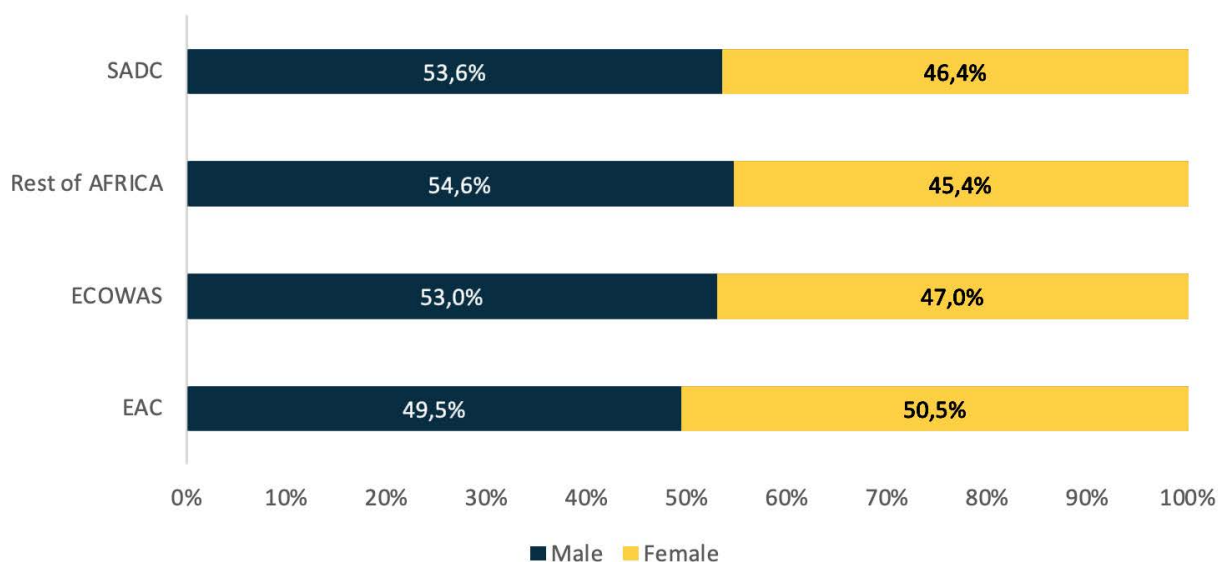


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

As of 2020, the mean age of Africa's immigrants was 31.4 years, slightly higher than the mean of 27.8 years in 1990. Generally, there are more young migrants in Africa than there are old ones, as shown by the right skew on the age structure graph in Figure 3. By contrast, the age distribution of the global stock of migrants is skewed to the left. The

sex composition of Africa's immigrant population is close to parity and has remained unchanged over time, with males slightly outnumbering females at 52.9% of Africa's migrant stock in 2020. As shown in Figure 4, this slight gender gap was replicated in all regions except EAC, where female migrants narrowly outnumbered male migrants.

**Figure 4: Sex Distribution of Africa's Destination Migrants by Region (2020)**



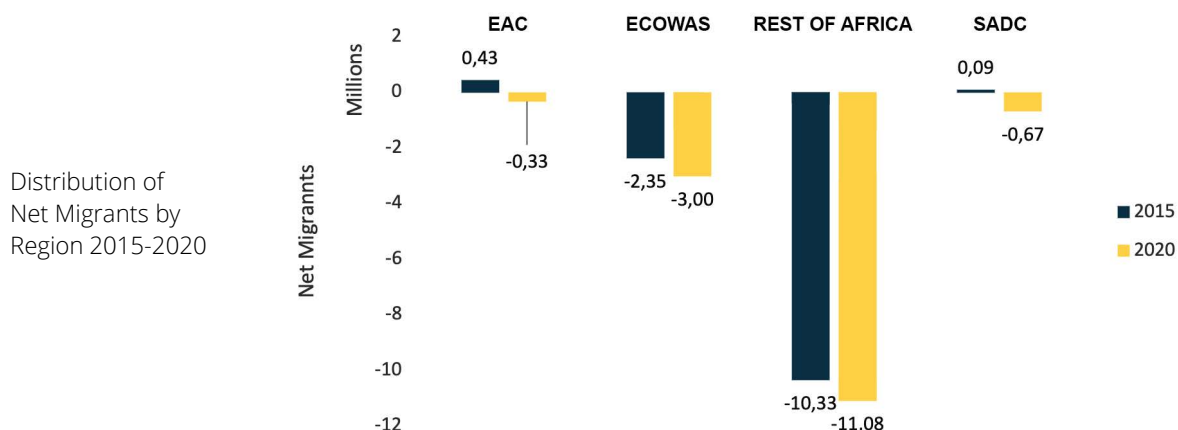
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Net migration refers to the difference between the number of people immigrating to a region and the number of people emigrating from that region. Africa has certainly experienced negative net migration since 1990, and this trend has not only persisted over time but has also become more pronounced. As of 2020, net migration to Africa stood at -15.1 million, with emigrants from Africa

outnumbering immigrants to Africa by 15.1 million.

The regional distribution of this net migration is shown in Figure 5. Net emigration is disproportionately high in the "Rest of Africa" region. At the other extreme, net migration to EAC and SADC is close to zero. In ECOWAS, emigrants outnumbered immigrants by 3 million in 2020.

**Figure 5: Net Migration by Region (2015 and 2020)**



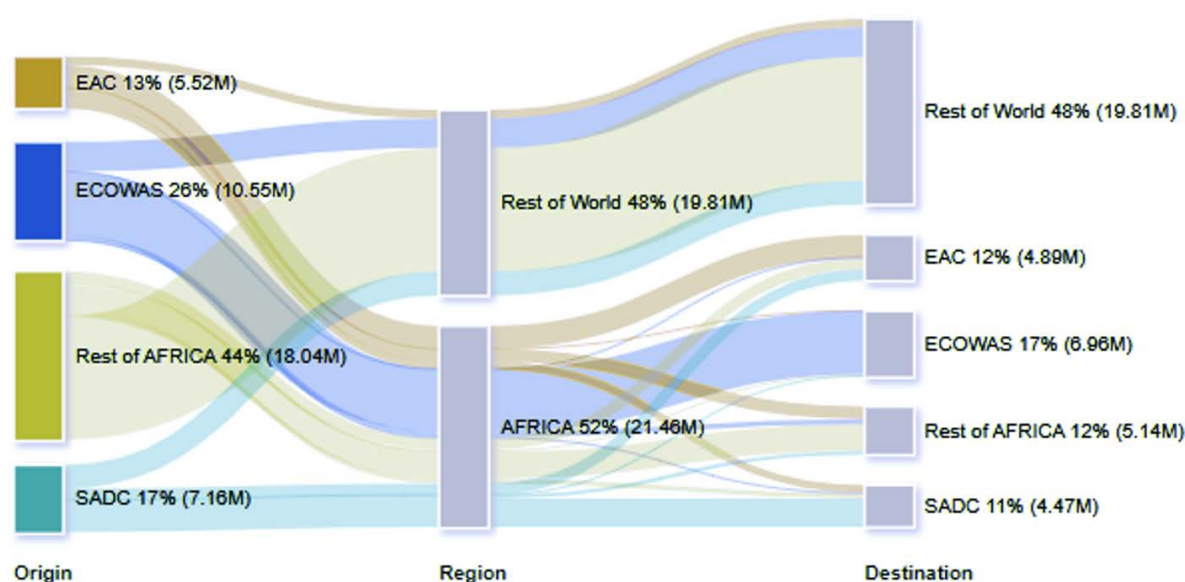
Distribution of Net Migrants by Region 2015-2020

Net migration provides prima facie insight into the relative levels of emigration and immigration in a region, but it should not be forgotten that much African migration is intra-regional. Intra-regional migration has no effect on net migration to that region.

Similarly, at the continental level, a very large proportion of African emigrants do not leave the continent but instead have their destinations in other parts of Africa. Thus it is important to establish the extent of extra-continental migration in Africa – that is, to establish how many African emigrants leave the continent,

and how many immigrants arrive in Africa from outside the continent. In this regard, of the 40.6 million emigrants that had left African origins as of 2020, 20.9 million had their destinations in Africa, leaving 19.6 million to migrate outside the continent. In other words, intra-African migration accounted for 52% of total emigration from African origins. From another point of view – considering Africa as a destination – there were a total of 25.3 immigrants resident in Africa in 2020, 4.4 million of whom originated outside the continent. Thus intra-African migration accounted for 82% of total immigration to African destinations. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate these patterns.

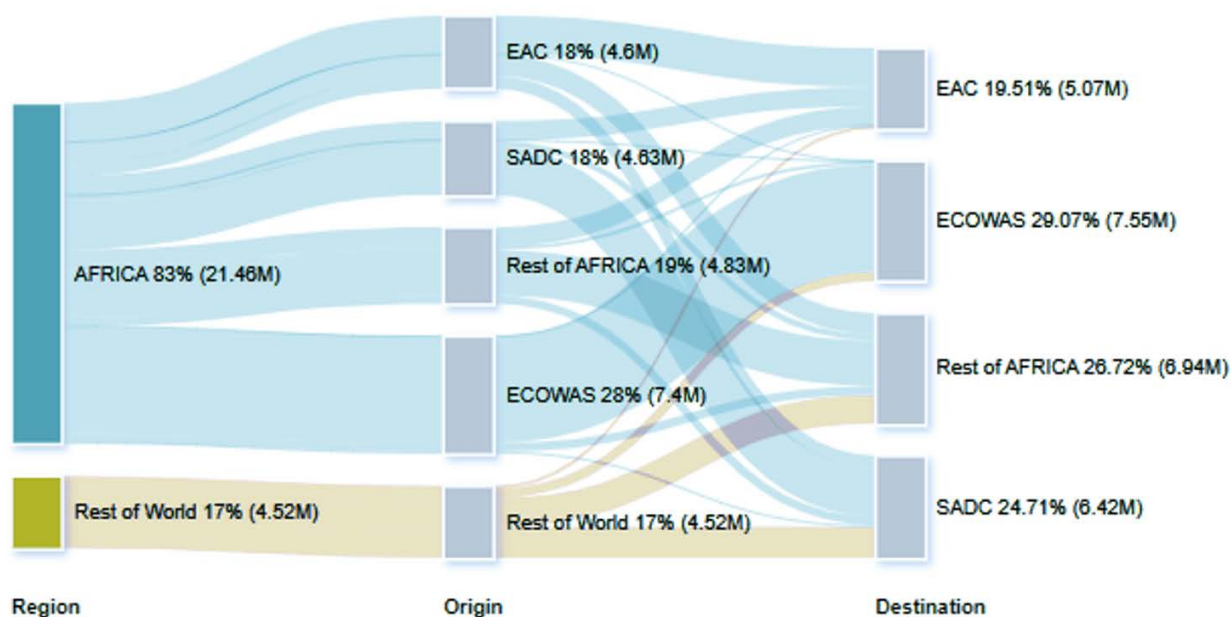
**Figure 6: Migration from Africa**



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

*Note: Tanzania is double-counted due to its dual membership in EAC and SADC. Without this double-counting, the total number of intra-African migrants is 20.9 million, not 21.46 million, and the total number of African migrants to the “Rest of World” is 19.6 million, not 19.81 million.*

Figure 7: Migration to Africa



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Note: Tanzania is double-counted due to its dual membership in EAC and SADC. Without this double-counting, the total number of intra-African migrants is 20.9 million, not 21.46 million, and the total number of migrants from the “Rest of World” is 4.47 million, not 4.52 million.

Table 3: Intra-African Migration as a Proportion of African Migration (2020)

	Migrant Populaton	%		Migrant Populaton
<b>Total Africa Emmigrants</b>	40 567 163	100%	<b>Total Africa Emmigrants</b>	40 567 163
Emigrants to Africa	20 917 565	52%	<b>Total Africa Immigrants</b>	25 389 464
Emigrants Outside Africa	19 649 598	48%	<b>Net Migration</b>	15 177 699
			<b>OR</b>	
<b>Total Africa Immigrants</b>	25 389 464	100%	Emigrants Outside Africa	19 649 598
Immigrants from Africa	20 917 565	82%	Immigrants from Outside Africa	4 471 899
Immigrants from Outside Africa	4 471 899	18%	<b>Net Migration</b>	15 177 699

Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Table 3 reveals a considerable amount of intra-African migration, contrary to the belief that Africans have a propensity to migrate to destinations outside the continent. Despite various hurdles to intra-African migration, the average African emigrant is

slightly more likely to migrate to another African country than to migrate outside the continent. Indeed, during the 30-year period between 1990 and 2020, the stock of intra-African migrants increased by 56% from 13.4 million to 20.9 million.

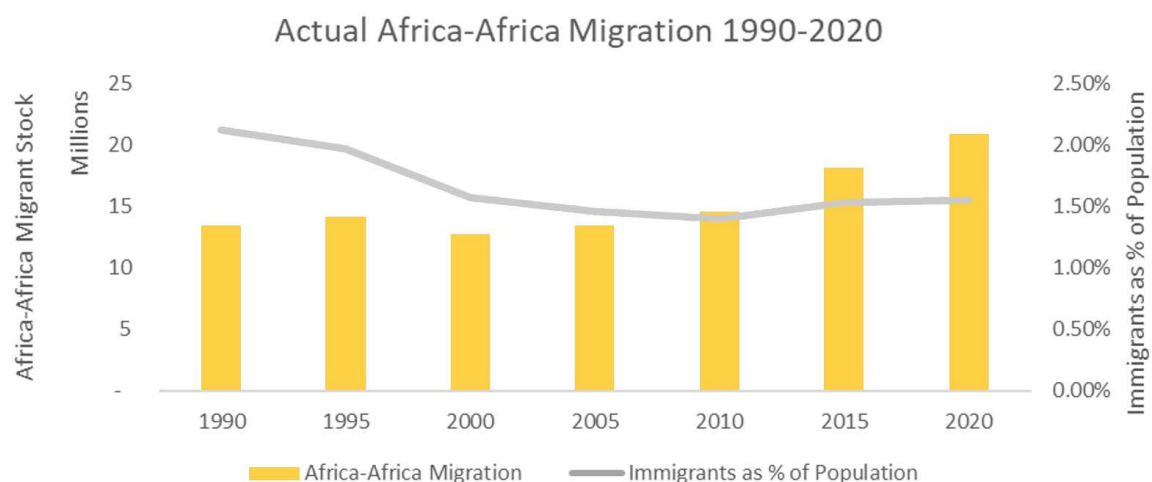
Table 3 also allows us to calculate net migration to Africa. As of 2020, 19.6 million African migrants lived outside the continent, but African countries accommodated 4.5 million immigrants from outside the continent, for net emigration of 15.2 million.

Figure 8 presents the actual migration figures for individuals moving within Africa

between 1990-2020. These numbers exclude extra-continental migration, and just focus on the trends within the continent.

Actual intra-African migration growth is half the growth of total population in Africa, resulting in a decline in the share of migrants to population in 2020.

**Figure 8: Africa-Africa Migration (1990-2020)**



	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth30 _yrs
<i>Africa-Africa Migration</i>	13 431 488	14 179 992	12 753 079	13 411 177	14 571 247	18 200 172	20 917 565	56%
<i>Africa Population</i>	630 349 685	717 270 112	810 984 232	916 154 285	1 039 304 030	1 182 438 803	1 340 598 113	113%
<i>Immigrants as % of Population</i>	2.13%	1.98%	1.57%	1.46%	1.40%	1.54%	1.56%	

Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

In the following subsections, we conduct a detailed origin and destination analysis for Africa, focusing on UNDESA's data

from 2020. Our aim is to understand where Africa's migrants originated and where they were destined to live.

### 2.2.1 Destination Analysis

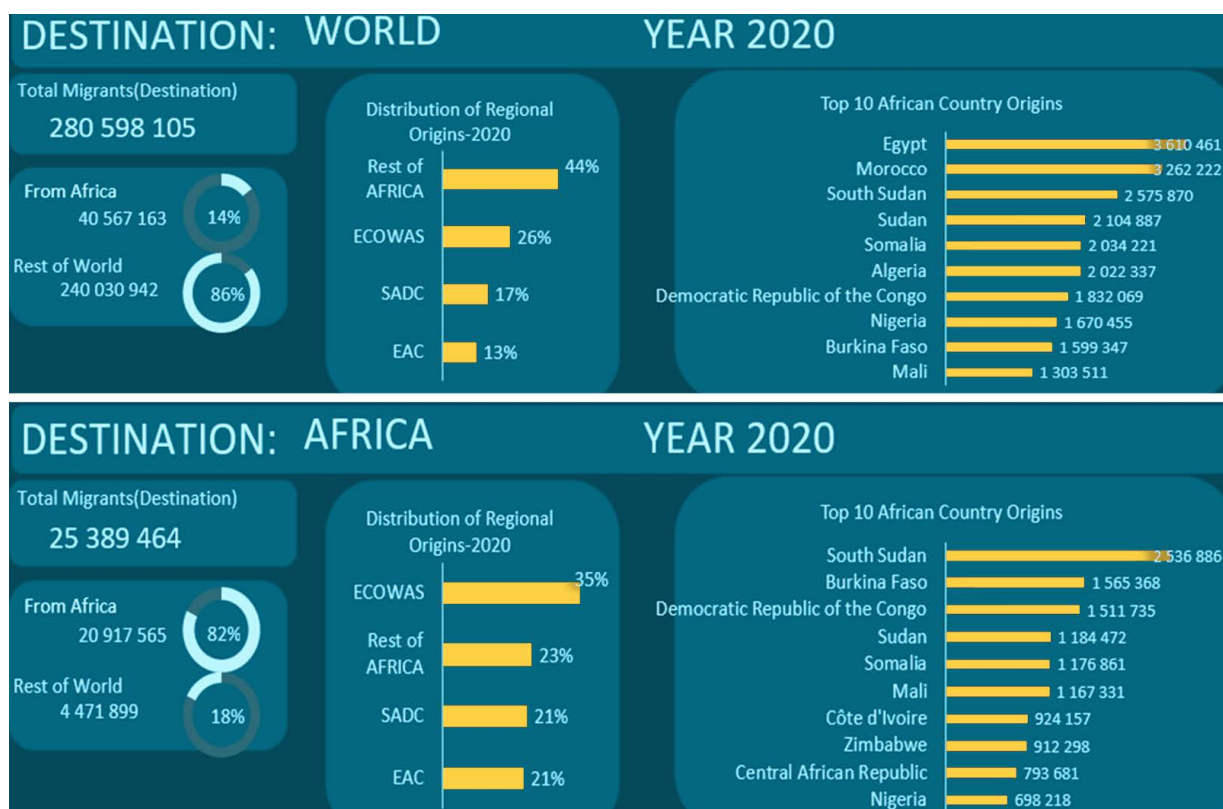
In analysing migration by destination, we categorise migrants according to the location or country to which they move. Such an analysis seeks to understand the patterns, trends, and characteristics of migration in the places that receive migrants.

In our classification, at the broadest level, all 280 million international migrants are destined for the "World". A subset are also destined, more specifically, for "Africa". As shown in Figure 9, emigrants from Africa comprise 14% of all immigrants to the "World" and, through intra-

African migration, comprise 82% of all immigrants to Africa. Among African regions, the residual region "Rest of Africa" leads as a migrant source to the "World", followed by ECOWAS and SADC, while EAC is the least significant source both of migrants to Africa and of migrants to the "World". Although the "Rest of Africa" sends many migrants to the "World", it is significantly less important as a source for migrants to Africa. This implies that most migrants leaving the "Rest of Africa" are destined for extra-continental migration. South Sudan is the source of the highest number of migrants destined for Africa.



Figure 9: Destination Analysis



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

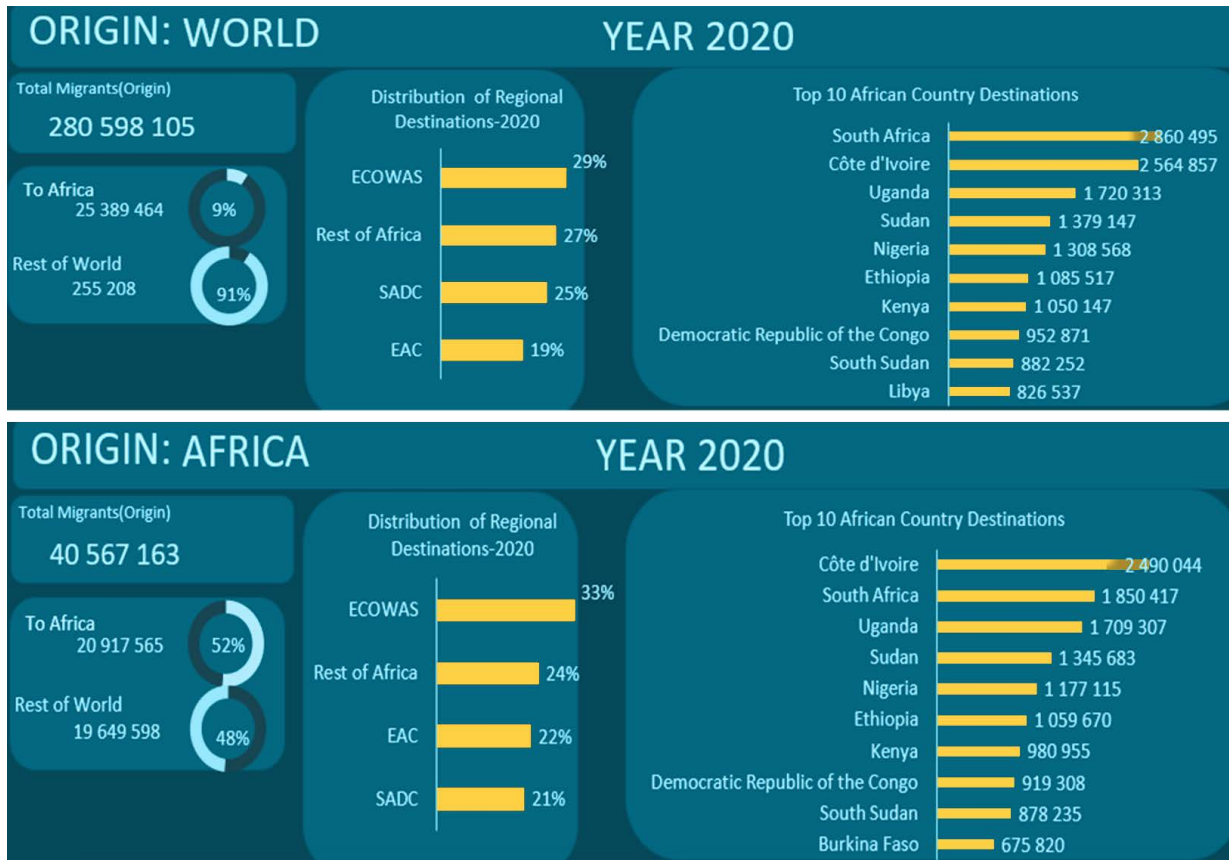
### 2.2.2 Origin Analysis

In analysing migration by origin, we categorise migrants according to their original or source location. Given a certain origin area, we can uncover popular destinations for migrants leaving that area. As in our destination analysis, we will consider the global stock of migrants – originating in the “World” – as well as the subset of migrants who originated in Africa. Figure 10 shows the destinations of each group of emigrants.

Of the 280 million global migrants in 2020, only 9% resided in Africa. Because many immigrants to Africa originated in other African countries, the number of extra-continental immigrants to Africa

is even lower. Of the migrants who originated in Africa, 52% were destined for African countries, while 48% left the continent. ECOWAS and the “Rest of Africa” regions are the most popular destinations in Africa. For migrants originating in Africa, EAC is a more popular destination than SADC, but SADC is preferred among the total pool of global migrants, implying that SADC receives more extra-continental immigrants than EAC does. South Africa is the most popular African destination and receives a considerable number of extra-continental immigrants, while Côte D’Ivoire, the second-most popular destination, draws most of its immigrants from Africa.

Figure 10: Origin Analysis

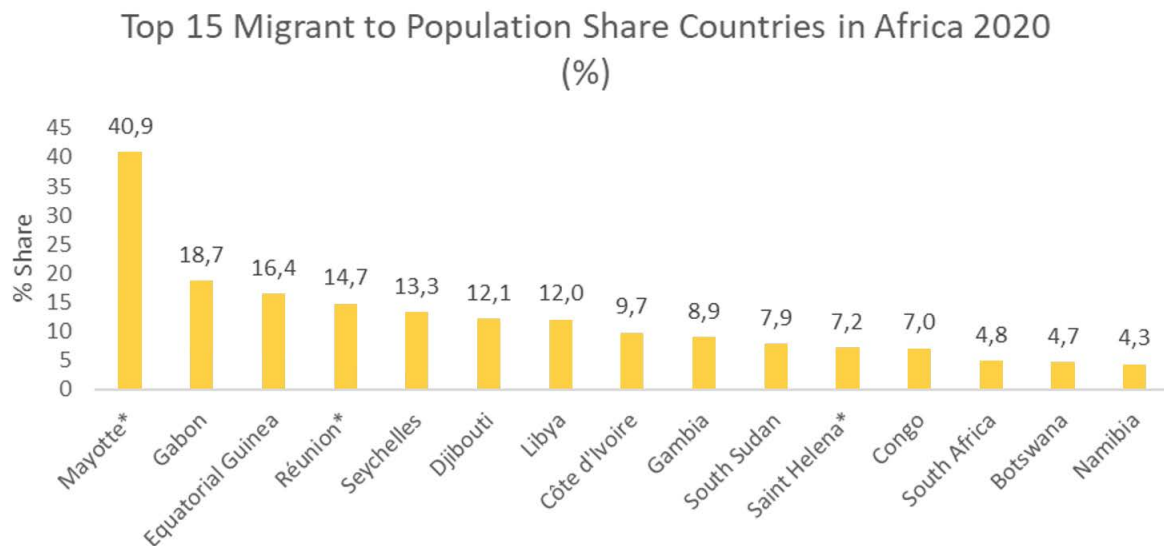


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

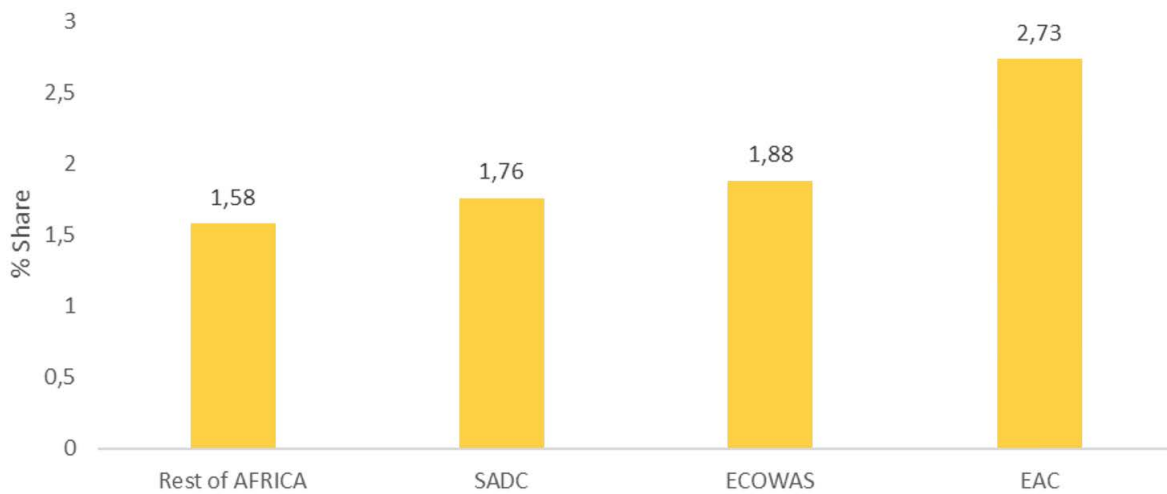
Mayotte in Africa has the highest migrant density in the continent. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea also have high proportions of migrants

owing to their relatively small populations. EAC has the highest migrant density as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Share of Migrants in Population by Region and Country (2020)



## Migrant to Population Share in African Regions 2020 (%)



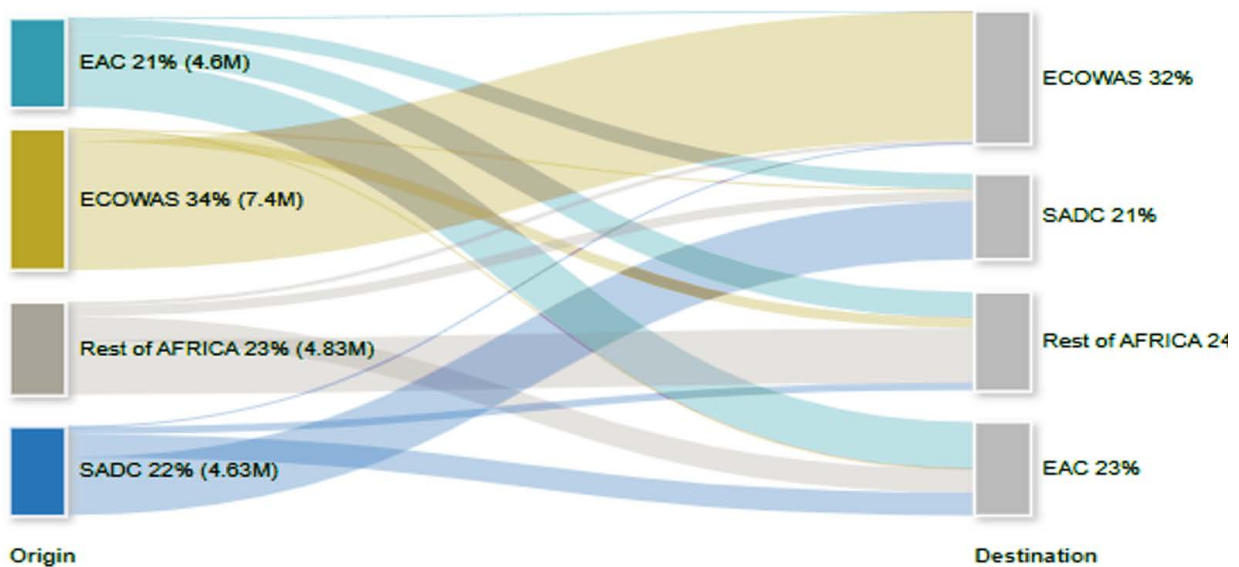
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 2.2.3 Intra-African Migration

In this subsection, we focus on intra-African migration, measuring the volume of migration between different African regions in order to extract the most popular regional migration routes on the continent. Intra-regional migration is most prevalent in ECOWAS, followed by SADC, “Rest of Africa”, and, finally, EAC. Conversely, EAC is strongly involved in inter-regional

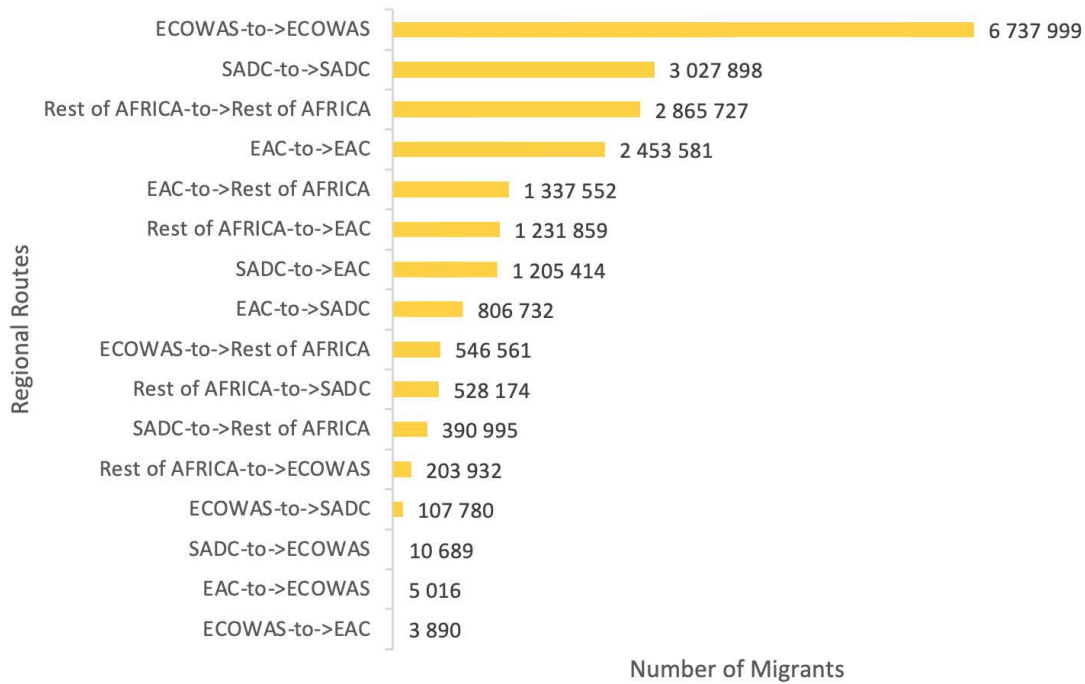
migration, notably in migration to or from the “Rest of Africa” and SADC. Although ECOWAS has very strong intra-regional migration, it appears isolated, as its interaction with other regions is very low. Specifically, ECOWAS-SADC and ECOWAS-EAC interaction is negligible; indeed, these are the least popular regional migration routes, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 12: Region-to-Region Migration in Africa



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

**Figure 13: Regional Migration Routes in Africa (2020)**

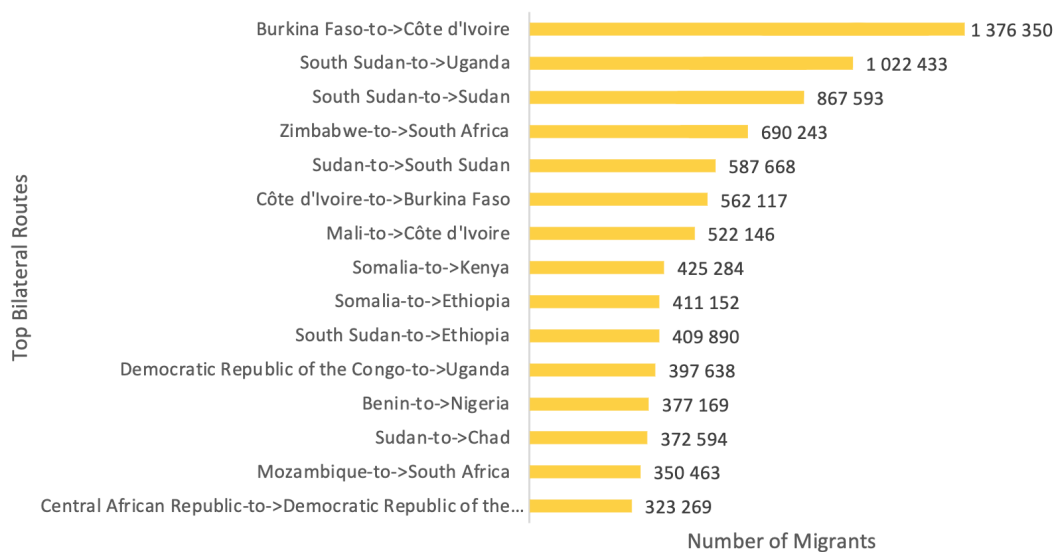


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 14 lists the 15 most popular bilateral migration routes in Africa. Given the strong regionalisation in patterns of African migration, many of these are intra-regional routes. As of 2020, Burkina Faso–Côte D’Ivoire was the most

popular route, used by 1.4 million migrants. Several of the top routes feature migration from South Sudan – which we earlier identified as the leading source of Africa-destined migrants – to neighbouring countries.

**Figure 14: Top 15 Bilateral Migration Routes in Africa (2020)**



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

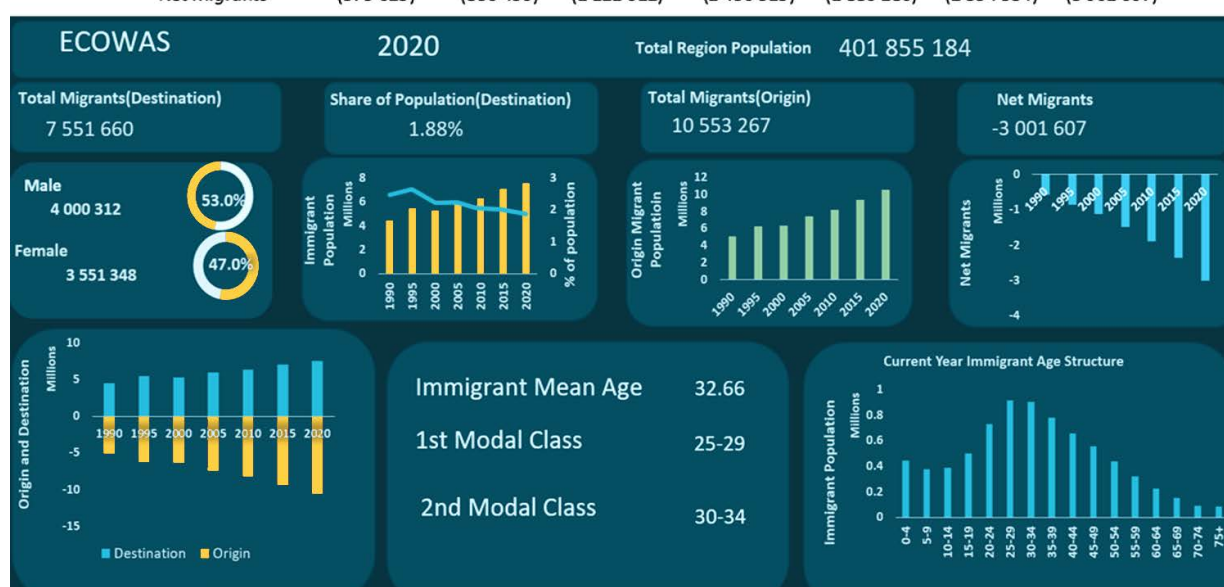
# PART 3:

## REGIONAL VIEW WITH COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

### 3.1 ECOWAS Region

Figure 15: Visualisation of Key ECOWAS Statistics and Trends

ECOWAS	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	180 528 368	205 685 571	234 742 566	267 889 318	307 035 227	351 711 775	401 855 184	123%
Migrants_Destination	4 470 560	5 433 478	5 261 023	5 956 885	6 321 389	7 066 761	7 551 660	69%
Migrants_Origin	5 050 185	6 289 934	6 382 635	7 447 800	8 207 569	9 421 695	10 553 267	109%
Immigrants as % of Population	2.48%	2.64%	2.24%	2.22%	2.06%	2.01%	1.88%	
Net Migrants	(579 625)	(856 456)	(1 121 612)	(1 490 915)	(1 886 180)	(2 354 934)	(3 001 607)	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Although the residual region “Rest of Africa” is larger, ECOWAS is the most populous REC in Africa, with a population of over 400 million people. Between 1990 and 2020, its population increased by 123% from 180.5 million to 401.9 million people, outpacing the continent’s average

population growth of 113%. Over the same period, ECOWAS’s stocks of immigrants and emigrants rose by 69% and 109% respectively – also faster than average for an African region. Migrant density, however, declined steadily from a high of 2.5% in 1990 to a low of 1.9% in 2020.

In 2020, the mean age of ECOWAS immigrants was 32.7 years, higher than the mean of 25.7 years in 1990. Generally, as shown in Figure 15, the age distribution of ECOWAS immigrants is skewed to the right. Between 1990 and 2000, the modal age class for ECOWAS migrants was 25–29 years, except in 2000, when the 20–24 age class – until then the second-most populous group – dominated. From 2005 onwards, 30–34 year olds were the second-most populous age class. The sex composition of the migrant stock

has been unchanged over time at close to parity; in 2020, male migrants were slightly more numerous than female migrants, accounting for 53% of the region’s total migrant stock.

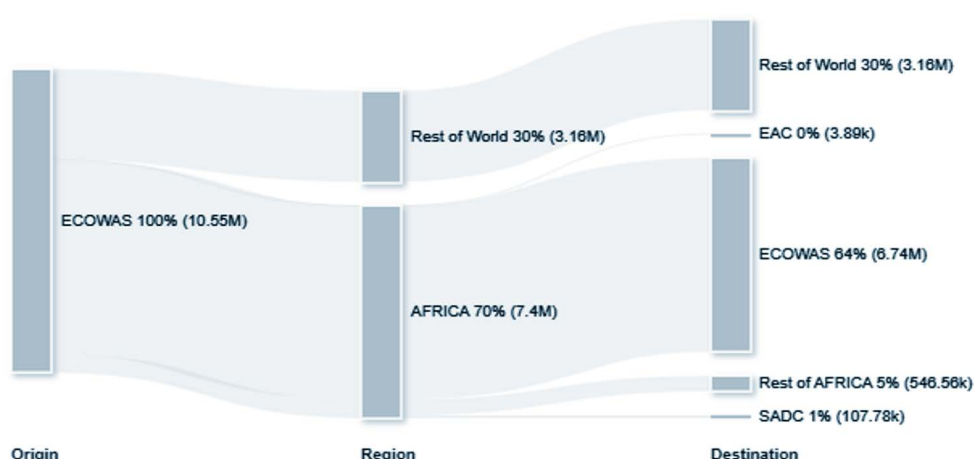
There are more emigrants from the region than there are immigrants to the region. This has been the case since 1990, and the surplus of emigrants has grown steadily over that time. In 2020, there were 10.6 million emigrants from ECOWAS and 7.6 million immigrants resident in ECOWAS.

### 3.1.1 Origin Analysis

In 2020, the global stock of migrants included 10.6 million emigrants from ECOWAS, most of whom resided in other African countries:

as shown in Figure 16, 70% of ECOWAS emigrants had their destination in Africa, and only 30% were extra-continental migrants.

Figure 16: Migration from ECOWAS



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

ECOWAS-to-ECOWAS migration is the most popular regional migration route on the continent and accounts for 91% of Africa-bound migration from ECOWAS. It is therefore no surprise that ECOWAS countries are

the top country destinations for ECOWAS emigrants. Côte d'Ivoire is the single most popular destination country for ECOWAS emigrants, followed by Nigeria. Figure 17 summarises our ECOWAS origin analysis.

Figure 17: ECOWAS as an Origin



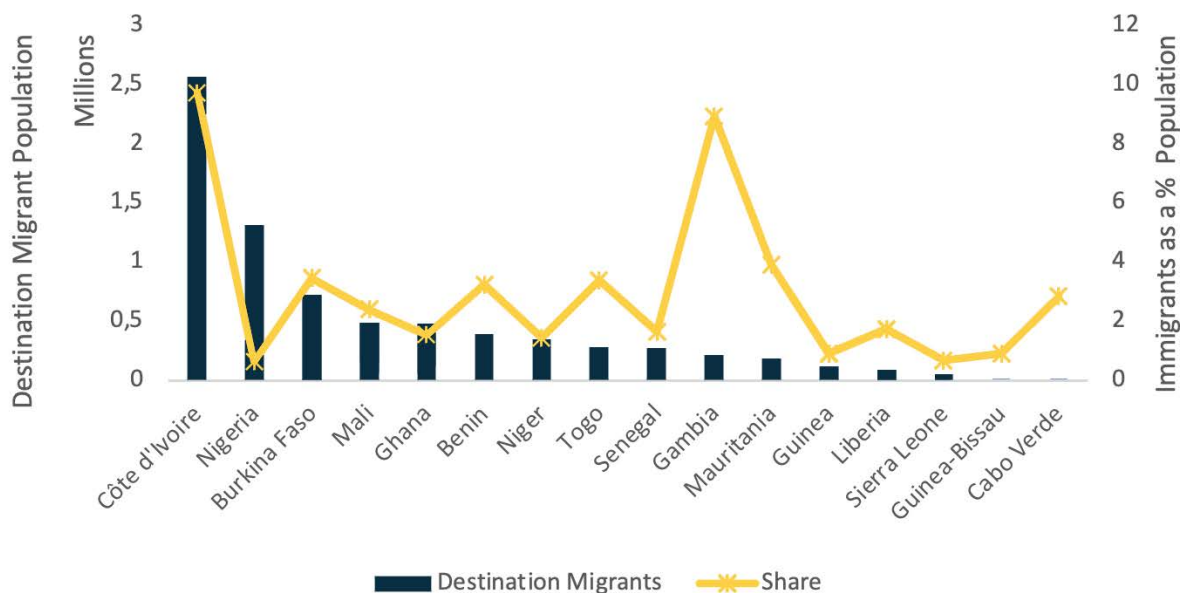
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.1.2 Destination Analysis

Within ECOWAS, Côte d'Ivoire is the leading destination for migrants, followed by Nigeria. However, although Côte d'Ivoire has high migrant

density, Nigeria's migrant density is the lowest of all ECOWAS countries. Among ECOWAS destinations, Cabo Verde accommodates the fewest immigrants.

**Figure 18: Stocks and Shares of Immigrants by ECOWAS Destination (2020)**

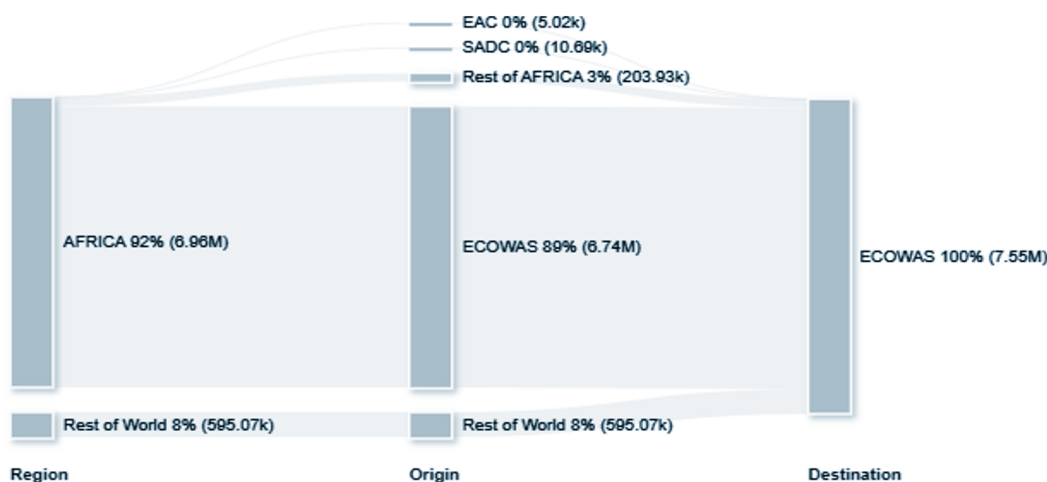


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

As Figure 19 shows, in 2020, ECOWAS countries accommodated a total of 7.5 million immigrants.

Only 8% of them originated outside Africa.

**Figure 19: Migration to ECOWAS**

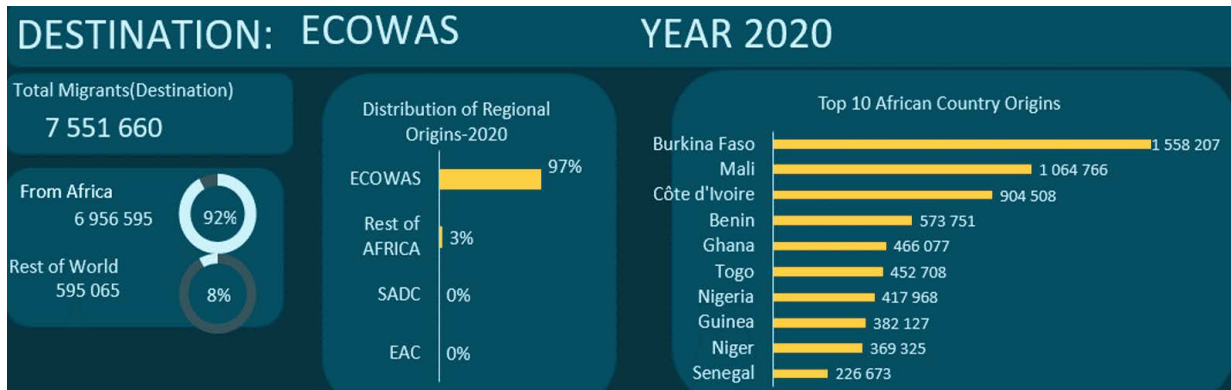


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

After ECOWAS itself, the "Rest of Africa" is the second-most popular regional source of immigrants to ECOWAS. EAC sends the fewest

migrants to the region. The main sending country to ECOWAS is Burkina Faso, closely followed by Mali, as shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: ECOWAS as a Destination

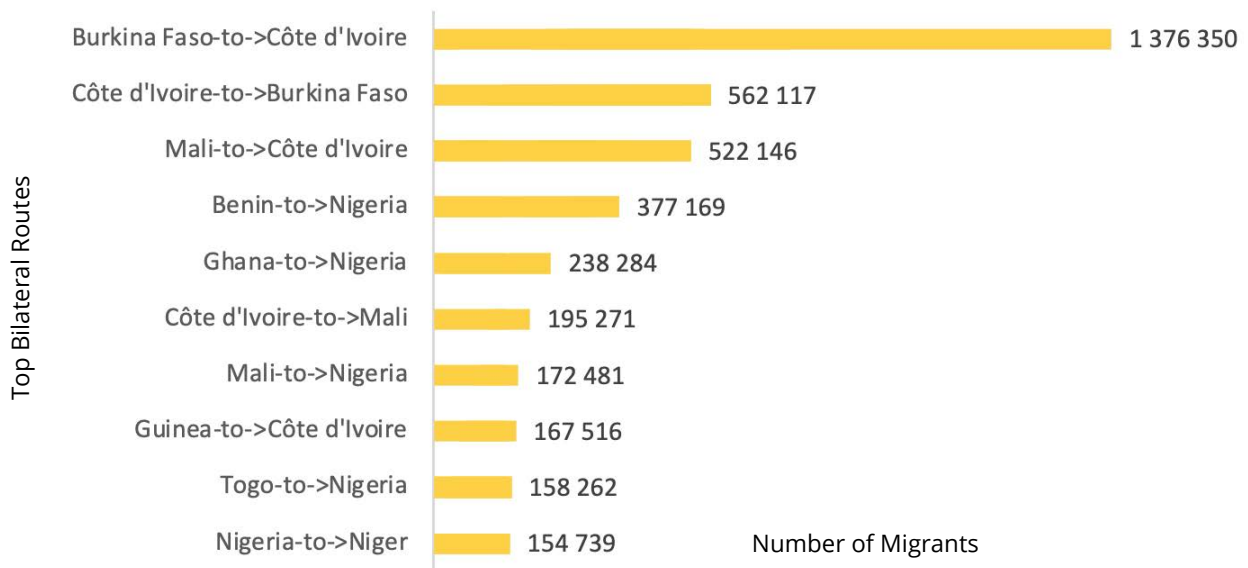


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Within ECOWAS, as in Africa as a whole, there are salient migratory routes that give the region its distinctive migration patterns. Burkina Faso-

Côte D'Ivoire is the most popular migration route in this region, as shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Main Migration Routes in ECOWAS (2020)



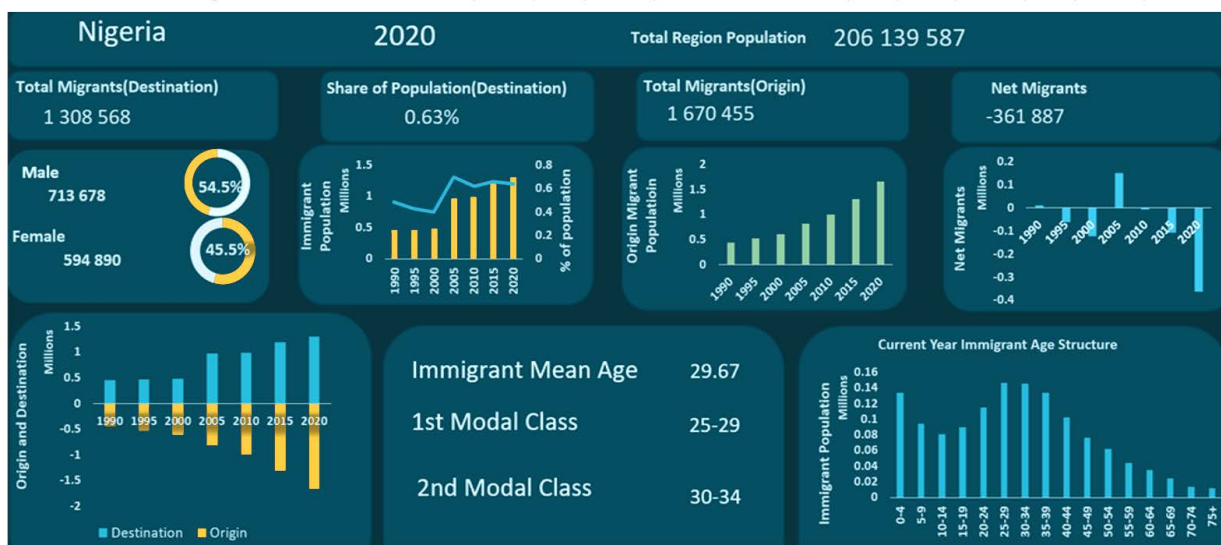
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020



### 3.2 Country Case Study: Nigeria

Figure 22: Visualisation of Key Nigeria Statistics and Trends

Nigeria	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	95 212 454	107 948 339	122 283 853	138 865 014	158 503 203	181 137 454	206 139 587	117%
Migrants_Destination	456 621	462 999	487 882	969 714	990 494	1 199 115	1 308 568	187%
Migrants_Origin	446 753	524 535	610 130	817 392	996 914	1 306 526	1 670 455	274%
Immigrants as % of Population	0.48%	0.43%	0.40%	0.70%	0.62%	0.66%	0.63%	
Net Migrants	9 868	(61 536)	(122 248)	152 322	(6 420)	(107 411)	(361 887)	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, but its migrant population is comparatively miniscule. The immigrant stock increased by 187% between 1990 and 2020, while the number of emigrants rose by 274% over

the same period. Unlike in other ECOWAS countries, immigration outpaced population growth, so migrant density rose marginally between 1990 and 2020. Nevertheless, migrant density remained low at 0.63% in 2020.

As shown in Figure 22, the age distribution of Nigeria’s immigrants is right-skewed: most are young, and the modal age groups are 25–29 years and 30–34 years. However, their average age has increased sharply from 20 years in 1990 to 29.67 years in 2020. Nigeria has always had more male migrants than female migrants, and males accounted for 55% of migrants in 2020.

Consistent with the regional trend, the country is an area of negative net migration. Emigrants have outnumbered immigrants since 1990, except during an immigration spike in 2005. However, as shown in Figure 22, the surplus of emigrants is not large, and net migration has hovered close to zero.

### 3.2.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, Nigeria had 1.7 million emigrants, more than half of whom had emigrated beyond the continent – only 42% emigrated to other African countries. Of those Nigerian emigrants who remained in Africa, 60% migrated to other ECOWAS

countries and 33% migrated to the “Rest of Africa”. Cameroon – which is not an ECOWAS member – is a major destination for Nigerian migrants, as are South Africa, Sudan, and Chad. Figure 23 summarises our origin analysis for Nigerian emigrants.

Figure 23: Nigeria as an Origin



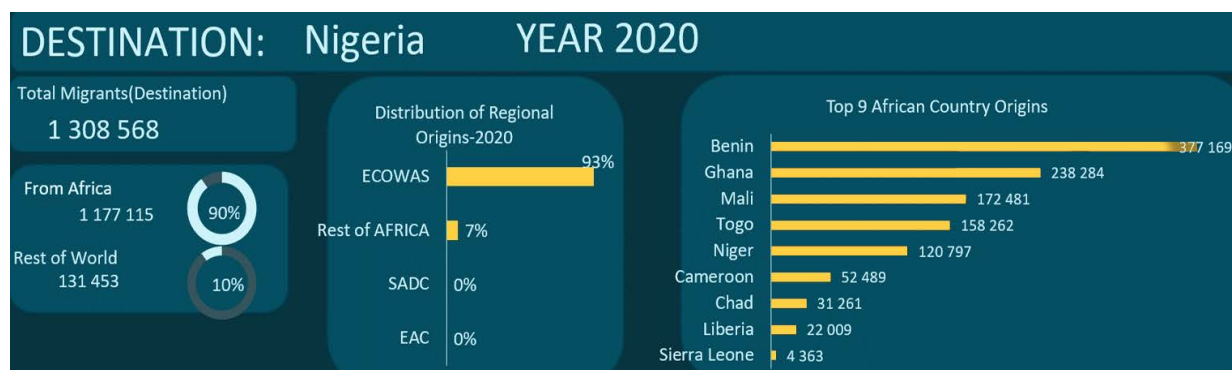
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.2.2 Destination Analysis

Nigeria accommodated 1.3 million immigrants in 2020, 90% of whom originated in other African countries and 10% of whom originated outside the continent. 93% of immigrants to Nigeria came from other ECOWAS countries. The “Rest of Africa” is also a significant source of Nigerian

immigrants, but migration from SADC and EAC to Nigeria appears to be negligible. Benin is the main sending country to Nigeria, together with other ECOWAS countries; Cameroon and Chad are the top sending countries outside of ECOWAS. Figure 24 summarises our destination analysis for Nigeria.

Figure 24: Nigeria as a Destination

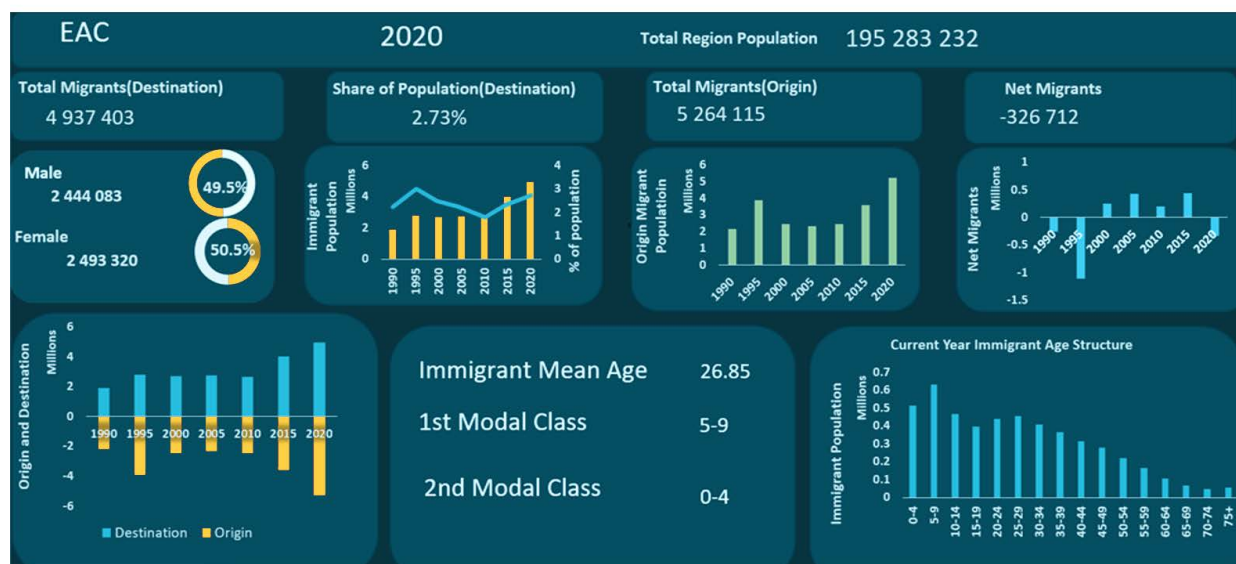


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.3 EAC Region

Figure 25: Visualisation of Key EAC Statistics and Trends

EAC	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	84 503 279	94 772 200	109 625 848	126 500 818	147 028 696	169 831 181	195 283 232	131%
Migrants_Destination	1 909 521	2 802 363	2 714 436	2 753 776	2 662 656	4 019 686	4 937 403	159%
Migrants_Origin	2 164 726	3 907 732	2 470 169	2 321 104	2 457 510	3 585 302	5 264 115	143%
Immigrants as % of Population	2.26%	2.96%	2.48%	2.18%	1.81%	2.37%	2.73%	
Net Migrants	(255 205)	(1 105 369)	244 267	432 672	205 146	434 384	(326 712)	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Of the four regions considered in this study, EAC is the smallest by population. (Note that the Democratic Republic of the Congo joined the EAC after 2020 and therefore is not included in this analysis.) Between 1990 and 2020, the region's population increased by 131% from 84 million to 195 million people. The stocks of immigrants and emigrants rose by 159% and 143% respectively over the same period. As in Nigeria, immigration

outpaced population growth, resulting in a rise in migrant density. Indeed, EAC has the highest migrant density of any of the four African regions. Interestingly, migrant density was declining until 2010; since then, it has risen steadily, reaching 2.73% in 2020. The recent growth in immigration could be related to the EAC Common Market Protocol, which came into force in 2010 after ratification by all EAC members (EAC, n.d).

The age distribution of EAC immigrants is skewed to the right, denoting a relatively youthful population, and the modal age classes are 5–9 years and 0–4 years. The bulge around the 5–9 years group suggests that there was an influx of young families, perhaps as the result of a refugee crisis or refugee crises. The share of the elderly in the migrant stock also appears to be dwindling faster than the continental average. In 2020, the mean immigrant age was 26.8 years, which is lower than the continental average of 31 years. 50.5% of EAC migrants were female, so sex composition was close to exact parity.

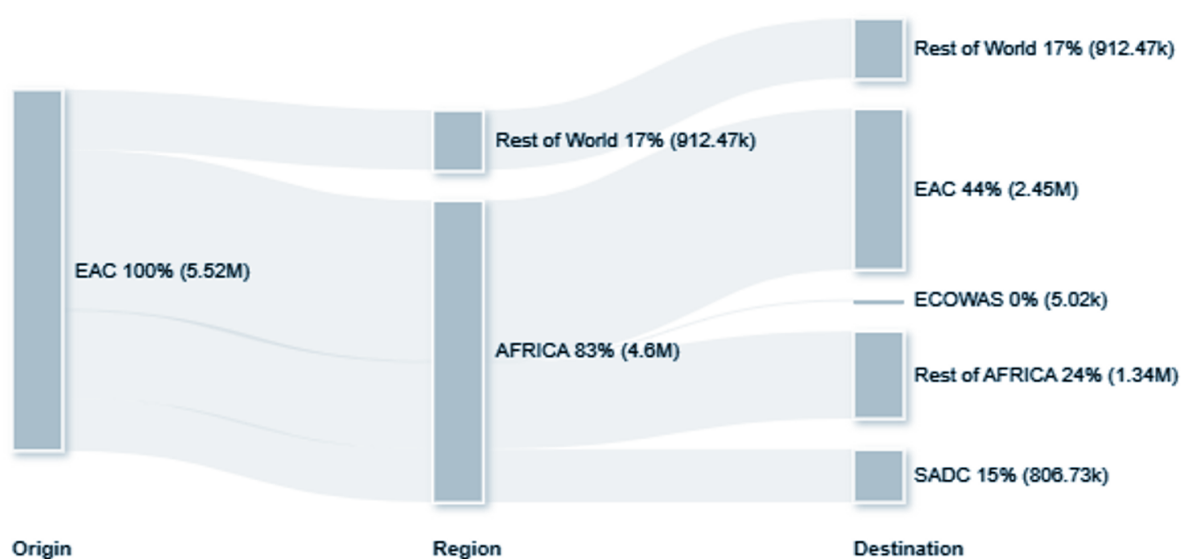
Net migration to EAC is negative but negligible, because the number of immigrants is almost equal to number of emigrants. As of 2020, there were 4.9 million immigrants to EAC and 5.3 million emigrants from EAC, resulting in a surplus of 326 712 emigrants. As the net migrants graph in Figure 25 shows, EAC has generally been an area of positive net migration since 2000. The upset that occurred in 2020 may be attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, which disrupted migration trends in most places.

### 3.3.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, EAC was the source of 5.3 million emigrants, 83% of whom had emigrated to other African countries and only 17% of whom had become extra-continental migrants. Figure 26 illustrates their regional destinations. As in ECOWAS, intra-regional migration is significant in EAC – a plurality

of emigrants from EAC have destinations elsewhere in the region. However, unlike ECOWAS, EAC also has a fair amount of inter-regional migration, with nearly half of its Africa-bound emigrants leaving EAC for SADC or the “Rest of Africa”. ECOWAS is the least popular regional destination for these emigrants.

Figure 26: EAC as an Origin



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Note: The total stock of EAC emigrants was 5.26 million. The figure of 5.52 million is obtained by double-counting Tanzania as a dual member of EAC and SADC.

The heterogeneity of EAC emigrants is reflected in their favoured destination countries, as listed in Figure 27. The most popular destination country, Uganda, is a member of the REC. However, the second-

most popular destination country, Sudan, is not a member of EAC, nor are Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Africa, all of which are among the top ten country destinations for EAC emigrants.

Figure 27: EAC Origin and Main Destinations



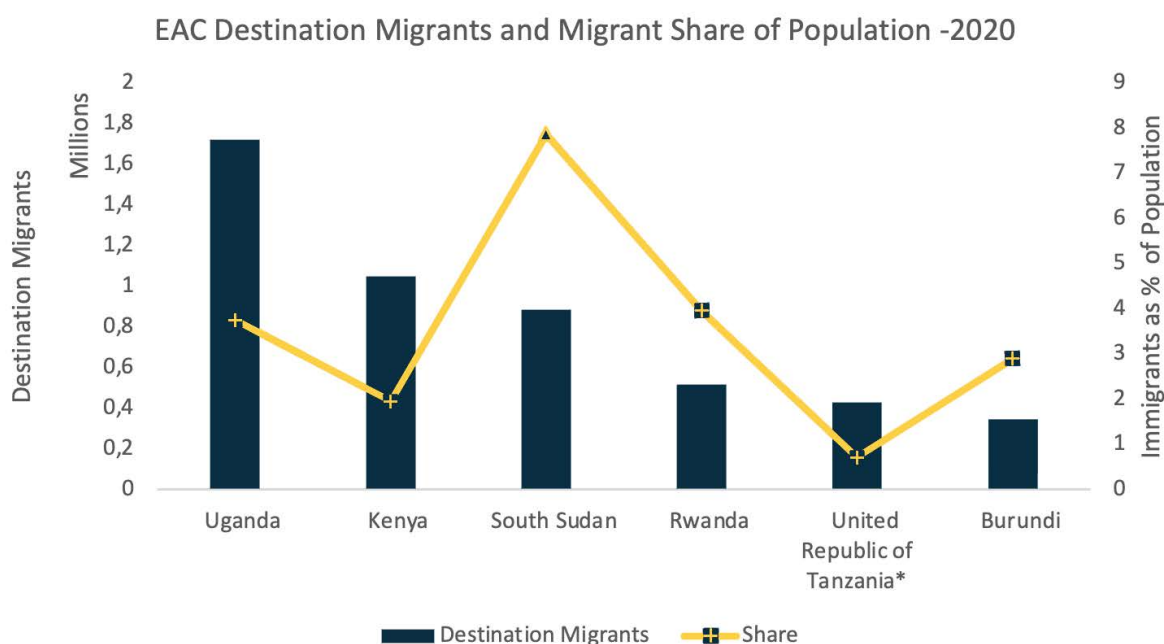
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.3.2 Destination Analysis

Within EAC, Uganda hosts the most immigrants, followed by Kenya and South Sudan. Burundi hosts the fewest immigrants. South Sudan has the highest migrant density, followed by Uganda. Tanzania has a small immigrant

population and the lowest migrant density in the region. Figure 28 shows the size of the immigrant population in each EAC destination and the share of immigrants in that country's total population.

Figure 28: Stocks and Shares of Immigrants by EAC Destination (2020)

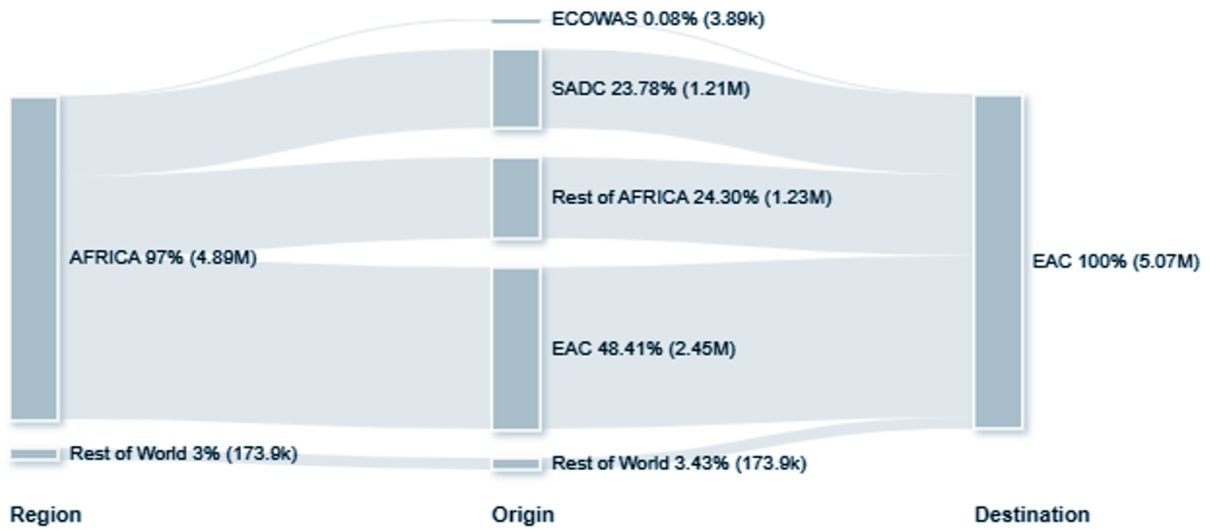


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

In 2020, there were 4.9 million immigrants resident in EAC. 96% originated in Africa and only 4% originated outside the continent. About half of EAC'S immigrants came

from within the region, and the other half came predominantly from SADC and the "Rest of Africa". Figure 29 illustrates the pattern of immigration to EAC.

Figure 29: Migration to EAC



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Note: The total stock of EAC in-migrants was 4.9 million. The figure of 5.07 million is obtained by double-counting Tanzania as a dual member of EAC and SADC.

The top countries of origin for immigrants to EAC include both EAC and non-EAC countries. As of 2020, the top three sending countries were South Sudan and two countries – the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan –

that were not EAC members at the time. There do not seem to be any prohibitive obstacles to inter-regional migration between EAC countries and countries outside the REC. Figure 30 summarises our destination analysis for EAC.

Figure 30: EAC as a Destination

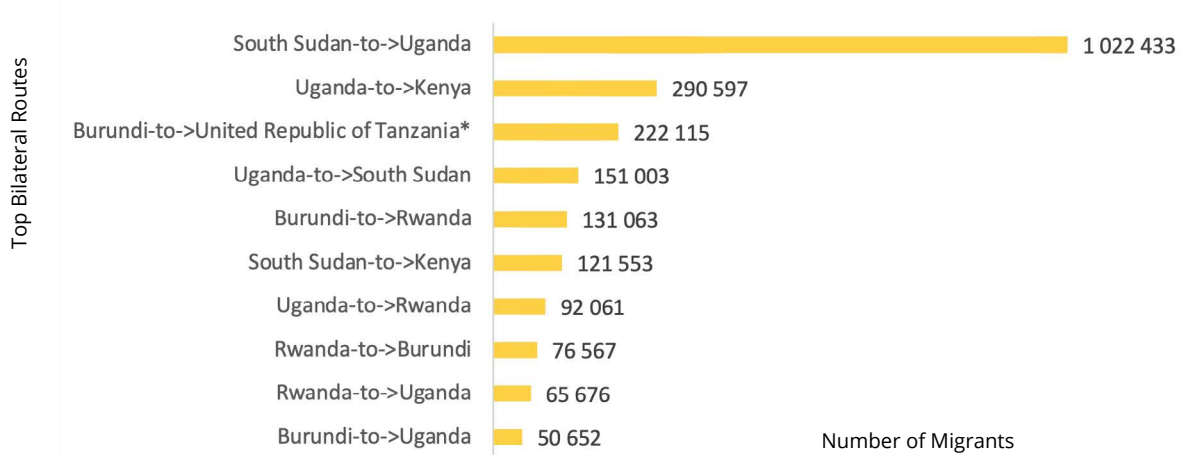


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 31 shows the main migration routes in EAC as of 2020. As in ECOWAS, there is one major route and several smaller ones. In this case, South

Sudan–Uganda is the most popular route, but, unlike ECOWAS’s top route, it is only modestly bidirectional, because the reciprocal leg is significantly less popular.

Figure 31: Main Migration Routes in EAC (2020)

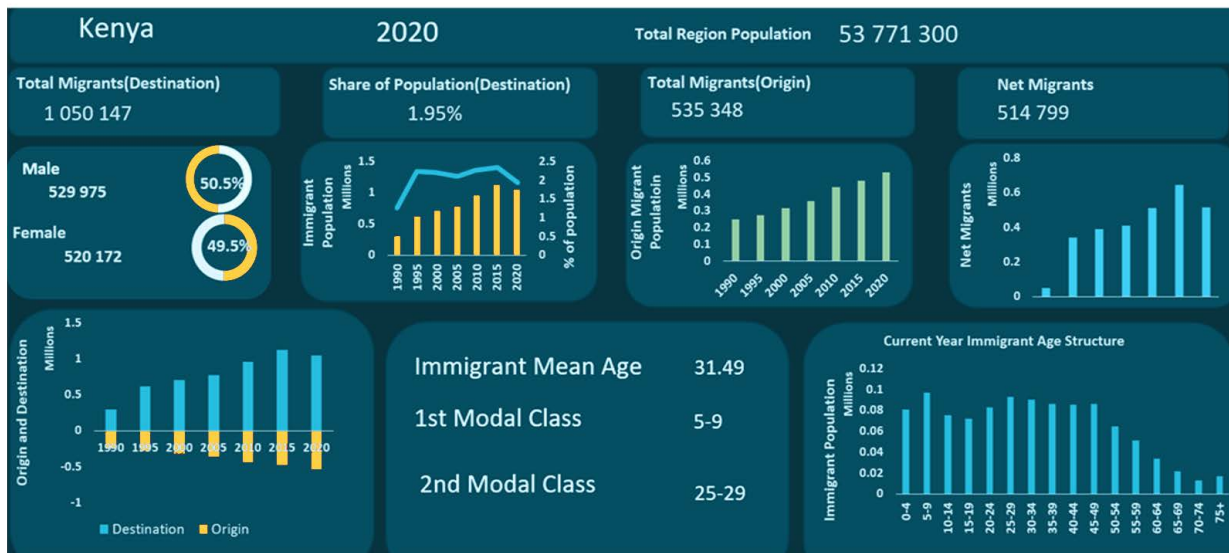


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.4 Country Case Study: Kenya

Figure 32: Visualisation of Key Kenya Statistics and Trends

Kenya	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	23 724 574	27 768 297	31 964 557	36 624 897	42 030 684	47 878 339	53 771 300	127%
Migrants_Destination	298 089	618 745	707 852	773 354	954 925	1 126 886	1 050 147	252%
Migrants_Origin	250 332	277 647	317 434	362 031	442 632	480 647	535 348	114%
Immigrants as % of Population	1.26%	2.23%	2.21%	2.11%	2.27%	2.35%	1.95%	
Net Migrants	47 757	341 098	390 418	411 323	512 293	646 239	514 799	



The population of Kenya increased by 127% between 1990 and 2020. Over the same period, the size of the immigrant population surged from a low of 298 089 immigrants to a high of just over one million. Growth in Kenya's immigrant stock, at 252%, therefore considerably outpaced the continental average of 62%. In fact, the stock of immigrants might have been larger had the pattern of year-on-year gains not been interrupted in 2020, presumably as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The stock of Kenyan emigrants also grew tremendously, increasing by 114% over the 30-year period. As a result of the explosion in immigration, Kenya's migrant density increased from 1.26% in 1990 to 1.95% in 2020. However, migrant density peaked in 2015 at 2.4%, which might better reflect the state of migration in the country before the global migration hiatus of 2020.

The age distribution of Kenya's immigrant population is skewed to the right; most migrants are between 0 and 49 years old. More precisely, the most populous age groups are 5–9 years and 25–29 years, with

a mean age of 31.5 years. Kenya is located in the Horn of Africa, a region that is marred by conflict; its unstable neighbours include Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. As the largest economy in the region, and having maintained relative stability, Kenya has evolved to become an important anchor state through which agents, foreign governments, and multinational agencies implement their interventions in neighbouring countries. Kenya runs several refugee camps, key among them the Kakuma and Dadaab camps in the north of the country. This is reflected in the age structure of Kenya's migrants, who include many children. Because Kenya is an economic hub, it also attracts migrants of prime working age, between 20 and 50 years old. No sex disparities are evident – in 2020, 50.5% of migrants were male.

The net migration graph in Figure 32 shows that Kenya recorded persistent positive net migration throughout the 30-year period. In 2020, there were 1 050 147 immigrants and 535 348 emigrants, resulting in a net positive position of 514 799 immigrants.

### 3.4.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, Kenya was the source of 535 348 emigrants. As shown in Figure 33, 24% of Kenyan emigrants remained in Africa, while 76% were extra-continental migrants. The top regional

destinations for Kenyan emigrants were SADC and EAC, and the top country destinations were a mix of countries in those regions.

Figure 33: Kenya as an Origin



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.4.2 Destination Analysis

One million immigrants were resident in Kenya in 2020. 93% originated in other African countries and 7% originated outside the continent. As shown in Figure 34, the "Rest of Africa" region

is the main sending region, followed by EAC. SADC is the origin of only about 8% of African immigrants to Kenya. Somalia is the main origin country for Kenyan immigrants.



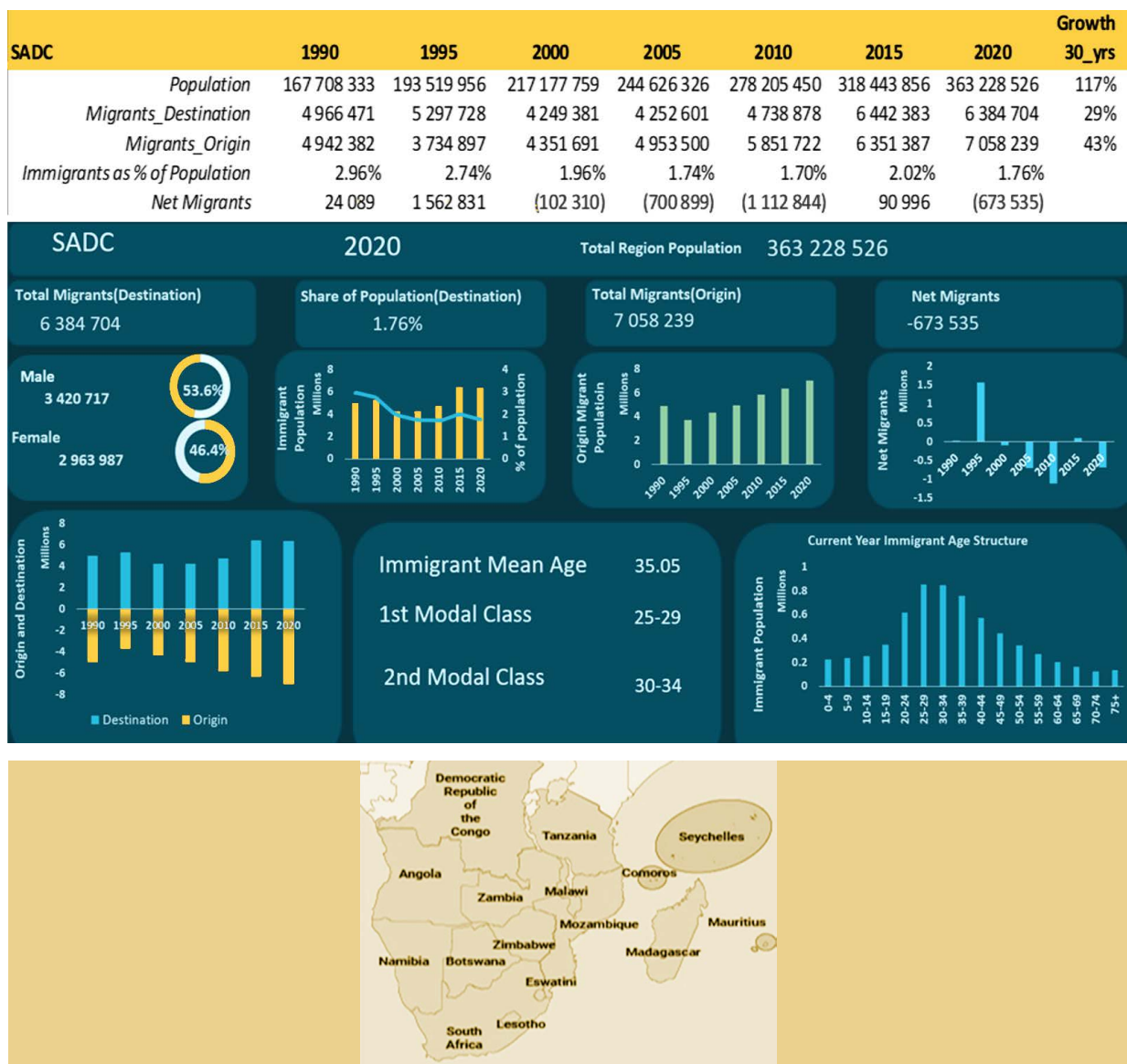
Figure 34: Kenya as a Destination



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.5 SADC Region

Figure 35: Visualisation of Key SADC Statistics and Trends



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Between 1990 and 2020, the population of SADC grew by 117%, slightly faster than the continental average of 113%. However, the region's immigrant stock grew by only 29% over the same 30-year period. This is the lowest rate of increase experienced by any of the four African regions. Growth in the emigrant stock has also been slow, with the stock of SADC emigrants increasing by 43% since 1990. Unsurprisingly, migrant density has decreased over time to 1.76% in 2020.

The age structure of the migrant population is unique insofar as the age distribution is leptokurtic, displaying greater kurtosis – that is, a higher peak – than the normal distribution. At 35 years, the mean age of SADC migrants is higher than that in other regions, but the modal age classes – 25–29 years and 30–34 years – are consistent with those in other regions. SADC arguably

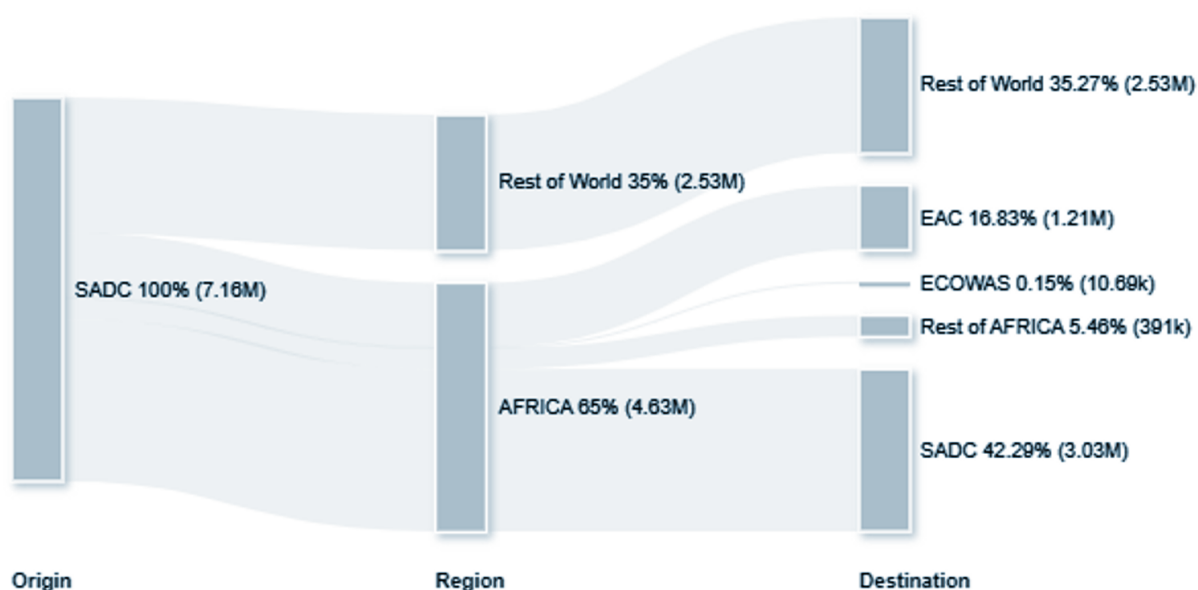
hosts many economic migrants. This might explain why SADC's migrant population includes relatively few minors. In 2020, 53.6% of SADC migrants were male and 46.4% were female.

Since 2000, SADC has typically been an area of negative net migration, with more emigrants than immigrants. This trend was reversed briefly with a small surplus of immigrants in 2015, but net migration was again negative by 2020.

### 3.5.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, SADC was the source of 7 million emigrants, 64% of whom resided in other African countries and 36% of whom had left the continent. For Africa-bound migrants from the region, SADC is the most popular regional destination, followed by EAC. Figure 36 shows the pattern of emigration from SADC.

Figure 36: Migration from SADC



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Africa-bound emigrants from the region are destined both for countries outside the REC – often for Uganda, Rwanda, or Burundi – and for other SADC countries. South Africa is by far the most

popular destination for SADC emigrants, and its attractiveness for intra-regional migrants confirms its status as an important anchor state in the region. Figure 37 summarises our origin analysis for SADC.

Figure 37: SADC as an Origin



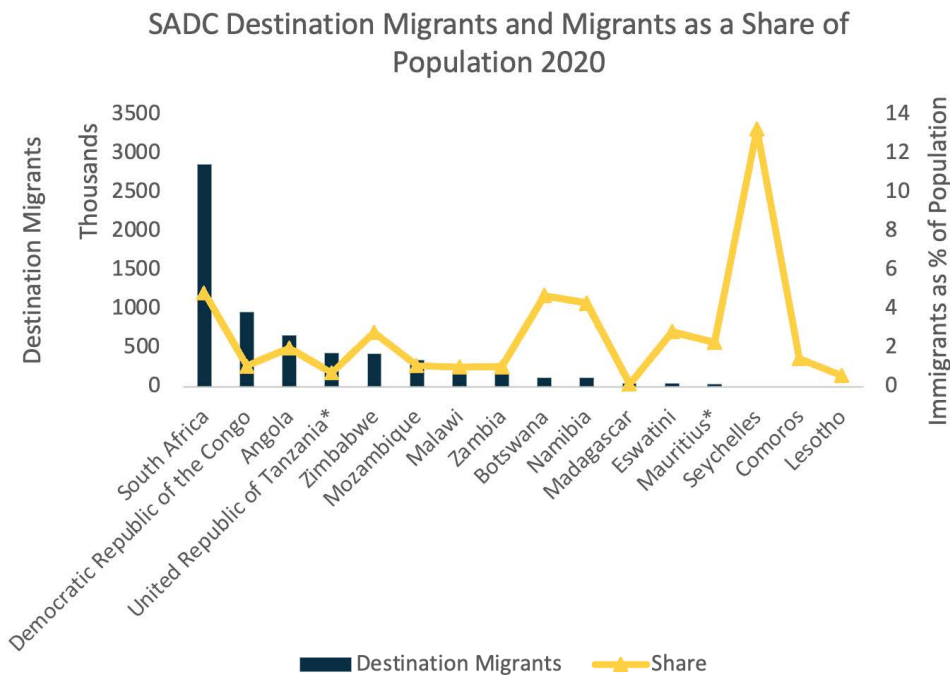
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.5.2 Destination Analysis

Of the SADC countries, South Africa hosted the highest number of immigrants in 2020 (2.9 million), followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. Lesotho's immigrant population, numbering only 12 060 people, was the smallest

in the region. Seychelles has the highest migrant density, with immigrants accounting for 13% of its total population. Madagascar and Lesotho have the lowest and second-lowest migrant density respectively. Tanzania, though it is the fourth-most popular migrant destination in SADC, also has one of the lowest migrant densities at 0.7%.

Figure 38: Stocks and Shares of Immigrants by SADC Destination (2020)

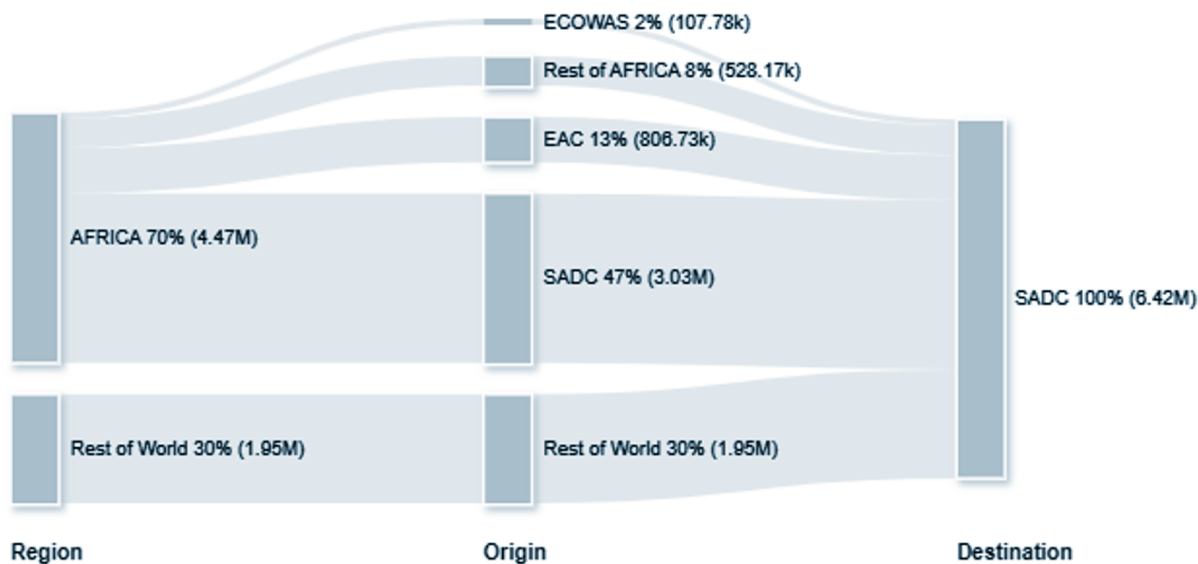


Source: Author calculations from 2020

As a migration destination, SADC accommodated 6.38 million immigrants in 2020. 70% of those immigrants originated in Africa, and the other 30% originated outside the continent. Most intra-African immigrants to SADC originated in other

SADC countries. EAC is the second-most common regional source, followed by the "Rest of Africa" region; ECOWAS sends the fewest immigrants to SADC. As of 2020, Zimbabwe was the top sending country, followed by Mozambique.

**Figure 39: Migration to SADC**



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

**Figure 40: SADC as a Destination**

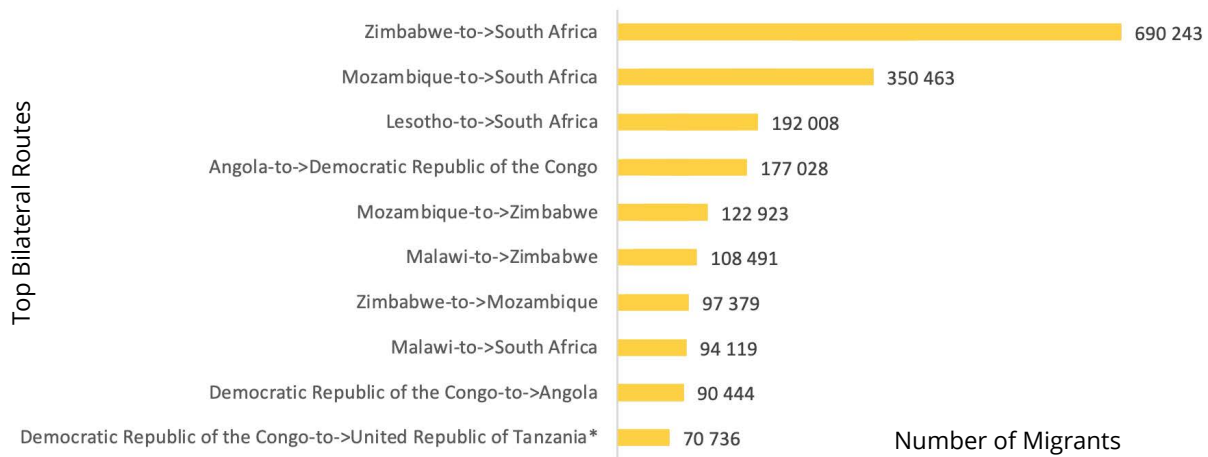


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 41 lists the most popular migration routes in SADC. Since South Africa is the most popular

destination for SADC migrants, it is the terminal point of several important migration routes in the REC.

Figure 41: Main Migration Routes in SADC (2020)

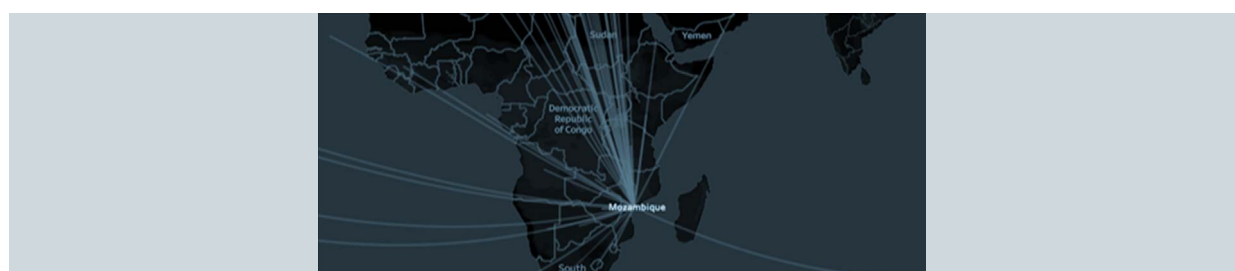
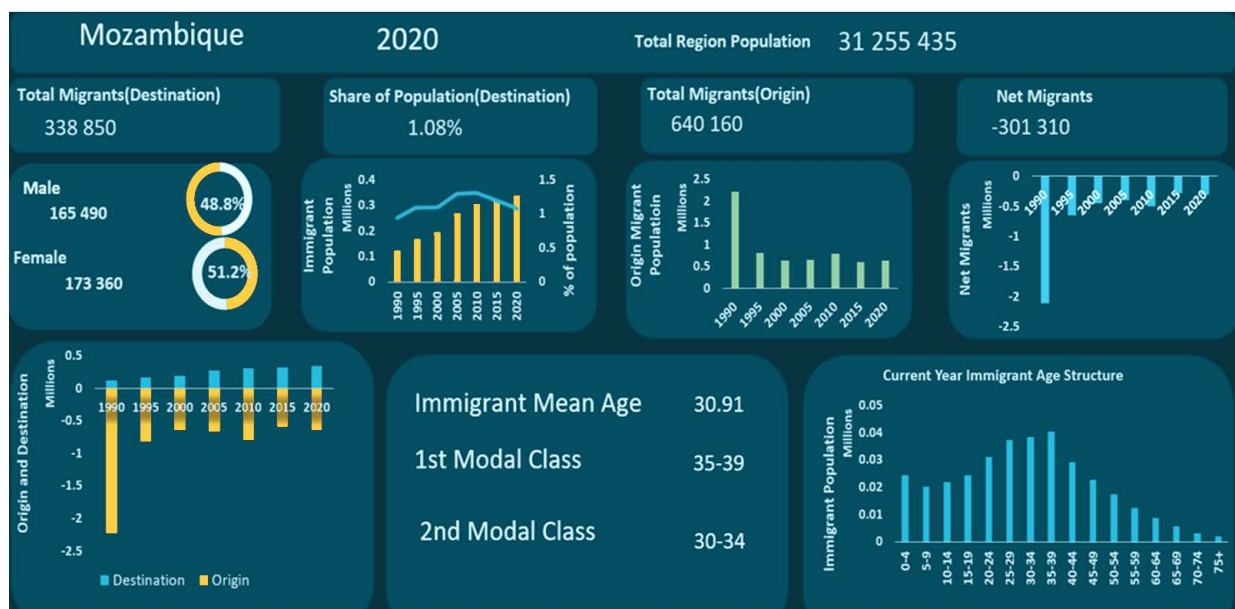


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.6 Country Case Study: Mozambique

Figure 42: Visualisation of Key Mozambique Statistics and Trends

Mozambique	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	12 987 292	15 483 277	17 711 925	20 493 927	23 531 567	27 042 001	31 255 435	141%
Migrants_Destination	122 332	168 256	195 702	268 694	306 471	321 794	338 850	177%
Migrants_Origin	2 222 354	812 685	644 421	662 951	797 808	596 949	640 160	-71%
Immigrants as % of Population	0.94%	1.09%	1.10%	1.31%	1.30%	1.19%	1.08%	
Net Migrants	(2 100 022)	(644 429)	(448 719)	(394 257)	(491 337)	(275 155)	(301 310)	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Mozambique's population increased by 141% between 1990 and 2020, and its stock of immigrants, though it remains small in absolute terms, grew by 177% over the same period. The stock of emigrants from Mozambique shrank substantially, falling 71% from 2.2 million emigrants in 1990 to 640 000 in 2020. This sharp decrease may be due in part to changing employment policies in South Africa, which increasingly favour natives, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic. Mozambique's migrant density, at 1%, has remained fairly constant over time.

The age structure of Mozambique's immigrant population resembles that of the continent's wider migrant population. The age distribution is skewed to the right, and the most populous age classes are 35–39 years and 30–34 years. The mean age is 30.9 years. In 2020, 49% of Mozambique's

migrants were male, and 51% were female. Thus, though the sex composition approaches parity, it reverses the regional and continental norm insofar as female migrants outnumber male migrants. Net migration to Mozambique has been negative since 1990 and was probably negative for many years before then. The size of the country's emigrant population peaked in 1990, in part because of the country's civil war.

### 3.6.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, there were 640 160 international migrants who originated in Mozambique. 84% of those lived in other African countries, while the other 16% were extra-continental migrants. As Figure 43 shows, most Mozambican emigrants are destined for other SADC countries; indeed, more than half are destined for South Africa.

Figure 43: Mozambique as an Origin



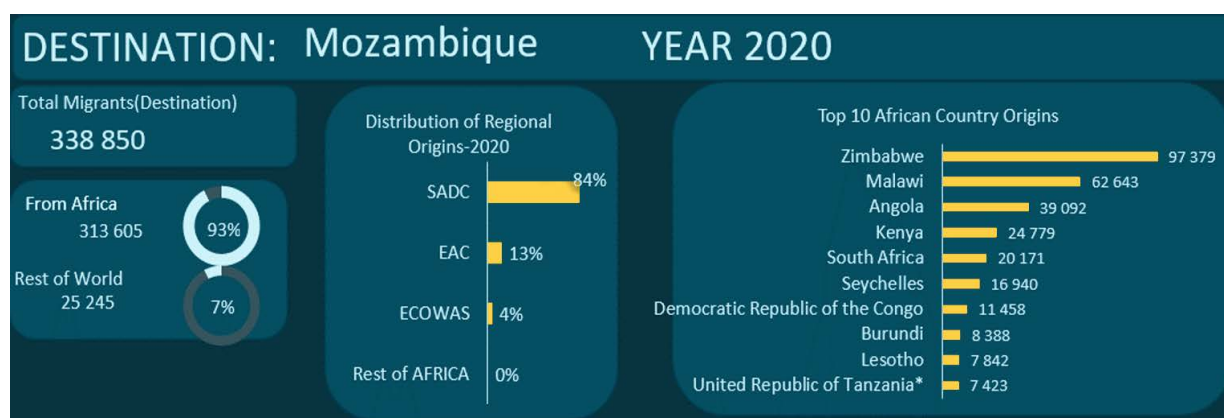
Source: Author calculations from 2020

### 3.6.2 Destination Analysis

As a destination, Mozambique was host to 338 850 immigrants in 2020. 93% of those immigrants originated in other African

countries, while 7% originated outside the continent. Of those who were intra-African migrants, 84% originated in SADC and 13% originated in EAC. Zimbabwe is the main sending country, as shown in Figure 44.

Figure 44: Mozambique as a Destination

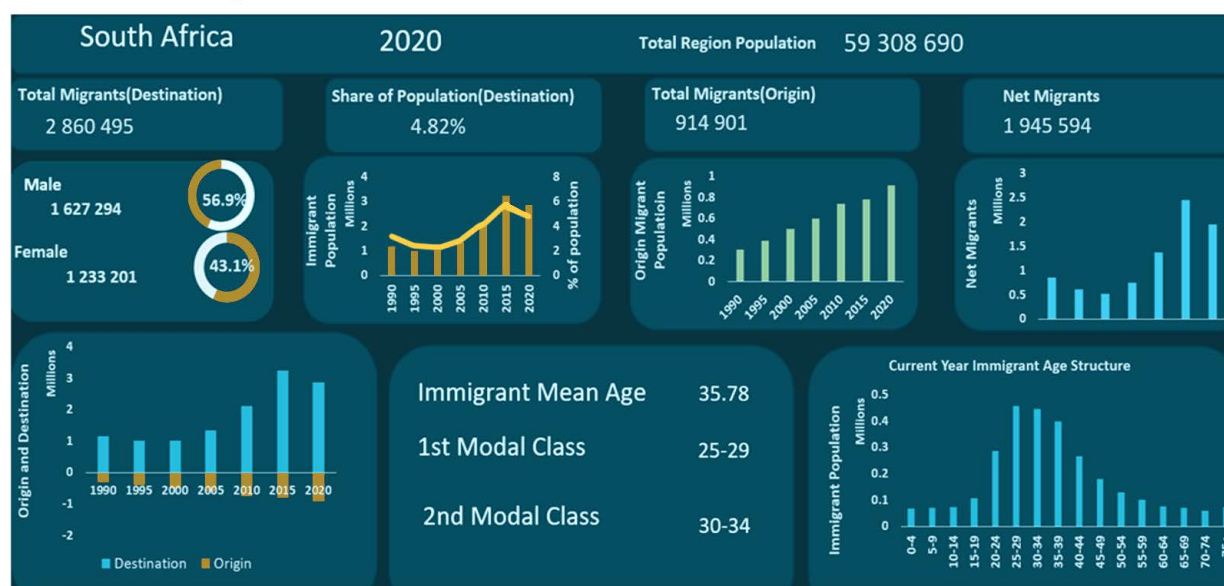


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.7 Country Case Study: South Africa

Figure 45: Visualisation of Key South African Statistics and Trends

South Africa	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	36 800 507	41 435 761	44 967 713	47 880 595	51 216 967	55 386 369	59 308 690	61%
Migrants_Destination	1 163 883	1 003 807	1 016 963	1 351 031	2 114 801	3 231 728	2 860 495	146%
Migrants_Origin	308 120	385 988	501 600	601 803	743 807	786 554	914 901	197%
Immigrants as % of Population	3.16%	2.42%	2.26%	2.82%	4.13%	5.83%	4.82%	
Net Migrants	855 763	617 819	515 363	749 228	1 370 994	2 445 174	1 945 594	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

By population, South Africa is the largest country in SADC. However, between 1990 and 2020, its population increased by only 61%, which is slower than average for the continent and region. Over the same period, the stock of immigrants increased by 146% and the stock of emigrants increased by 197%, in both cases far outpacing the SADC average (29% and 43% respectively). It is notable, however, that the immigrant stock slumped in 2020, interrupting a general upward trend; as in the case of Kenya, this slump might be the result of the Covid-19 pandemic. At its peak in 2015, South Africa's immigrant population numbered 3.2 million people, an increase of 178% since 1990. Similarly, migrant

density rose from 3.2% in 1990 to a peak of 5.83% in 2015 before falling to 4.82% in 2020.

The age structure of South Africa's immigrant population resembles that of SADC migrants more broadly: the distribution has a high peak and lacks the marked right skew that is characteristic of migrant populations in other African regions. Immigrant mean age is 35.8 years, and the most populous age classes are 25–29 years and 30–34 years. South Africa also has the sharpest sex disparity of all the countries considered: in 2020, 57% of migrants were male and 43% were female. Net migration to South Africa is positive and increasing: immigration is outpacing emigration year-on-year.

### 3.7.1 Origin Analysis

As of 2020, South Africa was the source of 914 901 emigrants, 90% of whom had left the continent and 10% of whom remained in Africa. Of the small group of intra-African

migrants, almost all had their destinations in other SADC countries. In fact, only one non-SADC country – Guinea – featured in the top ten country destinations chosen by Africa-bound SADC emigrants. Figure 46 shows the destinations of SADC emigrants.

Figure 46: South Africa as an Origin



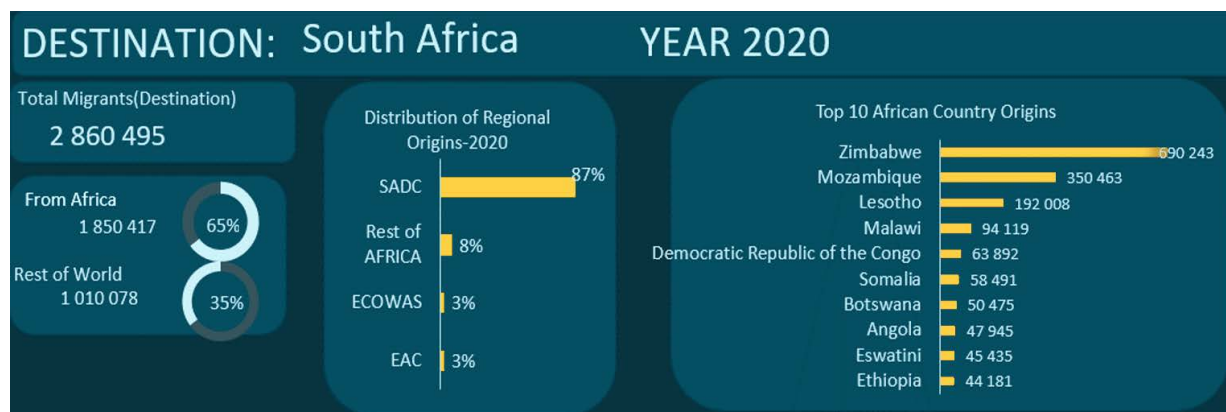
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.7.2 Destination Analysis

As of 2020, South Africa accommodated 2.9 million migrants, 65% of whom originated in Africa and 35% of whom originated outside the

continent. 87% of the intra-African migrants in South Africa were also intra-regional migrants who originated in SADC, and Zimbabwe was the top sending country. Figure 47 summarises our destination analysis for South Africa.

Figure 47: South Africa as a Destination



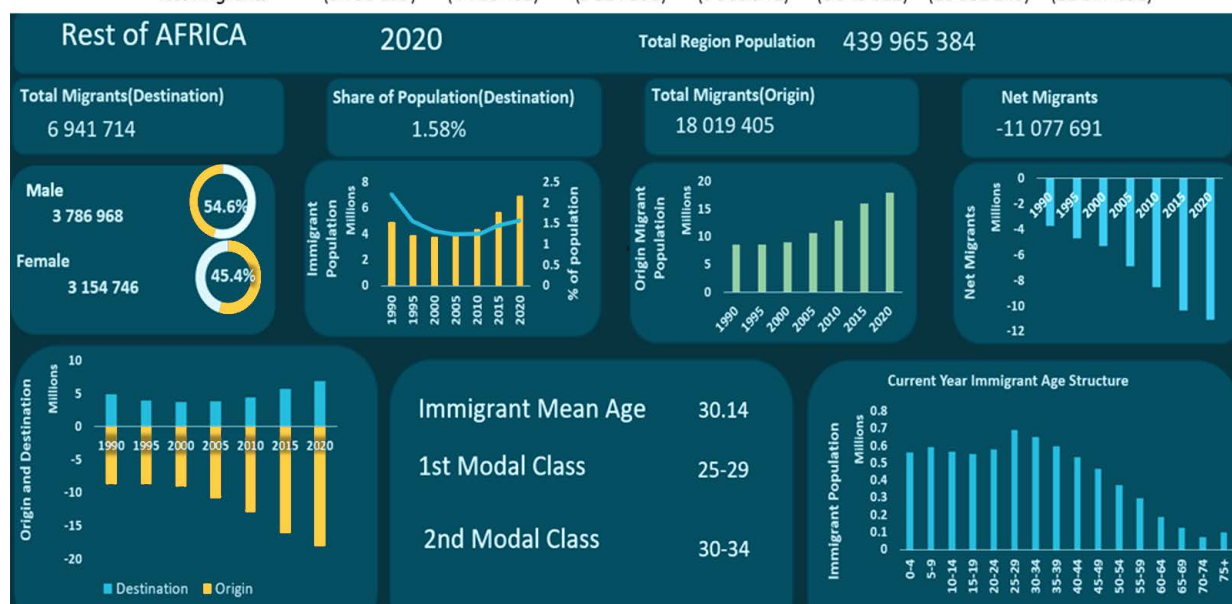
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020



### 3.8 “Rest of Africa” Region

Figure 48: Visualisation of Key “Rest of Africa” Statistics and Trends

Rest of AFRICA	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Growth 30_yrs
Population	222 813 553	252 941 513	282 937 236	315 588 146	351 381 189	393 934 629	439 965 384	97%
Migrants_Destination	4 917 139	3 929 551	3 776 437	3 847 978	4 393 601	5 716 529	6 941 714	41%
Migrants_Origin	8 667 214	8 637 982	9 090 968	10 753 920	12 939 223	16 047 677	18 019 405	108%
Immigrants as % of Population	2.21%	1.55%	1.33%	1.22%	1.25%	1.45%	1.58%	
Net Migrants	(3 750 075)	(4 708 431)	(5 314 531)	(6 905 942)	(8 545 622)	(10 331 148)	(11 077 691)	



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Our residual region, the “Rest of Africa”, is the most populous of the four African regions. Between 1990 and 2020, its population increased by 97% – slower than the continental average – from 222.8 million in 1990 to 439.9 million in 2020. Over the same period, the region’s emigrant stock grew by 108%, but its immigrant stock grew by only 41%; the latter is the smallest increase seen by any African region except SADC. High population growth and low immigration have led to a decline in migrant density from 2.2% in 1990 to 1.5% in 2020. As Figure 48 shows, migrant density

declined steadily until 2005, when it began a steady ascent. Nonetheless, the rate remains low and is below the continental average of 1.8%.

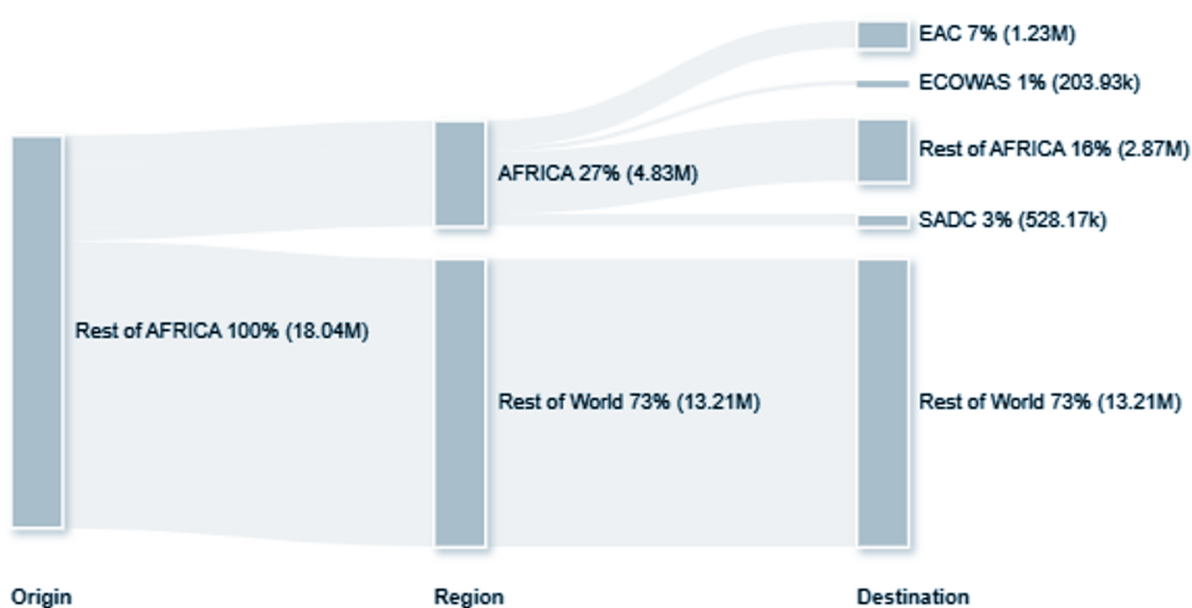
The region’s migrant population has a strongly right-skewed age distribution, suggesting that it is the most youthful migrant population on the continent. The mean migrant age is 30.1 years, and the modal age classes are 25–29 and 30–34. The sex composition of the migrant population has remained fairly constant over time; as shown in Figure 48, 54% of migrants were male in 2020.

Figure 48 also shows that the region's emigrants have outnumbered its immigrants in every year since 1990; indeed, the surplus of emigrants has been increasing steadily. The "Rest of Africa" is therefore an area of negative net migration. In 2020, the region had 6.9 million immigrants and 18 million emigrants, yielding net emigration of 11 million. This is the largest net emigration surplus in any of the four African regions.

### 3.8.1 Origin Analysis

Of the four regions of Africa, the "Rest of Africa" has the most emigrants. In 2020, almost half of the continent's 40 million emigrants originated in the region. Of the 18 million emigrants from the "Rest of Africa", 73% had left the continent; only 27% were intra-African migrants. Figure 49 shows the migration patterns of emigrants from the "Rest of Africa".

Figure 49: Migration from "Rest of Africa"



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Most Africa-bound emigrants from this region did not leave the region but instead found destinations elsewhere in the "Rest of Africa". The second- and third-most popular regional destinations are EAC

and SADC; ECOWAS is the least preferred regional destination for emigrants from the region. As shown in figure 50, popular destination countries include Ethiopia, South Sudan, Chad, and Kenya.

Figure 50: "Rest of Africa" as an Origin



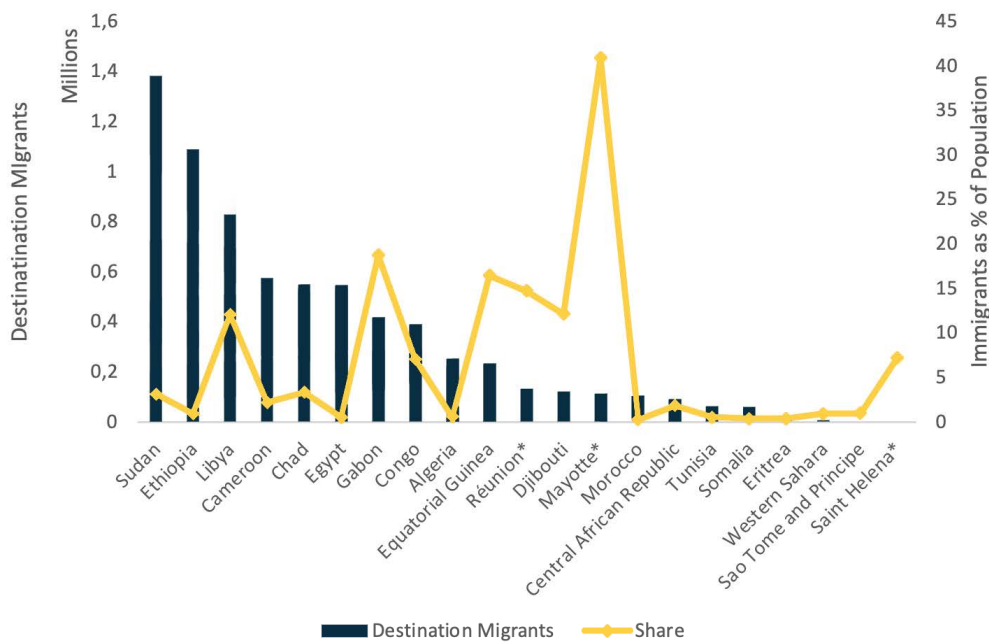
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.8.2 Destination Analysis

In 2020, the top immigration destinations in the region were Sudan, Ethiopia, and Libya, respectively. Although Sudan had the largest immigrant population of any country in the region,

its migrant density was relatively low. Indeed, the “Rest of Africa” region includes several North African countries in which immigrants comprise a very small minority of the population: as Figure 51 shows, migrant density is less than 1% in Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

**Figure 51: Stocks and Shares of Immigrants by “Rest of Africa” Destination (2020)**

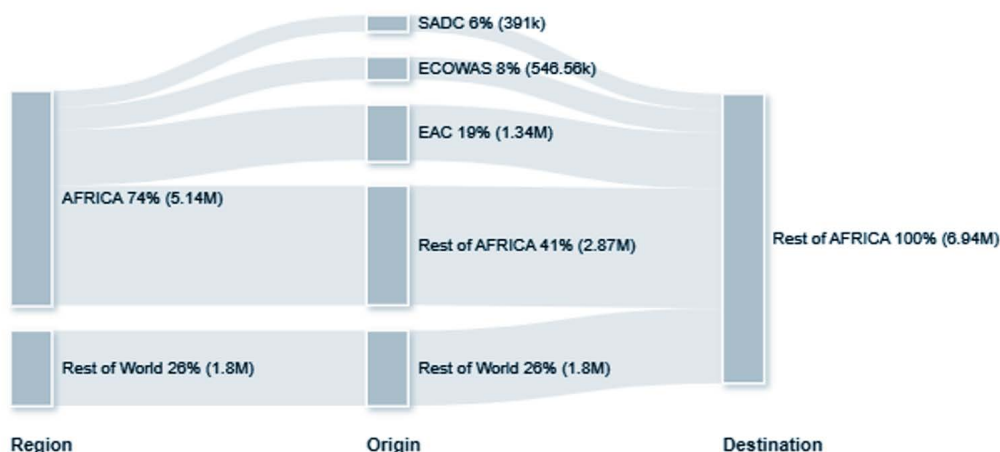


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

In 2020, the “Rest of Africa” accommodated 6.9 million immigrants, 26% of whom originated outside the continent and 74% of whom originated elsewhere in Africa. Of those who originated in Africa, slightly more than half came from within the “Rest of Africa” region, and another

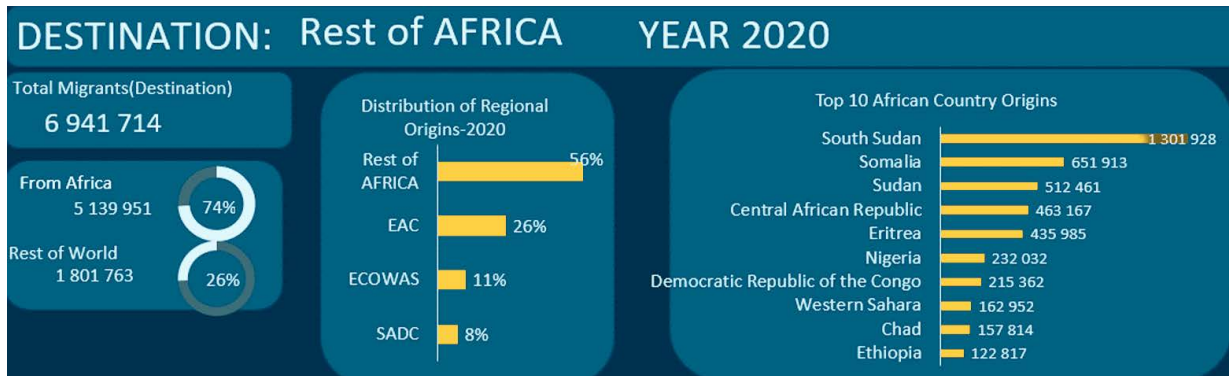
quarter came from EAC. 1.3 million emigrants from South Sudan resided in the region, making South Sudan the top sending country. Figure 52 shows the breakdown of migrants destined for the “Rest of Africa”, and Figure 53 summarises our destination analysis for the region.

**Figure 52: Migration to “Rest of Africa”**



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 53: Rest of Africa as a Destination

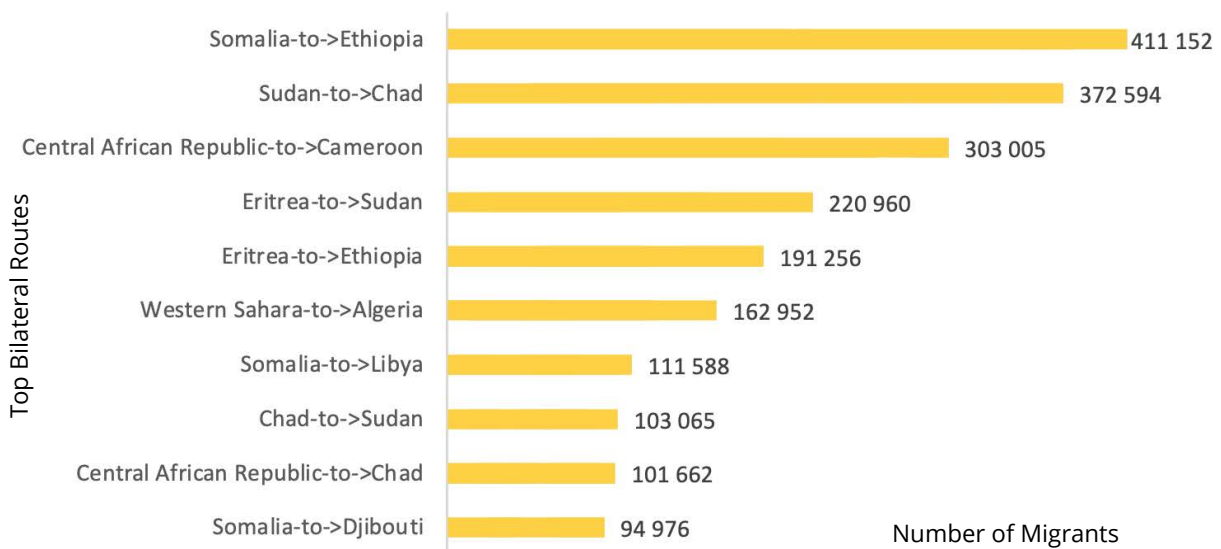


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 54 shows that, unlike in other African regions, the most popular migration routes in this region are largely unidirectional. As of

2020, the top migration route was Somalia-Ethiopia, but Ethiopia-Somalia did not even feature among the top ten routes.

Figure 54: Main Migration Routes in "Rest of Africa" (2020)



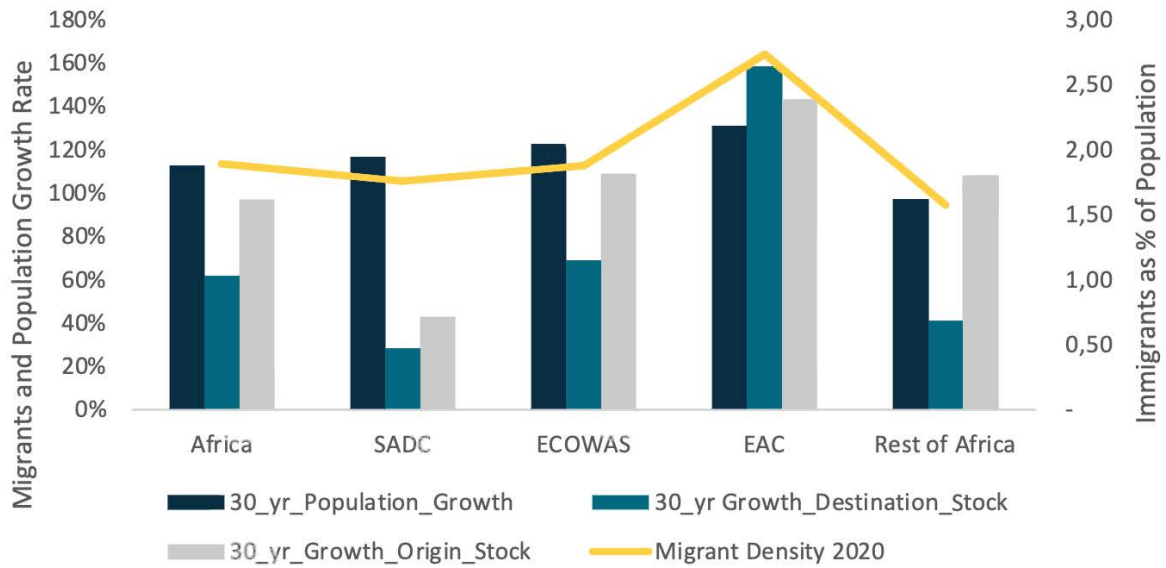
Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

### 3.9 Summary of Trends

We conclude this section by consolidating certain key metrics to get a high-level view of African migration. Figure 55 displays certain summary statistics for each region, as recorded between 1990 and 2020. Over that 30-year period, EAC recorded the fastest

population growth, followed by ECOWAS, while the "Rest of Africa" recorded the slowest. EAC also saw the fastest growth in its stocks of immigrants and emigrants, whereas SADC saw the slowest growth in both respects. In addition, EAC stands out because of its high migrant density; it is the only region in which migrant density exceeded 2%.

**Figure 55: Population Growth, Migrant Stocks' Growth, and Migrant Density by Region (2020)**

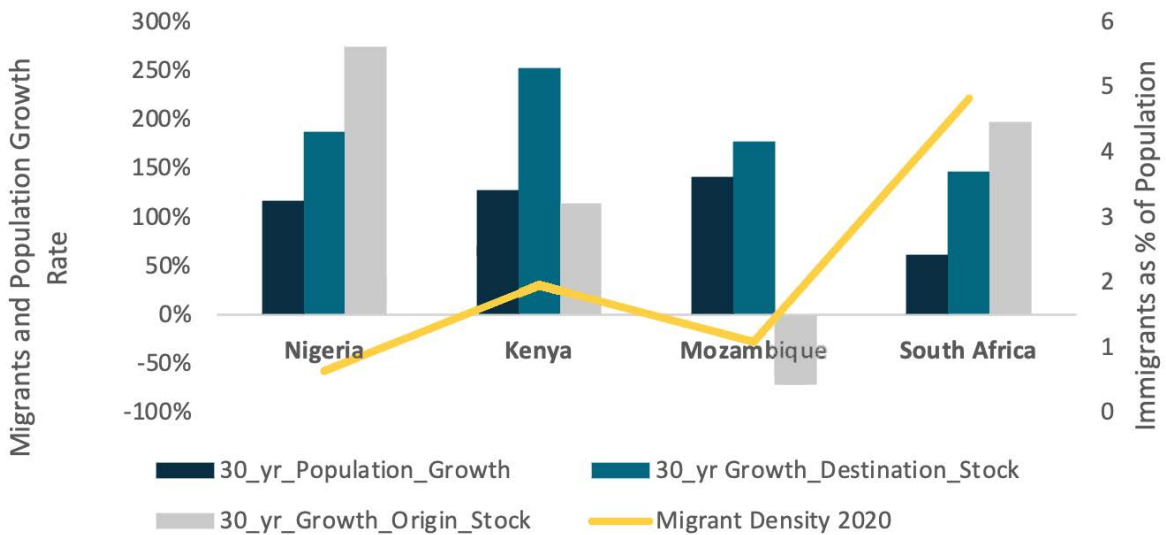


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Figure 56 shows the same metrics for our four country case studies. Among these four countries, Mozambique registered the highest population growth, followed by Kenya. Growth

in emigrant stock was highest in Nigeria, and growth in immigrant stock was highest in Kenya. In 2020, South Africa had the highest migrant density and Nigeria had the lowest.

**Figure 56: Population Growth, Migrant Stock Growth, and Migrant Density by Country (2020)**

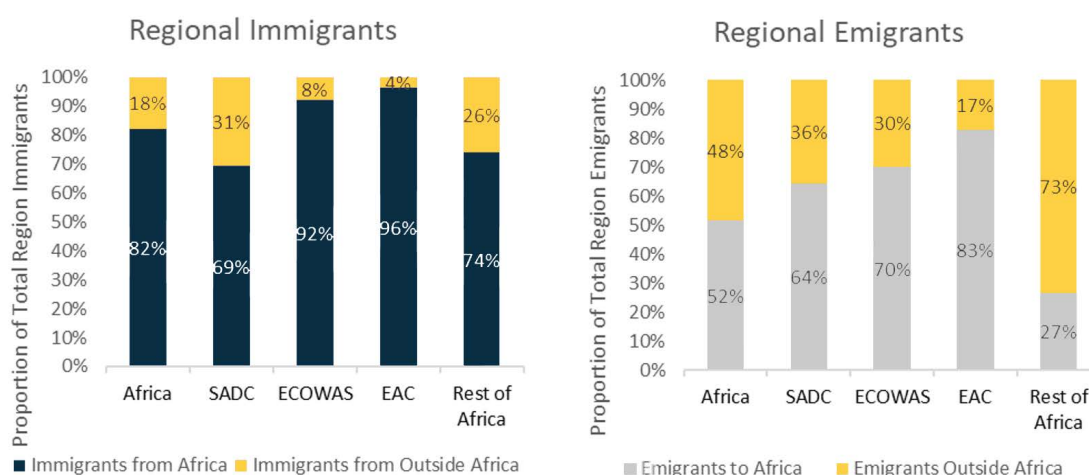


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

As discussed in Part 2, Africa is a region of negative net migration – its stock of emigrants is larger than its stock of immigrants. However, some African regions contribute more to extra-continental migration than others do. Figure 57 measures the proportions of migrants migrating within

and beyond the continent. All regions have large portions of immigrants from the continent. SADC has the highest proportion of extra-continental immigrants whereas EAC has the least proportion. All regions send a large proportion of emigrants to the continent except “Rest of Africa”.

**Figure 57: Proportions of Immigrants and Emigrants within the Continent and Beyond for Regions (2020)**

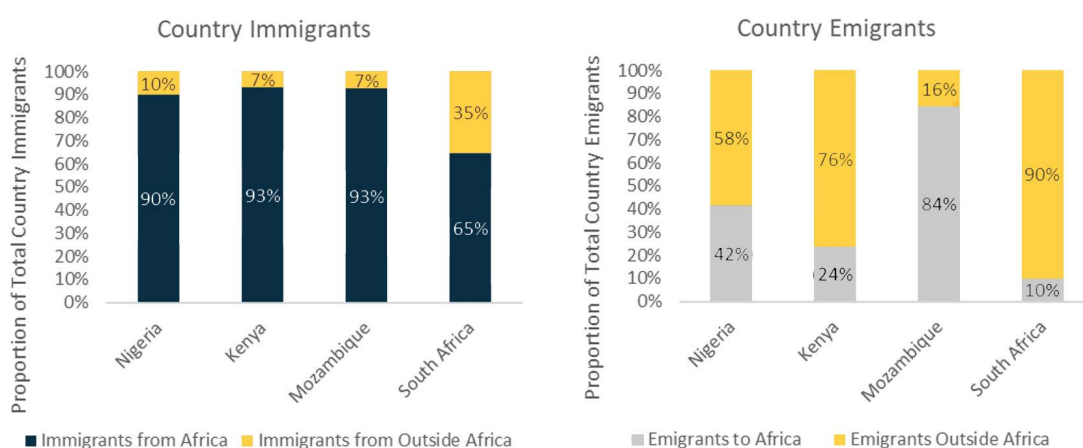


Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

Evidently, intra-African migration is a significant force in all four regions. This is particularly noticeable in ECOWAS and, above all, in EAC: 96% of immigrants to EAC are from Africa and 83% of emigrants from EAC remain in Africa. The “Rest of Africa” is a leader in extra-continental emigration – 73% of emigrants from the region have left the continent – but only 26% of all immigrants to the region originated outside Africa. Extra-continental migration also accounts for a significant proportion of emigration from SADC, and SADC is the only country in which extra-continental migrants account for a significant proportion of immigrants. In general, Africa does not appear to be a popular destination for migrants from other continents. Nor are many African migrants destined for continents other than Africa: extra-continental migrants account for fewer than half of emigrants from all African regions except one, the “Rest of Africa”.

Figure 58 reproduces this analysis at the country level. Among our selected countries, the share of extra-continental migrants in the emigrant stock is largest in South Africa and smallest in Mozambique. Extra-continental emigration is particularly rare among emigrants from Mozambique. Mozambique is the least developed country in the sample – Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa are all economic leaders and anchor states in their respective RECs. This might suggest that African countries with higher levels of income have a higher propensity to send extra-continental emigrants than do less developed African countries. With respect to immigration, Figure 58 bears out the regional trend: intra-African migration dominates as a source of immigration to African countries, regardless of whether those countries are rich or poor.

**Figure 58: Proportions of Immigrants and Emigrants within the Continent and Beyond for Countries (2020)**



Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

One key demographic characteristic of the migrant stock is its age structure. In 2020, Africa's migrants had an average age of 31 years. EAC had the youngest average age, at 26 years, and South Africa the oldest, at 35. Since 1990, the mean age of migrants has crept up in most regions, as shown in Table 4; the most dramatic increases were in

Mozambique and Nigeria, while the mean age of South Africa's migrants scarcely changed. In ECOWAS, EAC, and the "Rest of Africa", the age distribution of the migrant population is skewed to the right, implying a youthful generation of migrants. SADC is unique in this respect, insofar as it has fewer migrants in both the very young and very old age categories.

**Table 4: Mean Age of Migrants by Region and Country (1990 and 2020)**

	<b>Mean Age 1990</b>	<b>Mean Age 2020</b>
<b>Africa</b>	27.86	31.41
<b>SADC</b>	29.63	35.05
<b>ECOWAS</b>	25.73	32.66
<b>EAC</b>	30.76	26.85
<b>Rest of Africa</b>	27.16	30.14
<b>Nigeria</b>	20.31	29.67
<b>Kenya</b>	28.5	31.49
<b>Mozambique</b>	22.21	30.91
<b>South Africa</b>	35.02	35.78

Source: Author aggregation from UNDESA tables 2020

In most cases, regional trends are excellent indicators of national realities. For example, the sex composition of Kenya's migrant population mirrors that of the wider EAC migrant population, while the unique age structure of South Africa's migrant population mirrors that of the SADC population. Regional trends can thus be useful in informing expectations of individual countries in that region. In some rare cases, however, regional trends are not a good representation of circumstances at the national level. For example, while net migration to EAC is negative, Kenya has consistently recorded positive net migration. Regional trends are particularly unreliable guides to the realities of a region's smaller countries, because large regional anchor states have disproportionate weight in the measurement of regional aggregates. For example, SADC's rate of immigration growth is disproportionately influenced by trends in the region's largest country, South Africa, where the immigrant stock grew by 146% between 1990 and 2020. The SADC average does not reflect the reality in smaller countries like Namibia, where growth in the immigrant stock has, in fact, been negative.

Migration has strong non-random patterns. In the case of African migration, the most salient pattern is regionalisation, whereby proximate countries exchange disproportionately high numbers of migrants. Though regionalisation is a common theme across the continent, it is more pronounced in some regions than in others.

Intra-regional migration is obviously facilitated by relaxed migration rules within RECs. The bigger question might be whether a lack of formal regional arrangements is an impediment to African migration. Our analysis shows that it frequently is not. For example, a plurality of Kenya's immigrants originate in Somalia, though Kenya is an EAC member and Somalia is not; and a plurality of intra-African Nigerian emigrants are destined for Cameroon, though Nigeria is an ECOWAS member and Cameroon is not. It is apparent that intra-African migration is predicated on much more than formal regional groupings, although the impact of RECs should not be underestimated.

# PART 4:

## AFRICAN LABOUR MIGRATION TRENDS

### 4.1 **Introduction**

A prominent feature of African migration is economic migration, which occurs when migrants move to various economic hubs in order to benefit from greater economic opportunities (UNCTAD, 2018). Labour migration is one such form of movement, and this section will uncover some trends in African labour migration. Specifically, we compare the migrant and non-migrant labour forces in respect of their various attributes, such as sex, skills, education level, and economic sector. Labour migration is a contentious issue on the continent and it is often misunderstood or even vilified.

In this section, we use data that was compiled by the AU Institute for Statistics (STATAFRIC) and captured in the third edition of the AU labour migration report, covering the period between 2010 and 2019 (AU, 2021). STATAFRIC data is obtained with the assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. It is drawn mainly from country-level responses to a labour migration questionnaire. The response rate is high, with 47 countries completing the most recent questionnaire, but few of the responses are complete. Filling these gaps requires extrapolation. For example, aggregate regional or continental statistics depend on data that was provided by

only 26 countries. Regional estimates have thus been based on the returns of reporting countries.

In some cases, we have painted a more granular picture using individual country data from ILOSTAT, an ILO dataset. ILOSTAT uses three main methods to collect and compile data: microdata processing, automated data collection, and the annual ILOSTAT questionnaire. Nonetheless, there are glaring omissions in the dataset. To derive any general conclusion requires extrapolating from the pool of available data, which pertains to the few countries that furnish ILO with information. ILO data is mostly cross-sectional and gives an annual snapshot. Although much of the data is from 2019, ILO also considers observations from 2017 in cases where countries have not submitted more recent data. Further, ILO uses both “foreign-born population” and “foreign citizens” as proxies for the migrant population. Where both fields exist, we prefer the former as a proxy.

African institutions need not only to harmonise their data collection efforts but also to harmonise definitions and arrive at a common understanding of terms. For example, “working age” begins at 16 in Rwanda but at 15 in other African countries. Similarly, there is no consensus about how to define the “youth” by age. In addition, more African countries need to collect and record useful labour data, disaggregated along dimensions such as migration status, sex, and skill level.

#### 4.1.1 **Definition of Key Terms**

- 1 Working-age population:** This refers to individuals aged 15 years and over
- 2 Labour force:** This comprises all individuals that are of working age (15 years and over) and are either employed or unemployed and seeking employment. An unemployed person is not disqualified from the labour force, provided he or she still aspires to be employed.
- 3 Labour force participation rate:** This is a measure of the proportion of the civilian non-institutional working age population that is in the labour force.
- 4 Employed person:** This is a person of working age who is engaged in an activity to produce goods and/or services during the reference period.
- 5 International migrant worker:** This refers to all international migrants who are usually resident in the country of measurement and who were in that country’s labour force during the reference period.



#### 4.2 Working-Age International Migrants

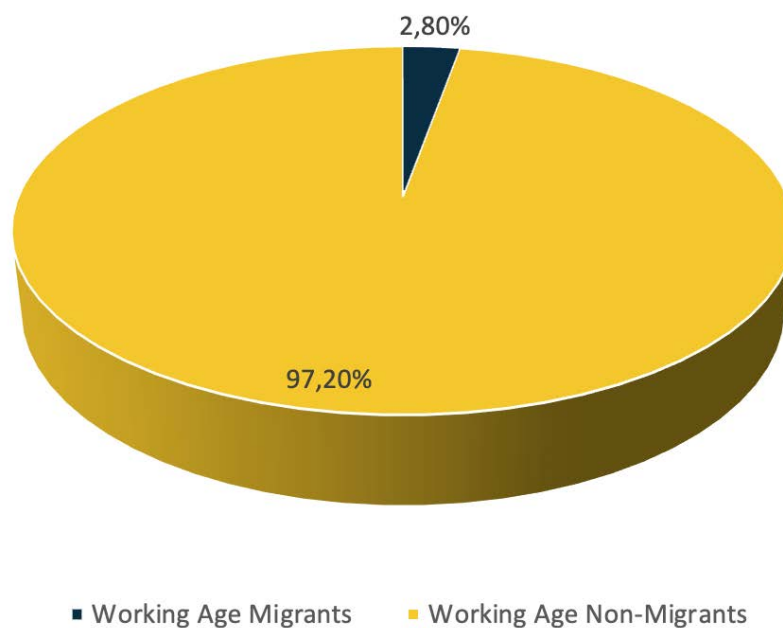
For our purposes, the working-age population includes all individuals who are aged 15 years or older. This definition is not uncontroversial – in particular, there is some merit to the argument that meaningful work becomes impossible for very old individuals. However, an upper age limit would make the concept less tractable, because certain professionals – such as doctors, lawyers, or skilled shoemakers – may continue working until late in their lives. Consequently, we shall keep the definition simple and only exclude minors below the age of 15 years.

The stock of working-age migrants resident in Africa increased by 53% between 2010

and 2019, from 13.2 million to 20.2 million. In 2019, only 23% of migrants in Africa were under the age of 15, meaning that 77% of the migrant population was of working age. The presence of working-age migrants is an important demographic fact with implications for policymaking in both host and destination countries.

In their destination countries, working-age migrants are perceived as competitors to the native labour force; they provide fodder for populists. In fact, however, Figure 59 shows that the share of international migrants in the working-age population is dwarfed by that of natives. In 2019, immigrants comprised less than 3% of Africa's total working-age population.

Figure 59: Proportion of Migrants in Africa's Working-Age Population (2019)



Source: Author calculation from AU 2021

In individual countries, too, immigrants are generally a small minority of the working-age population. Table 5 shows the share of immigrants and natives, respectively, in the total working-age population of selected destination countries. Notice that immigrants account for less than 10% of the total working-age population in most countries in the sample. Kenya (11%)

and Côte d'Ivoire (12%) are the only exceptions. Indeed, in developing countries worldwide, immigrants typically account for only a minor proportion of the working-age population. For example, in 2019, immigrants were a small minority in the working-age populations of Brunei (5.2%), Malaysia (2.2%), and Thailand (12.1%), all countries in the ASEAN region (ILO, 2022).

**Table 5: Proportion of Migrants in Working-Age Population by Country**

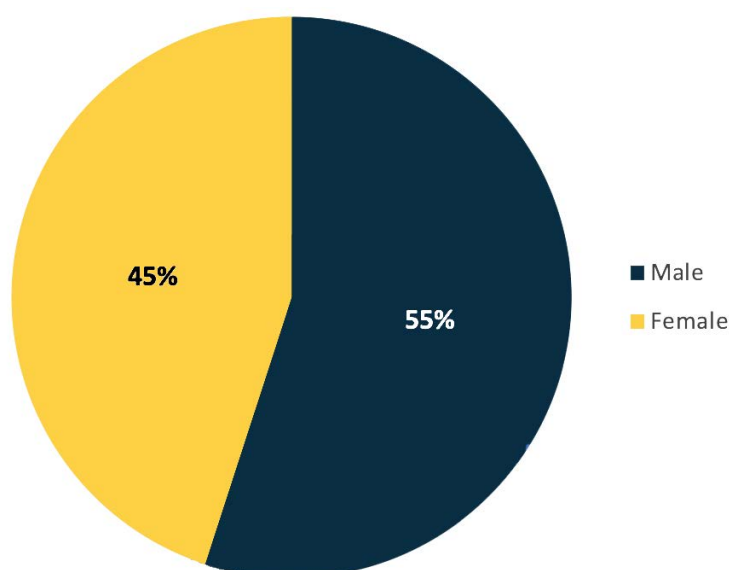
2017 Sample Countries		Working Age Migrants	Working Age Non-Migrants
Ghana		2%	98%
Malawi		2%	98%
Niger		1%	99%
Rwanda		5%	95%
Togo		6%	94%
South Africa		5%	95%
Zambia		1%	99%
2019 Sample Countries		Working Age Migrants	Working Age Non-Migrants
Angola		1%	99%
Cote d'Ivoire		12%	88%
Guinea		1%	99%
Kenya		11%	89%
Lesotho		1%	99%
Nigeria		0,2%	99,8%
Somalia		1%	99%
Zambia		1%	99%
Zimbabwe		1%	99%

Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

On the whole, Africa's working-age migrants are slightly more likely to be male than female: as Figure 60 shows, males accounted for 55% of Africa's working-age migrant stock in 2019. There is some variation at the level of individual countries, as is apparent in the sample of countries in Table 6. The sex imbalance is most pronounced in South

Africa and Somalia, where males accounted for 57% of working-age immigrants. By contrast, in some other countries, more working-age immigrants are female than are male; at the extreme, females accounted for 59% of working-age immigrants in Togo and for 64% in Guinea. In many other countries, the sex distribution is near parity.

**Figure 60: Sex Distribution of Working-Age Migrants in Africa (2019)**



Source: Author calculation from AU 2021

Table 6: Sex Distribution of Working-Age Migrants by Country

2017 Sample Countries			
	Male Working Age Migrants	Female Working Age Migrants	
Ghana	48%	52%	
Malawi	52%	55%	
Niger	51%	49%	
Rwanda	50%	50%	
Togo	41%	59%	
South Africa	57%	43%	
Zambia	51%	49%	
2019 Sample Countries			
	Male Working Age Migrants	Female Working Age Migrants	
Angola	51%	49%	
Cote d'Ivoire	55%	45%	
Guinea	36%	64%	
Kenya	48%	52%	
Lesotho	51%	49%	
Nigeria	51%	49%	
Somalia	57%	43%	
Zambia	50%	50%	
Zimbabwe	49%	51%	

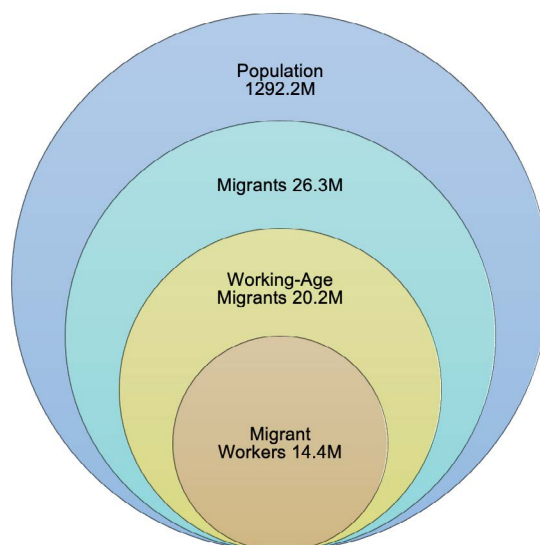
Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

### 4.3 Migrant Workers and the Labour Force

According to the International Labour Organization's definition (2015), the term "migrant worker" refers to all international migrants who are currently employed or are unemployed and seeking employment in their present country of residence. Any such person clearly intends

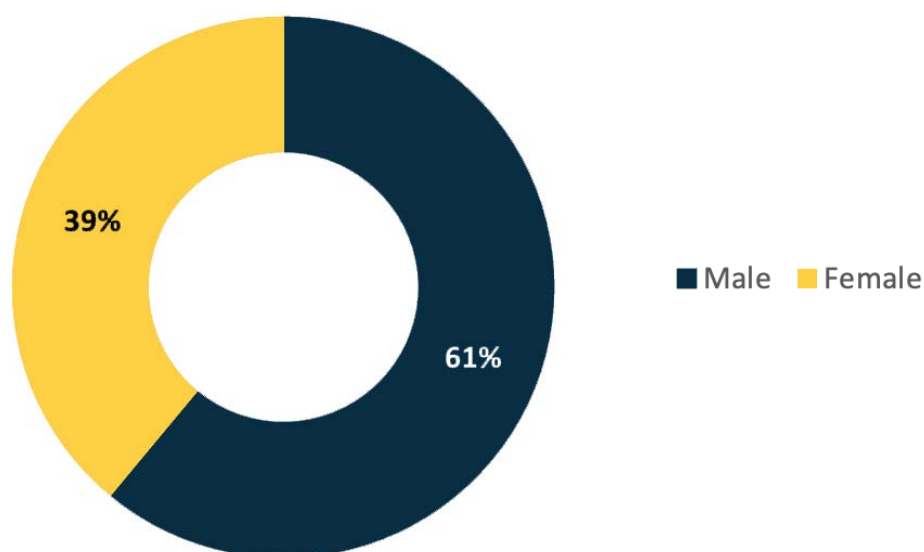
to work, so any working-age migrant worker qualifies as a member of the labour force. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 61. In 2019, Africa accommodated a total of 26.3 million international migrants. After subtracting minors from that group, there were 20.2 million working-age migrants. Of those working-age migrants, only 14.4 million were classified as migrant workers.

Figure 61: Total Migrants, Working-Age Migrants, and Migrant Workers in Africa (2019)



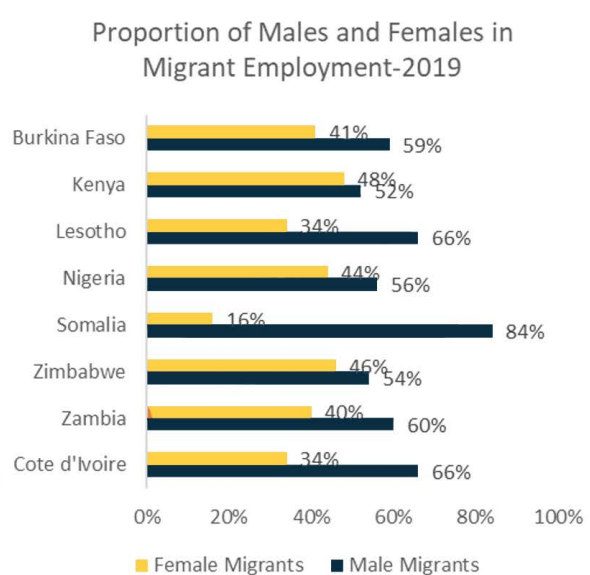
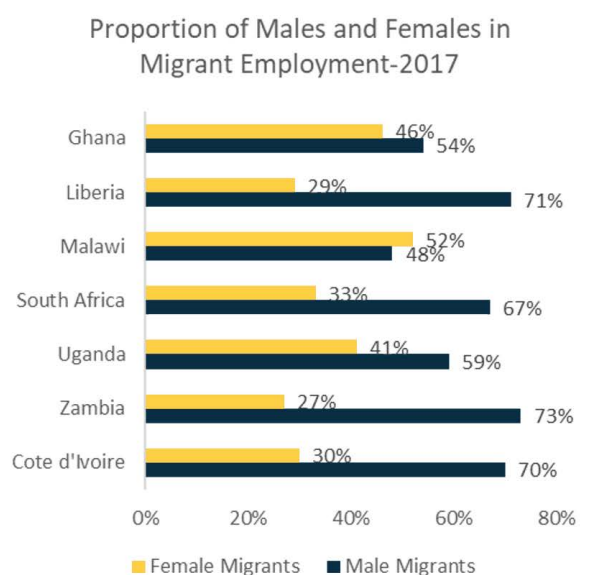
Source: Author calculation from AU 2021

**Figure 62: Sex Distribution of Migrant Workers (2019)**



Source: Author calculation from AU 2021

**Figure 63: Proportion of Male and Female Migrants in Employment (2017 and 2019)**

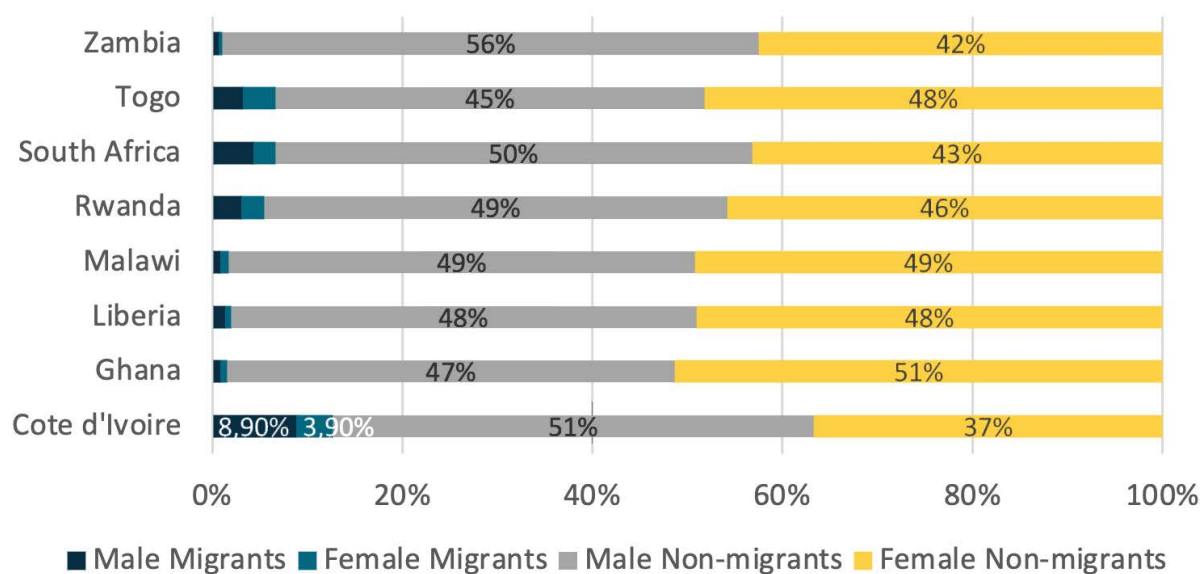


Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

As noted earlier, the labour force includes both employed and unemployed individuals. In most African countries, migrant workers constitute a very small minority in the labour force, which is typically dominated by native workers –

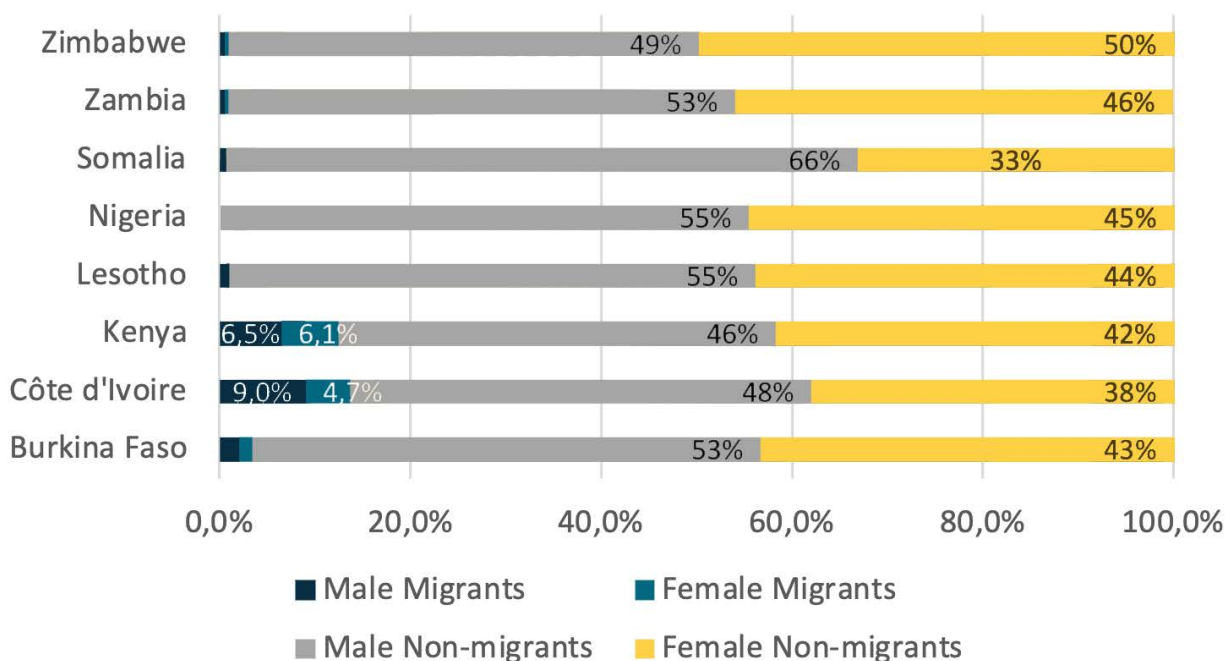
though there are often natives who believe that migrant workers dominate the labour market. Figures 64 and 65 reflect the composition of the total labour force in selected countries according to migration status and sex.

**Figure 64: Labour Force Composition by Country (2017)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

**Figure 65: Labour Force Composition by Country (2019)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

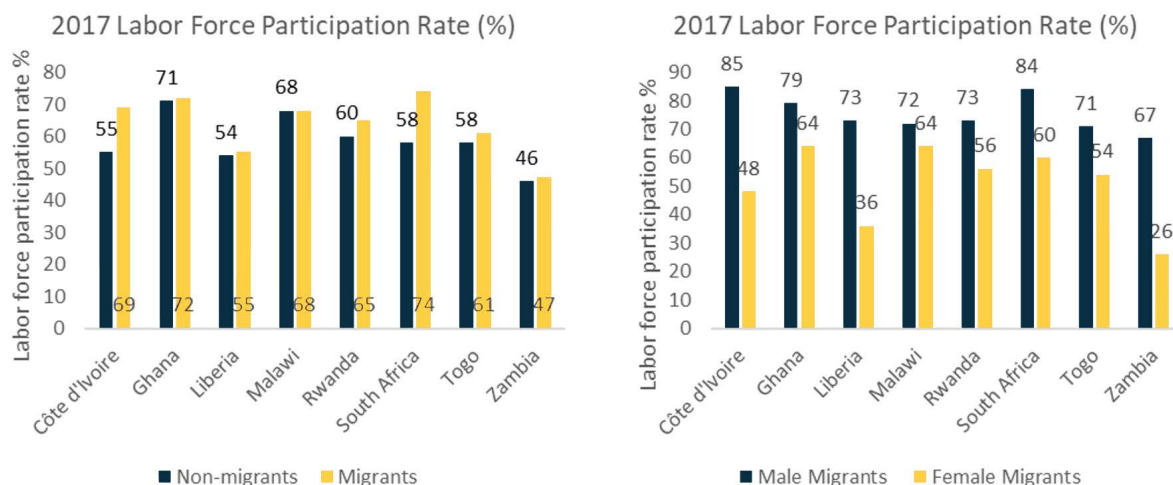
Although migrant workers generally make up a small proportion of the total labour force in their destination countries, migrants have a higher labour force participation rate than do non-migrants (ILO, 2021). Several theories have been advanced to explain this phenomenon. One plausible theory is that more productive workers are more likely

to emigrate (Wim, 1993). These more productive workers are more attractive to employers and thus are unlikely to drop out of the labour force after emigrating. In addition, migrants are likely to be highly motivated to earn an income and therefore will not be deterred by low wages or a limited choice of economic activities in their destination countries.

In keeping with global trends, immigrants in African countries have a higher labour force participation rate than do their non-migrant counterparts, as shown in Figures 66 and 67. The difference is particularly marked in South Africa and Côte

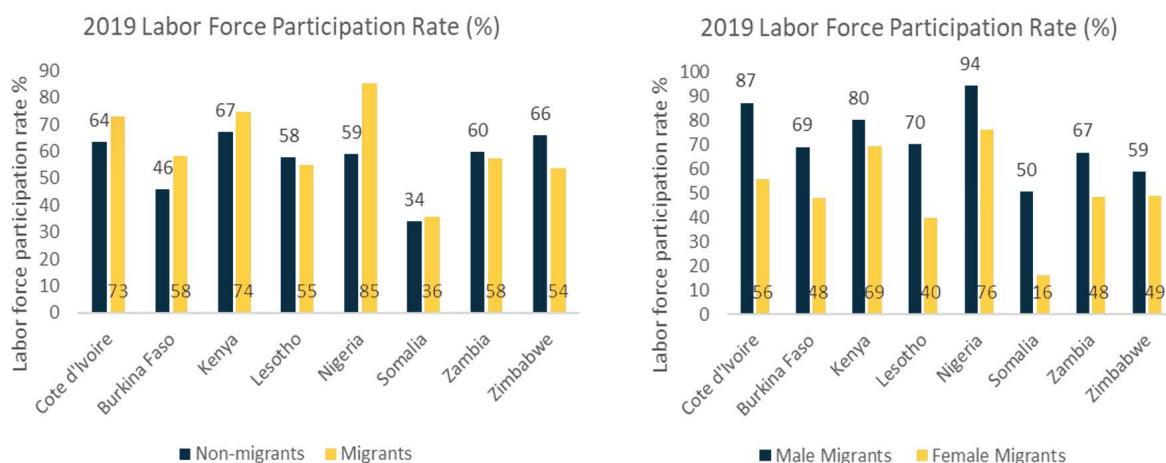
d'Ivoire. However, there are some countries, such as Zimbabwe and Zambia (in 2019), where the trend does not hold. It is also noteworthy that male migrants participate in the labour force at a higher rate than do female migrants.

**Figure 66: Labour Force Participation Rates by Country (2017)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

**Figure 67: Labour Force Participation Rates by Countries (2019)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

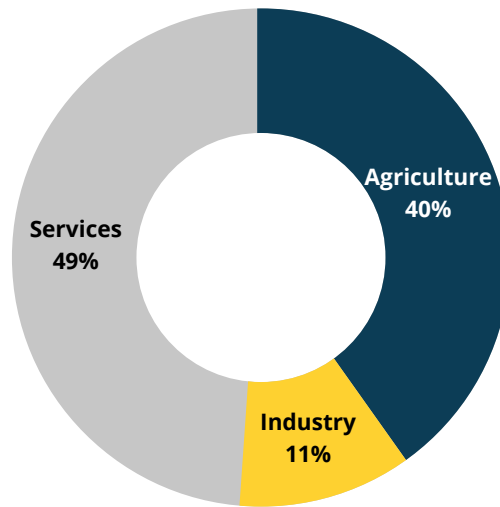
#### 4.4 Economic Sector, Level of Education, and Skills

We consider three broad economic sectors as classified by the ILO: agriculture, industry, and services. The agriculture sector broadly encompasses activities in agriculture, hunting, forestry, and fishing, while the industry sector comprises mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction, and

public utilities (electricity, gas, and water). The services sector includes activities in wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, transport, storage and communications, finance, insurance, real estate, and business services (ILO, 2015). According to data from 2019, almost half of all employed migrants resident in Africa work in the services sector and 40% work in the agricultural sector. The least popular sector is industry.

**Figure 68: Economic Sector of Migrant Workers (2019)**

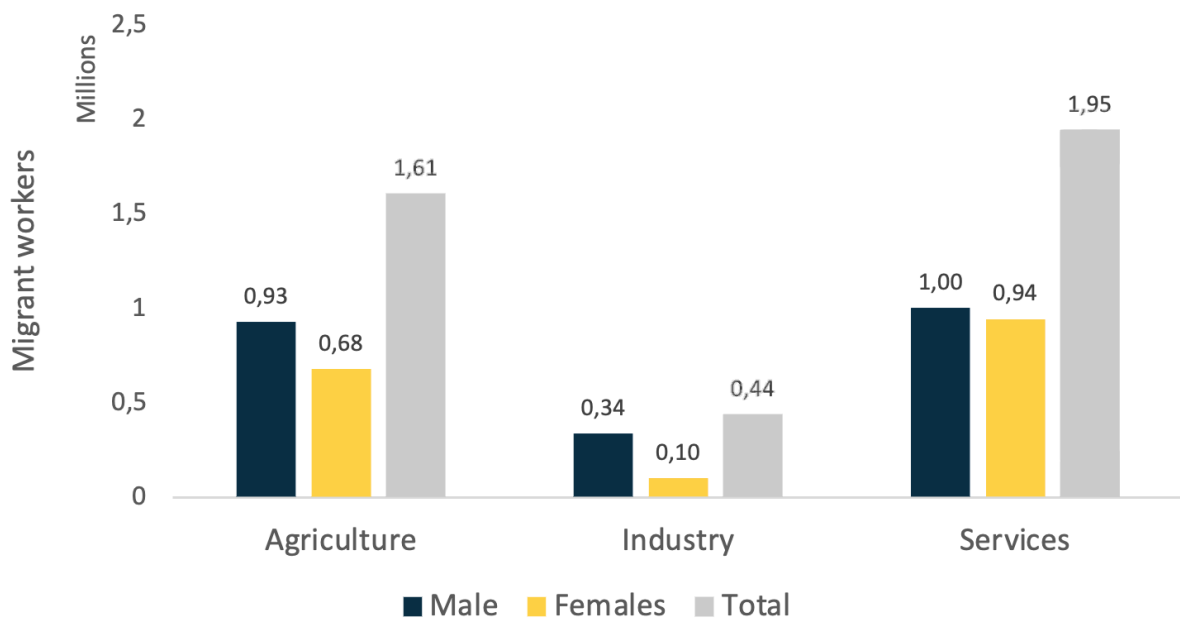
**Distribution of Migrant Workers by Economic Sector-2019**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

Male migrants outnumber female migrants in all three sectors, but the gender gap is narrowest in the services industry.

**Figure 69: Sector and Sex of Migrant Workers in Selected Countries (2019)**

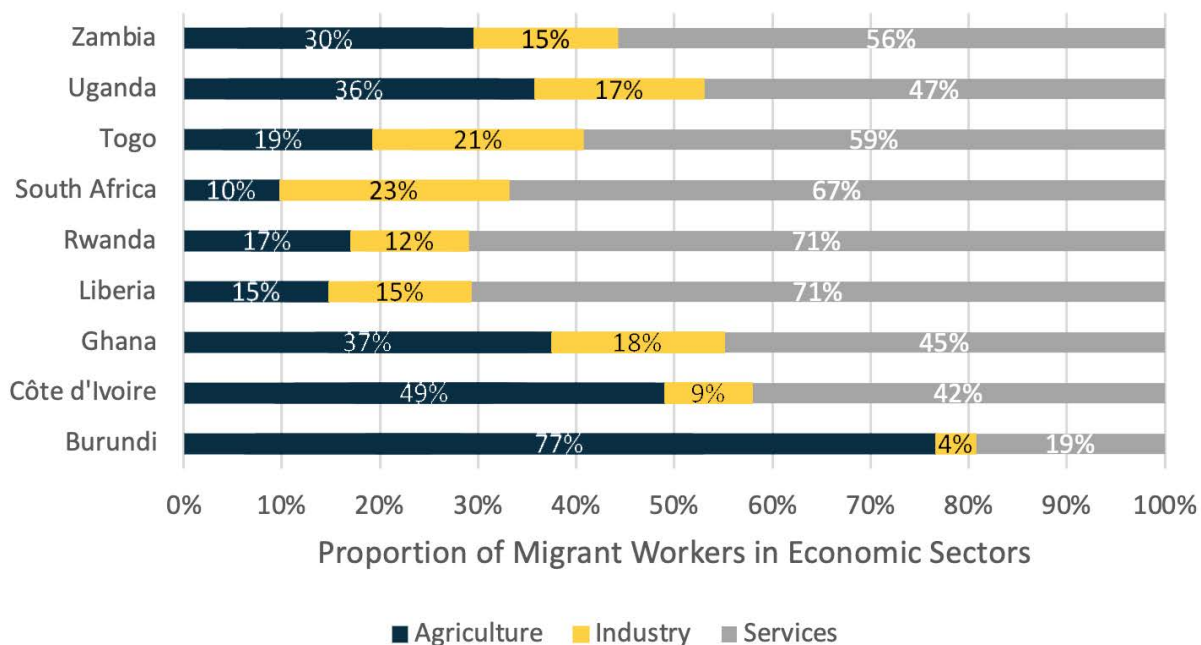


Note: The data in this figure are aggregated from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Somalia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Across the countries for which data was available in 2017 or 2019, agriculture was the

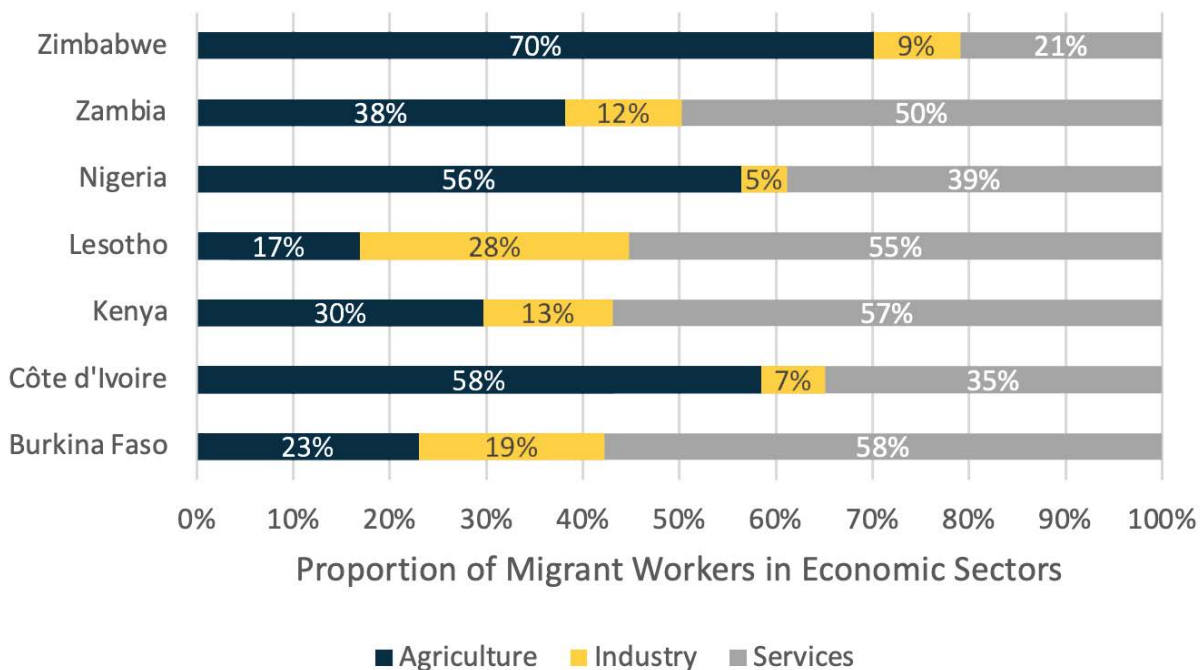
leading sector for migrant employment only in Burundi, Côte D'Ivoire, and Zimbabwe.

**Figure 70: Sector of Migrant Workers by Country (2017)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

**Figure 71: Sector of Migrant Workers by Country (2019)**



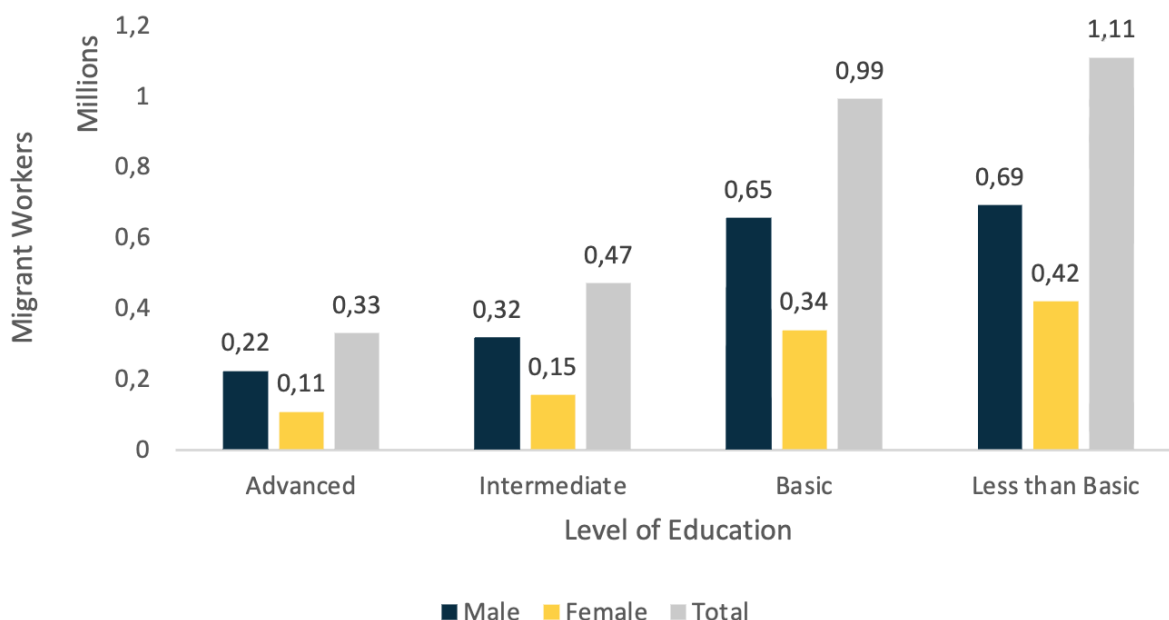
Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020



A migrant worker's choice among economic sectors may be influenced by several factors, one of which is his or her level of education. Most migrants in

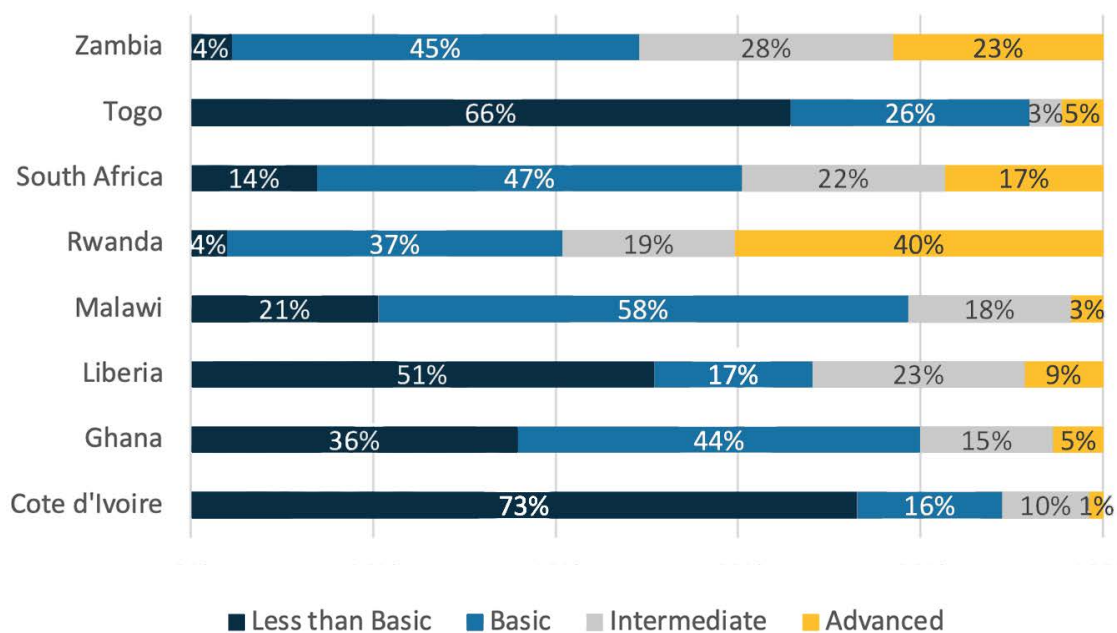
Africa have a basic education or less; very few have an advanced education. Male migrants outnumber female migrants at all levels of education.

**Figure 72: Sex and Education Level of Migrant Workers (2017)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

**Figure 73: Education Level of Migrants by Country (2017)**



Source: Author calculation from ILOSTAT 2020

#### 4.5 **Summary of Labour Trends, Data Challenges, and Data Gaps**

Labour migration is an important feature of intra-African migration, given that 77% of Africa's migrants were of working age in 2019. Although they are outnumbered by natives, accounting for only 3% of the total African working-age population, migrants participate in the labour force at a higher rate than natives do. Of Africa's 20.2 million working-age migrants, 14.4 million are classified as migrant workers. Almost half of these work in the services sector, and agriculture is also popular; industry accounts for the smallest proportion of migrant employment. Most migrant workers have a basic or less than basic education, and only a small proportion have an advanced education. Females accounted for

#### **Conclusion**

Since 1990, the population of Africa has increased by 113%, while the number of migrants living in Africa has increased by 62%. In contrast, over the same period, the world population increased by 46% and the global stock of migrants increased by 82%. This suggests that, with respect to migration, Africa lags behind other continents and more economically developed regions. Migration is positively correlated with development.

A large proportion of African migrants move between different African countries, and there were 20.9 million intra-African migrants in 2020. Intra-African migration accounts for 82% of total migration to Africa and for 52% of total migration from Africa. ECOWAS is the leading African destination for immigrants, followed by "Rest of Africa" and SADC, and the "Rest of Africa" region is the leading source of African emigrants, followed by ECOWAS. Among African regions, EAC contributes the least to migration, whether it is considered as a destination or as an origin.

Migrants on the African continent tend to be young, a pattern which is reproduced for working-age and working migrants, and there

46% of working-age migrants but for only 39% of migrant workers, meaning that female migrants are less likely to work than are male migrants.

The main deficiencies of existing labour data are the lack of cross-national harmonisation – particularly in defining such categories as working-age individuals or the youth – and the unevenness of reporting. Some countries do not keep records, and others do not produce them timeously. Because of this, broad aggregations depend on compiling data from different years, extrapolating from a limited sample of countries, or both. There are also significant gaps in the available data. In particular, there is scant data about the earnings of migrant workers in Africa. Without this data, researchers cannot investigate how migrants' level of education and skills level affects their earning potential.

are more males than females in all migrant categories. The most populous age groups comprise migrants between the ages of 20 and 45 at the prime of their productivity. Most African migrants have no more than a basic education, and a plurality work in the services sector.

Migration in Africa is complex and multifaceted, and there are a range of push and pull factors that drive people to move within and outside the continent. While there are challenges and risks associated with migration, including exploitation and human rights abuses, migration is also a vital source of economic and social development for individuals, communities, and countries. It should be facilitated rather than suppressed.

As the continent continues to face economic, political, and environmental challenges, it is likely that migration will remain a prominent feature of the African landscape. Moreover, as the continent develops, the rate of migration will grow. To ensure that migration is safe, orderly, and beneficial for all, it is essential that governments, civil society, and international organisations work together to develop effective policies and programmes to regularise migration and protect the rights and wellbeing of migrants.

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