

**112th session of IOM Council – Council Panel on the launch of the World Migration Report 2022
1 December 2021**

Statement by IOM’s Director General, Mr António Vitorino

It is my pleasure to launch the latest edition of IOM's flagship publication, the World Migration Report 2022. While previous editions focused on a single team, the series was revised in 2017, so that the report is now structured in two parts with key information including statistics on migration and migrants in part 1 and part 2 comprising balanced evidence-based analysis of complex and emerging migration issues.

I am pleased to report that these changes have successfully met the demand for balanced, robust and accessible information and analysis on migration around the world. Indeed, the World Migration Report continues to be IOM’s most downloaded publication and fortunately funding support for its translations continue to grow.

When we prepared this report, we have to recognize that one of its key focus is COVID-19 and its impact in terms of changing migratory patterns. Importantly, COVID-19 provided an opportunity for a rethink about the value we place upon everyone in our societies. Especially, as migrants in many countries became visible as essential to the functioning of societies around the world, at the same time, and almost paradoxically, the pandemic also seems to have accelerated the hostile rhetoric towards migrants that has been growing in the last decade.

We have devoted in this report a chapter on disinformation about migration and our research shows the debunking myth as well as pre-bunking strategies can help to mitigate or prevent harm caused by nefarious actors who seek to undermine balanced discussions on migration.

We also went back to the long-term empirical data on global migration patterns to have a close look at trends over the last two decades in particular. Rather than use country-income data we decided to use the UN's Human Development Index as it is a more rounded data variable, that takes into account economic factors along with a wide range of other key indicators, such as health, education and so on.

We found that migration is increasingly happening between highly developed countries, rather than from least or low development countries to high development countries. Of the top 20 countries of origin in 2020 - excluding refugee populations given that they have been displaced rather than migrated - 18 of them were high or very high on the human development index, compared to just seven in 1995.

This research provides a new perspective that uses global migration and development empirical data to show how migration patterns have changed. The analysis also highlights that there is link between migration patterns and regional free movement agreements, which can provide people valid options for moving. Options that people are increasingly using.

Our research also makes clear that migration has traditionally been an avenue for betterment. People move between countries to find better jobs, better economic prospects but also safer lives. They contribute in multiple ways in destination countries and the remittances they send home help alleviate poverty and support families and communities, while also contributing to economic growth in their countries of origin. Often migrants return home with new skills that help foster peace, stability, and development. But these long-term trends on who migrates globally show we are at risk of an international "mobility divide", with potential consequences for global inequality.

The new report also highlights that some regional labor migration corridors are heavily gendered toward male migration, connected to several factors, such as the sector and occupation gaps in destination countries. The gender gap is growing and we are committed to further research to unpack and explore these dynamics in order to inform effective and sustainable policy and programmatic responses, including through current research commissioned by the Government of Canada.

Ugochi has already mentioned to you the relevance of remittances which is also one issue of attention in this report.

Last year, while COVID-19 kept many millions of people grounded around the world, the total size of the global displaced population grew, and new internal displacements increased. By the end of 2020, there were 48 million internally displaced persons globally due to conflict and violence, plus over 26 million refugees and more than 4 million asylum seekers. And as we know the impacts of climate change are causing disaster displacement across the world.

All these elements deserve research, collecting of data and granular analysis of the data that you can find in the report.

I am pleased to let you know that IOM won recognition in two categories of the International Annual Report Design Awards 2021, in both the online and pdf categories, for the 2020 edition of the report. Only last week the new Interactive Platform of the report was awarded in two categories of the 2021 International iNova Awards for Excellence in Corporate Websites, with success in both the microsite and non-profit sector categories.

This international recognition validates IOM's approach in expanding the array of report materials for a digital age, thanks to the online interactive platform that all users can accede and use on the basis of this report.

We are also cognizant that many, including Member States' officials, need outputs and materials in their own official language(s). Language translation is a meaningful, practical and cost-effective way of supporting development and technical capacity-building for those working in migration around the world.



We are pleased that donors agree. The 2020 edition of the World Migration Report was available for the first time in all six United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), with key chapters also translated into German, Portuguese, Swahili and Turkish. Our aim, with the support of donors from all sectors, is to increase our linguistic reach even further for this current edition.

Please allow me to mention that in addition to the support of the Governments of Australia, Canada and Ireland, the Robert Bosch Foundation is a World Migration Report 2022 donor, along with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Geneva Science-Policy Interface. We thank them all for their support.

To conclude, in this era of heightened interest in and activity towards migration and migrants, we sincerely hope that this 2022 edition of the World Migration Report and its related tools become key resources for you. We hope they help you to navigate this high-profile and dynamic topic during periods of uncertainty, as the ones we are living in, and that the report prompts reflection during quieter moments.

Thank you so much.