

Session 12. A special focus on mainstreaming the gender perspective in international migration statistics

**UN Technical Workshop on International Migration and Temporary Mobility
Statistics**

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How does gender affect migration?

Gender influences migration:

 **Why?**

Gender roles and expectations in countries of origin and countries of destination affect the decision to migrate.

 **Who?**

Gender stereotypes restrict women's autonomy and decision-making, making women in patriarchal societies, especially those who are married, less likely to migrate alone across international borders.

 **How?**

Gender affects how people migrate and the networks they use, with men and women accessing different migration routes and support systems.

 **Where?**

Gender-segregated labour markets influence migration opportunities for men and women.

 **Risks?**

Gender influences the risks and vulnerabilities during migration, with women migrants facing pervasive, intersecting forms of discrimination that affect their well-being and safety throughout the journey.

How does migration affect gender equality?

Migration influences:

Gender relations

Migration can transform gender relations within households and communities by either empowering women or reinforcing traditional roles. Migrants may embrace new norms, leading to more equitable household tasks, delayed marriage, lower fertility, and greater emphasis on girls' education and labour participation.

Population composition

Gender differences in migration and mortality influence the sex and age composition of active-age populations in both origin and destination countries as well as living arrangements.

Women's economic contribution

Migrant women are change agents who enhance economies at their origin, transit, and destination by bringing diverse talents, expertise, and financial remittances that support their families and communities, fostering economic growth.

Women's autonomy

Migration can empower women as they transition from environments governed by traditional, patriarchal norms to ones where they gain greater autonomy. In origin countries, women left behind by migrating family members often assume new roles, becoming more actively involved in household and community decision-making.



Policy areas relevant for international migration from a gender perspective





Policy Area 1: Improve the measurement of international migration and temporary mobility stocks and flows

Gender statistics can:

Identify Migration Trends

Help in identifying trends like feminization or masculinization of migration

Promote equitable policies

Provide insights into gender dynamics can lead to more equitable migration policies

Inform targeted services

Inform the provision of targeted health and social services
(On Stocks)

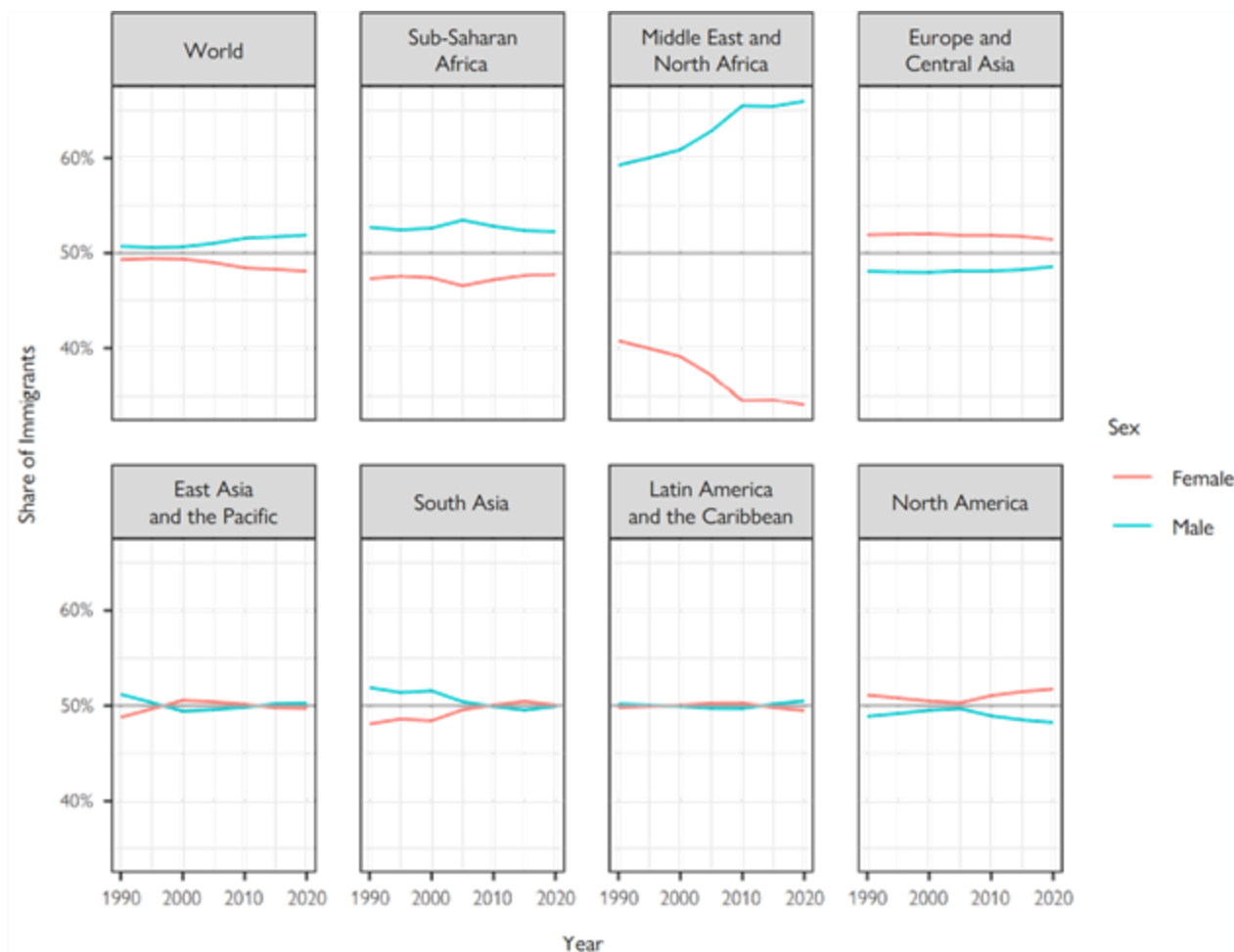
Design return and reintegration programmes

Help design return and reintegration programs tailored to the specific experiences or needs of male and female returnees (On Flows)

Support International Cooperation

Support addressing shared migration challenges globally

Share of male and female international migrants, by regions of destination, 1990–2020



Source: Abel, 2022, based on UN DESA, 2021.

Note: Regional categorization as done by the author.

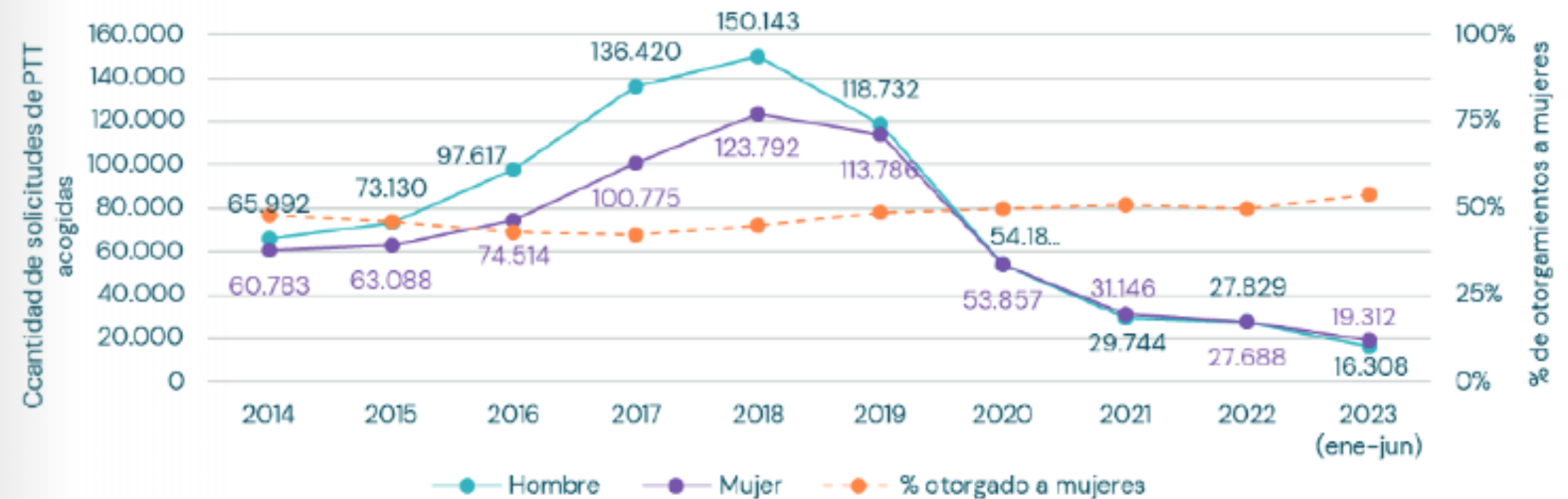
Image obtained from McAuliffe, M. and L.A. Oucho (eds.), 2024. World Migration Report 2024. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva.



Policy Area 2: Address irregular cross border movements and visa overstays

- Visa application processes remain cumbersome, and while online applications may help, they also pose challenges for individuals from less connected countries, particularly women who have less access to ICT.
 - Migration policies of many receiving countries implicitly assume a "dependent" status for women. Women are often classified by their relation to men.
- Seeking international protection can be a highly gendered experience as gender-related risks in the country of origin may justify individuals being granted international protection in the country of destination.

Gráfico 5.5. Solicitudes acogidas a trámite entre 2014 y 2023, de permisos de residencia temporal ordinarios, solicitados bajo la modalidad de titularidad (PTT), en hombres y mujeres de 15 años o más.



Fuente: elaboración propia, usando datos de registros administrativos SERMIG.



Policy Area 3. Ensure access to basic services by migrants and temporary populations vis-à-vis other groups

Healthcare needs

Are migrant women accessing healthcare addressing reproductive health needs, occupational hazards, and protection from sexual and gender-based violence throughout migration?

How are the challenges in maintaining family connections and stigma faced in destination countries affecting women's mental health care?

Socio-economic barriers

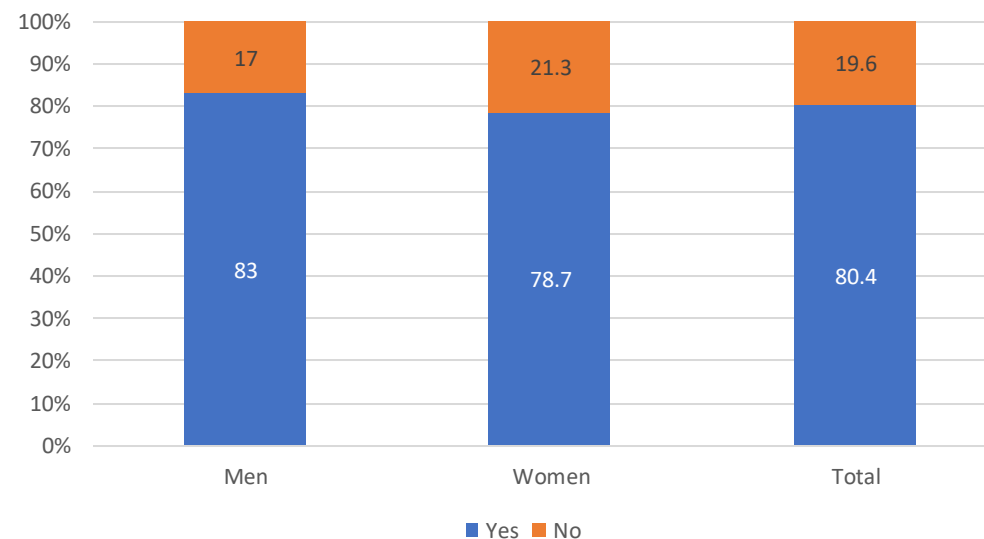
How does migration status impact existing power imbalances between employers and female employees, both legally and customarily?

What challenges do migrant women face in securing safe and adequate housing, and how do these challenges affect their overall well-being and safety?

Intersectional challenges

How do gender discrimination, racial stereotypes, and cultural biases intersect to affect the health and wellbeing of migrant women in destination countries?

Were you able to access the healthcare service you needed in the last 3 months? People who reported having health problems requiring medical attention, by sex



Source: Colombia Migration Pulse Survey (EPM)





Policy Area 4. Increase the integration and wellbeing of migrants

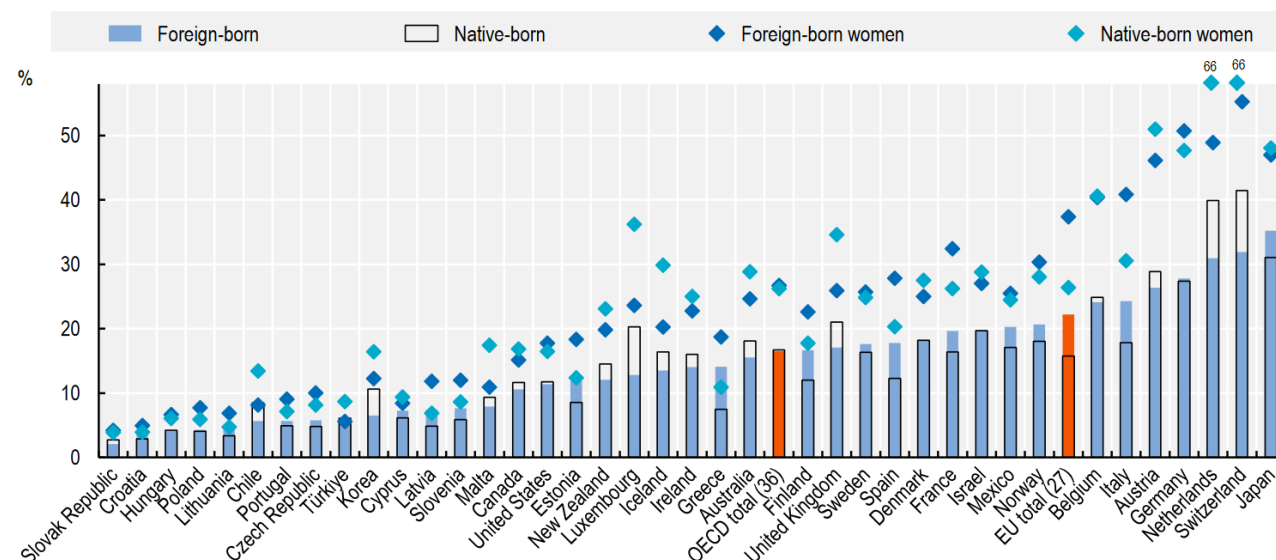
Economic contributions

- Despite earning less, women migrants often remit as much or more than men, doing so more frequently.
- Migrant women encounter gender-specific barriers in remittance sending due to their overrepresentation in the informal economy. This limits their access to diverse financial services and digital options, forcing reliance on in-person cash transfers with higher fees.

Part-time workers

Figure 3.19. Part-time workers

Employed individuals not in education, 15-64 year-olds, 2021



StatLink <https://stat.link/5jptz6>

Source: OECD, Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2023, Settling in.



United Nations

Statistics Division

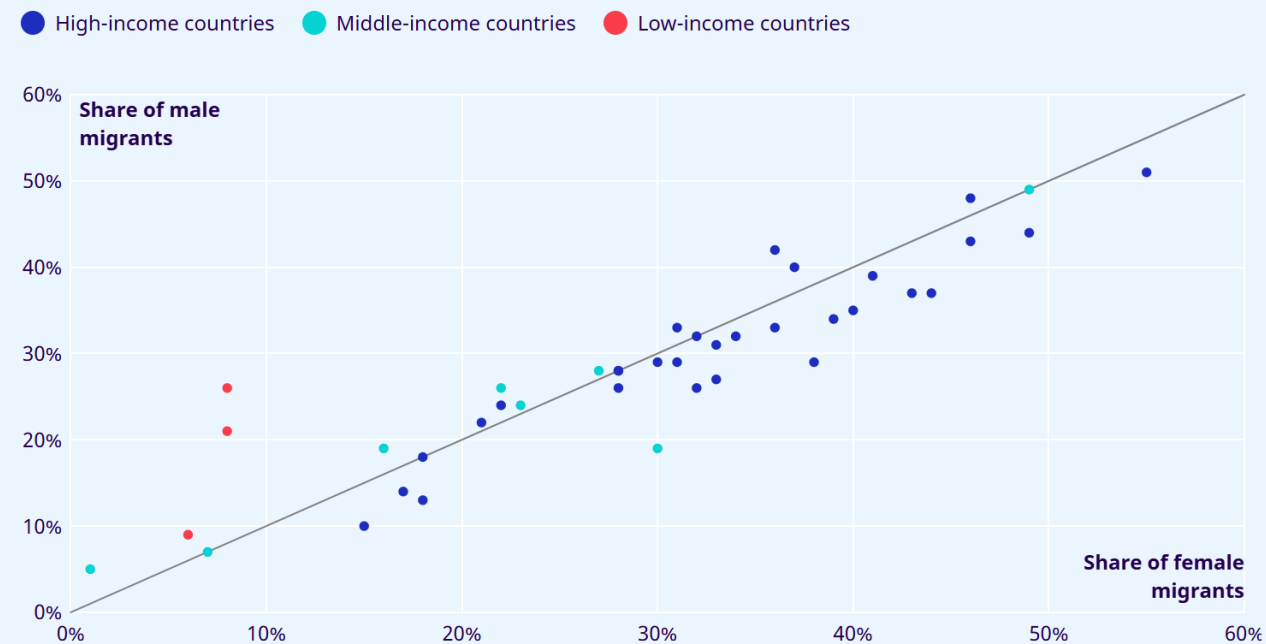


Policy Area 4. Increase the integration and wellbeing of migrants

Escape of societal pressures and gender norms

- A growing number of women with a tertiary education are migrating on their own to work or pursue further education. They tend to favor destinations with smaller gender gaps and less gender discrimination.
- Migration allows women to avoid prevailing social norms dictating their age of marriage or whether they can remarry after divorce.

► Share of working-age migrants with advanced education



Advanced education refers to tertiary education and above, which corresponds to ISCED-11 levels 5-8 and ISCED-97 levels 5-6.

Source: ILOSTAT • [Get the data](#)





Policy Area 5. Empower labour migrants

Gender segregated labour market

- Female labour migration is heavily concentrated in sectors/occupations that are traditionally associated with specific gender roles.
- Highly skilled labour migration tends to focus on global talent acquisition in STEM fields where men are often overrepresented
- Skilled occupations such as health and education, are often in regulated professions where migrants' qualifications may not be recognized, leading to downward occupational mobility.

Global Care Chains

- Care deficits in many economies, due to ageing populations, declining fertility rates, and rising female labour participation.
- These care needs are covered by women migrant workers, who often delegate their own caregiving duties to paid workers or family members.
- Global care chains, involve mostly women from low-income households migrating to take up care labor in high-income countries with the value of reproductive labor decreasing at each stage.

Women migrant domestic workers as a share of all migrant workers and migrant domestic workers as a share of all domestic workers, by sub-region, 2015

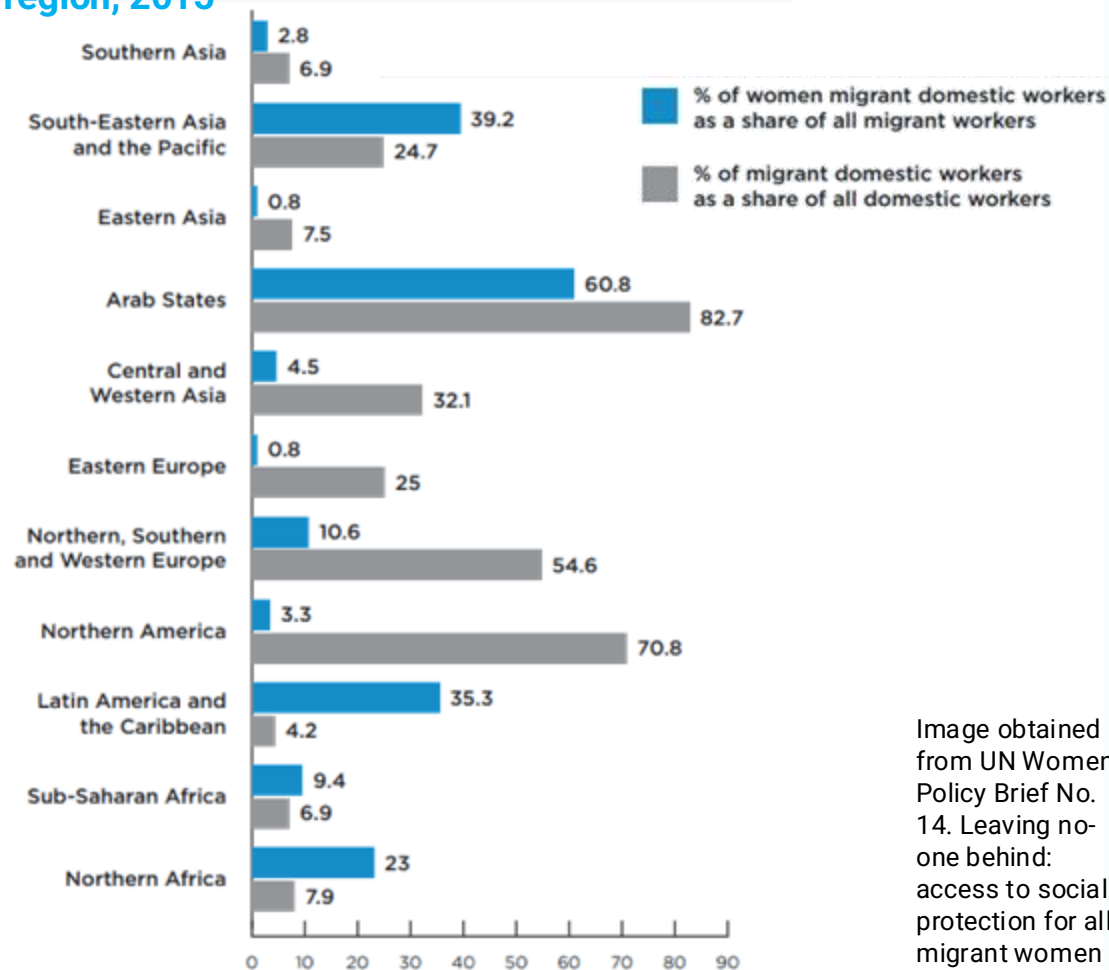


Image obtained from UN Women, Policy Brief No. 14. Leaving no-one behind: access to social protection for all migrant women

Source: Based on global and regional estimates of international migrant workers and international migrant domestic workers from ILO 2015.



Policy Area 6. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and end violence against migrants and temporary populations

