Migrants, Refugees, and Societies
An academic advisory panel, with 21 members – economics, social sciences, law – including a Nobel laureate

A high-level advisory panel, with ministerial-level members representing all regions, heads of UNHCR, IOM, and ILO, and leading civil society figures

The team has extensively consulted with a series of countries—including origin, destination, and refugee-hosting countries across all regions—and met with policymakers, private sector individuals and executives, and civil society organizations on the ground.
IN A FOREIGN LAND

184 million migrants and refugees
2.3 percent of the world population

Many countries—at all income levels—are both origin and destination at the same time

The United Kingdom
Türkiye
Nigeria
Italy's population is aging and declining.

In Mexico, the demographic transition is well under way and is expected to accelerate.

Nigeria will remain young well through the middle of the century.
THE MATCH AND MOTIVE MATRIX
ECONOMICS: MIGRANTS’ MATCH

- Labor contribution is larger than integration costs
- Benefits exceed costs
- Costs exceed benefits
- Labor contribution is smaller than integration costs

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INTERNATIONAL LAW: MIGRANTS’ MOTIVE

Migrants: Low need for international protection

Destination countries: Choose whether to accept migrants

Opportunity at destination

MOTIVE

Fear at origin

Destination countries: Obligated to host refugees

Refugees: High need for international protection
COMBINING MATCH AND MOTIVE

Maximize gains for all

Reduce need for movements, absorb, or return humanely

Ensure sustainability, share costs

MOTIVE

Opportunity at destination

MOTIVE

Fear at origin

Choice whether to accept

Obligation to host
WHEN THE MATCH IS STRONG

AT ORIGIN:
Facilitate remittances and knowledge transfers, build skills and mitigate brain drain, protect nationals while abroad

AT DESTINATION:
Provide rights and access to labor market for migrants, facilitate inclusion, attract skills in demand, support affected nationals

MATCH

Stronger match

Many economic migrants
Maximize gains for all

Refugees with skills in demand at destination
Maximize gains for all

Distressed migrants, mainly irregular
Reduce need for movements, absorb, or return humanely

Many refugees
Ensure sustainability, share costs

Opportunity at destination
MOTIVE
Fear at origin

WEAKENED MATCH
WHEN THE MATCH IS WEAKER BUT MIGRANTS ARE DRIVEN BY FEAR

- Many economic migrants
  - Maximize gains for all
  - Reduce need for movements, absorb, or return humanely

- Refugees with skills in demand at destination
  - Maximize gains for all
  - Ensure sustainability, share costs

Opportunity at destination ← MOTIVE ← Fear at origin

AT DESTINATION:
Facilitate internal mobility, allow refugees to work, include them in national systems

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WHEN THE MATCH IS WEAKER AND MIGRANTS ARE NOT DRIVEN BY FEAR

- **Match**
  - Stronger match
  - Weaker match

- **At Origin**
  - Strengthen skills and resilience to shocks through development

- **At Destination**
  - Shift incentives through legal pathways for people with skills in demand
  - Extend complementary modes of protection

- **Motive**
  - Opportunity at destination
  - Fear at origin

- **At Destination**
  - Refugees with skills in demand at destination
  - Many economic migrants

- **At Origin**
  - Distressed migrants, mainly irregular
  - Many refugees

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MAKING POLICY DIFFERENTLY

Working together

Bilateral cooperation:
- Bilateral labor agreements
- Global Skills Partnerships

Multilateral cooperation:
- Responsibility-sharing for refugees
- Norms setting

Financing instruments
- To support non-citizens
- To provide a medium-term perspective
- To incentivize cross-border cooperation

Inclusive decision-making
- Low- and middle-income countries
- Private sector, civil society, workers’ organizations, local authorities, and other stakeholders
- Migrants and refugees
KEY MESSAGES
Migration is necessary for countries at all levels of income

When migrants’ match is strong, the gains are large
- Destination countries should not let social and cultural controversies overshadow the economic gains from migration
- Most migrants benefit greatly from their move—and even more so when they have rights at destination
- Origin countries should actively manage migration for its development benefits

When migrants’ match is weak, costs need to be shared—and reduced—multilaterally
- Refugee situations should be managed as medium-term development challenges, and not just as humanitarian emergencies
- Distressed migration needs to be reduced, while respecting people’s dignity

Making migration work better requires doing things differently
- Stronger international cooperation is essential: bilateral to enhance migrants’ match, multilateral to respond to movements driven by fear
- To make change happen, underrepresented voices must be heard, including developing countries’
Data is necessary for understanding migration and policy levers for stronger match:
- Magnitude of migration and its determinants
- Impacts for migrants, origin and destination societies

Data is particularly scarce in low- and middle-income countries
- Migration is a rare phenomenon
- Limited applicability of findings in high-income country setting
- Comparability between data sources (administrative data, surveys, population censuses/registers, )

Data collection in fragile context presents increased challenges
- Accessibility/Safety concerns
- Exclusion of minorities and vulnerable populations (refugees, irregular migrants)

Looking ahead
- Harmonization
- Innovation
- Accessibility and privacy