

INTEGRATING MIGRATION INTO THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Migration is one of the defining characteristics of the 21st century. People are migrating to overcome poverty, escape conflicts or cope with economic and environmental shocks.

Although the relationship between migration and development is increasingly recognized, it remains unexplored. Lack of opportunities and investment in countries of origin can lead to migration. Migration can also improve development and investment in countries of origin, fill workforce gaps and foster innovation in host countries, but also contribute to development in transit countries. It is an effective tool for reducing poverty, not only for the migrants themselves but also for their families and their wider communities. Through significant contributions to economic and social development, migration can be a key factor in achieving sustainable development goals.

The 2030 Agenda is the first international framework that includes and recognizes migration as a dimension of development, which recognizes both the important contributions of migration to sustainable development and the specific vulnerabilities that migrants may face.

The paper presents a brief analysis of the measure and structure of global migratory flows, as well as the relationship between migration and sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda and the impact of migration on key development outcomes.

Keywords: migration, sustainable development, world economy, economic and social migration,

JEL Classification: F22, F63, F24, J11, J61, O11, Q01

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of migration has always existed, being materialized through transhumance, invasions, colonizations and crusades, or caused, in general, by the attraction exerted by richer regions on poorer populations.

Throughout history, there is no example of a country whose political and economic influence has not benefited from a dynamic demography or the action of an important and homogeneous population. It can be considered that there is a synergy of political, economic or demographic factors whose action can lead to migration movements.

Growth in volume, diversity, geographical extent, and the overall complexity of international migration in recent decades are often driven by advances in transport and information and communication technology. Also, the development of new technologies and communication

has led to an increase in the aspirations and awareness of many people, both from "traditional" countries of emigration and from other countries. In this context, in the last five decades international migration has accelerated and diversified in terms of countries of origin and destination.

For the beginning of the 21st century, migration is also one of the defining characteristics. Global estimates show that in 2019 there were around 272 million international migrants, an increase of 98 million compared to 2000. Statistical data on the size of migratory flows indicate that it has increased in recent years by a higher rate than anticipated at the beginning of the 21st century (projections for 2050 indicate a number of 230 million migrants, representing 2.6% of the global population) (World Migration Report, 2003) [14].

Sami Nair uses the term co-development (common development) for the first time in the 1997 Assessment and Guidance Report on Co-development Policy Related to Migration Flows, as a theory to highlight the extremely positive effects of migration on human development. This theory argues that international migration brings three benefits: to the migrants' country of origin, to their destination country, but also to the migrants and their environments [6].

As shown in the 2005 Report of the Global Commission on International Migration [5], the link between migration and development is based on 3 Ds (demography, democracy and development), in which the first acts as an attraction effect for immigration, and the second and the third as pushing effects that encourage people to migrate. Thus, the aging of developed societies causes them to drive an increase in immigration (the "D" effect), and the weaknesses of democracy and development (the "2D" effects) of many societies lead to an increase in international migration flows to economically stronger societies, more stable and more prosperous in terms of democracy and development.

Thus, migration can contribute with positive results to the sustainable development of economies and, ultimately, to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [1].

Adopted at the UN Development Summit in September 2015 [7], the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a comprehensive global action agenda that promotes the balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. For the first time, the proposed actions target both developed and developing countries. Through the Global Goals (the 17 Sustainable Development Goals), an ambitious agenda is set for the coming years to eradicate extreme poverty, combat inequality and injustice and protect the planet by 2030. The 2030 Agenda is also the first international framework which includes and recognizes migration as a dimension of development. In this context, the Agenda includes targets related to migration and recognizes both the important contribution of this phenomenon to sustainable development and the specific vulnerabilities that migrants may face.

The fact that Agenda 2030 is a useful platform for assessing the impact of migration and human mobility on development issues gives it a multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral character.

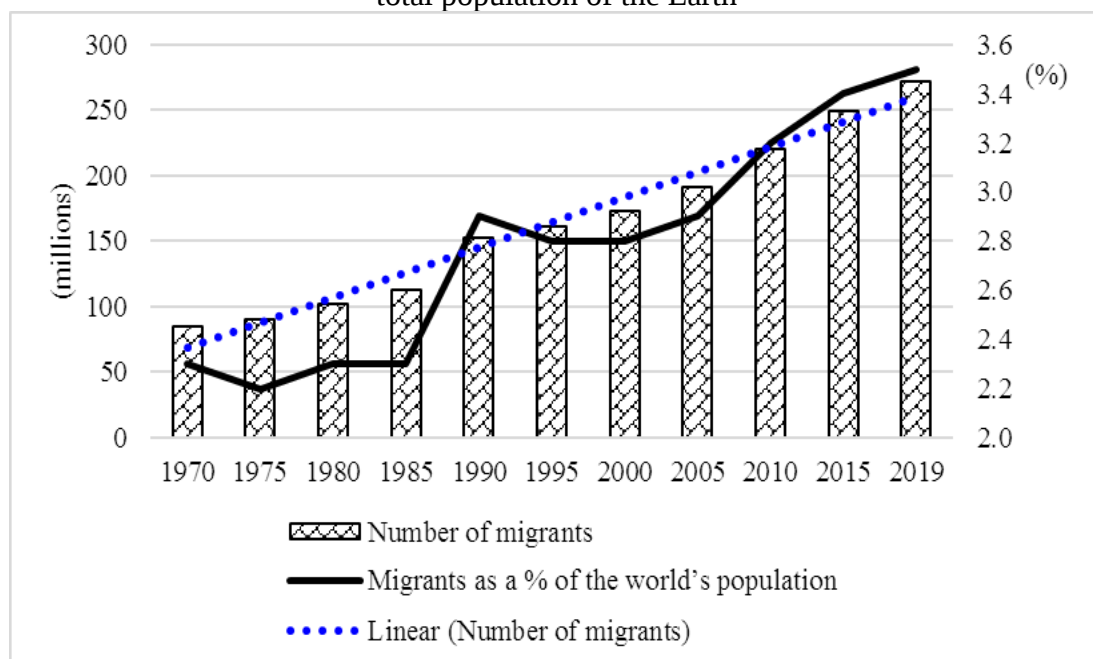
2. Recent developments in migration

Recent estimates by the International Organization for Migration (World Migration Report, 2020) [15] indicated that in 2019, 272 million people (of whom 52% men and 48% women) were living in a country other than their country of origin, accounting for approximately 3.5% of the Earth's population. If the number of migrants worldwide had an increasing evolution during 1975-2019, their share in total population had an oscillating evolution, with minimums registered in 1975 and 2000 (Figure 1).

Regarding the structure of migratory flows in 2019, the majority of migrants (approximately 74%) were between 20 and 64 years old, the share of those under 20 years of age was 14%,

decreasing by 2.4 pp compared to 2000, and the share of migrants aged 65 and over remained relatively constant (around 12%).

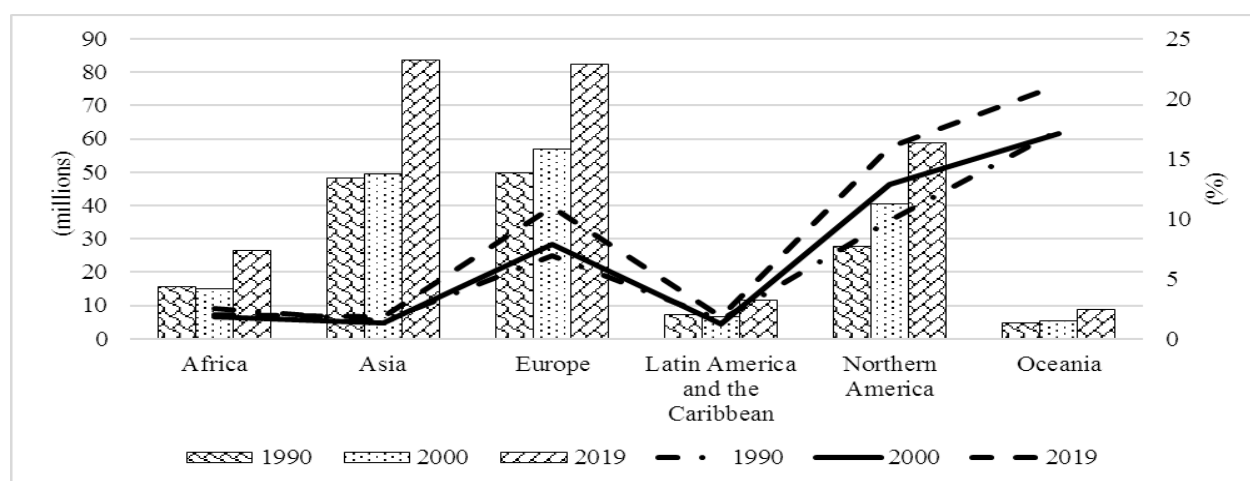
Figure 1 The evolution of the number of migrants at international level and of their share in the total population of the Earth



Data source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, UN DESA, 2008, 2019a, 2019b), [11] - [13],

Of the 272 international migrants in 2019, approximately 61% went to Europe (82 million people) and Asia (84 million people). North America hosted 58.6 million migrants (or 22% of the global migrant stock), followed by Africa (26.5 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (11.7 million) and Oceania (8.9 million) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Evolution of international migrant stock on geographic regions and international migrant stock as a percentage of the total population



Data source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2019a), [11]

Comparing the number of international migrants with the size of the population in each region (Figure 2), we can see that, in 2019, the highest shares were recorded in Oceania, North America and Europe, where international migrants represented, respectively, 21.2 %, 16% and 11.2% of the total population. Although Asia recorded the largest increase in international migrants in the period 2000-2019 (approximately 440 million people in absolute terms), their share in the total population of the region is relatively small (1.82%). This phenomenon is also due to the fact that in 2019 more than half of the world's total population lived in a single region: Asia with 4.6 billion people (region in which the population increased by 437 million people in 2009-2019, and compared to 1990 with 1375 million people) and where are five of the 10 most populous in the world (China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh).

Differences in the definition of *migrant workers*, methodological changes and data sources make the statistics on the number of migrant workers worldwide to be underestimated (Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers, 2018) [4].

In this context, the latest data on migrant workers are for 2017 and they show that this category of migrants represents 64% (or 163.8 million people) of the 248 million international migrants.

The largest share among migrant workers is held by people in the age group 25-64 years (86.5%). Young workers, aged 15-24, accounted for 8.3% of migrant workers, while older workers (over 65) accounted for only 5.2%. By gender, the age compositions of male and female migrant workers are very similar: 8.3% for men (for all age categories) and 5.2% for young women in the 15-24 age group, 5.0% for migrant working women aged between 25 -64 years and 5.4% for those aged 65 and over.

In 2017, compared to 2013, the gap between male and female migrant workers increased from 12 pp to 16.8 pp. If in 2013, male migrant workers accounted for 56% of the total of this category of migrants, and women 44%, in 2017, the share of men reached 58.4%, and that of women 41.5%.

Between 2013 and 2017, there were also changes regarding the destinations of migrant workers. Thus, the share of migrant workers living in high-income countries decreased from 74.7% in 2013 to 67.9% in 2017, and their share in middle-income countries increased from 23% in 2013 at 27.7% in 2017, values that suggest a reorientation of the number of migrant workers from high-income countries to lower-income countries. This phenomenon is due either to economic growth in middle-income countries or to changes in migration regulations in high-income countries.

With regard to the distribution of migrant workers, the statistics show that of the 163.8 million migrant workers, 23% are in North America, 23.9% are in Northern, Southern and Western Europe and 13.9% are in the Arab States (Figure 3).

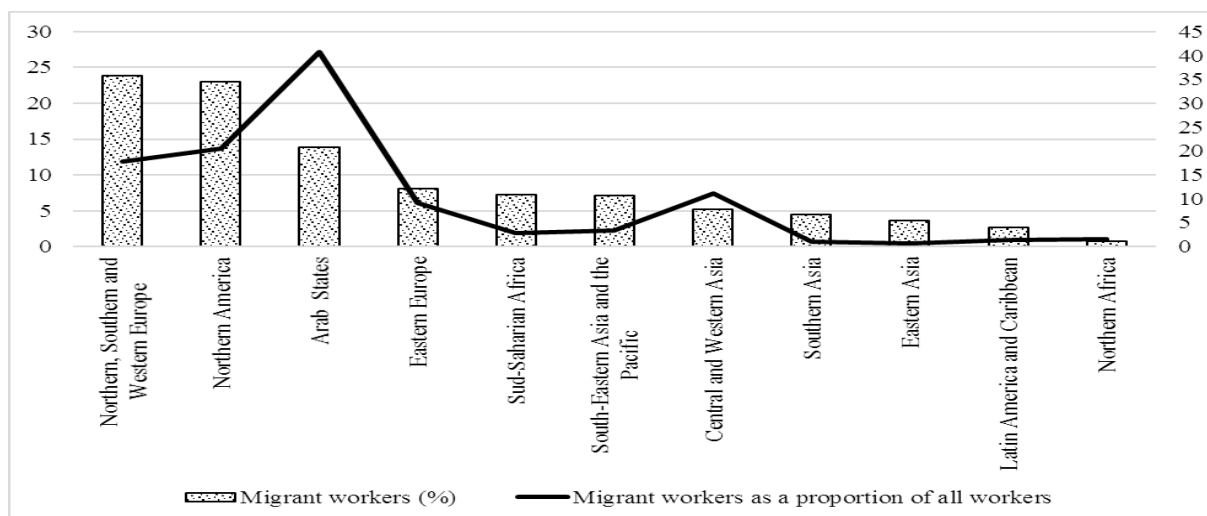
The other subregions hosting 5 to 10% of migrant workers are Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East and Pacific Asia and Central and West Asia (Figure 3), and North Africa hosts less than 1% of migrant workers.

The largest share of migrant workers in the total number of workers is registered in the Arab States (40.8%), followed by North America (20.6%) and Northern, Southern and Western Europe (17.8%). A significant number of migrants in the labor force are also registered in Central and Western Asia (11.1%) and Eastern Europe (9.1%) (Figure 3).

Of the 95.7 million male migrant workers, 21.1% are in North America, 19.8% are in Northern, Southern and Western Europe and 20.0% are in the Arab States, and of the 68.1 million female migrant workers, 25.8% are in North America and 29.6% are in Northern, Southern and Western Europe, and only 5.3% in the Arab States. The gender composition of migrant workers depends to a large extent on the fields analyzed: those that are dependent on manual labor are often over-represented by male migrant workers. Although global and regional estimates of migrant workers have shown that a large proportion of household workers are female migrant workers, the

Arab states still host the largest number of male migrant household workers compared to any other subregion of the world.

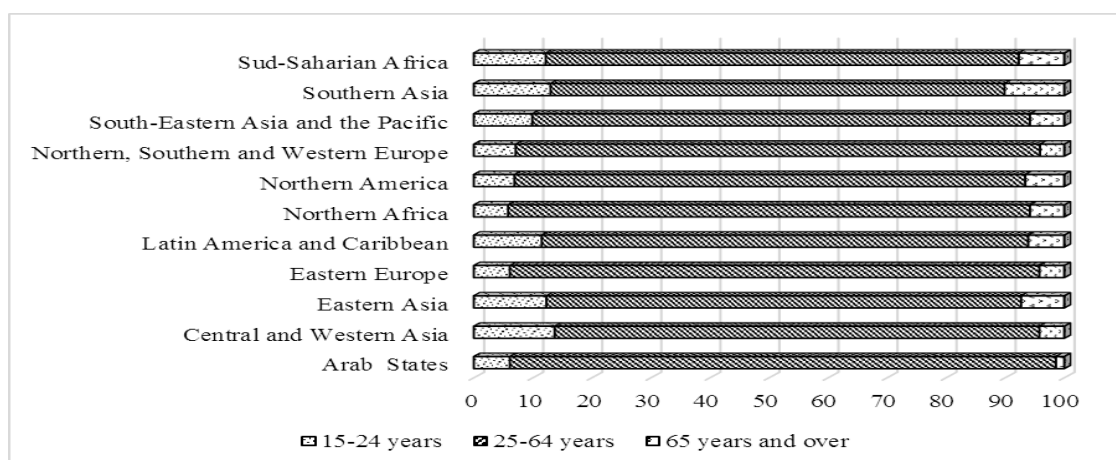
Figure 3 The share of migrant workers in the major subregions of the world



Data source: ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers. Results and Methodology, 2018, [4]

Among migrant workers, the largest group is people aged 25-64 (86.5%). In the Arab States, North America and Northern, Southern and Western Europe, the share of migrant workers in this age group varies between 86.5% and 92.5% (Figure 4).

Figure 4 The structure of migrant workers in the subregions of the world, by age groups



Data source: ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers. Results and Methodology, 2018, [4]

The share of migrant workers under the age of 25 varies between 5.8% to 13.7% (the highest values being recorded in the Asian subregions and in Latin America and the Pacific), while that of older workers (65 years and over) ranges from 1.4% to 10% (Figure 4). South Asia stands out as a region where the share of both young (13.0%) and older (10.1%) migrant workers in the migrant workforce population is relatively higher than in other regions of the world.

The analysis of the distribution of migrant workers from different age groups in the subregions of the world highlights the fact that North America and North, South and Western Europe host a substantial number of migrant workers from all three age groups, ranging from 19.1% to 29.6%.

The evolutions of the migratory flows, the changes in their structure and composition have determined the international recognition of the necessity of the cooperation in the field of migration.

Thus, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Compact for Ensuring Legal, Safe and Orderly Migration [9] as well as the Global Compact on Refugees [8] recognize the need for reliable, disaggregated, nationally relevant and internationally comparable migration statistics.

3. Integrating migration into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In 2016, the UN adopted two documents of great relevance for the future management of migration:

i) on 1st January 2016, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entered into force, a document that formulated a plan to achieve seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over a period of fifteen years, setting 169 specific objectives for this purpose. The 2030 Agenda aims to eradicate extreme poverty, as well as to achieve sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms;

ii) on 19th September, the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants [10] was adopted, which marked the beginning of the preparation of two global pacts, *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* and *Global Compact on Refugees*, which were completed in 2018.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has great relevance for the future and a harmonious management of global human migration. In this context, any reflection on the Global Compacts of 2018 must examine the migration-development link from the perspective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the 2030 Agenda, explicit reference is made to migration, only in three of the targets of three of its goals (SDG 8.8, SDG 10.7, and SDG 17.18). To these the following goals can be added: SDG 5.2, SDG 8.7 and SDG 16.2, which, although referring to victims of trafficking, forced labor and sexual exploitation or labor, nevertheless implicitly refers to migrants, as it is known the fact that a large number of these victims are migrants.

In addition to these objectives, SDG 10.2 refers to the requirement to reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances to at least 3% and to eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%.

The cornerstone of migration in the 2030 Agenda is goal 10.7, which calls for "facilitating safe, regular and responsible migration and the implementation of well-managed migration policies"

Apart from these specific objectives, Agenda 2030 is not subject to a wider contribution of migration to development outcomes. If countries are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), then they need to consider the impact of migration at all levels and on all outcomes, beyond the 2030 Agenda targets.

The analysis of the link between migration and sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda highlights a series of interdependencies, among which can be mentioned:

a) *migration is a powerful tool for poverty reduction and can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals:*

- i) in the host countries, migrants can cover the labor force needs, contribute to the development of services and to the increase of the government budget through taxes, but also to social security (SDGs 1, 8, 9);
- ii) labor migration can reduce their poverty and that of their families (who are either together or have remained in their country of origin) (SDG 1). Migrants and their families can benefit from increased incomes and knowledge that allow them to access

education and health services, access to energy at affordable prices, in a safe, sustainable and modern way. (SDGs 1,3, 4, 7);

- iii) increased economic resources for female migrants can improve their autonomy and socio-economic status (SDG 5);

However, for low-skilled migrants the chances of decent work are very low, and poor urban migrants often work in the informal sector, where the rewards of migration are lower.

Within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the concept of "decent work" occupies an important position, and directs political debates and an analysis of how the quality of new and existing jobs could be improved.

This is well reflected in Objective 8, which encourages action to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all". Also, within this objective there are five more specific objectives: 8.1; 8.2; 8.5; 8.6 and 8.8, which draw attention to the nature, quality and regulation of available economic opportunities. References to "decent work" are also made in Objectives 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all", 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" and 16: "Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies".

Goal 4 of Agenda 2030 calls for inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning for all. This objective refers in particular to children in "vulnerable conditions", a group that also includes migrant children, refugees and other displaced populations. Due to language or socio-economic barriers, migrant children are often excluded from education (specific objectives 4.1 and 4.5), and specific objective 4.2 calls for their inclusion in a quality early education, essential for the preparation of children. migrants for primary school "[1] Encouraging the inclusion of migrant children and improving intercultural understanding among children in the host country is recommended in specific objective 4.7 of the Agenda.

The inclusion of migrant children in the education system as well as the promotion of gender equality and the wider integration of migrant children and their families in the host communities are other specific objectives of the 2020 Agenda (SDG 5.1 and SDG 10.2, respectively). A higher level of education can help reduce poverty and stimulate the growth of migrants' incomes.

b) *migrants can contribute to a better provision of services and make vital contributions to host countries as workers and consumers*: access to education and training for migrants and their children allows them to be better prepared to help meet the needs of the labor market, increase their contribution to the local market, their earning potential and remittances sent to the country of origin. In this way they can contribute to the achievement of a wide range of SDGs. Granting access to health services is crucial, both to ensure the health of migrants and their contributions as workers, and for the local population by reducing the reduced risk of communicable diseases. If migration flows are large and unexpected, they can disrupt education systems, disadvantage children of migrants and refugees and create tensions in host communities. Under these conditions, there may be pressure on the providers of water, sewerage and other utilities services.

c) the 2030 Agenda contains references to the *risks and vulnerabilities of migrants* during the migration process only in the following specific objectives: 5.2, 8.7. 8.8 and 16.2, which may lead to their exclusion from national policies and programs;

d) *migration, international or domestic, to large cities* (those that are advanced producers of services, have large economies, are international gateways and are political and cultural centers of international importance) *is constantly growing*. Cities respond to the immediate needs of migrants and to a number of integration challenges, there are also areas that offer greater opportunities for education [2], [3]. A defining feature of the 21st century is the rapid urbanization in developing countries, determined by internal migration and population growth. In urban areas,

migrants, both those with higher qualifications, but especially those with low qualifications, have higher employment odds.

Cities have the opportunity either to capitalize on the skills of migrants and thus increase their competitiveness, or to increase the total cost of their social protection and unemployment system.

In this context, the 2030 Agenda highlights, from the perspective of migrants, two important sustainable development goals: promoting full, productive employment and decent work for all (Objective 8) and transforming inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (Objective 11). If Specific Objective 11.3 aims to promote comprehensive city planning and management, Specific Objective 11.a sets out how to implement this objective by supporting positive economic and social links between rural and urban areas, through regional and national planning. Therefore, it can be said that the way in which urbanization processes are managed and the types of jobs that migrants can access will have a particular influence on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. When urban migration is well managed, it can induce an economic and social dynamic that leads to an increase in the capacity of migrants in urban areas to cope with shocks and pressures. Otherwise, migrants face legal, cultural and social barriers, but also obstacles to accessing a full range of resources, services and opportunities that cities can offer: formal housing, employment, health care, education and social support systems. In this context, local and national decision-makers should include newcomers in the economic and spatial planning of urban development and the provision of services.

e) poor visibility of data on the size and structure of migratory flows *limits the understanding of migrants' needs and reduces the accountability of governments and service providers*. In this context, the collection and monitoring of disaggregated data, accompanied by migrant-specific indicators, is vital to understanding migrants' vulnerabilities and needs. Under the 2030 Agenda, specific goals 16.16 (calling for the development of efficient, accountable and transparent institutions that migrants could turn to) and 17.18 (calling for support to build countries' capacity to developing countries, including less developed countries and small developing island states, in order to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographical location and other relevant features in national contexts” [1]), could facilitate the implementation of coherent policies and programs to support better coordination and information on the size and structure of the migration phenomenon and thus to the implementation of effective support programs for migrants.

Therefore, it can be said that migration is an essential mechanism for achieving sustainable development, a mechanism that must, however, be well managed.

4. Conclusions

Whether international or domestic, migration as a multidimensional phenomenon encompasses various human movements, from completely voluntary migrations to forced migrations, in which people escape persecution, threats and catastrophes. The forced or voluntary state of these movements makes them different in many respects and therefore the ways in which companies manage such migrations must also be different.

Migration is not a development “problem” that needs to be addressed (as it may seem from SDG 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda), but rather a key mechanism for achieving sustainable development, a mechanism that needs to be well managed.

Migration can contribute to the positive results of development and, ultimately, to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This can be achieved both by understanding the impact that migration can have on the achievement of all sustainable development objectives within the 2030 Agenda, and the impact that these achievements will have on future migration patterns.

Migration is extremely important for development priorities. People will continue to move, and within the efforts for sustainable development it is necessary to recognize and integrate the challenges and opportunities presented by migration. A more careful, innovative and realistic approach to migration governance will generate surprising gains in support of sustainable development and the achievement of sustainable development goals.

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