

# Towards safe, orderly and regular migration in the Asia-Pacific region

## Challenges and opportunities

Presentation by the Secretariat  
Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Bangkok, 6-8 November 2017

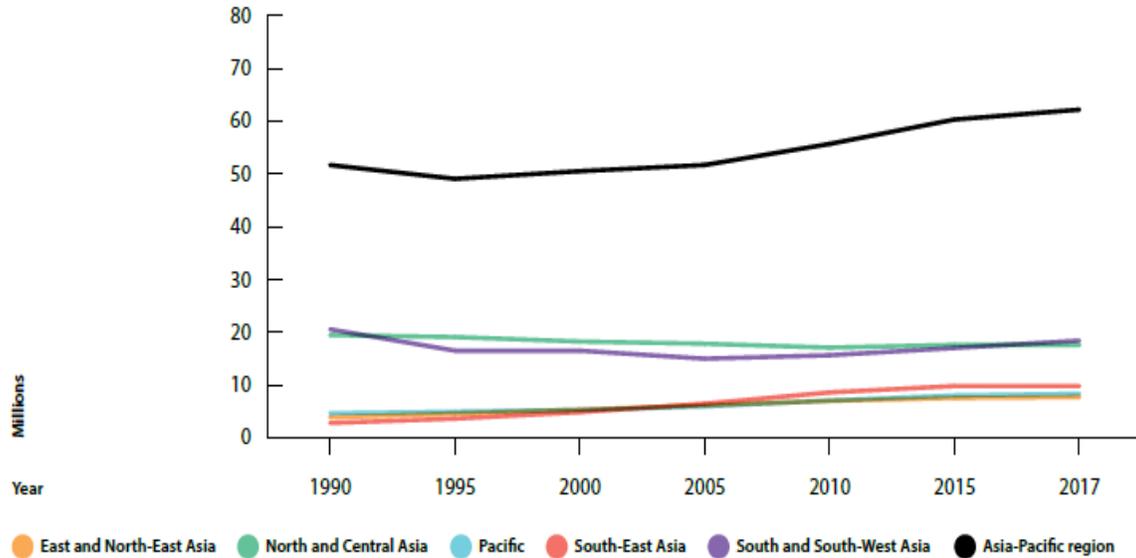


Towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities



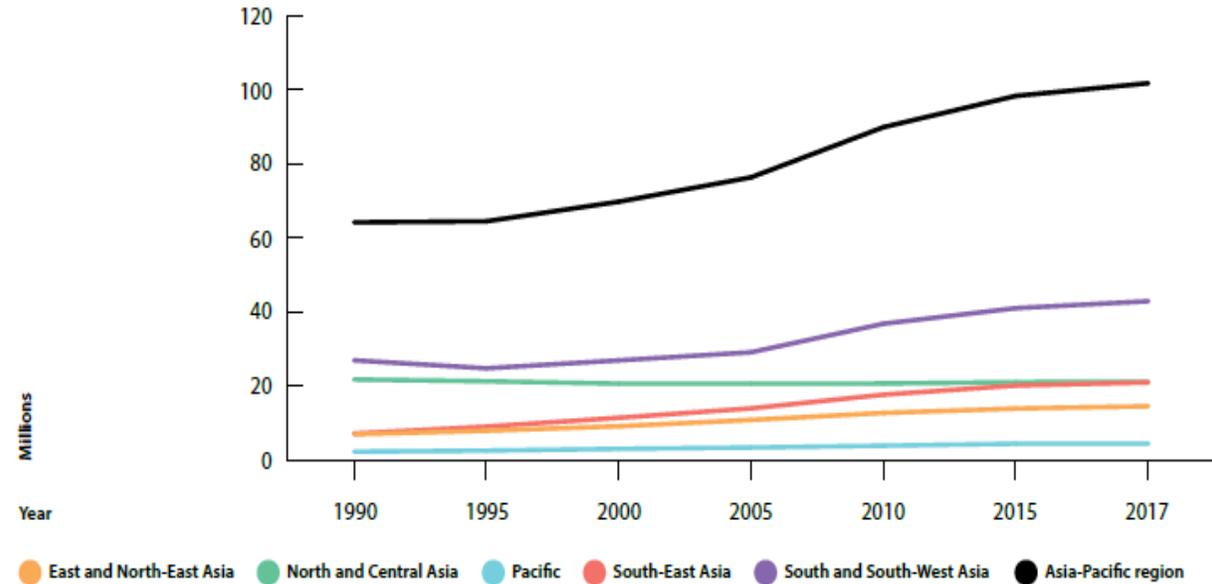
# International migration to and from the region is on the rise...

**FIGURE 1. MIGRANTS IN ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES, 1990–2017**

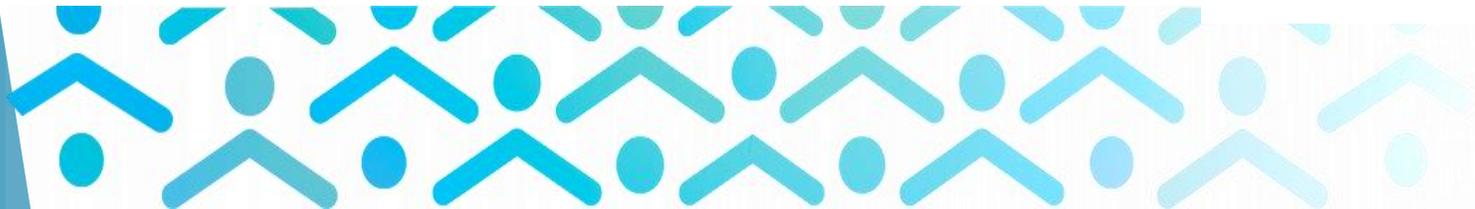


Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision* (data for 2017 forthcoming, United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017).

**FIGURE 2. MIGRANTS FROM ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES 1990–2017**



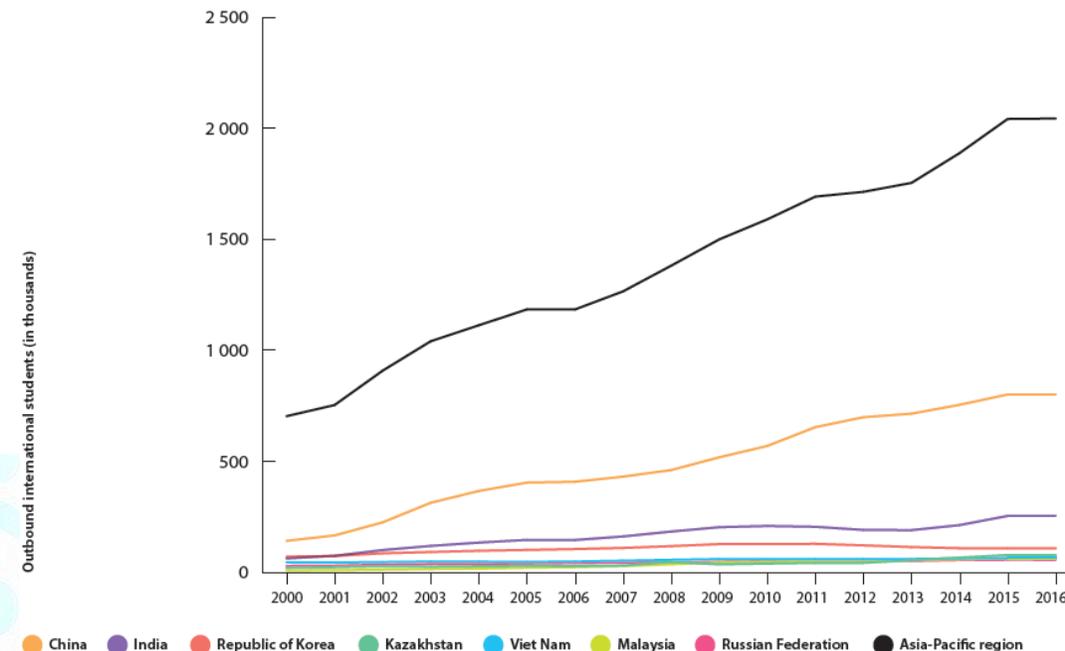
Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision* (data for 2017 forthcoming, United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017).



## ...Though migration takes many forms

- ▶ **Labour migration** is the main migration trend in Asia-Pacific
- ▶ Mainly South-South and intra-regional
- ▶ Other forms of migration
  - ▶ Seasonal employment
  - ▶ High-skilled migration
  - ▶ Student migration
  - ▶ Migration in response to climate change impacts
- ▶ Women make up a slight majority of the total migrant stock
- ▶ Many migrants take irregular pathways...
- ▶ While many others are smuggled and trafficked

**FIGURE 9. OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM SELECTED ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES, 2000–2016**



# Significant impacts in countries of origin...

- ▶ Remittances to the Asia-Pacific reached **US\$276 billion** in 2017
- ▶ Remittances help to achieve SDGs and reduce poverty
  - ▶ reduction of number of people living in poverty by 6-7 percentage points in Kyrgyzstan between 2010-2013

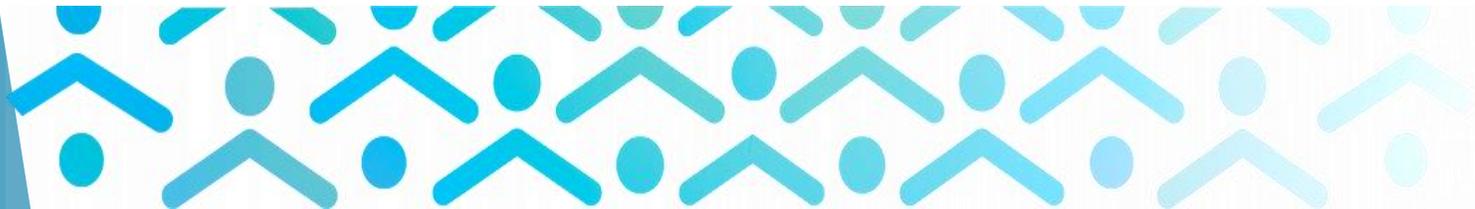
**TABLE 6. TOP REMITTANCE RECIPIENTS AND TEN YEAR TRENDS, 2016**

	REMITTANCES RECEIVED, BILLION (UNITED STATES DOLLARS)		REMITTANCES AS PERCENTAGE OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		
	2016	10-YEAR TREND (2006-2016)	2016	10-YEAR TREND (2006-2016)	
India	62.7		Kyrgyz Republic	30.5	
China	61.0		Nepal	29.7	
Philippines	29.8		Tajikistan	26.9	
Pakistan	19.8		Samoa	16.8	
Bangladesh	13.7		Marshall Islands	14.7	
Viet Nam	13.4		Armenia	13.1	
Indonesia	9.2		Tuvalu	10.6	
Sri Lanka	7.3		Georgia	10.4	
Republic of Korea	6.4		Philippines	10.2	
Nepal	6.3		Kiribati	9.8	

Source: ESCAP based on World Bank's calculations based on data from the International Monetary Fund Balance of Payments Statistics database and data released from central banks, national statistical agencies and World Bank country desks. Available from [www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/Updated%](http://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/Updated%20)

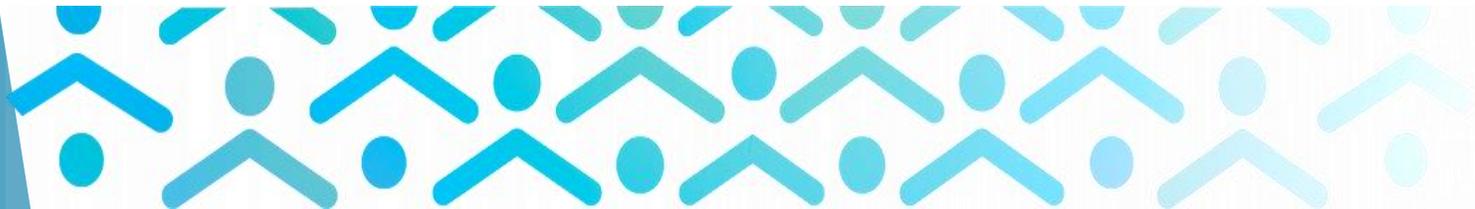
## ...and in countries of destination

- ▶ Migrants boost productivity and GDP growth in destination countries
  - ▶ Migrants contributed 3.1-6.2% of GDP in Thailand in 2013 (US\$12-24 billion)
- ▶ Migrants pay taxes and consume in countries of destination, and can help build trade and investment linkages
- ▶ Migrants generally perform jobs complementary to national workers. Hence, they create jobs for national workers too



## ....yet migrants remain vulnerable and lack social protection

- ▶ Migrants face exploitation and abuse, aggravated by factors such as irregular status, restrictive legal environments and gender discrimination
- ▶ Social protection is rarely extended to migrants
- ▶ High costs of migration and high costs of sending remittances
  
- ▶ Even though
  - ▶ International law recognises that migrants have equal rights, and should have equal working conditions



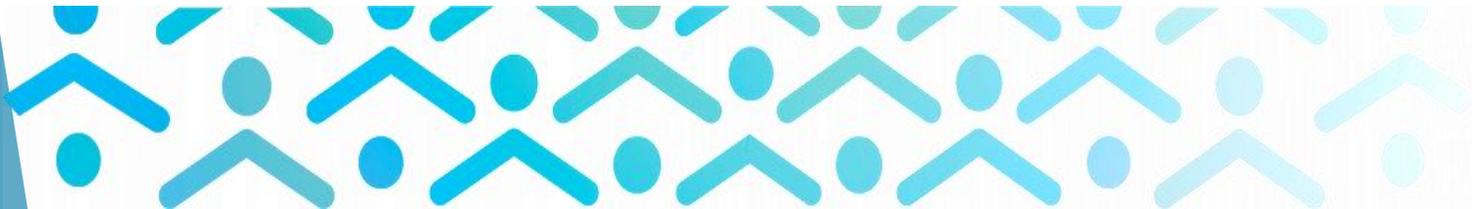
# International cooperation on migration

## ▶ Regional frameworks

- ▶ Eurasian Economic Union provides a comprehensive framework for labour migration
- ▶ ASEAN Declaration on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers
- ▶ ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons
- ▶ SAARC's Kathmandu Declaration -Cooperation to Protect Migrant Workers
- ▶ Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking and related Transnational Crime
- ▶ Almaty process on Refugee Protection and International Migration
- ▶ Colombo Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue

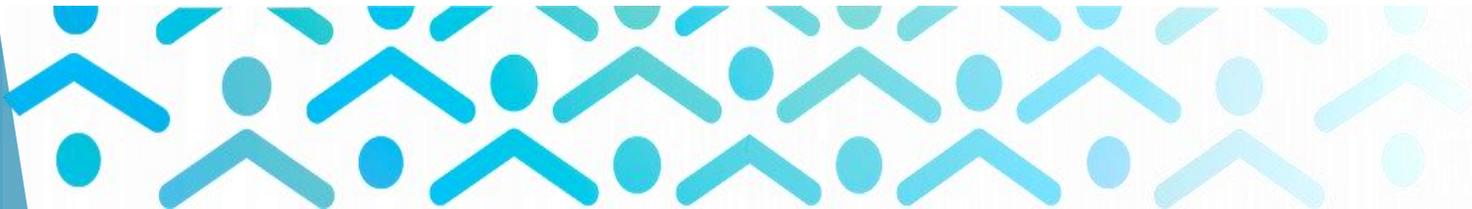
## ▶ Global frameworks

- ▶ High-Level Dialogues on Migration and Development of UNGA, 2006, 2013
- ▶ Global Forums on Migration and Development (GFMD)
- ▶ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing For Development
- ▶ The 2016 New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants at UNGA



## Global Compact and the Asia-Pacific

- ▶ Ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration is a priority for the region
- ▶ The global compact process offers an important opportunity to strengthen the **global governance and enhance coordination** on international migration
- ▶ It would present a **framework for comprehensive international cooperation** on migrants and human mobility
- ▶ Guided by the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, among others



## 7 Key GCM priorities for Asia-Pacific

- ▶ **Creating more and simpler regular pathways for labour migration** of low-skilled workers, in line with countries' needs and development strategies, and international norms
- ▶ **Ensuring the fair treatment of migrant workers**, including in informal sectors, such as domestic work, in line with national labour regulations, and human rights standards
- ▶ **Ensuring ethical recruitment with fair and transparent costs** to avoid exposing migrants to situations of additional vulnerability
- ▶ **Reducing remittance transaction costs** by creating regular low cost remittance channels
- ▶ **Creating opportunities for regular migration** as a climate change adaption strategy or those who are forced to migrate as a result of natural disasters;
- ▶ **Combatting trafficking and smuggling of migrant workers** through information campaigns, better law enforcement, regional and subregional cooperation, and more opportunities for safe and regular migration, as well as through protection of victims of trafficking and smuggling;
- ▶ **Increasing multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation** on international migration to ensure policy coherence to address it in a comprehensive and balanced fashion



# Thank you

<http://www.unescap.org/our-work/social-development/international-migration>

