▶ Thematic report on labour migration from the 2019 Kenya population and housing census

Analytical Report on International Labour Migration

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April 2022

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▶ Table of Contents

▶ **Figure 1: Map of Kenya showing the Counties**

▶ Foreword

The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, conducted in August 2019 in accordance with international statistical standards, collected extensive information on demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population, as well as data on housing and emigration. For Kenya, this census marked a significant shift toward generating evidence that more directly informs policymaking, including a clearer picture of the scale, patterns, and nature of labour migration.

This *Analytical Report on International Labour Migration*, represents an important milestone in Kenya's efforts to capture, analyse, and understand the movement of its workforce across borders. As the first monograph dedicated specifically to international labour migration, it provides a comprehensive analysis of the magnitude, direction and characteristics of Kenyan migrant workers. The report is guided by the resolutions of the 21st International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), ensuring alignment with global statistical standards.

The census theme, *"Counting Our People for Sustainable Development and Devolution of Services,"* remains highly relevant as Kenya advances its national development aspirations under Vision 2030, the Big Four Agenda, and broader regional and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063. High-quality, disaggregated data on international labour migration is essential for identifying trends, safeguarding migrant workers' rights, informing inclusive labour and social protection policies, and maximising the developmental benefits of labour mobility.

This report provides critical insights to support evidence-based policymaking and programme development in the area of labour migration. It enriches the growing body of research that strengthens labour migration governance in Kenya and across the East and Horn of Africa region. Furthermore, it highlights priority areas for improving future migration data collection, including the expansion of migration-related indicators, enhanced inter-agency coordination, and stronger linkages between National Statistical Systems and Labour Market Information Systems (LMIS).

I commend the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) for its leadership and technical rigour in producing this analytical report. I also wish to acknowledge the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) through the Better Regional Migration Management (BRMM) Programme funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), as well as the contributions of national and international partners, including those coordinated through the UN Resident Coordinator's Office for their collaboration throughout the census process. Their commitment and collaboration have been instrumental in advancing this important work.

It is our hope that this report will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, social partners, and all stakeholders working to enhance the governance of international labour migration. Ultimately, it aims to contribute to a future in which all Kenyan workers, wherever they may be, are protected, supported, and empowered to contribute meaningfully to national and regional development.

Macdonald G. Obudho, PhD, EBS, MBS
Director General
Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
2025
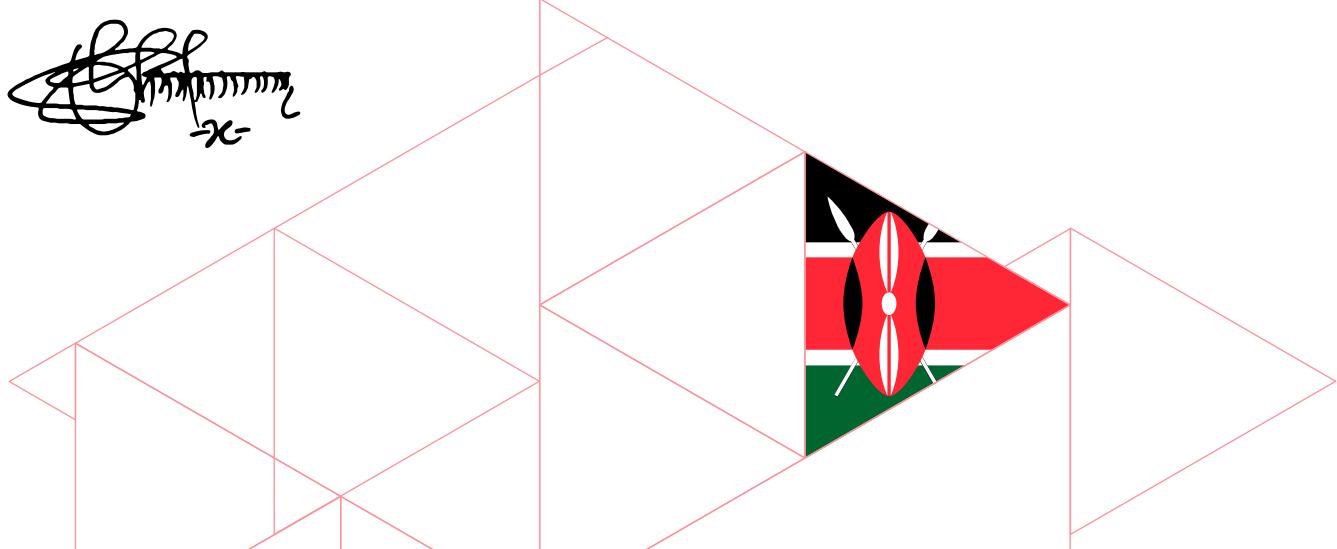
▶ 1
Introduction

1.1. Significance of international labour migration

International labour migration and mobility have become major global issues, ranking high on international, regional, and national policy agendas. The United Nations member states, while agreeing on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognized the central contribution of migrants to development and the need to pay special attention to migrants who are a potentially vulnerable population. These are various documented reasons why migration occurs, including environmental factors, family reunification, social and economic factors such as employment and education, and fleeing war, persecution, or hardship.

The number of international migrants has grown over the years in both developed and developing countries. The ILO estimates that the global stock of international migrants reached 284.5 million in 2022, with 255.7 million of them of working age (15 and over).[1] The international migration stock is expanding faster than the overall population. The number of international migrants in the labour force increased annually by an average of 3.5 per cent and 2.5 per cent, respectively. Therefore, international labour migration is becoming an increasingly important policy issue, and there is a need to respond fairly to the interests of countries of origin, countries of destination, and migrant workers and their families.

For policies to be effective, they must be based on solid evidence, including data on international migrant workers, their personal traits, and their employment conditions. Statistics are essential to provide evidence for policymakers who need to address these issues. In the 2018 Global Compact on Migration, member States also acknowledged the importance of "collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies."

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1   ILO (2024) Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers, International migrants in the labour force, Fourth edition

1.2. The international labour migration framework

The 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), held in 2018, provided guidelines on statistics of international labour migration. The ICLS identified three (3) categories of international labour migrants.

a. International migrant workers are all persons of working age in the country of measurement who fall into one of the following two categories:

> ▶ Usual residents: international migrants who, during a specified reference period, were part of the country's labour force at their usual residence, either employed or unemployed.

> ▶ Not usual residents or non-resident foreign workers: individuals who, during a specified reference period, were not habitual residents of the country but were present within it and had a labour attachment to the country, meaning they were either employed, providing labour to resident producer units of that country, or were seeking employment there.

b. For-work international migrants - all international migrants whose documented reason at the time of entering the country during a specific reference period was to undertake or seek employment.

c. Return international migrant workers - all current residents of the country who were previously international migrant workers in another country or countries.

Resolution 1 of the 20th ICLS recommends that "Each country should select a set of indicators to monitor the process of international labour migration affecting the country. For international reporting, the following set of core indicators is proposed" for international migrant workers.

a. The stock of international migrant workers

b. The labour force participation rate

c. The employment-to-population ratio and

d. The unemployment rate of international migrants.

The guidelines further recommend that the core indicators be disaggregated by sex and, where relevant, by country of origin, country of destination, country of labour attachment, or country of previous labour attachment. When relevant and feasible, the core indicators may also be expanded to include other aspects of labour underutilization among international migrant workers, particularly time-related underemployment and other forms of underemployment.

1.3. Rationale for this report

Most African countries have conducted national population and housing censuses during the UN 2010 and 2020 rounds of population and housing censuses and have produced thematic reports on economic activities as well as internal and international migration. However, no specific analytical report on international labour migration has been created. Therefore, the main goal of this report is to further analyse the census data to guide policy for better governance of international labour migration in Kenya. The specific objectives of this thematic report are to:

1. Provide information on selected labour migration characteristics of the population, including their employment status, among other aspects.

2. Provide information on labour migration disaggregated by the socio-demographic characteristics of migrant workers.

3. Identify gaps in data collection and analysis processes to improve future data efforts.

This report presents findings on international labour migration from the 2019 Kenya PHC. The report is organized into four chapters, with this chapter providing the background to the study. Chapter three offers an overview of labour migration. Chapter four discusses international labour migration based on the 2019 Kenya PHC, and chapter five shares the lessons learned.
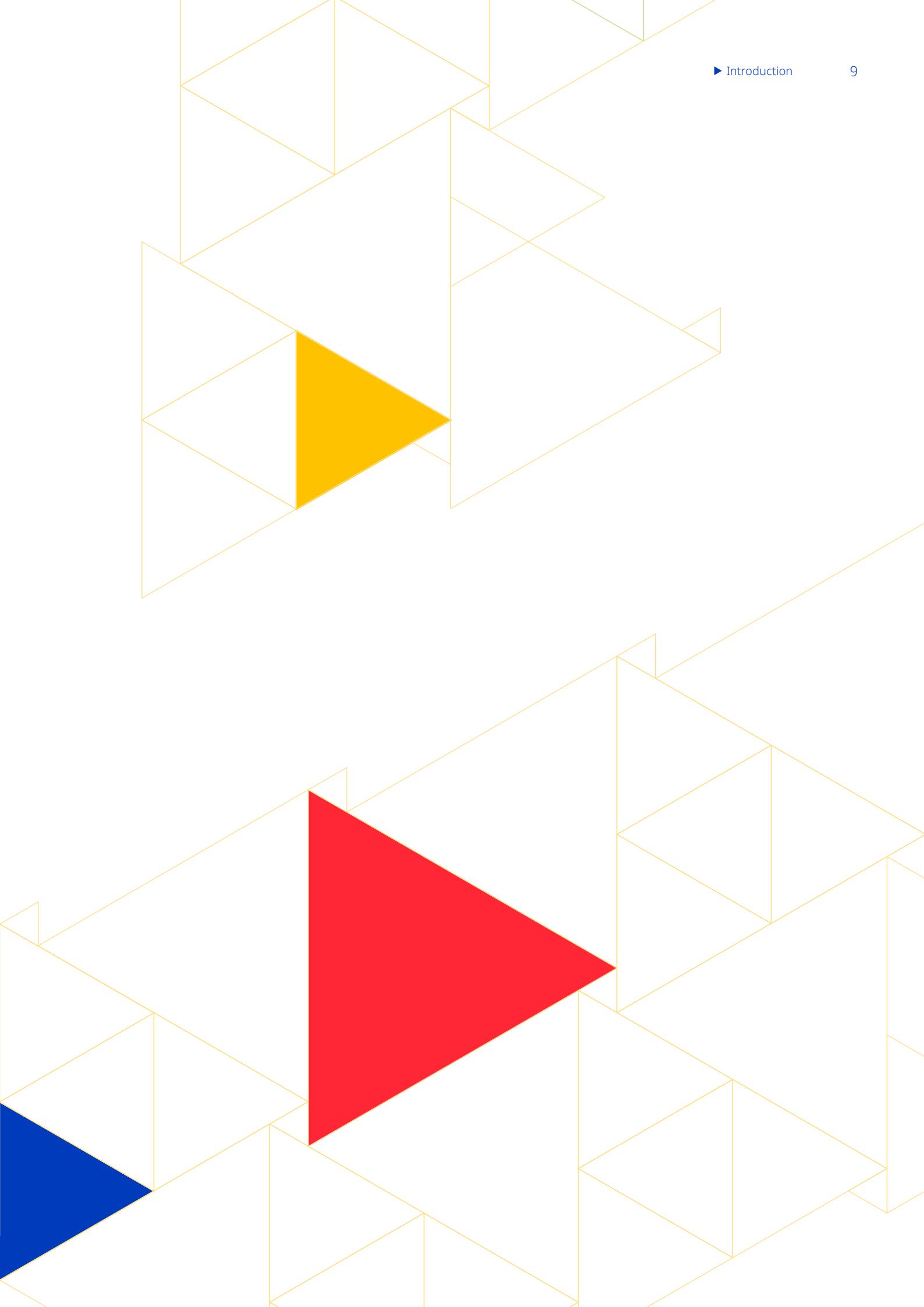
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The Kenya 2019 Population and Housing Census

2.1. Objectives of the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census[2] was carried out under the provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 (Fourth Schedule Part 1 Item 11), the Statistics (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the Statistics (Census of Population) Order, 2018 - Legal Notice No. 205, along with the Cabinet Memorandum of May 2017 on implementing the 2019 Population and Housing Census process. The theme of the census was "Counting Our People for Sustainable Development and Devolution of Services."

The primary goal of the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census was to gather data on the population's size, composition, distribution, and socio-economic traits. This data supports planning, budgeting, and programming for essential services; future policy development; resource distribution; establishing administrative and political boundaries; monitoring and assessing programmes and projects; conducting research; creating a master household sampling frame; developing a geo-spatial database; providing benchmarks for agricultural censuses and surveys; supporting business, industry, and labour analysis; and shaping housing policies and programmes.

2   The first post-independence population census in Kenya was undertaken in 1969. Since then, the country has conducted decennial Population and Housing Censuses, with the 2019 population census being the most recent.
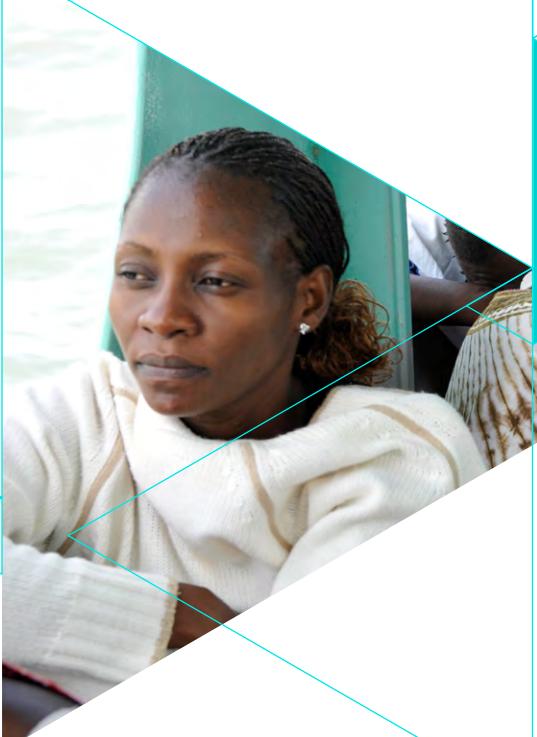
2.2. Implementation of the 2019 Census

Kenya adopted mobile technology for data collection during the 2019 census, covering both cartographic mapping and enumeration. It was the first census in Kenya to utilize mobile technology for capturing and transmitting data.

Cartographic Mapping: The preparatory activities began with a cartographic mapping exercise. The process involved dividing the country into Enumeration Areas (EAs). The EAs were used to manage the enumeration by determining the needed number of field personnel and ensuring complete coverage.

Census Questionnaires: Five different types of questionnaires were developed through a national consultative process. The main questionnaire was used to count the standard population, while four shorter versions were used for specific groups (travelers, outdoor sleepers, individuals in hotels and lodges, and persons in institutions). These questionnaires were uploaded onto mobile devices for data collection and transmission.

Enumeration: The primary census took place from the night of August 24th/25th, 2019, and concluded on August 31st, 2019. A follow-up was conducted on 1st and 2nd September 2019. Data was collected using mobile devices (tablets) and then transmitted to a central server.

Quality Assurance: Quality assurance was incorporated into every stage of the census process. Comprehensive guidelines were created and distributed to census personnel. Field supervision used a three-tier structure to provide adequate support, respond quickly to emerging issues, and offer feedback during data collection.

2.3. Data on international labour migration from the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

The 2019 Kenya PHC gathered various types of information that can identify international migrants.

a) Emigrants

Emigrants from Kenya were identified and estimated by asking whether members of all enumerated households had ever migrated to a different country in the past fifteen years. A short questionnaire was used to gather information on the characteristics of emigrants, including educational attainment, professional training, country of destination and residence, year of departure, reason for emigration, and remittances. However, no data was collected about the current labour force status of the immigrants, so it is not possible to analyse the employment status of citizens working abroad.

POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 24/25th AUGUST 2019 SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMIGRANTS		
E-01:	Seria I No.	
E-01(a):	Line No. of Respondent	
E-02:	Name of Emigrant	Please give me the name(s) of the emigrant(s)?
E-03:	Sex	What is <NAME>'s Sex? Male=1, Female=2
E-04:	Age	How old was <NAME> at the time of his/her departure?
E-05:	Level of Education	What was the was highest level of education that <NAME> has completed at the time of his/her departure?
E-06:	Professional training	What professional training had <NAME> acquired before departure from Kenya? (Applicable to persons age 15 years & above)
E-07:	Country of first Destination	What was <NAME>'s country of first destination during his/her departure?
E-08:	Year of Departure	When did <NAME> depart from Kenya?
E-09:	Main reason for Departure	What was the main reason for <NAME> departing from Kenya?
E-10:	Country of current residence	What is the current country of residence of <NAME>?
E-10a:	Select the Name of the Emigrant if currently in Kenya.	
E-11:	Remittances	Did <NAME> remit money to any member of this hosehold while otside Kenya in the last 12 months? Yes=1, No= 2, DK=9
E-12:	Utilization of funds	How was the money utilized?

b) Immigrants

The 2019 Kenya census questionnaire included items in the household questionnaire, and these were:

P-16	What is <NAME>'s ethnicity or nationality? For non-Kenyans, write code for Nationality
P-19	Where was <NAME> born? Write County code if in Kenya, or Country Code if outside Kenya
P-20	Where was <NAME> living in August 2018? Write County code if in Kenya, or Country Code if outside Kenya
P-21 & P-22	When did <NAME> move to the current county? Year and Month
P-23	Why did <NAME> move to the current place of residence? 1. Work/Employment 2. Business 3. Marriage. Sports 4. Education 5. Settlement Family related 6. Relocation due to development 7. Conflict/Disaster displacement 8. Refugee 9. Asylum Seeker 10. Family-Related Movement 11. Retirement 12. Visiting 99. DK

2.4. Socio-demographic profile of Kenya

The 2019 PHC of Kenya showed that the total population increased from 37.7 million in 2009 to 47.6 million in 2019, with an average annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent. The growth rate slightly declined from 2.7 per cent per year in 2009. Figure 1.1 shows the population counts conducted in Kenya between 1969 and 2019.

▶ **Figure 2.1: Census population, Kenya, 1969 - 2019**
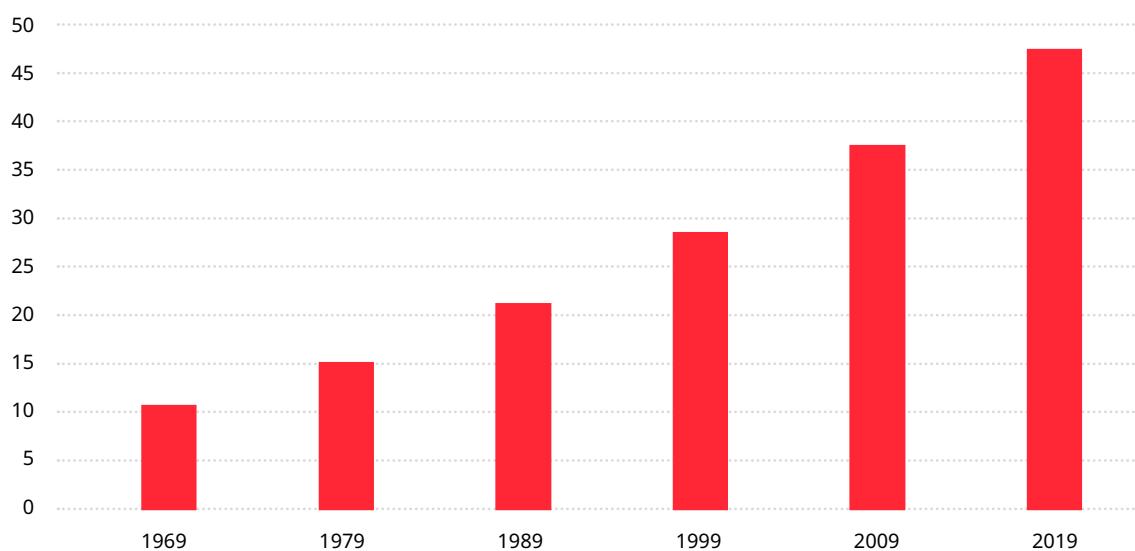
Table 1.1 shows that males account for 24.0 million, or 49.5 per cent, while females total 23.6 million, or 50.5 per cent.

▶ **Table 2.1: Census indicators at a glance, Kenya, 2019**

Indicator	Value
Population Size ('000s)	47,564.3
Male ('000s)	23,548.1
Female ('000s)	24,014.7
Inter Sex ('000s)	1.5
Sex Ratio (No. of males per 100 females)	98.1
Proportion of females	50.5
Population Density (No. of persons per square km)	82
Number of households ('000s)	12,143.9
Average Household Size	3.9
Inter-censal Growth Rate (%)	2.2

Source: 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

Kenya's population is predominantly made up of children. The 2019 census results show that the proportion of children under 15 years old was 39.0 per cent of the total population, while those aged 15 to 64 years made up about 57.1 per cent. The country's dependency ratio was 75 dependents (people aged 0-14 and 65+) for every 100 working-age individuals (15-64 years). Specifically, there are about 68 children (0-14 years) for every 100 working-age people (15-64 years), and about 7 persons aged 65 and above for every 100 working-age persons.

▶ **Figure 2.2: Proportion of the population in selected age groups, Kenya, 1969 - 2019**
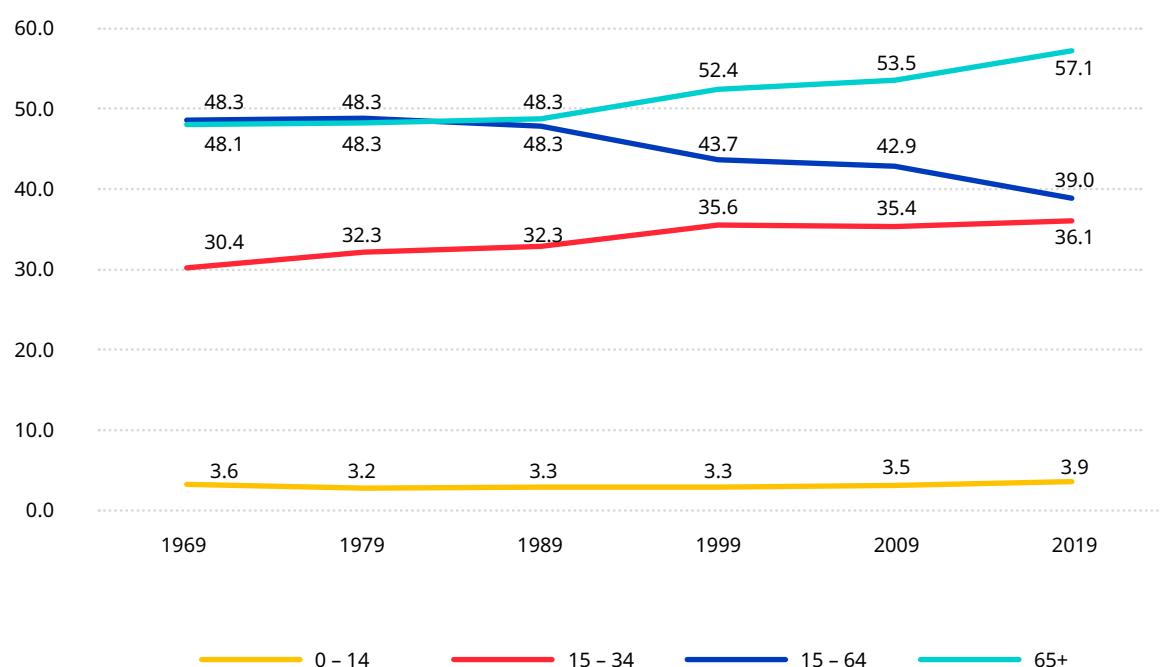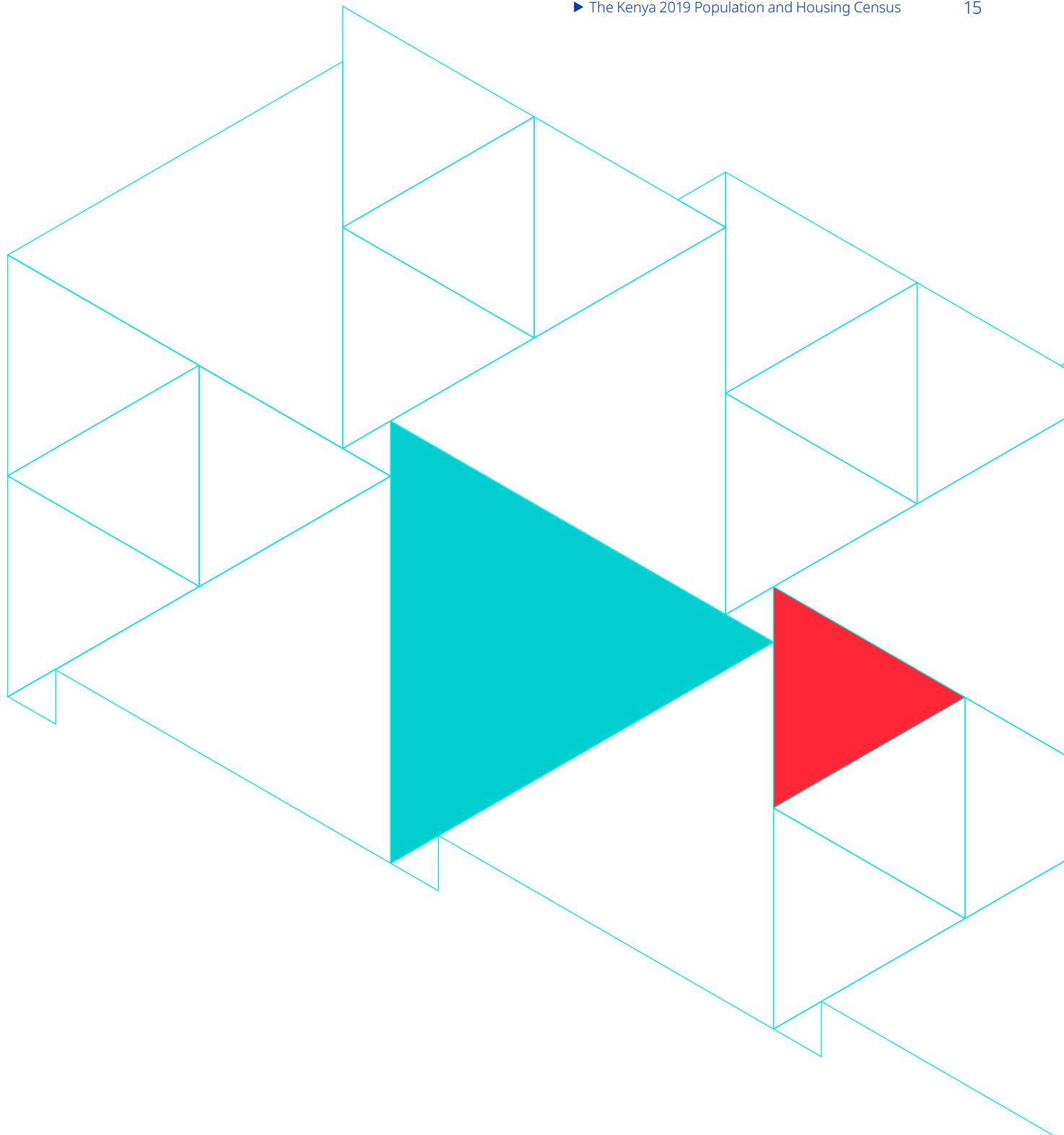
3 Concepts in international labour migration

3.1. International labour migration concepts

The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census (KNBS) described migration as 'a change of place of usual residence for a period of three months or more, of an individual or a group of persons from an administrative area to another'. It also described international migration as 'the process by which one changes his place of usual residence by crossing international boundaries into another country'.

International migration is the process of changing one's usual residence by crossing international borders into another country.

An emigrant is an international migrant leaving to another country by crossing an international border.

3.2. Labour force concepts

The working-age population (WAP) includes all individuals above a certain age threshold used for statistical purposes to define the economically active population (labour force). Globally, this threshold is commonly set at 15 years and older, as this is the age at which individuals gain access to the labour market according to the ILO Conventions.

Labour force characteristics - The analysis of the labour force characteristics was based on the 13th ICLS, which distinguishes between work and employment. Although data on the economic activities of persons was collected for all individuals aged five years and older, this report's analysis focuses on the population aged 15 years and above.

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) - is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work. it provides an indication of the size of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services, relative to the population at working age.

$$Labour\ force\ participation\ rate = \frac{International\ migrant\ workers}{International\ migrant\ workers}$$

The employment-to-population ratio (EPR)[3] - is defined as the proportion of a country's working-age population that is employed. A high ratio means that a large proportion of a country's population is employed, while a low ratio means that a large share of the population is not involved directly in market-related activities, because they are either unemployed or out of the labour force.

$$Employment\text{–}to\text{–}population\ ratio = \frac{Employed\ international\ migrant\ workers}{International\ migrants\ of\ working\ age}$$

The unemployment rate (UR) - is a useful measure of the underutilization of the labour supply. It reflects the inability of an economy to generate employment for those persons in the working ages who want to work but are not doing so, even though they are available for employment and actively seeking work. Thus, the unemployment rate is an indicator of the efficiency and effectiveness of an economy to absorb its labour force and of the performance of the labour market.

$$Unemployment\ rate = \frac{Unemployed\ international\ migrant\ workers}{International\ migrant\ workers}$$

Gender Parity index: The Gender Parity Index (GPI) as a socio-economic index usually designed to measure the relative access to a service (such as education or employment) of males and females.

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3   The employment-to-population ratio (EPR) is also referred to as the Employment Rate
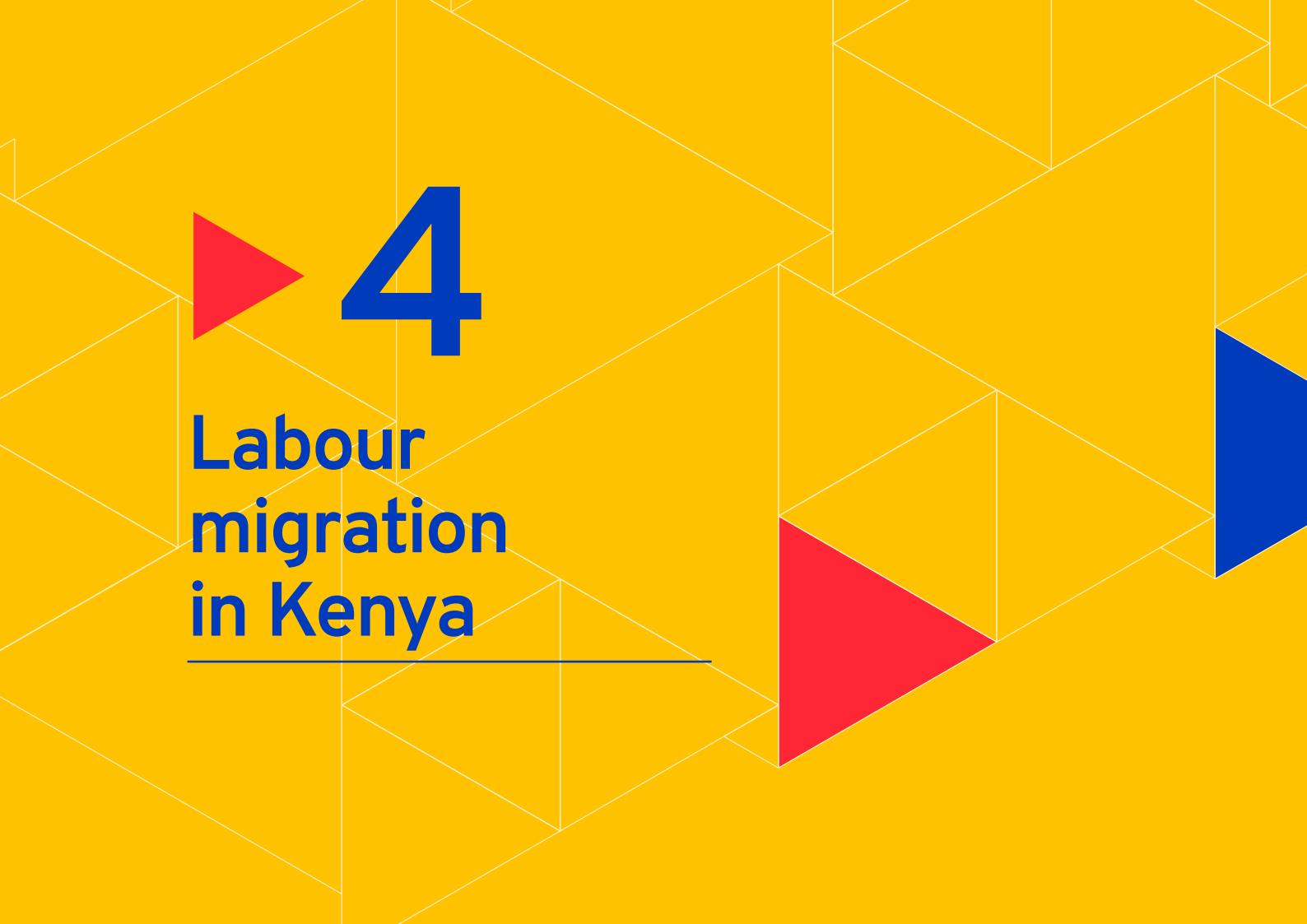
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Labour migration in Kenya

4.1. International migration in Kenya

International migrants can be identified by either the Country of Birth (foreign-born population) or the Country of Citizenship (foreigner population). During the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, 419,135 immigrants were counted, making up 0.88 per cent of the total population, with just over half (50.7%) being women. Most immigrants into Kenya originated from other African nations. Additionally, Kenya hosts a large number of refugees from neighbouring countries. According to the UNHCR, in early 2019, Kenya was hosting approximately 475,412 refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR 2019). The refugees mainly come from Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, while the asylum-seekers are primarily from eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, and Ethiopia.

Table 4.1 shows that international migrants, defined by Country of Birth, make up 0.88 per cent of the total population, while those defined by citizenship account for 0.89 per cent. Therefore, there is little difference in the number of international migrants whether identified by Country of Birth or country of citizenship. To keep this report consistent with other reports from the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, international migrants are hereby defined using the Country of Birth criterion. Additionally, the country of birth is preferred because it remains fixed and does not change regardless of a person's residence status. This allows for a comprehensive and mutually exclusive classification of each individual's migration status, thereby preventing any duplications.

▶ **Table 4.1: Population by citizenship and country of birth, Kenya, 2019**

Country of birth	Total	Citizen	Non-citizen
Total population	100.00	99.11	0.89
Born in Kenya	99.12	98.99	0.14
Born outside Kenya	0.88	0.13	0.75

The number of immigrants into Kenya has increased over time, from 179,000 in 1979 to 419,000 in 2019. The emigrants show a similar trend until 2009, before declining in 2019.

▶ **Figure 4.1: Trends in international migration in Kenya, 1979 - 2019**
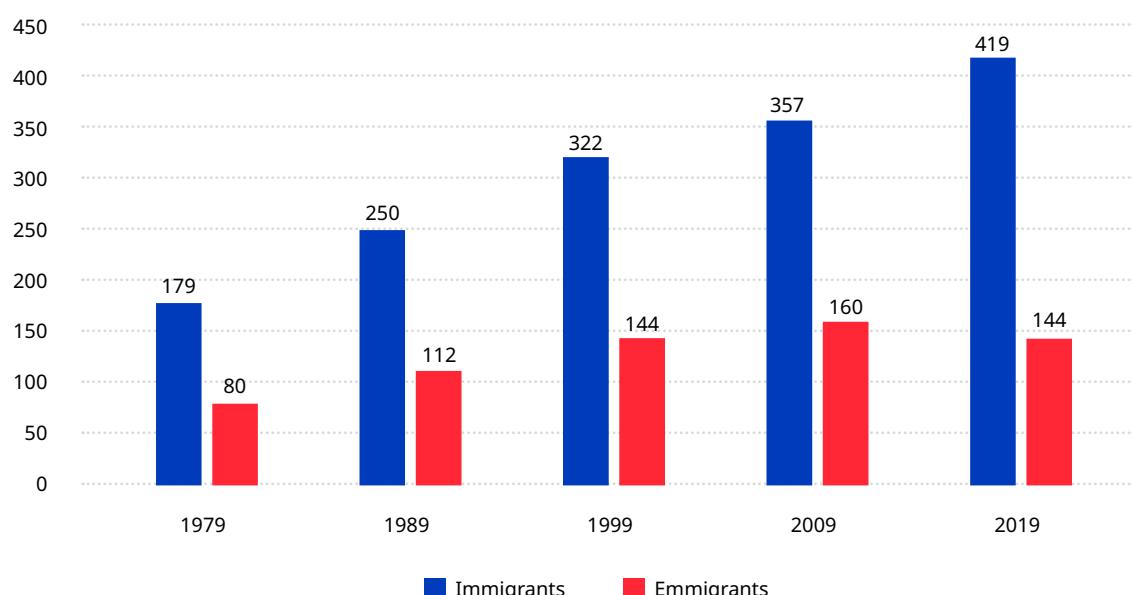
Source:

4.2. Emigration

The 2019 Kenya census gathered data on the number and traits of emigrants and return migrants using the Emigrant questionnaire. The information relates to all household members who have emigrated to another country within the 15 years before the census. Households reported on the Emigrants they previously lived with before leaving. The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census - Analytical Report (Volume VIII) provides a detailed analysis of emigration, while this section offers a summary of the findings.

The findings indicate that a total of 327,000 people emigrated in the 15 years before the census was conducted. Most emigrants moved to countries within the East African Community (EAC), which was their first destination, followed by those who migrated to the Arabian Gulf, other African countries outside the EAC, and the USA. These four destinations made up nearly three-quarters (73.9 per cent) of all emigrants over the past 15 years. Additionally, the findings show that 143,664 individuals were living outside Kenya at the time of the census. The majority of them resided in the Arabian Gulf (38,400), the USA (29,300), EAC countries (21,600), and Europe (20,400).

More than half (56 per cent) were reported to have emigrated for employment-related reasons, thus classified as international labour migrants. Over half (54.8 per cent) of those who emigrated for employment reasons were males. The gender distribution is fairly even among those who emigrated for education, family reasons, and settlement. However, significant gender differences are observed among those who migrated for marriage (females = 92.3 per cent) and sports (males = 76.1 per cent).

Africa is a major recipient of remittances. In 2018, inflows to Africa reached USD 81 billion, while outflows were USD 10.3 billion. Census data revealed that a total of 144,072 households (1.2 per cent of households in Kenya) reported receiving remittances. The majority of remittance-receiving households (61.3 per cent) were in rural areas.

Three out of every five emigrants were reported to send remittances. In the 12 months before the census, most of the remittances came from emigrants living in the Arabian Gulf. This is because over 80 per cent of emigrants to the Arabian Gulf move for employment reasons.

4.3. International labour migration

Table 4.1 provides a summary of the labour force status of the working-age population. The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census reported a total of 28.7 million people of working age, that is, aged 15 years and older. Of these, 332,524 (1.2 per cent) were immigrants or foreign-born. The table also shows that the 2019 census counted a total of 225,197 international labour migrants, meaning foreign-born individuals who were part of the labour force, either employed or unemployed. Of these, 44.6 per cent were women.

▶ **Table 4.1: Working age population by labour force status and country of birth by sex, Kenya, 2019**

Labour force status by Country of birth	Total	Male	Female	Per cent female
Working Age Population				
Total	28,726,451	14,012,669	14,712,864	51.2
Born in Kenya	28,393,927	13,850,275	14,542,755	51.2
Born outside Kenya	331,761	162,028	169,712	51.2
Labour force				
Total	21,273,920	10,722,171	10,551,048	49.6
Born in Kenya	21,048,148	10,597,036	10,450,429	49.7
Born outside Kenya	225,197	124,828	100,351	44.6
Employment				
Total	18,560,646	9,179,238	9,380,849	50.5
Born in Kenya	18,393,940	9,084,210	9,309,184	50.6
Born outside Kenya	166,249	94,778	71,458	43.0
Unemployment				
Total	2,713,274	1,542,933	1,170,199	43.1
Born in Kenya	2,654,208	1,512,826	1,141,245	43.0
Born outside Kenya	58,948	30,050	28,893	49.0
Outside the Labour force				
Total	7,452,531	3,290,498	4,161,816	55.8
Born in Kenya	7,345,779	3,253,239	4,092,326	55.7
Born outside Kenya	106,564	37,200	69,361	65.1

Note: The total includes 918 individuals of working age who are intersex, and 763 individuals of working age whose country of birth was not stated or unknown.

Most of the foreign-born working population (71 per cent) were from EAC member states. Most notable among these were Uganda (35.9 per cent) and the United Republic of Tanzania (19.9 per cent). Labour migrants from countries outside Africa made up nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of all labour migrants, while those from African countries outside the EAC accounted for only 5 per cent.

Figure 4.2 shows that most of the labour migrants were in the age group 20–34 years. Only 7 per cent of the labour migrants were between 15 and 19 years old. However, the share more than doubles to 17 per cent for ages 20–24 and 25–29. After that, it declines gradually, going down to as low as 2.0 per cent for the age group 60–64 years.

▶ **Figure 4.1: Foreign-born working population by country of birth and sex, Kenya, 2019**
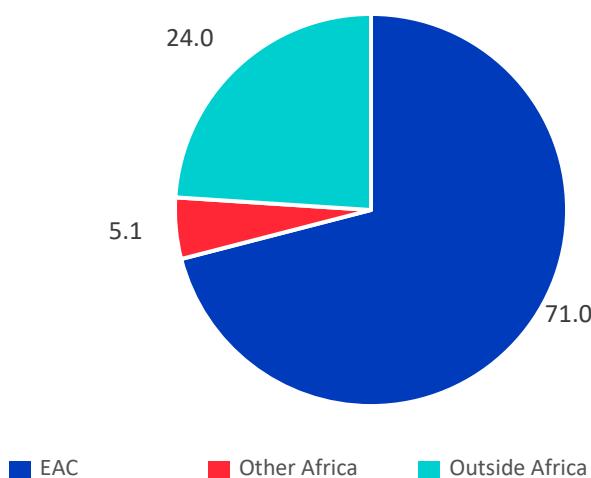
4.4. Core labour migration indicators

The 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) recommends the following set of core indicators regarding international migrant workers:

a) The number/percentage of international migrant workers

b) The labour force participation rate, the employment-to-population ratio, and the unemployment rate of international migrants.[4]

a) Labour force participation rate

The 2019 Kenya PHC indicates that the Labour Force Participation Rate for the foreign-born population was 67.9 per cent compared to 74.1 per cent for the native-born population. The gender differences were more notable among the foreign-born population, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1.3 compared to 1.1 for the native-born population.

▶ **Table 4.2: Labour force participation rate by sex and country of birth, Kenya, 2019**

Country of birth	Total	Male	Female	GPI
Total	74.1	76.5	71.7	1.1
Born in Kenya	74.1	76.5	71.9	1.1
Born outside Kenya	67.9	77.0	59.1	1.3

b) Employment‑to‑population ratio

The Employment-to-Population Ratio for the foreign-born population was 50.1 per cent, compared to 64.8 per cent for the native-born population. Significant gender differences were observed in the EPR of the foreign-born population, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1.4 compared to 1.0 for the native-born population.

▶ **Table 4.3: Employment to population by sex and country of birth, Kenya, 2019**

Country of birth	Total	Male	Female	GPI
Total	64.6	65.5	63.8	1.0
Born in Kenya	64.8	65.6	64.0	1.0
Born outside Kenya	50.1	58.5	42.1	1.4

c) Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate for the foreign-born population was 26.2 per cent, more than twice that of the native-born population at 12.6 per cent. Unlike the LFPR and the EPR, the Gender Parity Index for the foreign-born population (0.8) is lower than that of the native-born population (1.3), indicating a narrower gender gap in sex-specific unemployment rates among the foreign-born compared to those born in Kenya.

▶ **Table 4.4: Unemployment rate by sex and country of birth, Kenya, 2019**

Country of Birth	Total	Male	Female	GPI
Total	12.8	14.4	11.1	1.3
Born in Kenya	12.6	14.3	10.9	1.3
Born outside Kenya	26.2	24.1	28.8	0.8

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4   The analysis of the labour force characteristics was based on the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians

4.5. Characteristics of the foreign-born working population

Based on data from the 2019 census, the available economic characteristics of the labour force for analysis are labour force status, economic activity, and occupation. The employment status information was not coded according to the 20th ICLS guidelines and, therefore, is not included in this report.

a) Labour force status of the foreign-born working-age population

Table 4.5 shows that nearly three-quarters of the labour migrants (73.8 per cent) were employed. The employment rate is slightly lower for females (71.2 per cent) compared to males (75.9 per cent).

▶ **Table 4.5: Foreign-born population by labour force status and sex, Kenya, 2019**

Labour force status	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	% Share	Number	% Share	Number	% Share
Total	225,197	100.0	124,828	100.0	100,351	100.0
Employed	166,249	73.8	94,778	75.9	71,458	71.2
Unemployed	58,948	26.2	30,050	24.1	28,893	28.8

b) Occupations and skills level of the foreign-born working population

The ILO defines occupation as 'a set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity'. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) grouped all occupations into 10 groups.[5]

Table 4 (based on the KeSCO-2022) shows that more than half of the foreign-born working population was engaged in elementary occupations (25.6 per cent) or in agricultural-based activities (24.7 per cent).

The table also shows significant disparities in the distribution by sex, especially among professionals and plant and machine operators. While the overall sex ratio of the foreign-born working population is 133 per cent, the ratio for plant and machine operators and professionals exceeds 500 per cent.

▶ **Table 4.6: Distribution of the foreign-born working population by occupation and sex, Kenya, 2019**

Occupation and skills level	Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
All occupations	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*133*
Elementary occupations	25.6	24.6	26.9	121
Skilled farm, fishery wildlife and workers	24.7	21.3	29.1	97
Legislators, administrators and managers	13.5	12.3	14.9	109
Service workers, sop and market sales workers	9.7	8.0	11.9	90
Technicians and associate professionals	9.5	10.3	8.4	164
Craft and related trades workers	6.0	8.9	2.1	566
Professionals	5.7	6.6	4.4	202
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	4.0	6.7	0.4	2,132
Secretarial clerical services and related workers	1.5	1.1	1.9	79
Not elsewhere classified	0.1	0.1	0.0	1,650

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5   Kenya localized the ISCO-08 into the Kenya Standard Classification of Occupations (KeSCO-2022). The KeSCO-2022 is a comprehensive guide to occupational information in the Kenyan economy. The standard provides insights into the occupational framework: the type of work performed in jobs within establishments, industries, or the country; the nature of tasks performed; and the body of knowledge, skills, and skill levels needed for a job holder to perform those tasks effectively.

c) Sectors of employment for the foreign-born working population

Figure 3.3 shows that foreign-born employment is concentrated in three occupations: Agriculture (24.8 per cent), wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (7.4 per cent), and 'Other service activities'[6] (36.2 per cent). These three together account for more than two-thirds (68.4 per cent) of foreign-born employment.

Table A3.4 further highlights significant sex differences in the composition of foreign-born employment by gender. Among males, the top five industries are Other service activities, Agriculture, Wholesale and retail trade, Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, Construction, and Manufacturing. Conversely, among females, the leading industries are Other service activities, Activities of households as employers, Wholesale and retail trade, Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, and Accommodation and food service activities.

▶ **Figure 4.3: Foreign-born employment by type of industry, Kenya, 2019**

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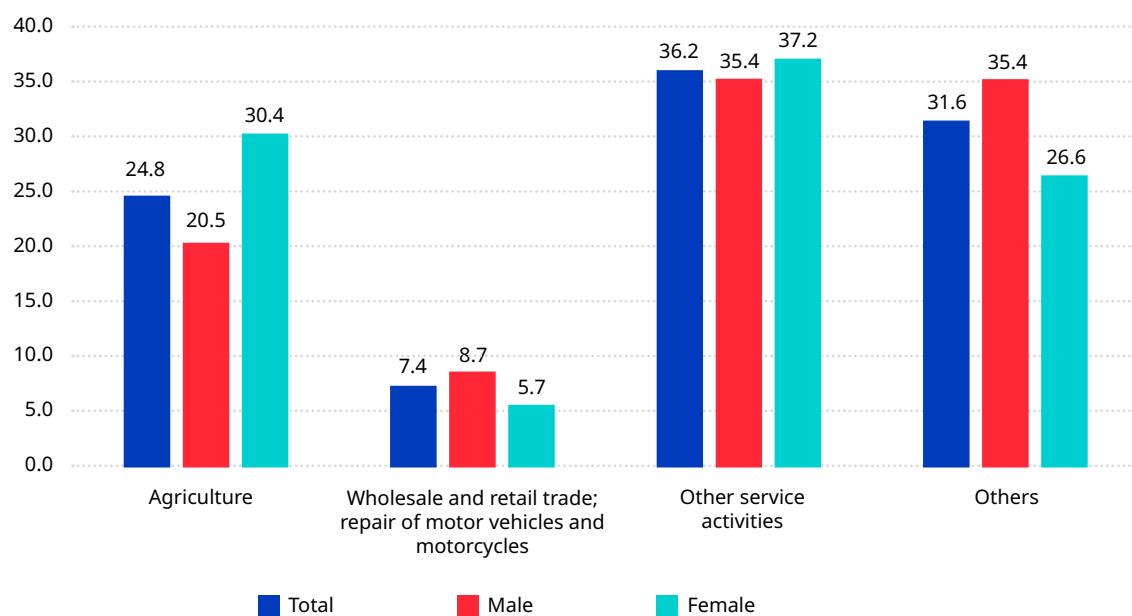
6   The 'Other service activities' (as a residual category) include the activities of membership organizations, the repair of computers and personal and household goods, and a variety of personal service activities not covered elsewhere in the classification (ISIC Rev 4).
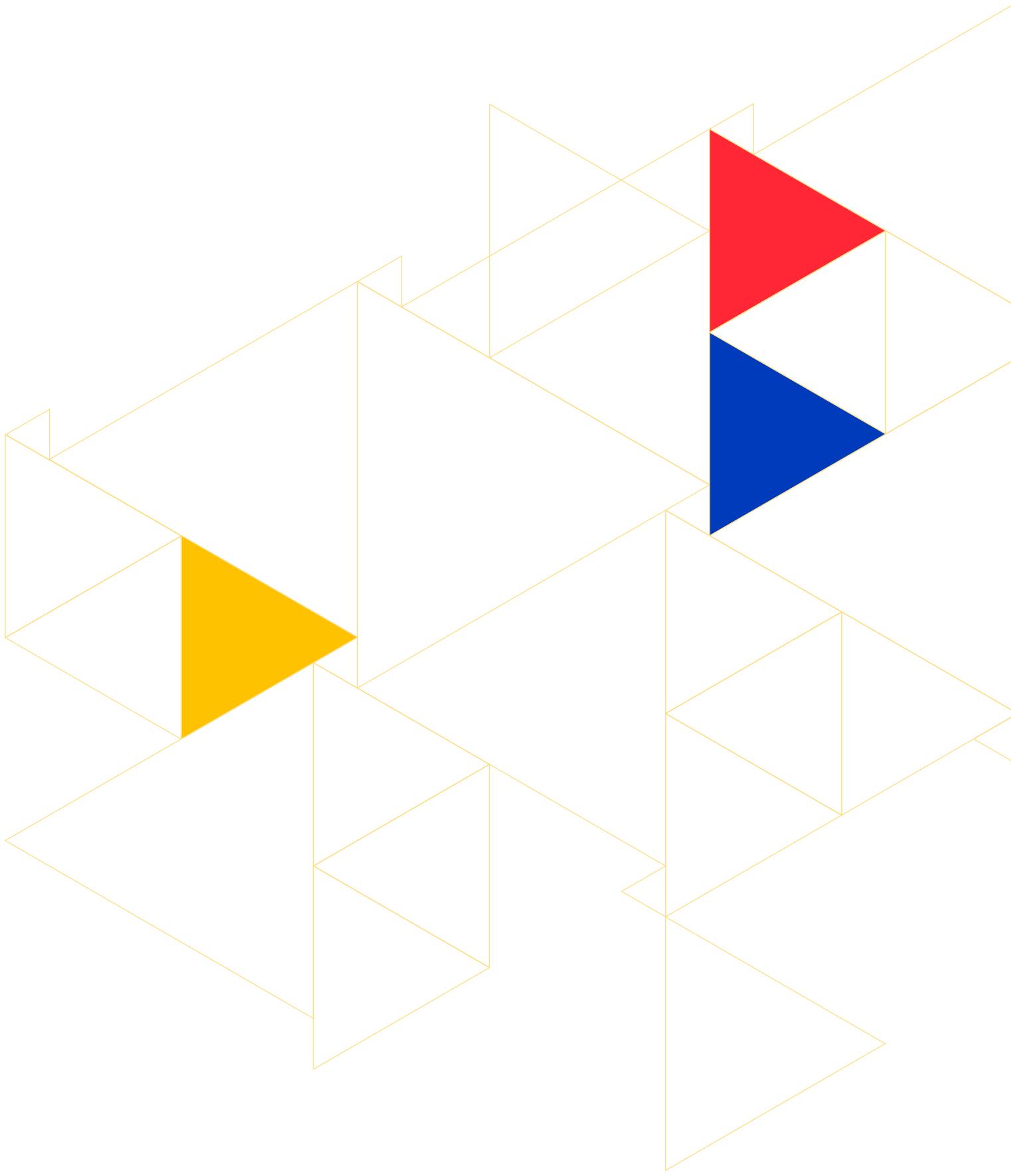
5

Lessons learned and areas for improvement

Good practices

1. There are several criteria for determining international migration, including 'Country of Birth' and 'Country of Citizenship'. Collecting and publishing information on both country of birth and country of citizenship has allowed the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics to build confidence among readers that using either criterion for identifying immigrants would yield similar results.

Areas that require improvement

1. The labour force analytical report published tables showing labour force characteristics by country of birth, allowing for the study of labour migration. However, the report's narrative did not address labour migration issues.
2. The information on 'Economic activity of persons' was based on the 13th ICLS Guidelines. In the future, such information should be based on the 19th ICLS Resolution I concerning statistics on work relationships.
3. Labour migration impacts individual migrants, their families, and the communities they live in. A better understanding of labour migration dynamics should also include an analysis of the family and community characteristics of migrants. An example is analysing the living conditions of migrant workers.

▶ References

International Labour Organization (2018), 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians: Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration

International Labour Organization (2021), Labour Market Assessment (with a special focus on migrant workers from the IGAD region), Kenya Country Report

International Labour Organization (2022), Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers International migrants in the labour force - Fourth edition

KNBS (2022), 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, Volume VIII: Analytical Report on Population Dynamics

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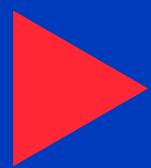
Appendix
Tables
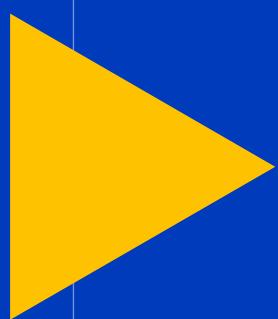
▶ **Table A1: Foreign-born working population by country of birth and sex, Kenya, 2019**

Country of birth	Total	Male	Female	Per cent Female
All countries	*166,706*	*95,028*	*71,665*	*100.0*
EAC member states				
Burundi	4,338	3,676	661	2.6
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6,252	4,068	2,183	3.8
Rwanda	4,216	3,139	1,075	2.5
Somalia	9,189	4,759	4,429	5.5
South Sudan	1,324	689	635	0.8
Tanzania	33,168	17,958	15,208	19.9
Uganda	59,836	27,595	32,236	35.9
Rest of Africa				
Ethiopia	3,416	2,146	1,270	2.0
Congo Republic of The...	3,387	2,314	1,073	2.0
Nigeria	1,145	959	186	0.7
South Africa	474	304	170	0.3
Outside Africa				
China	3,798	3,213	585	2.3
Germany	660	394	266	0.4
India	19,794	14,287	5,507	11.9
Italy	587	375	212	0.4
Pakistan	1,082	701	381	0.6
UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1,937	1,180	757	1.2
United States of America	1,741	879	861	1.0
Other nationality	477	279	198	0.3
Others	9,885	6,113	3,772	5.9

NB: Totals include 13 individuals who were working and identified as intersex.

▶ **Table A2: Foreign-born working population by industry and sex, Kenya, 2019**

Economic activity	Total	Male	Female	Per cent Share
All Economic activities	*166,249*	*94,778*	*71,458*	*100.0*
A – Agriculture, forestry and fishing	41,156	19,415	21,740	24.8
B – Mining and quarrying	1,200	1,063	137	0.7
C – Manufacturing	4,560	3,821	739	2.7
D – Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1,059	945	114	0.6
E – Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	498	359	139	0.3
F – Construction	7,114	6,635	478	4.3
G – Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	12,365	8,280	4,083	7.4
H – Transportation and storage	3,508	3,132	376	2.1
I – Accommodation and food service activities	7,264	3,351	3,913	4.4
J – Information and communication	1,705	1,162	542	1.0
K – Financial and insurance activities	2,974	1,641	1,333	1.8
L – Real estate activities	995	620	375	0.6
M – Professional, scientific and technical activities	2,980	1,895	1,085	1.8
N – Administrative and support service activities	2,702	1,589	1,113	1.6
O – Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	771	593	178	0.5
P – Education	2,722	1,241	1,479	1.6
Q – Human health and social work activities	2,964	1,432	1,532	1.8
R – Arts, entertainment and recreation	1,881	1,205	676	1.1
S – Other service activities	60,176	33,558	26,613	36.2
T – Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services producing activities of households for own use	6,111	1,868	4,242	3.7
U – Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	1,544	973	571	0.9
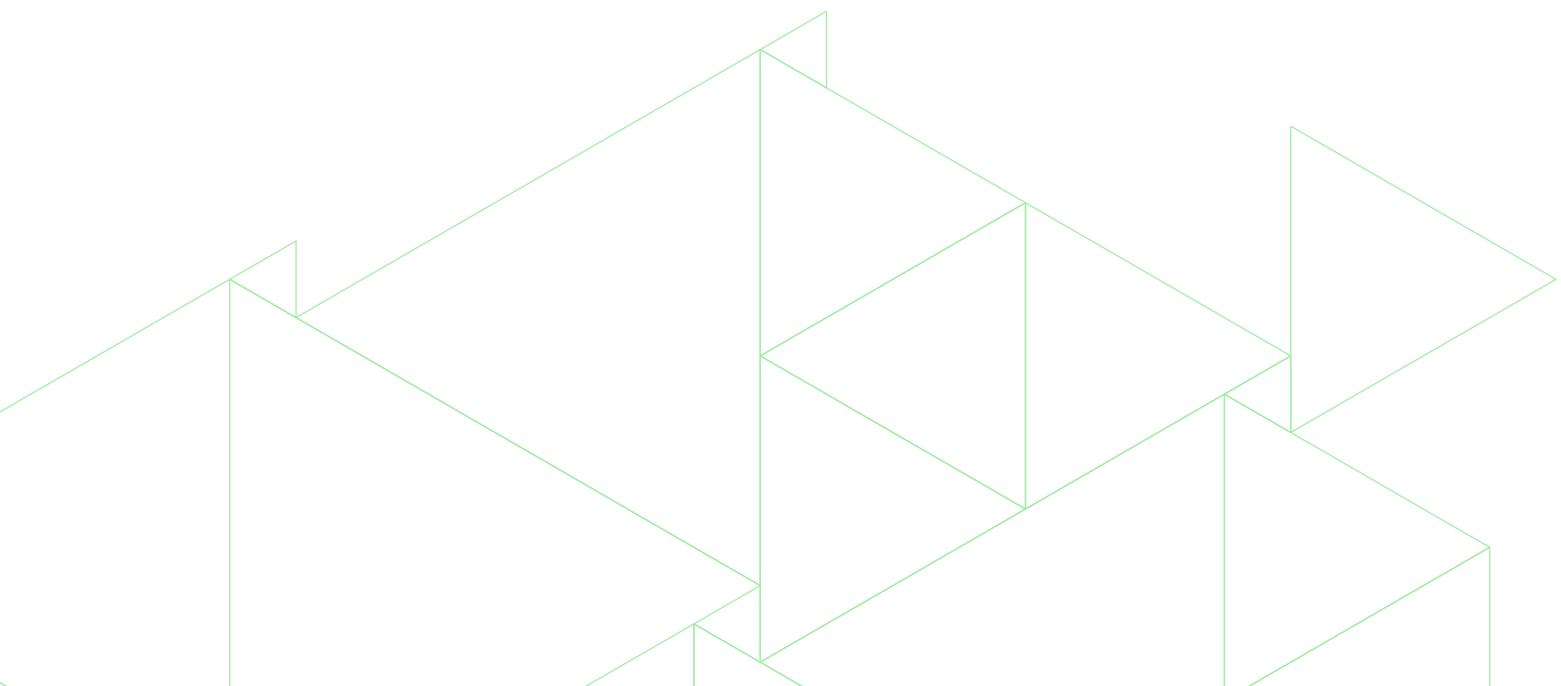
▶ **Table A3: Foreign-born working population by occupation and sex, Kenya, 2019**

Occupation	Total	Male	Female	Per cent Share
All occupations	*166,244*	*94,773*	*71,458*	*100.0*
Elementary occupations	42,561	23,308	19,249	25.6
Skilled farm, fishery wildlife and workers	41,023	20,207	20,814	24.7
Legislators, Administrators and Managers	22,361	11,681	10,679	13.5
Service workers, sop and market sales workers	16,056	7,586	8,468	9.7
Technicians and associate professionals	15,805	9,809	5,994	9.5
Craft and related trades workers	9,895	8,409	1,486	6.0
Professionals	9,418	6,299	3,117	5.7
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	6,606	6,310	296	4.0
Secretarial clerical services and related workers	2,414	1,065	1,349	1.5
Occupations not elsewhere classified	105	99	6	0.1

▶ **Table A.4: Emigrants from Kenya by sex, age, and reason for movement, Kenya, 2019**

Sex by age group	Emigrants		Reason for movement		
	Number	Per cent distribution	Employment	Other reasons	Not stated
Total (Both Sexes)	**327,694**	**100.0**	**172,366**	**153,494**	**1,834**
0 – 14	16,366	5.0	1,221	14,969	176
15 – 34	213,675	65.2	114,484	98,412	779
35 – 64	78,553	24.0	46,631	31,559	363
65+	3,065	0.9	371	2,671	23
Don't Know	16,035	4.9	9,659	5,883	493
Male	**179,861**	**100.0**	**100,012**	**78,782**	**1,067**
0 – 14	8,535	4.7	769	7,672	94
15 – 34	111,364	61.9	61,180	49,741	443
35 – 64	49,789	27.7	32,152	17,385	252
65+	1,566	0.9	290	1,259	17
Don't Know	8,607	4.8	5,621	2,725	261
Female	**147,833**	**100.0**	**72,354**	**74,712**	**767**
0 – 14	7,831	5.3	452	7,297	82
15 – 34	102,311	69.2	53,304	48,671	336
35 – 64	28,764	19.5	14,479	14,174	111
65+	1,499	1.0	81	1,412	6
Don't Know	7,428	5.0	4,038	3,158	232

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