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Emerging Trends in Migration: Insights From Gallup

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In today's global environment, leaders need easy access to timely, comparable data they can use to formulate and implement coherent migration and development policies. Gallup provides such a resource with its annual surveys of adults in more than 130 countries on subjects that inform decision making in these two interlinked policy fields.

As part of its World Poll, Gallup interviews nationally representative samples of residents aged 15 and older asking a standard set of core questions to assess attitudes on key topics such as migration, jobs, health, safety, government and private institutions, and education, as well as questions that are specific to a region. Gallup's use of standardized question wordings and survey methods worldwide means the data can be reliably compared across countries and regions, as well as trended over time.

Gallup studies several aspects of migration, approaching the topic from multiple perspectives:

- residents' desire to go abroad for temporary work and study, or to move away permanently
- potential migrants' preferred destination countries
- labor migration flow for temporary workers (registered and unregistered)
- destinations where household members are temporarily working or studying abroad
- residents' active plans and preparations (language proficiency) to move to another country
- social networks abroad and remittances
- attitudes toward migrants in destination countries
- measures of internal mobility (by the end of 2009)

Overall, Gallup's research reveals some common trends in attitudes toward migration, but it also exposes important differences in opinions and behaviors at the regional and country levels that reinforce the need for timely, regular measurement in each country.

Our data enable us to identify the factors that have the greatest bearing on an individual's desire to migrate permanently to another country and help create a comprehensive profile of those

who wish to do so. As our analysis shows, the desire is not the same in every country. In some countries, dissatisfaction with current conditions, including the economy, one's freedom to choose how one lives, opportunities for children, and lack of confidence in government significantly affect one's desire to move abroad permanently. In others, the presence of social networks in destination countries, desire to start a business, and opportunities for work and study are strong factors that influence desire to move to another country.

The same factors may have different effects on the desire to migrate in different countries. For example, in Cambodia, if a family member went overseas and returned in the last five years, there is a lower likelihood that someone in that same household desires to migrate. In Japan, on the other hand, the desire to migrate is greater for a person in a similar situation. Chances are that the Cambodian migrant's circumstances for migrating and consequently his or her experience during the stay were vastly different (perhaps negative) from the Japanese migrant's experience, influencing future decisions to migrate.

Strong push-and-pull factors are evident in Mexico. Dissatisfaction with economic conditions and the availability of work are push factors and presence of social networks or entrepreneurial opportunities in the destination countries are pull factors.

Class-based migration dynamics vary from country to country. In Hungary, desire to migrate is stronger among blue-collar workers and those in the service sector, while in Turkey, those with tertiary education express a desire to move. Dissatisfaction with economic conditions and the presence of strong social networks in other countries act as magnets in both cases.

Utility of the Data

Given the scope, size, and diversity of the migration trend, and most importantly, because of its relationship to development, Gallup's data possess value for a broad spectrum of stakeholders and sectors in destination and source countries.

For example, insights generated from these data give governments, institutions, and citizens in destination countries a better understanding of who potential migrants are, where they might come from, and why they desire to migrate -- enabling decision makers to take a proactive rather than reactive approach to migration issues. These data provide unique intelligence for leaders developing strategies to integrate migrants into their societies in a way that respects migrants and benefits the development of the entire population.

In source countries, these data assist policy-makers and other government and civil society groups in identifying the dynamics that contribute to their residents' desire to leave their home country either permanently or temporarily to work or study. Gallup's insights help decision makers facilitate migration in a manner that protects migrants and benefits the source country's economy and development.

Desires to Move Permanently to Another Country

Gallup's data help quantify the number of adults around the world who would like to move abroad permanently if they had the chance, and map where these potential migrants would like to go. These data reflect aspirations rather than reality.

Potential Departures

- **Gallup World Poll findings in 135 countries (representing 93% of the world's adult population) reveal that about 16% of adults would like to move *permanently* to another country if they had the opportunity.** This translates to approximately 700 million adults -- more than the *entire* adult population of North America and South America combined.
- Residents in sub-Saharan African countries are the most likely to say they would like to move permanently to another country if the opportunity presented itself. Thirty-eight percent of the adult population -- or an estimated 165 million adults -- in the region would like to move abroad.
- Residents in Asian countries are the least likely to say they would like to move to another country permanently. Ten percent of the adult population -- representing roughly 250 million adults -- in the region would like to migrate permanently.

Desired Destination Countries and Regions

- The United States is the destination country most often cited by those who say they would like to move to another country permanently. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of these respondents, which translates to more than 165 million adults, name the United States as their desired country of residence. With an additional estimated 45 million saying they would like to move to Canada, Northern America is one of the two most desired regions to which adults say they would like to move.
- Rounding out the rest of the top desired destination countries (with an estimated 25 million or more adults) are the United Kingdom (45 million), France (45 million), Spain (35 million), Saudi Arabia (30 million), Germany (25 million), and Australia (25 million).
- Roughly 210 million adults around the world would like to move to a country in the European Union, which is similar to number who would like to move to Northern America. Of those who live in the EU and would like to move permanently to another country (80 million), about half, or roughly 40 million, would like to move to another country within the EU.

Potential Net Migration Index

If all adults who desire to move to another country permanently actually moved today, what would the potential change in the adult population in each country be? Gallup answers this by subtracting the estimated number of adults who would like to move out of the country permanently from the estimated number of adults who would like to move in to that country, as a proportion of the total adult population. The resulting number, called the Potential Net Migration Index*, is the percentage increase (positive values) or decrease (negative values) of the

country's current adult population. The higher the positive Potential Net Migration Index value, the larger the potential net population gain.

- Singapore posts the highest Potential Net Migration Index of all countries and areas, with a net migration index value of +260%. Saudi Arabia (+180%), New Zealand (+175%), Canada (+170%), and Australia (+145%) round out the top five.
- In the Latin America and Caribbean region, no single country posts a positive Potential Net Migration Index value, meaning the number of people who would like to leave the country meets or exceeds the number interested in moving to the country permanently. Potential Net Migration Index values in this region range from -5% in Panama to -50% in Haiti.
- In Asia, only three countries -- Singapore (+260%), Malaysia (+25%), and Japan (+5%) - have positive Potential Net Migration Index values.
- Saudi Arabia (+180%) and Qatar (+45%) post the highest positive Potential Net Migration Index values among countries surveyed in the Middle East and North Africa region.
- In the European Union, Sweden (+80%), Spain (+80%), France (+70%), Cyprus (+65%), and the United Kingdom (+65%) have the highest positive Potential Net Migration Index values in the region. The only countries in the EU with negative net migration index values are former Socialist bloc countries.
- In the former Soviet Union countries, every country -- even Russia -- posts negative Potential Net Migration Index values.
- Only three countries in sub-Saharan Africa have positive Potential Net Migration Index values: Botswana (+55%), South Africa (+10%), and Namibia (+5%). The countries with the most negative Potential Net Migration Index values in this region are the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa) (-60%), Sierra Leone (-55%), and Zimbabwe (-55%).

Potential Net Migration Index and HDI

Gallup's Potential Net Migration Index demonstrates a high positive correlation with the United Nations' Human Development Index. However, there are a substantial number of countries in the High Human Development group that still don't have positive Potential Net Migration Index values. Colombia, with a Potential Net Migration Index value of -35%, Hungary with a value of -15%, and Turkey with a value of -10% are a few examples.

What this suggests is that countries are not maximizing their human potential and that governments should focus on highlighting the benefits their countries offer and improving the conditions that push people to leave.

Economic Crisis

There is little evidence, at least in the short-term, that people's desire to move to another country permanently decreased meaningfully after the global economic crisis hit in 2008. With a few exceptions, adults in many countries tended to be as likely to say they would like to move abroad in 2009 as they were in 2008.

- In the United Kingdom, 33% said in 2008 that they would like to move permanently, while a similar 30% say so in 2009. In other EU member countries such as Spain (8% in 2008 and 2009) and France (19% in 2008 vs. 18% in 2009), attitudes are also essentially unchanged.
- In the Americas, 20% of Mexico residents in 2008 said they would like to move to another country permanently if they had the opportunity, while a similar 18% say so in 2009. Attitudes in Ecuador and Colombia also remained relatively static, with less than a quarter and roughly a third, respectively, expressing a desire to relocate in both years.
- Further, across former Soviet Union countries in 2008, 33% said there were better opportunities outside their countries. In 2009, this percentage dropped to 14%. Over the same period, the percentage of residents in the Caucasus, the European part of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and Central Asia who said they would like move remained statistically unchanged. In the Baltic region, the percentage who would like to move permanently actually increased from 18% in 2008 to 25% in 2009. Taken together, these data suggest that respondents in this region are aware that the economic crisis may have reduced the number of opportunities outside their countries, but their desire to move abroad permanently remains unabated.
- In the Philippines, 20% of residents in 2009 say they would like to migrate permanently, which is down slightly from the 25% measured in 2008 but similar to the 23% observed in 2007.

Permanent vs. Temporary Work vs. Study Abroad

In select regions, Gallup queried respondents further about their aspirations to go abroad either for temporary work or to study.

Desire

In countries where respondents are asked about different types of migration, residents are more likely to say they would like to go abroad for temporary work or to study than they are to say they would like to move away permanently.

- For example, 32% of Mexico's residents say they would like to go abroad for temporary work, while 18% say they would like to move to another country permanently given the opportunity.

- In Russia, 22% say they would like to move for temporary work and 24% say they would like to go abroad to study, while 11% of residents say they would like to permanently relocate.

Destination Countries

The countries to which people desire to move to permanently are not necessarily the same as those to which they would like to move for temporary work or study. For example, among residents in former Soviet Union countries (excluding those in the Baltics) who would like to migrate:

- More residents in this region would like to study abroad in the United Kingdom (18%) than would like to move there permanently (5%) or for temporary work (7%).
- More people are interested in the United States as a desired destination for temporary work (14%) or study (17%) than as a permanent place to relocate (11%).
- There is less interest in Russia as a desired destination for study (9%) than there is in it as a place for temporary work (12%) or to live permanently (16%).
- The EU is the top desired regional destination for the various types of migration asked about. Of those in the former Soviet Union countries (Baltics excluded) who expressed a desire to migrate, 44% would move there permanently if they could, while 57% would like to move there to study abroad, and 51% would move there for temporary work.

Even within regions, desired destinations vary by country and by type of migration, which is why it is important to study each carefully. For example, among people in this region who would like to study abroad, the top desired destination country varies.

- Twenty-eight percent of Armenians and 21% of Kyrgyzstanis who express a desire to study abroad say they would like to study in the United States. Seventeen percent of Armenians who would like to study abroad would like to study in France.
- Twenty percent of the residents of Russia and 23% of Ukrainians who would like to study abroad say they would like to study in the United Kingdom. Twenty-three percent of Russian residents who would like to study abroad would like to study in Germany.
- In Uzbekistan, 11% of residents who would like to study abroad say they would like to study in South Korea.
- Respondents in all countries surveyed in Central Asia who would like to study abroad, from 25% in Kazakhstan to 62% in Tajikistan, say they would like to study in Russia.

Temporary Work: Reality vs. Desire

Gallup's data from the former Soviet Union countries suggest that the flow of temporary workers changes from year to year, as do the destination countries. Unlike respondents'

reported desire to move to another country permanently, the flow of reported temporary work migration decreased in all CIS countries where these questions were asked between 2008 and 2009, which is at least partly attributable to the economic crisis.

Flow

- The percentage of Tajikistanis who report that one or more of their household members works abroad temporarily declined from 44% in 2008 to 36% in 2009.
- The percentage of Moldovans who report that one or more of their household members works abroad temporarily declined from 37% in 2008 to 28% in 2009.

Destinations

- In Kyrgyzstan, among those who say they have relatives or members of their household working abroad temporarily, the percentage of residents who say these members work in Russia increased between 2006 and 2009, from 76% to 92%.

The relatively high percentage of Kyrgyzstanis, and residents of Central Asia in general, who say their household members work temporarily in Russia underscore how important it is for governments in source and destination countries to regulate and manage migration flows through mechanisms such as bilateral agreements.

There is a substantial gap between where respondents say they would like to go for temporary work and where temporary workers actually go -- desires do not match reality.

- In Central Asia, for example, 48% of those who would like to work abroad temporarily say they would like to go to a CIS country. Substantial percentages of residents say they would like to work temporarily in Asia (15%), Northern America (16%), and the European Union (17%). In contrast, 95% of those with household members or family working abroad temporarily say they are working temporarily in CIS countries.

Language Skills

More generally, migrant workers' knowledge of the language of a destination country benefits migrants and their families (in terms of economic and professional mobility and social integration), their employers, and their source and destination countries. Gallup's studies of potential migrants' knowledge of foreign languages, as well as those they are studying or want to learn, suggest they would be receptive to participating in language programs.

Among residents in many former Soviet Union countries, where this question was asked, Gallup finds residents who would like to move abroad -- whether permanently or temporarily for work or study -- are more likely than those who do not want to move to another country to say they have some knowledge of, are studying, or would like to learn languages other than their own. This tendency exists regardless of age, gender, or educational attainment.

- In Georgia, where 42% of residents express a desire to migrate, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany are among the top desired destinations. Georgians who are potential migrants are roughly three times as likely as those who are not to say they know some or would like to learn English, French, or German.

- In Armenia, where 56% express a desire to migrate, the United States and France are among the top desired destinations. Armenians who are potential migrants are more than twice as likely as those who are not potential migrants to say they know some or would like to learn English, and are more than eight times as likely to say this about French.
- In Azerbaijan, where 34% say they desire to migrate, Turkey, Germany, and the United States are among the top desired destinations. Residents who are potential migrants are nearly seven times as likely as those who are not potential migrants to say they have some knowledge of or would like to learn German, and five times as likely to say this about English and Turkish.

Climate for Immigrant Integration

Immigrant integration requires mutual work on the part of immigrants themselves and the communities they join. But the underlying climate of acceptance within destination countries is a key consideration when developing policies that challenge stigmatization and foster migrants' inclusion, protection, and eventual empowerment. Are adults in destination countries open to accepting migrants into their communities?

Gallup asks respondents in more than 150 countries whether they think the city or area where they live is a good place or not a good place for immigrants from other countries. Of the top desired countries for permanent migration, according to Gallup's research, residents of Canada are most likely to say their communities are good places for immigrants, at 90%. Eighty-one percent of those in the United States -- the top desired destination -- say their communities are good places for immigrants.

Majorities in other top desired destination countries such as Spain (78%), the United Kingdom (72%), and France (67%) also say their communities are good places for immigrants. While Greece is not among the top desired destination countries, 62% of residents also say this about their communities, placing Greece slightly above the world median percentage (58%).

Next Phase

Gallup will continue to refine our questions and gather data on global attitudes toward migration, but we are ready to begin the next phase of our research, which is -- with partners -- the analysis, synthesis, and theory building required to help migration and development around the world.

About Gallup's Global Research

In 2005, Gallup launched the World Poll, which annually surveys people in more than 150 countries and areas -- representing 95% of the world's adult population -- using randomly selected, nationally representative samples. Starting in January 2007, Gallup has annually asked residents around the world about their desire to move abroad. The analysis of adults' desire to move to another country permanently is based on 259,542 interviews aggregated across multiple surveys in 135 countries.

*In Gulf Cooperation Council countries, only Arab nationals and Arab expatriates were surveyed.

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