

Emerging Trends in Migration: Insights from Gallup A Summary

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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's annual global surveys provide such a resource. In particular, **Gallup's World Poll** (launched in 2005) annually surveys people in more than 150 countries areas (representing 95% of the world's adult population). Since January 2007 Gallup has annually asked residents around the world about their desire to move abroad. The analysis that follows is based on **259,542 interviews aggregated across multiple surveys in 135 countries**.

Methodology

- Interviews to nationally representative samples of residents aged 15 and older
- Standard set of core questions to assess attitudes on key topics such as migration, jobs, health, safety, government and private institutions, and education (this means that data can be reliably compared across countries, regions and over time)
- Region-specific questions are also included

Summary of Key Findings

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

Desires to Move Permanently to another Country : research findings

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.**
- Top interest comes from Sub-Saharan African countries, where thirty-eight percent of the adult population -- or an estimated 165 million adults -- in the region would like to move abroad if they had the chance
- Asian countries residents are the least likely to say they would like to move to another country permanently. Ten percent of the adult population in Asian countries -- 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 respondents, which translates to **more than 165 million adults**, name the United States as their desired country of residence.
- **An additional 45 million** say they would like to move to Canada,
- 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

Potential Net Migration Index*, is the percentage increase (positive values) or decrease (negative values) of the country's current adult population, if actually all adults who desire to move to another country permanently actually moved today. 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 **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 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.
- 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%).

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.
- Across **former Soviet Union** counties, respondents 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.

Climate for Immigrant Integration

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%).**

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