
AFRICAN FEMALE MIGRATION IN 2010 TO 2021

Abstract

The article deals with the issue of female migration, which is topical for the African continent. Africa is one of the leaders in international migration, and a significant percentage in this case are women, both single and married. The analysis of migration indicators of the female population of Africa, both within the country and beyond its borders, was carried out, as well as the main features of the economic situation of the continent, as the reason for the migration of women, were considered. The study contains information about other reasons for the resettlement of women and measures taken by the government of different countries to regulate this process.

Key words: migration, Africa, women, economic situation, population.

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The African region is in the 4th place in terms of international migration in the world. In 2017 about 19 million people migrated within the continent, and 6 million people migrated outside it. Thus, African migration amounted to 25 million people per year, which is explained by internal processes taking place in the region. The synergy of African Governments and international organizations is rapidly developing the processes of regional integration and gaining momentum. In addition, the development of regional migration on the continent is influenced by the development of infrastructure and the Western culture and languages popularization.

The most interesting and relevant works that address the problems of women's migration in Africa are: "Africa in the global migration flow: History and modernity" of the 2020 edition and "Report on Migration in the World 2020" [1] by the International Organization for Migration. Both reports are important in this study, as they contain up-to-date and reliable data on migration issues in Africa and provide relevant statistics.

The main reasons

The study revealed a large number of problems that contributed to the African female population resettlement to other countries and continents, but also the rate of migration increasing every year. Also, the study showed that the support provided by African governments is insufficient to reduce the level of female migration.

As of 2017 the global volume of international migrants was 258 million people, 38 million of which were Africans (almost 15% of the total). Migration statistics is maintained in 48 African countries in the form of at least one statistical source. However, statistics is not enough to control and deter migration, because migration indicators have been reflected in almost 80% of the total population in the census data of the region since 2000. It should be noted that international migration to African countries is less popular, as international migrants who arrived in Africa accounted for only 2% of the continent's population since 2000 to 2017, statistical studies claim [2].

African countries have the largest migration outflow. The volume of international migrants who left Africa has increased by 68% since the beginning of the XXI century. North America has become the region with the largest migration influx from Africa since the beginning of the XXI century and is characterized by the fastest growing region with attractive conditions for migrants. In addition, migration flows from African regions were aimed to Europe, which offered a much more stable and comfortable life and development prospects. Also, for a small number of migrants from Africa, the destinations of Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean have become relevant. Africa shows a dynamic increase in the number of migrants, the approximate number tends to a 7 percent from year to year.

The intensification of migration processes in the region is associated with several main factors affecting the social situation in the country. Migration flows consisted mainly of the male population for a long time, however, more and more women migrate in modern Africa, both inside and outside the country. Women have always stayed at home while men moved in search of earnings, now they often leave their homes. Currently, African women feel more independent from men and emigrate independently of their own volition, whereas previously they could only travel with their husband or parents [3].

In most societies in South African countries, social and political structures define and restrict women's opportunities to obtain loans, land plots and rights to produce goods, which causes serious damage to women's self-awareness and female independence. As the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe recently noted sarcastically, women "should not be considered as adult family members, they should be equated with younger male representatives" [4]. This is one of the main reasons for the female population emigration. The desire to gain freedom and independence has led to the fact that the inhabitants of

Africa leave their homeland and move to the countries of Europe, Asia and the USA.

The black population of some European countries is up to 7.5% and about half of them are women. There were about 115 thousand people in Russia in 2020, 1/3 of them — women. The main part of migrants arriving in Russia from Africa are refugees, economic migrants, who came in search of a better life, and registered students studying at universities in the country. A fifth of migrants are illegal residents, but less than 5% of them are women.

The African region is characterized by terrorist groups and military clashes, which also contribute to the migration of the population. One of the largest civil conflicts of our time, the war for independence, unfolded on the territory of Sudan in 2010–2016, ended only in 2020. During the period of military clashes between North Sudan, with predominant Muslim population, and South Sudan, with a widespread Christian religion, about 2 million people were killed and at the time of 2014, about 4 million people changed their place of residence inside Sudan. More than 500 thousand people left the territory of Sudan.

One of the most relevant areas of migration within the continent is Cameroon, where more than 300 thousand migrated Africans live. The population arrived in the country from Nigeria and the Central African Republic.

At the time of 2013, a political crisis was beginning in the CAR, which became an activator for large-scale migration of the population in Cameroon. A big problem is the widespread activity of the terrorist group Boko Haram in Nigeria's territories. The activities of the group forced more than 70 thousand people to leave the country only on the territory of Cameroon, the UN statistics reveal. Cameroon also experienced the consequences of migration, when local residents who settled in the border territories of the country began to move closer to the centre of the state. The lack of territories and

resources due to the arrival of migrants as well as due to fear due to the activities of terrorist groups in the border territories affected. About 124 thousand Cameroonians underwent internal migration due to these reasons in 2016.

South Africa today is a prosperous and stable country of the African continent, so there is a very large volume of migration flows in the country. About 3.15 million people migrated to South Africa from nearby countries, such as Mozambique, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. It is also worth noting that internal migration is more popular in Africa, because 13.5% out of 32 million migrants moved exclusively within the continent.

The SSA countries have also become host States. About 2.5 million refugees migrated to Nigeria and Ethiopia, as well as to the Congo, where about 1.5 million refugees from African countries, including from South Sudan, arrived. Due to uncontrolled migration flows, host countries face a number of issues, because refugee camps require certain funding and costs that not all States are able to support. This issue can turn into serious problems related to humanitarian, epidemiological and cultural complications. To overcome this issue, international humanitarian support is undoubtedly needed.

If we analyze the age of international female migrants from Africa to European countries, it can be noted that in 2019 most of the girls who left Africa were aged 15–19 years whereas the absolute majority are girls aged 18–19 years. 44% of African women who left their native continent are 35–40 years old and 65+ years old. Generally, these groups of women go to other countries to find a good job that will feed their family, or to find a place for a decent old age. Many African women over the age of 65 work in European countries and receive decent wages that allow them to live better than in their native country.

In addition to political and economic factors, climatic factors also affect the scale of migration. Natural disasters, the destruction of crops by insects and drought, the depletion of land areas and the inability to continue agricultural activities, climate changes affect migration flows and with an increase in the scale and potential of climate threats, the prospective flow of migration from problem regions grows in direct proportion. Forecasts show the average temperature is to increase by more than 3.5% in the Saharan regions, and for the East African region the average temperature increase will be about 2.6%. Besides, climatic cataclysm caused significant precipitation decrease

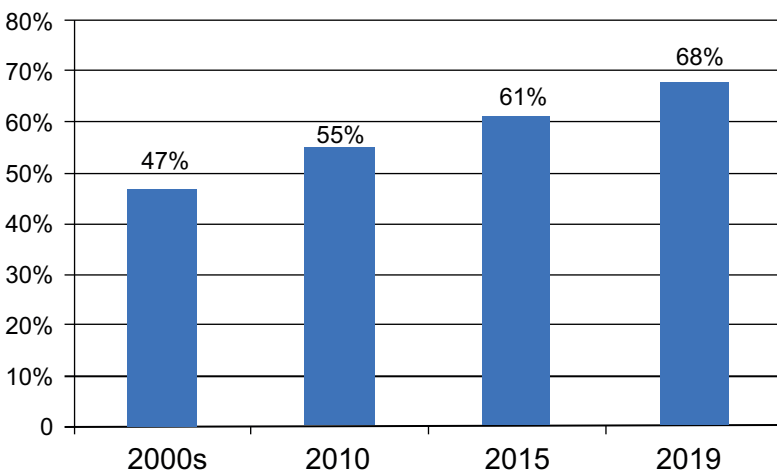


Fig. 1 The share of the female population in the migration flow (total international and internal migration) [5].

in the region, which leads to crop failure and an increase in mortality.

Migration, including female one, both within the African continent and abroad can also lead to positive results from an economic point of view, for example, economic indicators from migration due to displacement and optimization of labour resources are steadily growing from year to year. The main income source in this case is the labour migration of the African population, more specifically, money transfers that they make to their homeland from abroad. In 2007, the transferred funds of African migrants (including women) to the countries of Tropical Africa amounted to \$11 billion. The money volume grows every year as well as the number of money transfers and transactions themselves. Unfortunately, from 45% to 70% of all transferred amounts arrive in the country unofficially, for the purpose of tax evasion. This applies primarily to intraregional money transfers. 10 years later, in 2017, the transferred funds volume increased significantly.

The actual statistics reveal, Nigeria and Egypt are the leaders in received transfers from migrant workers with almost equal indicators — 20.8 and 20.4.

In some countries, primarily Muslim, there is a so-called hawala, an unofficial funds transfer through a system of trusted people for a very low payment. A significant share of this money is brought to African countries by female migrant workers.

The data presented above show that the percentage of transactions made by female population to their homeland hovers from 8 to 40% according to an approximate estimate. This depends on many factors, including the percentage of migrant women in a particular State, the wages they receive and the percentage they transfer to their homeland.

Negative consequences.

The female population migration today already represents an independent and conscious decision of African women to

leave their homeland in search of a better quality of life and increased income. At the beginning of the XXI century, the volume of women in the general migration statistics of the African region was 47%, ten years later this figure increased to 55%, and today this figure is already more than 69%. These statistics include movements within the African continent and beyond. Despite the positive developments of recent years, the economic situation is difficult, widespread poverty (up to 40% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa live on less than \$1 a day), the growth of unemployment and underemployment in the absence of visible prospects for reducing their level, increased material hardships of daily life most affect women and children, the least protected and vulnerable groups of African society [4].

The female labour migration in Africa is closely related to the critical indicators of poverty in many countries, which is a consequence of stable employment deficiency in the region. As a rule, the female population is engaged in agriculture in the regions of residence, so migration gives an opportunity to work in more promising and profitable directions. Low earnings, instability and seasonality are becoming the main incentives to move within the continent in order to provide a family with an income exceeding the average income per family in Africa, which is about \$1 per person a day.

Solving the problem

Migration policy is regulated by a set of measures at the social, economic and political levels. These measures should include optimization and improvement of the political system and state governance, optimization and development of private investment injections into the region, as well as increasing overall political responsibility for the events taking place in the region. It is known that there will be one rule for any region — if there is a national priority in any development direction, this area begins to have more influence

and becomes relevant among different communities, receives sufficient funding, centralized management and support. In addition, there is an explanation for the low efficiency of migration management. The main volumes of private investment are controlled by the state, and the high cost of the proposed projects and the presence of a large volume of contradictions in them become the main obstacles to the creation of a free market economy with competent regulation.

The main efforts should be directed to activating the processes of development and expansion of alternative professions in areas remote from cities, as well as supporting the population who are employed in the agricultural sector and handicraft production. All these measures are necessary to regulate the employment of the population and increase the volume of jobs, which will entail a qualitative increase in earnings and living standards.

From all of the above, it can be concluded that the migration situation in African countries, in particular, the situation with female migration remains quite difficult. This is due to a large number of reasons, which include, among others, the social situation, the oppression of women's rights, the country's economy, etc.

First of all, the authorities of African countries should work in two directions — changing attitudes towards women, and stabilizing the economic situation in underdeveloped countries.

Summing up, it is worth noting that when considering the female migration trend in Africa, there are reasons that contribute to the growth of migration in the region. The south of the continent, for example, is dangerous for the local population due to the abundance of armed clashes and wars, as well as the high dynamics of the growth of the starving population, climate change and environmental pollution. In addition, the political situation is quite unstable in some African countries, there is a critical disregard for human rights, and there is active activity of terrorist organizations in the region.

Moreover, migration has negative consequences for the host country, because refugees may not realize their labour potential and join the ranks of rebel formations, which lead to new flows of migration of the population. In order to regulate and control migration flows, control over applicants for migration, for example, to European countries, is being tightened. And internal migration is complicated by the dangers for migrants on the way, who die in clashes with terrorists or from diseases. Prompt measures are needed to regulate migration and ensure the safety of migrants on the way and on the ground. In addition, it is necessary to develop conditions in countries that will meet the quality of life and will become an incentive to stay at home and develop the economy there. Nevertheless, today many African countries are under inefficient and weak governance in terms of solving many issues, including the regulation of migration processes, which also shows a weak diplomatic potential. African States developed and signed a large number of declarations and agreements on migration cooperation at the bilateral level and within the framework of the African Union. Unfortunately, most of the agreements remain on paper and are unable to be implemented for a number of reasons. Increased many times in volume and intensity migration processes have a powerful impact on the structure and content of relations between the SSA countries. The migration problem has become a priority topic for most States in the region. African diplomacy seeks to achieve a favourable balance of interests with the recipient countries of migrants, respect for the rights of African migrants.

The prospect of the near foreseeable future can make Africa one of the leading regions in terms of population growth. At the time of 2018, the African population was more than 1.2 billion people, and according to UN estimates, the continent's population will amount to 2.4 billion people by 2050. All this will cause an increase in migration and, as a result,

aggravation of the problems that were discussed above. Thus, women's migration is an acute problem for African regions, which requires increased attention and the development of timely and comprehensive solutions that take into account many factors that prevent the growth of migration in Africa.

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