

Immigration Topics: a World-Historical Approach

A conversation about the conversations

subject area: current events, sociology, global-historical, political economy

Instructor: Kathleen C Schwartzman
Professor Emerita; University of Arizona, School of
Sociology

4 sessions Thursdays
3/26/2026 thru 4/16/2026
11:00-12:30

Session one: World on the move; the limitations of the "it's racism" narrative.

Session two: Framing immigration: the discourse and the reality

- U.S. a "Nation of immigrants"
- "Jobs nobody wants"
- Cost-benefit analysis

Session Three: Causes and consequences of migration:

- the push and the pull.
- Plausible explanations for the anti-immigrant sentiment.

Session Four: Thinking about solutions/policy alternatives.

- Walls
- Crocodiles
- 14th amendment

Terms: some outdated or considered to be inappropriate.

Language follows the Debate

- *Migrants = actors that don't fit*
- *illegal*
- *unauthorized noncitizens resided illegally*
- *unauthorized immigrant population*
- *unauthorized residents*
- *out-of-status*
- *Entrants without documents*

Problems with the debate

- 1) Polarized
- 2) Focuses on two stakeholder-groups
 - a. Immigrants and supporters
 - b. Those wanting to restrict immigration
- 3) Substitutes slander or sanctification for analysis

Religious basis of some Humanitarian Arguments

- Evangelical Immigration - treat foreigners well
- Torah - (Leviticus 25) - empathy -my people were strangers in Egypt.
- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops [2013];
 - "love the stranger." U.S. immigration system violates Scripture
- Catholic Church: wealthier countries should try to welcome migrants "to the extent they are able" but that nations also have right to regulate migration 2025 U.S. bishops responded to Trump's immigration orders
- Pope Leo XIV: U.S. extremely disrespectful treatment of migrants

SOCIOLOGICAL PREMISE

no analytical value in denigrating or sanctifying

👉 immigrants

👉 advocates of limited immigration

👉 supporters of immigrants

👉 Businesses which hire

SOCIOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

👉 Expand # of stakeholders to African Americans, businesses, governments, workers, and unions

👉 Assume all [pro & against] act within their perceived incentive structures

👉 Task: Where do their incentive structures come from?

Questions

Q. Are the issues of migration confronting other countries similar or different to those of the United States?

Q. How conflict generates misunderstandings; framing vs reality

Q. what are the cause and consequences of migration and reactions to immigration

Q. Are there some plausible solutions?

Immigration NOT wandering

- idea of a nation-state is associated with rise of modern system of states following Treaty of Westphalia (1648).
- recognizes right of nations to govern their territories without external interference;
- Nationalism and nation-state create boundaries of inclusion and exclusion

Migration refers to voluntarily leaving one's country and going to another.

International migrant stock typically includes people born in a country other than the one in which they currently live.

The UN specifically counts refugees and some of their descendants, like Palestinians born in refugee camps, as international migrants for the purpose of these estimates.

[United Nations Population Division UNDP]

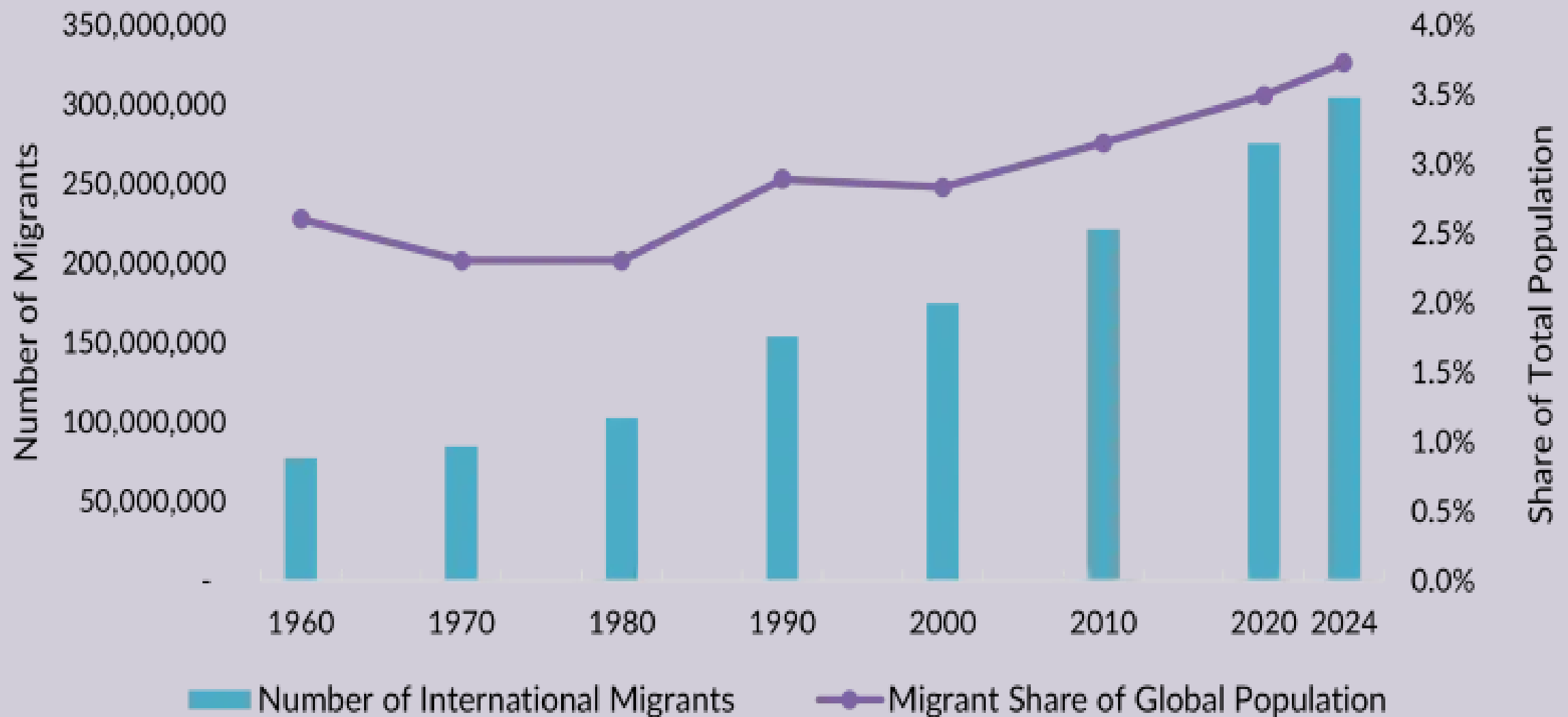
Mid 2025, estimated 42.5 million refugees, 6.86 million asylum seekers, and 67.8 million internally displaced

<https://www.migrationdataportal.org/key-figures> UNHCR, 2025;

Number and Share of Global Migrants, 1960-2024

304 million global migrants as of mid-2024

Figure 1. Number and Share of Global Migrants, 1960-2024



Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) tabulation of data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2024: Table 1: International Migrant Stock at Mid-Year by Sex and by Region, Country or Area of Destination, 1990-2024," and "International Migrant Stock 2024: Table 3: International Migrant Stock as a Percentage of the Total Population by Sex and by Region, Country or Area of Destination, 1990-2024," 2024, available online. Data prior to 1990 are no longer available online.

International Migrant Stock

2024	304,000,000	(3.7%)
2020 [232 countries]	280 598 105	(3.6%)
2015	244,000,000	(3.4%)
2013	232,000,000	
2010	222,000,000	
2000	173,000,000	
1990	154,000,000	
1970 [135 countries]	84,460,125	(2.3)

international migration slowed by 27%, or 2 million migrants, due to COVID-19

World living through a period of mass migration that has no precedent.

Until 1980s, immigrants made up less than 5% of the population in many Western European countries.

- share now has reached the teens.

has increased sharply in Australia and Canada, United States [most rapid immigration, pace of entry surpassed peak years of Ellis Island.

In all, about 16 percent of U.S. residents today were born abroad, exceeding previous high of 14.8 percent in 1890.



Refugees are granted legal status and protection
under international law,
Refugees often resettled through UN processes;

asylum seekers apply for asylum in the country to
which they have fled

Mexican asylum applications

	# submitted
FY 1992	614
FY 1997	18,820*

*the most of any country during that fiscal year

(The President's Triennial Comprehensive Report on Immigration. 1997:21)

<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/tri3fullreport.pdf>

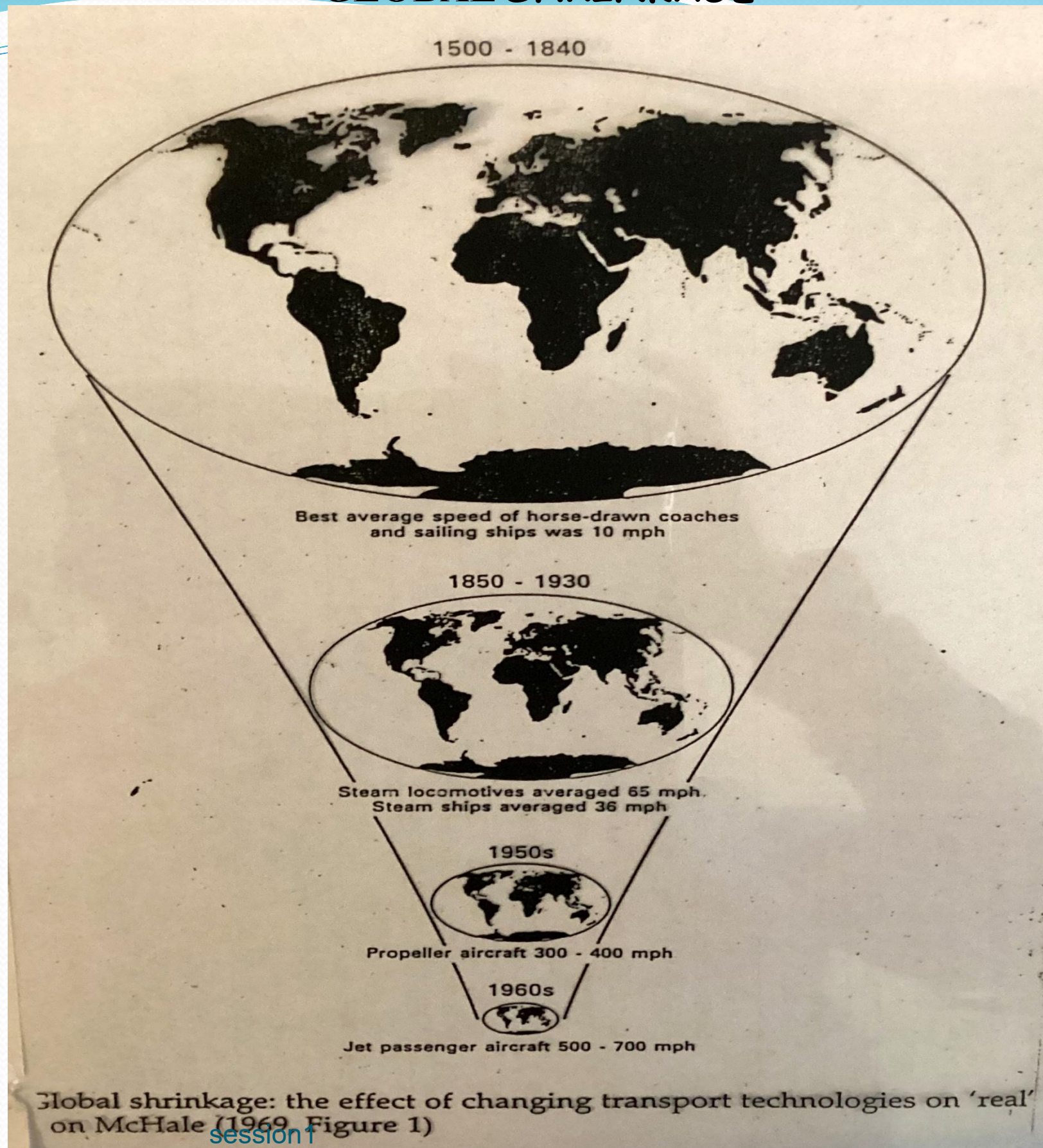
GLOBAL SHRINKAGE

10 mph

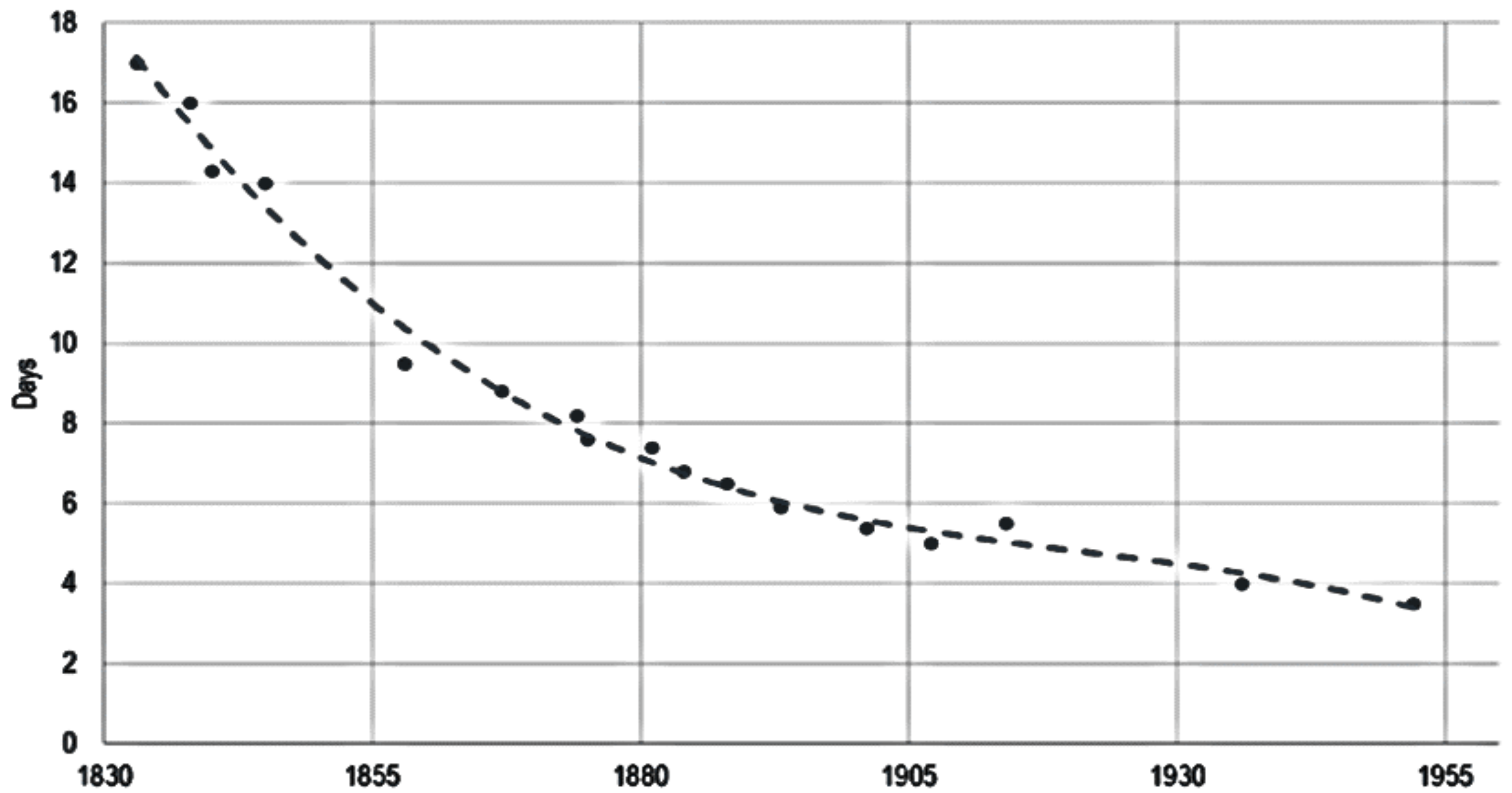
36-65 mph

300-400 mph

500-700 mph



Liner Transatlantic Crossing 1833 - 1952 (#days)



Destinations of International Migrants, by Region and Share, 2024

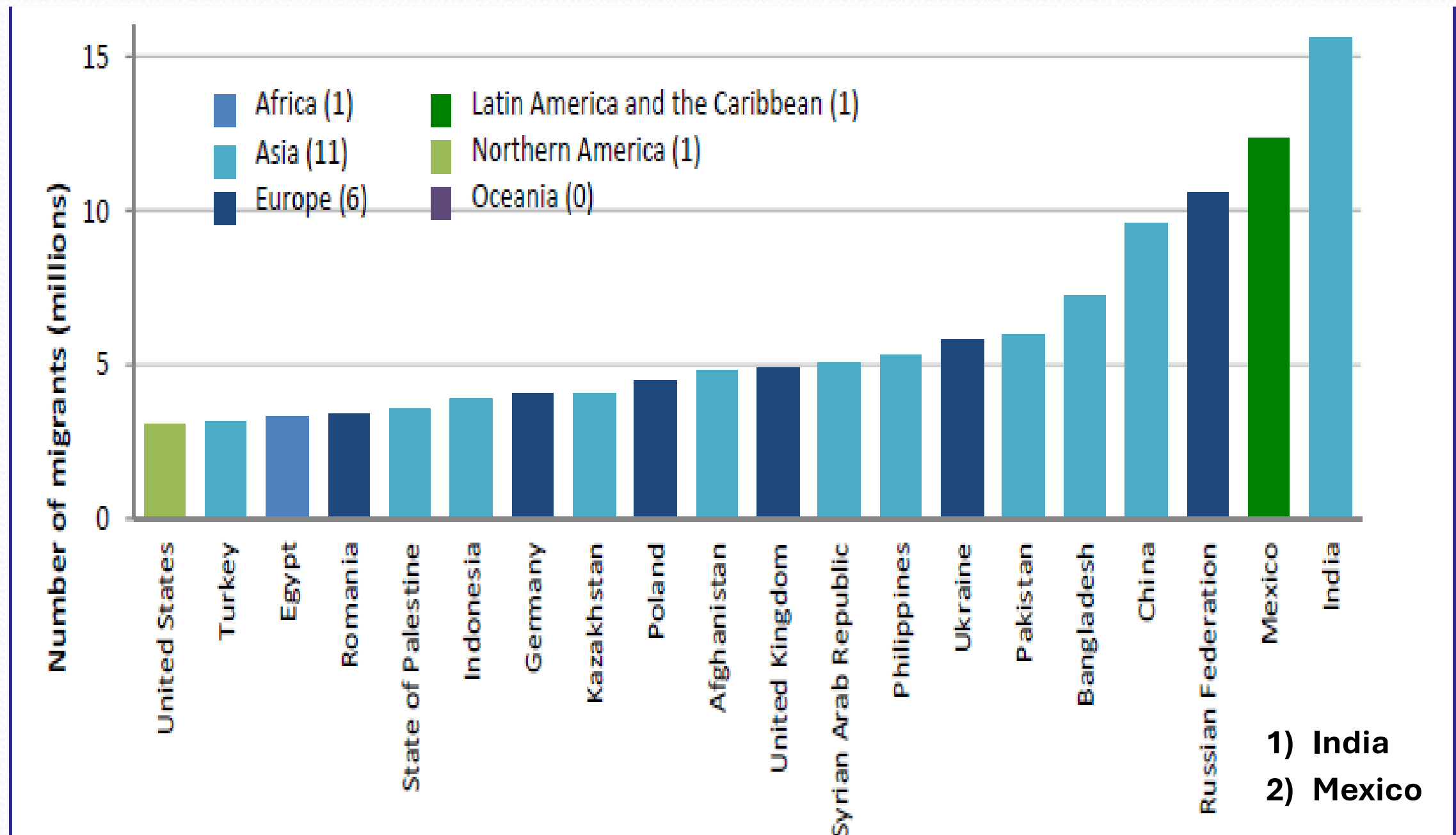
Table 1. Destinations of International Migrants, by Region and Share, 2024

Destination	Number of Migrants	Share of International Migrant Population (%)
TOTAL INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT POPULATION	304,022,000	100.0%
Europe and Northern America	155,259,000	51.1%
Northern Africa and Western Asia	54,086,000	17.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	24,306,000	8.0%
Eastern and Southeastern Asia	22,589,000	7.4%
Central and Southern Asia	20,370,000	6.7%
Latin America and the Caribbean	17,511,000	5.8%
Australia and New Zealand	9,579,000	3.2%
Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)	322,000	0.1%

Note: "Northern America" includes Bermuda, Canada, Greenland, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, and the United States. To see which countries are part of each region listed in the above table, [click here](#) .

Source: MPI tabulation of data from UN DESA Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2024: Table 1: International Migrant Stock at Mid-Year by Sex and by Region, Country or Area of Destination, 1990-2024."

Countries with the largest number of international migrants living abroad 2015 [UN]



From	Living Outside of Country 2015	Total population
India	16 million (1.22%)	1,311,050,527
Mexico	12 million (9.45%)	127 million

Top 10 Countries with Highest Number of Foreign-Born Residents (Immigrants) 2020

Country	# Immigrants
<u>United States</u>	50.6M
<u>Germany</u>	15.8M
<u>Saudi Arabia</u>	13.5M
<u>Russia</u>	11.6M
<u>United Kingdom</u>	9.4M
<u>United Arab Emirates</u>	8.7M
<u>France</u>	8.5M
<u>Canada</u>	8M
<u>Australia</u>	7.7M
<u>Spain</u>	6.8M

top countries by number of foreign-born residents, [UN in 2024]

1. United States
2. Germany
3. Saudi Arabia
4. France
5. United Kingdom
6. Russia
7. India
8. United Arab Emirates
9. Italy
10. Spain

Russian Immigrants 2014

Men	86%
18-30 yrs old	66%
From former Soviet Union	77%
Tajikistan & Uzbekistan	33%
From entire EU	10%

Table 1. Population of GCC Countries, by Nationality, Mid-2022

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Country	Total Population	Nationals	Foreign Nationals	% Foreign Nationals
Bahrain	1,525,000	714,000	811,000	53.2%
Kuwait	4,590,000	1,503,000	3,087,000	67.3%
Oman	4,731,000	2,836,000	1,895,000	40.1%
Qatar	2,878,000	349,000	2,529,000	87.9%
Saudi Arabia	32,175,000	18,792,000	13,383,000	41.6%
United Arab Emirates	10,075,000	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Data Not Available

Note: Nationality data for Qatar are estimates based on Planning and Statistics Authority data.

Source: Gulf Research Center, Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population Program (GLMM), "GCC: Total Population and Percentage of Nationals and Non-Nationals in GCC Countries (National Statistics, Mid-2022)," updated December 2023, [available online](#).

Key employment statistics for foreign workers

Country 	Year	Expat share of total population	Expat share of total workforce	Dominant sectors for foreign workers
Qatar	2022	88%	94%	Construction is a major sector for low-skilled workers.
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	2022	88%	93%	Construction and domestic work employ a large number of low-skilled foreign workers.
Kuwait	2022	70%	83% (2012)	Construction, wholesale and retail, and domestic work employ a significant number of foreign workers. Most are low-skilled men from Asia.
Bahrain	2013	55%	77%	Low-skilled foreign workers primarily fill roles in construction, wholesale and retail, domestic work, and manufacturing.
Oman	2022	40%	76.8% (2020)	Data indicates high demand for foreign labor across various sectors, complementing the national workforce.
Saudi Arabia	2022	38.8%	75.6% (2020)	Reliance on foreign labor for both low-skilled and higher-skilled jobs is noted.

Top Countries of Origin for International Migrants (2024)

1. **India:** 18.5 million
2. **China:** 11.7 million
3. **Mexico:** 11.6 million
4. **Ukraine:** 9.8 million
5. **Russian Federation:** 9.1 million

3 MAJOR Economic DIVIDES → MAJOR MIGRATION STREAMS

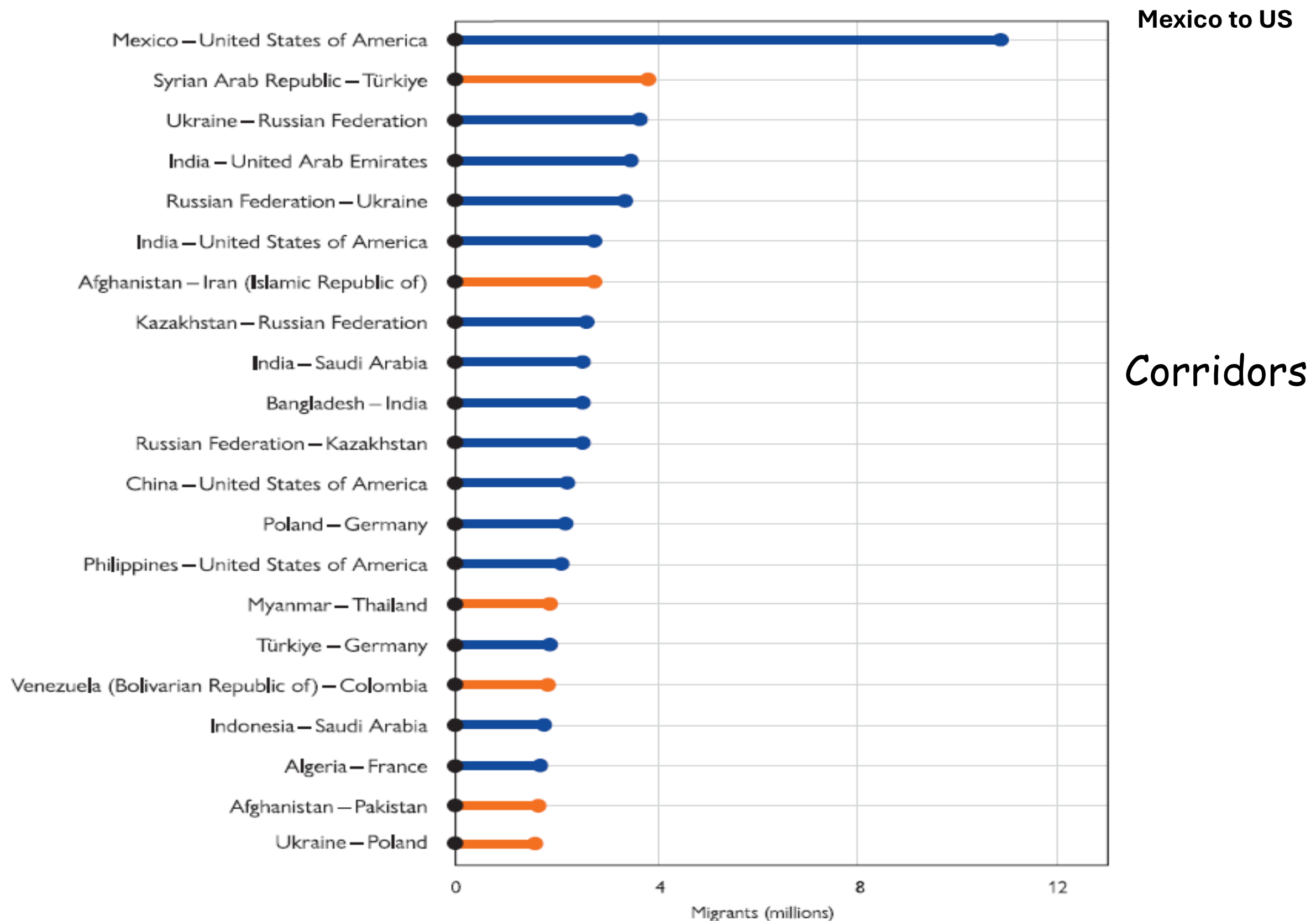
- 1) Rio Grande separating US from Mexico & Latin America
- 2) Oder-Neisse separating Eastern from Western Europe [Poland & East Germany]
- 3) Mediterranean separating Africa from Western Europe.



KEY MIGRANT ROUTES FROM AFRICA TO EUROPE

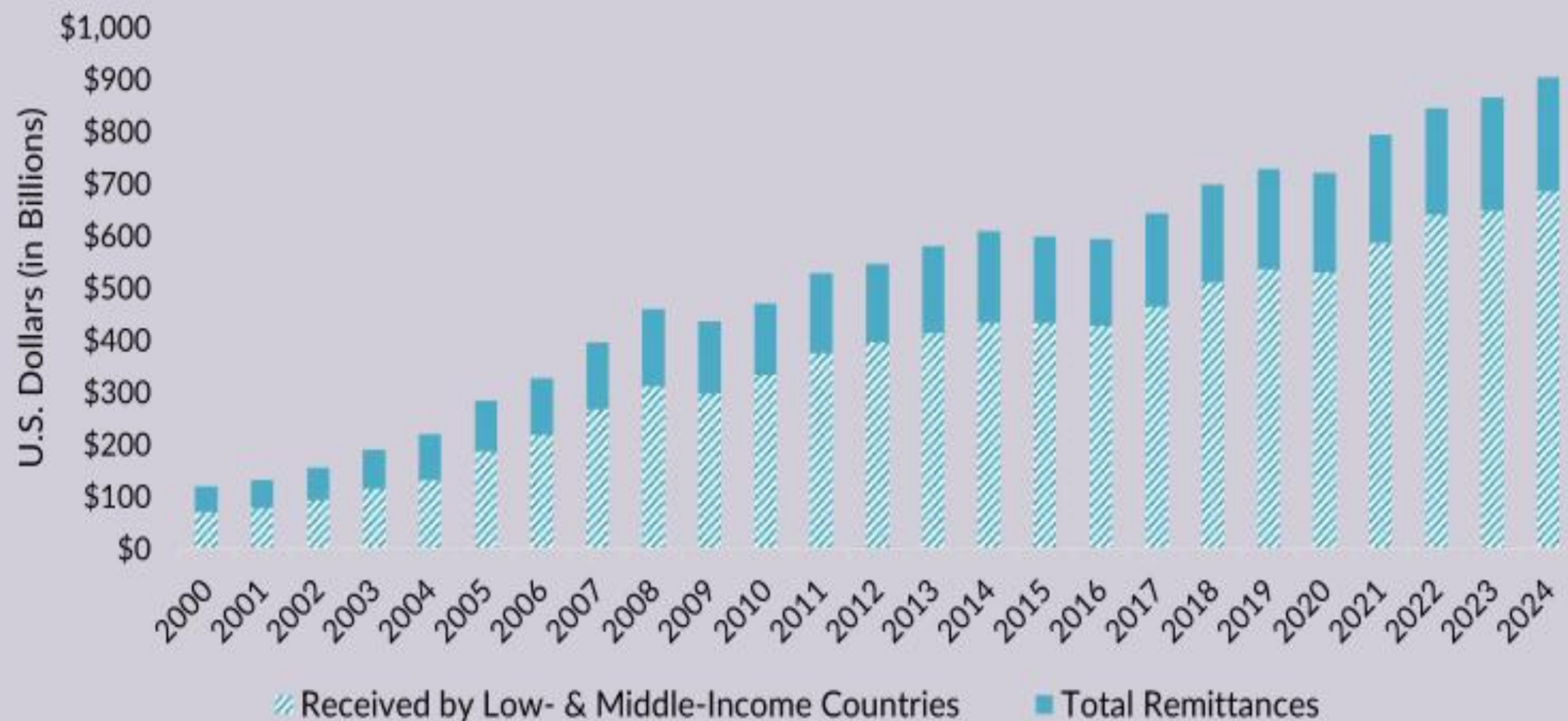


Figure 1. Top international country-to-country migration corridors, 2024



Source: UN DESA, 2021a; UNHCR, 2023a.
session1.

Figure 2. Global Remittances Sent via Formal Channels, 2000-24



Note: Data for 2024 are an estimate.

Sources: Dilip Ratha, Sonia Plaza, and Eung Ju Kim, "In 2024, Remittance Flows to Low- and Middle-Income Countries Are Expected to Reach \$685 Billion, Larger than FDI and ODA Combined," World Bank blog post, December 18, 2024, [available online](#).

Remittances

Largest remittance source outward flows

% of 2022 global \$\$flows

- #1 US \$79.15 billion (9.23%)
- #2 Saudi Arabia \$39.35 billion (4.59%)
- #3 Switzerland \$31.91b (3.72%)
- #4 Germany \$25.60b (2.99%)

Largest remittance receiving

2021*

- #1 India \$89.37 billion (11.44%)
- #2 Mexico \$52.6 billion (6.9%)
- #3 China \$53 billion (6.8%)

- KNOMAD/World Bank Bilateral Remittance Matrix 2021, December 2022. current (nominal) US dollar.

*2024 India (est \$129.1 b), Mexico (\$68.2 b), China (\$48b)

Top 10 countries sending international remittances 2022 (current USD billion)

2022	
United States	79.15
Saudi Arabia	39.35
Switzerland	31.91
Germany	25.60
China	18.26
Kuwait	17.74
Luxembourg	15.51
Kingdom of the Netherlands (the)	15.41
France	14.44
Qatar	12.29

Source: World Bank, n.d.b.

Notes: All numbers are in current (nominal) USD billion. The United Arab Emirates is not included for 2022 as the remittances data have not been updated.

<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/international-remittances>

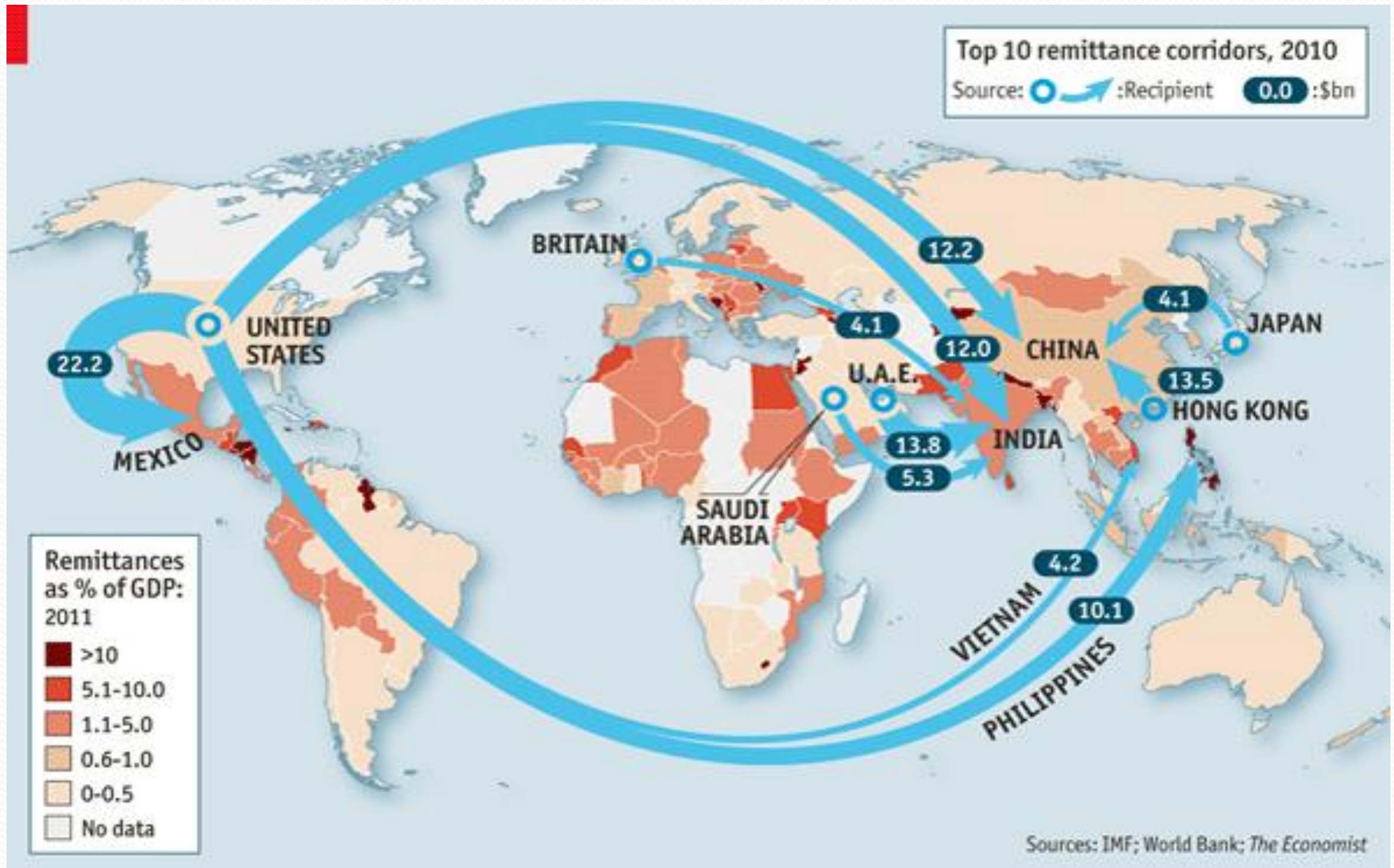
Top 5 remittance receivers 2023

1. India (120 billion)
2. Mexico (66 billion)
3. China (50 billion)
4. Philippines (39 billion)
5. Pakistan (27 billion).

2021 top remittance corridors

- United States - Mexico: \$52 billion
- United Arab Emirates- India: \$20 billion
- Saudi Arabia - India: \$13 billion
- United States - India: \$6 billion

Remittance Flows 2010

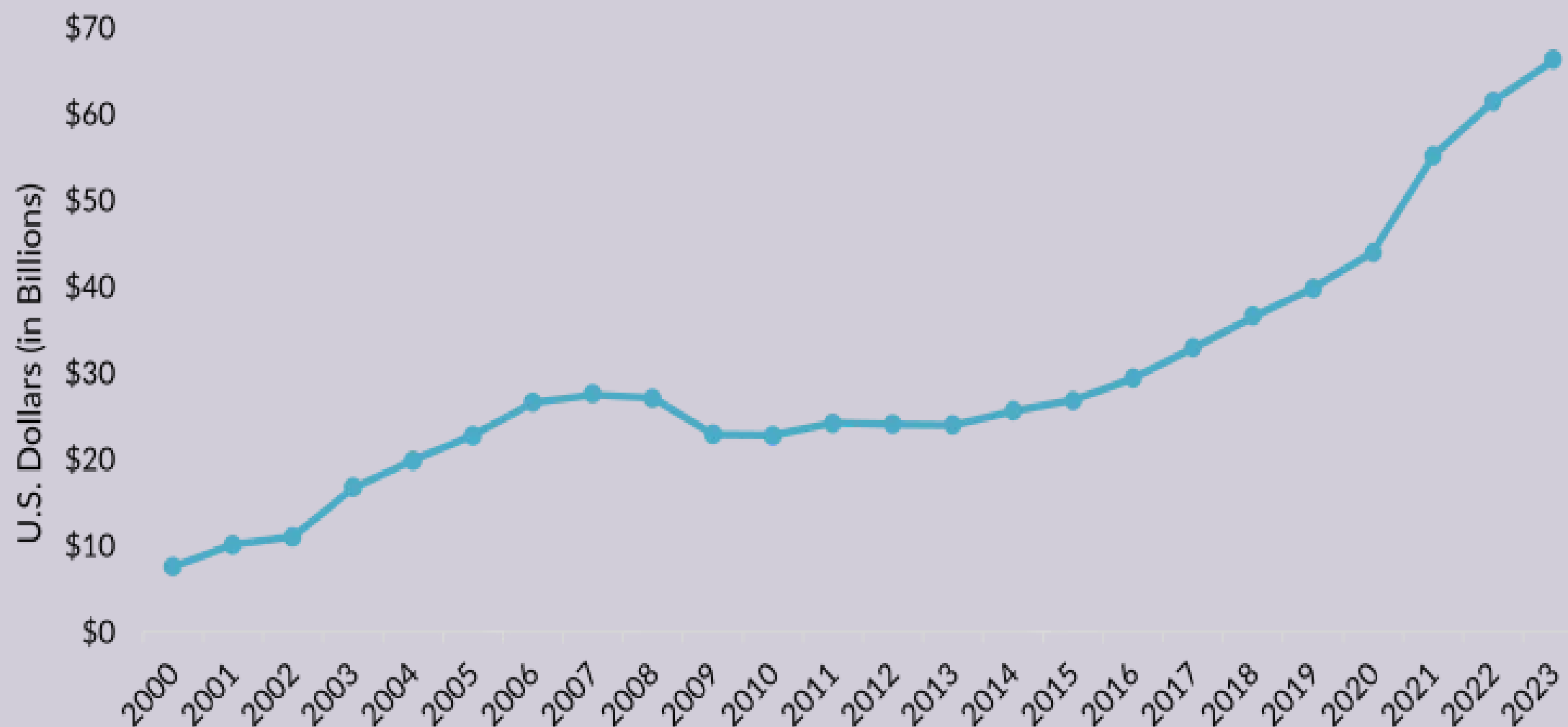


Contribution of Remittances to Mexican Economy 2023-2024 [% of GDP]

Crude Oil Exports \$28.4b	1.3%
Remittances \$63 billion	4.5%
Tourist Expenditures	14.9%

Raul Hernandez-Coss. 2005.

Figure 10. Annual Remittance Flows to Mexico, 2000-23



Source: MPI tabulation of data from the World Bank Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), "Remittance Inflows," June 2024 update, available online.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/mexican-immigrants-united-states#global>

Mexico remittance inflow from abroad

2022	US\$58.87bn
2023	US\$63.31bn
2024	US\$64.75bn
2025	US\$61.79bn

Source: Mexico central bank (Banxico)

January 1, 2026, remittance transfer providers (such as banks, money transfer services e.g. Western Union, or money service businesses) are responsible for collecting a new 1% excise tax on certain cross-border transfers.

Remittance transfer providers must withhold the 1% tax at the time of the transfer and remit it to the IRS.

- significant shift in the Mexican economy.

- **Shift from oil to services:** decreasing economic reliance on oil and gas, strong growth of tourism and remittance sectors,

- Remittances have outpaced oil export revenue in GDP contribution since 2015.

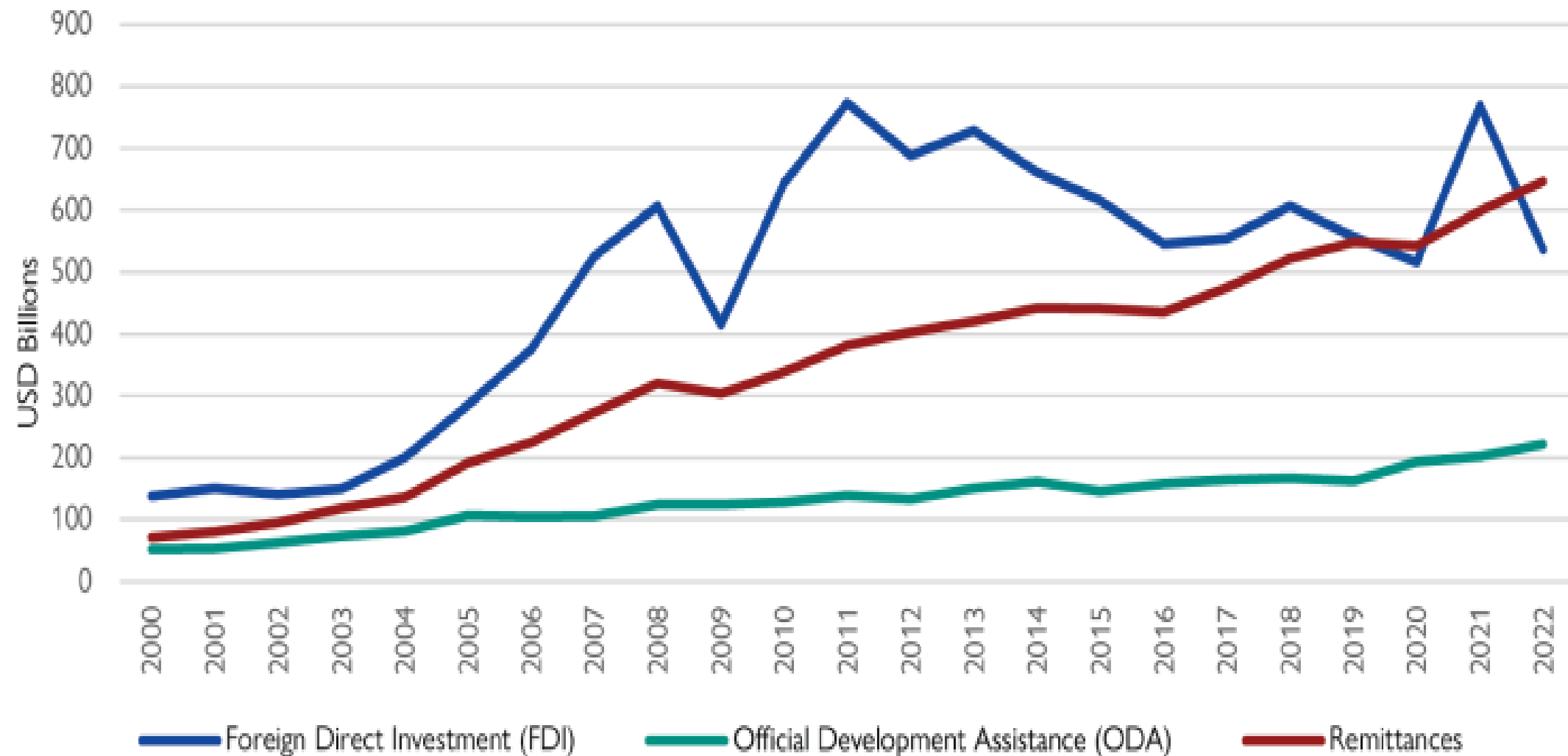
- **Remittances** a vital economic lifeline for millions of families, particularly in economically disadvantaged regions

- often used for basic needs like food, housing, and education.

<https://www.fairus.org/issue/remittances-us-loses-more-than-200-billion-dollars>

mid-1990s, international remittances have greatly surpassed official development assistance levels defined as government aid designed to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries; they have also recently overtaken foreign direct investment

Figure 10. International remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries (2000–2022)



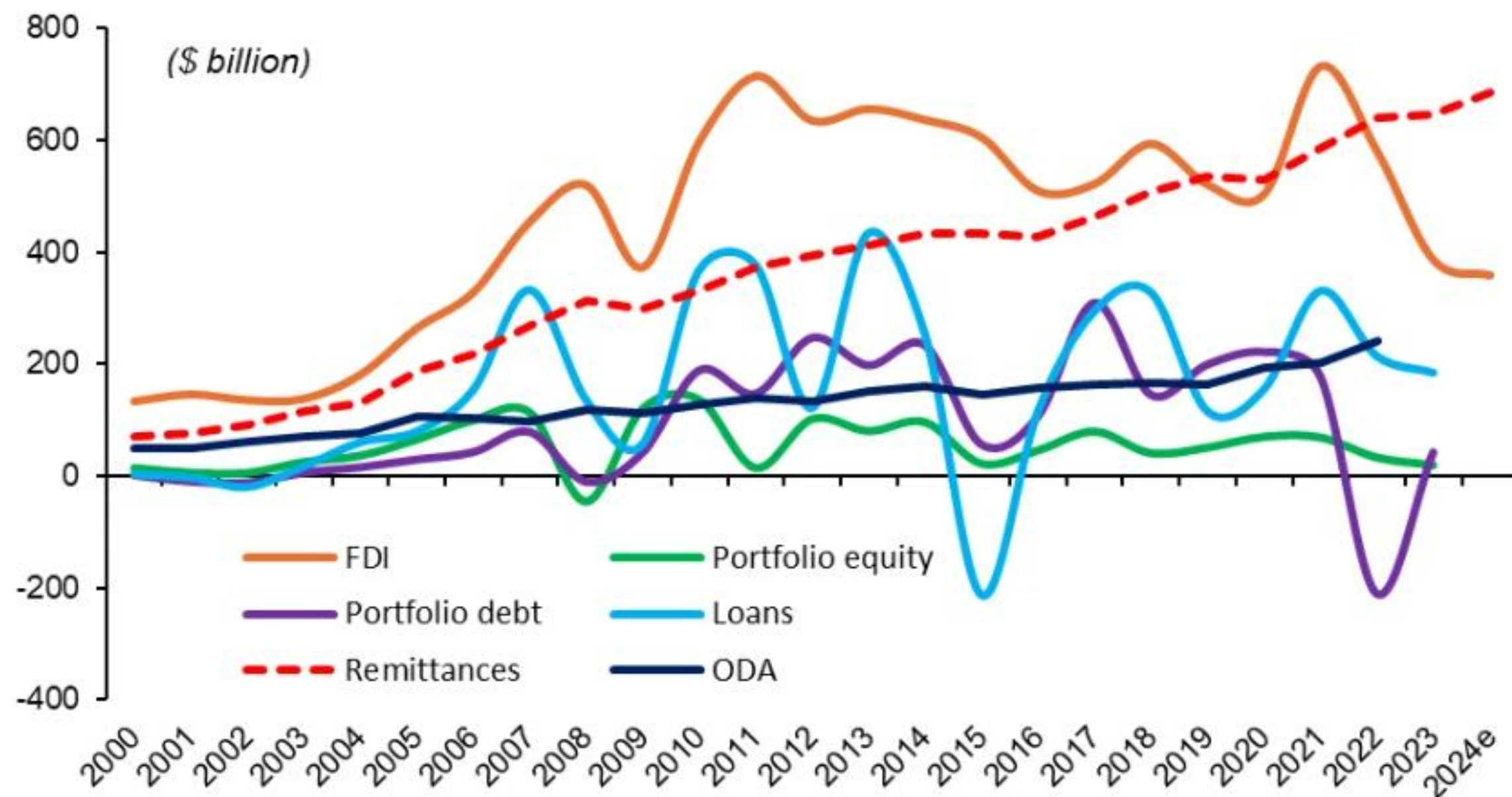
<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/international-remittances#:~:text=High%2Dincome%20countries%20are%20almost,data%20have%20not%20been%20updated.>

Tajikistan	47.89
Nicaragua	26.64
Nepal	26.23
Honduras	25.70
Bermuda	25.41
Samoa	24.01
El Salvador	24.00
Gambia, The	22.00
Lesotho	20.94
Comoros	19.60
Guatemala	19.12
Kyrgyz Republic	17.74
Somalia, Fed. Rep.	17.70
Kosovo	17.30
Haiti	16.30
Jamaica	16.19

Selected Countries: Remittances as % of GDP 2022

Tajikistan	49.90	Pakistan	8.05	Hong Kong China	0.12
Tonga	41.94	Mexico	4.20	Norway	0.11
Samoa	33.61	India	3.32	Ireland	0.10
Lebanon	30.66	Viet Nam	3.22	Gabon	0.09
Honduras	27.00	Afghanistan	2.21	Maldives	0.08
Kyrgyz Republic	26.58	Estonia	1.22	Australia	0.08
El Salvador	24.54	France	1.19	Turkiye	0.08
West Bank and Gaza	23.98	Poland	1.09	Malta	0.06
Nepal	22.85	Panama	0.69	Papua New Guinea	0.05
Gambia, The	22.76	Portugal	0.38	Canada	0.04
		Brazil	0.25	Oman	0.03
		China	0.15	United States	0.03
		Russian Federation	0.14	Saudi Arabia	0.03
		United Kingdom	0.13	Chile	0.02
		Japan	0.13	Angola	0.01

Figure 5. Remittances continued to outpace FDI and ODA combined



Source: Authors' estimates, World Development Indicators, IMF Balance of Payments Statistics

Note: FDI = foreign direct investment; ODA = official development assistance

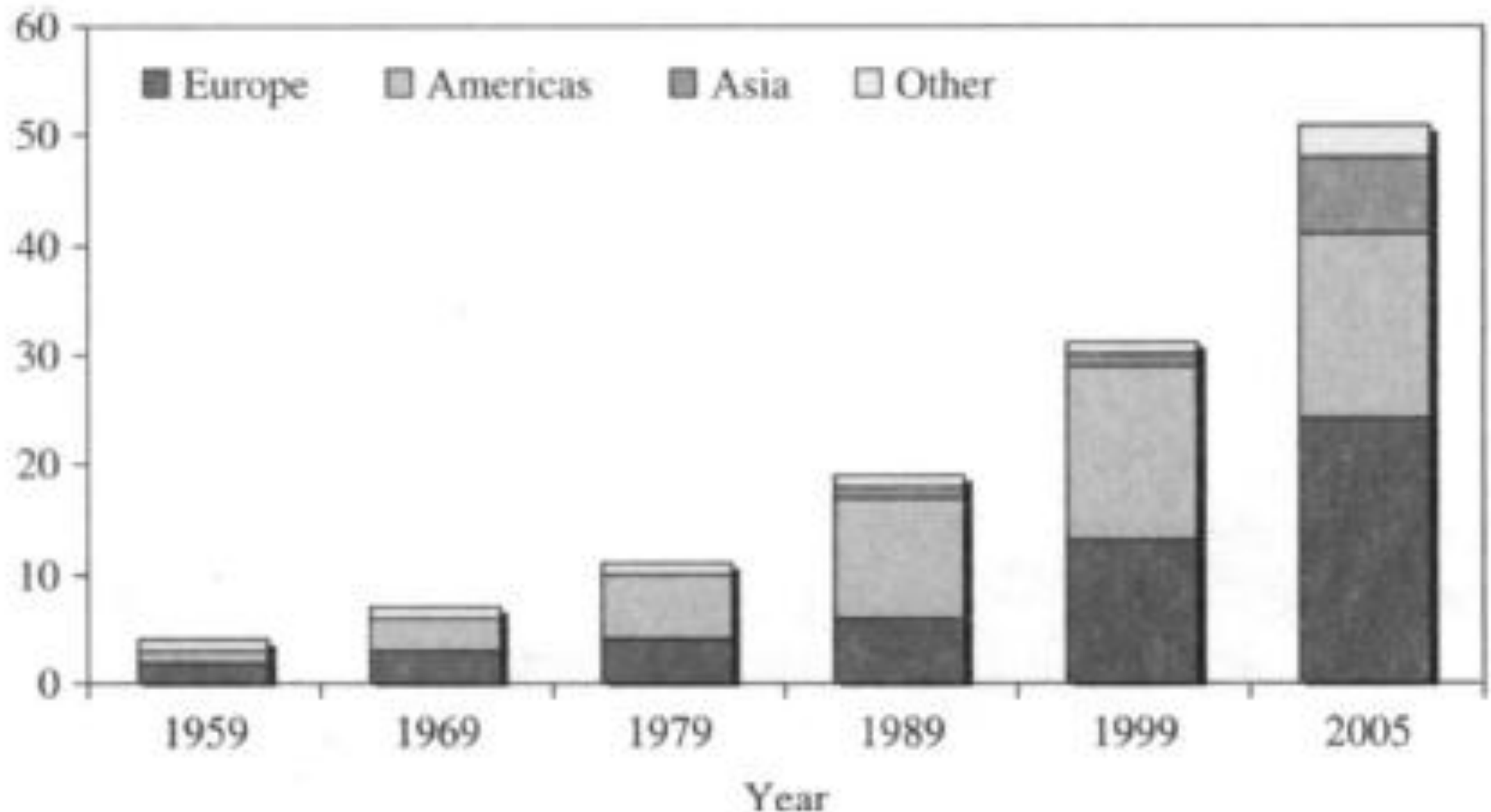
Current law: Americans can hold citizenship both at home and abroad and does not require that a person choose one allegiance over the other.

Sen. Bernie Moreno, R-Ohio, introduced legislation, dubbed the Exclusive Citizenship Act of 2025, that would require any U.S. citizen who has foreign citizenship to choose between the two countries
[December 2025 S.3283]

currently in early legislative stages, [low probability]

Figure I.

Number of Countries Analyzed with Legislation Allowing Dual Citizenship per Decade and Region



“I vow to thee my countries: the expansion of dual citizenship in the 21st century.”

Tanja Brondsted Sejersen.

International migration review. VOL. 42. No. 3 (fall, 2008).pp 523-549

Case of Mexico

- *1998 new Nationality Law. Allowed dual citizenship
- *legislation changed in order to benefit from economic and political influence of overseas diaspora
- *2002 Created Matricula Consular cards
- *2006 Mexico allows voting by dual-citizens living abroad
- *Mexico implemented programs to facilitate stronger relationships with the diaspora
- *encouraging ethnic clubs to invest. Offers Matching grants (federal & state) 3 x (immigpartv)

III CONFERENCE 'BRASILEIROS NO MUNDO'

January 2011

- CBM Marks new relationship between Brazilian government and expatriates.
- Attended by President Lula & 8 ministers of state
- Decreto 7.214 15 Junho de 2010, Creation of first CRIBE Conselho de Representantes de Brasileiros no Exterior
- To fortify the tie between citizens living abroad, offer support,...

(The Brazilians. Dezembro 2010-Janeiro 2011 (5p))

EXPLANATIONS FOR REACTIONS TO MIGRATION

Psychological reductionism

EXPLANATIONS FOR REACTIONS TO MIGRATION

Psychological reductionism

<i>SENDING SOCIETY</i>	<i>RECEIVING SOCIETY</i>	
	WHITE	NON-WHITE
WHITE		
NON-WHITE	Cause = Race	counterfactuals

Malaysia Launches Immigration Operation to Deport Illegal Workers Half a Million Illegal Foreign Workers Targeted

Street Journal. Sept. 1, 2013

Wall



Suspected illegal foreign workers arrested by Malaysian law enforcement officers during a raid in Klang, Malaysia--effort to cut surplus labor and trim a huge social cost arising from hosting a large population of foreigners, who make up more than 16% of total workforce in a nation of 29 million people.

session1

Malaysia deports boatloads of Bangladeshi



- In July 2004, Malaysian Home Minister Azmi Khalid announced plans to expel more than one million 'illegal immigrants', many are undocumented
- government would seek to prosecute all arrested undocumented migrants under Immigration Act
- convicted are liable to imprisonment and caning.
- government intends to deploy the People's Volunteer Corps, organization of uniformed part-time volunteers with some policing powers, to assist regular police and immigration officials in mass arrest and detention operations

- **Zambia 2016** looting of about 60 Rwandan-owned shops. With loss of lives and property. locals accused foreigners, especially Rwandans of ritual killings;
- **Botswana**, Zimbabweans were targeted. Foreigners blamed for spiraling crime and other social ills in the two countries, dwindling economic opportunities

South Africa



A movement gains force to 'put South Africans first,' and to drive out migrants

June 14, 2022 <https://www.npr.org/2022/06/07/1103445432/south-africa-anti-immigrant-operation-dudula>

Johannesburg violence 19 May 2008

WARNING: Viewers may find some images upsetting.

Twelve have been killed in Johannesburg, South Africa ... a wave of attacks against immigrants, Most attacks happened in run-down areas of South Africa's economic capital.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/7407572.stm

Angry rioters accuse foreigners - many of them from neighbouring Zimbabwe - of taking scarce jobs and housing and fueling the crime

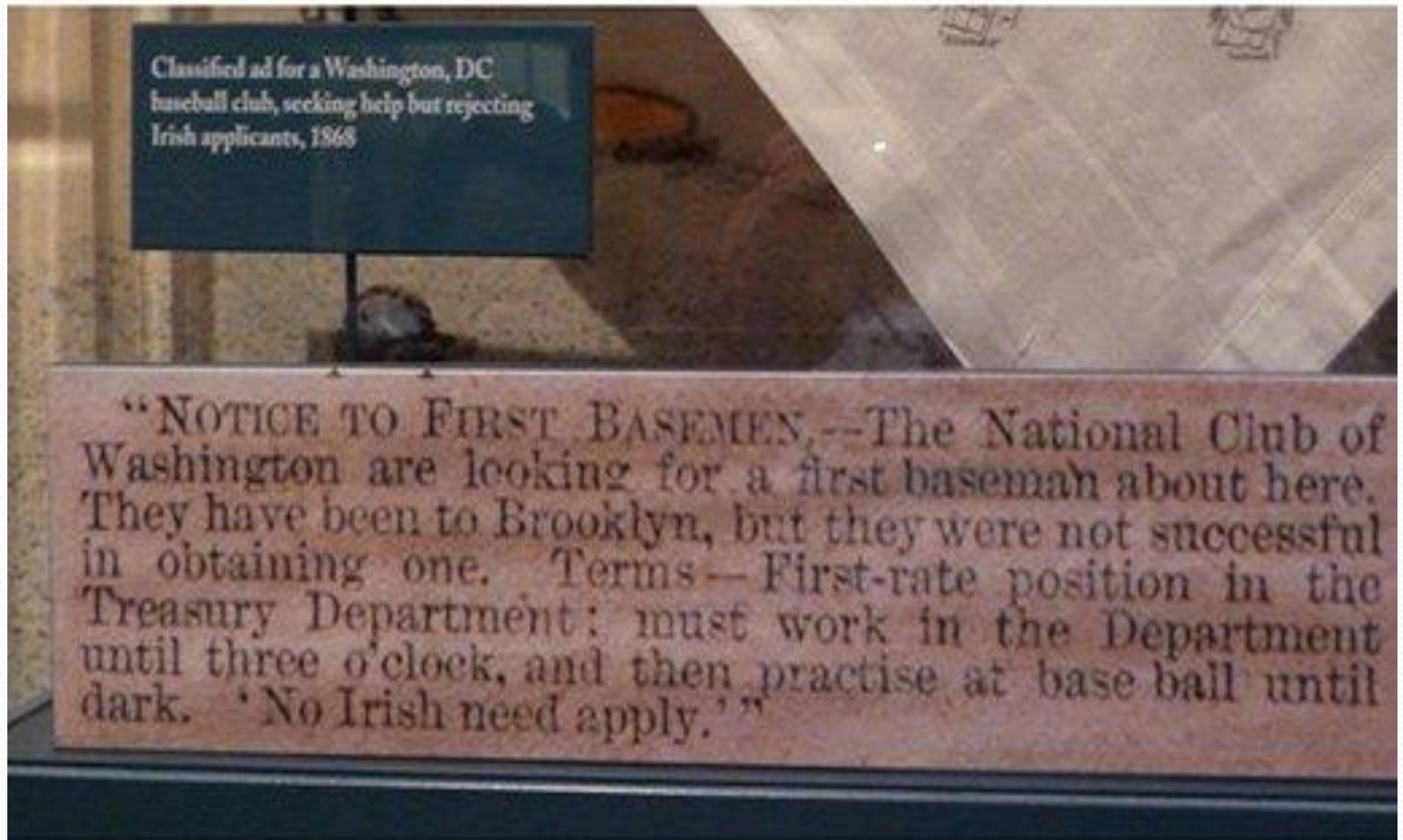


At least two people were burned and three others beaten to death by mobs armed with guns and machetes.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/7407572.stm



1868 'no Irish need apply' -classified ad for a Washington DC baseball club



Irish Example apes

- A historian. From 19th century wrote upon visiting Ireland. "But I am haunted by the human chimpanzees. I don't believe they are our fault. I believe they are happier, better, more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than they ever were. ...But to see... White chimpanzees is dreadful. Their skins are as white as ours."

Not Racism

- 1969 Chavez led a march to protest illegal immigration. joined by Sen Mondale, Ralph Abernathy [Southern Christian Leadership Council]
- The UFW picketed INS offices to demand closure of the border. Chavez & United Farm Workers Union routinely reported suspected illegal immigrants. 1979 UFW Members testified to a congressional hearing on the whereabouts of illegals, who hired them, where they were housed, etc.
- **FARMWORKER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING** Hearings Before The Committee on Labor & Human Resources United States Senate, Ninety-Sixth Congress. First Session On Examination of The Agricultural Labor Dispute And To Encourage Both Parties To Seek A New And More Productive Relationship. Salinas, California April 26 and 27 1979 S541-23 GPO 1979

Counterfactuals

SENDING SOCIETY	RECEIVING SOCIETY	
	WHITE	NON-WHITE
WHITE	U.S. Irish	
NON-WHITE	Cause = Race	South Africa, Botswana, Dominican Republic, Malaysia

COUNTERACTUALS: HOSTILITY v IMMIGRANTS OF SAME RACE/COLOR

CASE 1: Mozambicans in **South Africa**

CASE 2: Zimbabweans in **Botswana**

CASE 3: Russians in **Portugal**

CASE 4: Indonesians in **Malaysia**

CASE 5: Chinese Mainlanders in **Taiwan**

CASE 6: FSU in **West Germany**

CASE 7: Guatemalans in **Mexico**

CASE 8: Bolivian & Haitians in **Brazil**

CASE 9: Asia & Nekkei in **Japan**

Case 10: Nicaraguans in **Costa Rica**

Case 12: Colombians in **Chile**

Counterfactuals

Africans, Incas, & Aztecs all had slaves

In British colonies, Anglos used white indentured servants

Cesar Chavez protested against illegal immigrants (1979)

Mexican President B Juarez [Zapotec tribe] removed privileges of indigenous (1858)

U.S. against white immigrants c 1890

So-called "Racist" Institutions ended slavery, Apartheid, Jim Crow, etc

Forgotten history of indentured servants in U.S.?

- * geographic location slightly lost,
- * U.S. patriotic history narrative does better with pilgrims than indentured servants.





- **1891 Philadelphia Inquirer**
- The character of our immigration has also changed. Instead of the best class of people, we are now getting the refuse of Europe's outcast from Italy, brutalized Poles and Hungarians, the off scorings of the world.

The problem with the “it’s racism” framing

- 1) Ignores the counterfactuals [evidence of same-race cases]
- 2) disregards/misspecifies the underlying dynamics
- 3) To imagine solutions, we need to consider the underlying social conditions

Is Racism the causal factor?

- racism → colonialism/slavery
- OR
- colonialism/slavery → racism

Racism → colonialism

? → *Colonialism → **slavery→

***individual Racism

**slavery

**Justification for inequality and exploitation

"If some people are to enjoy special privileges and others to have lesser rights, there must be a systematic classification which makes clear who is entitled to what"

(Banton 65).

~~Racism~~ → ~~colonialism~~

? → *Colonialism → **Racism → ***Racism

***takes on life of own; reproduced as the **taken-for-granted narrative**; → Assumption: Racial divisions are natural

***becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: lesser get lesser and become lesser

- transmitted from one generation to another.
- **techniques: taxation, education, stereotyping**

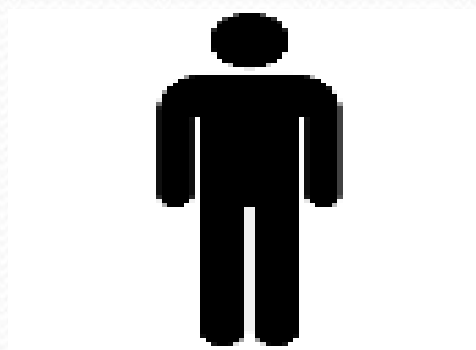
Structure

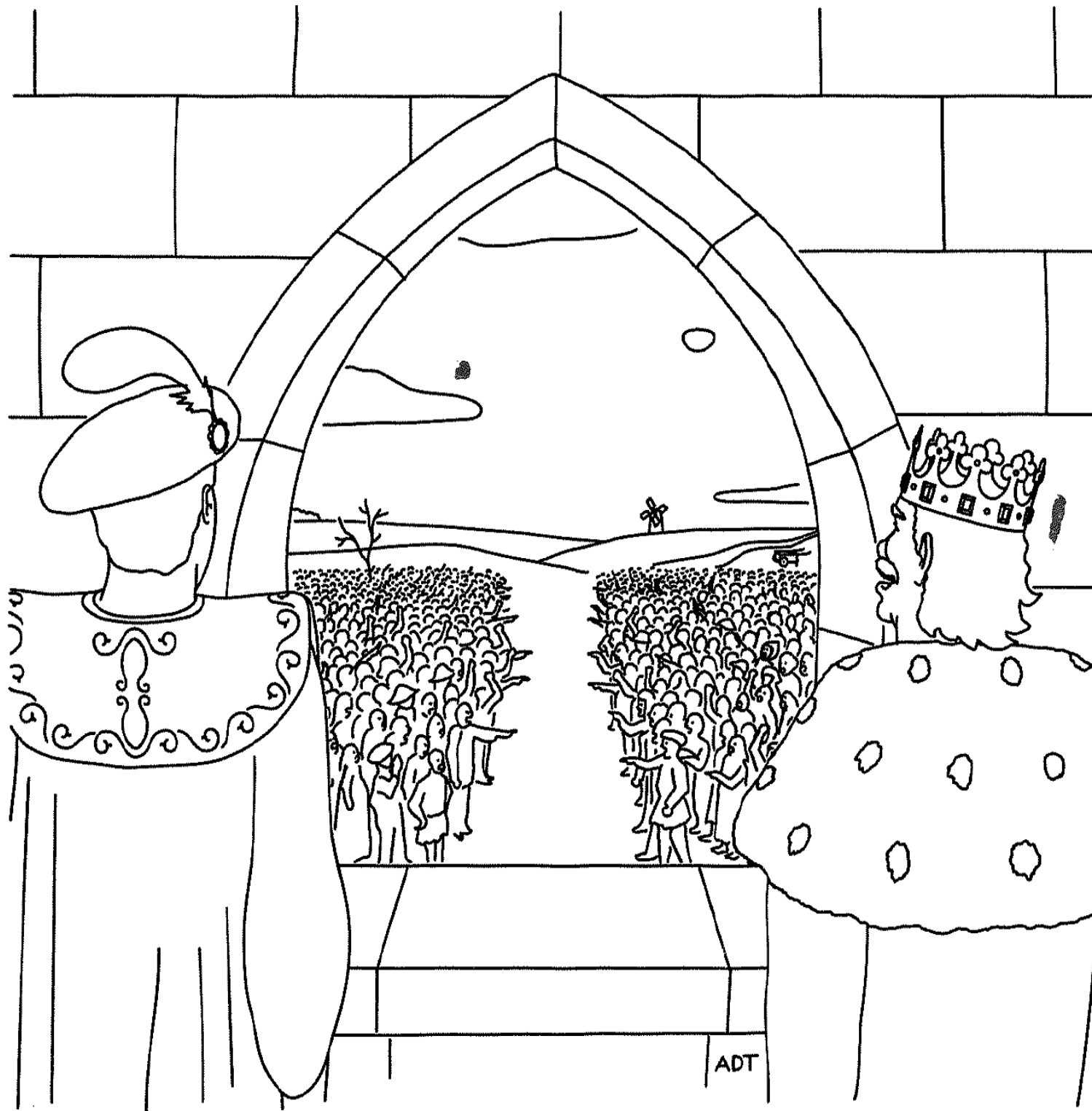


CULTURE



INDIVIDUAL





*"A revolutionary war was brewing, but I
managed to turn it into a culture war."*

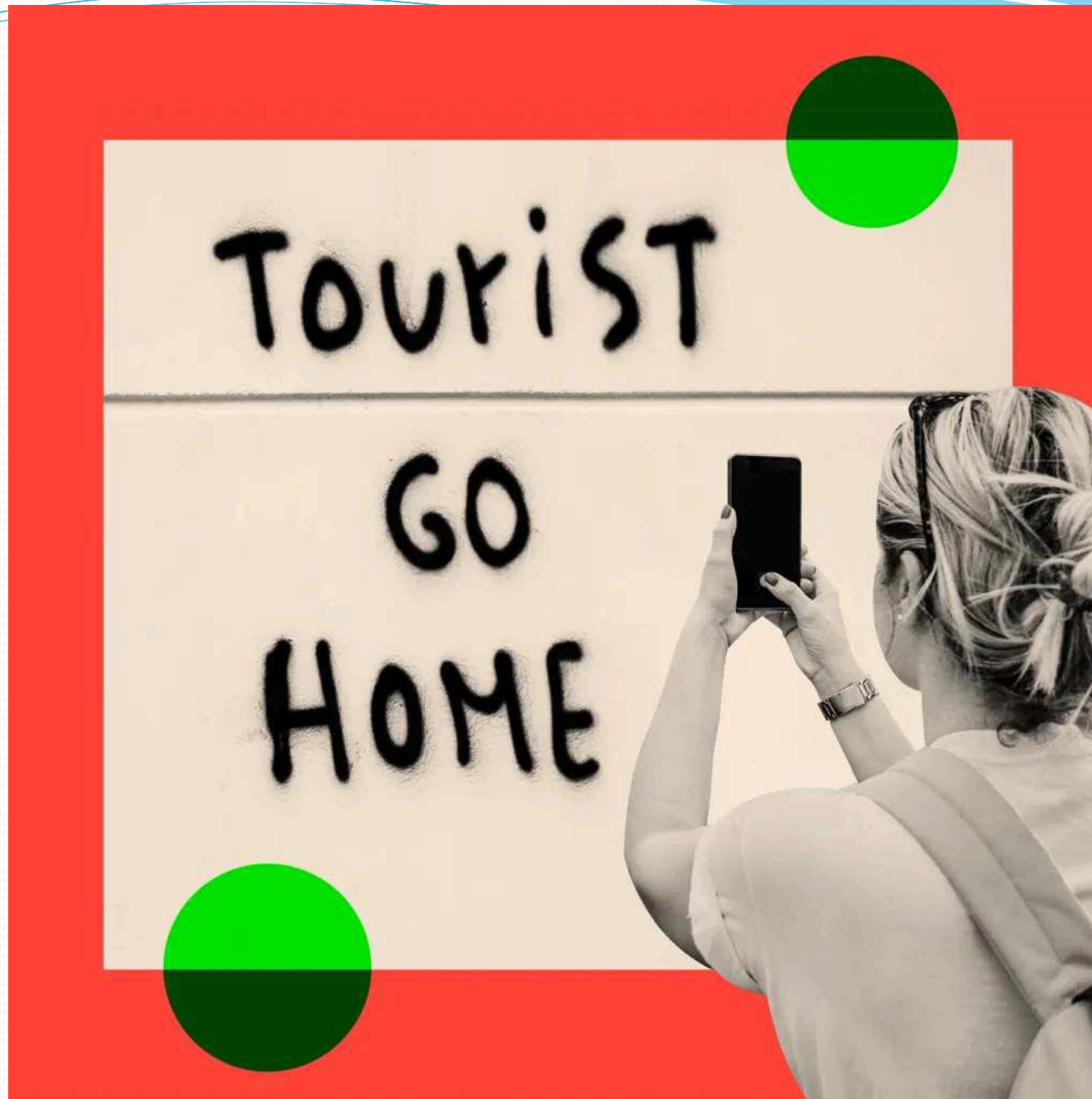
Bertolt Brecht(1898-1956)



Bertolt Brecht a German playwright, poet, and theatre director who created a theatrical technique designed to make audiences think critically rather than become emotionally involved in a play's story.

works explored social and political issues, Brecht fled Nazi Germany (1933) and later returned to East Berlin to establish the Berliner Ensemble.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of the laws of motion if one looks at them from a tennis ball's point of view.



Global tourism is booming. These people would rather it wasn't
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cl55vdjv2j3o>

'Gringos out!': Mexicans protest against tourists and gentrification

29 August 2025

Share  Save 

Will Grant BBC Mexico correspondent, Mexico City



Getty Images

The protesters say locals are being priced out of central Mexico City



Amsterdam Joins Mexico City, Barcelona, Canary Islands, Venice, Hallstatt in Rising Protest Against Over Tourism,



OUTLINE

- I: World on the move; the problem with the “it’s racism” narrative.
- II: Framing immigration: the discourse v the reality
- III: Causes and consequences of migration: the push and the pull. Explanations for the anti-immigrant sentiment.
- IV: Thinking about solutions/policy alternatives.

