

The share of African migration to the OECD has increased in the past few years but, with less than one in ten migrants, remains below its weight in the world population. Almost half of migration from Africa still comes from North Africa but the profile of African migrants is changing rapidly, now encompassing more highly skilled migrants and also more women.

*This **Migration Data Brief** presents the latest trends for African migration to the OECD based on a new update of the OECD database on immigrants in OECD countries (DIOC).*

Are the characteristics and scope of African migration outside of the continent changing?

How can we measure changes in African migration to OECD countries?

Given the major lack of information on migration, the collection and analysis of comparable international data over the long term is essential to gaining an understanding of the migratory phenomenon in its entirety. The Database on Immigrants in OECD countries (DIOC) uses censuses and representative surveys at national level in OECD countries to compare migrant numbers for the years 2000/01, 2005/06, 2010/11 and 2015/16. In this context, international migrants are defined as persons who are living in a country other than their country of birth. Accordingly, this definition is not based on the legal status or category of migration. The data therefore make it possible not only to count the number of migrants originally from African countries living in OECD countries, but also to characterise their socio-economic situation and their degree of integration into the labour market. The analyses carried out using the data do not however take into consideration intra-African migration, despite the fact that over half of African migrants live in another African country (United Nations, 2017).

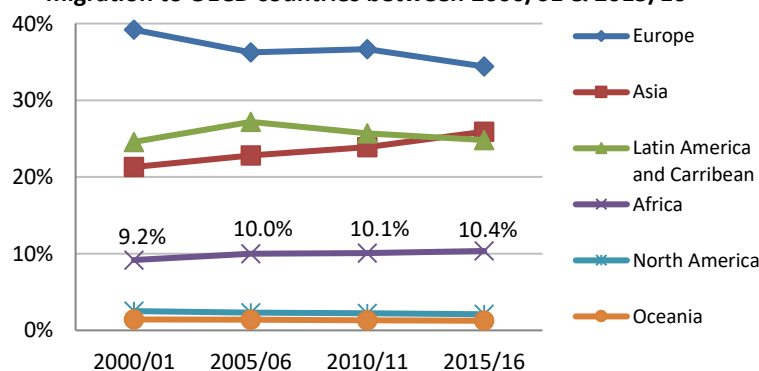
What have the recent changes in the share of African migration been?

The share of the population originally from Africa and living in an OECD country has risen over the past 15 years, but nevertheless remains very low. Indeed, the number of African migrants aged 15 years old and over residing in OECD countries increased from 7.2 million in 2000/01 to 12.5 million in 2015/16, but still only represented 10.4% of the 121 million migrants aged 15 years old and over residing in OECD countries in 2015/16, compared to 9.2% in 2000/01. This is the

second highest increase behind migrants from Asia, whose number rose from 21.3% of migrants in the OECD in 2000/01 to 25.9% in 2015/16 and a total of 31.3 million. The African continent, lagging far behind Europe, Latin America and Asia, therefore remains a very minor player in worldwide mobility towards OECD countries, despite the fact that the continent represents 16% of the world population.

This growth in the share of African migration towards OECD countries was weaker than growth in the continent's share of the world population between 2000 and 2015. While the share of African migration in total migration to the OECD rose by 1.2 percentage points in 15 years, the share of African countries in the world population increased by 2.9 points. At the same time, the share of Asian countries in total migration to the OECD rose by 4.6 points, while Asia's share in the world population fell by 0.8 percentage points. There is still a long way to go, therefore, before demographic growth in Africa results in an equivalent increase in migration towards OECD countries.

Figure 1. Change in the share of origin regions in total migration to OECD countries between 2000/01 & 2015/16



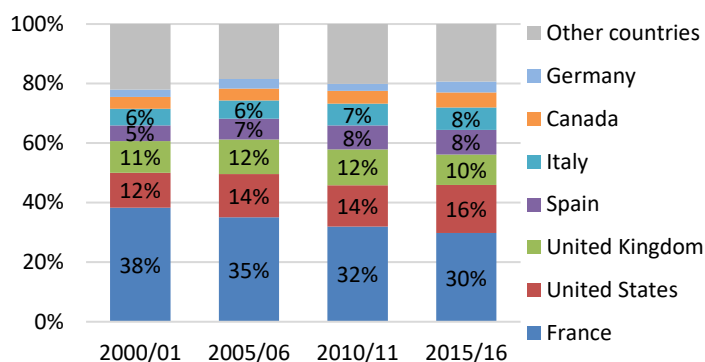
Note: Immigrant population aged 15 years old and over.

Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2000/01, 2005/06, 2010/11 and 2015/16.

Which are the main destination countries for African migrants?

Despite the increased diversification of destination countries for African migrants over the past 15 years, the leading destination countries have on the whole remained the same.

Figure 2. Change in the distribution of migrants from Africa in OECD countries between 2000/01 and 2015/16



Note: Immigrant population aged 15 years old and over.

Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2000/01, 2005/06, 2010/11 and 2015/16.

France is still the most popular destination for the African diaspora, but its share has fallen substantially, from 38% of African migrants settled in OECD countries in 2000/01 to 30% in 2015/16. It is followed by the United States, whose share of African migrants had risen considerably to 16% in 2015/16 compared to 12% in 2000/01. The United Kingdom's share has remained stagnant, while there has been a significant increase in the number of African migrants residing in Italy, Spain, Canada and Germany.

A certain amount of stability can be observed in the main origin countries of African migrants to OECD countries over the years (Table 1).

Accordingly, eight out of the ten leading origin countries in 2015/16 were already on the list in 2000/01. Migrants from North African countries alone represented around 46 % of African migrants in OECD countries in 2015/16 even though this proportion is falling as it stood at 54% in 2000/01. The leading origin country is Morocco, as it is the country of birth of almost one in four African migrants living in the OECD, before Algeria (1 in 8). The proportion of migrants from Nigeria has risen significantly over 15 years, even if that country still only accounts for fewer than 6% of African migrants. In 2015/16, over half (54%) of African migrants residing in OECD countries were from a country where French is the official language.

When mapped, the change in the number of additional migrants to OECD countries between 2000/01 and 2015/16 reveals some substantial differences between the countries.

Over 15 years, only 15 African countries have seen their diaspora increase by over 100 000 individuals. In half of the countries, the increase has been fewer than 20 000, and the number of emigrants in a country like Guinea-Bissau, for instance, has even fallen. Some countries in the Sahel, such as Niger and Chad, and in Southwest Africa, such as Namibia and Botswana, have seen only a very small increase in their diaspora since 2000/01.

Where do African migrants come from?

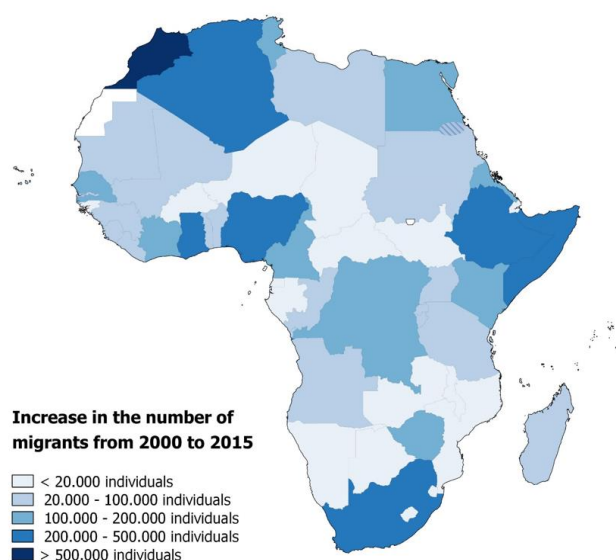
Table 1. Top ten countries in terms of share of African migration to OECD countries, 2000/01-2015/16

2000/01		2005/06		2010/11		2015/16	
Morocco	23.4%	Morocco	23.8%	Morocco	24.1%	Morocco	23.8%
Algeria	18.5%	Algeria	15.8%	Algeria	14.3%	Algeria	12.5%
Tunisia	6.4%	Tunisia	5.5%	South Africa	5.3%	Nigeria	5.7%
South Africa	5.0%	South Africa	5.3%	Nigeria	5.2%	South Africa	5.1%
Egypt	4.6%	Nigeria	4.3%	Tunisia	5.1%	Tunisia	5.0%
Nigeria	3.6%	Egypt	3.8%	Egypt	4.0%	Egypt	4.1%
Kenya	2.8%	Ghana	2.8%	Ghana	3.1%	Ethiopia	3.4%
Angola	2.7%	Ethiopia	2.7%	Ethiopia	2.9%	Ghana	3.3%
Ethiopia	2.3%	Kenya	2.7%	Somalia	2.7%	Somalia	2.9%
Ghana	2.3%	Somalia	2.4%	Kenya	2.5%	Senegal	2.5%

Note: Immigrant population aged 15 years old and over.

Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2000/01, 2005/06, 2010/11 and 2015/16.

Figure 3. Number of additional migrants to OECD countries from African countries between 2000/01 and 2015/16

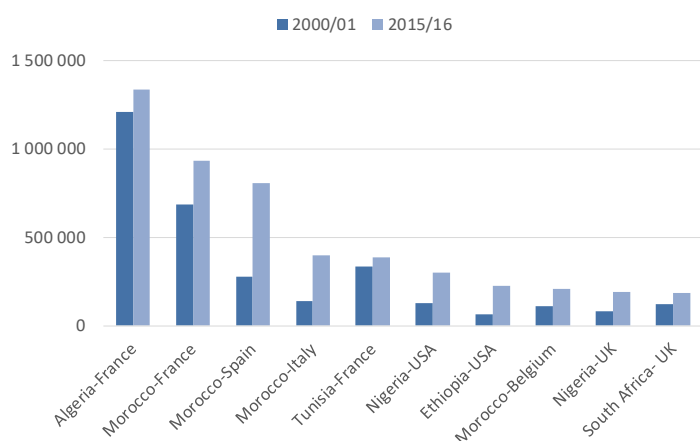


Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2000/01 and 2015/16.

Which are the most popular migration corridors?

The most decisive factors in African migration remain historical and linguistic connections. As a result, there has been little change in the main migration corridors between Africa and OECD countries. While the main flows are still from Algeria and Morocco to France, there has been a significant increase in the number of Moroccan migrants to Spain and Italy over the past 15 years. Conversely, the number of migrants born in Tunisia and residing in France has remained relatively stable. Lastly, there has been a sharp increase in migration from Nigeria and Ethiopia to the United States, and from Nigeria to the United Kingdom.

Figure 4. The ten leading migration corridors from Africa to OECD countries in 2000/01 and 2015/16 (numbers of migrants)



Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2000/01 and 2015/16.

Asylum seekers represent a small proportion of migrants from Africa. In recent years, France has seen an increase in the number of asylum seekers from African countries but they nevertheless remain a

minority compared to countries such as Albania, Afghanistan and Haiti (OECD, 2018).

Who are these African migrants?

Migrants from Africa are generally young, and their gender ratio is increasingly balanced. While African migrants are on average younger than migrants from other regions, their age structure has remained the same over 15 years. In contrast, there are increasing numbers of African women settling in OECD countries, from 46.7% of African migrants in 2000/01 to 48.2% in 2015/16. Indeed, now, women even represent the majority of the African diasporas in countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Ireland, Portugal, Israel, Luxembourg and Australia.

In addition, African migrants are increasingly qualified. Over 60% of them have an upper secondary level of educational attainment and half of this number (30%) have completed higher education. There has been a substantial increase in this share of tertiary educated migrants, as their percentage amounted to 24% in 2000/01. Conversely, the proportion of low-educated migrants (lower secondary or under) fell from 45% in 2000/01 to 38% in 2015/16.

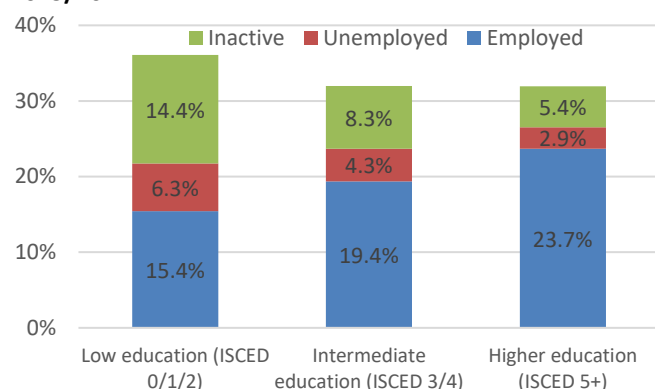
The upturn in the proportion of tertiary graduates among African migrants points to a strong emigration trend among individuals with a qualification from higher education, but it should be noted that the data do not reveal where the qualification was obtained, meaning that some migrants may have pursued higher education in the destination countries. As a result, some countries such as Mauritius, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, have emigration rates for tertiary graduates in excess of 30%. This graduate emigration exceeds 20% in Somalia, Rwanda, Eritrea, Djibouti, Morocco, Mali, Rep. of the Congo and Sierra Leone, despite the fact that the overall rates of emigration in these countries are relatively low.

How do African migrants integrate?

Proportionally, there are still few African students in OECD countries, even if their number is gradually increasing. In 2017, Africa had around 522 000 internationally mobile students, compared to 416 000 in 2012 (UIS, 2018). The share of African students in the total number of international students has remained stable at only 10%, which is much lower than Africa's share in the world youth population (20%). The African countries with the most emigrant students are Nigeria (89 000), Morocco (48 400), Egypt (31 800), Cameroon (24 800), Algeria (21 800) and Tunisia (20 000). The main destination countries of these students are the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Canada and Germany.

When it comes to the employment markets in OECD countries, African migrants are greatly affected by unemployment (13%), inactivity (28%) and over-qualification (35%). While the most qualified African migrants generally have jobs, the others often find themselves facing inactivity and unemployment. In 2015/16, nearly one out every two African migrants aged 15 to 64 was not in employment. Many of those in employment were in a job for which they held more qualifications than actually required. Accordingly, the rate of professional over-qualification in 2015/16 was 35%. This situation may be due to labour market discrimination, but it may also result from issues with the quality and recognition of diplomas. African migrants are particularly affected by over-qualification in the Southern European countries (Greece, Italy, Spain). Since 2000/01, there has been a downturn in the employment rate of poorly educated migrants, and an increase in the employment rate of tertiary graduates. There were no substantial changes in the overall rate of employment between 2010/11 and 2015/16, but it did fall slightly between 2000/01 and 2005/06.

Figure 5. African migrants (15-64) residing in OECD countries by level of education and employment status, 2015/16



Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from DIOC 2015/16.
Note : The total of the 3 categories makes 100% of the population 15-64.

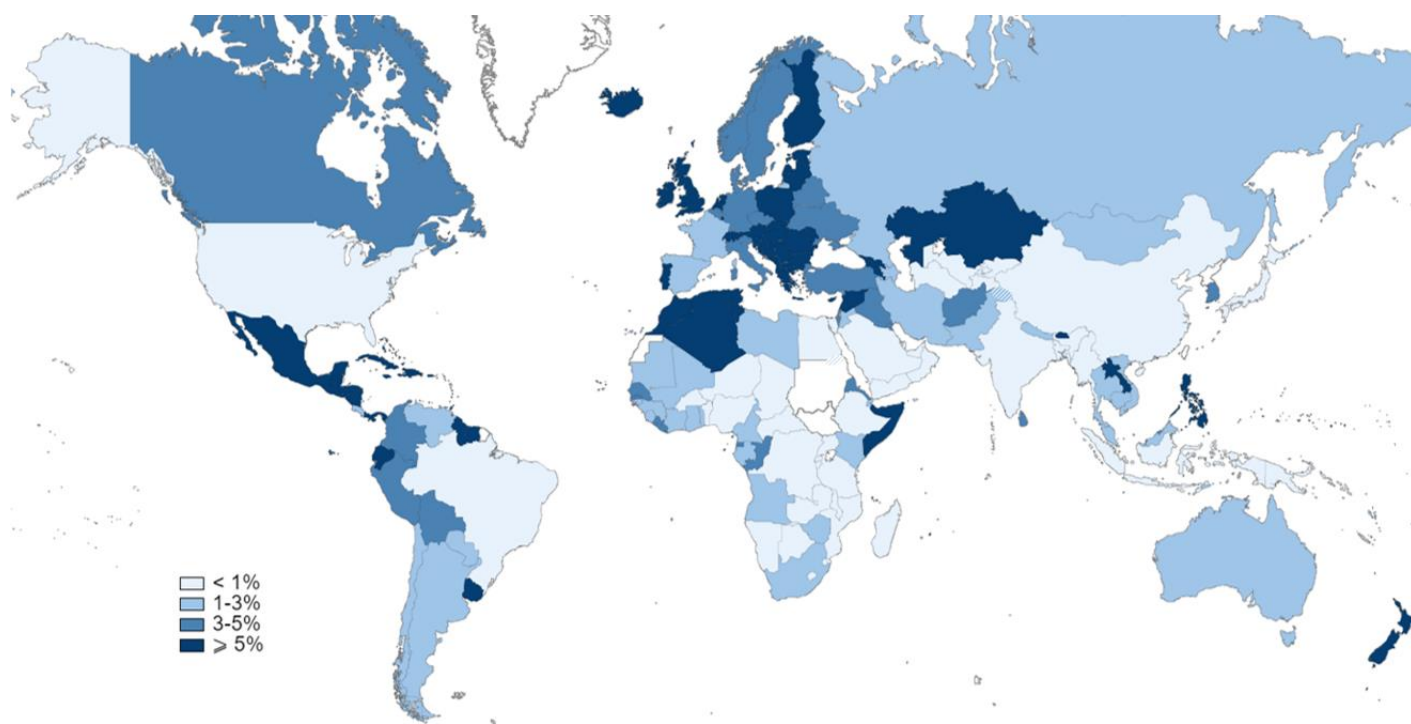
Conclusion

The update to the Database on Immigrants in OECD countries (DIOC) has made it possible to establish a profile of African migration and to analyse developments between 2000/01 and 2015/16. The share of African migrants to OECD countries has increased slightly, but they remain a small minority, representing less than 11% of total worldwide migration. France is still the main destination country for African migrants but its share has decreased significantly, whereas the share accounted for by the United States is rising. The origin countries and migration corridors have remained relatively stable, and almost half of African migration to OECD countries comes from North Africa, with migration from the large countries in Sub-Saharan Africa still in a relative minority. Even if the new data indicate an increase in migration from Africa to OECD countries, it is part of an overall increase in migrant flows in recent years and does not represent a major shift. There has been, however, two substantial changes of note, namely an increase in the share of migrant African women and in the share of those possessing higher educational attainment. African migrants are nonetheless often underemployed, and one third of them are in positions which do not match their level of education.

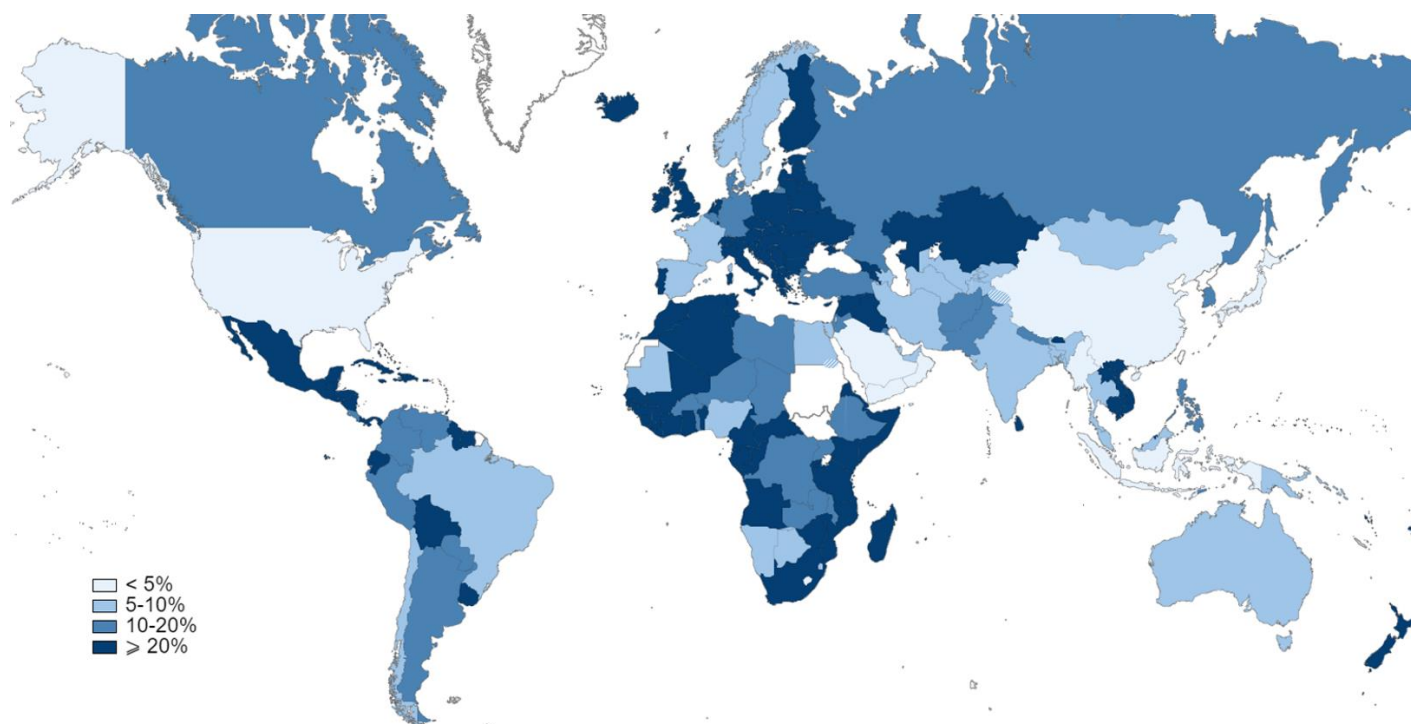
Table A.1. African migrants living in OECD countries by country of birth: population, characteristics and emigration rates

Country of birth	Number of emigrants in OECD countries (000)		Share of women, 2015/16 (%)	Distribution by level of education, 2015/16 (%)		Emigration rates to OECD countries, 2015/16 (%)		
	2000/01	2015/16		Low educated	Highly educated	Total	Women	Highly educated
Algeria	1 325	1 568	49.7	43.6	24.6	5.3	5.3	10.0
Angola	196	219	55.3	40.2	26.1	1.8	1.9	13.1
Benin	14	35	41.9	19.0	53.0	0.6	0.5	17.4
Botswana	4	11	55.5	11.4	38.5	0.7	0.8	6.1
Burkina Faso	8	27	43.3	46.0	30.2	0.3	0.2	6.7
Burundi	11	34	51.2	25.0	44.3	0.5	0.5	13.1
Cabo Verde	88	131	56.2	58.4	8.4	26.3	28.7	48.1
Cameroon	59	202	54.3	20.9	48.5	1.5	1.6	16.7
Central African Republic	10	24	53.3	27.1	35.8	0.8	0.8	20.2
Chad	6	14	44.1	29.5	40.5	0.2	0.2	6.2
Comoros	18	44	53.3	51.7	18.9	8.4	8.9	26.8
Congo	69	127	52.9	29.8	30.9	4.4	4.6	22.9
Côte d'Ivoire	63	184	49.2	36.1	33.1	1.4	1.4	9.1
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	101	280	52.0	24.9	34.0	0.7	0.7	5.7
Djibouti	5	13	55.7	28.0	38.3	2.0	2.2	23.4
Egypt	328	517	41.5	17.1	52.0	0.8	0.7	2.9
Equatorial Guinea	12	24	64.7	39.8	20.3	4.6	6.0	15.9
Eritrea	48	186	45.4	50.0	15.1	5.0	4.4	23.6
Ethiopia	166	425	50.0	27.6	31.7	0.7	0.7	6.9
Gabon	11	26	59.7	21.2	46.2	2.3	2.7	18.3
Gambia	21	47	40.6	52.4	19.3	4.0	3.1	14.3
Ghana	166	409	47.0	27.7	35.2	2.3	2.2	14.2
Guinea	21	89	44.9	44.4	28.0	1.4	1.3	11.9
Guinea-Bissau	30	29	41.7	52.6	18.0	2.8	2.3	30.7
Kenya	199	300	51.5	18.1	48.0	1.1	1.1	13.7
Lesotho	1	3	50.1	10.0	52.1	0.2	0.2	1.8
Liberia	41	104	53.1	18.6	35.4	3.5	3.8	54.6
Libya	82	114	47.1	32.7	37.2	2.3	2.2	7.6
Madagascar	77	140	59.5	29.6	36.0	1.0	1.2	15.2
Malawi	15	27	46.0	21.9	45.1	0.3	0.3	9.7
Mali	45	103	36.6	56.5	19.2	1.1	0.8	23.1
Mauritania	15	36	26.3	48.5	22.9	1.5	0.8	4.9
Mauritius	91	141	54.6	31.9	38.8	11.6	12.3	62.2
Morocco	1 675	2 971	47.7	57.3	17.0	10.8	10.0	23.2
Mozambique	86	96	53.6	28.7	36.7	0.6	0.7	28.6
Namibia	3	12	59.0	14.4	49.6	0.7	0.9	5.3
Niger	5	15	44.6	25.2	46.0	0.2	0.1	8.5
Nigeria	261	710	48.3	18.6	55.2	0.7	0.7	3.5
Rwanda	15	43	57.7	19.2	44.4	0.6	0.7	23.7
Sao Tome and Principe	12	20	59.8	63.2	9.5	15.6	17.8	64.7
Senegal	133	311	36.3	54.1	21.2	3.7	2.7	20.3
Seychelles	8	12	65.9	23.6	29.0	14.4	17.8	-
Sierra Leone	40	83	53.3	21.8	37.6	2.1	2.2	22.4
Somalia	125	357	51.3	50.6	17.2	5.9	5.9	24.8
South Africa	361	635	51.7	11.0	54.9	1.7	1.7	17.1
South Sudan	-	14	49.7	25.2	39.2	0.2	0.2	-
Sudan	42	109	41.2	24.7	43.2	0.5	0.4	-
Swaziland	2	7	62.9	10.7	61.7	0.8	1.0	5.5
Tanzania	70	94	52.9	25.4	44.4	0.3	0.3	11.7
Togo	18	67	44.8	25.6	40.3	1.6	1.4	8.9
Tunisia	461	626	42.8	44.8	25.1	6.9	5.9	12.8
Uganda	82	116	51.2	19.2	49.7	0.6	0.6	9.3
Zambia	35	49	55.9	10.3	62.1	0.6	0.7	7.8
Zimbabwe	78	191	51.2	12.1	53.9	2.3	2.3	21.5

Map 1. Emigration rates to OECD countries (population 15+), 2015/16

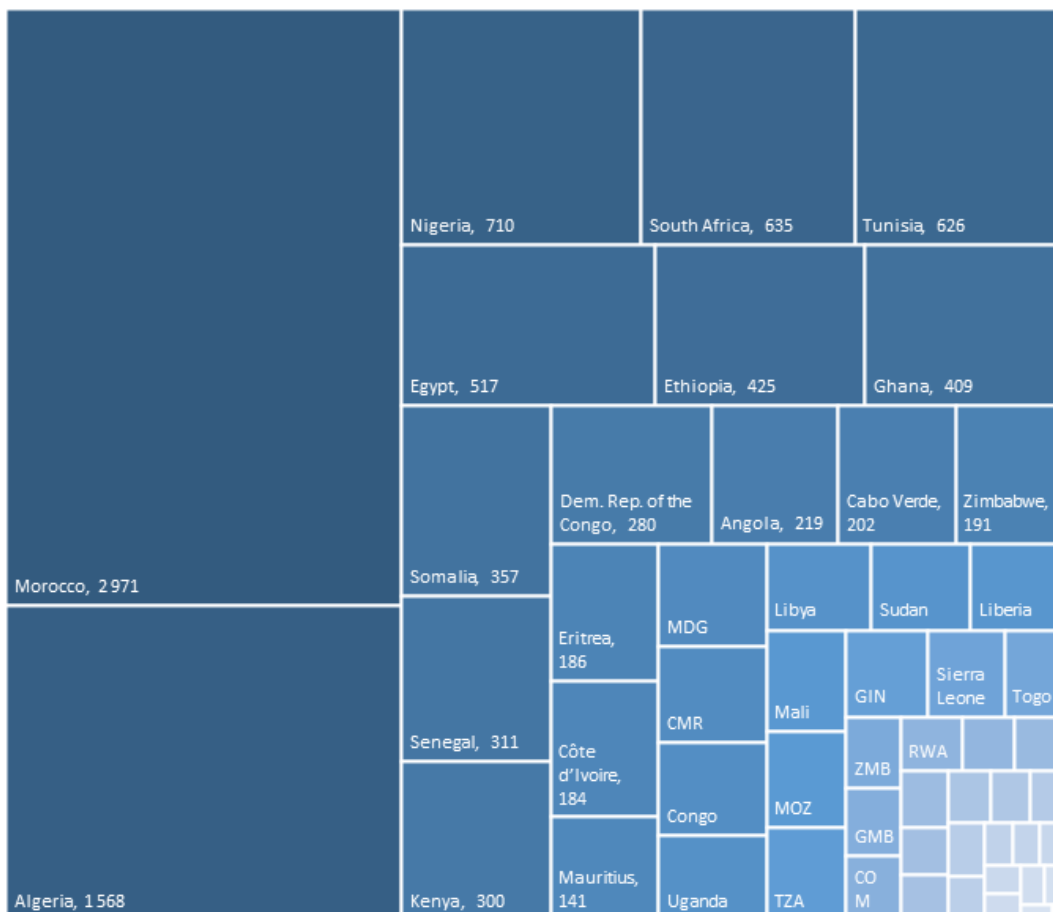


Map 2. Emigration rates of the highly educated to OECD countries (population 15+), 2015/16

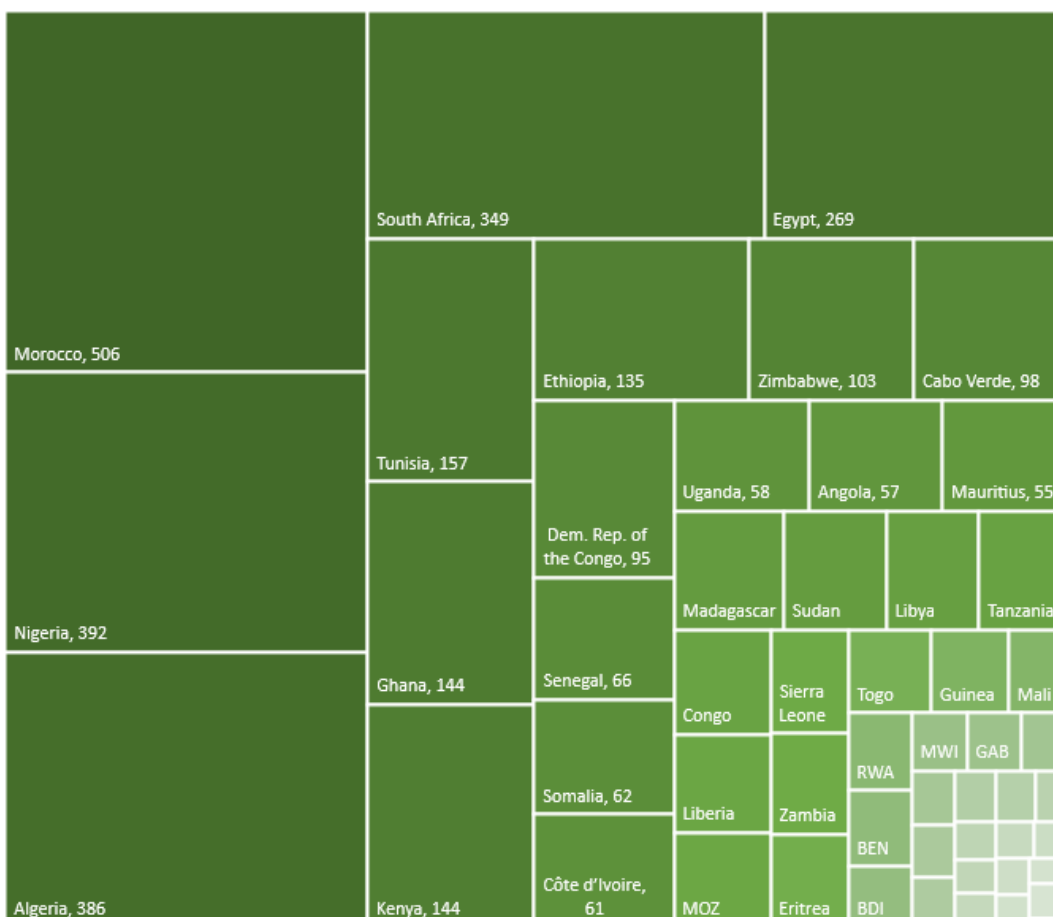


Graphique A.1. Stocks of emigrants born in Africa (aged 15 +) living in OECD countries by country of birth, 2015/16

A. Total emigrant population (15+) in thousands (12.2 million in total)



B. Highly educated emigrant population (15+) in thousands (3.8 million in total)



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Useful links

www.oecd.org/migration

<http://www.oecd.org/fr/els/mig/dioc.htm>

<https://www.afd.fr/en>

<https://www.afd.fr/fr/page-programme-de-recherche/demographie-et-societe?prevId=3004>

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