



# The Religious Composition of the World's Migrants Report

**For Prelims:** [The Religious Composition of the World's Migrants](#), [Emigrants](#), [Immigrants](#), [Religious Minorities](#), [Gulf Cooperation Council \(GCC\)](#), [Middle East-North Africa](#), [British India](#), [Remittances](#), [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#).

**For Mains:** Causes, Consequences and Significance of Migration in Globalised World.

**Source:** [BS](#)

## Why in News?

Recently, the **Pew Research Center** published a report titled [The Religious Composition of the World's Migrants](#) based on data from the [United Nations](#) and **270 censuses and surveys**.

- More than **280 million people**, or **3.6%** of the world's population, were living as [international migrants](#) in 2020.
- **Religion** plays a significant role in **migration patterns**, influencing both the departure from the homeland and the reception in the destination country.

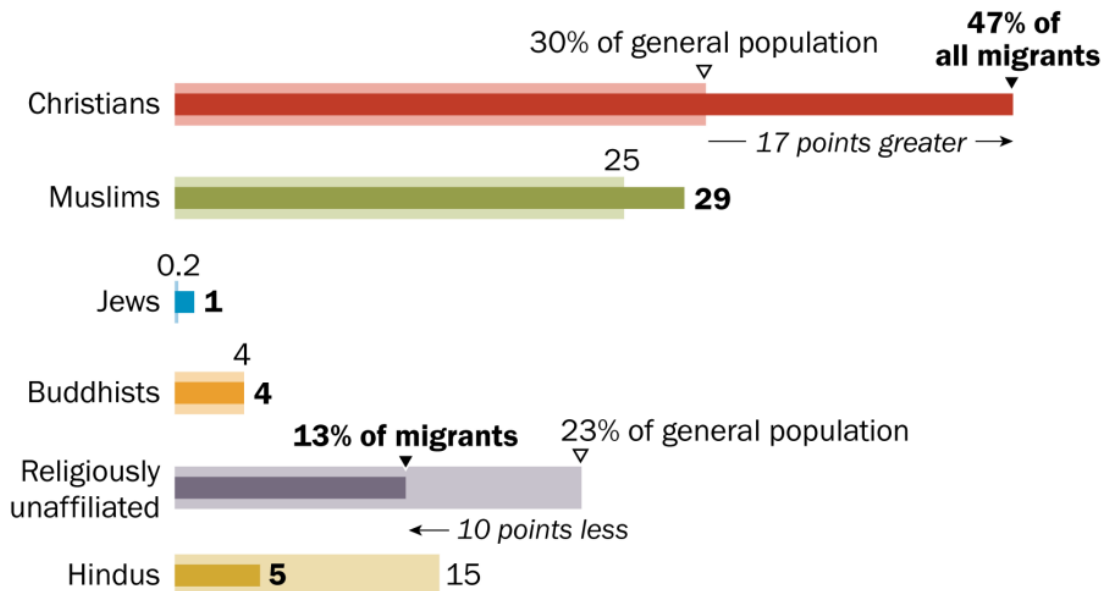
## What are the Key Findings of the Report?

- **Trend among Hindu Migrants:** In 2020, **India** emerged as the **top country** both for **Hindu emigrants** (out-migrants) and **immigrants** (in-migrants).
  - **7.6 million Hindus** born in India were living **abroad**.
  - About **3 million Hindus** born in other countries were residing in **India**.
- **Trend among Christians:** Christians represent the **largest share** of the global migrant population at **47%**.
- **Migration Trends among Religious Minorities in India:** Indian emigrants are **disproportionately** from [religious minorities](#).
  - **Christians** constitute **16%** of Indian emigrants but only **2%** of India's population.
  - **Muslims** represent **33%** of all Indian-born migrants but only **15%** of India's population.
    - **India is the second-largest source of Muslim migrants**, with 6 million Muslims living majorly in UAE (1.8 million), Saudi Arabia (1.3 million), and Oman (720,000).
- **Trend among GCC Countries:** The migrant population in the [Gulf Cooperation Council \(GCC\)](#) countries has grown by **277% since 1990**.
  - The majority of GCC migrants are **Muslims** (75%), while Hindus and Christians account for 11% and 14%, respectively.
  - GCC countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE) host **9.9 million Indian migrants** as of 2020.
- **Trends in Global Migration:** From 1990 to 2020, the number of **international migrants increased by 83%**, significantly outpacing the global population growth of 47%.
  - Migrants travel an **average distance of 2,200 miles**.
- **Religious Alignment and Migration Patterns:** Migrants often relocate to countries where their **religion aligns** with that of the **source country population**.

- This trend may be driven by **cultural and religious familiarity**, influencing both the choice of destination and the integration process.

## // Christians, Muslims and Jews make up higher shares of migrants than of the overall population

% of global and migrant populations who are ...

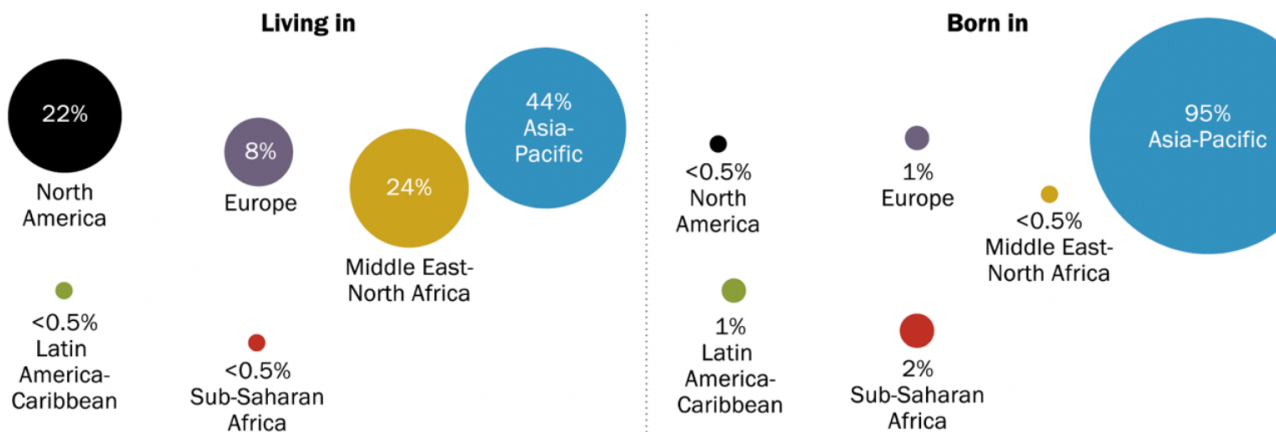


### What is Hindu Migration Pattern and Trends?

- **Global Underrepresentation:** Hindu migrants make up a small share (**5%**) of all international migrants, with **13 million Hindus** living outside their country of birth as of **2020**.
  - This is significantly lower than their proportion of the **global population (15%)**.
- **Distance Travelled:** Hindu migrants tend to travel longer distances, averaging **3,100 miles** from their country of origin, compared to the **global average of 2,200 miles** for all migrants.
  - This is the **longest average distance** traveled among all religious groups who originate from Asia.
- **Regions of Destination for Hindu Migrants:** The **Asia-Pacific region** hosts the largest share of Hindu migrants (**44%**), followed by the **Middle East-North Africa (24%)**, and **North America (22%)**.
  - Smaller proportions reside in **Europe (8%)**, with very few in Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa.

## Regions where Hindu migrants now live and where they came from

% of all Hindu migrants living/born in ...



- **Regions of Origin for Hindu Migrants:** The vast majority of **Hindu migrants (95%)** originate from the **Asia-Pacific region**, particularly **India**, which accounts for **57%** of the **world's Hindu migrants** and is **home to 94%** of the global Hindu population.
  - Other significant sources include **Bangladesh (12% of Hindu migrants)** and **Nepal (11%)**.
- **India as Destination for Hindu Migrants:** **India** is the leading destination for Hindu migrants, hosting **22% (3 million)** of all Hindu migrants.
  - This is largely due to historical events, particularly the partition of **British India** in 1947 and their subsequent **persecution** in their new homelands like Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- **Notable Country Pairs for Hindu Migration:**
  - **India to the United States:** The most **common migration route** for Hindus is from **India to the US**, with 1.8 million Hindus taking this path. These migrants often seek employment, higher education and income levels.
  - **Bangladesh to India:** The second most common route involves migration from **Bangladesh to India**, with 1.6 million Hindus moving along this path, driven by historical, social, and economic factors.

## How Diaspora Communities Boost Home-Country Growth?

- **Substantial Financial Inflows:** Diaspora communities significantly contribute to their home countries by sending **remittances**.
  - In 2022, migrants from emerging and developing countries sent **USD 430 billion**, which is **three times more than these countries receive in financial aid** from other nations or international institutions.
- **Impact on GDP:** Remittances constitute a substantial portion of **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** in several countries like 37% in Tajikistan, 30% in Nepal, and around 25% in Tonga, Liberia, and Haiti.
- **Diaspora Investments:** Diasporas often invest in home-country businesses and **government bonds**, increasing financial capital.
- **Knowledge Transfer and Expertise:** Diasporas transfer **knowledge and expertise** gained abroad back to their home countries.
  - This can enhance productivity by improving education quality and developing better business and governance practices.
- **Bridging Knowledge Gaps:** Diaspora members use their **skills, global contacts, and understanding of local customs** to help home-country businesses navigate challenges, improve efficiency, and expand into new markets.
  - For example, Indian executives in US technology companies have facilitated outsourcing to India.

## Conclusion

Migration and diaspora communities boost **home-country growth through remittances, investments, and knowledge transfer**. To maximise these benefits, governments should create **strong diaspora networks**, reduce investment barriers, **cut remittance costs**, and support diaspora-driven initiatives. These strategies will enhance capital inflow, productivity, and sustainable development.

**Drishti Mains Question:**

Discuss how migration and diaspora communities contribute to the economic growth and development of their home countries.

**UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)**

**Mains**

Q. 'Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries'. Comment with examples (2020)

Q. Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in South East Asian countries' economy and society. Appraise the role of Indian Diaspora in South-East Asia in this context (2017)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/the-religious-composition-of-the-world-s-migrants-report>

