

Understanding the Foreign-born Population Living in South Africa: In the Time of the Demographic Dividend

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Background: Migration is perceived as one of the three components of population growth (in addition to fertility and mortality), and is an important phenomenon as it plays a crucial role in population distribution and contributes to shaping the demographic structure of a country (Simelane, 1999; Stats SA 2017). Globally, international migration continues to grow rapidly, increasing from 154 million in 1990 to 244 million in 2015 (Global Migration Group, 2014; IOM, 2015). With respect to adolescents, countries show an increase in this cohort, with migration increasing from 82,3 million in 1990 to 135 million in 2013, (Global Migration Group, 2014). The Global Migration Group (2014) states that although human mobility has gained increasing international attention in recent years, migration by young people has been mostly absent from global policy debates and national policies. This paper adds to the discourse on international migration and adolescents

Data and methods: This paper focuses on lifetime migration. A lifetime migrant is defined as a person who was not born in South Africa, but who was enumerated in South Africa on the night of Community Survey (CS) 2016. The results are presented on spatial, sociodemographic and housing characteristics of adolescents; and utilizes data from the South African Community Survey (CS) 2016 which is the most recent data available on migration in South Africa.

Results: Preliminary findings indicate that Gauteng was home to the majority of foreign-born adolescents (45,4%). About 51% of all foreign-born adolescents were female, and the majority of foreign-born adolescents in South Africa are black African (88,3%). Almost three-quarters of foreign-born adolescents are not South African citizens. Only 66,2% of migrants in this cohort are currently attending an educational institution. Almost three times as many foreign-born adolescents (21,1%) than South African-born adolescents live in informal dwellings. About ten per cent of migrant adolescents were concerned about violence and crime in the municipality where they

lived. Nearly 10,54% of migrant adolescents were victims of crime in the year before the survey.

Policy implications: Recommendations are made on three important policy issues that can be gauged. First, non-admission to educational institutions for foreign-born children and adolescents who are undocumented needs to be considered. Second, the increase in the demand for single-person and smaller household size housing needs to be deliberated. Third, dealing with issues of xenophobia and crimes against those who are foreign born need to be prioritised.