



FACT SHEET ON MIGRATION FOR THE MEDIA

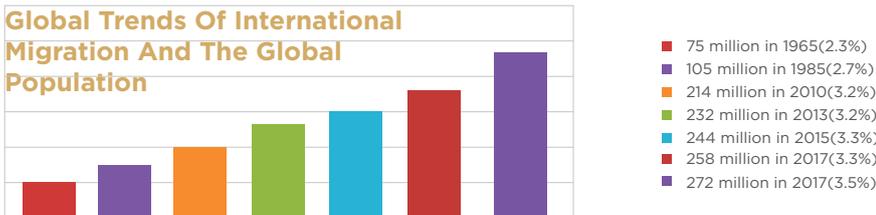
WHAT IS MIGRATION?

Migration is the process or act of moving either across an international geographical border or within a state for at least a six to twelve-month period. Therefore, a migrant is anyone who carries out this type of movement irrespective of their sex, race, gender, economic status, ethnic background, religious beliefs etc.



Globally, about 272 million people (3.5% of the global population) lived outside their countries of origin as international migrants, as at 2019 (UNDESA, 2020). Though the real number of international migrants has consistently increase over time, as a proportion of the global population, this increment has represented less than 4% (Figure 1).

Global Trends Of International Migration And The Global Population

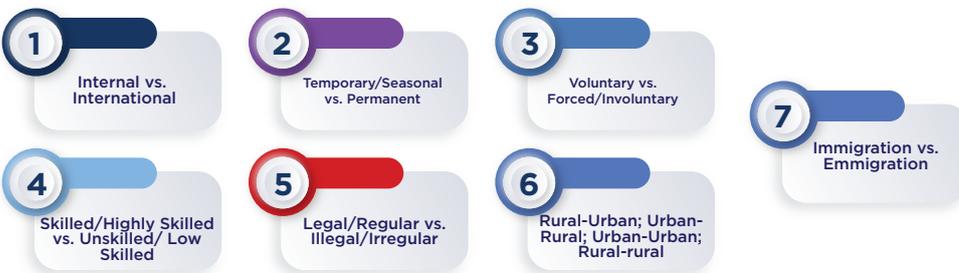


TYPES OF MIGRATION

There are different ways of classifying the different types of migration. For instance, persons leaving their geographical space, with the intention to permanently stay abroad, are emigrating while those entering, with the intention of permanent stay, are immigrating. Within a geographic space, migration can also be from a rural to urban community or vice versa.

Figure 2 shows different types of migration

FIG 2: MAIN TYPOLOGIES OF MIGRATION



REGULAR/IRREGULAR MIGRATION

A common classification is the difference between regular/legal and irregular/illegal migration. Regular migration is when a person follows the rules and conditions for entering a destination or host community/country e.g. by acquiring a visa and abiding by the conditions of their visa. Irregular migration refers to “movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination” (Ghana Migration Profile, 2019). Irregular/illegal migration, however, involves more than the mere illegal crossing of an approved boundary. One can be characterised as an irregular migrant on the following grounds:

a) Illegal entry: Migrants who enter a host country without permission either by evading immigration control or through deception. This includes acquiring new legal status within host country through deception e.g. through sham marriages.

b) Overstay: Migrants who stay on beyond a period for which they have approved stay e.g. after their visa has expired. Such migrants tend to include students, asylum seekers, visitors, labour migrants etc.

c) Semi-compliance: Migrants who enter and remain legally but act in breach of conditions attached to their immigration status i.e. working without permission or working for longer hours than they are permitted.

d) A child born to parents who are illegal residents in the host country: Such a child is an irregular migrant without having crossed any borders. This, however, varies from country to country.



WHY SHOULD MEDIA CARE ABOUT MIGRATION?

Migration is a serious issue in Africa. Ghana is one of 193 UN member countries to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which recognizes the contribution of migration to sustainable development. The Agenda's core principle is to “leave no one behind”, including migrants. The social responsibility role of media makes practitioners critical partners in the achievement of this and several other human development goals. For most people, their knowledge and understanding of migration issues are based on the images and texts they consume in media. The media's delivery of accurate, balanced and fair information, therefore enables audiences to understand and make informed migration decisions.

MIGRATION IN THE NEWS

Migration stories are among the salient human development subjects consistently making news headlines across different media forms globally. Examples of migration stories that have attracted widespread media coverage and public attention include conditions of migrant populations (refugees) fleeing from war and natural disasters, the vulnerabilities of migrants crossing into Europe through unapproved routes, human trafficking and forced labour of irregular migrants and the experiences of returnees. Migration is a complex subject. While media are acknowledged for providing coverage that informs policy and action, including migration decisions, there are growing concerns among migration researchers, and policy makers/actors over the nature and quality of such coverage. Triandafyllidou (2017) contends that migration is linked to mediatization explained as “the ways in which events and issues are represented in the media... what constitutes ‘news’ and how it is reported.” Below are a few of the concerns:

Poor news gathering practices leading to inaccurate and/or half-baked stories that fail to educate the public

Poor attention to the depth and breadth of issues

Biased frames and overly graphical images of conditions of migrants

Stereotypical portrayals and representations of migrants

Exclusion of migrants' perspectives from news content

Coverage of migration stories largely as conflict or planned events

Use of inappropriate words and expressions

Inappropriate use of terminologies

Lack of gender sensitivity in coverage and reporting

Sensationalism (Personalised and emotion laden content)



ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical reporting enriches the quality of migration news and information in media content. Ethical reportage of migration issues requires media professionals to be more accountable to their audiences. The following are some important elements of ethical reporting of migration issues that can guide media professionals:

ACCURACY: Use accurate, factual and credible information and (re)sources including evidence-based information. Report facts and avoid the biases. Verify information when in doubt and always rely on credible sources. Analyse statements to hold authority accountable.

BALANCE: Ensure balanced coverage by reporting all sides of the story, truthfully and fairly. Reportage must reflect migrant voices including voices of transit or destination communities. Reportage must also question accounts of self-appointed community and migrant spokespeople and who they really are.

UNBIASED REPORTING: Be impartial and inclusive in reporting and keep emotions and sentiments in check. Focus on migration success stories as well as threats, opportunities and challenges of migrations. Also stories should reflect the agency of migrants and other relevant actors in the migration process.

WRITE RESPONSIBLY: Avoid sensationalism, oversimplification, generalizations and undue negative framing of stories. Avoid the use of dehumanizing language, labels, metaphors, and stereotypical expressions that perpetuate negative images about migrants. Also, avoid inappropriate terms such as “illegal” “aliens” when describing migrants. Unless it is a direct quote, drop such words from your reportage. Challenge extreme notions about migrants for example, as problems or victims.

FAIRNESS: Report fairly and ensure all sides to the story are treated equally. Be clear and transparent when discussing the impact of migration on society.

INTERVIEW RESPONSIBLY: Respect the rights and dignity of migrants. Journalists, must not divulge the migration status of interviewees without their full informed consent. Migrant populations must be accorded the rights and protection they are entitled to under international law.

SHOW HUMANITY: Show empathy and avoid being judgmental. Connect with migrants by reflecting the human aspect of migration. Take note of the bigger picture.

AVOID HATE SPEECH. Avoid negative expressions that refer to the ethnic origin of suspects. For instance, in reporting crime, do not emphasize the legal status or ethnic origin of the person.

MIGRATION LAW: Be conversant with migration laws and use migrant definitions and terminologies appropriately. Make a distinction among terms such as asylum seekers, migrants, refugees.

DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Ghanaians living outside of Ghana grew by 26.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019 (UN DESA, 2019)

Male Ghanaians emigrate more than females

In 2019 alone, the Ghana Immigration Service recorded nearly one million departures from Ghana (GIS, 2019).

Since 2014, 7,401 migrants have died in transit across Africa and that they are mostly from Nigeria, Sudan, Benin and Ghana.

Ghana is a source, transit and destination country of victims of human trafficking. In 2018, the Government reported identifying 348 potential victims of trafficking of which 252 were children.

In 2018, there were 503 first-instance applications for asylum in Ghana - a huge drop from 20,113 in 2011. Côte d'Ivoire, topped the list due to internal political conflict.

In 2018, Refugees in Ghana documented by UNHCR totaled 11,891. They were largely from Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Liberia.

Economic development in Ghana has been enhanced by immigrant workers; majority work in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors.

Fewer than 10% of West African migrants travel to Europe/USA. There are significant flows to the continent, in particular, Northern, Central and Southern Africa. GLOSSARY ON MIGRATION

International migration - The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence and across an international border to a country of which they are not nationals

Internal migration - The movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence.

Migrant - A migrant is one who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

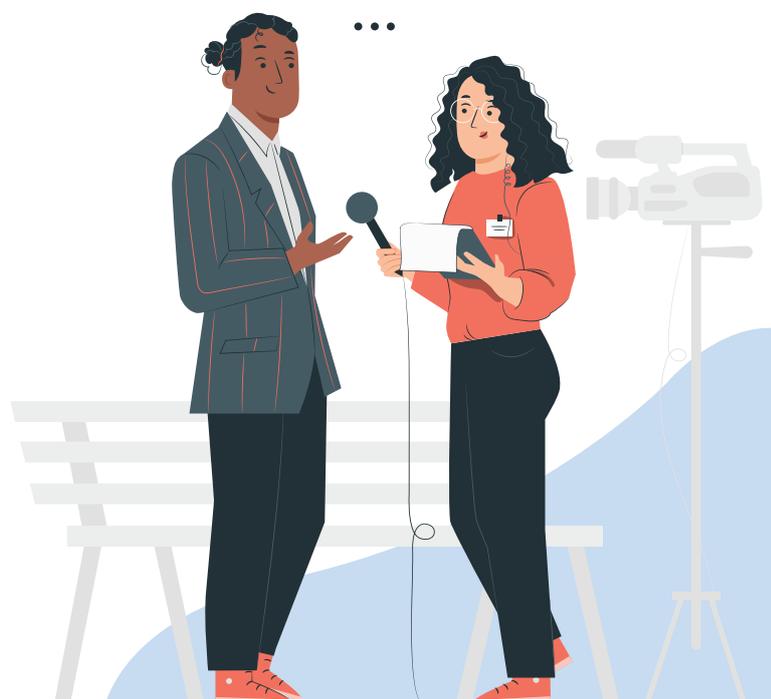
Asylum Seeker: An individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every recognized refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

Emigration - From the perspective of the country of departure, the act of moving from one's country of nationality or usual residence to another country, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence

Immigrant - From the perspective of the country of arrival, a person who moves into a country other than that of his or her nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Immigration - From the perspective of the country of arrival, the act of moving into a country other than one's country of nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Irregular migration - Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.



WHERE CAN THE MEDIA GO FOR RELIABLE INFORMATION ON MIGRATION

As media, your ability to report on migration issues in a manner that helps will-be migrants make informed decisions rests with the quality of information you can access. In Ghana, such information exists and is vested in different institutions which can serve as a source of both data and experts to include in your migration stories. These include:

The International Organisation for Migration:

Plot 48, 10 Osu Badu Ave, Accra
Phone: 030 274 2930
<https://www.iom.int/countries/ghana>

The Ghana Immigration Service

John Kasavubu Rd, Accra
030 222 4445
<https://home.gis.gov.gh/>

The Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana

University of Ghana main campus
Legon
<https://cms.ug.edu.gh/>

See the following documents for more information

<http://www.unhcr.org/publications/brochures/58e1ed994/reporting-on-refugees-guidelines-by-and-for-journalists.html>
<https://cms.ug.edu.gh/technical-papers>
<https://publications.iom.int/books/media-coverage-migration-promoting-balanced-reporting>
<https://en.unesco.org/themes/media-crisis-and-disaster-situations/media-coverage-migration>
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/wom3.8>
www.iom.int/world-migration-report-2015
https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf

- Triandafyllidou, A. (2017) 'Media Coverage on Migration: Promoting a Balanced Reporting', in McAuliffe, M. and M. Klein Solomon (Conveners) (2017) Ideas to Inform International Cooperation on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, IOM: Geneva. Internet source: www.iom.int accessed on 20/02/2021
- Hein de Haas (2008); Irregular Migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union: An Overview of Recent Trends (PFD, Prepared for IOM) accessed 21/02/2021
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Master Glossary of Terms (2006).
- International Organization for Migration, World Migration Report 2015
- International Organization for Migration, Glossary on migration, IML Series No. 34, 2019,

This migration fact sheet is sponsored by:



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