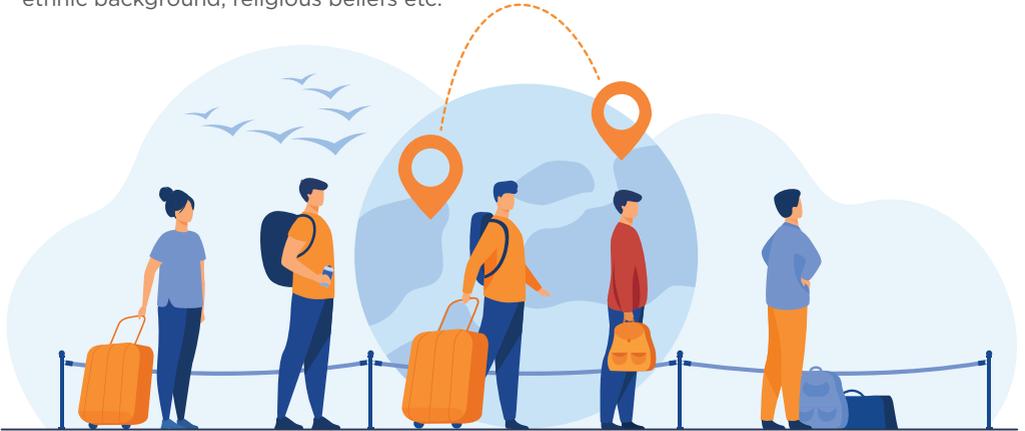




## FACT SHEET ON MIGRATION FOR THE YOUTH

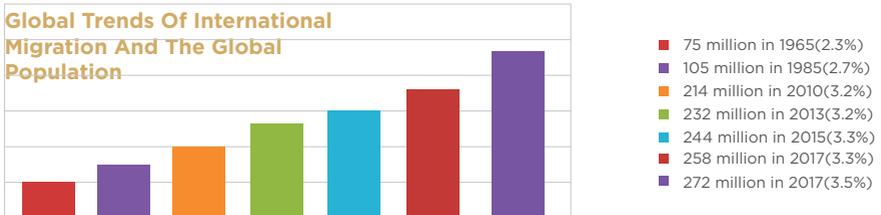
### WHAT IS MIGRATION?

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).

Fig. 1

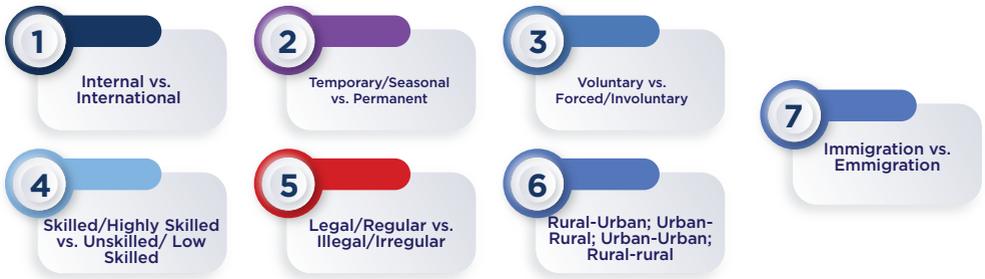


### TYPES OF MIGRATION

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 DO YOUNG PEOPLE MIGRATE IRREGULARLY?

Young people tend to embark on irregular migration for a variety of reasons. These include: The perceived limited avenues for acquiring visas. This perception is partly informed by prior experience of peers who have been refused visas. However, the refusal is sometimes due to lack of genuine requisite documentation to prove one’s true intentions for migration or ignorance about the application processes.

- Some young people are also lured into irregular migration by unscrupulous human smugglers or traffickers whose main priority is to make a financial gain at the expense of youngsters.
- Some young people also embark on irregular migration in response to peer pressure. Such perilous attempts at migrating are sometimes, mistakenly, perceived as a marker of one’s maturity among some migrant communities. Families also sometimes compel their youngsters to migrate, whether regularly or irregularly, simply for reasons of apparent prestige associated with migrant households.
- In some instances, some young people migrate irregularly out of desperation due to lack of employment opportunities, abject poverty or the absence of positive role models in their communities.

## IRREGULAR MIGRATION TRENDS AMONG GHANAIAN YOUTH

While there are limited reliable statistics on the actual number of youth who migrate irregularly from Ghana, anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of irregular youth migration takes place along the Sahara desert crossings from Ghana through Niger and into Libya. There have been several reports of deaths due to starvation and thirst, attacks by armed robbers, exhaustion and heat strokes. In spite of the heightened risk of harm or loss of life, young people continue to attempt to use Libya as a transit country to access Europe. Another youth migration corridor is from Ghana to the Gulf States. Such migration is mostly by female youth to work as domestic help in the Gulf States. Though these youths migrate regularly, in the first instance, they face grievous abuses by their employers and their passports are ceased from them, thus rendering them as irregular migrants who cannot choose to leave their destination countries on their own volition.

## DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH IRREGULAR YOUTH MIGRATION

- It exposes young migrants to high risk of death, injury, torture, poverty, social exclusion, exploitation and human rights abuses.
- There is the risk of irregular youth migrants falling into criminal activities in order to survive. Out of desperation, some youth are easily recruited into criminal gangs and are taken advantage of by self-serving drug dealers, armed robbers and leaders of other criminal enterprises.
- Irregular youth migrants are likely to be under-paid, if at all, since they are forced to work within the 'black market'.
- Some also get into debt bondage where so-called 'connection men' saddle them with impossible debt contracts that would keep the youth in exploitable conditions indefinitely.
- Since irregular migrants cannot access health-care for fear of being arrested and deported, they face a high risk of poor health and death.



## BENEFITS OF REGULAR AND WELL-MANAGED MIGRATION

When people use approved means to migrate, several benefits accrue. These include:

- Individual regular migrants experience enhancement in their skills and access to well-paid employment opportunities at the destination countries.
- Regular migrants live in destination countries without fear of arrest and deportation and their self-esteem is enhanced. They can also transfer their remittances through formal channels to their households and this reduces the risk of loss of hard-earned cash to operators of informal remittance transfer agencies.
- Regular migrants have the opportunity to access pathways to citizenship or permanent residence in the country of destination, if they choose to. They are also able to sponsor the regular migration of their household members after obtaining a permanent residence status in the host country.
- Improved incomes for their families: According to the World Bank (2016), in 2015, \$441 billion was transferred to countries in the developing world. This figure further increased to \$529 billion in 2018 (World Bank, 2019). In Ghana remittances (monies from relatives in other countries) in 2018 alone was \$3 billion (7.7% of GDP) (Mangala, 2017).

Ghana has also benefited from social remittances (i.e. behaviours, attitudes and ideas), skills transfers, investment capital and social/business networks from migration.

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE

In order to secure the benefits associated with regular migration, the Global Compact for Migration (2018) and target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development both advocate for safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people “through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.” Your safety as a youth depends on informed migration decisions that reduce the dangers you might face. If you want more information on migration, go to:

<https://www.iom.int/countries/ghana>

<https://home.gis.gov.gh/>

<https://cms.ug.edu.gh/technical-papers>

## KEY FACTS TO REMEMBER

- Regular migration is good for the migrant, his/her household members and their community as a whole.
- Irregular migration can expose youth to death, serious injuries, exploitation and human rights abuses.
- Do not be lured into embarking on irregular migration just to please your family or as a sign of maturity!
- Information is king! Seek accurate information about your intended migration before you become a victim of exploitation.
- Well-managed regular migration is dignified, safe, beneficial and desirable.

This migration fact sheet is sponsored by :



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