# SECURITIZATION OF AFRICAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE: IMPLICATIONS TO ACCESS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES AS DEPICTED BY MEDIA

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## ABSTRACT

Migration is a contentious topic in Europe that influences both the supranational integration process of migrants and the national policies of EU member states. This study analyzes how securitization of migration affects the lived experiences of African migrants in Europe using evidence from media. Specifically, the study examines how securitization of policies affect African migrants' access to essential services such as health care and education. Qualitative research design using secondary data from mainstream media and social media was employed. Securitization theory by Buzan guided the study. Findings suggest that securitization of migration, combined with xenophobic attitudes have caused a deep marginalization of migrants, especially those coming from Africa, among their host communities. Portraying African migrants as threats to security have led to policies and societal perceptions that make it difficult for migrants to access essential services. Therefore, it is important for governments in Europe to reconsider the approach they take in securitizing migration. Governments should strive to work with both mainstream media and social media to give a balanced coverage of migration news. A partnership between journalists, civil society groups and community leaders is critical in developing narratives that put emphasis on migrants' contribution to society to oppose negative stereotypes.

**Keywords:** Securitization, Migration, Africans, Essential services, Media

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

Securitization of migration has become a dominant topic in current global politics, particularly in Europe where migration is being framed by politicians and journalists as a security threat. This discourse has huge implications especially for African migrants who are often subjected to restrictive border policies, heightened surveillance and discriminatory practices (Bigo, 2002))

Studies on securitization indicate that this process impacts both policy and the daily lives of migrants especially in areas such as education, healthcare and legal. The securitization of migration has profoundly impacted the lived experiences of migrants in Europe; both legal, illegal, refugees and asylum seekers criticize host governments of creating an atmosphere that is not conducive for their survival. In most discourses there is a strong indication that African migrants in Europe are experiencing a tough environment in terms of access to basic services such as education, healthcare and legal (UNHCR report, 2024).

A factor to consider on whether migration should be a security issue or not sits squarely in the way migration stories are framed both in mainstream & social media discourses, political and

social circles. There is a widespread concern among the public in Europe fanned by media discourses and politicians who use metaphors that increase anti-immigration sentiment. Additionally, the context and language used to describe and portray migration has stimulated sentiments of threat (Bourbeau 2011, Huntington 2004). As seen on print, broadcast and social media, politicians and security officers mostly from European nations refer to African migrants as "an invasion", "a crisis", or even a "national emergency". Such strong negative connotations evoke emotions and attitudes that cause fear among the host communities hence arousing negative public perception towards migrants. A good example is the 2015 and 2016 refugee crises which were dominated by meta-discursive terminology and deliberations about building a border fence and placing a maximum limit on refugees (Krzyżanowski.M, Triandafyllidou.A, and Wodak.R 2016). Once such frames are created, enacting laws that support heightened security measures become easy (Bigo, 2002). The organizations established by the EU to stop migration now only work in a security-oriented manner. Frontex, for instance, drags the migrant boats it finds in the oceans. The international protection regime's non-refoulment principle is in direct opposition to this act. Given this, it can be argued that the EU fails to uphold its international protection obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention, which forbids the transfer of asylum seekers to nations where they may be persecuted on the basis of their nationality, ethnicity, or religion (Gonzales.J, Garcia, and Mlachila.M 2017).

It is therefore critical to understand that, there is a distinction between a migrant, an asylum seeker, and a refugee. Migrants are free to return home anytime they wish to, while refugees and asylum seekers do not have this luxury (Alarcon FJ, 2022). Refugees and asylum seekers most often flee their home countries due to either conflict, persecution or natural disasters. Therefore, it is noble to understand that these are human beings who are entitled to have their human rights respected and protected regardless of their reason of migrating. Another category of migrants includes the undocumented migrants usually referred to as "illegal migrants." These are migrants who move to foreign countries without authorization of the host countries, or those who entered the country lawfully but stayed own after their visas expired (US customs & Border protection agency, 2020)

Therefore, In Europe, migration is a contentious topic that influences both the supranational integration process and the national policies of EU member states. The implementation of supranationalization in the field of immigration policy is more challenging than in other general policies since it impacts sensitive areas including national sovereignty, national identity, culture, employment, development, citizenship, and internal affairs. This study aims to analyze how securitization of migration affects the lived experiences of African migrants in Europe using evidence from media.

This study aims to analyze how securitization of migration affects the lived experiences of African migrants in Europe using evidence from media. Particularly, the study will examine how securitization of policies affect African migrants' access to essential services, including healthcare, education, as well as examine the coping mechanisms employed by African migrants in response to the challenges posed by securitization, including strategies for navigating discrimination and accessing these services.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design using secondary data from mainstream media and social media. Mainstream media content was majorly from Aljazeera and the

conversation. Social media channel included X (former twitter) to analyze how the securitization of migration impacts the lived experiences of African migrants in Europe. Data collected include information from news articles and editorials from the mainstream media, and individual posts on X accounts as well as reputable organization posts such as X accounts such as @Refugees, @UNHCR, @IOM and @MigrantVoices.The data focused on The Impact of Securitization on African migrants' access to essential services such as healthcare, education, legal and employment Thematic content analysis was conducted to identify recurring themes. The study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the intersection between securitization, media portrayals, and the everyday challenges faced by African migrants in Europe.

## 2.1 Literature review and theory

This study was guided by the securitization theory. Ole Weaver and Barry Buzan developed the securitization theory, which examines how problems evolve from common political or social concerns into alleged security risks. This change is the result of powerful people framing the problem as an existential danger rather than a feature of the problem itself. If a situation is successfully securitized, it may be used as an excuse for extreme measures, potentially forgoing regular democratic processes in favor of swift action (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). African migrants are viewed through the lens of danger and risk leading to restrictive measures that create obstacles for their access to essential services such as education, employment and healthcare among others. Furthermore, framing African migrants as security threats risks breeding negative perceptions that might sway public perceptions and opinion by creating a scenario where accessing essential services becomes problematic as it is linked to perceived legitimacy and reliability rather than a necessity. Therefore, securitizing African migration worsens social exclusion and compromises migrants' fundamental rights in their home countries.

## 2.2 Access to essential services

Having access to health care is a human right, not a privilege. Health care is critically necessary for migrants. Due to their home country's living conditions and the nations from where the majority of current migrants come, they are more likely to have substandard health. Migrants frequently suffer from chronic illnesses like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and hunger. Furthermore, their current circumstances increase their vulnerability to mental health conditions like substance misuse, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Alarcon FJ, 2022). Conversely, In the USA, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are among the federally sponsored public health insurance programs those undocumented immigrants are ineligible for. According to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, or "PRWORA," only "qualified aliens" are eligible to receive Medicaid and other federal and state public services. A qualified alien is a person who fits into one of these groups. Since undocumented immigrants are regarded as "non-qualified aliens," their access to federal and state public services is restricted. For services required to treat an urgent medical condition (apart from organ transplants), undocumented immigrants may qualify for "Emergency Medicaid" coverage. Other than those pertaining to immigrant status, they still have to fulfill all other regular Medicaid requirements (Healthcare.gov. 2023) Public and non-profit hospitals, federally qualified community health centers (FQHCs), and migrant health centers are among the safety-

net providers that the United States depends on to care for its lower-income citizens, including undocumented immigrants (OHCR report, 2024).

Many migrants, especially undocumented individuals, face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services. This situation is exacerbated by fears of deportation and confusion over eligibility, which discourage many from seeking necessary medical care. In Europe, the situation mirrors that of the USA. A qualitative study of service - user experiences in the UK conducted by Kang (2019) indicated that, individuals had trouble navigating and negotiating primary care providers. The perception of discrimination based on race, religion, and immigration status; difficulty paying for dental care, prescription drugs, and transportation to appointments; lack of knowledge about the NHS's structure and operations; and language barriers and inadequate interpretation services were among the main issues. Many other studies have supported Kang's findings suggesting that, migrants, especially undocumented ones have trouble getting the right medical care in their host nations. Communication issues, poor doctor-patient relationships, and culturally unsuitable primary care were noted.

In UK in 2012, the government's goal was to reduce immigration from "hundreds of thousands to tens of thousands." At the time, the Home Secretary Theresa May indicated that the UK would become a "really hostile environment" for people who were considered irregular migrants. As a result, the policy changed to limit the rights of asylum seekers to NHS care and other services. The extension of health care charges in 2017 required payment in advance of treatment. GP services are still free, however community services related to primary care are now subject to fees. According to a recent study by Doctors of the World UK, 13% of vulnerable migrants tried to register with a general practitioner due to their immigration status and were denied. Practitioners and migrant rights advocacy organizations are becoming increasingly concerned that modifications to billing rules would make access more challenging (Kang, 2019).

For migrants, Obstacles to receiving medical treatment are a complicated problem. Various populations are affected by special health risks and access issues, such as recently arrived migrants, residents of temporary reception/detention facilities, and undocumented immigrants in general. Furthermore, there are other obstacles to delivering healthcare in a multicultural environment, some of which may be enduring for immigrants who have long resided in the host nation. Several of these issues are comparable to those encountered by long-standing ethnic minorities and could include: a lack of awareness regarding the services that are available; linguistic barriers; and culturally disparate perspectives on health and medical care (Stanciole, & Huber, 2009).

One of the most complicated issues for documented migrants who seek health care services under public programs is the drawn-out administrative procedure for obtaining paperwork, such as work and residency permits and health insurance papers. Asylum seekers face similar challenges, as a number of nations have recently tightened their conditions for granting refugee status and laws governing health care access for both unsuccessful and current asylum seekers (Stanciole, & Huber, 2009).

When it comes to education, laws that discriminate against foreign nationals and those with specific migratory statuses, like children of undocumented migrants, are in place in many nations. These children may be refused admission to public schools or encounter administrative obstacles that make it impossible for them to acquire the required paperwork, which can result

in serious barriers to their access to education. Although all children, including those who are migrants, are guaranteed the right to an education under international law, each nation's execution of these rights differs greatly. Due to administrative and legal obstacles, many jurisdictions actually do not enforce these rights, further marginalizing migrant children (UNESCO Report, 2018).

Migrants' integration into educational systems may be hampered by the negative societal impressions of them that result from the framing of migration as a security issue. This stigmatization may deter educational institutions from accepting or adequately supporting migrant students. For many immigrant families, a lack of funds is a major obstacle that affects their capacity to pay for extracurricular activities or school supplies. Furthermore, families may be discouraged from placing a high priority on schooling due to the economic uncertainty brought on by precarious migrant status (UNHCR Report, 2011). Securitization may result in educational regulations that deny migrant children access. Children of undocumented migrants may not be allowed to attend public schools in some nations or may encounter additional administrative obstacles that make it difficult for them to obtain an education.

As for access to legal services, securitization frequently results in the criminalization of immigration status, seeing migrants as criminals rather than as people looking for opportunities or safety. This change restricts irregular migrants' access to legal aid and representation and resulting in severe legal repercussions for them. For instance, migrants find it more difficult to comprehend their legal rights and seek assistance as a result of the growing confluence of criminal law and immigration enforcement (Parkin 2013). Laws in European countries such as the Nationality and Borders Act in the UK, have strengthened the securitization framework and put asylum seekers at a disadvantage. This statute makes it difficult for migrants to obtain legal assistance and protections since it externalizes asylum obligations and criminalizes some components of applying for asylum (Perez 2023). The main tool used to explain this new legal framework is the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, which establishes a two-tiered asylum system and makes it easier to externalize asylum processing in most situations, such as when asylum seekers travel through third countries before reaching the UK. This externalization approach exposes Category 2 asylum seekers to relocation under non-binding bilateral agreements, including the UK-Rwanda Memorandum of Understanding, and considers them as second-class asylum seekers. This makes it easier for them to move to nations where they might not have any ties, where they have less rights to efficient remedies and weak oversight systems. Because they expose asylum seekers, these externalization tactics violate the UK's commitments under the Refugee Convention and the ECHR, as they expose asylum seekers to the risk of human rights violations, whilst systematically denying them access to international protection (Perez 2023). The securitization narrative discourages migrants from obtaining legal aid by creating a fear-based atmosphere. Many people might refrain from seeking legal assistance out of fear of being detained or reported to immigration officials. Economic difficulties frequently prevent migrants from affording legal counsel. By limiting access to employment and social services, securitization policies can make these problems worse by depriving many people of the funds necessary to obtain legal assistance (Migration letters, 2022).

## 2.3 Coping Mechanisms and Resilience Strategies

To cope with such realities, migrant communities have often worked closely with Migrant community -based organizations (MCBOs). The MCBOs facilitate communication between immigrants and host communities. They play a crucial role by offering resources and support. Despite their frequent difficulties, these groups are essential in helping migrants develop resilience and a sense of community. Migrants frequently develop close-knit groups that help one another by exchanging resources and knowledge about social services, work, and legal systems. This camaraderie strengthens their resistance to stigma from the outside and improves their capacity to handle difficulties brought on by restricted laws ((Martinez Damia et al., 2024). Many migrants look for legal help in order to negotiate complicated immigration regulations and comprehend their rights. This involves using legal loopholes to prevent deportation and applying for asylum or refugee status. In order to combat unfair practices resulting from securitization attempts, legal representation is essential. While preserving cultural ties, migrants modify their identities and behaviors to blend in with their host communities. This dual identity serves as a safeguard against prejudice and xenophobia by enabling individuals to interact with both their heritage and the new cultural setting. To protest restrictive laws and spread awareness of their experiences, some migrants take part in advocacy activities. They can affect public opinion and policy on migration by taking part in demonstrations or collaborating with NGOs, advocating for a more compassionate attitude (IFRC policy document, 2024. Ohcr report,2024., UNHCR report,2024).

## 3.0 FINDINGS

By analyzing how the media portrays migration as a security issue, this section provides findings from both digital news and twitter accounts of different organizations. It shows how migration securitization has affected the lived realities of African migrants in Europe.

### 3.1 Impact of securitization on access to services

An analysis of the effects of securitization of migration shows that migratory communities face major obstacles when trying to access basic services. Policies and practices limit migrants' access to legal aid, healthcare, and education as governments, organizations and individuals in the host communities increasingly view migration as a security concern. By viewing migrants from the frame of risk rather than as individuals with fundamental rights and needs, this securitization attitude often times marginalizes them. As a result, this securitization discourses make migrants experiences quite difficult as service providers exclude them from basic needs (Aliverti, 2012; Huysmans, 2006). These sections analyze ways in which these limitations impact the daily lives of migrants from Africa by looking at various main stream media articles, as well as twitter accounts from individuals and organizations in the host communities. It examines how such information makes the lived experiences of migrants quite hard in the host communities.

An article by Aljazeera media which featured on its website on the 1st of October 2024 by the title "Fordham Expert Explains the Lure of Europe for African Migrants, Despite Dangers" shows the sentiments from an anthropology professor from Fordham university talking about migrants from West Africa, showing how they are portrayed negatively causing systemic discrimination (Martinez, J. (2024, October in Aljazeera)

Twitter accounts of @info migrants has some evidence of an 18-year-old baker who had stayed for several years working without a residency permit in France. His employer decided to fight

for the young man's permit by going on a hunger strike to protest against his deportation which drew attention from the whole world. Finally, the permit was issued account reads:

> Jan 14, 2021:18-year-old Guinean baker's apprentice Laye Fodé Traoré has been granted a residency permit in France. His employer had gone on hunger strike to protest against his deportation; the campaign drew global attention.

> infomigrants.net

> France: Campaign successfully saves baker's apprentice from deportation

> A French baker's apprentice from Guinea has been granted a residency permit. His employer had gone on hunger strike to protest against his deportation; the campaign drew global attention.

On the contrary, while the baker's employer is fighting for the 18-year-old Laye Fodé to get a residence permit, other citizens are posting racist sentiments on their twitter accounts against African migrants looking for employment Some of them are as follows;

> @WallStreetSilv

> Italian residents in Lampedusa are losing patience with the Italian government: "You journalists say they are refugees, false! They are not refugees!" 98% of the fake "refugees" are young men of military age. They are not coming to Europe to become productive members of society. They are not coming to work in factories. They are not coming to become engineers and doctors. It is time for Europe to wake up.

> @White_lenka

> Yes, its crazy! Europe is flooded with economic refugees and this causes huge internal issues. This summer I was in French coastal town Marseille and it was a complete disaster - I have never felt so much in danger. The city was full of North African middle-aged men who were wondering during a middle of a working day. Sitting around in groups and watching (you) and not nicely. I did not feel safe to walk there and this was a center of the town at 2PM. Also, very dirty and garbage on the street...

Such sentiments from Italians is an indication of a growing fear that migrants from Africa are not being managed well by the government hence the matter is growing out of control. The sentiments show that host communities cast doubt as to whether these are genuine refugees. They have the opinion that these young men and women have come to take their jobs and they should be stopped. Other concerns regard integration, economic contributions, and cultural impact that these migrants" would cause to the host communities which supports a larger and more widespread perception that Europe's present immigration policy is inadequate in differentiating between actual asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants. These beliefs represent a need for more stringent regulations and open immigration procedures in order to resolve alleged issues related to migration in Europe Tweets from the X account of are very xenophobic and derogatory,

> @DaveAtherton20

> Angela Merkel wanted to bring in migrants from the 3rd World for cheap labour. She found 68% were "functionally illiterate" even in their own language. A 2 year nursing

course saw only 5 out of 27 pass, & crime soared. Hence the dumping in other parts of the EU, & they don't believe "diversity is our strength."

@visegrad24

DENMARK, SWEDEN, GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS REVEAL CONCERNS OVER LOW-SKILLED MIGRATION IMPACT Academics in Denmark, Sweden, Germany, and other European countries have studied the effects of low-skilled mass migration, particularly from the Middle East and Northern Africa. Advocates of mass immigration claim it boosts economic growth and improves living standards. However, research from these countries paints a different picture. Studies suggest that low-wage, low-skill migration often leads to net fiscal costs for European economies.

@DaveAtherton20

There is systematic abuse of our welfare state by foreigners. A follower of mine, an DWP Work Coach, says some even deliberately don't learn English so they aren't obliged to work. "Hi David, I read your post regarding migrants and the cost to the welfare state. "I am a work coach for the DWP in a busy city centre job centre. We have a massive community of Somalians, Eritrean, Pakistani, & those from India.

@StanM3

Nov 7, 2017

Germany- Almost all kids have a migrant background in primary school. Teaching is almost impossible in Frankfurt

It portrays migrants from "third world" countries negatively hence jeopardizing their chances of accessing employment. It also pushes any chance of effective integration into the community.

Phrases such as "immigrants are not suited for productive roles" and "immigrants contribute to crime" can result into anxieties and prejudices which will impact the lived experiences of these migrants among the host communities in Europe. There is mistrust of migration policy towards multiculturalism as demonstrated by terms such as "dumping migrants', an assertion that diversity is not a strength but depicts migrants as liabilities rather than assets which Angela Merkel (former chancellor of Germany) was presuming. Such use of language feeds into xenophobia and limits the chances of migrants getting access to services. Below is an excerpt of some of the consequences of such tweets which keep growing every year around;
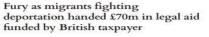
@the3million

Jan 23, 2019

Message received from one EU citizen applying for Settled Status. "Simple & straightforward" looks different: Asked to provide 60 months of evidence but only allowed to upload 9 documents (max total size 8MB). Now having to wait for caseworker to allow to upload more.

**Figure 1: source X account**

@TalkTV

Jul 3, 2021

Immigration lawyers cost the taxpayer almost £800m in legal aid every year defending foreign criminals and failed asylum seekers. Benjamin Loughnane: "It's a kick in the teeth for all the young people trying to buy a home. People come over and game the system".

The tweets are a clear indication of the difficulties that African migrants are facing while trying to proof their residence status. Processes that are straightforward and simple on policy documents are made hard to maneuver. Migrants are required to gather an extensive lot of evidence yet they encounter restrictive limits on uploading the same documents. This then leads to delays that cause stress and uncertainty. The tweets also show that the host community is quite hostile to the migrants. They indicate openly that legal aid given to migrants is too much and should be solving their economic crisis other than supporting "foreign criminals" and "failed asylum seekers". Such discourse only builds up negative perceptions towards migrants that cause exclusions from services impacting the lives of these migrants.

Other than pejorative sentiments towards African migrants, some members of the host community complain openly about migrants taking their children spaces in schools and how they are not welcome. They give migrants fear messages telling them that they are not welcome to Europe at all. Some of the tweets are as below;

@DaveAtherton20

The native population pay the price of mass immigration. One of my followers describes the problems getting their children into schools. "My daughter was out of school 3 months. Why? No school placements for her. I even appealed to my local MP. In the end I found a school that had been given a bad OFSTED rating but had been taken over by an academy & thankfully they had places.

Sentiments from the above tweet paint a picture that fosters divisiveness. It shows competition between the needs of migrants and the rights of local residents, which should not be the case. The system should flawlessly cater for this- inclusive system. These attitudes fuel xenophobia by showing how Migrants is a burden rather than a people who can enrich the society. They overlook other issues such as funding limitations, growth of population or policy decisions that

might have impacted the school capacity. Portraying the matters as a consequence of "mass migration" only serves to oversimplify the intricate societal challenges and this can contribute to negative stereotypes about migrants hence intensifying social divisions and resentment among host communities and migrants. These makes it very hard for the migrants to survive.

The below messages sound quite satirical. It may sound like a warning to the migrants but has everything to do with "migrants you are unwelcome to France" kind of message. The exaggerated message sends waves of fear such as the real dangers of crossing the sea illegally by boats, being exploited by smugglers, limited to no access to essential services such as housing and healthcare. As much as it comes as a warning, the sentiments reinforce xenophobic attitude towards migrants portrayed as people not ready for the hard European life and the strain to public services.

> @Co17Guillaumele
>
> Message to Migrants who are preparing to come to France: whether you come from the South or the East, give up on your project! By trying to come to us you will be confronted with: - A proven risk of death by drowning on a boat unsuitable for the crossing (SOUTH), or difficulties in crossing the mountains and borders that still exist (walls, barbed wire, etc.) - A racket organized by smugglers who get rich on "your back"; whether you live or not, they will have your €5,000 in their pocket and you... nothing! - A shortage of doctors, dentists, daycare centers for your little ones, housing. You risk sleeping in a tent for a long time or in a hotel that does not respect safety standards - For those who do not have a diploma, certain unemployment, and nothing to give to your children. Is this what you want? Do you want to leave poverty to find poverty elsewhere? Give up. #migrants #smugglers #immigration #undocumented #misery #boat
>
> @EricNaulleau
>
> #ericzemmour
>
> @The_Clive_Smart
>
> Oct 20
>
> And a population who hate you and will be racist to you, your children, their children and their children's children. Stay away, you are not wanted.
>
> National Federation of Cypriots in the UK
>
> @UKCypriotFed
>
> Oct 20
>
> A brilliant expose on the reality & human tragedy of people smuggling into #EU from Turkish-occupied northern #Cyprus by
>
> @josephwilkins: Kenyan student Ella's overseas education began with a lie from a university recruitment agent: "Study in the EU."

The focus on perceived inadequate public services is a clear indication that the host community is unwilling to share these services with migrants and they are not welcome. Such framing

pushes host communities to view migrants as burdensome to society. Such messages could also discourage any kind of support system and social services as it endorses the idea that migrants are naturally disruptive to national stability and its resources. Meanwhile, for migrants, such rhetoric messages have tangible consequences as it may contribute to reduced access to social services, social exclusion as well as impact their ability to integrate successfully. It creates a picture of migrants being unworthy of support and deserve every kind of challenge that confronts them. Eventually, these kinds of messages reinforce prejudices and can impede the development of an inclusive society in which immigrants can obtain services without encountering prejudice.

The below tweet compares USA and Europe in terms of migrant's acceptance into the host societies of Europe. The message describes migrants as "low- wage" and "poorly- educated". It shows the structural difference between USA and Europe due to language barriers and puts emphasis on the "unwelcome to Europe part". Integration for migrants in Europe is a struggle.

> @Porkchop_EXP
>
> Sep 21
>
> Europe is not United States where we can relatively seamlessly integrate poorly educated low wage workers into our societies if only just because European languages are much more complicated than English. This is not trivial. German is difficult to learn, an illiterate
>
> @Mick_O_Keeffe
>
> Oct 15
>
> "A message to African brothers. We expect the land of honey. It's not like that." African migrants in Ireland who are living on the streets advise others not to come to Europe. This is the message that needs to get out. If you come to Ireland, you'll be cold, poor, and lost.

Beneath this message, though, is an exclusionary sentiment. The idea that some migrants find European languages "too complicated" raises subtle concerns about their capacity for adaptation, either presenting them as less competent or as fundamentally out of step with the local linguistic and cultural environment. Such perspectives strengthen social divisions by reinforcing xenophobic beliefs by implying that immigrants lack the innate traits or assets required for effective integration. Such messages can impact the migrants' abilities to access services as the implication is that, integration is as a result of migrant's limitations rather that gaps in the support system. This kind of mindset may limit the municipal funding for education and language programs that are specifically designed to aid migrants' integration, which in turn can limit their chances of becoming involved and active members of their new communities.

Tweets from African migrants show students being denied access to evacuation vehicles. Even during calamities, students from Africa are treated as a burden. They are not allowed to run for safety in the face of a storm. The below tweet has such sentiments;

> Feb 28, 2022
>
> Replying to

@ajplus

Black students in Ukraine report racist border treatment and being blocked from evacuation vehicles or entering Poland. 20% of Ukraine's foreign students are from Africa, the most from Morocco and Nigeria: "We are trying to survive. We don't want to die in a foreign country."

@ajplus

Mar 1, 2022

Replying to

@ajplus

Over 16,000 African students are still stranded in Ukraine, most from Nigeria and Morocco. Nigerian students reported pushbacks at Poland's border and not being allowed on buses, telling CNN: "They told us we had to walk." One said: "As long as you are Black, no one likes you."

There is a clear depiction of worry and frustration from African students for being left out of other people's emergency protections. The feeling of uncertainty, suggesting that their lives and general well-being are viewed as less valuable than those of other evacuees. Even emergency response attempts may reflect and reinforce preexisting racial biases, making non-European migrants feel ignored or excluded. This brings up more general concerns about racial injustices during times of disaster.

## 4.0 DISCUSSION

It is obvious that securitization of migration, combined with xenophobic attitudes have caused a deep marginalization of migrants, especially those coming from Africa, among their host communities. Portraying African migrants as threats to security have led to policies and societal perceptions that make it very difficult for migrants to access essential services such as education, legal aid and healthcare. Mainstream media and social media have practiced their double-edged sword characteristic very well by both reinforcing negative stereotypes and mobilizing support for migrants. A good example is when the Guinea baker in France - Laye garner received huge public support initiated by his employer to the end that he was given residence permits by the government, while on the other side, the same media is marked by derogatory sentiments from host community who term migrants as burdensome to public resources and safety.

The hostile sentiments nourish a bigger discourse which views migrants as a disadvantage. This in turn causes migrants to be excluded from economic participation through employment, they are also denied essential services, and might eventually be forced to return to their homes through deportations. The antagonizing rhetoric are dangerous and sometimes may lead to difficult situations that reinforce hostile environments making migrants to feel insecure within the host communities. Ultimately, xenophobia and securitization like these hinder migrants' rights and chances for genuine inclusion by creating structural barriers.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, it can be seen from media evidence both mainstream and social media that securitization of migration is causing harm to African migrants in Europe. Therefore, to address difficulties that migrants go through in accessing at least the essential services, it is important for governments in Europe to reconsider the approach they are taking in securitizing migration. This standpoint often casts African migrants as potential risks rather than human beings with basic needs and rights which culminates into systemic discrimination and exclusion. When they focus on security concerns exclusively, they overlook valuable contributions that African migrants could make if they are permitted to integrate fully. Moving towards policies and practices that prioritize inclusion and equity is essential for creating a supportive environment for migrants.

Consequently, it is recommended that, Governments should strive to work with both mainstream media and social media to give a balanced coverage of migration news. A partnership between journalists, civil society groups and community leaders is critical in developing narratives that put emphasis on migrants' contribution to society to oppose negative stereotypes. This will aid in building public support for migrants' inclusion and integration.

Secondly, it is the duty of host countries to create policies that strengthen anti- discrimination systems that protect migrants from bias in accessing essential services. Consistent and persistent oversight by independent bodies is encouraged to ensure that service providers observe and follow these policies without which there should be consequences for discriminatory practices.

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