

This snapshot updates #6. These COVID-19 Analytical Snapshots are designed to capture the latest information and analysis in a fast-moving environment. Topics will be repeated from time to time as analysis develops. If you have an item to include, please email us at research@iom.int.

Migrants' stigmatization and discrimination in crisis situations

While it is true that the COVID-19 virus itself “does not discriminate” in its transmission, extensive [research](#) and [reporting](#) has shown that the pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing social and economic disparities, with migrants among the groups facing the [additional burdens](#) of stigmatization and discrimination. Refer to [Analytical Snapshot #6](#) for more on earlier analysis.

Discriminatory mobility restrictions

The manner in which some countries/areas have implemented mobility restrictions is coming under increasing scrutiny, particularly in relation to migrants, including refugees.

[Recent media reports](#) show that measures such as curfews, in some locations have targeted specific groups of migrants. This has raised concerns that harsh restrictions aimed at migrants could hamper their ability [to access basic care and services](#).



Click [here](#) to watch a video on one of IOM's COVID-19 responses to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Xenophobic stigmatization

Stigmatization of migrants has led to a rise in xenophobic confrontations. The [Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council](#) has documented [1,500 discriminatory and xenophobic incidents](#) in the United States since the onset of the pandemic. Reports from several countries indicate that discrimination and anti-migrant behaviour has induced [food insecurity](#) and [return migration](#) to migrants' origin countries.



Population surveillance: a COVID-19 legacy?



Many have raised [concerns](#) that once the current crisis has passed, governments could repurpose surveillance technology to track, monitor and discriminate against groups of interest, including [migrants](#). However, in some countries the ability to surveil populations through the use of new technology already exists. In the US, for example, AI facial recognition technology is used by immigration authorities to conduct [mass monitoring](#) of people in traffic flows to detect undocumented migrants.

Articles on COVID-19, discrimination and stigmatization against migrants

[“If I wear a face mask, everyone treats me like a disease”: the mask debate](#) by Juan Zhang

[Migrants and the COVID-19 pandemic: an initial analysis](#) by Lorenzo Guadagno

[How discrimination towards Africans and China’s surveillance state will reset a migration trend](#) by Roberto Castillo

[The Other Problematic Outbreak](#) by Yasmeen Serhan and Timothy McLaughlin

[Why xenophobia is bad for the health of all in South Africa](#) by Jo Vearey

[The many facets of pandemic vulnerability](#) by Alison Mountz

[The coronavirus pandemic could be devastating for the world's migrants](#) by Marie McAuliffe and Celine Bauloz

Access to Health Care

Due to a range of explicit and implicit policies, migrants in many places face unique obstacles when attempting to access health care during a pandemic. Among other barriers, these obstacles include [a scarcity of facilities](#), [a lack of health insurance](#) and [fears related to immigration status](#).



Addressing racism, discrimination and xenophobia

The [Coalition of Latin American and Caribbean Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia](#) released a statement emphasizing the need for solidarity and addressing discrimination of vulnerable populations, such as displaced persons and migrants, during the pandemic.

Vulnerabilities at work



Migrants provide a significant labour source for essential industries. These workplaces have now [become epicenters of COVID-19 transmission](#). For example, in the absence of adequate protection equipment has led to [hundreds of outbreaks](#) across the United States in places that disproportionately affect migrants.

In other sectors, migrants workers face [a precarious employment status](#) with only [inconsistent access](#) to social protection benefits.

Discrimination via environmental hazard

[Two](#) separate [studies](#) have given preliminary evidence that links [long-term exposure to air pollution](#) to increased vulnerability to COVID-19. Migrants disproportionately live in areas with [high-levels](#) of [pollution](#) and environmental hazard.

This COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot has been produced by [IOM Research](#) (research@iom.int).

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