

This page provides a basic overview of the vocabulary of international migration statistics and concepts. Unless otherwise indicated, we are using the latest United Nations definitions. The full 1997 UN report, entitled *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration*, is available online. Because these terms may be used differently by particular countries, non-governmental organizations and international bodies, we encourage you to cross-check these definitions against country-specific sources.

*Ancestry-based settlers:* Foreigners admitted by a country other than their own because of their historical, ethnic or other ties with that country, who, by virtue of those ties, are immediately granted the right of long-term residence in that country or who, having the right to citizenship in that country, become citizens within a short period after admission.

*Asylum:* Protection granted by a state to refugees. (Source: *Webster's Dictionary*)

*Asylum-seekers:* Persons who file an application for asylum in a country other than their own. They remain in the status of asylum-seeker until their application is considered and adjudicated. See also *foreigners seeking asylum*.

*Border workers:* Persons commuting between their country of usual residence (which is usually their country of citizenship as well) and their place of employment abroad.

*Brain Drain:* The emigration of a large number of a country's highly skilled and educated population to other countries that offer superior economic and social opportunities (Source: Population Reference Bureau).

*Citizens deported from abroad:* Citizens returning to their country as a result of deportation procedures against them in another country.

*Citizens in transit:* Persons who arrive in their own country but do not enter it formally because they are on their way to another destination.

*Citizenship:* The country in which a person is born or naturalized and in which that person has rights and responsibilities (Source: United States Immigration and Naturalization Service).

*Contract migrant workers:* Persons working in a country other than their own under contractual arrangements that set limits on the period of employment and on the specific job held by the migrant (that is to say, contract migrant workers cannot change jobs without permission granted by the authorities of the receiving State).

*Country of usual residence:* The country in which a person lives, that is to say, the country in which he or she has a place to live where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest. Temporary travel abroad for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage does not change a person's country of usual residence.

*Dependants:* Immediate relatives of the principal migrant who are normally admitted in the same migration category as that person. Although the definition of immediate relative varies from country to country, the spouse and minor children of a principal migrant usually qualify as dependants.

*Diplomats and consular personnel:* Foreigners working under diplomatic permits for foreign embassies or consulates established in the receiving country. Also, citizens traveling under diplomatic passports in order to work in their country's embassies or consulates abroad or in order to return from a posting abroad.

*Domestic employees:* Foreign persons admitted for the specific purpose of providing personal services to the foreign diplomatic and consular personnel in the country.

*Employment:* See *foreign migrant workers*.

*Employment-based settlers:* Foreigners selected for long-term settlement because of their qualifications and prospects in the receiving country's labor market. However, they are not admitted expressly to exercise a particular economic activity.

*Entrepreneurs and investors (as settlers):* Foreigners granted the right to long-term settlement in a country on condition that they invest a minimum sum of money or create new productive activities in the receiving country.

*Excursionists (also called "same-day visitors"):* Persons who do not reside in the country of arrival and stay for just a day without spending the night in a collective or private accommodation within the country visited. This category includes cruise passengers who arrive in a country on a cruise ship and return to the ship each night to sleep on board as well as crew members who do not spend the night in the country. It also includes residents of border areas who visit the neighboring country during the day to shop, visit friends or relatives, seek medical treatment, or participate in leisure activities.

*Family-based settlers:* Foreigners selected for long-term settlement because of the family ties they have with citizens or foreigners already residing in the receiving country.

*Foreign border workers:* Foreign persons granted the permission to be employed on a continuous basis in the receiving country provided they depart at regular and short intervals (daily or weekly) from that country.

*Foreign-born population of a country:* All persons who have that country as the country of usual residence and whose place of birth is located in another country.

*Foreign business travelers:* Foreign persons granted the permission to engage in business or professional activities that are not remunerated from within the country of arrival. Their length of stay is restricted and cannot surpass 12 months.

*Foreign diplomatic and consular personnel:* Foreigners admitted under diplomatic visas or permits.

*Foreigners admitted for family formation or reunification:* Foreigners admitted because they are the immediate relatives of citizens or foreigners already residing in the receiving country or because they are the foreign fianc (e)s or the foreign adopted children of citizens. The definition of immediate relatives varies from country to country but it generally includes the spouse and minor children of the person concerned.

*Foreigners admitted for humanitarian reasons (other than asylum proper or temporary protection):* Foreigners who are not granted full refugee status but are nevertheless admitted for humanitarian reasons because they find themselves in refugee-like situations. See also asylum-seekers, refugees and foreigners granted temporary protected status.

*Foreigners admitted for settlement:* Foreign persons granted the permission to reside in the receiving country without limitations regarding duration of stay or exercise of an economic activity. Their dependants, if admitted, are also included in this category.

*Foreigners granted temporary protected status:* Foreigners who are allowed to stay for a temporary though possibly indefinite period because their life would be in danger if they were to return to their country of citizenship. See also foreigners seeking asylum.

*Foreigners have the right to free establishment:* Foreigners who have the right to enter, stay and work within the territory of a country other than their own by virtue of an agreement or treaty concluded between their country of citizenship and the country they enter.

*Foreigners in transit:* Persons who arrive in the receiving country but do not enter it formally because they are on their way to another destination.

*Foreigners seeking asylum:* A category that encompasses both persons who are eventually allowed to file an application for asylum (asylum-seekers proper) and those who do not

enter the asylum adjudication system formally but are nevertheless granted the permission to stay until they can return safely to their countries of origin (that is to say, they become foreigners granted temporary protected status).

*Foreigners whose entry or stay is not sanctioned:* This category includes foreigners who violate the rules of admission and stay of the receiving country and are deportable, as well as foreign persons attempting to seek asylum but who are not allowed to file an application and are not permitted to stay in the receiving country on any other grounds.

*Foreigners whose status is regularized:* Foreigners whose entry or stay has not been sanctioned by the receiving State or who have violated the terms of their admission but who are nevertheless allowed to regularize their status. Although most persons regularizing their status have already been present in the receiving country for some time, their regularization may be taken to represent the time of their official admission as international migrants.

*Foreign excursionists (also called "same-day visitors"):* Foreign persons who visit the receiving country for a day without spending the night in a collective or private accommodation within the country visited. This category includes cruise passengers who arrive in a country on a cruise ship and return to the ship each night to sleep on board as well as crew members who do not spend the night in the country. It also includes residents of border areas who visit the neighboring country during the day to shop, visit friends or relatives, seek medical treatment, or participate in leisure activities.

*Foreign migrant workers:* Foreigners admitted by the receiving State for the specific purpose of exercising an economic activity remunerated from within the receiving country. Their length of stay is usually restricted as is the type of employment they can hold.

*Foreign military personnel:* Foreign military servicemen, officials and advisers stationed in the country. Their dependants and domestic employees are sometimes allowed to accompany them.

*Foreign population of a country:* All persons who have that country as country of usual residence and who are the citizens of another country.

*Foreign retirees (as settlers):* Persons beyond retirement age who are granted the right to stay over a long period or indefinitely in the territory of a State other than their own provided that they have sufficient independent income and do not become a charge to that State.

*Foreign settlers:* See migrants for settlement.

*Foreign students:* Persons admitted by a country other than their own, usually under special permits or visas, for the specific purpose of following a particular course of study in an accredited institution of the receiving country.

*Foreign tourists:* Foreign persons admitted under tourist visas (if required) for purposes of leisure, recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, health or medical treatment, or religious pilgrimage. They must spend at least a night in a collective or private accommodation in the receiving country and their duration of stay must not surpass 12 months.

*Foreign trainees:* Persons admitted by a country other than their own to acquire particular skills through on-the-job training. Foreign trainees are therefore allowed to work only in the specific institution or establishment providing the training and their length of stay is usually restricted.

*Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):* Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. (Source: "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacements" issued by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in 1998)

*International civil servants:* Persons working for international organizations located in a country other than their own. They usually reside in that country under special visas or permits. Their dependants and domestic employees are generally allowed to accompany or join them.

*Jus Sanguinis:* Literally meaning right of blood, it makes descent from a family member the primary determinant of citizenship. (Source: United States Immigration and Naturalization Service).

*Jus Solis:* States that a person is granted citizenship through place of birth. (Source: United States Immigration and Naturalization Service).

*Long-term migrant:* A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure, the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival, the person will be a long-term immigrant.

*Migrants for settlement:* Foreigners granted the permission to stay for a lengthy or unlimited period, who are subject to virtually no limitations regarding the exercise of an economic activity.

*Migrants having the right to free establishment or movement:* See *foreigners having the right to free establishment*.

*Migrant workers:* See *foreign migrant workers*.

*Migration for employment:* See *foreign migrant workers*.

*Nomads:* Persons without a fixed place of usual residence who move from one site to another, usually according to well-established patterns of geographical mobility. When their trajectory involves crossing current international boundaries, they become part of the international flows of people. Some nomads may be stateless persons because, lacking a fixed place of residence, they may not be recognized as citizens by any of the countries through which they pass.

*Principal migrant:* Within a family group, the person who is considered by immigration authorities to be the head of the family and upon whose admission depends that of the other members of the family.

*Project-tied migrant workers:* Migrant workers admitted by the country of employment for a defined period to work solely on a specific project carried out in that country by the migrant workers' employer.

*Refugee:* Any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside of the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it. (Source: UN Convention Related to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol) (See *refugees*)

*Refugees:* Foreign persons granted refugee status either at the time of admission or before admission. This category therefore includes foreign persons granted refugee status while abroad and entering to be resettled in the receiving country as well as persons granted refugee status on a group basis upon arrival in the country. In some cases, refugee status may be granted when the persons involved are still in their country of origin through "in-country processing" of requests for asylum. Refugee status may be granted on the basis of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol or pertinent regional instruments.

*Remittances:* Monies earned or acquired by migrants that are transmitted back to their

country of origin (Source: United Nations Population Information Network).

*Repatriating asylum-seekers:* Citizens returning after having attempted to seek asylum abroad. In principle, this category includes persons who return after their asylum cases have been decided negatively as well as persons who may not have been able to apply for asylum but who stayed abroad under temporary protection for some time.

*Repatriating refugees:* Citizens returning after having enjoyed asylum abroad. Both refugees returning under internationally assisted repatriation programs and those returning spontaneously are included in this category.

*Replacement Population:* The population that is necessary to offset declines in the general population, the population of working age, as well as to make up for the ageing of a population. (Source: United Nations Development Program).

*Resettlement:* Permanent relocation of refugees, internally displaced persons or others that have been displaced to a new place that allows them to establish residence. Refers to both international and internal relocations. (Source: United States Immigration and Naturalization Service).

*Returning citizens:* See *returning migrants*.

*Returning migrants:* Persons returning to their country of citizenship after having been international migrants (whether short-term or long-term) in another country and who are intending to stay in their own country for at least a year.

*Same-day visitors:* See *excursionists and foreign excursionists*.

*Seasonal migrant workers:* Persons employed by a country other than their own for only part of a year because the work they perform depends on seasonal conditions. They are a subcategory of foreign migrant workers.

*Settlement:* See *migrants for settlement*.

*Settlers:* See *migrants for settlement*.

*Short-term migrant:* A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least three months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment or religious image. For purposes of international migration statistics, the country of usual residence of short-term migrants is considered to be the country of destination during the period they spend in it.

*Stateless persons:* Persons who are not recognized as citizens of any State.

*Students:* See *foreign students*.

*Total Fertility Rate (TFR):* The average number of children women are having today. Also, the average number of children that a woman would have during her lifetime given age-specific fertility rates for a particular year. (Source: Population Reference Bureau).

*Tourists:* Persons who do not reside in the country of arrival and are admitted to that country under tourist visas (if required) for purposes of leisure, recreation, holidays, visits to friends or relatives, health or medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. They must spend at least a night in a collective or private accommodation in the receiving country and their duration of stay must not surpass 12 months.

*Trafficking:* When a migrant is illegally recruited, coerced and/or forcibly moved within national or across national borders. Traffickers are those who transport migrants and profit economically or otherwise from their relocation. (Source: International Organization for Migration).

*Trainees:* See *foreign trainees*.

*Usual residence:* See *country of usual residence*.

*Visitors (from abroad to the country):* Persons who do not reside in the country of arrival and who are admitted for short stays for purposes of leisure, recreation, holidays; visits to friends or relatives; business or professional activities not remunerated from within the receiving country; health treatment; or religious pilgrimages. Visitors include excursionists, tourists and business travelers.

*Xenophobia:* An unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or of that which is foreign or strange. (Source: Webster's Dictionary).