

10 FACTS ABOUT SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS

**THE RISKS OF USING
SMUGGLERS IN
IRREGULAR MIGRATION**



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#1

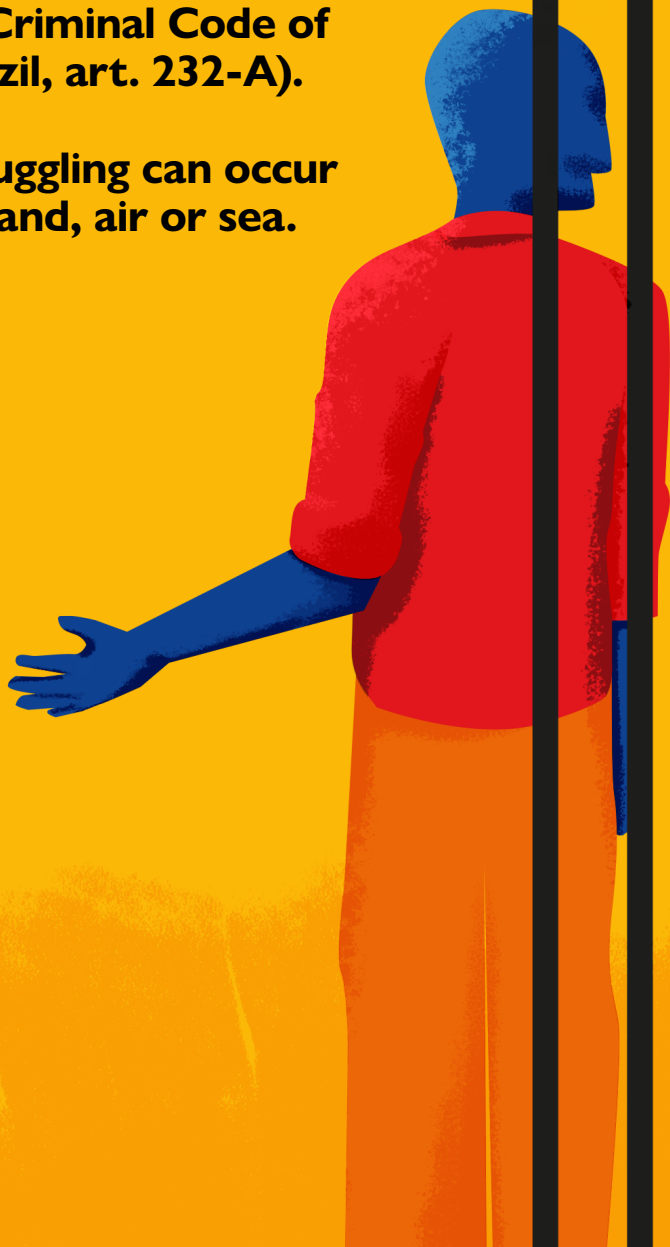
crime

Migrant smuggling is a crime that involves the facilitation, for financial or other material gain, of irregular entry into a country where the person is not a national or resident.



In Brazil, irregular migration is not a crime, but promoting it for financial profit is (Criminal Code of Brazil, art. 232-A).

Smuggling can occur by land, air or sea.





#2 causes

Everyone should be free to travel, relocate, rebuild their lives, have experiences and seek opportunities even if they are not in their country of origin.

In extreme situations, as in conflicts and systematic human rights violations, hiring smugglers may be the last resource to save lives. However, this decision can be dangerous.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN CAUSES OF MIGRANT SMUGGLING?

- 1. Economic difficulties and lack of opportunities;**
- 2. Armed conflicts and political oppression;**
- 3. Precarious living conditions;**
- 4. Restrictive laws for immigrants;**
- 5. Natural disasters.**

An illustration of a woman with long black hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, an orange vest, and light blue trousers. She is walking across a yellow and orange desert landscape under a large yellow sun. A long red cloth trails behind her. The text '#3 risks' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

#3 risks

Migrant smuggling usually happens with the consent of the person willing to migrate. However, the journey is often dangerous, violent and imposes unsafe and inhumane traveling conditions.

Crossing borders is often exhaustive and dangerous. Migrants end up being exposed to the risk of death, which may be caused by situations of violence and/or extreme physical stress during the journey.

Unfortunately, both adults and children are fatal victims of this crime across the world. Cases of migrant deaths due to suffocation in containers, drowning at sea or exhaustion in deserts are often reported by news.

POSSIBLE RISKS DURING BORDER CROSSING:

- 1. Risk of death from starvation and dehydration;**
- 2. Risk of abduction;**
- 3. Risk of falling into networks of trafficking in persons and be subjected to slavery-like practices and sexual exploitation;**
- 4. Risk of being forced to conduct illegal activities like trafficking of drugs and weapons;**
- 5. Risk of losing a large amount of money due to loan sharks or swindlers and fraud.**

Criminal organizations responsible for smuggling of migrants conduct a wide range of activities, and often carry out other types of crimes, such as trafficking of drugs and weapons, and documentation fraud.



Document fraud is a crime frequently related to smuggling, as the criminal networks counterfeit documents so that the migrant can present them to local authorities.

People who use these networks may end up being forced to commit other crimes, such as transport of illegal drugs when crossing borders, for example.

RISKS OF BEING CONNECTED TO CRIMINAL NETWORKS:

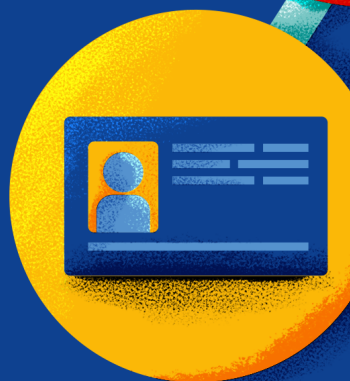
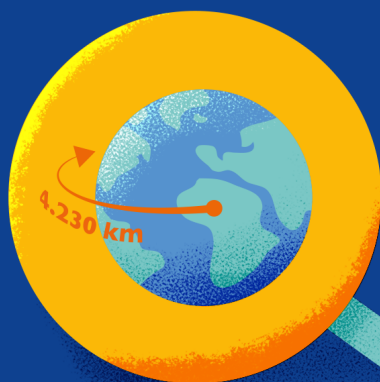
- 1. Risk of getting involved with illegal drugs and weapons traffickers;**
- 2. Risk of being accused of committing acts of corruption by bribing immigration officers;**
- 3. Risk of being criminally charged with document fraud.**



#5 costs

Hiring smugglers is a dangerous decision.
Migrant smuggling networks profit
approximately 6.7 billion dollars a year.

To gain profit, criminals usually deceive
migrants by creating difficulties in order to
sell solutions. For example, they pick longer
routes and more dangerous crossings that
put lives at risk.





FACTORS THAT INCREASE THE COST OF CROSSING IN CASES OF SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS:

- 1. Distance between the country of origin and the country of destination;**
- 2. Number of borders to be crossed;**
- 3. Need to pay bribes to local authorities;**
- 4. Falsification of travel documents, like passports or visas;**
- 5. Higher risk of detention.**

It is common for a migrant group to face some sort of adverse situation during the journey. For example, unexpected inspections, or a sudden change in weather conditions, preventing them from continuing their travel.

A grainy, high-contrast photograph of a person running away from a police car at night. The person is on the left, running towards the left edge of the frame. The police car is on the right, with its headlights on, illuminating the person. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting a road or a field at night. The overall mood is one of urgency and evasion.

#6

abandon

As they are unfamiliar with the region,
the local language and the support
networks, people who have been
smuggled may not know how to seek
help and access their rights.

Smugglers rarely respect agreements
and often abandon their “clients” in
the middle of the travel. In a dangerous
situation or at risk of detention, the
smuggled person will always be alone.



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#7 risks for women and LGBTQIA+ people



Factors related to gender identity and sexual orientation increase the risks during migrant smuggling journeys.

Women tend to be forced to take care of other travellers. They tend to clean, cook and take care of the sick. It is common for them to be coerced to share their food and water with the group.

The obligation to care of others puts their own lives in danger.

LGBTQIA+ people may be victims of hate crimes and are more vulnerable to various types of violence.

Exposing one's sexual orientation and gender identity may be a discriminatory factor and may be used to commit blackmail, psychological abuse or benefit from diverse forms of exploitation.

To this community, the crossings may be extremely violent, marked by rape, bullying, group rejection, and abandonment.



#8 risks for children adolescents

Children and adolescents may be used to forge kinship with the purpose of defrauding immigration and customs identification procedures and avoiding detention in destination countries.

In this process, they may get lost or be abandoned by the group, being exposed to mistreatment and to the worst forms of child labour and exploitation.

Children are more vulnerable to the risks faced in border crossings, like physical exhaustion during long journeys, drowning, as some cannot swim in shipwreck situations, and overheating in deserts.

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Going through these traumas can cause cognitive impairment that will have a strong impact on growth and learning.



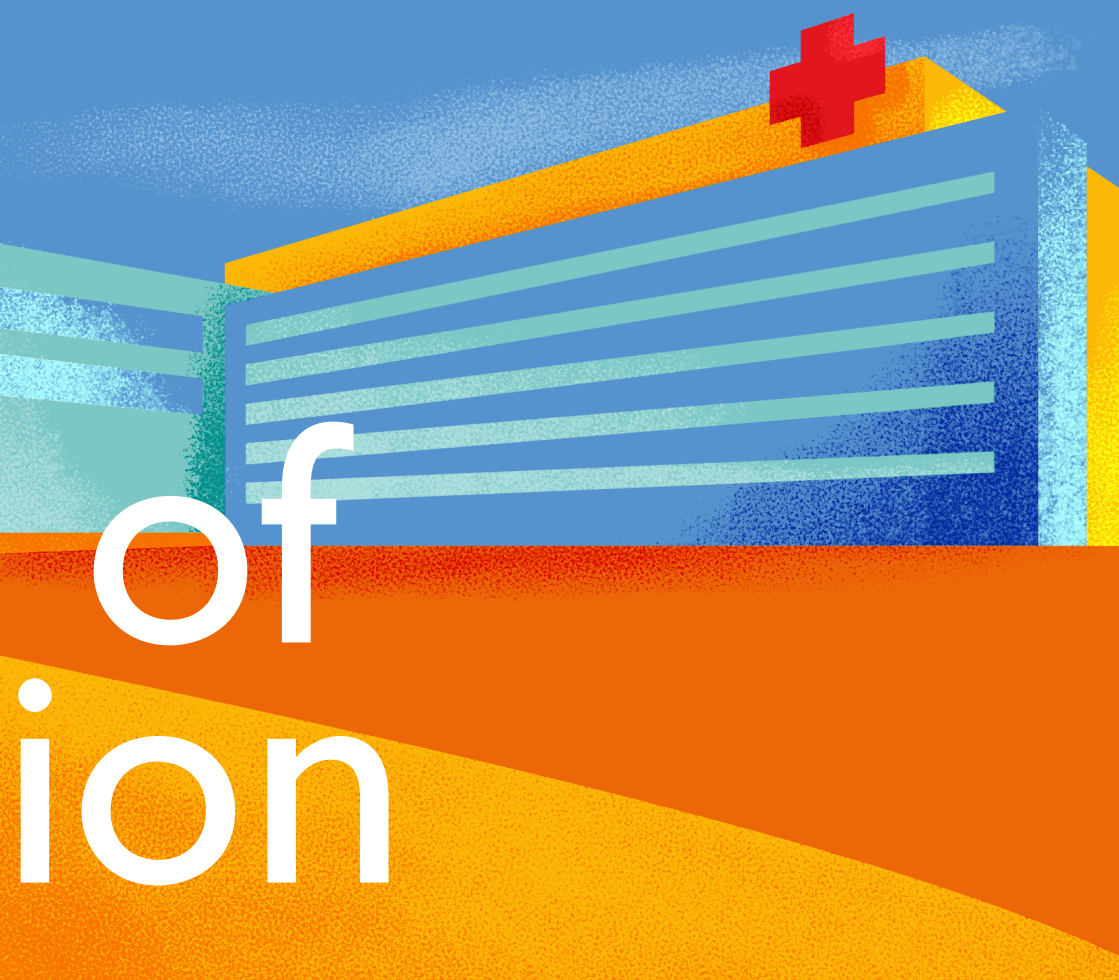


#9


country
destinat

Smuggled migrants are usually afraid of deportation or detention; thus, they tend not to seek migratory regularization.

Consequently, they arrive and live in the country without documents, staying on the fringe of society, with little or no access to services and public policies, as well as to protection institutions.



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A stylized illustration featuring a person in a yellow shirt and orange pants walking away from the viewer on a teal surface. To the left is a blue structure with four horizontal sections, each containing black and red vertical bars. The background is a solid red wall.

#10

impunity



Smuggling of migrants is usually an underreported crime.

Criminals usually take advantage of migrants' fear of deportation to make threats, blackmail, and impose fear, to guarantee that they are not reported.

Hence, people who suffer violence or are harmed in any way, in smuggling contexts, tend to remain in anonymity and not seek help.

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IF YOU KNOW THAT SOMEONE
IS BENEFITTING FROM
PROMOTING IRREGULAR
MIGRATION, REPORT IT.

DISQUE
DIREITOS
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 brazil.iom.int

 iombrazil@iom.int

    @OIMBrasil