

# FOOD SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

FOOD, PEOPLE, PLANET: A GLOBAL OUTLOOK

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## FOCUS ON

## AT THE ROOT OF EXODUS. FOOD SECURITY AS ONE OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF GLOBAL MIGRATION



“At a time when a record-high number of people have been forced to flee their homes across the world, a new study by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) clearly establishes that high levels of food insecurity lead to higher levels of migration across borders. The report determined that each percentage point of increase in food insecurity, results in a 1.9 percent more people to migrate (in a population of 1,000). Additionally, 0.4 percent more people flee a country for each additional year of conflict. This means that a country with rising levels of food insecurity and conflict will experience a greater outward migration, or movement of people away from their homes.”

These figures were reported in a [news release](#) published on May 5th by the WFP upon the release of its report "[2017 - At the root of exodus: Food security, conflict and international migration](#)".

Given the extreme topicality of this subject, in this edition of Focus, we decided to clarify the relationship between the terms "migrant" and "refugee" in connection to "food security" and the "right to food". We would like to add that, due to its importance, this subject will be at the centre of discussions during the 8th [International Forum on Food and Nutrition](#) in Milan, December 4-5. However, before we get into the analysis, a few clarifications are due.

For "migrant", we use the International Organization for Migration (IOM) definition: a migrant is "any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status, (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is." International migration refers to short-term, temporary or permanent outmigration.

The definition of a "refugee" is different and has legal status ratified by the 1951 Geneva Convention: any person who, "in the 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". A refugee is also any person who, "not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it".

In our case, it is more accurate to speak of "eco-refugees", that is, people who abandon their own country and cannot, or are unwilling, to return for reasons related to environmental sustainability. As seen above, we are discussing a different scenario than the one provided for by the Geneva Convention; therefore, to date, the status of "eco-refugee" does not have a precise legal meaning ([Migration in response to environmental change](#), European Commission, September 2015, Issue 51).

## MIGRATION, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE AT EVERY LEVEL (MEDIA, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC)

As illustrated in the table below, the word "migration" appears in all four of the areas monitored - MEDIA, LEGISLATION, INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES & NGOs and RESEARCH - with its usual prevalence in the MEDIA category, but it also appears very frequently in other categories, starting with POLICIES; further confirmation that this is a subject of widespread interest in all areas.

Queries	Volume	Share
<a href="#">Migration / Media</a>	161	52%
<a href="#">Migration / International Agencies &amp; NGOs</a>	92	29%
<a href="#">Migration / Research</a>	36	12%
<a href="#">Migration / Legislation</a>	92	7%

The most frequently used words are the names of some of the countries affected by the issue in recent years (Somalia, Kenya, Iraq, Syria, Ethiopia, etc.), the names of the multilateral agencies who are on the frontline dealing with the emergency (United Nations, World Food Program), as well as the words "humanitarian crisis" and "food security".

Topic Name	Mentions
<a href="#">Somalia</a>	22
<a href="#">WFP</a>	15
<a href="#">United Nations</a>	14
<a href="#">Europe</a>	13
<a href="#">Syria</a>	13
<a href="#">Iraq</a>	12
<a href="#">Kenya</a>	10



## MIGRATION / INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES & NGOs

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On International Agency and NGO websites, we are starting to see a change of perspective. The term "climate change" is most prevalent as, as seen above, the link between migration, food security and climate change is increasingly corroborated.



Below are the top 10 websites ranked by their coverage of the issue. The United Nations and the FAO account for 58% of total mentions.

Site	Volume
<a href="http://un.org">un.org</a>	29
<a href="http://fao.org">fao.org</a>	22
<a href="http://sdg.iisd.org">sdg.iisd.org</a>	9
<a href="http://ifad.org">ifad.org</a>	7
<a href="http://thechicagocouncil.org">thechicagocouncil.org</a>	6
<a href="http://euractiv.com">euractiv.com</a>	5
<a href="http://wfp.org">wfp.org</a>	4
<a href="http://emro.who.int">emro.who.int</a>	2
<a href="http://rona.unep.org">rona.unep.org</a>	2
<a href="http://weforum.org">weforum.org</a>	2

## MIGRATION / LEGISLATION

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In the LEGISLATION category, the range of terms employed is more varied and the most prevalent words relate to the measures that need to be taken to effectively tackle the problem of migration: "Education", "Protection" and "Funding".



The European Parliament heads the list.

Site	Volume
<a href="http://europarl.europa.eu">europarl.europa.eu</a>	14
<a href="http://state.gov">state.gov</a>	5
<a href="http://gov.uk">gov.uk</a>	3
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu">ec.europa.eu</a>	1

## MIGRATION / RESEARCH

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Finally, in the RESEARCH category, the search for the causes ("insecurity") and studies on the subject ("report") are the most frequently used terms (the most significant study released recently is the one referenced above).



Among websites, [fao.org](http://fao.org) alone accounts for over 60% of total mentions, confirming the leading role this organisation plays, also within the field of research.

Site	Volume
<a href="http://fao.org">fao.org</a>	22
<a href="http://thechicagocouncil.org">thechicagocouncil.org</a>	6
<a href="http://nutrition.tufts.edu">nutrition.tufts.edu</a>	1
<a href="http://pim.cgiar.org">pim.cgiar.org</a>	1
<a href="http://thinkprogress.org">thinkprogress.org</a>	1
<a href="http://farmingfirst.org">farmingfirst.org</a>	1
<a href="http://motherjones.com">motherjones.com</a>	1
<a href="http://environment.tufts.edu">environment.tufts.edu</a>	1
<a href="http://wle.cgiar.org">wle.cgiar.org</a>	1
<a href="http://sites.tufts.edu">sites.tufts.edu</a>	1