



Civil Society Key Advocacy Messages GFMD Roundtable 3: Media & Culture

***Disclaimer:** The following content reflects only the outcomes of the GFMD Civil Society Thematic Dialogues. Therefore, the challenges and opportunities outlined are limited to what emerged during the discussions. These ideas may evolve as further analysis and discussions take place.*

Challenges

- 1. Continued promotion of ‘good’ vs ‘bad’ migrants and ‘legal’ vs ‘illegal’ people in mainstream media and politics**
- 2. Promotion of anti-migration narratives in mainstream and major media, as well as in modern information technology (e.g. social media)**
 - a. Lack of accountability within and for media who disseminate disinformation, misinformation and discriminatory narratives about migrants.
 - b. Mainstream and wide-reach people remain reluctant to tell accurate stories of powerless or underrepresented people, including migrants, as well as around migration drivers.
 - c. Social media algorithms and messaging platforms propagate echo chambers of discriminatory disinformation with a low capacity for control of information or fact-checking.
 - d. Both mainstream media (e.g. prominent journalists and media conglomerate owners), as well as owners of social media and alternative media channels, share common interests with right-wing political groups who use migrants as a scapegoat.
- 3. Politically motivated spread of disinformation and/or xenophobic narratives**
 - a. Political will in the past years has skewed towards utilising xenophobia and migrant scapegoating for populist political gain.
 - b. Continued promotion and use of language criminalising and dehumanising migrants.
 - c. Migration narratives promoted by the government, largely from Home Affairs / Home Office focusing on securitisation.
- 4. Continued and perpetuated racism, xenophobia and white supremacy in the wider public**
 - a. Increasing polarisation and susceptibility of dominant populations towards prejudiced views, including the weaponisation of disinformation and cultural barriers to fuel White Supremacy and Nationalism.
 - b. Dominant populations are still under-educated about colonial histories and their legacy in current migration patterns.
- 5. Lack of consistent or coherent policy or regulation around disinformation or harmful narratives, as well as inadequate investment into independent monitoring and accountability mechanisms.**

- 6. Difficulties constructing accurate or positive migration narratives that gain popularity or visibility**
 - a. The complexity of migration issues means that it is very challenging to convey and disseminate accurate information in the short and catchy formats most successful in permeating wider narratives.
 - b. Difficulty finding a balance between visualising the hardships and violence of migration routes (victimisation), highlighting migrant success stories (contributions) and formats with wider appeal.
- 7. Lack of solidarity amongst civil society and centering of migrants' voices in the narratives landscape, particularly in ensuring migrants themselves receive direct funding for migrant-led or created content.**
- 8. Narratives with intersecting discrimination continue to portray a sexualised identity of migrant women.**

Opportunities

1. Build the foundations for sustainable positive representation

- a. Dismantle the 'good' vs 'bad' migrant narrative.
- b. Invest in diverse cultural, musical and artistic initiatives and projects from across society, including from migrant and diaspora communities.
- c. Promote multicultural understanding in formal education through engaging migrants as cultural ambassadors (e.g. in schools, tourism, history), and engaging diaspora and migrants as educators in national and private education systems.
- d. Embed accurate education around the realities and history of migration and colonialism, as well as media literacy, into national and international school curricula.
- e. Establish more internships, training, and employment programmes for migrants and the diaspora in the media and government.
- f. Invest in, promote and build migrant and diaspora-led storytelling and self-representation, particularly marginalised migrants.
- g. Promote multi-stakeholder networks, partnerships and training with progressive media outlets and media figures, including hosting multi-stakeholder exchanges between media, civil society and governments.
- h. Ensure the inclusion of migrant women and their intersectional identities in anti-discrimination policies and policies addressing gender-based violence.

2. Support better migration narratives with better migration policy

- a. Facilitate a shift from investing in 'addressing a problem' to 'investing in an asset for a strong society'.
- b. Reassume an emphasis on a human rights-based gender-sensitive mindset instead of migrants' utilitarian value for society. This requires shifting the focus away from securitisation and criminalisation to saving lives and pathways for safe, orderly, regular and dignified migration.
- c. Ensure that media conglomerates, businesses and employers play a role in promoting accurate narratives through strong policies around labour rights for migrants, regulations around disinformation and hate speech, and implementing human rights-based regular pathways.
- d. Promote truth telling about root causes of migration issues and share success stories of migrants, especially those most vulnerable, Indigenous People and people with a disability.

- e. Promote a human rights approach to migration that highlights the injustice of excluding people with a disability from safe, regular and orderly migration.

3. Promote a healthy media and narratives landscape

- a. Further regulate and legislate against hate speech, both in social media as well as for politicians and tabloids.
- b. Invest in media accountability mechanisms, fact-checking watchdogs and education campaigns combating and identifying misinformation and disinformation.
- c. Develop global and regional tools to regulate the spread of disinformation, particularly using Artificial Intelligence and Deepfakes.
- d. Invest in independent and migrant/diaspora-led media outlets.