



# MIGRANTS' SOURCES OF INFORMATION

This insight provides key findings from the PERCEPTIONS fieldwork concerning the sources and channels of information through which narratives and perceptions about Europe are transmitted to migrants.<sup>1</sup> *Sources* are the actors (people, organizations, governments, etc.) where the information comes from while *channels* of information are the means through which the information is passed, conveyed, communicated.

The analysis of the interviews conducted within WP3 lead to the identification of two types of sources: *formal sources and informal sources*. Interviewees (First-line practitioners, migrants, policy-makers, nongovernmental organisations, etc.) helped us to understand to what extent migrants rely on these sources and channels of information to form their narratives about Europe. This Insight thus describes the sources and channels of information mentioned during the PERCEPTIONS fieldwork. Ultimately, it addresses the key question: what are the most commonly used sources and channels of information about Europe among migrants both before and after arrival?

<sup>1</sup>The PERCEPTIONS project used the term 'migrant' referring to a broad category of people who migrated to Europe or want to do so, including asylum seekers, recognized refugees, family re-unifiers and others.



# SOURCES OF INFORMATION

## Formal sources of information



**NGO**

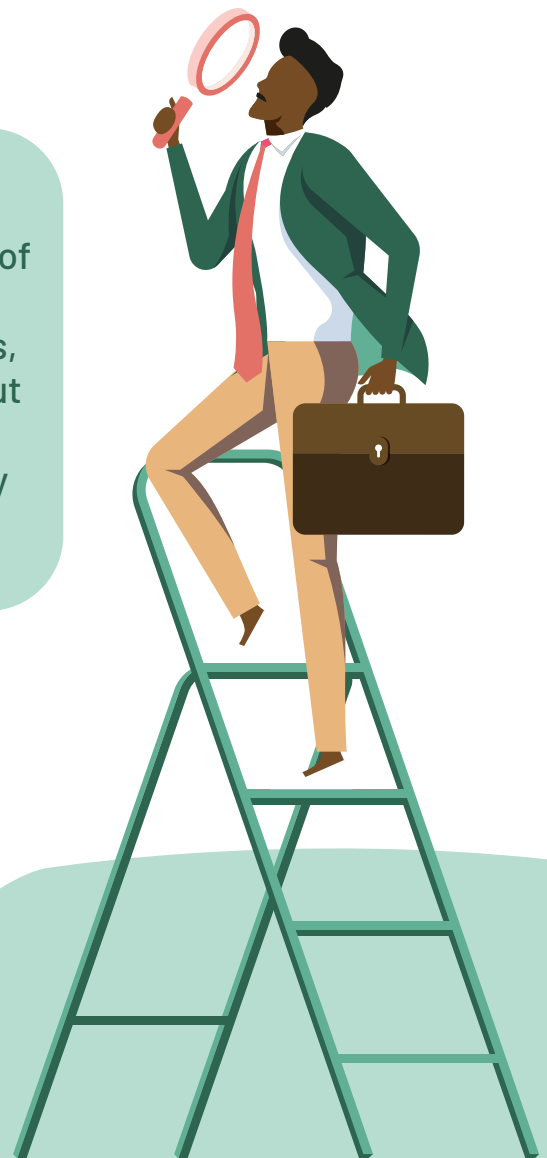
### Nongovernmental Organizations

While many migrants see NGOs as reliable sources providing personalized information, many also perceive them as having an agenda against migration and would not seek to consult them. Migrants do contact NGOs to seek guidance for the bureaucratic procedures once they have already arrived in Europe.



### Governments and Institutions

Governments and institutions are considered by migrants as sources of information in relation to specific topics regarding official procedures, for example to gain knowledge about particular national requirements. Meanwhile, many migrants said they are suspicious of government agencies.



# Informal sources of information



## Smugglers and Human Traffickers

Smugglers and human traffickers are key actors as well as sources of information for migrants in illegally crossing international borders. Moreover, they are influential in migrants' decision making (on issues like, countries to go, transport and routes to take, timing, cost of the journey, escape border control etc).



## Friends

Friends constitute an important source of information for (would-be) migrants. Examples are: friends from their own countries who live in Europe or visit it regularly, friends they meet during the migration journey, Europeans who have lived or visited the country of origin, etc..



## Family

Family members play a crucial role; on the one hand, in providing information about life in Europe, and on the other hand, in providing a place to stay.



# CHANNELS OF INFORMATION

## Websites



### Institutional Websites

Institutional Websites are often consulted to gain knowledge on national requirements regarding regularization processes and entry, as well as for family reunification.



### NGOs websites

NGOs websites are perceived to provide useful and structured guidance in the bureaucratic procedures to migrants arriving in



### CONVENTIONAL MEDIA (Newspaper, Radio, Television)

They include all means of communication playing a prominent role before the internet era: newspapers, radio, television, etc. Although they are still of great relevance, conventional media are perceived as biased towards particular interests.



### University websites

Universities also offer similar information as NGOs, in the case of student migrants.



# Internet & social media



## Google

Google is mainly used to access legal, cultural, political, economic and geographical information. Google tools are considered very helpful. For example, migrants use “Google translate” as an on-the-spot translation tool of information and “Google maps” is used to find directions.



## Meta (Facebook & Instagram)

Facebook is used in multiple ways: to communicate with friends and family members, to access news, to raise awareness and money for particular causes, as well as sharing doubts or particular needs with those who have already migrated or plan to migrate. Instagram was mentioned to a lesser extent, but provides images that help migrants shape their idea of Europe.



## WhatsApp, Skype and Viber

WhatsApp is the most mentioned instant-messaging channel by which migrants get information and communicate with family, friends, and acquaintances. Skype and Viber are also used, although mentioned to a lesser extent.



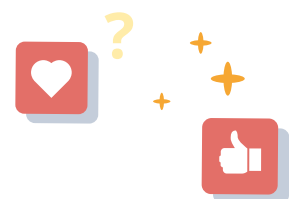
## Twitter

Mentioned to a lesser extent, Twitter is used mostly for social and political debate among schooled migrants.



## Youtube

The number of migrant YouTubers is growing rapidly, and they are becoming more and more a relevant channel for sharing migration experiences.



# Fiction products

Cultural products constitute a massive channel of information. They do not act as any other channel of information because their formal intention is not to inform. Nonetheless they offer images and transmit powerful emotional messages that contribute to shaping perceptions.



## Movies

Movies, especially French and Italian ones, are mentioned as being a channel through which narratives and perceptions are created and transmitted about Europe.



## Novels and TV shows

European literature (such as novels) and TV shows are considered by migrants to shape their perceptions about Europe.

