



# LIBERIA INSTITUTE OF STATISTICS AND GEO-INFORMATION SERVICES (LISGIS)



## Thematic Report on Migration & Urbanization

2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census





## **Disclaimer** Thematic Report: Migration and Urbanization - 2022 LPHC

Dear Reader,

I am pleased to present this document as a highlight summary of the upcoming Thematic Report on Migration and Urbanization from the 2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census (LPHC). This summary offers a snapshot of the key findings and insights that will be detailed in the final report.

Please note that the full report is currently undergoing finalization, which includes comprehensive editing, formatting, graphic designing, and proofreading. The finalized version will replace this document once it is completed.

We appreciate your patience and look forward to sharing the complete report with you soon.

Best regards,

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# Outline

- ⇒ Background and Context
- ⇒ Lifetime migration flows: Analysis of the size and direction of flow of lifetime migrants
- ⇒ Characteristics of lifetime migrants
- ⇒ International and return migration
- ⇒ Urbanization: Urban growth over time, density etc.
- ⇒ Conclusions, policy implications and recommendations



## Background and Context

- ❑ Liberia's founding as a country was largely shaped by migration of returned free slaves from the Americas. In the recent past, Liberia's migration history was mainly shaped by the 14 years civil war.
- ❑ Currently, migration is mainly driven by the search for better livelihoods and new opportunities. Given the large disparities in observable living standards across counties, internal migration appears to be a potentially important channel for reducing within country geographic inequality

### **Justification for the theme**

- ❑ Migration is one of the three factors that cause population change. Migration can create social tensions if not managed properly.
- ❑ Collecting and analyzing migration data can help develop evidence-based policies that can help manage migration in a way that can be beneficial for both migrants and the society.

### **Methodology: estimation and analysis**

- ❑ Method of analysis is largely bi-variate, that is, bringing out differences between the migrant and non-migrant population.
- ❑ Simple descriptive statistics, mainly proportions
- ❑ Analysis on patterns, trends and differentials between 2008 and 2022, have, been done at county level.

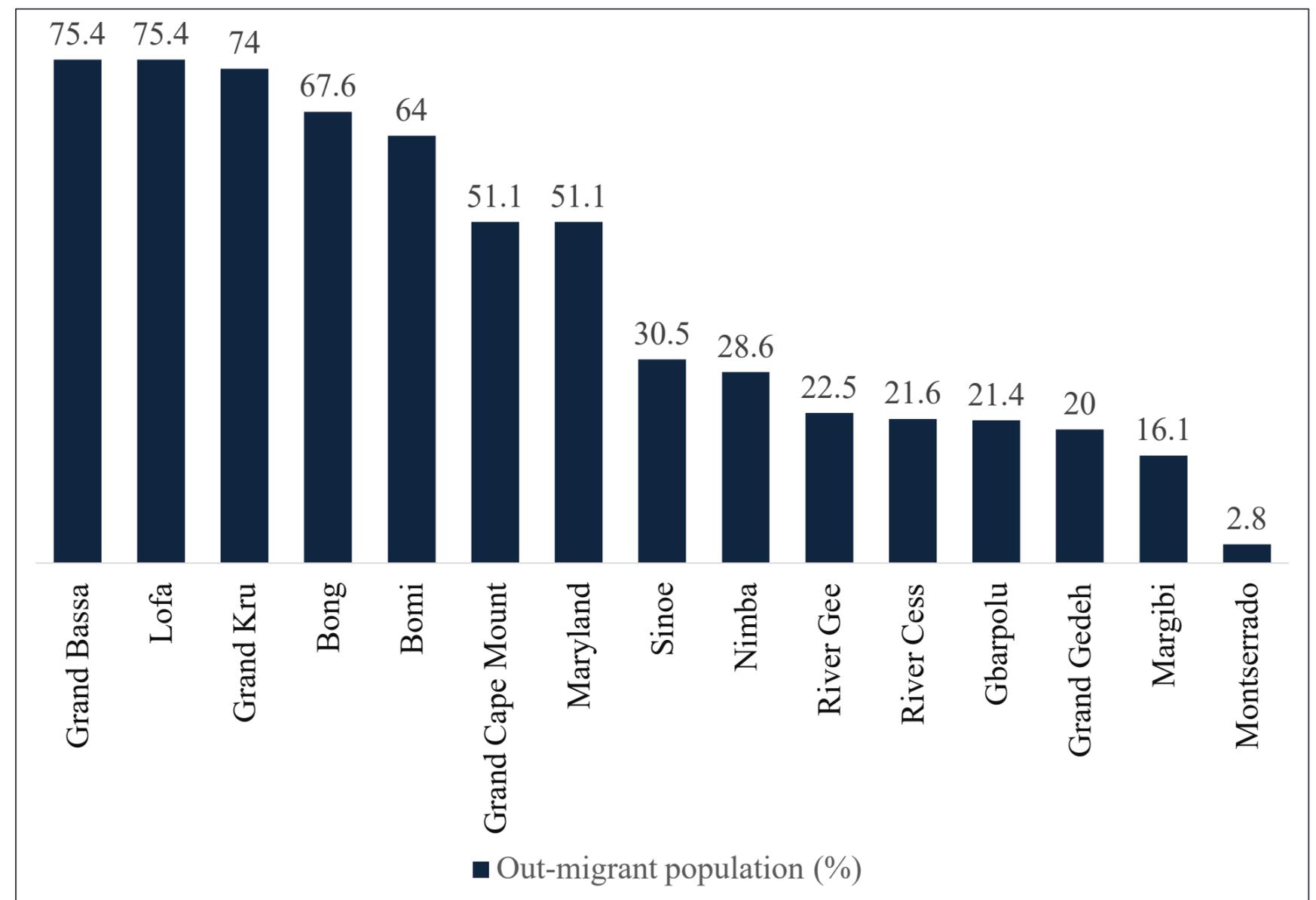
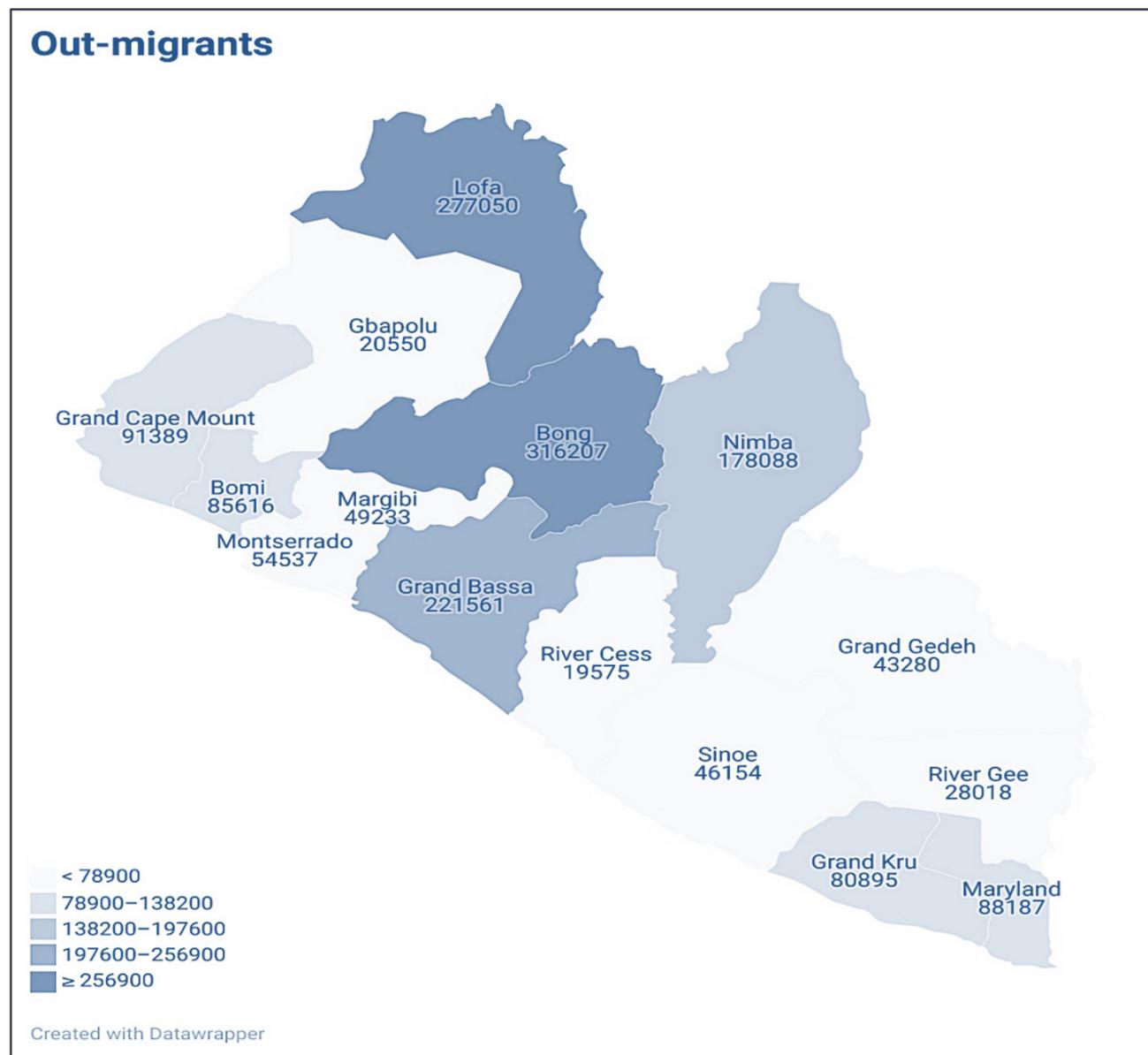


## Basic information on the lifetime migrant population

- ❑ Lifetime migrants constitute 30.5% of the population in 2022 indicating an increase from 21.7% in 2008.
- ❑ Lifetime migrants constitute 46.7% of urban population and 13.6% of rural population
- ❑ The proportion of female migrants (50.1%) is slightly higher than males (49.9%). However, it is only Montserrado that has more female migrants than males (96 males to 100 females) among the counties.



# Share of out-migrant population by county



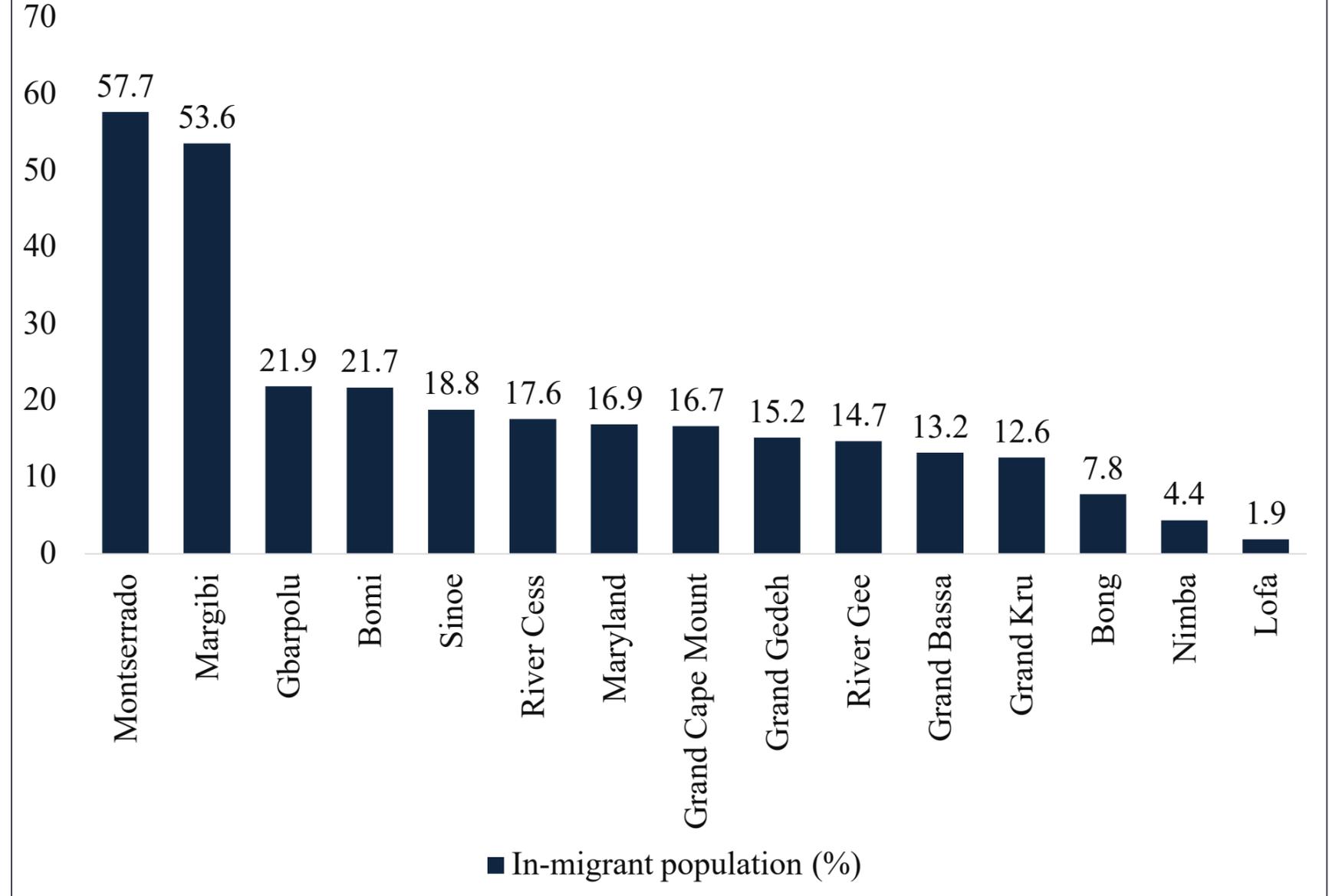
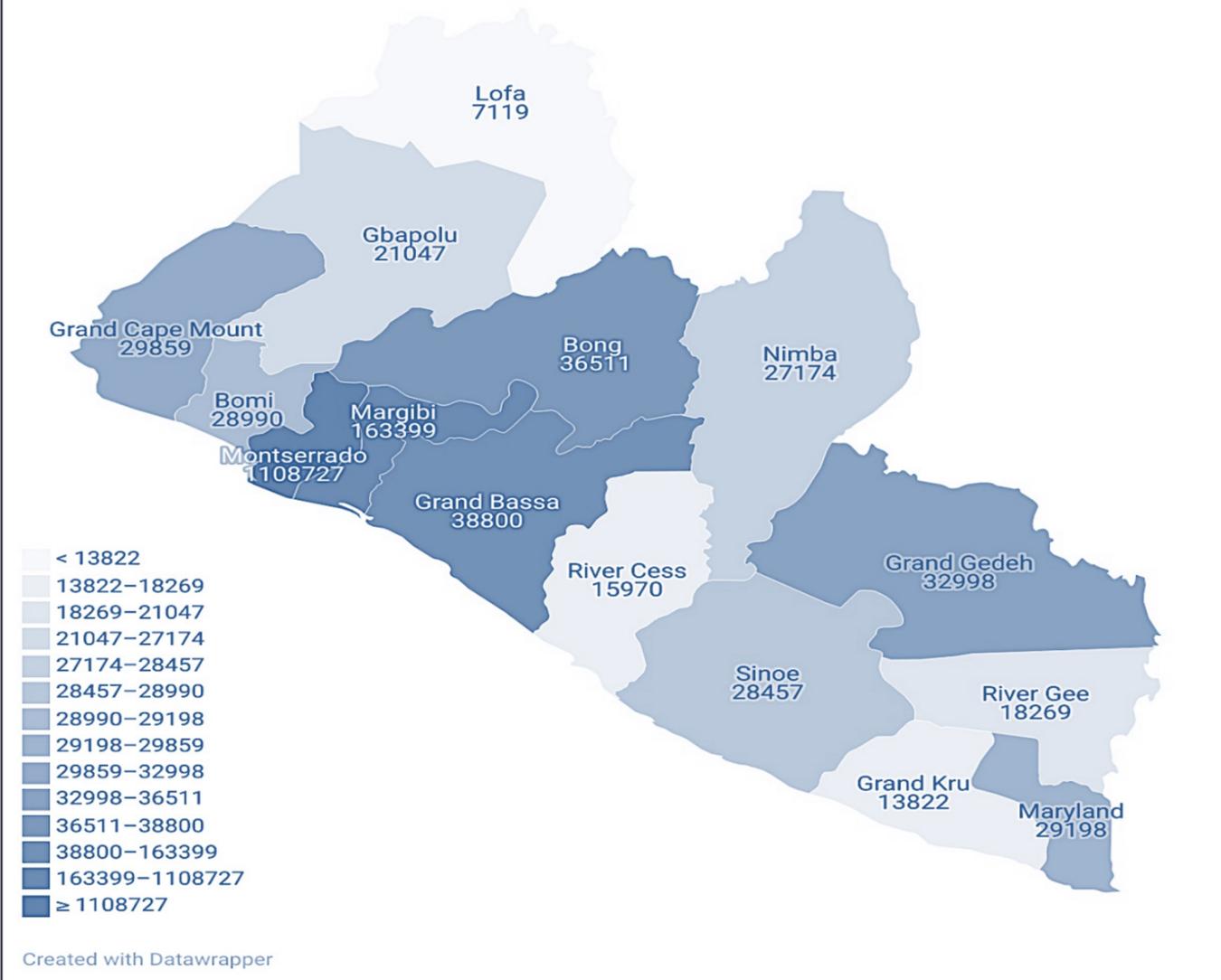
- ❑ Bong County has the largest out-migration population (316,207)
- ❑ Montserrado and Margibi, have low out-migrant population

- ❑ Grand Bassa (75.4%), Lofa (75.4%), and Grand Kru (74.0%) have high out-migrant population as share of county resident population.
- ❑ Montserrado County (2.8%) has the lowest out-migrant proportion, followed by Margibi (16.1%).



# Share of in-migrant population by county

## In-migrants



- Montserrado is the destination of majority of the migrants (1,108,727).
- Lofa County received the least migrant population

- Majority of the population residing in Montserrado (57.7%) and Margibi (53.6%) are migrants.
- Lofa County has the least migrant population (1.9%).



# Matrix of Lifetime Migration Flow

COUNTY	COUNTY OF ENUMERATION														
	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Montserrado	Nimba	River Cess	River Gee	Sinoe
Bomi	77.9	0.7	2.3	0.9	3.1	0.6	0.5	0.2	1.8	0.3	3.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.9
Bong	4.4	92.0	5.5	5.4	3.2	1.9	0.7	0.6	18.2	0.6	11.4	1.2	2.1	0.9	2.1
Gbarpolu	1.1	0.2	77.3	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Grand Bassa	1.5	1.2	1.2	86.5	1.9	1.3	0.7	0.1	9.9	0.7	8.9	0.6	5.5	0.5	2.3
Grand Cape Mount					82.7	0.6	0.3	0.1	1.3	0.2	4.0	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.6
Grand Gedeh	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	83.9	0.7	0.0	0.9	0.6	1.7	0.1	0.3	1.5	1.2
Grand Kru	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.1	87.1	0.3	0.8	8.1	2.8	0.1	0.3	1.3	2.6
Lofa	4.9	2.5	4.8	1.2	3.3	1.5	0.9	98.0	8.2	0.7	11.3	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.7
Margibi	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	45.3	0.7	2.0	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.4
Maryland	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.4	1.8	3.3	0.1	1.3	82.5	3.4	0.2	0.4	4.8	2.2
Montserrado	3.4	0.7	2.1	1.7	2.4	1.3	1.0	0.3	5.8	1.0	39.5	0.8	3.2	1.2	1.8
Nimba	1.0	1.3	2.6	1.1	1.0	2.2	2.3	0.2	4.9	0.5	7.3	95.5	2.1	1.8	2.0
River Cess	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.1	82.1	0.2	0.5
River Gee	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.0	1.2	0.0	0.2	3.3	0.7	0.0	0.5	84.8	0.9
Sinoe	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.0	0.4	0.5	2.0	0.1	1.0	1.2	80.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population	131,009	458,771	92,605	287,507	172,394	205,020	106,844	359,438	298,981	166,971	1,833,278	610,263	89,113	119,833	147,064

□ Bong and Lofa are counties with the largest out-migrant population in Montserrado. Lofa attracted the least migrants.

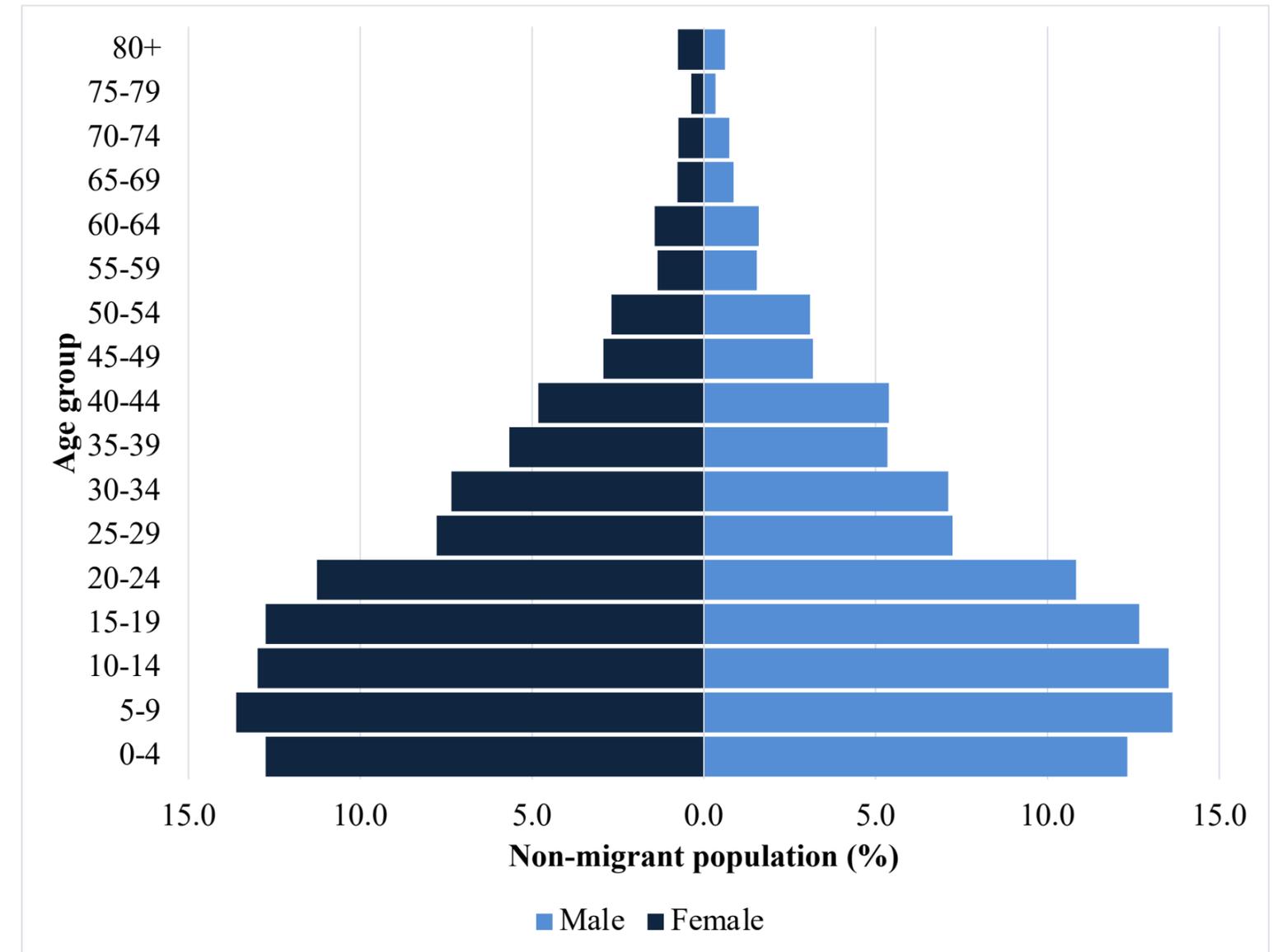
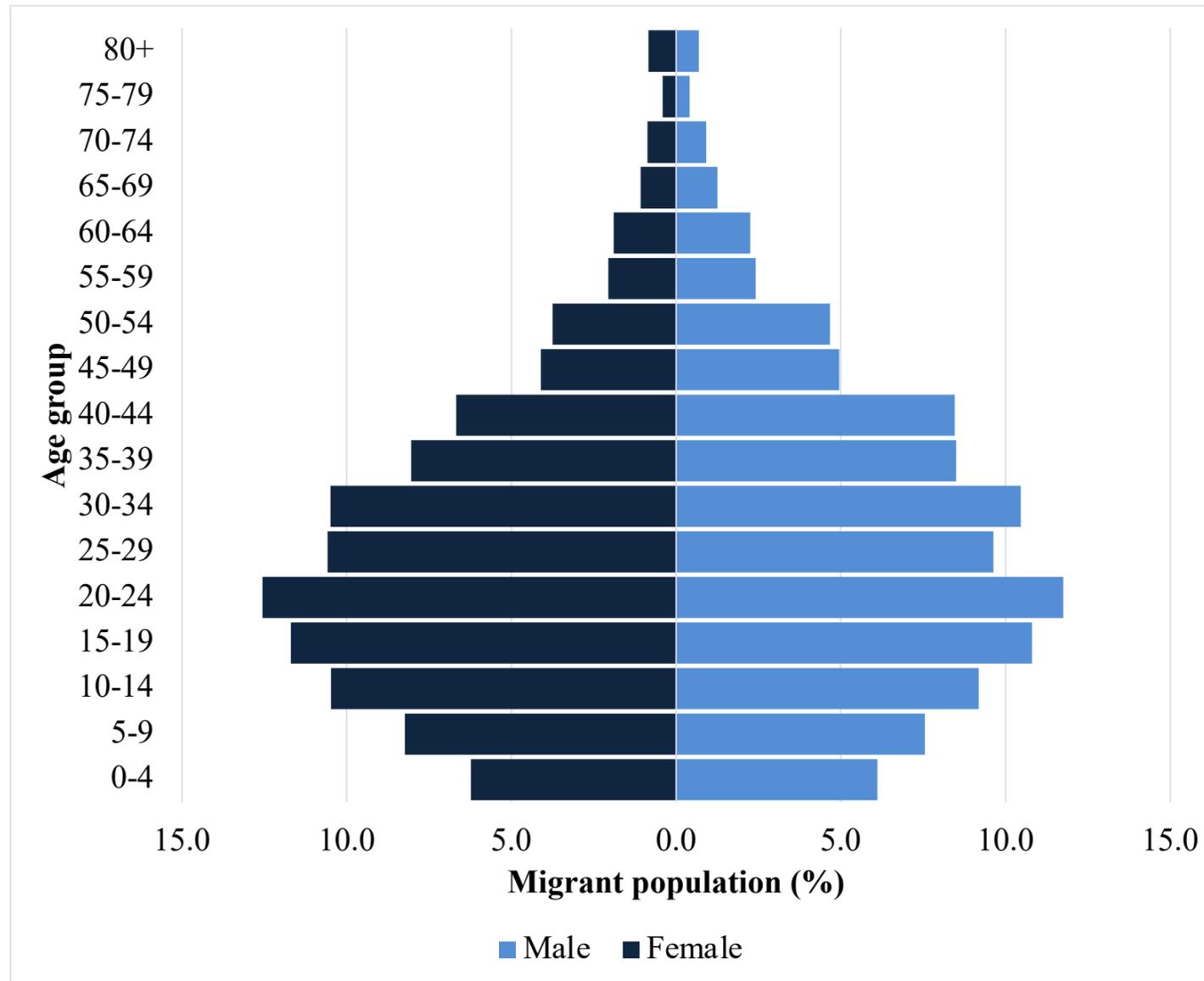


## Structure of lifetime migrant population

- ❑ Children under 15 years form 39.4% of non-migrant population compared to 23.9% for migrants
- ❑ For ages 15 to 34 (youthful age) migrants have a higher proportion (44.0%) than non-migrants (38.5%)
- ❑ The proportion of female migrants is higher (45.3%) at youthful ages than the proportion of males (42.7%).
- ❑ Proportion of migrants in the old ages is higher than that of non-migrants



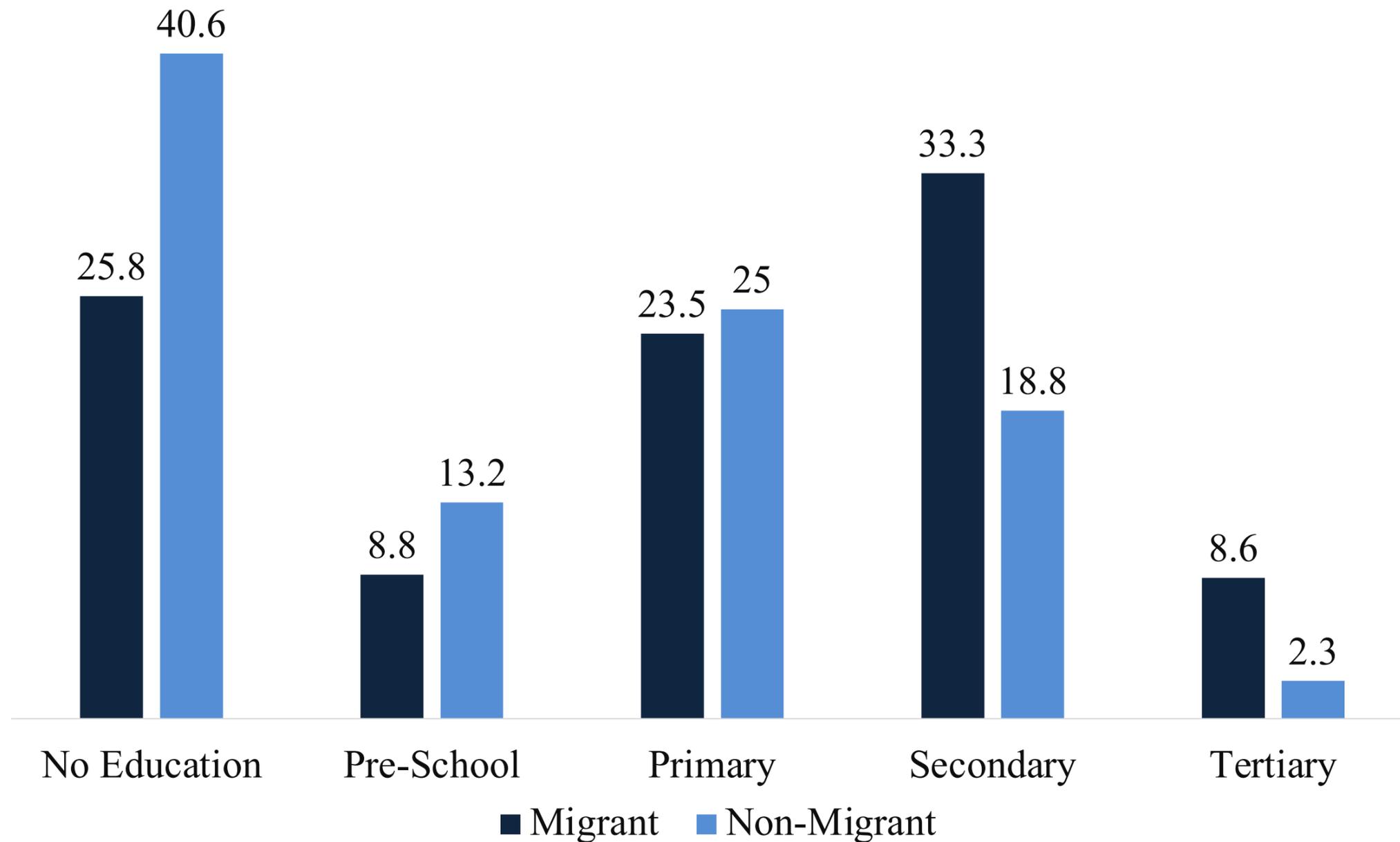
# Population pyramids of migrants and non-migrants



1. Both pyramids show a youth bulge but more pronounced in migrants
2. Migrants have a larger proportion of older people than non-migrants.



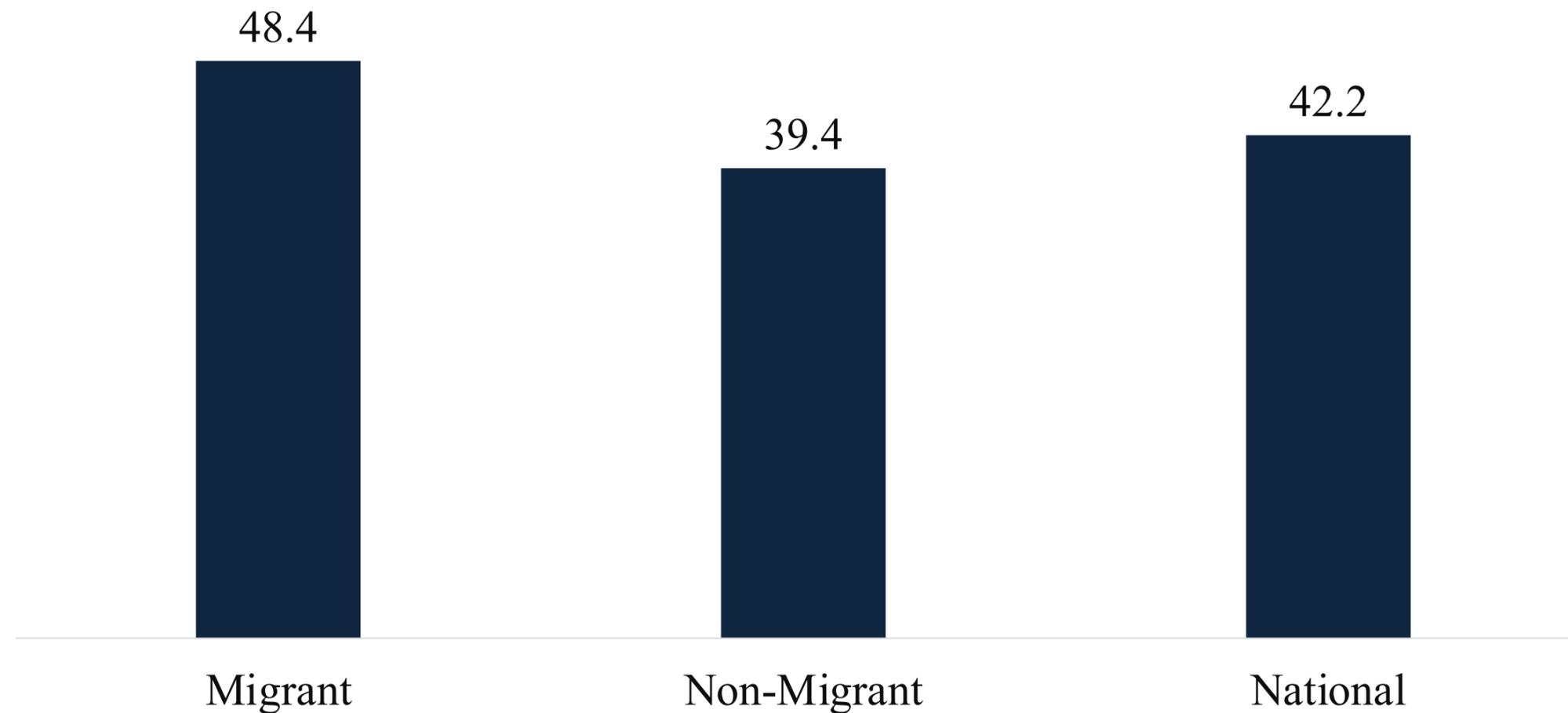
# Education attainment



Education attainment for migrants is higher than non-migrants as indicated in the proportion that have completed secondary and tertiary education.



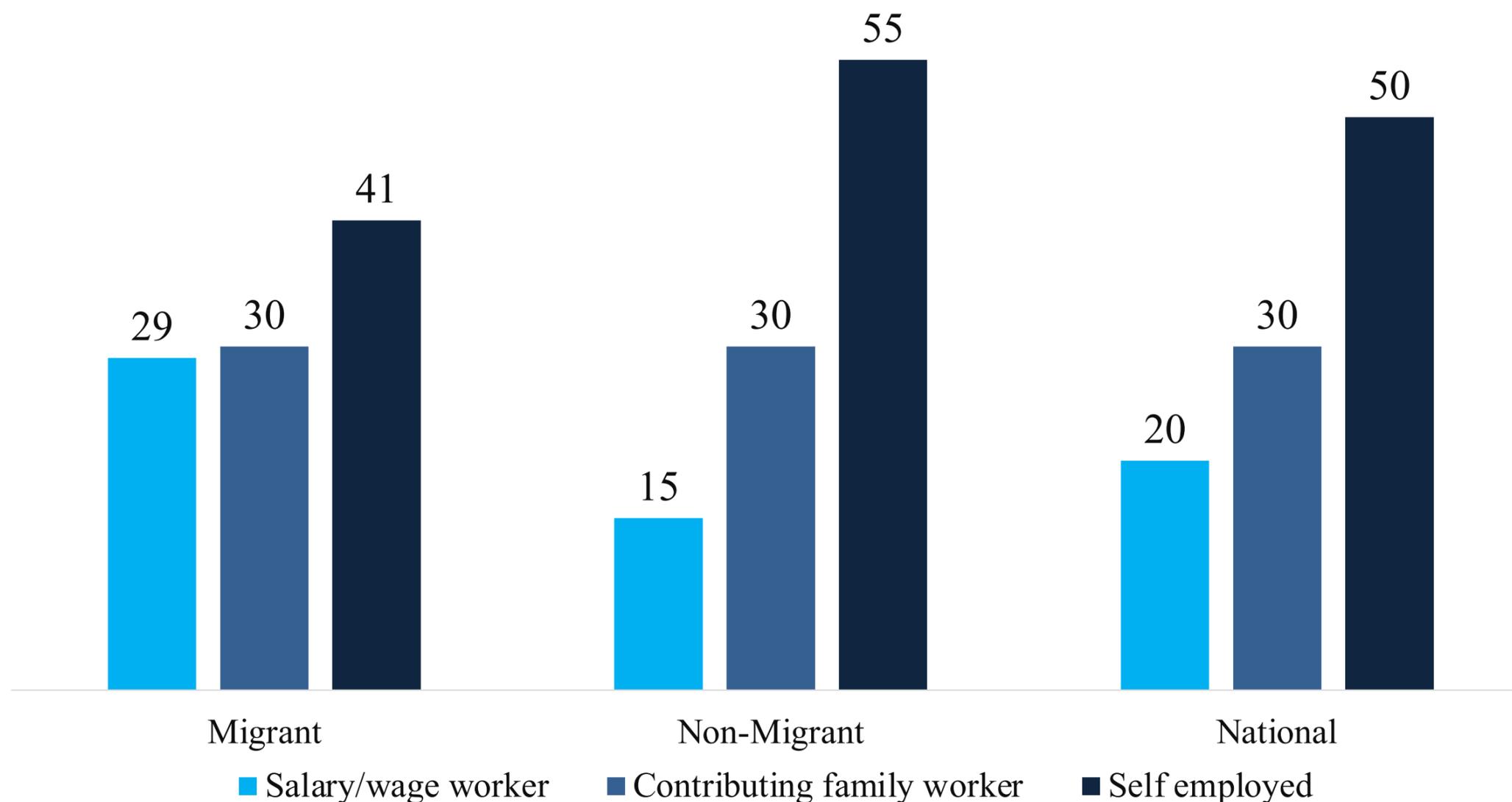
## Economic activity participation rate for population 5 years and older



Almost half of the migrant population performed some form of economic activity compared to two-fifths of non-migrants



## Work activity status of population 5 years and older by migration status

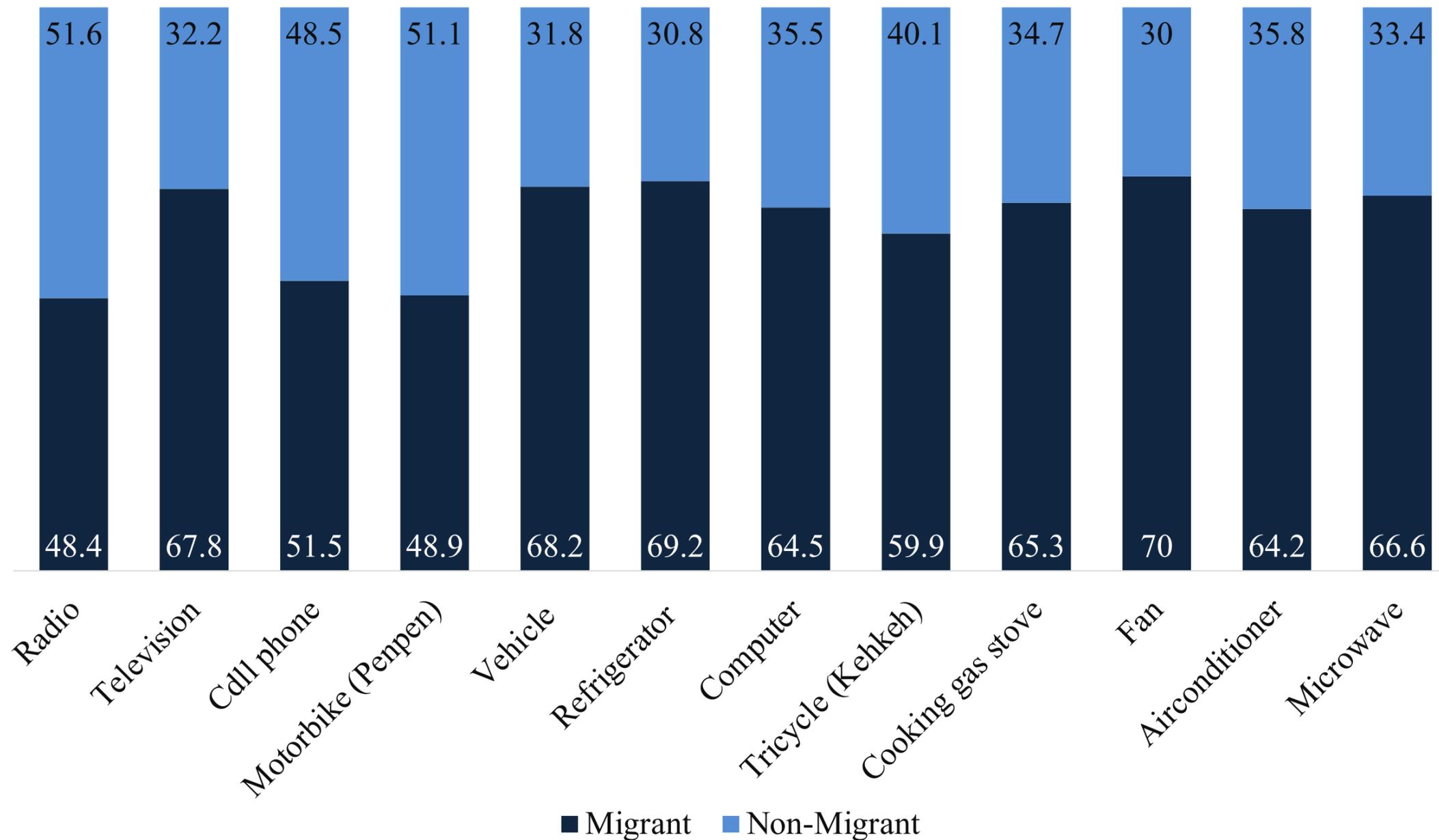


The largest proportion of both non-migrants (55%) and migrants (41%) are own-account workers

Migrants have more of the working population as salary/wage workers (29%) than non-migrants (15%).



# Asset Ownership



Though migrant households form 41% of total households in the country, they own greater proportion of selected assets in the country

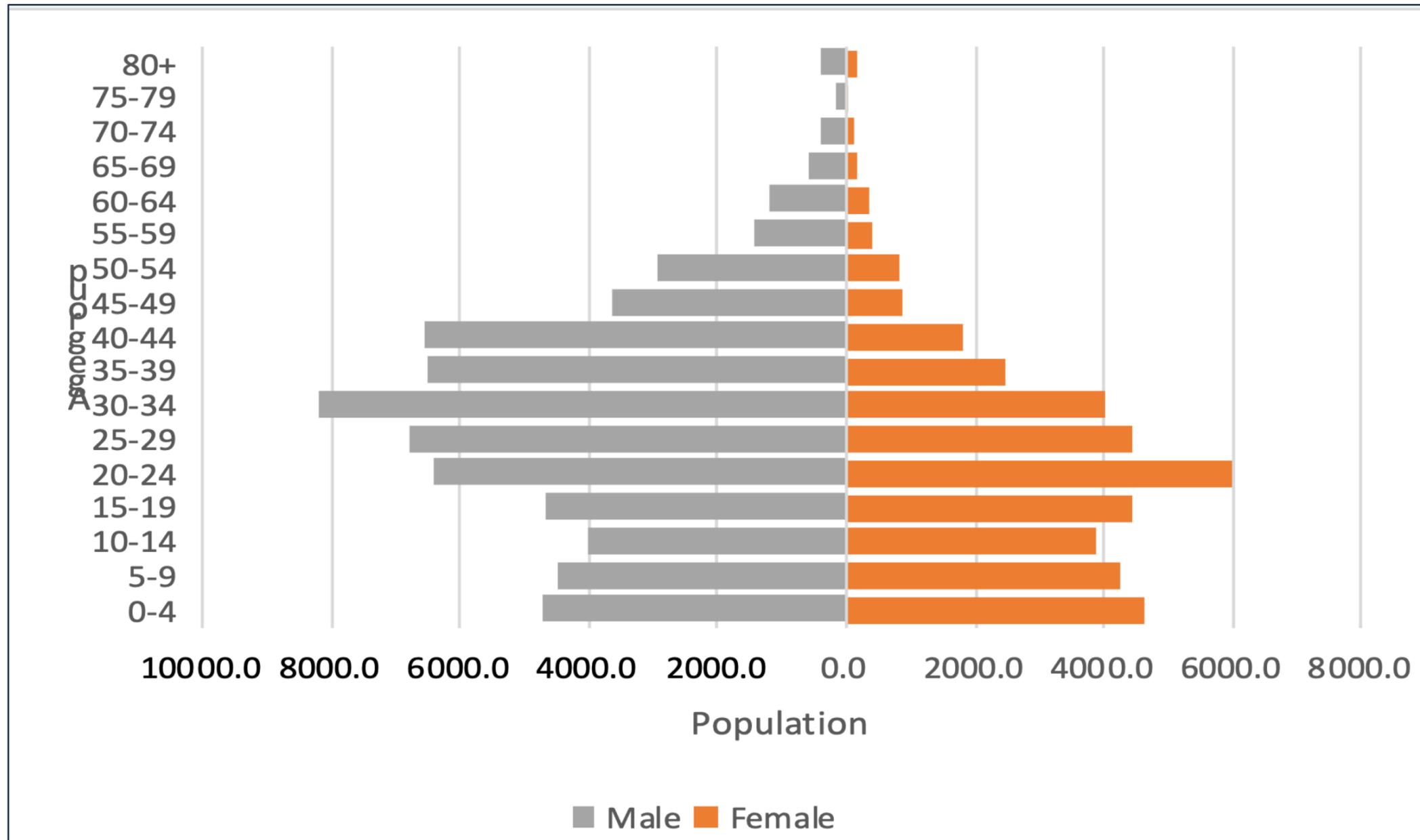


## International Migration (summary of findings)

- Total immigrant population in 2022 is 102,074, made up of 61.5% males and 38.5% female
- 93% of the immigrants are West African nationals. Guinea, which shares borders with Liberia in the north, contributes the largest (42.4%) to the international migrant population, followed by Ghana (14.3%) and Nigeria (11.8%)
- Asian nationals constitute 2.2% of the immigrant population, with Indians being the largest.
- Nationals from other African countries and European countries constitute 0.5% each of the immigrant population.



# Structure of the immigrant population

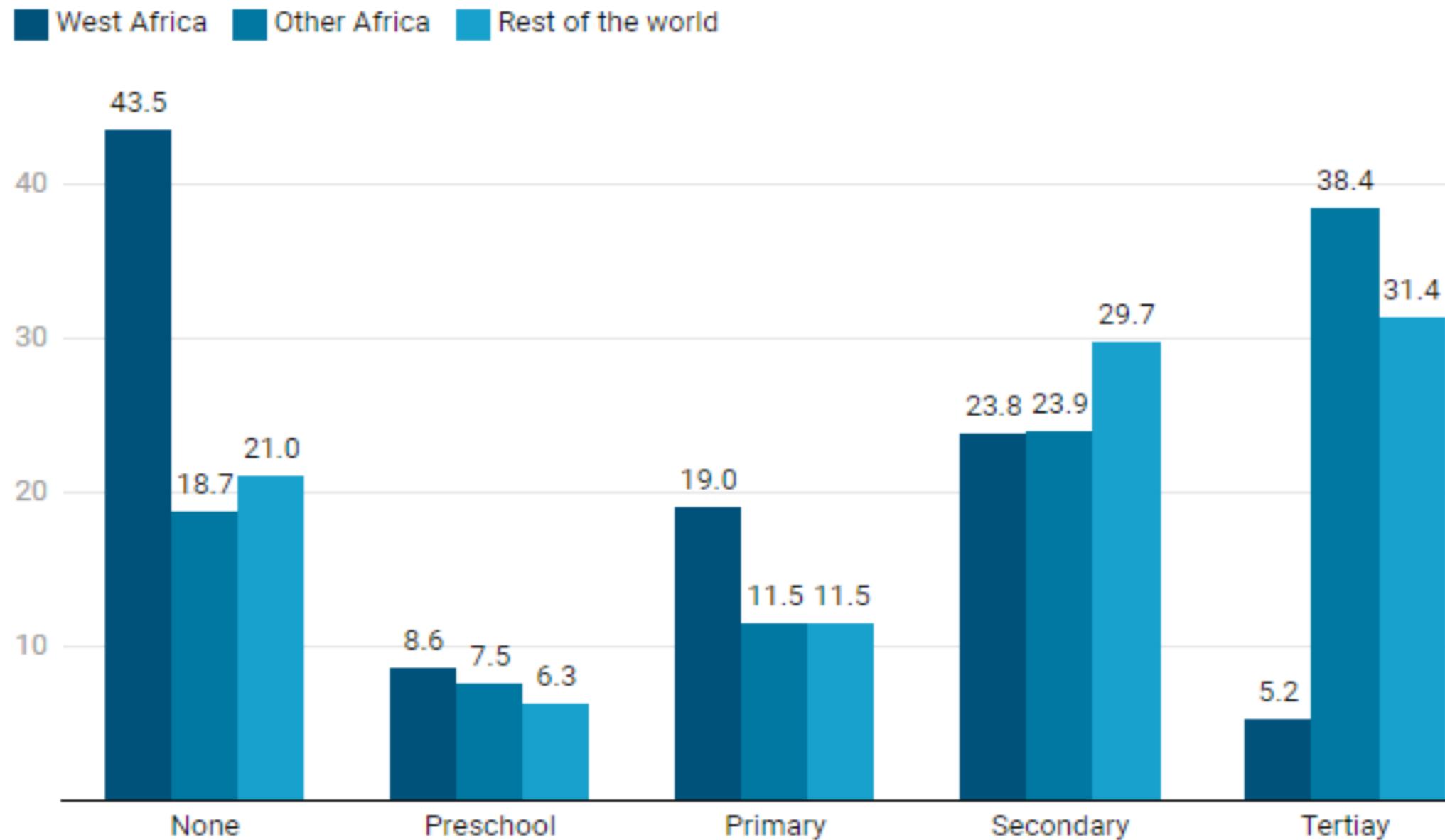


The male age group with the highest population is 30-34, while it is the 20-24 age group for the females.

Among the male population, 54.8% are of ages 20 to 44, and 48.1% for the females.



# Level of Education Completed by Immigrants



43.5% of West African immigrants have not completed any level of education and only 5.2% have completed tertiary level



## Return migration (summary of findings)

- ❑ The returnee population constitute 15.1% of the total population
- ❑ Almost half (48.6%) of returnees 5 years and older have never completed any level of schooling compared to 34.7% of non-returnees
- ❑ 46% of returnees are literates compared with 60% on non-returnees
- ❑ However, the returnee population has a larger proportion (6.4%) who have completed university and other tertiary education than the non-returnees (4.2%).
- ❑ Returnees have relatively better living conditions than non-returnees



## Which settlements qualify as urban in Liberia?

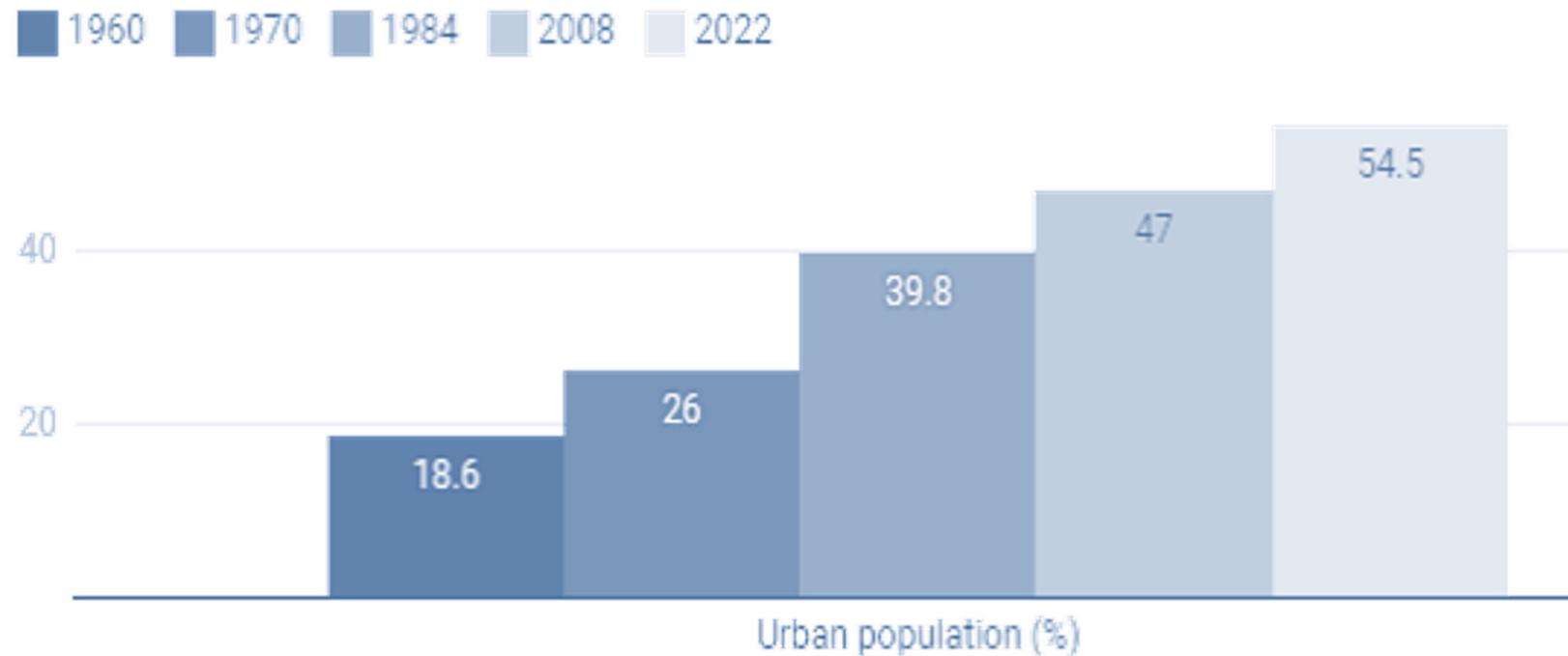
- ❑ In Liberia, urbanization is mainly defined in terms of population size. An urban area is that settlement with a population of 2,000 and above. Nevertheless, any other locality with less than 2,000 people but being the capital town of a county is also considered as an urban area.

### Summary

- ❑ Urban population as a share of total population, increased from 47.0% in 2008 to 54.5% in 2022.
- ❑ Annual intercensal urban growth rate between 2008 and 2022 is 4.1%, which is higher than the population growth rate of 3.0%.
- ❑ 61.5% of the urban population lives in Montserrado county



# Trend in urbanization over time



- ❑ The urban population grew from 18.6% in 1960 to 54.6% in 2022 making Liberia’s population to predominantly urban.
- ❑ Share of urban population increased in all counties except Gbarpolu and Montserrado
- ❑ Montserrado remains the most urbanized county (91.7%)
- ❑ Maryland & Margibi have more than half of the population in urban settlements
- ❑ Gbarpolu & Grand Kru have less than 10% in urban settlements

Proportion of urban population in 2008 & 2022		
County	2008	2022
Bomi	20.2	25.6
Bong	30.8	32.0
Gbarpolu	9.3	9.2
Grand Bassa	26.3	30.5
Grand Cape Mount	6.4	26.4
Grand Gedeh	33.3	42.3
Grand Kru	6.4	6.6
Lofa	30.3	23.6
Margibi	42.3	55.9
Maryland	34.6	61.5
Montserrado	92.7	91.7
Nimba	22.8	33.7
Rivercess	3.3	12.0
River Gee	26.2	49.8
Sinoe	13.1	17.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>54.5</b>



## Conclusions

- ❑ Proportion of lifetime migrants have increased over time.
- ❑ The age-sex structure of the population, irrespective of migration status and locality of residence, shows a youth bulge.
- ❑ Migration of the population to well-endowed counties, thus, can act as a safety valve for the failure to create appropriate employment and basic social amenities in those places.



## Policy Implications and Recommendations

- ❑ Urban population continues to grow rapidly because of rural-to-urban migration, mainly caused by resource disparities between rural and urban areas.
- ❑ Many of the migrants are heading to Montserrado county, which need support to respond in a way that leverages migration for local development and benefits both residents and newcomers.
- ❑ Policy makers' attention should be drawn to how the urban areas can accommodate the thousands of expected new residents. These new urban residents need housing, and if formal housing is under-provided many could end up living in slums.
- ❑ Available policy documents show that government and DPs are aware of the effects of the rapid urbanization and de-population of the rural areas. Some of the documents are:
  - ❑ National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance which aims at ensuring equitable political, economic, and social development throughout the country, and to increase citizen participation in these processes
  - ❑ Local Government Act (LGA) of 2018
  - ❑ National Urban Policy 2021
  - ❑ Agriculture, Road, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, Tourism (ARREST)



## Policy Implications and Recommendations

A paragraph on page 24 of the LGA, 2018, states

- ❑ *“There are additional issues of rapid migration from rural communities to urban centers. This has several negative impacts. First, rural communities are losing youth for agricultural work. Second, urban centers are becoming overcrowded. Finally, given that many migrants are untrained and unemployed, urban crime is on the increase. All of these have implications for town and city planning”.*
- ❑ It is recommended that a migration module is included in agriculture surveys, DHS, HIES,

and labor force surveys.

- ❑ In addition to the regular questions on migration, these surveys can collect information on the future intentions of individuals moving to other counties or leaving Liberia and this will help provide a timely picture of migration patterns.
- ❑ There is a need for increasing the level of use of migration data by training more analysts and by making policy-makers, planners, and administrators aware of the usefulness of quantitative data in their work.