



BIG IDEAS
on global issues



Global
Education
Time

MIGRATION

KEY CONCEPTS
AND **LEARNING OUTCOMES**



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1 WHAT IS MIGRATION

Migration is a feature of human existence and of our interdependent world. Modern humans first migrated out of Africa and across the world from around 120,000 years ago. We are all their descendants.



Learning outcomes

- Students understand that migration is a global process and has always been a feature of human (and other animals') behaviour.
- They know all people are descendants of migrants, including themselves and their family.

2 CAUSES OF MIGRATION

Migration is named as a right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 13¹). It entails the freedom of movement within a territory of a country, to choose one's residence, the right to leave any country and the right to return to one's own country.

Some people choose to migrate (e.g. for a better life), some people are forced to migrate (e.g. by war or climate change). Some forces like war, poverty, lack of services **Push** people **out**. Other forces **Pull** people **in** e.g. employment, safety, religious tolerance, lower risk of natural hazards or better land. Refugees are pushed (forced) to migrate because of conflict, persecution or violence.

[1] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf

Political, social, environmental and economic factors (e.g. discrimination, jobs, economic inequality between countries) can create migration flows.

The current global estimate is that there were around 281 million international migrants in the world in 2020, which equates to 3.6 per cent of the global population. Overall, the estimated number of international migrants has increased over the past five decades. The total estimated 281 million people living in a country other than their countries of birth in 2020 was 128 million more than in 1990 and over three times the estimated number in 1970². Every migrant has an individual story.



Learning outcomes

- Students understand that there are a variety of reasons why people migrate, and can name some key 'pull' and 'push' factors.
- Students know that there are different types of migration flows; they can describe some of the political, social, environmental and economic causes of migration.
- Students are familiar with some migrants' stories and can empathise with them.

[2] <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>



3

TRANSATLANTIC ENSLAVEMENT TRADE

Peaceful, violent and 'forced' migration flows have taken place throughout history. The Transatlantic African Enslavement Trade is an example of a forced migration of an estimated 10 - 12 million people³.



Learning outcomes

- Students understand the characteristics of different types of migration (peaceful, forced, violent).
- They can name some key historic migrations (e.g. migration from Africa; migration to the Americas; TAET).

4

MIGRATION TODAY

Migration today is often linked to events in the past. European violent 15-20th century colonisations of parts of Asia, and much of Africa and the Americas have led in turn to (peaceful) migration into Europe in the 20th Century. "We are here because you were there" A. Sivanandan⁴.

[3] <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13235/20200727201752/http://abolition.nypl.org/home/>

[4] <https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/by-era/1900%E2%80%99g32000>



Learning outcomes

- Students understand the connections between events in the recent or more distant past, and migration today.
- For example, they can explain the connection between past European colonisations and contemporary migration into Europe.

5 EQUALITY GAP & CLIMATE CHANGE

The equality gap between countries and climate change are two major drivers of migration. Up to 216 million internal climate migrants are predicted by 2050⁵. Climate Change can negatively affect the ability of families in majority world countries to produce food and survive. So, families will even get into debt to help a family member migrate. They hope this person will repay this and send 'remittances' home to help pay for basic needs, like health care, school or food, which families otherwise might struggle to afford.



Learning outcomes

- Students are aware that migration from the majority world to the minority world is a consequence of the equality gap in the world.
- They can explain some of the links between Migration and Climate Change. They know the predicted scale of environmental migration.
- They understand that 'remittances' may support development and narrow the equality gap.

[5] <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/climate/articles/10.3389/fclim.2023.1189125/full>



6

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FLOWS

Migration takes place internally and internationally. In our time, the biggest international migration flows are from rich to other rich countries and from poorer to other poorer countries (North-North; South-South). Much migration is temporary; many migrants return to their country of origin⁶.

The great majority of people do not migrate across borders; much larger numbers migrate within countries (an estimated 740 million internal migrants in 2009). That said, the increase in international migrants has been evident over time – both numerically and proportionally – and at a slightly faster rate than previously anticipated.

Although there is only a small proportion of the world's population overall who are international migrants (3.6%), there exists wide variation at the country level. In some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, over 88% of the population are international migrants⁷.

When international migrant populations are examined by the United Nations region, Europe is currently the largest destination for international migrants, with 87 million migrants (30.9% of the international migrant population), followed closely by the 86 million international migrants living in Asia (30.5%). Northern America is the destination for 59 million international migrants (20.9%), followed by Africa with 25 million migrants (9%). Over the past 15 years, the number of international migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean has more than doubled from around 7 million to 15 million, making it the region with the highest growth rate of international migrants and the destination for 5.3 per cent of all international migrants. Around 9 million international migrants live in Oceania, or about 3.3 per cent of all migrants⁸.

[6] <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/return-migration>

[7] <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>

[8] <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>



Learning outcomes

- Students know that migration is a continual process, which takes place locally, nationally and internationally.
- They can name some key facts about the main national and international migration flows e.g. the % world's population that are migrants.
- They can describe some global migration flows e.g. China to African countries; South /East Asia to the Middle East.

7 EFFECTS OF MIGRATION

Migration often brings challenges to host countries/communities. Existing communities may find it difficult to adapt to people with different ways of doing things and have concerns about negative impacts on their lives, such as reduced access to jobs & housing. Individuals express frustration about not having a choice in the changes in their community. These concerns are open to being portrayed in emotive terms by the media. Media misrepresentation of migrants & migration can increase tension between communities, fear of 'the other' and foster racism and discrimination⁹.

However, migration actually often brings benefits to host communities - like new ideas, more wealth, & workers. This fosters the social & cultural development and the economic growth of these countries. Many famous people with migrant heritage are recognised as making significant contributions to their societies¹⁰.

[9] https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en_chapter8.pdf https://www.reminder-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/REMINDER_D9_1_Media_effects_migration_mobility_web.pdf

[10] <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SDD%20AP%20Migration%20Report%20report%20v6-1-E.pdf>



Learning outcomes

- Students can explain why migration presents challenges and brings benefits to host communities, and can name some of these.
- Students can describe how migration can benefit or impoverish countries of origin, particularly majority world countries.
- Students can explain why migration is a contentious issue and why people have different views about it.
- They are able to explain how it may be misrepresented by the media and exploited by political parties.
- They can describe some of the consequences of this.

8

CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS

Equally, for countries of origin, migration can bring challenges (e.g. loss of skilled workers) and benefits (e.g. remittances from emigrants)^[11]. These remittances are about 3 times greater than official development aid (see footnote 14) and increased of 50% between 2017 and 2023 reaching \$ 669 billion^[12].



Learning outcomes

- Students can name some of the challenges and benefits of migration for countries of origin.

[11] <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2018/04/24/migration-and-remittances-transit-migration>

[12] <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/12/18/remittance-flows-grow-2023-slower-pace-migration-development-brief>

9 CULTURALLY-DIVERSE SOCIETIES

The process of migration is resulting in the creation of new culturally-diverse societies, raising questions about what diversity is and how to live in a diverse society. Migration raises questions about how we see 'ourselves' and 'the other'. Because migrants often face prejudice and discrimination, some countries have created Equality laws to prevent discrimination and protect people's rights. Governments also adopt strategies to enable the integration of migrant communities and promote community cohesion.



Learning outcomes

- Students understand that migration raises questions about how we see 'ourselves' and 'the other'.
- They know the name and purpose of relevant Equality legislation.

10 THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING INDUSTRY

Migration is a risky process. Migrants are susceptible to exploitation by traffickers who make money out of them. The well-being of migrants is not a key priority for many traffickers. This results in the deaths of many migrants. Per year, the forced labour and human trafficking industry earns profits of \$150bn¹³.



Learning outcomes

Students can describe what the trafficking business is and know of the dangers migrants face from traffickers and the services they provide.

[13]

https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@aed_norm/@declaration/documents/publication/wcms_243391.pdf



11 ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL MIGRATION

Countries attempt to control and reduce migration e.g. by building physical barriers, passing laws to restrict benefits, investing in poorer countries and helping to resolve conflicts.

On the other hand, richer countries encourage certain types of migration from poorer countries because they need skilled/unskilled workers (e.g. doctors and nurses or manual workers). Businesses also recruit skilled migrants to stay ahead of other competitors and maximise profits.



Learning outcomes

- Students can explain why governments try to control migration and name some of the strategies they use.
- Students can explain why governments and businesses encourage certain types of migration to fill the skills gap and can name some examples (e.g. for National Health Services).

Lead Partner



Project Partners



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