

## Migration – the big ideas

What should young people know about Migration by the time they leave school?

### 1. 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.

### 2. Causes of migration.

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, lower risk of natural hazards or better land. *Refugees* are *pushed* (forced) to migrate because of conflict, persecution or violence.

Political, social, environmental and economic factors (e.g. discrimination, jobs, economic inequality between countries) can create **migration flows**. 98% of the USA's population migrated there over the last 500 years, mostly for economic reasons. Every migrant has an **individual story**.

### 3. 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 12.5 million people.

### 4. Migration today is linked to events in the past.

European violent 15-20<sup>th</sup> century colonisations of parts of Asia, and much of Africa and the Americas have led in turn to (peaceful) migration into Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

**"We are here because you were there"** A. Sivanandan

### 5. The **equality gap** between countries and **Climate Change** are two major drivers of migration.

Climate Change effects 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 couldn't afford.

### 6. 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; migrants return to their country of origin. An estimated 258 million people live in a country they weren't born in; this is approx. 3.6% World's inhabitants (U.N. 2017). "In Europe, the size of the total population would have declined during the period 2000-2015 in the absence of migration." (UN 2017).

### 7. Effects of migration.

Migration brings **challenges** and **benefits** 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. 'Overcrowding', reduced access to jobs & houses are often concerns. Migrants also bring benefits like new ideas, more wealth, & workers. Additionally migration brings challenges (e.g. loss of skilled workers) and bring benefits (e.g. remittances from emigrants) for the **country of origin**.

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**8. 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*'. Migrants often face prejudice and discrimination. Some countries have addressed this with new Race Equality laws to prevent discrimination and protect people's rights. Governments adopt strategies to enable the *integration* of migrant communities.

**9. Representation of migrants.**

Migration is contentious and so is often portrayed in emotive terms by the media. Misrepresentation of migrants & migration can increase tension between communities, fear of 'the other' and foster racism and discrimination.

**10. 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 human trafficking industry earns profits of \$150bn.

**11. 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.

**12. Induced Migration.**

Recruiting Migrants is important for some businesses to stay ahead of other competitors and maximise profits. Richer countries encourage migration from poorer countries because they need skilled/ unskilled workers e.g. doctors and nurses or manual workers.

This guide has been produced by **Leeds Development Education Centre**. [www.globalschools.org.uk](http://www.globalschools.org.uk)

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