AP Human Geography

Migration
What Geographers Study

- Geographers document from where people migrate and to where they migrate.
- They also study reasons why people migrate.
What Migrants Seek

- Most people migrate in search of three objectives:
  - economic opportunity
  - cultural freedom
  - environmental comfort.
Migration

The Key Issues are:

1) Why do people migrate?
2) Where are migrants distributed?
3) Why do migrants face obstacles?
4) Why do people migrate within a country?
The subject of this chapter is a specific type of relocation diffusion called migration, which is a permanent move to a new location.

- **Emigration** is migration from a location.
- **Immigration** is migration to a location.

The difference between the number of immigrants and the number of emigrants is the net migration.
Migration and Circulation

- **Migration** is a form of mobility, which is a more general term covering all types of movements from one place to another.

- Short-term, repetitive, or cyclical movements that recur on a regular basis, such as daily, monthly, or annually, are called **circulation**.
Here’s a Good Question that relates to Migration in the 21st Century

- If people can participate in the globalization of culture and economy regardless of place of residence, why do they still migrate in large numbers?
  - The answer is that place is still important to an individual’s cultural identity and economic prospects.
Issue 1: Why People Migrate

- Reasons for migrating
  - *Push and pull factors*
    - Economic
    - Cultural
    - Environmental
    - *Intervening obstacles*

- Distance of migration
  - *Internal migration*
  - *International migration*

- Characteristics of migrants
  - *Gender*
  - *Family status*
Ravenstein’s Laws

- Geography has no comprehensive theory of migration, although a nineteenth-century essay of 11 migration “laws” written by E. G. Ravenstein is the basis for contemporary migration studies.

- Ravenstein’s “laws” can be organized into three groups:
  - reasons
  - distance
  - migrant characteristics
Most people migrate for economic reasons.

Cultural and environmental factors also induce migration, although not as frequently as economic factors.

Fig. 3-2: The major flows of migration are from less developed to more developed countries.
Push – Pull Factors

- People decide to migrate because of push factors and pull factors.
  - A push factor induces people to move out of their present location.
  - A pull factor induces people to move into a new location.
- Both push and pull factors typically play a role in human migration.
Three Types of Push-Pull

- We can identify 3 major kinds of push and pull factors:
  - Economic
  - Cultural
  - Environmental
Economic Push and Pull Factors

- Most people migrate for economic reasons.
- The relative attractiveness of a region can shift with economic change.
Cultural Push and Pull Factors

- Forced international migration has historically occurred for two main reasons:
  - Slavery
  - Political instability
Twentieth Century Instability

- In the twentieth century, forced international migration increased because of political instability resulting from cultural diversity.
  - Refugees are people who have been forced to migrate from their home country and cannot return for fear of persecution.
  - Political conditions can also operate as pull factors, especially the lure of freedom.
  - With the election of democratic governments in Eastern Europe during the 1990s, Western Europe’s political pull has disappeared as a migration factor.
  - However, Western Europe pulls an increasing number of migrants from Eastern Europe for economic reasons.
Refugees: sources and destinations

Fig. 3-1: Major source and destination areas of both international and internal refugees.
Changes in Refugee Populations

Changes in refugee populations 1996-1997 by region

- Oceania: 74,900 (71,100)
- Latin America & Caribbean: 87,700 (83,200)
- Northern America: 720,100 (662,500)
- Europe: 3,165,500 (2,340,700)
- Asia: 4,888,300 (4,730,300)
- Africa: 1,341,600 (3,481,700)

Source: Populations of Concern to UNHCR - A Statistical Survey (July 1997)
Environmental Push and Pull Factors

- People also migrate for environmental reasons, pulled toward physically attractive regions and pushed from hazardous ones.
- Attractive environments for migrants include mountains, sea sides, and warm climates.
- Migrants are also pushed from their homes by adverse physical conditions.
  - Water - either too much or too little - poses the most common environmental threat.
Intervening Obstacles

- Where migrants go is not always their desired destination.
- They may be blocked by an intervening obstacle.
  - In the past, intervening obstacles were primarily environmental... like mountains and deserts.
  - Bodies of water long have been important intervening obstacles.
  - However, today’s migrant faces intervening obstacles created by local diversity in government and politics.
Distance Traveled

- Ravenstein’s theories made two main points about the distance that migrants travel to their home:
  - Most migrants relocate a short distance and remain within the same country.
  - Long-distance migrants to other countries head for major centers of economic activity.
International vs. Interregional Migration

- International migration is permanent movement from one country to another, whereas internal migration is permanent movement within the same country.
  - International migrants are much less numerous than internal migrants.
- Interregional migration is movement from one region of a country to another, while intraregional migration is movement within one region.
Two Types of Migration

- International migration is further divided into two types
  - Forced
  - Voluntary
Connections to Demographic Transition

- Geographer Wilber Zelinsky has identified a migration transition, which consists of changes in a society comparable to those in the demographic transition.
  - A society in stage 1,
    - Unlikely to migrate permanently.
    - Does have high daily or seasonal mobility in search of food.
  - According to migration transition theory, societies in stages 3 and 4 are the destinations of the international migrants leaving the stage 2 countries in search of economic opportunities.
  - Internal migration within countries in stages 3 and 4 of the demographic transition is intraregional, from cities to surrounding suburbs.
Characteristics of Migrants

- Ravenstein noted distinctive gender and family-status patterns in his migration theories:
  - Most long-distance migrants have historically been male
  - Most long-distance migrants have historically been adult individuals rather than families with children.

- Changes in Gender of Migrants
  - But since the 1990s the gender pattern has reversed, and women now constitute about 55 percent of U.S. immigration.
Ravenstein also believed that most long-distance migrants were young adults seeking work.

For the most part, this pattern continues for the United States.

With the increase in women migrating... more children are coming with their mother.
Mexican Immigration

- The origin of Mexican immigrants to the United States matches the expectations of the migration transition and distance-decay theories.
  - The destination of choice within the United States is overwhelmingly states that border Mexico.
  - But most immigrants originate not from Mexico’s northern states but from interior states.
  - Because farm work is seasonal... the greatest number of Mexicans head north to the United States in the autumn and return home in the spring.
Issue 2: Migration Patterns

- Global migration patterns
- U.S. migration patterns
  - Colonial immigration
  - 19th century immigration
  - Recent immigration
- Impact of immigration on the U.S.
  - Legacy of European migration
  - Undocumented immigration
  - Destination of immigrants within the U.S.
Fig. 3-3: Net migration per 1,000 population. The U.S. has the largest number of immigrants, but other developed countries also have relatively large numbers.
Migration to U.S., by region of origin

Fig. 3-4: Most migrants to the U.S. were from Europe until the 1960s. Since then, Latin America and Asia have become the main sources of immigrants.
First Peak of European Immigration

- From 1607... until 1840, a steady stream of Europeans (totaling 2 million) migrated to the American colonies and after 1776... the United States.

- Ninety percent of European immigrants... prior to 1840 came from Great Britain. During the 1840s and 1850s, the level of immigration... surged.
  - More than 4 million people migrated... more than twice as many as in the previous 250 years combined.

- More than 90 percent of all U.S. immigrants during the 1840s and 1850s came from Northern and Western Europe, including two fifths from Ireland and another one third from Germany.
Second Peak of European Immigration

- U.S. immigration declined somewhat during the 1860s as a result of the Civil War (1861—1865).
- A second peak was reached during the 1880s, where more than a half-million people, more than three-fourths during the late 1880s, came from Northern and Western Europe.
Third Peak of European Immigration

- Economic problems in the United States discouraged immigration during the early 1890s, but by the end of the decade the level reached a third peak.

- During this time, most people came from Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, places that previously had sent few people.

- The record year was 1907, with 1.3 million.
  - The shift coincided with the diffusion of the Industrial Revolution to Southern and Eastern Europe.
Recent Immigration from Less Developed Regions

- Immigration to the United States dropped sharply in the 1930s and 1940s, during the Great Depression and World War II, then it steadily increased during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.
- It surged during the 1980s and 1990s to historically high levels.
Migration from Asia to the U.S.

Fig. 3-5: Migration in 2001. The largest numbers of migrants from Asia come from India, China, the Philippines, and Vietnam.
Migration from Latin America to the U.S.

Fig. 3-6: Mexico has been the largest source of migrants to the U.S., but migrants have also come from numerous other Latin American nations.
Impact of Immigration on the United States

- The U.S. population has been built up through a combination of emigration from Africa and England primarily during the eighteenth century, from Europe primarily during the nineteenth century, and from Latin America and Asia primarily during the twentieth century.
- In the twenty-first century, the impact of immigration varies around the country.
- Massive European migration ended with the start of World War I.
Europe’s Demographic Transition.

- Rapid population growth in Europe fueled emigration, especially after 1800.
- Application of new technologies pushed much of Europe into stage 2 of the demographic transition.
- To promote more efficient agriculture, some European governments forced the consolidation of several small farms into larger units.
- Displaced farmers could choose between working in factories in the large cities or migrating to the United States or another country where farmland was plentiful.
Diffusion of European Culture

- Europeans frequently imposed political domination on existing populations and injected their cultural values with little regard for local traditions.
- Economies in Africa and Asia became based on extracting resources for export to Europe, rather than on using those resources to build local industry.
- Many of today’s conflicts in former European colonies result from past practices by European immigrants.
Undocumented Immigration to the United States

- Many people who cannot legally enter the United States are now immigrating illegally, called undocumented immigrants.
- The U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) estimate 7 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., although other estimates are as high as 20 million.
- The BCIS apprehends more than a million persons annually trying to cross the southern U.S. border.
- Half of the undocumented residents legally enter the country as students or tourists and then remain after they are supposed to leave.
Undocumented Immigration: Mexico to Arizona

Fig. 3-7: The complex route of one group of undocumented migrants from a small village north of Mexico City to Phoenix, Arizona.
The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act

- The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act tried to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants.
  - Aliens who could prove that they had lived in the United States continuously between 1982 and 1987 could become permanent resident aliens and apply for U.S. citizenship after 5 years.
  - At the same time, the law discouraged further illegal immigration by making it harder for recent immigrants to get jobs without proper documentation.
Fig. 3-8: California is the destination of about 25% of all U.S. immigrants; another 25% go to New York and New Jersey. Other important destinations include Florida, Texas, and Illinois.
Issue 3: Obstacles to Migration

- Immigration policies of host countries
  - U.S. quota laws
  - Temporary migration for work
  - Time-contract workers
  - Economic migrants or refugees?

- Cultural problems living in other countries
  - U.S. attitudes toward immigrants
  - Attitudes toward guest workers
U.S. Quota Laws

- The era of unrestricted immigration to the United States, ended when Congress passed the Quota Act in 1921 and the National Origins Act in 1924.
- Quota laws were designed to assure that most immigrants to the United States continued to be Europeans.
- Quotas for individual countries were eliminated in 1968 and replaced with hemispheric quotas.
- In 1978 the hemisphere quotas were replaced by a global quota of 290,000, including a maximum of 20,000 per country.
- The current law has a global quota of 620,000, with no more than 7 percent from one country, but numerous qualifications and exceptions can alter the limit considerably.
Brain Drain

- Other countries charge that by giving preference to skilled workers, U.S. immigration policy now contributes to a brain drain, which is a large-scale emigration by talented people.

- The average immigrant has received more education than the typical American: nearly one-fourth of all legal immigrants to the United States have attended graduate school, compared to less than one-tenth of native-born Americans.
Fig. 3-9: Guest workers emigrate mainly from Eastern Europe and North Africa to work in the wealthier countries of Western Europe.
Time-contract Workers

- Millions of Asians migrated in the nineteenth century as time-contract laborers, recruited for a fixed period to work in mines or on plantations.

- More than 29 million ethnic Chinese currently live permanently in other countries, for the most part in Asia.

- In recent years people have immigrated illegally in Asia to find work in other countries.

- Estimates of illegal foreign workers in Taiwan range from 20,000 to 70,000.
  - Most are Filipinos, Thais, and Malaysians.

Fig. 3-10: Various ethnic Chinese peoples have distinct patterns of migration to other Asian countries.
Distinguishing between Economic Migrants and Refugees

- It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between migrants seeking economic opportunities and refugees fleeing from the persecution of an undemocratic government.

- The distinction between economic migrants and refugees is important, because the United States, Canada, and Western European countries treat the two groups differently.
Emigrants from Cuba

- Since the 1959 revolution that brought the Communist government of Fidel Castro to power, the U.S. government has regarded emigrants from Cuba as political refugees.
- In the years immediately following the revolution, more than 600,000 Cubans were admitted to the United States.
- A second flood of Cuban emigrants reached the United States in 1980, when Fidel Castro suddenly decided to permit political prisoners, criminals, and mental patients to leave the country.
Emigrants from Haiti

- Shortly after the 1980 Mariel boatlift from Cuba, several thousand Haitians also sailed in small vessels for the United States.
- Claiming that they had migrated for economic advancement, U.S. immigration officials would not let the Haitian boat people stay.
- The Haitians brought a lawsuit.
- The government settled the case by agreeing to admit the Haitians.
- After a 1991 coup that replaced Haiti’s elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, thousands of Haitians fled their country but the U.S. State Department decided that most left Haiti for economic rather than political reasons.
- The United States invaded Haiti in 1994 to reinstate Aristide as president.
- Many Haitians still try to migrate to the United States.
Fig. 3-11: Many Vietnamese fled by sea as refugees after the war with the U.S. ended in 1975. Later boat people were often considered economic migrants.
Cultural Problems Living in Other Countries

- For many immigrants, admission to another country does not end their problems.
- Politicians exploit immigrants as scapegoats for local economic problems.
U.S. Attitudes toward Immigrants

- Americans have always regarded new arrivals with suspicion but tempered their dislike during the nineteenth century because immigrants helped to settle the frontier and extend U.S. control across the continent.

- Opposition to immigration intensified when the majority of immigrants ceased to come from Northern and Western Europe.

- More recently, hostile citizens in California and other states have voted to deny undocumented immigrants access to most public services, such as schools, day-care centers, and health clinics.
Attitudes toward Guest Workers

- In Europe, many guest workers suffer from poor social conditions.
  - Both guest workers and their host countries regard the arrangement as temporary.
  - In reality, however, many guest workers remain indefinitely, especially if they are joined by other family members.
- As a result of lower economic growth rates, Middle Eastern and Western European countries have reduced the number of guest workers in recent years.
- Political parties that support restrictions on immigration have gained support in France, Germany, and other European countries, and attacks by local citizens on immigrants have increased.
Issue 4: Migration within a Country

- Migration between regions of a country
  - Migration between regions within the U.S.
  - Migration between regions in other countries

- Migration within one region
  - Rural-urban migration
  - Urban-suburban migration
  - Migration from metropolitan to non-metropolitan regions
Migration Inside the US

- In the United States, interregional migration was more prevalent in the past, when most people were farmers.
- The most famous example of large-scale internal migration is the opening of the American West.
Fig. 3-12: The center of U.S. population has consistently moved westward, with the population migration west. It has also begun to move southward with migration to the southern sunbelt.
Interregional Migration in the U.S.

Fig. 3-13: Average annual migrations between regions in the U.S. in 1995 and in 2000.
Migration between Regions in Other Countries – Russia

- Soviet policy encouraged factory construction near raw materials rather than near existing population concentrations.
- The collapse of the Soviet Union ended policies that encouraged interregional migration.
- In the transition to a market-based economy, Russian government officials no longer dictate “optimal” locations for factories.
Population, Migration and Brazil

- Most Brazilians live in a string of large cities near the Atlantic Coast.
- To increase the attractiveness of the interior, the government moved its capital in 1960 from Rio to a newly built city called Brasilia.
Since 1969 the Indonesian government has paid for the migration of more than 5 million people, primarily from the island of Java, where nearly two-thirds of its people live, to less populated islands.

The number of participants has declined in recent years, primarily because of environmental concerns.
Throughout Western Europe, the regions with net immigration are also the ones with the highest per capita incomes.

Even countries that occupy relatively small land areas have important interregional migration trends.

Regional differences in economic conditions within European countries may become greater with increased integration of the continent’s economy.
Migration within India

- Indians require a permit to migrate or even to visit the State of Assam.
- The restrictions, which date from the British colonial era, are designed to protect the ethnic identity of Assamese.
Migration from Rural to Urban Areas
Intraregional Migration in the U.S.

Fig. 3-14: Average annual migration among urban, suburban, and rural areas in the U.S. during the 1990s. The largest flow was from central cities to suburbs.
Trends in Urbanization


Urban Population %

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Migration from Metropolitan to Non-metropolitan Areas

- During the late twentieth century, the more developed countries of North America and Western Europe witnessed a new trend.
  - More people in these regions immigrated into rural areas than emigrated out of them.
- Net migration from urban to rural areas is called **counter-urbanization**.
  - Most counter-urbanization represents genuine migration from cities and suburbs to small towns and rural communities.
  - Like suburbanization, people move from urban to rural areas for lifestyle reasons.
  - Many migrants from urban to rural areas are retired people.
  - Counter-urbanization has stopped in the United States because of poor economic conditions in some rural areas.
- Future migration trends are unpredictable in more developed countries, because future economic conditions are difficult to forecast.