



What is Human Migration?

Migration (human) is the movement of people from one place in the world to another. People can either choose to move ("voluntary migration") or be forced to move ("involuntary migration").

Migrations have occurred throughout the past, beginning with the movements of the first human groups from their origins in East Africa to their current homes throughout the world.

Migration occurs in a variety of ways: Migration can occur between continents, within a continent, or within a single country. Migration can even occur when people move out of the city and into the country. The most important thing about migration to remember is that it occurs when *groups of people move for the same reason*.

Types of Migration

Internal Migration: Moving to a new home within a state, country, or continent.

External Migration: Moving to a new home in a different state, country, or continent.

Emigration: Leaving one country to move to another (e.g., the Pilgrims emigrated *from* England).

Immigration: Moving into a new country (e.g., the Pilgrims immigrated *to* America).

Return Migration: When groups of people move back to where they came from.

Seasonal Migration: When people move with each season (e.g., farm workers following crop harvests or working in cities off-season).

Seasonal Migration: The process of moving for a period of time in response to labor or climate conditions (e.g., farm workers following crop harvests or working in cities off-season; "snowbirds" moving to the southern and southwestern United States during winter).

People Who Migrate

Emigrant: A person who is leaving a country to live in another.

Immigrant: A person who is entering a country from another to make a new home.

Refugee: A person who has moved to a new country because of a situation in their former home (e.g., war).

Why Do People Migrate?

People move for many reasons. To decide, they think about what is good or bad about staying or moving.

Push Factors: Leaving a place because of a problem (such as a food shortage, war, flood, etc.).

Pull Factors: Moving to a place because of something good (such as nicer climate, better food supply, etc.).

Laws of Migration

Geographer E.G. Ravenstein developed a series of migration 'laws' in the 1880s that still make sense today. Here are a few:

- Most migrants travel only a short distance
- Migrants traveling long distances usually settle in cities
- Most migration is from the country to the city
- Most migrants are adults

Impacts of Migration

Cultural Markers: Like detectives, we can learn a lot about our past by looking at pieces of evidence from the past. These pieces of evidence, or "cultural markers," can be objects from the past (pottery, arrowheads, treasures, etc.), maps, literature, music, and even people's memories.

Migration Resources

U.S. Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/>

Population Reference Bureau

http://www.prb.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PRB/Educators/Human_Population/Migration2/Migration1.htm

Ancestry.com: Thirteen Reasons Our Ancestors Migrated

<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=1436>

Smithsonian Institution: Migrations in History

<http://smithsonianeducation.org/migrations/start.html>

Migration Information Source

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/>

UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency

<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/tehis/vtx/home>

International Organization for Migration

<http://www.iom.int/>

National Geographic Magazine: Changing America

http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2001/09/01/html/ft_20010901.3.html

National Geographic: Xpeditions—Migration Station

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/hall/index.html?node=36>

National Geographic: Geography Action!—Migration: The Human Journey

http://ngsednet.org/community/index.cfm?community_id=7

National Geographic: The Genographic Project

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/genographic/index.html>