Chapter 3

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?
Net Migration

• 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 21\textsuperscript{st} 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 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
Global Migration Patterns

– 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 (1996), 71,100 (1997)
- Northern America: 720,100 (1996), 668,500 (1997)

Source: Populations of Concern to UNHCR - A Statistical Survey (July 1998)
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, seasides, 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.
Family Status of Migrants

• 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.
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.