Why do people migrate?

What are some important population issues?
When people move from one place to another, this is called migration. Immigrants are people who leave one country and move to another.

Why do people move?

- Demographers use the “push-pull” theory to explain immigration.
- People migrate because certain things “push” them to leave. The reasons may be economic (maybe people cannot buy land or find work). Sometimes changes in government force people to leave.
- The hope for better living conditions “pulls” people to a country. People might be pulled by many things, such as better economic opportunities or a more desirable climate.
The push-pull theory can explain the great Irish immigration in the 1840s and 1850s and Vietnamese immigration in the 1970s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>Vietnamese</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event</strong></td>
<td>In the 1840s, disease destroyed Ireland’s main crop—potatoes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Push Factors</strong></td>
<td>People went hungry and starved. Also, England ruled Ireland very harshly, leaving the Irish few opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pull Factors</strong></td>
<td>Job opportunities in the United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sometimes, people are forced to migrate.

**Colonization**
Australia was colonized by the English. The English sent convicts to serve their sentences in Australia.

**War**
When war broke out among three ethnic groups in Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s, many refugees fled to escape being killed.

**Helping families**
Young men from Morocco and Turkey often go to Europe to find work. For a few years, they work hard and save their money. Then they return home.
Migration also occurs within a country.

- One of the biggest challenges to today’s nations is urbanization—the movement of people to cities from rural areas and the growth of cities.
- In recent years, the population of major cities has grown tremendously.

Example:

- Recently, in the United States, the population has shifted from the northeastern states to the southern and southwestern states.

Why?

- People may be searching for better job opportunities or better climates. The growth of urban areas in southern states has put a great stress on services.
Examples of Growing Cities

- Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, and São Paulo, Brazil, are examples of rapidly growing cities. Jakarta’s population more than doubled between 1978 and 2000. São Paulo is now the largest city in South America and is rapidly developing.

So, what’s the problem?

- The cities cannot keep up: They cannot provide housing, jobs, schools, hospitals, and other services that people need.
- Life can be difficult: Overcrowding in schools and on streets, and heavy pollution, among other things, can make life uncomfortable.

So, why do people move?

- Most are seeking a better life for their families. They are looking for jobs, decent houses, and good schools. Above all, they want more opportunities for their children.
### Causes

"Push-pull"—something pushes immigrants to leave their homes, and something pulls them to a new land

- Famine
- Unstable or harsh government
- War
- Religious persecution
- Need to find better job opportunities
- Desire for better educational opportunities for children

### People Migrate

### Effects

**Urbanization**—cities grow as people move from rural areas and arrive from other countries

- Fewer farms mean less food
- Not enough clean water for everyone
- Overcrowded schools and hospitals
- Jobs are scarce
- Not enough decent housing
- Increased traffic and pollution
What are some of the reasons why people migrate? People migrate to escape starvation, find freedom, escape wars and religious persecution, find jobs and better lives, or to work and save money abroad and then return home.

Why have some immigrants left their homelands to live in the U.S.? Cubans came for freedom. Scandinavians came for farmland.