

## People on the Move: Causes and Consequences of Migration

### Lecture Summary

International migration is very simple to define, but encompasses a great diversity of people, forms of mobility and experiences. This lecture provides an overview of debates around causes and consequences of international migration and highlights the importance of context through the use of two case studies: Singapore and Mexico

### Causes of international migration

Simple push-pull migration models are a good place to start in examining causes of migration, but it is also important to acknowledge the theoretical approach adopted, the scale at which analysis is taking place, and the nature of obstacles for international migration, recognising that the ability to cross international borders is highly unequal.

### Consequences of international migration

Understanding consequences of international migration requires an understanding of actors (individuals/ groups/ organisations/ institutions) in migration. Migration is rarely a completely positive or negative experience; rather, as geographers, we seek to understand what benefits or disbenefits may accrue to these different actors. These will also vary over time and space.

### Case Study 1: Singapore

Immigration has been key to the economic success of Singapore since independence in 1965. With its small population and limited natural resources, the country has drawn on its regional location and history as a key trading centre to benefit from the transport and communications advances associated with globalisation. Attracting migrant labour has been crucial to this process, but the **governance** of labour migration is highly controlled, with a division between skilled professional and technical personnel, and unskilled workers for the construction industry and domestic labour.

### Case Study 2: Mexico

Emigration has been an important strategy for household survival among low-income, particularly rural, Mexican populations for generations. This has also proved beneficial to the Mexican government due to the flows of remittances from overseas, and economic support for low-income families. The vast majority of Mexicans emigrate to the USA, through both formal documented routes (into a range of employment sectors) and undocumented routes. Net migration between Mexico and the USA varies over time due to the state of the US and Mexican economies, immigration control and reduced birth rates in Mexico. Mexico is increasingly a country of transit for migrants from Central America seeking to enter the USA.

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