

MIGRATION IN THE 19TH CENTURY

A historical perspective on mass migration within and across different continents between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth century helps us contextualise.

Migration, for first, can be classed as voluntary or forced as well. Between and one million and a half of them migrated to US, half million reached Latin American countries, Canada, Europe and Palestine. Other major receiving countries were Argentina, Canada, Brazil and Uruguay. Between and around 17 million people left Europe for the New World[9]. They typically passed through something like a half-century life-cycle: a steep rise in emigration rates from low levels in preindustrial decades, followed by a plateau of very high emigration, and then a subsequent fall during more mature stages of industrialization. At the same time, an adverse economic situation in the destination-countries, led many migrants for the first time back to their origin countries. In addition to the traditional immigration receiving countries in the Americas, Western Europe and Australia and New Zealand, a range of other countries attract a growing population of migrants. Migrants from former colonies in the Caribbean and South Asia came to find work in Britain, migrants from Turkey went to Germany and those from former French colonies in North Africa went to France. Other mass migrations include the forced migration of 20 million people as slaves from Africa to North America in the 16th–19th centuries and the Great Atlantic Migration of 37 million people from Europe to North America between and . For instance, he argues that migration to the rice fields and rubber plantations of Southeast Asia was as much a part of the industrial processes that were transforming the world as were the factories of Manchester and wheat fields of North America. Or do they remain isolated long after they settle? As indentured labour was gradually restricted after and abolished in , there were further waves of emigration from India: nearly 4 million Indians travelled to Malaysia, over 8 million to Ceylon today Sri Lanka, over 1. Within Africa itself, labour migration to plantations and mines in southern and central areas of the continent increased during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as did movement to agricultural areas and coastal cities in western and eastern Africa. For example, the duration of the Atlantic passage fell from 5 weeks to one week. Credit: Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland This period of migration took place when labour was needed in the post-war reconstruction efforts in Europe and to service the economic boom in Europe, North America and Australia. Post s migration Migrants riding outside a freight train in Mexico, Credit: Peter Haden Since the s, the variety of sending and destination countries has grown phenomenally. Besides, migration can be either temporarily or permanent. Finally, as far as Africa is concerned, this continent experienced transcontinental immigration, but at a much lower level than the main destinations mentioned above. War-related forced migrations and refugee flows continue to be very large, as are voluntary migrations from developing nations to industrialized ones[4]. While migrants from India mainly went to other parts of the British empire, only a small proportion of them could be considered truly indentured labour. These include countries that have historically been nations of emigration such as Italy, Spain and Portugal. Internal migration is a population shift occurring within national or territorial boundaries, often characterized by persons seeking labour opportunities in more advantageous areas. It is estimated that approximately 48 million people left Europe between and Massey et al. Of these, around eight million people migrated from the British Isles, including more than a million who left Ireland following the potato famine of . Whereas women traditionally migrated to join their partners or families or migrated together with their family in the earlier periods, an increasing number of women are migrating independently. Many of these labour migrants, including South Asian migrants to the UK, went on to settle in the receiving country. Between and , some 55 million migrants moved from Europe to America. Another change is that unlike earlier phases when migration was more likely to end in permanent settlement, temporary and circular migration is again becoming more important.