PEOPLE AND MIGRATION
POPULATION AND MIGRATION

The world population is growing rapidly. Environmental and economic factors affect population density, distribution and structure. Migration has positive and negative effects on a country or area.

World population distribution describes how people are spread out across the globe. The human population is not spread evenly. Few people live in locations that are sparsely populated and densely populated places have many. The distribution of people is often shown using a dot distribution map.

The Himalayas are a good example of an environment that is difficult or challenging for people to live and work in. This large mountain range in Asia has low temperatures, poor soil quality and the slopes are too steep for people to live on and cultivate - and so it is sparsely populated. Other locations, such as parts of the UK, are more densely populated because they have flatter land, good soils and a mild climate.

This distribution is:

- Uneven
- Subject to change
- Distribution can be shown as a dot distribution map. These show population concentrations well but can give the impression some areas have no people.
POPULATION DENSITY

Population density is the number of people living in an area. It is worked out by dividing the number of people in an area by the size of the area. So, the population density in an area is equal to the number of people per sq km, divided by the size of the area in sq km.

The population density for the UK is approximately 260 people per sq km but if we look at different areas within the UK, we see big differences in density. London has a population density of 4,932 per sq km. Urban spaces tend to be more crowded. Scotland has a density of 65 per sq km. Rural spaces have less people and they are usually more spread out.

The UK is about 100 times as densely populated as Australia which has approximately two people per sq km.

Population density and distribution is affected by many factors. People prefer to live in places where they can grow food, build homes and work. Some areas are very difficult places to live and so only very few people live there.

Factors that attract people and lead to dense populations include:

• flat or gently sloping land
• mild climate
• good soils
• lowland
• water
• good transport and communication links, eg ports
• places to work
• resources, eg coal, oil

Factors that may discourage people and lead to sparse populations include:

• steep slopes
• harsh climate - very hot or very cold
• dense forest
• dry conditions
• isolated areas with poor transport links
• few jobs
• lack of resources
### Reasons for distribution

The reasons for the uneven distribution of population can be divided into two categories: **Physical and Human**

#### Physical
- **Landscape** - Steep/Flat
- **Climate** - Hot/Dry/Cold
- **Vegetation** - Grassland/Forest
- **Water** - Available/Unavailable

#### Human
- **Resources** - Many/Few
- **Industries** - Production/Tourism
- **Political Policies** - Encourage/ Discourage Growth

These factors may have a positive or negative effect on the population.

---

**Densely Populated Areas**

- Hyper-crowded Hong Kong apartments

**Sparsely Populated Areas**

- Open spaces in Australia
POPULATION CHANGE …..AND POPULATION GROWTH

From the earliest times the world’s population has been increasing. There are now more people alive than ever before. But not only is it increasing, it is doing so at an alarming rate!

In the past 100 years the population has virtually doubled twice. This has been called the population explosion.

During the 1st century AD, the world population was about 300,000 people. The current population is over 7 billion, and most of the growth has taken place within the last 100 years. In fact, in the late 1990s, the world population was 5.9 billion, which increased to over 7 billion in 2011. During the 1960s the population was half what it is today, ie 3.3 billion.

Some people are concerned that this rapid growth of the world’s population will lead to a shortage of food and other resources. Already certain countries are struggling to meet the basic needs of their people. But population increase in many countries has began to slow down and this is likely to continue to happen in many countries in the twenty-first century.

What causes population to change?

- **births** (eg birth control and trends)
- **deaths** (eg war and disease)
- **migration** (eg people moving into or out of a country for various reasons)

The number of people born each year is the **birth rate** while the number of people who die is called the **death rate**. The difference between the birth rate and the death rate is called the rate of **natural change** in population.

The rate of natural change varies from country to country. In general, population growth is slower in **developed countries (MEDCs)** than it is in **underdeveloped countries (LEDCs)**
Migration is the movement of people from one permanent home to another. This movement changes the population of a place. International migration is the movement from one country to another.

People who leave their country are said to emigrate. People who move INTO another country are called immigrants. People who move OUT of a country are called emigrants. The movement of people into a country is known as immigration.

If we go back a few generations, nearly all of us will find that our families came from somewhere else. The things that usually make people want to move from one place to another are PUSH FACTORS and the things that attract them to another place are called PULL FACTORS.
Forms of Migration

The various kinds of migration depend on the flow and number of people often involved, the reasons for their movement, the time they spend in migration, and the nature of that migration. Here are a few forms:

**RURAL TO URBAN MIGRATION**

Sometimes people just move from one region to another within the same country. In many developing countries, large numbers of people have moved from the countryside to the cities in recent years.

**INTERCONTINENTAL MIGRATION**

This happens when the movement is across continents, such as from Korea (Asia) to Brazil (South America). If the movement is on the same continent, we say *intracontinental migration*. Sometimes, people migrate from one place to the other within the same region, continent or country. This is also known as regional migration or internal migration.

**FORCED MIGRATION**

Here, people are forced to migrate but due to some push factors such as war, hunger and other difficult conditions.

**SEASONAL MIGRATION**

Sometimes people move during specific seasons such as crop harvesting and climate to work and then go back when the season is over.

**RETURN MIGRATION**

This involves the voluntary return of migrants to their original place after they outlive the reasons for which they left. Often times, young people who move into the cities to work return home when they retire to spend the rest of their lives in the quiet of their towns and with old friends and family.
LONG AND SHORT-TERM MIGRATION

People may consider migrating for good if the condition in their home is one that is threatening. For example, people move for better health care if they have some disease that requires some level of attention that can only be received in another place. On the other hand, it may be temporal in nature. For example, a person may study in another place, but may decide to stay and work for many years before going back for good.

Advantages and disadvantages of migration

Migration can bring advantages and disadvantages to the country which is losing people and also to the host country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country losing people</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Money sent home by migrants</td>
<td>People of working age move out reducing the size of the country’s potential workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decreases pressure on jobs and resources</td>
<td>Gender imbalances are caused as it is typically men who seek to find employment elsewhere. Women and children are left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Migrants may return with new skills</td>
<td>'Brain drain' if many skilled workers leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country receiving people</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A richer and more diverse culture</td>
<td>Increasing cost of services such as health care and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helps to reduce any labour shortages</td>
<td>Overcrowding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Migrants are more prepared to take on low paid, low skilled jobs</td>
<td>Disagreements between different religions and cultures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, there are a number of obstacles that the migrant may need to overcome, including:

- unemployment in new country
- racism and cultural differences
- language barriers
- lack of opportunities
TYPES OF MIGRANTS

SHORT-TERM MIGRANT:

A. For medical treatment

B. For study purposes.

C. For sport. Athletes may be required to travel around the globe to compete in various tournaments. Sport may also require someone to take temporary residence in a country to fulfil a contract. Football in the UK is a sport that attracts foreign players. Pull factors are higher wages and the reputation of the country.

D. Retirement migration

E. Economic migrants; Economic migration is defined as a choice to move to improve the standard of living by gaining a better paid job. When Poland and seven other Eastern European countries joined the EU in 2004, the UK received many economic migrants. There were 500,000 workers from Eastern Europe in 2009. The pull factors included wages five times greater than they could get at home. Some come for seasonal jobs, such as vegetable and fruit picking. More qualified migrants may look for medical or education jobs.

F. Refugees.
Population Pyramids

Population pyramids are graphs that show population structures, ie how many males and females of different age groups are in the population in each place. Population structures change from place to place and over time. The population pyramids for the countries below are different shapes.

What does this mean?

- A wide base means there are lots of young people, and suggests a high birth rate.
- A narrow base means a smaller proportion of young people, suggesting a low birth rate.
- A wide middle, tall pyramid means an ageing population, suggesting that there is a long life expectancy.

Remember, though, that the shape of pyramids can also be affected by migration. The United Kingdom has quite a narrow base but a large middle and top. This means it has an ageing population.

An ageing population can bring benefits, such as more experience and knowledge. But it also increases the cost of healthcare and adds to the government spending, as they have to pay everyone a pension (retirement income).