

RGS-IBG KS3 Tutorial: Population and Migration

Slide 1: Introduction

Welcome to the RGS-IBG Key Stage Three tutorial on 'Population and migration'.

The aim of this tutorial is to investigate ideas around 'population' and 'migration' and how such themes might be incorporated into geographical teaching and learning at Key Stage Three. A range of information and teaching ideas is provided and the emphasis is on making learning relevant to issues of today in the UK whilst giving a wider global picture. Population and migration is a key issue or theme for 21st century geographers at Key Stage Three. Its study can develop understanding of the 'Key Concepts', develop the 'Key Processes', cover some of the 'Range and Content', and support the 'Curriculum Opportunities' of the Geography Programme of Study. Studying about population and migration enables students to address a whole range of political, socio-economic and environmental issues. Despite its complexity, it is a theme that can be incorporated into geographical studies of all of scales from personal, local, regional, national, international, continental and global. Seemingly never out of the newspapers, questions about population and migration are becoming increasingly central to national and geo-political conflicts and debates about identity, the nation-state, environmental change and sustainable development.

Slide 2: Overview

The world's population has grown at such a fast rate in the last 100 years that the effects are seen everywhere: the creative endeavours of the world's people, the growing global economy, dynamic societies, the growth of new technologies, migration of people and greater global social and economic interdependence – alongside – pollution, climate change, overfishing, deforestation and overcrowded cities.

There are now 6.5 billion people on the earth. Geographers make links between population and other fields of within the discipline as well as with economics, sociology, history, culture, identity and ethics.

The study of migration is highly relevant to debates about Britain's contemporary multicultural society, where many pupils will have a range of personal experiences and links; some through family histories, travel or other connections. Patterns of migration have changed and continue to change from decade to decade, and students need to be aware of the global picture when they are developing their own informed opinions about migration. Teaching about population and migration can be rewarding and contribute to

a wider curriculum aims such as community cohesion as it often challenged pupils' perception, values and attitudes.

In terms of engaging pupils, births, deaths and migration are all part of the human condition and experience: students are fascinated by the different attitudes that, for example, influence birth rate and the spatial differences in causes of deaths. Births, deaths and migration affect us all.

Using an online World Population Clock is a good way of illustrating dynamic population change on the global scale. There are some suggestions included on the web page.

Slide 3: Some demographic concepts

There are a number of basic demographic concepts which students need to understand so that they can use them in research, informed argument and making comparisons.

Crude Birth Rate. This is the number of births per 1000 people in one year. It is called a 'crude' measure because it is taken for all people, not just women of child-bearing age.

Crude Death Rate. This is the number of deaths per 1000 people in one year. It is again a 'crude' measure because it is taken for all people, not just a certain age group.

Migration: In-migration or 'immigration' is the movement of people into a country. Out-migration or 'emigration' is the movement out of a country. Each individual will of course be an emigrant and an immigrant at the same time. However, the statistics are usually given separately for 'immigration' and 'emigration'.

Natural increase. This is the sum of total births minus total deaths. This is the increase or decrease of population when only births and deaths are used.

Population change: This figure includes natural increase (births and deaths) and the change due to migration (in-migrants and out-migrants). It may be shown as an absolute figure for a year, or as a percentage of the total population.

Slide 4: Place

One human characteristic of a place is the density of its population. Developing 'geographical imaginations' of places such as Manhattan, New York, central London, or Hong Kong; and the Sahara Desert, Siberia and the Amazon Basin is a good way of exploring the influence population has on place and 'sense of place'. In this two extremes are used to illustrate the point.

At the local scale it is possible to do simple fieldwork to assess the difference in population density from one street in a city to another, or between a town and the countryside, or between a high rise block and a row of terrace houses. This kind of fieldwork is enhanced by incorporating locally available data from the UK Census. You will find a link to the UK Census data on the webpage.

On the global scale, a map of world population distribution is a basic resource for teaching about population and migration. It can be displayed in the classroom, and a copy put in every student's work book. The contrasts between high and low population density should be noted and discussed. The four main concentrations of population should be highlighted: - East Asia, South Asia, Western Europe, and North East North America. Other significant concentrations of population are visible in South East Asia, West Africa, the Nile Valley, Southern Brazil and parts of the West Coast of USA.

As well as the map of world population densities, students can look at proportional cartograms such as are available on the interactive Worldmapper website. A link to Worldmapper can be found on the webpage.

Another key resource is a graph of the growth of world population. Although it doesn't differentiate between different places, it is key in understanding the big picture. Students should recognise how long it took the planet to reach 1 billion (until 1804) 2 billion (123 more years) 3 billion (33 more years) 4 billion (only 14 more years) 5 billion (just 13 more years) 6 billion (a mere 12 more years). Big geographical themes such as how globalisation, migration, resources, and sustainable development can affect place should be set in this context.

Migration is often linked to 'place identity'. What places are characterised by their migrant communities both established and new? What moving stories explain how places change? Understanding migrations is important when considering what a place is like, how it became that like that and how it might change.

Slide 5: Space

Two ideas about population that relate to the Key Concept of space are networks and flows of migration and population distribution.

In terms of spatial flows of people, the history and geography of the earth is inextricably tied to migrations. It is important to discuss with students the early migration of humans from Africa outwards and from the early centres of civilization, such as the Middle East and China. Migrations through history are a large study in themselves. Students should have some knowledge of these migrations such as the Transatlantic slave trade from Africa to North America and the Caribbean, the European colonisation of North America, Australia, Africa, S.E. Asia and South America. The major Diasporas, such as the flow of Chinese, Jewish and south Asian communities across the world are equally important. There are plenty of opportunities for cross-curricular or inter-disciplinary work here, with geography at the core.

The usual way to describe and explore spatial flows of people is through the use of the concept of push and pull factors. *Push factors* (such as lack of jobs, overpopulation, degradation of land and resources, famine, war and political conflict) are the factors which tend to push a person into moving. *Pull factors* (such as the prospect of a better job, family links, and the lure of the big city or a better quality of life) are those factors which pull a person towards a particular place. Students can list the push and pull factors which may cause them to migrate in the future.

A map of world population distribution will show the unequal spatial pattern of population. Explaining this map demonstrates well the reasons for spatial disparity, and links with the key concept of Physical and Human Processes. Climate, soil, topography are all clearly major factors in human population distribution. The least populated areas are the hottest, driest and coldest. Temperate areas of fertile plains are mostly well populated. People can only live in large numbers where they can produce food or earn enough money to import food. Therefore, areas of high economic output (farms, factories, ports, cities) are areas of population. Societies, nations, cultures have all had key areas where they have lived and flourished. Certain societies have mastered the seas or the deserts, while others have lived successfully in rain forest or treeless plains.

Some places are more highly populated than others because of historical and political factors. There may be no other particular reasons for the difference in population distribution other than an historical decision to locate a settlement at A instead of B, but the implications over time may be important. For example the capital cities of Australian states are located because of historical decisions to locate the first small settlements there. The Myanmar (Burma) military government have abandoned the old coastal capital city of Rangoon in favour of a new settlement, located about 500km inland.

Spatial patterns and some of the reasons for them can be shown in *Google Earth*. With this tool they can zoom in on densely and sparsely populated areas, looking for the factors causing the differences. The spatial patterns of cities, farming regions, industrial zones, ports, deserts, coasts and river valleys can be seen vividly in *Google Earth*.

Slide 6: Scale

Scale is a useful concept in a study of population and migration. Differences in population density, structure, or diversity can be studied at the local scale, regional scale, national scale and global scale. How does the distribution of migrant populations compare across London? England? UK? Europe? How are these scales linked? Perhaps international scale migration has influenced your local area? Maybe something in your locality is a strong 'pull factor' on a global scale?

What are the local, regional, national and global migrations that are pertinent to your students?

Push and pull factors can operate on any scale. It is often the combination of particular groups of 'push and pull' factors operating at a particular time that causes a large migration flow between two places.

Slide 7: Interdependence

Migration is an excellent way of demonstrating the Key Concept of interdependence. There is new research that shows that international migration has a 'triple bottom line benefit' – it benefits:

- a) the migrants themselves
- b) the receiving country
- c) the country of previous residence.

This is now being recognized by the United Nations, and reports from the previous Secretary General (Kofi Annan) have emphasized this.

Previously, one attitude to international migration was that it was a 'brain drain' of talent from the original country to the receiving country. Recently there have been more studies on this topic by geographers of remittances (the money flowing back to the original country). On a global scale, this is calculated as being between \$US130 and \$US300 billion per year, which is comparable to all the money given officially by national governments as overseas aid. In addition, the networks that are set up between individuals and families who have migrated and the people in their country of origin have a major influence.

Studies are now about to be made of the '*diaspora*' of migrants from China, India and the Philippines living abroad. These are the 3 nations of Asia with the largest diaspora (the group of migrants from that country living abroad.) There are 30-40 million Chinese living abroad, 20 million Indians, 4 million Pakistanis, and 7.5 million Filipinos.

These positive aspects of migration are important. However, it is also important to explore negative aspects of migration. Such aspects may include issues around the challenge of social integration and 'community cohesion'; the attitudes of 'host' communities towards new arrivals or how some migrants may be exploited.

It is worth emphasizing to students the influence of time on migrant assimilation – it is easy to see the differences in the children and grandchildren of migrants from earlier migration flows.

The concept of interdependence in change can be demonstrated by a study of how the enlargement of the European Union causes large-scale migration. Poland, the largest of the 'new nations, is home to 38 million people, nearly one million of whom are thought to have left since May 2004, when EU enlargement took place.

For young Polish people, this has brought an opportunity to find better-paid work or to pursue artistic ambitions elsewhere. Unemployment is officially at 15% and the average annual wage is only around £3,000. In comparison, employment in the UK can pay five times more. It is therefore clear to see how a political decisions and economic push and pull factors have played a part in the mass migration.

Sometimes social motives have been important too, as young men and women have followed their partners overseas. And cultural push and pull factors operate too. Young Poles who are keen to play in rock bands head to the UK to join its music scene, leaving behind an environment that many feel was "behind the times" musically.

Slide 8: Environmental Interaction and sustainable development

'Ecological footprints' are a useful idea for exploring the key concept of environmental interaction and sustainable development. Students may enjoy calculating their own 'ecological footprint' and comparing it with those of others, as well of those of nations. They can do this through interactive online calculators, examples of which are given on the webpage.

Sustainable development can be related to rapid increases in world population and the idea of 'carrying capacity' - the optimum number of people that can be sustained by an environment and its resources. When sections of the world population increase the size of their 'ecological footprint' - a result of economic development and growing affluence - the challenge of achieving

future sustainable development becomes stark. However, industrialised nations with declining and ageing populations often have the largest 'ecological footprints' per person. A reduction in consumption in countries like the USA, Japan, and UK is paramount, as is controlling consumption by newly industrialised countries such as China and India.

Historically, some nations have tackled this issue by seeking to reduce population growth. China is one example, which through its population policy has dramatically lowered its *rate* of population increase.

Some nations that have had significant falls in population increase because of social and economic factors which have led to lower birth rates. These include the UK, Germany and Italy. Singapore has become so concerned about this fall in birth rate that it has a 'pro-natalist policy' to increase the number of births. Families are encouraged by advertising and financial benefits to have more than 2 children.

Slide 9: Physical and Human Processes

Physical processes that cause natural disasters, diseases and land degradation can have a negative effect on a population size in certain locations, while other phenomena such as the growth of deltas and floodplains, and changes in rainfall, can have a multiplier effect on population size.

Human processes such as conflict and resource depletion negatively effect populations. Conversely, human activities such as irrigation, resource exploration and exploitation, land improvement and urbanisation can increase population in specific locations. There are many such examples with can be treated as case studies, such as:

- a) The effect of a disease on death rates through studying the fall and rise of malaria;
- b) the effects of high magnitude disasters on the population of an area through deaths and in- and out-migration in the short and long term, for example, of the 2004 tsunami in Asia and;
- c) the dramatic growth of Chinese cities because of migration from rural areas over the last decade.

Slide 10: Cultural Understanding and Diversity

Cultural understanding, diversity and identity are central concepts in studying migration. Migration over centuries has led to the culturally diverse societies we see around the world today. The second half of the twentieth century saw growing number of refugees on the move. The UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) estimates that there are about 22 million refugees,

internally displaced persons and asylum seekers in the world. The UNHCR website gives up to date facts and figures on refugee movements, aid, responses and prospects.

More recently, migration of short-term and long-term workers into and within the European Union has provided skilled and unskilled employees for the growing economies of countries such as the UK. This has raised political questions about the nature and levels of mass-migrations. Indeed, such questions may also be raised by pupils who may have their own individual experiences, views and perspectives on migration. And here, Geography has a role in helping young people understand the causes and consequences of migration both within their own community and wider society.