

Assessing the Human Migration Challenge

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As both predator and prey, humans have always been designed to move in response to both negative conditions and positive opportunities. Such movement is essential to assure human biological and social survival. Examining migration provides one window revealing sociological complexity – especially migration at the international scale.

Variables influencing human individual and group movement [in-migration and out-migration] are multiple: biological [age, sex, disease], political, economic, ecological [resources, climate], racial, and social [religious, ethnic, caste/class – privileged class vs. underclass/suppressed, etc.], etc.

The variables influencing the response to both in-migration and out-migration at every social scale from the individual to the family to the regional group to the nation to the international level are the same array and equally complex. Response is further complicated by whether those moving in fall into the legal/authorized or illegal/unauthorized category.

Each migratory situation is defined by and must be evaluated in terms of the relevancy of each of these variables together with consideration of the perspective of those moving out, of those experiencing the loss/benefit of out-migration, and of those receiving and being impacted positively and/or negatively by those moving in.

Over-population, climate change [and its effect on available resources] and conflict are the main modern international sources of migration [whether immigrants, emigrants, or refugees, and whether legal or illegal]. In the future, human migration is very likely to become a MUCH, MUCH greater challenge.

By definition, developed regions/nations with higher overall economic standards of living, political freedom, greater educational options, advanced medical capability, religious tolerance, and judicial equality are seen as offering opportunities to individuals and groups in less developed regions/nations where some or all of these conditions may not apply. In-migration pressure is on developed regions/nations while out-migration pressure is on developing regions/nations. Over population is a key out-migration driver in developing areas.

Policy regarding migration is inherently NOT simple!! No simple Answers!!

Policy regarding the response to migration is inherently NOT simple!!

Beware of Unrealistic Idealism! Beware of Crass, Self-Centered Pragmatism!