

A SEA OF MIGRANTS

Migrants

Migrants are people who leave their country in order to improve their living conditions. They almost always live in poverty and have specific needs, but decide to move freely, without external constraints. When migrants arrive in a country they are called immigrants, when they leave a country they are known as emigrants.

Fatal attraction

There has always been migration from poor countries to richer ones. Emigrants leave their native country and travel to a foreign one in order to improve their economic condition. They hope to find a job or start a profitable economic activity. In recent decades migration has become a mass phenomenon involving millions of people moving continually from poor countries to rich ones. Thanks to the mass media the inhabitants of poorer countries can see how people live in richer ones and can compare their own living conditions with conditions in the west. Young people especially are attracted by the rich industrialized countries and try to reach the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. Young Africans are willing to risk their lives to reach Europe.

Fleeing war

Unlike economic migrants, refugees have to leave their home as they are often in serious danger of being killed. Wars, political persecution and natural disasters (drought, floods, desertification etc.) make their native countries uninhabitable or dangerous and so they are forced to flee. In recent years the number of wars has increased leading to the dramatic growth in the number of refugees who arrive en masse in Europe. They come mostly from the Middle East, the Far East and Central Africa.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are two routes to Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The countries where immigrants land are Greece (the Balkan route) and Italy (the Central Mediterranean route).

The EU has funded Turkey so that it can organize camps in order to accommodate refugees and prevent them from boarding boats for Greece. This was the EU's strategy to limit the flow of refugees through the Balkan route.

The most dangerous route is that of the Central Mediterranean. It is estimated that in the last seven months of 2017 over 1500 people have died.

In 2016 a million Syrian refugees sought asylum in Germany, which was the most welcoming country for migrants.

Immigration has become one of the main problems of Europe. EU countries continually fail to reach an agreement on how to deal with the problem.

In the UK the issue of immigration also dominated the referendum debate on whether to vote for Brexit.

ACTIVITIES

Circle the correct answer.

What does the passage mainly discuss?

- a. The issue of migration
- b. The jobs that migrants do
- c. Where migrants go
- d. The problem of migration in the underdeveloped nations of the world

The word constraints in line 6 means:

- a. controls
- b. limits
- c. compulsions
- d. needs

According to the passage why do emigrants leave their home country?

- a. To better their economic conditions
- b. To travel around the world
- c. To discover another country
- d. To move freely from one place to another

The author speaks about the mass phenomenon of migration in line 12 in order to point out:

- a. The high number of people migrating
- b. The high number of poor people
- c. The high number of poor countries
- d. The high number of people who die during migration.

How do people of poor countries know about the living conditions of people in rich countries?

- a. Through newspapers
- b. By means of the mass media
- c. Through the internet
- d. Through their mobile phones

Who is particularly influenced by industrialized countries?

- a. Adults
- b. Young people
- c. Teens
- d. Children

Which of the following are the major causes of migration?

- a. The need for work
- b. The lack of money
- c. The lack of food and work
- d. The effects of wars, natural disasters and poverty

What nationality are the majority of migrants?

- a. American
- b. Eastern European
- c. African
- d. African and Asian

Who is providing money to Turkey for helping immigrants?

- a. The USA
- b. The UN
- c. The EU
- d. The UK 10.

Where did refugees receive a warm welcome in 2016?

- a. In Europe
- b. In Germany
- c. In Australia
- d. In Italy