

Essay and Discussion Questions

Migration Higher Education Questions

Help students understand how migration influences the world's economies, cultures, and politics through these essay and discussion questions.

Question 1

What are the most critical push and pull factors that shape migration flows? To what degree can national governments, international organizations, NGOs, or other actors most effectively address the conditions that contribute to migration? What are the challenges and limitations to addressing such issues? Discuss specific examples.

- What are the major push and pull factors that drive migration?
- What patterns exist concerning the countries migrants leave and which countries they go to?
- What are remittances, and what are their economic impacts on home countries?

Question 2

Comment on the effectiveness of the processes involved in the determination of refugee status. To what degree are these processes effective? Does the current state of global migration require improvements on these processes? If so, what improvements should be made and by whom? Consider the role of individual governments, NGOs, and global organizations such as the United Nations.

- What are the processes involved in the determination of refugee status? Who makes these?
- What government and non-state actors are involved in designating someone an economic migrant or refugee?
- Who decides on asylum claims and how are these claims decided on?
- What is the difference between an economic migrant and a refugee? In what ways is the distinction blurry?

Question 3

Evaluate the 2016 deal between the European Union and Turkey on accommodating migrants as an example. Whom does it benefit? To what extent is it effective? What is the broader relevance of the impact of international negotiations on the relocation of migrants?

- How does sovereignty complicate aiding refugees?

Question 4

As the top destination for international immigrants, how should the U.S. most effectively reform its immigration policy? How should it consider balancing the needs of its large population of undocumented immigrants, as well as those seeking to migrate to the United States, amid constantly changing economic and political landscapes?

- What are the main goals of modern U.S. immigration policy? How has the U.S. carried out these goals in recent years and what has been the impact?
- What are some of the challenges and drawbacks to current U.S. immigration policy?
- How does U.S. immigration policy compare to that of other high-income nations that host large migrant populations such as France, the United Kingdom, or Germany?

Question 5

Why is it more challenging for governments and international nongovernmental organizations to support IDPs than to support refugees? What improvements should be made and by whom?

- What is the difference between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees? What hardships are particular to IDPs?
- How does the principle of sovereignty prevent intervention from governments and institutions abroad in supporting IDPs?