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# AGTA SCHOLARSHIP GEOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

## Migration: a geographical perspective

Mel Wall




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### 1. Migration is geographical

- Migration is a spatial process.
- Individuals, families and groups are linked through informal and formal networks across places.
- Examine the impacts on the micro and macro scales.
- Impacts countries of origin, places traveled through, and the destination countries.

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- **Geographers examine:**
  - factors that influence migrant decision making (see resources);
  - spatial trends of migration and how they might be explained;
  - impact of migration upon migrants;
  - impacts on the origin and destination countries that migrants move between;
  - and various economic, cultural, social, and political implications of such movements.

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- Differentiate between:
  - *migration*, which has a sense of permanency and involves moves to 'distant' places,
  - versus '*residential mobility*' usually assumed to involve shorter-distance moves (e.g. holidays or changing houses).
  - UN defines international migrants as having resided in a different country for at least one year.

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## 2. Migration trends

- Mobility has become such a widespread practice that some talk of the 'age of migration'.
- Media frenzy yet only approx. 3% of the global population is an international migrant.
- E.g. Daily Mail 2015 'Swarm on our streets'.

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- **Why are the numbers so small?:**
  - Inability of many of the world's poorest to move elsewhere;
  - Inertia: most people 'content' with their circumstances;
  - Role of governments who influence migration across their borders (either entry or exit).
    - E.g. North Korea versus Philippines.
    - E.g. OECD nations and their border controls.

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- *Impression* that migration has reached unprecedented levels,
  - true of some origin–destination flows (e.g. Syrian crisis),
  - yet major movements of people have occurred for centuries.

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- E.g. Major **international** migration flows:
  - Est. 12 million African slaves taken to the 'New World' in C18th & C19th.
  - Est. 12 million economic migrants processed through Ellis Island, New York 1850s-1930s.
  - Est. 250,000 European economic migrants to NZ between 1840-1870. Subsequent assisted migration policies.
  - Australia and the 1 million 'Ten Pound Poms'.
    - See *Immigration Nation* documentary

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- E.g. Major **internal** migration flows:


Industrialisation lead to massive rural to urban migration.

  - Urban overcrowding.
  - Suburbanisation.
  - Counterurbanisation (net decline in some cities).
  - Gentrification of inner city – net in-migration.

N.B. Context important. Processes are not universal.

  - In developing countries, voluntary internal migration flow dominated by movement to primate cities. E.g. Lagos, Nigeria – UN estimates population to double in size by 2050.

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**Figure 1:** The number of Syrians in neighbouring countries and in Europe

Country	Number of Syrians
Lebanon	1,117,091
Turkey	789,678
Jordan	602,182
Iraq	225,475
Egypt	138,101
Europe	123,600

- Popular impression in many richer countries is that they bear the burden of refugee flows.
- However majority of refugees originate in and remain in the poorest parts of the world.
- Majority of refugee migration within Africa and the Middle East - internally displaced persons or between neighboring countries (Burroughs 2014).

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### 3. Impact of migration upon migrants

- Most international migrations were assumed to be permanent yet far more people move temporarily.
- Focus on 'mobility'.
- Today, emphasis on the role of 'circulation' - large numbers of migrants leading dual lives divided between countries.
- E.g. 1.5 generation in New Zealand
- <http://www.listener.co.nz/uncategorized/the-1-5-generation/>

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- For many, migration associated with positive new opportunities and experiences.
- For others, though, migration may be a negative experience, perhaps forced upon them, by circumstances outside their control.
  - Deportations, forced & voluntary repatriation.
  - <http://time.com/4278325/iraq-refugees-return/>
  - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35993767>
- Migration not just about the destination. Also about the journey. Sometimes perilous.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54092#.V1PO2kYXfAE>

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- Moving is a potentially stressful event, involving considerable planning and expense. Disrupts existing social networks.
- Longer-distance moves are more likely to lead to greater disruption for the migrants.
  - particularly when moving to a country which uses a different language,
  - or to a place where there are few social contacts or support networks.
    - Assistance E.g. Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre.

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- Negative consequences of migration are increased when migration forced or impelled.
- ‘Human trafficking’ most extreme example. UNICEF - 1 million+ children trafficked yearly in modern slavery.
- Why? Can involve forced prostitution, illicit international adoption or armed forces recruitment.
- Trafficking different to ‘smuggling’. Latter involves migrants ‘voluntarily’ embarking on a move organised by smugglers.
- <http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/trafficking-of-children.html>

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**4. Impact of migration upon countries of origin E.g.**

- **Remittances** – World Bank official figures \$US 431.6 billion in 2015.
- **Skilled migrants** – ‘brain drain’
  - E.g. Guyana, 2010 approx. 90% of highly skilled lived in OECD nations.
- Often only young & elderly left in communities.
- *Demographic deficit* – aging and birth rates below replacement levels.

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**5. Impact of migration upon countries of passage**  
E.g. refugee crisis impact on Turkey, Macedonia, Lebanon, Libya, Greece, Spain

**7. Humanise the story. Important to look beyond the macro-processes E.g.**  
<http://thewireless.co.nz/articles/the-pencilsword-hussam-and-the-death-way>

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**6. Impact upon destination countries. E.g.**

- Sometimes seen as positive or as threatening for destination societies (criminalised, racially stereotyped, constructed as undeserving).
- Irony – citizens often descendants of migrants.
- Segregation versus clustering?
- Benefit to society?
  - E.g. entrepreneurialism
  - E.g. Brexit - core issue being migration
- Examine changes in context.
- Important not to universalise.

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**Useful websites**

- <http://www.forcedmigration.org> Forced Migration Online.
- <http://www.migrationwatchuk.org> Migration Watch.
- <http://www.refworld.org/> UNHCR.
- <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/> UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- <http://www.iom.int/> IOM, International Organization for Migration.
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues> World Bank
- <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/World-Migration-in-Figures.pdf> OECD

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**New Zealand refugee websites**

- <https://www.redcross.org.nz/what-we-do/in-new-zealand/refugee-programmes/> Red Cross NZ
- [www.refugeeservices.org.nz](http://www.refugeeservices.org.nz) - Refugee Services
- <http://www.rc.org.nz> - Refugee Council of New Zealand
- <http://thewireless.co.nz/articles/the-pencilword-hussam-and-the-death-way>
- <http://www.doingourbit.co.nz/> Double the quota.

**News organisations on refugees and migration:**

- <http://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/refugees.html> Al Jazeera.
- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/refugees> The Guardian.
- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/migration> The Guardian.

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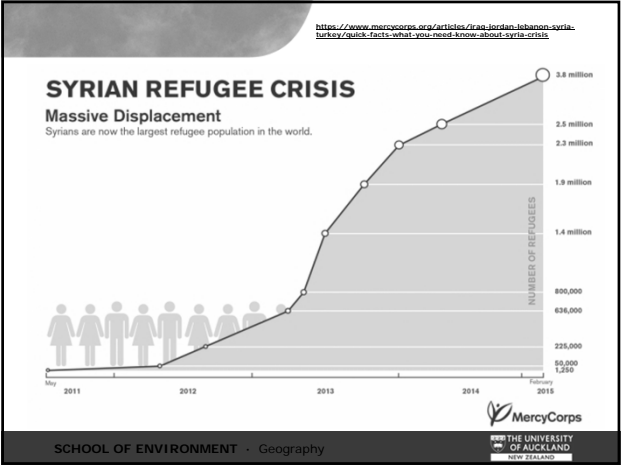
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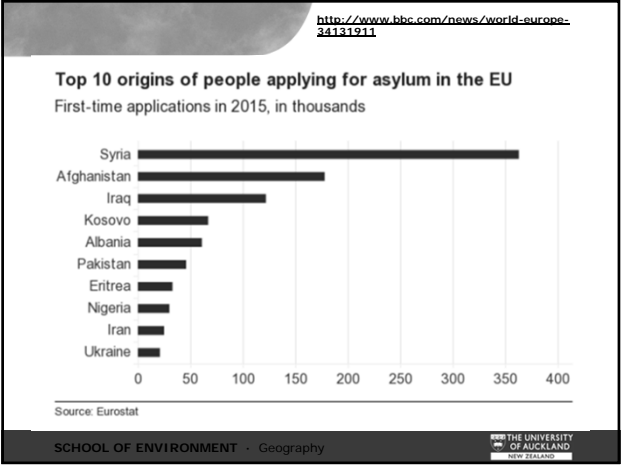
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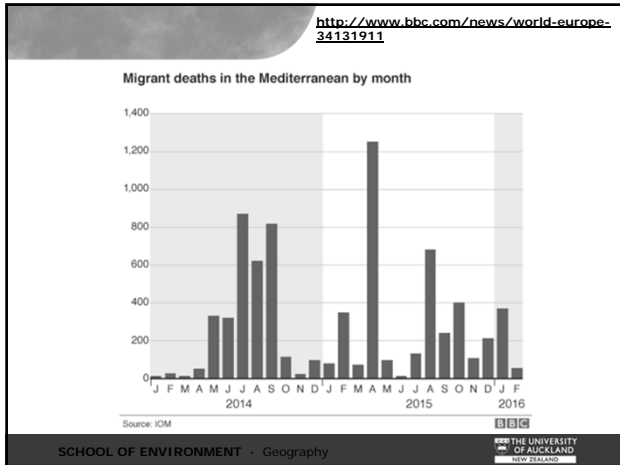
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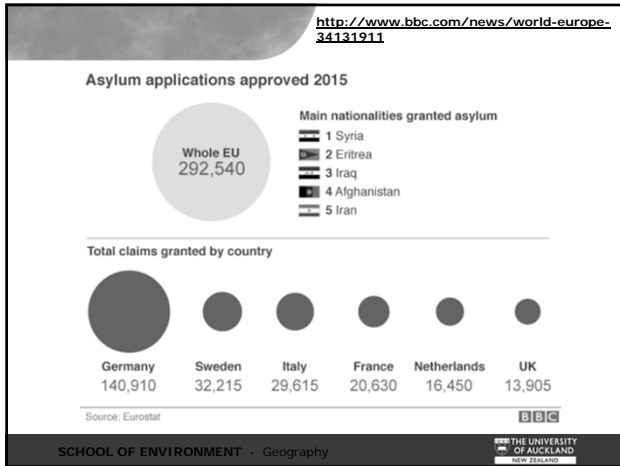
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### Geography undergraduate advice.

1) Contact Undergraduate Geography adviser:

- **Mel Wall**
- Ph. (09) 9237949
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2) Check out our website [www.env.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.env.auckland.ac.nz)

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