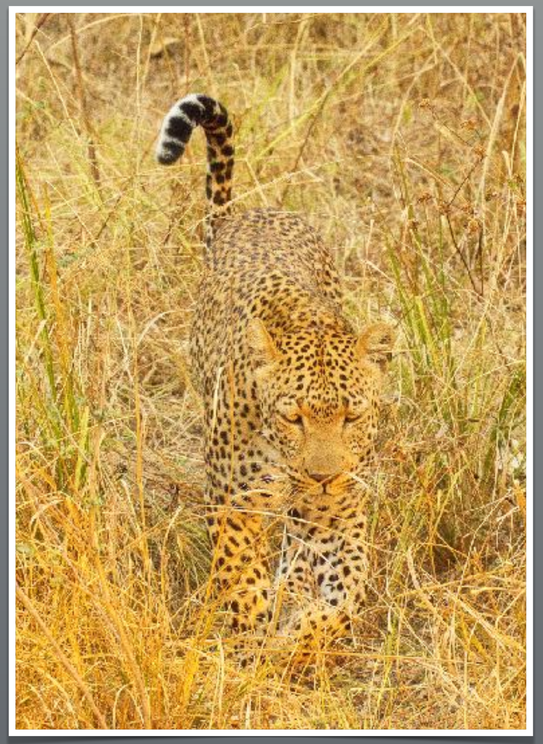
Migration is much more than small boat crossings





Week 3: Impact of migration

Question from last week

What proportion of world population is living in a different country to the one in which they were born?

35% or 3.5%

Correct answer is 3.5% (confirmed by two chatbots)

Ooops… I was only out by 2.6 billion!

Percentage for UK (17%) is correct

So, in 2024 1 in 6 people living in the UK were born elsewhere

(Similar to Germany, Spain, Norway & Netherlands)

(France is lower 13.8%)

Source: UN DESA

Migration in the news

Wke 15 October 2026

Yemen is both a place people are fleeing and a transit corridor

217,000 people internally displaced 2026 at end-September 2026

134,100 immigrants—mainly from the Horn of Africa, heading towards Gulf labour markets

(Source: IOM)

UK reduction in small boat arrivals

small-boat arrivals at 20,935 between January - October,

43 percent below the equivalent period in 2025

deaths and disappearances had risen to at least 2,292

Fewer larger boats making more dangerous crossings (source:BBC)

Recap of Wk 2 Patterns of Migration

We’re a restless species, at every scale from local to global.

Migrations are drivern by a combination of push & pull factors

The scale of forced and coerced migrations are historically important

Migrant flows lumpy & often determined by geopolitical events

Decolonisation triggered some massive, sudden migrations

Outcomes depended not just on who moved, but on how host state’s response

Historical prespective is relevant to contemporary debate on migration

Wk 3 The Impact of Migrations

	Historic	Contemporary (Post WWII)
Global		✓
Regional/ international		✓
National		✓
Local		✓

Refugee hosting

Migrant journeys

Impact on the source country

Impact on the host country

Personal experiences

Push & Pull Drivers of migration

Push	Pull
Poverty & lack of opportunity	Employment opportunities
Conflict and persecution	Education and skills
Environmental stress	Colonial or family networks
Concern about medium term future	Aspiration of a better life

Global sources of refugees 2025

41.6 million refugees worldwide at the end of 2025

Origin	Refugees	% popn	Main drivers of migration
Venezuela	6.5 million	23%	Political and economic crisis, insecurity, shortages, and human-rights concerns
Ukraine	5.2 million	14%	Russia’s invasion and continuing war
Syria	4.9 million	20%	Civil war, insecurity, economic collapse, and continuing political instability
Afghanistan	3.7 million	9%	Conflict legacy, repression, poverty, and humanitarian crisis
Sudan	Approx 3–4 million*	7–8%	Civil war since April 2023, mass violence, and humanitarian collapse
South Sudan	Approx 2–2.5 million*	18–22%	Conflict, local violence, food insecurity, and climate shocks

Only includes international refugees, not Internally Displaced Persons

Source: UNHCR 2025

Common western migration routes

Route	Broad origin regions	Main transit / departure areas	Main destination
Central Mediterranean	Sub-Saharan Africa, Sahel, Horn of Africa, South Asia and Middle East	Primarily Libya; smaller departures from Tunisia and Algeria	Italy and Malta
Eastern Mediterranean	Middle East, South-West Asia, Afghanistan, parts of Africa	Türkiye, with crossings to Greece and Cyprus; some onward movement through the Balkans	Greece, Cyprus and other European states
Western Mediterranean	Morocco, Algeria, Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and other West African states	Morocco and Algeria	Mainland Spain, including the Balearic Islands and Spanish enclaves
West Africa Atlantic	West Africa and Sahel	Mauritania, Senegal, Morocco and other West African coastal departure points	Canary Islands, Spain
Eastern Route	Ethiopia and other Horn of Africa countries	Djibouti or Somalia; Gulf of Aden crossing; Yemen	Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states
Southern Route	Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea and other Horn of Africa countries	Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Nigeria	South Africa

Top five refugee hosting countries in 2024

#	Country	Region	Refugees Hosted	Per Million Population	% of Host Population	Main Country of Origin	GDP per Capita (USD)
1	Iran	Middle East	3,760,000	43,800	4.38%	Afghanistan	$3,400
2	USA	Americas	3,620,000	10,700	1.07%	El Salvador / Cuba	$63,000
3	Turkey	Middle East	3,340,000	38,900	3.89%	Syria	$10,500
4	Germany	Europe	3,040,000	36,100	3.61%	Syria / Ukraine	$48,700
5	Colombia	Americas	2,910,000	56,400	5.64%	Venezuela	$6,100

Source: UNHCR & World Bank

Proximity is more important than wealth

Refugee hosting case study: Iran

Iran hosts 770,000 Afghan refugees in 2026

Iran also deported 1.9million undocumented Afghans in 2025

Many have lived in the country for decades

Similar situation to undocumented residents in the US

Migration paradox, simultaneous hosting & expelling

Case study: Migration to Italy from Libya 2025

Approx 90,000 attempted crossing from Libya to Italy

22,500 were intercepted and forcibly returned to Libya

1,330 dead or missing

66,296 disembarked in Italy

126,635 asylum applications lodged from all routes

52% arrived via Libya.

Other routes eg Tunisia & Morrocco + people already in Italy

Source: UNHCR reports

Asylum seekers in EU & UK in 2024

669,400 applicants lodged asylum claims in EU

Spain 141,000, Italy 126,600, France 116,400

Main countries of origin:Venezuela, Afghanistan, Syria, Bangladesh and Colombia

108,138 lodged claims in UK

Main countries of origin: Pakistan (10%) Afghanistan (8%) Iran (8%)

Sharp rise in Pakistani applicants (+79%)

Deteriorating domestic political & economic situation

Most entered legally (visitor, work or study visas)

Sources: Europa & gov.uk

Impact on source countries



Saying goodbye

Brain drain

Remittances



“To the Madeiran emigrant, present in all latitudes.”

“Brain drain” from source countries

Main source countries for EU “highly qualified” legal migration (Blue card)

India (16,268 Blue cards), Russia (6,657), Türkiye (5,645), China (4,550)

Main source countries for UK - India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Philippines

India sources doctors, IT, engineering, finance and other professional work

Other countries mainly care-work, nursing & social care

Principal recent changes were Brexit (end of free movement)

Lead to EU nationals leaving, to be replaced by non-EU nationals

Biggest shift was expansion of Health & Care visas

Global remittances 2024

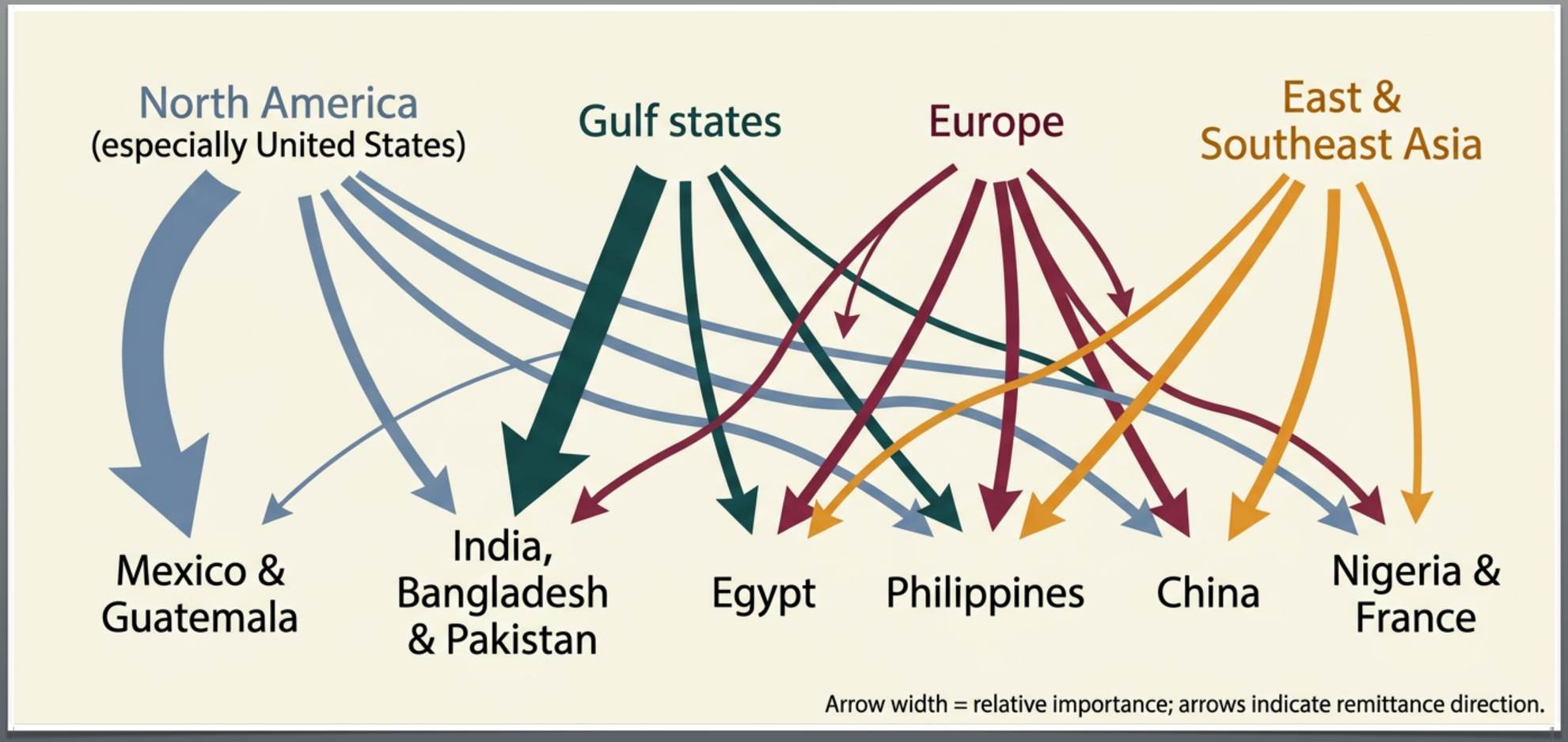
Rank	Recipient country	Remittances US$ Bns	Remittances as % of GDP
1	India	137.7 billion	3.5%
2	Mexico	67.6 billion	3.7%
3	Philippines	40.3 billion	8.7%
4	France	36.9 billion	1.2%
5	Bangladesh	35.6 billion	6.3%
6	Pakistan	34.9 billion	9.4%
7	China	31.4 billion	0.2%
8	Guatemala	21.6 billion	19.1%
9	Nigeria	21.3 billion	11.3%
10	Egypt	19.5 billion	4.9%

Source: World Bank

GDP value of remittances is relative the size of the country

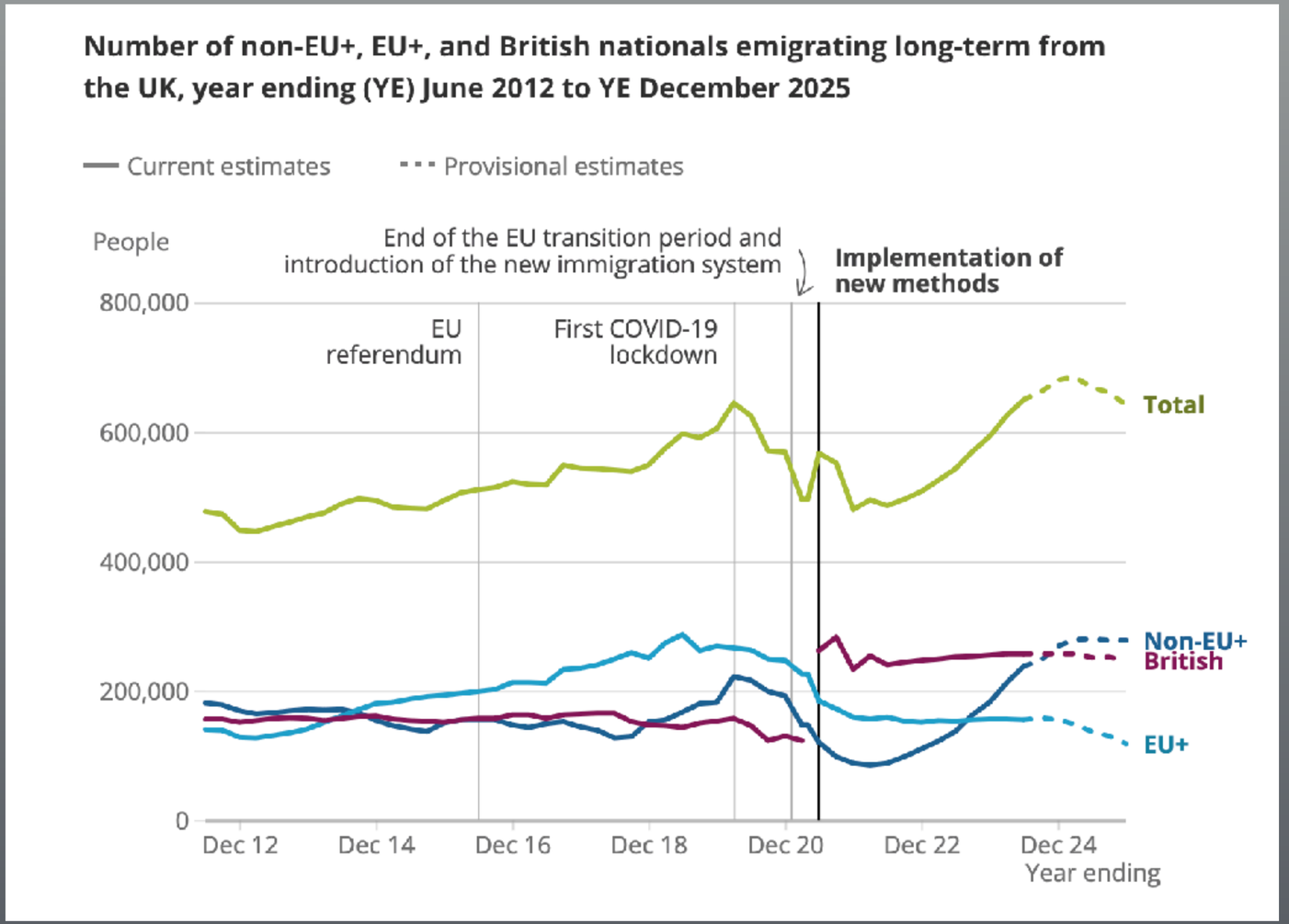
Individual families who are main beneficiaries

Sending Regions & Receiving countries



Source: World Bank

Emigration from UK 2012 - 2025



“Brain drain” leaving UK

UK is a relatively low emigration country (comparable to other OECD countries)

Data on emigration, skills & destinations patchy; main host countries:

- Spain (21%)
- US (13%)
- Australia (12%)
- Canada (9%)

Claims that “super-rich” are emigrating much exaggerated



UPDATE

The ‘Millionaire Exodus’ the UK Media Told You About Never Actually Happened

The equivalent of 30 stories a day were published about an exodus of wealthy people that a new study finds was “non existent”

Josiah Mortimer

Migrant experience on arrival

Where did you migrate from and to?

Why did you choose to migrate? (push and pull factors)

On arrival, what was your experience?

- First impressions
- Finding accommodation and/or work
- Did you feel accepted socially and/or at work?
- What were the biggest challenges?
- What surprised you?

Any other observations about the experience.

Conclusions from Wk3 Impact of Migration

Refugee hosting falls heavily on neighbouring states, not just rich Western ones

Border controls reshape migration routes more often than they stop migration.

Source countries can lose skills but gain vital remittances at the same time

In the UK, the key change is the composition of migration skills after Brexit,
not a simple story of exit or influx numbers

Next week



How countries manage migration, historically & currently

Look at case studies of:

- US
- Australia
- EU
- Britain prior to Brexit