Migration is much more than small boat crossings



Tim Ewbank

Autumn 2026

I can't get an NHS appointment

The country is full

I don't feel safe

Let's leave European Convention on Human Rights



No camp near me!





Cultural erosion

Invasion

What's the government doing about it?

Course Objectives

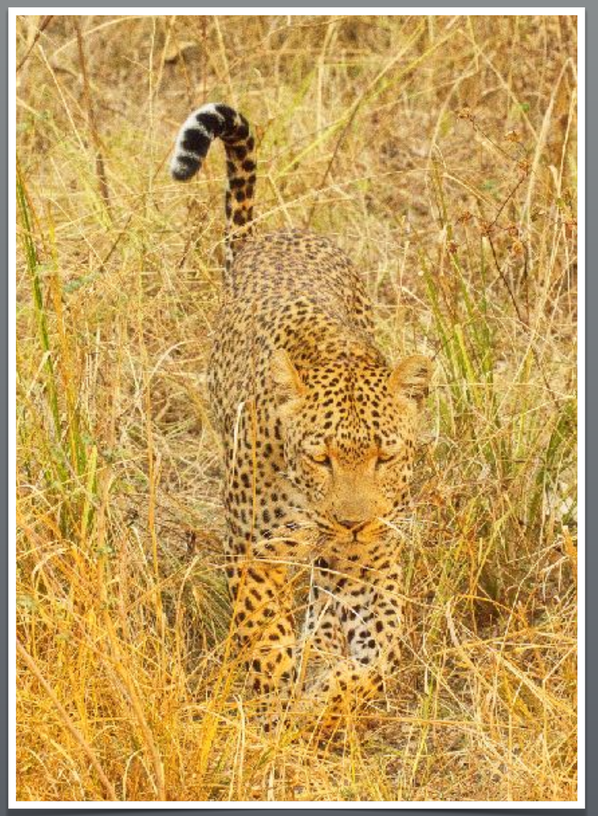
Place what the UK is experiencing in the larger context:

- Historic
- Geographic
- Contemporary, elsewhere in the world

Examine the impact of both immigration and emigration

Investigate how this global problem is addressed by other countries

Discuss what is being done and what could be done here





What the course is not going to cover.

Migration of conquest:

- Romans, Vikings, Normans
- Mongols, Conquistadors

National building:

- Western expansion of US
- Australia and New Zealand
- Expansion of Russia into Siberia



A guiding principle

"To know where we're going,
we have to know where we are.
To know that, we have to know
where we came from & how we
got here"

Ancient proverb

Agenda

Week One *Where we are* Setting the scene

Week Two *Where we came from* Historic migrations

Week Three *How we got here* Impact of migration

Week Four *How we got here* Past practice & regulation

Week Five Where we're going What's being done now



Rules of engagement

Questions & comments welcomed

Please share relevant experience

Contentious subject

Do my best to be objective

Try to disagree agreeably

The Four Dimensional Migration Matrix

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

Categories of migrants

Immigration and emigration

Issues are different in each dimension

One of the major issues of our age

Global issue, both immigrant arrivals or consequences of emigration

Historically European emigrant flows were to the colonies

Today, two main immigrant flows are from Global South and Middle East to Europe

Many countries have border control challenges
Eg. US southern border with Mexico & EU countries' south and eastern borders.

Border control highly visible & source of societal concern
Recently become politically charged for right wing activists & policiticans.

Why immigration is a highly contentious political subject globally

Arrival of large numbers of asylum seekers create local challenges

- Arrangements until their claims are resolved
- Contention for resources
- Risk of undocumented arrivals
- Integration & social cohesion
- Fear of crime

Cost to the host state

Migration in the news - international

July 2026

Riots in South Africa over undocumented immigrants

August

Moroccans overwhelm Ceuta enclave

Biggest ever migrant dingy arrives in Britain (230 asylum seekers)

September

Piddington referendum vote. Same planned for Barnham, Norfolk

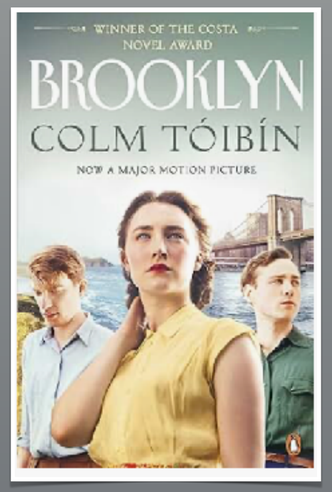
Migration in the news - UK

October

Home Office Immigration Enforcement arrested three men in connection with fake asylum claims from Bangladeshis pretending to be gay.

Government has ended the “one-in-one-out” arrangement with France and reopened the UK Resettlement Scheme. The policy opens three new sponsorship routes involving charities, universities and businesses. Shift towards institutional sponsorship

Migration is a common theme in the arts



Books & movies:

C. Tóibín *Brooklyn* (2020)

Books

S. Selvon: *Lonely Londoners*

Z. Smith : *White Teeth*

R. Tremain : *The Road Home*

C. N. Adichie : *Americanah*

C. Lefteri : *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*

D Grenville: *The Secret River*

M. Levy "*Get the Children Out – Unsung Heroes of the Kindertransport*"

M Hutchinson *"The Mercy Step"*



Migration Museum
City of London, 2028

The migration dilemma

Our country needs migrants to:

Fill gaps in our labour market:

- skilled workers in particular sectors, eg. health & care, IT
- do jobs locals are unwilling to do
- seasonal, casual, irregular work

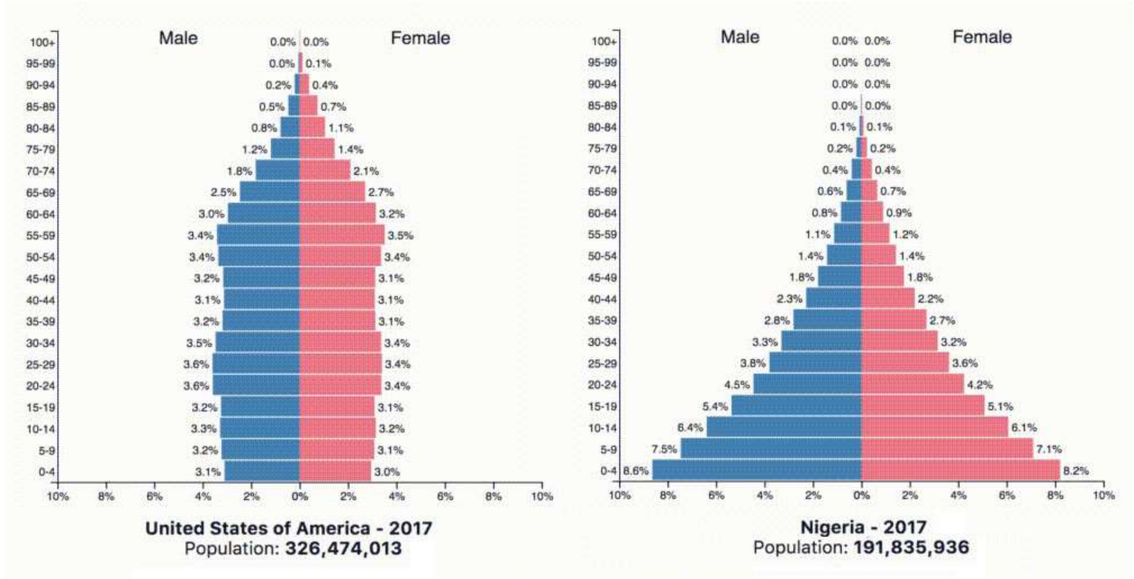
In longer term, compensate for demographic shortfall:

- fertility rates are falling across the developed world
- our population is not replacing itself

We need some, but not all, migrants

The demographic challenge: comparison of US & Nigeria

Population Age Structure



The is an enormous amount of data about migration

INTERNATIONAL

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) based in Geneva

OECD annual International Migration Outlook report (440pp in 2025)

IOM International Organisation for Migration (270pp in 2026)

Our World in data https://ourworldindata.org/migration

UK BASED

ONS Office of National Statistics

Migration Observatory, Oxford

Sussex Centre for Migration Research (SCMR) Sussex university

R King (2010) *Atlas of Human Migration*, Earthscan



Lack of information is not a problem, quite the opposite

“migrant” is an umbrella term

Migrant
catch-all term for people voluntarily moving residence, either within a region or country or internationally
Migrants choose to move for reasons such as work, study, or family reunion
They retain the protection of their home government and face no legal impediment to return.
No formal definition of duration, but one year of residence is generally accepted

Immigrant
People arriving in another country

Emigrant
People leaving their current place of residence

Every immigrant is an emigrant somewhere else

Definition of Refugee & Asylum seekers

UNHCR 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

Refugee

havng fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality
being outside the country of his residence, is unwilling, fearful of returning

Asylum seeker

is seeking international protection.
an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country to which it been has submitted.
Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee

Every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker

Other categories of migrants

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

been forced to leave their home, but who remains within their own country's borders.
May subsequently become asylum seekers, if need to move again
Current examples: Sudan 9 million, Columbia and Syria 7+ million

People under humanitarian protection

people whom a state allows to remain because return would expose them to serious harm
a form of international protection
Current example: Ukraine 4.4 million people under temporary protection in the EU

Two recent additions to the lexicon of migration

Undocumented migrants

Applies in US & UK contexts and others

Covers migrants who are legally in the country but do not have documentary proof

May have been in the country for many years, have jobs, families, pay taxes etc

Remigration

recent addition to far right political vocabulary of migration

- used in Europe & US
- euphemism for deportation?
- has undertone of cultural purity (“Heritage Americans”)
- Different from return migrants, who never intended to stay

Overview of migration in the EU & UK

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

Immigration and emigration

Current migration situation in Europe

EU had 1.20 million asylum seekers pending applications in 2025
the UK has the 5th largest no. of asylum seekers in the EU+ awaiting a decision (40,168)
(behind Germany 291,245, France, Spain and Italy)

Asylum seekers per head of population, UK ranks 16th in EU+

In UK 40,168 awaiting initial-decision is 56% below June 2025
There were 5% fewer asylum applications in 2025 than 2024
First half of 2026, numbers are down by approximately 20%

Immigration to the UK in 2025

In 2025, 813,000 people immigrated to the UK

Category	Estimated arrivals
Non-EU+ nationals: study-related	294,000
Non-EU+ nationals: work-related	146,000
Non-EU+ nationals: asylum	88,000
Non-EU+ nationals: family-related	44,000
Non-EU+ nationals: humanitarian-related	38,000
Non-EU+ nationals: other/uncategorised	17,000
EU+ nationals	76,000
British nationals returning/moving to UK	110,000

Source: ONS & Home Office

Of the asylum seekers(11%), more than half (52%) entered the country by illegal means

Net migration to the UK in 2025

Net migration = those who arrived - those who left the country over any given period

Immigration was 813,000
642,000 people emigrated from the UK
So, net migration for 2025 was +177,000

Fall of 48% from 2024

Main change was reduction in arrivals from outside the EU,
particularly those entering for work,
Biggest group, Health & Care Workers and their dependents owing to change in regulations

The overall picture is improving June 2025 - June 2026

21% reduction in asylum applications (85,900)

40% fewer asylum seekers arriving on small boats

56% fewer asylum seekers awaiting first decision

Initial decisions unchanged (116,000)

51% increase in appeals backlog (90,400)

+8% increase in returns, enforced & voluntary) (41,000)

Summary

Introduced the different categories of migrants

Outlined why it is such a contentious subject

Defined categories of migrants

Introduced the *migration dilemma*

Overview of the current EU & UK situations

Next week



Drivers of migration

Historic flows of migrants

Colonisation & decolonisation

Case studies

Slides will be on my website: https://www.zimbushboy.online/about-1