Read the following text and answer the questions below

Exploring migration causes: why people migrate

European Parliament

People migrate for many reasons, ranging from security, demography and human rights to poverty and climate change.

The total number of non-EU citizens residing within the EU as of 1 January 2021 was 23.7 million, according to Eurostat, the EU's statistical office. This represents 5.3% of the EU population. In most EU countries, the majority of non-nationals were from outside the EU.

What is migration?

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another, to settle in a new location. Migration can be voluntary or involuntary and can occur for a variety of different reasons, including economic, environmental and social issues.

Reasons for migration: push and pull factors

Push factors are the reasons people leave a country. Pull factors are the reason they move to a particular country. There are three major push and pull factors.

Social and political factors

Persecution because of one's ethnicity, religion, race, politics or culture can push people to leave their country. A major factor is war, conflict, government persecution or there being a significant risk of them. Those fleeing armed conflict, human rights violations or persecution are more likely to be humanitarian refugees. This will affect where they settle as some countries have more liberal approaches to humanitarian migrants than others. In the first instance, these people are likely to move to the nearest safe country that accepts asylum seekers.

In recent years, people have been fleeing to Europe in large numbers from conflict, terror and persecution at home. Of the 384,245 asylum seekers granted protection status in the EU in 2022, more than a quarter came from war-torn Syria, with Afghanistan and Venezuela in second and third place respectively.

Demographic and economic causes

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Demographic change determines how people move and migrate. A growing or shrinking, aging or youthful population has an impact on economic growth and employment opportunities in the countries of origin or migration policies in the destination countries.

Demographic and economic migration is related to poor labour standards, high unemployment and the overall health of a country's' economy. Pull factors include higher wages, better employment opportunities, a higher standard of living and educational opportunities. If economic conditions are not favourable and appear to be at risk of declining further, a greater number of people will probably migrate to countries with a better outlook.

According to the UN International Labour Organization, migrant workers - defined as people who migrate with a view to being employed - stood at roughly 169 million worldwide in 2019 and represented more than two thirds of international migrants. More than two-thirds of all migrant workers were concentrated in high-income countries.

Environmental and climate migration

The environment has always been a driver of migration, as people flee natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. However, climate change is expected to exacerbate extreme weather events, meaning more people could be on the move.

According to the International Organization for Migration, "Environmental migrants are those who for reason of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad."

It is hard to estimate how many environmental migrants there are globally due to factors such as population growth, poverty, governance, human security and conflict, which have an impact. Estimates vary from 25 million to one billion by the year 2050.

1. What are push and pull factors?
    a. Push factors are the reasons people leave a country. Pull factors are the reason they move to a particular country.
    b. The main reasons for immigration.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

c. Socio-economic causes of poverty.

2. What are some of the social and political causes of migration?

    a. Poverty and war.

    b. Persecution and armed conflict.

    c. Poverty and persecution.

3. Why do demographic changes affect migration?

    a. Because overpopulation can cause people to need more resources.

    b. Because they can lead to war.

    c. Because they impact the economy.

4. What are some pull factors related to demographic changes?

    a. Higher wages, better employment opportunities, a higher standard of living and educational opportunities

    b. Poor labour standards, high unemployment and the overall health of a country's' economy

    c. War and famine.

5. What are some push factors related to demographic changes?

    a. Higher wages, better employment opportunities, a higher standard of living and educational opportunities

    b. Poor labour standards, high unemployment and the overall health of a country's' economy

    c. War and famine.

6. What are migrant workers?

    a. People who need to migrate because of their job.

    b. People who migrate unemployed.

    c. People who migrate in search for employment.

7. What could be the effect of climate change on migration?

    a. As the climate worsens, it will be increasingly difficult to migrate.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

b. As the climate worsens, more people will migrate.

c. It won't have an impact on migration.

8. Why is it hard to estimate the number of environmental migrants?

a. Due to population growth, poverty, governance, human security and conflict.

b. Due to other factors that could also be causing migration.

c. Because we are not seeing the effects of climate change on migration yet.

LIVEWORKSHEETS