



Understanding Migration

Curriculum Resources for the Classroom
Revised Edition



Hemispheres is a partnership of:

Center for European Studies
Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies
Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies
South Asia Institute

in the College of Liberal Arts
at the University of Texas at Austin



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Introduction

Why do people move? Simple as it may seem, this question raises complex questions about the causes of individual versus large-scale migration as well as the global effects of migration. This curriculum unit was conceived in response to numerous requests from educators concerning the discussion of issues related to human migration in the social studies classroom. Our goal was to present this fluid and nebulous concept in an easy-to-follow manner, with clear lesson objectives and outcomes.

Given our own strength as content providers for world studies courses (in Texas, this consists of the 6th grade Contemporary World Cultures course, 9th grade World Geography course, and 10th grade World History course, in addition to AP-level courses and other electives), we chose to address these essential questions by using a case-study approach looking at the phenomenon of migration in a global context.

The unit is aligned to middle and high school standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, as well as National Geography Standards) and so the activities have been designed for Grades 6–12, although some suggestions for use at lower levels are included below.

In 2011, following the revision of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS—the state-mandated educational standards) for social studies, we created the revised edition of this unit. It incorporates feedback from field testers and educators who have offered constructive comments on the unit since its first publication. We hope that this unit, which has been used in classrooms nationwide, will be even more useful in this revised edition.

We welcome any feedback or comments you may have.

How to use this unit effectively in the classroom

The unit allows maximum flexibility on the part of the classroom teacher: modular in design, any section (or case study within a section) can be used individually or in combination with other sections. Based on previous coverage of the topic and the academic level of your students, you may incorporate as many or as few activities as support your learning goals. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the entire unit so as to select the activities/topics that best suit your needs.

Section Overview

Section 1

A brief PowerPoint introduction to migration theory incorporates key vocabulary (e.g., push-pull factors) and real world examples. The original document can be downloaded from the Hemispheres website at: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/orgs/hemispheres/>.

Section 2: Introductory Activities

Once students have a basic understanding of the forces that affect migration, we offer two classroom activities to generate a general discussion. Although these activities are intended to be used before Sections 3 or 4, they can also be used individually (or not at all). They should be implemented insofar as they facilitate learning goals and enrich your students' understanding of migration. **Student Activity 1** examines migration trends in your community through a series of interviews. This activity can easily be modified for use at the elementary level, by either interviewing one person as a class or using a story or video; you can discuss migration stories without conducting the spectrum graph activity. **Student Activity 2** examines film, asking students to think critically about the film and plot elements relating to migration. Since most films dealing with this topic are for more mature audiences, we suggest using this activity at the high school level. There are some films, such as the animated picture *An American Tail*, that could be used with younger audiences.

Section 3: Using T-Charts and Writing Prompts to Explore Migration

Intended for a middle school audience, the T-chart case studies may also be used with older students in place of the advocate/decision-making activity. The five topics, which are simplified versions of real world issues from Section 4, include background information for the teacher, short readings for students, and four variations of an analysis activity.

For a high school audience, a writing prompt is provided in the instructions as Variation 4 to use the documents in the T-chart case studies to write a DBQ essay. A grading rubric for the essay can be found on page 68.

Section 4: Using an Advocate/Decision-Making Activity to Discuss Migration

This “controlled debate” activity requires students to argue one side of a real migration issue. Two to three pages of essential reading are included for each topic; supplemental materials are provided if time allows or if you feel that the issue needs additional coverage. We have made a conscious effort to use as many primary document sources as possible in order to help build critical reading and interpretation skills; reading levels vary according to the documents selected.

A writing prompt is provided in the instructions (p. 65) to use the documents provided in each case study to write a persuasive DBQ essay. The essay exercise can be done as an assessment piece for the Advocate/Decision-Making Activity. A grading rubric for the essay can be found on page 68.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms

We have provided a list of terms defined in footnotes in the glossary for handy reference.

Additional Resources

Each case study in Section 4 also includes a list of Web and print resources for learning more about the topic it covers. *ABC-CLIO*, *History Alive!*, and other content providers may have additional materials that will help facilitate the coverage of migration in your classroom.

We hope you find this unit useful and that you feel free to select and modify activities as they fit your classroom needs.

**THIS CURRICULUM UNIT ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS
IN THE TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS (TEKS), 2010 REVISION:**

113.18 Social Studies, Grade 6

GEOGRAPHY

4) The student understands the factors that influence the locations and characteristics of locations of various contemporary societies on maps and globes and uses latitude and longitude to determine absolute locations.

The student is expected to:

- B) identify and explain the geographic factors responsible for patterns of population in places and regions;
- C) explain ways in which human migration influences the character of places and regions.

ECONOMICS

8) The student understands the factors of production in a society's economy.

The student is expected to:

- A) describe ways in which the factors of production (natural resources, labor, capital, and entrepreneurs) influence the economies of various contemporary societies;
- B) identify problems and issues that may arise when one or more of the factors of production is in relatively short supply; and
- C) explain the impact of relative scarcity of resources on international trade and economic interdependence among and within societies.

HISTORY

1) The student understands that historical events influence contemporary events.

The student is expected to:

- A) trace characteristics of various contemporary societies in regions that resulted from historical events or factors such as invasion, conquests, colonization, immigration, and trade; and
- B) analyze the historical background of various contemporary societies to evaluate relationships between past conflicts and current conditions.

SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

21) The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology.

The student is expected to:

- A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; and artifacts to acquire information about various world cultures;
- B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;
- C) organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;
- D) identify different points of view about an issue or current topic;
- E) identify the elements of frame of reference that influenced participants in an event.

113.33 World History Studies

CULTURE

18) The student understands the ways in which cultures change and maintain continuity.

The student is expected to:

A) analyze cultural changes in specific regions caused by migration, war, trade, innovations, and diffusion.

GEOGRAPHY

7) The student understands the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.

The student is expected to:

B) explain the political, economic, social, and environmental factors that contribute to human migration such as how national and international migrations are shaped by push-and-pull factors and how physical geography affects the routes, flows, and destinations of migration.

HISTORY

13) The student understands the impact of major events associated with the Cold War and independence movements.

The student is expected to:

F) explain how Arab rejection of the State of Israel has led to ongoing conflict.

SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

31) The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

The student is expected to:

A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

113.34 World Geography Studies

HISTORY

1) The student understands how geography and processes of spatial exchange (diffusion) influenced events in the past and helped to shape the present.

The student is expected to:

A) analyze the effects of physical and human geographic patterns and processes on the past and describe their impact on the present, including significant physical features and environmental conditions that influenced migration patterns and shaped the distribution of culture groups today.

GEOGRAPHY

7) The student understands the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.

The student is expected to:

B) explain the political, economic, social, and environmental factors that contribute to human migration such as how national and international migrations are shaped by push-and-pull factors and how physical geography affects the routes, flows, and destinations of migration.

8) The student understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent.

The student is expected to:

A) compare ways that humans depend on, adapt to, and modify the physical environment, including the influences of culture and technology;

- B) describe the interaction between humans and the physical environment and analyze the consequences of extreme weather and other natural disasters such as El Niño, floods, tsunamis, and volcanoes; and
- C) evaluate the economic and political relationships between settlements and the environment, including sustainable development and renewable/non-renewable resources.

GOVERNMENT

- 14) The student understands the processes that influence political divisions, relationships, and policies.

The student is expected to:

- C) analyze the human and physical factors that influence the power to control territory and resources, create conflict/war, and impact international political relations of sovereign nations such as China, the United States, Japan, and Russia and organized nation groups such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU).

CITIZENSHIP

- 15) Citizenship. The student understands how different points of view influence the development of public policies and decision-making processes on local, state, national, and international levels.

The student is expected to:

- A) identify and give examples of different points of view that influence the development of public policies and decision-making processes on local, state, national, and international levels; and
- B) explain how citizenship practices, public policies, and decision making may be influenced by cultural beliefs, including nationalism and patriotism.

SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

- 31) The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

The student is expected to:

- A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and
- B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

THIS UNIT ALSO ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS:

Standard 9, Human Systems: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

GRADES 5–8

By the end of the eighth grade, the student knows and understands:

- 3. the types and historical patterns of human migration and;
- 4. the effects of migration on the characteristics of places.

GRADES 9–12

By the end of the twelfth grade, the student knows and understands:

- 1. trends in world population numbers and patterns and;
- 2. the impact of human migration on physical and human systems.

Student Activity: Migration Advocate/Decision-Making Activity

Advocate/decision-making activities allow for complete class involvement. Unlike class debates, which are usually dominated by a few of the most vocal students, the advocate/decision-making activity works well because each student is accountable for a role. Every student is either a debater (“advocate”) or a judge (“decision-maker”). The exercise sets up clear points of disagreement, and the competition to persuade the decision-maker enhances student motivation. In addition, such activities can be used with a large variety of historical and contemporary social studies problems and issues.

This activity revolves around a complex historical or contemporary migration issue that is presented to the students. It is presented in the form of a “should” question, allowing participants to examine reasons for support or opposition of the issue under discussion. Case studies for use with this activity can be found beginning on page 70.

Time Needed:

Two class periods of 45 minutes–1 hour each or one 90-minute class period will be sufficient for steps 3–5, assuming that:

- class preparation (step 1) is done outside of this time frame (this will require approximately 10–15 minutes to assign roles, distribute worksheets and readings, and to explain the first steps of the activity);
- individual preparation (step 2) is assigned as homework; and
- group preparation (step 3), confrontation (step 4), and de-briefing (step 5) are done in class.

We recommend a minimum of 30 additional minutes if individual preparation (step 2) is assigned as an in-class activity.

Supplies for this activity:

- the *Advocate’s Worksheet* (p. 66)
- the *Decision-Maker’s Worksheet* (p. 67)
- copies of the 2-4 page brief from any of the case studies that follow in this section, beginning on p. 70

Conducting the activity:

There are five steps in this activity, and an optional sixth step for assessment. It is also possible to do the assessment activity—writing a persuasive essay—without doing the advocate/decision-making activity. Begin by selecting the question(s) your class will debate.

Step 1: Class preparation:

Divide the students into 3 groups and assign each group one of the following roles: 1) advocates in favor, 2) advocates in opposition, and 3) decision-makers. The groups should be equal in size. When the class number is not divisible by 3, make the one or two extra students decision-makers.

Step 2: Individual preparation:

During this phase, the students should quietly read their background documentation. Each case study contains a brief that all students should read. Supplemental readings follow, which may be assigned as extra credit or as homework. While reading, each student should complete the appropriate worksheet.

Advocates prepare their arguments by finding relevant evidence in the text that supports their position, using the worksheet on page 66. Decision-makers prepare questions to ask the advocates and consider what the main arguments on each side are likely to be, completing the first section of the worksheet on page 67.

Alternately, you may choose to assign roles to students after they have done the reading and note-taking, requiring all students to examine all sides of the issue and prepare an argument for both sides.

Step 3: Group preparation:

Have your students come together in groups according to the roles they have been assigned: advocates in favor will meet with the other advocates in favor, advocates in opposition with their counterparts, and decision-makers with the other decision-makers.

In each group, students should share the information gathered during individual preparation, and the arguments they have prepared. The advocates should decide the best arguments for their perspective, while decision-makers should analyze both perspectives, deciding the best questions to ask.

Step 4: Confrontation:

Re-group your students into small groups of 3, consisting of one advocate from each side and a decision-maker. (If your class is not divisible by 3, there will be one or two groups with an extra decision-maker.)

For the first ten minutes, advocates in favor are allowed to present their argument to the decision-maker, who may ask questions. During this period, the advocates in opposition may only listen and take notes.

For the next ten minutes, advocates in opposition have their chance to present their argument, while their opponent may only listen and take notes.

For the final 10–15 minute period, the advocates may debate the issue, presenting rebuttals or challenges to the argument presented, and the decision-maker may further question both advocates.

At the end of this period, the decision-maker should complete his or her worksheet, revealing their decision and the reasons for it.

Step 5: De-briefing:

Individual decision-makers should stand before the class and summarize the debate process for their group, discussing which arguments were most persuasive and most supportable. They should end by announcing their decision and the reasons for it.

Arguments and decisions may also be reviewed in terms of values. A homework assignment, for all participants, could include an essay examining values: What values underlay the positions and statements? Where did the values conflict? What values did the decision-makers demonstrate?

Assessment (optional):

The assessment piece is a DBQ activity that uses the documents in each case study and the following essay prompt: *Read the introduction and the documents provided. Identify the push and pull factors given in the documents. Consider the overall issue. Are the causes economic, social, political, or environmental (or more than one of these) in nature?*

Write a persuasive essay in which you describe the issue presented. Be sure to identify the major push and pull factors, their causes, and the potential effects they may have on the migrants, the place they are planning to leave, and the place to which they are planning to migrate. Cite specific passages and examples from the documents to support your answer. Remember to consider the perspective of the authors of each document. Finally, explain which argument you find more persuasive, based on the factors you have described above. Justify your decision citing information from the documents, or from additional research.

A grading rubric may be found on page 68.

THIS ACTIVITY WAS ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED BY JOHN ROSSI OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY. THIS ADAPTATION BY HEMISPHERES, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, IS BASED ON A REVISED VERSION USED BY THE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE.

ADVOCATE'S WORKSHEET

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

My **position** on the issue is that _____

1. One **reason** to support the position is _____

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is _____

2. A second **reason** to support the position is _____

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is _____

3. A third **reason** to support the position is _____

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is _____

4. The **opponents** of this position might say _____

I would **reply to their reason** by saying _____

DECISION-MAKER'S WORKSHEET

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

I. List the questions you will ask the advocates when they try to persuade you. Ask challenging questions that show what you already know about the issue. Make sure your set of questions is balanced and does not show favoritism for one side.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

II. On the back of this sheet, list the reasons given by each advocate when they attempt to persuade you. Divide the reasons into two columns, as shown here:

REASONS FOR

REASONS AGAINST

III. Before making a decision, think about these questions:

1. Is the reason relevant?
2. Is the reason supported by evidence?
3. What reasons presented by one advocate went unchallenged by the other advocate?
4. What contrary evidence was presented?
5. How unbiased are the sources?

IV. After evaluating the reasons and evidence presented by both advocates, I have decided that:

V. The reasons and/or evidence that most influenced my decision, in order of importance, are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Essay Grading Rubric

Essay : Understanding Migration

Teacher Name: _____

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards	Score
Focus or Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.	
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	
Accuracy	All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.	
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.	
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	

Should the Egyptian government facilitate the emigration of its own citizens?

In 2003, the government of Egypt launched a website to help its citizens find jobs overseas. Advocates of the website say that it will help Egypt’s “labor surplus” find employment. Opponents argue that the government should not be encouraging emigration as a solution to high unemployment rates. Read the following documents to defend your position in the Advocate/Decision-Making Activity.

Chart: Number of Egyptian Migrants by Country of Destination, 2000

Receiving Country	Number of Egyptian Migrants	Distribution by Destination (%)	Overall Distribution (%)
KSA	923,600	48.3	33.7
Libya	332,600	17.4	12.2
Jordan	226,850	11.9	8.3
Kuwait	190,550	10.0	7.0
UAE	95,000	5.0	3.5
Iraq	65,629	3.4	2.4
Qatar	25,000	1.3	0.9
Yemen	22,000	1.2	0.8
Oman	15,000	0.8	0.5
Lebanon	12,500	0.7	0.5
Bahrain	4,000	0.2	0.1
Total in Arab Countries	1,912,729	100.0	69.9
United States of America (USA)	318,000	38.6	11.6
Canada	110,000	13.3	4.0
Italy	90,000	10.9	3.3
Australia	70,000	8.5	2.6
Greece	60,000	7.3	2.2
Netherlands	40,000	4.9	1.5
France	36,000	4.4	1.3
United Kingdom	35,000	4.2	1.3
Germany	25,000	3.0	0.9
Switzerland	14,000	1.7	0.5
Austria	14,000	1.7	0.5
Spain	12,000	1.5	0.4
Total in Non-Arab Countries	824,000	100	30.1
Total	2,736,729		100

SOURCE: “THE PERMANENT MIGRATION OF EGYPTIANS 2000,” CENTRAL AGENCY FOR PUBLIC MOBILIZATION AND STATISTICS (CAPMAS), CAIRO, 2001.

Reading 1: “Italy and Egypt Meet Online”

Al-Ahram is the state-run newspaper that acts as a voice for the Egyptian government. It publishes two daily editions (morning and evening) in Arabic and a weekly edition in English. This article ran in the weekly edition.

Egyptians seeking to work abroad are in a unique position among the world’s migrant labour market with the launch on Monday of the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), a project aimed at helping Egyptian workers find employers abroad.

With its surplus of skilled labour and its young population, Egypt is in a strong position to feed European economies straining under the burden of ageing populations. A joint project between the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Emigration (MME) and the Italian government, the IMIS is a pilot project in regulating migration flow and maintaining contact with Egyptians working abroad. Rafaat Radwan, chairman of the Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC), hailed the project as a chance to “bridge the gap between North and South” and play a role in the “dialogue of civilisations”, but what this initial IT phase really boils down to is an online match making service.

Potential workers log onto a newly established bilingual Web site (www.emigration.gov.eg), where they can post their CV in English and Arabic and search a database of employers. Using extensively detailed occupational descriptions based on International Labour Organisation lingo, some 8–10,000 job titles are listed on the site. Companies or other entrepreneurs seeking workers with particular skills can in turn search profiles of workers and contact the MME about promising candidates. Remarkably user-friendly, the IMIS Web site also caters to what publicity material refers to as the “Egyptian diaspora,” as well as embassies abroad seeking to post information for potential immigrants.

At the IMIS inauguration on Monday, Italian Ambassador Antonio Badini noted a “temporary excess” of manpower in Egypt and pointed to a dearth of manpower in some areas in Italy, saying that the IMIS project will help to improve economic and social development in Italy while allowing Egypt to “compete more effectively in the international arena.”

Minister of Manpower and Emigration Ahmed El-Amawy likewise stressed the importance of increasing Egypt’s ties with the world and singled out the Italian expatriate community in Egypt as historically one of the most significant. Saluting what he referred to as a “fruitful cooperation” between the two countries, El-Amawy pointed to the need to facilitate legal emigration as well as to aid Egyptian immigrants already abroad.

By facilitating this project, however, some will argue that the government is encouraging the dreaded “brain-drain”—an exodus of Egypt’s highly skilled labour. But Hassan Abdel-Moneim, senior regional advisor for the Middle East and special envoy to the Gulf countries at the IOM in Geneva, is tired of what he sees as an age-old threat that has never amounted to anything. “At IOM, we believe there is no ‘brain drain’, it’s a ‘brain gain’,” he says. An Egyptian expatriate himself, Abdel-Moneim notes that Egyptians typically keep close ties with their families and there is a strong incentive to return home. He noted that it is important to create an environment that encourages foreign-trained workers to either return to Egypt or invest in the country.

SOURCE: “ITALY AND EGYPT MEET ONLINE,” *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY*, N.V.: 660, OCTOBER 16–22, 2003. (PERMISSION PENDING.)

Reading 2: Library of Congress Country Study: Egypt**Social Issues: Emigration**

The 1986 census estimated that 2.25 million Egyptian nationals were working outside the country. Only small numbers of Egyptians, primarily professionals, had left the country in search of employment before 1974. Then, in that year, the government lifted all restrictions on labor migration. The move came at a time when oil-rich Arab states of the Persian Gulf and neighboring Libya were implementing major development programs with funds generated by the quadrupling of oil revenues in 1973.... By 1980 more than 1 million Egyptians were working abroad. That number doubled by 1982. The emergence of foreign job opportunities alleviated some of the pressure on domestic employment. Many of these workers sent a significant portion of their earnings to their families in Egypt. As early as 1979, these remittances amounted to US \$2 billion, a sum equivalent to the country's combined earnings from cotton exports, Suez Canal transit fees, and tourism.

The foreign demand for Egyptian labor peaked in 1983, at which time an estimated 3.28 million Egyptian workers were employed abroad. After that year, political and economic developments in the Arab oil-producing countries caused a retrenchment in employment opportunities. The Iran-Iraq War decline in oil prices forced the Persian Gulf oil industry into a recession, which caused many Egyptians to lose their jobs. Up to 1 million workers returned home. Most of the expatriate workforce remained abroad but new labor migration from Egypt slowed considerably. In late 1989, the number of Egyptian workers abroad still exceeded 2.2 million.

The majority of Egyptian labor migrants expected to return home eventually, but thousands left their country each year with the intention of permanently resettling in various Arab countries, Europe, or North America. These emigrants tended to be highly educated professionals, mostly doctors, engineers, and teachers. Their departure caused a serious "brain drain" for Egypt. Iraq and, to a lesser extent, Kuwait were the Arab countries most likely to accept skilled Egyptians as permanent residents. Iraq, which sought agriculturists trained in irrigation techniques, encouraged Egyptian farmers to move to the sparsely populated but fertile lands in the south. Outside of the Arab countries, the United States was a preferred destination. Between 1970 and 1985, about 45,000 Egyptians immigrated to the United States.

Economy: Employment

Employment grew at a slower rate than did the population and the labor force, resulting in a worsening unemployment situation. According to official accounts, the rate of unemployment increased from 2.8 percent in the period from 1975 to 1977 to about 12 percent in 1986. The figures probably understated the problem, because other informed sources put the rates at 20 percent to 25 percent in 1987 and 1988.

In addition to unemployment, economists pointed to underemployment, or disguised unemployment. There was a consensus that underemployment was rampant in the government bureaucracy, because of overstaffing and low remuneration. In 1990 the government was considering paying private-sector employers a two year salary for every new graduate they hired. It viewed the measure as a means of checking the expansion of the bureaucracy and ameliorating the unemployment problem.

Although Egypt had a high percentage of high-school and college graduates, the country continued to face shortages in skilled labor. Probably 35 percent of civil servants and 60 percent of persons in public-sector enterprises were unskilled or illiterate. The lack of skilled labor was blamed on, among other things, the cultural bias against manual work, the theoretical nature of courses in most higher education institutions, and the emigration of skilled personnel abroad, where they received higher wages. There were complaints that the implementation of development plans was hampered by the insufficient supply of skilled labor.

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, "EGYPT COUNTRY STUDY," DECEMBER 1990. [HTTP://LCWEB2.LOC.GOV/CGI-BIN/QUERY/R?FRD/CSTDY:@FIELD%28DOCID+EG0068%29](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?FRD/CSTDY:@FIELD%28DOCID+EG0068%29). (ACCESSED OCTOBER 13, 2011).

Ameliorate: *relieve or reduce pressure.*

Remittance: *income sent home by migrant workers from abroad; remittances are generally not taxed by the home country.*

Remuneration: *salary or payment for a job or services rendered.*

Supplemental Reading 1: “Unchecked Exodus”

What can be done to bring back the thousands of highly trained Egyptian medical professionals working abroad—and keep the ones we have?

It can hardly be considered a new problem. The issue of the brain drain—the steady flow of intellectual talent out of developing countries such as this one—has been the subject of much hand-wringing for decades.

It’s an issue that cuts across all areas of education and technology. In the medical field, some of the top medical professionals in the world—such as London heart surgeon Magdi Yaqoub—are Egyptian, but very few of those acknowledged giants actually work in Egypt. The net loss of all this brain-power on the country’s medical system is nearly incalculable.

Dr. Venice Kamel Ghouda, former minister of scientific research, estimates that at least 10,000 Egyptian experts in medicine and biotechnology are currently working abroad. If they all came back, she says, “That’s enough to start a new technological revolution in Egypt.”

Egypt has a solid level of base medical training, but only certain select pockets of the medical system can be considered on a par with international standards. Some of these advanced fields, such as plastic surgery, actually draw a steady stream of foreign customers who come seeking top-notch treatment at comparatively low prices.

If anything, the talent-loss problem has loomed larger in recent years as technological capacity has progressed to the point where the country can finally utilize advanced skills. Thirty years ago, perhaps, there truly was no place here for people wishing to do advanced research in some fields.

Expatriates who do return don’t necessarily contribute to the improvement of local health care. One common phenomenon is for expatriate surgeons to set up shop for a couple of months in Egypt—where they can charge high rates and be treated like visiting royalty, thanks to the mystique of their foreign status.

The roots of the current medical and technological brain drain lie in the emigrant wave of the ’60s. Compared to previous Arab emigrant generations, this wave was a largely educated, white-collar exodus—the cream of the crop of the country’s young students, whose talents had enabled them to secure grants to do post-graduate work abroad.

Among doctors and medical professionals, opinions are split on the issue of emigration. Some who travel to receive foreign training view it as a sort of patriotic duty to return and apply their skills at home; others claim that they can do more advanced, ground-breaking research abroad—thereby benefiting all humanity, including Egyptians. “I believe that Egyptians that came here 15 or more years ago can help more by staying in the US and helping from here,” says Malak Kotb, a professor in biotechnology at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. She claims that India makes far better use of its expatriate talent base than Egypt. “Unfortunately, there is no official program to optimally utilize our abilities.”

Ahmed Al Danaf, professor of plastic surgery at Matariyya Teaching Hospital, is one who chose to return. He spent four years studying in France, but says he never considered staying abroad. “I had the objective of getting the most training in the shortest amount of time and returning.”

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Expatriate: someone who resides in a foreign country.

Obviously not everyone feels that way though. Al Danaf says that of his Egyptian colleagues who were overseas for training at the same time, about half of them never came back. “They leave Egypt for the money, they leave Egypt for the research opportunities. Some of them leave Egypt because they’re sick of the system here.”

That system, which drives away some of Egypt’s best and brightest, is a major obstacle for those seeking to repatriate medical brainpower. The rampant nepotism and back-scratching which plagues Egyptian academia often makes the decision to stay abroad that much more attractive.

Ahmed Abdelal, a professor of molecular biology at Georgia State University, speaks of a need to change the “reward system” and eliminate the “*wasta*” (connections) requirement that largely decides who advances in Egyptian colleges and medical faculties. Bottom line: many of the doctors who stayed overseas did so simply because they felt there was a better chance outside the country of being judged solely on their merits.

Even those who wish to give something back to the motherland face obstacles. Kotb says her attempts to reach out to peers in Egypt were often met with indifference or even outright hostility. “Sometimes it was almost like people were suspicious of my motives,” she says.

While the campaign to encourage emigrants to invest their money back in their homeland has been underway for several years now, the effort to do the same with overseas expertise is still in its formative stages. Venice Kamel Gouda has recently founded the Egyptian Expert Network Overseas in an attempt to create an “emigrant think-tank” of experts. Under the auspices of a campaign known as *gusour* (bridges), Gouda has created a fledgling on-line community of Egyptian expatriate doctors and medical professionals—some of whom have come back for seminars, short-term consultancies or sabbaticals.

“They don’t have to move back to Egypt. There are a lot of ways they can help,” says Gouda, who is focusing on medical and biotechnology professionals.

One of the program’s success stories is Kotb, who says she “jumped at the chance” to offer her services when approached by Gouda. Kotb participated in a group that put together an American-Egyptian agreement on biotechnology transfer and will be coming to Egypt this month to conduct a seminar on biotech.

Obviously the best way to keep medical talent at home is to keep students and doctors from leaving in the first place—by improving the level of advanced research in the country to the point where there’s no longer a need for young talents to travel to receive proper training. “That’s something that’s really missing here—the advanced training,” says Al Danaf. He describes the basic medical training here as solid, but says that for advanced specializations, a stint at a foreign medical school is still necessary.

Perversely, the same lack of specialized training that leads to the brain drain also ensures that the phenomenon continues. Those expatriate doctors and medical professionals could be working and teaching here, offering all that foreign-acquired knowledge so that the new generation of doctors wouldn’t have to travel in search of it (and maybe stay abroad). So the best way to stop the brain drain is to improve the level of advanced training at home, and the best way to improve the training is to reverse the brain drain.

As Al Danaf sees it, “If all these people returned to Egypt, the world here would change overnight.”

SOURCE: ASHRAF KHALIL, “UNCHECKED EXODUS,” *THE CAIRO TIMES*, 3:3, APRIL 1–14, 1999. (PERMISSION PENDING.)

Nepotism: the practice of showing favoritism to family members.

Repatriate: to return to one’s country of origin.

Sabbatical: an extended period of leave from one’s job, often to engage in a short-term project, training, etc.

Supplemental Reading 2: “Stop the brain-drain from the Arab world”

One of the main problems facing the Arab world today is the so-called brain drain. Such a movement of highly skilled, talented individuals is becoming so acute that many are worrying about its effects on the economic development of the region.

One study carried out by the London-based Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies in 2001 suggests that Arab countries will lose their experts if the brain drain continues at the current rate.

More and more educated professionals such as engineers, doctors and scientists are looking for greener pastures in western countries. Also more Arab students receiving an education in Britain, the US, or France stay after completing their studies.

UNESCO defines the brain drain as an odd form of scientific exchange among states because it is characterised by a movement in one direction that inevitably flows to developed countries.

Brain drain has long become a worldwide phenomenon. UNCTAD suggests that between 1960 and 1987, 825,000 skilled immigrants entered the US and Canada from developing countries.

The movement of skilled labour increased in the 1990s as a result of the global marketplace and the introduction of new growth industries, such as Information and Communications Technology.

In a paper presented at the 4th Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics in Oslo last year, Andreas Solimano says this movement resulted in 900,000 skilled professionals pouring into the US from the developing countries.

The movement of labour across the world became much more fluid in the 1990s, with the concept of globalisation, the tearing down of barriers and as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. This meant skilled and professional labour became more mobile which resulted in the flow to the west.

It is argued that between 500,000 and 800,000 Russian scientists migrated to Europe and America in the past 10 years, according to a BBC report. Today, there is also a brain drain from countries in Africa, Taiwan, New Zealand, China and India as well as Iran, Korea and the Philippines. And if there isn't a brain drain in Pakistan, professional people are also actively thinking about going abroad.

No different

The Arab world is no different, with the brain drain phenomenon occurring from the region, too. The latest Human Development Report of 2003, the second under the auspices of the United Nations Development Fund, UNDP, states that 25 per cent of the 300,000 graduates from Arab universities in 1995-1996 migrated, and that 15,000 doctors did likewise between 1998 and 2000.

At the 10th Afro-Arab Parliamentary Conference at Addis Ababa in January 2003, the Arab-African brain drain issue was discussed at length, with measures to be taken to reverse it. It was stated that 37 per cent of the world's migration of experts and specialists comes from African and Arab countries.

It is also suggested that 54 per cent of doctors, 26 per cent of engineers and 17 per cent of scientists graduating from Arab and African universities migrate to Europe, the US and Canada, and half of African and Arab students studying abroad never return.

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One study published in Egypt and carried by ArabicNews.com backs up the UNDP report when it says that 50 per cent of medical doctors, 23 per cent of engineers and 15 per cent of Arab scientists are lost every year to Europe and North America.

This has resulted in significant material losses. Parliamentarians in Addis Ababa noted that a total of \$13 billion was lost to the Arab world and African countries in the 1970s as a result of the brain drain.

Today, it is estimated that Arab states annually lose up to \$1.5 billion as a result of the brain drain. Ashraf Khalil, writing in the *Cairo Times* in 1999, said that the loss to the Egyptian medical sector was incalculable.

Dr. Venice Kamel Ghouda, former Egyptian Minister of Scientific Research, quoted in her article, suggests that at the end of the 1990s, there were at least 10,000 Egyptian experts in the medical and biotechnology sector working abroad. If these people came back it would be “enough to start a new technological revolution in Egypt.”

But losses are measured in other ways. Experts suggest Arab and developing countries invest a lot in educating and training young men and women. This translates into a loss to their states when these people migrate, with the direct benefit accruing to the recipient states that do not need to fork out the cost of educating them.

Significant knowledge

Thus, this brain drain also creates a significant knowledge gap in the sender states, which no longer possess the technical know-how because of the migration of labour.

One solution to the brain drain includes establishing a network between the home country and its immigrant community abroad. Through her Egyptian Expert Network Overseas, Dr. Ghouda has tried to create “an emigrant think-tank” of experts that will serve as a bridge with their country through the exchange of information, offering consultancies and coming on sabbaticals to their home countries.

However, the problem may be in creating real job opportunities and the right environment for making people stay in the Arab world, according to Amr Moussa, the Secretary General of the Arab League. He told delegates at a conference on Information Technology and Telecommunications in the Arab world last September that the brain drain would be stemmed through progress made by Arab countries in the Information Technology field.

In the final analysis, however, it is clear that it is up to governments to act to stop the brain drain.

Dr. Marwan Asmar is a member of the Gulf News Research Centre.

SOURCE: MARWAN ASMAR, “STOP THE BRAIN DRAIN FROM THE ARAB WORLD,” *GULF NEWS (DUBAI)*, DECEMBER 29, 2003. (REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.)

Supplemental Chart: Survey of Egyptians Living Abroad: Reasons for Leaving Egypt

This chart indicates the results of a survey of Egyptians living abroad: whole numbers indicate the number of responses received for a particular answer, with the percentage of the total given in parentheses below.

Reasons behind Emigration	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Difficult political situation in Egypt	4 (2.5%)	21 (12.7%)	25 (7.7%)
Difficult economic situation and poverty in Egypt	65 (41.1%)	24 (14.5%)	89 (27.6%)
Impossibility of getting employment in Egypt	28 (17.7%)	8 (4.8%)	36 (11.1%)
Impossibility of personal development and improvement in Egypt	19 (12%)	48 (29.1%)	67 (20.7%)
Corruption and prejudice in Egypt	42 (26.8%)	40 (24.2%)	82 (25.5%)
Insufficient income opportunities in Egypt	41 (25.9%)	32 (19.4%)	73 (22.6%)
Adventure and the desire to see a new country	10 (6.3%)	34 (20.6%)	44 (13.6%)
Born abroad	16 (10.1%)	36 (21.8%)	52 (16.1%)
Other reasons	9 (5.7%)	57 (34.5%)	66 (20.4%)

SOURCE: *A STUDY ON THE DYNAMICS OF THE EGYPTIAN DIASPORA: STRENGTHENED DEVELOPMENT LINKAGES*, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION, CAIRO, 2010.

Web Resources on Egypt and the “Brain Drain” Phenomena

Canada’s Brain Drain

<http://www.canadiansocialresearch.net/hightax.htm>

Website that examines reasons why Canadian professionals are leaving for the United States. There are a lot of parallels with the issues discussed in relation to Egypt, which could make an interesting activity in comparing the two case studies.

Library of Congress, Country Study: Egypt

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/egtoc.html>

A succinct overview of the geography, society, economy, transportation and telecommunications, politics and government, and national security of Egypt. Good background material for a better understanding of Egypt’s history.

Government of Egypt, Ministry of Manpower and Emigration

<http://www.emigration.gov.eg>

The website, mentioned in the case study, that allows Egyptians to post their curricula vitae for review by potential employers abroad.

About Hemispheres

Hemispheres, the international outreach consortium at the University of Texas at Austin, utilizes University resources to promote and assist with world studies for K-12 and postsecondary schools, businesses, community groups, and the general public.

Hemispheres is coordinated by five independent units that receive funding from multiple sources, including the Title VI International Area Studies Program of the US Department of Education:

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Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies
Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies
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