

## Migrations

Migrations fall into several broad categories. First, internal and international migration may be distinguished. Within any country there are movements of individuals and families from one area to another (for example, from rural areas to the cities), and this is distinct from movements from one country to another. Second, migration may be voluntary or forced. Most voluntary migration, whether internal or external, is undertaken in search of better economic opportunities or housing. Forced migrations usually involve people who have been expelled by governments during war or other political upheavals or who have been forcibly transported as slaves or prisoners. Intermediate between these two categories are the voluntary migrations of refugees fleeing war, famine, or natural disasters.

Human migrations within recorded history have transformed the entire aspect of lands and continents and the racial, ethnic, and linguistic composition of their populations. The map of Europe, for example, is the product of several major early migrations involving the Germanic peoples, the Slavs, and the Turks, among others. And in the course of 400 years—from the late 16th through the 20th century—the Americas, Australia, Oceania, the northern half of Asia, and parts of Africa were colonized by European migrants. The overseas migration of Europeans during this period totaled about 60 million people.