Chinese Inter-Provincial Migration
“The Largest Internal Migration in history”

-12th February 2015-

**Hukou** – household registration system

**floating population** – urban workers with rural hukou.

**Remittances** - Transfers of money/goods by migrant workers to their home village.

**Who are the migrants?**

Since 1978 over 160 million people have left rural areas to seek work in the cities. The majority of the migrants are economically active, predominantly female, leaving poorer rural communities in the inland provinces. Many migrants are regarded as *floating population* and do not have official urban *hukou*.

**Cause of migration?**

- **Push**
  - Intense, manual labour.
  - Low wages. Lack of services. Lack of opportunities.

- **Pull**
  - Family, Young Children/Elderly parents require care

- **Intervening Obstacles**
  - Hukou registration (prevents permanent settlement)
  - Financial cost of movement

- **Pull**
  - Increased income.
  - Opportunity to send remittances home to support family. Opportunity to gain new skills and education. Improved services.

  - **Push**
    - Poor living conditions
    - Fragmented families.

**Pattern of migration.**

Inland provinces such as Sichuan (-7.5m) and Hunan (-5.0 to 7.5m) have seen large outflows of migrants to the coastal provinces of Guangdong (+7.5m) and Zhejiang (+5.0 to 7.5m) where large scale industrialisation has taken place. This has led to development disparities with Guangdong ($1.1 Trillion) having an equivalent GDP as Australia.
- Foxconn assembly line workers producing Apple’s iphone
- Migration has contributed significantly to China’s economic growth.
  - $640 Billion in 2010

**Impacts at source and destination?**

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Destination</th>
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<td>+ Remittances sent home allow children to attend school and gain an improved education. - Grandparents raising children leading to breakdown in parent/child relations.</td>
<td>- Ghettoisation of migrant workers in urban areas. + Cultural mixing in the city between different ethnic groups (Food, music, festivals)</td>
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<td>- Lack of workers to take over the family farm. + Remittances supplement incomes of elderly in villages.</td>
<td>+ Workers can earn equivalent of 1 year rural salary in 1 month. + Cheap abundant labour source for growing manufacturing sector. - Strain on public services in the city.</td>
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<td>- Lack of young workers to farm the land and maintain the village infrastructure.</td>
<td>- Industrialisation has led to increased air pollution, harmful to human health, in urban areas such as Beijing</td>
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<td>- Returning migrants spread new ideas to the village from the city which can lead to political unrest.</td>
<td>- Unrest between migrant workers and city natives resentful of competition for jobs.</td>
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- References —
  - Peasants Migration - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prSuvqaGl_s#t=531](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prSuvqaGl_s#t=531)