

## Displacement in the Middle East: Causes, Consequences, and Communities

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### Forced Migration Exercise

Is migration a choice or is it forced? Select a few of the migrants or migrant groups from the list below. Where would you place these migrants in a continuum which runs from economic migrants (those choosing to migrate) to refugees (those forced to migrate)? In 1-2 sentences justify your placement. Remember that your justification has implications for how national governments assign legal status and protections to migrants.

- a. An Egyptian man who migrates to Jordan to work in a sandwich shop, because he cannot find work in Egypt. He sends most of the money he earns back to his parents in Cairo.
- b. A Syrian family who flees Aleppo to live in Istanbul, because of fear of chemical attacks and bombings.
- c. An Iraqi woman and her two children who flee ISIS control of Mosul in 2015 and go to Turkey.
- d. An Iranian teenager who is gay decides to study in Turkey and try to get a job there, because he fears being penalized for his sexuality under the Iranian regime.
- e. A Lebanese woman who moves to the United States to attend university and join her father who is living here.
- f. A Pakistani family who moves in with extended family after their home was destroyed by flooding.
- g. An Afghani man who worked as a translator with the U.S. military during the War in Afghanistan and moves to Pakistan, because he fears being killed for his connections with the U.S. military.
- h. An Egyptian science teacher who lives and works in Doha, Qatar, because she prefers the lifestyle and political freedom there.
- i. An Afghani woman who moves to Iran with her family because of a lack of social services, a lack of rights, and violence and general insecurity in Afghanistan.

*Notes: This exercise is adapted from an activity used in a 400-level undergraduate Sociology course on Contemporary Immigration in the United States. In pairs, I have students draw a continuum, and pick a few migrants to place along the continuum. After students have done this, I draw a continuum on the board and ask different students to come up to the board, place a migrant on the continuum and justify their placement. Students with different perspectives are asked to respond and debate the positioning of these migrants along the continuum. The exercise aims to complicate conceptions of whether migration is forced or it is a choice.*

*Related N.C. Learning Objective: 7.G.1.1 Explain how push-pull factors of forced and voluntary migrations have affected societies around the world*