



CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

Migration is a massive phenomenon. In 2017, there were 258 million international migrants, more than 30 million of whom were children. One-third of refugees and migrants to Europe are children.

This infographic will brief you on the concept of 'Children on the Move', which includes their identity, movement patterns and motivations, as well as the effects of migration on them.



'Children on the move' are persons under the age of 18 who travel away from their habitual residence, within and across national borders, for any reason.



According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18.



The needs of children differ from the needs of youth (18-25) and adults (>25); they are a demographic which requires special attention and tailored assistance.

THERE ARE SEVERAL DIMENSIONS TO CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

1 REASONS FOR MIGRATION



Children leave their homes for a range of reasons. Most irregular migrants in this region of the world have been forcibly displaced due to conflict and insecurity, such as the Syrian Civil War and instability in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Migration can occur for other reasons, such as economic, poverty, and a lack of education and opportunities.

2 MOVEMENT PATTERNS



There is a range of movement patterns among children on the move. Some travel together with family or relatives, while some others have embarked on the journey alone, or been separated from their family. The latter group is referred to as Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC); they are more vulnerable as there is no designated adult to look after them.

3 ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS



Most child migrants in Southeast Europe have arrived from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, although those from Iran and Pakistan are also well-represented.

Some of them seek asylum in Southeast European countries, but for many of them the desired destination is Western Europe, where they have family and where there are better perceived conditions.

4 SCALE OF MOVEMENT



'Children on the move' covers both movement within and across national boundaries.

Most child migrants in the region are international migrants, although some continue to be affected by internal displacement from the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s.

5 CONSEQUENCES OF MOVEMENT



Children are prone to risks while on the move. These include trafficking, abuse, exploitation, and health risks.

After the child has reached their destination or a reception centre, they are still susceptible to psychological and developmental damage if trauma from the journey is not treated and if the receiving environment is not conducive to the child's development.



This infographic is part of the thematic package on the topic of Children on the Move. Other materials in this package include quick bites on the risks and effects of movement on children, the treatment of child migrants in countries in this region, as well as considerations which social workers and policymakers could use to better manage and assist children on the move.

REFERENCES

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For more information and to get in touch with professionals working with children on the move, visit us at childhub.org

Produced by Ser Jay Tan in 2018

