LEAVING HOME

General migration statistics

22.5 million
refugees worldwide

55% (over half) of refugees come from South Sudan, Afghanistan and Syria

28,300 people every day have to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

There are more people displaced now than after World War II

65.6 million = \( \frac{2.9}{22.5} \times 12 \)

65.6 million people around the world right now have had to leave their homes – that’s over 12 times the population of Ireland. Many of these people are IDP’s who have had to leave home, but have not left their country.

51% 51% of refugees are children

TURKEY hosts the most refugees of any country in the world - 2.9 million - Followed by Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Uganda and Ethiopia.

84% (most) refugees are hosted in developing countries (ie: not rich countries such as those in Europe)

Some Definitions:

- **A migrant** is a person who has moved from one place to another. The term migrant can include refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants.
- **A refugee** is a person who is forced to leave their own country because their life is in danger, and seek safety in another country. This might be because of violence, conflict, discrimination (religious, racial, social or political) or natural disasters.
- **An asylum seeker** is a person who is asking the government of another country to officially recognise them as a refugee and allow them to stay in that country. In Ireland, asylum seekers live in group accommodation called *direct provision centres* and are not allowed to work while they are waiting for a decision on refugee status.
- **An internally displaced person (IDP)** is someone who is forced to leave their home because their life is in danger, seeking safety and protection in another part of their own country. An IDP has not crossed an international border.

There are 4,456 people in Ireland who have applied for asylum and are staying in direct provision centres. That’s less than 1% of the number of refugees in Turkey.

South Sudan is the world’s fastest growing refugee crisis

- 66% of refugees leaving South Sudan are children
- South Sudan became independent after a civil war in 2011. Since 2013 there has been much conflict, and at the end of last year (2016), 1 in 4 have been forced from their homes.

Trócaire has been working in Southern Sudan for 40 years, and focuses on supporting communities affected by conflict and extreme poverty.
The Refugee Convention

Refugees are protected under the 1951 Refugee Convention, or agreement. The full name is “The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees”. 145 countries have agreed to this convention, making a promise that they will stick to its rules to help people who have had to flee their homes. The convention was created after the Second World War, when many people in Europe became refugees. The most important rule of the convention is that people should not have to return to their home country if they are still in danger.

Ireland during the famine

Over 2 million people left Ireland as a result of the Great Famine 1845-1850 – that was equal to a quarter of the total population of the country. Over 70% travelled on boats across the Atlantic Ocean to America. These boats were often called “coffin ships”, as many people died while making the journey. Many of those who emigrated came from the poorest areas of Ireland, where Irish was spoken, such as the west. This meant that when they arrived they had to learn English as a new language. Ireland’s population has never recovered to the number it was before the famine, which was approximately 8 million.

As a result of emigration, there are now over 70 MILLION people worldwide who claim Irish heritage.

Some famous people who claim Irish heritage include: John F Kennedy, Barack Obama, Muhammed Ali, Anne Hathaway, Samantha Power, P!nk… and even Walt Disney!!

WATCH - Leaving Home: The Stories of Brigit and Sami
trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/global-schools-resource

Some questions to discuss after seeing the animation and reading these facts:

• Did anything surprise you?
• Did you learn anything new?
• How are Sami and Brigit’s stories similar?
• How are they different?
• Has your mind been changed about refugees and the reasons why people might have to leave their homes and countries?
• Do you think Ireland is doing enough to help people who have had to leave their home countries?

To do in your class

Imagine you have been told you must leave your home, or country with your family. Think about how you would like to be treated when you arrive in your new home. In groups, or on your own, write a letter to your new community, telling them your story and how you feel about moving. Let them know how they could make you feel welcome as you settle in a new place.

If you would like, send these letters to Trócaire Head Office, Maynooth, Co. Kildare (W23 NX63) where they will be displayed in our offices and on our website, and we will send you lots of information about our work and resources.

For the teacher

It’s important to remember that children in your classroom may have varied understandings and sometimes personal experiences of migration. This may require some preparation and extra discussion before using this resource in the classroom.

List of sources:
Effects of the Famine: wesleyjohnson.com
Trócaire in South Sudan: trocaire.org/whatwedo/wherewework/south-sudan
UNICEF: unicef.org/eca/resources_28329.html
UNHCR global trends: unhcr.org/globaltrends2016
United Nations High Council for Refugees: unhrc.org

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