Pull Factors of Human Migration

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The causes of human migration can be categorized as either push or pull factors. Pull factors are generally positive, and attract people to a new location. Click each button to learn more about pull factors.

Arable Land

Arable Land

Pull factor for people who want to establish a farm and produce food

Arable land, which is land that is suitable for growing crops, serves as a pull factor for people who want to establish a farm and produce food. Arable land has been an important pull factor throughout human history.

Economic Opportunity

Economic Opportunity

Many immigrants migrated to the American colonies for economic opportunities

People often move to a new location in search of economic opportunities. Even before the United States was established as a nation, immigrants were migrating to the American colonies seeking economic opportunities. The pull factor has remained an important part of America's cultural identity, as many immigrants continue to come to the U.S. for the chance to earn a better living.

Ethnic and Family Ties

Ethnic and Family Ties
Immigrants try to reunite with family members

People may be motivated to move to an area based on existing family or ethnic ties. Many immigrants attempt to reunite with family members who have already migrated to an area. Additionally, numerous immigrants are pulled to ethnic enclaves with nicknames like Chinatown or Little Italy, in order to protect themselves and preserve cultural traditions.

Land Availability

Land Availability

Many people left the eastern U.S. to claim land in the West

The availability of land has the potential to pull people to a new region. For example, during the mid-nineteenth century, many people without land left the eastern United States for the chance to claim available land in the West.

Political Freedom and Stability

Political Freedom and Stability

Politically stable areas are less likely to experience conflict

Berlin Wall, 1988

Political freedom is a powerful pull factor for human migration. After the end of World War II, the German city of Berlin was divided among the democratic Allied powers, and the communist government of the USSR. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, people regularly attempted to escape the confines of communist East Berlin to immigrate to the democratic West Berlin. Politically stable areas are also pull factors, since these areas are less likely to experience politically motivated conflict.

Religious Freedom and Unity

When a country has a government that offers religious freedom, it pulls people from a variety of faiths, particularly if they are victims of religious persecution. Religious unity can also serve as a pull factor. For instance, Israel is viewed as a Jewish state, and pulls many immigrants who are members of the Jewish faith.