

A GLOBAL issue in the classroom: Migration

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Self-access discussions

The session “A GLOBAL issue in the classroom: Migration” shows ways of integrating teaching language and the topic of migration, an issue that affects everyone’s life. EFL can serve as the terrain of social awareness raising and through the discussion of topical issues can also be intellectually motivating for the learners. The session demonstrates how to build interesting activities involving all four skills starting from vocabulary work through talking about opinions then examining arguments and finally deciding on actions in a problem solving task.

The materials of the session have been collected in this folder in four sections: VOCABULARY, OPINIONS, ARGUMENTS and ACTIONS. Feel free to browse, to think about the issues raised and to consider how you could use the activities presented here in your EFL class. You can work on your own or discuss your ideas with friends, colleagues or someone you have just met here. Each section contains the description or a basic idea for the activities and the materials that can be used. If you’d like to check out how the activities actually work, please use the cards in the envelopes attached to each section.

Please leave the folder here when you have finished, so that others can also have a go. The materials, the ideas and the sources will be uploaded to the IATEFL Global Issues SIG website (<http://gisig.iatefl.org>) in about two weeks after this conference.

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1., VOCABULARY

What is the difference between these terms?

Immigrant
Migrant
Economic migrant
Refugee
Asylum seeker

*(Maybe also:
Emigrant
Expatriate
Exile
Displaced person)*

A more controlled version would be to match the words and definitions:

Immigrant	a person who comes to a country in order to settle there
Migrant	a person that moves from one region, place, or country to another
Economic migrant	a person who moves from one region, place, or country to another in order to improve his or her standard of living
Refugee	a person who has fled from some danger or problem, esp. political persecution
Asylum seeker	a person who, from fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, social group, or political opinion, has crossed an international frontier into a country in which he or she hopes to be granted refugee status
Emigrant	a person who leaves one place or country, esp. a native country, to settle in another
Expatriate	a person who lives in a foreign country
Exile	a person banished or living away from his home or country; expatriate
Displaced person	a person forced from his home or country, esp. by war or revolution

Definitions from: Collins English Dictionary

How would you describe the people who are leaving their homes in the Middle East or Africa and hoping to settle in Europe in large numbers in our days? What adjectives would you use?

Why do different people use different words for these people?

What difficulties are these people facing?

2., OPINIONS

What do you think of these statements and quotes?

- A Syrian refugee gave birth in a Szeged hospital and was released to go in two days.
- In a summer student camp at Lake Balaton, a 7th grade Budapest child (age 13) threatened a 6th grader of mixed race with a knife and told him to get out of the country.
- The Hungarian government has not contributed to/does not contribute to the care of refugees.
- The treatment of the refugees has given Hungary a bad reputation.
- A young refugee boy has carried his small puppy with him all the way from Syria. Another has brought his kitten.
- The efforts of the civilians in looking after the refugees is admirable and humbling. Still, many bloggers on the internet show great disrespect to them.
- Students in a Budapest secondary school made several thousand scones for refugees but it turned out that some spat in the dough.
- The fence erected on the border of Hungary and Serbia is a very effective way to deal with refugees.
- Protecting our borders is more important than seeing to the needs and wishes of the refugees.
- The European Commission and the governments of the individual countries have delayed dealing with the migration issue too long.
- Settling the refugees would mean a welcome diversification in Europe.
- "If Europe fails on the question of refugees, its close connection with universal civil rights will be destroyed." (Chancellor Angela Merkel)
- "These broken lives compromise the dignity of the international community and we are in danger of losing our humanity." (President Mattarella of Italy)
- "We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners," added Francis, who was born in Argentina to Italian parents. "I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants." (Pope Francis in the US)
- "Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War. This presents us with great challenges and many hard decisions. On this continent, too, thousands of persons are led to travel north in search of a better life for themselves and for their loved ones, in search of greater opportunities. Is this not what we want for our own children? We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their

stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal. We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to discard whatever proves troublesome. Let us remember the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Pope Francis in the US)

- “Anyone who saw those pictures overnight could not help but be moved and, as a father, I felt deeply moved by the sight of that young boy on a beach in Turkey. Britain is a moral nation and we will fulfil our moral responsibilities. [...] We are taking thousands of people, and we will take thousands of people.” (Prime Minister David Cameron)

- “We need a comprehensive solution, a new government in Libya, we need to deal with the problems in Syria. [...] I would say the people responsible for these terrible scenes we see, the people most responsible, are President Assad in Syria and the butchers of Isil [Islamic State] and the criminal gangs that are running this terrible trade in people. And we have to be as tough on them at the same time.” (Prime Minister David Cameron)

- “While German voters initially rallied behind Ms. Merkel’s decision, earlier this month, to open the country’s doors to tens of thousands of refugees stranded in Hungary, opinion polls have since shown growing concern about the scale of the influx, while several towns and cities have complained they were barely coping with the rising numbers.” (The Wall Street Journal, 24 September, 2015)

- “There is a psychological imperative at work. Public attitudes shaped by the nation’s history make it difficult for Germany to pursue the “keep-them-out” approach. Its government has shown more generosity than most in distributing aid packages to arriving refugees. But there is pragmatism too. Low fertility rates make the need for migrants a reality. This is less often discussed, but nevertheless it is an important part of the analysis in Berlin. Some projections show the country’s population is set to drop by 18 million people by 2060.” (The Guardian, 21 August, 2015)

- Europe needs migrants and for that to happen in a decent, sustainable way, legal channels need to be opened, and resources devoted to integration. This is an existential issue, not one that can be solved by haggling over the “Calais jungle” or bickering over quotas. (The Guardian, 21 August, 2015)

- “France had been reluctant to open its doors to migrants crossing the Mediterranean in perilous circumstances, but the government shifted position last week and now backs Berlin’s push for a permanent and mandatory mechanism for distributing refugees across the EU. Germany is expecting to receive about 800,000 asylum applications in 2015, more than the whole of the EU combined last year. The quota system will be formally presented by European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker on Wednesday.” (The Financial Times, 7 September, 2015)

- “The French president said the borders of the EU passport-free Schengen zone needed to be strengthened with the establishment of centres to identify and register migrants when they arrive, sifting plausible refugees from migrants from countries deemed to be safe. The latter would then have to be sent back home, he said.” (The Financial Times, 7 September, 2015)

- “Mr Hollande implicitly criticised Hungary, one of the most hardline opponents of a more welcoming stance to migrants and which erected a razor wire fence to protect its southern border earlier this year.” (The Financial Times, 7 September, 2015)

- Viktor Orban, Hungary’s prime minister, is a pugnacious opponent of immigration. His stance is shared not only by many of his people but also by plenty in other eastern European countries. Whereas 96% of Germans approve in principle of taking in refugees (and 59% support taking in more now), 71% of Czechs are against taking any. How to explain this discrepancy? (The Economist, 19 September, 2015)

- “Those arriving have been raised in another religion, and represent a radically different culture. Most of them are not Christians, but Muslims,” Mr. Orban wrote in a commentary for Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung, a German newspaper. “This is an important question, because Europe and European identity is rooted in Christianity.” “Is it not worrying in itself that European Christianity is now barely able to keep Europe Christian?” Mr. Orban asked. “There is no alternative, and we have no option but to defend our borders.”

“I want to underline that for me, Christianity in public and social life means a duty to our brothers in need,” Mr. Tusk said as he stood alongside Mr. Orban. (The New York Times, 4 September, 2015)

- “We don’t want to criticize France, Belgium, any other country,” he [i.e., Viktor Orbán] said, but “we think all countries have a right to decide whether they want to have a large number of Muslims in their countries. If they want to live together with them, they can. We don’t want to and I think we have a right to decide that we do not want a large number of Muslim people in our country. We do not like the consequences of having a large number of Muslim communities that we see in other countries, and I do not see any reason for anyone else to force us to create ways of living together in Hungary that we do not want to see.” (The New York Times, 4 September, 2015)

- Julia Klöckner, a senior member of Chancellor Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union: ... both sides have obligations – Germany to promote integration, for example with language courses, and immigrants to be willing to integrate. She added: “When fathers say that they do not talk with their children’s teachers, you have to ask them how they imagine their future in Germany.” (<http://www.breitbart.com/london/2015/09/28/senior-politician-calls-immigrants-adapt-liberal-germany/>)

- (For Hungarian speakers only) „Barátaim, parázslík körülöttünk a világ, át-át csap határainkon egy és más gonosz szél, de elmondhatjuk: a mi fedelünk alatt még mindig jutott és jut menedék a hadak úzte menekülőnek. S megtanultuk, hogy jó, ha az emberi élet, a szellemi érték védelmében kinek mije van - pénze, ereje, szakértelme - azt a másokéval összedobja. Hogy az egyérekéük okosan teszik, ha összefognak közös és jogos érdekeik védelmére és érvényesítésére. [...] Mert ha fagyot lehel körülöttünk a világ, egymást kell melengetnünk. S helyet kell szorítanunk magunk között a gyöngébbnek, a meleget áhítónak. Aki, meglehet, épp a gyűlölet, a magány vagy a nyomorúság teléből kéredzkezik közénk.” (Göncz Árpád, 31 December, 1992)

Find out what others think about these.

If you disagree: what is at the core of your disagreement? Is your disagreement based on emotions or facts?

How aware are you of the objective **facts** regarding the migration issue? Are there any views that you hold as facts but if you think more thoroughly about them, you have to realize that you don’t really know if they are true?

How do you make sure to base your opinion on facts rather than superficial statements and emotions?

.....

The statements and quotations as a prompt for discussions, presentations, writing tasks, etc.

Pictures can also be used.

The Hungarian text (the last in the list) can be used for a mediation task.

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3., ARGUMENTS

Explain that fear of anything/anyone different from us is an ancient instinct going back to prehistoric times when intruders were a threat to the livelihood of a group or tribe. (We can easily observe this in animals, particularly those living in groups.) It takes a lot of learning, willingness and openness to master ways of accepting strangers and disregarding the differences of origins. But it can be done.

- Lead-in:

Many people are afraid of / annoyed with migrants/refugees. What are their fears or annoyances? What are these fears/annoyances based on? What do these fears/annoyances stem from?

- Sts: List some fears/annoyances that you can think of and then try to give a logical explanation or a supported counter argument

(Alternative: the items in the list are provided separately and they have to be matched, i.e., the sts read all of them probably)

List different fears / annoyances	Give a logical explanation or counter argument
They will want to convert Europe to become Muslim.	Islam is not an aggressive conversionist religion.
They have money and expensive IT equipment.	Most refugees are middle class and have brought what they could save of their possessions. The IT equipment is essential for them to acquire information....

<p>They refuse food that is offered to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We don't always give "well". We should observe their dietary needs more. - On occasions they were "offered" food in an unacceptable way. In crowded and disorganised refugee centres they were thrown food from outside the fence.
<p>They leave a lot of rubbish behind.</p>	<p>They often have no other choice. In many of the places they are there are no adequate ways to get rid of rubbish.</p>
<p>They spread disease.</p>	<p>Not any more than anybody else. On the contrary: because they are weak, their immune system is down, they catch diseases. The hardships during migration also contribute to their injuries, skin and other infections, colds, respiratory problems, dehydration, etc.</p>
<p>They are dirty.</p>	<p>Migrants do not have the facilities to wash themselves or their clothes properly.</p>
<p>Many must be terrorists; most of them are young men.</p>	<p>Many young men aim to settle somewhere safe and find employment before bringing their families to safety. Also, many families in the affected areas cannot leave but spend all their money on sending their teenage or young adult children to safety abroad.</p>
<p>They must be very cruel to submit their families to the ordeal of migration.</p>	<p>They are not. Often this is their last resort, they are fleeing to save their lives.</p>

<p>They will take our jobs.</p>	<p>1., From the point of view of Hungary: While many of them are well trained in different trades and professions, they do not want to settle in Hungary, they don't speak Hungarian, they could not take our jobs. In fact, Hungary would need many skilled people in different jobs. 2., From the point of view of the EU: Many countries have jobs that they can offer to new settlers. They are in need of new workforce so much that they would invest money in training, language education and welfare, too.</p>
<p>It is not good/healthy to have people of different cultural backgrounds live in our country.</p>	<p>On the contrary: Diversity is richness. It makes communities more colourful, more knowledgeable, more adaptable, more considerate, more accepting...</p>
<p>They are aggressive and not as humble as they should be.</p>	<p>- Re aggression: Since the influx of refugees started, we have not heard about cases of aggression initiated by the refugees. The kind of aggression that has happened on occasion can happen in any group of people living in crowded spaces, under stress, in desperate circumstances, and at the mercy of other people or authorities. - Re humility: (Just like respect) humility should be earned and not required. People who are in a situation help or to give to others should not do this in exchange for humility but out of goodwill.</p>
<p>Many of them are criminals, so the rate of crime will increase.</p>	<p>Yes, there must be criminals among them just as in any other group of people. But criminals constitute a small minority of any community. Most people everywhere – and thus among migrants, too – are law-abiding.</p>
<p>They will want to mould Europe according to their taste, introduce Sharia law, etc.</p>	<p>Currently approx. 7% of Europe's population is muslim. While many of them live in enclaves and have observed their religion and kept their cultural heritage, they have not aimed to change Europe.</p>

This whole migration is financed by IS	There is no proof for this.
The refugees get a per diem in Hungary from the government. They are given better care than a lot of local poor people in need.	This is simply not true. Those who intend to stay here and are granted refugee status are accommodated in refugee camps – in rather harsh circumstances – and are supported till they establish their own existence in Hungary. This is not financed at the expense of supporting the poor and others who are in need. The national budget certainly does not spend enough on humanitarian causes, education and healthcare, but this budget has been decided on by the government and accepted by the Parliament, i.e., MPs elected by the people.
They ruined the crops and stole from people's gardens in villages near the border where they came in.	Much of the damage was collateral and if stealing happened it must have been committed out of basic needs, like hunger.

Blank cards can also be used for the students to write their own ideas and arguments.

N.B. It might be a good idea to put the statements and the (counter)arguments on different coloured cards to make them easier to distinguish. Take care to make the cards roughly the same size.

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4., ACTIONS

What could/should be done about migrants and migration in Europe? What would be the logical order? (You can indicate it if some things should happen alongside one another.)

- Setting up “hot spots” in frontline countries at places where migrants enter the EU, i.e., places where the migrants would be:

- informed about what to expect,
- registered for further processing,
- filtered according to their status (refugee, legal immigrant, irregular migrant, etc.)
- given initial health care if needed
- accommodated to recuperate before moving on.
- etc.

- Organising public information campaigns to educate the population of EU countries about refugees/migrants and the value of diversity. What exactly should be done? What should the campaigns consist of?

- Including the issue of migration in particular and diversity in general in the curricula of various school subjects. What subject should be involved?

- Including social awareness raising into school curricula with elements for skills development in co-operation and emotion management.

- Investigating and prosecute networks of people smugglers.

- Organising a clear system of allocating refugees in Europe.

- Creating easy-to-digest information for the local population about the refugees and how to best help them.

- Mapping job and study opportunities in Europe and inform the migrants about these.

- Letting migrants know about what to expect in Europe, and about particular countries so that they could be placed in a country in an informed manner.
- Integrating immigrants into their new environment through education (language and culture) and involving their new local communities.
- Strengthening the guarding of borders.
- Building more and thicker fences to keep migrants out.
- Supporting refugee camps in the vicinity of the countries of origin of the refugees.
- Organising military intervention to eradicate the problems in countries issuing refugees.
- Reallocating funds from building fences to providing humanitarian aid.
- Anything else?

And what can individuals do?

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Summary of the European Agenda on Migration

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