

2.4 Migration and the Caribbean



Digital Library

Main Idea Many Caribbean people migrate to other countries to find economic opportunities and help support their families back home.

People **migrate**, or move from one place to another, because of push-pull factors. Push factors make people move away from an area because of difficulties like war or drought. Pull factors draw people to a place because it offers more security and better job opportunities.

Migration Within the Caribbean

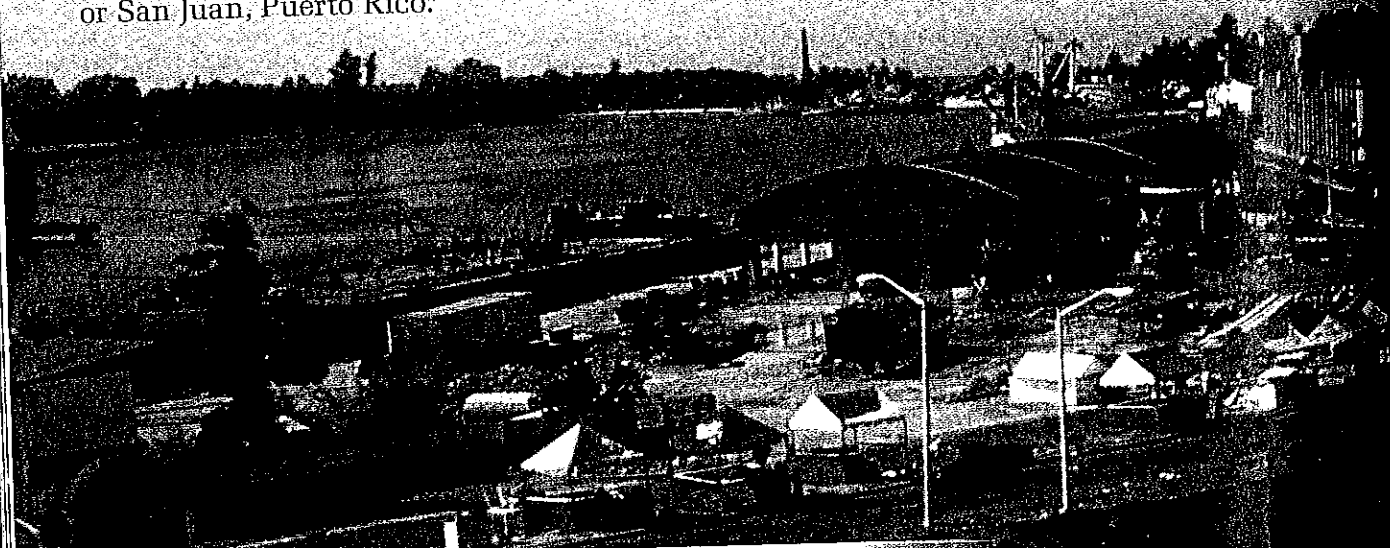
Today, it is hard to make a living on many Caribbean islands. The collapse of major businesses, including the sugar industry, has pushed workers out of rural areas into cities to find work. As a result of this internal migration, or migration within a country or region, two-thirds of the population now lives in cities such as Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic or San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Many of these cities have become overcrowded. Urban unemployment is high in the Caribbean. Migrants seeking better jobs and a higher standard of living have been forced to travel to other islands within the Caribbean region.

By the 1990s, the tourism industry had expanded dramatically across the region. The demand for workers pulled many people to islands with large or growing tourist industries, such as Aruba, the Bahamas, and the Virgin Islands.

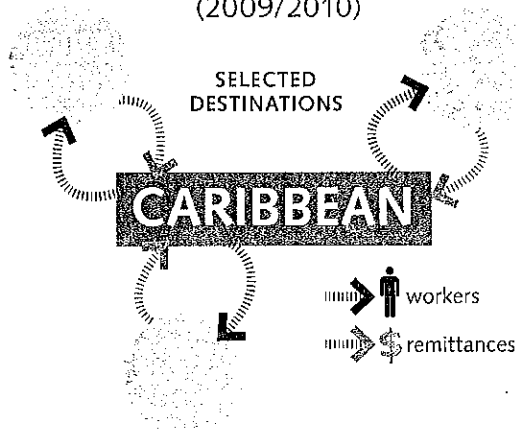
Migration Out of the Caribbean

At the same time, push-pull factors played a part in workers leaving to go the United States, Canada, Europe, and other places. For example, political conflict in Cuba and Haiti pushed people to migrate to the United States.




Critical Viewing Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, the oldest city founded by Europeans in the Western Hemisphere has a growing population. Based on the photo, what economic opportunities might exist in Santo Domingo?

WORKERS LEAVING THE REGION (2009/2010)



SELECTED REMITTANCES

Honduras

 \$564 million

El Salvador

 \$233 million

Dominican Republic

 \$152 million

Jamaica

 \$79 million

Source: World Bank Online

Remittances

Most migrants who find work in another country send money back to their families in the form of **remittances**, money sent to a person in another place. Remittances have become a significant part of the economy of some Caribbean countries. For example, Jamaica receives more than \$79 million each year in official aid, or money from other governments or organizations. However, the island receives 27 times that figure (see chart at right) in remittances. These remittances are sent from relatives in other countries, such as the United States, Canada, and France.

Before You Move On

Summarize How are people who migrate out of the Caribbean able to help support their families back home?

ONGOING ASSESSMENT

DATA LAB

- Analyze Visuals** Based on the graphic, what goes out of the Caribbean, and what comes back in?
- Analyze Data** What brings more money into countries in this region, official aid or remittances? How does the graphic show this?
- Draw Conclusions** How do remittances help to ease the strain of poverty in the region?