

Immigration



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Immigration. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the word Immigration. We hear it a lot of this in the news, on social media and even in our own communities. But what does it really mean? According to Oxford Dictionary, the definition for Immigration is: ‘The action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country.’ But does this really affect us?

According to the British Government, there were 137.9 million passenger arrivals in the year ending March 2018, including returning UK residents, an increase of 6.0 million compared to the previous year: a record number. This increase was divided between:

3.1 million more arrivals by British, other EEA and Swiss nationals (up 3% to 118.0 million)

2.9 million more by non-EEA nationals (up 17% to 19.9 million)

These numbers represent the number of occasions when a person entered the UK, not the number of distinct individuals.



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“If you were president would you accept this immigrant into your country?”

We conducted a survey for secondary students with this question and the results are as followed:

70% of students said “YES”

20% of students said “NO”

10% of students said “DON’T CARE”

We interviewed an immigrant from Eritrea who settled in the UK. This is his story: “My name is Tesfay Awate I am 15 years old, I was born in Eritrea- a small country in the horn of Africa. My government has enforced an armed service policy on the

population where they would force people to serve the army. It was the year of 2014 and I was only 11 years old, military men came to our house looking for my brother who had been with them but came for a holiday but had disappeared in the process; me and my family were threatened with arrest if my brother didn't come back even though we had no idea where he was or where he had gone missing. After witnessing how they had treated me I knew it had gotten to the point where I had to leave. Thus, my journey to England began.

At night time at around 9 pm I left my town off to a mountainous region in Ethiopia on the border. The journey took about 30 mins on foot. However, the threat of bombs and hyenas roaming did not make it any better. I stayed there for about a year and a half at a camp. There was no education and I really missed my family. On the other hand, I did get a chance to speak to my uncle twice. He told me that he was sending someone and that I should follow them.

At night time me and around 30 other people made our way to Sudan, then at around midnight we were put into large lorries. The journey took around a week and unfortunately not everyone made it. When we got there, we were housed into big houses, where about 70 people were staying.

Next, we moved to Cairo where there was a lack of food and shortage of water. We were tired and we felt we would die in the mountains of Cairo. After many hours our travel guide showed up and had brought with him water, bread and cheese. Later that day a bus came to take us into the main part of Cairo, it was the freest place I had been to so far. But not too soon afterward, we were caught by local officers and sent back to my home country. We stayed there for a month.

We then moved to a house near the sea and after two days we boarded a small boat to Italy- we were told it would take two days. When sunrise came, we had to move into a bigger boat because we were all so crammed. On the sixth day there was a very strong wave and we were all certain we would die-my friend even said goodbye to me because he was sure he would die! Eight days later we arrived in Sicily, Italy- it was probably the most unexpected thing that had happened to us as we never thought that we would make it out of that storm alive. We then found ourselves in a red cross tent, they gave us food, water and they clothed us. Compared to what I had already been through; this was like heaven! Next, we went to Milan by train. We stayed in Milan for 10 days and then boarded a train to France without paying. We knew there would be a very high risk of us getting arrested but we took our chances as we knew that there was hope for a better life after our fatigue journey.

From the border between France and Italy, we tried to walk into France at night. However, in the morning French policemen put us back on trains back to Italy. We stayed in a church for 5 days and every night we would try and cross the boarder but always be sent back. On the fifth day we climbed up a mountain and each paid 50 euros to a man to take us to Paris through the mountains. On top of the mountain the man told us where to go and where the police would be etc... He then left us all go on our separate ways, we all got separated through the process. When we got to the city, we found a train station and climbed over the fence. The man on the train asked us each to pay 100 euros, my friend had enough and paid for us. We then landed in Paris.

We then got on a train to Calais and in Calais we went into a jungle-lorries passing the highway to Dover were stopped by big branches planted on the road by us, and we jumped onto them, then we used knives to get into the lorries. Police stopped the lorries and sprayed mace into it and used smoke guns on those who tried to run away from the lorries; it was truly brutal. We finally landed in Dover where I was sent to a police station, they told me I wouldn't be accepted in England, but they could send me back to France. I refused and so they questioned me for about two hours. I spent the night in the station. They then bought me to my current house. Now I am almost two years into my new life – and it couldn't be better. I have a good foster carer who comes from the same country as me and has the same religious views. I'm studying, I've got an ID card to move around freely and my best friend is also well. The story started difficult; it's going well now."

People that have immigrated to other parts of the world should be accepted, great leaders in the world for example Donald J. Trump have been planning to build a wall at the Mexican border, we should be conscious that immigrants are human and they deserve the same rights as all of us. "Borders don't stop people trespassing, it just makes their life harder."

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