

Migration Comprehensive Examination Questions (updated: April 21, 2021)

1. Do you agree that immigrants' transnational activities hinder their integration in the host country? Discuss how researchers have conceptualized and operationalized "transnationalism" and "integration" first and explain your answer to the above question.
2. Explain in what ways today's immigrants in Canada incorporate into the host country labour markets differently along the lines of their education, host country language skills, and race/ethnicity. And discuss whether and to what extent the human capital and discrimination approaches can help explain their diverse experiences.
3. Explain in what ways today's immigrant offspring in Canada (the 1.5 and second generations) incorporate into the host societies differently along the lines of their race/ethnicity, class, and gender. And discuss whether and to what extent the existing theories on assimilation can help explain their diverse experiences.
4. The term "visible minority" has become increasingly used in larger political discourse in relation to discussions of inequality, systemic racism, equity programs, and the like. But given the different class and status trajectories of the various groups included in the category and the wide disparity in achievements in terms of income, status, education, and the other indicators of success in our society, discuss whether the concept is still meaningful and if so, in what way(s).
5. Is Canada a "land of opportunity" for immigrants? What factors might account for the challenges that immigrants face in realizing their dreams of upward mobility?
6. What is the current "balance" between permanent resident and temporary resident migration to Canada today? Is temporary migration for the purposes of work starting to replace Canada's historical preference for permanent immigrants?
7. Explain in what ways the integration of immigrants to the host country is gendered. In your answer, discuss at least five examples from the migration comprehensive examination reading list.
8. Suppose you, as a sociologist, are tasked to develop evidence-based policy to help new immigrants in Canada better achieve political and social integration. What kinds of policy recommendations will you make? Propose and discuss at least four recommendations.
9. Suppose you, as a sociologist, are tasked to develop evidence-based policy to help skilled immigrants in Canada achieve better economic integration. What kinds of policy recommendations will you make? Propose and discuss at least four recommendations.
10. Choose two theories on international migration from Massey (1993) and/or deHaas et al. (2020). Summarize each theory in 1-2 pages, and then discuss each theory's strengths and weaknesses in explaining today's international migration patterns.

11. Do you agree that the concept of superdiversity can better explain the integration patterns of today's ethnic minority immigrant offspring (the 1.5 and second generations) in Canada than the concept of assimilation? Discuss how researchers have conceptualized "superdiversity" and "assimilation" first and explain your answer to the above question.

12. Do you agree that Canada's immigration policies are "exceptional" in comparison to immigration policies in other developed immigrant-receiving countries (e.g. the US, Australia)? Support your argument using examples from the migration comprehensive examination reading list.

13. Do you agree that the integration patterns of children of immigrants in Canada are "exceptional" in comparison to those in other wealthy Western countries (e.g. the US, the UK, Australia)? Support your argument using examples from the migration comp reading list.

14. Borders and their regulation have taken on heightened importance in an increasingly interconnected world. This globalization has been accompanied by a growing commercialization in cross-border mobility. Drawing from literature engaged in the migration comprehensive examination reading list, what are some ways in which borders are increasingly being patrolled? What is considered at stake in the regulation of these flows, particularly as pertaining to South-North migration? What is the migration industry, and what is their role in regulating international flows? How has the fortification of borders and an accompanying migration industry altered the nature of international migration?

15. Temporary migrant worker programs (TMWPs) are widely regarded as win-win-win arrangements for labour sending states, labour receiving states, and individual migrants. They are also fraught with controversy given a host of challenges that the literature has documented underlying these policies. Drawing from relevant literature, what are the benefits and shortcomings associated with temporary migrant worker programs? How do immigration controls shape these challenges in the areas of work and labour markets? What do these programs tell us about the nature of citizenship and prospects of incorporation in Western countries like Canada?