



World in transition: Migration and Trade

Establishing migrant communities in London

Narrator

This programme is about two London communities living in the same place, but at very different stages of becoming established.

The Greek Cypriots who originally came here to escape rural poverty and Ethiopians who have been fleeing from persecution and conflict in more recent years.

In 1996 the Greek Orthodox arch-Diocese reported that in London alone there were more than a quarter of a million Greek and Greek Cypriot people, many living in north London. Most Cypriots came to join and work with relatives. Close family ties and shared experiences including memories of a liberation struggle, cause them to stick together, socially, economically and politically.

Floya Anthias, University of Greenwich

Greek Cypriot migration can be looked at in terms of three different stages of migration. There was a period in the 1930's when Greek Cypriots came over, primarily because of rural poverty. The biggest migration period took place during the late 50's and early 60's, partly for political reasons, because of what was happening in Cyprus at the time, which was the national conflict, you know, what some people call the anti colonial struggle, but also for again economic reasons. There was a lot of poverty in Cyprus during this period.

Narrator

There are now over twenty thousand Ethiopians living in Britain, mainly in the capital. Nearly all have left their country under dramatic circumstances.

Alemhayu Dessie, Ethiopian Community in Britain

It's true. We come empty handed. See you don't even have the chance of picking your own clothes when you leave your country desperately, but to be able to get a job and earn something in a year or two, is impossible.