



Core units: Key understandings – Years 7–8

Illustration 1: Internal migration in China

Peng the unemployed security guard's story

Peng has been living in Shenyang, Liaoning Province, since he was eighteen. He lived with four other men from close to his home village in a room five metres square that costs each of them ten yuan a day. He desperately needed work to pay the rent and buy food. Peng, a former farmer from the age of thirteen, from Liaoning Province, called his village a 'poor old place'. He aimed to be the family breadwinner to support his father and uncle's families back home. With his first wage of 1,300 yuan (\$200) per month he sent two-thirds of the money home but he was dismissed from his job guarding a three star hotel by an overbearing, bullying supervisor. Courageously, he decided to try his luck in Beijing and boarded a bus in a strenuous ten hour-long journey. Unfortunately, the firm that he tried to work for were unscrupulous employers that confiscated his ID and then refused to pay him. After returning home to his village a number of times he set out again for Shenyang but has yet to find work.

Source: Adapted from Pai. H. (2012). *Scattered sand: The story of China's rural migrants*. London: Verso.