



Core units: Key understandings – Years 7–8

Illustration 1: Internal migration in China

## Lei the young mother's story

... quieter residents are moving in — grandparents. They spend the day sitting around the few playgrounds and putting baby clothes out to dry on the fences. They have come because their children, who work for Foxconn, have called them in to babysit. Lei, 23, from Hunan Province, has a son aged two and a half: "My parents were migrant workers round here too, and because they were registered in the country, I couldn't get into a school [migrants don't have the same access to public services as locals]. So they left me at home in our village. When I was a child, I only saw them once a year, at the New Year. I don't want my son to be as lonely as I was. I want him to go to school here, even if I have to pay."

Lei and her husband rent a room with just 9 square metres, for 350 yuan (\$55) a month, just big enough for a mattress, a television set and the child's pushchair. Lei's husband assembles Cisco landline phones, 12 hours a day, six days a week. He earns a good living: up to 4,000 yuan (\$631) a month. Lei stopped working when their son was born. Now she is pregnant again. When the baby is born, she will send for her (now retired) parents and go back to work, to double the household's income.

Source: Adapted from *Le Monde diplomatique*: English version. Article by Jordan Pouille. Retrieved October 2012, from: <http://mondediplo.com/2012/07/07/foxconn>.

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