

Immigrant Group Dispersion: Who Migrates Internally and Where Do They Go?

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As evidence grows that immigrants are dispersing to new destinations throughout the United States, many questions are being raised about the determinants and consequences of these settlement shifts. To date, researchers have carried out studies on the changes underway in immigrants' settlement patterns (Durand et al. 2000; Frey & Liaw 2006; Funkhouser, 2000 #639; Goździak & Martin 2005; Lichter & Johnson 2006; Massey & Capoferro 2008), the characteristics of places receiving immigrants (Donato et al. 2007), the economic and social forces attracting immigrants to new destinations (Hernández-León & Zúñiga 2000; Johnson-Webb 2002; Parrado & Kandel 2008), group relations between immigrants and natives in new destinations (Winders 2005), and integration processes (Bohon et al. 2005; Leach & Bean 2008). A parallel body of research focuses on the shifting settlement patterns of Latinos given that native-born Latinos as well as their foreign-born counterparts are also moving to new destinations (Fischer & Tienda 2006; Kandel & Parrado 2004, 2005; Lichter & Johnson 2009; Millard & Chapa 2004; Parrado & Kandel 2008; Singer 2004; Suro & Singer 2002; Zúñiga & Hernández-León 2005). One question that has not yet been addressed in the literature is whether immigrants who are moving to new destinations are likely to settle permanently in those places? This is an important question since new destinations are probably not places to which most immigrants have close community ties or where they are likely to find informal or institutional support systems comparable to those available to them in large metropolitan places. This paper examines whether immigrants in new destinations are more likely to migrate than their counterparts in traditional areas and considers how economic and social conditions in different labor markets condition out-migration.

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