

## **UC Irvine**

### **UC Irvine Previously Published Works**

#### **Title**

Moving Patterns of Immigrant Settlement and Spatial Mobility

#### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1mv5c1j5>

#### **Authors**

Portes, Alejandro  
Rumbaut, Ruben G

#### **Publication Date**

2014

Peer reviewed

DRAFT – DO NOT DISTRIBUTE, QUOTE OR CITE WITHOUT THE AUTHORS' PERMISSION.

# **IMMIGRANT AMERICA: A PORTRAIT**

(4th edition, forthcoming)

**Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut**

## **Chapter 3**

### **Moving: Patterns of Immigrant Settlement and Spatial Mobility**

In the aftermath of World War I, the National Research Council initiated a series of “scientific studies of the causes and effects of migration.” One of these investigations, published in 1926 as *Migration and Business Cycles*, focused on “the shortage and surplus of labor in the United States in its relation to immigration and emigration.” Its author, the economist Harry Jerome, concluded that the inflow of population was “on the whole dominated by conditions in the United States. The ‘pull’ is stronger than the push.”<sup>1</sup> By that time, the gradual integration of the world economy had advanced sufficiently to make many Europeans aware of economic opportunities on the other side of the Atlantic, so deliberate recruitment became unnecessary. The question remains, however, about the destination of these flows. Labor economists frequently write as if immigrants have perfect information about labor market conditions in the receiving country and adjust their locational decisions accordingly.

The reality is very different because a number of factors other than wage differentials impinge on the actual destination of migrant flows. This chapter examines the locational distribution of immigrant groups with an emphasis both on diversity among nationalities and types of migration and on the unequal distribution of the foreign-born population in space. Although our main interest is on contemporary trends, we must go back in time, because the roots of the locational patterns of immigrants arriving today are often found in events that took place earlier in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

## **The Pioneers**

The settlement decisions of contemporary immigrants are decisively affected by the ethnic concentrations established by their compatriots in the past. Because earlier flows consisted overwhelmingly of manual laborers, it is important to examine first how these foreign working-class communities came to settle where they did. A first significant factor was geographical propinquity. It is not by chance that the bulk of European immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century settled along the mid- and north-Atlantic seaboard while their Asian counterparts settled in California and other Pacific states. It is also not surprising that the bulk of early Mexican immigration concentrated in the Southwest, especially along the border. For immigrant workers, proximity to the homeland has two important economic consequences: first, for those who come on their own, it reduces the costs of the journey; second, for everyone, it reduces the costs of return, which most labor migrants plan to undertake at some point. In those cases where migration occurs along a land border, as with Mexicans, proximity to the sending area also provides a familiar physical and climatic environment.

The impact of propinquity is most vividly reflected in those immigrant communities established right by the waterside, at points of debarkation in port cities of both coasts. The “Little Italys” huddled close to the water in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and the “Chinatowns” of San Francisco and other cities, offer living testimony of a type of immigration that, having reached U.S. shores, would go no farther.<sup>2</sup>

This is not the whole story, however, because many other groups pushed inland. For foreign laborers, the decisive factor for the latter type of settlement was recruitment either in the home country or at ports of entry. The concentration of some Central and Eastern European peoples in the Midwest reflects the development of heavy industry in this area more than a century ago—first steel and later auto making. This concentration was coupled with the minimal

skills required for most new industrial jobs, which made recruiting cheap immigrant labor attractive to employers. Consequences of this recruitment pattern have long endured: While only 4 percent of the foreign-born population of the United States in 2000 lived in Ohio, it was the home state of 15 percent of the nation's Croatians, 14 percent of the Hungarians, 15 percent of the Serbs, 22 percent of the Slovaks, and 45 percent of the Slovenians, whose ancestors had come a century earlier.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, during the nineteenth century, labor recruitment by the Hudson and other canal companies moved contingents of Irish and Italian workers inland along the routes followed by canal construction. In the West, Chinese coolie workers also moved inland after mass recruitment by the railway companies.<sup>4</sup> The Union Pacific and the Central Pacific also recruited Mexicans, trainloads of whom were dispatched from El Paso and other border cities. About the same time, Finnish workers made their appearance in northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Michigan Peninsula—hired by the copper mine and timber companies.<sup>5</sup>

Not every group arriving during the nineteenth century consisted exclusively of wage workers, however. Those coming before the Civil War in particular were often able to take advantage of cheap land in the West to go into business for themselves. This was especially the case of German settlers arriving since before the Revolutionary War. Germans were able to push inland toward the sparsely settled lands of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and beyond. In their wake, the landscape of the Midwest became dotted with rural farm enclaves in which the settlers' language and customs dominated.<sup>6</sup>

The influence of what were, in fact, the entrepreneurial migrations of its day have also lasted to the present. Descendants of the original settlers and those coming later on during the nineteenth century represent today the paramount ethnic concentrations throughout the Midwest. In 2009, of the 66 million people who resided in the Midwest (one in five Americans), 20 million reported a primary German ancestry (two of every five German Americans in the country).<sup>7</sup> In the states of Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota and Iowa, between 35 and 45 percent of the population reported German ancestry in 2009, figures that quintuple those corresponding to the English.<sup>8</sup> German Americans have been by far the dominant ethnic group in cities like Milwaukee (45 percent), Cincinnati (39 percent), St. Louis (36 percent), and Indianapolis (27 percent).<sup>9</sup>

A similar pattern of independent Midwest farm settlement was followed by early Scandinavian and Czech immigrants. Scandinavian enclaves in the west north central region and especially in Minnesota and the Dakotas attracted immigrants from the same nationalities throughout the twentieth century. The 2000 census found that the descendants of Norwegian immigrants represented the second largest ancestry group in North Dakota (where over 30 percent of the population was of Norwegian ancestry), Minnesota (over 17 percent) and South Dakota (over 15 percent). Of the approximately 9 million persons of Norwegian and Swedish ancestry in the U.S. in 2009, 45 percent resided in Midwestern states—as did a similar proportion of those of Finnish ancestry, and a third of Danish Americans.<sup>10</sup>

Czech farming made its appearance in Wisconsin around the mid-1800s; from Racine and earlier farming enclaves, Czechs pushed inland toward the Nebraska frontier and then to Oklahoma and Texas. As late as 1990, Czech ancestry still accounted for about 25 percent of the

populations of several rural counties in these states.<sup>11</sup> Remarkably, of the 1.6 million persons who reported a primary Czech ancestry in 2009, 45 percent remained concentrated in the Midwest.<sup>12</sup>

In the Far West, Japanese immigrants attempted to follow the same path by buying land and engaging in independent farming during the early 1900s. In their case, however, land was neither plentiful nor empty. As seen in Chapter 1, Japanese farmers faced the united opposition of domestic growers, who had welcomed their arrival as laborers but who resisted violently their shift into self-employment.<sup>13</sup>

As a consequence of these restrictions and of low level of immigration after the liberalization of U.S. laws in 1965, Japanese-Americans, although a highly successful group, have declined from a high of 850,000 in 1990 to slightly over 750,000 in 2010 (another half a million, however, report mixed- Japanese ethnicity, reflecting high levels of intermarriage. With the notable exception of Hawaii, the Japanese today represent a minuscule proportion of the population of the states where they concentrate.<sup>14</sup>

Pioneer migrants—whether settling close to places of arrival, following labor recruiters inland, or charting an independent course through farming and urban trade in different locations—had a decisive influence on later migrants. Once a group settled in a certain place, the destination of later cohorts from the same country often became a foregone conclusion. Migration is a network-driven process, and the operation of kin and friendship ties is nowhere more effective than in guiding new arrivals toward pre-existing ethnic communities. This process may continue indefinitely and accounts for the high concentration of most foreign groups in certain regions of the country and their near absence from others.

### **Following in the Footsteps**

At the time of the Mexican Revolution in the early 1900s, large contingents of Mexican refugees migrated northward to find employment in the slaughterhouses of Chicago, the breweries of Milwaukee, and the steel mills of Gary, Indiana. Communities established then continue to serve as magnets for Mexican migrants today. Despite the distance and the different climatic conditions, remote villages in the interior of Mexico continued sending their sons, year after year, for a stint of work in the cities of the Midwest.<sup>15</sup>

The same pattern is found in the East, where small Jamaican, Dominican, and Haitian colonies in New York City provided the nucleus for mass labor migration in recent decades. Again distance and a colder climate were no obstacle for these Caribbean migrants to follow in the wake of their predecessors. Out West, most contemporary Asian and Pacific Islander migrations, such as the Japanese and the Filipinos, continue to be overwhelmingly concentrated in their areas of traditional settlement.<sup>16</sup>

The influence of preexisting networks on locational patterns is decisive among contemporary labor migrants because they are not guided by recruiting agents, but by spontaneous individual and family decisions, usually based on the presence in certain places of kin and friends who can provide shelter and assistance. Exceptions to this pattern are found most often among other types of immigrants. Professionals, such as physicians, engineers, and

scientists, tend to rely less on the assistance of preexisting ethnic communities than on their own skills and qualifications. They often come only after securing job offers from U.S. employers and tend to be more dispersed throughout the country than manual labor migrants. Although no foreign group is formed exclusively by professionals and their families, a few—such as recent Indian immigrants—approximate this pattern and provide examples of its characteristic dispersion.<sup>17</sup>

Entrepreneurial minorities tend to settle in large urban areas that provide close proximity to markets and sources of labor. Like working-class migrants, foreign entrepreneurs are often found in the areas of principal ethnic concentration because of the cheap labor, protected markets, and access to credit that they make available. This is the case, for example, of Koreans, concentrated in Los Angeles; Chinese entrepreneurs in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York; and Cubans in Miami. However, other business-minded immigrants choose to move away from areas of ethnic concentration in quest of economic opportunity. The latter are commonly found in the role of middleman merchants and lenders to domestic minorities. Koreans and Chinese in several East Coast cities and Cubans in Puerto Rico provide contemporary examples.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, the early locational patterns of political refugees and seekers of political asylum are often decided for them by government authorities and private resettlement agencies. In the past, the goal of official resettlement programs was to disperse refugee groups away from their points of arrival to facilitate their cultural assimilation and attenuate the economic burden they are supposed to represent for receiving areas. This official decision accounts for the multiplicity of locations in which groups such as the Cubans and the Vietnamese are found today, as well as more recent arrivals from Somalia, Iraq, and Burma. Gradually, however, refugees tend to trek back toward areas closer to their homeland and more compatible in terms of climate and culture. The presence of ethnic communities of the same nationality or a related one has frequently played a decisive role in promoting these secondary migrations.

The rapid growth of the Cuban population in Miami-Dade County, Florida, and of the Vietnamese population in Orange County and San Jose, California, can be traced directly to this process. By 1979, on the eve of the Mariel boatlift, half of the Cuban-origin population of the United States was found in the Miami metropolitan area, a result primarily of return migration by refugees originally resettled elsewhere; by 2000 the national share of Cuban Americans in the Miami area had grown to 60 percent, before declining proportionately in 2010 to about half of their growing national total of 1.8 million. Similarly, by 1990 Orange County had more Vietnamese refugees than any state except California itself, with its hub in the communities of Santa Ana and Westminster ("Little Saigon"), where the Nguyens outnumbered the Smiths 2 to 1 among Orange County home buyers; it was followed by San Jose in northern California. By 2000, Orange County and San Jose accounted for one fifth of all Vietnamese in the country; by 2010, of the 1,550,000 Vietnamese counted by the census, their proportion in the Orange County and San Jose areas remained unchanged at 20 percent. *Calle Ocho* (S.W. 8th Street) in Miami is the heart of "Little Havana"; Bolsa Avenue in Westminster has been called the Vietnamese capital of America.<sup>19</sup>

These various causal processes have led to a settlement pattern among recent immigrants to the United States that combines two apparently contradictory outcomes: concentration,

because a few states and metropolitan areas receive a disproportionate number of the newcomers, and diffusion, because immigrants are found in every state of the Union and because different immigrant types vary significantly in their locational decisions.

### **Changing Contemporary Settlement Patterns: A Map of Immigrant America**

In 1910, at the peak of the era of mass European migration, the census counted a foreign-born population of 10.6 million, or 14.7% of the national total. At that time, the bulk of the immigrant population (62%) was concentrated in seven northern states, though only 39% of the U.S. population lived there: New York (21%), Pennsylvania (10%), Illinois (9%), Massachusetts (8%), New Jersey (5%), and Ohio and Michigan (4% each). In 2010, a century later, 67% of the foreign-born population of 40 million was concentrated in just six states, though again only 39% of the U.S. population lived in those states: California (25%), New York (11%), Texas (10%), Florida (9%), New Jersey (5%), and Illinois (4%). Of those, three states remained from a century earlier as main areas of immigrant concentration, but their combined share of immigrants had decreased from 35% to 20%: New York, New Jersey and Illinois. The rapid growth of southern and western states as new immigrant destinations, notably California -- which by 1990 accounted by itself for one-third of the foreign-born total, but only for 10 percent of the native-born population -- Texas and Florida, reflect the post-war economic and demographic shifts to the country's Sun Belt. This changing geography of immigrant settlement has accompanied, in turn, the change in the national origins of U.S.-bound immigration in recent decades.

[Figures 3.1 and 3.2 about here](#)

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 provide a pair of maps of immigrant settlement by county in the contiguous 48 states at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (based on the last decennial census which collected data on the foreign-born population for each county). The first map shows the absolute number of the foreign-born population residing in each county; the second shows the relative proportion of the foreign-born as a percentage of each county's total population. While vast expanses of the country, particularly in the heartland, contained relatively few immigrants in absolute or relative terms as of 2000, other regions exhibited extraordinary concentrations, especially along the coasts. Large concentrations were apparent throughout much of the entire state of California, most notably along its southern corridor from Los Angeles to San Diego, as well as in South Florida, the northeast coastal corridor extending from Washington DC through Philadelphia, New York City and Boston, and the greater metropolitan areas of Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Phoenix, Atlanta, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and Seattle.

High relative proportions were especially evident in less populated counties along the Mexican border from Texas to California, and more recently in some non-traditional areas of immigrant settlement, notably in North Carolina and Georgia in the southeast, and in Colorado and Nevada in the southwest. This evolving map of immigrant America is updated in Figure 3.3, which displays the proportion of the foreign-born in the fifty states as of 2010, and their number in principal metropolitan areas of immigrant concentration.

[Figure 3.3 about here](#)

The twin processes of continuing concentration as well as diversification in immigrant settlement patterns in recent decades are detailed in Table 3.1. It documents the growing size of the immigrant population in the top six states from 1990 to 2000 to 2010, but also the top ten states ranked by the rate of growth in their foreign-born populations from 1990 to 2010. Despite continuing immigrant population growth in the former, it is the extraordinarily rapid growth of the latter that has called attention to the emergence of “new destinations” in immigrant settlement.<sup>20</sup> During these twenty years, the U.S. immigrant population doubled from 19.8 million in 1990 to 40 million in 2010. In the top six states the foreign-born population increased from 14.4 million to 25.9 million—in California alone it grew from 6.5 million in 1990 to 10.2 million in 2010—but only Texas and Florida exceeded the national growth rate; California and New York grew by just over 50 percent.

By contrast, as shown in Figure 3.4, ten states—all located in the south or in the mountain west—grew by 280 to 525 percent, led by North Carolina and Georgia, and followed by Arkansas, Tennessee, Nevada, South Carolina, Kentucky, Nebraska, Alabama and Utah. The areas experiencing the fastest growth rates were places that had relatively small immigrant populations prior to the 1990s. While the net increase in the number of immigrants in California during this period (nearly 4 million) was larger than the total foreign-born population in those ten fast-growth states combined, the impact of foreigners in regions unused to the incorporation of immigrants produced political reactions by natives at the state and local levels that have shaped the national policy debate, as will be seen in Chapter 5.

[Table 3.1 and Figure 3.4 about here](#)

To be sure, different nationalities settle in different places. Table 3.2 documents the concentrations at the state level of the ten largest immigrant groups in 2010. California alone was home to over 25 percent of all U.S. immigrants—a decrease from its 33 percent share in 1990, but still the principal state of settlement of 8 of the 10 largest immigrant nationalities. The state of New York absorbed another 10.8 percent of the nation’s foreign-born, while being home to only 5.6 percent of the native-born. Texas followed with 10.4 percent of the foreign-born total, compared to 7.8 percent of the native-born. Those three states combined to account for nearly half of all immigrants in the country. Another 18 percent of the foreign-born were found in Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey, so that two-thirds of all immigrants nationally still resided in the six states in 2010 (but down from their 73 percent share in 1990).

[Table 3.2 about here](#)

Within this general picture, some immigrant nationalities are far more concentrated than others. Of the ten largest groups in 2010, three-fourths of all Cubans were in Florida; half of all Dominicans were in New York, with another 15 percent next door in New Jersey; three-fifths of the nearly 12 million Mexican immigrants remained in California and Texas, despite growing geographic diversification since the mid 1990s; and between 30 and 50 percent of Filipinos, Vietnamese, Koreans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans were also in California. By comparison, and for reasons noted earlier, Indian immigrants were the most dispersed, with 18 percent found in California, 12 percent in New Jersey, and 9 percent in Texas.



The top six states have been the primary destination states for legal immigrants in every year since 1971. In fiscal 2011, two thirds of the 1,062,040 foreign-born persons admitted for legal permanent residency went to the same half a dozen states in approximately the same proportions: California (20 percent), New York (14 percent), Florida (10), Texas (9 percent), New Jersey (5 percent), and Illinois (4 percent). At the other extreme, no state received fewer than four hundred immigrants, the least favored being Montana (511) and Wyoming (420).<sup>21</sup>

### **Locational Decisions of Immigrant Groups**

An alternative portrait of the settlement process emerges when we examine locational decisions of the major immigrant groups themselves, rather than major areas of destination. Although there is overlap between both forms of arranging the data, the two vary because national contingents differ in their levels of concentration and their propensity to locate in metropolitan areas. Table 3.3 presents the relevant information for 2011. Six of the ten largest immigrant groups obtaining their legal permanent resident status in that year—Mexicans, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Koreans, Salvadorans and Guatemalans—shared a preferred place of destination: Los Angeles. New York was the first choice of three other groups: immigrants from mainland China, India, and the Dominican Republic. More than two-thirds of the last group—the Cubans—overwhelmingly preferred Miami.

Table 3.3 about here

The locational decisions of all major contemporary inflows reflect both historical patterns of settlement and types of contemporary immigrants. Most concentrated and least rural are Cubans, 69 percent of whom settled in Miami. In 2011, as in prior years, recorded immigration from Cuba did not correspond to actual arrivals, but was formed instead by former political refugees who adjusted their legal status. As refugees, Cubans were far more dispersed following the deliberate resettlement policy of government agencies. The high concentration of Cubans as “immigrants” thus reflects voluntary individual decisions to migrate back to South Florida. As a result, the majority of the city of Miami’s population is today of Cuban origin, and about two-thirds of the metropolitan population of Miami-Dade County is now classified as Hispanic or Latino. Undoubtedly, geographic and climatic reasons have played a role in the process, but more important seems to have been the business and employment opportunities made available by the emergence of an ethnic enclave economy in the area.<sup>22</sup>

Next in concentration are Dominicans, a group whose rapid growth has taken place during the last four decades and that is composed primarily of industrial workers and urban laborers. Employer recruitment and the existence of an older Dominican colony in New York City appear to have been the decisive factors channeling Dominican migration toward the Northeast.<sup>23</sup> After New York City, Boston and Miami came in a distant second and third as preferred places among new Dominican immigrants.

As already noted, one of the most spatially dispersed are Indian immigrants—the group with the highest proportion of university graduates and professionals, whose numbers in the United States more than tripled since the 1990s. The Indian pattern of settlement corresponds to that expected from professional immigrants. In 2002, less than 10 percent had settled in their preferred destination (San Jose), reflecting the occupational composition of Indian immigration

since it is tied to employment in the high-tech industries of Silicon Valley; by 2011 the top choice for Indians was New York City (preferred by 16 percent of those receiving their green cards that year), followed by Chicago and then San Jose..

The Chinese exhibit both a clear preference for New York City and a moderately high level of concentration in their next major places of destination— Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. Like Indians, a high proportion of recent Chinese immigrants possess university degrees; and, like Cubans, they are often bound toward those areas where an ethnic enclave economy already exists. In this case, traditional Chinatowns and emerging ones in suburban areas seem to provide the lure for the entrepreneurially-inclined, as well as those seeking wage-work in ethnic firms.<sup>24</sup>

The largest national contingents are relatively similar in their levels of metropolitan concentration, although this convergence is not the outcome of the same historical process. The largest group by far—Mexicans—is formed overwhelmingly by workers and their families. The proportion of professionals and managers among occupationally active Mexican immigrants remained the lowest among all major immigrant groups in 2010, as it had been in prior years; the percentage of urban workers and farm laborers was, however, the highest. Originally a rural-bound flow, Mexican immigration has become mostly urban in recent years, with the vast majority of new arrivals going to metropolitan areas. The considerable dispersion of this group can be attributed to its size and its long-standing character as a source of wage labor throughout the Southwest and Midwest, and since the 1990s to its growing extension to new areas of settlement in the South and Northeast.<sup>25</sup>

Filipinos represent another large group with a long history of settlement in the United States. Earlier arrivals, in particular those going to Hawaii, were mostly rural workers.<sup>26</sup> Unlike Mexicans, however, contemporary Filipino immigrants are a diverse group, combining family reunification with a sizable contingent of new professionals, especially nurses. A tradition of serving as subordinate personnel in the U.S. Navy accounts for sizable Filipino concentrations in Pacific fleet ports, in particular San Diego. By 2011, Filipinos who obtained legal permanent residency were settling primarily in Los Angeles, followed by New York—a new but growing destination—and then by San Francisco and San Diego.

Koreans are an entrepreneurial group of more recent vintage, with a sizable number of professionals. Their main destination remains Los Angeles, where an ethnic enclave economy grew rapidly during the 1980s and 1990s. Koreans have also become prominent in produce retailing and other middleman small businesses in East Coast cities. New York and Washington DC came next to Los Angeles as their places of destination in 2011; they were also the single largest foreign group arriving in large mid-Atlantic cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore.<sup>27</sup>

Like Cubans, the Vietnamese are not newly arrived immigrants, but mostly former refugees who have adjusted their legal status. The influence of government resettlement programs in the spatial distribution of refugee groups can be seen clearly in this instance. About 17 percent of 2011 Vietnamese immigrants planned to settle in the Orange County area, their preferred location. Earlier evidence had suggested that the Vietnamese, like the Cubans in the past, began leaving areas of initial settlement and concentrating in other cities, primarily in California but also in the Houston and Dallas areas in Texas. As early as 1993, the proportion of

Vietnamese settling in Orange County had reached 18 percent, with adjacent Los Angeles and San Diego absorbing an additional sizable share of these former refugees.<sup>28</sup> By 2011 the share of new Vietnamese immigrants who chose Orange County remained at about the same level, with San Jose and San Diego accounting for 11 percent, and Houston and Dallas for another 11 percent.

In general, however, refugee groups that are sponsored and resettled initially through official programs tend to exhibit higher levels of spatial dispersion at the start of their American lives than subsequently. This pattern is illustrated in Table 3.4, which presents data on preferred areas of residence of the five largest refugee groups admitted in 1987, 1993, 2001, and 2010. All three Southeast Asian nationalities, generally resettled through officially sponsored programs, chose California as their preferred destination, but much smaller fractions were initially settled there. Over time, however, family sponsorships led to increasing concentrations in their preferred locales. In 1987, only 6 percent of Hmong refugees from Laos were resettled in Fresno, but by 1993 the proportion going to Fresno had quadrupled to 25 percent. The proportion of Iranians settling in Los Angeles increased by 10 percent between 1987 and 1993.

Like immigrants of the same nationality, Cuban “refugees” in 1987 were not new arrivals, but mostly individuals who had come during the Mariel boatlift and then adjusted their earlier “entrant” status. After the initial resettlement period, Mariel refugees were free to select their place of residence. Like other Cubans, they gravitated heavily toward South Florida. As table 3.4 shows, 78 percent of all 1987 Cuban refugees and 76 percent of all 1993 Cuban refugees settled in Miami, as did 66 percent of all Cubans admitted in 2001.

Table 3.4 about here

As seen in Chapter 1, geopolitical events since the early 1990s changed the composition of refugees admitted into the United States. In the 1990s the flows of Cambodians and Laotians slowed to a trickle while new waves of refugees were ushered in from the successor republics of the former Soviet Union. They were joined by Bosnians, Croats, Serbs, Iraqis and Somalis coming as refugees in the wake of American interventions in their respective countries. For these newer arrivals, a pattern of dispersal to new destinations, similar to that experienced by earlier refugee groups, was the norm. In 2001, the two most common destinations for newly admitted refugees from the former Yugoslavia were Chicago (9 percent) and St. Louis (5 percent); for those from the former USSR, it was New York (16 percent) and Sacramento (13 percent); and for Iraqis, Detroit (19 percent) and San Diego (12 percent).

The 2001 figures for Iraqis were for refugees admitted in the fiscal year ending on September 30; virtually all had been admitted before the attacks of September 11, after which their numbers plummeted—as did refugee admissions generally—all the more after the U.S. went to war against Iraq in March 2003. Not until 2008 did refugee admissions from Iraq increase substantially and, by 2010, they were the largest refugee admitted. New refugees from Burma and Bhutan followed in number of admissions, and they were being resettled primarily in new destinations such as Indianapolis, Phoenix, Columbus, Ohio, and Erie, Pennsylvania. If history is any guide, it is likely that these groups will subsequently gravitate toward locations selected for reasons of history or propinquity, thereby increasing their respective levels of concentration.

## Preferred Places

Immigration to the United States is today an urban phenomenon, concentrated in the largest cities. In 2010, less than 5 percent of legal immigrants went to live in nonurban areas; 38 percent settled in just five metropolitan locations (New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and Houston), and 85 percent resided in the 100 largest metros. In particular, recent years have seen the gradual end of what was a significant component of pre–World War I immigration: rural-bound groups coming to settle empty lands or work as farm laborers.

This trend is probably less marked among undocumented immigrants, many of whom continue working in agriculture, from California’s Central Valley to dairy farms in upstate New York. There are no reliable figures on the size and occupational distribution of the undocumented population, but a series of studies conducted among returning immigrants in their places of origin indicates both a continuing rural presence and an increasing urban concentration. Many undocumented immigrants apparently begin as rural workers but gradually drift into the cities, attracted by higher wages and better working conditions.<sup>29</sup> As seen in Chapter 1, there is a close interaction between legal and illegal immigrants from the same countries. A large proportion of legal migration from countries like Mexico and the Dominican Republic is composed of formerly undocumented immigrants who managed to legalize their situation. Hence, the spatial distribution of the recorded component of these inflows gives us a partial glimpse of what takes place underground.<sup>30</sup>

The bias of contemporary immigration toward a few metropolitan places is not a phenomenon of recent years, but one that has occurred regularly during the last several decades. Year after year, with remarkable regularity, the same cities emerge as the preferred sites of destination of the total inflow and of its major national components. Table 3.5 illustrates this trend with data for selected years, beginning in 1967. During the subsequent 45 years, approximately one-fourth to one-third of total immigration concentrated in the three principal areas of destination. Until the 1990s New York remained always the preferred site while the next two places alternated among Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami. The single most significant change during the period was the emergence of Los Angeles as the most preferred destination of immigrants overall by the turn of the century; but by 2011, New York has regained its primacy.

### Table 3.5 about here

Table 3.5 presents trends for the four major nationalities for which data are available during the entire period. Mexicans went from 12 percent of total immigration in 1967 to over 20 percent in 2002, all the while increasing their absolute numbers from some 40,000 to over 200,000 per year, before reducing their numbers after 2006 and their share to 13.5 percent of total immigration by 2011. Dominicans maintained roughly the same proportion of total immigration throughout these years, peaking in 1993 and decreasing through 2002 before peaking again in 2011. Filipino immigration experienced a significant absolute increase between 1967 and 1987 and then stabilized at about 50,000 immigrants per year through 2011. Cuban immigrants—mostly adjusted former refugees—declined significantly until the mid-1980s and then increased again to about 5 percent of total immigration in 1987. This quantum jump is an outgrowth of the Mariel exodus, which also accounts for an extraordinary rise in spatial

concentration. Over 70 percent of recent Cuban immigrants cluster in just three cities, with the overwhelming majority going to Miami.

As seen previously, Dominicans come close to Cubans in level of concentration, although their strong preference for New York has declined in recent years. Filipinos and Mexicans are far more dispersed; yet, with some exceptions, their preferred areas of destination remain the same. Los Angeles consolidated its place during this period as the major area of settlement for both groups, and in the 1980s and 1990s San Diego surged ahead to third place for Mexicans and second place for Filipinos, replacing more traditional destinations. By 2011, however, after Los Angeles, Mexicans preferred Houston and Dallas; New York and San Francisco occupied the second and third settlement choices for Filipinos.

Reasons for the spatial concentration of immigrant flows, the strong urban bias of recent ones, and the consistency of their destinations over time are all linked to the characteristic economics of immigration. Like native youths, newly arrived immigrants are newcomers to the labor market who tend to search for immediately available opportunities. Regardless of their qualifications and experience, recent immigrants generally enter at the bottom of their respective occupational ladders. Thus, foreign manual workers are channeled toward the lowest paying and most arduous jobs; immigrant professionals – such as engineers, programmers, physicians and nurses – also must accept less desirable entry jobs within their professions and even outside of them.<sup>31</sup> Lastly, entrepreneurs also start small, with shops catering to their own community or in riskier “middleman” ventures in the inner city.

In the absence of deliberate recruitment or other *ad hoc* factors, entry jobs at the bottom of the respective ladders are more easily accessible in large urban agglomerations and in those experiencing rapid economic growth. Once immigrants from a particular nationality “discover” the existence of such opportunities, migration becomes self-perpetuating through the operation of ethnic networks. It is thus not surprising that the principal concentrations of the largest immigrant groups at present are found in Los Angeles, a large metropolitan area that has experienced sustained economic expansion in recent decades. It is not surprising either that Cubans concentrate in Miami, another fast-growing city that has become the center of U.S. trade with Latin America. Washington, D.C., is also an attractive area of destination for entrepreneurially oriented groups because of the presence of a large inner-city minority population, along with a sizable segment of well-paid government workers.

Less obvious are the forces leading to the continuation of New York-bound immigration, given the industrial decline of the area in recent history. Between 1980 and 1990, the most affected sector in New York was manufacturing, where employment decreased by almost one-third. New York’s industrial decline raises the question of why immigrants persist in going there instead of following manufacturing jobs to their new locations in the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, or Texas. One reason is that, despite declines in both population and employment, New York continues to be the nation’s largest urban agglomeration. Another is that large established ethnic communities continue to serve as a magnet for new immigrants from their home countries. More important, however, amid industrial decline there has been significant economic growth spurred by other sectors, including services and construction. From 1977 to 1987, close to two-thirds of all new jobs created in New York were in the information industries. In 1990, total construction activity was up by more than 25 percent over the 1980 level. Between 1981 and 1990, demand

for office space remained strong,<sup>32</sup> Manhattan alone gaining more than 53 million square feet of new office space.

About half of the jobs generated in distributive and producer services in New York City are in the highest paid earning classes; this is particularly true in the so-called FIRE sector (finance, insurance, and real estate) and in transportation, communications, and utilities. However, about 45 percent of employment in producer services and 65 percent in consumer services are formed by jobs paid minimum or near minimum wages. Approximately 20 percent of employment in construction is also in this low-wage class, a figure that increases significantly among nonunion workers.<sup>33</sup>

Immigrants have found in these low-paid jobs a continuing and expanding entry point into New York's labor market; in turn, their presence has been a significant element fueling the city's economic expansion. In addition to producer services, consumer services, and construction, there are also indications of renewed industrial activity, but one that takes place through subcontracting, sweatshops, homework, and other informal arrangements. Several field studies point to a heavy concentration of immigrants among both owners and workers in this informal industrial economy.<sup>34</sup> Thus, recent economic growth in New York has been accompanied by a profound reorganization of production and distribution activities in a number of sectors.

As Saskia Sassen noted: "The large influx of immigrants from low-wage countries over the last fifteen years... cannot be understood separately from this restructuring... It is the expansion in the supply of low-wage jobs generated by major growth sectors that is one of the key factors in the *continuation* of the current immigration to New York."<sup>35</sup> Roger Waldinger has argued that an ethnic division of labor in this context allows immigrants to gain entry into lower level service jobs ahead of native minorities. A hiring queue allocates jobs among ethnic groups in terms of desirability for preferred jobs. Factors such as the shape of the queue (the relative sizes of the groups), resources, ethnic networks, and discrimination determine where a group will fall in the resulting hierarchy.<sup>36</sup>

### **Persistent Ethnicity**

A final question is what locational trends can be expected in the future. In other words, will recent immigrants and their descendants continue to be disproportionately concentrated in a few metropolitan places, or will they gradually disperse throughout the country? Theories of immigrant assimilation have consistently assumed the latter outcome: insofar as immigrants and their children become more like native Americans, their patterns of spatial mobility will become more similar to those of the rest of the population. In this view of things, the gradual disappearance of concentrated immigrant communities represents the spatial counterpart of cultural assimilation as foreign groups "melt" into the host society. In some writings, the process is described as an elementary version of queuing theory, with older immigrant groups leaving urban ethnic areas to new ones:

There has also been an historical pattern of one group replacing another in neighborhoods, jobs, leadership, schools, and other institutions. Today's neighborhood changes have been dramatized by

such expressions as “white flight” but these patterns existed long before... In nineteenth century neighborhoods where Anglo-Saxons had once fled as the Irish moved in, the middle-class Irish later fled as the Jews and Italians moved in.<sup>37</sup>

We showed previously that new immigrants tend to be persistent in their choice of spatial location. This pattern says little, of course, about the long-term preferences of particular groups once they have settled in the country for generations. To explore this question, we must move back in time and examine locational patterns of groups that have been in the United States for longer periods. One study provided initial support for the assimilation hypothesis by reporting a negative correlation between time in the country and spatial concentration as measured by the index of dissimilarity (D) from the American population as a whole. For ten European nationalities, most of which were already well represented in the country at the time of independence, the correlation between these two variables is  $-.72$ .<sup>38</sup> However, the same study goes on to report that immigrant groups’ initial settlement patterns have had a decisive influence on the ethnic composition of each of the country’s regions. For example, with few exceptions, the five largest ancestry groups within each regional division include groups that were among the five largest immigrant contingents already living in the area in 1850, 1900, or 1920. Thus, German and Irish are among the largest ancestry groups in New England, where they were also among the principal immigrant nationalities in each of these earlier years; Norwegians and Swedes were strongly represented in the west north central region, just as their ancestors were at the turn of the century.<sup>39</sup>

What is true of regions is also true of specific nationalities. Descendants of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigrants, particularly those coming from the Mediterranean and from non-European countries, tend to remain in their original areas of settlement. As seen previously, Mexicans and Filipinos continue to arrive in large numbers and continue to go to the places in which they were concentrated half a century ago. The remaining groups are, however, descendants of immigrants who arrived in the United States mostly before World War II. Despite long residence in the country, they cluster in the same areas as their forebears. Four-fifths of all Portuguese-Americans reside at present in only two regions of the country: the Northeast (mainly in Massachusetts and Rhode Island) and the West and (mainly in California and Hawaii); most Japanese-Americans are found in just the latter two states.<sup>40</sup>

Within major areas of settlement, there has been, of course, outward movement and dispersal, and this pattern has been taken as evidence of full assimilation. However, the telling fact is that, after several generations, particular nationalities continue to be associated with specific patches of national territory, giving them their distinct idiosyncrasies and cultural traits. Such stable locations are a far cry from the image of a thoroughly homogenized “melted” population with identical proportions of the same original nationalities found everywhere.

There are few grounds to believe that the resilience of these ethnic communities is likely to disappear in the future. The American population as a whole is gradually moving away from the Northeast and Midwest toward the South and Southwest. If present trends continue indefinitely, New England and the mid-Atlantic region will see their combined share of the total population reduced from 21 to just 10 percent, and the west south central and Pacific regions will increase theirs from 24 to 36 percent. Already in 2010, 60 percent of the U.S. population was

located in the South and the West, a share that keeps increasing. However, this spatial displacement will not necessarily lead to greater dispersion of ethnic communities. If trends observed since the late 1980s continue, their overall spatial concentration will either persist or will be renewed following the new pioneering displacements observed since the late 1990s.

Reasons for this somewhat surprising outcome are threefold: First, ethnic groups concentrated in regions losing population are less likely to leave so that, over time, their relative proportion increases. Second, when members of an ethnic minority move, they are more likely to go to areas where their own group is already numerous, including those experiencing out-migration. Third, when an ethnic group moves *en masse* from its traditional area, it does not become necessarily dispersed, but often regroups in another region. The outcome of these trends, when projected into the future, is that nationalities such as the Poles will tend to remain heavily concentrated in the Northeast and Midwest, Norwegians in the west north central states, and Cubans in the Southeast; Jews of mostly Russian origin will tend to abandon the mid-Atlantic region to reconstitute themselves as a major ethnic group in the Pacific.<sup>41</sup>

An instructive example involves the one hundred thirty thousand Indochinese refugees who arrived in the United States in 1975. Upon arrival, they were sent to four major reception centers, from which they were resettled in 813 separate locations spread throughout all fifty states. Data collected at the reception centers show that less than half of these refugees (47 percent) were sent to the state of their choice. By 1980, however, 45 percent lived in a state other than the one to which they had been sent. Nearly 40 percent had moved to areas of high ethnic concentration in California. Conversely, the proportion that lived in dispersed communities with less than five hundred refugees of the same nationality dropped from 65 to 40 percent. Secondary migration trends during the 1980s and 1990s continued reinforcing the predominance of a few areas of Indochinese concentration.<sup>42</sup>

Given these past experiences and the propensity of major contemporary immigrations to remain clustered, there is little reason to expect a dispersal of recent immigrants and their children. Contrary to conventional assimilation views, the safest prediction is that ethnic communities created by present immigration will endure and will become identified with their areas of settlement, giving to the latter, as other immigrants had before them, a distinct cultural flavor and a new “layer” of phenotypical and cultural traits.

### **Conclusion: The Pros and Cons of Spatial Concentration**

The question of why ethnic communities tend to stay put in certain parts of the country can be discussed jointly with advantages and disadvantages of this pattern because the two issues are closely intertwined. Overall, the entire process of immigrant settlement is “sticky” because new arrivals tend to move to places where earlier immigrants have become established, and later generations do not wander too far off. Following assimilation theory, it could be argued that this pattern is irrational because economic opportunities, especially for the American-born generations, are often greater elsewhere. Individualistic aspirations should lead to dispersal because upward economic mobility often requires spatial mobility.<sup>43</sup>

There is, however, an alternative logic that contradicts this reasoning. By moving away from places where their own group is numerically strong, individuals risk losing a range of social



and moral resources that make for psychological well-being as well as for economic gain. A large minority that becomes dispersed risks lacking a significant presence or voice anywhere; on the contrary, even a small group, if sufficiently concentrated, can have economic and political influence locally. For members of the immigrant generation, spatial concentration has several positive consequences: preservation of a valued life-style, regulation of the pace of acculturation, greater social control over the young, and access to community networks for both moral and economic support.

For subsequent generations, preservation of the ethnic community, even if more widely dispersed, can also have significant advantages. Among the entrepreneurially inclined, ethnic ties translate into access to sources of working capital, protected markets, and pools of labor.<sup>44</sup> Others also derive advantages from an enduring community. There is strength in numbers, especially at the ballot box, and this fact allows minority groups to assert their presence and their interests in the political process. As Chapter 5 shows, politics can also serve as an avenue of individual upward mobility when other paths remain blocked. The ascendance of urban Irish politicians in the late nineteenth century and that of their Italian counterparts later on provide the classic examples.<sup>45</sup> The highly concentrated Cuban population in South Florida has followed the same path.

The question of relative advantages and disadvantages can be turned around, however, and asked from the point of view of mainstream society. Many writers, most loudly Samuel Huntington, have expressed fears of continuing immigration precisely because it leads to growing ethnic concentration, which, they believe, will alter the cultural fabric of the nation. At worst, secessionist movements have been anticipated in those areas where immigrants and their descendants become the majority.<sup>46</sup>

There is little doubt that the best way of minimizing the social and cultural impact of immigration is either to stop it or to disperse new arrivals, but this is also a way of minimizing the potential long-term contribution that immigrant communities can make. Throughout the history of the United States, communities created by foreign groups have been a significant force in promoting the growth and economic development of cities like New York, Boston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, as well as entire regions like the Midwest. Once immigrants have settled and integrated economically, their traditions and folkways have entered local culture. After a while, these syncretic products become institutionalized and are then proudly presented as “typical” of the local lore. St. Patrick’s Day parades, German beer fests, Chinese New Year celebrations, Mardi Gras carnivals, Mexican fiestas, and the like are so many manifestations of this process. Without the past and present contribution of immigrant groups, the dynamism and vibrancy of contemporary American culture would have given way to a uniform, grey landscape.

But what about separatism? During the first two decades of the century, immigrants came to represent over one-fifth of the American labor force, and they and their children composed absolute majorities of the country’s urban population. This situation, in which the foreign presence relative to the native population vastly exceeded that found today, did not give rise to any secessionist movement. Immigrants focused their energies instead on carving an economic niche for themselves; their children learned English and gradually entered native social circles and the local political process. Perhaps the most telling case against nativist fears is that of Mexican-Americans in the Southwest. Despite the large size of this minority, its proximity to the

home country, and the fact that these territories were once Mexico's, secessionist movements within the Mexican-American population have been insignificant.

During World War II and the Korean War, Mexican-American youths could easily have avoided military service by taking a short ride into Mexico; instead, they contributed tens of thousands of soldiers and battle casualties to the nation's war effort.<sup>47</sup> There are more Mexican-Americans who have honorably served this nation in its many wars than words in Huntington's essay against them.<sup>48</sup> Recent illustrations come in the form of the commanding officer of American troops in Iraq in 2003 and early 2004: Lt. General Ricardo Sánchez, a second-generation Mexican-American from a poor immigrant family settled right by the U.S.-Mexico border. And in the form of many "Green Card Marines"—such as José Angel Garibay, 22, and Jesús Angel González, 22, who were born in Mexico and grew up in poverty in Southern California. They who were among the first to die in action in Iraq at the start of the war in 2003.<sup>49</sup>

Ethnic communities have been much less the Trojan horses portrayed by nativists and xenophobes than effective vehicles for long-term adaptation. As Andrew Greeley stated: "It could be said that the apparent inclination of men... to consort with those who, they assume, have the same origins provides diversity in the larger society and also creates substructures that meet many functions the larger society would be hard put to service."<sup>50</sup> Greeley also notes, however, that "the demons of suspicion and distrust prove very hard to exorcise from interethnic relationships."<sup>51</sup> At a time when such "demons" are again on the rise in the United States, it may be well to recall past experience, where spatial concentrations of immigrants from all over the globe did not lead either to political separatism or to cultural alienation. Within their respective areas of settlement, ethnic communities created by immigration have grown and diversified; later generations' efforts to maintain a distinct culture have been invariably couched within the framework of loyalty to the United States and an overarching American identity. Today's immigrants, in all likelihood, will follow the same path.

### Endnotes: Chapter 3

---

<sup>1</sup> Jerome, *Migration and Business Cycles*, 40.

<sup>2</sup> See Handlin, *The Uprooted*; Vecoli, "The Italian Americans"; Alba, *Italian Americans*.

<sup>3</sup> Lieberman and Waters, "The Location of Ethnic and Racial Groups," 782.

<sup>4</sup> Boswell, "A Split Labor Market Analysis."

<sup>5</sup> Kivisto, *Immigrant Socialists*.

<sup>6</sup> Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution*; Sowell, *Ethnic America*, chap. 3.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "People Reporting Ancestry" (2011).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Ancestry*, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/c2kbr-35.pdf>; Lieberman and Waters, "The Location of Ethnic and Racial Groups," 782, 798-799.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "People Reporting Ancestry".

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*; Allen and Turner, *We the People*, 84-85; U.S. Census Bureau, *1990 Ethnic Profiles for States*.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "People Reporting Ancestry".

<sup>13</sup> Light, *Ethnic Enterprise in America*.

<sup>14</sup> Gardner, Robey, and Smith, "Asian Americans"; Wong and Hirschman, "The New Asian Immigrants"; Nishi, "Japanese Americans"; U.S. Census Bureau, *The Asian Population: 2010*.

<sup>15</sup> Reichert, "The Migrant Syndrome"; Dinerman, "Patterns of Adaptation"; Massey, "The Settlement Process."

<sup>16</sup> On West Indian migration, see Anderson, "Migration and Development"; Dixon, "Emigration and Jamaican Employment"; Levine, *The Caribbean Exodus*. On Dominicans, see Grasmuck and Pessar, *Between Two Islands*; Sassen-Koob, "Formal and Informal Associations." On Haitians, see Stepick and Portes, "Flight into Despair." See also Gardner, Robey, and Smith, "Asian Americans"; Bonacich, "Asian Labor"; Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America*; Min, *Asian Americans*.

<sup>17</sup> Portes and Manning, "The Immigrant Enclave"; Rumbaut, "Origins and Destinies"; Kanjanapan, "The Immigration of Asian Professionals"; U.S. Census Bureau, *The Foreign Born With Science and Engineering Degrees: 2010*.

<sup>18</sup> Korean businesses in Los Angeles are found both in the concentrated "Koreatown" enclave and dispersed throughout the metropolitan area. In New York, however, most Korean enterprise appears to be of the "middleman" kind. See Kim, *New Urban Immigrants*; Sassen-Koob, "The New Labor Demand"; Cobas, "Participation in the Ethnic Economy"; Fong, *The First Suburban Chinatown*.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Censuses, 1980-2000; Grenier and Pérez, *The Legacy of Exile*; Díaz-Briquets and Pérez, "Cuba"; U.S. Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population: 2010*; Rumbaut, "Vietnamese, Laotian,

---

and Cambodian Americans”; Rumbaut, “The Structure of Refuge”; Allen and Turner, *We the People*, 163-164, 193; U.S. Census Bureau, *The Vietnamese Population in the United States: 2010*.

<sup>20</sup> Massey, *New Faces in New Places*; Singer, “The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways”; Weeks and Weeks, *Irresistible Forces*; Zúñiga and Hernández-León, *New Destinations*.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Office of Immigration Statistics, *2011 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*.

<sup>22</sup> The Cuban enclave is discussed in chapters 4 and 5. See also Grenier and Pérez, *The Legacy of Exile*; Díaz-Briquets and Pérez, “Cuba”; Wilson and Martin, “Ethnic Enclaves”; Portes and Stepick, *City on the Edge*.

<sup>23</sup> Pessar, “The Role of Households”; Grasmuck and Pessar, *Between Two Islands*.

<sup>24</sup> Sassen-Koob, “The New Labor Demand”; Wong and Hirschman, “The New Asian Immigrants.” Flushing, New York and Monterrey Park, California are examples of new and flourishing “suburban Chinatowns”. See Smith and Zhou, *Flushing: Capital and Community*; Fong, *The First Suburban Chinatown*.

<sup>25</sup> Zúñiga and Hernández-León, *New Destinations*; Weeks and Weeks, *Irresistible Forces*; Massey, *New Faces in New Places*.

<sup>26</sup> Hirschman and Wong, “The Extraordinary Educational Attainment”; Sharma, “The Philippines”; Geschwender, “The Portuguese and Haoles.”

<sup>27</sup> Lack of English proficiency has led many Korean professionals to turn to small business as a avenue of economic advancement. This patten contrasts significantly with Indians who arrive proficient in English. The Korean enclave economy is discussed in chapter 3. See also Min, “Ethnic Business”; and Min, *Asian Americans*.

<sup>28</sup> Rumbaut, “Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans”; Forbes, “Residency Patterns.”

<sup>29</sup> Cornelius, “Illegal Immigration”; Browning and Rodríguez, “The Migration”; Massey, “The Settlement Process.”

<sup>30</sup> Grasmuck, “Immigration”; Portes, “Illegal Immigration.”

<sup>31</sup> Recently arrived refugee groups, such as Ethiopians and Afghans, tend to have high proportions of former professionals—a pattern that reproduces that found for early refugee nationalities, such as Cubans and Vietnamese. Yet one study found that almost none of these new professionals had achieved comparable employment in the United States during the first three years after arrival. See Cichon, Gozdziaik, and Grover, “The Economic and Social Adjustment.” See also Stevens, Goodman, and Mick, *The Alien Doctors*; Portes, “Determinants of the Brain Drain”; Rumbaut, “Passages to America”; Kanjanapan, “The Immigration of Asian Professionals.”

<sup>32</sup> Waldinger, *Still the Promised City?* See also Sassen-Koob, “The New Labor Demand,” 149.

<sup>33</sup> Sassen-Koob, “The New Labor Demand,” 156. See also Waldinger, “Immigration and Industrial.”

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*; Portes and Sassen-Koob, “Making It Underground.”

<sup>35</sup> Sassen-Koob, “The New Labor Demand,” 158.

---

<sup>36</sup> Waldinger, *Still the Promised City?*

<sup>37</sup> Sowell, *Ethnic America*, 277.

<sup>38</sup> Lieberman and Waters, "The Location of Ethnic and Racial Groups," 790.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. See also Gardner, Robey, and Smith, "Asian Americans"; Bonacich and Modell, *The Economic Basis*; U.S. Census Bureau, "People Reporting Ancestry".

<sup>41</sup> Lieberman and Waters, "The Location of Ethnic and Racial Groups."

<sup>42</sup> Baker and North, *The 1975 Refugees*; Forbes, "Residency Patterns"; Rumbaut, "Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans." As seen previously, Vietnamese refugees who have recently adjusted their status to immigrants have significantly reduced their preference for their main area of concentration in Orange County. However, as Table 1 shows, they still remain highly concentrated in California. The pattern is congruent with what took place with earlier immigrant groups, as described in the text.

<sup>43</sup> Sowell, *Ethnic America*, chap. 11; Alba, *Italian Americans*; Steinberg, *The Ethnic Myth*.

<sup>44</sup> Light, *Ethnic Enterprise in America*; Bonacich and Modell, *The Economic Basis*; Portes and Manning, "The Immigrant Enclave"; Cobas, "Participation in the Ethnic Economy."

<sup>45</sup> Dahl, *Who Governs?*; Sowell, *Ethnic America*, chap. 2; Glazer and Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot*.

<sup>46</sup> Huntington, *Who Are We?*; Lamm and Imhoff, *The Immigration Time Bomb*.

<sup>47</sup> Moore and Pachón, *Hispanics in the United States*, chap. 10; Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society*; Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest*.

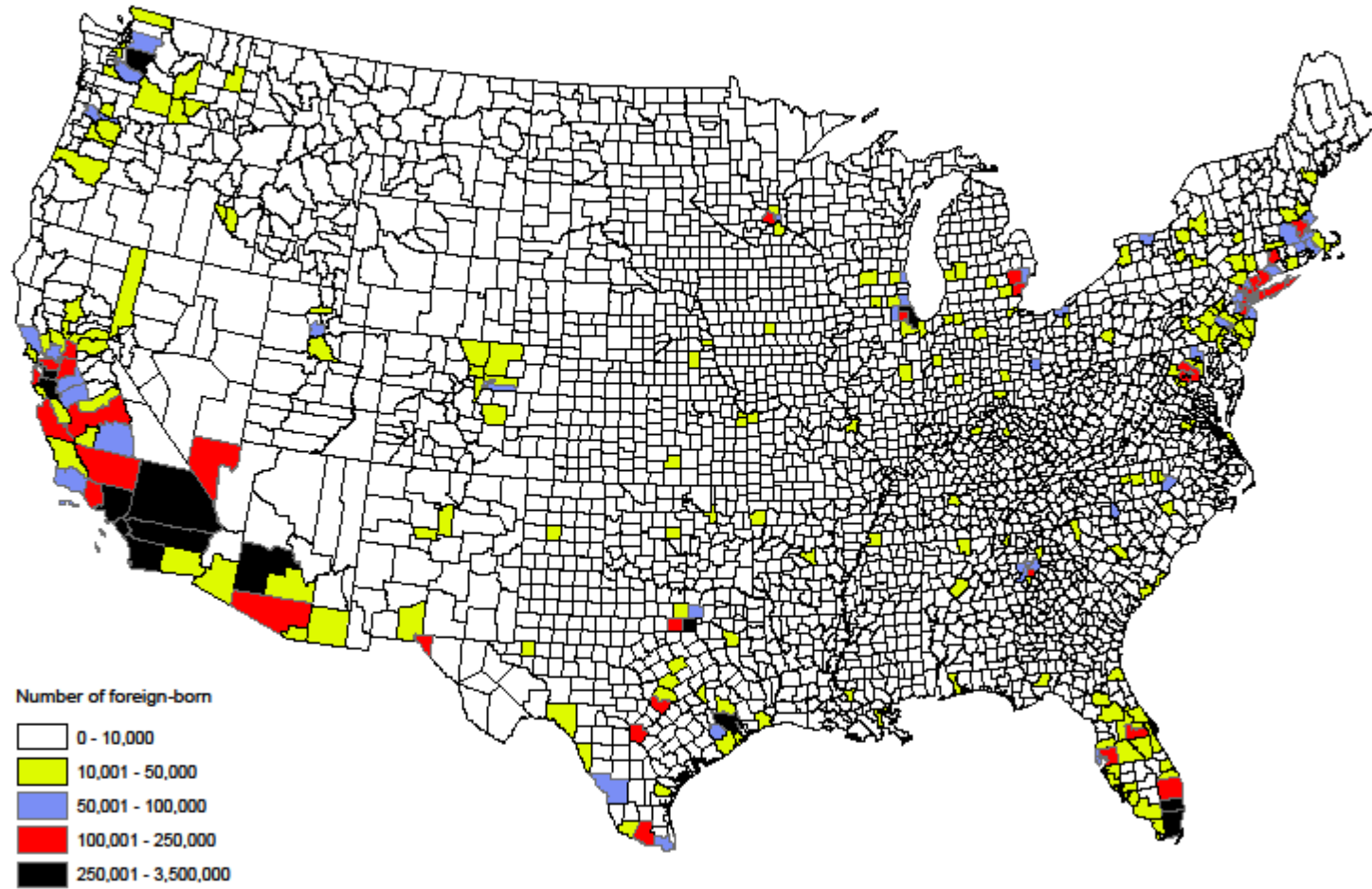
<sup>48</sup> Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge".

<sup>49</sup> López and Stanton-Salazar, "Mexican-Americans"; Wadestrandt, "Lt. General Ricardo Sánchez named 'Hispanic of the Year'"; Arax et al., "Green Card Marines: Just Looking to Fit In;" Arax et al., "Green Card Marines: Radical Turn for a Rebel."

<sup>50</sup> Greeley, *Why Can't They Be Like Us?*, 43.

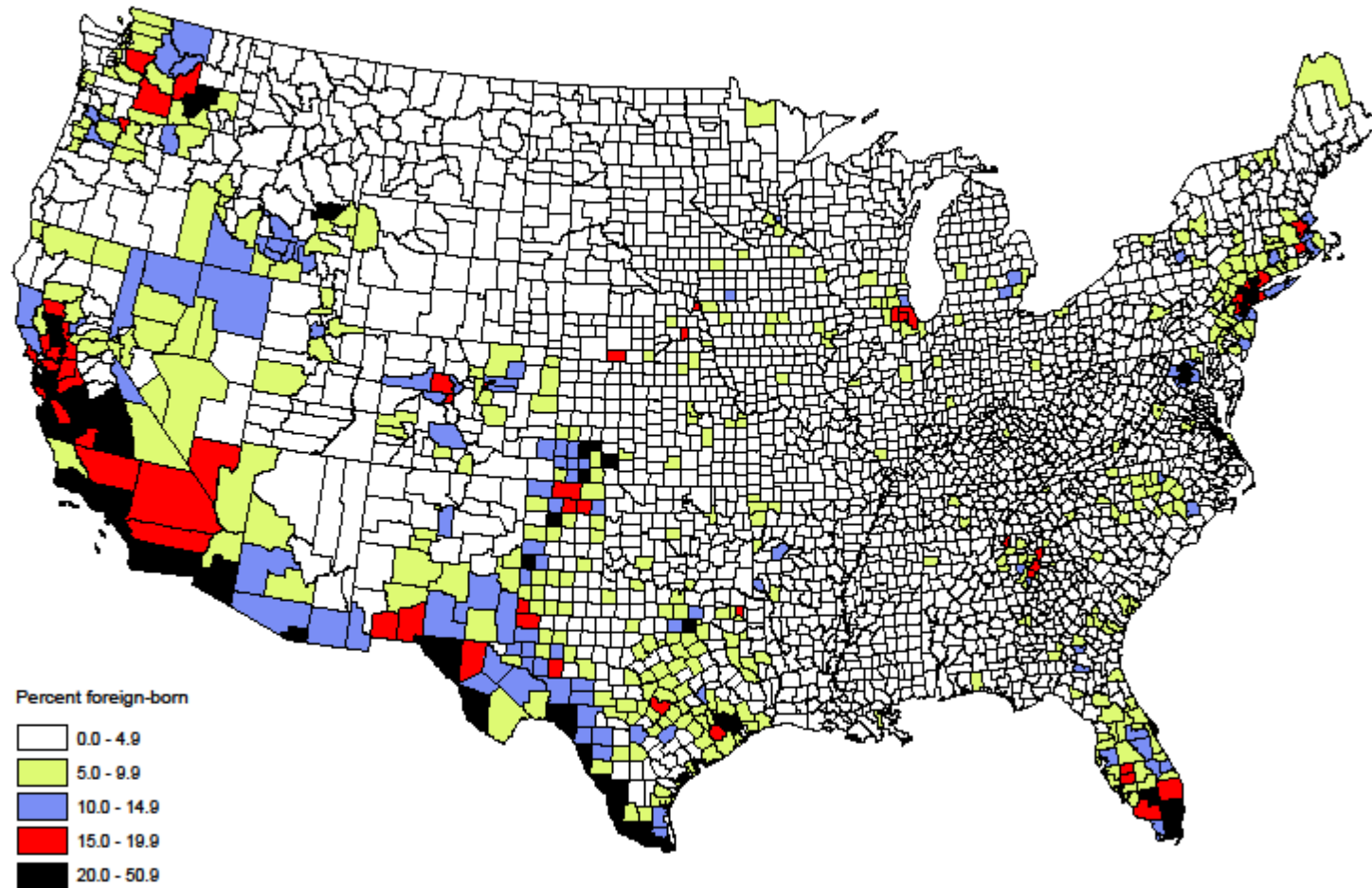
<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 1. The Foreign-Born Population in the United States by County, 2000**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

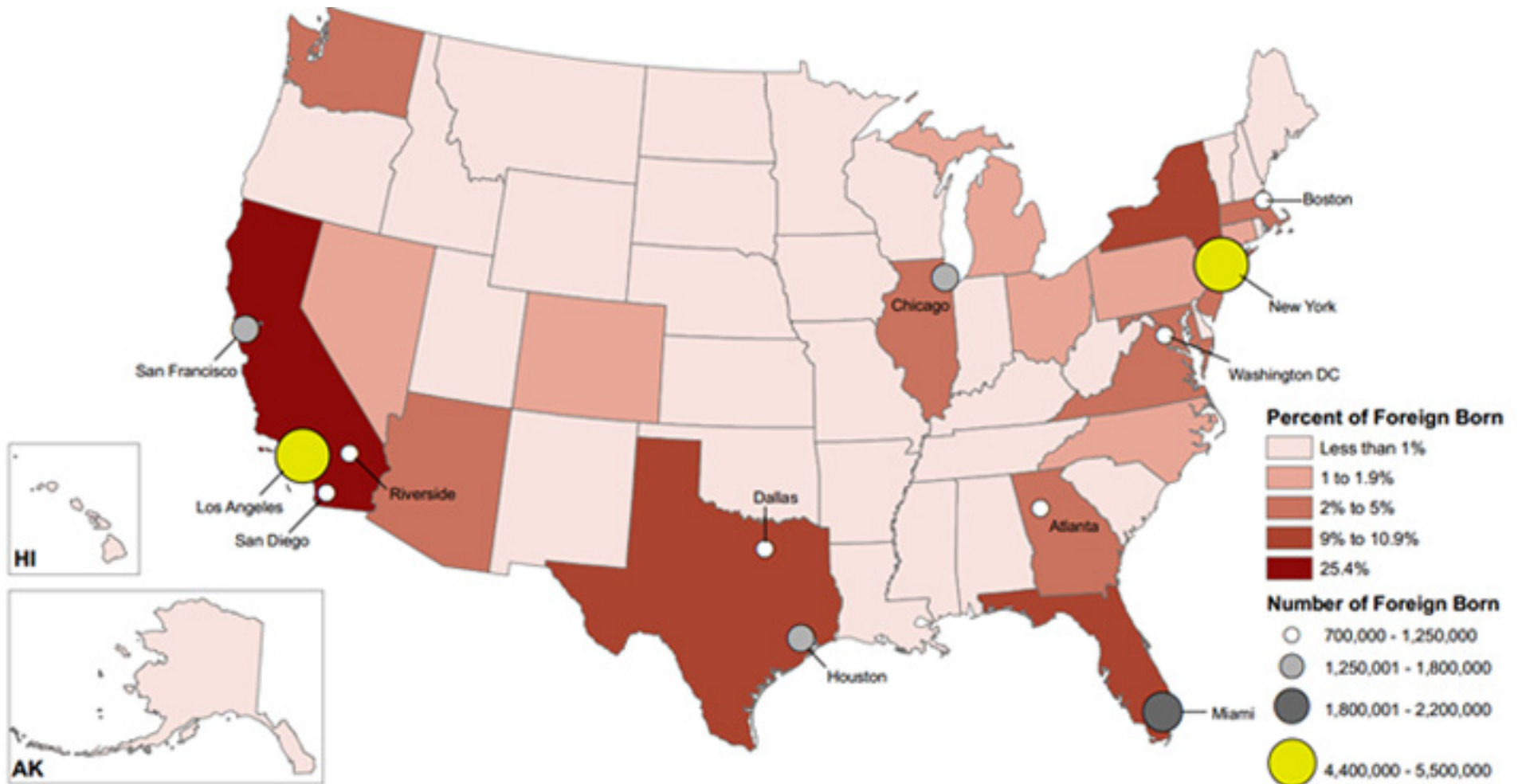
**Figure 2. The Foreign-Born in the United States  
as a Percentage of Total County Population, 2000**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Figure 3-3.

**STATES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS OF IMMIGRANT CONCENTRATION, 2010:  
PERCENT OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IN THE FIFTY STATES  
AND NUMBER OF FOREIGN-BORN IN PRINCIPAL METROPOLITAN AREAS**



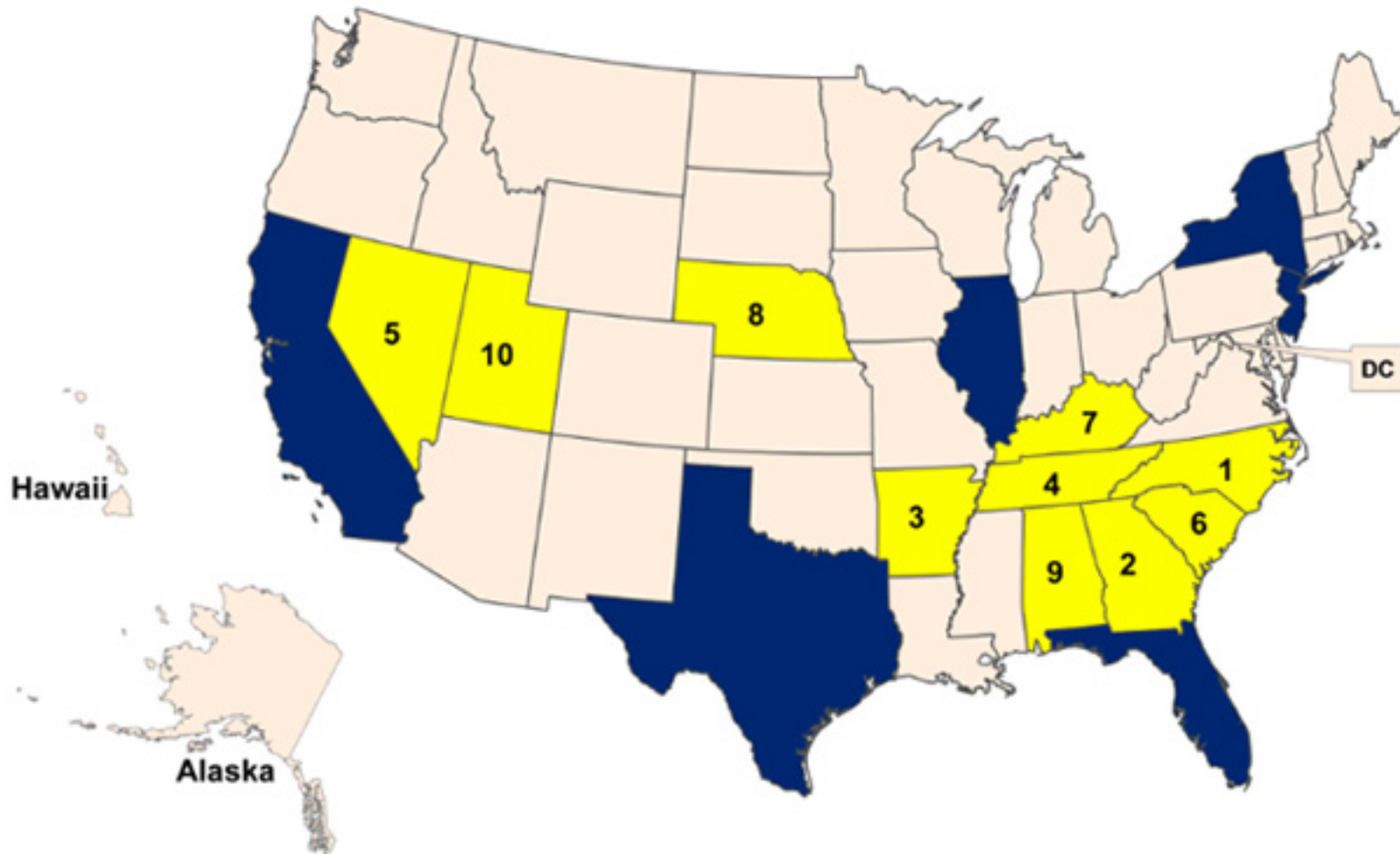
Source: American Community Survey, 2010; Jeanne Batalova, Migration Policy Institute, Washington, DC.



Figure 3-4.

**CONCENTRATION AND DIVERSIFICATION, 2010:  
THE SIX LARGEST STATES OF IMMIGRANT CONCENTRATION,  
AND THE TEN STATES WITH THE FASTEST-GROWING IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS**

- States with 1.7 million or more immigrants (2010)
- States (ranked) with 280 percent or higher growth (1990 to 2010)



Source: American Community Survey, 2010; Jeanne Batalova, Migration Policy Institute, Washington, DC.

Table 3-1.

*Top Six States by Size of the Foreign Born Population, 1990, 2000 and 2010;  
and Top Ten States by Percent Growth of the Foreign Born, 1990 to 2010\**

State	Foreign-Born Population						% growth of foreign-born (1990 to 2010)
	1990		2000		2010		
	N	Rank	N	Rank	N	Rank	
United States	19,767,316		31,107,889		39,955,854		102.1
<u>Top states of immigration:<sup>a</sup></u>							
California	6,458,825	1	8,864,255	1	10,150,429	1	57.2
New York	2,851,861	2	3,868,133	2	4,297,612	2	50.7
Florida	1,662,601	3	2,670,828	4	3,658,043	4	120.0
Texas	1,524,436	4	2,899,642	3	4,142,031	3	171.7
New Jersey	966,610	5	1,476,327	6	1,844,581	5	90.8
Illinois	952,272	6	1,529,058	5	1,759,859	6	84.8
<u>Top immigrant growth states:</u>							
North Carolina	115,077	21	430,000	15	719,137	14	524.9
Georgia	173,126	16	577,273	10	942,959	8	444.7
Arkansas	24,867	42	73,690	38	131,667	37	429.5
Tennessee	59,114	31	159,004	25	288,993	23	388.9
Nevada	104,828	23	316,593	19	508,458	16	385.0
South Carolina	49,964	34	115,978	32	218,494	28	337.3
Kentucky	34,119	39	80,271	36	140,583	34	312.0
Nebraska	28,198	41	74,638	37	112,178	38	297.8
Alabama	43,533	35	87,772	35	168,596	33	287.3
Utah	58,600	33	158,664	26	222,638	27	279.9

<sup>a</sup> States listed by 1990 ranks.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 census, and 2010 American Community Survey.

Table 3-2.  
STATES OF PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENT OF THE TEN LARGEST FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS, 2010

<i>Country of Birth</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% of total immigrants</i>	<i>States of Principal Settlement</i>					
			<i>First</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>%</i>
Mexico	11,711,103	29.3	California	36.8	Texas	21.2	Illinois	6.1
India	1,780,322	4.5	California	18.3	New Jersey	11.6	Texas	9.2
Philippines	1,777,588	4.5	California	45.6	Hawaii	6.1	New York	4.8
China <sup>a</sup>	1,601,147	4.5	California	30.3	New York	21.3	Texas	4.5
Vietnam	1,240,542	3.1	California	39.3	Texas	12.7	Washington	3.9
El Salvador	1,214,049	3.0	California	34.8	Texas	13.9	New York	8.7
Cuba	1,104,679	2.8	Florida	76.5	New Jersey	4.5	California	3.4
Korea	1,100,422	2.8	California	31.4	New York	9.2	New Jersey	7.1
Dominican Republic	879,187	2.2	New York	50.1	New Jersey	14.5	Florida	11.0
Guatemala	830,824	2.1	California	31.7	Florida	8.4	Texas	6.8
Total foreign-born	39,955,854	100	California	25.4	New York	10.8	Texas	10.4
Total native-born	269,393,835	100	California	10.1	Texas	7.8	New York	5.6

<sup>a</sup> Immigrants from mainland China only.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey.

TABLE 3-3.  
 METROPOLITAN DESTINATIONS OF THE TEN LARGEST NEW LEGAL IMMIGRANT GROUPS, 2011  
 (Persons admitted to legal permanent residency status in fiscal year 2011)

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Most Common Destination</i>		<i>% at</i>	<i>% at Other</i>	<i>% at Non-</i>	<i>As %</i>
		<i>Metropolitan Area</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Top Three</i>	<i>Metropolitan</i>	<i>metropolitan</i>	<i>of Total</i>
				<i>Destinations</i>	<i>Destinations</i>	<i>Destinations</i>	<i>Immigration</i>
Mexican	143,466	Los Angeles	11.5	22.2	29.2	2.6	13.5
Chinese <sup>a</sup>	87,016	New York	32.6	52.8	13.1	0.9	8.2
Indian	69,013	New York	16.3	28.1	17.8	0.6	6.5
Filipino	57,011	Los Angeles	15.2	29.8	21.0	4.1	5.4
Dominican	46,109	New York	62.0	74.0	8.5	0.9	4.3
Cuban	36,452	Miami	68.9	77.4	10.7	0.2	3.4
Vietnamese <sup>b</sup>	34,157	Los Angeles	16.9	31.8	18.7	0.4	3.2
Korean	22,860	Los Angeles	23.8	43.2	15.8	2.3	2.2
Salvadoran	18,667	Los Angeles	23.0	46.8	11.8	0.7	1.8
Guatemalan	11,092	Los Angeles	23.5	37.2	19.5	1.9	1.0

Source: U.S. Office of Immigration Statistics, *2011 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*, Supplemental Table 2 (2012).

<sup>a</sup> Immigrants from China, excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan.

<sup>b</sup> Los Angeles metropolitan (core-based statistical) area includes Orange County.

Table 3-4  
*Metropolitan Destinations of the Five Major Refugee Groups Admitted in 1987, 1993, 2001 and 2010*

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Most</i>		<i>Second Most</i>	
		<i>Common Destination</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>Common Destination</i>	<i>(%)</i>
1987					
Cuban	26,952	Miami, FL	78.5	New York, NY	5.9
Vietnamese	20,617	Orange County, CA	9.2	Los Angeles, CA	7.4
Cambodian	12,206	Stockton, CA	9.3	Los Angeles, CA	6.0
Laotian	6,560	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	12.1	Fresno, CA	6.4
Iranian	5,559	Los Angeles, CA	40.3	New York, NY	5.8
1993					
Soviet Union	45,900	New York, NY	24.5	Los Angeles, CA	8.7
Vietnamese	30,249	Orange County, CA	17.9	San Jose, CA	10.3
Cuban	11,603	Miami, FL	76.5	Jersey City, NJ	3.7
Laotian	6,547	Fresno, CA	24.6	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	9.4
Iranian	3,875	Los Angeles, CA	60.9	New York, NY	6.2
2001					
Former Yugoslavia <sup>a</sup>	29,830	Chicago, IL	8.8	St. Louis, MO-IL	5.0
Cuban	22,687	Miami, FL	66.0	Tampa, FL	3.6
Former Soviet Union <sup>b</sup>	19,057	New York, NY	15.8	Sacramento, CA	13.5
Vietnamese	10,351	Orange County, CA	7.0	San Jose, CA	6.8
Iraqi	3,060	Detroit, MI	19.4	San Diego, CA	12.2
2010					
Iraqi	18,016	Southfield, MI	4.3	Phoenix, AZ	3.5
Burmese	16,693	Indianapolis, IN	4.5	Phoenix, AZ	3.7
Bhutanese	12,363	Denver, CO	3.6	Erie, PA	3.1
Somalian	4,884	Columbus, OH	5.8	Minneapolis, MI	4.4
Cuban	4,818	Miami, FL	23.3	Hialeah, FL	9.6

Sources: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 1988, table 40; 1994, table 37; 2002, table 33;  
U.S. State Department, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, 2011.

<sup>a</sup> Includes migrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

<sup>b</sup> Includes migrants from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and other former Soviet Union.

Table 3-5  
*Destinations of Major Immigrant Nationalities Obtaining Legal Permanent Residence in Selected Years*

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>As % of Total Legal Immigration</i>	<i>% in Top Three Destinations</i>	<i>Most Common Destinations</i>		
					<i>First</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Third</i>
Mexican	1967	42,371	11.7	19.6	Los Angeles	Chicago	El Paso
	1975	62,205	16.1	22.7	Los Angeles	Chicago	El Paso
	1987	72,351	12.0	33.0	Los Angeles	El Paso	San Diego
	1993	126,561	14.0	31.4	Los Angeles	Chicago	Houston
	1997	146,865	18.4	22.5	Los Angeles	Chicago	Houston
	2002	219,380	20.6	27.0	Los Angeles	Riverside	San Diego
	2011	143,446	13.5	22.2	Los Angeles	Houston	Dallas
Cuban	1967	33,321	9.2	59.0	Miami	New York	San Juan
	1975	25,955	6.7	57.9	Miami	New York	San Juan
	1987	28,916	4.8	86.0	Miami	New York	Tampa
	1993	13,666	1.5	81.5	Miami	Jersey City	Tampa
	1997	33,587	4.2	78.8	Miami	Tampa	Palm Beach
	2002	28,272	2.7	71.3	Miami	Tampa	Jersey City
	2011	36,452	3.4	77.4	Miami	Tampa	New York
Dominican	1967	11,514	3.2	90.6	New York	San Juan	Miami
	1975	14,066	3.6	84.7	New York	San Juan	Jersey City
	1987	24,858	4.1	76.0	New York	San Juan	Bergen-Passaic
	1993	45,420	5.0	71.1	New York	San Juan	Boston
	1997	27,053	3.4	65.6	New York	San Juan	Boston
	2002	22,604	2.1	49.8	New York	Bergen-Passaic <sup>a</sup>	Boston
	2011	46,109	4.3	74.0	New York	Boston	Miami
Filipino	1967	10,865	3.0	25.6	San Francisco	Honolulu	New York

	1975	31,751	8.2	20.1	San Francisco	Los Angeles	Honolulu
	1987	50,060	8.3	30.0	Los Angeles	San Francisco	San Diego
	1993	53,457	7.0	26.0	Los Angeles	New York	San Diego
	1997	49,117	6.2	24.8	Los Angeles	Honolulu	San Diego
	2002	51,308	4.8	20.9	Los Angeles	San Diego	Chicago
	2011	57,011	5.4	29.8	Los Angeles	New York	San Francisco
<b>Total</b>	1967	361,972	100	26.1	New York	Miami	Chicago
	1975	386,194	100	28.2	New York	Los Angeles	Chicago
	1987	601,516	100	33.2	New York	Los Angeles	Miami
	1993	904,292	100	30.9	New York	Los Angeles	Chicago
	1997	798,378	100	27.0	New York	Los Angeles	Miami
	2002	1,063,732	100	21.5	Los Angeles	New York	Chicago
	2011	1,062,040	100	32.2	New York	Los Angeles	Miami

Source: U.S. Office of Immigration Statistics, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (1968, 1976, 1988, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2012).

<sup>a</sup> San Juan is not listed after 2002 in the OIS statistical yearbook.