

MIGRATION SWINGS

The Census 2000 Supplementary Survey offers the first opportunity in a decade to classify states by their migrant and immigrant populations. BY WILLIAM H. FREY

America is a nation on the move. During the 1990s, 73 million people moved across state lines, and another 13 million immigrated from other countries. Yet, migrants are selective when they are deciding on a new home—and their choices impact not only the regions they pick but those they leave behind.

This according to the Census 2000 Supplementary Survey (C2SS), a quantitative study of 700,000 households conducted by the Census Bureau at the same time as Census 2000. Although a more complete picture will be available from Census 2000 this summer, the C2SS offers a first look at how some aspects of the country have changed at the national and state levels over the past decade.

Among its findings, the C2SS shows that immigrants from abroad tend to be younger than the general population and to select destinations where they have friends and family, and where they can speak their native language. They revitalize the economy of the regions they move to and enrich them culturally with their tastes in music, food and entertainment. Similarly, migrants between states are generally younger, better educated and less risk-averse than the general population. The regions that receive them become rejuvenated with a growing working-age population, more children, as well as a greater demand for homes and a wide range of consumer items. Some states—such as Texas and Florida—have attracted both immigrants and domestic migrants.

The regions that do not attract either group have often experienced a prolonged economic decline, or they lack the natural or cultural amenities that many migrants seek. They tend to be composed of natives or so-called “home grown” residents who have enjoyed living in these areas since birth, and who hold long-term relationships and community associations.

Immigrant Magnets

After more than two decades of high immigration levels, America’s foreign-



born population now has a significant presence in several states. Leading the pack is California, where 1 resident in 4 is foreign-born. This is a dramatic change for the Golden State, which has long relied on migrants from other parts of the U.S. as its primary source of growth. As recently as 1960, more than half of California’s population was born in another state. Now, the refrain “California, here I come,” is more closely

associated with immigrants from abroad. In fact, for the first time in a century, the foreign-born account for a greater share of that state’s population than those born in other parts of the U.S. (See chart, page 20.)

Today, the foreign-born make up at least 10 percent of the population in 15 states, compared with just five states in 1990—California, Florida, Hawaii, New Jersey and New York. (See map, right.)

JIM FRAZIER/SIS

Of course, each state attracts different mixes of populations, and each group contributes to the distinct melting pot that emerges. For example, Mexicans dominate groups in California, Texas and Illinois; Dominicans, Chinese and Indians are prominent in New York and Cubans have a commanding presence in Florida.

Texas and Florida have attracted both kinds of transients—those moving from other parts of the U.S. and from abroad.

One implication of this significant foreign-born presence is the heightened propensity to speak a language other than English at home. This is the case for 18 percent of the national population, age 5 and above, but rises to nearly 40 percent in California, where about one-

quarter of the population speaks Spanish at home, and another 9 percent speaks an Asian language. The prevalence of Spanish-speaking residents is growing in the states with a large foreign-born population. (See table, below.) At the same time, the younger generation that speaks Spanish at home is increasingly likely to speak English “very well” in the community at large, according to the C2SS.

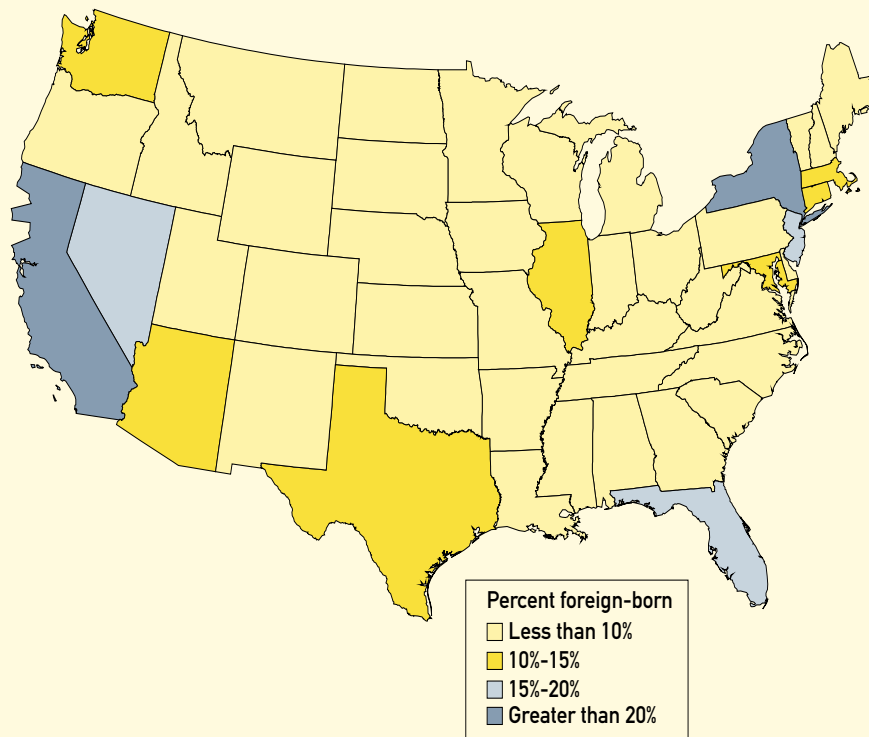
Domestic Migrant Magnets

The sustained in-migration of residents from other parts of the U.S. has shaped the population of states termed “domestic migrant magnets.” States where newcomers from other parts of the country constitute a substantial critical mass—at least one-third of the population—are regions where these non-natives are not seen as outsiders, so it is easy to make friends, move into new business circles and connect with the wider community. These are largely Western and Southeastern states that enjoyed robust

economies over the past decade. (See map, top of page 21.) In Nevada for example, 6 in 10 residents were born elsewhere in the U.S. Other states where more than half of all residents are non-natives include: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Florida and Wyoming. Several other states that found significant increases (greater than one-third) in their out-of-state “transplant” shares over the past two decades include South Carolina and Georgia. South Carolina rose from a rank of 33 nationally on this measure in 1980, to 18 in 2000, when its domestic transplant population rose from 25 percent to 37 percent. Georgia rose from No. 29 to No. 21, when its out-of-state population rose from 27 percent in 1980, to 34 percent in 2000. On the other hand, California’s new migrant waves, coupled with its domestic out-migration during the 1990s, caused it to drop in rank from 16 in 1980, to 43 in 2000, as its population born out-of-state declined, from 40 per-

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

In 2000, the foreign-born represented at least 10 percent of the population in 15 states (including Washington, D.C., and Hawaii, not represented on map), compared with just five states in 1990.



NATIVE TONGUES

While about one-fourth of California’s population speaks Spanish at home, less than 10 percent speaks an Asian language at home.

SPEAK SPANISH LANGUAGE ONLY AT HOME:

STATE	PERCENT
1. New Mexico	28.3%
2. Texas	27.6%
3. California	25.7%
4. Arizona	19.9%
5. Florida	15.8%
6. Nevada	15.2%
7. New York	13.7%
8. New Jersey	12.3%
9. Illinois	10.8%
10. Colorado	9.8%

SPEAK ASIAN LANGUAGE ONLY AT HOME:

STATE	PERCENT
1. Hawaii	23.0%
2. California	8.8%
3. Washington	5.1%
4. New York	3.9%
5. New Jersey	3.8%
6. Alaska	3.6%
7. Nevada	3.4%
8. Massachusetts	3.0%
9. Maryland	2.8%
10. Virginia	2.5%

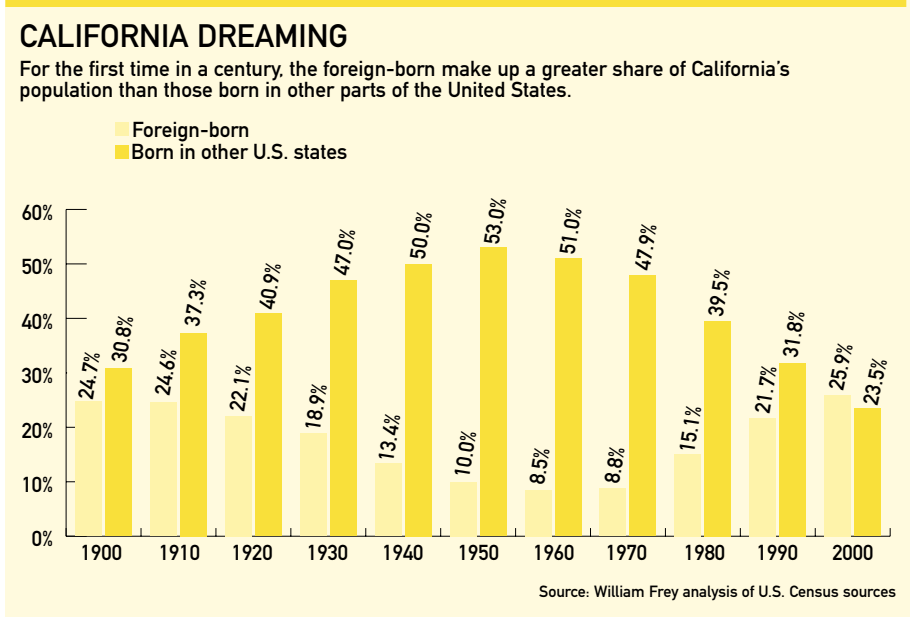
Source: William Frey analysis of U.S. census sources

cent to 23 percent. Migrants from California helped fuel the rise in transplants to surrounding states.

Homegrown Havens

Places where a large share of residents—more than 65 percent—were born in the same state are typically located in regions that have not attracted many migrants either from abroad or from other parts of the U.S. in a decade or two. They tend to have older populations because they are not infused with youthful migrants and their offspring. These include a good part of the Midwest, the Northeast and the more stagnant states of the South. (See map, bottom of page 21.) The foreign-born presence in these states tends to be low, while the dominant minority population in many Southern and Midwestern states is African American.

These areas are typically thought of as the heartland and home to America's oldest and best-known cities. For example, the strong identification and attach-



ment to community for natives of Iowa, Chicago or Detroit reflects the existence of long-standing communities that have

more of a history than cities like Ft. Lauderdale, San Jose or Colorado Springs. States in this heartland region

are often chosen for focus groups or surveys to assess the attitudes of typical Americans. Of course, the new diversity in other parts of the country makes these states less typical than they were in the past. But they still make up a plurality (42 percent) of the nation's population, and the stability of their residents makes it more accurate to forecast the demographic profile of these regions.

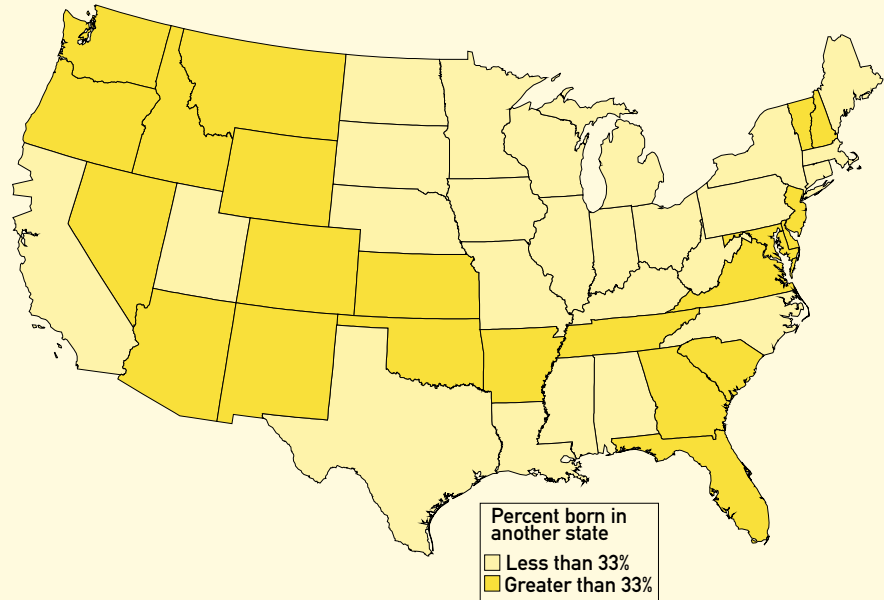
Many of the states that are home to the largest transient populations do not necessarily hold on to them as the local economy changes or opportunities arise elsewhere.

Many migrants exemplify a demographic axiom: “mobility breeds mobility”—that is, the propensity of migrants to move to a new location does not necessarily dampen after they arrive. They often pick up again, seeking greener pastures. Not surprisingly, many of the states that are home to the largest transient populations—either the foreign- or the domestic-born variety—do not necessarily hold on to them when the local economy changes, or new opportunities arise elsewhere. Past migrant flows, linked to previous booms and busts in regions of the Rust Belt, the oil patch, and various high-tech silicon valleys and alleys, reflect the fickle nature of migrants in America. Nonetheless, the migration patterns of the past that are reflected throughout the country have almost indelibly shaped the intrinsic character of transiency or inertia associated with these broad regions. These regional distinctions are likely to persist, however slowly or quickly the revolving door of America's migration swings into play. ■

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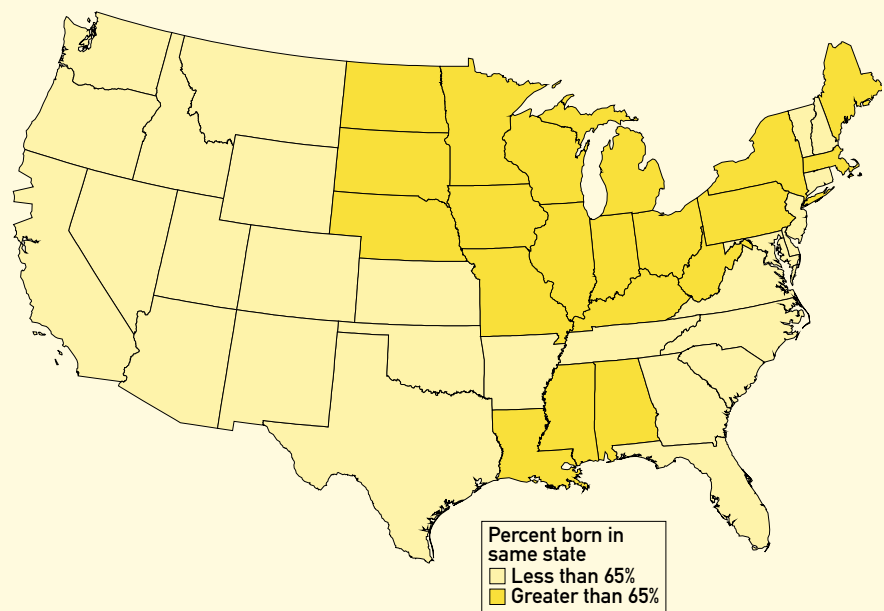
BORN IN THE U.S.A.

Western and Southeastern states where newcomers from other parts of the U.S. accounted for at least one-third of the population in 2000 have enjoyed robust economies over the past decade.



LONG-STANDING COMMUNITIES

States in the Midwest, the Northeast and parts of the South have few migrants. These states tend to have older, less diverse populations.



Source: William Frey analysis of U.S. census sources