

# Moving to another country

Sociology



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Latin Immigration. The combined effects of globalization and the end of the Cold War have meant that people are on the move like never before. Millions of individuals from poor countries migrate to richer ones in an effort to better provide for themselves and their families through legal channels and, in their absence, illegal ones. In general, the United States has strict immigration policies; in addition to enforcing existing measures, it has introduced new ones, including the construction of a fence along the Mexico-U. S. border to curb illegal migration into the country. Despite these measures, the number of irregular labor migrants from various countries only seems to be increasing.

Empirical evidence suggests that the decision to migrate abroad is strongly influenced by economic factors, particularly opportunities for employment and a higher wage<sup>1</sup>. The decision to migrate depends on the income that an individual expects to receive in the destination country relative to the income expected in the home country.

General ethnocentrism seems to be a powerful antecedent of immigration opinion, typically displaying larger effects than economic concerns. While ethnocentrism dominates economic concerns in explanations of Whites' immigration policy opinions, attitudes toward Latinos in particular account for nearly all of the impact of ethnocentrism since 1994. Journalistic attention to Latino immigration roughly parallels actual rates of immigration from Latin America, suggesting the media shaping of policy opinion around this group may be driven by real-world demographic patterns.

As in the Todaro(1969) model, expected income in the destination country depends on actual earnings there, the probability of employment and the cost of migrating abroad. In light of the special circumstances in which illegal

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migration takes place, expected destination income is assumed to depend on the probability of being captured and deported as well as on the illegality tax on an individual's earnings abroad

The probability of being captured can be defined as the proportion of all individuals attempting to illegally enter the country in any given period who are actually prevented from doing so. It depends on both the average number of attempts to migrate illegally and the rate of apprehension on each single attempt.

Although legal, documented international migration still constitutes a major flow of labor to the United States, illegal, undocumented migration across the borders represents a troublesome phenomenon. The 1986 passage of the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Reform and Control Act designed to curb inflow of illegal migrants through imposition of employer penalties and increased border apprehension showing the Congressional concern over impact of illegal migration.

The economic impacts include domestic unemployment and wage structures, added cost of social services and changing demographic picture in recipient areas, high unemployment in home country in the home country, lower but still positive unemployment in destination country, no equilibrating wage rates in home and destination countries, discriminatory domestic wage structures between domestic and illegal workers and physical constraints on labor mobility

While U. S. laws mandate that authorities prevent illegal entry and punish firms that hire unauthorized immigrants, these laws are imperfectly enforced. Lax enforcement may reflect political pressure by employers and other interests that favour open borders.

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## References

Gelletly, L. A. (2004). Mexican immigration. Philadelphia: Mason Crest Publishers.