

Moving around to get by and try to get ahead: Immigration experiences in new settlement communities of the Midwest

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Abstract

In recent decades, towns across the United States have experienced an increase in culturally distinct newcomers, primarily from Latin America. A key characteristic of these newcomers is a tendency to move around until they find a place to settle. A recent study in Missouri found that, along with racial profiling, mobility had a significant negative impact on income earnings, especially for foreign born female immigrants. Why do people move around so much and why do mobility, being foreign born and a woman, have such a negative impact on earnings? This study addresses these questions through case studies of Latina immigrants in three new settlement communities in the Midwest. This study examines their moves, the reasons for moves, the processes by which they settle or move on, and how income is affected by mobility, origins and gender. Understanding the perspective of the newcomers will help human service providers better meet their needs.

Key words: mobility, immigrants, Midwest, women, interviews

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