

## KEY ISSUE 2

# Where Do People Migrate within a Country?

- Interregional Migration
- Intraregional Migration

### Learning Outcome 3.2.1

Describe the history of interregional migration in the United States.

Internal migration for most people is less disruptive than international migration. Two main types of internal migration are interregional (between regions of a country) and intraregional (within a region).

## Interregional Migration

In the past, people migrated from one region of a country to another in search of better farmland. Lack of farmland pushed many people from the more densely settled regions of the country and lured them to the frontier, where land was abundant. Today, the principal type of interregional migration is from rural areas to urban areas. Most jobs, especially in services, are clustered in urban areas (see Chapter 12).

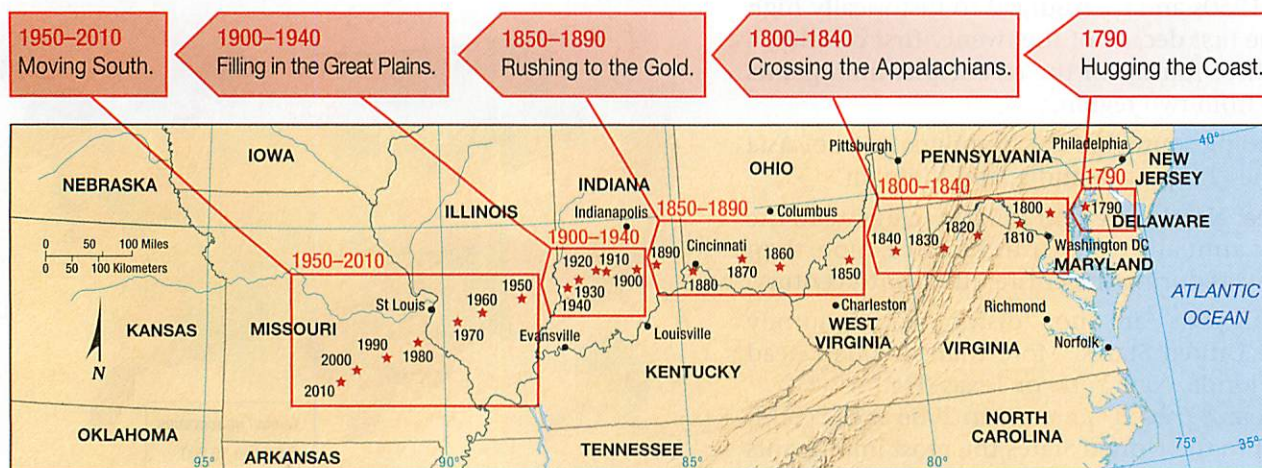
## MIGRATION BETWEEN REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

An especially prominent example of large-scale internal migration is the opening of the American West. At the time of independence, the United States consisted of long-established settlements concentrated on the Atlantic Coast and a scattering of newer settlements in the territories west of the Appalachian Mountains. Through mass interregional migration, the interior of the continent was settled and developed.

**CHANGING CENTER OF POPULATION.** The U.S. Census Bureau computes the country's population center at the time of each census. The population center is the average location of everyone in the country, the "center of population gravity." If the United States were a flat plane placed on top of a pin, and each individual weighed the same, the population center would be the point where the population distribution causes the flat plane to balance on the pin.

The changing location of the population center graphically demonstrates the march of the American people across the North American continent over the past 200 years (Figure 3-9). The center has consistently shifted westward, although the rate of movement has varied in different eras:

- **1790: Hugging the coast.** This location reflects the fact that virtually all colonial-era settlements were near the Atlantic Coast. Few colonists ventured far from coastal locations because they depended on shipping links with Europe to receive products and to export raw materials. The Appalachian Mountains also blocked western development because of their steep slopes, thick



▲ **FIGURE 3-9 CHANGING CENTER OF U.S. POPULATION** The population center is the average location of everyone in the country, the "center of population gravity." If the United States were a flat plane placed on top of a pin, and each individual weighed the same, the population center would be the point where the population distribution causes the flat plane to balance on the head of a pin.

forests, and few gaps that allowed easy passage. The indigenous residents, commonly called “Indians,” still occupied large areas and sometimes resisted the expansion of settlement.

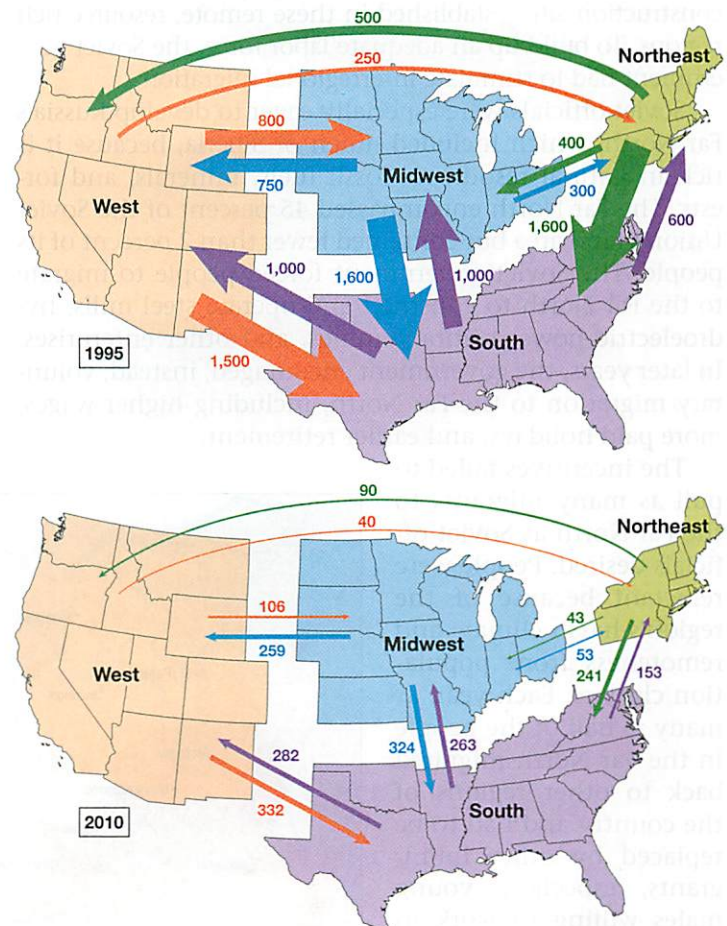
- **1800–1840: Crossing the Appalachians.** Transportation improvements, especially the building of canals, helped to open the interior. Most important was the Erie Canal, which enabled people to travel inexpensively by boat between New York City and the Great Lakes. In 1840, the United States had 5,352 kilometers (3,326 miles) of canals. Encouraged by the opportunity to obtain a large amount of land at a low price, people moved into forested river valleys between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River. They cut down the trees and used the wood to build homes, barns, and fences.
- **1850–1890: Rushing to the gold.** The population center shifted westward more rapidly during this period. Rather than continuing to expand agriculture into the next available westward land, mid-nineteenth-century pioneers kept going all the way to California. The principal pull to California was the Gold Rush, beginning in the late 1840s. Pioneers during this period also passed over the Great Plains because of the physical environment. The region’s dry climate, lack of trees, and tough grassland sod convinced early explorers such as Zebulon Pike that the region was unfit for farming, and maps at the time labeled the Great Plains as the Great American Desert.
- **1900–1940: Filling in the Great Plains.** The westward movement of the U.S. population center slowed during this period because emigration from Europe to the East Coast offset most of the emigration from the East Coast to the U.S. West. Also, immigrants began to fill in the Great Plains that earlier generations had bypassed. Advances in agricultural technology enabled people to cultivate the area. Farmers used barbed wire to reduce dependence on wood fencing, the steel plow to cut the thick sod, and windmills and well-drilling equipment to pump more water. The expansion of the railroads encouraged settlement of the Great Plains. The federal government gave large land grants to the railroad companies, which financed construction of their lines by selling portions to farmers. The extensive rail network then permitted settlers to transport their products to the large concentrations of customers in East Coast cities.
- **1950–2010: Moving south.** The population center resumed a more vigorous westward migration. It also moved southward, as Americans migrated to the South for job opportunities and warmer climate. The rapid growth of population and employment in the South has aggravated interregional antagonism. Some people

in the Northeast and Midwest believe that southern states have stolen industries from them. In reality, some industries have relocated from the Northeast and Midwest, but most of the South’s industrial growth comes from newly established companies.

Interregional migration has slowed considerably in the United States into the twenty-first century; net migration between each pair of regions is now close to zero. Regional differences in employment prospects have become less dramatic (Figure 3-10). The severe recession that began in 2008 discouraged people from migrating because of limited job prospects in all regions.

### Pause and Reflect 3.2.1

What means of transportation were available to migrants crossing the United States during the different eras?



▲ **FIGURE 3-10 RECENT INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES** Figures show average annual migration (in thousands) in 1995 (top) and 2010 (bottom).

## MIGRATION BETWEEN REGIONS IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST COUNTRY

### Learning Outcome 3.2.2

Describe interregional migration in Russia.

Long-distance interregional migration has been an important means of opening new regions for economic development in Russia. The population of Russia, the world's largest country in land area, is highly clustered in the western, or European, portion of the country. Much of the country, especially east of the Ural Mountains, is extremely sparsely inhabited (Figure 3-11). To open up the sparsely inhabited Asian portion of Russia, interregional migration was important in the former Soviet Union. Soviet policy encouraged factory construction near raw materials rather than near existing population concentrations (see Chapter 11). Not enough workers lived nearby to fill all the jobs at the mines, factories, and construction sites established in these remote, resource-rich regions. To build up an adequate labor force, the Soviet government had to stimulate interregional migration.

Soviet officials were especially eager to develop Russia's Far North, which included much of Siberia, because it is rich in natural resources—fossil fuels, minerals, and forests. The Far North encompassed 45 percent of the Soviet Union's land area but contained fewer than 2 percent of its people. The Soviet government forced people to migrate to the Far North to construct and operate steel mills, hydroelectric power stations, mines, and other enterprises. In later years, the government encouraged, instead, voluntary migration to the Far North, including higher wages, more paid holidays, and earlier retirement.

The incentives failed to pull as many migrants to the Far North as Soviet officials desired. People were reluctant because of the region's harsh climate and remoteness from population clusters. Each year, as many as half of the people in the Far North migrated back to other regions of the country and had to be replaced by other immigrants, especially young males willing to work in the region for a short period. One method the Soviet government used was to send a brigade of young volunteers, known as Komsomol, during school vacations to help construct projects, such as railroads (Figure 3-12).



▲ **FIGURE 3-12 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: RUSSIA**

When Russia was still constituted as the principal components of the Soviet Union, workers migrated to Siberia to build rail lines, including these in 1930.

The collapse of the Soviet Union ended policies that encouraged interregional migration. In the transition to a market-based economy, Russian government officials no longer dictate “optimal” locations for factories.

### Pause and Reflect 3.2.2

With Russia more closely linked economically to Europe, which region of the country is most likely to attract interregional migration?

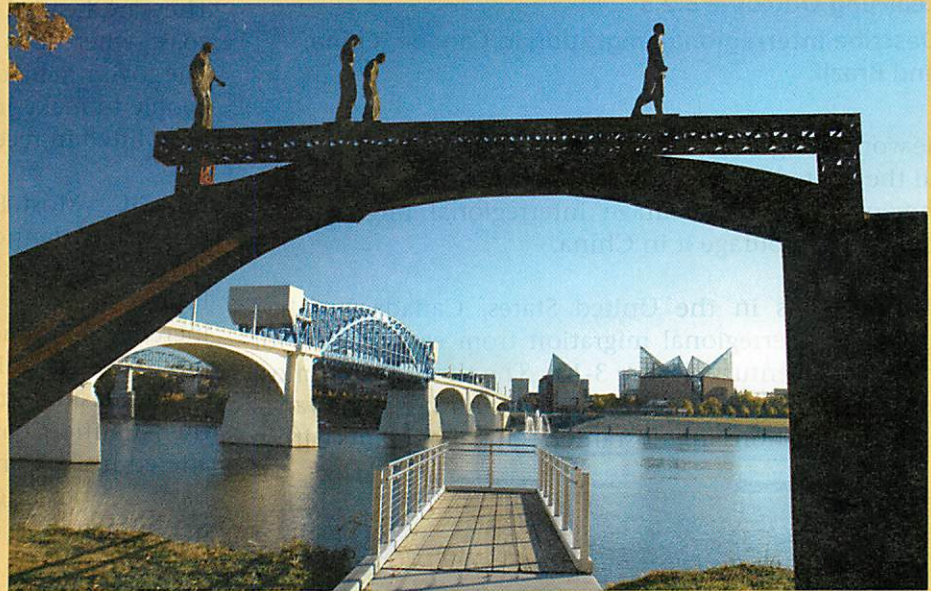


▲ **FIGURE 3-11 POPULATION DISTRIBUTION: RUSSIA** Russia's population is clustered in the west of the country, nearest to Europe.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND INEQUALITY IN OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE

### Trail of Tears

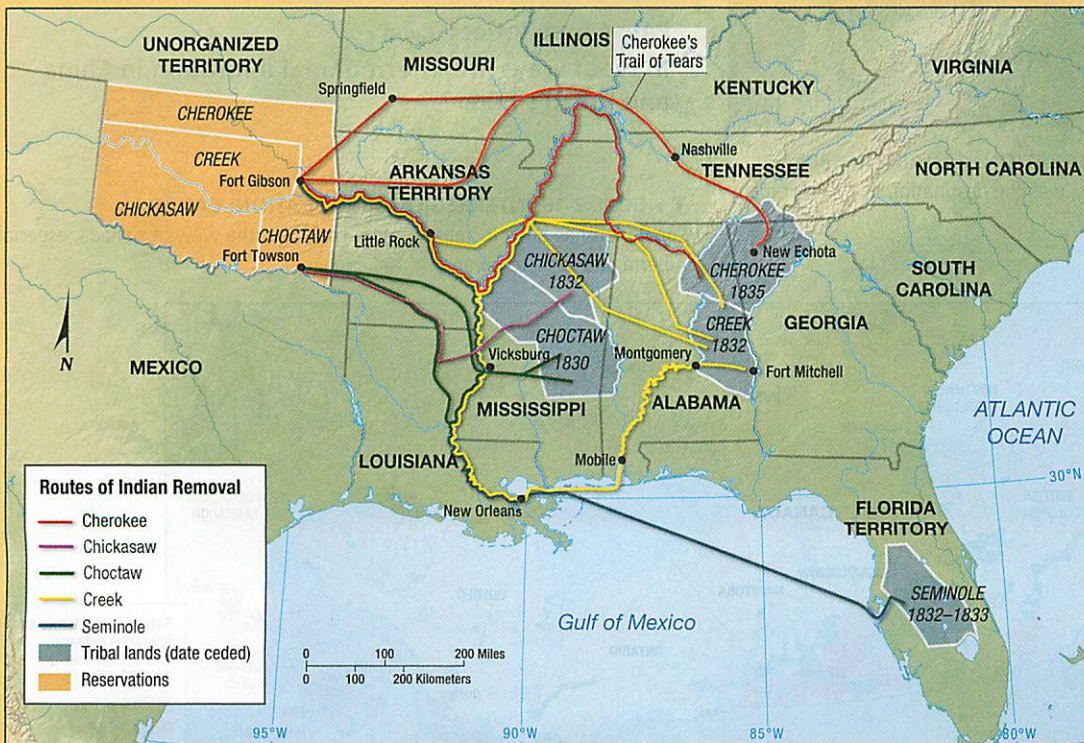
Like many other people, Native Americans also migrated west in the nineteenth century. But their migration was forced rather than voluntary. This inequality was written in law, when the Indian Removal Act of 1830 authorized the U.S. Army to remove five Indian tribes from their land in the southeastern United States and move them to Indian Territory (now the state of Oklahoma). The Choctaw were forced to emigrate from Mississippi in 1831, the Seminole from Florida in 1832, the Creek from Alabama in 1834, the Chickasaw from Mississippi in 1837, and the Cherokee from Georgia in 1838 (Figure 3-13). The five removals opened up 100,000 square kilometers (25 million acres) of land for whites to settle and relocated the tribes to land that was too dry to sustain their traditional ways of obtaining food. Approximately 46,000 Native



▲ **FIGURE 3-13 TRAIL OF TEARS SCULPTURE** This sculpture in Chattanooga, Tennessee, commemorates the start of the path that the Cherokee were forced to take to relocate to Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in 1838.

Americans were estimated to have been uprooted, many of whom died in the long trek to the west. The

route became known as the Trail of Tears; parts of it are preserved as a National Historic Trail (Figure 3-14).



▲ **FIGURE 3-14 TRAIL OF TEARS**

These are the routes that the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole tribes took when they were forced to migrate in the early nineteenth century.

## MIGRATION BETWEEN REGIONS IN OTHER LARGE COUNTRIES

### Learning Outcome 3.2.3

Describe interregional migration in Canada, China, and Brazil.

The world's largest countries in land area other than Russia, and the United States are Canada, China, and Brazil. Government policies encourage interregional migration in Brazil and discourage it in China.

**CANADA.** As in the United States, Canada has had significant interregional migration from east to west for more than a century (Figure 3-15). The three westernmost provinces—Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan—are the destinations for most interregional migrants within



▲ **FIGURE 3-15 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: CANADA IN 1900**  
Dawson City, in Canada's Yukon Territory, was the destination in 1900 for many immigrants looking for gold.

Canada. Net out-migration is being recorded in provinces from Manitoba eastward (Figure 3-16).

**CHINA.** An estimated 100 million people have emigrated from rural areas in the interior of the country (Figure 3-17). They are headed for the large urban areas along the east coast, where jobs are most plentiful, especially in factories. The government once severely limited the ability of Chinese people to make interregional moves, but restrictions have been lifted in recent years.

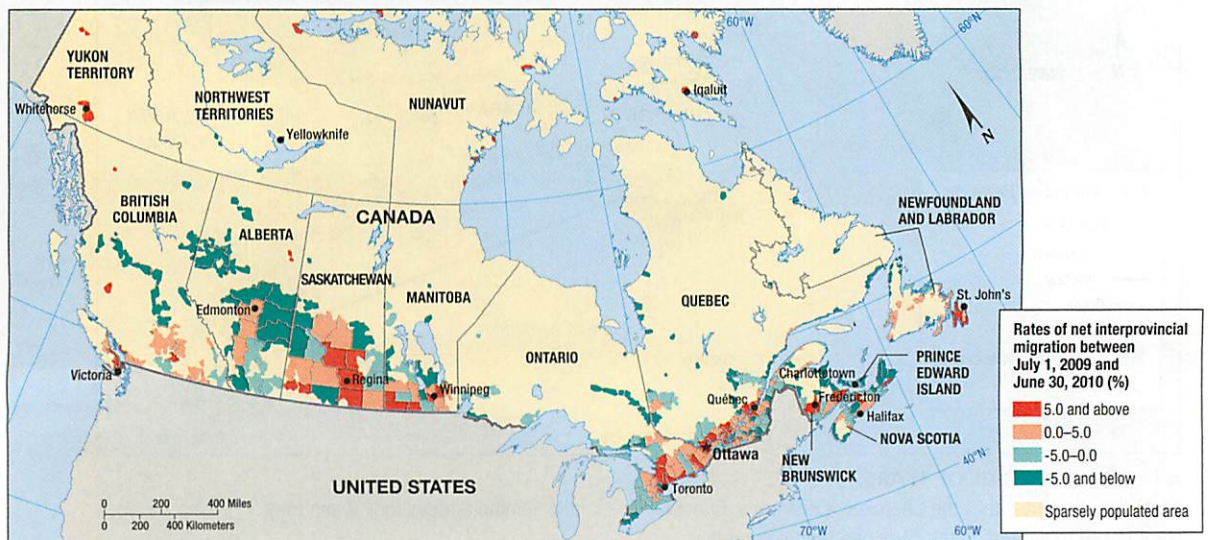
**BRAZIL.** Most Brazilians live in a string of large cities near the Atlantic Coast. São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have become two of the world's largest cities. In contrast, Brazil's tropical interior is very sparsely inhabited. To increase the attractiveness of the interior, the government moved its capital in 1960 from Rio to a newly built city called Brasília, situated 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from the Atlantic Coast. Development of Brazil's interior has altered historic migration patterns. The coastal areas now have net out-migration, whereas the interior areas have net in-migration (Figure 3-18).

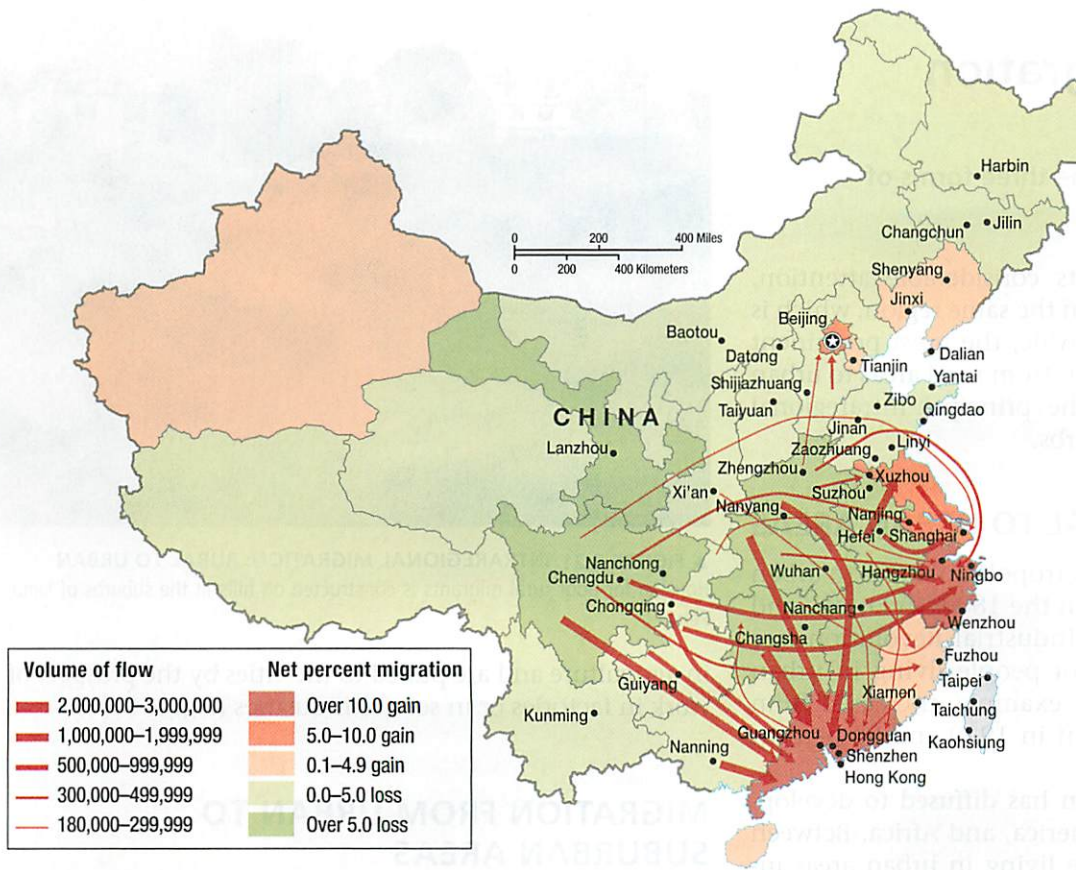
From above, Brasília's design resembles an airplane, with government buildings located at the center of the city and housing arranged along the "wings" (Figure 3-19). Thousands of people have migrated to Brasília in search of jobs. In a country with rapid population growth, many people will migrate where they think they can find employment. Many of these workers could not afford housing in Brasília and were living instead in hastily erected shacks on the outskirts of the city.

### Pause and Reflect 3.2.3

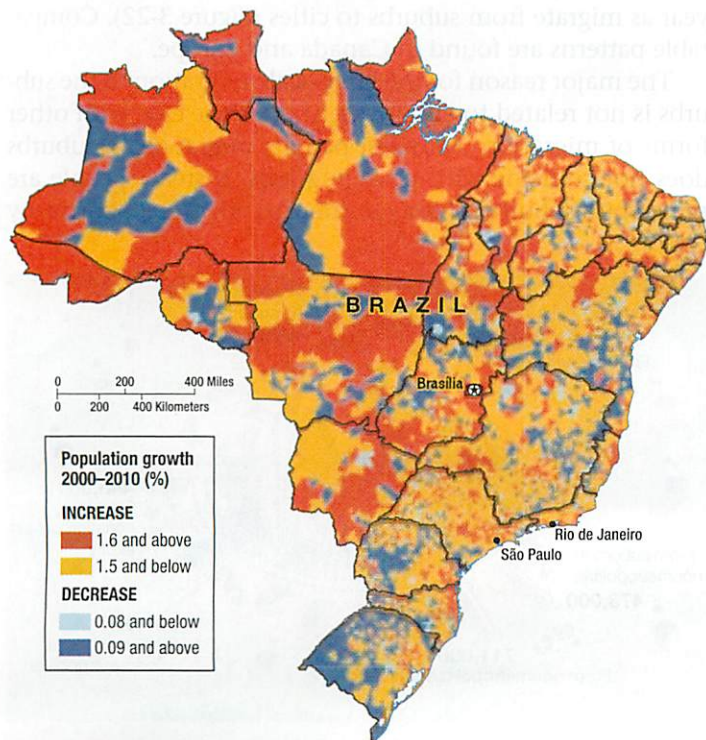
In what ways are interregional migration in China and Brazil similar?

▼ **FIGURE 3-16 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: CANADA**  
Population has been increasing more rapidly in the west of Canada, especially Alberta and Saskatchewan.





▲ FIGURE 3-17 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: CHINA Migrants are heading eastward towards the major cities.



▲ FIGURE 3-18 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: BRAZIL Population is growing more rapidly in the interior of the country.



▲ FIGURE 3-19 INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION: BRAZIL'S CAPITAL From the air, Brasília looks like an airplane. The city was built beginning in 1960 to lure migrants from the country's large coastal cities.

# Intraregional Migration

## Learning Outcome 3.2.4

Explain differences among the three forms of intraregional migration.

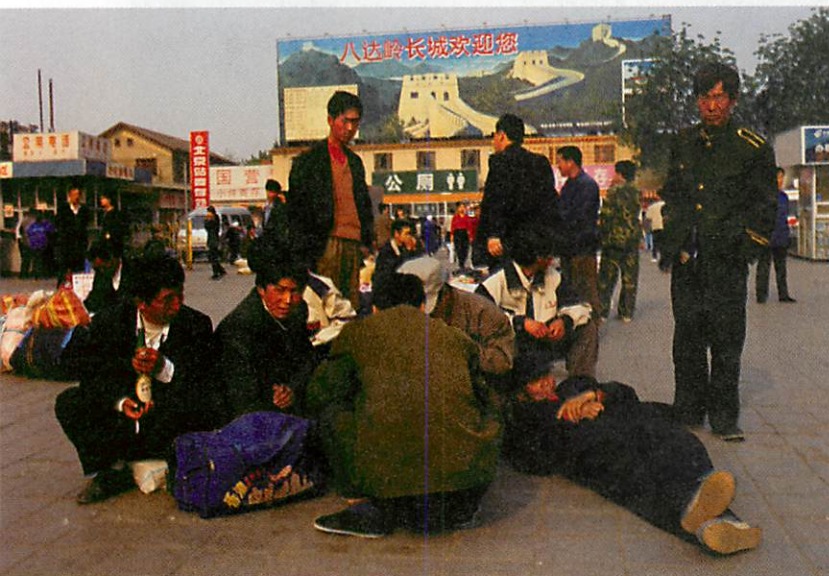
Interregional migration attracts considerable attention, but far more people move within the same region, which is intraregional migration. Worldwide, the most prominent type of intraregional migration is from rural areas to urban areas. In the United States, the principal intraregional migration is from cities to suburbs.

### MIGRATION FROM RURAL TO URBAN AREAS

Migration from rural (or nonmetropolitan) areas to urban (or metropolitan) areas began in the 1800s in Europe and North America as part of the Industrial Revolution (see Chapter 11). The percentage of people living in urban areas in the United States, for example, increased from 5 percent in 1800 to 50 percent in 1920 and 80 percent in 2010.

In recent years, urbanization has diffused to developing countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Between 1950 and 2010, the percentage living in urban areas increased from 40 percent to 80 percent in Latin America, from 15 percent to 45 percent in Asia, and from 10 percent to 40 percent in sub-Saharan Africa. Worldwide, more than 20 million people are estimated to migrate each year from rural to urban areas (Figure 3-20).

As with interregional migrants, most people who move from rural to urban areas seek economic advancement. They are pushed from rural areas by declining opportunities



▲ FIGURE 3-20 INTRAREGIONAL MIGRATION: CHINA These migrants from rural to urban areas within China are waiting for trains to take them back to the countryside during holidays.



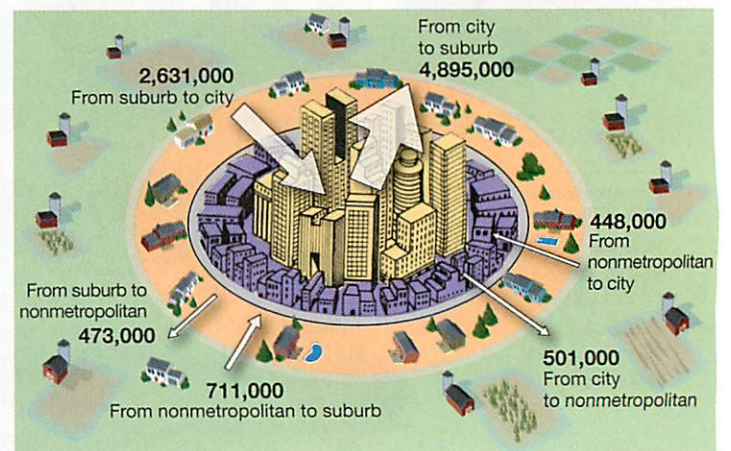
▲ FIGURE 3-21 INTRAREGIONAL MIGRATION: RURAL TO URBAN Housing for poor rural migrants is constructed on hills in the suburbs of Lima, Peru.

in agriculture and are pulled to the cities by the prospect of work in factories or in service industries (Figure 3-21).

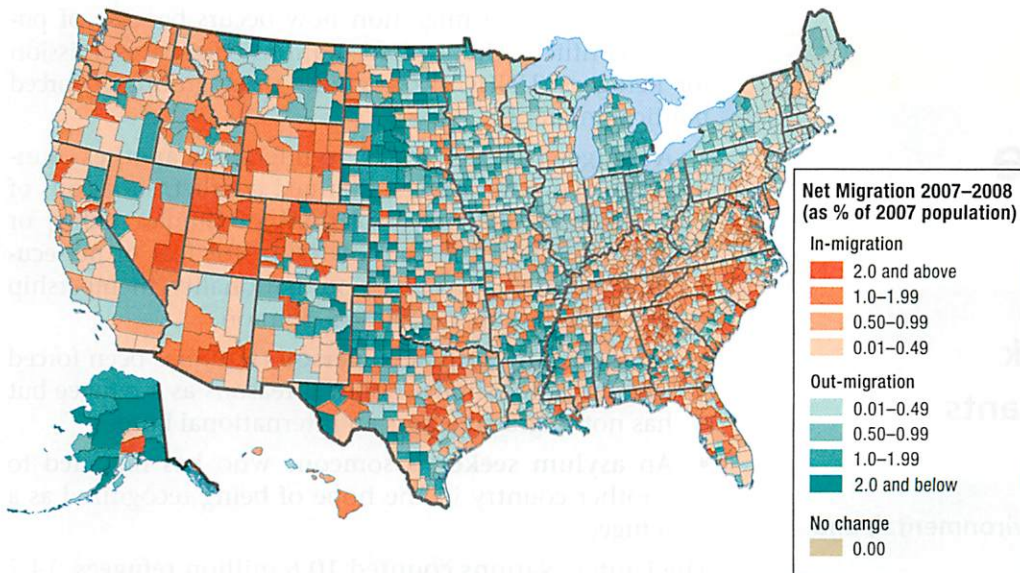
### MIGRATION FROM URBAN TO SUBURBAN AREAS

Most intraregional migration in developed countries is from cities out to surrounding suburbs. The population of most cities in developed countries has declined since the mid-twentieth century, while suburbs have grown rapidly. Nearly twice as many Americans migrate from cities to suburbs each year as migrate from suburbs to cities (Figure 3-22). Comparable patterns are found in Canada and Europe.

The major reason for the large-scale migration to the suburbs is not related to employment, as is the case with other forms of migration. For most people, migration to suburbs does not coincide with changing jobs. Instead, people are pulled by a suburban lifestyle. Suburbs offer the opportunity



▲ FIGURE 3-22 INTRAREGIONAL MIGRATION: UNITED STATES This figure shows migration between cities, suburbs, and nonmetropolitan areas in 2010.



▲ **FIGURE 3-23 NET MIGRATION BY COUNTY** Rural counties experienced net in-migration in Rocky Mountain and southern states and net out-migration in Great Plains states.

to live in a detached house rather than an apartment, surrounded by a private yard where children can play safely. A garage or driveway on the property guarantees space to park cars at no extra charge. Suburban schools tend to be more modern, better equipped, and safer than those in cities. Cars and trains enable people to live in suburbs yet have access to jobs, shops, and recreational facilities throughout the urban area (see Chapter 13).

As a result of suburbanization, the territory occupied by urban areas has rapidly expanded. To accommodate suburban growth, farms on the periphery of urban areas are converted to housing and commercial developments, where new roads, sewers, and other services must be built.

## MIGRATION FROM URBAN TO RURAL AREAS

Developed countries witnessed a new migration trend during the late twentieth century. For the first time, more people immigrated into rural areas than emigrated out of them. Net migration from urban to rural areas is called **counterurbanization**.

The boundary where suburbs end and the countryside begins cannot be precisely defined. Counterurbanization results in part from very rapid expansion of suburbs. But most counterurbanization represents genuine migration from cities and suburbs to small towns and rural communities.

As with suburbanization, people move from urban to rural areas for lifestyle reasons. Some are lured to rural areas by the prospect of swapping the frantic pace of urban life for the opportunity to live on a farm, where they can own horses or grow vegetables. Others move to farms but do not earn their living from agriculture; instead, they work in nearby factories, small-town shops, or other services. In the United States, evidence of counterurbanization can be seen primarily in the Rocky Mountain states. Rural counties in states such as Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming have experienced net in-migration (Figure 3-23).

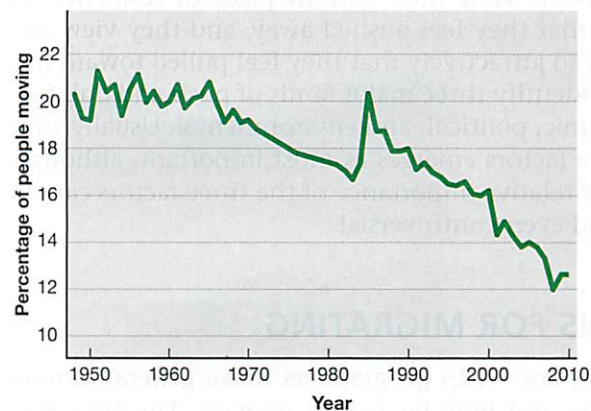
With modern communications and transportation systems, no location in a developed country is truly isolated, either economically or socially. Computers, tablets, and smart phones enable us to work anywhere and still have access to an international network. We can buy most products online and have them delivered within a few days. We can follow the fortunes of our favorite teams on television anywhere in the country, thanks to satellite dishes and webcasts.

Intraregional migration has slowed during the early twenty-first century as a result of the severe recession (Figure 3-24). Intraregional migrants, who move primarily for lifestyle reasons

rather than for jobs, found that they couldn't get loans to buy new homes and couldn't find buyers for their old homes.

### Pause and Reflect 3.2.3

What changes in communications and transportation might make counterurbanization easier or harder?



▲ **FIGURE 3-24 PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS MOVING IN A YEAR** The percentage has declined from 20 percent in the 1980s to 12 percent in the 2010s.

### CHECK IN: KEY ISSUE 2

#### Where Do People Migrate Within a Country?

- ✓ Migration between regions is important within the United States, as well as within other large countries.
- ✓ Migration within countries takes several forms, including rural to urban, urban to suburban, and urban to rural.