

District Data Brief

Migrants from High-Cost, Large Metro Areas during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Their Destinations, and How Many Could Follow

First Quarter 2022 Update for Tables and Figures

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This document contains tables and figures from [“Migrants from High-Cost, Large Metro Areas during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Their Destinations, and How Many Could Follow”](#) that have been updated with data through March 30, 2022.

This update is substantially different from the original DDB and the first three updates. The measures in the original data brief were designed to characterize the immediate impact of the pandemic and lockdowns. The duration of the pandemic has grown quite long and has exhibited enough variation that measures aggregating over the whole pandemic period are not as useful. To provide a more accurate sense of recent developments on an ongoing basis, the tables now report migration in the most recent four quarters, rather than the whole pandemic era. Where percentage changes are reported in the tables, they are the increase or decrease of the most recent four quarters relative to the comparable averages from the three years just before the pandemic (2017:Q2 through 2020:Q1). This update continues to display the time series figures, so the recent estimates can be compared to the series' history.

With 2022:Q1 data included, Table 1 shows the increases in migration toward less-populous places continue to be larger than the increases in flows toward more-populous places relative to prepandemic averages. Flows from lower-cost large metro areas to mid-sized metros and rural areas are up more than 10 percent relative to prepandemic norms, while the opposite flows are up only 6 percent and 2 percent, respectively. In the first quarter of 2022, the net migration out of high-cost large metro areas (Figure 1) continued to slow toward its prepandemic trend. In the original brief, migration flows from 7 of the 14 high-cost large metros displayed much stronger increases among people moving to destinations within 150 miles. In the most recent four quarters (see Table 3), that advantage for near locations has eroded so that it remains for areas only near the Washington DC, Miami, and, to a lesser extent, New York metro areas. The list of top destinations (Table 4) for people leaving high-cost large metros reflects this shift

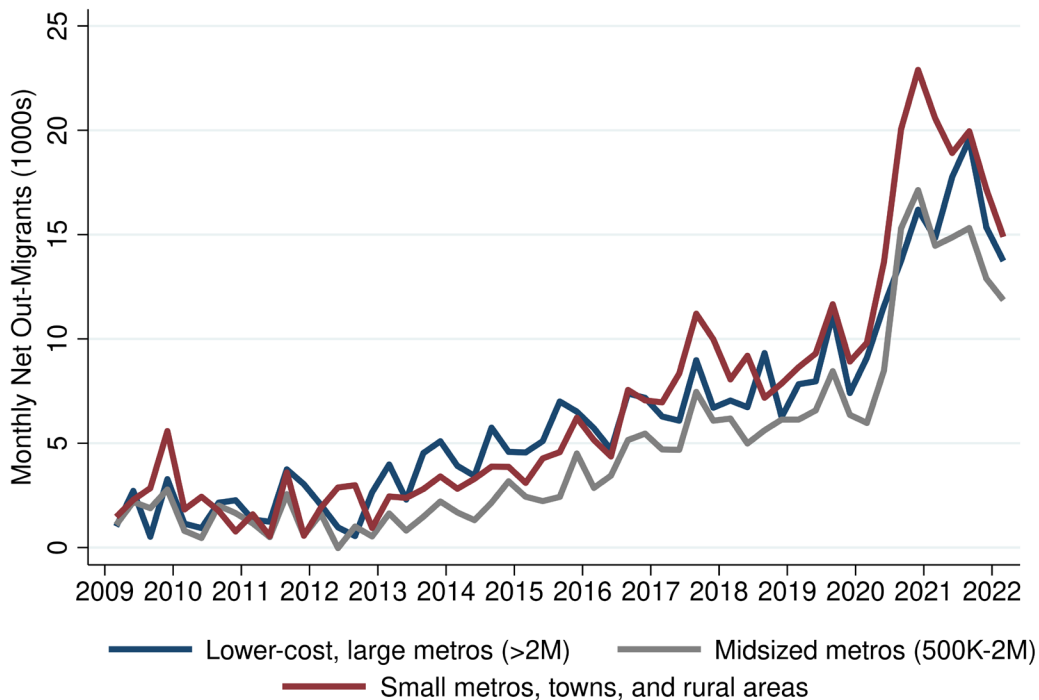
toward more distant destinations. Scranton, Pennsylvania, which is 120 miles from New York, fell off the list. Joining the list is Greenville, South Carolina, which is almost 500 miles from the nearest high-cost large metro, Washington DC.

Table 1. Estimated Interregional Gross Migration by Type of Region during the Last Four Quarters (2021:Q2 through 2022:Q1)

	To high-cost, large metro areas (>2M)		To lower-cost, large metro areas (>2M)		To mid-sized metro areas (500K–2M)		To small metro areas (<500K), towns, and rural areas	
	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change
From high-cost, large metro areas (>2M)	895,620	4.7	651,180	19.8	595,220	18.5	748,940	14.8
From lower-cost, large metro areas (>2M)	451,940	0.7	495,640	4.9	476,840	10.5	794,100	11.7
From mid-sized metro areas (500K–2M)	430,420	0.6	484,940	6.0	544,040	6.1	846,920	9.7
From small metro areas, towns, and rural areas	536,120	-1.1	752,040	1.9	843,860	5.3	1,964,780	5.0

Notes: Populations indicated in parentheses. The percentage change is relative to the average equivalent migration flows from 2017:Q2 to 2020:Q1. Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data, American Community Survey, National Association of Realtors, and author’s calculations.

Figure 1. Net Migration from High-Cost, Large Metro Areas to Other Types of Regions



Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data, American Community Survey, National Association of Realtors, and author’s calculations.

Table 2. Estimated Gross Migration from the High-Cost, Large Metro Areas to Other Types of Regions during the Last Four Quarters (2021:Q2 through 2022:Q1)

	To high-cost, large metro areas (>2M)		To lower-cost, large metro areas (>2M)		To mid-sized metro areas (500K–2M)		To small metro areas (<500K), towns, and rural areas	
	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change
New York, NY	125,300	6.8	149,000	25.0	141,020	22.7	115,560	19.5
Los Angeles, CA	190,080	9.1	89,220	33.0	69,420	23.9	61,280	12.8
Washington, DC	47,060	-7.9	76,540	6.8	55,420	8.7	68,400	9.1
Chicago, IL	45,920	-1.2	68,940	11.6	47,600	14.8	75,780	11.5
Miami, FL	47,220	-3.1	64,060	11.3	50,280	22.3	57,760	11.1
San Francisco, CA	99,620	14.7	29,320	30.5	33,040	26.0	50,740	19.9
Riverside, CA	88,320	6.1	30,360	32.9	20,720	15.8	36,780	27.4
Boston, MA	38,240	2.0	21,400	3.8	59,200	11.3	42,520	14.9
Seattle, WA	33,980	-0.9	29,040	23.2	24,320	10.5	62,920	12.1
San Diego, CA	58,680	0.9	27,440	16.1	25,000	16.9	32,480	11.3
Denver, CO	18,540	-0.4	26,760	12.0	27,320	17.2	53,580	19.3
San Jose, CA	56,060	6.0	13,780	45.1	14,460	24.9	17,840	8.8
Portland, OR	18,980	-1.8	14,320	28.3	12,120	19.6	41,280	14.3
Sacramento, CA	27,620	4.3	11,000	26.8	15,300	25.7	32,020	15.5

Notes: Populations indicated in parentheses. The percentage change is relative to the average equivalent migration flows from 2017:Q2 to 2020:Q1. The city name indicates the core based statistical area (www.census.gov/geographies/reference-maps/2020/geo/cbsa.html).

Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data, American Community Survey, National Association of Realtors, and author's calculations.

Table 3. Estimated Gross Migration from High-Cost, Large Metro Areas to Other Regions by Distance during the Last Four Quarters (2021:Q2 through 2022:Q1)

	To other regions within 150 miles		To other regions beyond 150 miles	
	Migrants	Change	Migrants	Change
New York, NY	130,280	22.1	400,600	17.3
Los Angeles, CA	139,940	15.0	270,060	17.4
Washington, DC	78,060	10.2	169,360	2.2
Chicago, IL	42,500	12.0	195,740	8.9
Miami, FL	35,360	43.7	183,960	5.3
San Francisco, CA	80,000	18.5	132,720	20.3
Riverside, CA	76,420	7.9	99,760	21.7
Boston, MA	66,820	10.5	94,540	7.6
Seattle, WA	33,780	2.0	116,480	13.2
San Diego, CA	34,720	3.5	108,880	10.2
Denver, CO	28,540	12.9	97,660	14.3
San Jose, CA	50,780	7.7	51,360	18.8
Portland, OR	24,100	6.5	62,600	15.7
Sacramento, CA	33,280	9.7	52,660	17.7

Notes: The percentage change is relative to the average equivalent migration flows 2017:Q2 to 2020:Q1. The city name indicates the core based statistical area (www.census.gov/geographies/reference-maps/2020/geo/cbsa.html).

Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data, American Community Survey, National Association of Realtors, and author's calculations.

Table 4. Metro Areas with the Greatest Net Migration from the High-Cost, Large Metro Areas as a Percent of Their Workforce during the Last Four Quarters (2021:Q2 through 2022:Q1)

	Net migration from high-cost, large metro areas	Ratio of net migrants to metro area labor force
Fort Myers, FL	10,460	3.9
Sarasota, FL	10,000	3.3
Stockton, CA	6,340	2.5
Boise City, ID	8,060	2.4
Las Vegas, NV	21,580	2.1
Austin, TX	17,920	1.7
Colorado Springs, CO	4,760	1.7
Orlando, FL	19,920	1.5
Tampa, FL	19,480	1.5
Nashville, TN	13,700	1.4
Phoenix, AZ	28,260	1.3
Jacksonville, FL	9,100	1.3
Allentown, PA	4,700	1.3
Raleigh, NC	8,100	1.2
Bakersfield, CA	3,760	1.2
Provo, UT	2,480	1.0
Charlotte, NC	11,620	0.9
Charleston, SC	3,340	0.9
Knoxville, TN	3,320	0.9
Oxnard, CA	2,700	0.9
Tucson, AZ	2,920	0.8
Dallas, TX	26,940	0.7
Atlanta, GA	18,000	0.7
San Antonio, TX	6,800	0.7
Greenville, SC	2,640	0.6

Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data, Occupational Employment Statistics, American Community Survey, National Association of Realtors, and author's calculations.