

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**.

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

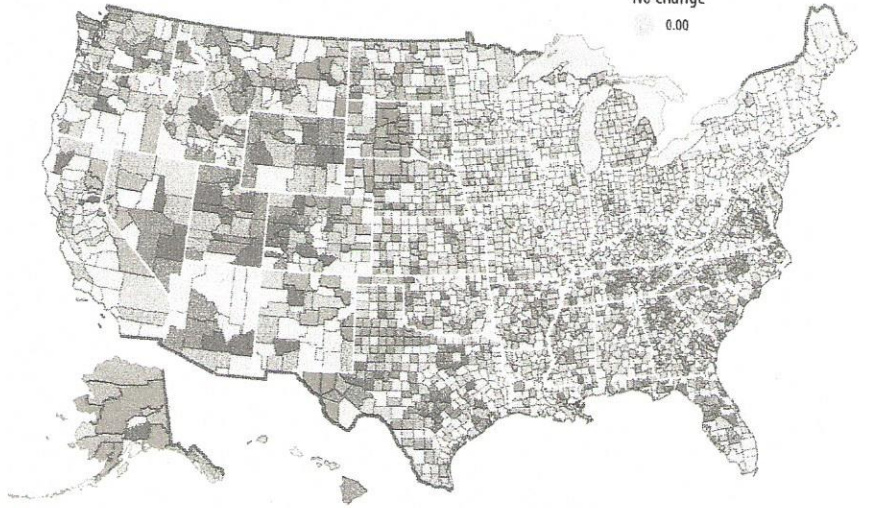
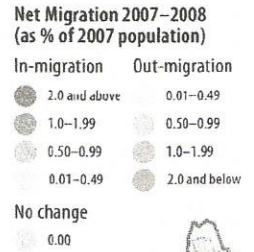
Like suburbanization, people move from urban to rural areas for lifestyle reasons. Some are lured to rural areas by the prospect of swapping the frantic pace of urban life for the opportunity to live on a farm where they can own horses or grow vegetables. Others move to farms but do not earn their living 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. Some rural counties in states such as Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming have experienced net immigration (Figure 3.4.3).

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 we 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 team on TV 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 3.4.4). Intraregional migrants, who move primarily for lifestyle reasons rather than for jobs, found that they couldn't get loans to buy new homes nor find buyers for their old homes.

▼ 3.4.3 NET MIGRATION BY U.S. COUNTY



◀ 3.4.4 PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS MOVING IN A YEAR

