German, and Irish immigrants a half-century earlier. A government study in 1911 reflected popular attitudes when it concluded that immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe were racially inferior, “inclined toward violent crime,” resisted assimilation, and “drove old-stock citizens out of some lines of work.”

More recently, hostile citizens in California and other states have voted to deny unauthorized immigrants access to most public services, such as schools, day-care centers, and health clinics. The laws have been difficult to enforce and of dubious constitutionality, but their enactment reflects the unwillingness on the part of many Americans to help out needy immigrants. Whether children of recent immigrants should be entitled to attend school and receive social services is much debated in the United States.

Attitudes Toward Guest Workers
In Europe, many guest workers suffer from poor social conditions. The guest worker is typically a young man who arrives alone in a city. He has little money for food, housing, or entertainment because his primary objective is to send home as much money as possible. He is likely to use any surplus money for a railway ticket home for the weekend.

Far from his family and friends, the guest worker can lead a lonely life. His isolation may be heightened by unfamiliarity with the host country’s language and distinctive cultural activities. Many guest workers pass their leisure time at the local railway station. There they can buy native-language newspapers, mingle with other guest workers, and meet people who have just arrived by train from home.

Both guest workers and their host countries regard the arrangement as temporary. In reality, however, many guest workers remain indefinitely, especially if they are joined by other family members. Some guest workers apply their savings to starting a grocery store, restaurant, or other small shop. These businesses can fill a need in European cities by remaining open on weekends and evenings when most locally owned establishments are closed.

Many Western Europeans dislike the guest workers and oppose government programs to improve their living conditions. Political parties that support restrictions on immigration have gained support in France, Germany, and other European countries, and attacks by local citizens on immigrants have increased. In the Middle East, petroleum-exporting countries fear that the increasing numbers of guest workers will spark political unrest and abandonment of traditional Islamic customs. After the 1991 Gulf War, Kuwaiti officials expelled hundreds of thousands of Palestinian guest workers who had sympathized with Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990. To minimize long-term stays, other host countries in the Middle East force migrants to return home if they wish to marry and prevent them from returning once they have wives and children.

The severe global recession of the early twenty-first century has sharply reduced the number of guest workers and economic migrants. With high unemployment and limited job opportunities in the principal destination countries, potential migrants have much less incentive to risk the uncertainties and expenses of international migration.

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**KEY ISSUE 4**

**Why Do People Migrate Within a Country?**

**Migration Between Regions of a Country**

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).

**Migration Between Regions Within the United States**

An especially prominent example of large-scale internal migration is the opening of the American West. Two hundred years ago, the United States consisted of a collection of settlements concentrated on the Atlantic Coast. Through mass interregional migration, the interior of the continent was settled and developed.

The U.S. Census Bureau computes the country’s population center at the time of each census. 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 3-16).

- **Colonial Settlement.** When the first U.S. census was taken, in 1790, the population center was located in the Chesapeake Bay, near Chestertown, Maryland. 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. Settlement in the interior was also hindered by an intervening obstacle, the Appalachian Mountains. The Appalachians blocked western development because of their steep slopes, thick forests, and few gaps that allowed easy passage. Hostile indigenous residents, commonly called “Indians,” also retarded western settlement.
Early Settlement in the Interior. Transportation improvements, especially the building of canals, helped to open the interior in the early 1800s. 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, and the U.S. center of population had moved to Weston, West Virginia, 250 miles west of Chestertown.

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.

Migration to California. The population center shifted more rapidly during the mid-nineteenth century, reaching Greensburg, Indiana, in 1890, a 400-mile westward movement in 50 years. 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. Mid-nineteenth century pioneers 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.

Settlement of the Great Plains. The westward movement of the U.S. population center slowed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1940, the center of population was still in Indiana, only 150 miles west of its 1890 position.

The rate slowed, in part, because large-scale migration to the East Coast from Europe offset some of the migration from the East Coast to the U.S. West. Also, immigrants began to fill in the area between the 98th meridian and California that earlier generations had bypassed. Advances in agricultural technology enabled people to cultivate the Great Plains (Figure 3-17). 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

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FIGURE 3-16 Changing center of population in the United States. 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 center has consistently shifted westward, although the rate of movement has varied in different eras. In recent decades, the center has also started to shift southward, a reflection of recent migration to the South.

FIGURE 3-17 Great Plains settlement. Large-scale migration into the Great Plains began in the 1880s. This family was photographed on their farm in Loup Valley, Nebraska, in 1886.
transport their products to the large concentrations of customers in East Coast cities.

- **Recent Growth of the South.** The population center resumed a more vigorous migration during the late twentieth century, moving 250 miles further west between 1940 and 2000, across Illinois to central Missouri. The population center also moved southward by 75 miles between 1940 and 2000. The population center drifted southward because of net migration into southern states, especially during the last two decades of the twentieth century (Figure 3-18).

Americans migrated to the South primarily for job opportunities and environmental conditions. Americans commonly refer to the South as the “sunbelt” because of its more temperate climate and the Midwest as the “rust-belt” because of its dependency on declining manufacturing (as well as the ability of the climate to rust out cars relatively quickly).

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. With most new jobs in the service sector of the economy, jobs are expanding and contracting at similar rates around the country.

**Migration Between Regions in Other Countries**

As in the United States, long-distance interregional migration has been an important means of opening new regions for economic development in other large countries. Incentives have been used to stimulate migration to other regions.

**RUSSIA.** Interregional migration was important in developing 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 less than
The Cultural Landscape

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. An example is the Baikal-Amur Railroad, which runs for 3,145 kilometers (1,955 miles) from Taishet to Sovetskaia Gavan.

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.

BRAZIL. Another large country, Brazil, has encouraged interregional migration. 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. From above, Brasília’s design resembles an airplane, with government buildings located at the center of the city and housing arranged along the “wings.” Thousands of people have migrated to Brasília in search of jobs (Figure 3-19). 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.

INDONESIA. Since 1969, the Indonesian government has paid for the migration of more than 5 million people, primarily from the island of Java, where nearly two-thirds of its people live, to less populated islands. Under the government program, families receive a one-way air ticket, 2 hectares (5 acres) of land, materials to build a house, seeds and pesticides, and food—a year’s worth of rice—to tide them over until the crops are ready.

EUROPE. The principal flow of interregional migration in Europe is from east and south to west and north. This pattern reflects the relatively low incomes and bleak job prospects in eastern and southern Europe.

In the twentieth century, wealthy Western European countries received many immigrants from their former colonies in Africa and Asia. The expansion of the European Union into Eastern Europe in the twenty-first century removed barriers for Bulgarians, Romanians, and residents of other former Communist countries to migrate to Western Europe (Figure 3-20).

Interregional migration flows can also be found within individual European countries. Italians migrate from the south, known as the Mezzogiorno, to the north, and Britons migrate from the north to the south. In both cases, economic conditions are stronger in the regions to which migrants are heading than in the regions where they originated.

The attractiveness of regions within Europe can change. For centuries, Ireland and Scotland were regions with net out-migration. Improved economic conditions in the late twentieth century induced a reversal of historic patterns, and both became regions of net in-migration. The deep recession of the early twenty-first century discouraged further in-migration to Ireland and Scotland.

INDIA. A number of governments limit the ability of people to migrate from one region to another. For example, Indians require a permit to migrate—or even to visit—the State of Assam in the northeastern part of the country. The restrictions, which date from the British colonial era, are designed to protect the ethnic identity of Assamese by limiting the ability of outsiders to compete for jobs and purchase land.
Because Assam is situated on the border with Bangladesh, the restrictions also limit international migration.

Migration Within One Region

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. 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. Today, approximately three-fourths of the people in the United States and other MDCs live in urban areas.

In recent years, urbanization has diffused to LDCs, especially in Asia. The number of Asians living in urban areas increased from ½ billion in 1982 to 1½ billion in 2007, and the number in rural areas declined from 1½ billion to 1¾ billion. The percentage of Asians living in urban areas increased during that quarter-century from 23 percent to 42 percent. Worldwide, more than 20 million people are estimated to migrate each year from rural to urban areas.

Like interregional migrants, most people who move from rural to urban areas seek economic advancement. They are pushed from rural areas by declining opportunities in agriculture and are pulled to the cities by the prospect of work in factories or in service industries.

Migration from Urban to Suburban Areas

Most intraregional migration in MDCs is from cities out to surrounding suburbs. The population of most cities in MDCs declined during the second half of the twentieth century, and suburbs grew rapidly. Into the twenty-first century, nearly twice as many Americans migrate from suburbs to central cities each year than migrate from central cities to suburbs (Figure 3-21). Comparable patterns are found in Canada, the United Kingdom, and other Western European countries.

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 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 automobiles at no charge. Suburban schools tend to be more modern, better equipped, and safer than those in cities. Automobiles 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 developments, where new roads, sewers, and other services must be built.

Migration from Urban to Rural Areas

MDCs 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.

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. Rural counties in states such as Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming have experienced net in-migration (Figure 3-22).

With modern communications and transportation systems, no location in an MDC is truly isolated, either economically or socially. Computers enable us to work anywhere and still have access to an international network. We can obtain money at any time from a conveniently located electronic transfer machine rather than by going to a bank building. We can select clothing from a mail-order catalog, place the order by telephone, pay by credit card, and have the desired items delivered within a few days. We can follow the fortunes of our favorite baseball teams on television anywhere in the country, thanks to satellite dishes and computer webcasts.

Roughly the same number of people now migrate from urban to rural areas as from rural to urban areas. Net in-migration into Rocky Mountain states has been offset by out-migration from the Great Plains states, where the economy has been hurt by poor agricultural conditions. Future migration trends in MDCs are unpredictable, because future economic conditions are difficult to forecast. Have these countries reached long-term equilibrium, in which approximately three-fourths of the people live in urban areas and one-fourth in rural areas? Will counterurbanization resume in the future because people prefer to live in rural areas? Is the decline of the rural economy reversible?

**FIGURE 3-21** U.S. intraregional migration. Figures show migration (in millions) in 2007. Excluded are 8.5 million who moved elsewhere in the same city, 8.7 million who moved within the same suburbs, and 3.1 million who moved elsewhere in the same nonmetropolitan county.

**FIGURE 3-22** U.S. net migration by county, 2007. Rural counties experienced net in-migration in Rocky Mountain states and net out-migration in Great Plains states.