

Factors associated with internal migration at the local level in the United States

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Objective

- Several studies described associations of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics with internal migration rates in the United States
 - There is less focus on the profile and spatial distribution of internal migrants
- We investigate
 - Factors associated with internal migration in recent years
 - Local indicators of spatial association to understand clusters of internal migrants



U.S. internal migration trends

- Internal migration declined from 20% in 1950–1960 to 9.8% in 2019 (Frey 2019)
 - Rates are higher for better educated, whites, blacks, households without children, renters, unemployed (Molloy, Smith, Wozniak 2011; Moretti 2011)
- Neoclassical theory: people move for jobs
 - Fewer people are changing jobs (Molloy, Smith, Wozniak 2017)
 - Low-skilled Mexicans more responsive (Cadena, Kovak 2016)
- Social networks (Motel, Patten 2012)
 - Communities with higher proportions of Mexican immigrants facilitate flexibility in the labor market

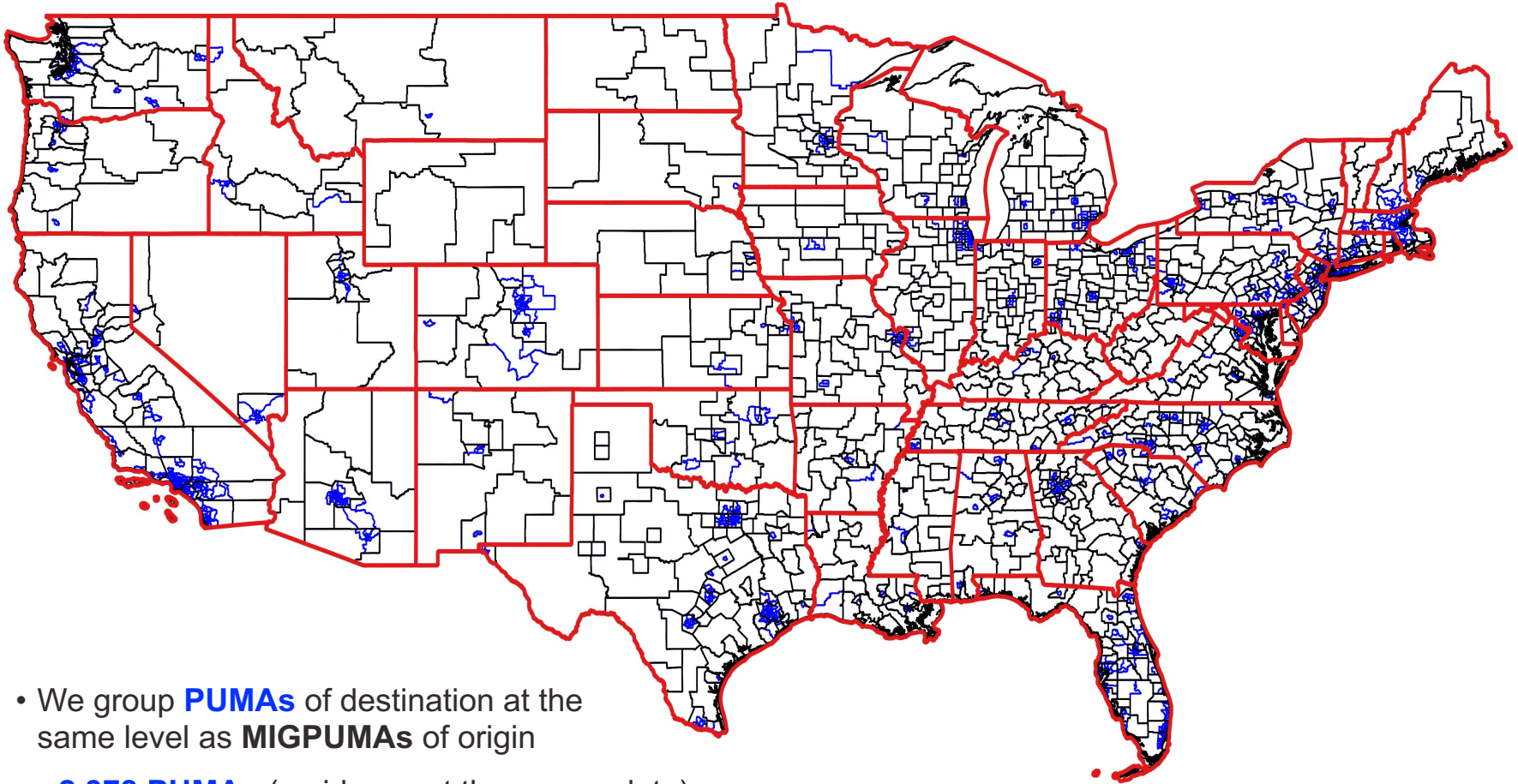


Data and geographical areas

- We analyze spatial distributions of internal migrants with the 2005–2019 American Community Surveys
- Areas of destination (current residence)
 - Publicly available data has information on Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) as the lowest level of geographic aggregation (100,000+ residents)
- Areas of origin (previous residence)
 - Data relates to PUMAs or, for confidentiality issues, groups of PUMAs (also known as MIGPUMAs)



State, MIGPUMA, PUMA



- We group **PUMAs** of destination at the same level as **MIGPUMAs** of origin
 - **2,378 PUMAs** (residence at the survey date)
 - **1,005 MIGPUMAs** (residence one year before the survey)

Methods

- Estimate factors associated with internal migration flows
 - 2005–2019 American Community Surveys (ACS)
 - Logistics models
 - Dependent variable: internal migrants vs. non-migrants
 - Sample size: 36,039,390 (only people aged 18+)
- Analysis of spatial distribution of proportion of internal migrants
 - 2019 ACS: focus on area of destination
 - Local indicators of spatial association (LISA)



Logistic regressions

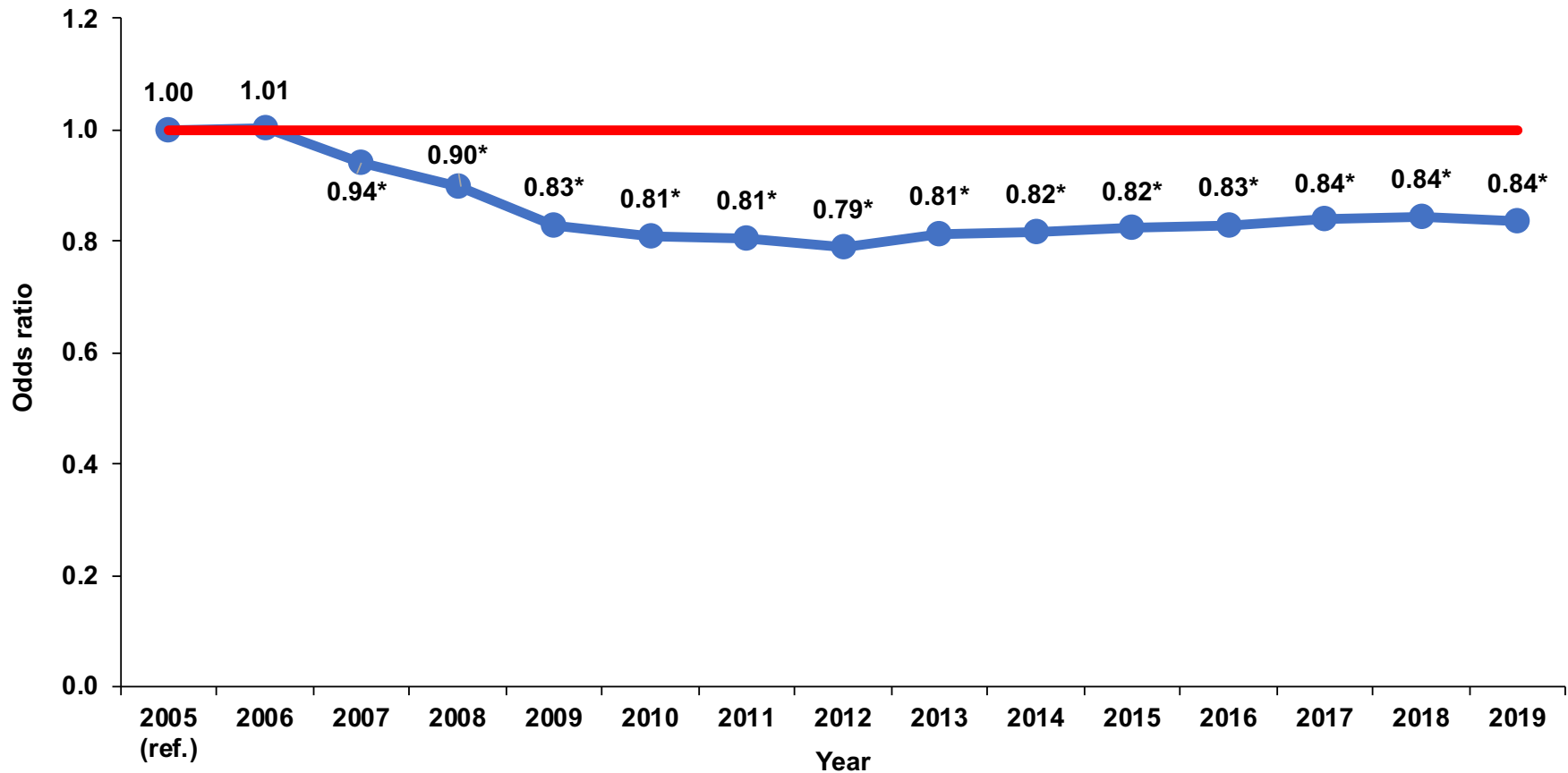
- Independent variables
 - Year
 - Sex
 - Age group
 - Educational attainment
 - Marital status
 - Citizenship
 - Nativity (foreign born, U.S. born)
 - Race/ethnicity
 - At least one child in the household
 - Homeownership
 - Region of residence one year ago
- Interaction
 - Nativity * race/ethnicity
- For people 18+
 - In school
 - Speak English
 - Any disability
 - Occupation and employment status
 - Top 50% income

Note: Results for variables in red are presented in the following slides.

Variables selected based on Molloy, Smith, Wozniak (2011, 2017).



Odds ratios of being an internal migrant by year

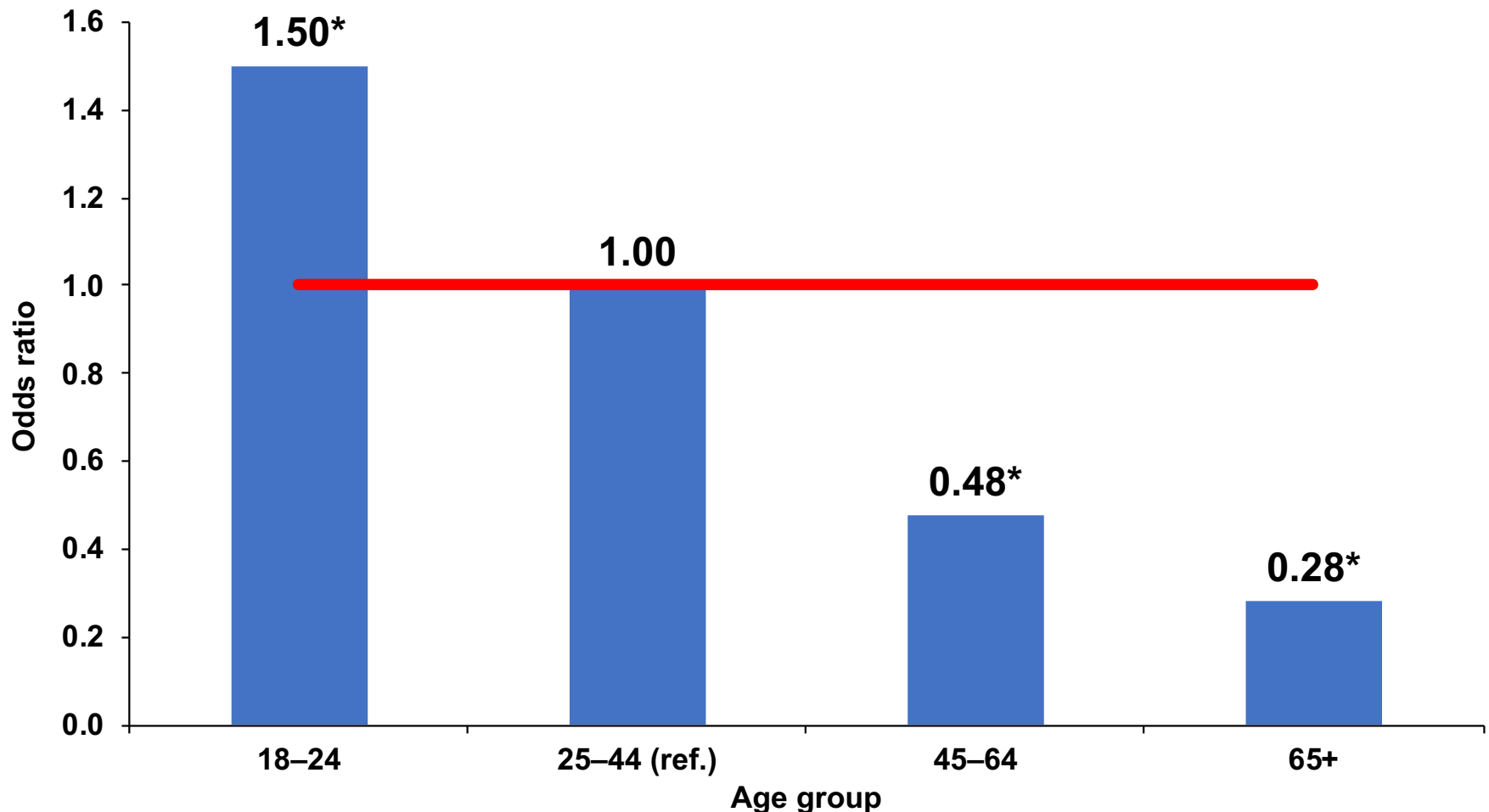


Note: Only people aged 18+. Controlled for other independent variables. * Significant at $p < .01$.

Source: 2005–2019 American Community Surveys.



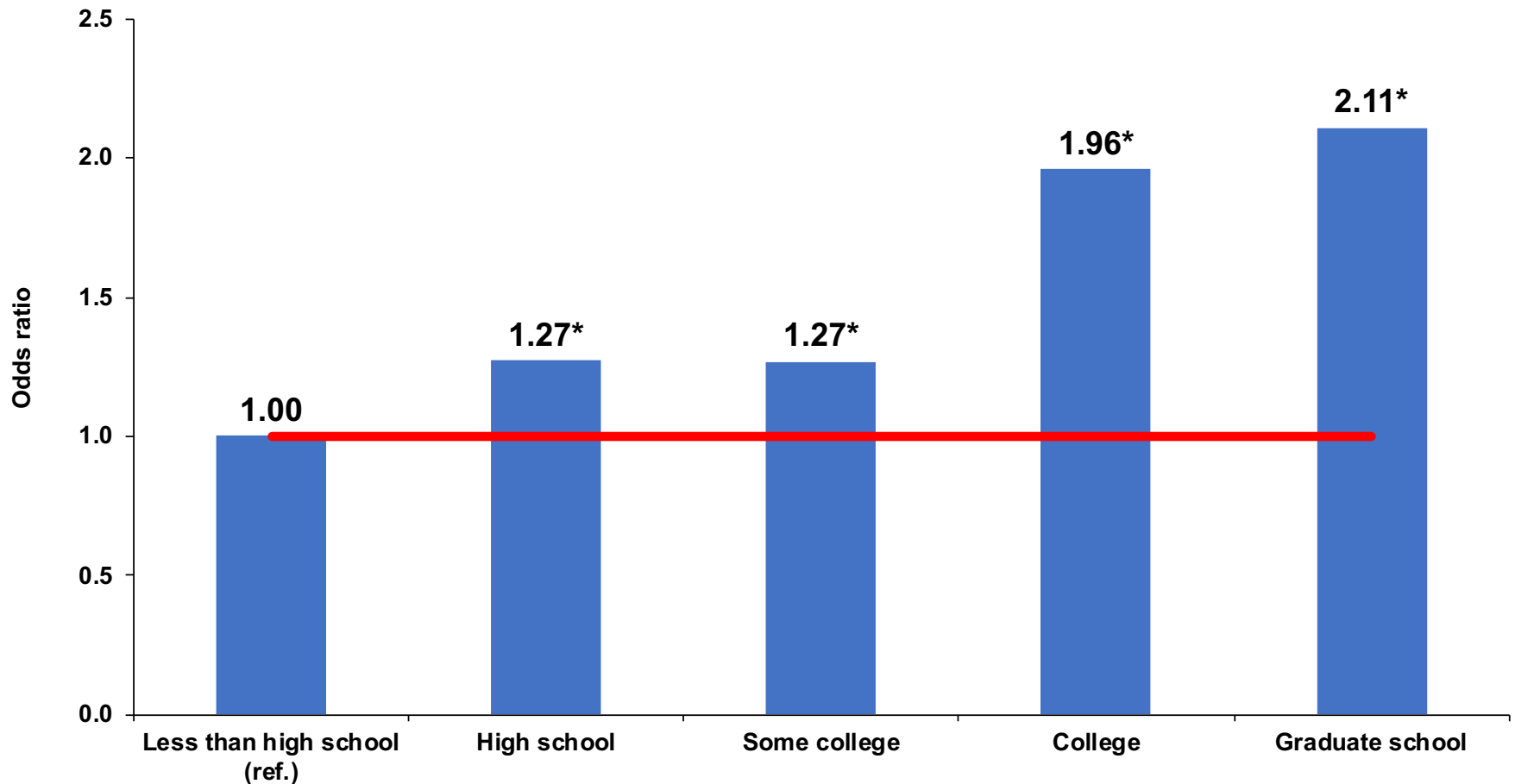
Odds ratios of being an internal migrant by age group



Note: Only people aged 18+. Controlled for other independent variables. * Significant at $p < .01$.

Source: 2005–2019 American Community Surveys.

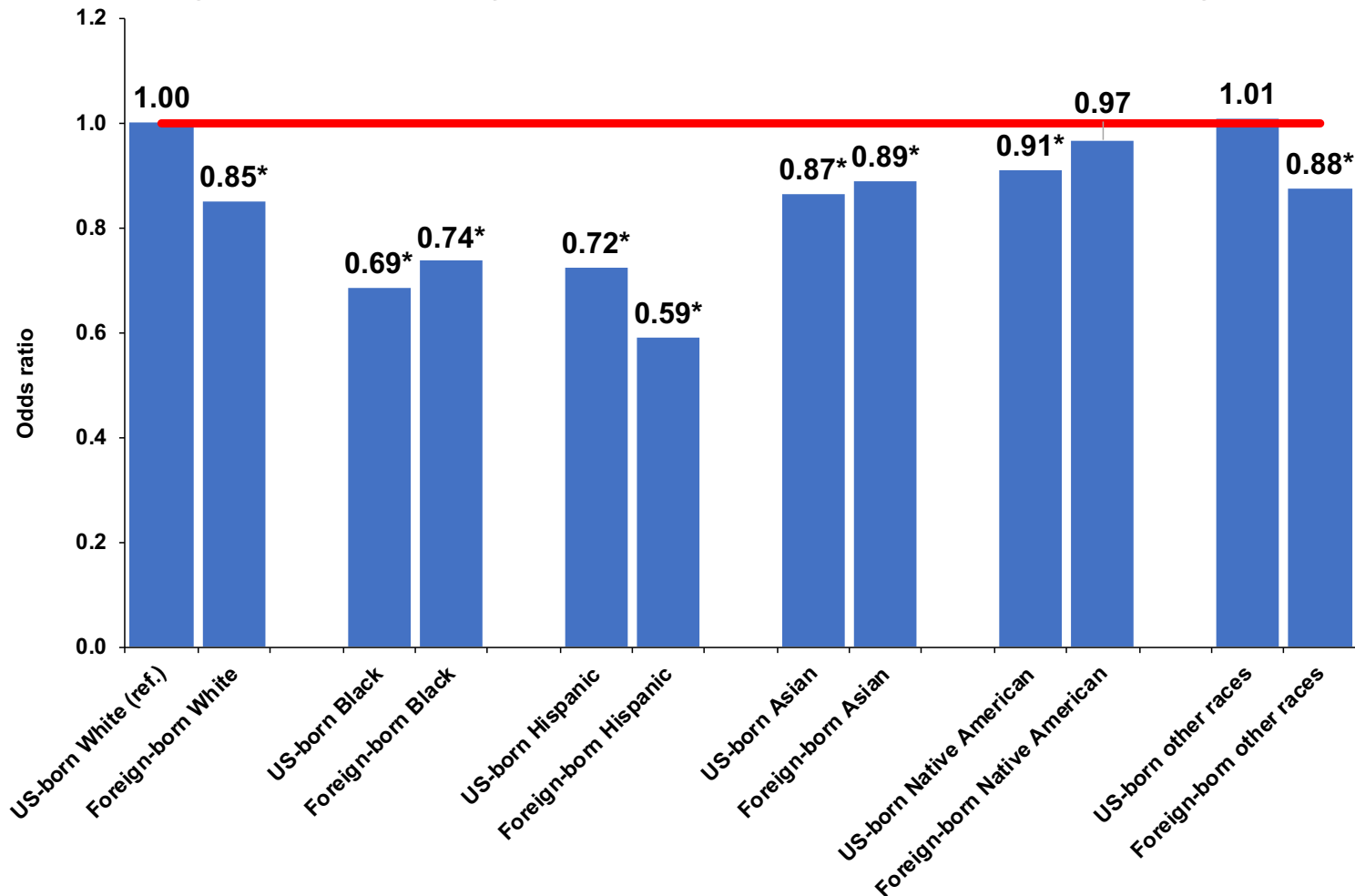
Odds ratios of being an internal migrant by educational attainment



Note: Only people aged 18+. Controlled for other independent variables. * Significant at $p < .01$.

Source: 2005–2019 American Community Surveys.

Odds ratios of being an internal migrant by nativity and race/ethnicity



Note: Only people aged 18+. Controlled for other independent variables. * Significant at $p < .01$.

Source: 2005–2019 American Community Surveys.



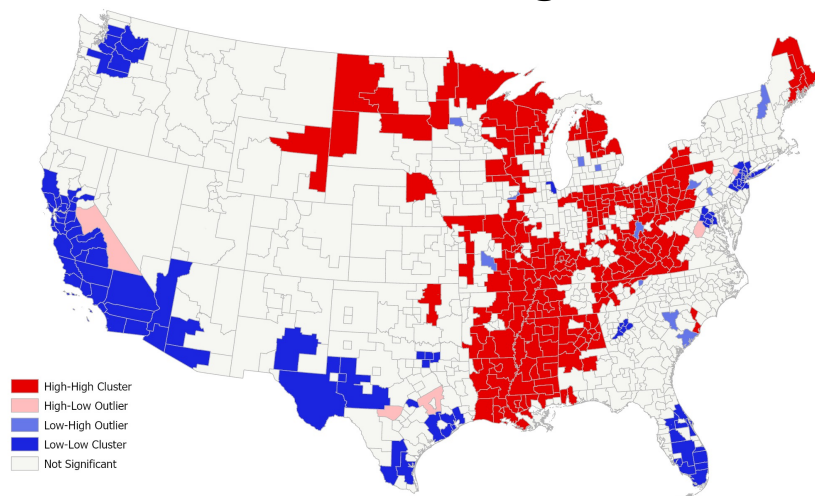
Analysis of spatial association

- Local indicator of spatial association (LISA) identifies spatial clusters and outliers (Anselin 1995)
- **Spatial clusters**
 - **High-High**: areas with high levels of a specific indicator surrounded by areas with high levels for that indicator
 - **Low-Low**: areas with low levels of a specific indicator surrounded by areas with low levels for that indicator
- **Spatial outliers**
 - **High-Low**: areas with high levels of a specific indicator surrounded by areas with low levels for that indicator
 - **Low-High**: areas with low levels of a specific indicator surrounded by areas with high levels for that indicator

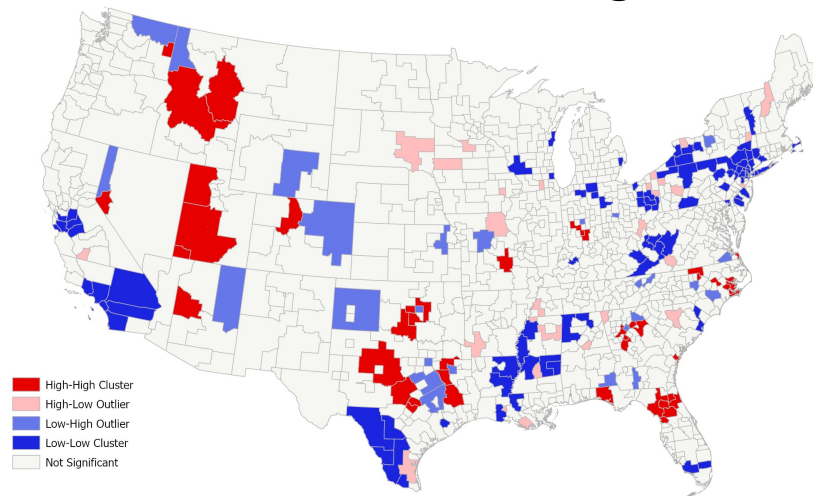


Internal migrants are those who changed residence between 2018 and 2019

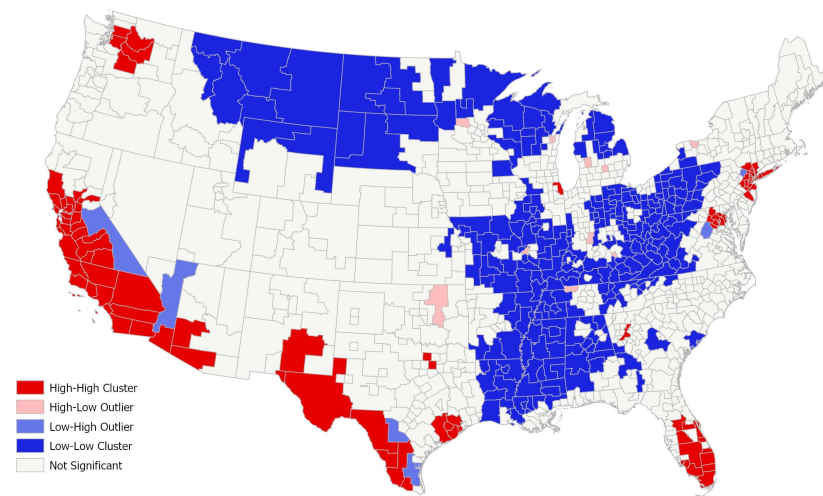
US-born non-migrants



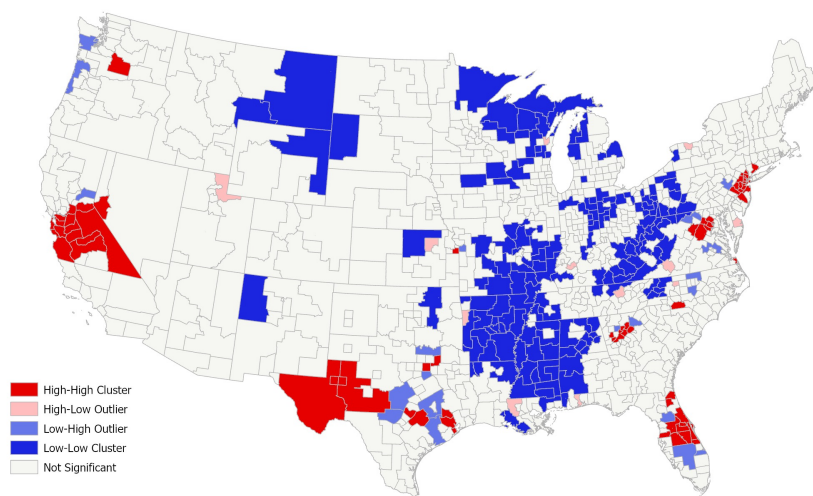
US-born internal migrants



Foreign-born non-migrants

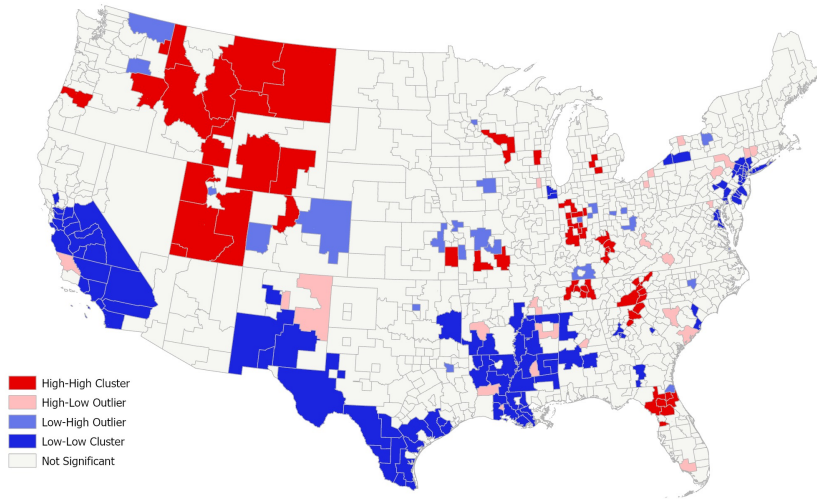


Foreign-born internal migrants

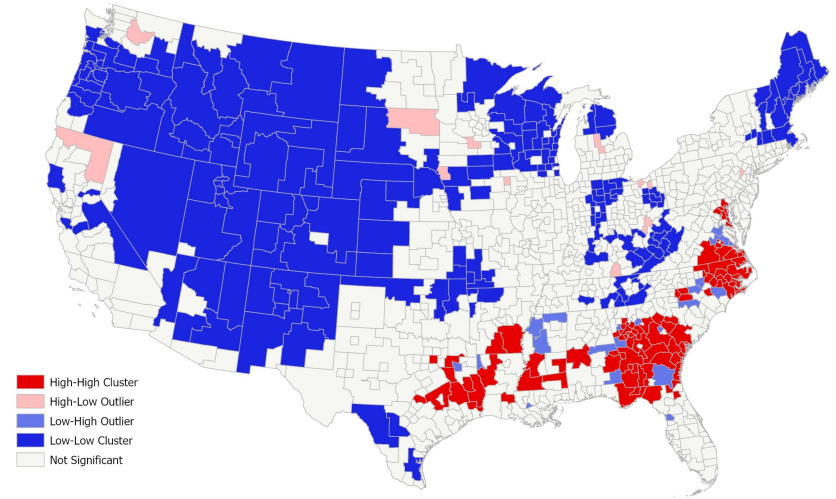


All maps below are for internal migrants, 2018–2019

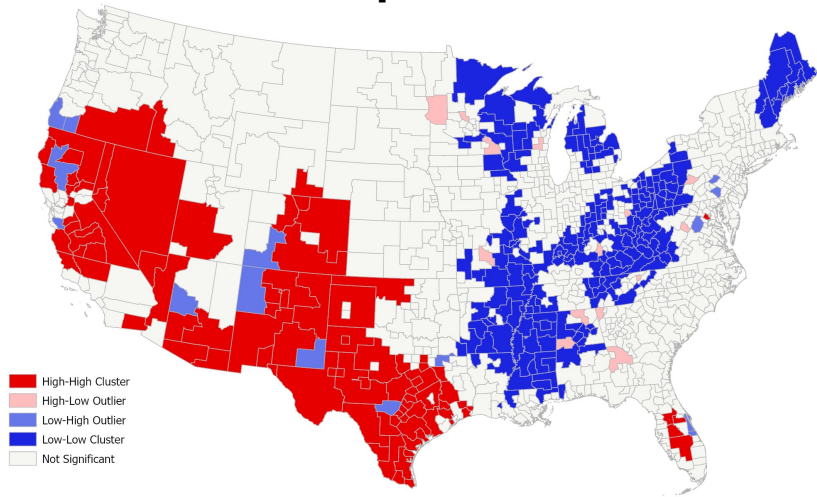
Non-Hispanic Whites



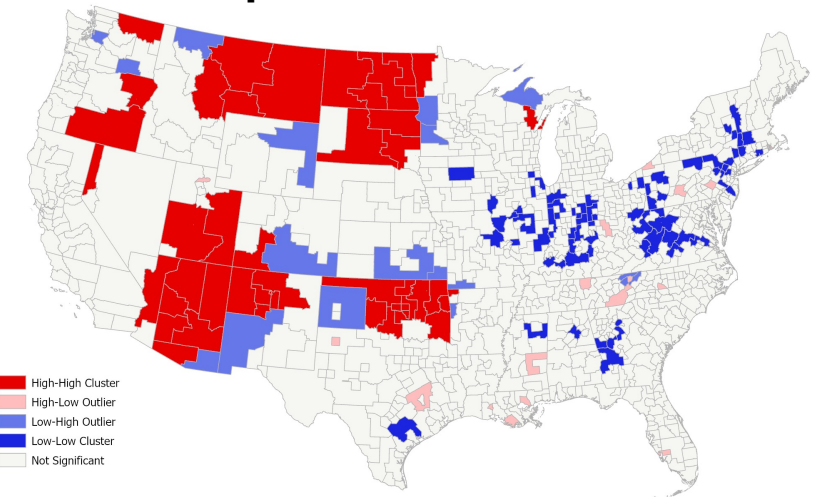
Non-Hispanic African Americans



Hispanics



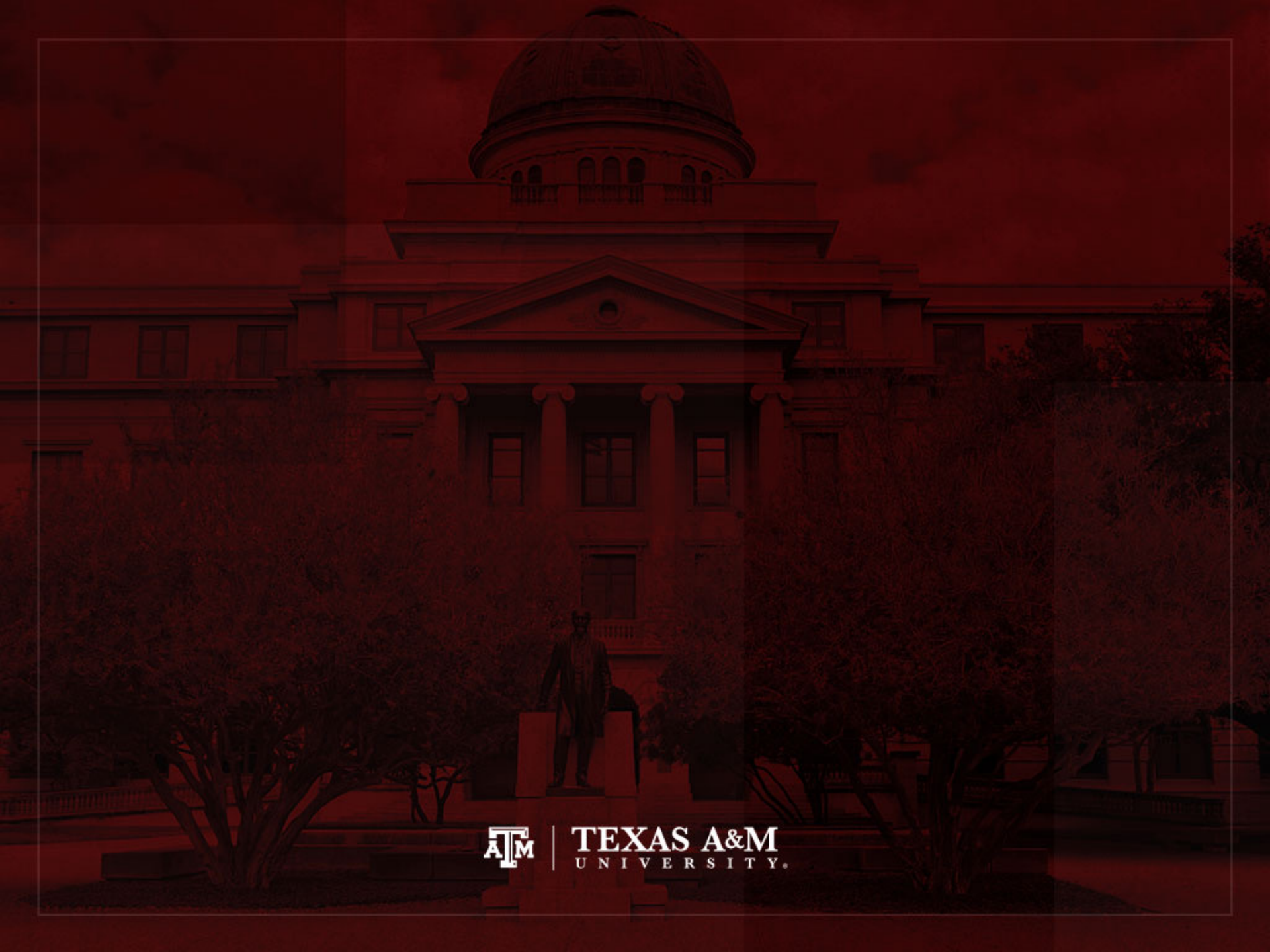
Non-Hispanic Native Americans



Final considerations

- Factors associated with migration rates similar to previous findings (Molloy, Smith, Wozniak 2011; Moretti 2011)
- Neoclassical theory (Molloy, Smith, Wozniak, 2017)
 - People move to areas with more jobs
 - Areas in Midwest with economic issues still have higher concentration of non-migrants
- Social networks (Motel, Patten 2012)
 - Spatial patterns of internal migration vary for different nativity and race/ethnicity groups
 - Areas with large proportions of specific race/ethnicity groups are attracting more of these groups





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