

The value of a warm reception: Contexts of return and the economic incorporation of Mexican returnees from the United States

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Short Abstract

The past twenty years have witnessed a rapid transformation in the nature of return migration of Mexican migrants coming back from the United States. Increased immigration enforcement coupled with the economic turbulence of the Great Recession resulted in unprecedented levels of return. In many instances migrants were unprepared to reenter Mexican society and had few possibilities for re-migration. Such a decline in circularity, accompanied by rapid reentry, means that more migrants are settling in Mexico and must reintegrate quickly. This paper addresses how Mexican returnees are reintegrating into the labor market, focusing on how local contexts of reception impact their success. We link the 2015 Mexican Intercensal survey to rich contextual data at the municipality level on labor market conditions, poverty rates, community migration histories, levels of violence, and environmental hazards. Multi-level models highlight the heterogeneity in economic well-being of returnees and how contexts of reception facilitate or constrain success.