

# Fresno in Transition: Urban Impacts of Rural Migration

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## ABSTRACT

This working paper focuses on the impact of migration from outside countries into rural communities in California, such as Fresno. This study uses a multi-methodological approach. Specifically, secondary data are used to examine the social and economic changes that have occurred in Fresno in the past two decades. To supplement the secondary data, the authors conduct field research over several years to examine the patterns of assimilation and acculturation of recent Mexican immigrants in Fresno. From the field research the authors conclude that the development of Mexican enclaves in rural areas, such as Fresno, slows down the process of assimilation among Mexican immigrants and makes the transition to urban areas and non-agricultural jobs unlikely for immigrants and for their children. In sum, the authors find assimilation into American society from Mexican immigrants is less likely, but that the children of Mexican immigrants are more likely to assimilate into American society and improve their social standing.