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Webinaire Junior sur l'économie des migrations. Party Affiliation of Governors and Internal Migration of Low-Skilled Immigrants: Evidence from the US States

Party Affiliation of Governors and Internal Migration of Low-Skilled Immigrants: Evidence from the US States

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how political shocks affect the interstate migration of low-skilled immigrants, particularly Hispanic individuals. Despite the Democratic Party's pro-migration stance, regression discontinuity estimation reveals that Democrats' close win in the US gubernatorial election leads to a lower net interstate migration of low-skilled Hispanic immigrants due to reduced inflows and increased outflows. In contrast, low-skilled white natives show higher net flows resulting from larger inflows and reduced outflows to the state. During Democratic governors' terms, labor market outcomes for Hispanic immigrants worsened compared to white natives, as reflected in estimates showing higher (lower) unemployment rates for low-skilled Hispanic immigrants (white natives). Additionally, I found that Democratic governors set higher state minimum wages and higher Earned Income Tax Credit rates. A simple interpretation with imperfect substitution between immigrants and natives in the labor market demonstrates that migration and labor outcomes align with the labor market policies implemented by Democratic governors.

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