

FROM CHINA TO NEW YORK, BY WAY OF THE SOUTHERN BORDER

JOANNA DENG¹

ABSTRACT. Thousands of Chinese migrants have made their way to Queens, Brooklyn and Chinatown after first passing through Central and South America.

Keywords. Chinese, Immigration Crisis, Pressing Issues

CONTENTS

1. Something Important	1
2. I Hate This Website	2
3. Something Not Important	2
4. Conclusion	2
References	3

1. SOMETHING IMPORTANT

When busloads of migrants from Venezuela and Latin America started turning up on New York City streets in 2022, it spurred a crisis that has overwhelmed city shelters and incited protests over immigration policies.

And while Mayor Eric Adams and city leaders have sought to slow the pace of new arrivals, there has been another, smaller but also growing group of migrants coming into the city — largely unnoticed.

Thousands of Chinese migrants have also made their way to New York, with many following on the heels of migrants from Central and South America and crossing at the United States-Mexico border. Once they reach the city, however, many are tapping into long-established family and social networks in Chinese enclaves to get on their feet quickly and, for the most part, on their own.

It is not known exactly how many Chinese migrants have landed in New York. But immigration court filings since October 2022 show that New York State was their top destination — with more than 21,000 filings for Chinese migrants — followed by California, according to an analysis by Julia Gelatt, an associate director at the Migration Policy Institute.

The influx of Chinese migrants into the city has been the largest in more than a decade, and marks a return to the sizable immigration of Chinese people beginning in the 1980s that revived struggling neighborhoods like Chinatown, and cemented newer ethnic strongholds in Flushing, Queens, and Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

2. I HATE THIS WEBSITE

Yet, this revival of Chinese migration has attracted relatively little attention, in part because it has been dwarfed by the sheer numbers of people arriving from Latin America. The rapid increase in Chinese newcomers, nonetheless, promises to have a significant effect on New York City and its sprawling Chinese American community of 590,000, which is the largest in the nation.

There's a large scale migration going on in the Chinese community that's completely off the radar screen,

said Kenneth J. Guest, an anthropology professor at Baruch College who studies Chinese immigration.

The latest increase in Chinese migrants has been driven in part by frustration over China's harsh pandemic-era lockdowns, authoritarian government and a worsening economy. A flurry of online and social media posts have provided detailed instructions and tips on how to cross the southern border.

3. SOMETHING NOT IMPORTANT

Across the United States, the number of Chinese migrants has soared. There were 52,700 Chinese migrants arriving without a valid entry visa at land borders, and on boats and planes, during the federal government's fiscal year 2023, or more than double the number just two years earlier, according to the analysis by Ms. Gelatt, of the Migration Policy Institute. Those numbers did not include people who came in without encountering border officials or later overstayed their visas.

These Chinese migrants have increasingly crossed at the southern border, with the number encountered by border officials there jumping more than sixfold to 5,980 in December 2023 from 950 a year earlier.

Still, they were just a small subset of the 3.4 million migrants who have crossed the southern border since October 2022, which included more than 974,000 Mexicans and over 410,000 Venezuelans.

4. CONCLUSION

When busloads of migrants from Venezuela and Latin America started turning up on New York City streets in 2022, it spurred a crisis that has overwhelmed city shelters and incited protests over immigration policies.

And while Mayor Eric Adams and city leaders have sought to slow the pace of new arrivals, there has been another, smaller but also growing group of migrants coming into the city — largely unnoticed.

Thousands of Chinese migrants have also made their way to New York, with many following on the heels of migrants from Central and South America and crossing at the United States-Mexico border. Once they reach the city, however, many are tapping into long-established family and social networks in Chinese enclaves to get on their feet quickly and, for the most part, on their own.

It is not known exactly how many Chinese migrants have landed in New York. But immigration court filings since October 2022 show that New York State was their top destination — with more than 21,000 filings for Chinese migrants — followed by California, according to an analysis by Julia Gelatt, an associate director at the Migration Policy Institute.

The influx of Chinese migrants into the city has been the largest in more than a decade, and marks a return to the sizable immigration of Chinese people beginning in the 1980s that revived

struggling neighborhoods like Chinatown, and cemented newer ethnic strongholds in Flushing, Queens, and Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bekka, B. (2006). Property (T) for C^* -algebras. Bulletin of the London Mathematical Society, 38(5), 857-867. <https://doi.org/10.1112/S0024609306018765>
- [2] Bekka, B., de La Harpe, P., & Valette, A. (2008). Kazhdan's property (T). Cambridge university press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511542749>
- [3] Brown, N. P. (2006). Kazhdan's property T and C^* -algebras. Journal of Functional Analysis, 240(1), 290-296. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfa.2006.05.003>
- [4] Connes, A., & Jones, V. (1985). Property T for von Neumann algebras. Bulletin of the London Mathematical Society, 17(1), 57-62. <https://doi.org/10.1112/blms/17.1.57>
- [5] Green, P. (1978). The local structure of twisted covariance algebras. Acta Mathematica, 140, 191-250. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02392308>
- [6] Kazhdan, D. A. (1967). Connection of the dual space of a group with the structure of its close subgroups. Funktsional'nyi Analiz i ego Prilozheniya, 1(1), 71-74. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01075866>
- [7] Leung, C. W., & Ng, C. K. (2009). Property (T) and strong property (T) for unital C^* -algebras. Journal of Functional Analysis, 256(9), 3055-3070. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfa.2009.01.004>

¹ NC INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Email address: jdeng@nctutoring.org