

## Abstract

The location where a migrant settles is a consequential factor in their future well-being. Each migrant is different, and each location is different, so it follows that some migrant/location pairs result in better outcomes than others. Principles of market design can be used to develop algorithms that allocate migrants across available locations via outcome-based matching, preference-based matching, or a combination of both. Since there is no systemic data on migrant preferences, these have to be inferred. This paper introduces a methodology to derive the preferences of migrants over a set of locations, focusing on the large population of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. We create a model to evaluate how well preferences can be ascertained from migrants' realized choices in location. Using historical data on Venezuelan migrant families and the departments in Colombia where they settle, we analyze the effect of family-specific variables, such as number of children, and department-specific variables, such as measures of educational achievement, to see what role, if any, these play in determining preferences. Top-line results suggest strong preferences for border departments. In addition, we found unexpected patterns, like families with school-aged children preferring departments with lower-quality education, indicating the presence of omitted variables in our current analysis, such as family ties or income constraints.

**Keywords:** displacement, refugee resettlement, market design, choice models, Venezuelan migrant crisis