

# Internal migration and the spread of Covid-19\*

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## Abstract

How does internal migration affect the spread of a pandemic? Looking at the case of Italy and using data on the province of origin of migrants located in outbreak areas, we document that provinces more exposed to the virus experience higher mortality in post-outbreak weeks, even when comparing provinces within the same region. We calculate that, had all non-outbreak provinces been as exposed as the one at the lowest decile of the exposure distribution, they would have experienced 60% fewer COVID-19 deaths. Additional evidence from phone records data confirms that the effect is mainly driven by increased mobility from outbreak areas.

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*JEL classification:* J61; R23; H12; I10.

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