Internal Migration of the Older Population: 1995 to 2000

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Age strongly affects the likelihood that a person will move. Rates of moving usually peak between the ages of 18 and 30 and generally decrease until very late in life, perhaps because failing health forces some people to change their living arrangements.[1] Migration of older people interests researchers, government, public agencies, the media, and other organizations because of its potential effects on the economic, social, and demographic composition of local areas.

This report discusses the internal migration of the older population, using Census 2000 data. "Older population" in this report is defined as those aged 65 and over in 2000.[2] Census 2000 data are uniquely able to provide the basis for statistically reliable migration analysis of relatively small populations, such as the older population, at detailed levels of geography.[3] This report is limited to internal migration of the older population

[1] For examples of moving rates by age, see U.S. Census Bureau, 2001, *Geographical Mobility: March 1999 to March 2000*, by Jason Schachter, Current Population Reports P20-538, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

[2] Age in this analysis is defined as how old the respondents were at the time of Census 2000. Since Census 2000 asked where they had lived on April 1, 1995, their migration could have occurred at any time during those 5 years.

[3] Current residence is measured as of April 1, 2000, while previous residence is measured as of April 1, 1995; thus, the census does not track any moves made within that 5-year period. Similarly, the residence-5-years-ago question does not capture those who moved away from a place of residence and later returned to that same residence during that 5-year period. Older people who made seasonal moves — moving between two residences at specific times during a year due to preferences in climate or other reasons — could be counted as nonmigrants, depending on where they lived on April 1, 2000.

Common Migration Terms

Movers can be classified by type of move and are categorized as to whether they moved within the same county, to a different county within the same state, to a different county from a different state or region, or were movers from abroad. *Migration* is commonly defined as moves that cross jurisdictional boundaries (counties in particular), while moves within a jurisdiction are referred to as *residential mobility*. Moves between counties are often referred to as *intercounty* moves, while moves within the same county are often referred to as *intracounty* moves. Further, migration can be differentiated as movement within the United States (*domestic*, or *internal*, migration) and movement into and out of the United States (*international* migration). *Inmigration* is the number of migrants who moved into an area during a given period, while *outmigration* is the number of migrants who moved out of an area during a given period. *Net migration* is the difference between inmigration and outmigration during a given time. A positive net, or *net inmigration*, indicates that more migrants entered an area than left during that time. A negative net, or *net outmigration*, means that more migrants left an area than entered it.

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between 1995 and 2000 and does not include movers from abroad.[4]

The report first examines the general mobility of the older population — how many moved and what type of move they made — and compares different age groups among the older population. Given that mobility patterns of the older population may differ from those of the rest of the population, people 65 years and older are compared with those under age 65, especially the "near old," who are aged 55 to 64.[5] In addition, because women outnumber men at older ages, this report evaluates differences in mobility patterns between older men and women.

The second part of the report discusses the redistribution of the older population in the United States between 1995 and 2000 by examining net migration rates and flow numbers at the region, division, and state levels, in order to identify areas that experienced the largest net migration gain or loss of older people, as well as the most popular destinations and origins of older migrants. Finally, a map of county-level net migration rates complements the state-level migration analysis with a finer degree of geographic detail.

GENERAL MOBILITY OF THE OLDER POPULATION

Older people were much less likely to have moved than younger people, although, among the older population, the oldest old had the highest mobility.

Most older people did not move between 1995 and 2000. Among the 34.7 million people aged 65 and over who lived in the United States in 1995 and in 2000, only 7.9 million lived in a different residence at the end of the 5-year period (Table 1). In contrast, people 5 to 64 years old in 2000 were more than twice as likely as the older population to have moved during that same 5-year period (47.7 percent compared with 22.8 percent, respectively).

Among the older population, the "oldest old," people 85 years and older in 2000, were most mobile. Between 1995 and 2000, almost one-third (32.3 percent) of the oldest old moved, which was much higher than the percentages of movers 65 to 74 or 75 to 84 years old (21.2 percent and 21.9 percent, respectively). At advanced ages, health concerns may force some people to move closer to or in with their children, to assisted-care facilities, or to nursing homes.

Most older movers moved within the same county.

Among moves made by the older population, the majority were within the same county (59.7 percent), while about one-fifth (21.5 percent) were to a different county in the same state, and almost one-fifth (18.8 percent) were to a different state. Among older movers, the "young old," people 65 to 74 years old in 2000, were slightly less likely than their older counterparts to have moved within a county (57.9 percent), but more likely to have moved to a different state (21.2 percent). In contrast, the oldest old were least likely to have moved to a different state (14.9 percent). The implied distances the 65 and older population moved were quite similar to those of people under 65, even though people 65 to 74 years old were slightly more likely to have made an interstate move (most likely retirement migration) than those under 65.[6]

The mobility patterns of the population 55 to 64 years old were similar to those of 65 to 74 year olds.

People 55 to 64 years old are near retirement age, and some have retired already. Census 2000 data show that the mobility of the near old was somewhat higher than that of the older population, but much lower than that of younger populations — only a little over one-quarter (26.1 percent) of them moved between 1995 and 2000.

General mobility patterns of the near old were similar to those of older movers, but the near old were slightly less likely to have made an intracounty move and more likely to have moved to a different state. However, the distribution of moves for those 65 to 74 and those 55 to 64 years old was almost the same: about 21 percent (21.2 and 21.4 percent, respectively) of each group had moved to a different state. This broad age range includes many moves associated with retirement.

The fact that neither the near old nor the younger old were as mobile as the oldest old sheds light on older people's mobility patterns. Although Census 2000

[4] National, regional, and state level data on movers from abroad by age are available at the U.S. Census Bureau's Web site at *www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/migration.html.*

[5] In this report, "older population" is defined as ages 65 or older, and "near old" is ages 55-64. Among the older population, "young old" is defined as ages 65-74, "old old" is ages 75-84, and "oldest old" is ages 85 or older.

[6] This report treats moves within counties, between counties within a state, and between states as if they form a distance continuum, although sometimes they do not.

Table 1.
General Mobility for the Population 5 Years and Over by Sex and Age: 1995 to 2000

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf)*

Characteristic	65 and over				5 to 64*	
	Total	65 to 74	75 to 84	85 and over	Total	55 to 64
NUMBER						
Total	**34,734,844**	**18,348,433**	**12,252,211**	**4,134,200**	**220,148,839**	**23,891,509**
Nonmovers	26,831,885	14,462,754	9,568,507	2,800,624	115,195,593	17,652,103
Movers	7,902,959	3,885,679	2,683,704	1,333,576	104,953,246	6,239,406
Same county	4,719,418	2,248,962	1,655,197	815,259	60,720,000	3,557,862
Different county, same state	1,697,327	813,174	564,679	319,474	23,630,000	1,346,423
Different state	1,486,214	823,543	463,828	198,843	20,603,246	1,335,121
Different state, same region	650,664	349,893	207,998	92,773	9,783,423	596,451
Different state, different region	835,550	473,650	255,830	106,070	10,819,823	738,670
Male	**14,282,654**	**8,288,447**	**4,798,383**	**1,195,824**	**109,856,123**	**11,438,319**
Nonmovers	11,237,627	6,528,935	3,842,609	866,083	57,140,000	8,404,803
Movers	3,045,027	1,759,512	955,774	329,741	52,716,123	3,033,516
Same county	1,764,980	981,247	580,114	203,619	30,060,000	1,710,257
Different county, same state	657,836	380,868	202,368	74,600	12,090,000	669,525
Different state	622,211	397,397	173,292	51,522	10,566,123	653,734
Different state, same region	266,547	167,145	76,012	23,390	4,986,909	295,477
Different state, different region	355,664	230,252	97,280	28,132	5,579,214	358,257
Female	**20,452,190**	**10,059,986**	**7,453,828**	**2,938,376**	**110,277,123**	**12,453,190**
Nonmovers	15,594,258	7,933,819	5,725,898	1,934,541	58,050,000	9,247,300
Movers	4,857,932	2,126,167	1,727,930	1,003,835	52,227,123	3,205,890
Same county	2,954,438	1,267,715	1,075,083	611,640	30,650,000	1,847,605
Different county, same state	1,039,491	432,306	362,311	244,874	11,540,000	676,898
Different state	864,003	426,146	290,536	147,321	10,037,123	681,387
Different state, same region	384,117	182,748	131,986	69,383	4,796,514	300,974
Different state, different region	479,886	243,398	158,550	77,938	5,240,609	380,413
PERCENT						
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Nonmovers	77.2	78.8	78.1	67.7	52.3	73.9
Movers	22.8	21.2	21.9	32.3	47.7	26.1
Same county[1]	59.7	57.9	61.7	61.1	57.9	57.0
Different county, same state[1]	21.5	20.9	21.0	24.0	22.5	21.6
Different state[1]	18.8	21.2	17.3	14.9	19.6	21.4
Different state, same region[2]	43.8	42.5	44.8	46.7	47.5	44.7
Different state, different region[2]	56.2	57.5	55.2	53.3	52.5	55.3
Male	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Nonmovers	78.7	78.8	80.1	72.4	52.0	73.5
Movers	21.3	21.2	19.9	27.6	48.0	26.5
Same county[1]	58.0	55.8	60.7	61.8	57.0	56.4
Different county, same state[1]	21.6	21.6	21.2	22.6	22.9	22.1
Different state[1]	20.4	22.6	18.1	15.6	20.0	21.6
Different state, same region[2]	42.8	42.1	43.9	45.4	47.2	45.2
Different state, different region[2]	57.2	57.9	56.1	54.6	52.8	54.8
Female	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Nonmovers	76.2	78.9	76.8	65.8	52.6	74.3
Movers	23.8	21.1	23.2	34.2	47.4	25.7
Same county[1]	60.8	59.6	62.2	60.9	58.7	57.6
Different county, same state[1]	21.4	20.3	21.0	24.4	22.1	21.1
Different state[1]	17.8	20.0	16.8	14.7	19.2	21.3
Different state, same region[2]	44.5	42.9	45.4	47.1	47.8	44.2
Different state, different region[2]	55.5	57.1	54.6	52.9	52.2	55.8

* Migration data are for the population aged 5 years and over, since the question in Census 2000 asked about residence 5 years ago.

[1]Percent based on number of movers.
[2]Percent based on number of movers between states.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Table 2.

Inmigration, Outmigration, and Net Internal Migration for the Population 65 Years and Over by Region, Division, State, and Age: 1995 to 2000[1]

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf)*

Area	Total, 65 and over				65 to 74				75 to 84				85 and over			
	Inmigrants[2]	Outmigrants[2]	Net migration	Net migration rate	Inmigrants[2]	Outmigrants[2]	Net migration	Net migration rate	Inmigrants[2]	Outmigrants[2]	Net migration	Net migration rate	Inmigrants[2]	Outmigrants[2]	Net migration	Net migration rate
Northeast	**89,564**	**265,378**	**-175,814**	**–23.5**	**40,005**	**162,254**	**-122,249**	**–31.5**	**33,545**	**74,531**	**-40,986**	**–15.2**	**16,014**	**28,593**	**-12,579**	**–13.6**
New England	**46,341**	**68,627**	**-22,286**	**–11.7**	**20,950**	**42,145**	**-21,195**	**–21.9**	**16,375**	**19,040**	**-2,665**	**–3.9**	**9,016**	**7,442**	**1,574**	**6.4**
Maine	9,347	7,697	1,650	9.1	4,987	4,792	195	2.0	2,868	2,119	749	11.9	1,492	786	706	31.9
Vermont	4,736	4,717	19	0.2	2,472	2,702	–230	–5.6	1,438	1,408	30	1.1	826	607	219	22.6
New Hampshire	11,588	10,868	720	4.9	6,200	6,139	61	0.8	3,543	3,375	168	3.3	1,845	1,354	491	27.1
Massachusetts	22,350	36,784	-14,434	–16.6	10,269	21,283	-11,014	–25.2	8,066	10,685	-2,619	–8.3	4,015	4,816	–801	–7.0
Rhode Island	5,339	6,087	–748	–4.9	2,368	3,397	-1,029	–13.8	1,861	1,871	–10	–0.2	1,110	819	291	14.4
Connecticut	16,691	26,184	-9,493	–20.0	6,769	15,947	-9,178	–38.4	6,141	7,124	–983	–5.6	3,781	3,113	668	10.7
Middle Atlantic	**70,101**	**223,629**	**-153,528**	**–27.5**	**31,451**	**132,505**	**-101,054**	**–34.7**	**26,416**	**64,737**	**-38,321**	**–19.2**	**12,234**	**26,387**	**-14,153**	**–20.8**
New York	35,491	149,662	-114,171	–45.0	15,632	87,353	-71,721	–53.6	13,106	42,772	-29,666	–33.6	6,753	19,537	-12,784	–40.5
New Jersey	42,405	65,556	-23,151	–20.6	20,637	38,876	-18,239	–31.0	14,434	18,930	-4,496	–11.1	7,334	8,072	–738	–5.5
Pennsylvania	43,599	59,483	-15,884	–8.2	21,457	32,551	-11,094	–11.3	14,900	19,059	-4,159	–5.8	7,242	7,873	–631	–2.7
Midwest	**132,723**	**241,324**	**-108,601**	**–13.0**	**61,752**	**146,788**	**-85,036**	**–31.5**	**48,023**	**67,313**	**-19,290**	**–6.5**	**22,948**	**27,223**	**-4,275**	**–4.1**
East North Central	**97,317**	**191,251**	**-93,934**	**–16.3**	**44,158**	**116,283**	**-72,125**	**–23.8**	**35,949**	**53,300**	**-17,351**	**–8.5**	**17,210**	**21,668**	**-4,458**	**–6.5**
Ohio	33,063	51,652	-18,589	–12.2	14,944	30,272	-15,328	–18.9	12,324	15,041	-2,717	–5.0	5,795	6,339	–544	–3.2
Indiana	24,260	30,575	-6,315	–8.3	11,357	17,913	-6,556	–16.3	8,594	8,380	214	0.8	4,309	4,282	27	0.3
Illinois	30,294	73,413	-43,119	–28.1	13,740	43,240	-29,500	–36.9	11,013	21,060	-10,047	–18.5	5,541	9,113	-3,572	–18.8
Michigan	26,227	48,176	-21,949	–17.7	12,391	29,088	-16,697	–25.3	9,252	13,637	-4,385	–10.1	4,584	5,451	–867	–6.1
Wisconsin	19,046	23,008	-3,962	–5.6	9,164	13,208	-4,044	–11.2	6,347	6,763	–416	–1.7	3,535	3,037	498	5.4
West North Central	**60,042**	**74,709**	**-14,667**	**–5.7**	**29,343**	**42,254**	**-12,911**	**–9.9**	**20,308**	**22,247**	**-1,939**	**–2.1**	**10,391**	**10,208**	**183**	**0.5**
Minnesota	14,923	21,060	-6,137	–10.3	6,567	12,674	-6,107	–20.2	5,210	6,036	–826	–3.9	3,146	2,350	796	9.4
Iowa	10,843	15,770	-4,927	–11.2	5,073	8,533	-3,460	–16.0	3,457	4,965	-1,508	–9.4	2,313	2,272	41	0.6
Missouri	27,897	27,384	513	0.7	14,721	14,135	586	1.5	9,058	8,519	539	2.1	4,118	4,730	–612	–6.3
North Dakota	2,402	3,948	-1,546	–16.1	1,271	1,895	–624	–13.4	711	1,297	–586	–17.0	420	756	–336	–22.5
South Dakota	4,084	4,330	–246	–2.3	2,159	2,389	–230	–4.3	1,284	1,300	–16	–0.4	641	641	0	0.0
Nebraska	6,780	8,669	-1,889	–8.1	3,436	4,913	-1,477	–12.6	2,227	2,499	–272	–3.3	1,117	1,257	–140	–4.2
Kansas	14,357	14,792	–435	–1.2	6,365	7,964	-1,599	–9.0	5,335	4,605	730	5.7	2,657	2,223	434	8.7
South	**436,567**	**203,788**	**232,779**	**19.2**	**274,495**	**94,420**	**180,075**	**27.6**	**119,109**	**74,630**	**44,479**	**10.6**	**42,963**	**34,738**	**8,225**	**5.9**
South Atlantic	**370,822**	**171,664**	**199,158**	**30.0**	**233,133**	**79,116**	**154,017**	**43.7**	**101,316**	**63,578**	**37,738**	**16.0**	**36,373**	**28,970**	**7,403**	**9.8**
Delaware	8,268	5,589	2,679	27.2	5,127	2,986	2,141	39.4	2,209	1,893	316	9.3	932	710	222	21.9
Maryland	25,979	30,367	-4,388	–7.3	10,984	18,862	-7,878	–24.0	9,801	8,225	1,576	7.6	5,194	3,280	1,914	30.5
District of Columbia	2,860	8,047	-5,187	–69.5	1,471	3,706	-2,235	–58.5	943	2,642	-1,699	–63.7	446	1,699	-1,253	–128.9
Virginia	38,977	32,040	6,937	8.9	20,582	18,787	1,795	4.2	12,328	9,655	2,673	10.0	6,067	3,598	2,469	29.8
West Virginia	9,574	10,505	–931	–3.4	5,253	5,009	244	1.6	3,107	3,596	–489	–5.1	1,214	1,900	–686	–21.2
North Carolina	50,655	29,733	20,922	22.1	29,874	16,407	13,467	25.7	14,790	9,917	4,873	15.1	5,991	3,409	2,582	26.0
South Carolina	31,789	16,029	15,760	33.6	20,011	8,129	11,882	45.6	8,512	5,754	2,758	17.3	3,266	2,146	1,120	23.2
Georgia	42,444	28,518	13,926	18.1	22,436	15,846	6,590	15.2	14,061	8,929	5,132	20.3	5,947	3,743	2,204	26.3
Florida	286,808	137,368	149,440	56.9	186,587	58,576	128,011	97.8	76,270	53,672	22,598	22.8	23,951	25,120	-1,169	–3.6
East South Central	**69,538**	**54,972**	**14,566**	**6.9**	**41,039**	**27,532**	**13,507**	**11.7**	**20,255**	**18,275**	**1,980**	**2.8**	**8,244**	**9,165**	**–921**	**–3.8**
Kentucky	15,782	17,179	-1,397	–2.8	8,914	8,661	253	0.9	4,869	5,623	–754	–4.4	1,999	2,895	–896	–15.6
Tennessee	33,062	22,563	10,499	15.2	18,626	12,421	6,205	16.4	10,096	7,005	3,091	13.2	4,340	3,137	1,203	15.4
Alabama	19,765	16,734	3,031	5.3	11,712	8,050	3,662	11.6	5,747	5,820	–73	–0.4	2,306	2,864	–558	–8.4
Mississippi	13,437	11,004	2,433	7.1	8,457	5,070	3,387	18.3	3,538	3,822	–284	–2.5	1,442	2,112	–670	–15.4
West South Central	**94,827**	**75,772**	**19,055**	**5.7**	**53,826**	**41,275**	**12,551**	**6.8**	**29,137**	**24,376**	**4,761**	**4.2**	**11,864**	**10,121**	**1,743**	**4.5**
Arkansas	20,002	17,506	2,496	6.7	12,721	8,339	4,382	22.5	5,142	6,278	-1,136	–8.8	2,139	2,889	–750	–16.3
Louisiana	11,677	14,149	-2,472	–4.8	6,161	7,626	-1,465	–5.1	3,749	4,442	–693	–4.0	1,767	2,081	–314	–5.4
Oklahoma	18,162	17,088	1,074	2.4	10,331	8,802	1,529	6.3	5,419	5,668	–249	–1.6	2,412	2,618	–206	–3.7
Texas	71,373	53,416	17,957	8.8	38,683	30,578	8,105	7.2	23,232	16,393	6,839	10.1	9,458	6,445	3,013	13.3
West	**176,696**	**125,060**	**51,636**	**7.6**	**97,398**	**70,188**	**27,210**	**7.6**	**55,153**	**39,356**	**15,797**	**6.6**	**24,145**	**15,516**	**8,629**	**11.1**
Mountain	**177,353**	**91,676**	**85,677**	**44.4**	**108,022**	**48,447**	**59,575**	**56.8**	**51,069**	**30,815**	**20,254**	**30.1**	**18,262**	**12,414**	**5,848**	**28.0**
Montana	6,911	6,020	891	7.4	3,678	3,367	311	5.0	2,098	1,715	383	9.0	1,135	938	197	13.1
Idaho	11,218	8,423	2,795	19.6	6,206	4,491	1,715	23.1	3,608	2,789	819	16.1	1,404	1,143	261	14.8
Wyoming	3,902	3,931	–29	–0.5	2,078	2,250	–172	–5.5	1,208	1,244	–36	–1.8	616	437	179	27.4
Colorado	28,104	26,110	1,994	4.8	14,593	15,688	-1,095	–4.8	9,410	8,128	1,282	9.2	4,101	2,294	1,807	40.0
New Mexico	16,382	13,882	2,500	12.0	9,691	7,534	2,157	18.6	4,642	4,549	93	1.3	2,049	1,799	250	11.1
Arizona	95,481	42,240	53,241	87.4	60,526	20,155	40,371	125.5	26,801	15,400	11,401	51.5	8,154	6,685	1,469	22.2
Utah	10,897	8,801	2,096	11.2	6,216	5,288	928	9.2	3,359	2,555	804	12.3	1,322	958	364	17.3
Nevada	41,857	19,668	22,189	114.2	26,998	11,638	15,360	132.7	11,542	6,034	5,508	86.6	3,317	1,996	1,321	88.0
Pacific	**109,554**	**143,595**	**-34,041**	**–7.0**	**54,150**	**86,515**	**-32,365**	**–12.7**	**37,664**	**42,121**	**-4,457**	**–2.6**	**17,740**	**14,959**	**2,781**	**4.9**
Washington	33,893	32,723	1,170	1.8	16,826	19,104	-2,278	–6.8	11,419	10,175	1,244	5.2	5,648	3,444	2,204	27.7
Oregon	28,551	27,211	1,340	3.1	15,276	14,690	586	2.7	9,139	9,137	2	0.0	4,136	3,384	752	13.6
California	94,557	128,728	-34,171	–9.6	46,775	75,465	-28,690	–15.2	33,061	38,444	-5,383	–4.3	14,721	14,819	–98	–0.2
Alaska	2,406	3,834	-1,428	–39.4	1,315	2,690	-1,375	–59.3	778	989	–211	–20.0	313	155	158	62.5
Hawaii	5,719	6,671	–952	–6.0	3,456	4,064	–608	–7.1	1,781	1,890	–109	–1.9	482	717	–235	–13.3

[1]The net migration rate is based on an approximated 1995 older population, which is the sum of people in specific age categories (based on age in 2000) who reported living in an area in both 1995 and 2000 and who reported living in that area in 1995 but had moved elsewhere. The net migration rate divides net migration, which is inmigration minus outmigration, by the approximated 1995 population and multiplies the result by 1,000.

[2]Values for in- and outmigrants for regions, divisions, and states were calculated independently. Thus, within a region, numbers for states do not sum to the number for each division, which in turn do not sum to the number for the region.

Note: A negative value for net migration or the net migration rate is indicative of net *out*migration, meaning more migrants left an area than entered it. Positive numbers reflect net *in*migration to an area.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

did not ask reasons for move, the data suggest that retirement (among the near old and the younger old) is a less powerful stimulus to migration than increasing frailty and the need for old-age care (among the oldest old).

Mobility patterns of the older population differed by sex.

Because of women's higher life expectancy, there were about 1.4 times as many women than men aged 65 and over in the United States in 2000. The disproportionate share of women was even more pronounced among older movers — about 1.6 women per man. Census 2000 data show that 4.9 million older women and 3.0 million older men moved between 1995 and 2000 (Table 1). Older women were more likely than older men to have moved (23.8 percent compared with 21.3 percent). Although young-old women were about equally mobile as young-old men, oldest-old women were much more likely to have moved (34.2 percent) than their male counterparts (27.6 percent).

Older women were more likely than older men to have moved within the same county and less likely to have moved to another state. This was particularly true of young-old women. Once people reached the oldest-old ages, however, gender differences in the proportions moving various implied distances were substantially reduced. At this age (85 years and over), changes in health or living arrangements may result in stressful relocations to be near other family members or to institutional settings.

INTERNAL MIGRATION OF OLDER MOVERS

The South experienced the greatest net migration gain of older people.

The frequency and distance of moves made by the older population revealed one aspect of migration. Another aspect involves where they moved to and from. At the regional level, migration patterns of older people were quite similar to those of the general population, as older movers tended to move to the South and the West and away from the Northeast and the Midwest.[7]

The South experienced the greatest net migration gain (and net migration rate) of the older population of all four regions (Table 2). Between 1995 and 2000, 437,000 older people moved to the South from other regions.[8] This number was much higher than the number moving to the Northeast (90,000), the Midwest (133,000), or the West (177,000). Older people moving out of the South during this same period numbered 204,000, resulting in a net migration gain of 233,000 older people, the highest gain among the four regions. This net gain translates into a net migration rate of 19.2 for the South of the older population, indicating that the region gained about 19 older people through migration for every 1,000 older individuals living there in 1995.[9] The South experienced net inmigration for all three age subgroups of older people, but most of the overall gain could be attributed to the young old.

Within the South, the South Atlantic division enjoyed the largest migration gains of the older population. Of the eight states and the District of Columbia in the South Atlantic division, five (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida) were ranked among the top 10 in terms of net migration gain.[10]

Outmigration of older people from the Pacific division was the main reason why the West had a low net migration increase.

Of the two divisions in the West, one (the Mountain division) experienced net inmigration of older people and the other (the Pacific division) had net outmigration. The Mountain division's older net migration rate was the highest among the nine divisions and was primarily attributable to older people migrating to Nevada and Arizona. In contrast, the Pacific division had a net loss of over 30,000 older people and a net migration rate of about -7.0, indicating that the Pacific division lost

[7] For migration patterns for the total population, see U.S. Census Bureau, 2003, *Domestic Migration Across Regions, Divisions, and States: 1995 to 2000*, by Rachel S. Franklin, Census 2000 Special Reports, CENSR-7, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

[8] For discussion purposes, the number of people is rounded to the nearest thousand.

[9] The net migration rate in this report is based on an approximated 1995 older population, which is the sum of people 65 years and over in 2000 who reported living in an area in both 1995 and 2000 and those who reported living in that area in 1995 but had moved elsewhere. The net migration rate divides net migration, which is inmigration minus outmigration, by the approximated 1995 population and multiplies the result by 1,000.

[10] Because of sampling error, the top ten point estimates may not be significantly different from one another or from other point estimates outside these ten.

7 older people due to migration for every 1,000 older people living there in 1995. California alone had a net migration loss of 34,000 older people, the majority of whom were the young old.

The Middle-Atlantic division lost the largest number of older people.

The Middle-Atlantic division, consisting of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, lost the largest number of older people due to migration between 1995 and 2000, most of them in the young-old age group. Between 1995 and 2000, 224,000 older people moved out of the Middle-Atlantic division, while only 70,000 moved in, resulting in a net outmigration of just over 150,000 and a net outmigration rate of 27.5.

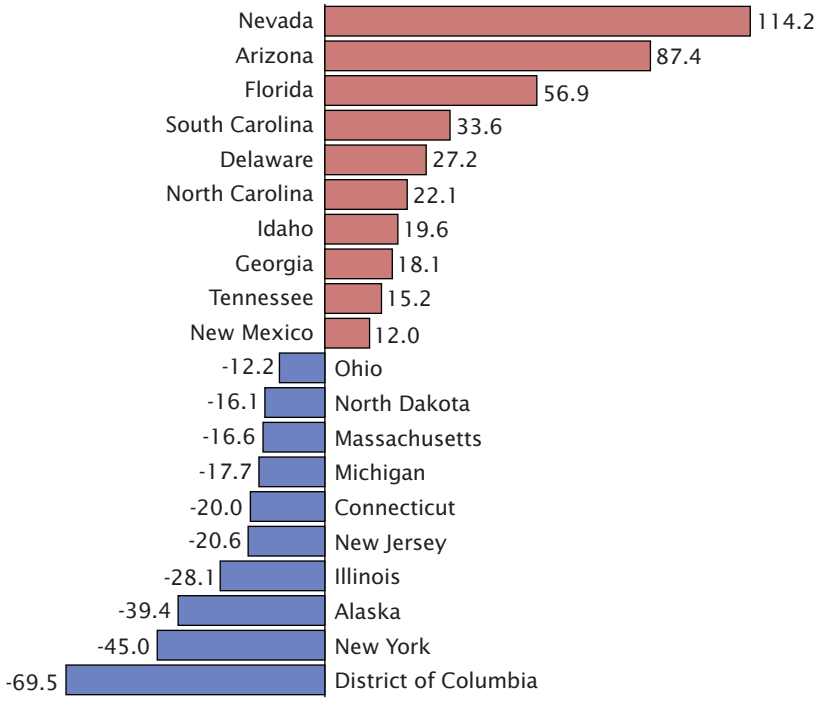
Florida gained the largest number of older movers, but Nevada had the highest net migration rate.

For discussion purposes, states are classified as "gaining states" if they experienced an increase in their older population through migration, "losing states" if they saw their older population decline through migration, and "stable states" if they had had very little change in their older population due to migration. Florida was the leading gaining state, as it received 149,000 more older people than it lost through migration. This increase was almost three times the number of second-ranked gaining state Arizona (53,000 net migration gain) and about seven times that of Nevada (22,000). The top gaining states were in the South and the West (Table 2).

In terms of net migration rates of the older population, Nevada ranked first among the states with a net migration rate of 114.2, gaining about 114 older people for every 1,000 in 1995. Arizona was again second in ranking, with a net migration rate of 87.4, while Florida was third at 56.9 (Figure 1).

Figure 1.
States With the Highest and Lowest Net Migration Rates[1] for the Population 65 Years and Over: 1995 to 2000

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)



[1] See text for definition of net migration rate.
Note: Because of sampling error, the estimates in this figure may not be significantly different from one another or from rates for other states not shown in this figure.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

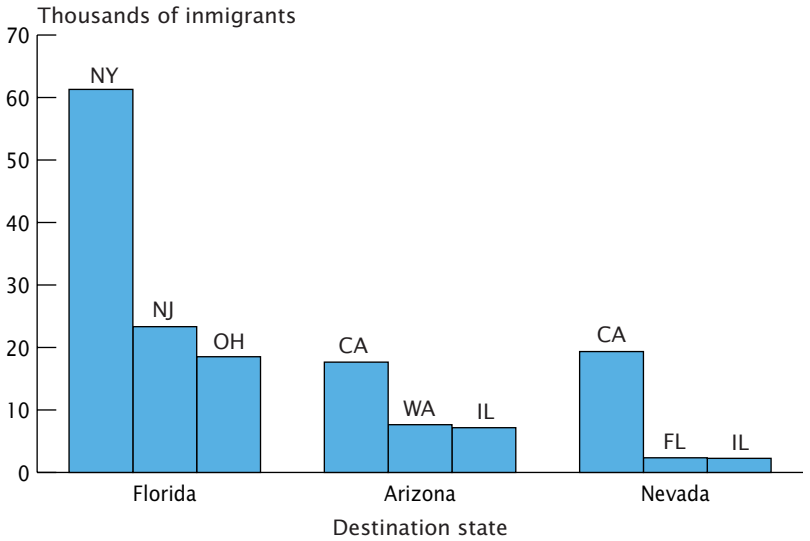
New York lost the largest number of older movers.

New York lost the largest number of older people through migration (114,000), which was much higher than the second- and third-highest losing states (Illinois at 43,000, and California at 34,000). Five of the top-ten losing states were in the Northeast, while several others were in the Midwest.[11] As well as losing the largest number of older people through net migration, New York had one of the highest net outmigration rates of the older population, 45.0 (see Figure 1). The District of Columbia had a greater net outmigration rate (69.5) than New York, due perhaps to its small size and functional status as a central city.

[11] Because of sampling error, the top ten point estimates may not be significantly different from one another or from other point estimates outside these ten.

Figure 2.
States of Origin for the Population 65 Years and Over Who Moved to Florida, Arizona, and Nevada: 1995 to 2000

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

States gaining older migrants usually were in close proximity to or had milder climates than the states with net losses of older migrants.

State-to-state migration flows illustrate the geographic origin of the gain or loss of a particular state.[12] The top gaining state, Florida, received many migrants from the Northeast and the Midwest. Close to one-third of all older movers to Florida came from New York (61,000) and New Jersey (23,000, see Figure 2). Other top sending states to Florida were the northeastern states of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, and the midwestern states of Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. Florida absorbed a large number of older movers from the colder Northeast and Midwest regions, who may have moved in search of a milder climate in which to retire.

Both Arizona and Nevada had a high net migration gain of older people, indicating that geographic proximity may also influence migration. One-quarter of older movers to Arizona came from California and Washington. Other top sending states to Arizona were western states like Colorado, as well as midwestern states like Illinois. Similarly, Nevada gained mostly from inmigration from other western states like California (17,000), which represented 40 percent of its older inmigrants, and Arizona. Nevada also received a large number of older inmigrants from Florida and Illinois.

[12] Tables with complete state-to-state migration flows of the older population are available on the Census Bureau's Web site at *www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/migration.html.*

Patterns of top losing states varied.

About three-fourths (72.8 percent) of New York's outmigrants moved to southern states along the eastern seaboard — Florida (61,000), North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina, — or neighboring northeastern states — New Jersey (19,000), Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.

Illinois was the second-largest losing state, although its older outmigrants were more evenly distributed across the country than New York's outmigrants. Florida (15,000) received the largest number of older outmigrants from Illinois, while Arizona (7,000), Wisconsin, Indiana, and California also received many.[13] Geographic proximity (and perhaps cost of living) seemed to play a greater role than climate for older California outmigrants, as more than half settled in other western states. Arizona (18,000), Nevada (17,000), Oregon (12,000), and Washington (10,000), along with Texas (8,000) and Florida (7,000), were favorite destinations for older people leaving California.[14]

State-level migration rates varied by the age of the older population, suggesting a pattern of "return migration" at the oldest ages for some states.

State-level migration rates varied by age within the older population. Many states that gained large numbers of the young old saw migration rates drop by age, while other

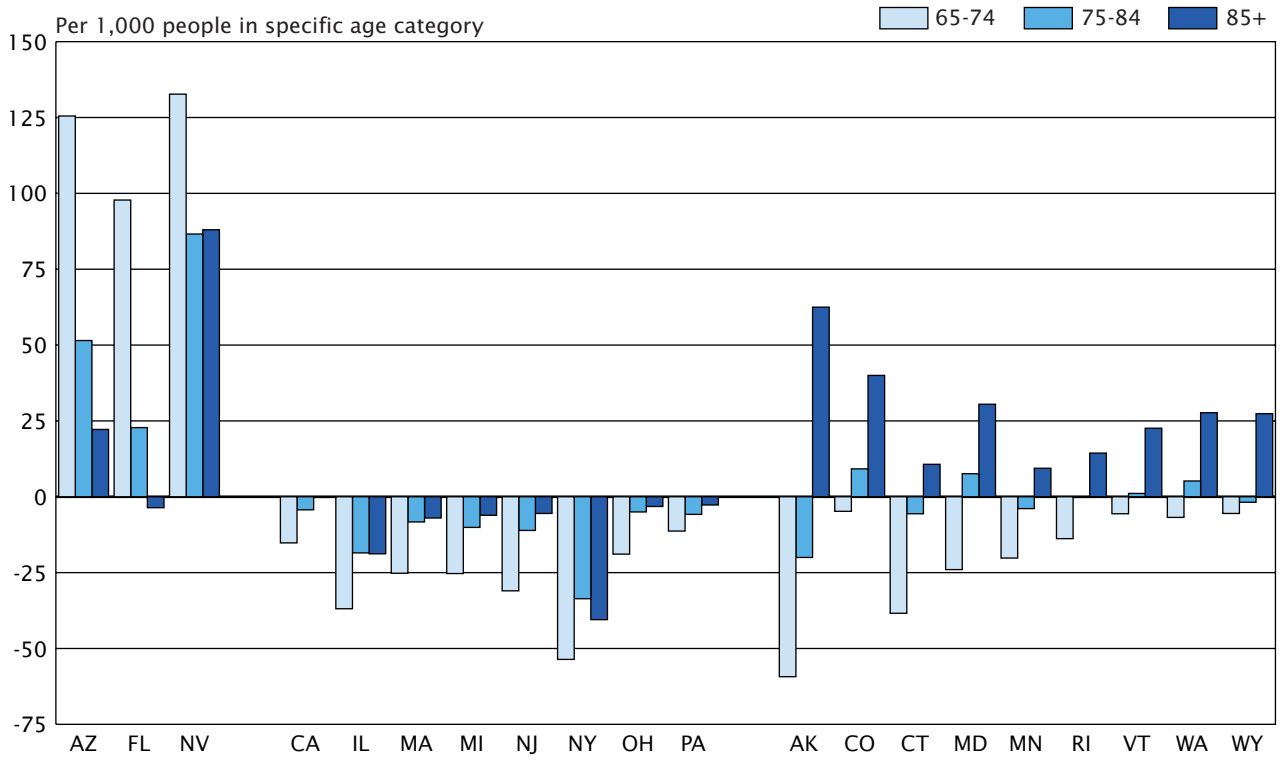
[13] The difference among the Illinois outflows to California, Texas, and Missouri were not statistically significant.

[14] The difference between the California outflows to Arizona and Nevada, to Washington and Texas, and to Texas and Florida were not statistically significant.

Figure 3.

Selected State Net Migration Rates[1] for the Population 65 Years and Over by Age: 1995 to 2000

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)



[1] See text for definition of net migration rate.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

states that lost the young old saw migration rates increase by age. These changes in migration rates by age suggest that, at the oldest ages, many older people who initially moved away at retirement may have returned to their states of origin, perhaps to be closer to family or simply to return home.[15]

Figure 3 shows net migration rates for selected states for the older population by age. Popular retirement states such as Florida and Arizona had net migration rates that decreased among their older populations. In fact, Florida experienced net outmigration of those aged 85 and over. On the other hand, many states that had high net outmigration of the young old saw decreasing losses or even gains of advanced-age groups. Examples of states with decreasing net outmigration by the age of the population included California, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. States that had a net loss of the young old and a net gain of the oldest old included Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington.

County-level migration rates of the older population followed patterns similar to state and regional findings.

Figure 4 shows county-level net migration rates for the population 65 years and older, providing greater geographic detail than the results described above. In general, county net migration rates for the population 65 years and older coincide with patterns found for regions and states, with migration gains in the South and the West, and migration losses in the Northeast and the Midwest. However, even in those states that lost older population, some counties gained older people, such as

[15] For an example of research on oldest-old people's return migration, see Stoller, Eleanor Palo and Charles F. Longino, Jr., 2001, "'Going Home' or 'Leaving Home'? The Impact of Person and Place Ties on Anticipated Counterstream Migration," *The Gerontologist*, 2001, Vol. 41, No. 1, 96-102.

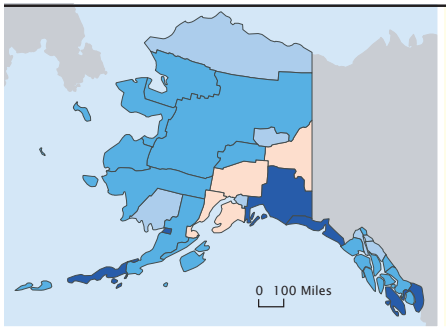
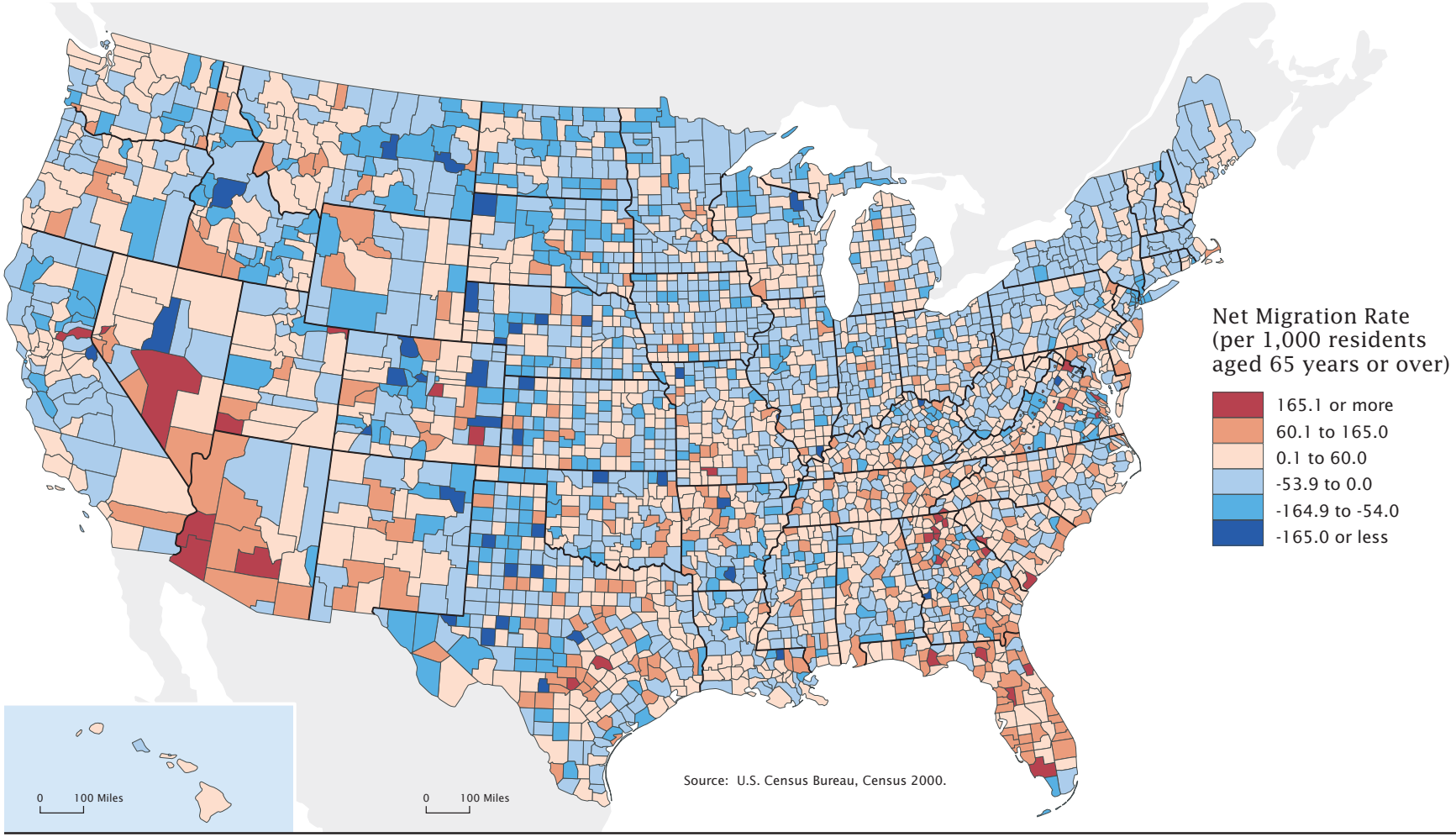


Figure 4.

Net Migration Rates for the Population 65 Years and Over: 1995 to 2000

(Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Riverside County in California, Ocean County in New Jersey, Barnstable County in Massachusetts, and Eaton County in Michigan. Within states that gained older people, of particular notice were the dichotomies between northeastern Arizona (lost) and the southwestern part of the state (gained), southern Florida (lost) and central Florida (gained), and northwestern Arkansas (gained) and southeastern Arkansas (lost).

The counties with the largest net gain of older people were Maricopa County, AZ, and Palm Beach County, FL. Many of the counties in Florida exhibited high net migration rates, led by Sumter County. Other counties with high net inmigration rates for the older population included Williamson County, TX; James City County, VA; and Nye County, NV. In terms of net migration loss, counties that lost the largest number of older people were Los Angeles County, CA, and Cook County, IL, followed by Kings County, NY. Counties with high net outmigration rates of the older population included Chattahoochee County, GA; Prairie County, MT; and Pope County, IL.

SUMMARY

People 65 years and older were much less mobile than those under the age of 65, but the oldest old were the most mobile of the older population. Older women were more likely to move than older men. Movers aged 65 to 74 were slightly more likely than movers under 65 to have made an interstate move, probably associated with retirement. The older population tended to move to the West and the South, leaving the colder climates of the Northeast and the Midwest.

At a state level, Florida, Arizona, and Nevada gained the largest numbers of people 65 years and older, while New York lost the most. State-to-state migration patterns of the older population varied across the country, with much of the outmigration from New York going to Florida, and much of the inmigration to Nevada coming from California. There was some evidence of return migration at advanced ages (85 and over), perhaps "reversing" their retirement move. This seems to explain why Florida experienced net inmigration of people 65-84 years old but not of people 85 years and older.

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

The data contained in this report are based on the sample of households who responded to the Census 2000 long form. Nationally, approximately 1 out of every 6 housing units was included in this sample. As a result, the sample estimates may differ somewhat from the 100-percent figures that would have been obtained if all housing units, people within those housing units, and people living in group quarters had been enumerated using the same questionnaires, instructions, enumerators, and so forth. The sample estimates also differ from the values that would have been obtained from different samples of housing units, people within those housing units, and people living in group quarters. The deviation of a sample estimate from the average of all possible samples is called the sampling error.

In addition to the variability that arises from the sampling procedures, both sample data and 100-percent data are subject to nonsampling error. Nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the various complex operations used to collect and process data. Such errors may include: not enumerating every household or every person in the population, failing to obtain all required information from the respondents, obtaining incorrect or inconsistent information, and recording information incorrectly. In addition, errors can occur during the field review of the enumerators' work, during clerical handling of the census questionnaires, or during the electronic processing of the questionnaires.

Nonsampling error may affect the data in two ways: (1) errors that are introduced randomly will increase the variability of the data and, therefore, should be reflected in the standard errors, and (2) errors that tend to be consistent in one direction will bias both sample and 100-percent data in that direction. For example, if respondents consistently tend to underreport their incomes, then the resulting estimates of households or families by income category will tend to be understated for the higher income categories and overstated for the lower income categories. Such biases are not reflected in the standard errors.

While it is impossible to completely eliminate error from an operation as large and complex as the decennial census, the Census Bureau attempts to control the sources of such error during the data collection and processing operations. The primary sources of error and the programs instituted to control error in Census 2000 are described in detail in Summary File 3 Technical Documentation under Chapter 8, "Accuracy of the Data," located at *www.census.gov /prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf.*

All statements in this Census 2000 report have undergone statistical testing and all comparisons are significant at the 90-percent confidence level, unless otherwise noted. The estimates in tables, maps, and other figures may vary from actual values due to sampling and nonsampling errors. As a result, estimates in one category may not be significantly different from estimates assigned to a different category. Further information on the accuracy of the data is located at *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*. For further information on the computation and use of standard errors, contact the Decennial Statistical Studies Division at 301-763-4242.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

More detailed information on decennial migration products, including additional tables and other product announcements, is available on the Internet and can be accessed via the Census Bureau's decennial migration Web page at *www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/migration.html.*

The decennial migration Web page contains additional detailed migration tables not included in this report, a schedule of upcoming migration data releases, and migration-related Census 2000 Special Reports.

For more information on decennial migration products, please contact:

Population Distribution Branch
Population Division
U.S. Census Bureau
301-763-2419

or send e-mail to *pop@census.gov.*

Information on other population and housing topics is presented in the Census 2000 Brief and Special Reports Series, located on the U.S. Census Bureau's Web site at *www.census/gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html.* These series present information about race, Hispanic origin, age, sex, household type, housing tenure, and other social, economic, and housing characteristics.

Census 2000 information and data can also be accessed via the Census 2000 Gateway Web page at *www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html.*

For more information about Census 2000, including data products, call our Customer Services Center at 301-763-INFO (4636) or e-mail *webmaster@census.gov.*

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