### **Population Characteristics**

Series P-20, No. 353 Issued August 1980

# Geographical Mobility:

March 1975 to March 1979



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### **SYMBOLS USED IN TABLES**

- Represents zero or rounds to zero.
- B Base less than 75,000.
- ··· Not applicable.

### Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1979

This report presents data from the March 1979 Current Population Survey (CPS) which included questions on respondent's county and city of residence 4 years earlier. The mobility data obtained by comparing residence in 1975 with that in 1979 show a continuation of the major migration patterns established during the first half of the 1970's.

Regional migration patterns continued to show net outmigration from the Northeast and the North Central Regions into the South and the West. The data also show a continuation of the trend since 1970 of net outmigration from central cities and a net shift, due to migration, out of metropolitan areas as a whole. These movements are discussed more fully as are the longstanding migration differentials associated with age, education, and other characteristics.

#### REGIONAL MOVEMENT

The 1975-79 CPS data on net migration for the four major regions confirm the patterns found since the late 1960's. The Northeast had a net outmigration of 1,103,000 persons 4 years old and over, and the North Central Region had a net outmigration of 907,000. The West and South continued to have net inmigration from the North (1,072,000 and 937,000, respectively). There was no indication of a significant change in direction and little change in magnitude when data were compared for the first half of the decade with the data for the last part of the decade (table A).

Data on the interregional movement of Blacks remain inconclusive. The very small net inmigration of Blacks to the South shown in the tables is not statistically significant. Therefore, although the South no longer has a net outmigration of Blacks as it did prior to 1970, it is not clear whether

Table A. Regional Migration Patterns: 1970-74 and 1975-79

(Numbers in thousands)

	North-	North		
	east	Central	South	West
1970-74:				
Inmigration	1,035	1,800	3,377	2,141
Outmigration	1,993	2,512	2,312	1,536
Net migration	<b>-958</b>	712	+1,065	+605
1975-79:				
Inmigration	1,035	1,830	3,585	2,552
Outmigration	2,138	2,737	2,513	1,615
Net migration	-1,103	-907	+1,072	+937

there will be net inmigration to the South in the future or if the pattern of nearly equal flows of Blacks into and out of the South which began in the 1970's will continue.

### METROPOLITAN-NONMETROPOLITAN SHIFTS

Outmigrants from metropolitan areas continue to outnumber inmigrants from the nonmetropolitan territory of the United States. This phenomenon of the 1970's is partially the result of the continued expansion of metropolitan areas into the nonmetropolitan territory surrounding them. Since the Current Population Survey continues to use standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) as defined in 1970, population movement into the new parts of SMSA's redefined since 1970 and new SMSA's is still counted here as a move to nonmetropolitan territory.

In The Revival of Population Growth in Nonmetropolitan America, Calvin L. Beale found that about five-eighths of the total net inmigration to the nonmetropolitan territory between 1970 and 1973 was to counties adjacent to metropolitan areas. This would support the belief that a substantial proportion of the net movement to the nonmetropolitan territory is merely an expansion of metropolitan areas. This also implies that a large proportion are moving to the more rural parts of the nonmetropolitan area.

It is important to note that a net outmigration from metropolitan areas due to internal migration does not necessarily imply a decline of population in metropolitan areas for several reasons. First, metropolitan areas generally have higher rates of natural increase than the nonmetropolitan territory. Second, most immigration from abroad is to metropolitan areas. For example, the data from this survey show that 80 percent of the persons 4 years old and over who reported that they were abroad in 1975 were living in metropolitan areas in 1979.

The pattern of net inmigration to the nonmetropolitan area is similar to that found between 1970 and 1974 (table B). The slight reduction in magnitude of the net may indicate the beginning of a change in this pattern, perhaps due to concerns involving the economy, the availability of gasoline, and the increase in the cost of commuting.

Much of the movement between the central cities of SMSA's and the suburbs (balance of SMSA's) continued along familiar patterns. Most of the people who left central cities moved to the suburbs—three times as many as moved

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Beale, Calvin L. 1975. *The Rival of Population Growth in Non-metropolitan America*. ERS-605. Economic Development Division, Economic Research Service, Department of Agriculture.



# Population Characteristics

U.S. Department of Commerce BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Series P-20, No. 353 Issued November 1980

## Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1979 Errata Sheet

The figure on outmigration from central cities to the suburbs between 1975 and 1979 shown in table C is incorrect. The corrected table is shown below.

Table C. Central City and Suburban Migration: 1970-74 and 1975-79

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-74	1975-79
Central cities:		
Inmigration	5,492	6,199
From suburbs	3,859	4,162
From nonmetropolitan areas .	1,633	2,037
Outmigration	11,381	12,000
To suburbs	8,509	8,906
To nonmetropolitan areas	2,872	3,094
Net migration	-5,889	-5,801
Suburbs:		
Inmigration	10,997	12,039
From central cities	8,509	8,906
From nonmetropolitan areas .	2,488	3,133
Outmigration	6,952	7,759
To central cities	3,859	4,162
To nonmetropolitan areas	3,093	3,597
Net migration	+4,045	+4,280

In the text, the second sentence in the section entitled "Education" on page 3 should read:

Between March 1975 and March 1979, only 26 percent of those persons who completed 8 or fewer years of school moved to a different house in the United States, while 39 percent of those with 1 to 4 years of high school and 48 percent of those with at least some college moved.

Table B. Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Migration: 1970-74 and 1975-79

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-74	1975-79
Metropolitan:		
Inmigration	4,121	5,171
Outmigration	5,965	6,691
Net migration	-1,844	-1,520
Nonmetropolitan:		
Inmigration	5,965	6,691
Outmigration	4,121	5,171
Net migration	+1,844	+1,520

to the nonmetropolitan area. In the traditional migration theory, persons move from rural areas to central cities to suburbs to exurbs. Therefore, the central cities should receive most of their new residents from the nonmetropolitan area, and most inmigrants to the nonmetropolitan area should come from the suburbs. The data, however, do not fit this classic picture. Instead, between 1975 and 1979, the central cities gained twice as many persons from the suburbs as from the nonmetropolitan area, since most movers from the suburbs are not moving further out but seem to be moving back to the central cities. Additionally, 50 percent more of the people leaving the nonmetropolitan territory of the United States are going to the suburbs than are going to the central cities. Table C also shows similar patterns for the first part of the 1970's.

The data for Blacks for the 1975-79 period also show a net gain for the suburbs and a net loss for central cities. This pattern was found during the early part of the decade

Table C. Central City and Suburban Migration: 1970-74 and 1975-79

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-74	1975-79
Central cities:		
Inmigration	5,492	6,199
From suburbs	3,859	4,162
From nonmetropolitan		
areas	1,633	2,037
Outmigration	11,381	12,000
To suburbs	8,509	8,406
To nonmetropolitan areas.	2,872	3,094
Net migration	-5,889	-5,801
Suburbs:		
Inmigration	10,997	12,039
From central cities	8,509	8,906
From nonmetropolitan		
areas	2,488	3,133
Outmigration	6,952	7,759
To central cities	3,859	4,162
To nonmetropolitan areas .	3,093	3,597
Net migration	+4,045	+4,280

as well. Metropolitan-nonmetropolitan movement is less clear for Blacks. The net inmigration of Blacks to metropolitan areas shown in table D and the detailed tables is not statistically significant. This near equality of Blacks moving into and out of metropolitan areas indicates that the patterns of movement between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas have not converged for Blacks and Whites.

Table D. Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan
Migration of Blacks: 1970-74 and 1975-79

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-74	1975-79
Metropolitan:		
Inmigration	374	388
Outmigration	283	337
Net migration	+91	+51
Central cities:		
Inmigration	665	625
Outmigration	870	1,134
Net migration	-205	-509
Suburbs:		
Inmigration	777	1,043
Outmigration	481	483
Net migration	+296	+560
Nonmetropolitan:		
Inmigration	283	337
Outmigration	374	388
Net migration	<b>91</b>	-51

#### MIGRATION DIFFERENTIALS

Movers typically have different characteristics than persons who do not move. The impact of mobility on the areas of origin and destination may, therefore, change the demographic character of these areas even if the flows into and out of a particular area balance out. If an area has a net loss of population, the movers are likely to be younger and better educated than those left behind—perhaps a greater loss to the area of origin than the mere numbers would imply.

Age and sex. The highest mobility rates continue to be found for persons in their twenties when many are establishing their own households, starting new jobs, finishing school or service in the Armed Forces, or getting married. In the 4-year period between March 1975 and March 1979, 72 percent of the persons 25 to 29 years old in 1979 and 63 percent of those 20 to 24 years old had changed residence, compared with only 40 percent of the total population 4 years old and over. Young children also have high mobility rates, reflecting the relatively high mobility of their parents; 60 percent of children 4 years of age and 51 percent of those 5 to 9 years old had moved during the 4-year period.

Although large numbers of retired persons moved to the Sunbelt States and other resort areas, the numbers were

large only in terms of their impact on those areas. Only a small percentage of the persons over 55 made changes of residence in the 4-year period: 21 percent of the noninstitutional population 55 to 64 years old in 1979, 18 percent of those 65 to 74 years old, and 16 percent of those 75 years and over moved between 1975 and 1979.

Persons in their forties and their teenage children have mobility rates intermediate between the extremes of the young adults and the older adults. At intermediate ages, adults are more likely to be established in their careers and settled in a neighborhood and a house that they own, and less inclined to move because they have more invested emotionally as well as financially in their present location.

Women and men in the United States exhibit similar residential and migratory patterns; this is not surprising as most persons marry sometime during their lives, and most married couples move together. Females had somewhat higher rates of moving at ages 15 to 19 years, 20 to 24 years, and 75 years and over; males had somewhat higher rates at ages 30 to 34 years, 35 to 44 years, and 45 to 54 years. Most of the differences in the residential and migratory behavior of women and men can be attributed to differences in marital status, employment status, life-cycle stage, or labor market opportunities, which may favor the employment of one sex over the other. In fact, the differences found in mobility rates between women and men at each age may simply reflect the movement of married couples in which the woman is typically a few years younger than her husband.

Education, Educational attainment is another good predictor of residential mobility. Between March 1975 and March 1979, only 26 percent of those persons who completed 8 or more years of school moved to a different house in the United States, while 39 percent of those with 1 to 4 years of high school and 48 percent of those with at least some college moved. For nearly every type of move, those with at least some college were the most likely to move, and those with only an elementary school education were the least likely to move. This relationship holds true whether the move was within the same SMSA or between counties, SMSA's, or States. Only one exception was found to this general rule: there is some evidence to indicate that persons with 1 to 4 years of high school are more likely to move within the same county than those with 1 or more years of college (persons with only an elementary school education were least likely to make this type of move). Persons with some college were most likely to move from central cities to the suburbs and were also most likely to move from the suburbs to the central cities.

Race. Patterns of moving vary by race as well as by age and education. Between March 1975 and March 1979, Blacks and Whites changed residences at about the same rate (40 percent and 41 percent, respectively). Blacks, however, were more likely to move within the same county (30 percent) than Whites (22 percent), while Whites were more likely to make long-distance moves than Blacks. During the 4-year period, 18 percent of the Whites moved to a different county (approximately 9 percent to a different county in the same

State and 8 percent to a different State). Meanwhile, only 11 percent of the Blacks moved between counties (5 percent within the same State and 6 percent between States).

Local and long-distance moves can also be analyzed in terms of movement within and between SMSA's. The data, once again, support the generalization that Blacks are more likely to make short-distance moves than Whites (26 percent of Blacks moved within the same SMSA as compared with 18 percent of Whites). Blacks were more likely to move within or between central cities of SMSA's; Whites were more likely to move within or between suburbs of SMSA's.

Rates of movement from central cities to the suburbs were about equal for both races. However, it does appear that Whites were more likely to move from the suburbs to central cities, between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, and within the nonmetropolitan area.

### **INTERVAL LENGTH**

The mobility questions that are used in the March CPS do not measure number of moves during a given time period but estimate the number of persons who lived in a different house at the beginning of the period than at the survey date. In other words, the number of movers is estimated, not the number of moves. Persons who moved more than once are counted only once; and persons who moved out of their current residence but returned by the end of the period are not counted as movers at all. As a result, a count of the number of movers in a shorter period more nearly approximates the number of moves during that period than is measured in a longer interval which more nearly measures the percentage of the population that is affected by mobility.

The effect of repeat movers on short-interval mobility rates can be illustrated by comparing the 1-year mobility rate from the March 1976 CPS with the 4-year rate derived from data collected in the 1979 survey. According to estimates from the 1976 survey, 17.1 percent of the 208,069,000 persons 1 year old and over were living in a different house in the United States 1 year earlier. By comparison, the 1979 survey shows that 40.2 percent of the 203,437,000 persons 4 years old and over were living in a different house in the United States on that date 4 years earlier.

### MIGRATION UNIVERSE

The mobility data in this report are derived from the answers to questions on residence 4 years before the survey date and the geographic location of the respondent's current residence. A facsimile of the questions on previous residence is shown below. These questions were asked for all members of the survey household who were 14 years old and over on the survey date. Previous residence for persons under 14 years old was allocated based on the responses of their parents or other members of the household. (See the section "Allocations of Mobility Status" for a further discussion of the allocation of mobility data for children and other persons for whom no response or only partial responses to the mobility questions were given.)

The universe sampled includes all civilian noninstitutional households and members of the Armed Forces living off

base or with their families on base. (For a more detailed discussion of the sample selection and limitations of the sample and survey design, see "Source and Reliability of the Estimates.")

54. Was , . . living in this house 4 years ago; that is, on March 1 1975? Yes O (Skip No (Ask 55) to 56) 55. Where did . . . live on March 1, 1975? a. Name of State, foreign country, U.S. possession, etc. b. Name of county c. Name of city, town, etc. d. Did . . . live inside the limits of a city, town, village, etc.? Yes O No O

### ALLOCATIONS OF MOBILITY STATUS

In the March 1979 CPS, complete mobility information was not reported for about 6 percent of all persons 14 years old and over and the mobility questions were not asked for any persons under 14 years of age. In these cases, missing mobility data are allocated by values obtained for other family members if available or from other active respondents with similar demographic characteristics. The previous residence assigned to a nonrespondent is that obtained for another person with similar demographic characteristics who did respond and who has been selected systematically in the order in which individual records are processed. Characteristics used in these allocations (when mobility data for other family members are not available) are age, race, years of school completed, metropolitan status, and State of current residence. (State of previous residence is used instead of State of current residence if State but not place or county of previous residence is provided by the respondent.)

### **RELATED REPORTS**

Statistics on the mobility of the population have been collected annually in the Current Population Survey since 1948. Tables similar to those in this report were published for the 1975-78 period in Series P-20, No. 331, Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1978; 1975-77 period in Series P-20, No. 320, Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1977; for the 1975-76 period in Series P-20, No. 305, Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1976; for the 1970-75 period in Series P-20, No. 285, Mobility of the Population of the United States: March 1970 to March 1975; for the 1970-74 period in Series P-20, No. 273; and for the 1970-73 period in Series P-20, No. 262. Data for the 1970-71

period were issued in Series P-20, No. 235, and similar statistics were published in this series each year beginning with the report for 1947-48.

Statistics on geographic mobility of the population for cities, counties, SMSA's, urbanized areas, State economic areas, States, divisions, regions, and the United States appear in Volume I of the 1970 Census of Population (based on State of birth or residence 5 years before the census). Detailed statistics on mobility status by race and sex for these areas and the United States appear in Volume II, Subject Reports: PC(2)-2A, State of Birth; PC(2)-2B, Mobility for States and the Nation; PC(2)-2C, Mobility for Metropolitan Areas; PC(2)-2D, Lifetime and Recent Migration; PC(2)-2E, Migration Between State Economic Areas; and PC(2)-7E, Occupation and Residence in 1965. Some other subject reports of the 1970 census present statistics on mobility status in relation to the main subject of the report.

# COMPARABILITY OF METROPOLITAN AND NONMETROPOLITAN DATA FROM THE 1979 CPS WITH DATA FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

Changes in CPS design and procedures over the last several years have made the annual series of sample population data for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas inconsistent. Analytic comparisons of year-to-year changes in these figures should be avoided. Trends in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan population growth over the 1970-79 and 1976-79 periods should not be appreciably affected by the procedural changes.

The major revisions to the CPS sample design and estimation methods have involved the expansion of the number of sample units from 55,000 housing units to 65,500 housing units. This incorporation of approximately 10,000 supplemental housing units into the March CPS sample in 1977 was accompanied by new procedures for inflating the sample results to reflect national estimates. It was determined subsequent to the introduction of the additional sample that the new inflating (weighting) procedures used for processing both the March 1977 and March 1978 CPS supplement data had resulted in an apparent overestimate of the nonmetropolitan population and corresponding underestimate of the metropolitan population for those years. For March 1979, another revision of the weighting process was introduced to correct the problem discovered in the earlier procedures. The result of this change was a spurious large increase in the metropolitan population and decrease in the nonmetropolitan population relative to March 1978 levels.

The March 1979 CPS metropolitan and nonmetropolitan population estimates also reflect other operational changes including the introduction of a coverage improvement sample designed to provide greater accuracy in survey estimation. The net effect of all changes in procedure was to increase the metropolitan area estimates. Research and detailed analysis of the impact of each procedural change on the population estimates is underway and the results will be issued in a forthcoming technical report.

### Table Finding Guide—Subjects by Type of Mobility and Table Number

Subject	Detailed mobility	General mobility	Mobility for SMSA's	Mobility for central cities of SMSA's	Regional mobility
GENERAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS					
Age: Single years of age Age groups	4	6,13,18,24,27	9,11,14,16,22,28, 32,34,36,37,38	10,12,15,17, 23,30,33	6,7,34,36,40,41
Race	1,35,39	2,3,43	2,3,8,25,29,34, 36,37,38,43	26,31,42	2,3,7,8,34,35, 36,39,40,42
Spanish origin	1		25,29,37,38	26,31	
Years of school completed		24	22,25,37,38	23,26	40,41
Marital status		27	28,32	33	
Households and household relationship			8,9	10	8
Families	35	13,18,21	11,14,16,19,34,	12,15,17,20	34,35,36,40,41
By presence or ages of own children		18,21	36,37,38 14,16,19	15,17,20	
Unrelated individuals			36		36
ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS					
Employment status		27	28,29,37,38	30,31	40,41
Occupation			28,29	30,31	40,41
Income in 1978: Persons		18	32,37,38 16	33 17	
Receipt of public assistance	35		34,37,38		34,35
Above or below poverty level			36,37,38		36,40,41

### NOTE

In the past the Census Bureau has designated a head of household to serve as the central reference person for the collection and tabulation of data for each member of the household (or family). However, the trend toward recognition of equal status and roles for adult family members makes the term "head" less relevant in the analysis of household and family data. As a result, the Bureau is currently developing new techniques for the enumeration and presentation of data which will eliminate the concept "head." Although the data in this report are based on this concept, methodology for future Census Bureau reports will reflect a gradual movement away from this traditional practice.