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**Geographical  
Mobility:  
March 1975  
to March 1980**



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## SYMBOLS USED IN TABLES

- Represents zero or rounds to zero
  - B Base less than 75,000.
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## Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1980

Migration, or geographical mobility, is an important component of demographic change. It has major impact on population distribution as people move between cities and suburbs, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, and regions. It is important to know the characteristics of movers—age, race, sex, occupation, income, education, and marital status—in order to assess the impact that migration may have on the areas of origin and destination.

The mobility data in this report are estimates from the March 1980 Current Population Survey (CPS). They are derived by comparing the locations of each respondent's residence in 1975 with current residence in 1980. In the 1970's, there were several significant changes in the residential mobility patterns of Americans. Some of these changes, especially in regional movements, began in the 1960's for Whites but were not evidenced for Blacks until the 1970's. Changes in the patterns of migration to and from metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas of the United States were first seen in the 1970's. These trends are discussed in detail in the following sections. The analysis compares the mobility patterns of persons during the late 1960's, using data from the 1970 census, with patterns found in the Current Population Surveys for the early 1970's and in the last 5 years of the decade.

### REGIONAL PATTERNS

The 1975-80 data indicate a continuation of the trend that began in the late 1960's and resulted in net movement out of the Northeast and North Central Regions into the South and West (table A). This net outmigration from the Northeast and North Central Regions was significantly larger for each 5-year period in the 1970's than for the 1965-70 period. (This analysis excludes movers from abroad.) It should be noted that the pattern of interregional migration evidenced in the 1960's reflected only the net movement of Whites. Blacks had quite a different pattern of interregional movement, but because of their smaller numbers, the net outmigration of Blacks from the South in that period was obscured in the totals.

One contributing factor in the continued net loss from the North is the South's turn-around from net loss to net gain of Blacks since 1975; in the late 1970's, the direction of the interregional movement of Blacks was no longer different from that of Whites. During the 5-year period from 1965 to 1970, the South still had a net outmigration of Blacks, while each of the other three regions had a net immigration of Blacks. Small net gains of Blacks to the South

began to show up in each Current Population Survey throughout the 1970's, but these gains were not statistically significant. However, the net immigration of Blacks to the South shown in this report for the 1975-80 period is statistically significant (table B). Data from the 1980 census should help to identify which States were involved in these major interregional population shifts.

**Table A. Interregional Migration: 1965-70, 1970-75, and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	North-east	North Central	South	West
<b>1965-70:</b>				
Inmigrants....	1,273	2,024	3,142	2,309
Outmigrants....	1,988	2,661	2,486	1,613
Net migration..	-715	-637	+656	+696
<b>1970-75:</b>				
Inmigrants....	1,057	1,731	4,082	2,347
Outmigrants....	2,399	2,926	2,253	1,639
Net migration..	-1,342	-1,195	+1,829	+708
<b>1975-80:</b>				
Inmigrants....	1,106	1,993	4,204	2,838
Outmigrants....	2,592	3,166	2,440	1,945
Net migration..	-1,486	-1,173	+1,764	+893

**Table B. Interregional Migration of Blacks: 1965-70, 1970-75, and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	North-east	North Central	South	West
<b>1965-70:</b>				
Inmigrants....	146	203	162	150
Outmigrants....	110	111	378	61
Net migration..	+36	+92	-216	+89
<b>1970-75:</b>				
Inmigrants....	118	150	302	153
Outmigrants....	182	202	288	51
Net migration..	-64*	-52*	+14*	+102
<b>1975-80:</b>				
Inmigrants....	99	170	415	193
Outmigrants....	274	221	220	163
Net migration..	-175	-51*	+195	+30*

\*Difference from zero not statistically significant at the .05 level.

## METROPOLITAN-NONMETROPOLITAN SHIFTS

Metropolitan areas as a whole continued to lose population to the nonmetropolitan portion of the country between 1975 and 1980 (table C). The rather modest net loss from metropolitan areas due to internal migration between 1965 and 1970 was greatly increased during both 5-year periods of the 1970's. This increase in the net migration *out* of metropolitan areas may be at least partially due to the fact that the data for all three 5-year periods between 1965 and 1980 use the 1970 definition of standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's). Much of the movement from metropolitan to nonmetropolitan areas was to counties that were redefined as metropolitan since 1970 or to counties adjacent to existing SMSA's.

In comparing the metropolitan-nonmetropolitan movement of the total population to that for Blacks, the patterns of movement for Whites again have obscured a much different pattern for Blacks (table D). Blacks showed a net immigration to metropolitan areas during the late 1960's (compared with a net outmigration for the total population), and there is some evidence that metropolitan areas still had a net Black immigration in the first half of the 1970's. However, by the 1975 to 1980 period, the apparent small net

immigration was not statistically significant, a development which indicates a change from the predominance of Black movers into metropolitan areas in the late 1960's. The number of Black immigrants to metropolitan areas was about the same over the three 5-year periods, but the number of Black persons leaving metropolitan areas increased significantly between the 1960's and 1970's.

## CITIES AND SUBURBS

The net loss of persons from metropolitan areas in the 1970's due to internal migration was the result of very large net losses by the central cities. The balance of the metropolitan areas, commonly known as the suburbs, had net gains of population from migration in both 5-year periods during the 1970's (table E). A comparison of the 1970-75 and the 1975-80 periods seems to show a small decline in the net loss of central cities in the latter half of the decade and a small decline in the net gain to the suburbs. However, these differences are not statistically significant. (Comparable data are not available for the 1965-70 period.)

Central cities also showed a net loss of Blacks in both periods, and suburbs had a corresponding net gain of Blacks due to internal migration (table F). However, the net gain of Blacks to the suburbs was greater than the net loss from

**Table C. Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Migration: 1965-70, 1970-75, and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	1965-70	1970-75	1975-80
<b>Metropolitan:</b>			
Immigrants.....	5,457	5,127	5,993
Outmigrants.....	5,809	6,721	7,337
Net migration.....	-352	-1,594	-1,344
<b>Nonmetropolitan:</b>			
Immigrants.....	5,809	6,721	7,337
Outmigrants.....	5,457	5,127	5,993
Net migration.....	+352	+1,594	+1,344

**Table D. Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Migration of Blacks: 1965-70, 1970-75, and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	1965-70	1970-75	1975-80
<b>Metropolitan:</b>			
Immigrants.....	452	463	469
Outmigrants.....	234	325	353
Net migration.....	+218	+138*	+116*
<b>Nonmetropolitan:</b>			
Immigrants.....	234	325	353
Outmigrants.....	452	463	469
Net migration.....	-218	-138*	-116*

\*Difference from zero not statistically significant at the .05 level.

**Table E. Central-City and Suburban Migration: 1970-75 and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-75	1975-80
<b>Central cities:</b>		
Immigrants.....	5,987	6,891
Outmigrants.....	13,005	13,237
Net migration.....	-7,018	-6,346
<b>Suburbs:</b>		
Immigrants.....	12,732	13,628
Outmigrants.....	7,309	8,627
Net migration.....	+5,423	+5,001

**Table F. Central-City and Suburban Migration of Blacks: 1970-75 and 1975-80**

(Numbers in thousands)

	1970-75	1975-80
<b>Central cities:</b>		
Immigrants.....	737	724
Outmigrants.....	980	1,163
Net migration.....	-243	-439
<b>Suburbs:</b>		
Immigrants.....	827	1,123
Outmigrants.....	446	567
Net migration.....	+381	+556

central cities, resulting in a net gain of Blacks to metropolitan areas. The apparent changes in the net loss of Blacks from central cities and the net gain to suburbs between the 1970-75 and 1975-80 periods shown in table F are not statistically significant.

## MIGRATION DIFFERENTIALS

Data shown in the detailed tables of this report indicate that persons who move differ in several ways from persons who do not move. For example, although 45 percent of all persons 5 years old and over moved during the 1975-80 period, the rate for persons 25 to 29 years of age was the highest at 77 percent. The highest mobility rates typically occur among persons in their twenties, reflecting the establishment of new households by young adults who have just finished school, recently married, or entered the labor market. Children 5 to 9 years of age also have high rates of moving, reflecting the high mobility of their parents. After the peak is reached at 25 to 29, the rates of moving steadily decline with advancing age.

Persons moving into SMSA's from outside SMSA's between 1975 and 1980 were younger than persons moving from SMSA's to nonmetropolitan territory. The median age of immigrants to SMSA's was 26.3 years, compared with 29.0 years for outmigrants.

Between 1975 and 1980, Blacks and Whites changed residence at about the same rate (45 and 46 percent, respectively). However, Blacks tended to move shorter distances than Whites. In the 1975-80 period, 33 percent of Blacks moved within the same county, compared with only 25 percent of Whites. Whites had higher rates of intercounty and interstate migration than Blacks. During the 5-year period, 20 percent of the Whites moved to a different county (approximately 11 percent to a different county in the same State and 9 percent to a different State). Only 13 percent of the Blacks moved between counties with approximately equal rates within the same State and between States.

The survey data indicate that mobility status varies by labor force status. The mobility rates were higher for civilian persons currently unemployed than for those employed (56 and 49 percent, respectively). Persons not in the labor force had much lower mobility rates than either of these groups (35 percent). Of the 855,000 members of the Armed Forces, 75 percent changed residence during the 5-year period, continuing the trend of Armed Forces personnel having the highest mobility rates of any of the labor force status groups. Labor force status refers to the time of the survey and, therefore, represents status at the end rather than the beginning of the mobility interval.

Mobility status also varies among occupation groups. For nonfarm workers, mobility rates vary little among occupations, except that professional workers have a higher mobility rate than that of other nonfarm workers. Farm workers have, by far, the lowest mobility rate of any of the occupations. A limitation of the statistics is that occupation is measured at the end of the migration interval; for some persons occupation changed, but the data do not allow com-

parison of occupational changes associated with geographical mobility.

Educational attainment also influences the likelihood of geographical mobility. College graduates are more likely to move than high school graduates who, in turn, move more frequently than persons with only an elementary education. Among persons 18 years old and over, 55 percent of those with 4 or more years of college moved between March 1975 and March 1980, compared with 45 percent of those who had completed only 4 years of high school and 29 percent of those with only 8 years of education.

The ages of own children in a family influence the likelihood of moving, although overall, the presence or absence of children does not appear to influence the likelihood of moving. Among family householders who were 15 to 54 years old at the survey date, those with own children under 18 were about as residentially mobile as those with no own children under 18. The families whose children were all under 6 years were more residentially mobile than those with children over 6 years. Thus, the presence of school-age children acts to reduce the geographical mobility of families.

The data in this report are for individuals and, therefore, do not relate directly to the migration of families. For many purposes, the mobility of family householders can be used as an indication of the mobility of the entire family because family members usually have the same mobility status as the householder. However, some families were formed during the migration interval, and others were dissolved. Still other families experienced changes in composition as a result of persons joining the family or leaving it.

## INTERVAL LENGTH

The mobility questions that are used in the March CPS do not measure the 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 5-year rate derived from data collected in the 1980 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 1980 survey shows that 45.0 percent of the 202,216,000 persons 5 years old and over were living in a different house in the United States on that date 5 years earlier.

## MIGRATION UNIVERSE

The mobility data in this report are derived from the answers to questions on residence 5 years before the survey date and the geographical location of the respondent's current residence. A facsimile of the question on previous residence is shown below. These questions were asked for all members of the survey household who were 15 years old and over on the survey date. Previous residence for persons under 15 years old was allocated based on the responses of their parents or other members of the household. (See the section entitled "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.")

<p>53. Was . . . living in this house 5 years ago; that is, on March 1, 1975?</p> <p>Yes <input type="radio"/> (Skip to 55) No <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>54. Where did . . . live on March 1, 1975?</p> <p>A. Name of State, foreign country, U.S. possession, etc. →</p> <p>-----</p> <p>B. Name of county →</p> <p>-----</p> <p>C. Name of city, town, etc. →</p> <p>-----</p> <p>D. Did . . . live inside the limits of that city, town, village, etc.)</p> <p>Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/></p>

## ALLOCATIONS OF MOBILITY STATUS

In the March 1980 CPS, complete mobility information was not reported for about 6 percent of all persons 15 years old and over, and the mobility questions were not asked for any persons under 15 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 1975-79 period in Series P-20, No. 353, *Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1979*; for the 1975-78 period in Series P-20, No. 331, *Geographical Mobility: March 1975 to March 1978*; for the 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 geographical 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 1980 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 1970-80 and 1975-80 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 supplemental 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.

Beginning with 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
<b>GENERAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
Age:					
Single years of age.....		5			
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	11,14,16,19,34,36,37,38	12,15,17,20	34,35,36,40,41
By presence or ages of own children..		18,21	14,16,19	15,17,20	
Unrelated individuals.....			36		36
<b>ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
Employment status.....		27	28,29,37,38	30,31	40,41
Occupation.....			28,29	30,31	40,41
Income in 1979:					
Persons.....			32,37,38	33	
Families.....		18	16	17	
Receipt of public assistance.....	35		34,37,38		34,35
Above or below poverty level.....			36,37,38		36,40,41