

Desire to Move and Residential Mobility: 2010–2011

Household Economic Studies

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INTRODUCTION

The residences we live in are associated with economic opportunities, health status, social relationships, and exposure to crime and disorder.¹ This report focuses on people who desire to move to a new residence because of dissatisfaction with where they live, and it examines how frequently people who desire to move to a new residence do so. “Residences” here include housing units, neighborhoods, and local communities.

Considerable research has been devoted to understanding why households move.² The generally accepted model of residential mobility suggests that a mismatch between current housing and housing needs and aspirations is related to residential dissatisfaction, which in turn is associated with the desire to move and an actual move. However, despite wide acceptance of this model, empirical tests have provided mixed results.

Households frequently do not move, even after expressing residential dissatisfaction and the desire to move.³

Few data sets combine longitudinal data on moves with measures of desire to move and detailed characteristics of respondents and their residences. This is the main difficulty with studying desire to move and residential mobility. Moreover, having the desire to move is not the same as having the intention to move. Some households may desire to move, but because of socioeconomic status, physical health, family and social ties, or lack of more suitable alternatives, do not intend or plan to move.

This report combines data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) with supplemental data from the American Community Survey (ACS) to provide a detailed analysis of the characteristics of householders who desired to move in 2010 and their subsequent mobility patterns from 2010 to 2011. The report looks at how many households desire to move, how this relates to the likelihood of moving, and how desiring to move and moving vary across households and across time.

¹ See Tama Leventhal and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, “The Neighborhoods They Live In: The Effects of Neighborhood Residence on Child and Adolescent Outcomes,” *Psychological Bulletin*, 2000, Vol. 126, pp. 309–337; Ana Diez Roux, “Investigating Neighborhood and Area Effects on Health,” *American Journal of Public Health*, 2001, Vol. 91, pp. 1783–1789; Robert Sampson, Jeffrey Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley, “Assessing ‘Neighborhood Effects’: Social Processes and New Directions in Research,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2002, Vol. 28, pp. 443–478.

² See Peter Rossi, *Why Families Move: A Study in the Social Psychology of Urban Residential Mobility*, The Free Press, Glencoe, IL, 1955; Alden Speare Jr., “Residential Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable in Residential Mobility,” *Demography*, 1974, Vol. 11, pp. 173–188; Nancy Landale and Avery Guest, “Constraints, Satisfaction and Residential Mobility: Speare’s Model Reconsidered,” *Demography*, 1985, Vol. 22, pp. 199–222.

³ See Barrett Lee, R.S. Oropesa, and James Kanan, “Neighborhood Context and Residential Mobility,” *Demography*, 1994, Vol. 31, 249–270; Gordon De Jong, “Choice Processes in Migration Behaviour,” in K. Pandit and S.D. Withers (eds.), *Migration and Restructuring in the US*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, New York, 1999, pp. 273–292; Max Lu, “Do People Move When They Say They Will? Inconsistencies in Individual Migration Behavior,” *Population and Environment*, 1999, Vol. 20, pp. 467–488.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Nearly 1 in 10 American households (9.6 percent) report that they are dissatisfied with their current housing, neighborhood, local safety, or public services to the point that they desire to move.
- The majority of those who desire to move do not move within the next year, but their rate of moving is higher than that of the general population (18.3 percent compared with 9.6 percent).
- Desiring to move is associated with younger age and with lower income. Renters are more likely to desire to move than homeowners. Neighborhood poverty levels and racial composition are also associated with desiring to move.
- The likelihood of moving is higher for households who desire to move, and most of the factors associated with desiring to move are also associated with moving. Changes in family composition (marriage, divorce, birth of a child) are associated with moving. By contrast, disability status is associated with desiring to move without always being associated with moving.
- Only 89,000 of the about 1.7 million older homeowners who desired to move moved from 2010 to 2011.
- Householders who desire to move and who do move generally report greater residential satisfaction with their new residence than their old one.
- Despite rapid changes in the housing market since 2008, the overall trend toward increased residential satisfaction and decreased desire to move has continued, and the rate of residential moves has declined.

DATA

Four measures, collected during the Adult Well-Being Topical Module of the 2008 SIPP, are used in this report as indicators of whether householders desire to move because of dissatisfaction with conditions in the home, neighborhood conditions, local safety, or public services (see text box below).⁴

⁴ Each household contains one householder (also called the reference person). The householder is the person in whose name the home is owned or rented. If the house is owned or rented jointly by more than one person (such as a married couple or some roommate situations), any of those people may be listed as the householder.

SURVEY OF INCOME AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION (SIPP)

The SIPP is a longitudinal survey that follows an initial sample of about 50,000 eligible households for a several-year period (called a panel), including when entire households or individuals change residences, provided they remain in noninstitutionalized residential settings in the continental United States during this time. During each interview period (called a wave), households are split into four roughly equal-sized groups (called rotations) and interviewed, one group per month, over a 4-month period. Household members are asked questions about the 4 months prior to the interview month. These questions include core items that are asked each interview period and topical module items that are only asked in one or two waves.

The 2008 SIPP Wave 6 and Wave 9 Adult Well-Being Topical Modules include a number of detailed questions about householders' subjective appraisals of their housing units, neighborhoods, and specific aspects of their neighborhoods including crime and services.* Among these items are four questions that measure attitudes about moving, specifically asking the respondents if problems with their housing, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they would like to move:

1. Are conditions in your home undesirable enough that you would like to move?
2. Is your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move?
3. Overall, is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move?
4. Are the public services undesirable enough that you would like to move?

* Data from the SIPP Adult Well-Being Topical Module, which includes the measures of desiring to move used in this paper, were collected from May to August of 2010 (Wave 6) and from May to August of 2011 (Wave 9). The reference period for the topical modules was the month prior to the interview month, or reference month 4 of the given wave. For example, the interview month for the first rotation group of Wave 6 was May. The reference month of the Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Topical Module for this rotation group was April. Therefore, the desire to move questions asked in the Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Topical Module for the first rotation group reference the residence the respondent lived at during April of 2010.

The Adult Well-Being Topical Module also includes overall measures of residential satisfaction, where householders are asked to rate their satisfaction with their homes, neighborhoods, local safety, and public services as very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, somewhat satisfied, and very satisfied. Some householders indicate dissatisfaction with one or more aspects of their residence but report that these problems are not so bad that they desire to move. While these householders are important to study, this report focuses primarily on those who are dissatisfied enough with their residence to desire to move.⁵ For simplicity, these householders will be referred to as “desiring to move” or “desires to move” for the remainder of the report.

⁵ For a more comprehensive analysis of the Adult Well-Being Topical Module data, see Julie Siebens, “Extended Measures of Well-Being: Living Conditions in the United States: 2011,” *Household Economic Studies*, P70-136, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2013.

The SIPP includes a wide array of personal and geographic information about respondents that is rarely, if ever, available in a single survey. This report considers three groups of characteristics that may be related to both desiring to move and residential mobility:

1. Housing tenure—the householder’s homeownership status (tenure).
2. Personal characteristics—socio-demographic and economic information about the householder at the time of interview, demographic and job events during the year prior to and after the interview period, and disability status.
3. Neighborhood characteristics—census tract information from the 2006–2010 5-year ACS on the demographic, economic, and housing market characteristics

of the neighborhoods in which householders lived.^{6, 7}

⁶ Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or equivalent entity that are updated by local participants prior to each decennial census as part of the Census Bureau's Participant Statistical Areas Program. The Census Bureau delineates census tracts in situations where no local participant existed or where state, local, or tribal governments declined to participate. The primary purpose of census tracts is to provide a stable set of geographic units for the presentation of statistical data. Census tracts generally have a population size between 1,200 and 8,000 people, with an optimum size of 4,000 people. A census tract usually covers a contiguous area; however, the spatial size of census tracts varies widely depending on the density of settlement. Census tract boundaries are delineated with the intention that they will be maintained over a long time so that statistical comparisons can be made from census to census. Census tracts occasionally are split due to population growth or merged as a result of substantial population decline.

⁷ The ACS is a nationally representative yearly survey with an initial sample of about 3 million addresses. Data are collected monthly, over the course of 1 year, and then combined into a single file and weighted to independent subcounty population estimates for July 1 of the survey year. Estimates from the ACS data are produced for single-year, 3-year, and 5-year time periods, with many of the same characteristics released for each period. The 5-year file produces representative estimates for all census geographies on a number of population and housing characteristics.

DEFINITIONS

Residential mobility—Residential mobility refers to moves within a jurisdiction (local moves), while migration is commonly defined as moves that cross jurisdictional boundaries (counties in particular). While this report does not explicitly consider distance moved, respondents who moved because of dissatisfaction with their residential circumstances, as opposed to employment and other related factors, are likely to make local moves.

Desire to move—Respondents who answered yes to one of the following questions are considered dissatisfied enough with their residence to desire to move: (1) Are conditions in your home undesirable enough that you would like to move? (2) Overall, is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move? (3) Is your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move? and (4) Are the public services undesirable enough that you would like to move? For descriptive purposes, this group is called the “desires to move” group. Respondents who did not answer yes to one of these questions are referred to as “does not desire to move,” indicating they did not desire to move because of residential dissatisfaction. However, those in this group may still be dissatisfied with their residential circumstances, just not to the extent that they desire to move.

Householder—Each interviewed household contains one householder (also called the reference person). The householder is the person in whose name the home is owned or rented. If the house is owned or rented jointly by more than one person (such as a married couple or some roommate situations), any of those people may be listed as the householder. In this report, the terms householder and respondent are used interchangeably.

Combining information about housing tenure and the personal characteristics of respondents with information about the areas that they live in makes it possible to evaluate which factors are most important for understanding who desires to move and who moves.

The first section of the report presents estimates of how many householders desired to move in 2010 by housing tenure, personal characteristics, and neighborhood characteristics. The second section of the report focuses on the mover rates of householders who desired to move from 2010 to 2011 by the three groups of predictors. In the third part of the report, multivariate analyses are used to untangle the most important predictors of both desiring to move and residential mobility. The fourth section answers the questions (1) Were respondents who desired to move

in 2010 more satisfied after they moved? and (2) Did the mobility patterns of householders who desired to move change when comparing estimates from 2005–2006 and 2010–2011? The report concludes with a summary and discussion of relevant findings.

DESIRE TO MOVE

Estimates

Table 1 shows the numbers of householders who desire to move because of dissatisfaction with housing, neighborhood, local safety, or public services.⁸ The results show that about 11.2 mil-

lion householders desired to move in 2010. This represented about 9.6 percent of all householders, or about 1 in 10.

There were noticeable age differences in the likelihood of desiring to move. About 14.6 percent of householders aged 16 to 34 reported desiring to move, compared with 10.4 percent of householders aged 35 to 54, and 6.3 percent of householders aged 55 and older. This pattern carried over to the detailed measures of desiring to move; young adults 15 to 34 years old were the most likely to report desiring to move because of problems with their home, neighborhood, and local safety (Figure 1).⁹

⁸ The estimates in this paper (which may be shown in text, figures, or tables) are based on responses from a sample of the population and may differ from the actual values because of sampling variability or other factors. As a result, apparent differences between the estimates for two or more groups may not be statistically significant. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted.

⁹ The percentage of householders 15 to 34 years old who were dissatisfied enough with public services to move is not statistically different from the percentage of householders 35 to 54 years old who were dissatisfied enough with public services to move.

Table 1.
Desire to Move by Age and Mover Status: 2010 to 2011
(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

Desire to move	Total				Age 16–34				Age 35–54				Age 55 and older			
	Total, 2010		Moved, 2010 to 2011 ¹		Total, 2010		Moved, 2010 to 2011		Total, 2010		Moved, 2010 to 2011		Total, 2010		Moved, 2010 to 2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	116,248	100.0	11,264	9.7	23,153	100.0	4,791	20.7	47,251	100.0	4,001	8.5	45,843	100.0	2,472	5.4
Desires to move for any reason ²	11,184	9.6	2,048	18.3	3,383	14.6	942	27.8	4,899	10.4	780	15.9	2,902	6.3	325	11.2
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with housing ³	7,081	6.1	1,497	21.1	2,328	10.1	697	29.9	3,082	6.5	564	18.3	1,671	3.6	236	14.1
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with neighborhood ⁴	5,482	4.7	945	17.2	1,672	7.2	432	25.8	2,437	5.2	387	15.9	1,372	3.0	127	9.2
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with local safety ⁵	4,757	4.1	793	16.7	1,487	6.4	380	25.5	2,031	4.3	309	15.2	1,238	2.7	105	8.4
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with public services ⁶	2,058	1.8	332	16.2	553	2.4	137	24.8	989	2.1	155	15.7	516	1.1	40	7.8

¹ Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).

² Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.

³ Question AW13_SATLV2 asks: Are conditions in your home so undesirable you want to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

⁴ Question AW25_SATLV5 asks: Is your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

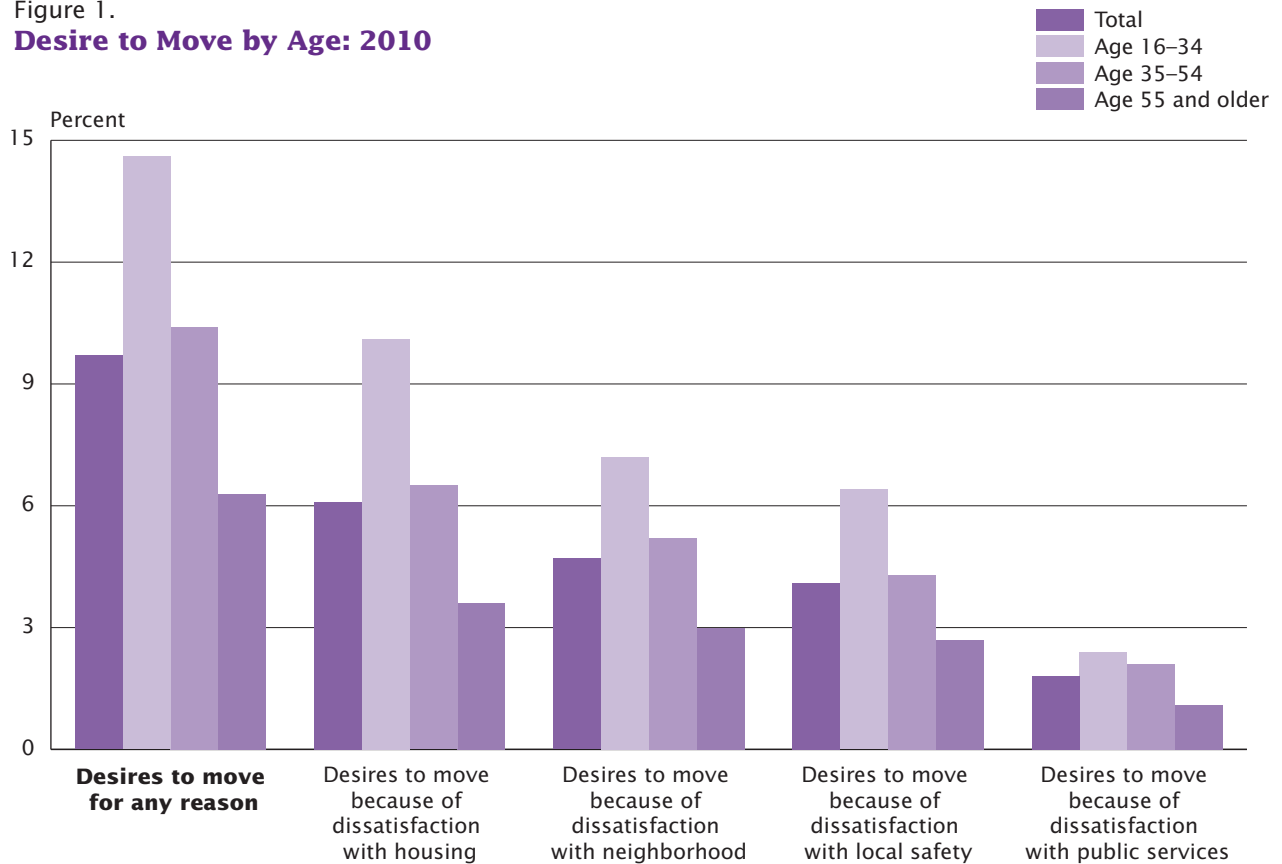
⁵ Question AW21_SATLV3 asks: Overall, is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

⁶ Question AW33_SATLV7 asks: Are the public services undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

Figure 1.
Desire to Move by Age: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

Housing Tenure

Table 2 reports by age group the housing tenure of current residence for all householders and those who desired to move. Homeownership has long been associated with positive social and economic benefits. Achieving homeownership may be a sign of upward mobility and a

source of wealth accumulation.¹⁰ These reasons may explain why renters, across all three age groups, were far more likely to desire to move compared to homeowners.

¹⁰ William Rohe, Shannon Van Zandt, and George McCarthy, "The Social Benefits and Costs of Homeownership: A Critical Assessment of the Research," in Nicolas Retsinas and Eric Belsky (eds.), *Low Income Homeownership: Examining the Unexamined Goal*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2001, pp. 381-406.

For example, 16.5 percent of all householders who rented desired to move, more than twice the rate for householders who owned. This provides some evidence for why older householders were less likely to report desiring to move; they were substantially more likely to be homeowners. Yet, younger homeowners reported desiring to move more frequently than middle

Table 2.

Age and Housing Tenure by Mover Status and Desire to Move: 2010 to 2011

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

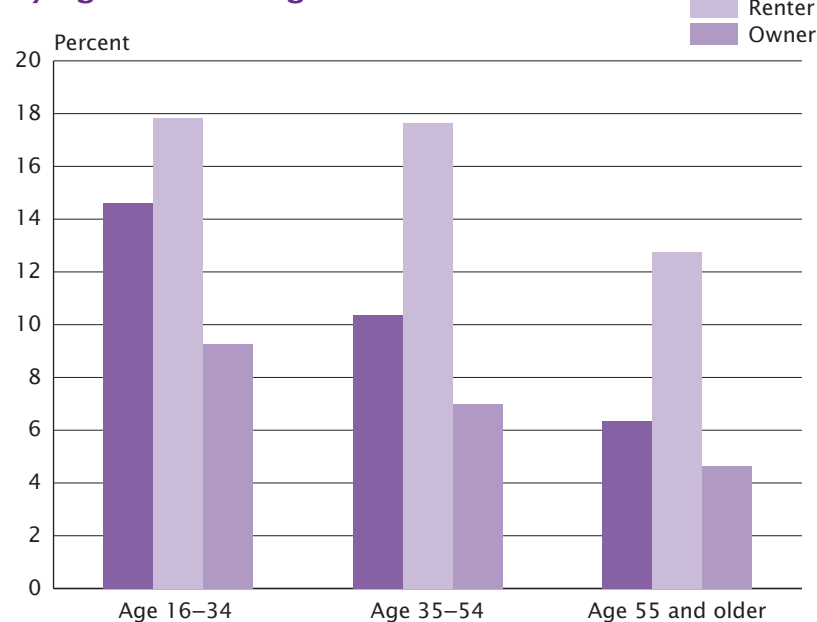
Characteristic	Total, 2010						Movers, 2010 to 2011 ⁴							
	Total		Desires to move ¹				Total				Desires to move			
	Num-ber	Margin of error ²	Num-ber	Margin of error ²	Per-cent ³	Margin of error ²	Num-ber	Margin of error ²	Per-cent ⁵	Margin of error ²	Num-ber	Margin of error ²	Per-cent ⁶	Margin of error ²
Total	116,248	162	11,184	333	9.6	0.3	11,264	334	9.7	0.3	2,048	148	18.3	1.2
Tenure														
Renter	39,037	535	6,444	258	16.5	0.6	8,105	287	20.8	0.7	1,661	134	25.8	1.8
Owner	77,210	543	4,740	223	6.1	0.3	3,159	183	4.1	0.2	386	65	8.1	1.3
Age 16–34														
Total	23,153	451	3,383	189	14.6	0.8	4,791	224	20.7	0.9	942	101	27.8	2.5
Renter	14,419	372	2,573	166	17.8	1.1	4,119	208	28.6	1.2	825	95	32.1	3.0
Owner	8,734	297	810	94	9.3	1.0	672	85	7.7	0.9	117	36	14.4	4.1
Age 35–54														
Total	47,251	557	4,899	227	10.4	0.5	4,001	206	8.5	0.4	780	92	15.9	1.7
Renter	15,003	378	2,645	168	17.6	1.0	2,730	171	18.2	1.0	599	81	22.6	2.7
Owner	32,248	507	2,254	155	7.0	0.5	1,271	117	3.9	0.4	181	44	8.0	1.9
Age 55 and Older														
Total	45,843	554	2,902	176	6.3	0.4	2,472	163	5.4	0.3	325	60	11.2	1.9
Renter	9,616	311	1,226	115	12.7	1.1	1,256	117	13.1	1.1	236	51	19.3	3.7
Owner	36,227	524	1,676	134	4.6	0.4	1,216	115	3.4	0.3	89	31	5.3	1.8

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.² This number, when added to or subtracted from the estimate, represents the 90 percent confidence interval around the estimate.³ Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics.⁴ Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).⁵ Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics.⁶ Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics.

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

Figure 2.

Percent of Householders Who Desire to Move by Age and Housing Tenure: 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

age and older homeowners (Figure 2). These findings suggest that homeownership only partially explains why older householders are less likely to desire to move than younger householders.

Personal Characteristics

Table 3 primarily reports respondents' personal characteristics as measured for the reference month of the Adult Well-Being Topical Module. These characteristics provide a snapshot of householders' personal characteristics at a single point in time. However, it is likely that changes in employment status and household composition, in addition to status at a single point in time, are also associated with desiring to move. For this reason, data from previous waves are used to compute whether the respondent experienced a demographic event

Table 3.

Personal Characteristics by Mover Status and Desire to Move: 2010

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total, 2010			Movers, 2010 to 2011 ³			
	Total number	Desires to move ¹		Total		Desires to move	
		Number	Percent ²	Number	Percent ⁴	Number	Percent ⁵
Total	116,248	11,184	9.6	11,264	9.7	2,048	18.3
Race and Hispanic Origin							
White, non-Hispanic, alone	82,098	6,245	7.6	7,251	8.8	1,174	18.8
Black, non-Hispanic, alone	14,002	2,322	16.6	1,729	12.3	488	21.0
Asian, non-Hispanic, alone	3,686	351	9.5	377	10.2	59	16.8
All other races, non-Hispanic, alone	2,938	483	16.4	359	12.2	101	20.9
Hispanic, of any race, alone or in combination	13,523	1,783	13.2	1,547	11.4	226	12.7
Marital Status							
Married	59,634	4,461	7.5	3,884	6.5	681	15.3
Widowed	11,695	703	6.0	898	7.7	99	14.1
Divorced	18,734	2,237	11.9	2,030	10.8	422	18.9
Separated	3,387	543	16.0	563	16.6	84	15.5
Never married	22,797	3,239	14.2	3,890	17.1	762	23.5
Own Children Under 18							
Not present	97,217	8,466	8.7	8,921	9.2	1,496	17.7
Present	19,031	2,718	14.3	2,343	12.3	552	20.3
Demographic Events in Previous Year⁶							
Experienced any demographic event	5,239	635	12.1	1,145	21.1	247	21.6
Birth of child	848	148	17.5	372	18.3	94	25.3
Marriage	1,586	202	12.7	374	25.3	71	19.0
Widowhood	792	32	4.0	45	8.6	3	6.7
Divorce	1,183	160	13.5	246	25.2	45	18.3
Separation	886	99	11.2	148	29.2	34	23.0
Household Type							
Family household—married couple	57,671	4,277	7.4	3,620	6.3	630	14.7
Family household—male	5,559	696	12.5	637	11.5	129	18.5
Family household—female	14,998	2,615	17.4	2,123	14.2	548	21.0
Nonfamily household—male	17,377	1,488	8.6	2,346	13.5	292	19.6
Nonfamily household—female	20,287	2,047	10.1	2,457	12.1	440	21.5
Annual Household Income							
Under \$25,000	31,735	4,416	13.9	4,539	14.3	966	21.9
\$25,000 to \$49,999	31,013	3,115	10.0	3,082	9.9	549	17.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20,542	1,761	8.6	1,676	8.2	246	14.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12,991	853	6.6	855	6.6	121	14.2
\$100,000 or more	19,966	1,040	5.2	1,112	5.6	166	16.0
Work Status in Previous Year⁷							
Employed							
Employed now at the same primary job as previous year	61,417	5,463	8.9	4,287	8.2	745	17.4
Employed now but changed primary job in previous year	10,525	1,255	11.9	2,258	15.2	388	17.2
Employed now but was not working in previous year	4,247	519	12.2	539	14.8	99	18.4
Not working							
Not working now but was employed in previous year	3,107	418	13.5	712	15.1	135	19.0
Not working now and was not working in previous year	36,864	3,514	9.5	2,764	7.7	525	19.0
Educational Attainment							
Less than high school graduate	12,389	1,684	13.6	1,401	11.3	332	19.7
High school grad or equivalent	27,810	2,803	10.1	2,749	9.9	470	16.8
Some college or associate's degree	40,749	4,491	11.0	4,190	10.3	869	19.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	35,299	2,207	6.3	2,924	8.3	376	17.0
Disability Status							
No disability	78,780	6,496	8.2	7,771	9.9	1,237	19.0
Disability							
Physical disability	33,080	4,038	12.2	2,910	8.8	663	16.4
Communicative disability	9,757	1,307	13.4	878	9.0	206	15.8
Mental disability	8,377	1,724	20.6	1,176	14.0	346	20.1

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.² Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics unless noted.³ Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).⁴ Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics unless noted.⁵ Percentages calculated from total householders who desire to move by characteristics unless noted.⁶ Demographic events for the total householders columns were calculated for the year prior to the collection of the Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Topical Module (Wave 4, Month 1 to Wave 6, Month 4). Demographic events for the total movers category were calculated for the year following the collection of the Adult Well-Being Topical Module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).⁷ Work status for the total householders columns was calculated for the year prior to the collection of the Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Module (Wave 4, Month 1 to Wave 6, Month 4). Work status for the total movers category was calculated for the year following the collection of the Adult Well-Being Module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

or change in employment status during the previous year.¹¹

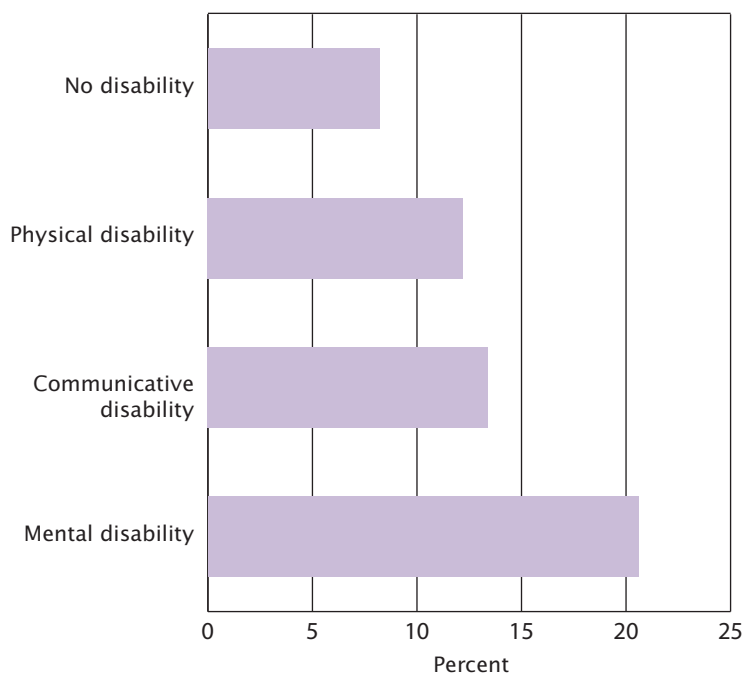
From the table, it is clear that a number of personal characteristics were associated with desiring to move. These included race/ethnicity, the presence of children, socioeconomic status and employment status during 2009 to 2010, and disability status.

In general, racial and ethnic minorities were more likely to report desiring to move than non-Hispanic Whites.¹² Black householders (16.6 percent) and Hispanic householders (13.2 percent) reported desiring to move more frequently than Whites (7.6 percent). Of respondents who

¹¹ For example, the Adult Well-Being Topical Module questions, for the first rotation group of Wave 6, reference the residence the respondent lived at during April of 2010. The static personal characteristics reported in Table 3 also reference April of 2010. However, the demographic event and job status change items reference changes from May of 2009 (Wave 4) to April of 2010 (Wave 6).

¹² Federal surveys now give respondents the option of reporting more than one race, which means that two basic ways of defining a race group are possible. First, a group such as Asian may be defined as those who report that they are Asian and no other race—the race-alone or single-race concept. Alternatively, the group may be composed of those who reported that they were Asian, regardless of whether they also reported another race—the race-alone-or-in-combination concept. The body of this paper (text, figures, and tables) uses the race-alone concept, and therefore reports data for people who reported that they were White, Black, or Asian alone. People who reported any of those races in combination with another race, as well as people who reported another race alone, are shown in a separate category (“all other races”). Although Hispanics may be of any race, data in this paper for Hispanics do not overlap with data for the White, Black, Asian, and other race populations—in other words, all race/ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive. In the text of this paper, the groups “White alone, non-Hispanic,” “Black alone, non-Hispanic” and “Asian alone, non-Hispanic” are referred to as “White,” “Black,” and “Asian,” respectively. Similarly, those who gave these races in combination, or listed another race, are in the “all other races” category, so long as they did not also indicate that they were Hispanic.

Figure 3.
Householders Who Desire to Move by Disability Status: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

identified as a race/ethnicity group other than White, Black, Asian, and Hispanic, 16.4 percent reported desiring to move.

Another characteristic correlated with desiring to move was the presence of children in the household. Measured several different ways, householders with children present consistently reported desiring to move more frequently than householders who did not have children present. This trend was apparent when comparing all householders with children present to householders without children present, and householders who had a newborn child in the previous year to householders who did not have a child.

Both current socioeconomic status and employment status in the previous year were associated with desiring to move. Householders with fewer financial resources tended to be more likely to desire to move than those with more resources. Those making under \$25,000 annually and/or who have less than a high school degree were more likely to report desiring to move than those with greater incomes and more education. Losing or leaving a job during the previous year was also associated with desiring to move.

Householders with a disability reported desiring to move more often than householders without a

Table 4.

Average Census Tract Characteristics by Desire to Move and Tenure: 2010

(Householders 16 years and older with census tract information)

Characteristic	Total, 2010			
	Total		Desires to move ¹	
	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter
Total number (in thousands)	76,091	36,581	4,654	6,094
Aggregated tract-level characteristics for residence in 2010²				
Demographic				
Percent age 65 and older	13.8	12.4	12.5	11.5
Percent non-Hispanic White	70.7	56.3	59.9	47.5
Percent foreign-born	10.4	16.1	11.7	17.3
Socioeconomic				
Percent in poverty (age 18 and older population)	10.3	15.6	13.7	19.1
Percent unemployed (age 16 and older in the labor force population)	7.6	9.0	9.4	10.8
Median income (in dollars)	60,647	49,170	51,310	42,701
Housing supply				
Percent owner-occupied (all occupied units)	73.5	54.0	68.0	48.9
Percent vacant units (all housing units)	10.1	11.3	11.4	12.2
Median year home built is post-1978	44.3	32.9	38.5	25.0

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.² These estimates show the characteristics of the average neighborhood (census tract) for the Wave 6 residences of householders.

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

disability (Figure 3).¹³ About 12.5 percent of householders with a disability desired to move compared to about 8.2 percent of household-

¹³ People who have disability in the communicative domain reported one or more of the following: (1) was blind or had difficulty seeing, (2) was deaf or had difficulty hearing, and (3) had difficulty having their speech understood. People who have disability in the mental domain reported one or more of the following: (1) had a learning disability, an intellectual disability, developmental disability or Alzheimer's disease, senility, or dementia and (2) had some other mental or emotional condition that seriously interfered with everyday activities. People who have disability in the physical domain reported one or more of the following: (1) used a wheelchair, cane, crutches, or walker, (2) had difficulty walking a quarter of a mile, climbing a flight of stairs, lifting something as heavy as a 10-pound bag of groceries, grasping objects, or getting in or out of bed, and (3) listed arthritis or rheumatism, back or spine problem, broken bone or fracture, cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, epilepsy, head or spinal cord injury, heart trouble or atherosclerosis, hernia or rupture, high blood pressure, kidney problems, lung or respiratory problem, missing limbs, paralysis, stiffness or deformity of limbs, stomach/digestive problems, stroke, thyroid problem, or tumor/cyst/growth as a condition contributing to a reported activity limitation. For additional information on SIPP disability measures, see Matthew W. Brault, "Americans With Disabilities: 2010," *Current Population Reports*, P70-131, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2012.

ers without a disability who desired to move. Those with mental disabilities were more likely to desire to move (20.6 percent) than those with other disabilities as well as those without a disability.

Neighborhood Characteristics

As the previous section demonstrated, personal characteristics were important determinants of desiring to move. However, the characteristics of the neighborhoods people live in play a role. This section of the report focuses on associations between the demographic, economic, and housing supply of the current neighborhood, measured using ACS data on census tracts, and desiring to move.¹⁴ Combining respondents' survey data with external data on the characteristics of the

¹⁴ The census tract estimates from the 2006–2010 5-year ACS were merged with the SIPP data by matching on the census tract of the householder's current residence. The ACS tract estimates are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. This error is not directly considered by the statistical tests in this report.

census tracts in which they live provides a unique opportunity to study relationships between subjective reports of desiring to move because of residential dissatisfaction and the objective characteristics of neighborhoods.¹⁵

Table 4 shows the characteristics of the average neighborhood (census tract) for the Wave 6 residences of all householders and those who desired to move by housing tenure.¹⁶ Two patterns were particularly striking. First, householders' reports of desiring to move were

¹⁵ Note that, in this report, census tracts are used as approximations for more specific indicators of housing, neighborhood, and local community characteristics. However, there may be substantial variation within census tracts on all three of these indicators of residential quality. For a more detailed discussion of using census tracts as approximations for residential quality, see Robert Adelman, "Neighborhood Opportunities, Race, and Class: The Black Middle Class and Residential Segregation," *City & Community*, 2004, Vol. 3, pp. 43–63.

¹⁶ About 3 percent or 3,538,000/116,248,000 weighted respondents did not have address information that could be coded to the tract level. These respondents are omitted from the tract analysis.

ted to objective neighborhood characteristics. Figure 4 shows the average poverty rate for neighborhoods by tenure and desire to move. For both owners and renters, householders who desired to move lived in neighborhoods with higher poverty rates. For example, the average homeowner who desired to move lived in a census tract with a poverty rate of 13.7 percent while the average homeowner overall lived in a census tract with a poverty rate of about 10.3 percent. The differences were not limited to poverty; householders who desired to move lived in neighborhoods with lower median incomes, older housing, more foreign-born individuals, and fewer non-Hispanic Whites than householders who did not desire to move.

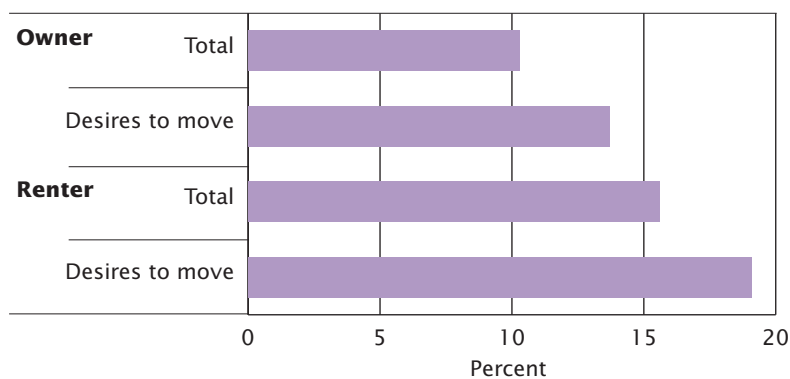
The second noticeable pattern was that homeowners lived in neighborhoods with different demographic, economic, and housing market conditions than householders who rented. The neighborhoods of homeowners were disproportionately likely to include non-Hispanic Whites, fewer households living below the poverty line, and newer housing.

DESIRE TO MOVE AND RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY

Estimates

A key question examined in this report is how desiring to move because of residential dissatisfaction is associated with moving. Table 1 shows mobility rates for the period from 2010 to 2011 by desire to move and age. Approximately one-fifth of householders who desired to move moved from 2010 to 2011, twice the mover rate of the overall population

Figure 4.
Percent of Census Tract Below the Poverty Line by Tenure and Desire to Move: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

(18.3 percent compared with 9.7 percent).¹⁷ Householders in the younger age group moved more frequently than the middle and older age groups, both overall and among those who desired to move. The 55 and older age group, which reported the lowest overall rates of desiring to move, also had the lowest rates of residential mobility among those who desired to move.

Housing Tenure

Table 2 shows estimates of residential mobility by housing tenure for different age groups of householders and householders who desire to move. Focusing on all householders, renters were about five times as likely to move compared to homeowners (20.8 percent versus 4.1 percent). The same trend was apparent for householders who desired to move, but for this group renters who desired to move were just over three times more likely

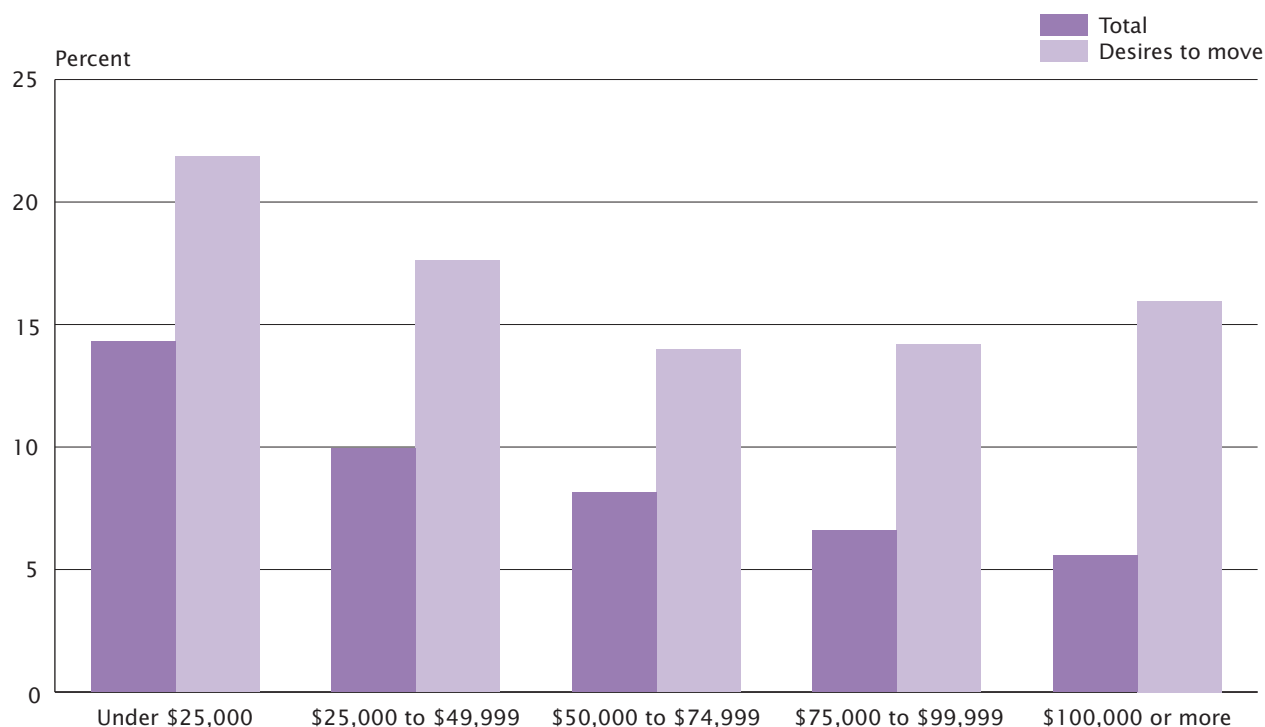
to move than were homeowners (25.4 percent versus 8.1 percent). This suggests that being a renter was a weaker predictor of moving for householders who desired to move compared to all householders. Stated another way, a homeowner who desired to move was twice as likely to move as the average homeowner (8.1 percent versus 4.1 percent) but a renter who desired to move was only about 1.2 times as likely to move as the average renter (25.4 percent versus 20.8 percent).

Older homeowners who desired to move changed residences at particularly low rates. While older respondents had the highest rates of homeownership among the three groups, older households generally had the lowest migration rates of the age groups, even after controlling for housing tenure.¹⁸ Only 89,000 (5.3 percent) of the roughly 1.7 million older homeowners who reported desiring to move moved in the following year.

¹⁷ The mover rate was calculated by taking the number of householders who moved during the year following the Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Topical Module divided by the total number of householders who answered the Wave 6 module. Given the staggered rotation groups of SIPP, this period ranged from May 2010 to July 2011. The period for the first rotation group stretched from May 2010 to April 2011, and the period for the fourth rotation group extended from August 2010 to July of 2011.

¹⁸ The difference between the mover rate for renters who desired to move and were aged 55 and over and renters who desired to move and were aged 35 to 54 was not statistically significant.

Figure 5.
Mover Rates by Household Income and Desire to Move: 2010 to 2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

Personal Characteristics

Table 3 presents the mover rates for total householders and householders who desired to move by personal characteristics. These included race/ethnicity, household type and presence of children, socioeconomic status and employment status, and disability status.

The results from Table 3 suggest that when desire to move is taken into account, some of the patterns across characteristics look different. Although Hispanic householders were more likely to move than the average householder, Hispanic householders who desired to move were less likely to move than householders who desired to move from most other race and ethnic

groups.¹⁹ Only 12.7 percent of Hispanics who desired to move moved while, for comparison purposes, 21 percent of Black householders who desired to move moved and almost 19 percent of White householders who desired to move moved.²⁰

Householders with high income who desired to move moved more frequently than those with low income, at least relative to their group-specific mover rates. For example, about 16 percent of householders with household income of \$100,000 or more who desired to move moved, compared to only 5.6 percent of total households with income of \$100,000 or

¹⁹ The difference between the mover rate for Hispanic householders who desired to move and Asian householders who desired to move was not statistically different.

²⁰ The difference between the mover rate for Black householders who desired to move and White householders who desired to move was not statistically different.

more (Figure 5). For lower income householders, about 21.5 percent of householders with income under \$25,000 who desired to move moved in the following year. However, these householders were generally very mobile, with 14.3 percent of all householders in this income group moving in the following year.

The results for disability status suggest that householders with a disability who desired to move moved almost twice as often as all householders with a disability (17.3 versus 9.3), yet they were no more likely to move than householders with no disability who desired to move. Householders with a mental disability who desired to move were about 1.5 times as likely to move as all householders with a mental disability (20.1 percent versus 14.0 percent).

Table 5.

Tract Characteristics for Dissatisfied Householders by Mover Status and Tenure: 2010

(Householders 16 years and older with census tract information)

Characteristic	Desires to move ¹				Does not desire to move ³			
	Stayer, 2010 to 2011		Mover, 2010 to 2011 ²		Stayer, 2010 to 2011		Mover, 2010 to 2011	
	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter
Total number (in thousands)	4,294	4,525	360	1,569	68,742	24,736	2,696	5,751
Aggregated tract-level characteristics for residence in 2010⁴								
Demographic								
Percent age 65 and older	12.5	11.7	12.1	11.2	13.9	12.7	13.2	12.2
Percent non-Hispanic White	59.5	45.4	64.3	53.6	71.4	57.7	69.6	60.0
Percent foreign-born	11.9	18.0	9.0	15.2	10.3	16.2	10.7	14.6
Socioeconomic								
Percent in poverty (age 18 and older population)	13.6	19.6	14.4	17.4	10.1	14.9	10.7	14.9
Percent unemployed (age 16 and older in the labor force population)	9.4	11.1	9.7	9.8	7.4	8.7	7.5	8.7
Median income (in dollars)	51,622	41,723	47,581	45,521	61,333	50,534	59,266	50,161
Housing supply								
Percent owner-occupied (all occupied units)	68.3	47.8	64.1	51.9	73.9	55.0	72.7	55.2
Percent vacant units (all housing units)	11.4	12.3	11.5	12.1	10.0	11.0	10.3	11.4
Median year housing units built post-1978	38.8	22.3	34.6	32.7	44.5	32.9	47.5	41.1

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.² Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4)³ This group includes householders who did not report dissatisfaction enough to move with where they lived.⁴ These estimates show the characteristics of the average neighborhood (census tract) for the Wave 6 residences of householders.

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6.

Households that experienced a demographic event in the previous year had the same overall probability of moving whether or not they indicated desiring to move.²¹

Neighborhood Characteristics

The characteristics of householders' neighborhoods, measured by using census tract data, were associated with householders' reports of desiring to move, according to Table 4. This section looks at the importance of neighborhood characteristics for the residential mobility of householders who desired to move and householders who did not desire to move.

Table 5 shows the average census tract characteristics for movers and stayers by housing tenure and residential mobility. The estimates were tabulated for the

census tract of residence during the Wave 6 topical module (2010). These estimates shed some light on the neighborhood characteristics of stayers who desired to move and the neighborhood characteristics of movers who desired to move, measured prior to the move. In general, many of the observed differences on the neighborhood indicators between stayers and movers who desired to move, both owners and renters, were not statistically different. However, the results do provide a descriptive picture of the neighborhoods of those renters who desired to move because of dissatisfaction with their residence but did not move from 2010 to 2011. These neighborhoods had a race composition of about 45 percent non-Hispanic White, with 18 percent of all residents being foreign-born. The unemployment rate was about 11 percent, and the median tract income almost \$42,000. Only 22 percent of the housing was built, on average,

after 1978 and less than half of all householders owned their own home.²² On average, about 1 in 5 households in these neighborhoods lived below the poverty line.

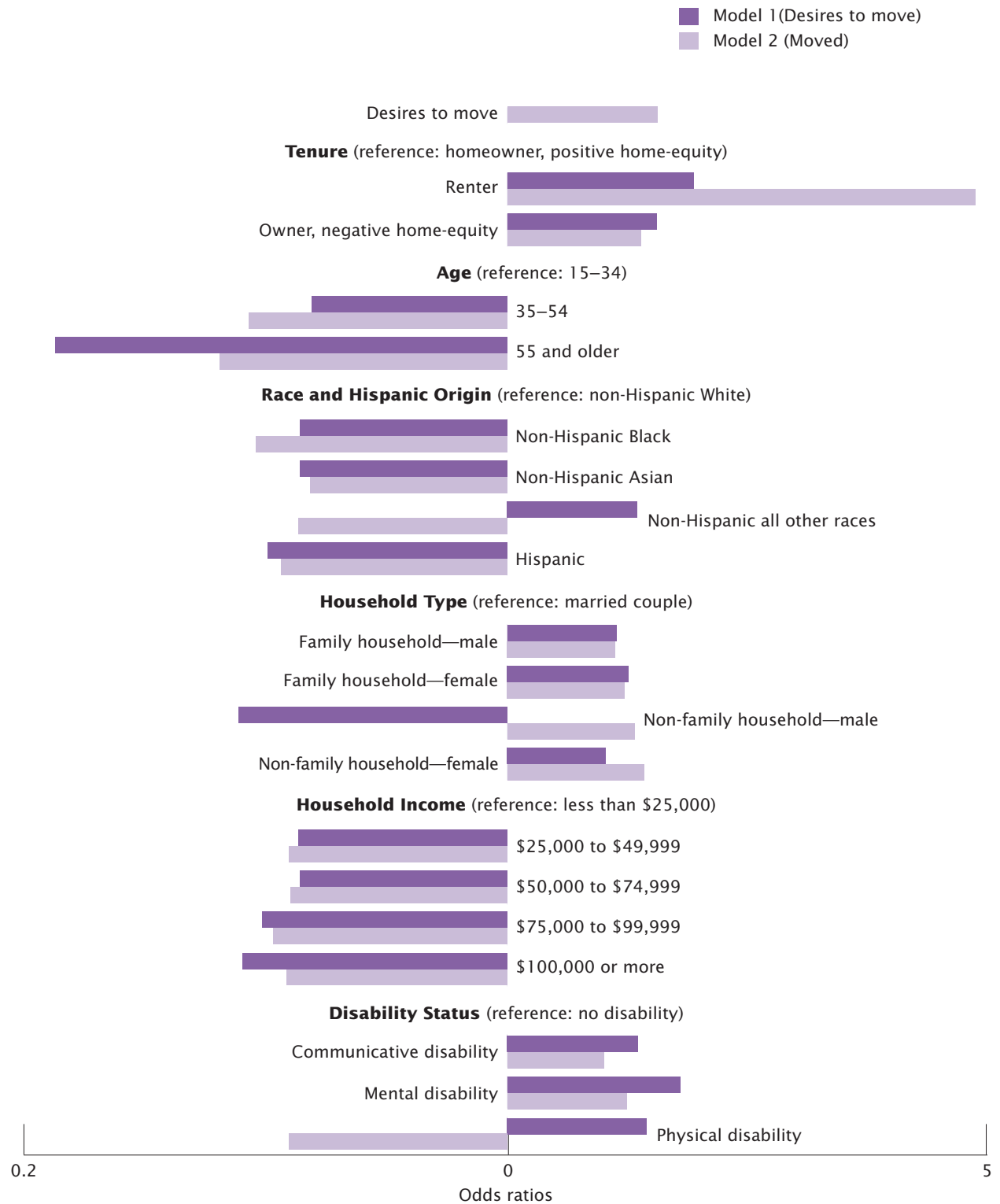
MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

As in the preceding analyses, identifying relationships between one or two predictor variables and desire to move and residential mobility is a straightforward way of determining whether some characteristics are associated with moving or staying. However, this method ignores potential correlations across the various predictor variables. A more complex method is to model these relationships using multivariate regression techniques. The multivariate analysis makes it easier to determine which characteristics are particularly strong

²² Lead, a potentially hazardous material, was banned from household paints in 1978. Housing built prior to 1978 may still contain lead paint. For this reason, the percentage of housing in a census tract built post-1978 was chosen as one indicator of housing supply.

Figure 6.

Logistic Regression Models Predicting Desire to Move and Moving



Source U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

predictors of desiring to move and which relationships differ from those in the descriptive results, net of the other control variables.

Figure 6 shows selected results from two regressions—one that looks at how various factors affect the desire to move and another that shows how factors affect the probability of moving (full regression results are provided in Appendix Table 2). The positive odds ratio of 1.95 for renters indicates the odds of reporting desiring to move for this group were almost two times the odds of homeowners (who did not have negative home-equity) reporting desiring to move.²³ Homeowners with self-reported negative home-equity had 1.56 times greater odds of reporting desiring to move compared

to homeowners without negative home-equity.²⁴

Householders aged 55 and older had 0.42 the odds of reporting desiring to move than householders in the 16 to 34 years old group.²⁵ This difference in the odds of reporting desiring to move between older and younger adults was one of the larger effect sizes in the analysis, indicating that householders 55 and older were particularly unlikely to report desiring to move, even after controlling for housing tenure, personal characteristics, and neighborhood characteristics.

DESIRE TO MOVE AND RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION: 2010 TO 2011

The focus of this report is to describe the characteristics of those who desire to move because of residential dissatisfaction and see if they moved from 2010 to 2011. However, it is also important to ask whether respondents who desire to move are more satisfied after they move. The Wave 6 Adult Well-Being Topical Module was

re-asked in Wave 9, one year later. This data for the same respondents at multiple time points (2010 to 2011) allows comparison at two points in time of respondents' reports of desiring to move.

According to the results on Table 6, there was evidence that householders who desired to move and moved were more satisfied with their new residence than their old residence. Only about 1 in 5 householders who desired to move in 2010 and who moved from 2010 to 2011 reported being dissatisfied enough with their new residence to move. However, SIPP also collects data on householders' general satisfaction with their residence regardless of the desire to move. These more general questions on residential satisfaction ask householders to rate their satisfaction with different aspects of their residence as very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, somewhat satisfied, and very satisfied. Figure 7 shows the average reported satisfaction with the home, neighborhood, neighborhood safety, and public services for both the old residence (2010) and new residence (2011) of householders who desired to move and moved. According to the measures of housing and neighborhood satisfaction, householders who desired to move and moved were more satisfied with their new residence than their old residence.

²³ The results of the analysis are most easily interpreted as using odds ratios, which are derived from the regression model's estimates. When the odds ratios are greater than 1, the person with the specific characteristic had a greater odds of reporting desiring to move or moving (depending on the model) than the odds for the comparison group. Odds ratios of less than 1 indicate that these people had lower odds of reporting desiring to move or of moving than the odds of the comparison groups. Odds ratios should not be understood as the probability that a group experiences an event compared to another group. For example, an odds ratio of 2 does not indicate that one group is twice as likely to experience an event as another group but that the odds of one group experiencing an event are twice the odds of another group experiencing the event.

²⁴ See the proceeding "Self-Reported Home-Equity" section for a more detailed description of SIPP home-equity measures.

²⁵ Odds ratios of less than 1 can be inverted by dividing 1 by the given odds ratio. For example, the odds of householders aged 55 and older not reporting desiring to move are 2.4 times (1.00/0.42) the odds of householders age 15 to 34 not reporting desiring to move.

Table 6.
Desires to Move by Mover Status: 2010 to 2011

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

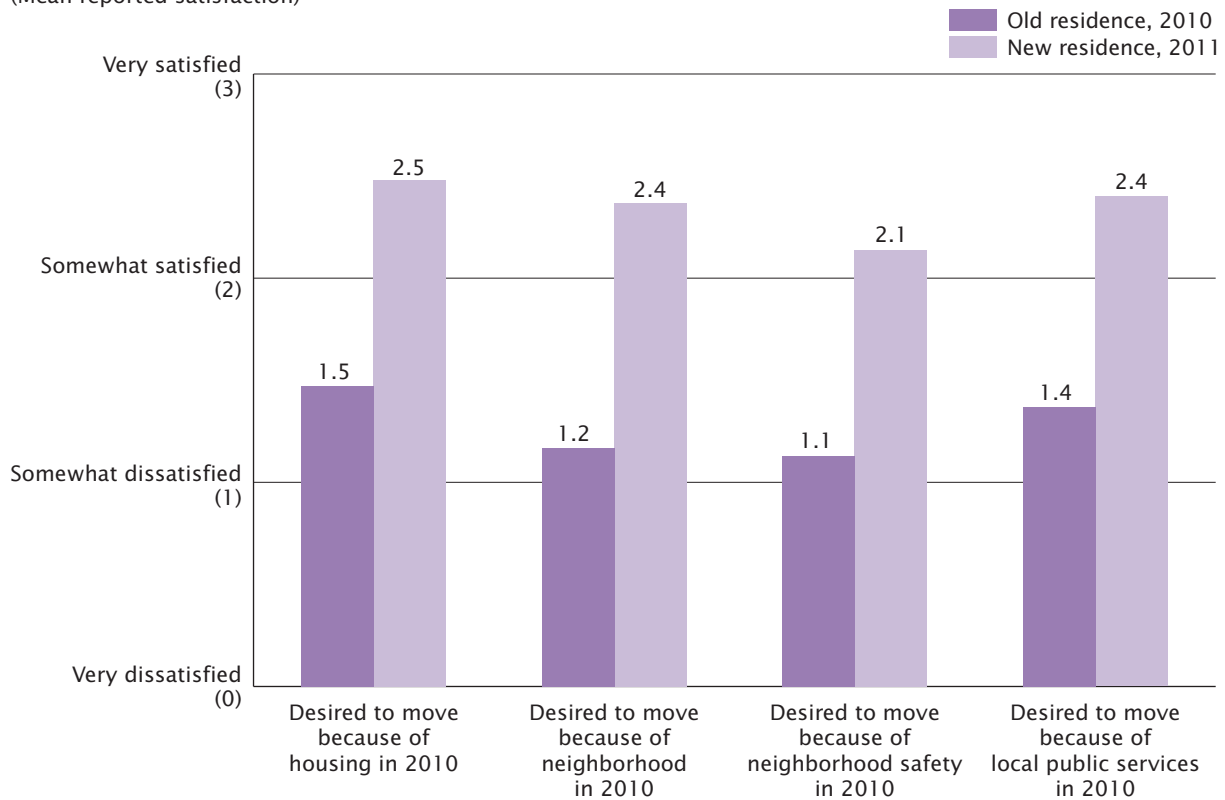
Desire to move	Moved ¹				Stayed			
	Does not desire to move, 2010		Desires to move, ² 2010		Does not desire to move, 2010		Desires to move, 2010	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total	6,104	100.0	1,377	100.0	82,179	100.0	7,425	100.0
Does not desire to move, 2011	5,590	91.6	1,130	82.0	77,503	94.3	4,181	56.3
Desires to move, 2011	515	8.4	247	18.0	4,676	5.7	3,244	43.7

¹ Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7 Month 1 to Wave 9 Month 4).

² Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

Figure 7.
Residential Satisfaction for Householders Who Desired to Move and Moved:
2010 to 2011

(Mean reported satisfaction)



Source U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

Table 7.
Desire to Move by Mover Status: 2005 to 2006 and 2010 to 2011

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

Desire to move	2005 to 2006				2010 to 2011			
	Total		Moved ¹		Total		Moved ²	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	112,597	100.0	13,752	12.2	116,294	100.0	11,247	9.7
Desires to move for any reason ³	12,757	11.3	3,202	25.1	11,198	9.6	2,056	18.4
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with housing ⁴	8,307	7.4	2,281	27.5	7,092	6.1	1,505	21.2
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with neighborhood ⁵	6,456	5.7	1,727	26.8	5,484	4.7	945	17.2
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with local safety ⁶	5,004	4.4	1,351	27.0	4,760	4.1	796	16.7
Desires to move because of dissatisfaction with public services ⁷	2,043	1.8	551	27.0	2,058	1.8	332	16.2

¹ Moved during the year following the Wave 5 topical module (Wave 6, Month 1 to Wave 8, Month 4).

² Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).

³ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.

⁴ Question AW13_SATLV2 asks: Are conditions in your home so undesirable you want to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

⁵ Question AW25_SATLV5 asks: Is your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

⁶ Question AW21_SATLV3 asks: Overall, is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

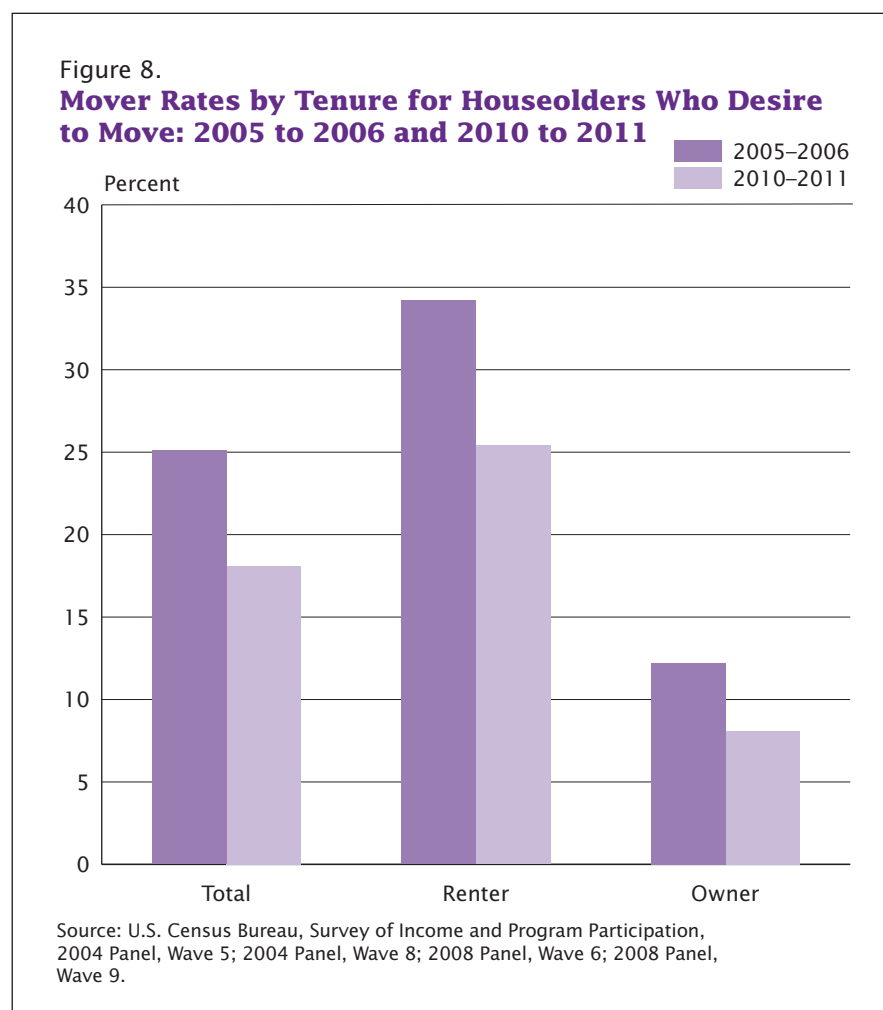
⁷ Question AW33_SATLV7 asks: Are the public services undesirable enough that you would like to move? (1 = yes, 0 = no).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2004 Panel, Wave 5; 2004 Panel, Wave 8; 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

However, the results from Table 6 also make clear why a report of desiring to move may not always lead to a move; 56 percent or about 4.2 million stayers who reported desiring to move during 2010 did not report desiring to move when interviewed again in 2011. Yet, about 4.7 million stayers who did not report desiring to move in 2010 reported desiring to move in 2011. Understanding why reports of desiring to move changed for these householders, despite not moving, was beyond the scope of this report. However, given the large number of characteristics that this report has identified as associated with desiring to move, it is perhaps not surprising that there was so much variation in reports of desiring to move from 2010 to 2011. Despite this variation, it is important to note that a sizable number of householders who desired to move in 2010 did not move by 2011 and still reported desiring to move. This amounted to about 3.2 million households.

DESIRE TO MOVE AND RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY: 2005–2006 AND 2010–2011

Have national reports of desiring to move because of residential dissatisfaction and residential mobility rates changed since the economic recession? The Adult Well-Being Topical Module was asked during the fifth wave of the 2004 Panel, which was collected during 2005. Table 7 presents estimates of desiring to move and mobility rates for the 2005 to 2006 and the 2010 to 2011 periods. According to the results, there were substantial decreases in reported moving rates for all householders and for those who desired to move, regardless of housing tenure (Figure 8). For example, about 25 percent of householders who desired to



move moved in the following year in 2005, but just 18 percent of householders who desired to move in 2010 moved in the following year. These results carried over to the specific indicators of desiring to move, as householders who reported problems with their housing, neighborhood, local safety, or public services so undesirable they desired to move were less likely to move in 2010 when compared to householders from 2005. Taken together, these results suggest fewer households were moving, and therefore fewer households were able to move out of homes and neighborhoods with which they were dissatisfied in 2010 relative to 2005.

Surprisingly, reports of desiring to move actually decreased between 2005 and 2010. While determining the reason for this decrease was beyond the scope of this report, a previous census report using SIPP data from multiple panels found that residential satisfaction among all householders has been increasing since at least the mid-1990s.²⁶

SELF-REPORTED HOME-EQUITY

The financial crisis and subsequent recession from 2007 to 2009 brought attention to the role of negative home-equity on

²⁶ See Julie Siebens, "Extended Measures of Well-Being: Living Conditions in the United States: 2011," *Household Economic Studies*, P70-136, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2013.

Table 8.

Self-Reported Home-Equity and Desire to Move by Mover Status: 2010 to 2011

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total, 2010			Movers, 2010 to 2011 ³			
	Total number	Desires to move ¹		Total		Desires to move ¹	
		Number	Percent ²	Number	Percent ⁴	Number	Percent ⁵
Total	116,248	11,184	9.6	11,264	9.7	2,048	18.1
Tenure and mortgage status							
Renter	39,037	6,444	16.5	8,105	20.8	1,661	25.4
Owner	77,210	4,740	6.1	3,159	4.1	386	8.1
Owner, with a home mortgage	44,408	2,876	6.5	1,762	4.0	225	7.8
Owner, positive home-equity	38,133	2,234	5.9	1,404	3.7	177	7.9
Owner, negative home-equity	6,275	643	10.2	358	5.7	48	7.4

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.² Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics.³ Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).⁴ Percentages calculated from total householders by characteristics.⁵ Percentages calculated from total dissatisfied householders by characteristics.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

moving behavior.²⁷ Table 8 takes advantage of the SIPP data on self-reported home-equity to examine the relationship between negative home-equity, desiring to move, and residential mobility.²⁸ According to estimates from SIPP, householders with negative home-equity were more likely to desire to move in 2010 than those with positive home-equity. About 10 percent of the 6.3 million householders with negative home-equity said they were dissatisfied enough with their current residence to desire to move, while about 6 percent of homeowners with positive home-equity reported desiring to move.

Past studies provided mixed evidence for the role of negative home-equity on moving behavior, with some studies finding those

with negative home-equity are more mobile while others find they are less mobile.²⁹ According to Table 8, among all householders with a home mortgage, those with negative home-equity moved slightly more frequently than those with positive home-equity (5.7 percent versus 3.7 percent). However, among householders who desired to move and had a mortgage, there was no statistical difference in the mover rate between those with positive and those with negative home-equity.

CONCLUSION

This report shows that nearly 1 in 10 American households (9.6 percent) in 2010 reported that they were dissatisfied with their current housing, neighborhood, local safety, or public service to the point that they would like to move. The majority of those who desire to move do not move within the next year, but their rate of moving is higher than that of the general population (18.3 percent compared with 9.6 percent).

Desiring to move is associated with younger age and with lower income. Renters are more likely to desire to move than homeowners. Neighborhood poverty levels and racial composition are also associated with desiring to move. The likelihood of moving is higher for households who desire to move, and most of the factors associated with desiring to move are also associated with moving. Changes in family composition (marriage, divorce, birth of a child) are associated with moving. By contrast, disability status is associated with desiring to move without always being associated with moving.

Householders who desired to move and then did move generally reported greater satisfaction with their new residence compared to their old. Yet, desiring to move because of residential dissatisfaction appeared to be dynamic, with many respondents' reports of desiring to move changing one year later, despite living in the same residence. Despite rapid changes in the housing market since 2008, the overall trend toward increased residential satisfaction has continued, and the rate of residential moves has declined.

²⁷ The Great Recession officially began in December of 2007 and ended in June of 2009, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, <www.nber.org/cycles.html>.

²⁸ In the Wave 4 Household Real Estate Topical Module, homeowners were asked to report the principal balance remaining on any home mortgages and the current property value of their home. This information was used to calculate instances of negative home equity, defined as owing more on a home than it is worth. For more detailed information on SIPP mortgage data, see George Carter and Alfred Gottschalck, "A Tale of Two Surveys: Mortgage Wealth Data in the AHS and the SIPP," in *Proceedings of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology Meeting*, Washington, DC, 2010. Available at <www.fcsm.sites.usa.gov/>.

²⁹ See Fernando Ferreira, Joseph Gyourko, and Joseph Tracy, "Housing Busts and Household Mobility," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 2010, Vol. 68, pp. 34–45, and Sam Schulhofer-Wohl, "Negative Equity Does Not Reduce Homeowners' Mobility," *Quarterly Review*, 2012, Vol. 35, pp. 2–14.

SOURCES OF THE DATA

The data in this report are from the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and the 2006–2010 5-year American Community Survey (ACS). Some estimates are also derived from the 2004 SIPP. The population represented (the population universe) in the 2008 SIPP is the civilian noninstitutionalized population living in the United States. The SIPP is a longitudinal survey conducted at 4-month intervals. The data in this report were collected from May through August of 2010 in the sixth wave (interview) of the 2008 SIPP. The data highlighted in this report come primarily from the main survey and the Adult Well-Being Topical Module. Although the main focus of the SIPP is information on labor force participation, jobs, income, and participation in federal assistance programs, information on other topics, such as adult well-being, is also collected in topical modules on a rotating basis. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing facilities/skilled-nursing facilities.

The population represented (the population universe) in the ACS is the population living in both households and group quarters (that is, the resident population). The group quarters population consists of the institutionalized population (such as people in correctional institutions or nursing homes) and noninstitutionalized population (most of whom are in college dormitories).

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence

level unless otherwise noted. This typically means the 90 percent confidence interval for the differences between the estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling errors in surveys may be attributed to a variety of sources, such as how the survey is designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately the answers are coded and classified. The Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the production process, including the overall design of surveys, the wording of questions, the review of the work of the interviewers and coders, and the statistical review of reports to minimize these errors. The SIPP weighting procedure uses ratio estimation whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known. All of these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

Further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates, including standard errors and confidence intervals, is available at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/source-accuracy-statements/source-accuracy-statements-2008.html> or by contacting Mahdi Sundukchi of the Census Bureau's Demographic Statistical Methods Division at <mahdi.s.sundukchi@census.gov>.

Additional information on the SIPP can be found at the following Web

sites: <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/> (the main SIPP Web site), <www.census.gov/sipp/workpapr/wp230.pdf> (SIPP Quality Profile), and <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/methodology/users-guide.html> (SIPP User's Guide).

The final ACS population estimates are adjusted in the weighting procedure for coverage error by controlling specific survey estimates to independent population controls by sex, age, race, and Hispanic origin. The final ACS estimates of housing units are controlled to independent estimates of total housing. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to over- or undercoverage, but biases may still be present, for example, when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than sex, age, race, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known. All these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

For further information on the ACS sample, weighting procedures, sampling error, nonsampling error, and quality measures from the ACS, see <www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/MultiyearACSAccuracyofData2010.pdf>.

CONTACTS

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SUGGESTED CITATION

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Appendix Table 1.

Region of Residence by Mover Status and Desire to Move: 2010 to 2011

(Householders 16 years and older. Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total, 2010			Movers, 2010 to 2011 ²			
	Total number	Desires to move ¹		All		Desires to move	
		Number	Percent	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Total	116,248	11,184	9.6	11,264	9.7	2,048	18.3
Region of residence, 2010							
Northeast	21,210	2,045	9.6	1,505	7.1	324	15.8
Midwest	25,973	2,388	9.2	2,409	9.3	433	18.1
South	43,344	3,817	8.8	4,528	10.4	767	20.1
West	25,720	2,935	11.4	2,822	11.0	523	17.8

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.

² Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).

Note: All characteristics are measured during Wave 6 (2010) unless noted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.

Appendix Table 2.
Weighted Logistic Regressions of Desire to Move and Moved on Select Characteristics
 (Householders 16 years and older with census tract information)

Covariates	Desires to move ¹			Moved ²		
	Point estimate	SE	Odds ratio	Point estimate	SE	Odds ratio
Intercept	-2.50	0.06	X	-3.44	0.06	X
Desires to move	X	X	X	0.45	0.03	1.57
Housing Tenure						
Tenure (Reference: Homeowner, positive home-equity)						
Renter	0.67	0.03	1.95	1.59	0.03	4.90
Owner, negative home-equity	0.45	0.05	1.56	0.33	0.06	1.40
Personal Characteristics						
Age (Reference: 15–34)						
35–54	-0.02	0.02	0.98	-0.30	0.02	0.74
55 and older	-0.86	0.04	0.42	-0.41	0.04	0.67
Race and Hispanic Origin (Reference: Non-Hispanic White)						
Non-Hispanic Black	-0.07	0.04	0.93	-0.27	0.04	0.77
Non-Hispanic Asian	-0.08	0.06	0.93	-0.03	0.06	0.98
Non-Hispanic all other races	0.30	0.06	1.36	-0.09	0.06	0.92
Hispanic	-0.22	0.04	0.80	-0.17	0.04	0.84
Household Type (Reference: Married Couple)						
Family household—male	0.13	0.05	1.14	0.12	0.05	1.13
Family household—female	0.23	0.03	1.27	0.21	0.04	1.23
Nonfamily household—male	-0.34	0.04	0.72	0.28	0.03	1.33
Nonfamily household—female	0.03	0.03	1.03	0.36	0.03	1.43
Presence of Own Children Under 18 (Reference: Not Present)						
Present	0.24	0.03	1.27	0.13	0.03	1.14
Demographic Events (Reference: No Demographic Event)³						
Birth of child	0.15	0.10	1.16	0.55	0.07	1.73
Marriage	0.25	0.08	1.29	0.67	0.07	1.96
Widowhood/divorce/separation	-0.07	0.07	0.93	0.24	0.06	1.27
Education (Reference: Less Than High School)						
High school graduate equivalent	-0.10	0.04	0.90	-0.03	0.04	0.97
Some college or associate's degree	0.05	0.04	1.06	0.01	0.04	1.01
Bachelor's degree or higher	-0.27	0.04	0.77	-0.02	0.04	0.99
Household Income (Reference: Less Than \$25,000)						
\$25,000 to \$49,999	-0.09	0.03	0.92	-0.13	0.03	0.88
\$50,000 to \$74,999	-0.08	0.04	0.92	-0.12	0.04	0.89
\$75,000 to \$99,999	-0.24	0.05	0.78	-0.20	0.05	0.82
\$100,000 or more	-0.32	0.05	0.72	-0.14	0.04	0.87
Work Status (Reference: Employed at Same Primary Job as Previous Year)⁴						
Employed but changed primary job in previous year	0.16	0.04	1.17	0.45	0.03	1.56
Employed but was not working in previous year	-0.01	0.05	0.99	0.23	0.06	1.25
Not working now but was employed in previous year	0.03	0.06	1.03	0.46	0.05	1.59
Not currently working and was not working in previous year	-0.12	0.03	0.89	-0.02	0.03	0.98
Disability Status (Reference: No Disability)						
Communicative disability	0.31	0.04	1.37	0.01	0.04	1.01
Mental disability	0.59	0.04	1.81	0.22	0.04	1.25
Physical disability	0.38	0.03	1.46	-0.13	0.03	0.88
Objective Neighborhood (Tract-Level)⁵						
Demographic						
Percent non-Hispanic White	-0.47	0.03	0.63	0.06	0.03	1.06
Percent foreign-born	-0.09	0.03	0.91	-0.06	0.03	0.94
Socioeconomic						
Percent in poverty	0.26	0.02	1.30	-0.02	0.03	0.99
Housing Supply						
Percent owner-occupied (all occupied units)	-0.11	0.03	0.89	-0.10	0.03	0.90
Median year units built post 1978	-0.17	0.02	0.85	0.16	0.02	1.17
Percent vacant units (all housing units)	0.13	0.02	1.14	0.04	0.02	1.04
Region and Metropolitan Status						
Nonmetropolitan (Reference: Metropolitan)	-0.42	0.05	0.66	-0.19	0.05	0.83
Micropolitan (Reference: Metropolitan)	-0.08	0.04	0.92	-0.13	0.04	0.88
Region (Reference: North)						
Midwest	0.06	0.04	1.06	0.38	0.04	1.46
South	-0.13	0.03	0.87	0.47	0.04	1.59
West	0.11	0.03	1.11	0.37	0.04	1.45
Somers' D ⁶	0.49	X	X	0.52	X	X

X Not applicable.

¹ Respondents who report conditions in home, neighborhood, local safety, or public services are so undesirable that they want to move are placed in this category.

² Moved during the year following the Wave 6 topical module (Wave 7, Month 1 to Wave 9, Month 4).

³ Demographic events for the "Desires to Move" model were calculated for the year prior to the Wave 6 interview month. Demographic events for the "Moved" model were calculated for the year after the Wave 6 interview period.

⁴ Work status for the "Desires to Move" model was calculated for the year prior to the Wave 6 interview month. Work status for the "Moved" model was calculated for the year after the Wave 6 interview period.

⁵ For the multivariate analysis, the tract-level estimates were standardized and have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.

⁶ Somers' D is an ordinal measure of association. Values range between 0 and 1.0. The stronger the relationship, the higher the value of Somers' D.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6; 2008 Panel, Wave 9.