

POPULATION DIVISION

Seasonality of Moves and The Duration and
Tenure of Residence: 1996

by
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ABSTRACT

The pattern of seasonality found in the 1996 SIPP is much the same as that described in the earlier *Seasonality of Moves and Duration of Residence* report based on 1993 data. Respondents continued to show a preference for moving during the summer months – particularly in June and August, and race and ethnicity and geographic region remained factors on when people move. Median duration of residence declined from 5.2 years in 1993 to 4.7 years in 1996. At the time of the 1996 survey, 19 percent of residents had lived in their current home less than one year, while 30 percent had lived in their current home more than 10 years. The duration of residence is tied to age, but it is also associated with marital status, the presence of young children, race and ethnicity, citizenship, household income, and housing tenure. Many socioeconomic characteristics continued to affect housing tenure, as people tended to shift from living in renter-occupied housing units to living in owner-occupied housing units.

This paper reports the results of research and analysis undertaken by Census Bureau staff. It has undergone a more limited review than official Census Bureau publications. This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion.

Every year millions of people move to another residence. Three important aspects of residential mobility and migration are:

- the timing, or seasonality, of moves,
- the length, or duration, of residence, and
- the patterns of settlement

This report continues analysis of seasonality and duration of moves first reported using 1993 SIPP panel data.¹ The data continue to be of interest to policy-makers, businesses, community planners, educators, and service providers. In addition, whether residents rent or own their home can affect patterns of long-term settlement, neighborhood stability, and the overall quality of life.

The data in this report come from the 1996 panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The Migration History Topical Module (collected during the second wave of each SIPP panel) asks respondents to provide the month and year each individual 15 years and over moved to his or her current residence and previous residence. These responses enable us to determine the seasonality of the move and the length of time (duration) at current residence.²

The 1996 survey included a new question which asked the respondent to report the owner/renter status, or housing tenure, of their current and previous residences. These data allow us to look at the timing of settlement patterns, as well as transitions in tenure, particularly, the shift from living in renter-occupied units to owner-occupied units.

The data contained in this report have been tabulated by the characteristics of movers at the time the survey was conducted. Some characteristics such as marital status, parenthood, citizenship, education, and income may have been different at the time of the most recent move (which may have occurred at any time prior to the survey). With

¹ P70-66, *Seasonality of Moves and Duration of Residence*, October 1998.

² Duration of residence is measured by subtracting the date the respondent moved into his or her current residence from the date the survey was administered. These topics were also the subjects of the P70-66 report (footnote 1), although in that report moves into both the current and the previous residences were used to analyze seasonality of moves. The 1996 data are based solely on the date each person moved into their current home.

the exception of tenure of previous residence, the survey did not collect data on the characteristics of people at the time they moved.

SEASONALITY OF MOVES

One-third of all moves take place between June, July, and August.

Information about the seasonality of moves, or the time of year that moves occur, is useful to schools, businesses, or service providers whose work is affected by cyclical behavior. In 1996, as in 1993, people were more likely to have moved during the summer months (defined here as June through August). June, when most school years end, and August, just before the new school year begins, had the largest percentages of people changing residence (11 percent), followed by July and September (10 percent each). As Figure 1 illustrates, the lowest percentage of movers changed residence from December through February, when winter weather conditions in many areas make moving more difficult.

<Figure 1 about here>

Moves are more likely during the summer, and less likely during the winter, even when the characteristics of movers are taken into account.

The timing of when people move is clear, but for the most part, seasonality is not related to mover characteristics. All groups were most likely to move during the summer months, while almost all groups were least likely to move during the winter months. Factors such as marital status, household income, and metropolitan/non-metropolitan residence had little effect on seasonality of moving. Surprisingly, even the presence of children under the age of 18 did not increase the likelihood of a summer move: 32 percent of both those with and without children under 18 moved during the summer months (Table 1). However, people 15 to 24 years old were more likely to move during the summer compared with all other age groups (34 percent versus 32 percent).

Within seasons, race/ethnicity,³ education, and citizenship differ in the timing of moves.

Differences in citizenship status, race/ethnicity, and education appear to be sensitive to seasonal effects on migration. Blacks, Hispanics, and non-citizens were less likely than non-Hispanic Whites and citizens to move during the summer months, while people with a Bachelor's degree were more likely to move during the summer than those less educated. Table 1 shows detailed seasonality of moves into current residence by the characteristics of movers.

<Table 1 about here>

Type of move and region of destination are associated with the seasonality of moves.

Intercounty moves (within the same state, different county or between different states) were more likely than intracounty moves (within the same state, same county) to occur during the summer months. Interestingly, moves from abroad were more likely during the winter months than domestic moves.

Figure 2 shows that those moving within and to the West were less likely to move during the summer than those moving within and to other regions, perhaps because of climate differences. For people moving within and to the South, the fall months were a less popular time to move. As expected, the winter months had the lowest percentage for movers to and within the Northeast and Midwest.

<Figure 2 about here>

³ Data for the American Indian and Alaska Native population are not shown in this report because of small sample size in the SIPP. Based on Wave 2 of the 1996 SIPP, 5 percent of the Black population and 3 percent of the Asian and Pacific Islander Population are also of Hispanic origin.

DURATION OF RESIDENCE

Duration of residence is the length of time each person 15 years old and over has lived in his or her current home, and is measured by calculating the number of months between the date moved into current residence and the date the survey was administered. In 1996, the median duration of residence for the U.S. population 15 and over was 4.7 years, a decline from the 5.2 years found in 1993. Almost 19 percent of the population had lived in their current home less than one year, while 30 percent had lived in their current home longer than ten years. As Table 2 illustrates, the duration of residence varies enormously across the population, depending on the characteristics of the resident.

<Table 2 about here>

Duration of residence is closely tied to age.

Duration of residence increased with age, with the exception of a slight decline in the median duration of residence between people 15 to 24 years old and people 25 to 34 years old,. Those 65 years and older had lived in their current residence for a median of 18.7 years compared with 1.9 years for those ages of 25 to 34. Obviously, older people have had more potential years than younger people to stay in the same residence. As Figure 3 illustrates, the duration of residence for younger people is much shorter than that for older people: one-third of those 15 to 34 years old had lived in their current residence less than one year compared with less than 10 percent of those 55 years and older. At the opposite end of the spectrum, about 60 percent of those 55 years and older had lived in their current residence over 10 years, compared with just 10 percent of those 15 to 34 years old.

<Figure 3 about here>

Marital status, the presence of children, race/ethnicity, and citizenship are associated with the duration of residence.

The median duration of residence for those who were married (spouse present or absent) was over two years longer than for those who were not married (never-married, divorced, separated, and widowed); for those with children under 18 in the household, the median was two years shorter than for those without children in the household. White non-Hispanics and citizens had lived in the same residence longer than other racial/ethnic groups and non-citizens. Almost 33 percent of White non-Hispanics had lived in their current home over 10 years, compared with 26 percent of Blacks, 18 percent of Hispanics, and 16 percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders. Similarly, citizens were almost four times as likely as non-citizens (32 percent versus 8 percent) to have lived in the same residence for over 10 years.

Duration of residence increases with income.

Those with higher incomes tended to stay in one location longer than those with lower incomes. In 1996, the median duration of residence for those living in households with income of \$75,000 or more was 6.3 years, compared with 3.6 years for those living in households with income of less than \$25,000. Over 20 percent of those living in households with income less than \$25,000 lived in their current residence less than one year, compared with just 13 percent of those living in households with income of \$75,000 or more.

Home owners have lived in their homes longer than renters.

Those who lived in owner-occupied housing units had longer durations of residence than those who lived in renter-occupied housing units. People living in renter-occupied housing are much more mobile than those living in owner-occupied housing units.⁴ Figure 4 shows that 37 percent of those living in renter-occupied housing units had lived in their current residence less than one year compared with just 11 percent of those living in owner-occupied housing units.

<Figure 4 about here>

⁴ For example, P20-538, Geographical Mobility: March 1999 to March 2000, shows that 33% of those living in renter-occupied units moved between March of 1999 and 2000 compared to just 9% of those living in owner-occupied units.

TENURE OF RESIDENCE

The 1996 SIPP data in Table 3 show that of all respondents, 70 percent currently lived in owner-occupied housing, compared with 41 percent who did so in their previous home. This change from renter to homeowner reflects the fact that most people rent prior to buying a home, both in terms of the life course, as well as upon initial relocation to a new area. The percentage of those living in owner-occupied housing units increased steadily from 55 percent for those 25 to 34 years old to over 80 percent of those over age 55.

<Table 3 about here>

Married people are more likely to be home owners.

Among those married, 79 percent lived in owner-occupied housing, compared with 59 percent of non-married people. The change from renting to owning was slightly greater for married than non-married people. The rate of home-ownership increased by 76 percent (45 percent to 79 percent) for married people, compared with 70 percent (35 percent to 59 percent) for non-married people. People living in households with children under 18 were not more likely to be living in owner-occupied housing units than people without children under 18.

White non-Hispanics are more likely than other racial and ethnic groups to own their home.

More than 70 percent of all 15 years and older White non-Hispanics lived in owner-occupied housing, compared with 53 percent of Blacks, 58 percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders, and 48 percent of Hispanics. However, when comparing tenure of current and previous residences, the likelihood of living in an owner-occupied housing unit increased at a lower relative rate for White non-Hispanics (68 percent) than for other racial and ethnic groups, such as Blacks, who had a relative increase of 123 percent. This difference is primarily due to the initial relatively low probability that minorities lived in an owner-occupied unit at their previous residence. In addition, citizens were much more likely to live in owner-occupied homes than non-citizens, 72 percent vs. 38 percent respectively.

The more educated and affluent are more likely to live in owner-occupied housing units.

Among those with a Bachelor's degree or more 77 percent lived in owner-occupied housing, compared with 63 percent of those with less than a high school education. Those living in households with higher income were also more likely to live in owner-occupied housing units: 89 percent of those living in households with income of \$75,000 or more lived in owner-occupied housing, compared with 52 percent of those living in households with income less than \$25,000. Nonmetropolitan residents were also more likely to live in owner-occupied housing units than metropolitan residents.

SUMMARY

The pattern of seasonality found in the 1996 SIPP is much the same as that described in the earlier *Seasonality of Moves and Duration of Residence* report based on 1993 data. Respondents continued to show a preference for moving during the summer months –particularly in June and August, and race and ethnicity and geographic region remained factors on when people move.

Median duration of residence declined from 5.2 years in 1993 to 4.7 years in 1996. At the time of the 1996 survey, 19 percent of residents had lived in their current home less than one year, while 30 percent had lived in their current home more than 10 years. The duration of residence is tied to age, but it is also associated with marital status, the presence of young children, race and ethnicity, citizenship, household income, and housing tenure. Many socioeconomic characteristics continued to affect housing tenure, as people tended to shift from living in renter-occupied housing units to living in owner-occupied housing units.

SOURCE OF THE DATA

The estimates in this report come from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The SIPP is a longitudinal survey of people who are at least 15 years old, conducted at 4-month intervals by the Census Bureau. Although the main focus of SIPP is information on labor force participation, jobs, income, and participation in federal assistance programs, information on other topics is also collected in topical modules on a rotating basis. Data shown in this report are from the Migration History topical module collected in the 4-month period from June

1996 through September 1996 as part of the 1996 panel of the SIPP. The Migration History topical module included questions on location, duration, and tenure of previous residence; place of birth; citizenship; nativity; year of entry; and immigration status.

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

All survey statistics are subject to sampling error, as well as non-sampling error such as survey design flaws, respondent classification and reporting errors, data processing mistakes, and undercoverage. The Census Bureau attempts to reduce errors made by respondents, coders, and interviewers through the use of quality control and editing procedures. Ratio estimation to independent age-race-sex-Hispanic population controls partially corrects for bias due to survey undercoverage. However, biases exist in the estimates when missed people have characteristics different from those of interviewed people in the same age-race-sex-Hispanic origin group. Analytical statements in this report have been tested and meet statistical standards. However, because of methodological differences, use caution when comparing these data with data from other sources.

Contact the Demographic Statistical Methods Division, at 301-763-4192 or on the internet at:

dsmd_s&a@census.gov for survey design and estimation questions. For more information on the source of the data, the accuracy of the estimates, the use of standard errors, and the computation of standard errors, see the "Source and Accuracy Statement for the 1996 SIPP Public Use File." See also the SIPP web site:

<http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp>.

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Table 1. Seasonality of Move by Selected Characteristics

(For movers who reported a valid month of move into current residence. Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total movers, 15 years old and over	Percent			
		December - February	March - May	June - August	September - November
Total	172,496	18.8	22.6	32.0	26.6
Age					
15 to 24 years	27,629	17.9	21.7	34.4	26.0
25 to 34 years	35,476	19.6	23.7	30.7	26.0
35 to 44 years	38,314	18.8	22.8	31.6	26.8
45 to 54 years	28,249	19.1	22.4	31.8	26.8
55 to 64 years	17,823	18.5	21.6	32.6	27.3
65 years and older	25,005	18.8	22.7	31.5	27.1
Marital status					
Not married (never married, divorced, separated, and widowed)	70,070	18.7	22.6	32.4	26.4
Married (spouse present or absent)	102,426	18.9	22.6	31.7	26.8
Presence of children under 18					
No children under 18	102,289	18.6	22.6	32.1	26.7
Children under 18	70,207	19.1	22.6	31.8	26.5
Race and Hispanic origin					
White	146,673	18.4	22.8	32.1	26.7
Non-Hispanic	131,517	18.2	22.6	32.3	26.8
Black	18,090	21.2	21.3	31.0	26.5
Asian and Pacific Islander	6,019	21.9	22.4	30.8	24.9
Hispanic (of any race)	15,839	21.0	23.4	30.1	25.6
Citizenship					
Non-citizen	11,244	21.7	23.7	28.9	25.7
Citizen	161,252	18.6	22.5	32.2	26.7
Education					
Less than high school	35,209	20.2	22.1	31.4	26.3
High school graduate	51,550	18.3	22.6	31.4	27.7
Some college or Associate degree	48,879	18.8	23.1	31.6	26.4
Bachelor's degree or more	36,858	18.3	22.3	33.8	25.7
Household income					
Less than \$25,000	50,060	19.1	22.1	32.9	25.9
\$25,000 to \$49,999	57,266	19.5	22.3	31.5	26.7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	34,664	18.3	23.7	31.1	27.0
\$75,000 or more	30,505	17.6	22.8	32.3	27.2
Current residence					
Nonmetropolitan	34,430	18.2	22.8	31.5	27.5
Metropolitan	138,066	19.0	22.5	32.1	26.4
Region					
Northeast	33,350	18.2	21.4	33.1	27.3
Midwest	41,906	17.4	22.7	32.0	27.9
South	59,318	19.9	22.5	32.3	25.3
West	37,922	19.3	23.7	30.4	26.6
Type of move					
Same state, same county	118,647	18.8	23.3	31.3	26.6
Same state, different county	26,826	18.2	22.1	33.4	26.3
Different state	23,820	19.1	19.8	33.8	27.4
From abroad	3,203	23.9	21.6	30.8	23.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

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Table 2. Duration of Residence by Selected Characteristics: 1996

(For movers who reported a valid year of move into current residence. Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total movers, 15 years old and over	Percent who have lived in their present home...				Median years
		Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	4 to 10 years	Over 10 years	
Total	189,013	18.7	24.7	26.7	30.0	4.7
Age						
15 to 24 years	29,483	32.6	26.8	25.9	14.7	2.3
25 to 34 years	37,463	31.0	40.4	22.9	5.6	1.9
35 to 44 years	41,225	17.1	28.6	36.4	17.9	4.3
45 to 54 years	31,023	11.6	19.0	29.1	40.3	8.0
55 to 64 years	20,092	8.2	14.4	22.6	54.8	12.2
65 years and older	29,727	5.7	10.1	18.7	65.5	18.7
Marital status						
Not married (never married, divorced, separated, and widowed)	78,960	24.1	25.3	24.8	25.8	3.4
Married (spouse present or absent)	110,053	14.7	24.2	28.0	33.1	5.8
Presence of children under 18						
No children under 18	114,261	18.1	21.1	21.6	39.2	6.0
Children under 18	74,752	19.5	30.1	34.4	16.1	3.8
Race and Hispanic origin						
White	159,478	18.0	24.0	26.7	31.3	4.9
Non-Hispanic	142,322	17.1	23.3	26.8	32.9	5.5
Black	20,998	21.2	27.7	25.1	26.1	3.9
Asian and Pacific Islander	6,643	23.1	29.8	31.2	16.0	3.1
Hispanic (of any race)	18,013	26.2	30.8	25.4	17.6	2.5
Citizenship						
Non-citizen	12,502	31.8	35.3	24.6	8.4	1.8
Citizen	176,511	17.7	23.9	26.8	31.6	5.1
Education						
Less than high school	40,729	18.4	23.9	26.3	31.5	4.8
High school graduate	56,953	18.0	22.8	25.4	33.8	5.3
Some college or Associate degree	52,399	19.5	25.5	27.1	27.8	4.5
Bachelor's degree or more	38,932	18.7	27.1	28.2	26.1	4.4
Household income						
Less than \$25,000	56,988	23.3	23.6	22.5	30.6	3.6
\$25,000 to \$49,999	62,680	19.4	25.8	25.7	29.1	4.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	37,009	15.4	25.0	30.2	29.5	5.4
\$75,000 or more	32,336	12.7	23.8	31.9	31.5	6.3
Current residence						
Nonmetropolitan	37,812	16.3	22.3	26.8	34.6	5.7
Metropolitan	151,202	19.3	25.3	26.6	28.9	4.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

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Table 3. Housing Tenure by Selected Characteristics: 1996

(All people, 15 years and over. Numbers in thousands)

Current Characteristic	Current Tenure			Previous Tenure		
	Total, 15 years old and over	Percent owner	Percent renter	Total, 15 years and older	Percent owner	Percent renter
Total	205,150	70.1	29.9	196,048	40.6	59.4
Age						
15 to 24 years	36,239	60.9	39.1	31,037	36.1	63.9
25 to 34 years	40,376	55.1	44.9	39,060	26.7	73.3
35 to 44 years	43,332	70.5	29.5	42,509	38.0	62.0
45 to 54 years	32,392	78.5	21.5	31,834	44.8	55.2
55 to 64 years	21,027	82.7	17.3	20,668	50.6	49.4
65 years and older	31,784	82.4	17.6	30,940	54.8	45.2
Marital status						
Not married (never married, divorced, separated, and widowed)	92,676	59.2	40.8	84,936	34.9	65.1
Married (spouse present or absent)	112,474	79.1	20.9	111,112	44.9	55.1
Presence of children under 18						
No children under 18	124,862	70.5	29.5	119,615	42.7	57.3
Children under 18	80,288	69.5	30.5	76,433	37.2	62.8
Race and Hispanic origin						
White	171,575	73.3	26.7	164,546	43.6	56.4
Non-Hispanic	152,751	76.2	23.8	146,623	46.3	53.7
Black	24,359	52.5	47.5	22,573	23.5	76.5
Asian and Pacific Islander	7,129	57.7	42.3	6,959	26.7	73.3
Hispanic (of any race)	19,799	47.9	52.1	18,856	20.5	79.5
Citizenship						
Non-citizen	13,337	37.8	62.2	13,352	16.9	83.1
Citizen	191,813	72.4	27.6	182,696	42.3	57.7
Education						
Less than high school	46,385	62.5	37.5	42,604	34.2	65.8
High school graduate	62,252	71.0	29.0	59,670	40.9	59.1
Some college or Associate degree	56,068	70.8	29.2	53,982	41.9	58.1
Bachelor's degree or more	40,446	76.5	23.5	39,793	45.1	54.9
Household income						
Less than \$25,000	62,563	52.3	47.7	60,125	33.6	66.5
\$25,000 to \$49,999	67,248	69.3	30.7	64,531	37.6	62.4
\$50,000 to \$74,999	40,115	82.6	17.5	38,107	44.0	56.0
\$75,000 or more	35,225	89.2	10.8	33,285	55.0	45.0
Current residence						
Nonmetropolitan	40,816	76.4	23.6	38,808	46.1	53.9
Metropolitan	164,334	68.6	31.4	157,240	39.2	60.8

Note: The total number of people with previous tenure differs from those with current tenure because some people have never moved from their home of birth, thus never having a previous tenure.

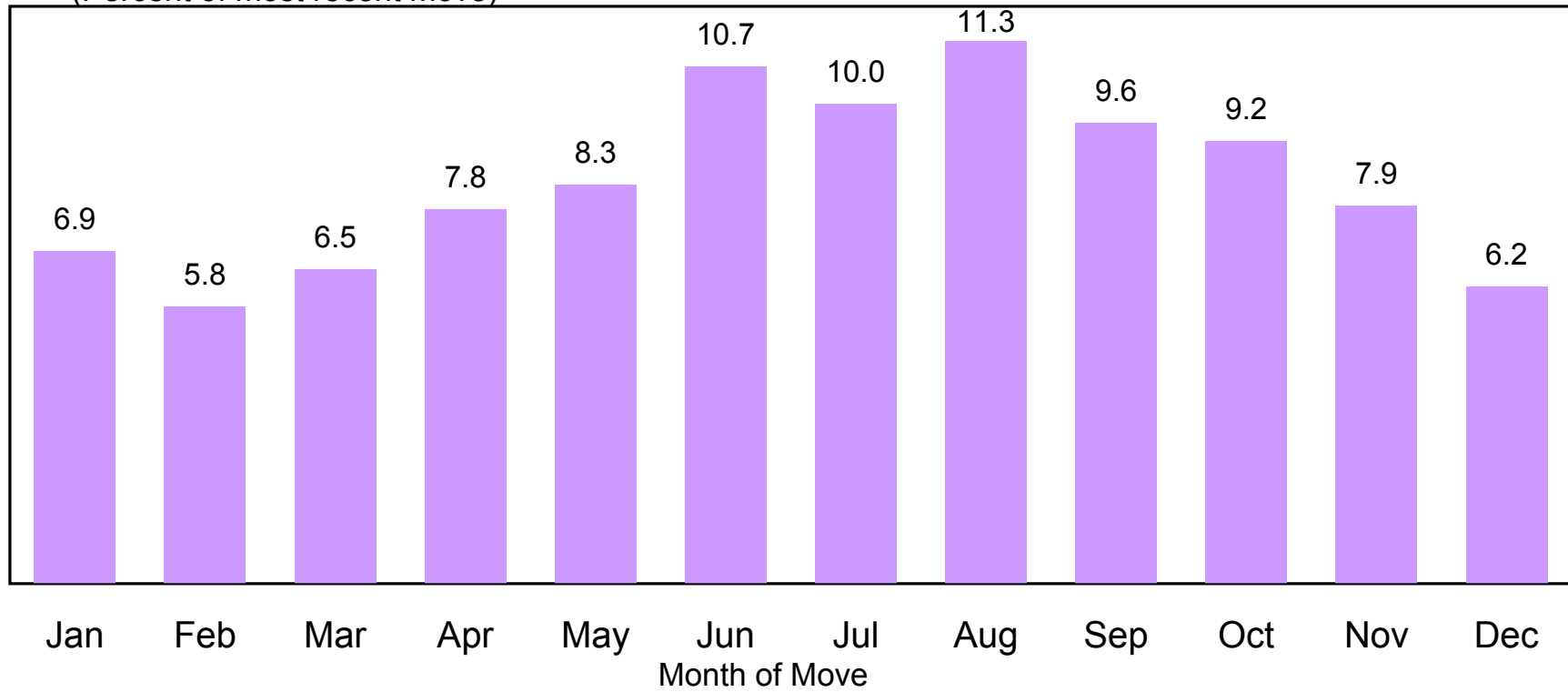
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

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Figure 1.

Distribution of Moves by Month: 1996

(Percent of most recent move)

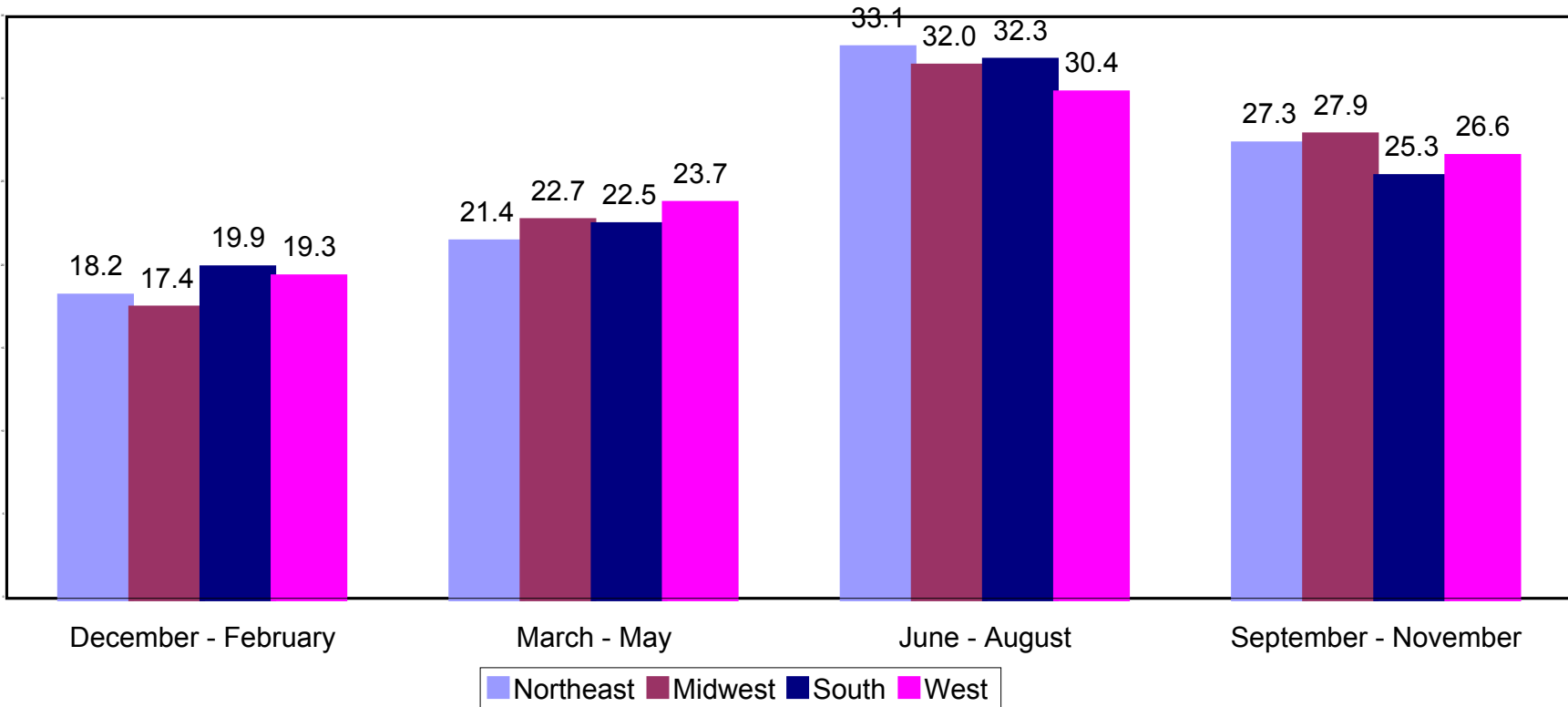


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

Figure 2.

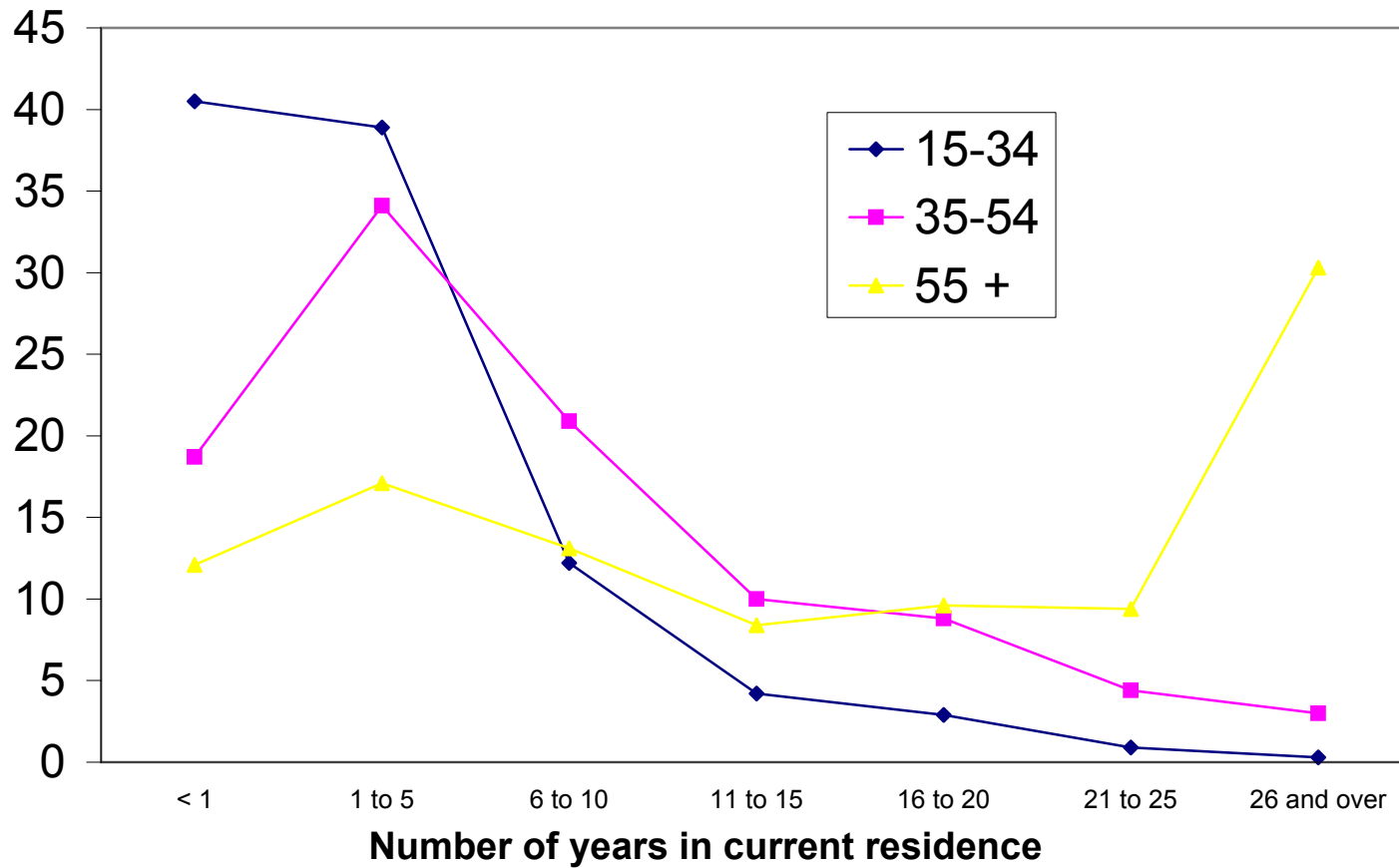
Season of Move by Region: 1996

(Percent of all moves within and to each region)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

Figure 3.
Duration of Current Residence by Age: 1996
(Percent of people 15 years and older, who reported a valid year of move into current residence)

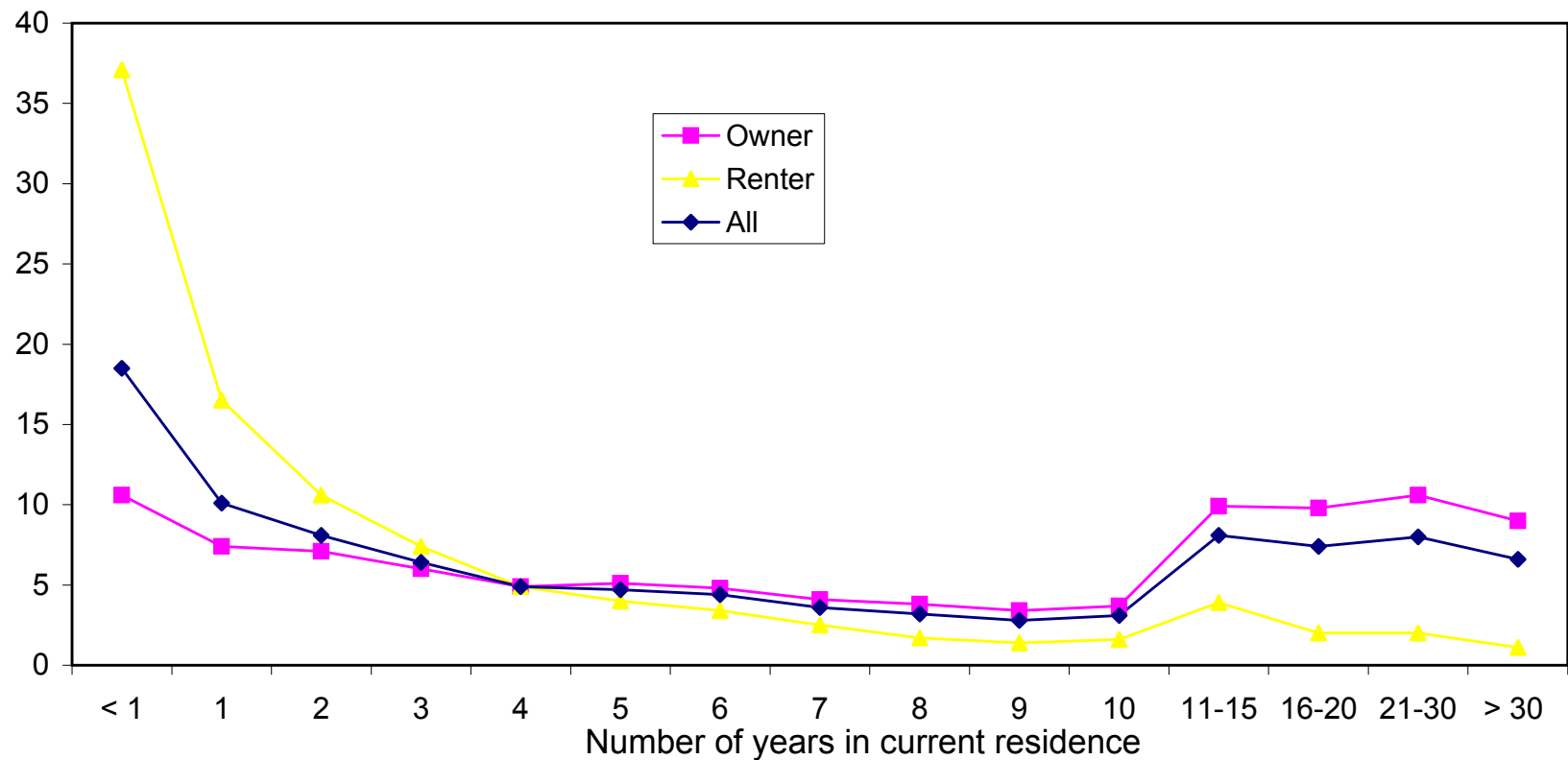


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.

Figure 4.

Duration of Current Residence by Current Tenure: 1996

(Percent of people 15 years and older, who reported a valid year of move into current residence)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996.