

Housing in Metropolitan Areas — Movers and Stayers

We Americans are a transient people. A new job, a change in marital status, or the chance to buy or rent a nicer home are among the reasons we switch residences. Where were people the most mobile? You're about to find out!

This is one of a series of Briefs that uses data collected in the 1990 Census of Population and Housing to examine the characteristics of housing in American metropolitan areas (MA's). This Brief examines which MA's had the highest concentrations of recent movers — householders who moved into their homes during the 15 months prior to the 1990 census.

Of course, not all of us had just seen the moving vans depart. In fact, some — the “stayers” — had gotten to know their homes very well indeed. Stayers were householders who had last moved prior to 1960 (before John F. Kennedy was in the White House!). We'll show you where stayers were most prevalent.

The MA's used here correspond to the definitions that were in place in 1990. The count of 335 MA's equals the total number of MSA's



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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

(metropolitan statistical areas) and PMSA's (primary metropolitan statistical areas).

PMSA's are aggregated into consolidated metropolitan statistical areas, not discussed in this Brief.

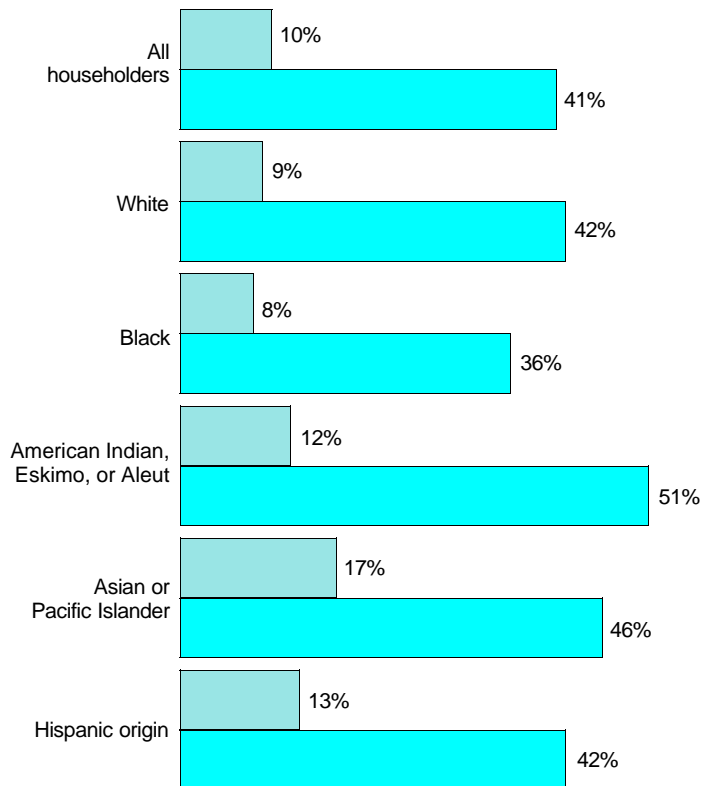
MA's where recent movers were most prevalent contained large universities or military bases.

Nationally, 22 percent of metro area householders had recently changed residences. Bryan-College Station, TX, home of Texas A&M

While Asians or Pacific Islanders Were the Most Mobile Owners, Native Americans Were the Most Mobile Renters

Percent of metro area householders who were recent movers, by tenure, race, and Hispanic origin: 1990

Owners
Renters



Note: Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

University, was the Nation's most transient MA — 41 percent of householders there were recent movers. There were six other MA's where recent movers comprised more than one-third of householders. These included —

- Two others in Texas (Austin and Killeen-Temple).
- Las Vegas, NV.
- Anchorage, AK.
- Jacksonville, NC.
- Lawrence, KS.

Of the 46 largest MA's (one million or more inhabitants), Dallas, TX; Orlando, FL; and San Diego, CA were tops (see table at right). These were the only large MA's where at least 30 percent of all householders were recent movers.

Most recent movers were renters

Renters comprised slightly more than one-third of the Nation's metro area households. But they accounted for nearly three-quarters of recent movers. Of course, it's hardly surprising that it was more common for renters than owners to have moved lately. What is a bit startling, though, is just *how common* it actually was! In the 15 months before the census, over 4 in 10 renters relocated.

In 5 MA's, this rate topped 60 percent. Making this list were —

- A pair of areas in Texas (Killeen-Temple and Bryan-College Station).
- Jacksonville, NC.
- Lawton, OK.
- Lawrence, KS.

Phoenix, AZ (at 59 percent) led the large MA's.

.... but don't forget owners.

Though owners were much less apt than renters to have moved recently, it was far from unheard of. About 1 in 10 metro area owners had recently changed residences.

Metro Area Rankings by Movers and Stayers

(Metro areas with 1 million or more persons)

	Recent movers		Stayers	
	Percent of all households	Rank	Percent of all households	Rank
All MA's with 1 million or more persons	21.7%		7.9%	
Anaheim – Santa Ana, CA PMSA	25.9%	14	2.8%	44
Atlanta, GA MSA	26.7%	11	4.4%	37
Baltimore, MD MSA	18.6%	35	10.9%	8
Bergen – Passaic, NJ PMSA	13.8%	44	14.6%	2
Boston, MA PMSA	17.8%	37	11.7%	5
Charlotte – Gastonia – Rock Hill, NC – SC MSA	21.6%	28	9.6%	14
Chicago, IL PMSA	19.5%	33	8.4%	19
Cincinnati, OH – KY – IN PMSA	20.0%	31	8.8%	17
Cleveland, OH PMSA	16.1%	39	11.1%	7
Columbus, OH MSA	23.7%	20	6.8%	25
Dallas, TX PMSA	30.8%	1	4.4%	37
Denver, CO PMSA	27.2%	9	4.7%	36
Detroit, MI PMSA	17.0%	38	10.0%	12
Fort Lauderdale – Hollywood – Pompano Beach, FL PMSA	23.4%	23	2.3%	46
Fort Worth – Arlington, TX PMSA	29.3%	7	5.4%	32
Houston, TX PMSA	29.4%	5	5.0%	34
Indianapolis, IN MSA	23.2%	24	7.4%	24
Kansas City, MO – KS MSA	22.3%	26	7.8%	21
Los Angeles – Long Beach, CA PMSA	24.1%	19	6.4%	29
Miami – Hialeah, FL PMSA	25.0%	16	3.7%	40
Middlesex – Somerset – Hunterdon, NJ PMSA	16.0%	40	11.4%	6
Milwaukee, WI PMSA	19.9%	32	10.1%	11
Minneapolis – St. Paul, MN – WI MSA	21.5%	29	7.8%	21
Nassau – Suffolk, NY PMSA	10.6%	46	14.1%	3
New Orleans, LA MSA	21.1%	30	9.5%	15
New York, NY PMSA	14.2%	43	9.5%	15
Newark, NJ PMSA	15.0%	41	10.9%	8
Norfolk – Virginia Beach – Newport News, VA MSA	26.7%	11	6.6%	27
Oakland, CA PMSA	23.5%	22	6.8%	25
Orlando, FL MSA	30.6%	2	3.3%	42
Philadelphia, PA – NJ PMSA	14.8%	42	13.6%	4
Phoenix, AZ MSA	29.6%	4	2.8%	44
Pittsburgh, PA PMSA	13.3%	45	19.2%	1
Portland, OR PMSA	25.3%	15	6.6%	27
Riverside – San Bernardino, CA PMSA	29.4%	5	3.2%	43
Rochester, NY MSA	18.7%	34	10.5%	10
Sacramento, CA MSA	28.3%	8	5.0%	34
Salt Lake City – Ogden, UT MSA	24.5%	17	8.7%	18
San Antonio, TX MSA	26.0%	13	7.6%	23
San Diego, CA MSA	30.2%	3	4.0%	39
San Francisco, CA PMSA	22.0%	27	8.4%	19
San Jose, CA PMSA	24.3%	18	5.1%	33
Seattle, WA PMSA	27.2%	9	5.7%	30
St. Louis, MO – IL MSA	18.3%	36	10.0%	12
Tampa – St. Petersburg – Clearwater, FL MSA	23.6%	21	3.7%	40
Washington, DC – MD – VA MSA	22.8%	25	5.6%	31

Data for Smaller MA's

Due to space constraints, the table above contains data only for the 46 largest metro areas. However, the information we show in it is available at a small charge for all 335 metropolitan areas. To order these printouts, call Myra Washington (301-763-8553).

There were 4 metro areas where this rate topped 15 percent —

- Las Vegas, NV (the Nation's leader, at 19 percent).
- Riverside-San Bernardino, CA.
- Yuma, AZ.
- Naples, FL.

Stayers were usually owners.

About 6 million metro householders (8 percent) had lived in their current home since 1959; 5.6 million of them owned their home. All in all, 13 percent of metro owners (and 2 percent of renters) were stayers.

New York was the only MA with any appreciable number of renters who were stayers. In fact, nearly one-third of the Nation's metro area stayer renters lived in New York.

Pennsylvania was the stayer capital.

In 15 metro areas, at least 15 percent of all householders were stayers. All but 3 either were located in Pennsylvania or bordered on it. Johnstown, PA and Beaver County, PA, both at over 20 percent, led the Nation.

Pittsburgh, PA, meanwhile, headed the roster of large MA's — 19 percent of its householders were stayers (see table on page 2). Pittsburgh was joined by Nassau-Suffolk, NY and Bergen-Passaic, NJ as the only large MA's where stayers outnumbered recent movers.

Recent movers had far higher incomes than stayers.

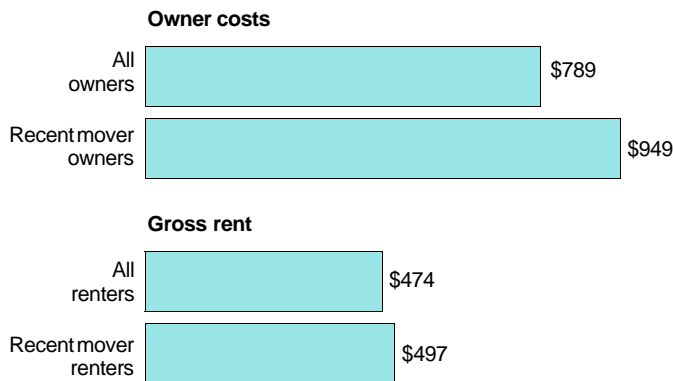
Within MA's, recent mover renters had about the same 1989 median household income as all renters (\$21,274 compared with \$21,404). In contrast, the figure for stayer renters was only \$13,776. The story was much the same for owners. Recent movers were tops (\$41,764), all owners followed closely (\$40,069), and stayers lagged far behind (\$22,785). The graph at the bottom left helps explain the income disparity between recent movers and stayers. As we discuss later, many stayers were of retirement age. This accounted for the fact their households were likelier to have no workers and, thus, lower incomes.

Recent movers were young

The older a householder, the less likely it was he or she was a recent mover. The rate dropped steadily from 72 percent for those aged 15 to 24 to 6 percent of those 75 years and over. This pattern held for both owners and renters. Recent movers had a median age of 33, a dozen years younger than the norm for all householders.

Housing Costs Were High for Recent Movers

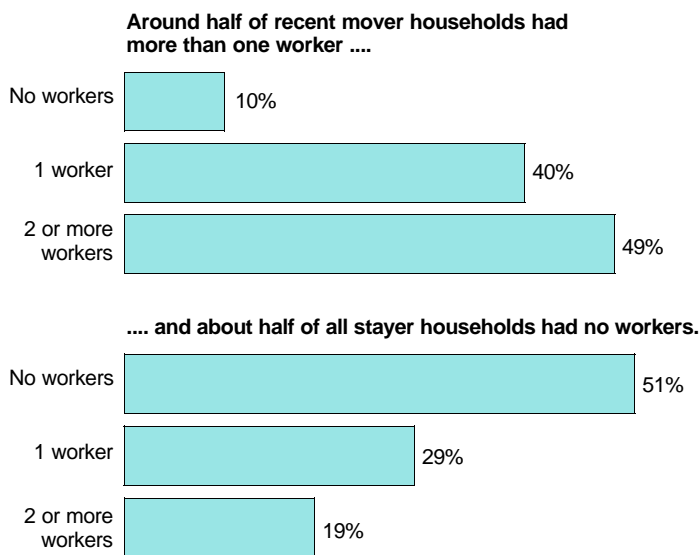
Median selected monthly owner costs for specified mortgaged owners and median gross rent for specified renters in metro areas: 1990



Note: Selected monthly owner costs include mortgages, real estate taxes, property insurance, and utilities and fuels. Gross rent includes contract rent and utilities and fuels. Specified owners were those in one-family houses on a property of less than 10 acres with no business or commercial establishment. Specified renters were all except those in one-family houses on places of 10 acres or more.

Workers Were More Commonplace in Recent Mover Households

Percent of households in metro areas, by number of workers in household: 1990



Unmarried male householders *not* living alone were more likely to have moved recently (about 40 percent) than any other type of household. These men were especially footloose if they were renters aged 15 to 24 (nearly 80 percent). Meanwhile, married couples (17 percent) and women living alone (18 percent) were least apt to have been recent movers.

... while stayers were much older.

As a householder's age rose, so did the chances they had been staying put for a long time. Consequently, a third of those 75 years and over were stayers. (The median age of stayers, by the way, was 71.)

Women living alone were the most likely to have been stayers (16 percent). The vast majority of these

women were elderly and probably lacked the financial means or the desire to move. Incidentally, nearly one-fourth of all stayer renters were women 75 years and over who lived alone.

Among racial groups, White householders were the most apt to have been stayers (9 percent).

Occupants of single-family houses were the least likely to have moved lately.

Fourteen percent of householders in one-family houses were recent movers. This was much lower than the 22 percent of all householders. On the other hand, 12 percent of those living in single-family houses were stayers, higher than the 8 percent of all householders.

More information:

Subject Summary Tape File 7 (Metropolitan Housing Characteristics) presents 1990 census data for States and MA's. Statistics on year householder moved into unit are cross-tabulated by items such as household income, housing costs, structural characteristics, and household demographic characteristics. *SSTF 7* comes on both computer tape and CD-ROM. Call Customer Services (301-763-4100) for more information on 1990 census products.

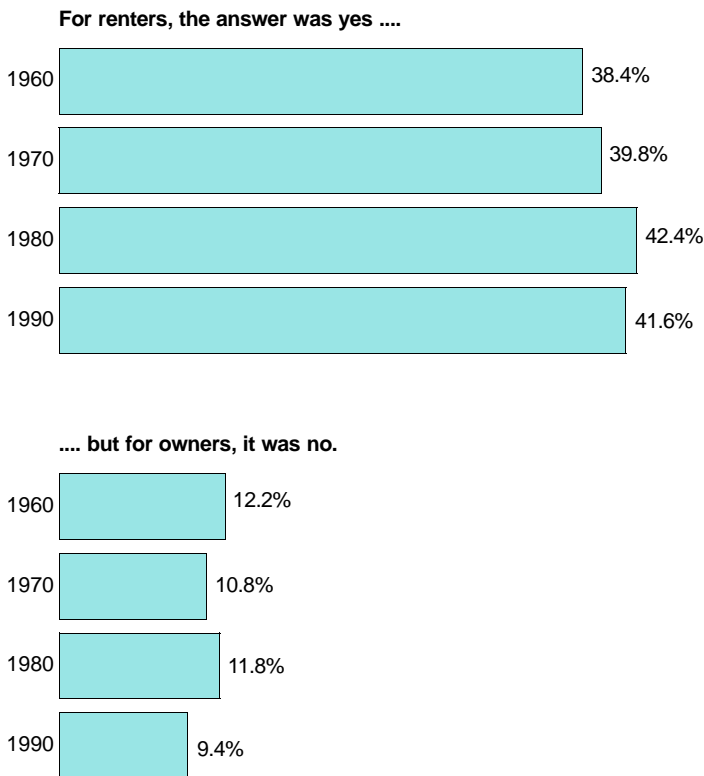
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This Brief is one of a series that presents information of current interest. It examines data from the 1990 census. A complete description of statistical quality and limitations is included in the SSTF 7 technical documentation.

Were We as a Nation More Mobile in 1990 Than We Were 30 Years Earlier?

Recent movers as a percentage of all owner and renter householders: 1960-1990



Note: Because of changes in metro area definitions between 1960 and 1990, the data shown in this graph are for all householders (both metro and nonmetro).