Recession

Keeps More Americans in Place

Numbers of people moving are down; but most of those who did move still reside in the same county.

Between 2009 and 2010, 37.5 million people in the U.S. moved at least once to new quarters. This amounts to 12.5 percent of all people 1 year of age or older.

Most people who moved, 27.0 million or 69.3 percent of movers, still reside in the same county. The 10.6 million who moved by 2010 to a new county, comprise about 3.5 percent of the population. This is the lowest percentage of out-of-county migrants since the U.S. Census Bureau began keeping such records in 1947. The previous year, 11 million people moved to a different county. Between 2004 and 2005 for example, when the economy was flourishing, 15.8 million people moved to a new county.

The enduring effects of the recession—relatively high unemployment, housing difficulties of foreclosures and falling prices, and slow job growth—have restrained the mobility of Americans.

Mobility information collected by the Census Bureau from its monthly Current Population Survey has shown over the years that during times of recession with less economic opportunity, domestic migration slows. The lack of mobility in our current economy is worse than usual. Often, when there is a U.S. recession, while some parts of the country experience economic difficulties there are other areas that are doing well. This last, so called "great recession," which contained a severe financial crisis, touched all areas of the country.

There are about 80 tables provided by the Census Bureau that highlight other demographic and economic characteristics related to the mobility of Americans, including:

- The mover rate varies considerably by region of the country with Westerners (14.7 percent moving) more likely to change address.
- The unemployed (19.8 percent) have a greater propensity to move than the employed (12.4 percent), while 9.5 percent of those not in the labor force were movers.
- People who had incomes below the poverty level (23.5 percent) change address more frequently than those above the poverty level (10.7 percent).
- Differences between racial/ethnic groups revealed that Blacks had the highest mover rate at 16.7 percent, followed by Hispanics (15.6 percent), Asians (13.9 percent) and Whites not Hispanic (10.8 percent).

Mobility in the United States
Reason for Move: 2009 to 2010

Total Movers (Population 1+ years in thousands)	37,540
Family Reason	
Change in marital status	7.3%
To establish own household	11.2%
Other family reason	11.7%
Job Related	
New job or job transfer	7.8%
To look for work or lost job	2.6%
To be closer to work/easier commute	4.2%
Retired	0.5%
Other job related reason	1.3%
Housing Reason	
Wanted own home, not rent	4.6%
Wanted new or better home/ apartment	15.5%
Wanted better neighborhood /less crime	4.1%
Wanted cheaper housing	10.8%
Other housing reason	8.7%
Other Reasons	
To attend or leave college	2.7%
Change of climate	0.6%
Health reasons	1.5%
Natural disaster	0.3%
Other reasons	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey.

The complete series of statistical tables from *Geographic Mobility: 2010* that detail types, distances, characteristics, and reasons that people change address can be found on the Census Bureau web site:

http://www.census.gov/hhes/migration/data/cps/cps2010.html.

Total Movers (in thousands)		37,540
Where did they Move:		
Same County	26,017	69.3%
Different County		
Same State	6,252	16.7%
Different State	4,326	11.5%
Abroad	946	2.5%

Mobility in the United States
Destination: 2009 to 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey.