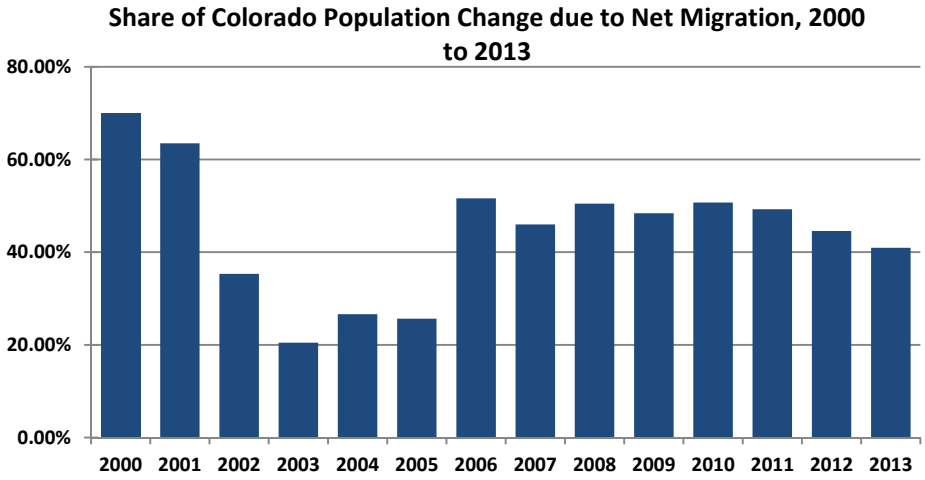
Division Of Local Government
State Demography Office
www.colorado.gov/demography
January 2015
Rob Kemp

Colorado Migration in 2013

Introduction

Migration is an incredibly salient topic for Colorado, a State where only 43.35% of residents are natives (born in Colorado), compared to 58.8% of the United States residents living in the state they were born in.[1] Since the 1990's, migration has made up between ~20% to 70% of total population change for the State[2].



Migration is one of the most powerful forces shaping the size and characteristics of local populations.

Migration Defined

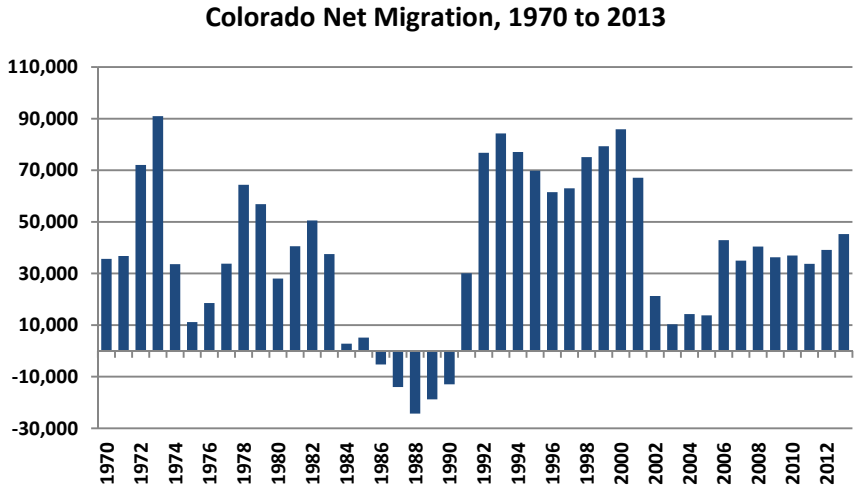
Migration is one of the three ways that a population can change, along with births and deaths. Technically, migration is the permanent relocation of a household or individual from one defined place to another. Migration is generally discussed in what are called flows, such as the number of people moving to a place and the number of people leaving because these are directly countable events. Net migration, which is not directly observed but derived from flows, is the difference between the number of people coming and the number of people leaving, and is positive when more people come than leave, and negative otherwise. Migration is most often responsible for large shifts in demographic characteristics within an area over short periods of time. Natural increase (birth-deaths) and aging tend to take much longer to have their most profound effects.

[1] 2013 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
[2] State Demography Office, Population Estimates

General Migration Trends

In 2013, Colorado experienced Net Migration of about 45,000 residents; that is approximately 45,000 more people moved into Colorado than left. Our flows show that about 205,000 people moved into Colorado in 2013 and a little more than 160,000 moved out.

Colorado's level of net migration has varied dramatically over time. The chart below shows the time series since 1970. High levels of migration in the 1970s was driven by job growth and Baby Boomers, and contributed to both the demographic and economic momentum in future decades. The migration in the 1970s is responsible for Colorado's large share of retiring Boomers at present. The Colorado specific recession in the 1980s is reflected in negative net migration for that period, as is the economic panacea in the 1990s. The tech bust in the early 2000s dramatically reduced our net migration after it had risen near to an all-time high. In more recent years, despite a dip during the Great Recession, net migration has remained somewhat constant.



Nationally, Colorado was ranked 4th among U.S. States in total population growth in 2013, largely due to high levels of net migration, in which Colorado ranked 5th[3]. In 2013, Colorado ranked 12th nationally for its number of in-migrants. Colorado's migrants come from all over the country, however, California and Texas are the two largest "trading partners." Colorado receives the most migrants from these states, and in turn, most of the migrants that leave Colorado tend to move to these same two states. Since 2005, Colorado has had a positive net migration of Californians, and in fact Californians make up the largest proportion of its overall net migration since 2005[4]. The top five states by flow are below.

Top 5 Migrant Sending States (In Flow)

1. California
2. Texas
3. Florida
4. Arizona
5. New York

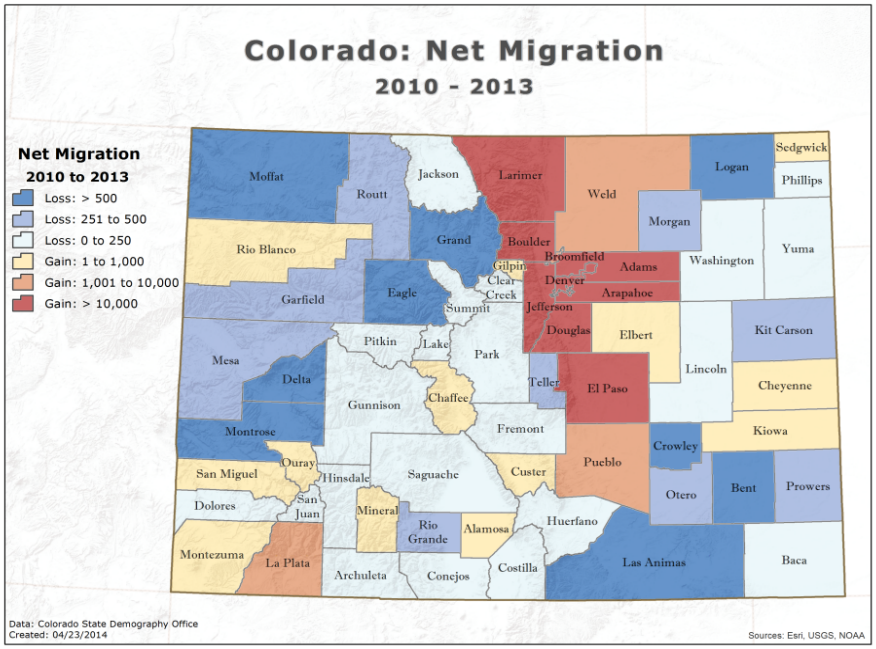
Top 5 Migrant Receiving States (Out Flow)

1. Texas
2. California
3. Arizona
4. Florida
5. Utah

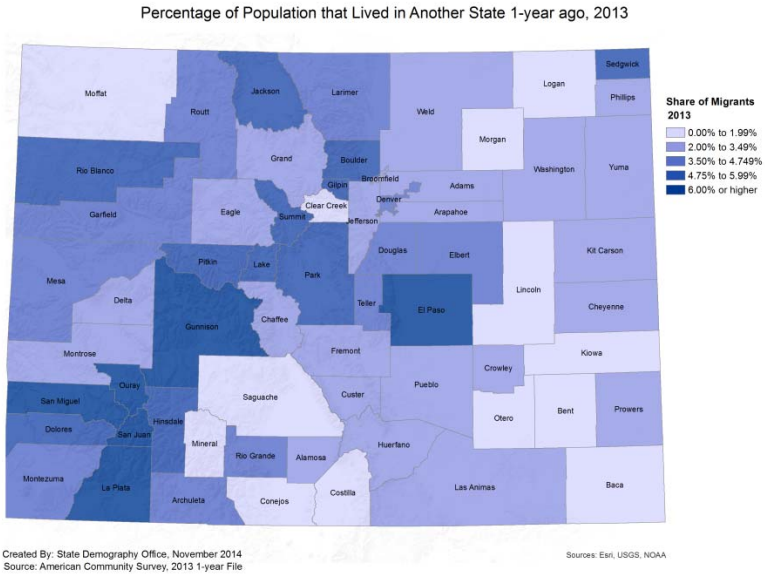
[3] Vintage 2013 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.
[4] American Community Survey State-to-State Migration Files, 2005-2013, U.S. Census Bureau

Where do they move in Colorado?

Migration isn't spread equally across the whole state. There are definite spatial patterns in net migration overall and for where in-migrants tend to locate. These patterns help define Colorado's population landscape.



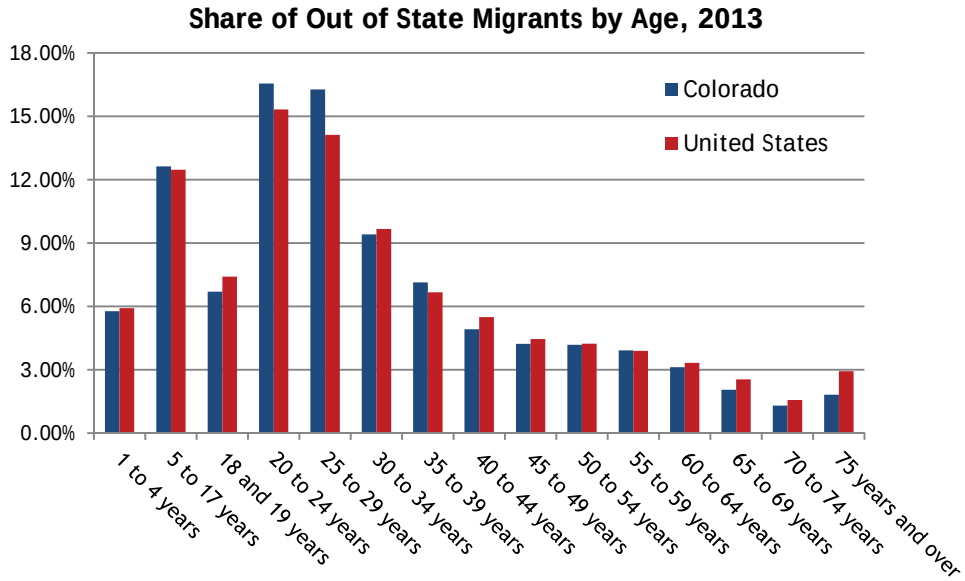
Net migration by county captures any move that was across county lines (both from in-state and out-of-state) and provides a snap shot of regional variation in mobility. From 2010 to 2013, net migration has been centered primarily in the Front Range, from Larimer County in the north to Pueblo County in the south. The south western corner of the state has seen some positive net migration despite having a smaller population. La Plata County, where Durango is located, has also seen positive net migration. Net migration for the rest of the State broadly has either been negative or negligibly positive. The Eastern Plains have been experiencing this out migration trend for an extended period of time. The out migration in the Western Slope is recent, coming on the heels of a population and economic boom that has slowed due to a move of oil production to the Front Range from the Western Slope and a slowing of the tourism industry.



When focusing just on out-of-state migrants, they choose specific places within the state to move to that somewhat mirror the trends seen above in net migration. In absolute terms, most out of state migrants move to the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area and El Paso County.

When you consider the size of each counties population, the focus shifts to Southwest Colorado. The Map at left shows the percentage of each counties population that moved to Colorado from another state in the past 12 months. While the Denver area still shows a relatively high proportion of migrants, the epicenter is in the south western counties and the Southern Front Range.

Who are these migrants?

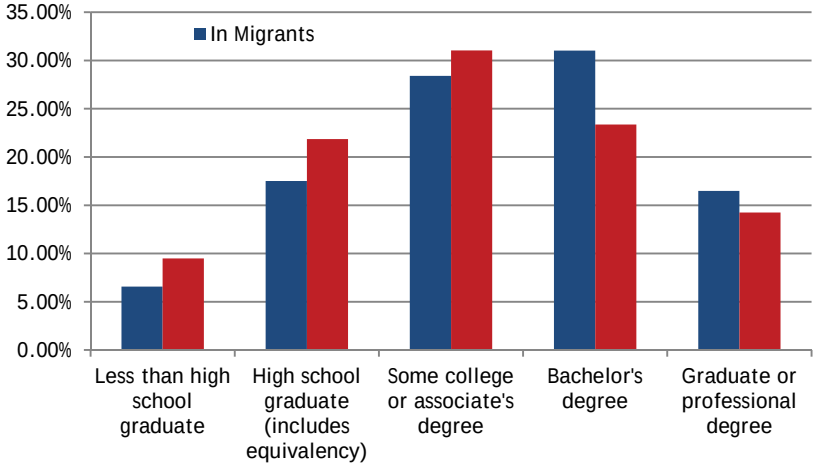


Source: 2013 ACS 1-Year FIle

A defining characteristic of migrants is that they tend to be younger than non-migrants. In general, migrants to Colorado from out of state tend to be younger than out of state migrants for the country overall. Most movers to Colorado are between 18 and 34 years old, an age group that mostly encapsulates the current Millennial generation. The most mobile age group is the 20 to 24 year olds, about 16.5% of migrants to Colorado from other states were in this age group. After accounting for the fact that more young people move in general, Colorado attracts a relatively similar proportion of movers from each age group[5]. Historically, older populations are less mobile, which is true in Colorado, but even these age groups are more mobile than the U.S. as a whole. For example, 9.6% of Coloradans in the 55 to 64 year old age group moved in the last year, compared to 7.6% of the same age group for the U.S. overall. Denver specifically has gained national attention as a top net migration area for those between 25 and 34 years old, ranking as the second most popular Metropolitan Statistical Area for the period from 2010 to 2012[6]. When looking at net migration rankings for the same age group, Colorado ranks 5th in nation, up from 9th in 2010, but down from 4th in 2007 (see Appendix C for full rankings)[5].

[5] 2013 American Community Survey 1-Year File, U.S. Census Bureau
[6] William Frey, analysis of American Community Survey Census Data

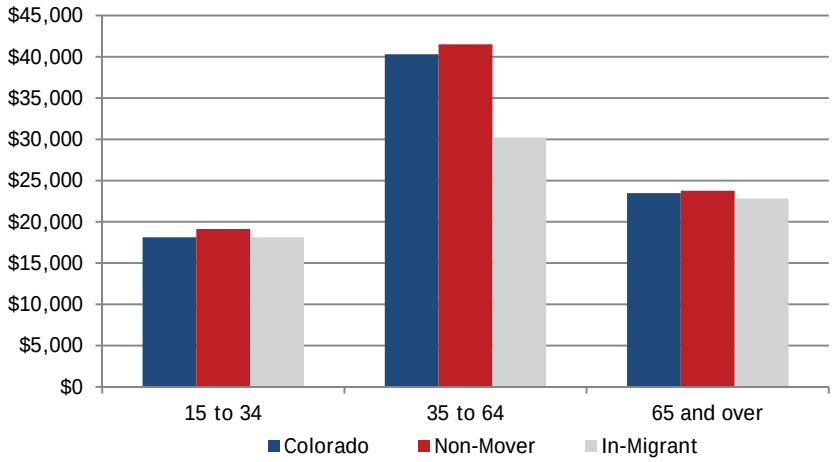
Educational Attainment by Migration Status, Colorado, 2013



Source: Source: 2013 ACS 1-Year File

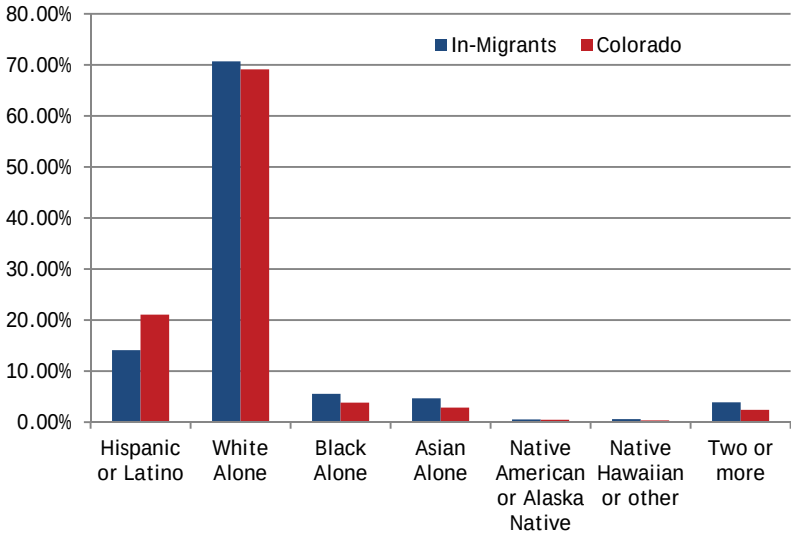
In terms of education, migrants tend to be more educated, but often have lower incomes (due in part to their younger ages) than non-migrants. Internal migrants (those that move within the state) tend to have a similar distribution of educational attainment as the State as a whole, but those that move to Colorado from another state are often more highly educated than the general population. They have a far higher level of Bachelor's Degree attainment as well as higher levels of Graduate and Professional Degrees.

Median Personal Income by Migration Status and Age, 2013



Migrants have lower median personal incomes even after looking at the distribution by age. The main income difference occurs for migrants between 35 and 64, the median income is $30,226 for in-migrants and $41,511 for non-movers. Much of this may be due whether the person own or rent, migrants overwhelmingly are renters. Additionally, a higher percentage of in-migrants are below the poverty level than non-movers (15.55% of in-migrants compared to 11.00% of non-movers in 2013).

Racial Distribution in Colorado, 2013



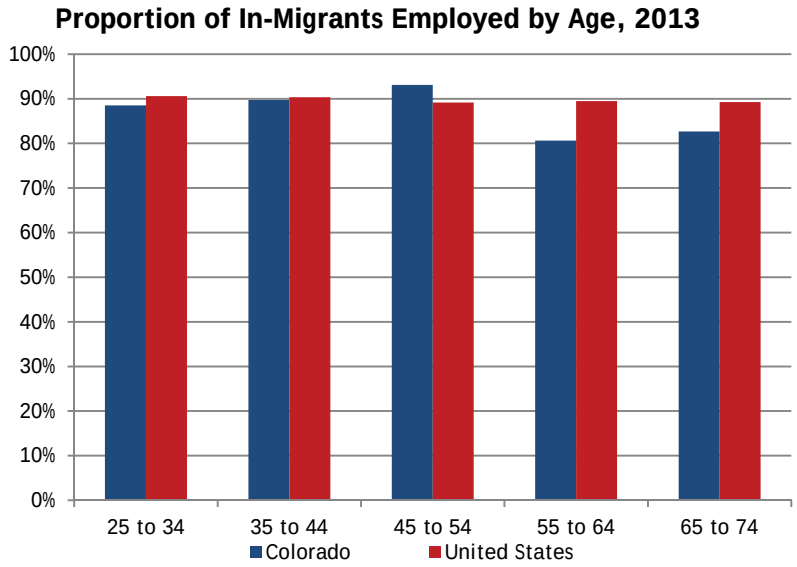
Migrants to Colorado have a different racial profile than the State as a whole. The predominant difference in 2013 was the share of In-Migrants that identified as Hispanic or Latino is about 6% less than the same share of the State as a whole. This difference is largely accounted for by more Blacks, Asians, and those identifying as two

or more races, along with a slightly higher proportion of those that are White only.

Why do migrants move?

People migrate for a whole host of reasons, from job changes and housing to education. For states, these reasons are not well captured in the existing data directly. Due to this lack of direct data, survey data from the American Community Survey can be used. There is reliable data on school enrollment and employment status for recent migrants. This can indirectly provide information on whether migrants from out of state are engaged in educational opportunities or employment in the year since they moved.

At the National level, about 19.4% of moves in general are related to employment, compared to 30.3% related to family concerns, and 48% related to housing[7]. Only about 30% of recent migrants to Colorado own their home, which suggests that around 70% of those that recently moved to Colorado may need to move again in the next few years to secure housing, contributing to that 48% of moves related to housing[8].



Note: For those not enrolled in school and in the labor force

Employment also clearly plays an important role. Overall, about 88.7% of migrants to Colorado in 2013 that were in the labor force were employed, but this varies for migrants of different ages[7].The chart above shows the proportion of recent migrants by age group that were in the labor force and not enrolled in school but were employed. Interestingly, older migrants tend to be employed at lower rates than younger migrants, this could be due to retirement driven migration where a person does not entirely leave the labor force yet. Migrants in the 45 to 54 age group have the highest level of employment. Colorado shows higher employment for the ages that it in-migrates the most in absolute terms compared to the national average.

Many economic factors play a role in driving employment migration. Often there is a basic mismatch in the number of jobs between two areas where one does not have enough jobs,

[7] David Ihrke. "Reason for Moving: 2012 to 2013." *Population Characteristics.* June 2014, U.S. Census Bureau Publication: P20-574

[8] 2013 American Community Survey 1-Year File, U.S. Census Bureau

and one has a surplus of jobs. In this case, migration to the area with surplus jobs would take place to fill the labor demand. Sometimes the mismatch is more specific and driven by economic demand in an area. For example, if an area ages and starts requiring more healthcare, employment opportunities specific to the industry occur driving some migration to the area by those with the skills to fill the job. This can happen across multiple industries simultaneously, driving migration based on job change in both primary and secondary industries.

Many migrants, particularly younger ages, move for educational purposes. In fact, 45% of those 18 to 24 year old migrants to Colorado are currently enrolled in school. Over 16% of those 25 to 34 are enrolled in school[7]. These two groups are made primarily of current Millennials and mirror statistics showing high levels of education in this group.

Measuring Migration

Migration can be measured in a multitude of ways. The most comprehensive way would be using a population registration system that would track population movement and provide accurate 'in' and 'out' data for each household. This system is implemented in Sweden, but most countries, including the United States, do not use systems like this. Instead, surveys and indirect measures such as tax returns are used to get a sense of migration in the US. The U.S. Census Bureau gets information on migration from the Current Population Survey (CPS), the American Community Survey (ACS), and creates estimates based on IRS tax return data. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tracks migration indirectly through changes in the filing address of a tax filer, the marital status of the filer, and their exemptions for dependents. Each of these methods has its strengths and drawbacks.

The CPS and ACS gather data on migration by asking questions about where a person lived 1 year ago. They note if the person lived in the same house or not, then look at the locations for each move derived from addresses. This allows these surveys to provide data on the in-migrants to an area, and on out-migrants that stay in the US. Out-migrants are much harder to estimate because they are not in the targeted location and may be slightly underrepresented overall. Additionally, the CPS and ACS are domestic surveys that would be unable to capture information on migrants moving internationally from the US.

The IRS receives information on the addresses of each person in the US filing taxes. This allows the IRS to track changes in these addresses by geography and provide information from the return itself such as the number of exemptions or presence of a co-filer. The IRS tabulates moves between counties and captures some level of international migration as well through filers living abroad. If a filer moves, then that is considered a household move, then IRS then tabulates the number of co-filers and exemptions to get an estimate of the total number of people moving between counties. This provides some basic information on the migration information for those that file taxes, but there are many different people that

are not required to file, or may not file taxes that would not be counted using this method. The IRS numbers likely underestimate migration flows overall. Additionally, this tabulation is lagged from the current time period, often by 1 or 2 years.

The Census Bureau has a unique relationship with the IRS that allows them to make some adjustments to the IRS data that increase accuracy. They use an anonymous matching procedure to match filers to their Census Records. This linkage allows the Bureau to adjust the estimates based on the number of people in a place that the IRS might have missed and the characteristics of the filers themselves. This data is used internally and externally for population estimates and revised for each year back to the last Census. The State Demography Office uses these adjusted Census Bureau numbers in their annual population estimates.

Appendix A. Net Migration Rankings – Top 10 by State

State Rankings of Net Migration for Colorado: In-Flow

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1	California	California	California	California	New Mexico	California	Oregon	California	California
2	New York	Arizona	Texas	Nevada	California	Texas	New Mexico	Massachusetts	Illinois
3	Pennsylvania	Ohio	Ohio	New Mexico	Michigan	Arizona	Texas	New York	Texas
4	Nebraska	Pennsylvania	Missouri	New Jersey	Nevada	Georgia	Ohio	Louisiana	New York
5	North Carolina	New York	Connecticut	Arizona	Indiana	Illinois	Illinois	Illinois	Virginia
6	Nevada	Massachusetts	Maryland	Alaska	Minnesota	Washington	Arizona	Indiana	Alabama
7	Wyoming	Virginia	Kansas	Florida	Nebraska	Michigan	Alabama	Alaska	Missouri
8	New Hampshire	Utah	Oregon	Pennsylvania	North Carolina	Florida	California	Nebraska	Kansas
9	Massachusetts	New Mexico	Massachusetts	South Carolina	Arizona	Oregon	Tennessee	New Jersey	Florida
10	Indiana	Louisiana	Illinois	Georgia	Missouri	Indiana	Alaska	Kentucky	Pennsylvania

State Rankings of Net Migration for Colorado: Out-Flow

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1	Arizona	Nevada	Washington	Washington	Florida	Kansas	Wyoming	Arizona	Oregon
2	Washington	Idaho	Florida	North Carolina	Utah	Arkansas	Kansas	Nevada	Hawaii
3	Oregon	Kansas	Virginia	Missouri	Montana	Maryland	Florida	Oregon	South Carolina
4	Hawaii	Texas	Oklahoma	South Dakota	Washington	South Carolina	Louisiana	Virginia	Nebraska
5	Michigan	Kentucky	Idaho	Kansas	Kentucky	Idaho	South Carolina	South Dakota	Indiana
6	Idaho	Missouri	Wyoming	Nebraska	Pennsylvania	Virginia	Idaho	Minnesota	Utah
7	Texas	South Dakota	Mississippi	Tennessee	Texas	Iowa	Michigan	Iowa	Alaska
8	Oklahoma	Tennessee	Michigan	New York	Vermont	Alabama	District of Columbia	North Carolina	North Dakota
9	Arkansas	Arkansas	Minnesota	Maine	Connecticut	Louisiana	Utah	Washington	Arkansas
10	New Mexico	North Dakota	South Carolina	Vermont	Oregon	Tennessee	Connecticut	Maine	District of Columbia

Appendix B. Net Migration Rankings - County

Net Migration by County, 2011-2013						
	2011		2012		2013	
County	Net Migration	Rank	Net Migration	Rank	Net Migration	Rank
Adams County	3,157	5	3,952	4	4,551	4
Alamosa County	98	17	-85	51	48	25
Arapahoe County	6,200	2	5,679	2	6,976	2
Archuleta County	-124	52	46	21	73	22
Baca County	32	27	-40	41	-61	49
Bent County	-92	47	-115	54	-87	52
Boulder County	2,496	7	3,486	8	3,447	9
Broomfield County	671	10	740	10	838	10
Chaffee County	176	13	127	14	357	12
Cheyenne County	36	25	-5	30	2	34
Clear Creek County	-70	44	-9	33	-19	39
Conejos County	-10	34	-71	49	-43	45
Costilla County	97	18	-52	45	-50	46
Crowley County	5	30	-103	53	-68	51
Custer County	-40	41	25	23	70	23
Delta County	-509	62	31	22	43	26
Denver County	10,511	1	8,924	1	9,060	1
Dolores County	-41	42	-40	42	26	29
Douglas County	2,613	6	3,522	7	5,288	3
Eagle County	-962	64	-451	64	35	27
El Paso County	4,569	3	3,707	6	3,920	6
Elbert County	60	21	108	17	260	14
Fremont County	275	12	110	16	-206	62
Garfield County	-609	63	302	11	-156	56
Gilpin County	-19	39	6	28	81	20
Grand County	-301	56	-438	63	74	21
Gunnison County	-15	38	-70	48	-38	44
Hinsdale County	-12	35	-34	40	2	35
Huerfano County	-100	48	118	15	-62	50
Jackson County	-15	37	-31	39	20	32
Jefferson County	1,764	9	4,972	3	4,290	5
Kiowa County	45	23	-9	32	-16	38

Net Migration by County, 2011-2013						
	2011		2012		2013	
County	Net Migration	Rank	Net Migration	Rank	Net Migration	Rank
Kit Carson County	106	16	-48	44	-60	48
La Plata County	136	14	231	12	627	11
Lake County	34	26	-134	55	-22	41
Larimer County	3,198	4	3,892	5	3,651	8
Las Animas County	-327	57	13	27	-561	63
Lincoln County	-34	40	-13	35	-37	43
Logan County	-120	50	-144	56	-201	61
Mesa County	17	28	-241	60	-810	64
Mineral County	0	31	-8	31	21	31
Moffat County	-501	61	-321	62	-157	57
Montezuma County	-124	51	-27	38	182	15
Montrose County	-365	59	-179	58	-6	36
Morgan County	65	20	-302	61	-166	59
Otero County	-4	32	-189	59	-105	54
Ouray County	-45	43	85	18	21	30
Park County	-199	54	-52	46	91	18
Phillips County	-90	46	0	29	-16	37
Pitkin County	-167	53	25	24	82	19
Prowers County	-78	45	-154	57	-166	58
Pueblo County	536	11	197	13	149	16
Rio Blanco County	124	15	-42	43	-55	47
Rio Grande County	-112	49	-21	37	-174	60
Routt County	-352	58	-101	52	104	17
Saguache County	40	24	63	19	-149	55
San Juan County	-13	36	-11	34	5	33
San Miguel County	74	19	55	20	31	28
Sedgwick County	13	29	13	26	-22	40
Summit County	-421	60	-13	36	297	13
Teller County	-226	55	24	25	-99	53
Washington County	-8	33	-61	47	56	24
Weld County	1,825	8	3,005	9	3,707	7

Appendix C. State Rankings of Net Migration, 25 to 34 year Olds, 2007 to 2013

State	Ranks		
	2007	2010	2013
Alabama	15	21	37
Alaska	50	51	51
Arizona	6	12	7
Arkansas	33	20	33
California	2	2	2
Colorado	4	9	5
Connecticut	28	28	20
Delaware	31	45	30
District of Columbia	44	47	48
Florida	8	8	3
Georgia	7	11	13
Hawaii	48	39	18
Idaho	17	44	42
Illinois	25	30	12
Indiana	11	35	36
Iowa	23	34	26
Kansas	45	25	29
Kentucky	22	13	21
Louisiana	21	33	49
Maine	47	42	35
Maryland	40	10	15
Massachusetts	18	36	19
Michigan	43	49	23
Minnesota	37	29	11
Mississippi	51	43	39
Missouri	32	16	24
Montana	41	38	28
Nebraska	29	31	31
Nevada	30	32	25
New Hampshire	34	24	34
New Jersey	12	19	8
New Mexico	24	17	47
New York	35	3	32
North Carolina	3	5	17
North Dakota	49	37	43
Ohio	19	23	14
Oklahoma	14	18	27

	Ranks		
State	**2007**	**2010**	**2013**
Oregon	13	15	6
Pennsylvania	20	6	16
Rhode Island	39	26	41
South Carolina	10	22	22
South Dakota	36	41	38
Tennessee	27	14	9
Texas	1	1	1
Utah	16	48	46
Vermont	42	40	44
Virginia	9	7	10
Washington	5	4	4
West Virginia	38	50	45
Wisconsin	26	27	50
Wyoming	46	46	40

Source: 2007-2013 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS Files