

Who is Leaving Pittsburgh?

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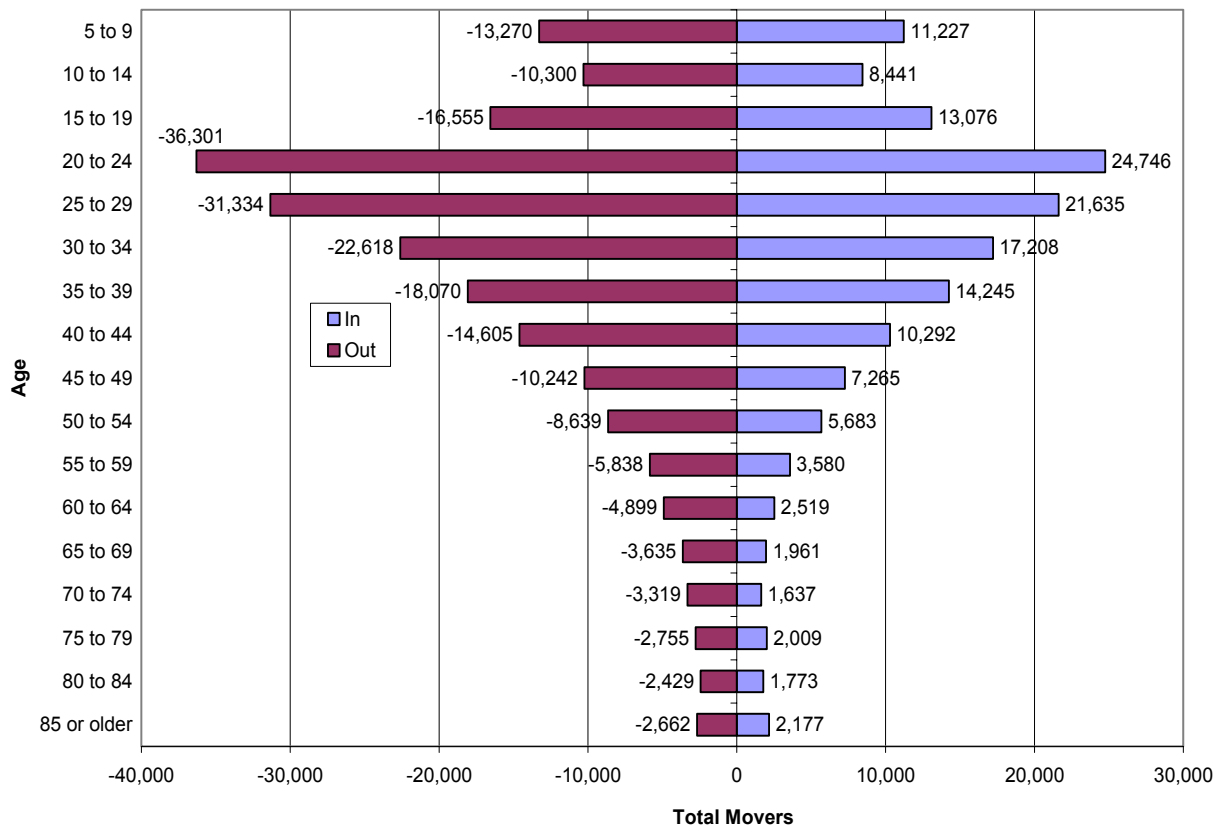
April 2004

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Pittsburgh's population loss has been well documented. The city has lost half of its population since 1950 and continues to shrink. The MSA, which has fared better than the city, had 58,000 more out-migrants than in-migrants between 1995 and 2000, a substantial increase over the first half of the decade. Migration is one part of population change; the other component is births and deaths. (For more on this topic, see *The Root of Pittsburgh's Population Problem*).

In order to understand migration, it is important not just to look at the net data, but to look at who is leaving and who is coming. Recent census migration allows for analysis of the population that lived in the region 1995 but not in 2000 and vice versa. This paper examines the demographic characteristics of people that left and moved to Pittsburgh between 1995 and 2000.¹

In-migration and Out-migration in the Pittsburgh MSA, 1995-2000



¹ Because migration data is based on residence in 1995 and residence in 2000, this data does not include intermittent moves. If someone left Pittsburgh in 1997, but came back in 1999, they would not be included in these statistics. If someone moved from Pittsburgh to Washington in 1996, and from Washington to New York in 1999, the move would be recorded as Pittsburgh (1995) to New York (2000).

Analysis

Pittsburgh experienced a net loss of people due to migration in every age category between 1995 and 2000; the city is not just losing young people. The 20-24 and 25-29 age categories were the most mobile; these groups showed both the largest losses and gains to the region. Pittsburgh gained more people in the 20-24 age group than in any other category (24,746) but also lost more people in that group than in any other category (36,301); the net loss was 11,555 overall. The 25-29 cohort gained 21,635 people but lost 31,334, resulting in a net loss of 9,555 people.

One reason for the high mobility of the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups is the presence of regional universities. Nationally, 40% of all 20-24 year-olds were enrolled in school in 2000. Many students choose to go to universities away from home. The University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon, along with other regional colleges and universities, attract students from all over the world and bring them to Pittsburgh. In 2002, 34% of Carnegie Mellon students (graduate and undergraduate) came not just from outside of Pittsburgh, but from outside of the United States.

College enrollment is a large driver of all migration to and from the Pittsburgh region. Of all people who came to Pittsburgh between 1995 and 2000, 20% were enrolled in college; of all people who left, 23% were enrolled in college. While it is possible that some of these people chose to enroll in college after moving to Pittsburgh (rather than the move being driven by enrollment), this data does show the importance of our colleges and universities in attracting people to the region.

Net loss was lowest from the 85 and older age group, but this is due to the small size of the cohort and the difficulty of moving at or after age 85. In-migration as a percentage of out-migration was highest (86%) for the 5-9 age group and the 10-14 age group (82%). In-migration is also a relatively high percentage of out-migration for the 35-39 age group (79%) and the 40-44 age group (70%). Because these cohorts are likely to have children in the 5-9 and 10-14 cohorts, this shows that the region is more attractive to families with children than to other groups. Out of all groups, in-migration as a percentage of out-migration is lowest for the 70-74 age group (49%); for every two people leaving Pittsburgh in this group, one moved to Pittsburgh. This group is most likely leaving after retirement, presumably to move to a better climate. The 60-64 and 65-69 cohorts also have rates below 60%.

So what do these figures say about population loss in Pittsburgh? While the loss of Pittsburgh's young people is a constant theme in the media, the city is not just losing young people. The region is losing more people than it is gaining across all age groups. This net outflow has been less severe in families with younger children and more severe among young people and retirees. Greater losses in the 20-29 year-old cohorts may be troublesome but are in line with national trends. This analysis demonstrates that Pittsburgh needs to become more attractive to all segments of the population. The region should therefore focus on amenities that cut across all age groups.