



Detroit MSA Migration Patterns 2019-2023

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Analysis

NCHEMS extracted migration estimates from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) for the Detroit Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The corresponding migration area within the PUMS files include the counties which define the Detroit MSA (Lapeer, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, and Wayne) and additionally the counties of Genesee and Shiawassee.

To increase sample sizes and improve the accuracy of the migration estimates, five years of PUMS data were aggregated for years 2019 through 2023 (most recent). The combination of years makes it possible to disaggregate estimates by education level, age group (25-44, 45-64, 25-64), and race/ethnicity. While most in-migration and out-migration estimates are statistically sound, most net-migration estimates (in-migration less out-migration) are not statistically significant at the 90% confidence level. However, trends and patterns can be observed with reasonable certainty from the data. The following migration patterns were observed for the five-year timeframe and additional detail can be found in the accompanying charts within the PowerPoint presentation.

- The Detroit MSA was a net importer of individuals during this time frame, especially among people holding a bachelor's degree.
- It attracted more individuals from elsewhere than it lost to other places, with the source of those net imports generally relocating from outside of the state, including foreign. The new residents were consistently more likely to have college degrees than those departing.
- The data indicates a reasonably large exchange of individuals to and from Detroit from other parts of Michigan, and although there is not a sufficient difference in the number of in-migrants and out-migrants to fully determine the net effects, it appears that the MSA region is losing a few more people than gaining. Point estimates, while they are generally not statistically significant, hint that Detroit has about the same influx of individuals with higher levels of education from other parts of Michigan as it loses to other communities in the state.
- Younger people between 25-44 years of age comprised most of the net-migration, and a much larger share of movement generally compared with the older population age 45-64
- Although not statistically significant, the older population age 45-64 trends as a net-exporter overall and by education level and is predominantly driven by movement of the white non-Hispanic population.





- Detroit was a net importer of younger individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher; it is not apparent that Detroit attracted individuals with some college or an associate's degree any better than it lost them to other places.
- Net migration was also positive for the Detroit MSA for Asians/Pacific Islanders with bachelor's degrees and those without any college, and for Hispanics overall.
- Migration Churn Rates (sum of in-migration and out-migration relative to total population) which measure the level of overall migration activity within a population group are greatest for the Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic populations followed by other/mixed non-Hispanic minorities. Less overall activity is observed among white and black non-Hispanics.

Comparison with 2013-2018

- Overall migration activity has slowed significantly (note that the 2019-2023 period includes the Covid pandemic)
- Most of the migration activity is still driven by the younger 25-44 age group.
- Net migration of white non-Hispanics has shifted from positive to negative (more leave the Detroit MSA than move in)
- Net-migration of the Asian/Pacific Islander population has slowed but is still the strongest among all race groups and is driven by persons holding a Bachelor's degree.
- Net-migration of the Hispanic population has remained positive steady.
- Net-migration of the Black non-Hispanic population has increased significantly but is still less than Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanics.
- Overall churn rates which measure overall migration activity (the sum of in-migration and out-migration relative to the total population) have decreased.
- The highest churn rates are still observed among Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic populations.
- Migration churn rates among white non-Hispanics and Black non-Hispanics are still below average and have dropped slightly.

