Research Brief

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First ACS County-to-County Migration Data Shows
Pennsylvania Gained More than 16,000 Residents

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The U.S. Census Bureau recently released the 2005-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) County-to-County Migration Flows. The data, which documents migratory patterns of the population during the period 2005-2009, marks the first set of county-to-county migration flow data to be generated from the ACS and is the first data set addressing this topic since the 2000 Census. Data released in the file shows the total number of movers between pairs of counties in the United States.

According to the data, the number of people moving into Pennsylvania from another state during the period 2005-2009 was 248,783 while the number of people moving out of the Commonwealth to another state was 232,331. During the time period, the net migration (in-migrants minus out-migrants) was 16,452. Overall, the Commonwealth gained 1.3 people per 1,000 residents over the time period 2005-2009. New Pennsylvania residents were most likely to come from counties in neighboring states (see Table 1.). Counties in neighboring states were also the most popular destination for former Pennsylvania residents with counties in Delaware, New York and New Jersey ranking in the top overall; however, counties from states in the Western United States (Arizona and California) ranked fourth and fifth, respectively (see Table 2.)

Table 1. Top 5 Out-of-State Counties for In-Migration to Pennsylvania, 2005-2009 Area Number of Movers		
Rank	County Name	Total Inflow
1	Kings County, NY	7,080
2	New Castle County, DE	5,951
3	New York County, NY	5,534
4	Camden County, NJ	4,229
5	Queens County, NY	3,863

Table 2. Top 5 Choices for Pennsylvania Out-Migrants, 2005-2009 Area Number of Movers		
Rank	County Name	Total Outflow
1	New Castle County, DE	7,678
2	New York County, NY	3,954
3	Camden County, NJ	3,530
4	Maricopa County, AZ	2,770
5	Los Angeles County, CA	2,486

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2005-2009 American Community Survey County-to-county Migration Flow Data
    * It should be noted that flows in the top 5 may not be significantly different from each other or flows outside the top 5.

During the period 2005-2009, more than 1.2 million people lived in a different house within Pennsylvania one year earlier. Of these movers, 344,042 lived in a different county. Table 3. shows the Pennsylvania counties with the largest number of in-migrants along with the county from which the largest number of migrants originated.

Table 3. Largest Total Inflow of Migrants with Largest County of Origin, Pennsylvania Counties: 2005-2009					
			Largest County of Origin		
Rank	**County Name**	**Total Inflow**	**County**	**Number**	**Percent**
1	Philadelphia County	66,096	Montgomery County	6,357	9.6%
2	Allegheny County	50,636	Westmoreland County	4,236	8.4%
3	Montgomery County	45,866	Philadelphia County	11,638	25.4%
4	Delaware County	30,140	Philadelphia County	8,052	26.7%
5	Chester County	29,527	Delaware County	4,010	13.6%
6	Centre County	24,829	Allegheny County	1,448	5.8%
7	Bucks County	23,348	Philadelphia County	4,109	17.6%
8	Lancaster County	21,766	Chester County	1,870	8.6%
9	Lehigh County	20,975	Northampton County	4,494	21.4%
10	York County	20,614	Baltimore County, MD	1,943	9.4%

Table 4. shows the Pennsylvania counties with the largest number of out-migrants along with the destination county to which the largest number of migrants settled.

Table 4. Largest Total Outflow of Migrants with Largest Destination County, Pennsylvania Counties: 2005-2009					
		Total Outflow	**Largest Destination County**		
Rank	**County Name**		**County Name**	**Number**	**Percent**
1	Philadelphia County	72,593	Montgomery County	11,638	16.0%
2	Allegheny County	48,103	Westmoreland County	3,731	7.8%
3	Montgomery County	41,817	Philadelphia County	6,357	15.2%
4	Bucks County	27,363	Montgomery County	4,883	17.8%
5	Delaware County	25,995	Philadelphia County	4,368	16.8%
6	Chester County	24,503	Montgomery County	2,520	10.3%
7	Lehigh County	19,479	Northampton County	5,282	27.1%
8	Lancaster County	18,059	Philadelphia County	1,333	7.4%
9	Northampton County	16,544	Lehigh County	4,494	27.2%
10	York County	16,514	Adams County	1,683	10.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2005-2009 American Community Survey County-to-county Migration Flow Data
* It should be noted that flows in the top 10 may not be significantly different from each other or flows outside the top 10.

More about County-to-County Migration Data
The 2005-2009 American Community Survey County-to-County Migration Files provide tables for each county in the nation, showing both inflows and outflows. Inflows are the number of people living in a given county who lived in another specific county one year earlier, while outflows represent the number of people who lived in a particular county one year earlier who subsequently moved to another specific county.

Caution must be exercised by data users when comparing data from today's release with similar data was published from Census 2000 SF-3. County-to-county migration data from Census 2000 SF-3 was produced for the number of migrants who moved between counties in the United States in the previous 5 years as opposed to the "1 year ago" time frame used by the 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

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Later this year, the U.S. Census Bureau plans to release a file from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey five-year estimates showing county-to-county flows by demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, and race and Hispanic origin.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey County-to-county Migration Flow Data

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's National State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.

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