

# CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

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#### MOBILITY OF THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES APRIL 1952

Nine out of every ten persons 1 year old and over in the United States in April 1952 had moved at least once in their lifetime according to the results of a sample survey released today by Robert W. Burgess, Director, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. About one-fourth of the total had moved since January 1951, three-fifths since 1946, three-fourths since 1941, and four-fifths since 1935. Persons whose most recent move occurred before 1935 constituted 10 percent of the total population, and persons always living in the same house, 9 percent. The great majority of this latter group was made up of children under 18 years old; only about 2 percent of the adult population had always lived in the same house.

In April 1952, 120,016,000 persons, or 79.7 percent of the persons 1 year old and over in the United States in April 1952, lived in the same house as in April 1951; 29,840,000, or 19.8 percent of the total, had changed residence within continental United States; and 638,000, or 0.4 percent, had moved into the United States from abroad (table 1). Of the 30 million mobile persons, that is, persons who had changed their residence within the United States during the year, about 20 million had moved within a county and about 10 million were migrants, that is, they had moved from one county to another. The rates of these various types of mobility were about the same as in other postwar years back to 1947.

As in previous periods studied (except during World War II), males tended to be more mobile than females and whites tended to move longer distances than nonwhites. These differences, although persistent, have been relatively

small (table 1). The 1952 survey, like previous surveys, indicates that mobility varies considerably with age. Young adults are considerably more mobile than the remainder of the population--in 1952 about 30.6 percent of the population 18 to 34 years old had moved during the year as compared with 16.3 percent for persons in the remaining age groups (table 3).

In 1952 there was some indication that the population in small cities and in towns and villages had been more mobile than that in large cities or on farms (table 2). As in previous surveys, the figures for 1952 indicate that persons in the labor force were more mobile than those not in the labor force and that the unemployed were more mobile than the employed (table 4).

For those persons who have moved more than once during their lifetime, only the date of the latest move was recorded. Thus, age for age, persons who have moved frequently are concentrated in the more recent periods, leaving only the occasional mover to appear in the earlier periods. At each age level, the percentage of persons who had moved between April 1951 and March 1952 was appreciably higher than the actual or implied percentage for any earlier year (table 5).

Within this general pattern, it appears that the proportion of moves in the various time periods covered is related to the total period of time in which it was possible to have moved. For example, at the extremes, persons 1 to 13 years old, born after 1935, could not have moved prior to that year whereas for persons 65 years old and over, there was, at a minimum, a period

of nearly 50 years prior to 1935 in which it was possible to have moved. Thus, 36.0 percent of the persons 65 years old and over, and 22.4 percent of those 45 to 64 years, had moved for the last time before 1935 as compared with 9.6 percent for persons of all ages.

The data on year of last move are based on the responses to a supplementary inquiry made for the first time in the 1952 survey. In addition to the basic statistics on age and year of last move presented in table 5, similar statistics are presented by color in table 6, by marital status in table 7, by income in table 8, and by relationship to head of household in table 9.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Population coverage.--The data for 1952 (covering the mobility period April 1951 to April 1952) shown in this report relate primarily to the civilian population of the United States 1 year old and over. Approximately 988,000 members of the armed forces living off post or with their families on post were also included, but all other members of the armed forces were excluded. For simplicity, the group covered is called the "population" or the "civilian population" in this report. The coverage of the population for the earlier survey years was essentially the same.

Urban and rural residence.--The definition of urban and rural areas used in the April 1952 survey was the same as that used in the 1950 Census. This definition differs slightly from that used in the April 1951 and March 1950 Current Population Surveys, but it is markedly different from that used in earlier surveys and censuses.

Size of place.--The urban population is classified as living in urbanized areas or in urban places outside urbanized areas. According to the definition used in the 1950 Census and in the April 1952 Current Population Survey, the population in urbanized areas comprises all persons living in (a) cities of 50,000 inhabitants or more in 1940 or according to a special census taken between 1940 and 1950; and (b) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, surrounding these cities. Residents of urbanized areas were classified according to the size of the entire area rather than by the size of the place in which they lived. The remaining urban population is classified as living in the smaller urban places not in the urbanized areas.

Farm and nonfarm residence.--The rural population is subdivided into the rural-farm popu-

lation, which comprises all rural residents living on farms, and the rural-nonfarm population, which comprises the remaining rural population. The method of determining farm and nonfarm residence in the April 1952 survey is the same as that used in the 1950 Census and in the April 1951 and March 1950 Current Population Surveys but differs from that used in earlier surveys and censuses. Persons on "farms" who were paying cash rent for their house and yard only were classified as nonfarm; furthermore, persons in institutions, summer camps, "motels," and tourist camps were classified as nonfarm.

Mobility status.--The civilian population of the United States has been classified according to mobility status on the date of the survey on the basis of a comparison between the place of residence of each individual at the survey date and the place of residence one year earlier. This comparison restricts the classification in terms of mobility status to the population born before the beginning of the mobility period; hence, children under 1 year old are omitted from this report.

The information on mobility status was obtained from the response to the following series of inquiries: The first of these was: "Was ... living in this house April 1 a year ago?" If the answer was "No," the enumerator asked, "Was ... living in this same county on April 1 a year ago?" If the response was "No" again, the enumerator asked, "What State (or foreign country) was ... living in on April 1 a year ago?"

In the classification three main categories are distinguished:

1. Mobile persons or movers.--This group consists of all persons who were living in a different house in the United States at the end of the period than at the beginning of the period.

2. Nonmobile persons or nonmovers.--This group consists of persons who were living in the same house at the end of the period as at the beginning of the period.

3. Persons abroad.--This group consists of persons, either citizens or aliens, whose place of residence was outside continental United States at the beginning of the period, that is, in a Territory or possession of the United States or in a foreign country. These persons are distinguished from movers, who are persons who moved from one place to another within continental United States.

Mobile persons are subdivided in terms of type of mobility into the following two groups:

1. Same-county movers.--These are persons living in a different house but in the same county at the beginning and end of the specified period.

2. Migrants, or different-county movers.--This group consists of persons living in a different county in the United States at the beginning and end of the period. Migrants are further classified by type of migration on the basis of a comparison of the State of residence at the end of the period with the State of residence at the beginning of the period.

- a. Migrants within a State.
- b. Migrants between States.

Year of last move.--The data on year of last move are based on the inquiry "What year did ... move into this house?" which was asked for all persons who were reported to have been living in the same house in April 1952 as they had lived in one year earlier. Classification was made by the respondent and enumerator into the time periods indicated in table 5. Because of the memory factor involved, the reporting for earlier periods is probably subject to some margin of error with respect to the exact time period in which the move occurred.

Age.--The age classification is based on the age of the person at his last birthday.

Color.--The term "color" refers to the division of population into two groups, white and nonwhite. The group designated as "nonwhite" consists of Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races.

Marital status.--Persons 14 years old and over are grouped into four major categories with respect to marital status: single (never married); married, spouse present (husband and wife living in the same household); married, spouse absent (husband and wife not living in the same household); and widowed and divorced.

A person was classified as "married, spouse present" if the husband or wife was reported as a member of the household or quasi household even though he or she may have been temporarily absent on business or vacation, visiting, in a general hospital, etc., at the time of enumeration. The group "married, spouse absent" includes married persons whose marriages had been broken by separation (often preceding divorce), married persons employed and living for several months at a considerable distance from their homes, those whose spouse was absent in the armed forces, husbands and wives of inmates of institutions, and all other married persons whose usual place of residence was not the same as that of their spouse.

Relationship to head of household.--The 1952 survey presents data on year of last move by

relationship to head of household. A household includes all the persons who occupy a house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a room that constitutes a dwelling unit. A quasi household is a group of persons living in quarters not classified as a dwelling unit, for example, in a house with at least five lodgers, or in a hotel, institution, labor camp, or military barracks. The classification by relationship to head of household used here involves the following categories:

Head of household.--One person in each household is designated as the "head." The number of heads, therefore, is equal to the number of households. The head is usually the person regarded as the head by the members of the household. Married women are not classified as heads if their husbands are living with them at the time of the census.

Wife of head.--As the designation indicates, this category comprises wives of household heads.

Child of head.--This category includes sons and daughters, stepchildren, and adopted children of the head regardless of their age or marital status. It excludes sons-in-law and daughters-in-law and, of course, any children of the head no longer living in the household.

Other relative.--This category comprises grandchildren and parents of the head of the household and other relatives such as sons-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, brothers, aunts, grandparents, cousins, and great-grandchildren, if these are members of the household.

All other except inmates.--This category comprises all persons living in households who are not related to the head and persons living in quasi households other than institutions.

Inmate.--This category comprises all persons, other than employees and their families, living in institutions, such as homes for the mentally or physically handicapped, places providing specialized medical care, homes for the aged, prisons, and jails.

Veteran of World War II.--A veteran of World War II is defined as a person who had been a member of the armed forces of the United States on active duty at any time between September 16, 1940, and July 25, 1947. This report shows separate data for male, but not female, veterans of World War II. Veterans of World War I or other wars, or those with peacetime service, are shown as nonveterans unless they are also veterans of World War II.

Employment status

Employed persons.--This category comprises those persons who, during the survey week,

were either (a) "At work"--those who did any work for pay or profit, or worked without pay for 15 hours or more on a family farm or business; or (b) "With a job but not at work"--those who did not work and were not looking for work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, bad weather, or layoff with definite instructions to return to work within 30 days of layoff. Also included are persons who had new jobs to which they were scheduled to report within 30 days.

Unemployed persons.--This category includes those persons who did not work at all during the survey week, and who were looking for work. Also included as unemployed are persons who would have been looking for work except that (a) they were temporarily ill, (b) they expected to return to a job from which they had been laid off for an indefinite period, or (c) they believed no work was available in their line of work or in the community.

Labor force.--This category comprises (a) the total of all civilians classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the criteria described above, and (b) persons serving in the armed forces who, at the time of the survey, were living off post or with their families on post. Members of the armed forces living on post, apart from their families, are not included.

Not in the labor force.--This category includes those persons 14 years old and over not classified as employed, unemployed, or in the armed forces. Persons who were engaged in "own home" housework, in school, inmates of institutions, retired, permanently unable or too old to work, seasonal workers for whom the survey fell in an "off" season, and the voluntarily idle are considered as "not in the labor force." Persons doing only incidental unpaid work (less than 15 hours) are also classified as not being in the labor force.

Income.--Income as defined in this report represents the "total money income," or the sum of money wages and salaries, net income from self-employment, and income other than earnings. The median income is the amount which divides the income distribution of persons in two equal groups, one group having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median. The income is that received during the calendar year 1951.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

The estimates presented in this report are based on data obtained in connection with the

Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey. The sample consists of about 25,000 households located in 68 areas in 42 States and the District of Columbia. The estimates shown in table 1 for periods prior to April 1951 to April 1952 are based on data obtained in connection with the Current Population Surveys for the respective periods.

The estimating procedure used in this survey involved, as a final step, the inflation of weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian population of the United States classified by age, sex, and veteran status. These independent estimates were based on statistics from the 1940 Census of Population, statistics of births, deaths, immigration, and emigration, and statistics on the strength of the armed forces and separations.

Since the estimates, except the independent estimates mentioned above, are based on sample data, they are subject to sampling variability. The following table presents the approximate sampling variability of 1952 estimates of selected sizes for over-all totals, i.e., those not classified by the items noted below. The chances are about 19 out of 20 that the difference between the estimate and the figure which would have been obtained from a complete census is less than the sampling variability indicated below:

Size of estimate	Sampling variability	Size of estimate	Sampling variability
50,000.....	60,000	3,000,000.....	460,000
100,000.....	85,000	5,000,000.....	590,000
300,000.....	145,000	10,000,000.....	820,000
500,000.....	190,000	20,000,000.....	1,100,000
1,000,000.....	270,000	40,000,000.....	1,450,000

Estimates of characteristics classified by urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm residence are subject to somewhat greater sampling variability, and estimates of characteristics classified by age and sex are subject to slightly less sampling variability than that shown above. Data in table 1 for years earlier than 1952 are also subject to somewhat lower sampling variability.

The reliability of an estimated percentage depends upon both the size of the percentage and the size of the total on which it is based. The following table presents the approximate sampling variability of estimated percentages for 1952, based on totals of selected sizes.

The estimates of sampling variability shown in these tables are not directly applicable to

differences obtained by subtracting one figure from another. The sampling variability in an observed difference between two estimates depends on the sampling variability of each of the estimates and the correlation between them.

In addition to sampling variation, the estimates are subject to biases due to errors of response and to nonreporting, but the possible effect of such biases is not included in the measures of reliability shown.

If the estimated percentage is:	And if the size of the base is:							
	50,000,000	20,000,000	10,000,000	5,000,000	3,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	500,000
	Then the chances are about 19 out of 20 that the difference between the estimated percentage and the percentage which would have been obtained from a complete census is less than:							
2 or 98.....	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.7	2.2	2.6	3.8	5.4
5 or 95.....	0.8	1.3	1.8	2.6	3.4	4.2	5.9	8.2
10 or 90.....	1.2	1.8	2.5	3.5	4.6	5.6	8.0	11.4
25 or 75.....	1.7	2.6	3.7	5.2	6.7	8.2	11.6	16.3
50.....	1.8	3.0	4.2	6.0	7.7	9.4	13.3	19.0

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