

Omaha Conditions Survey: 1998



Movement To and From the Greater Omaha Area

by:

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Introduction

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Efforts to satisfy local demand for workers can focus on two major strategies. One is to more fully employ the existing population. This would involve bringing more people into the

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labor force as well as reducing levels of unemployment and underemployment. The second strategy is to increase the local population by encouraging local residents to stay in the area and encouraging non-residents to move here. An earlier Omaha Conditions Survey: 1998 report covered survey findings on the labor force, unemployment, and underemployment. This report covers findings about population movement to and from the greater Omaha area.

Survey Sample

Information in this report is based on telephone interviews with persons 19 years and older from a random sample of area households. The survey sample consists of 1,200 completed interviews conducted between May 7 and July 13, 1998. Questions pertaining to movement to

and from the Omaha area were asked only of the respondent. Respondents were not asked to provide this information for other household members as was the case with some questions on other topics. For a detailed description of survey methodology, see page 20 of the earlier Omaha Conditions Survey: 1998 publication.

Geographic Area

Questions were asked of persons residing in the Omaha Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Omaha MSA is composed of Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, and Cass counties in Nebraska along with Pottawattamie County, Iowa. Respondents were asked about their movement, if any, to and from the five-county area. Movement within the five-county area (for example, from one neighborhood to another) was not asked.

Survey Questions

The survey questions pertaining to movement to and from the Omaha area were:

1. "Have you lived in the greater Omaha area your whole life, or did you move to the area from someplace else?" (Greater Omaha area is Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Cass, and Pottawattamie counties.)

If respondent moved to the Omaha area from elsewhere:

- 1A. "How many years have you lived in the greater Omaha area?"
- 1B. "Where did you live before coming to the Omaha area?" (city/state/country)
- 1C. "What prompted your move here?"
2. "In the next five years, do you plan to remain in the Omaha area or move someplace else?"

If respondent planned to move:

- 2A. "Why do you plan to move from the Omaha area?"

Limitations

The ideal study of population movement would include interviews both with persons who moved into the area and those who moved out. However, while persons who have moved in are relatively easy to locate and interview, persons who have moved out are not. The Omaha Conditions Survey: 1998 was limited to current area residents, and no effort was made to survey former residents. Note, therefore, that the question about moving in necessarily differed from the question about moving out in two

respects. First, the question on moving in asked what the respondent had actually done while the question on moving out asked what the respondent planned to do. Second, the question on moving in was open-ended in terms of time while the question on moving out was limited to the next five years.

It is important to keep these differences in mind when reviewing the survey results. For example, family-related reasons were given more often for moving to Omaha than for moving from Omaha. But this is because the structure of the survey was such that persons who moved here as children and remained were interviewed while persons who moved out as children (or children who plan to move out) were not interviewed. To provide better comparability between persons moving in and planning to move out, some tables show data just for those persons moving into the area within the last five years.

Population Estimates

According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau estimate (1997), 478,371 persons aged 19 and older reside in the five-county Omaha MSA. By applying the survey percentages to this figure, we estimate the number of persons who have moved to the greater Omaha area, plan to move out of the area, and so on. The reader is cautioned to note that these are simply approximations, not exact counts.

Movement to the Greater Omaha Area

About half the Omaha area’s adult residents (48.9 percent) have lived here their whole life. The other half (51.1 percent, or 244,507 persons) moved to the Omaha area from someplace else. An estimated 65,058 of the area’s adult residents (13.6 percent of the total) moved here within the last five years. Table 1 summarizes information on movement to the Omaha area.

Reasons for Moving to the Greater Omaha Area

Respondents who reported moving to the area from someplace else were asked what prompted them to move here. Responses were recorded verbatim and later categorized for analysis.

Looking first at all adults who moved to the area sometime in the past

(estimated at 244,507), 38.9 percent gave a work-related reason (other than military) for moving to Omaha. Another 10.0 percent said they came here because of the military. Family-related reasons were given by 35.9 percent of respondents, and 15.3 percent mentioned personal or quality-of-life reasons.

Looking just at those adults who moved to the area within the last five years (estimated at 65,058), 40.4 percent reported coming for work-related reasons (other than military). An additional 17.3 percent were military transfers. Family-related reasons were given by 25.6 percent of respondents, and 16.7 percent mentioned personal or quality-of-life reasons.

Reasons given for moving to the greater Omaha area are summarized in table 2.

	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over, total	478,371	100.0
Lived whole life in the greater Omaha area	233,864	48.9
Moved to the area from someplace else, total	244,507	51.1
Within the last 5 years	65,058	13.6
More than 5 years ago	179,389	37.5

Key Findings

- Of the estimated 478,371 persons age 19 and over in the greater Omaha area, about half (51.1 percent) are non-natives, having moved to the area from elsewhere sometime in the past. An estimated 65,058 adult residents (13.6 percent of the total) moved to the Omaha area within the last five years.
- When non-native residents were asked what brought them to the greater Omaha area, 38.9 percent gave work-related reasons (other than military transfer). An additional 10.0 percent said they came here because of the military. Family-related reasons were given by 35.9 percent, and 15.3 percent mentioned personal or quality-of-life reasons.
- Roughly half (49.4 percent) of the greater Omaha area’s non-native residents report coming here from elsewhere in the west north central states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. The east north central states, pacific states, and foreign countries also contributed relatively large numbers of new residents. (Many of those coming from foreign locations were military personnel.)

Characteristics of Persons Who Moved to the Greater Omaha Area

Table 3 displays selected characteristics of all adult residents who moved to the Omaha area from someplace else—how long they have lived here, where they came from, and their detailed reasons for coming.

Approximately one in four residents (24.0 percent) who came to the area from elsewhere did so less than five years ago. Another 14.3 percent of non-native residents moved here between five and nine years ago, and 25.8 percent moved here between ten and 24 years ago. Roughly one-third (35.9 percent) of the Omaha area’s non-native adult residents have lived here 25 years or more.

Where did the Omaha area’s non-native residents come from? One in

Table 2. What Prompted Move to the Greater Omaha Area

	Total		Within last 5 years		More than 5 years ago	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over who moved to the area from someplace else, total	244,507	100.0	65,058	100.0	179,389	100.0
Reason for moving to the greater Omaha area:						
Military	24,360	10.0	11,260	17.3	13,227	7.4
Work related, other than military	95,089	38.9	26,274	40.4	68,614	38.2
Family related	87,714	35.9	16,682	25.6	71,094	39.6
Personal or quality of life	37,344	15.3	10,843	16.7	26,454	14.7

five (20.1 percent) came from elsewhere in Nebraska, and another 15.1 percent came from elsewhere in Iowa. An additional 14.2 percent came from other west north central states (North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Kansas, and Missouri). Overall, the seven west north central states accounted for about half (49.4 percent) of the Omaha area's non-native residents.

Other regions contributing large numbers of new residents to the Omaha area are the east north central states (Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio), pacific states (California, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii, Alaska), and foreign countries. Some of the foreign in-migration consists of military personnel coming to Offutt Air Force Base from overseas assignments.

Detailed reasons for moving to the Omaha area that were mentioned frequently include work, job, or employment; military transfer; moved with a parent or spouse; and moved to attend college. A complete summary of reasons for moving to the Omaha area appears in table 3.

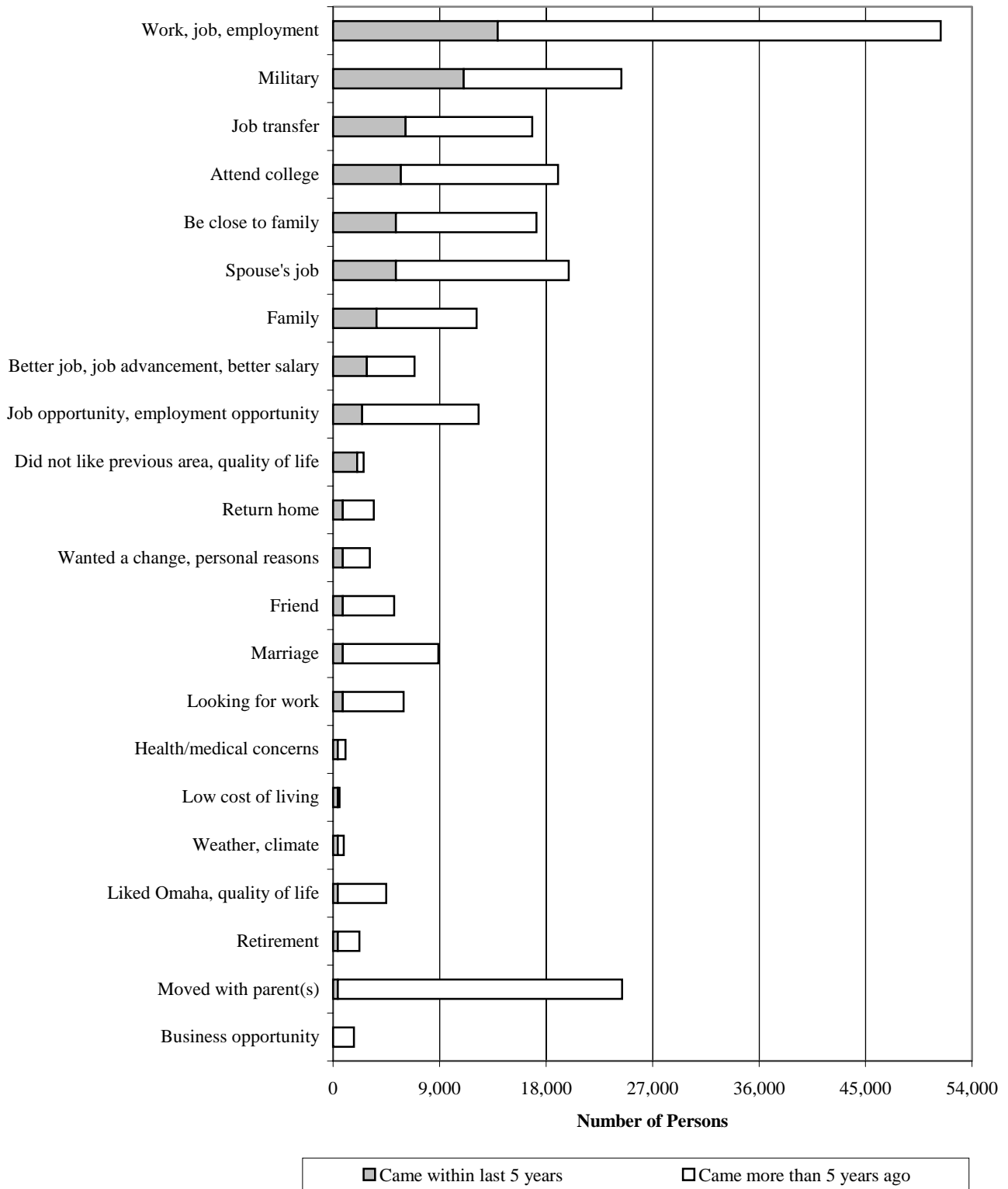
Chart 1 displays reasons for moving to the Omaha area for persons coming in the last five years and for persons coming more than five years ago.

Table 3. Characteristics of Persons who Moved to Greater Omaha Area from Someplace Else

	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over who moved to the area from someplace else, total	244,507	100.0
Years lived in greater Omaha area		
0-4 years	58,608	24.0
5-9 years	35,026	14.3
10-24 years	63,140	25.8
25+ years	87,733	35.9
Where lived before coming to Omaha area		
West North Central States, total	120,809	49.4
Nebraska	49,184	20.1
Iowa	36,983	15.1
Remainder West North Central States	34,642	14.2
East North Central States	24,021	9.8
Pacific States	22,075	9.0
Foreign	18,833	7.7
Southeast States	18,659	7.6
West South Central States	17,761	7.3
Mountain States	12,771	5.2
Northeast States	9,579	3.9
What prompted move to Omaha area (detailed response)		
Military	24,360	10.0
Work related, other than military, total	95,089	38.9
Work, job, employment	51,357	21.0
Job opportunity, employment opportunity	12,311	5.0
Job transfer	16,813	6.9
Looking for work	5,958	2.4
Better job, job advancement, better salary	6,896	2.8
Business opportunity	1,754	0.7
Family related, total	87,714	35.9
Spouse's job	19,913	8.1
Moved with parent(s)	24,408	10.0
Marriage	8,899	3.6
Be close to family	17,180	7.0
Family	12,144	5.0
Friend	5,170	2.1
Personal or quality of life, total	37,344	15.3
Attend college	19,006	7.8
Retirement	2,233	0.9
Liked Omaha, quality of life	4,486	1.8
Did not like previous area, quality of life	2,578	1.1
Weather, climate	894	0.4
Low cost of living	536	0.2
Wanted a change, personal reasons	3,113	1.3
Health/medical concerns	1,046	0.4
Return home	3,454	1.4

Chart 1.

**Persons 19 Years and Over Moving to Greater Omaha Area,
Ranked by Detailed Reason for Coming in Last Five Years**



Movement from the Greater Omaha Area

Of the estimated 478,371 persons age 19 years and over in the greater Omaha area, 13.6 percent (64,970 persons) plan to move from the area in the next five years (table 4).

Reasons for Moving from the Greater Omaha Area

Respondents who said they planned to move from the Omaha area in the next five years were asked why

they planned to leave. About half (52.9 percent) gave personal or quality-of-life reasons. Another fourth (26.2 percent) said they planned to leave for work-related reasons (other than military); 8.4 percent planned to leave because of military transfer. Family-related reasons were given by 12.6 percent of respondents who planned to move. (See table 5.)

Characteristics of Persons Who Plan to Move from the Greater Omaha Area

Table 6 displays information on how long people planning to leave have lived in the area along with their detailed reasons for leaving.

Of the estimated 64,970 adult residents who plan to leave in the next five years, about one-third (35.7 percent) are native to the Omaha area. Just over another third (37.9 percent) are non-natives who moved to the area within the last four years. The remainder are non-natives who have lived in the area five years or more.

Frequently mentioned detailed reasons for planning to move from the Omaha area are better job, job advancement, better salary; does not like Omaha/Nebraska; likes someplace else; weather, climate; and military transfer. A complete summary of detailed reasons for planning to move from the Omaha area appears in chart 2, and the data appear in table 6.

Table 4. Movement from the Greater Omaha Area Planned in Next Five Years

	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over, total	478,371	100.0
Plan to remain in the greater Omaha area	413,401	86.4
Plan to move from the area	64,970	13.6

Table 5. Why Plan to Move from the Greater Omaha Area in Next Five Years

	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over who plan to move from the area in next 5 years, total	64,970	100.0
Reason for moving from the greater Omaha area:		
Military	5,467	8.4
Work related, other than military	17,002	26.2
Family related	8,163	12.6
Personal or quality of life	34,338	52.9

Key Findings

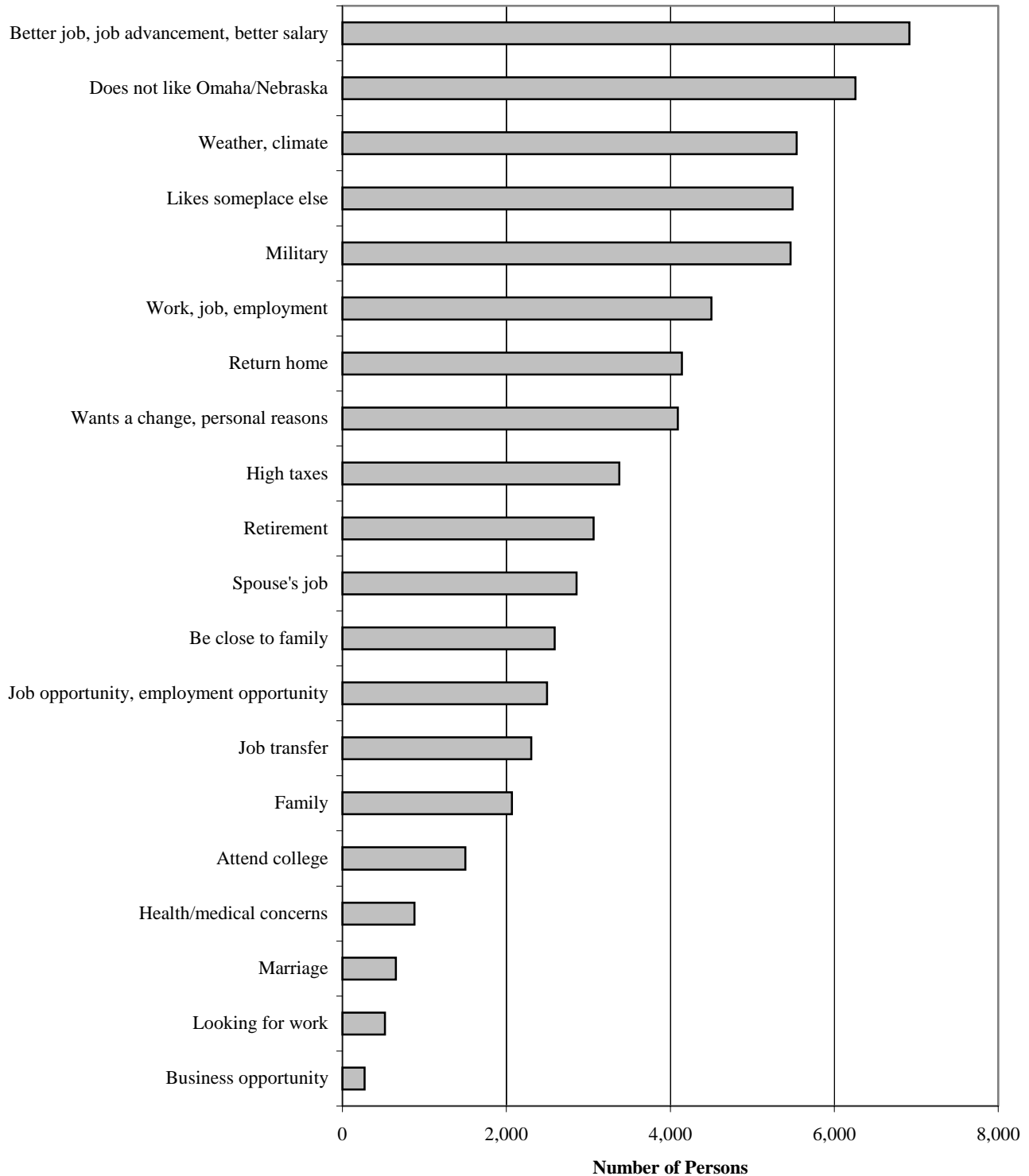
- An estimated 64,970 adults plan to move from the greater Omaha area in the next five years. This is 13.6 percent of the total adult population.
- About half those planning to move away (52.9 percent) gave personal or quality-of-life reasons for leaving. One fourth (26.2 percent) gave work-related reasons (other than military), and another 8.4 percent expected military transfers. Family-related reasons were given by 12.6 percent.

Table 6. Characteristics of Persons Planning to Move from Greater Omaha Area in Next Five Years

	Number	Percent
Persons 19 years and over who plan to move from the greater Omaha area in the next five years, total	64,970	100.0
Years lived in greater Omaha area		
Lived whole life in greater Omaha area	23,194	35.7
Moved to the area from someplace else, total	41,776	64.3
0-4 years ago	24,648	37.9
5-9 years ago	6,809	10.5
10-24 years ago	5,306	8.2
25+ years ago	5,013	7.7
Why plan to move from Omaha area (detailed response)		
Military	5,467	8.4
Work related, other than military, total	17,002	26.2
Work, job, employment	4,501	6.9
Job opportunity, employment opportunity	2,492	3.8
Job transfer	2,301	3.5
Looking for work	519	0.8
Better job, job advancement, better salary	6,917	10.6
Business opportunity	271	0.4
Family related, total	8,163	12.6
Spouse's job	2,854	4.4
Marriage	653	1.0
Be close to family	2,586	4.0
Family	2,070	3.2
Personal or quality of life, total	34,338	52.9
Attend college	1,501	2.3
Retirement	3,062	4.7
Likes someplace else	5,490	8.5
Does not like Omaha/Nebraska	6,258	9.6
Weather, climate	5,539	8.5
High taxes	3,377	5.2
Wants a change, personal reasons	4,092	6.3
Health/medical concerns	880	1.4
Return home	4,138	6.4

Chart 2.

Persons 19 Years and Over Planning to Move from Greater Omaha Area in Next Five Years, Ranked by Detailed Reason for Leaving



Persons Moving To and From the Greater Omaha Area: Similarities and Differences

Key Findings

- The greater Omaha area had the same proportion of adults move in within the last five years as it has planning to move out in the next five years (13.6 percent). This works out to roughly 65,000 persons both coming and going.
- Population sub-groups with high proportions of persons new to the Omaha area in the last five years include the young (especially the 19-to-24-year-old age group), Hispanics, Asians and American Indians.
- Population sub-groups with high proportions of persons planning to leave the Omaha area in the next five years also include the young (especially the 19-to-24-year-old age group), and Hispanics.
- Areas with the largest proportion of residents new to the greater Omaha area in the last five years are Sarpy County (27.3 percent), South Omaha (17.3 percent), Washington County (15.6 percent), and Douglas County excluding North and South Omaha (12.4 percent).
- Areas with the largest proportion of residents planning to leave the greater Omaha area in the next five years are Sarpy County (24.4 percent), North Omaha (19.4 percent), South Omaha (15.6 percent), and balance of Douglas County (10.3 percent).
- Residents new to the area in the last five years and those planning to leave in the next five years are more or less equally distributed across education and income levels. The greater Omaha area is neither attracting nor losing a disproportionate number of people in any particular level of education or household income.
- A larger proportion of African-American residents report planning to leave in the Omaha area in the next five years (22.1 percent) than report coming in the last five years (9.4 percent). Conversely, 53.8 percent of “other race” respondents (mostly Asian and American Indian) report coming in the last five years, but only 19.2 percent report planning to leave in the next five years.

As noted in the “Limitations” section on page 2, the design of the Omaha Conditions Survey: 1998 does not allow perfect comparison of persons moving in with persons moving out. With survey limitations in mind, this section looks at only persons who moved to the Omaha area in the last five years and persons planning to leave in the next five years. In so doing, we seek to address three key questions:

1. Overall, how does the proportion of residents who moved to the Omaha area within the last five years compare with the proportion of residents planning to move out in the next five years?
2. Are certain population sub-groups moving in (or planning to move out) at different rates than other sub-groups? For example, do some age groups have significantly different proportions of recent move-ins (or persons planning to move out) than other age groups?
3. In each population sub-group, how does the proportion of recent move-ins compare with the proportion of persons planning to move away? For example, is the proportion of young persons moving into the Omaha area significantly different than the proportion of young persons planning to move away?

Overall Comparison of Persons Moving In and Persons Planning to Move Out

The survey found no difference between the proportion of adult residents who moved into the Omaha

Table 7. Percentage of Persons in Selected Groups who Recently Moved to Omaha Area or Plan to Soon Leave

	Percentage of persons 19 years and over:		Difference between proportion of group moving in and proportion planning to move out (p < .05)
	Living in Omaha area 5 years or less	Planning to move from the Omaha area in next 5 years	
All persons 19 years and over	13.6	13.6	no difference
Age			
19-24	41.0*	42.3*	no difference
25-34	26.3*	21.3*	no difference
35-49	13.1*	12.1*	no difference
50-64	4.6*	9.5*	negative
65 +	2.3*	2.3*	no difference
Race			
Hispanic	50.0*	43.3*	no difference
White, not Hispanic	11.8*	11.9*	no difference
African American	9.4*	22.1*	negative
Other	53.8*	19.2*	positive
Education			
Less than high school	6.7	8.1	no difference
High school graduate or GED	11.3	11.6	no difference
Some college, but no degree	14.5	17.5	no difference
Associate (2-year) degree	11.5	16.2	no difference
Bachelor's (4-year) degree	15.0	12.0	no difference
Advanced degree	20.0	14.3	no difference
Area			
North Omaha	7.5*	19.4*	negative
South Omaha	17.3*	15.6*	no difference
Balance of Douglas County	12.4*	10.3*	no difference
Sarpy County	27.3*	24.4*	no difference
Pottawattamie County	2.7*	7.9*	negative
Cass County	7.3*	7.1*	no difference
Washington County	15.6*	0.0*	positive
Occupation			
Managerial and professional specialty	15.0*	13.2*	no difference
Technical, sales, and administrative support	11.9*	12.0*	no difference
Service	14.7*	16.8*	no difference
Farming, forestry, and fishing	0.0*	8.3*	no difference
Precision production, craft, and repair	17.6*	5.7*	positive
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	13.0*	18.8*	no difference
Unique military	55.6*	61.1*	no difference
Household Income (Annual)			
Under \$10,000	12.5	17.1	no difference
\$10,000 to 14,999	20.0	25.9	no difference
\$15,000 to 19,999	13.8	6.6	no difference
\$20,000 to 24,999	18.6	15.3	no difference
\$25,000 to 29,999	11.5	15.4	no difference
\$30,000 to 34,999	13.3	8.5	no difference
\$35,000 to 44,999	12.7	15.0	no difference
\$45,000 to 54,999	17.1	12.3	no difference
\$55,000 to 64,999	13.0	12.9	no difference
\$65,000 to 79,999	14.9	15.0	no difference
\$80,000 to 99,999	12.2	16.2	no difference
\$100,000 or more	13.2	13.2	no difference

*Differences across categories are statistically significant (p < .05)

area within the last five years and the proportion planning to move out in the next five years. Both groups represented 13.6 percent of the population, or roughly 65,000 persons. Thus, the Omaha area appears to be attracting and losing residents at more or less the same rate. (See table 7.)

Proportion Moving in and Planning to Move out by Population Sub-group

Here we examine recent movement into the area and planned movement out of the area by population sub-groups based on age, race, education, area of residence, occupation, and household income. This offers insight on any differential rates of movement to and from the area among sub-groups. Results are summarized in the first two columns of table 7.

Looking first at age, we find that the proportion of persons moving into the Omaha area declines as the age group increases. Among the 19-to-24-year age group, 41.0 percent have lived in the Omaha area five years or less. Among persons age 25 to 34, 26.3 percent have lived here five years or less. Only 13.1 percent of persons age 35 to 49 have been here five years or less. For persons age 50 to 64 and persons 65 and over, 4.6 percent and 2.3 percent respectively are recent move-ins.

A similar pattern exists for persons planning to move out of the Omaha area. Two out of five residents age 19 to 24 (42.3 percent) plan to move out of the Omaha area in the next five years. In the 25-to-34 age group, 21.3 percent plan to leave as do 12.1 percent of persons age 35 to 49. Among persons age 50 to 64, 9.5 percent plan to leave. Among persons 65 and over, only 2.3 percent plan to leave.

The proportion of recent move-ins also differs substantially by race. Half the Hispanic group (50.0 percent) as well as half the persons in the “other

race” category (53.8 percent, primarily Asian and American Indian) have lived in the Omaha area five years or less. By comparison, only 11.8 percent of white, non-Hispanic persons and 9.4 percent of African Americans have lived in the Omaha area five years or less.

The proportion of persons planning to move out of the Omaha area also differs by race. Hispanics had the largest proportion planning to leave (43.3 percent) followed by African-Americans (22.1 percent) and “other race” (19.2 percent). About one in ten white, non-Hispanic persons (11.9 percent) plan to leave the area in the next five years.

Differences in the proportion of recent move-ins by education level were not statistically significant, nor were differences in the proportion of persons planning to move out. Thus it appears that the Omaha area is both attracting and losing persons at similar rates across the spectrum of educational levels.

There were significant differences in the proportion of recent move-ins to Omaha by geographic area. Not surprisingly, Sarpy County (contains Offutt Air Force Base) recorded the highest proportion of persons who had moved to the Omaha area from elsewhere in the last five years (27.3 percent). Other areas with large proportions of their population new to the Omaha area were South Omaha (17.3 percent), Washington County (15.6 percent), and the balance of Douglas County (excludes North and South Omaha, 12.4 percent). Recent move-ins from outside the greater Omaha area composed only 7.5 percent of the adult population in North Omaha, 7.3 percent in Cass County, and 2.7 percent in Pottawattamie County.

There were also differences in the proportion of adults planning to leave the Omaha area by area of residence. Again, not surprisingly, Sarpy County

had the largest proportion planning to leave the Omaha area in the next 5 years (24.4 percent). Next were North Omaha, where 19.4 percent planned to leave the Omaha area, and South Omaha, where 15.6 percent planned to leave. From the balance of Douglas County, 10.3 percent planned to leave as did 7.9 percent from Pottawattamie County and 7.1 percent from Cass County. None of the survey respondents from Washington County reported planning to move from the greater Omaha area in the next five years.

Looking at major occupational groups, the survey found a statistically significant difference in the proportion of both recent move-ins and persons planning to move out. Most of the difference, however, is between persons in unique military occupations and everyone else. Over half the persons in unique military occupations (55.6 percent) had lived in the Omaha area 5 years or less compared with percentages ranging from 11.9 to 17.6 for all other occupational groups except farming, forestry, and fishing. (None of the survey respondents in the farming, forestry, and fishing occupational group had lived in the area for five years or less.) Likewise, 61.1 percent of persons in unique military occupations planned to move from the Omaha area in the next five years. For all other occupational groups, the percentage planning to leave the area ranged from 5.7 percent (precision production, craft, repair) to 18.8 percent (operators, fabricators, and laborers).

As was the case with education, differences in the proportion of recent move-ins by level of household income were not statistically significant, nor were differences in the proportion of persons planning to move out. The greater Omaha area looks to be both attracting and losing people more or less equally across all income levels.

Comparison of Persons Moving In and Persons Planning to Move Out by Sub-group

In this section we compare the proportion of persons in each sub-group who moved to the Omaha area in the last five years with the proportion of the sub-group planning to leave in the next five years. Sub-groups with significant positive or negative differences suggest potential shifts in the makeup of the greater Omaha area population. Results are summarized in the third column of table 7.

For four of the five age groups studied, there was no statistically significant difference between the percentage of persons moving to the Omaha area in the last five years and the percentage planning to move away in the next five years. The one significant difference was the 50-to-64-year age group where only 4.6 percent were recent move-ins but 9.5 percent planned to move away. This is not too surprising when one remembers that we are looking at moving in and moving out over two different time

periods—one in the past and one in the future. The proportion of people planning to leave the area when they reach retirement age is larger than the proportion of people moving to the area in the years just prior to retirement.

Looking at race, 9.4 percent of African-Americans reported moving to the Omaha area in the last five years, and 22.1 percent reported planning to move out of the Omaha area in the next five years—a significant difference. Over half the persons in the “other race” category (53.8 percent) moved to the Omaha area in the last five years, but only 19.2 percent said they planned to leave in the next five years. This, too, is a significant difference. Differences in the percentage of recent move-ins and persons planning to move out among Hispanics and white, non-Hispanic persons were not statistically significant.

There was no significant difference between the proportion of recent move-ins and persons planning to move out in any of the educational groups.

Washington County had a larger proportion of persons new to the

Omaha area (15.6 percent) than persons planning to move away from the area (0.0 percent). Conversely, North Omaha had a smaller proportion of persons new to the area (7.5 percent) than planning to leave (19.4 percent). The same was true for Pottawattamie County where only 2.7 percent had lived in the Omaha area five years or less but 7.9 percent reported planning to leave in the next five years. For all other areas, there was no significant difference between the proportion of persons new to the Omaha area and planning to leave.

Looking at major occupational groups, only one (precision production, craft, and repair) showed a significant difference between the proportion of persons new to the Omaha area (17.6 percent) and the proportion planning to leave the Omaha area (5.7 percent).

Each category of household income had a similar proportion of persons who had moved to the Omaha area in the last five years and planned to leave in the next five years. There were no significant differences.

Rates of Labor Force Participation, Unemployment, and Underemployment

This section looks at the labor market experience of adults new to the Omaha area and adults planning to leave. To do so, we compare rates of labor force participation, unemployment, and underemployment between adults who moved to the Omaha area in the last five years and who did not. We also compare those rates for adults planning to leave the area in the next five years and for those who are not. These results are summarized in table 8.

Labor Market Experience of Persons New to the Omaha Area

Looking first at adults new to the Omaha area, we find that they participate in the labor force at a higher rate than those not new to the area. This is not especially surprising since a large percentage of new residents say they came to the Omaha area for work-related reasons. The labor force participation rate for persons in the Omaha area five years or less was 89.4 percent compared to 73.2 percent for

persons living in the area over five years.

Differences in both the unemployment rate and the underemployment rate between adults here five years or less and those here over five years were not statistically significant. This suggests that persons who move to the Omaha area from elsewhere generally fare as well as current residents in the local job market.

Labor Market Experience of Persons Planning to Leave the Omaha Area

Persons 19 years and over planning to leave the greater Omaha area in the next five years have a higher labor force participation rate (88.3 percent) than those not planning to leave (72.9 percent). In addition, adult residents planning to leave the Omaha area had higher rates of both unemployment and underemployment. Among those planning to leave, the unemployment rate was 4.9 percent compared to 1.6 percent for those not planning to leave. The underemployment rate for persons planning to leave was 27.6 percent—over ten percentage points higher than the 16.9 percent rate posted for persons who did not plan to leave. Besides helping to more fully employ the existing population, then, reducing unemployment and underemployment might also help the Omaha area grow by keeping people here otherwise would have left.

Key Findings

- Both the unemployment and underemployment rates for adults who moved to the greater Omaha area within the last five years are similar to the rates for adults living in the area more than five years. This suggests that persons who move to the Omaha area from elsewhere generally fare as well as current residents in the local job market.
- Adult residents planning to leave the Omaha area in the next five years have significantly higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than do those adults planning to remain. Besides more fully employing the existing population, then, reducing unemployment and underemployment would also help the Omaha area grow by keeping people here otherwise would have left.

Table 8. Rates of Labor Force Participation, Unemployment, and Underemployment by Years Migration Status, Omaha MSA

	Labor Force Participation Rate (percent of persons 16 years and over)	Unemployment Rate (percent of labor force)	Underemployment Rate (percent of employed)
All persons 19 years and over	75.0	2.2	18.6
Years living in the Omaha area			
5 years or less	89.4*	2.1	22.5
Over 5 years (including native-born)	73.2*	2.2	17.8
Years planning to remain in the Omaha area			
5 years or less	88.3*	4.9*	27.6*
Over 5 years	72.9*	1.6*	16.9*
<i>*Differences across categories are statistically significant (p < .05)</i>			



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