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Realty Times

Where'd Everybody Go?

Jan 16, 2007, 12:05 pm PST

Americans were more likely to pull up roots in the Northeast and across the Rust Belt and put down stakes in the West and Southwest last year, according to a migration study by the nation's largest mover.

St. Louis, MO-based United Van Lines' "2006 Migration Study" of 227,254 interstate household moves in the 48 contiguous states and Washington, D.C. reveals a definitive migration pattern in the nation -- at least among those who used the mover's service.

United classifies each state as either "high inbound" (55 percent or more of the moves were into the state); "high outbound" (55 percent or more of moves out); or "balanced."

Most states were "balanced," but 12 states and the District of Columbia revealed definite inbound patterns while nine states revealed the opposite.

The South was a big draw as North Carolina came in as the top destination with a 64 percent inbound rate. Out West, Oregon was the second most popular inbound state at 62.5 percent.

Other states with high inbound rates were South Carolina, 60 percent; Nevada, 59.9 percent; Idaho, 59.3 percent; New Mexico and the District of Columbia, 57.9 percent; Alabama, 57.5 percent; Utah, 56 percent; Tennessee, 55.8 percent, and Montana, 55 percent.

On the outbound trail, Michigan tied with North Dakota for the top 66 percent outbound rate, followed by New Jersey, 60.9 percent; New York, 59.5 percent; Indiana, 58.2 percent; Pennsylvania, 57.0 percent; Louisiana, 56.4 percent and Ohio, 55.8 percent.

The study also found:

- After being outbound last year, Nebraska, at 52.5 percent inbound in 2006, had 3.2 percent more moves into the state compared to 2005.
- The year 2006 marked the first time in 25 years that Minnesota, at 51.3 percent inbound, saw more people moving in than moving out.
- Missouri at 51.8 percent outbound, continued its 12-year outbound trend as 1 percent more residents left in 2006 compared to 2005.
- Wisconsin, at 53.2 percent outbound, witnessed its lowest outbound influx since 2000.
- Reeling less from Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana's 56.4 percent outbound rate reflects 1.5 percent fewer people shipped out by United than those in 2005.
- Considered a balanced state, Oklahoma, 50.0 percent inbound, saw a 3 percent increase over last year's numbers.
- California and Florida may be perceived as inbound states but they are also listed as "balanced" states and actually lean toward being outbound. California had a 53.9 percent outbound rate while Florida's was 51.2 percent.

"Go West" has begun to take on new meaning.

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