

2009 Migration Data

Flock Talk:

Most states are balanced; fewer leave the nest.

Reading migration data is a bit like interpreting abstract art; you can trace the lines and see the patterns, but the larger image is harder to comprehend. This year, however, the big picture is clear: 71,474 relocations that Atlas handled in 2009 provide insight on patterns of movement throughout North America. For each state and province, the survey calculates the ratio of households moving out to those moving in. Most (29) are "balanced." Another 18 are "outbound," and the remaining 10 (including the District of Columbia) are "inbound."

inbound Canadian province, British Columbia, which teeters between balanced and outbound, edged into the balanced category. And Yukon Territory earned the distinction of no moves in or out.

Away From Center

With automakers struggling and manufacturing shrinking, the center of the country continues to shoo people. Illinois, like Missouri last year, joins Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana in the outbound ranks. North and South Dakota also slipped from balanced to outbound, a curious turn given relatively good rates of employment. And, though conventional wisdom about opportunity points west, Colorado, Nevada, Montana and Oregon dropped from "inbound" to "balanced" status.

How Status Is Determined

For more findings and an interactive map with ten-year histories for each state, visit www.atlasworldgroup.com/migration

Seeking Pots of Gold

To where did people follow their rainbows? Washington D.C. led with the highest percentage of inbound traffic for the fourth year in a row. It is part of an inbound cluster that includes Virginia and North Carolina as well as formerly balanced Maryland. Further north, Vermont and New Hampshire broke from tradition to become magnets in an otherwise balanced New England. The southwest states of Texas, New Mexico and, for the first time in five years, Oklahoma, are also attracting folks.

In the northern climes, Alaska extended its inbound streak to nine years. Newfoundland was the sole

