

State Highlights of County-to-County Commutation Data for Maryland

Over 450,000 Maryland residents earn their living out of state, according to recently released 2000 Census Journey-to-Work commutation data. Those who commute out of state to work comprise 18.1 percent of all working residents of Maryland.

At the same time, just under 183,000 out of state residents commute to work in Maryland resulting in a net export of Maryland workers of just under 268,000 in 2000. (See [Table 1](#).)

Washington, D.C. Main Destination

Washington, D.C. is the work place destination for the majority of Maryland residents who work out of state. In 2000, nearly 279,500 Maryland residents, or 62.0 percent, worked in Washington, D.C. Virginia was the second most popular destination, where nearly 116,400 Maryland residents worked, or 25.8 percent of all out of state commuters. In total, nearly nine-out-of-10 (87.8%) Maryland residents who work out of state work in these two localities.

Virginia (61,101), Pennsylvania (41,056) and Washington, D.C. (36,450) dominated in-commuting into Maryland. Combined, these three areas comprise just over three quarters (75.8%) of all in commuters into Maryland.

The net out-commutation (the number of in-commuters minus the number of out-commuters) is highest to Washington, D.C. (-243,029), Virginia (-55,266) and Delaware (-9,789). Just over three-quarters (76.5%) of the net outflow to Washington, D.C. and Virginia is from Prince George's and Montgomery counties, with Anne Arundel and Charles counties accounting for an additional 11.8 percent.

The net out-commutation to Delaware is almost totally the result of residents of Cecil County working in Delaware.

In contrast to the net out-commutation to Washington, D.C., Virginia and Delaware, Maryland is a net importer of labor from both Pennsylvania (28,218) and West Virginia (14,255). The net in-commutation from Pennsylvania is distributed to many of Maryland's bordering counties, but is highest to Baltimore (7,713) and Washington (7,330) counties. The net in-commutation from West Virginia is strongest to Washington (5,063), Allegany (3,069), Frederick (2,340) and Montgomery (2,030) counties. (See [County-to-County Commutation Tables](#).)

Change Since 1990

Overall, commuting into and out from Maryland, increased between 1990 and 2000. The number of out of state residents commuting into Maryland increased by nearly 31,500 (20.8%), while the number of Maryland residents working out of state rose by

18,545, or 4.3 percent. (See [Table 2](#) for 1990 data, [Table 3](#) and [Table 4](#) for change and percentage change between 1990 and 2000.)

Chiefly responsible for the much smaller outflow from Maryland was the decline to Washington, D.C. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of Maryland residents working in Washington, D.C. dropped by 11,216, or 3.9 percent. This decline is not surprising given that the total jobs in Washington, D.C. dropped from 685,600 in April 1990 to 647,000 in April 2000, a decline of 5.6 percent.¹

With the exception of out commuting to Washington, D.C., all other commuting flows with surrounding states increased over the 1990 to 2000 period. Gains in out commutation were greater than in commuters for states where Maryland has traditionally had net out commutation: Virginia and Delaware. As a result, net out commutation to Virginia increased by 14.2 percent and to Delaware by 19.1 percent during the decade.

Net in-commutation increased in 2000 for those states in which Maryland had net inflows in 1990 - Pennsylvania and West Virginia. For Pennsylvania net in-commutation to Maryland increased 24.6 percent while it rose by 38.6 percent from West Virginia. The bulk of the gains from Pennsylvania were to Washington, Baltimore and Frederick counties. From West Virginia, the largest gains were to Frederick and Montgomery counties.

Jurisdiction Commutation

The diverse economic geography found among Maryland's jurisdictions is reflected by the 2000 journey-to-work commutation patterns. [Table 5](#) summarizes the 2000 inter-jurisdictional in and out flows; net (in minus out) flows; the percent of residents working within their own jurisdictions; and, the percent of jurisdiction jobs held by jurisdiction residents. [Table 6](#) has the same data for 1990 and [Table 7](#) has the change between 1990 and 2000 for these items.

Net Commutation

Net commutation in 2000 was positive (meaning more commuters coming in to a jurisdiction than those residents commuting out to work in another jurisdiction) for seven jurisdictions and negative (i.e., more out commuters than in commuters) for the remaining 17 jurisdictions. The range for these net commutation totals went from a positive (net in) 92,625 for Baltimore City to a negative (net out) of 102,117 for Prince George's County. (See [Chart 1](#).) Besides Baltimore City, the jurisdictions with positive net in-commutation are all of the Eastern Shore or in the Western Region of the State. The largest net out-commuting is found in the suburban jurisdictions surrounding Washington, D.C. or Baltimore City.

¹ Current Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The net commutation patterns in 2000 are very similar to what existed in 1990. The same seven jurisdictions had net in commutation in both 2000 and 1990. All but Kent County experienced an increase in their net commutation over the decade. (See [Chart 2](#).) The largest increase among these jurisdictions was in Washington County, where net in commutation grew from 295 in 1990 to just under 4,100 in 2000. This increase during the decade was due to much larger in flows from West Virginia (particularly Berkeley County) and Pennsylvania (primarily Franklin County).

Of those jurisdictions with continued net out commutation, there were several jurisdictions which had fairly sizeable drops in their net outflows, including Prince George's (17,676), Baltimore (9,673) and Howard counties (5,849). (See [Table 7](#).) The decline in Prince George's County's net outflows was due chiefly to the reduction of County residents commuting to Washington, D.C. For Baltimore County, the decline was primarily a function of lower out-commutation to Baltimore City and larger in commuting from Harford County. For Howard County, an increase in commuters from Baltimore, Carroll and Harford counties reduced the County's net out flow total, as Howard County's strong job growth during the decade made it more of a prime workplace destination for the Baltimore Region.

Residents Working Within Their Own Jurisdiction

The percent of workers whose jobs are within their jurisdiction of residence also shows great variation across Maryland, from a high of 85.1 percent in Allegany County to a low of 38.0 percent for those who live and work in Howard County. (See [Chart 3](#).) Most of the jurisdictions that have less than half of their residents working within their own borders are the "newer" or later-developing suburban jurisdictions such as Howard, Charles, Queen Anne's, Calvert, Carroll and Cecil counties. These jurisdictions have developed into bedroom communities supplying labor for jobs in "older" or earlier-developing suburban counties – Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince George's – or the central cities of Baltimore City or Washington, D.C.

With the exception of Prince George's County, all of the remaining older suburban jurisdictions of Baltimore, Montgomery and Anne Arundel counties have between 50 and 60 percent of their residents working within their own borders. For these three older suburban counties, many remaining residents are commuting to either another older suburban county or to Baltimore City or Washington, D.C.

All of the Western Maryland counties, and the Eastern Shore counties of Kent, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester have 70 percent or more of their residents working within their own borders. These jurisdictions have relatively small commutation flows and have yet to forge strong economic links with major metropolitan counties.

The relative ranking of counties by percent of their residents who work in their own county in 2000 is very similar to 1990 with a few exceptions. (See [Chart 4](#).) Allegany, Wicomico and Talbot were at the top in 1990 and 2000, and Prince George's and Howard County were at the bottom in both years.

Only three jurisdictions, Baltimore, Howard and St. Mary's counties, increased their share of residents who work in their own county between 1990 and 2000. For Howard and Baltimore counties, this increase was 2.2 percentage points and for St. Mary's County 1.6 percentage points. (See [Table 7](#).) The gains in Howard and St. Mary's were fueled by solid job growth during the decade that ranked near the top in both absolute and percentage terms. For Baltimore County the increase in share was partly due to the growth in jobs and partly due to the decline in jobs in Baltimore City leading to a reduction in out commuting to Baltimore City.

Of those jurisdictions that had declines in the share of residents working in their own jurisdictions, the largest drops were in Dorchester (-9.5 percentage points and Garrett (-6.1 percentage points) counties. The drop in Dorchester County (from 76.6% in 1990 to 67.2% in 2000) seemed to be the result of a deteriorating economic climate. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of County residents working in Dorchester declined by nearly 1,500 (or 13.6%) as the County lost 300 jobs, or 1.9 percent. As a result, net out commutation nearly tripled from 534 in 1990 to 1,598 in 2000. Most of the increase in out-commuting was to Talbot County.

The decline in Garrett County (from 78.9% in 1990 to 72.8% in 2000) came despite an increase in the total number of Garrett residents working in Garrett County (an additional 313, to 9,427) and good job growth (3,741, or 9.1%) in excess of total labor force growth (1,150, or 9.1%). Most of the increased outflow was to Allegany County.

Jurisdiction Jobs Held by Jurisdiction Residents

The percent of a jurisdiction's jobs held by its own residents also shows great variation, ranging from St. Mary's 80.0 percent to Howard County's 42.7 percent. (See [Chart 5](#).) St. Mary's high proportion of jobs held by its residents is due chiefly to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station being the major employer in the County. Howard County's low proportion is primarily the result of its prime location midway between Baltimore City and Washington, D.C. This location over the last 20 years has allowed its residents to commute to other job opportunities throughout the two metropolitan areas. In addition, Howard County, unlike most newer suburban jurisdictions, has developed a significant job base, which has attracted workers from other suburban counties.

Jurisdictions that have the highest share of jobs held by their own residents tend to have either a large military base as a dominant employer (such as St. Mary's and Harford counties), or are more likely to be the more rural jurisdictions located in Western Maryland and on the Eastern Shore which do not have significant volumes of cross-jurisdictional commuting.

Besides Howard County, the jurisdictions with the lowest percentage of jobs held by their own residents include Baltimore City and the four older suburban jurisdictions of Prince George's, Montgomery, Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties. The low proportion of jobs held by their own residents in the older suburban jurisdictions is due to

the cross-jurisdictional commuting patterns, not only among themselves, but also with the newer suburban jurisdictions and central cities.

Baltimore City's second lowest share in Maryland of jobs held by its own residents (45.2%) is a result of the large net in-commuting by suburban residents (especially Baltimore County). The fact that suburban commuters hold over one-half of the total jobs in the City emphasizes the extreme importance of Baltimore City to the economic vitality of the State as a whole, and even more importantly, to the Baltimore Region.

As a result of the continued decentralization of jobs and population in Maryland during the 1990s, the percent of jurisdiction jobs held by jurisdiction residents dropped in all but two counties (Baltimore and Garrett). (See [Chart 6](#) and [Table 7](#).)

The largest drops were seen in St. Mary's County (-10.1 percentage points) and Somerset County (-9.3 percentage points). For St. Mary's County, which had the highest share of jobs held by jurisdiction residents in 1990 (90.1%), the relatively large decline was a sign of prosperity. That is, as a result of the expansion of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, the number of in-commuters increased by 157 percent at the same time that the share of County residents working in their home county increased 1.6 percentage points (one of only three counties to have an increase since 1990).

For Somerset County, the drop in share of jobs held by jurisdiction residents was also the result of in-commutation increasing more than out-commuters (principally from Wicomico County). Unlike St. Mary's County, however, both the absolute and percent of County residents working in Somerset declined between 1990 and 2000, and according to Census data, the unemployment rate increased from 8.4 percent in 1990 to 9.7 percent in 2000.

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