Moving In, Moving Out

A special report analyzing Hudson Valley demographic changes early in the Covid-19 pandemic

July 2022

CONTENTS

Cover image: The Bear Mountain Bridge photographed from Fort Montgomery in Orange County.

Inside image: The Shawangunk Ridge as seen from the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail in New Paltz.

Photographs courtesy of Danny Wild, on Instagram @dannywild11.

Introduction: Hudson Valley Migration

A batch of data released by the federal government shows that thousands of people moved into the Hudson Valley during the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, pandemic-driven migration throughout the United States resulted in the Hudson Valley gaining more people than it lost for the first time in more than a decade.

The new migration data were released by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in late spring. The data utilize information from tax returns to track domestic and international migration in the United States. The IRS migration data are considered among the most accurate information to track the movement of people throughout the country.

The latest set of data tracks migration by analyzing the address changes between tax returns in 2019 and 2020. It includes some returns that were processed through mid-July 2021 because of delays caused by the pandemic.

That means the data show migration for approximately one year before the pandemic began, and partial migration data from approximately the first year of the pandemic. The regional analysis below accounts for inflow and outflow data from the nine-county region that includes Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties.

Key takeaways

- **The nine-county region gained 105,716 people and lost 105,087 because of migration in 2019-2020, for a net gain of 629 people.** That is not many, but the small increase is a noteworthy reversal of huge population losses across the Hudson Valley in preceding years. From 2016-2019, the region lost about 5,000 residents during each reporting period. It lost a 7,255 people to migration during the 2015-2016 period alone.

- **The data confirm that thousands of people moved out of New York City and into the Hud-son Valley during the first months of the pandemic.** A total of 48,642 people from the five boroughs of New York City moved into the Hudson Valley, and 15,248 moved out of the region and into the city, for a net gain of 33,394 people in the Hudson Valley.

- **The data show a north-south divide across the region. Counties in the lower Hudson Valley (Westchester, Rockland, Orange) lost population due to migration, while counties to the north showed net gains in population.** Conclusions are hard to draw because these data include migration before and during the pandemic, but the divide likely indicates a movement away from densely populated areas into smaller cities, villages, and rural towns. This trend was well documented in real estate data that showed people leaving high-population areas because they feared that density put them at a greater risk of contracting the novel coronavirus.

Why should we care about migration?

Migration into and out of the Hudson Valley affects many aspects of life across the region, including schools, businesses, taxes, and the number of Congressional seats assigned to New York.

The Hudson Valley has experienced a net outflow of people due to migration for more than a decade. That loss of population has resulted in fewer children in our schools, which forced school districts to close some of their elementary buildings forever. It has reduced the size of the workforce in many parts of the region, which makes it more difficult for employers to find workers. The State of New York once sent 45 representatives to Congress, but that number has dropped to 26 because of our population declines relative to gains elsewhere in the country.

In general, Hudson Valley residents who left the region over the past decade migrated to two categories of

destinations. Some relocated to urban centers within the state, especially Albany and New York City. Other popular destinations – Arizona, Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina – had the common features of good weather and less costly standards of living.

The latest batch of migration data show a shift, particularly in the outward migration to New York City. As we analyze these data, elected officials, planners, business owners and others should ask these questions:

Why did they come here? The region should seek to understand why thousands of people moved into the Hudson Valley during the pandemic, with a particular focus on the communities they moved to, the lifestyles they sought, and the businesses or amenities that attracted them here.

Will they stay? The Hudson Valley has not seen a net-increase in migration since the few years that followed the terrorist attacks of 9/11. That inflow was driven by people who moved into the region from New York City, but generally continued their commute to jobs in the city. That trend lasted for two to four years, after which migration shifted back to New York City.

This time could be different. Work-from-home software is better and more common than it was in 2001. And discussions with regional leaders suggest that this new wave of residents are more attracted to the Hudson Valley's small cities and villages than the wave that came 20 years ago. The region should be engaged in a discussion with our new neighbors to understand what they enjoy about the Hudson Valley, the services that are lacking, and what we might do to keep them here.

What are the effects? Any shift in population comes with opportunities and challenges. A net inflow of people brings significant energy and opportunity to the Hudson Valley. New residents often invest in homes and businesses, as we've seen with the record increase in home repairs and remodels over the past two years. An inflow of new residents also tends to bring entre-

## Regional Migration 2019-2020

- 105,716 people moved into the region

- 105,087 people moved out of the region

- The Hudson Valley gained 629 people from migration, the first net gain from migration in more than a decade

- 48,642 people moved into the Hudson Valley from New York City

- 15,248 people moved to New York City from the Hudson Valley

- The Hudson Valley experienced a net gain of 33,394 residents from NYC

preneurs who open new businesses, a spark of creativity that can inspire community art and events, and investment to our communities. In some cases, new resident bring their children to schools who have seen their enrollments steadily shrink.

An influx of new residents also brings challenges, but those tend to be fewer. For example, the significant uptick in home prices and rental costs can be attributed to the high demand for housing from new residents, and the lack of housing supply to meet that surge in demand. An increase in population can also reveal some of our regional shortcomings, like the lack of child care, medical services or public transportation in many of our rural communities.

The pages that follow include a regional analysis of demographic shifts compared with New York City, and county-by-county data that show in the inflow, outflow, and the nationwide counties that are connected to those migration trends.

Regional Data

Inflow ▪ Outflow

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
	-7,255	-5,084	-4,176	-4,493	629
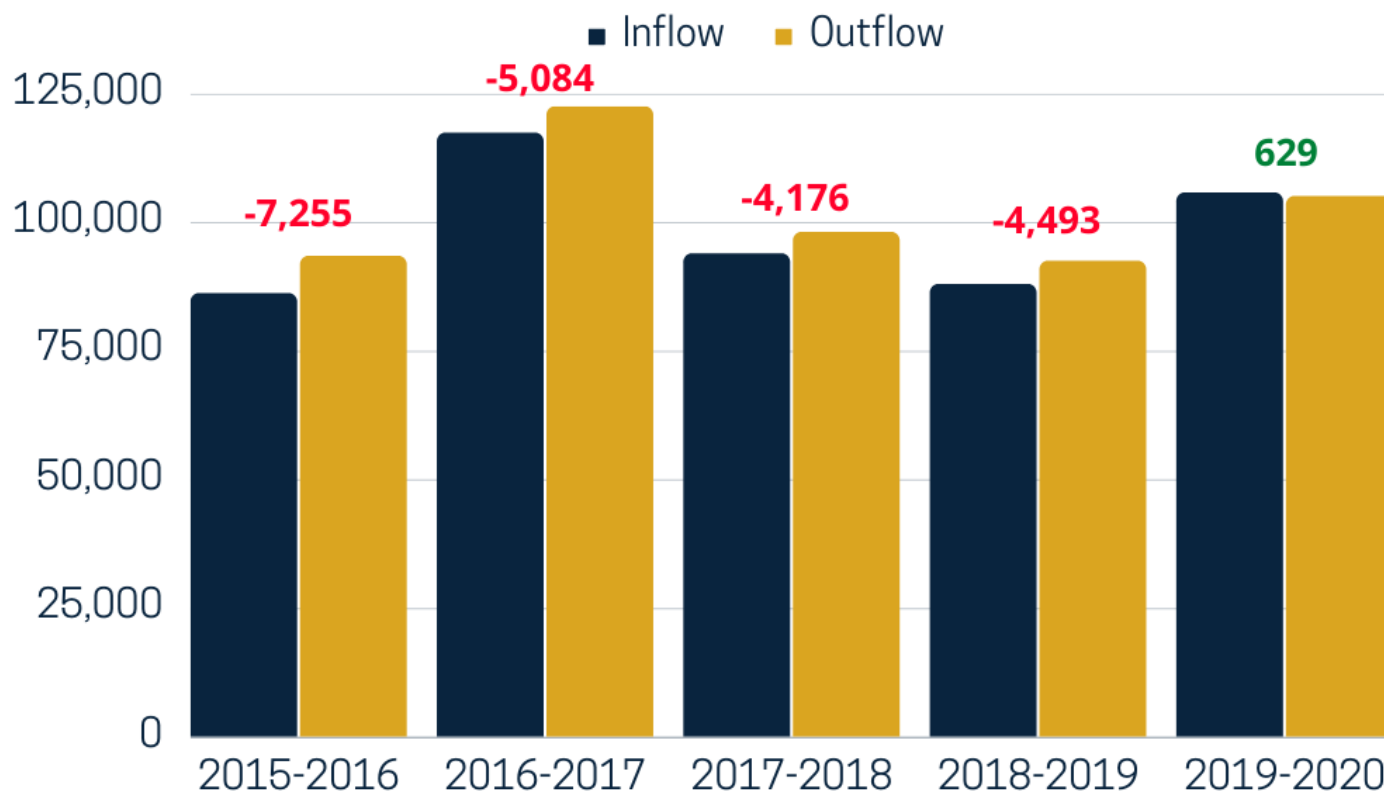
Hudson Valley Outflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
NYC Counties	NY	15,248
Fairfield County	CT	6,809
Bergen County	NJ	2,547
Long Island Counties	NY	2,134
Palm Beach County	FL	1,460
Albany County	NY	959
New Haven County	CT	829
Hudson County	NJ	583
Horry County	SC	527
Broward County	FL	522

Hudson Valley Inflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
NYC Counties	NY	48,642
Long Island Counties	NY	3,056
Fairfield County	CT	2,401
Bergen County	NJ	1,733
Hudson County	NJ	1,184
Albany County	NY	571
Los Angeles County	CA	570
New Haven County	CT	341
Passaic County	NJ	329
Palm Beach County	FL	324

The bar chart at the top of this page shows the total inflow and outflow migration for the Hudson Valley over the past five years. The lists show the top 10 counties from which the most people moved into the region or out of the region. Please note that migration between counties within the Hudson Valley is not included in the top 10 lists.

New York City Data

People migrate in large numbers between the Hudson Valley and New York City every year.

The chart on this page shows that recent migration, likely influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic, resulted in net gains for the Hudson Valley. The data show the inflow of people from New York City, the outflow to the city, and the net gains that each of our counties made from 2019 to early 2021.

The line chart below shows the population of New York City over the past decade. The city's population grew for nearly the entire decade, largely because of birth rates, longer life expectancies, and international migration into the city.

An analysis by the New York City Planning Department, however, shows a net loss of approximately 337,000 residents during the first year of the pandemic. This was driven by domestic migration out of the city, lower than usual international migration into the city, lower births and higher than usual deaths.

Hudson Valley / NYC Migration			
County	Inflow from NYC	Outflow to NYC	Net total
Columbia	1,091	134	957
Dutchess	5,906	951	4,955
Greene	566	127	439
Orange	5,849	1,785	4,064
Putnam	1,372	394	978
Rockland	4,751	1,312	3,439
Sullivan	1,665	461	1,204
Ulster	2,421	468	1,953
Westchester	25,021	9,616	15,405

Source: Internal Revenue Service

New York City Population, 2010-2021

July 1, 2021 Population Estimate: 8,467,513
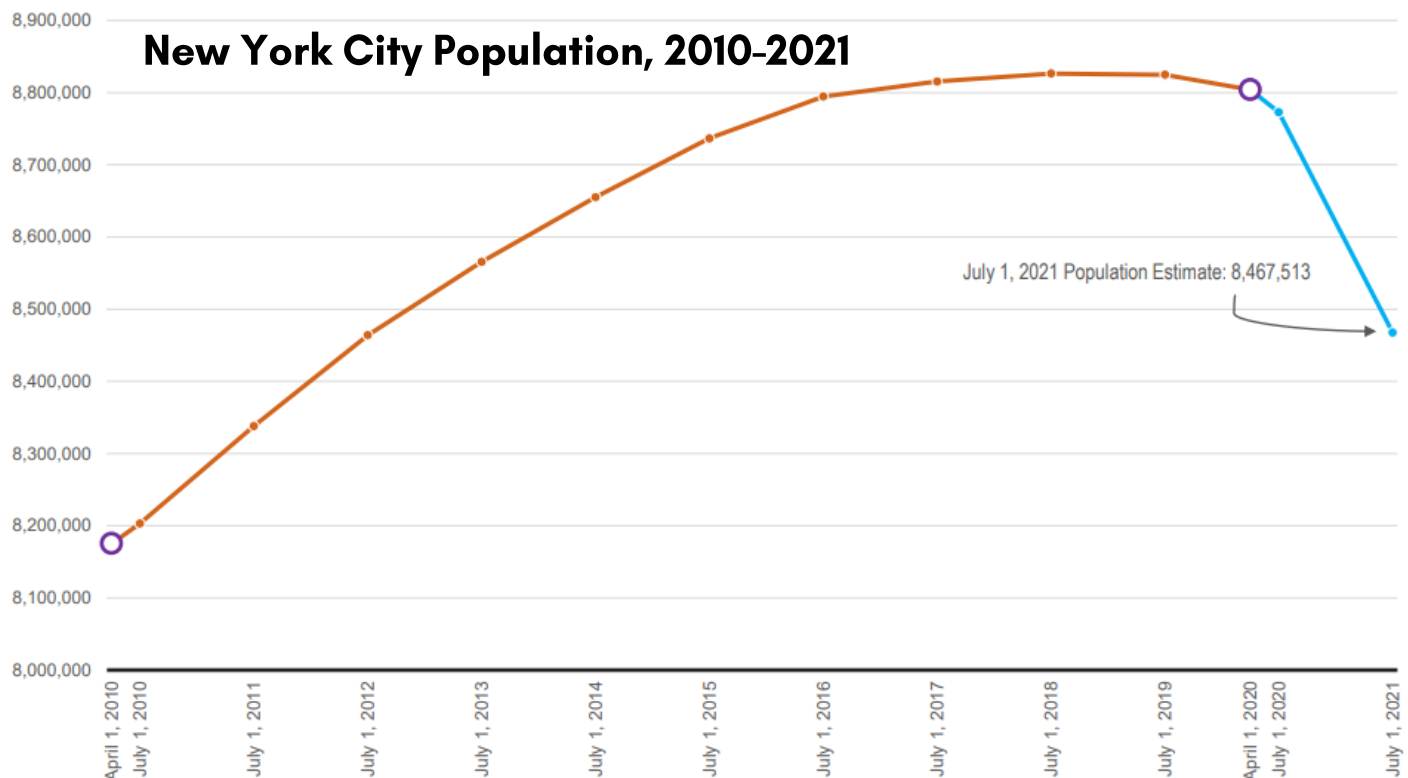
Source: NYC Department of Planning

Columbia County

Inflow ■ **Outflow**
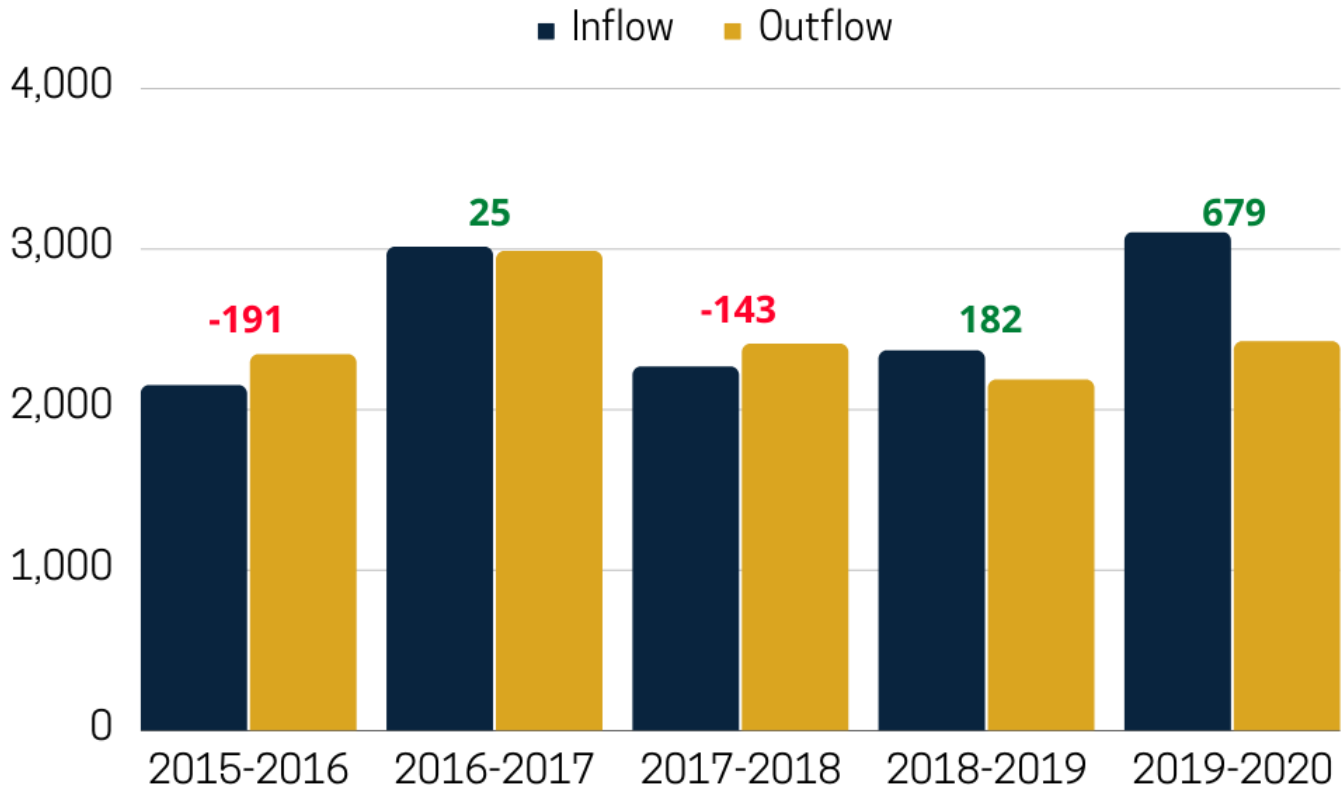
Columbia County Outflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
Rensselaer County	NY	291
Albany County	NY	218
NYC Counties	NY	134
Berkshire County	MA	81
Saratoga County	NY	55
Schenectady County	NY	38

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Columbia County Inflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
NYC Counties	NY	1,091
Rensselaer County	NY	174
Albany County	NY	131
Berkshire County	MA	81
Long Island Counties	NY	37
Schenectady County	NY	36

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Guide to county-by-county data: Each county in the pages that follow will include a bar chart and two lists. The bar chart shows the inflow and outflow for that county for each of the past five years reported by the IRS, with a net calculation at the top of each year. The lists show the counties and states from which the greatest number of people came from, or moved to, for each county in the Hudson Valley.

The lists **do not** include migration between counties in the Hudson Valley. Also note that net inflow/outflow should not be confused with total population gain or loss, which is a function of births, deaths and other factors that are not included in the IRS data. The IRS is the source of all data in the charts and lists.

Dutchess County
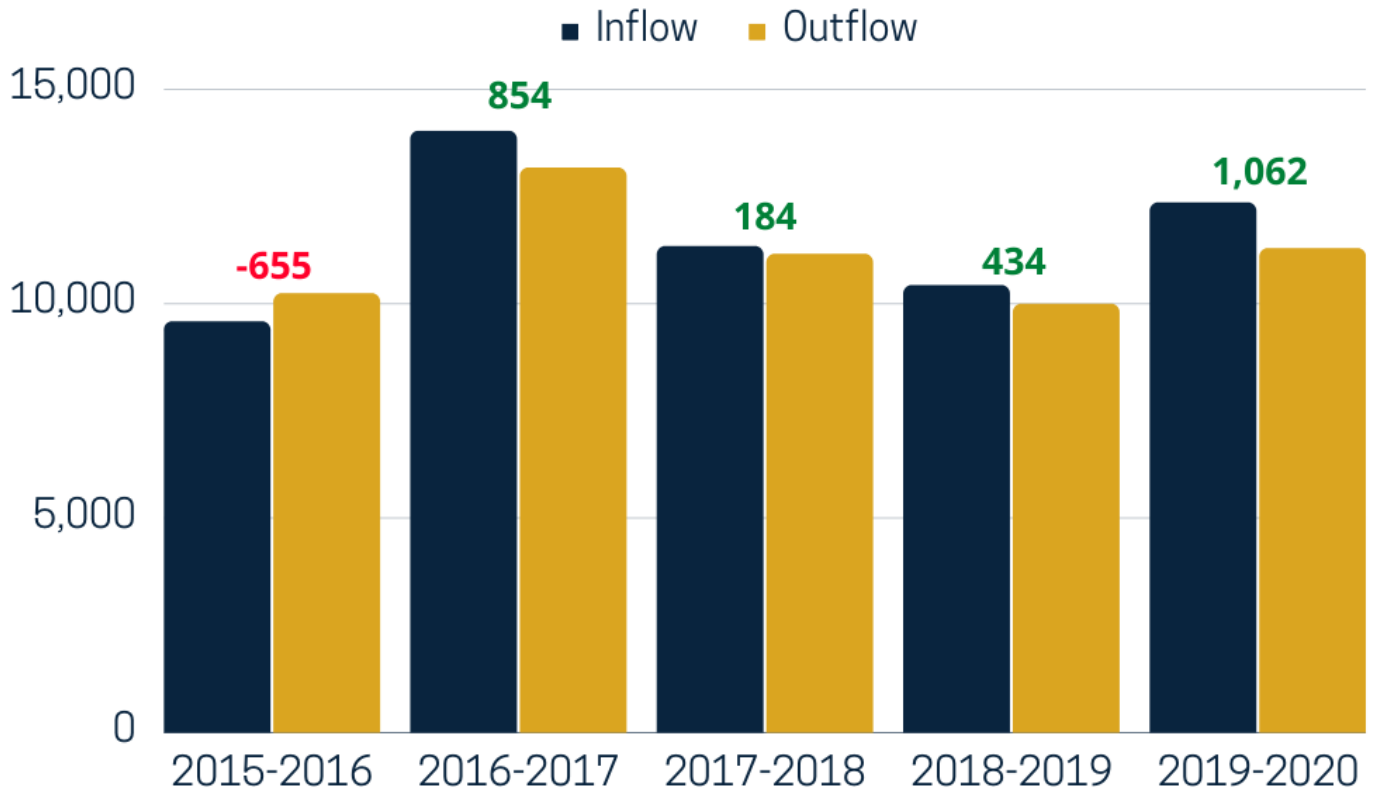
Dutchess County Outflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	951
Fairfield County	CT	317
Litchfield County	CT	183
Horry County	SC	176
Long Island Counties	NY	165
Albany County	NY	126
Palm Beach County	FL	111
New Haven County	CT	99
Middlesex County	MA	69
Wake County	NC	66

Dutchess County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	5,906
Fairfield County	CT	234
Long Island Counties	NY	513
Albany County	NY	111
Litchfield County	CT	101
Hudson County	NJ	84
Bergen County	NJ	62
Los Angeles County	CA	55
New Haven County	CT	55
Essex County	NJ	46

Greene County
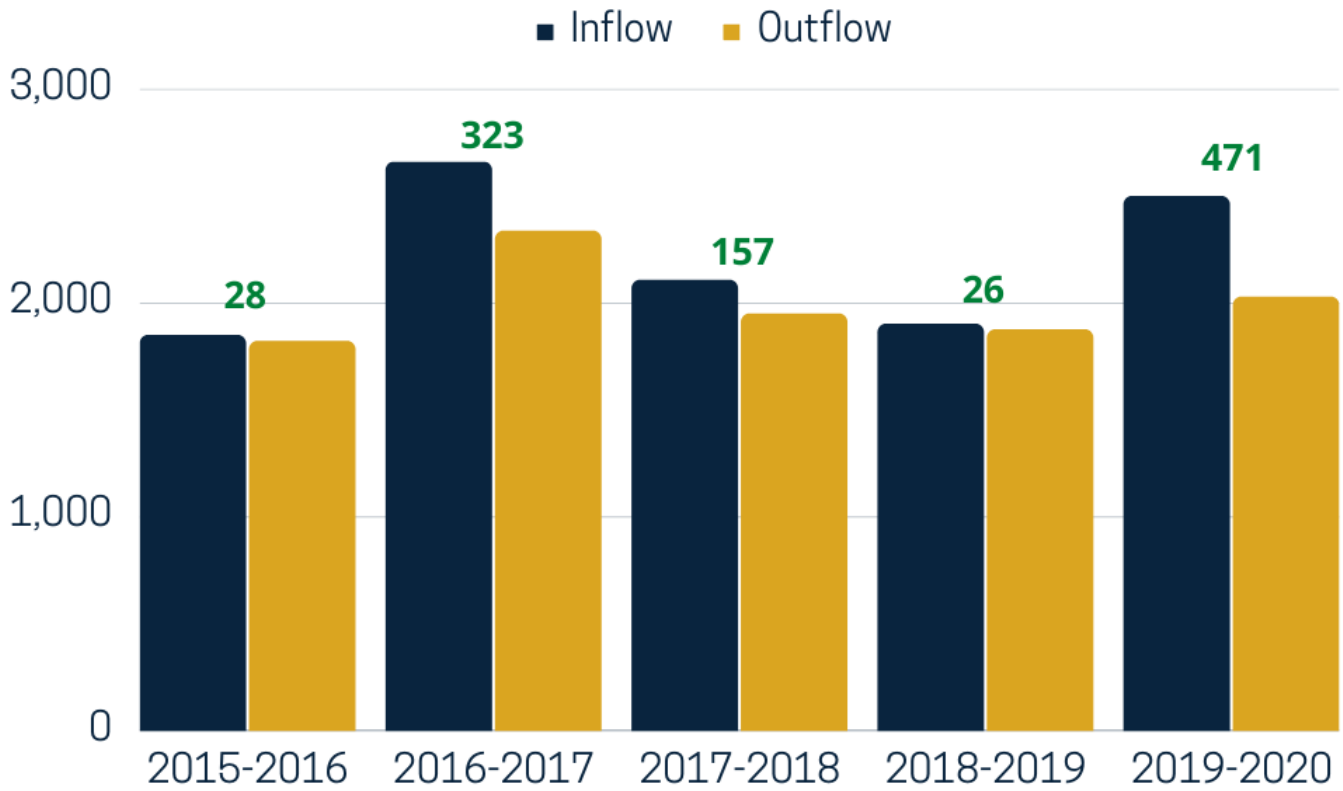
Greene County Outflow

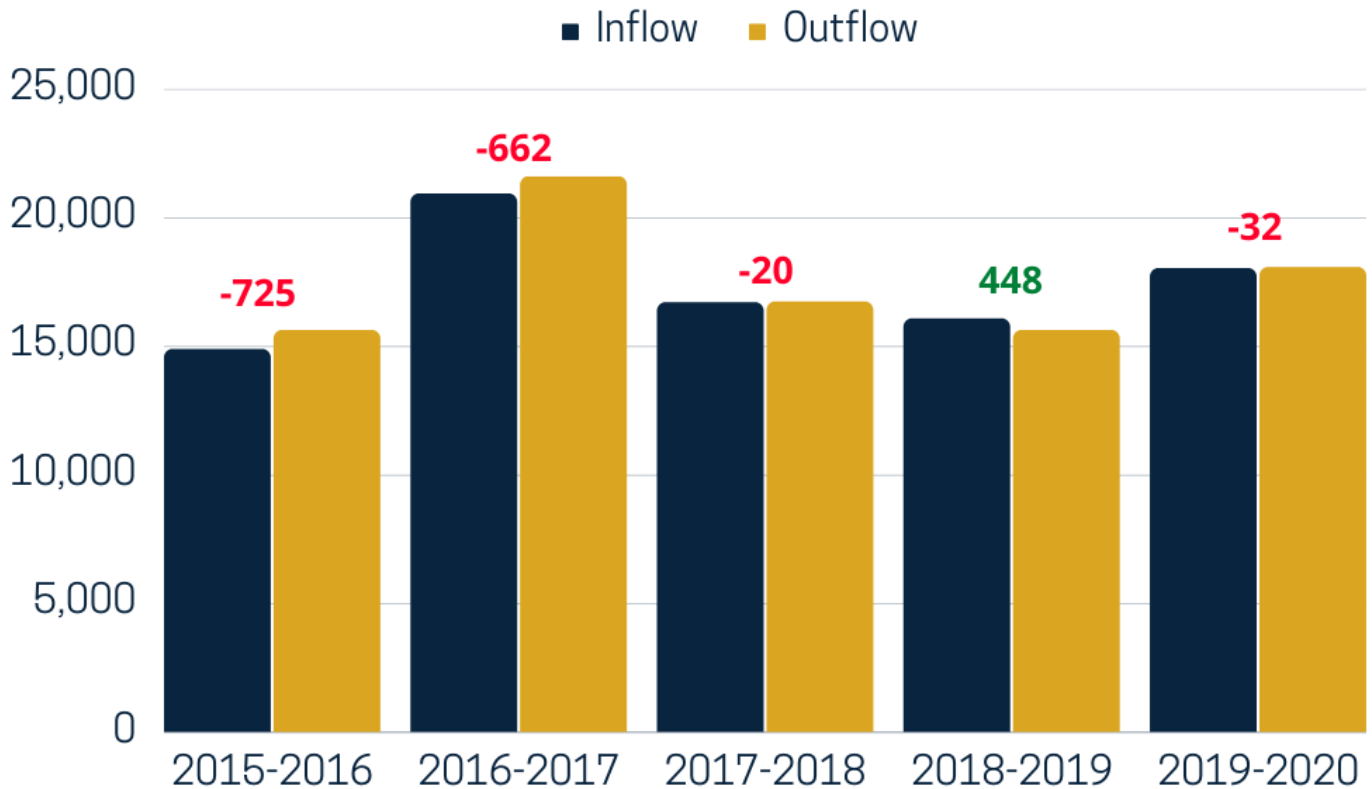| County	State	Number of People
Albany County	NY	432
NYC Counties	NY	127
Rensselaer County	NY	78
Saratoga County	NY	47
Schenectady County	NY	40
Schoharie County	NY	37

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Greene County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	566
Albany County	NY	248
Long Island Counties	NY	94
Rensselaer County	NY	62

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.
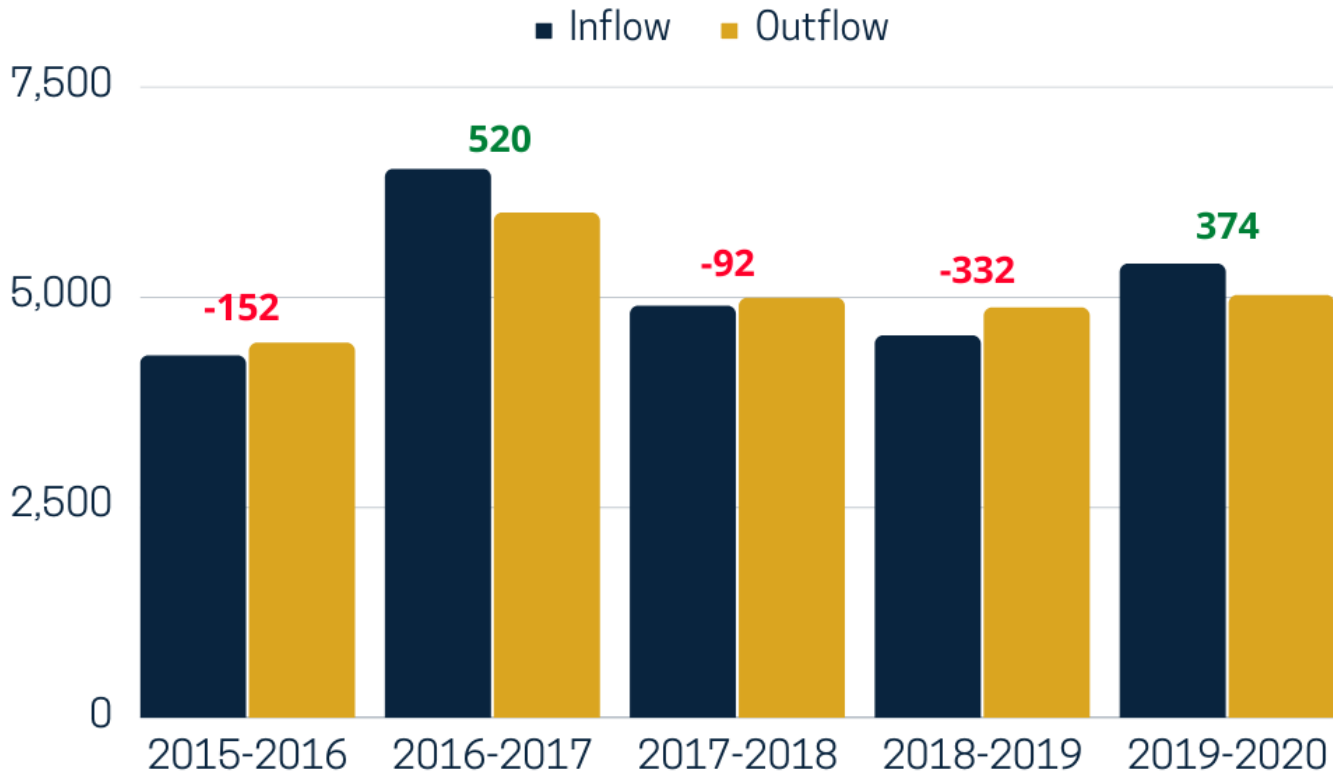
Orange County

Orange County Outflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
NYC Counties	NY	1,785
Pike County	PA	533
Bergen County	NJ	383
Sussex County	NJ	225
Long Island Counties	NY	223
Horry County	SC	207
Passaic County	NJ	144
Palm Beach County	FL	134
Sussex County	DE	127
Fairfield County	CT	126

Orange County Inflow		
County	**State**	**Number of People**
NYC Counties	NY	5,849
Bergen County	NJ	408
Long Island Counties	NY	485
Sussex County	NJ	179
Passaic County	NJ	172
Pike County	PA	163
Hudson County	NJ	160
Los Angeles County	CA	98
Fairfield County	CT	97
Essex County	NJ	79

Putnam County

Chart legend: ■ Inflow ■ Outflow

Year	Net
2015-2016	-152
2016-2017	520
2017-2018	-92
2018-2019	-332
2019-2020	374

Putnam County Outflow

County	State	Number of People
Fairfield County	CT	634
NYC Counties	NY	394
Long Island Counties	NY	76
Litchfield County	CT	62
Horry County	SC	58
Palm Beach County	FL	46
New Haven County	CT	41

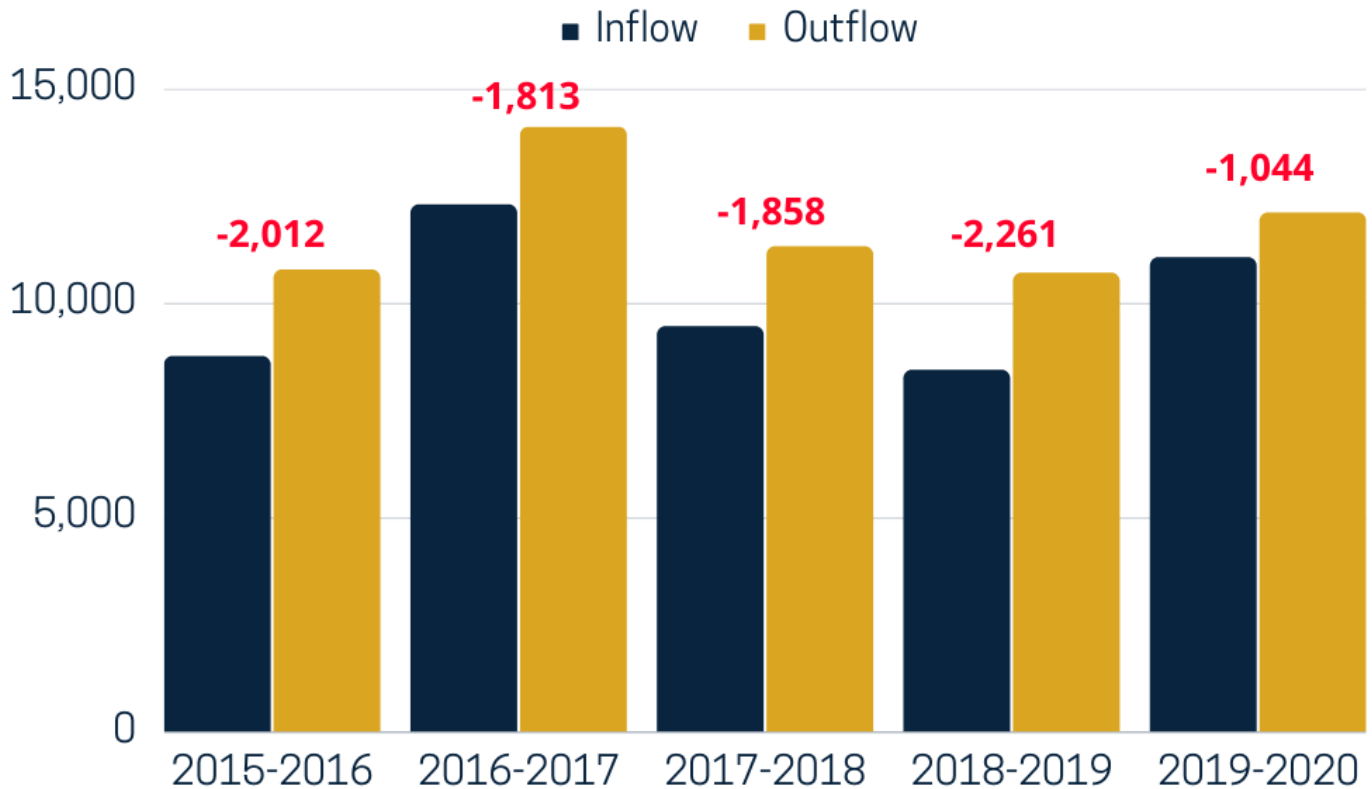* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Putnam County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	1,372
Fairfield County	CT	189
Long Island Counties	NY	150
New Haven County	CT	41
Bergen County	NJ	35

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.
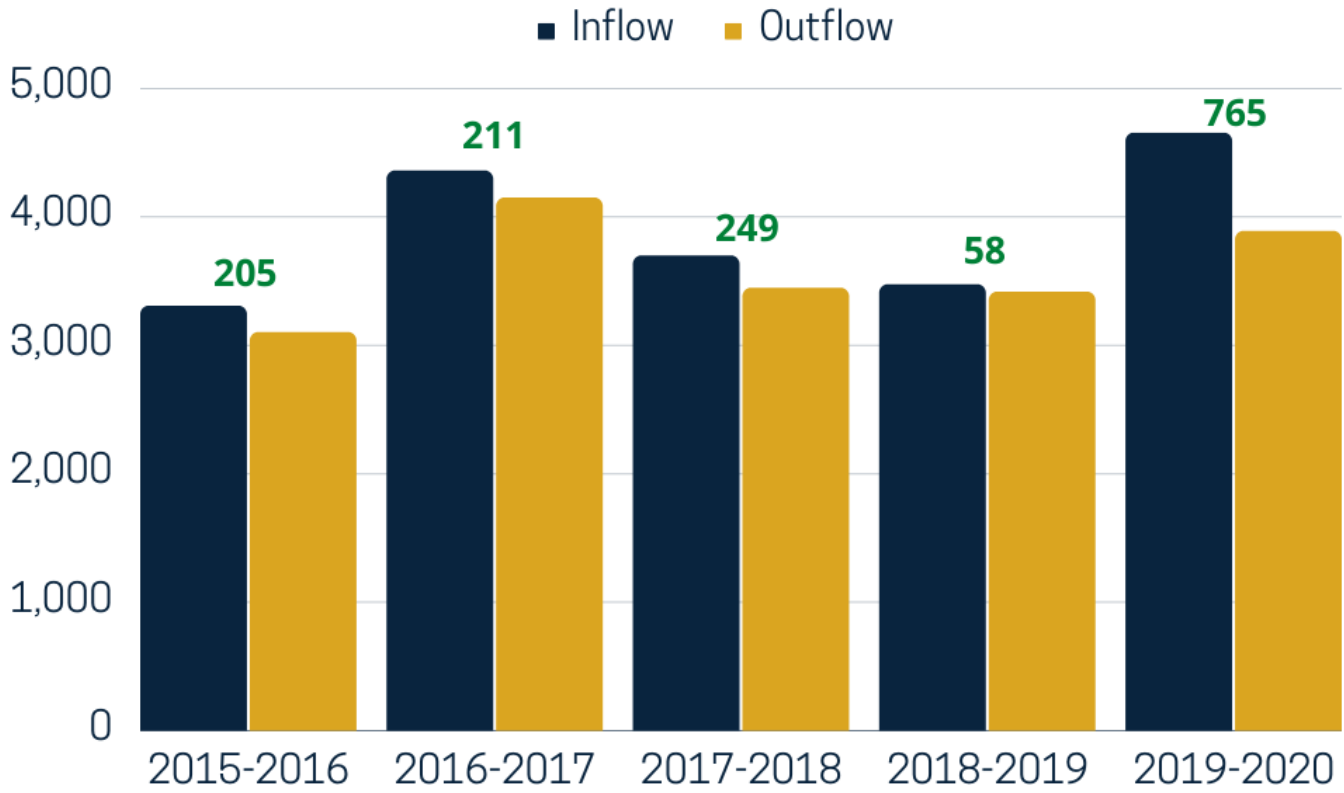
Rockland County

Rockland County Outflow

County	State	Number of People
Bergen County	NJ	1374
NYC Counties	NY	1312
Ocean County	NJ	353
Long Island Counties	NY	277
Passaic County	NJ	276
Palm Beach County	FL	274
Fairfield County	CT	181
Hudson County	NJ	180
Morris County	NJ	144
Broward County	FL	124

Rockland County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	4,751
Bergen County	NJ	709
Long Island Counties	NY	245
Ocean County	NJ	209
Hudson County	NJ	183
Passaic County	NJ	157
Essex County	NJ	111
Fairfield County	CT	100
Los Angeles County	CA	68
Palm Beach County	FL	62

Sullivan County

Legend: ■ Inflow ■ Outflow

Chart values (net, shown in green above bars):
- 2015-2016: 205
- 2016-2017: 211
- 2017-2018: 249
- 2018-2019: 58
- 2019-2020: 765

Sullivan County Outflow

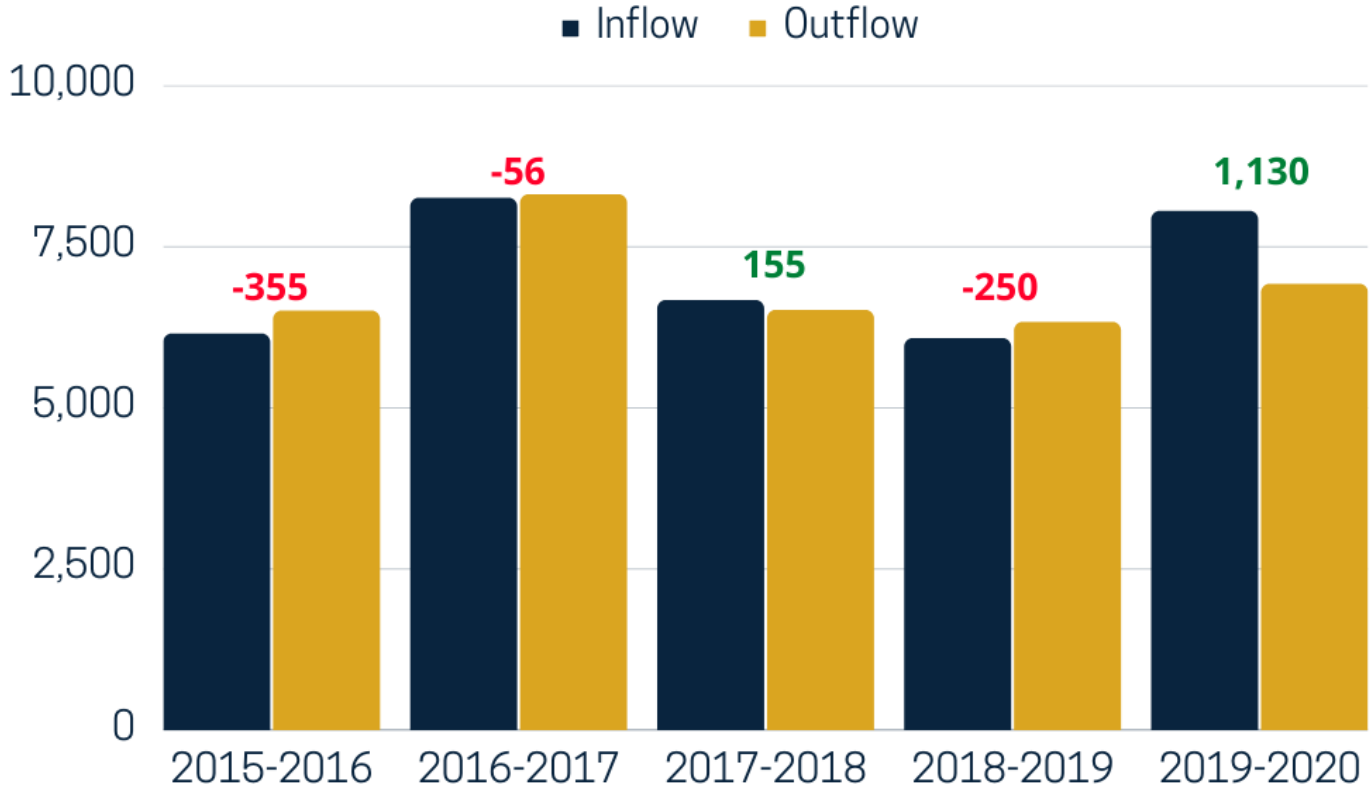| County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	461
Pike County	PA	88
Wayne County	PA	64
Long Island Counties	NY	48
Delaware County	NY	45
Palm Beach County	FL	44
Broome County	NY	35

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Sullivan County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	1665
Long Island Counties	NY	119
Deleware County	NY	51
Hudson County	NJ	47
Pike County	PA	44
Wayne County	PA	44
Bergen County	NJ	40

* Note: Counties are not included when the migration to/from them is fewer than 20 people.

Ulster County

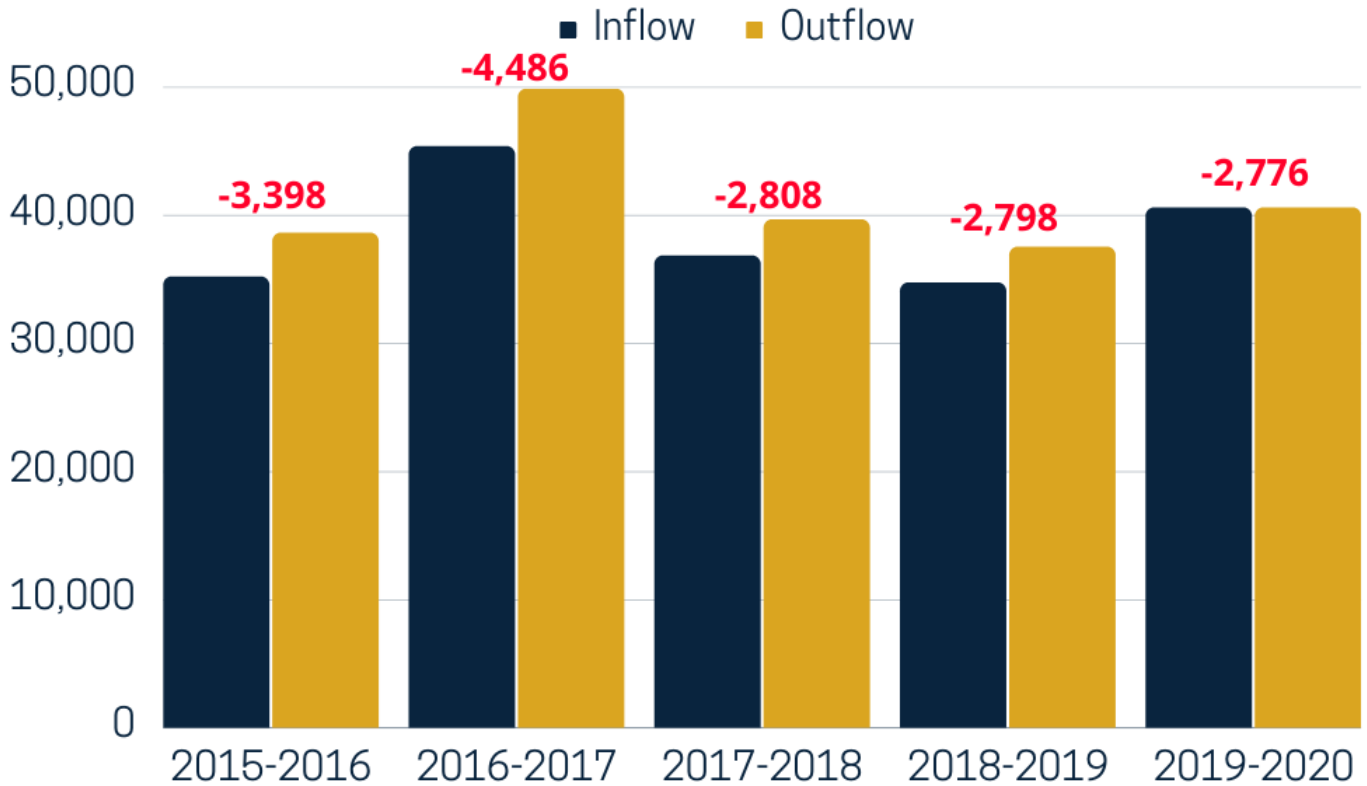**Ulster County Outflow**

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	468
Albany County	NY	183
Horry County	SC	86
Saratoga County	NY	75
Long Island Counties	NY	70
Broward County	FL	65
Fairfield County	CT	65
Rensselaer County	NY	59
Delaware County	NY	59
Hillsborough County	FL	57

Ulster County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	2,421
Long Island Counties	NY	220
Albany County	NY	81
Hudson County	NJ	60
Bergen County	NJ	58
Los Angeles County	CA	57
Fairfield County	CT	47
Rensselaer County	NY	36
Essex County	NJ	35
Philadelphia County	PA	26

Westchester County

Westchester County Outflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	9,616
Fairfield County	CT	5,486
Long Island Counties	NY	1,275
Palm Beach County	FL	851
Bergen County	NJ	790
New Haven County	CT	689
Los Angeles County	CA	427
Hudson County	NJ	403
Essex County	NJ	334
Broward County	FL	333

Westchester County Inflow

County	State	Number of People
NYC Counties	NY	25,021
Fairfield County	CT	1,834
Long Island Counties	NY	1,193
Hudson County	NJ	650
Bergen County	NJ	421
Los Angeles County	CA	292
Palm Beach County	FL	262
New Haven County	CT	245
Middlesex County	MA	159
San Francisco County	CA	152

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