

# New Mover Studies: Decatur County

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## Findings

This report highlights the findings and experiences of Decatur County respondents who were included in a survey of nonmetropolitan movers in Iowa.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the study is to better understand the decisions and thoughts of people who have moved and what they think about the communities and areas where they have lived. With increased understanding about why people move, community leaders may be able to develop actionable strategies for attracting and retaining population.<sup>2</sup>

Twenty-two respondents from Decatur County participated in the survey, nine who moved into the county, ten who moved out, and three who moved within the county but changed zipcode (Table 1). In many respects, the

Decatur County participants shared similar characteristics and responses with the overall set of respondents, but in some aspects there were differences.

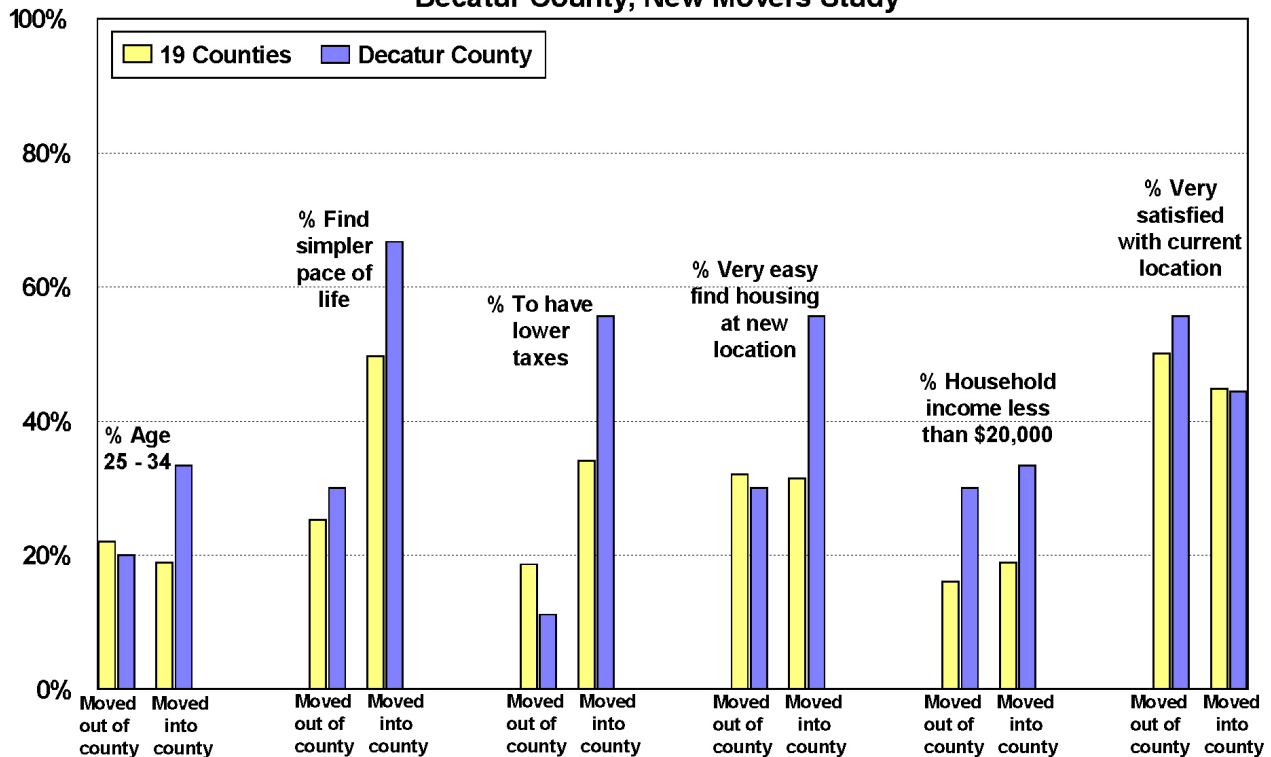
The Decatur movers in the study had a median age profile similar to the overall set of participants across most of the mover groups. There was, however, a higher proportion of movers age 25 - 34 coming into Decatur County than for the overall findings. In addition, all of the Decatur movers were younger than 70 years old, another difference from the overall results (Tables 1, 5; Figure 1).

The respondents coming into Decatur County varied from the overall participants in their educational profile as well. Unlike the total set of movers, all of those moving

into Decatur had at least some college or vocational training and 44 percent reported having an associate degree (Tables 1, 5).

Reasons for moving varied among the respondents, but generally fell into those related to work, family, community, or housing. The respondents coming into Decatur tended to give fewer family-related reasons and more community kinds of reasons as most important than the overall set of movers (Tables 1, 5). In contrast, among those who left Decatur County, 61 percent said that a work-related reason was most important in their decision to move. Forty percent of the participants who moved out of Decatur said they had taken a new job with a new employer; 22 percent of those coming to Decatur County said they had a new job (Table 2).

**Figure 1: Selected Demographic, Moving Decision, and Satisfaction Factors, Decatur County, New Movers Study**



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

	Type and Direction of Move							
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State
Number of respondents	22	10	9	3	6	4	4	5
Median age in years	43.0	32.5	47.0	*	45.5	39.0	24.0	52.0
Selected age categories	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Age 25 – 34	22.7	20.0	33.3	*	16.7	25.0	25.0	40.0
% Age 70 or older	0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gender	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Male	59.1	60.0	55.6	*	50.0	75.0	75.0	40.0
% Female	40.9	40.0	44.4	*	50.0	25.0	25.0	60.0
Marital status	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Never married	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
% Married	68.2	70.0	66.7	*	83.3	75.0	50.0	60.0
% Divorced or separated	18.2	10.0	22.2	*	0.0	25.0	25.0	20.0
% Widowed	9.1	10.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	20.0
Highest level of education completed	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Less than high school graduate	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
% High school graduate or equivalent	18.2	20.0	0.0	*	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Some college or vocational training	18.2	20.0	22.2	*	33.3	0.0	0.0	40.0
% Associate degree	27.3	10.0	44.4	*	0.0	50.0	25.0	40.0
% Bachelor degree or more	31.8	40.0	33.3	*	33.3	50.0	50.0	20.0
Most important reason for moving								
Number of reasons <sup>1</sup>	34	18	12	4	12	6	6	6
Type of reason	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work, income, education, retirement	44.1	61.1	33.3	*	58.3	50.0	66.7	16.7
Family, friends, health	17.6	16.7	16.7	*	16.7	0.0	16.7	33.3
Community, services, amenities	20.6	11.1	41.7	*	16.7	50.0	0.0	33.3
Housing	14.7	5.6	8.3	*	8.3	0.0	0.0	16.7
Other	2.9	5.6	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0

\*Information suppressed, fewer than 4 respondents. <sup>1</sup>Number of reasons exceeds number of respondents because some respondents gave more than one reason.

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New Mover Studies: Decatur County

Table 2. Factors in Moving Decision by Type and Direction of Move.

	Type and Direction of Move							
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State
	% Yes <sup>1</sup>	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Number of respondents	22	10	9	3	6	4	4	5
Factors in Moving Decision								
Moved, commuted, same employer	9.1	0.0	11.1	*	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Job transfer by employer to location	9.1	10.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	20.0
Laid off from previous job	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
New job with new employer	27.3	40.0	22.2	*	16.7	25.0	75.0	20.0
Moved to look for new job or work	18.2	20.0	22.2	*	16.7	25.0	25.0	20.0
Retired from previous employment	14.3	22.2	11.1	*	20.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
To be nearer parents	22.7	20.0	33.3	*	16.7	0.0	25.0	60.0
To be nearer children	13.6	30.0	0.0	*	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
To live with spouse or partner	13.6	20.0	11.1	*	16.7	25.0	25.0	0.0
To be nearer siblings, other relatives	22.7	20.0	33.3	*	16.7	0.0	25.0	60.0
To be nearer friends, acquaintances	22.7	30.0	22.2	*	33.3	0.0	25.0	40.0
Change in marital status	9.1	10.0	11.1	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	20.0
Place easier find spouse or partner	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Decline in health	13.6	20.0	11.1	*	33.3	25.0	0.0	0.0
Take care aging parents	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Find less congested place to live	27.3	20.0	44.4	*	16.7	50.0	25.0	40.0
Find safer place to live	36.4	40.0	44.4	*	50.0	50.0	25.0	40.0
Live in desirable natural environment	54.5	60.0	66.7	*	66.7	75.0	50.0	60.0
More outdoor recreation	27.3	30.0	33.3	*	16.7	75.0	50.0	0.0
Find arts, entertainment, cultural	22.7	40.0	11.1	*	33.3	0.0	50.0	20.0
Find simpler pace of life	45.5	30.0	66.7	*	33.3	100.0	25.0	40.0
Find more exciting lifestyle	14.3	33.3	0.0	*	20.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
Live someplace new, have fresh start	54.5	60.0	66.7	*	50.0	100.0	75.0	40.0
Lower cost of housing	31.8	20.0	44.4	*	16.7	50.0	25.0	40.0
Have lower taxes	28.6	11.1	55.6	*	0.0	50.0	25.0	60.0
Have better internet, tv, phone	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Find better quality local schools	13.6	20.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	25.0	20.0
Opportunities children to achieve	22.7	30.0	22.2	*	16.7	0.0	50.0	40.0
Have more ethnic diversity	10.0	12.5	11.1	*	0.0	0.0	33.3	20.0
Have less ethnic diversity	5.0	0.0	11.1	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0

\*Information suppressed, fewer than 4 respondents. <sup>1</sup> Respondents could respond "Yes" to more than one factor.

New Mover Studies: Decatur County											
Table 3. Lived in Area Previously, Sources of Information, Ease of Finding Housing, and Household Income by Type and Direction of Move.											
	Type and Direction of Move										
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State			
Number of respondents	22	10	9	3	6	4	4	5			
Previously had lived:	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
In current state	76.2	66.7	77.8	*	100.0	100.0	25.0	60.0			
In current county	30.0	12.5	22.2	*	20.0	0.0	0.0	40.0			
In or near current city/town	15.8	12.5	0.0	*	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Used source of information for move	% Yes <sup>1</sup>	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Internet	9.1	0.0	22.2	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0			
TV, magazines, newspapers	31.8	40.0	33.3	*	33.3	50.0	50.0	20.0			
Current community resident	13.6	20.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	25.0	20.0			
Employer or co-workers	18.2	30.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	50.0	20.0			
Friends and acquaintances	31.8	30.0	33.3	*	16.7	25.0	50.0	40.0			
Family	36.4	40.0	44.4	*	33.3	25.0	50.0	60.0			
Travel or vacation to new location	13.6	0.0	33.3	*	0.0	50.0	0.0	20.0			
Attended school or college there	18.2	20.0	22.2	*	0.0	0.0	50.0	40.0			
Ease of finding housing at new location	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very difficult (1)	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Somewhat difficult (2)	31.8	40.0	11.1	*	33.3	25.0	50.0	0.0			
Neither difficult or easy (3)	22.7	20.0	33.3	*	0.0	25.0	50.0	40.0			
Somewhat easy (4)	0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Very easy (5)	40.9	30.0	55.6	*	50.0	50.0	0.0	60.0			
Average rating finding housing (1 – 5)	3.41	3.00	4.00	*	3.33	3.75	2.50	4.20			
Household income for 2004	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than \$20,000 (1)	31.8	30.0	33.3	*	16.7	0.0	50.0	60.0			
\$20,000 - \$34,999 (2)	22.7	20.0	22.2	*	33.3	25.0	0.0	20.0			
\$35,000 - \$49,999 (3)	4.5	0.0	11.1	*	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0			
\$50,000 - \$69,999 (4)	13.6	10.0	22.2	*	16.7	50.0	0.0	0.0			
\$70,000 - \$99,999 (5)	13.6	20.0	11.1	*	16.7	0.0	25.0	20.0			
\$100,000 - \$149,999 (6)	4.5	10.0	0.0	*	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0			
\$150,000 or more (7)	9.1	10.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0			
Average income category (1 – 7)	3.05	3.40	2.56	*	3.33	3.25	3.50	2.00			

\*Information suppressed, fewer than 4 respondents. <sup>1</sup>Respondents could respond "Yes" to more than one source.

Community Vitality Center, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

		Type and Direction of Move							
		Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State	
Number of respondents		22	10	9	3	6	4	4	5
Current location income compared with previous location income		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Significantly lower income (1)		4.8	0.0	11.1	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Somewhat lower income (2)		23.8	22.2	33.3	*	40.0	25.0	0.0	40.0
About same income (3)		28.6	11.1	33.3	*	20.0	50.0	0.0	20.0
Somewhat higher income (4)		23.8	22.2	22.2	*	20.0	25.0	25.0	20.0
Significantly higher income (5)		19.0	44.4	0.0	*	20.0	0.0	75.0	0.0
Average comparison income (1 – 5)		3.29	3.89	2.67	*	3.20	3.00	4.75	2.40
Satisfaction with previous location		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very dissatisfied (1)		13.6	30.0	0.0	*	33.3	0.0	25.0	0.0
Somewhat dissatisfied (2)		13.6	0.0	22.2	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0
Neither dissatisfied or satisfied (3)		18.2	20.0	11.1	*	16.7	25.0	25.0	0.0
Somewhat satisfied (4)		18.2	10.0	33.3	*	16.7	50.0	0.0	20.0
Very satisfied (5)		36.4	40.0	33.3	*	33.3	25.0	50.0	40.0
Average satisfaction previous (1 – 5)		3.50	3.30	3.78	*	3.17	4.00	3.50	3.60
Satisfaction with current location		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very dissatisfied (1)		4.8	11.1	0.0	*	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Somewhat dissatisfied (2)		0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Neither dissatisfied or satisfied (3)		4.8	11.1	0.0	*	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Somewhat satisfied (4)		38.1	22.2	55.6	*	0.0	100.0	50.0	20.0
Very satisfied (5)		52.4	55.6	44.4	*	60.0	0.0	50.0	80.0
Average satisfaction current (1 – 5)		4.33	4.11	4.44	*	3.80	4.00	4.50	4.80
Would do move over again		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Definitely not (1)		0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Probably not (2)		0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Undecided (3)		0.0	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Probably yes (4)		31.8	30.0	44.4	*	50.0	75.0	0.0	20.0
Definitely yes (5)		68.2	70.0	55.6	*	50.0	25.0	100.0	80.0
Average rating do move over (1 – 5)		4.68	4.70	4.56	*	4.50	4.25	5.00	4.80

\*Information suppressed, fewer than 4 respondents.

Community Vitality Center, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

New Mover Studies: 19 County Overall Findings

Table 5. Age, Gender, Marital Status, Education, and Most Important Reason for Moving by Type and Direction of Move.

	Type and Direction of Move							
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State
Number of respondents	737	327	366	85	206	207	121	159
Median age in years	46.0	42.0	48.0	45.0	43.0	44.0	41.0	53.5
Selected age categories	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Age 25 – 34	21.3	22.0	18.9	24.7	20.9	21.7	24.0	15.1
% Age 70 or older	13.2	9.8	14.5	20.0	10.2	12.6	9.1	17.0
Gender	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Male	54.5	57.7	50.4	54.8	54.6	46.1	63.0	56.1
% Female	45.5	42.3	49.6	45.2	45.4	53.9	37.0	43.9
Marital status	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Never married	12.0	15.8	8.6	10.7	13.8	10.8	19.3	5.7
% Married	62.4	61.8	61.9	64.3	60.1	57.4	64.7	67.7
% Divorced or separated	16.3	13.3	20.5	14.3	16.8	25.0	7.6	14.5
% Widowed	9.4	9.0	9.1	10.7	9.4	6.9	8.4	12.0
Highest level of education completed	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Less than high school graduate	5.1	5.8	4.1	7.2	6.8	3.5	4.2	5.0
% High school graduate or equivalent	17.3	16.7	16.3	25.0	20.0	17.6	11.0	14.6
% Some college or vocational training	28.3	26.0	30.3	28.6	31.2	29.3	16.9	31.6
% Associate degree	10.6	11.8	10.7	9.5	12.7	12.7	10.2	8.2
% Bachelor degree or more	38.8	39.7	38.5	29.8	29.3	37.0	57.6	40.5
Most important reason for moving								
Number of reasons <sup>1</sup>	1,011	458	498	115	289	288	169	210
Type of reason	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work, income, retirement, education	38.4	47.2	36.5	15.7	45.0	36.1	50.9	37.1
Family, friends, health	22.3	18.1	27.5	13.9	20.8	23.3	13.6	33.3
Community, services, amenities	22.0	22.0	21.9	19.1	18.0	21.2	29.0	22.9
Housing	15.7	10.5	12.4	50.4	13.8	17.0	4.7	6.2
Other	1.6	2.2	1.6	0.9	2.3	2.3	1.8	0.5

<sup>1</sup>Number of reasons exceeds number of respondents because some respondents gave more than one reason.

New Mover Studies: 19 County Overall Findings  
Table 6. Factors in Moving Decision by Type and Direction of Move.

	Type and Direction of Move							
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State
Number of respondents	737	327	366	85	206	207	121	159
Factors in Moving Decision	% Yes <sup>1</sup>	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Moved, commuted, same employer	14.2	12.6	13.3	28.8	16.7	18.8	5.5	6.4
Job transfer by employer to location	7.6	9.8	7.1	1.3	7.8	4.0	13.4	11.0
Laid off from previous job	4.9	7.9	3.4	0.0	8.3	3.1	7.1	3.9
New job with new employer	26.7	34.3	24.7	3.8	29.7	25.6	42.1	23.5
Moved to look for new job or work	16.5	19.4	15.9	5.0	15.0	13.6	27.0	18.8
Retired from previous employment	14.4	11.1	16.9	12.2	10.8	14.6	11.7	19.9
To be nearer parents	23.7	21.0	30.5	7.5	19.7	30.2	23.1	30.9
To be nearer children	20.1	21.3	22.3	7.4	24.4	19.7	16.0	25.6
To live with spouse or partner	15.0	15.5	14.3	16.5	17.6	19.0	12.0	8.0
To be nearer siblings, other relatives	30.5	26.6	38.4	11.1	24.7	34.3	29.7	43.6
To be nearer friends, acquaintances	29.6	29.3	32.6	21.5	30.7	34.8	27.0	29.6
Change in marital status	13.2	12.1	13.3	16.0	12.6	16.0	11.1	9.8
Place easier find spouse or partner	7.9	12.7	4.2	3.7	9.6	5.5	17.9	2.6
Decline in health	10.4	7.6	11.5	12.3	8.6	7.0	6.0	17.4
Take care aging parents	5.9	5.1	7.6	1.2	4.5	5.5	6.0	10.4
Find less congested place to live	28.2	15.2	39.2	27.2	20.6	32.3	6.0	48.1
Find safer place to live	26.1	15.9	35.9	18.5	21.3	30.0	6.8	43.5
Live in desirable natural environment	35.8	29.9	43.5	25.9	31.0	43.8	28.2	43.1
More outdoor recreation	29.3	28.3	31.7	22.2	24.2	36.1	35.0	26.0
Find arts, entertainment, cultural	23.7	36.1	15.8	6.2	28.1	16.9	49.6	14.3
Find simpler pace of life	36.8	25.2	49.6	24.7	30.0	44.8	16.9	55.8
Find more exciting lifestyle	22.4	31.3	17.7	8.6	25.0	21.4	41.9	13.0
Live someplace new, have fresh start	41.4	39.5	43.2	37.0	38.2	43.8	41.7	42.5
Lower cost of housing	31.7	20.1	41.5	32.9	26.3	35.3	9.5	49.4
Have lower taxes	25.5	18.6	34.0	15.9	18.5	30.3	19.0	38.8
Have better internet, tv, phone	8.3	12.4	6.2	1.2	11.6	8.5	13.8	3.3
Find better quality local schools	14.0	12.1	17.3	8.6	13.7	16.6	9.4	18.2
Opportunities children to achieve	19.3	20.7	19.2	14.8	20.8	19.0	20.5	19.5
Have more ethnic diversity	10.3	16.9	5.9	1.2	9.6	7.0	29.3	4.6
Have less ethnic diversity	4.4	2.6	6.3	3.7	3.1	4.0	1.7	9.2

<sup>1</sup> Respondents could respond "Yes" to more than one factor.

		Type and Direction of Move							
		Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State	Total
Number of respondents	737	327	366	85	206	207	121	159	
Previously had lived:	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
In current state	77.2	73.9	77.6	97.5	95.5	96.9	36.8	53.5	
In current county	38.6	28.3	34.3	100.0	33.9	36.5	31.5	33.9	
In or near current city/town	34.2	28.5	32.3	69.9	34.0	35.6	18.7	27.9	
Used source of information for move	% Yes <sup>1</sup>	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Internet	31.2	35.2	30.3	14.1	26.7	24.6	49.6	37.7	
TV, magazines, newspapers	22.3	24.8	20.5	20.0	22.8	22.7	28.1	17.6	
Current community resident	22.0	21.4	23.0	18.8	19.4	20.8	24.8	25.8	
Employer or co-workers	23.6	26.3	23.5	16.5	25.2	24.2	28.1	22.6	
Friends and acquaintances	36.6	39.4	35.0	34.1	36.4	38.6	44.6	30.2	
Family	41.2	37.0	44.0	42.4	37.4	41.5	36.4	47.2	
Travel or vacation to new location	14.2	15.6	15.8	2.4	10.2	12.6	24.8	20.1	
Attended school or college there	6.9	7.0	6.3	7.1	7.3	3.9	6.6	9.4	
Ease of finding housing at new location	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very difficult (1)	8.8	5.9	12.2	9.4	7.8	9.3	2.5	16.0	
Somewhat difficult (2)	20.6	24.2	18.1	18.8	23.0	18.6	26.3	17.3	
Neither difficult or easy (3)	16.5	15.2	15.3	21.2	14.7	17.2	16.1	12.8	
Somewhat easy (4)	22.4	22.7	23.1	20.0	23.5	23.5	21.2	22.4	
Very easy (5)	31.6	32.0	31.4	30.6	30.9	31.4	33.9	31.4	
Average rating finding housing (1 – 5)	3.47	3.51	3.43	3.44	3.47	3.49	3.58	3.36	
Household income for 2004	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than \$20,000 (1)	17.3	16.0	18.8	19.0	18.0	18.4	12.6	19.4	
\$20,000 - \$34,999 (2)	23.0	21.6	23.3	26.6	25.0	24.3	16.0	21.9	
\$35,000 - \$49,999 (3)	18.2	18.2	17.7	22.8	18.0	20.4	18.5	14.2	
\$50,000 - \$69,999 (4)	18.5	18.2	19.1	15.2	18.0	21.4	18.5	16.1	
\$70,000 - \$99,999 (5)	12.4	13.8	11.9	8.9	12.5	12.6	16.0	11.0	
\$100,000 - \$149,999 (6)	7.7	8.5	7.2	3.8	6.5	1.5	11.8	14.8	
\$150,000 or more (7)	2.9	3.8	1.9	3.8	2.0	1.5	6.7	2.6	
Average income category (1 – 7)	3.20	3.33	3.11	2.95	3.10	2.96	3.71	3.32	

<sup>1</sup> Respondents could respond “Yes” to more than one factor.



New Mover Studies: 19 County Overall Findings

Table 8. Income Comparison Between Locations, Satisfaction with Previous and Current Locations, and Doing Move Over Again by Type and Direction of Move.

	Type and Direction of Move							
	Total	Moved Out Of County	Moved Into County	Within County, Different Zipcode	Out To Different Iowa County	In From Different Iowa County	Out To Another State	In From Another State
Number of respondents	737	327	366	85	206	207	121	159
Current location income compared with previous location income	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Significantly lower income (1)	11.0	6.9	16.1	3.8	7.0	11.8	6.8	21.8
Somewhat lower income (2)	12.1	10.7	13.3	7.5	11.9	9.8	8.5	17.9
About same income (3)	41.9	38.2	41.7	63.8	46.8	46.6	23.7	35.3
Somewhat higher income (4)	23.1	29.2	19.2	17.5	26.9	20.1	33.1	17.9
Significantly higher income (5)	11.8	15.0	9.7	7.5	7.5	11.8	28.0	7.1
Average comparison income (1 – 5)	3.13	3.35	2.93	3.18	3.16	3.10	3.67	2.71
Satisfaction with previous location	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very dissatisfied (1)	11.2	11.4	11.5	9.4	12.7	12.1	9.2	10.7
Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	14.7	14.8	15.9	11.8	16.1	16.0	12.5	15.7
Neither dissatisfied or satisfied (3)	12.7	16.9	9.0	15.3	17.6	11.7	15.8	5.7
Somewhat satisfied (4)	29.0	26.5	29.0	29.4	27.3	26.2	25.0	32.7
Very satisfied (5)	32.5	30.5	34.5	34.1	26.3	34.0	37.5	35.2
Average satisfaction previous (1 – 5)	3.57	3.50	3.59	3.67	3.38	3.54	3.69	3.66
Satisfaction with current location	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very dissatisfied (1)	7.6	8.7	7.8	4.7	9.3	6.9	7.7	9.0
Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	8.1	7.8	9.5	5.9	9.8	7.4	4.3	12.2
Neither dissatisfied or satisfied (3)	6.6	5.9	8.4	3.5	7.3	6.9	3.4	10.3
Somewhat satisfied (4)	29.4	27.6	29.5	28.2	24.9	27.1	32.5	32.7
Very satisfied (5)	48.3	50.0	44.8	57.6	48.8	51.7	52.1	35.9
Average satisfaction current (1 – 5)	4.03	4.03	3.94	4.28	3.94	4.09	4.17	3.74
Would do move over again	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Definitely not (1)	3.2	3.1	3.6	1.2	2.0	2.9	5.1	4.4
Probably not (2)	5.1	4.3	4.7	9.4	4.9	4.9	3.4	4.4
Undecided (3)	9.7	8.7	10.4	7.1	8.3	6.8	9.3	15.2
Probably yes (4)	33.2	35.1	33.0	29.4	38.2	35.4	29.7	29.7
Definitely yes (5)	48.9	48.8	48.4	52.9	46.6	50.0	52.5	46.2
Average rating do move over (1 – 5)	4.20	4.22	4.18	4.24	4.23	4.25	4.21	4.09

Community Vitality Center, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

## New Mover Studies: Decatur County

One third of the movers who came to Decatur County said that wanting to be nearer parents, siblings, or other relatives was a factor in their moving decision. None of the respondents coming to Decatur said that moving to be nearer children, to be in a place where it would be easier to find a spouse or partner, or to take care of aging parents was a factor in their decision (Table 2).

The Decatur movers were very similar to those in other counties in that the respondents who came into Decatur County were more likely than those who left to say that wanting a less congested place to live or a simpler pace of life was a factor in their moving decision. Two-thirds of the participants coming to Decatur noted wanting a simpler pace of life (Tables 2, 6; Figure 1). Those moving out were more likely to say they wanted more arts, entertainment, or cultural activities or a more exciting lifestyle than those who came into Decatur County. Many of the movers to Decatur (44.4%) said that wanting to lower their cost for housing was a factor in their move, but even more (55.6%) noted wanting lower taxes as a factor in the decision to move (Table 2, Figure 1).

In general, the movers coming to Decatur found housing relatively easily. More than half said that finding housing was very easy and none said it was very difficult (Table 3; Figure 1). The Decatur movers tended to report lower income than the overall set of respondents. Approximately one-third of those going both into and out of Decatur County said their household income was less than \$20,000 and another 20 percent had income below \$35,000 (Tables 3, 7; Figure 1). Those who left

Table 9. Mover Categories and Type and Direction of Move.

Category	Type and Direction of Move
A: <i>Within County, Zipcode change</i>	Moved within one of the 19 study counties but changed zip code.
B: <i>Out To Another Iowa County</i>	Moved out of one of the study counties to another county in Iowa.
C: <i>In From Another Iowa County</i>	Moved from another county in Iowa into one of the study counties.
D: <i>Out To Another State</i>	Moved out of one of the study counties to another state.
E: <i>In From Another State</i>	Moved from another state into one of the study counties.

the county were more likely than those moving in to think that their income in their new location would be higher than it was in the previous location. Nearly 67 percent of those leaving the county said that their household income would be higher in the new location than in Decatur County; just 22 percent of the movers coming to Decatur said this (Table 4).

The movers who came into Decatur County were generally satisfied with their new location. Forty-four percent said they were very satisfied and all the others noted they were at least somewhat satisfied (Table 4; Figure 1). In addition, more than half of those who came to the county said that they would definitely do their move to Decatur County over again (Table 4).

The goal of this study is to better understand the experiences of people who have moved. This report focuses on the findings for Decatur County and highlights some of the similarities and differences with the findings for the entire set of 19 counties. Because the number of respondents in any one county is small, the overall findings and trends are likely the best guidelines as community residents and leaders think about possible next steps. The overall objective is to help community leaders better understand household moving trends so they can develop actionable strategies to address the reasons why people come, why people leave,

enhance the qualities that cause people to stay, and thus stabilize or increase their populations.<sup>2</sup>

### The Study

These research results are from a survey of nonmetropolitan movers in 19 selected counties in Iowa that included Decatur County.<sup>1</sup> People who had moved either into or out of these 19 counties were identified through a purchased database and were mailed a survey in the fall of 2005. The survey asked questions about the respondent's previous location as well as their current location, reasons for moving, satisfaction with multiple factors in their communities, as well as their demographic, social, and economic situation. Five categories of movers are used to examine the results (Table 9). Most respondents had moved during 2003 through 2005 and 737 respondents who met the study criteria replied for an overall response rate of 35 percent. The estimated response rate for Decatur County was 27.5 percent.

### Notes

1. Previous reports, a description of the study, the counties included, and the survey questionnaire are available on the Community Vitality Center web site at: [www.cvcia.org](http://www.cvcia.org).
2. Previous reports contain examples of possible next steps and strategies that community leaders might consider.

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 December, 2008

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*Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jack M. Payne, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.*