

## *Migration Patterns in Northern and Southern British Columbia.*

This Feature Article presents information on patterns of migration in Northern and Southern areas of B.C.. Areas of interest explored are the size of migrant populations within these areas, the age and sex characteristics of migrants, and their top destination and source areas. Northern areas for this Feature Article are defined as the northernmost Development Regions (DR) of British Columbia: Cariboo DR; North Coast DR; Nechako DR; and Northeast Development Region. Southern areas include: Vancouver Island/Coast DR; Mainland/Southwest DR; Thompson-Okanagan DR; and Kootenay DR. While these areas may also have a variety of migration patterns within their areas, this paper will discuss primarily the patterns of the Northern and Southern areas.

### *Importance of Intra-provincial and Inter-provincial Migration*

Migrants are an important component of population. However, the composition of this group in terms of their origin, age and sex characteristics may vary greatly. This section presents statistics on the relative importance of different migrant groups within the populations of the Northern and Southern Areas of B.C. at the time of the 2001 Canada Census. The Census allows for the most accurate account of the composition of a population at one given point in time. The 2001 Census is the most recent and available Census for Canada.

The 2001 Census gathered information on the mobility status of individuals aged five years and older, and one year and older. Information on the usual place of residence for individuals one year prior and five

years prior were gathered and compared with the location of their current residence location. Table 1 presents Total 2001 Census Population (Ages 5 years and older) and the Population (Aged 5 years and older) by mobility status.

Migrants are defined as those individuals that listed a 1996 usual place of residence in a different Census Sub-division (CSD) than their 2001 residence. This group includes both external migrants (movers from outside of Canada) and internal migrants (movers from outside their 2001 CSD but from within Canada). For B.C., 842,600 individuals, or 23.0 per cent of the total population aged 5 and up at the time of the 2001 Census, were classified as migrants. Canada's average, over this same period, was 19.5 per cent. Internal migrants who had moved within the previous five years accounted for 17.6 per cent of the total population aged 5 and up, a rate above the National average of 16.0 per cent.

Comparing the populations of northern and southern B.C., a higher proportion of migrants were found in the southern area of the province. A total of 788,615 individuals, or 23.5 percent of the population 5 years and older, had migrated there during the previous five year period. Of these migrants, 593,410 individuals, or 75.4 per cent of total migrants, arrived from areas internal to Canada. The population in the northern area held a lower proportion of migrants than the Canadian average. In total, 54,000 migrants or 17.0 per cent of the north's total over 5 population had moved to this area over the previous 5 years. Of these migrants, 95 per cent had arrived from areas internal to Canada.

Table 1: Five Year - Mobility Status of Population Aged 5 and Up at 2001 Census, (Mobility Status Population as a Per Cent of Total 2001 Census Population Aged 5 and Up)

Region	Total 2001 Census Population (5ys+)	Migrants	Internal Migrants	Internal Migrants			
				Inter-Provincial Migrants	Intra-Provincial Migrants	<i>Intra-Regional District Mi-grants</i>	<i>Inter-Regional District Mi-grants</i>
Canada	<b>27,932,590</b>	5,458,735 (19.5 %)	4,482,775 (16.0 %)	905,665 (3.2 %)	3,577,105 (12.8 %)		
British Columbia	<b>3,661,940</b>	842,600 (23.0 %)	644,935 (17.6 %)	151,720 (4.1 %)	493,215 (13.5 %)		
North	<b>303,330</b>	54,000 (17.8 %)	51,530 (17.0 %)	10,925 (3.6 %)	40,600 (13.4 %)	31,450 (3.0 %)	9,150 (10.4 %)
South	<b>3,358,600</b>	788,615 (23.5 %)	593,410 (17.7 %)	140,785 (4.2 %)	452,620 (13.5 %)	226,555 (6.7 %)	226,065 (6.7 %)

Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census, Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Internal migrants aged 5 years and older have comparable shares of the total population in the northern and southern areas. Intra-provincial migrants are those migrants that moved between CSDs but remained within the province. Inter-provincial migrants account for a larger percentage of the internal migrant population than interprovincial migrants for both areas. However, the intra-provincial migrant populations of the two areas exhibit

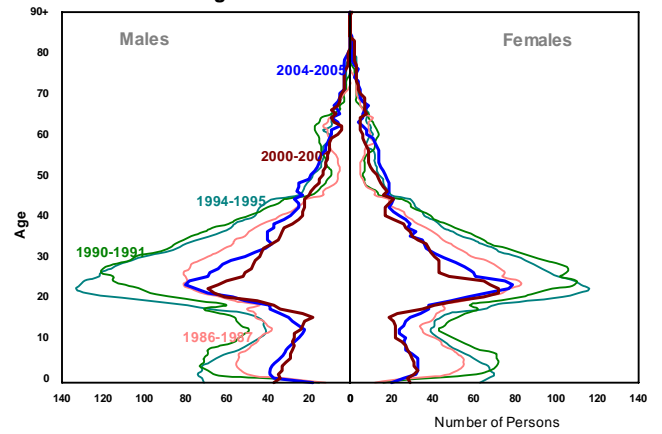
different characteristics. The northern area has a higher proportion of inter-Regional District migrants, or migrants that moved from another Regional District, in its population. However, the southern area has equal proportions of migrants in their population that moved between CSDs within the same Regional District, and that moved from another Regional District to their current residence.

## Age and Sex Characteristics of Interprovincial Migrants

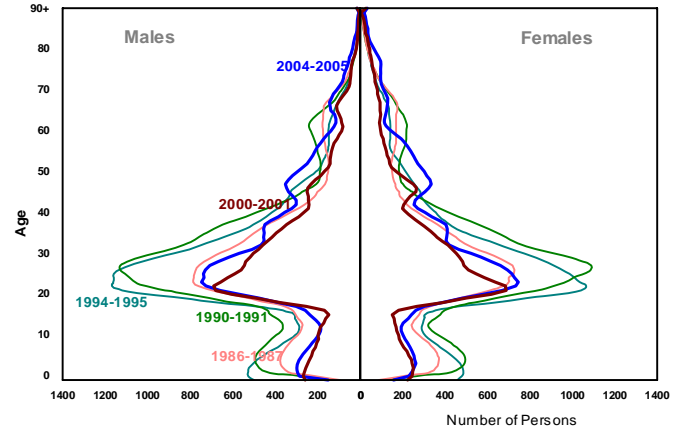
Persons aged 20 to 40 years old account for the majority of inter-provincial in-migrants. During the early 1990s, this characteristic of the age and sex distributions became more pronounced as the number of in-migrants in this age group increased dramatically. The higher inflow into the northern area was weighted more towards men, and men of an older age group, than the inflow to the southern area. Since the early 1990s, inflows of older men have decreased by approximately a third.

The age and sex distributions of inter-provincial out-migrants are more strongly centred around the ages of 20 to 30 years than the distributions of inter-provincial in-migrants. For the northern area, males between these ages account for a slightly larger share of total out-migration than females. In recent periods the number of individuals aged 20 to 24 who moved out of both areas has increased.

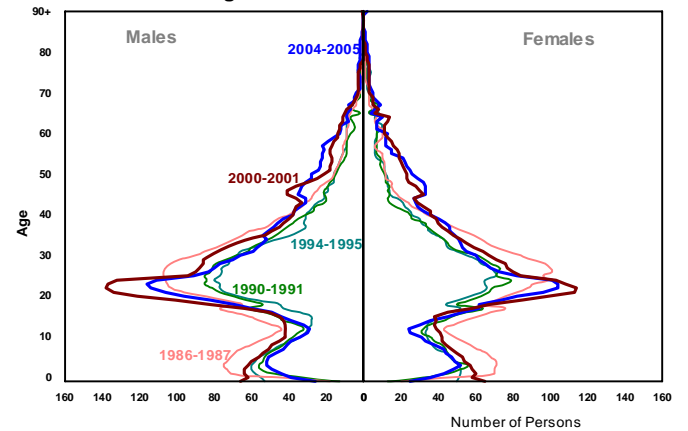
**Figure 1: Northern Areas Interprovincial In-migrants  
Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



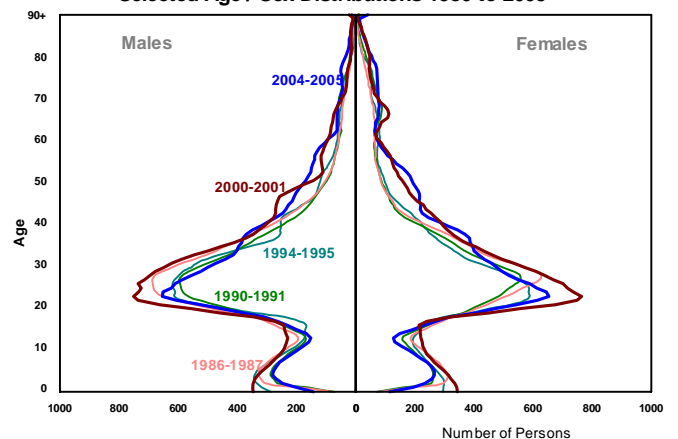
**Figure 2: Southern Areas Interprovincial In-migrants  
Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



**Figure 3: Northern Areas Interprovincial Out-migrants  
Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



**Figure 4: Southern Areas Interprovincial Out-migrants  
Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



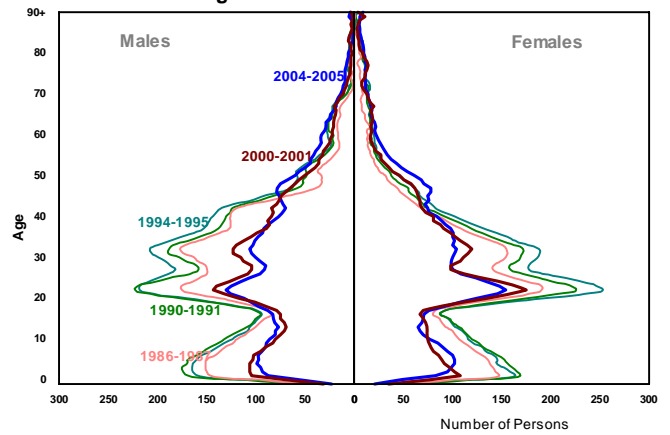
## Age and Sex Characteristics of Intraprovincial Migrants

Intra-provincial migration is defined here as the movement of individuals between Regional Districts within B.C. For example, a northern intra-provincial out-migration distribution represents the age and sex of individuals who moved out of any of the northern RD, regardless of their destination.

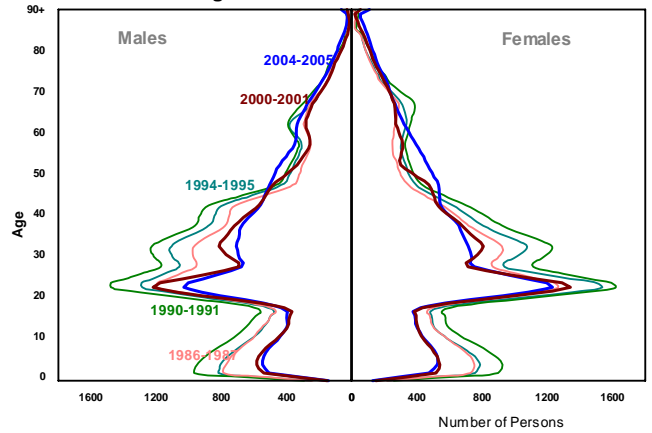
The age and sex distributions of intra-provincial migrants show pronounced migration patterns for individuals aged 20 to 24 years. In all years, movements within this age group are larger than for all others. The distributions for intra-provincial in-migrants to northern areas between the years of 1990 to 1994 were more heavily weighted towards men aged 20 to 40 years. In recent years however, female in-migrants have outnumbered males in this age group. Finally, a lower proportion of total in-migrants in the northern area can be attributed to individuals aged 65 and over than in southern areas.

The age and sex distributions of intra-provincial out-migrants for the northern area are also heavily weighted towards individuals under 45 years of age. This characteristic is less pronounced for the distributions of southern areas. In the south, there has been a decline in the number of out-migrants under 45 years

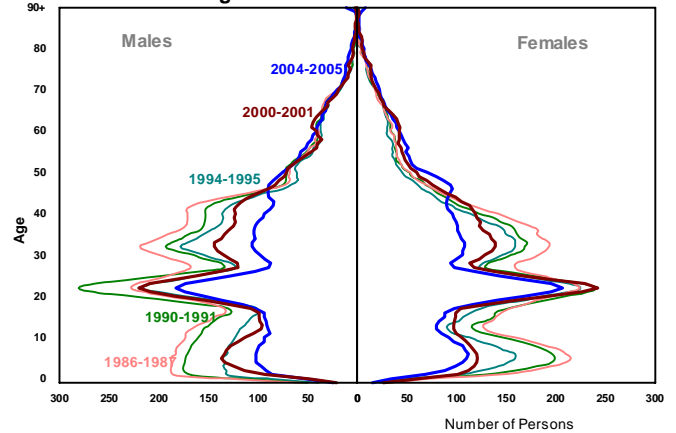
**Figure 5: Northern Areas Intraprovincial In-migrants Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



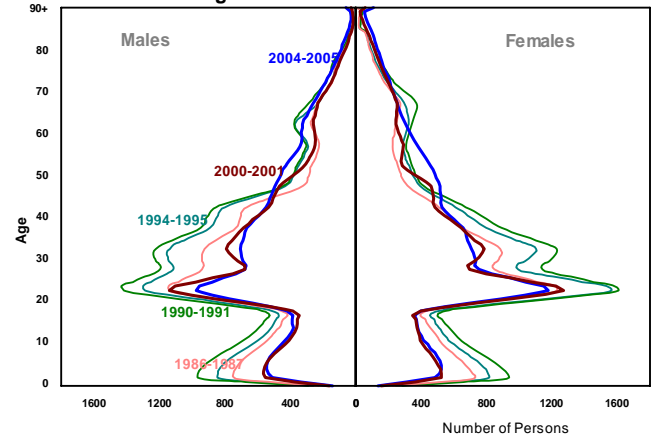
**Figure 6: Southern Areas Intraprovincial In-migrants Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



**Figure 7: Northern Areas Intraprovincial Out-migrants Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**



**Figure 8: Southern Areas Intraprovincial Out-migrants Selected Age / Sex Distributions 1986 to 2005**

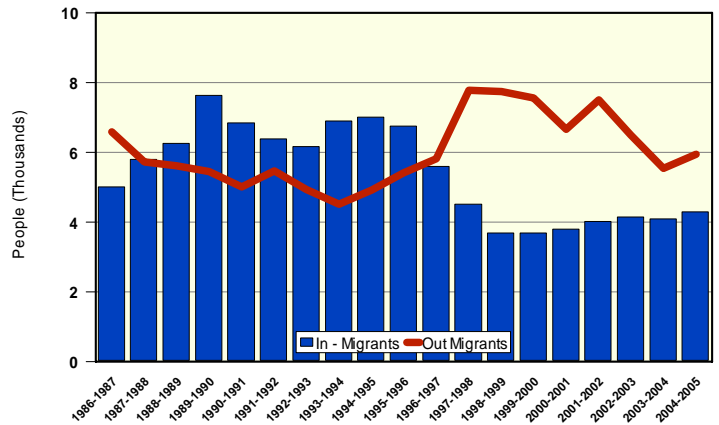


## Geographic Characteristics of B.C. Migration Patterns

Using the Annual Demographic Statistics of Statistics Canada, Figures 9 and 10 present the long term trends in inter- and intra-provincial migration. Inter-provincial in- and out-migration for the northern and southern areas show a similar trend between 1986 and 2005. For both these areas, the highest level of in-migration occurred before the late 1990s. However, since the late 1990s in-migration to the north dropped by one-third while out-migration has increased. This has resulted in negative net inter-provincial migration.

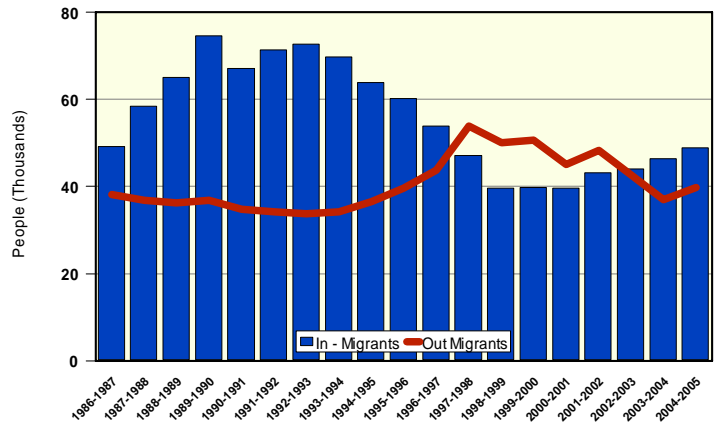
For the southern area in-migration decreased after 1997 while out-migration increased. Recently, in-migration has rebounded in the south, allowing for positive net inter-provincial migration since 2002-2003.

Figure 9: Northern Area Interprovincial Migration 1986 - 2005



Data Source : Statistics Canada Demography Division, Annual Demographic Statistics

Figure 10: Southern Area Interprovincial Migration 1986 - 2005



Data Source : Statistics Canada Demography Division, Annual Demographic Statistics

The 2001 Census provides information on the direction of migration flows within Canada. The following presents information on the destinations and origins of in- and out-migrants from areas within B.C. between 1996 and 2001.

### Geographic Characteristics of Interprovincial Migration

The destinations of inter-provincial out-migrants of the northern and southern areas of B.C. are quite different. Eight of the top ten most popular destinations for out-migrants from northern B.C., who left between 1996 and 2001, were within Alberta. Calgary and Edmonton received the highest number of interprovincial out-migrants from this area over this period. Calgary and Edmonton were also the most popular destinations for out-migrants from B.C.'s southern areas. However urban centres in other provinces held six of the other top eight destination spots.

Most individuals who moved from other provinces into the northern area of B.C. between 1996 and 2001, arrived from areas within Alberta, Yukon, and Northwest Territories. Calgary and Edmonton were the top two sending areas for individuals migrating to areas in southern B.C.. The other important sending areas for the south were the main urban centres in Eastern Canada.

Figure 11: Northern Areas Interprovincial Out-Migrants  
Top 10 Census Divisions Moved to  
Between 1996 and 2001

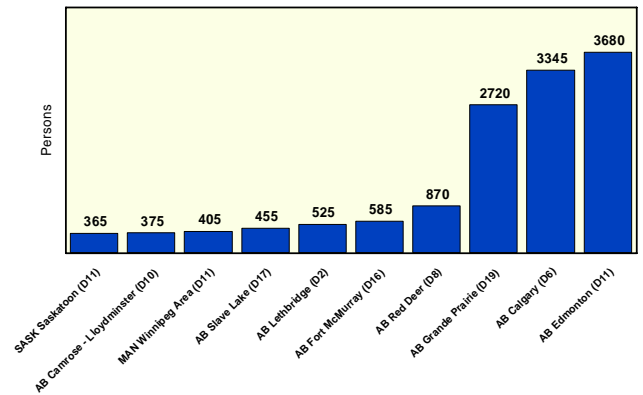


Figure 12: Southern Areas Interprovincial Out-Migrants  
Top 10 Census Divisions Moved to  
Between 1996 and 2001

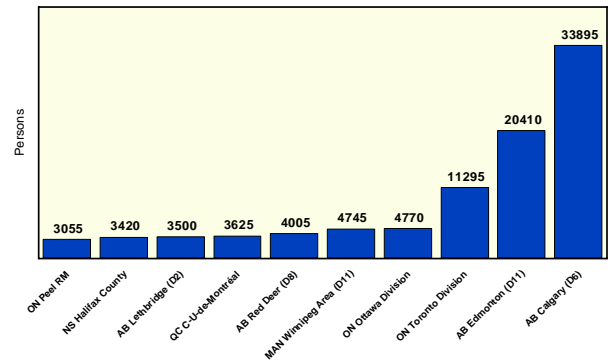


Figure 13: Northern Areas Interprovincial In-Migrants  
Top 10 Census Divisions Moved From  
Between 1996 and 2001

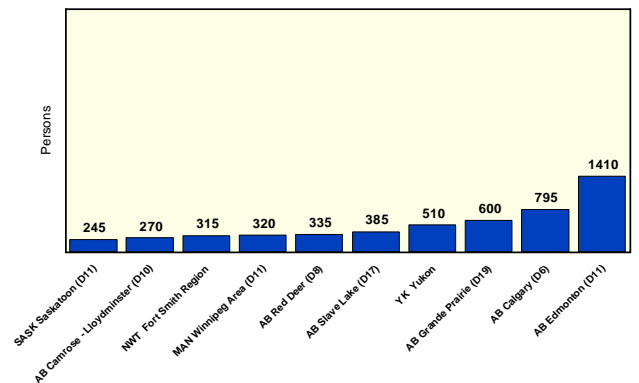
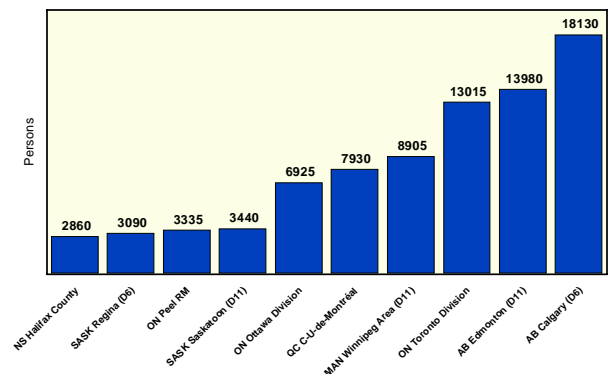


Figure 14: Southern Areas Interprovincial In-Migrants  
Top 10 Census Divisions Moved From  
Between 1996 and 2001



### *Geographic Characteristics of Intra-provincial Migration*

There was a sizable intra-provincial migration flow between the northern and southern areas of B.C between 1996 and 2001. Over this period 30,830 individuals (who were five years and older in 2001) left the northern area for areas in the south. A total of 19,195 individuals also left the southern area for the north over the same period.

Table 2 presents more detailed information on intra-provincial movements over this time. This table presents the number of individuals aged 5 years and over who moved between the Development Regions

of B.C. between 1996 and 2001. Individuals who moved *within* the same DR to a different Regional District are listed in the diagonal elements of the table.

Southern DRs sent a larger number of individuals to other Southern DR areas than to the North. Vancouver Is./Coast DR and Mainland/ Southwest DR also had a higher number of migrants move within their boundaries than to any other single DR. A total of 27,305 individuals moved between Regional Districts within Vancouver Island/ Coast DR and 39,185 individuals moved within Mainland/ Southwest DR regional districts. Intra-provincial migration movements for the southern area, therefore, are more focused within itself.

Table 2: BC Intra-provincial Migration Flows (Migrants Aged 5 Years and Older): Movements between Regional Districts 1996 – 2001. (Information Presented at the *Development Region*)

Origin Development Region : 1996 Resi-	Destination Development Region : 2001 Residence								
	Southern Area				Northern Area				<i>Total Leavers</i>
	Vancouver Is. / Coast	Mainland South	Thompson Okanagan	Kootenay	Cariboo	North Coast	Nechako	North-east	
Vancouver Is. / Coast	27,305	21,925	6,570	1,405	1,990	860	705	790	61,550
Mainland Southwest	23,005	39,185	23,665	4,310	4,950	1,160	1,120	1,350	98,745
Thompson - Okanagan	5,495	14,930	13,515	2,930	2,805	525	635	1,085	41,920
Kootenay	1,895	3,360	3,895	2,335	565	180	270	205	12,705
Cariboo	3,385	6,100	6,265	675	1,395	605	1,205	1,195	20,825
North Coast	2,130	2,855	1,925	350	1,415	1,175	655	275	10,780
Nechako	1,020	1,025	1,075	215	1,315	620	95	345	5,710
Northeast	635	1,305	1,370	500	1,105	215	250	390	5,770
<i>Total Received</i>	64,870	90,685	58,280	12,720	15,540	5,340	4,935	5,635	258,005

Data Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census (Migrants Aged 5 Years and Older)

Note: Diagonal elements represent movements of individuals between Regional Districts that are *within* the same Development Region. (Number of Intra-Development Region Migrants)

Vancouver Island/Coast DR, Thompson-Okanagan DR and Kootenay DR had positive net intra-provincial migration between 1996 and 2001. More individuals moved to these areas from other parts of British Columbia than moved out. Mainland/Southwest DR experienced negative net intraprovincial migration. Thompson-Okanagan DR sent the highest number of intra-provincial migrants to the Mainland/Southwest DR.

Intra-provincial migration from the northern area shows large flows to areas in the south. However, the Cariboo DR in the North received a large inflow of intra-provincial migrants from other northern DRs. Cariboo DR and Northeast DR sent a majority of their intra-provincial emigrants to Thompson-Okanagan DR while North

Coast DR sent a high number of intra-provincial migrants to the Mainland/Southwest DR. Cariboo DR, North Coast DR, Nechako DR and Northeast DR all had more individuals move to other parts of the province than move in from areas within BC over this same period.

In terms of receiving intra-provincial migrants, Cariboo DR and the Northeast DR received high numbers of migrants from the Mainland/Southwest DR. North Coast DR received the highest number of intra-provincial migrants from areas within its boundaries, and Nechako DR received their highest number of intra-provincial migrants, 1,205 individuals, from Cariboo DR.