Demographic Trends in Metropolitan Chicago at Mid-Decade

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Summary

The Chicago metropolitan region has grown by 413,000 residents (4.4 percent) since 2000 according to recent Census Bureau estimates. The region’s total population stands at 9,725,000. The growth rate for the metropolitan region has slowed slightly since the 2000 Census. The overall population gain in the Chicago metropolitan region masks sharply contrasting demographic trends within the region. A summary of population change in the region using the Census Bureau’s most recent estimates suggests:

City of Chicago (Population 2,834,000):
- The City of Chicago lost almost 62,000 residents between April of 2000 and July of 2006. This compares with a population gain of 112,000 between 1990 and 2000.
- The population losses in Chicago resulted from out migration. The number of people leaving the city was so great that the excess of births over deaths was not sufficient to offset it. Chicago is experiencing migration losses for all ages except those between the age of 20-30.
- Hispanics accounted for almost all of the population increase in the City of Chicago. The number of blacks and whites living in Chicago is declining.

Suburban Cook County (Population 2,454,000):
- In suburban Cook County, the population decreased by roughly 27,000 between 2000 and 2006. In contrast, the population grew by 159,000 during the 1990s.
- More people moved out of suburban Cook County than moved into it, and the excess of births over deaths was not sufficient to offset this loss.
- The white population declined in suburban Cook County, but the black, Hispanic and other populations all grew.

Suburban Fringe (Population 4,437,000):
- The population residing in the remainder of the Chicago metropolitan region grew by 501,000. Recent population gains in the outer suburbs closely approximate the gains of the 1990s on an annualized basis.
- The large population gain in the outer suburbs occurred because many families are moving there and because births exceeded deaths by a substantial margin.
- Significant population gains occurred in the outer suburbs for whites, Hispanics, blacks and others.

Other Significant Findings:
- Cook County lost more population than all but two U.S. counties between 2000 and 2006.
- Cook County’s domestic migration loss of 599,000 between 2000 and 2006 is already greater than its domestic migration loss during all of the 1990s.
- Cook County lost $1.25 billion dollars in income in migration exchanges with its six neighboring counties in recent years.
Demographic Trends in the Chicago Metropolitan Region at Mid-Decade

Kenneth M. Johnson, Loyola University-Chicago, Chicago, IL

The Chicago metropolitan region has gained 413,000 additional residents (4.4 percent) since 2000 according to Census Bureau estimates. The region’s total population in July of 2006 was 9,725,000. The growth rate for the metropolitan region has slowed slightly since the 2000 Census. Roughly 29.1 percent of the area’s population resides in the City of Chicago, 25.2 percent live in suburban Cook County and the remaining 45.6 percent reside in the outer suburbs. Chicago’s share of regional population has declined over the past several decades while the proportion residing in suburban Cook County and the outer suburbs has increased.

The overall population gains in the Chicago metropolitan region masks sharply contrasting demographic trends within the region (Figure 1). The population of the City of Chicago is estimated to be 2,834,000 in July of 2006. The city lost approximately 62,000 residents between April of 2000 and July of 2006 according to Census Bureau estimates. Although modest in absolute terms, this compares with a population gain of 112,000 between 1990 and 2000. The population gain of the 1990s was the first for the city in 50 years and was heralded by some as indicative of a new era of growth for the city. Yet, the losses since 2000 are more consistent with historical trends, suggesting that the 1990s may have been a short-term deviation from longitudinal trends.
In suburban Cook County, the population declined by almost 27,000 between 2000 and 2006 to 2,454,000. Population gains were considerably more robust during the 1990s, when suburban Cook County grew by 160,000. When Chicago and suburban Cook County are combined, the county as a whole lost approximately 88,000 residents between 2000 and 2006, compared to a gain of 260,000 between 1990 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2006, Cook County experienced the third largest population loss of any U.S. county according to recent Census Bureau estimates. Only Wayne County (Detroit) and Orleans Parish (New Orleans) lost more people between 2000 and 2006.

Cook County is not the only large metropolitan core county experiencing population loss. Among the other large metro core counties, those including Philadelphia,
Detroit, Cleveland, San Francisco and Pittsburgh in addition to hurricane damaged New Orleans have also experienced significant population loss. Although the percentage population loss in each of these counties is not large, the fact that the entire county including the major city of the region is losing population is indicative of the on-going outward sprawl of the nation's metropolitan areas often at the expense of the central core county.

In contrast to the losses in Cook County, the population residing in the remainder of the Chicago metropolitan region grew by 501,000 (12.7 percent) between 2000 and 2006. Population gains in the outer suburbs after 2000 closely approximate those of the 1990s on an annualized basis. By July 2006, the population of the Chicago region outside of Cook County was 4,437,000.
The outward sprawl of the metropolitan region is clearly evident in the map above. Population growth rates are highest in a broad band around the outer edge of the metropolitan area. Losses are evident both in the City of Chicago and in the inner suburbs. These trends suggest continued growth at the outer periphery of the metropolitan area and in the rural areas just beyond the urban edge. In contrast, population loss is occurring in the urban core and the proximate suburbs. Such deconcentration is consistent with recent Census data which shows that while Cook County lost more population than almost any U.S. county, Will County and Kendall County were among the fastest growing counties in the country.

**Demographic Components of Change**

Population change in the Chicago metropolitan region is the result of a complex interaction between several demographic components. Natural increase (the excess of births over deaths) is a significant source of population increase in every large metropolitan area. However, net migration (the difference between the number of individuals moving into and out of an area) has a far more differential effect; increasing the population of some areas and decreasing the population elsewhere. In studying the Chicago metropolitan region, it is useful to disaggregate overall migration change into two separate components. The first is domestic migration, which includes the movement of a person between locations in the U.S. The second type of migration is net immigration, which is the difference between the number of people coming into an area from outside the U.S. and the number of people from the area leaving the U.S. Both types
of migration played an important role in the demographic change in the Chicago metropolitan region between 2000 and 2006.

The population losses in the City of Chicago occurred because the excess of births over deaths was not sufficient to offset the net outflow of people from the city. Between 2000 and 2006, there were an estimated 304,000 births in Chicago compared to 141,000 deaths, producing a natural increase of 162,000 (Figure 2). This gain through natural increase was more than offset by net outmigration. In all, 223,000 more people moved out of Chicago than moved in. This net migration loss occurred even though an estimated 171,000 people immigrated to the City of Chicago from outside the U.S. during the period. These gains from immigration were not sufficient to offset the net loss of
395,000 domestic migrants in exchanges with other U.S. counties. Because migration losses exceeded natural gains, the city population declined.

The trend was similar in suburban Cook County, where a natural gain of 74,000 (208,000 births compared to 134,000 deaths) was not sufficient to offset a net migration loss of 101,000 (a net loss of 203,000 domestic migrants that was only partially replaced by 103,000 immigrants). The combination of these demographic components produced an overall population loss in suburban Cook County.

In the suburban fringe of the Chicago region, the trends were quite different. Here a significant surplus of births over deaths of 215,000 (389,000 births compared to 175,000 deaths) was supplemented by a net migration gain of 286,000. This migration gain was fueled both by a net influx of domestic migrants (182,000) from elsewhere in the U.S. (the largest number coming from Cook County) and by significant immigration (105,000).

**Recent Population Change by Race/Ethnicity**

Hispanics accounted for all of the population increase in the City of Chicago (Figure 3). Chicago’s Hispanics population increased by approximately 36,000 (4.8 percent) between 2000 and 2005. In contrast, the number of non-Hispanic blacks living in Chicago diminished by 55,000 (-5.2 percent) and the non-Hispanic whites population declined by 33,000 (-3.5 percent). The group containing all other racial groups (most of whom are Asian) decreased slightly ( .9%).
In suburban Cook County, the Hispanic population also grew the most with a gain of 72,000 (22.6 percent). Gains among the non-Hispanic black population were also considerable with an increase of almost 35,000 (10.1 percent). There was also a modest gain among those of other races. In contrast, the non-Hispanic white population declined by 131,000 (-7.9 percent). Thus, the white loss more than offset the minority population gain resulting in an overall population loss for suburban Cook County.

In the outer suburbs, the patterns of racial change are quite different. Population gains occurred among each of the racial/ethnic groups. The numerical gain, as well as the percentage gain, was greatest for Hispanics; this population grew by 171,000 (40.2 percent) between 2000 and 2005. The next largest numerical gain was registered by Non-Hispanic whites, who grew by 154,000 (5.3 percent). The Other racial group also had a
large percentage gain: 34.8 percent (54,000). And, the non-Hispanic black population
grew by nearly 41,000 in the outer suburbs.

The distribution of racial groups within the three areas shifted during the period as
a result of these racial and ethnic trends (figure 4). Despite modest losses, blacks (35.3
percent) remained the largest racial group in the City of Chicago in 2005 followed by
whites (31.3 percent). The growing Hispanics population now represents 27.7 percent of
the city total. The “other” group (largely Asian) represented about 5.5 percent of the
population.

Suburban Cook County remained over 62 percent white despite an 8 percent loss
to this segment of the population between 2000 and 2005. Blacks represented slightly
more than 15 percent of suburban Cook County; Hispanics were nearly 16 percent; and
the other category (largely Asian) was 6.5 percent. The outer suburbs were approximately
73 percent white. Hispanics were the next largest group at 14 percent, followed by blacks (8 percent) and other (5 percent).

**Flows of Migrants within the Chicago Metropolitan Region**

Using data from the Internal Revenue Service, it is possible to examine the movement of the population within the Chicago metropolitan region and gain further insights into how migration is reshaping the demographic structure of the region. The IRS data do not cover the entire population, but the coverage is quite substantial. Therefore, conclusions drawn from analysis of the IRS migration data are likely to be indicative of the overall migration streams in the region.

In 2002, Cook County lost migrants in exchanges with each of the six counties that are contiguous to it (Figure 5). In all, 47,000 more people left Cook County for the six adjacent counties than move from these counties to Cook. The greatest losses were to Will and DuPage County. The volume of migration that produced the net migration loss of 47,000 was substantial as well. Some 85,000 people left Cook County for the surrounding counties in 2002 according to the IRS data. This outflow was only partially offset by an influx of 37,000 from the six neighboring counties.
The outflow of migrants from Cook County is matched by an outflow of income. In total, migrants leaving Cook County for its six immediate neighbors in 2002 earned 1.26 billion dollars more than the migrants moving into Cook County. This net loss of income was caused both by the larger number of people leaving the county than coming to it and because the households leaving Cook County earned more on average than the households coming to it. Analysis also suggests that the average household size of those moving into Cook County was less than the household size of those leaving. This suggests that a significant proportion of the migrants moving into Cook County are individuals or couples, whereas those leaving are more likely to be families with children.
Additional data presented below on age-specific net migration offers further support for this hypothesis.

Analysis of migration patterns in the six counties adjacent to Cook County provide additional insights into the role that migration is playing in the redistribution of population within the region. The data suggest a consistent outward flow of migrants from the core of the urban area to the periphery. For example, DuPage County receives a net inflow of migrants from Cook, but has a net outflow to Lake, McHenry, Kane, Kendall and Will counties. Lake County, IL receives a net inflow from closer in Cook and DuPage, but has a net outflow to McHenry and Kane as well as to more remote Kenosha and Walworth County in Wisconsin. Even McHenry County on the outer periphery of the Chicago CMSA gains migrants from Cook, Lake, DuPage and Kane, but losses migrants to the next outer tier of counties such as Boone in Illinois and Walworth in Wisconsin. The overall trend is a continuing outward sprawl of the population from the densely settled core of the region to the less densely settle periphery.

**Migration Patterns by Age and Race**

Migration is the driving force behind most demographic change in the Chicago region. However, migration trends differ both by age and race. Because the data and computational demands required to produce such estimates are substantial, this is the first time that such data have been presented for sub-areas of the region. Examining the patterns of net migration by age and race provides additional insights into the demographic change underway in the region.
Between 1990 and 2000, the City of Chicago lost migrants in every age group except those in their 20s (figure 6). These results are fairly consistent for each of the major racial/ethnic groups that make up the city population. White migration trends match the overall city pattern most closely. Among whites the only migration gain was among those 20-29. At every other age, more whites left the city than came to it. The outward flow is even more pronounced for blacks. They experienced net migration loss in every age group. Among Hispanics and others (mostly Asian) there were modest migration gains among those in their teens and thirties and a larger gain among those in their twenties. The pattern of migration change in the city is likely linked to life course changes of its population. For example, white young adults are attracted to the city during their 20s when many have yet to marry and are just beginning careers. However, non-Hispanic whites leave the city in large numbers when they are in their 30s and 40s and the concomitant exodus of children suggests an outflow of families from the city. Blacks are leaving at every age, with the greatest losses among those under age of 40. Hispanic migration reflects a similar trend to whites with an influx of young adults to the city consistent with immigration. However, the minimal gains for Hispanics in their 30s, together with a net loss of older Hispanics and children suggests that Hispanic families are not moving into the city and may, in fact, be leaving. It is important to recognize that
the focus here is on net trends, so negative net migration for a given age group does not mean that no individuals of that group are moving into the city, it simply means that more are leaving than coming.

In suburban Cook County, there is a net migration loss of whites at every age (Figure 7). The losses are greatest among those in their 30s. In contrast, there is a net influx of minority populations of all races and virtually all ages to suburban Cook County. Hispanic gains are greatest among those 20-29, a finding consistent with significant immigration of young adults. For blacks and the other group, age-specific migration gains are greatest in the 30’s. In this regard, the significant gains among all minority groups over 30 and the influx of minority children would suggest suburban Cook is gaining minority families.
In the outer suburbs, there are significant losses of young white adults consistent with adult children leaving home for college or jobs elsewhere (including the City of Chicago). The significant migration gain for whites in their 30s together with the sizeable net inflow of children is consistent with the movement of families into the outer suburbs (Figure 8). There is also evidence of white retirement age outmigration from the outer suburbs. In contrast, Hispanic migration gains are greatest in the teens and 20s, a pattern consistent with the rapid growth of an immigrant population. However, the increase in Hispanic children suggests that the influx of Hispanics to the outer suburbs may include a mix of young immigrants together with families (some of whom may be coming from Cook County). Although smaller in numbers, black and other migration gain patterns in the outer suburbs appear more consistent with white patterns. This suggests that the outer suburbs may be gaining minority families.
In sum, between 1990 and 2000 the City of Chicago gained a significant numbers of migrants in their 20s, a life cycle phase characterized by single adults beginning independent lives. Yet, the city is losing sizeable numbers of residents in their prime childbearing and family forming years. In contrast, the outer suburbs lose young white adults in their 20s many of whom are likely moving to Chicago (either directly or after college). The outer suburbs gained many migrants in their prime family rearing years. This influx contributes to future population gain as well because additional children will be born to these migrant families.

**Demographic Trends in the 1990s**

To fully appreciate the demographic trends of the new century, it is important to compare them to historical trends. The patterns of demographic change in the Chicago
metropolitan region since the 2000 Census are generally similar to those during the 1990s, though there are some important differences.

In the 1990s, the population of the Chicago metropolitan region grew by 918,000 (11.1 percent). The region had a total population of 9,158,000 in April of 2000 making it the third largest metropolitan region in the country. Gains were greatest in the outer suburbs and smallest in the city. Both natural increase and net migration contributed to this population gain. Natural increase accounted for most of the growth in the area. There were a total of 1,464,000 births and 717,000 deaths in the region between 1990 and 2000 producing a population gain attributable to natural increase of 748,000. The net migration gain to the region was 170,000. The migration gain occurred because a net immigration gain of 424,000 offset a domestic migration loss of 254,000.

The population increased by 112,000 (4 percent) in the City of Chicago. This was the first population gain in more than 50 years (Figure 9). Suburban Cook County gained 159,000 (6.9 percent) during the period. Suburban Cook’s gain during the 1990s was larger than during the 1980s, but modest compared to that in the 1950s and 1960s when suburbanization was concentrated in places proximate to the city. The outer suburbs grew by approximately 646,000 (20.6 percent) between 1990 and 2000. This was the largest percentage gain since the 1960s and underscores the continuing outward sprawl of the metropolitan area.
The City of Chicago experienced natural increase and net outmigration during the 1990s just as it did from 2000 to 2004, though the smaller migration losses during the 1990s resulted in overall population gain. Chicago experienced a net migration loss of 171,000 in the 1990s. This loss occurred because the net outflow of domestic migrants from the city was only partially offset by immigration (Figure 10). Although substantial, the City of Chicago’s migration loss between 1990 and 2000 was considerably smaller than those during the three prior decades. The excess of births over deaths was 283,000 (10.2% of the total population) in the city. Thus, the gain from natural increase was sufficient to offset the migration loss from the Chicago.
Suburban Cook County also had natural increase during the 1990s, plus it had a modest net migration gain. Suburban Cook County gained approximately 14,000 migrants during the decade because net immigration gains were sufficient to offset a net loss of domestic migrants. Natural increase contributed 145,000 (6.2%) new residents to suburban Cook County. This substantial gain from natural increase supplemented the modest migration gain in suburban Cook County.

The suburban fringe grew through natural increase and net migration during the 1990s, a pattern that has actually accelerated since 2000. The outer suburbs experienced a net migration gain of 326,000 (10.4 percent) fueled by both domestic migrants and immigrants. The gain from natural increase nearly matched that from migration at 320,000 (10.2 percent). This large gain from natural increase added to the substantial migration gain in the outer suburbs resulting in a very significant population gain (20.6 percent) there.
During the 1990s, Hispanics population gains fueled most of the growth in the Chicago, just as it did in the period after 2000 (Figure 11). The white and black populations both declined in the 1990s, as they did after 2000. The Hispanic population of Chicago increased by 208,000 between 1990 and 2000. This gain offset a substantial net loss of non-Hispanic whites and a modest loss of blacks. The “Other” category (which is primarily Asians) also grew during the period. Suburban Cook County also grew in the 1990s. Population gains there resulted from the growth of the Hispanic, black and other racial groups. These gains offset the loss of whites just as it did from 2000 to 2004. Population growth was greatest in suburban areas beyond Cook County, because net migration and natural increase gains there were substantial. All four racial groups gained population in the outer suburbs; with the largest gain experienced by the white population. Hispanics experienced substantial growth as well, whereas gains to the black and the other category were modest.

Change in Racial/Ethnic Distribution, 1990-2000
Chicago CMSA

Figure 11.
An examination of net migration and natural increase by race reveals the complex dynamics of demographic change in the metropolitan region during the 1990s. In the City of Chicago, the non-Hispanic white population experienced both net out migration and natural decrease. Natural decrease occurred because white deaths exceeded births. There was also significant black net out migration from the city during the 1990s, though it was largely offset by natural increase. In contrast, Hispanics experienced both substantial natural increase and significant net migration gains. However, it is important to note that more than two-thirds of Hispanic growth in the city was a function of natural increase. This refutes a commonly held notion that Hispanic population growth in the City of Chicago is mostly due to immigration. The primarily Asian population of the “Other” category also enjoyed both natural increase and net migration in the 1990s.

There was a substantial net outflow of whites from suburban Cook County between 1990 and 2000. Modest natural increase only partially offset this loss. Most of the black population gain in suburban Cook County resulted from migration; thought there was also significant natural increase. The two combined to produce a 51% increase in the number of blacks residing in suburban Cook County. Hispanics also enjoyed significant natural increase and substantial inmigration in suburban Cook County, as did those in the other category. Part of the reason for the large percentage gains in the black and Hispanic population in the suburbs was the relatively small number of each groups residing there in 1990. However, even measured in absolute terms, the growth of the black and Hispanic population in the suburbs was substantial.
In the suburban fringe, significant natural increase combined with substantial net migration gains to produce a large population gain for each of the four racial groups. The outer suburbs are the only part of the metropolitan area that had a net inflow of whites. A trend that continued in 2000 to 2004. Population gains were greatest among Hispanics, who grew 110% between 1990 and 2000. Most of the Hispanic growth was from net migration. Migration gains were also substantial for the largely Asian other category.

In conclusion, the significant population gains in each sub-area of the Chicago metropolitan region between 1990 and 2000 contrasts with the trends since 2000. In the most recent period, Chicago experienced a modest population loss; Cook County had a minimal gain and growth in the outer suburbs accelerated. These recent population trends resulted from a complex interplay of fertility, mortality, domestic migration and immigration. Most of the region’s growth was fueled by immigration and natural increase, with Hispanics contributing disproportionately to both processes. The Chicago area continued to experienced significant net domestic out migration, especially from the city and suburban Cook County. Most of this net migration loss occurred among non-Hispanic whites.
Methods and Data

For purposes of this study, the Chicago metropolitan region is defined as the Chicago, Kenosha, and Gary Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area. This includes Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. Also included are Kenosha County in Wisconsin and Jasper, Lake LaPorte, Newton and Porter County in Indiana. The City of Chicago is reported separately from the remainder of Cook County in most of the analysis.

The data for this project was assembled from a number of sources. Most of the data are from the U.S. Census Bureau. Data were obtained from the 1950 to 2000 Censuses and the 1990 and 2000 Modified Age-Race-Sex file (MARS) prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Additional Census data comes from the 1990-2006 Federal State Cooperative Population Estimates Series (FSCPE). Detailed race based birth and death data were obtained from the National Center for Health Statistics and from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Data for the period since the 2000 Census are from estimates by the Census Bureau. Such estimates have proven quite reliable in the past, but the results must be interpreted with caution. It was necessary to make a number of estimates to adjust datasets to be consistent in period covered and data type.

The age specific net migration estimates were produced using a cohort-component method. Detailed birth and death date by race were obtained from the National Center for Health Statistics. The 1990 and 2000 Census populations were adjusted for the enumeration undercount in each Census prior to the generation of age-specific net
migration estimates. A detailed description of the methods and data employed for the
calculation of age-specific net migration are available for those interested in the topic.

Data on migration and income flows between counties are from the Internal
Revenue Service County to County Migration Flow Data. The IRS measures migration
by comparing the county of residence in successive years of income tax returns. For each
return indicating a change in county of residence, the county of origin, destination,
number of dependents and income is reported. Coverage includes between 95 and 98
percent of all tax returns filed. However, the data series excludes persons that do not file
returns (due to low income, income from non-taxed retirement plans, recent international
immigrants, illegal immigrants, etc). Although the coverage is not complete, it covers the
vast majority of the population and findings reported for the IRS data are likely to be very
accurate representations of overall migration trends.

To produce a database consistent in time and structure, a number of additional
estimates and adjustments were made using procedures widely accepted by
demographers. Although these estimation and adjustment procedures introduce some
uncertainty into the results, I am confident my conclusions here accurately represent the
overall demographic trends in the Chicago metropolitan region.
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2000-2006

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Fringe and Total CMSA values for the year 2000 vary slightly in the 1990 to 2000 and 200-2006 data. This is due to revisions to the boundaries of the Chicago Metropolitan Area by the Office of Management and Budget.
Kenneth M. Johnson is a demographer and Professor of Sociology at Loyola University-Chicago. Tim Weddle, Neil Holmgren, David Goldblatt and Kate Dalton of Loyola University-Chicago produced the graphics and contributed to the data analysis. Mark Flotow of the Illinois Department of Public Health provided timely and detailed birth and death data for Cook County. Steve Murdock, the State Demographer of Texas, provided additional data. Dr. Johnson’s research on this project was funded by grants from the Northern Research Station of the U.S. Forest Service.

The population of the city of Chicago has not yet been estimated for 2006. The 2005 population estimate for the city was 2,842,000. I have estimated the 2006 population at 2,834,000. The estimate assumes that the proportion of the Cook County population residing in Chicago in 2006 is the same as it was in 2005. Although it is likely that the actual population of the city in 2006 will differ somewhat from this value, the difference is likely to be extremely modest.

Findings from the IRS data result from a collaboration between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Carol Sonnenschein of Metropolis 2020. For detailed results from the IRS analysis see, Sonnenschein, C. 2004. “Following the Money: Income Migration in the Chicago Metropolitan Region.” Chicago: Metropolis 2020.

