VERMONT’S DOMESTIC MIGRATION PATTERNS:
A Cause of Social and Economic Differences

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ABSTRACT
This paper serves as the backdrop for this edited volume by paying attention to domestic migration flows into and out of Vermont, a state with such a small population base (barely above 625,000) that its vitality could be threatened by sustained levels of out-migration. The state’s very low birth rate, a rapidly aging population, and low gains from international migration make the “growth or decline” balance from interstate migration a perennial issue of concern. The state’s very recent net population outflows are modest and are typical of the Northeast. Vermont attracts an unusually vigorous stream of in-migrants, enough to give the state a relatively high proportion of residents who were born in other states, yet the stream of out-migrants has recently exceeded the stream of in-migrants. The educational levels of the transplants are well above that of most states and well above that of native born Vermonters who remain in the state. Data from five statewide surveys on quality of life in Vermont conducted by the authors provide unique insights into the perceived well-being of in-migrants and identify areas of distinctiveness compared to the native born population. Given the higher levels of education and income of the in-migrants, the authors were not surprised to find many quality of life differences between the two groups, but when controlling for demographic difference in a multivariate context, statistical differences between natives and the new migrants weakened or disappeared. Among the differences that remained, in-migrants have more confidence in the state government, are less worried about population growth in the state, are less likely to feel that they need to focus on themselves and their families, and are more likely to find life “exciting” rather than dull. New migrants also tend to be more environmentally sensitive, and with their higher incomes, are more willing to pay increased taxes to support their public priorities. Keywords: Vermont, out-migration, youth, higher education, economy.

Introduction

In many respects, Vermont is a remarkable place, with a national reputation that is far more expansive than its small size warrants. Among the fifty states, Vermont is frequently listed either
at or near the top of “good” lists or at the bottom of various undesirable state rankings (Bolduc and Kessel 2005, 2008). Vermont’s unusual demographic profile is one of many characteristics that distinguish it from other states. Its small and homogeneous population (second highest percent of non-Hispanic whites in the nation, third lowest in the percent of the population speaking a language other than English in the home), older age distribution (second highest median age among states), a well-educated population (sixth highest percent with advanced degrees), and the highest percent of the population in the nation that live in small towns, all stand out (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a, 2015b). The U.S. Census Bureau (2015a) estimated Vermont’s population in 2014 at 626,562, the second smallest among the fifty states, and just ahead of Wyoming.

Policy makers and citizens alike are concerned with the relative decline of New England’s historic prominence on the national scene. Nowhere is this influence seen more clearly than in its population decline as a proportion of national growth. For decades, the south and the west have grown at rates that far exceed even the most robust of the six New England states. As one analyst put it “... [an] unprecedented and substantial population change is sweeping over the region” (Francese 2014,1). There are many reasons for this shifting national balance, but two factors stand out. First, the rate of natural increase in New England (the surplus of births over deaths) is at historic lows (Murphy, Xu, and Kochanek 2013; Martin et al. 2015) and second, the balance between in and out migration has resulted either in anemic growth or absolute declines. The focus of this paper is on the latter, domestic migration patterns into and out of Vermont. While foreign migration into Vermont has been noteworthy in recent years due to the diversity it has added to selected urban areas, our study focuses on the shifts in domestic migration. We will identify some of the ways that Vermont’s population changes both mirror and deviate from the other New England states. After looking at these migration streams, the second part of this paper turns its attention to a twenty-five year longitudinal study of how these new Vermonter differ from their native born neighbors in their assessments of their quality of life in their adopted state. Perceptions differ in a number of areas, but the research that follows will show that many of these differences are attributable to the distinctive socio-demographic characteristics of the native and non-native born Vermonters.

The frequency with which Vermont’s annual out-migration appears to exceed in-migration has become a statewide concern for many politicians and analysts, although there are groups like “Vermonters for a Sustainable Population” which advocate for a smaller, “environmentally sustainable” population (Vermonters for a Sustainable Population 2015). More commonly, however, politicians of all stripes have expressed alarm about Vermont’s slow rate of population growth (Ring 2013). These concerns show up on several related fronts. One is the fear that Vermont’s businesses will not be able to grow and remain competitive if they are unable to find qualified workers. Others worry about a brain drain and family dislocations arising from the loss of many younger Vermonters who search for jobs in other states or who graduate from a Vermont institution and then seek employment elsewhere (Brome 2007). The loss of many younger Vermonters exacerbates the state’s aging profile, a generational imbalance which will present structural problems in the near future. This aging process also has important tax implications as incomes and spending rates fall during the retirement years, both of which are
key revenue sources for states (Felix and Watkins 2013).

The aging of the Vermont population is likely to slow down as selected Baby Boomers migrate to the Sun Belt. This process will also contribute to the out-migration rates in the Northeast perhaps followed in the future by a small reverse stream as some return north to be near their family members as the difficulties associated with aging set in.

Demographic patterns such as we see in Vermont and the other states in the Northeast may be changing slowly, but the long run implications are extremely important. The patterns we see today have been underway for decades. In 1790, the population center of the nation was twenty-three miles east of Baltimore, but today it is in Texas County, Missouri and is inching south and southwest (U.S. Census Bureau 2015c). A full consideration of the implications of these changes is well beyond the scope of this paper, but they will impact all the major institutions of society including the economy, education, health care, public finance, families and the social service sector.

Compared to other states, international migration is a relatively small contributor to Vermont’s population growth, but it is large enough at times to cancel out net losses in domestic migration. For the first nine years of the millennium, the international migration of about 5,000 persons offset Vermont’s small net losses in domestic migration (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). International migration has also made certain cities in Vermont (e.g., Burlington and Winooski) considerably more diverse. For example, the students in the Burlington school system speak fifty-six languages other than English (Burlington School District Annual Report 2013, 3).

The Context of Domestic Migration Flows

Finding reliable estimates of migration patterns between states is challenging. There are five main sources of data on domestic migration: 1) the decennial Census; 2) the American Community Survey (ACS); 3) Current Population Survey (CPS); 4) Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tracking of taxpayers from one year to the next; 5) a component methods that utilizes various measures from the American Housing Survey and the Vital Statistics system. All have their own limitations with accompanying systematic distortions. Conflicting estimates from different sources are common, as are wide margins of error. For example, the Census web site on “Migration and Geographic Mobility” provides estimated migration patterns among all fifty states. In the case of Vermont, it appears that between 2012 and 2013, 23,180 people moved into the state while 21,773 left Vermont for other states. This would represent a gain of 1,407 residents. However, the specified margin of error is so wide that Vermont could have experienced a net gain in population as high as 8,022, a net loss of 5,208 or anything in between (U.S. Census Bureau 2014a).

For several generations, America has been known as a mobile society, but in recent decades the rate at which people move, both within and between states, has lessened considerably. The years immediately following World War II found 20 percent of the population changing residences each year, but by 2000, the rate had lessened to about 15 percent, and in 2013 it was estimated to be just 11.7 percent (Ihrke 2014). Most moves are local. According to the American Community Survey, the time period between 2009 and 2013 saw an annual rate of
residential moves within counties at 9.1 percent and the rate from county to county within the same state was 3.2 percent. In Vermont, the “within state” moves are somewhat lower than national averages, at 7.4 percent and 2.0 percent respectively. The interstate rate of mobility, and the focus of this article, was the least common form of geographical mobility at just 2.3 percent per year. On the other hand, the 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey reports that 3.7 percent of Vermont’s population moved into the state from other states in the past year. Such a rate is a sign of the continuing attractiveness of the state to many people—and as will be shown later, especially those with advanced degrees. Among the 50 states, Vermont ranked eighth in terms of the percent of total movers in the population and second in terms of the high educational levels of the new in-migrants (Governing States and Localities 2015). While this rate of in-migration is much higher than the national average, it was frequently offset by out-migration of approximately the same proportion (U.S. Census Bureau 2015d).

New England is one of the slowest growing regions in the United States, and were it not for international migration and a birth rate that exceeds the death rate, the net domestic migration would cause the population of this region to contract. Yet New England is not the only region experiencing low or no population growth, twenty-eight states experienced net out-migration between 2012 and 2013, most of which were either neighboring states in the Northeast or in the Midwest. Indeed, this population slowdown is a regional issue with only the Dakotas boasting positive population growth rates over the past three years that are above the national average. The other Midwest states have anemic growth rates similar to New England (U.S. Census Bureau 2015c).

The most recent data for 2013 and 2014 from the Census Division of Mobility and Migration indicates a relatively large outflow of 469,000 people from the Northeast to the three other regions (Midwest, South and West) while only 375,000 migrated from those three regions into the Northeast. Not surprisingly, a high proportion of those who left the Northeast for the South were over the age of sixty-five (39,000 in number) but there were also 15,000 people over sixty-five making the move in the opposite direction (U.S. Census Bureau 2015f).

Table 1 illustrates the slow growth rate for New England relative to the nation. In none of the three time periods shown does New England approach the national rate of population growth. Yet, New England’s net losses are also seen throughout the Northeast as well. When we look at gains in the South and West, the contrast is clear. In the former, there was a net domestic migration gain of 365,289 new residents in the single year ending in June, 2014 and in the latter, a gain of 103,464. In that one year time period, the eleven states that make up the Midwest lost a total of 182,057 people while the Northeast lost 286,696 to domestic out-migration. Such a loss in a year has not been unusual over the past four years. Between 2010 and 2014, the nine states that make up the Northeast lost a total 918,618 people to other states. Given the increasing age of the population in the region, fertility is unlikely to have much of an effect on reversing this pattern. Two of the New England states listed in Table 1 (Maine and New Hampshire) showed small net domestic migration gains for the most recent time periods, but this has been somewhat unusual in the recent past. More often than not, net losses occurred in all six states (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015g). It’s also important to remember that small gains or losses within a state could be offset by the relatively wide margins of error.
Table 1 shows that Vermont's rate of growth is lower than the nation as a whole, but not out of character with other New England states. While not shown, this is similar to other Northeastern and Midwestern states. Vermont's slow population growth reflects a low birth rate, not unexpected in a state with an aging population, and a high percentage of well-educated and non-Hispanic whites, groups which have considerably lower fertility rates than other segments of the population.

There is an historic reciprocity between sending and receiving states. The states that most frequently are target destinations for exiting Vermonters are also the most likely states to send new migrants to Vermont. The surrounding states of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire are the most common senders and receivers of migrants, and have been for several generations. IRS data for 2010 to 2011 (Table 2) presents data for the six states with the highest number of inflows into Vermont. The numbers are derived from the number of tax returns that were filed in one state in 2010 and then filed in another state in 2011.5

Table 1.

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<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>-0.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-1,549</td>
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015a; U.S. Bureau of the Census 2015g.

Table 2.

<table>
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<th>States with the highest of migration reciprocity with Vermont</th>
<th>Inflows of new tax returns to addresses in Vermont from other states</th>
<th>Outflows of tax returns from addresses in Vermont to other states</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<td>1,169</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
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<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total all 50 states</td>
<td>8,586</td>
<td>9,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total all exemptions)</td>
<td>13,488</td>
<td>14,112</td>
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Table 2.
As noted above, Vermonters who leave the state most likely end up moving to either New York or another New England state. Florida stands out as an exception, as it has for many years. Over the period between 2001 and 2013, the state lost approximately 1,000 tax filers per year to Florida. At the same time, as shown above, this is not a net flow as Vermont also gains new residents from Florida, but a much smaller number. Perhaps what is most striking about these migration flows is the income differences of those who move; the adjusted gross income for those who moved to Vermont from Florida was $23,885 in comparison to $76,536 for those who moved from Vermont to Florida. Indeed, the adjusted gross income of the tax filers in 2012-2013 who moved to Florida was 86 percent higher than the group who moved to either New York or one of the New England states (excluding Rhode Island, a recipient of only a few Vermonters). These figures provide some evidence of a notable flow of relatively wealthy retirees to the Sun Shine state, attracted by either the moderate climate and the lower cost of living (Internal Revenue Service Tax Stats 2015).

Vermont Net Migration

In 2013, Vermont had a higher proportion of its population who lived in a different state the prior year than most states, including all states in New England. In fact, when we rank order the percent of the fifty states’ population that lived in another state the previous year, we see Vermont near the top 10 for each the past number of years. For example, in 2014, 3.6 percent of Vermont’s residents had lived in another state the year before, ranking it the 11th highest in the country. In 2013, the proportion was 3.7 percent, well above the national norm of 2.4 percent, enough to keep its high ranking. The state with the highest proportion of domestic in-migrants in that year was North Dakota at 5.4 percent, likely due to the growth in its energy industry. The lowest was New York at 1.3 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2015h). These ratios are not the same as “net gains” but rather a ratio of new interstate migrants to the total population. Out-migrants may offset these in-migrants.

The net loss from domestic migration in Vermont that we see in the Figure 1 is a fairly new phenomenon. In fact, from 2000 to 2005, there was a net gain from domestic in-migration, although at a slower rate than some fairly heavy inflows in the prior decades. When we sum the total net gain for the nine years of 2000 to 2009, the aggregate net loss was only 1,124 (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Between 2010 and 2014, Vermont had a total migration loss of 1,653. Had it not been for positive international migration gains, the net loss would have been much greater (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015g).

Native vs non-native born

These year to year ebbs and flows of interstate domestic migration are often depicted as the ratio of a state’s proportion that was born there (the native born) versus those who were born in other states and moved to their current state. While this statistic tells us nothing about a state’s out migration, it nonetheless conveys important information about the current population, and it varies significantly between the fifty states. According to the American Community Survey for
the 2010-2014 five year estimates, the national average for the percent of population who were born in their state of current residence is just above two-thirds, 67.6 percent. The states that are the least likely to have their residents leave are Michigan and New York (where about 82 percent were born in-state) but perhaps the most distinctive state is Nevada, with only 31.1 percent of the population born in-state. The Western and Southern regions tend to have the highest levels of mobility, while the Midwest has the highest proportions of the population who live in the same state in which they were born. At 53.6 percent, Vermont is ranked 40th in the proportion of native born residence. This suggests that Vermonters are a fairly mobile population (U.S. Census Bureau 2015i). Figure 2 presents these differences for the New England states.
In Vermont, college students are a significant contributor to net migration flows. Unfortunately, the best data on the inflows and outflows of college students is derived from Title IX federal financial aid records. The result is that students who either receive non-federal aid or no aid at all are not included in the mobility statistics, a particularly troublesome fact given the importance of college students as one of the most mobile of all population categories. According to the Vermont Agency of Education, in the five year period between 2009 and 2013, Vermont high schools graduated 34,388 students, and 56.8 percent of them—19,539—went on to some form of postsecondary school within twelve months of graduation. Of those headed to colleges, 47.2 percent (9,922 students) went out of state (Dan Shepard, Vermont Agency of Education, 9 March 2015, email communication). Compared to other states, this is an unusually high proportion. In some states, the ratio of first year college students leaving the state is as low 10 percent or 20 percent. In California, 23 percent of first year college students go out of state. In Vermont, more than double that proportion does. As we have seen above, this movement is partly a reflection of the relative population and geographic sizes of these two states.

It is worth noting that the most popular receiving states of Vermont’s college-age students overlap heavily with the Northeastern states with whom Vermont exchanges the most migrants of all ages, i.e., New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Simultaneously, Vermont’s institutions also enroll a large number of incoming students each fall. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, a total of 6,967 new first time students arrived on Vermont’s campuses in 2013 (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics 2015). The Census Bureau estimates that only one in four of these are Vermonters, suggesting that the state receives 3,632 new students from other states each fall (U.S. Census Bureau 2014b). Projecting these figures from freshmen year to graduation, it is inevitable that many of these in-migrants (now holders of college degrees) will be counted on the ledger of out-migration. Classifying all of these departing college graduates in the same category as other out-migrating Vermonters may exaggerate concerns of a “brain drain” of the young and the college educated. If it wasn’t for Vermont’s colleges and universities, these in-migrants are unlikely to have moved to the state in the first place. Surely an eighteen year old from Chicago who attends Middlebury College to major in Russian and East European Studies does not think of herself as “moving to Vermont” in the same sense as that of her professor who arrives with a family in tow.

The selectivity of Vermont’s in-migrants

Most migration is highly selective. With the exception of the forced mass migration of refugees, domestic migration from one state to another is highly selective and often involves a complex decision making calculus that encompasses employment opportunities, family circumstances and quality of life opportunities. Each of these factors is impacted by the background characteristics of migrants, especially their age, education, and prospects for income gain. Economic theory suggests that migration can best be understood as a human capital investment in which people rationally weigh the costs and benefits, both broadly defined and
discounted for the passage of time (Sjaastad 1962). If the net benefits exceed the net costs, people are more likely to move.

As we have seen, Vermont loses well educated young people every year, but it also gains well-educated people who move to Vermont, most often because of a job and the allure of a state that they hope will offer them a high quality of life. This dynamic circulation process, where the well-educated young move from state to state, is not unique to Vermont. In fact, this exchange pattern is common throughout the country.

1. Age

It is well known that migration streams are characterized by younger persons in the early years of developing careers. They are the most likely to take risks, and have the least to lose if their move fails. They have fewer investments in their occupations, real estate or social networks and have longer periods of time in their lives to receive the benefits from a successful move. Today, normative patterns of late marriage and family formation into the late twenties also makes young adults freer to pursue other life goals with relatively few restrictions. Among all age groups, those between twenty-five and twenty-nine were the most likely to move from one state to another (3.3 percent). Fifteen years ago, a Census Special Report found that over one-third of movers were between twenty-five and thirty-nine years old, and streams of international migration are also disproportionately weighted towards younger persons (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2015d). This pattern exists today as well (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2014d). The median age in the United States is thirty-seven, and a high of forty-two years in Vermont (U.S. Census Bureau 2015j). Yet, the national figure for persons who moved between states within the year is just twenty-seven and a-half. In spite of Vermont’s older age profile, the median age among those who moved to the state is just twenty-four years, although this number is undoubtedly impacted by the large migration of students to Vermont’s institutions of higher education (U.S. Census Bureau 2015k, 2015l).

2. Education and income

For many years, Vermont has been one of the best educated states in the country, and an important part of that success can be traced to selective migration. Nationally, 29.6 percent of adults hold a Bachelors’ degree or higher, but in Vermont the figure is 35.8 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2015l). This is not accidental. The potential economic gains from migration are highest for the better educated who often search for jobs in national rather than local labor markets. Employers are also more likely to seek their most skilled and better educated workers on a national level. According to the Census, “Whether married or single, young people with a college education were more likely to move than those without a college degree” (U.S. Census Bureau 2015d, 3).

Using a 2012 Microdata set from the Current Population Survey (Flood et al. 2012), we found that in every state in the nation, in-migrants from other states had higher average educational attainment than their native born counterparts. Nationally, the percent of residents with at least a college degree was nearly twice as high for in-migrants as it was for native born residents. In Vermont, the percent of the in-migrants with at least a college degree was just over three times as high as it was for the native born who remain in the state. The American Community Survey also found similarly high rates of advanced degree holders among the
population of Vermont who had in-migrated within the “past year” (U.S. Census Bureau 2015k). The same process would likely be true for Vermont’s out-migrants, especially within the younger cohorts and older retirees who have the resources to retire to warmer climates.

On-line Census publications give further precision to this pattern of educational selectivity of interstate migrants that we found in our original analysis of the CPS Microdata. Of all geographically mobile residents who have moved across state borders within the last year, 40 percent had Bachelor’s degrees or higher. For Vermont, the figure is higher still at 55 percent. (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2015m). Figure 3 depicts these differences. This selectivity has resulted in the striking fact that 75 percent of the Vermonters who have a bachelor’s degree were born outside Vermont, even though non-natives comprise only about one-half of the state’s population. (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2015n).

Examining the CPS Microdata set further revealed that in-migrants bring more than higher educational levels to a state. We estimated a series of ordinary least square earnings equations for each state to determine whether nativity would have an independent effect on annual earnings after controlling for age, gender, race, education levels, hours worked per week and weeks worked per year. Controlling for these explanatory variables, the results indicated that in-migrants earn significantly more than native born in forty-six out of fifty states. More specifically, those who moved to another state earned approximately $3,000 more annually than the native born residents even after controlling for the above set of demographic factors. The comparative figure for Vermont was just over $2,200.

There are other indicators of the positive income contributions of new migrants to Vermont. While there is some inconsistency depending on the measure used, the American Community Survey tells us that median income of Vermonters who were born in Vermont was $25,469 (for the past twelve months) but it was $30,049 for Vermonters born in another state.
This is a significant differential (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2015o). Internal Revenue Service records also support the fact that Vermont’s new-migrants bring higher incomes with them than those who migrate out. Here the data show that the per-exemption adjusted gross income of taxpayers moving into Vermont are consistently higher than those leaving. In the years between 2007 and 2010 the differences ranged from $875 per exemption to $4,483. Over the seventeen years for which this IRS data is available, the net gain in taxable income from new migrants totals nearly a billion dollars (Internal Revenue Service Tax Stats 2015).

Quality of life comparisons between the native and non-native born Vermonters

To explore the differences between native born Vermonters and those who moved here from other states, we turned to the results from a series of five statewide quality of life surveys, known as the Pulse of Vermont, that have been conducted every five years between 1990 and 2010. The studies were conducted by the Center for Social Science Research (SSRC) at Saint Michael’s College with the support of the Vermont Business Roundtable (Bolduc and Kessel, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010). In concert, they provide unique comparisons between the ways in which the native born and the in-migrants experience life and well-being in the state.

Each Pulse of Vermont study was based upon telephone interviews that averaged approximately twenty minutes with just over 400 randomly selected Vermonters. A number of steps were taken to reach a broad spectrum of the Vermont population, and while the response rate for each survey remained relatively high at approximately 60 percent, the resulting samples still contained some bias from an imperfect sampling frame, not all Vermonters have phone service, and non-response bias. As phone technology has changed, achieving a representative response rate has become increasingly difficult (Holbrook, Krosnick and Pfent 2007). Statistical weighting was use to compensate for a sample with a disproportionate number of college educated respondents, the most important source of bias. The resulting characteristics of the samples in each of the five studies were proportional to Census data in terms of education, gender, marital status, employment rates, geographic distribution and nativity. The biggest gap left after adjusting the data for education was in the age profile, where the sample was over-represented with a slightly older population.

For more detail on the methodology employed, see the explanations in the various Pulse of Vermont publications (Bolduc and Kessel 2010).

Since some new questions were added while others were dropped over the course of the five studies, the sample size for selected questions varied. Some of the findings reported below are based upon a sample of just over 2,000 respondents, but more often they are based upon
a sample size ranging between 1,200 and 1,600 respondents. Also, a number of the tables and charts that follow are only presented in summary form, so the range of responses presented is abbreviated. The full tables with all the options and number of responses are available from the authors upon request.

**Differences between in-migrants and the native born**

Table 3 highlights some of the key socioeconomic differences between the native and non-native born Vermonters. Perhaps the most striking contrasts between the two groups are the educational and income differences. This parallels the Census data examined above. As can be seen, among the native born Vermonters, 27 percent have a college degree in comparison to 58 percent for those born outside of the state. The table also shows the stark income differences between the two groups, along with the considerably more liberal political orientation of the non-native born. These sorts of differences become important when we examine the different perceptions about a range of quality of life issues. Gender, marital status and religious orientations were not significantly different.

**Why people move to Vermont**

Census data on geographic mobility show that the longer the distance people move, the more likely it is to be occupationally related. Local moves within the same county or between counties are mostly driven by housing and family related considerations. In moves that take place over 500 miles, 18 percent are for housing reasons, 32 percent for family reasons, but job related issues rise to 48 percent of the stated reasons (Ihrke 2014, 3).

In each of the *Pulse of Vermont* studies, we asked respondents who had moved to Vermont what prompted their move to the Green Mountain state. A job offer was the most common reason listed (selected by just over 30 percent) followed closely by being closer to family and friends (27 percent) (Beldoc and Kessel 2010). Quality of life concerns also play an important role in people’s decision to move to Vermont. Thirteen percent said that the physical environment and recreation opportunities were the primary reasons they moved here, followed by the pace of life (8 percent). Another 15 percent noted other reasons that were linked to the quality of life. The fact that almost one-third of the respondents said that they were *less well off financially* after their move to Vermont, (the same percent who said that they were financially *better off*), and that three quarters of the respondents indicated that they would have still have moved to Vermont even if they had to take a cut in pay is suggestive of the role played by Vermont’s quality of life in people’s decision to move to the state. Of course, the sample did not include those who moved from the state and may not have felt the same allure of Vermont’s quality of life.

While women were as likely to have a job offer as men when they first moved to Vermont, they were more likely to choose *to be closer to family or friends* as their primary reason for the move (31 percent vs. 23 percent for men). Men were also more likely than women to choose *recreational opportunities and the natural environment* (16 percent) as their primary reason...
for moving to Vermont in comparison to women (11 percent). Another 23 percent selected other quality of life reasons for their move, including a slower pace of life. Only 4 percent selected affordability as their primary reason for the move.

### Nativity, life satisfaction and well-being

Trying to measure people’s subjective well-being is beset with difficulties. Some people may not feel comfortable telling an interviewer that they are not satisfied with their lives. In fact, they may not be certain about this themselves. In addition, their feelings on the subject may change with their mood swings or even the day of the week. Some argue that the way people respond to questions about well-being has a psychological dimension in that even under the most difficult life events, some people are able to maintain a sunny disposition and an optimistic view of the future. In spite of these very real measurement challenges, researchers have found that subjective measures of quality of life remain consistent over time and “contain substantial information about how respondents evaluate their lives” (Diener, Inglehart, and Tay 2013, 26).

With these caveats in mind, we asked respondents four questions which measure various dimensions of well-being. The first question asked people to generalize about how happy they considered themselves among three alternatives—very happy, somewhat happy or not too happy. The second question asked people to use a five-point scale to identify how satisfied they are with their lives as a whole. The third question asked people whether they find life exciting, routine,
or dull, while the last question invited respondents to tell us where they would place themselves on a ten foot ladder where the top step represents the best possible life you could have imagined for yourself and the lowest step means that you have done less well than you could have expected. All four variables, as expected, are significantly correlated with each other, although the Pearson correlation coefficients are not as high as one might expect, ranging from a high of .518 between happiness and life satisfaction (people that are happier are more satisfied with life) to a low of -.385 between an exciting life and life expectations (people who feel that life is exciting are more likely to feel they have exceeded their life expectations).

National research has shown that people’s happiness and satisfaction with their lives remain fairly steady from year to year. We see this in the way that Vermonters responded to the question about overall life satisfaction in all five Pulse of Vermont studies. These responses ranged between 75 percent and 82 percent of the respondents saying that they were either completely satisfied or satisfied. The similarities in the responses occurred in spite of the very different economic conditions and changes in the social-political conditions that existed at the time of each of the five studies. This range mirrors the percentages found by the Gallup Organization (73 percent to 88 percent) with a similar question they have asked since 1980 (Gallup Organization 2007).

The findings from the Pulse of Vermont studies revealed that there were statistically significant differences between in-migrants and native born respondents in whether or not they found their life “exciting,” “routine,” or “dull” (Bolduc and Kessel 2010). In-migrants were more likely to choose the “exciting” option, 61 percent to 49 percent. There were also differences when respondents were asked whether their lives turned out better than they expected, about the same as they expected, or worse than they expected. In-migrants were more likely to choose the “better than expected” option, 53 percent to 42 percent. To test whether or not these differences in well-being were due to the independent effects of nativity, we estimated a series of ordinal logistic equations, where the four life satisfaction questions were each regressed against the variables of age, education, gender and nativity. In each case, once we controlled for these other variables, nativity was no longer a significant factor in explaining any of the measures of well-being. Instead, the only consistent significant factor was age. Older respondents, whether native or non-native born, expressed significantly higher levels of well-being than their younger counterparts on all four measures of well-being. This finding is consistent with much of the literature on happiness and age (Frijters and Beatton, 2012; Lacey, Smith and Ubel 2006).
When we examined satisfaction levels with individual domains of life (i.e., residences, jobs, health, family life, friendships, health, town, standard of living, education, spare time, and religious or spiritual life) a number of interesting trends emerged, although none were related to native and non-native born differences. First, the year-to-year variation in the satisfaction levels within each domain has been quite small. Second, the relative satisfaction rankings between the

*** Statistically significant differences

Figure 6.

Figure 7.

When we examined satisfaction levels with individual domains of life (i.e., residences, jobs, health, family life, friendships, health, town, standard of living, education, spare time, and religious or spiritual life) a number of interesting trends emerged, although none were related to native and non-native born differences. First, the year-to-year variation in the satisfaction levels within each domain has been quite small. Second, the relative satisfaction rankings between the
different domains of life remain fairly constant over time. For example, the lowest satisfaction ratings in each study was “spare time,” “one’s education” and “standard of living.” Third, there are many factors associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, although satisfaction with standard of living correlates most highly with overall life satisfaction ($r=.516$). We were surprised to find no statistically significant differences by nativity in the ten domains of life, given the differences in education and income between native and non-native born Vermonters that we outlined above. People likely adapt their expectations to their own reference groups—to their circles of family, friends and neighbors and not necessarily where they find themselves located in the wider spectrum of income and educational distributions within the state.

**Employment and economic stress**

As we saw earlier, many of those who move to Vermont do so because of a job offer. We know that Vermont’s quality of life also plays a role as do family considerations. The jobs that people hold influence our quality of life in a myriad of ways. Since so many of our respondents moved here because of job offers, one would expect that their level of job satisfaction and rewards might be higher than those who had not taken that affirmative step. But this was not the case. For the most part, few meaningful differences in job satisfaction were found by nativity.

Most of the respondents were employed at the time of their interview, with a nearly identical employment rate of 70 percent between the Pulse of Vermont studies conducted between 1995 and 2010 for both native and non-natives alike. During this period, the unemployment rate for the samples averaged 3.7 percent, with only modest differences between native born and non-native born Vermonters. In addition, the respondents were working just over forty hours per week, again, with no differences found by nativity.

Vermont’s labor market is unique for a number of reasons, but two related factors stand out. One was the seemingly high percent of self-employed workers at 21 percent, native and non-native born alike. Part of the explanation for this finding is that some of the self-employed also work for traditional employers. But the statistic also reflects the rural nature of the state with a scarcity of large firms. There are only thirty-six companies in the state (1/10 of 1 percent of all private sector firms) that have at least 500 workers at a common location (Vermont Department of Labor 2014a). In the state as a whole, 17 percent of all workers are reported to be self-employed (Vermont Department of Labor, 2014b). This compares to 10 percent nationally (U.S. Department of Labor 2015).

When we asked respondents in 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 to rate six specific aspects of their jobs (e.g., whether the pay is good, the job helps me feel good about my life), the ratings for these items largely average out to the level found for overall job satisfaction. Three items were rated below the 71 percent for overall job satisfaction (pay is good, benefits are good, and chances for long-term employment are good), while the other three items (would go into the same line of work, good use of my education and skills, and maintain a reasonable balance between my personal and work life) were rated more highly than the rate for overall job satisfaction. Among the six dimensions of jobs that we explored, including pay and benefit levels, the one characteristic that had the highest correlation with overall job satisfaction was the question: *My job allows*
me to make good use of my education and skills.\textsuperscript{16} Pay and benefits matter, but less so than might be expected.

Given the significant differences in educational levels between the native born and in-migrants, the jobs each group holds would be expected to vary in predicable ways, such as in compensation and benefits levels or the degree of autonomy. Indeed, many of the in-migrants may have moved here for a better job. Even so, the native and non-native born respondents in our \textit{Pulse of Vermont} studies viewed their jobs similarly. Even where we see statistically significant variations between the groups in their perceptions of their jobs, the differences that emerged were only significant at the .05 or .10 levels. Since so many of our respondents moved here with higher levels of education and a job offer, we were surprised that in-migrants did not rate either their “pay” or “benefits” as significantly better than native born respondents. Perhaps this is another example of respondents adjusting or adapting their perceptions to their own set of expectations or reference groups.

For the same reasons, the native born were no more likely to worry about being able to meet their expenses than the non-native born (55 percent vs. 52 percent) and the responses to the question about whether respondents were \textit{better or worse off financially than they were five years ago}, did not differ by nativity. Additionally, the perceived likelihood of being able to retire in some level of comfort did not vary by nativity. Overall, only 14 percent of the respondents were \textit{very optimistic} about their chances to retire in comfort.

\textbf{Trust and confidence}

We hardly need philosophers to remind us that our welfare and well-being goes far beyond the material or economic dimensions of our lives. Living in a community where people and

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\hline
Town & 82\% & 80\% & 79\% & 76\% & 70\% \\
\hline
Residence & 80 & 80 & 81 & 82 & 77 \\
\hline
Education & 57 & 54 & 64 & 68 & 61 \\
\hline
Job & 77 & 73 & 75 & 74 & 71 \\
\hline
Religious/Spiritual Life & 66 & 66 & 74 & 74 & 72 \\
\hline
Standard of Living & 69 & 63 & 71 & 68 & 69 \\
\hline
Health & 66 & 66 & 75 & 74 & 70 \\
\hline
Spare Time & 66 & 66 & 63 & 54 & 63 \\
\hline
Friends & 80 & 81 & 84 & 81 & 75 \\
\hline
Family & 80 & 87 & 84 & 74 & 72 \\
\hline
Life in General & 77 & 75 & 82 & 80 & 78 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Satisfaction with Private Domains of Life: \% “Completely Satisfied” and “Satisfied” 1990 to 2010}
\end{table}
Table 5
Job Satisfaction and Nativity
1995 to 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent who say that it is true that:</th>
<th>Native born</th>
<th>Non-native born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pay is good</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The benefits are good</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chances for long-term employment are good**</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would still go into same line of work*</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job makes good use of my education/skills*</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job allows reasonable balance between personal and work life</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall job satisfaction % very satisfied and satisfied</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Significant at the .01 level  ** Significant at the .05 level  * Significant at the .10 level

Table 5.

institutions are trusted and can be called upon for help in times of need is vitally important to our sense security, our sense of belonging, and overall well-being.

The *Pulse of Vermont* data reveals a number of differences between the native and non-native born Vermonters regarding a range of issues related to social alienation. Part of these differences can be explained statistically by the lower levels of educational and income characteristic of native born Vermonters, but not all.

The General Social Survey (GSS) and other research institutions have documented an alarming erosion over time in the public’s perceptions about whether *most people can be trusted* (Smith et al. 2015). The GSS found that trust levels in the United States have fallen from 46.2 percent in 1972 to 30.8 percent in 2014. In the *Pulse of Vermont* survey, we asked a similar question: *Generally speaking, would you say that most people in Vermont can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people today?* Both Vermont’s native born and in-migrants were far more likely to trust their fellow residents than others across the country, but people who moved here were significantly more likely to trust their fellow Vermonters—by a margin of 76 percent to 69 percent.17 Place of birth aside, our data reveals a strong link between trust and level of education and gender. As education increases, so does trust, while women were more trusting than their male counterparts.18

Perhaps the higher rates of trust found in Vermont reflect the relative homogeneity of the state and its small size. A parallel pattern was found when we asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: *With all the troubles we are facing today, I need to spend more time looking out for myself and my family.* A positive response to this question is
likely to be at odds with a healthy civic life in which members of the community trust and take care of each other in times of need. Sixty-nine percent of the native born Vermonters affirmed the more inward looking and defensive position compared to only 55 percent of those who moved here from other states. Estimating the relationship in a logistic equation revealed that even after controlling for gender, education and age, respondents who were born outside the state, were still less likely to feel they needed to spend more time looking out for myself and my family. This was also the case for older respondents and the better educated.

Among those who felt they needed to spend more time looking out for themselves and their families, 39 percent felt that life in Vermont was getting worse, much higher than the rate of 24 percent for other respondents. The manner in which people responded to this question was also closely related to changes in their financial status over the last five years. Among respondents who said that they had lost ground, 69 percent felt that they had to spend more time looking out for themselves and their families in comparison to 57 percent of those respondents who felt they were now better off. However, like many other questions, the breakdown varied even more by education. As with the trust question, far fewer respondents with a college education agreed with this position than those with an education of high school or less—49 percent compared to 75 percent.

Although in-migrants, perhaps because of their higher education levels, appear to be more trusting and externally focused, it is notable that both groups differ little in their feeling of belonging to the community in their town. Yet, at the same time, in-migrants were statistically more likely to feel safer in their neighborhoods than their native born counterparts (very safe: 61 percent for native born vs. 67 percent for in-migrants).

Citizen confidence in the institutions that address the major social and economic needs of the society is another sign of a healthy society and robust civic life. On the other hand, a lack of confidence in the basic institutions of society is another measure of alienation in which we compared native born Vermonters with those born in other states. Without a reasonable measure of confidence in these basic institutions that constitute the formal level of social organization in most societies, citizens are less likely to be honest in paying their taxes, support their school system, or trust the legitimacy of the government and courts. The importance of this dimension of quality of life caused us to ask respondents in 2005 and 2010 how much confidence they had in each of these eight major Vermont institutions. The choices were “A great deal of confidence,” “only some confidence,” and “hardly any at all,” and only the first category is reported in the chart.

The ranking of these institutions found that colleges and universities in Vermont enjoyed the highest level of confidence, and the government in Montpelier the least. About 55 percent of respondents said they had a great deal of confidence in Vermont’s higher education organizations, and only about 17 percent placed such confidence in the government in Montpelier. Confidence levels in six of the eight institutions shown in the chart did not differ by nativity. In the two areas where the native born diverged from their counterparts, the health care system enjoyed slightly higher confidence among Vermonters who moved from other states (45 percent to 42 percent) but the margin was widest for confidence in the government in Montpelier—20 percent for in-migrants versus 13 percent for the native born.
### Table 6
Alienation and Nativity
1995 to 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native</th>
<th>Non-native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can most people in Vermont be trusted?</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most can be trusted</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can't be too careful</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Need to spend more time looking out for myself/family</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feeling of belonging to community</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Good</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Good At All</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is life in Vermont getting better</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial status compared to five years ago</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially better</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially worse off</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the same</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Significant at .01 level. ** Significant at .05 level * Significant at .10 level

Table 6.
Organized religion plays an important integrative role in American society serving as a bonding function by socializing adherents to shared moral standards, thereby pulling people together and building bridges across social and economic divides (Putnam 2001). To be sure, it can do the opposite, but many regard its effects on societal cohesion to be positive—especially in America. Yet Vermont is widely regarded as one of the “least churched” states in the country, and both our study and the Pew Survey on Religion and the Public Life confirm this ranking (Pew Research 2015). The Gallup Poll also found Vermont to have the second highest rate of citizens who reported that they had “no religious affiliation” (24 percent) and the lowest response among the fifty states to the question of “the importance of religion in their daily lives” (Gallup 2009). In our 2010 study, respondents were asked about the importance that religion played in their lives and four options were offered, two being positive and two indicating that religion played little to no role in their lives. Overall, 34 percent felt religion was either not very important or not at all important in their lives, but there were significant differences between natives (29 percent) and the non-native born Vermonters (42 percent), but after controlling for

*** Statistically significant differences

Figure 8.
gender, age, and educational differences no statistically significant differences were found. As one might expect, religion played a more important role in the lives of older respondents and this was found to be the case even after controlling for demographic differences between the younger and older members of the sample.

One consistent difference among the Pulse of Vermont respondents seemed to be centered on the politics of protecting the environment. While there was agreement on many of the most important priorities for the state (such as creating more good jobs), the 2010 Pulse of Vermont study showed that the native born were more likely to feel that maintaining family farms and agriculture and also helping people who can’t help themselves should be top priorities. The non-native born, on the other hand, were more likely to identify preserving clean air and water as the highest priority. This group was also more likely to be willing to pay higher taxes to preserve open land (58 percent to 51 percent). Likewise, 78 percent of the native born were of the opinion that Vermont population was growing too quickly compared to just 54 percent of the transplants who felt the same way. This difference did not disappear when the different educational profiles were accounted for. While income abilities surely played some role, the in-migrants had higher educational levels and therefore, were in part more willing to pay higher taxes for better schools (53 percent vs. 48 percent).

Summary and conclusions

Vermont has a distinctive reputation among the states in the Northeast: small, liberal, and home to many distinctive businesses and progressive social trends. It is a state which is proud of its unspoiled environment, natural beauty, and high quality of life. Over the years, Vermont has become a popular destination for tourism, recreation and the arts. But internally there are increasing concerns over what is often thought to be substantial streams of out-migration of the young and better educated. At least since 2007, domestic out-migration has modestly exceeded in-migration. To be sure, a portion of this out-migration consists of graduating college students native to other states and retiring Baby Boomers who are moving to the Sunbelt to escape Vermont’s harsh winters and relatively high cost of living, but some of the out-migration is due to the same mix of demographic and economic forces at work in every state. With a birth rate that is one of the lowest in the country and a rapidly aging population, it is little wonder that so many observers of the state’s public policies have raised concerns over the trend.

Primarily using Census data and the findings from a series of five statewide quality of life surveys conducted by the authors, this study has documented domestic migration patterns in Vermont and explored the implications on the well-being of the native born and those born elsewhere in the country. The comparisons between the native born Vermonters and the in-migrants found many distinctive traits and characteristics between the two groups, the most important being the significantly higher levels of education and higher income of the non-native born. We found that while the educational level of new migrants in every state exceeded that of the native born (a process of “circulating elites”), the gap in Vermont is particularly wide, resulting in the vast majority of Vermont’s college educated residents having been born in other states, setting the stage for potential cultural and financial conflicts.
This robust stream of well-educated transplants has frequently been accompanied by entrepreneurial and financial capital that is an important engine of economic growth. Many of the state’s best known businesses, such as Ben and Jerry’s, Green Mountain Coffee, IDX (now G.E. Health Care), the Vermont Teddy Bear Company, Burton Snowboards, and Gardener’s Supply, were started by entrepreneurs who were born outside of the state. The list could be extended easily. An informal survey conducted by the authors of the CEOs that comprise the membership of the Vermont Business Roundtable in 2010 found precious few born in the state.

But there is another side to these migration flows. Over the years, native born Vermonters have expressed concerns over the influx of people moving in from other states. This has ranged from calling these new comers “flatlanders” to bumper stickers and signs on barns and houses that read “Take Back Vermont,” which was at first a reaction to the role that the non-native born played in the passage of Civil Unions in 2000 and other liberal legislation. In the gubernatorial election of 2000, Ruth Dwyer, the Republican candidate who was running against Howard Dean, spoke about the new people who make the rules for others and don’t listen (Goodman 2000). The study also showed that the native born population was more concerned about Vermont’s population growth than non-natives. It should not be surprising that the influx of considerably wealthier, better educated and more liberal transplants would evoke some reaction from the native born community.

Given the educational and income differences between the two groups, it would have been surprising not to have found many differences in quality of life measures as well. But perhaps the fact that most of the statistically significant differences were either moderated or completely eliminated when subjected to multivariate analysis should not have been surprising. Is there something intrinsically important about the act of moving from one state to another that made for so many quality of life differences? Perhaps, but the study shows that one’s education, income and age typically trump nativity as key factors that help explain differences between groups within the population. It would be a mistake, however, to underestimate the importance of nativity merely because it can often be explained away in the context of regression analysis. The fact remains that nativity, income, and education are all strongly correlated with each other—not as a statistical artifact—but as manifest in individuals in a density that frequently distinguishes native born Vermonters from residents born elsewhere. The social significance of these differences should not be overlooked.

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Together they have co-authored a series of five statewide surveys documenting changes in the “quality of life” of Vermonters (1990 to 2010) sponsored by the Vermont Business Roundtable. This longitudinal study uses standard survey research to measure changes in “the pulse of Vermont” as residents experience change over the decades.
Notes

1. We wish to thank our three anonymous reviewers. Their generous and insightful efforts have made this a much better paper.
2. In 2013, 16.4 percent of the Vermont population were 65 years or older in comparison to 14.1 percent for the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a).
3. The most common Census measures of mobility employ two separate questions. The first one simply asks if the respondent was born in the state in which he or she presently resides and the second asks whether or not a person moved into their present state residence within the past year. Both are weak approximations of the full mobility a person may have experiences in a lifetime.
4. Vermont’s relatively high rate of interstate migration might reflect its small geographic size. Vermonters cannot move long distances and stay within the state borders to the extent that many can in larger states such as in Texas or California.
5. This measure of migration cannot capture residential flow by persons not filing tax returns, but has the advantage of a lower margin of error, a significant problem for the American Community Survey. Note too, that the number of returns is always lower than the number of exemptions which is a closer approximation of population flow, but undoubtedly underestimates the full number.
6. The chart data on net migration for 2007 to 2010 come from Internal Revenue Service SOI analysis of tax returns with the numbers in the chart represent the net change in the numbers of exemptions (Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Stats, 2015). The chart data for 2007 to 2013 come from Census population estimates (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2014g).
7. The state ranks number one in the country in terms of the percent of the new in-migrants with a graduate or professional degree at 27.8 percent (Governing the States and Localities. October 2, 2015).
8. The analysis ignored international migration. The CPS sample sizes of 21 out of 50 states were below 100,000 and may not be representative of their respective states populations.
9. In four of the states, the nativity variable was not significant after adjusting for the other control variables.
10. The regression results are available from the authors.
11. The IRS temporarily ceased making this data available in 2011 or 2012.
12. The response rate was aided by mailing out two first class letters, one from the researchers and one from the sponsor explaining the purpose of the study. Both letters also explained the opportunity for a number of respondents to win a $100 debit card through a drawing.
13. By several measures, expression of life happiness in America is highest on weekends (Ryan, Bernstein and Brown 2010).
14. The results from these regression equations are, as are the others in the study, available upon request from the authors.
15. The mean age between the native and non-native born differed by less than a year.
16. The correlation coefficient was .438.
17. Like the national data, there has been some signs of decreasing trust levels in Vermont, but the rates still remain much higher than the country as a whole.
18. In a logistic equation with trust as the dependent variable nativity no longer remained statistically significant once gender, education and age were controlled for. However, women were significantly more trusting than males and as were the better educated in this multivariate context.
19. The earliest Pulse of Vermont studies asked if respondents were willing to pay an additional $100 in local taxes to support various changes. Later surveys adjusted this amount up to $250.
References


