

Domestic Migration to South Florida by Metropolitan Area, County, and Small Area

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Abstract

Domestic migration to South Florida has been remarkably high in recent years. This wave of migration is characterized by domestic migrants who have had notably higher incomes than in the past. Using data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and Internal Revenue Service (IRS), this paper analyzes migration flows, migration rates, and the income of migrants. Most domestic migrants in recent years have come from the New York City metropolitan area; this migration flow to South Florida is greater in terms of both the number of overall migrants, and their incomes compared to 10 years ago. The most populous migration flows also had the highest average incomes. At the county level, New York County, NY to Miami-Dade County had both the most migrants and the highest average adjusted gross income (AGI); Nassau County, NY to Palm Beach County had the second most migrants with the third largest average AGI; and New York County, NY to Palm Beach County had the third largest migration flow with the second highest average AGI. When zooming into smaller destinations, the flow from New York County, NY to Miami City (East) & Key Biscayne was the largest followed by Los Angeles County, CA to Hollywood (North) & Dania Beach (South), and New York County, NY to Miami Beach & Miami Shores. This wave of wealthy domestic migrants, especially from the New York City area and the greater Northeast, has been transformative to South Florida. It has further implications on international migration to the area along with the current and long-term effects on the local population.

Introduction

The Miami metropolitan area has been a major destination for domestic and international migrants for many years. It has been defined by its cultural and economic diversity, attracting migrants from abroad – primarily from Cuba and other parts of Latin America (Portes and Puhramm, 2015) – and domestically, particularly from the northeastern United States (Nijman, 2007). As of recent history, migrants have come to this area from a variety of different socioeconomic backgrounds (Nijman, 2007). In the past few years, there has been a notable influx of domestic migrants to South Florida. Moreover, according to IRS data, migrants in this newer wave of migration have had substantially higher incomes than in the past. It should be noted that in this paper, South Florida refers solely to the Miami metropolitan area – officially the Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm Beach, FL Metropolitan Statistical Area – which comprises Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach counties.

As of the 2020 Census, the population of South Florida was 6,138,333 – 1,944,375 in Broward, 2,701,767 in Miami-Dade, and 1,492,191 in Palm Beach counties – making it the eighth-largest metropolitan area in the United States. According to the most recent 2023 BEBR estimates, South Florida’s population had increased to 6,275,251, which encompasses 27.7% of Florida’s total population (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2023). There are many factors which make migration to South Florida unique, not all of which can be discussed in this paper. Rather, the analysis highlights a number that are important.

The first to note is that within South Florida exist clusters of populations representing different age groups, races, ethnicities, and cultures; accordingly, two nearby areas may have drastically different population profiles. For example, ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) 33445 in Delray Beach is 25.9% Black or African American and 10.7% Hispanic or Latino origin, whereas ZCTA 33428, west of the City of Boca Raton, is 8.7% Black or African American and 22.3% Hispanic or Latino origin. Furthermore, 63.5% of the population in ZCTA 33445 spoke English only compared to 54.7% in ZCTA 33428 (2018–2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates).

South Florida also has a unique spatial layout. Bordering the Everglades to the west, urban development in the three counties has progressed along a north-south axis, although not evenly. Compared to the core-periphery pattern prevalent in many metropolitan areas, South Florida has multiple urban centers (Nijman and Clery, 2015). Consequently, when thinking of the relationship between the three counties, it is not necessarily true that one is more suburban than another just because of its proximity to the City of Miami. Differences in the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics between localities in the same metropolitan area can impact the types of migrants that are attracted to a particular area, and these migration flows in turn can influence the makeup of the population in these localities and their accessibility to different spaces.

This paper analyzes the migration flows, migration rates, and the income characteristics of domestic migrants at three levels of geography: between metropolitan areas, between counties, and between PUMAs (Public Use Microdata Areas). It should be noted that this analysis focuses solely on domestic migration from other states to South Florida. Migration within Florida, as well as migration from abroad, are beyond the scope of this paper. More on each method will be described in their respective sections.

This paper utilizes data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) over a ten-year period (2012–2021) to illustrate how trends have evolved over time. To ensure data comparability for the small area analysis, data from the 2012–2016 and 2017–2021 ACS 5-year estimates were used instead of the newer 2018–2022 estimates. This is because the Census Bureau redefines PUMA boundaries every 10 years on the basis of new population data from the latest decennial census, and the most recent 2018–2022 ACS estimates contain migration estimates based on a mixture of 2010 Census definitions for data years 2017–2021 and 2020 Census definitions for data year 2022. For other parts of the analysis, when appropriate, the most recent ACS 5-year estimates for 2018–2022 are referenced.

The IRS also publishes migration data which are based on year-to-year changes in addresses filed on tax returns. The data contain matched tax records that provide estimates of the number of individuals and the adjusted gross income (AGI) for migration

flows between counties (IRS Migration Data Users Guide, 2021). Currently, the most recent IRS migration data are for the year 2021. To limit year-to-year fluctuations, IRS data were averaged across three years at the county level. For direct comparisons with the 5-year ACS data, IRS data were also calculated as 5-year averages for the same periods (2012–2016 and 2017–2021). At the metropolitan area level, one-year IRS data were used because of the larger population sizes involved in the migration flows. Since the IRS migration data are only available for counties and states but not metropolitan areas, individual counties were aggregated to their respective metro areas. For the small area analysis, only ACS data based on Census-defined PUMAs are used; the IRS migration data are not available for comparable levels of geography.

Migration by Metropolitan Area

Table 1 shows the ten metropolitan areas that sent the largest number of migrants to South Florida, based on IRS data. In 2021, almost half of all domestic migrants from other states came from these ten metro areas (IRS, 2021). By far the largest number came from the New York (NYC) metropolitan area, accounting for 22.3% of all domestic migrants from other states (Table 1). The NYC metro area was also the leader ten years prior in 2011 but represented a smaller portion of total migration at 15.6%. Thus, while migration from the NYC metro area to South Florida is not a new phenomenon, both the number of migrants and the migration rates have gone up over time. Domestic migrants were 3.7 and 4.9 times more likely to be from the NYC metro area than the second-leading metropolitan area in 2011 (Atlanta) and 2021 (Boston), respectively. Furthermore, in 2021 domestic migrants were more likely to be from the NYC metro area than the next eight-highest metropolitan areas combined.

Table 1. Top 10 Metropolitan Areas Sending Migrants to South Florida in 2011 and 2021 (IRS)

Rank		Metropolitan Area	In-Migration (Totals)			*AGI Rank		
2011	2021		2011	2021	Change	2011	2021	Change
1	1	NYC	17,701	32,754	15,053	15	2	13
3	2	Boston	4,572	6,665	2,093	2	3	-1
5	3	Los Angeles	2,938	4,390	1,452	40	8	32
2	4	Atlanta	4,769	4,135	-634	76	30	46
6	5	D.C.	2,493	3,902	1,409	8	13	-5
7	6	Chicago	2,339	3,882	1,543	5	1	4
4	7	Philadelphia	3,440	3,305	-135	41	15	26
11	8	San Fransisco	1,286	3,162	1,876	18	6	12
9	9	Hartford	1,746	2,285	539	11	11	0
10	10	Houston	1,678	2,063	385	32	47	-15

Note: *Out of the 100 metro areas with the most in-migration to South Florida.

Rank		Metropolitan Area	Percent of In-Migration			Migration Rate		
2011	2021		2011	2021	Change	2011	2021	Change
1	1	NYC	15.6	22.3	6.7	0.80	1.46	0.66
3	2	Boston	4.0	4.5	0.5	0.58	0.80	0.22
5	3	Los Angeles	2.6	3.0	0.4	0.16	0.24	0.08
2	4	Atlanta	4.2	2.8	-1.4	0.79	0.59	-0.20
6	5	D.C.	2.2	2.7	0.5	0.43	0.61	0.18
7	6	Chicago	2.1	2.7	0.6	0.24	0.39	0.15
4	7	Philadelphia	3.0	2.3	-0.8	0.49	0.45	-0.04
11	8	San Fransisco	1.1	2.2	1.0	0.14	0.34	0.20
9	9	Hartford	1.5	1.6	0.0	1.44	1.88	0.44
10	10	Houston	1.5	1.4	-0.1	0.28	0.28	0.00

The NYC metro area is the most populous in the country, and accordingly migration flows to and from this metro area often rank highly in metropolitan area comparisons. However, results are similar when focusing on migration rates, i.e., the proportion of an area's population that moved to a specific destination. Here, the NYC metro area still ranked the second highest in both years, behind only the Hartford metro area. Given the size of the NYC metro area, the number of migrants to South Florida was much higher than from Hartford. In 2021, the Hartford metro area's migration rate of about 1.9% amounted to 2,285 persons, whereas the NYC metro area's migration rate of about 1.5% included

32,754 persons. Overall, migration rates from metro areas in the Northeast were higher than those from the West, notably California. In 2021, the Los Angeles metro area sent the third highest number of migrants to South Florida, but its migration rate of 0.24% was the lowest amongst the top 10 metropolitan areas. The San Francisco Bay Area, the eighth-leading metro for migration to South Florida in 2021, had a migration rate of only 0.34%. The Houston and Chicago metro areas also had comparatively low migration rates at 0.28% and 0.39%, respectively.

The NYC metro area also had the largest increase in the share of total migration to South Florida from 2011 to 2021 (6.7%). Out of the 100 metro areas with the most migration to South Florida, only one other, the San Francisco Bay Area, had an increase of over one percent over the same period. In fact, the Bay Area sent over twice as many migrants to South Florida in 2021 (3,162) than in 2011 (1,286); most of these migrants moved to Miami-Dade County. Other notable increases came from the Chicago, Boston, D.C., and Los Angeles metro areas.

Another noteworthy change in domestic migration to South Florida is the decrease in migration from Greater Atlanta. In 2011, Greater Atlanta was the second-leading metro for migration to South Florida. While still the fourth largest in 2021, it had the largest decrease both numerically (-634) and as a percentage of overall migration (-1.4%). Greater Atlanta itself was not losing population; it grew by 15 percent between Census 2010 and 2020.

Table 1 also shows the ranking of the 10 metro areas' adjusted gross income (AGI) out of the 100 metro areas with the most in-migration to South Florida. The AGI figures were calculated as an average of all migrants from each metro area. To make the AGIs comparable across the two periods, an inflation adjustment was applied based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index (CPI). Overall, at the metro area level, the top-sending areas experienced an increase in income over time. While income levels vary within individual metro areas, the AGI of migrants, when averaged over the entire metro area, can give insights into how income and migration correlate. For example, in 2021, Greater Atlanta ranked 30th in overall AGI; however, that was a significant increase from

2011, where it ranked 76th in overall AGI (Table 1). Moreover, an increase in income was observed for the three top-sending areas. From 2011 and 2021, the NYC metro area increased from 15th to 2nd, the Los Angeles metro area increased from 40th to 8th, and the Chicago metro area from 5th to 1st (Table 1).

County-to-County Migration

The out-of-state counties sending the largest number of migrants to South Florida have remained quite consistent in recent years. **Table 2** shows the counties with the largest migration flows to Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach counties, based on IRS data. Since county-to-county migration flows fluctuate from year-to-year, the data shown are averaged over three years (IRS, 2012–2015, 2018–2021). In addition to the migration flows, Table 2 also shows each county’s migration rate and AGI classification using the same inflation adjustment as for Table 1 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Again, AGI was calculated to reflect an average per individual migrant – the total AGI across the entire origin county divided by the total number of individuals. As a next step, origin counties were classified into quintiles based on the average income of the migrants. Below are how the AGI quintiles were defined (in dollars):

- 5 — 162,940 and higher (high-outliers)
- 4 — 89,970 – 160,150
- 3 — 66,020 – 89,820
- 2 — 41,480 – 65,750
- 1 — 41,350 and lower

Table 2a. Top 10 Counties for In-Migration to Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties (IRS, 2012–2015)




























































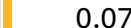
Broward County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	Queens	NY	1,099	 0.48	1
2	Kings	NY	961	 0.37	1
3	Cook	IL	729	 0.14	3
4	Los Angeles	CA	623	 0.06	3
5	New York	NY	595	 0.37	4
6	Nassau	NY	568	 0.42	3
7	Bronx	NY	545	 0.38	1
8	Fulton	GA	506	 0.52	1
9	Harris	TX	497	 0.11	4
10	Suffolk	NY	450	 0.30	2
Miami-Dade County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	New York	NY	1,292	 0.79	5
2	Los Angeles	CA	1,014	 0.10	3
3	Queens	NY	798	 0.35	1
4	Kings	NY	778	 0.30	2
5	Cook	IL	701	 0.13	5
6	Harris	TX	682	 0.16	2
7	Clark	NV	628	 0.31	1
8	Bronx	NY	482	 0.34	1
9	Hudson	NJ	438	 0.67	2
10	Fulton	GA	435	 0.44	3
Palm Beach County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	Fairfield	CT	1,271	 1.35	5
2	Nassau	NY	1,117	 0.83	4
3	Suffolk	NY	911	 0.61	3
4	New York	NY	784	 0.48	5
5	Queens	NY	721	 0.32	2
6	Kings	NY	591	 0.23	2
7	Westchester	NY	579	 0.60	5
8	Cook	IL	553	 0.11	5
9	Bergen	NJ	489	 0.53	4
10	Fulton	GA	450	 0.46	3

Table 2b. Top 10 Counties for in-Migration to Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties (IRS, 2018–2021)

Broward County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	Kings	NY	1,181	 0.45	2
2	Queens	NY	1,130	 0.49	1
3	New York	NY	927	 0.56	4
4	Cook	IL	767	 0.15	3
5	Los Angeles	CA	755	 0.08	2
6	Nassau	NY	666	 0.49	3
7	Bronx	NY	508	 0.35	1
8	Suffolk	NY	505	 0.34	3
9	Harris	TX	442	 0.09	2
10	Bergen	NJ	436	 0.46	4
Miami-Dade County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	New York	NY	2,643	 1.60	5
2	Kings	NY	1,284	 0.49	3
3	Los Angeles	CA	1,247	 0.12	5
4	Harris	TX	968	 0.21	1
5	Queens	NY	952	 0.41	2
6	Cook	IL	889	 0.17	5
7	Clark	NV	593	 0.26	2
8	Hudson	NJ	548	 0.79	3
9	Bronx	NY	479	 0.33	1
10	Fulton	GA	449	 0.42	4
Palm Beach County					
Rank	County	State	In-Migration	Migration Rate	AGI Class
1	Nassau	NY	1,712	 1.25	5
2	New York	NY	1,614	 0.98	5
3	Suffolk	NY	1,292	 0.86	4
4	Kings	NY	958	 0.36	3
5	Queens	NY	942	 0.41	2
6	Westchester	NY	843	 0.86	5
7	Fairfield	CT	805	 0.52	5
8	Cook	IL	782	 0.15	5
9	Los Angeles	CA	717	 0.07	4
10	Bergen	NJ	711	 0.76	5

To illustrate, three noteworthy flows for the period 2018–2021 are highlighted. All three are from counties in the New York metro area, and they ranked highly in terms of the number of migrants and their wealth. First, the migration flow from New York County, NY to Miami-Dade County was the highest with respect to the number of migrants (2,643), the migration rate (1.6%), and average AGI (\$527,990). Second, the flow from New York County to Palm Beach County had the second-highest average AGI (\$469,180), the third-highest migration rate (1.0%), and the third-highest number of in-migrants (1,614). Third, the flow from Nassau County, NY, to Palm Beach County had the second highest number of migrants (1,712), the second-highest migration rate at 1.3%, and a high average AGI of \$184,200.

In-migration of high-income individuals can be transformative to an area, and the two flows from New York County to Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties stand-out because of their remarkably high AGI – the two highest amongst all flows in South Florida, averaging about half a million dollars per migrant – and their high migration rates, about 2.6% with an average of 4,257 people moving to both counties over 2018–2021. However, one should note that the AGI figures shown in Table 2 are averages that can be skewed upward by outliers, i.e., migrants with very high reported incomes. The available IRS migration data only allow the calculation of simple averages; more robust measures, such as the median income of migrants for a particular county-to-county flow, cannot be calculated.

Additionally, Table 2 highlights changes in migration over time in county-to-county migration from 2012–2015 to 2018–2021. Migration flows from counties in the NYC metro area were already amongst the highest to the three South Florida counties in 2012–2015, but the level of migration was lower than in 2018–2021. The largest migration flow, from New York County, NY to Miami-Dade County, was the same in both periods, but it increased substantially in size over the period (from 1,292 to 2,643, respectively), and the migration rate doubled from 2012–2015 (0.8%) to 2018–2021 (1.6%). The flow with the highest migration rate in 2012–2015 was not from one of the five NYC boroughs, but rather from Fairfield County, CT to Palm Beach County, which is still included in the larger New

York combined statistical area (CSA). This flow had a migration rate of 1.4%, and involved 1,271 migrants, just 21 fewer than the flow from New York County, NY to Miami-Dade County. The top-sending counties' AGI classes were relatively similar across the two periods; broadly speaking, Broward County received migrants with generally lower AGIs, Palm Beach County received migrants with higher AGIs, and Miami-Dade County received migrants from a mixture of income levels (Table 2). In Miami-Dade County, four out of the ten top flows were in the highest or second-highest AGI class in 2018–2021, compared to just two in 2012–2015, while in Palm Beach County, there were two more counties in the two highest AGI class in the more recent period (eight vs. six). In contrast, in Broward County none of the flows came from the highest AGI class in either period, but there were two flows in the second-highest class in both.

As highlighted above, counties from the NYC metro area had the largest migration flows to each county in South Florida, but there were apparent county-level differences. The top origin county to Palm Beach County in 2018–2021 was Nassau County, NY. Speaking generally, Nassau County and Palm Beach County share similar characteristics. Both counties include wealthy areas but are also characterized by economic inequalities, and both are in proximity to major urban centers. The same distinction could be made for Nassau County's neighbor to the east – Suffolk County – the third leading county for domestic migration to Palm Beach County in 2018–2021. Moreover, there are also shared characteristics between New York County and Miami-Dade County, and especially between Brickell – the financial district in the City of Miami – and much of Manhattan.

While the most recent wave of domestic migrants to South Florida had notably higher incomes than in the past, the destinations of the high-income migrants varied between the three counties. Broward County, with a population 30.3% larger than Palm Beach as of Census 2020, received the fewest number of domestic in-migrants. However, it should be noted that this is relative to the three counties. According to IRS migration data, Broward County received the fifth-most migrants overall in Florida in 2018–2021 (data not shown). Migrants to Broward County, on average, also had lower AGIs than those to Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties. In 2018–2021, 52 origin counties had migrants

with notably high AGIs that made them outliers. For 32 of these origin counties, their destination was Palm Beach County; 19 had a destination in Miami-Dade County; and only one, Somerset County, NJ, had a destination in Broward County (data not shown).

While the IRS migration data indicate that fewer high-income migrants moved to Broward County than to Miami-Dade or Palm Beach counties, that does not mean that Broward County did not receive migrants from these high-income counties. But in most cases, their average AGI was lower than that of those who moved to Miami-Dade or Palm Beach counties. **Table 3** provides more detail in this respect. The ten counties shown here were counties whose AGI was in the highest class in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach, but not in Broward. New York County, NY and Bergen County, NJ are notable examples of this. As discussed previously, migrants from New York County, NY, had an average AGI of \$527,990 in Miami-Dade County, and \$469,180 in Palm Beach County. In contrast, migrants from New York County to Broward County had a much lower average AGI (\$124,880). The same pattern holds true for other high-income origin counties. For example, migrants from Bergen County, NJ, had an average AGI of \$189,760 in Miami-Dade County, \$186,450 in Palm Beach County, and \$99,110 in Broward County. Furthermore, while there were more people moving from Nassau County, NY, to Broward County than to Miami-Dade County, the average AGI of the migrants to Miami-Dade County was \$248,960 compared to \$66,430 for Broward County.

Table 3. Origin Counties Where Average AGI Was Significantly Higher in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties Than in Broward (IRS, 2018–2021)

Origin	Broward County		Miami-Dade County		Palm Beach County	
	In-Migration	AGI	In-Migration	AGI	In-Migration	AGI
Nassau County, NY	666	\$66,430	408	\$248,960	1,712	\$184,210
Oakland County, MI	143	\$76,570	111	\$164,620	268	\$180,650
Westchester County, NY	362	\$79,780	327	\$166,810	843	\$348,660
Cook County, IL	767	\$86,570	889	\$310,970	782	\$241,630
Bergen County, NJ	436	\$99,110	377	\$189,760	711	\$186,450
Fairfield County, CT	351	\$112,840	308	\$377,100	805	\$463,540
San Mateo County, CA	90	\$113,680	135	\$241,140	81	\$254,560
Lake County, IL	141	\$122,220	96	\$376,800	227	\$392,420
New York County, NY	927	\$124,880	2,643	\$527,990	1,614	\$469,180
Morris County, NJ	138	\$158,780	95	\$227,550	334	\$239,080

While for each individual county-to-county flow only the average AGI of all the migrants can be calculated, one can calculate both the mean and median AGI of all the inflows to a particular county. In 2018–2021, the mean AGI of all in-migrants from other states was \$56,841 in Broward County, \$77,070 in Miami-Dade County, and \$103,029 in Palm Beach County. The median AGIs were lower throughout – \$49,115 in Broward County, \$46,530 in Miami-Dade County, and \$76,050 in Palm Beach County. The differences between the means and medians were much larger in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties than in Broward County, indicating the presence of high-income outliers. Overall, in South Florida across the three counties the mean AGI of in-migrants from other states was \$79,508, and the median was \$56,560 (data not shown).

Up to this point, all county-level comparisons have come from IRS data. Next, the IRS migration data are compared to those from the ACS to see if they provide similar results. **Table 4** shows a comparison of the 10 largest migration flows to the three counties in South Florida based on IRS and ACS data. To ensure comparability, the IRS data were averaged over the same years as the ACS 5-year estimates (2012–2016 and 2017–2021). By displaying 5-year data, distinctions between trends and long-term patterns can be made. For example, the Greater Atlanta metro area showed a decrease in migration to South Florida. Prior to the large influx of migration from the NYC metro area, counties within the greater Atlanta area, especially Fulton County and DeKalb, made up a larger portion of migration to Broward County (ACS 2012–2016, 2017–2021). According to the 2012–2016 ACS 5-year estimates, Fulton County, GA was the leading origin county for domestic migration to Broward County; in 2017–2021 it ranked ninth (Table 4). While many top-sending counties remained the same between the two time periods and were present in both the IRS and ACS data, there were some differences between the two data sources, which can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4a. Top 10 Origin Counties to Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties
(ACS v. IRS) (2012–2016)**

Broward County						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Queens	NY	NYC
2	Kings	NY	NYC	Kings	NY	NYC
3	New York	NY	NYC	Cook	IL	Chicago
4	Queens	NY	NYC	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles
5	Worcester	MA	Boston	New York	NY	NYC
6	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles	Harris	TX	Houston
7	Cook	IL	Chicago	Fulton	GA	Atlanta
8	Bergen	NJ	NYC	Nassau	NY	NYC
9	Suffolk	MA	Boston	Bronx	NY	NYC
10	Suffolk	NY	NYC	Suffolk	NY	NYC
Miami-Dade County						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	New York	NY	NYC	New York	NY	NYC
2	Kings	NY	NYC	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles
3	Anchorage	AK	Anchorage	Harris	TX	Houston
4	Worcester	MA	Boston	Kings	NY	NYC
5	Suffolk	MA	Boston	Queens	NY	NYC
6	Queens	NY	NYC	Clark	NV	Las Vegas
7	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Cook	IL	Chicago
8	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles	Fulton	GA	Atlanta
9	Cook	IL	Chicago	Dallas	TX	Dallas Fort-Worth
10	Hudson	NJ	NYC	Bronx	NY	NYC
Palm Beach						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	Nassau	NY	NYC	Nassau	NY	NYC
2	Suffolk	NY	NYC	Fairfield	CT	NYC
3	Worcester	MA	Boston	Suffolk	NY	NYC
4	Kings	NY	NYC	New York	NY	NYC
5	New York	NY	NYC	Queens	NY	NYC
6	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles	Kings	NY	NYC
7	Bergen	NJ	NYC	Westchester	NY	NYC
8	Fairfield	CT	NYC	Cook	IL	Chicago
9	Cook	IL	Chicago	Bergen	NJ	NYC
10	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles

**Table 4b. Top 10 Origin Counties to Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties
(IRS v. ACS) (2017–2021)**

Broward County						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	Queens	NY	NYC	Queens	NY	NYC
2	Worcester	MA	Boston	Kings	NY	NYC
3	Cook	IL	Chicago	New York	NY	NYC
4	New York	NY	NYC	Cook	IL	Chicago
5	Kings	NY	NYC	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles
6	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles	Nassau	NY	NYC
7	Hudson	NJ	NYC	Bronx	NY	NYC
8	Bergen	NJ	NYC	Suffolk	NY	NYC
9	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Harris	TX	Houston
10	San Bernardino	CA	Los Angeles	Fulton	GA	Atlanta
Miami-Dade County						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	Kings	NY	NYC	New York	NY	NYC
2	New York	NY	NYC	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles
3	Queens	NY	NYC	Kings	NY	NYC
4	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles	Harris	TX	Houston
5	Suffolk	MA	Boston	Queens	NY	NYC
6	Cook	IL	Chicago	Cook	IL	Chicago
7	Worcester	MA	Boston	Clark	NV	Las Vegas
8	Bergen	NJ	NYC	Hudson	NJ	NYC
9	Harris	TX	Houston	Bronx	NY	NYC
10	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Fulton	GA	Atlanta
Palm Beach County						
	ACS			IRS		
Rank	County	State	Metro	County	State	Metro
1	Nassau	NY	NYC	Nassau	NY	NYC
2	Worcester	MA	Boston	New York	NY	NYC
3	Queens	NY	NYC	Suffolk	NY	NYC
4	New York	NY	NYC	Queens	NY	NYC
5	Kings	NY	NYC	Kings	NY	NYC
6	Suffolk	NY	NYC	Westchester	NY	NYC
7	Cook	IL	Chicago	Fairfield	CT	NYC
8	Fulton	GA	Atlanta	Cook	IL	Chicago
9	Fairfield	CT	NYC	Bergen	NJ	NYC
10	Cobb	GA	Atlanta	Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles

Small Area Analysis

The analysis of migration flows between metropolitan areas and between counties presented above provided a broad overview of domestic migration trends impacting South Florida. Yet the region is also characterized by socioeconomic and demographic variations within each county. For example, according to the 2018–2022 ACS 5-year estimates, within Broward County, the City of Coral Springs had a median household income of \$87,488 whereas the City of Pompano Beach had a median household income of \$61,155. While an analysis of migration flows between places would be interesting, there are unfortunately no migration flows available from the ACS or the IRS at that level of geography. Even if such data were available, there would be limitations to such an analysis since the delineation of local jurisdictions can vary widely between states or even within a state. For example, New York City is made up of five counties, whereas the City of Miami is one of over 30 incorporated municipalities in Miami-Dade County, and about 1.2 million people (almost 44%) live in the unincorporated area of Miami-Dade County.

More realistic comparisons between smaller areas can be made using Census-defined Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs). PUMAs are non-overlapping, statistical geographic areas that partition each state into geographic areas containing no fewer than 100,000 people each. The ACS assigns a migration PUMA (MIGPUMA) to identify where a respondent lived one year prior; MIGPUMAs are aggregated from the PUMA-level to their respective counties (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Based on the Census 2010 definitions that apply to the study period of this article (2012–2021), there were 49 PUMAs in South Florida: 14 in Broward County, 24 in Miami-Dade County, and 11 in Palm Beach County. PUMAs can cross county boundaries; the southernmost PUMA in Miami-Dade County – South/Outside Urban Development Boundary & Monroe County – was excluded from this analysis.

**Table 5. Domestic Migration to Each PUMA in South Florida
(2017–2021 ACS)**

Destination		Average Income of Domestic Migrants (total)	Top-Sending Origin		
PUMA	Area Name		In-Migration	County/State	Metro Area
Broward County					
1101	Coral Springs & Parkland	\$70,439	507	Bergen, NJ	NYC
1102	Margate & Coconut Creek	\$46,628	164	Kings, NY	NYC
1103	Deerfield , Pompano Beach (North) Lighthouse Point	\$59,603	355	Worcester, MA	Boston
1104	Pompano Beach (South) & Fort Lauderdale (Northeast)	\$109,136	234	Tarrant, TX	Dallas-Fort Worth
1105	Tamarac, Oakland Park & North Lauderdale	\$60,821	416	Queens, NY	NYC
1106	Plantation & Sunrise	\$66,834	399	Cook, IL	Chicago
1107	Lauderhill & Lauderdale Lakes	\$38,449	78	Fulton, GA	Atlanta
1108	Fort Lauderdale (Central)	\$97,145	387	Monmouth, NJ	NYC
1109	Hollywood (North) & Dania Beach (South)	\$46,369	562	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles
1110	Davie & Cooper City	\$65,897	271	New York, NY	NYC
1111	Weston, Pembroke Pines (Northwest) & Southwest Ranches	\$132,270	335	Queens, NY	NYC
1112	Miramar (West) & Pembroke Pines (Southwest)	\$96,669	91	Forsyth, GA	Atlanta
1113	Hollywood (South) & Pembroke Pines (East)	\$57,563	299	Hudson, NY	NYC
1114	Miramar (East), Hallandale Beach & West Park	\$72,480	289	San Bernardino, CA	Los Angeles
Miami-Dade County					
8601	Greater Miami Lakes	\$133,670	165	Worcester, MA	Boston
8602	Miami Gardens (North & West)	\$53,833	107	Suffolk, NY	NYC
8603	North Miami Beach (West)	\$59,509	281	Queens, NY	NYC
8604	Aventura & Surfside	\$72,486	266	Suffolk, MA	Boston

Table 5. Domestic Migration to Each PUMA in South Florida (2017–2021 ACS)
(Continued)

Destination		Average Income of Domestic Migrants (total)	Top-Sending Origin		
PUMA	Area Name		In-Migration	County/State	Metro Area
Miami-Dade County (continued)					
8605	North Miami (Southwest) & Golden Glades (West)	\$40,706	535	Kings, NY	NYC
8606	Opa-Locka, West Little River & Westview	\$42,104	101	Kings, NY	NYC
8607	Hialeah (Northeast)	\$77,236	49	Bexar, TX	San Antonio
8608	Doral, Sweetwater & Fontainebleau	\$66,530	235	Fulton, GA	Atlanta
8609	Hialeah (South Central)	\$34,069	86	Waynesboro, VA	Staunton, VA
8610	Miami Springs & Miami International Airport	\$57,821	174	San Bernardino, CA	Los Angeles
8611	Miami (North)	\$111,711	178	Hudson, NJ	NYC
8612	Miami Beach & Miami Shores	\$116,906	556	New York, NY	NYC
8613	Miami (Downtown)	\$76,681	136	Fulton, GA	Atlanta
8614	Miami (East) & Key Biscayne	\$108,258	593	New York, NY	NYC
8615	Miami (West)	\$56,309	102	Suffolk, MA	Boston
8616	Coral Gables, Pinecrest Village & Kendall (South)	\$84,049	345	Queens, NY	NYC
8617	South Miami, Westchester & Coral Terrace	\$102,106	61	Yazoo, MS	Jackson, MS
8618	Tamiami Trail Region (South) - Tamiami	\$39,404	124	Cook, IL	Chicago
8619	Kendale Lakes (Southwest) & Kendall West (South)	\$34,988	164	Bronx, NY	NYC
8620	Kendall (North), Sunset & Westwood Lakes	\$51,090	185	Kings, NY	NYC
8621	The Hammocks (West), Richmond West (West) & Country Walk	\$64,835	150	Kings, NY	NYC
8622	South Miami Heights	\$68,237	87	Bergen, NJ	NYC
8623	Cutler Bay & Palmetto Bay	\$55,922	149	Wadena, MN	Not in a Metro
8624	Homestead (North) & Florida City (North)	\$46,476	164	Lowndes, GA	Valdosta, GA

Table 5. Domestic Migration to Each PUMA in South Florida (2017–2021 ACS)**(Continued)**

Destination		Average Income of Domestic Migrants (total)	Top-Sending Origin		
PUMA	Area Name		In-Migration	County/State	Metro Area
Palm Beach County					
9901	Palm Beach County (Northeast) (Jupiter & Surrounding Areas)	\$110,351	299	Hamilton, IN	Indianapolis
9902	Palm Beach Gardens & Rivera Beach	\$105,640	198	Cook, IL	Chicago
9903	West Palm Beach (Southeast) & Palm Beach	\$71,554	293	Fulton, GA	Atlanta
9904	Greenacres (North) & Palm Springs (North)	\$61,278	109	Spotsylvania, VA	DC
9905	Lake Worth, Lantana & Atlantis	\$79,982	119	Edgar, IL	Not in a Metro
9906	Greater Boynton Beach (North)	\$84,643	469	Worcester, MA	Boston
9907	Greater Delray Beach	\$99,697	320	Nassau, NY	NYC
9908	Boca Raton & Highland Beach	\$122,069	399	Nassau, NY	NYC
9909	West of Boca Raton	\$87,390	417	Cobb, GA	Atlanta
9910	Wellington & Agricultural Reserve	\$90,867	438	Nassau, NY	NYC
9911	Glades & Western Communities	\$56,616	193	Wallowa, OR	Not in a Metro

Table 5 shows the county of the leading MIGPUMA to each PUMA in South Florida in 2017–2021; it also shows the average income of each MIGPUMA that sent migrants to that area. It should be noted that only respondents 18 years of age and older were included in this calculation, and MIGPUMAs that had an average income less than \$20,000 were removed due to noise. Similar to the county-to-county migration flows, across all PUMAs in South Florida, the largest flows of domestic migrants came predominantly from the New York City metro area. For 22 PUMAs, the largest flow came from the NYC metro area, including 13 from one of the boroughs of New York City. Of all the individual flows between PUMAs, the one from New York County, NY to Miami City (East) & Key Biscayne was the largest with 593 migrants. This was followed by Los Angeles County, CA to Hollywood

(North) & Dania Beach (South) – 562 migrants; New York County, NY to Miami Beach & Miami Shores – 556 migrants; Kings County, NY to Miami City (East) & Key Biscayne – 546 migrants (data not shown – second largest flow to Miami City (East) & Key Biscayne); and Kings County, NY to North Miami (Southwest) & Golden Glades (West)– 535 migrants. (Table 5). Other noteworthy flows outside of the NYC metro area include Worcester County, MA to Greater Boynton Beach (North) – 469 migrants; Cobb County, GA to West of Boca Raton – 417 migrants; Cook County, IL to Plantation & Sunrise – 399 migrants; and Worcester County, MA to Deerfield, Pompano Beach (North), and Lighthouse Point (Table 5).

Figure 1 displays two maps of South Florida – one based on ACS 2012–2016 estimates and the other on ACS 2017–2021 estimates – showing the metro area of the MIGPUMA with the most migration to each PUMA. Only metro areas with a major city as a principal city are shown on the map; smaller metro areas and MIGPUMAs that are located outside of a metro area are included in the “Other” category. The two data periods shown in the maps highlight changes over time. Spatially, migration flows from MIGPUMAs in the NYC metro area were more prominent to PUMAs in Broward and Miami-Dade County in the more recent period. In Palm Beach, the opposite was true; here, MIGPUMAs from Atlanta and Boston were more prevalent in the later period whereas in the earlier period those from the NYC metro area dominated. It is important to note the spatial layout of the PUMAs; while they are comparable in population, they are not comparable in land area (Figure 1). For example, in Palm Beach County, PUMA 09911: Glades & Western Communities comprises the entire western portion of the county to Lake Okeechobee, whereas PUMA 9907: Greater Delray Beach City makes up a more densely populated, urban area. Consequently, since PUMAs comprise similar population totals, the spatial extent of each PUMA provides clues to the population density of an area, with high density PUMAs near the urban centers being more narrowly delineated spatially than the lower density PUMAs on the western periphery bordering the Everglades.

Figure 1a. Migration by PUMA to South Florida by the Metro Area of the Leading MIGPUMA (2012–2016 ACS)

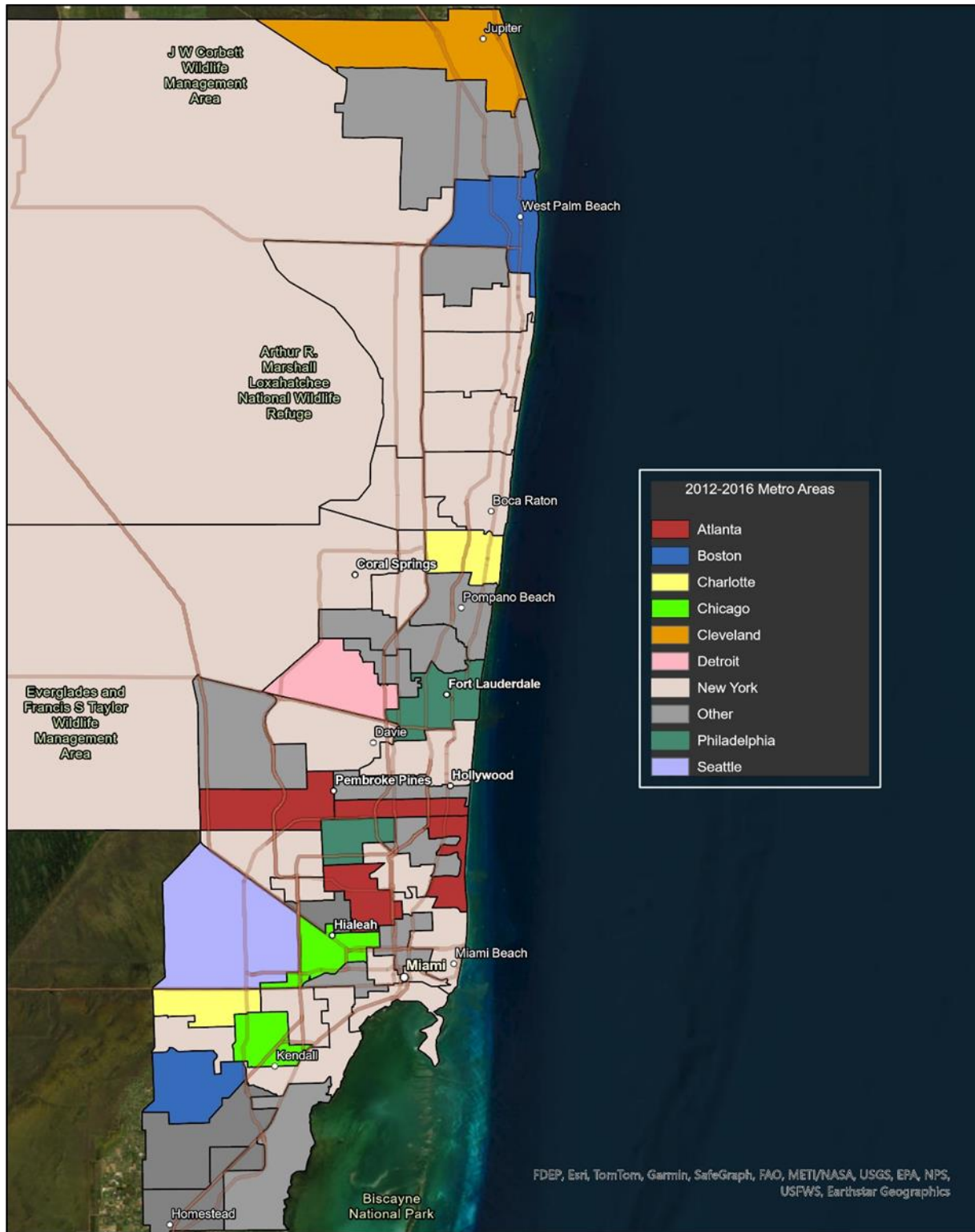
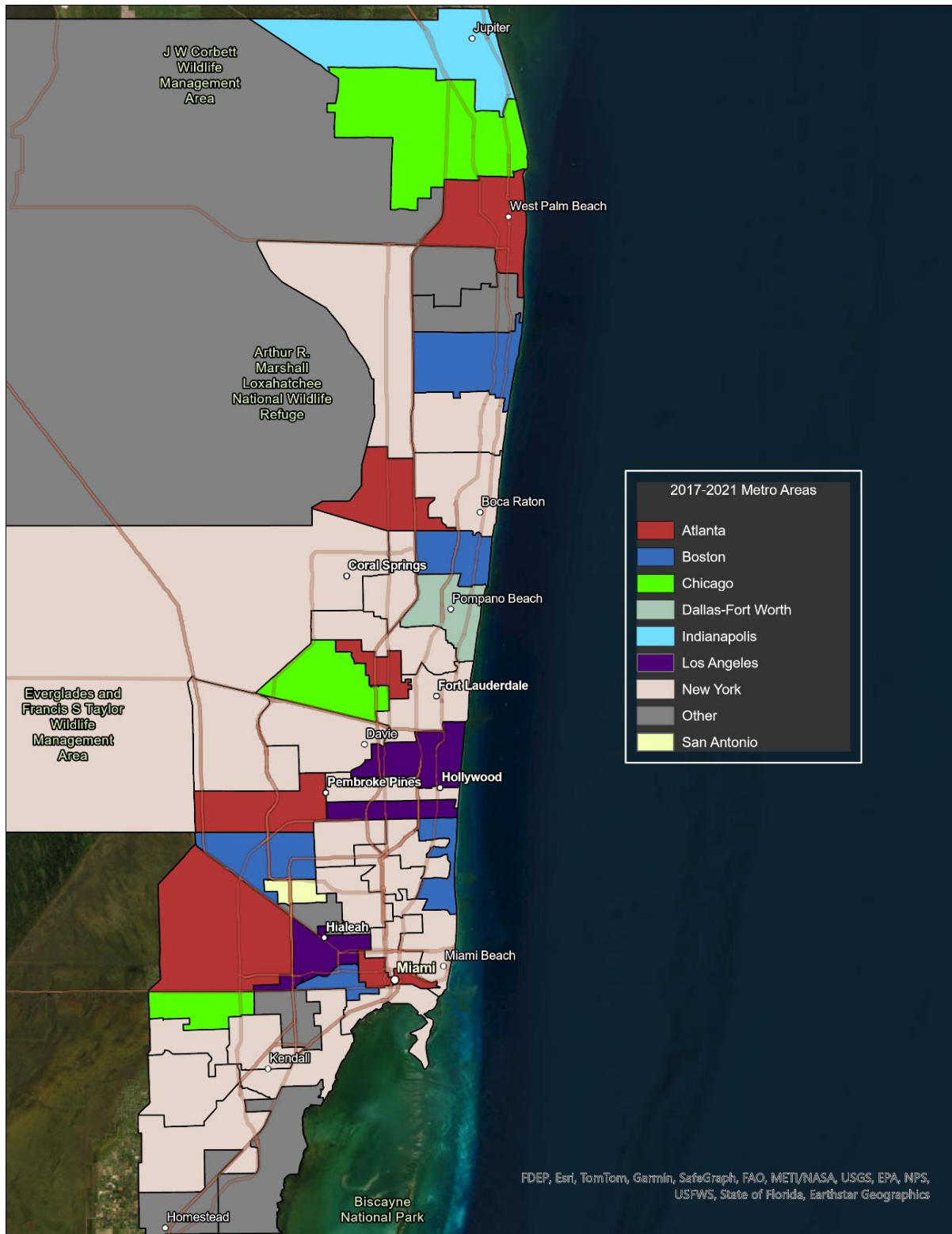


Figure 1b. Migration by PUMA to South Florida by the Metro Area of the Leading MIGPUMA (2017–2021 ACS)



When zooming in on smaller geographies, connections between wealthier origin areas and specific destinations within South Florida become apparent. For example, persons with higher incomes from Bergen County, NJ, were more likely to move to Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties than to Broward County, but also to particular areas within each county. For migrants 18 years and older, in 2017–2021, four PUMAs in South Florida had inflows of at least 80 persons from Bergen County. The largest of these flows – 135 persons – was to PUMA 1101: Coral Springs & Parkland Cities, Broward County. However, with an average household income of \$51,455, migrants to this PUMA also had the lowest average income of the four flows. Incomes were noticeably higher for the 92 persons moving from Bergen County to PUMA 9907: Greater Delray Beach City, Palm Beach County (\$85,823). In Miami-Dade County, people who moved to the Aventura & Surfside area from Bergen County, NJ, had higher average incomes than those who moved to the northern part of the city of Miami (\$81,587 vs. \$53,742).

Overall, in South Florida, the destinations of high-income migrants were largely areas with higher concentrations of wealth. These destinations are scattered across South Florida. Areas where people with notably higher incomes often moved to include Fort Lauderdale, Weston, Pembroke Pines, and Southwest Ranches in Broward County; Miami Beach, the City of Miami, Key Biscayne, and Coral Gables in Miami-Dade County; and in Palm Beach County, Boca Raton, Jupiter, and pockets of the central part of the county (2017–2021 ACS 5-year estimates).

Conclusion

The migration flows to South Florida described in this paper are having an impact on the demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics of the region. The information on average income levels of the migrants also helps us to better understand the economic layout of South Florida and how it varies across its space. While not growing as rapidly as some other parts of Florida, according to the 2024 BEBR County Projections, South Florida's population is projected to grow over the coming decades, to 6.63 million by 2030, 6.94 million by 2040, and 7.14 million by 2050 (Rayer and Comfort, 2024). South Florida's

population increase depends on migration; natural change – the balance between births and deaths – still contributes modestly to population change in Broward and Miami-Dade counties but is already negative in Palm Beach County. As shown in this paper, the lion share of domestic migration has come from the Northeast, in particular the New York City metro area, as well as some other large metros including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. Future growth of the region will depend on the extent to which South Florida remains a popular migration destination from those out-of-state sending areas. Moreover, if South Florida continues to attract high-income migrants at the rate of recent years, the local population with lower incomes will be likely be impacted by rising housing costs and gentrification in general.

This most recent wave of domestic migration to South Florida should not be viewed in isolation. In addition to domestic migration, South Florida, and particularly Miami-Dade County, has also been a primary destination for international migrants, especially from Central and South America. To conclude, **Table 6** shows the respective proportions of domestic and international migration for South Florida and compares them to the Orlando and Tampa Bay metro areas – which are the second and third largest metro areas in Florida – based on migration data from the 2012–2016 and 2017–2021 ACS 5-year estimates. In 2012–2016, domestic and international migration were nearly even in South Florida (52.8% and 47.2%, respectively), while international migration contributed less to the Orlando (30%) and Tampa Bay (19.7%) metro areas. By 2017–2021, the contribution of domestic migration in South Florida increased by 3.4% to 56.2%, whereas it decreased by 4.5% for the Orlando metro area and was largely unchanged for the Tampa metro area. In South Florida, the increase in domestic migration occurred in all three of the counties, with the biggest change in Miami-Dade County which experienced a 6.2% shift toward domestic migration.

Table 6. Recent Changes in International and Domestic Migration in the Three Largest Metro Areas in Florida (Shown in Percentages of Overall Migration) (ACS 2012–2016, 2017–2021)

County/Metro	2012-2016		2017-2021		Change International
	Domestic	International	Domestic	International	
Broward	57.3	42.7	58.5	41.5	-1.3
Miami-Dade	36.6	63.4	42.8	57.2	-6.2
Palm Beach	70.0	30.0	71.0	29.0	-1.0
South Florida	52.8	47.2	56.2	43.8	-3.4
Lake	91.4	8.6	83.5	16.5	7.8
Orange	66.5	33.5	61.1	38.9	5.4
Osceola	58.5	41.5	54.1	45.9	4.4
Seminole	77.2	22.8	76.9	23.1	0.3
Orlando Metro	70.0	30.0	65.4	34.6	4.6
Hernando	89.0	11.0	89.8	10.2	-0.8
Hillsborough	73.0	27.0	74.5	25.5	-1.6
Manatee	87.2	12.8	82.9	17.1	4.3
Pasco	85.8	14.2	86.8	13.2	-1.0
Pinellas	83.4	16.6	84.6	15.4	-1.2
Tampa Bay	80.3	19.7	80.5	19.5	-0.3

Note: Domestic migration excludes migration from within Florida; Puerto Rico is included in international migration.

Finally, one should note that in-migration, whether domestic or international, only partially explains population changes at the local level, and that out-migration also plays an important role. According to the latest population estimates from the Census Bureau, both Broward and Miami-Dade counties were estimated to have experienced a net loss of domestic migrants to other parts of Florida and other states (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). Thus, while the migration flows from other states detailed in this paper impacted the local demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics of South Florida, out-migration from South Florida warrants further study. The same goes for recent international migration to the area, including information on which countries send migrants and their socioeconomic characteristics.

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