

Moving vans a good sign for state

Since '96, it's 1st time state has nearly as many moves in as out

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Michigan, for the first time since 1996, had almost as many people moving into the state as moving out, a new study shows.

That, experts said, is a clear indication of an improving economy.

The annual study, which was released this week, tracked 129,000 moves by United Van Lines nationwide in 2013 and showed that there were 5,573 moves in and out of Michigan. Of those, 46% were into the state and 54% were out of the state.

In contrast, Michigan led the nation in moves out of the state from 2006 to 2009.

"It's been a long time since you've seen a lot of optimism and the population moving back," said Michael Stoll, professor and chairman of the Department of Public Policy at the University of California in Los Angeles. "I don't see anything in the data that this is



David Corrigan

President of Corrigan Moving Systems

million people) until 2011 (9.87 million), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The population increased slightly in 2012 (9.88 million) and then again last year by 13,103 people.

Stoll pointed out that while the United Van Lines moves tend to lag

sistent pattern from 2009 to last year of increasingly more people moving in each year (774 in 2009 to 1,013 in 2013) and fewer people each year moving out (1,744 in 2009 to 1,185 in 2013).

Despite having an unemployment rate higher than the national average, Stoll said, home sales and home prices in Michigan are up, showing an increased demand for housing; the state's per capita income is up, and automakers in Detroit have rebounded and are hiring.

Nationally, he said, the data shows movement to the Pacific Northwest and South.

Florida is expected by the U.S. Census Bureau to surpass New York in population this year. California and Texas are the top two most populous states, respectively, and Georgia pulled past Michigan last year. Michigan is No. 9 in population, just ahead of North Carolina, which was among the top states where people were moving in 2013.

Still, David Corrigan, president of Farmington Hills-based Corrigan Moving Systems and grandson of its founder, said the study results are great news for Michigan. The lifelong Michigander added he is optimistic about his home state.

"For years and years, we've been a state that lost people," he said. "We now have an economy that is recovering, and we have people moving in to fill jobs."

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just temporary or will be reversed."

For the study, states that had less than 55% of inbound or outbound moves were considered statistically balanced.

Stoll, an economist, said it appears that Michigan's population—and economy—may be stabilizing. The state population declined from 2005 (10.05

what is happening in the economy by a year or two, they also are a good measure of job growth because, generally, more educated workers who are moving for job prospects use moving companies.

Moreover, the data for metro Detroit from the moving study showed a con-