

Shifting Sands and Economic Currents Affecting the Decision to Leave Hawai‘i

Findings from the *Hawai‘i in Motion: Understanding the Decision to Stay, Leave, or Return Study*

December 2022

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Summary

Migration for the pursuit of economic gains such as better employment, higher income, and increased financial stability has long been a primary focus of theories and research about human migration. This brief reports on a study, *Hawai‘i in Motion: Understanding the Decision to Stay, Leave, or Return*, with a special focus on the economic forces that influence decisions to leave or stay in ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i.¹ Study findings suggest that many Native Hawaiians are driven away from their homeland to faraway places in response to economic conditions in Hawai‘i. Many participants describe the need to support and provide for their families, pointing to the financial gains achieved by moving and the relative lack of those opportunities afforded those who remain in the islands. Citing Hawai‘i’s exceedingly high cost of living along with limited career advancement and job opportunities, this study finds that many individuals would consider staying in Hawai‘i if there is a strong workforce with jobs and careers that allow individuals to afford housing and other living costs, care for loved ones, and build financial sustainability. A limited healthy economic environment pushes individuals and families to remain afar for extended periods before coming home, or often, not returning at all. Finally, those who return do so typically due to the social connections to family, friends, and community that draw them home, forgoing the financial stability they achieved elsewhere to be closer to their loved ones. Together these findings have important policy and practical implications for Native Hawaiian wellbeing and a collective path towards a thriving lāhui.²

¹ Archipelago

² Nation, race, people

Key Takeaways

Hawai'i's economic conditions, specifically job availability and career advancement, play a large role in overall migration decisions.

Economic conditions in Hawai'i and other locations continually influence residents' decisions on where to live. Study findings reveal economic factors such as job and career opportunities, higher income and financial stability, and affordable housing and other living costs impact decisions to remain or leave the state for 60 percent of interviewees.

Among these economic factors, Hawai'i's limited job market and career advancement opportunities are discussed as the most prominent economic reason to move. Relatedly, a robust workforce in Hawai'i with more job and career advancement opportunities can motivate participants to reconsider their decision to leave Hawai'i and is a main economic reason why participants return to the islands. This suggests that increasing job availability and workforce opportunities may provide residents the option to stay in, or return to, Hawai'i over other economic factors.

More Native Hawaiian participants seek better paying jobs outside of Hawai'i as a result of struggling financially than non-Hawaiians.

Many Native Hawaiian participants in the islands struggle financially in jobs with low wages. Seeking higher pay is often tied to being able to make ends meet and not living paycheck-to-paycheck. A larger percentage of Native Hawaiian participants (64 percent) discuss economic factors as reasons to leave Hawai'i in comparison to non-Hawaiian participants (52 percent).

Native Hawaiians discuss their small paychecks, feelings of being overworked and underpaid, and thinking they would have a better chance of building their finances in places outside of Hawai'i. Non-Hawaiians spoke of perceived better pay elsewhere or promotions that offer better salaries more generally. This suggests that Native Hawaiians may view leaving Hawai'i as a means of survival for themselves and their families, while for non-Hawaiians, migration may be linked to financial advancement that is desired but not always necessary.

Economic factors are intertwined with social relationships, which are the primary draw for staying or returning to the islands.

For many, economic stability is a means to provide for their families. Unfortunately, low wages and a high cost of living means working longer hours and leaving less time to spend with friends and family. Even so, social ties can outweigh unfavorable economic conditions, with many participants choosing to remain or return to Hawai'i to be close to their family.

Recommended Citation:

Pagud, C., Kekahio, W., & Kana'iaupuni, S. (2022). *Shifting Sands and Economic Currents Affecting the Decision to Leave Hawai'i*. Kamehameha Schools, Strategy and Transformation.

Acknowledgements:

This study was conducted with the support from SMS Research and Auriga WPS Consulting.

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Study Overview

Hawai'i in Motion: Understanding the Decision to Stay, Leave, or Return is a large-scale, statewide study conducted in 2019 to understand reasons why Native Hawaiian families and others leave, return, or remain in Hawai'i. This study explores the connection between movement out-of-state and key individual and systemic economic, environmental, education, health, and social factors. This research illuminates the deep connections and cause and effect dynamics of policies, relationships, resources, power, and values within our state that contribute to, or deter, families from voluntarily and involuntarily moving away.

This study captures perspectives prior to the COVID-19 pandemic which altered the lives of Hawai'i residents and reshaped the social and economic conditions in which we live. Overall study findings highlight many conditions vastly affected by the pandemic: the availability of jobs, high cost of living, digital and in-person educational opportunities, and the strength of social, cultural, and family ties. Through understanding these critical aspects of our lives, a better normal can be created in which Native Hawaiians, and everyone in Hawai'i, have opportunities to thrive wherever they choose.

Study Participants

In addition to examining U.S. Census Bureau data to calculate migration rates and trends, personal stories were gathered from individuals who have left Hawai'i. In some cases, these individuals moved away and later returned to Hawai'i; in other cases, individuals were still residing out-of-state at the time of the study. Individuals who chose to remain in Hawai'i and did not move away were also interviewed. Stories were gathered through phone interviews from approximately 250 individuals born in Hawai'i.

Demographically, participants represent all education levels, counties in Hawai'i, and range in age from 18 years to over 75 years. Native Hawaiians were oversampled and comprised two-thirds of participants.³ See Appendix A for more information.

This Brief

This brief is a part of a series that presents findings from the *Hawai'i in Motion* study. It focuses particularly on the economic drivers that influence the decision to leave or stay in Hawai'i; however, economic influences are situated within many other factors that also impact decision making around where to live. Our broader analysis of interview data show that education and social factors, in addition to economics, play prominent roles in this decision. These topics are discussed in separate publications.

³ For this study, participants self-identified and reported if they are of Native Hawaiian ancestry. Among the 253 participants interviewed for this study, 169 identify as Native Hawaiian, comprising 67 percent of respondents.

Introduction

Pua left her childhood home in Hawai'i to pursue her career. In hopes of remaining in the islands she began working in the travel industry, but felt her heart pulling her toward a career in education, specifically special education. She eventually received a job offer on the continent and made the decision to leave. Although she did not like the thought of permanently leaving her aging parents, the job offer came with a much higher starting pay than in Hawai'i. After spending years on the continent, Pua was offered her dream job back in Hawai'i. Unfortunately, it paid \$20,000 less than her current salary. By that point, she had two boys attending a private school and knew she could not give them the same life at home. She remained on the continent and, now retired, Pua looks back at a satisfying career as an administrator and educator. Although she dreams of coming home to care for her late parents' farm, she is filled with uncertainty. "My heart feels better in Hawai'i. I feel whole when I'm there.... That's my roots. That's the base of my life, the Hawaiian traditions. That's just who I am. I carry it with me. I'm trying to figure out what I need to do and where I want to live when I move back. But the cost of living... Do I buy a house there or do I rent? I don't know."⁴

Pua's story resembles the experiences of many who leave the islands in search of better job opportunities, sustainable pay, and affordable living. Her story illustrates the complexities of economic conditions and social ties that influence decisions to leave Hawai'i. The rising cost of living, growing wealth divide, and limited workforce opportunities are a few challenging economic factors Hawai'i residents endure and consider when contemplating leaving the islands.

Economic conditions have continuously been highlighted in past and recent news segments as a primary driver of migration in Hawai'i. Previous research from the early 2000s and 2010s show those who left Hawai'i or considered leaving were affected by economic factors such as income and job opportunities, the housing market, and wanting to achieve financial stability (Malone, 2005; Isihibashi, 2005; Lassetter et al., 2013; Nakatsuka et al., 2013). Findings shared in this report demonstrate the persisting nature of these conditions and the continued impact they have on many families in Hawai'i.

⁴ This story is based on an interview conducted through the *Hawai'i in Motion* study with changes to names and other identifying information.

Findings

Economic conditions persistently influence decisions on where to live. The economic conditions of Hawai'i, as well as conditions in other places, drive some to leave the state. For others, staying in Hawai'i means accepting possible workforce limitations and day-to-day financial struggles. It is not an easy decision and one that participants may face multiple times throughout adulthood.

Study findings reveal economic factors, such as job and career opportunities, income and financial stability, cost of living, and affordable housing and homeownership contribute to decisions to remain or leave the state for 60 percent of interviewees.

Participants who moved away as adults and haven't returned to Hawai'i are the most impacted by economic factors when they decided to leave (78 percent). In comparison, those who moved away as adults and returned to Hawai'i and those who didn't leave the islands discuss economics to a lesser extent (68 and 33 percent, respectively). This suggests economic reasons have a greater influence among those who do not end up returning to Hawai'i and is less of an influence among those who think about moving but decide to stay.

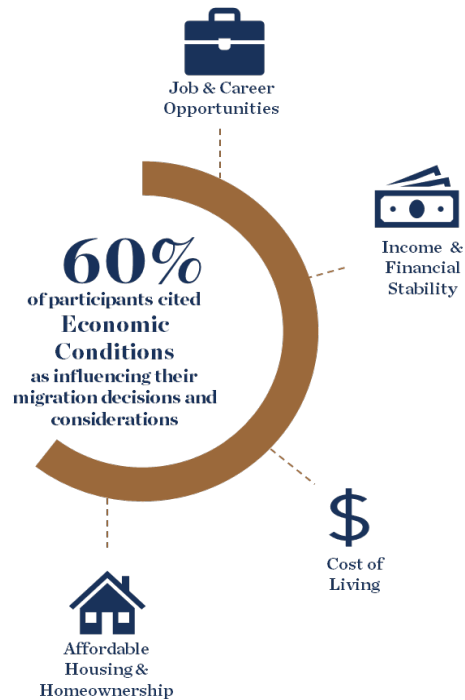


Figure 1. Economic conditions that influence migration decisions

Job and Career Opportunities

Job and employment conditions and opportunities are continually discussed by participants as prominent considerations in contemplating where to live. Among participants who discuss economic reasons, 84 percent specifically cite job opportunities as a reason or consideration to leave Hawai'i. Job opportunities locally and afar are more prominently discussed among those who moved from Hawai'i (88 percent) and less frequently among those who considered leaving but ultimately chose to stay (59 percent).

Participants describe Hawai'i's job market as limited and tough to find work in, saying there are "very little job opportunities in Hawai'i" or "the job market is really tight [in Hawai'i]." Many feel pushed to leave because of inadequate work availability in the islands leading them to search for "employment, broader job opportunities, [and] higher pay" elsewhere.

A tough and competitive job market is a challenge influencing migration decisions from as far back as the 1960s. One participant describes their experience during that time,

“It was like there was nothing here on Maui. No job available for someone without more education. It was a dead end... So that led me to go.” This is echoed by many others, highlighting the persistent and pervasive workforce challenges in the islands and significance of job opportunities in the decision to leave or stay in Hawai‘i.

Many participants also discuss limitations they face when trying to advance in Hawai‘i’s workforce. Career growth is important to many and a critical factor in the decision to leave. One participant explains: “I was a waiter at Duke’s and... that’s all I could see as my future in Hawai‘i. I didn’t see any other future for me.” Another participant states, “People don’t leave so it’s really hard to get promoted.” The limited advancement in Hawai‘i is exacerbated by the perception that there are more chances for professional advancement on the continent: “There are a lot more growth opportunities [for work] on the mainland.”

A robust workforce in Hawai‘i with increased job opportunities has the potential to motivate participants to reconsider their decision to leave. Additionally, job stability, the chance to kick start their career, and being established in a career also factor into this reconsideration. Although connected, interviews reveal more job opportunities are a stronger influencer to keep residents in Hawai‘i over other economic factors such as a lower cost of living and increased affordability. Among respondents that moved from Hawai‘i who cite an economic reason in their consideration to stay in the islands, over half (53 percent) specifically identify job opportunities as a factor that would have kept them in the islands. This suggests that increased job availability and workforce opportunities may support residents to remain in Hawai‘i.

For some, career and job pathways are tied to military assignments—either for themselves or a loved one. Among those affected by economic conditions, military assignments impact a little over one in four participants. Many were drafted into the military during wartime, leaving them little choice but to leave. As one participant says, “I was drafted into the U.S. Army... The only choice was to go or go to jail.” It was less of an option and more a call to duty. For others, the decision to join the military is theirs alone to make, with some choosing to fulfill an obligation and responsibility. For example, one participant describes, “I come from a line of veterans... That’s what I believed was an obligation, a kuleana instilled in me from my dad.” Participants also share that the military provided opportunities to gain experience or education beyond their service and to see the world outside of Hawai‘i. One participant describes the role the military played in their decision to leave, “To experience life outside of Hawai‘i. Born and raised on the Big Island, I wanted to learn more. I knew there had to be more than go to school, go work, go home. So I joined the military.”

Once participants move away from Hawai‘i, job opportunities continue to influence them to remain afar. Nearly two-thirds mention a job opportunity, either for themselves or a loved one, as a reason to remain out of state. Participants note ample workforce opportunities available outside of Hawai‘i upon graduating from college and job offers that bring them to new places. One participant shares, “It was the jobs we had. The money. And we couldn’t come home. [If] we did come home, it was to accept going down in pay.” Participants describe growing professionally in their fields and concerns that the same opportunities might not be available to them back in Hawai‘i, as reflected in this participant’s statement, “I wasn’t sure I would be able to find something like [my job] in Hawai‘i.”

Job opportunities also draw participants back to Hawai‘i. More than half of participants, 63 percent, who discuss returning to the islands for economic reasons cite job

opportunities available to them or their family member back home. For others, they follow loved ones who have employment opportunities in Hawai'i or are having difficulties in other states' job markets. Some participants who return to Hawai'i consider leaving again for career-related reasons. Previous employment opportunities outside of Hawai'i assist with building professional connections that lead to future job offers and the possibility of transferring or relocating their job.

Income and Financial Stability

Particularly in Hawai'i where the cost of living is one of the highest in the nation (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2021), income and pay are key motivators to seek or accept a new job. Many participants express that higher income and better pay are needed to comfortably afford life in the islands. In their decision making of whether to move or not, participants feel pushed away by Hawai'i's low wages and drawn to increased pay they believe is available in other places. Participants discuss being "overworked and underpaid" and that "low wages made it unreasonable to stay."

The search for a higher income and better pay is also related to the desire to achieve financial stability and adequately support loved ones. For a number of participants, life in Hawai'i is financially difficult, with many living paycheck to paycheck and others struggling to sustain themselves independently without relying on social benefits. One participant explains, "You know, we wanted to get our own house. We wanted to settle down. We just wanted more than just living paycheck to paycheck." Another shares their own perspective, "I never [wanted] the island mentality of staying on welfare and having them support me or selling drugs to make an income. You get stuck in a rut from generation to generation if you don't break that cycle."

A stable income allows participants to "provide a living" for themselves and others and establish financial stability. Participants emphasize the search for better jobs and higher income is situated among social factors such as being able to provide for and spend time with family. One participant notes, "Everybody in Hawai'i has to work so much. So it's not like they can stay home and help with the children. I'd rather live [in Hawai'i], but everyone has to go to work." Another participant stresses that leaving for a better job and higher pay means that they can better financially support their family: "I left to work and send money home to my sister, who was pregnant." They went on to say, "My paychecks in Hawai'i were small. I applied for food stamps, but it wasn't enough while I was trying to help my sister." These experiences highlight competing priorities that are a reality for many in Hawai'i—the need to work more to support and care for loved ones juxtaposed with the reality that working multiple jobs often leaves limited time to spend with family and friends.

As seen with the influence of job opportunities both locally and outside of Hawai'i, slightly more participants who left Hawai'i discuss seeking a higher income than those who didn't move (19 percent versus 14 percent, respectively). Those who left Hawai'i and haven't returned are also more than twice as likely to be influenced by financial instability in Hawai'i than those who moved and then returned, 31 percent and 13 percent. Meanwhile, those who haven't moved from Hawai'i do not discuss experiencing financial instability as a part of their experiences.

Cost of Living

The cost of living in Hawai'i has continually increased in large part due to rising costs of housing and essential household goods and services, exacerbating families' financial instability and making it progressively more difficult to live in the islands (Aloha United Way, 2020). These costs become increasingly problematic for families who are financially struggling and have to choose between certain essential goods or to spread

their limited income across all, creating potential long-term problems. Increasing costs, coupled with Hawai'i's isolation and dependence on imported goods, contribute to Hawai'i's cost of living being ranked as one of the highest in the nation (Aloha United Way, 2020; Heckathorn, et al., 2020).

For many families, Hawai'i's high cost of living is a factor in their decision on where to live. Among participants who are affected by economic conditions, 31 percent specifically discuss Hawai'i's cost of living. This was discussed the most by those who decided to not move (73 percent) versus those who ended up moving. The prominence of this topic among those who remained in the islands may be due to their day-to-day lived experience with Hawai'i's high cost of living. Additionally, it may suggest that although many in Hawai'i are distressed by and acknowledge the high cost of living in the state, other factors such as having strong social ties, stable and affordable housing, or a well-paying job may make living here manageable and preferred.

Many participants feel forced to leave the islands because they cannot support themselves and their families. As one participant explains, "I couldn't support my kids at home...It's not an option to live [in Hawai'i], I can't afford it... To feed my two kids, I had to move." Another shares, "It was getting expensive in Hawai'i, so I wanted to move to start a new life for my son." In order to provide for their families, participants are drawn to places outside of Hawai'i where a lower cost of living means they can survive and live comfortably.

Living afar provides those who left with firsthand experiences of the affordability elsewhere. When describing the cost of living in the islands in comparison to other places, participants frequently discuss the costs of housing (e.g., mortgage, rent), food and groceries, utilities, day care, private education for their children, and automotive expenses (e.g., gas, car registration). One participant shares, "Cost of living is a lot better than Hawai'i. Your dollar goes a long way in Texas." Another participant who lived on the continent and then returned to Hawai'i states, "[I] miss the cheapness of everything, hospital, grocery store. Everything was there and didn't need to pay an arm and a leg." Another reflects on their time afar, "I'm still struggling to afford living [in Hawai'i]. I know I could survive in Las Vegas."

Additionally, the experiences of friends and family who moved from Hawai'i inform participants' perception of the cost of living in other places. As one participant explains, "I had friends that lived there. The cost of living for them was better out there. It was less expensive." Another states, "My brother lives in North Carolina and they have a beautiful home. They have land and everything and they are very happy. They have something." For some, the belief that life is easier and more affordable elsewhere is enough to pull them away.

Cost of living in places outside of Hawai'i can motivate many to not return to the state. Among participants who cite an economic condition that kept them afar, nearly a fifth (19 percent) mention the affordable cost of living elsewhere. Participants share that a more affordable cost of living (i.e. housing, groceries) leads to less stress and worrying about supporting themselves and their families. One participant states, "[There's] no stress, no worrying about rent or putting food on the table." The financial stability that many participants achieve due to a lower cost of living leaves them feeling that returning to the islands is not realistic.

Affordable Housing and Homeownership

Affordable housing and homeownership also influence decisions of where to live, but are not discussed as prominently as other economics conditions. Among participants

who cited an economic reason, 12 percent discussed affordable housing and homeownership. Hawai'i's high housing and rent costs, restrictive market, and high out-of-state demand contribute to low homeownership rates and families needing to rent, which is also increasingly expensive.

The rise in rent contributes to the state's overall high cost of living. One participant describes the only affordable rental for their family as "far away from the city" and "pretty termite eaten." Though affordable for the family, it is subpar in quality. Families perceive rent to be lower and cheaper elsewhere and are willing to explore those markets.

Participants are also interested in owning their homes and feel that staying in Hawai'i makes that dream less of a reality. As one individual shares, "Real estate was a big thing because we knew we wouldn't be able to own a house in Hawai'i." The perception that housing markets elsewhere are more affordable is echoed by other participants, "I wanted to have my own place. I'd be able to afford it." For others, they know they would only be able to afford a home in Hawai'i if they are offered Hawaiian homelands, but many remain on the waitlist and end up leaving the state. Participants also feel pushed out by out-of-state and foreign investors, "There's a lot of outside people coming in, investors. They are the ones buying up all the places and we don't have a place."

While the desire to own a home may incentivize some to move away, already owning a home or land to build a home may influence participants to stay in the islands. One in five participants residing in Hawai'i at the time of the study cited home and property ownership as a reason that keeps them here. Many share that they will continue to live in Hawai'i because they own or inherited a home or land and are settled. As one participant shares, "We wouldn't move permanently because we own a house in Hawai'i." This suggests that upon acquiring a home or property, many residents will choose to stay in the islands. Essentially, homeownership (which, for some, may indicate financial stability) is a grounding factor for families in Hawai'i.

Economic Factors Among Native Hawaiians

As indigenous people of Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians have a deep and spiritual connection to the history, 'āina,⁵ culture, and language in the islands. Across generations, migration and exploration has been an integral part in the lives of many Native Hawaiians. Historically and presently, migration to and from Hawai'i took place for many reasons. Exploring stories shared specifically by Native Hawaiians suggest different, nuanced motivations for leaving than that of non-Hawaiians.

Experiences shared by study participants show that economic factors have varying levels of influence in migration decisions among Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians. Overall, 64 percent of Native Hawaiians discuss economics as a reason to leave in comparison to 52 percent of non-Hawaiians, revealing that economic conditions influence decision making among more Native Hawaiians than non-Hawaiians (Figure 2). Most notably, 40 percent of Native Hawaiians who discuss an economic condition cite the cost of living as a factor in their decision to move or stay in comparison to 27 percent of non-Hawaiians. Higher pay and financial stability also appear to influence more Native Hawaiians than non-Hawaiians (31 percent and 23 percent). Non-Hawaiians who cite an economic condition in their decision to move are influenced by job opportunities more than Native Hawaiians (95 percent versus 79 percent). In terms of affordable housing and homeownership, Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians

⁵ Land, earth

appear to be equally influenced by these factors in their decision and consideration to leave the islands.

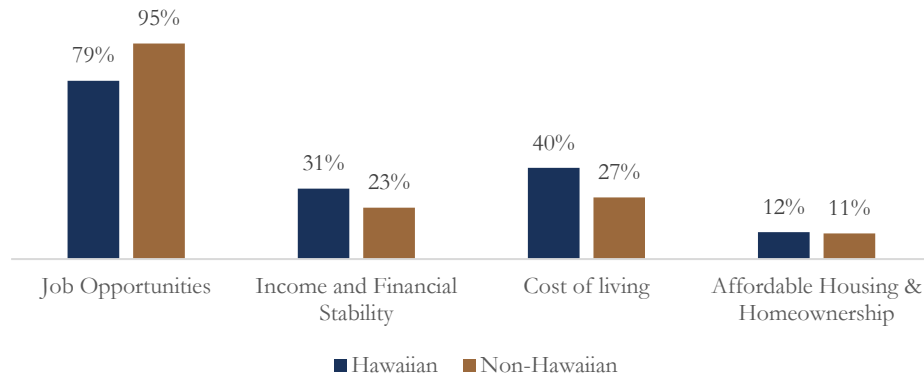


Figure 2. Specific economic factors that contribute to decisions to move, by ethnicity
Note: Percentages reported are among the subset of participants who discussed economics as a factor in their decision of where to live.

In addition to some variations in the percentages of Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians who discuss economic factors, there are also differences in how factors are discussed. For example, in terms of financial hardships and instability, Native Hawaiians speak about utilizing and relying on welfare supports and struggling to live paycheck to paycheck. One Native Hawaiian participant states, “I decided that if I was to live there [in Hawai‘i]... I could make a goal but I wouldn’t have a lot of money to retire on. It was kind of like living paycheck to paycheck, I guess you could say. [By] moving away I knew I would be able to save and enjoy life, instead of having to pinch pennies.” Relying on financial support and struggling from paycheck to paycheck are not discussed as much by non-Native Hawaiian participants.

In the area of higher pay, Native Hawaiians discuss their small paychecks, feelings of being overworked and underpaid, and thinking they would have a better chance of building their finances in places outside of Hawai‘i. Non-Hawaiians spoke of perceived better pay elsewhere or promotions that offer higher pay and better salaries more generally. This suggests that Native Hawaiians may view leaving Hawai‘i as a means of survival for themselves and their families, while for non-Hawaiians, migration may be more linked to financial advancement that is desired but not always necessary.

Covid-19 Implications

The findings shared in this report capture perspectives of study participants prior to the Covid-19 pandemic which altered the lives of Hawai‘i residents and reshaped social and economic conditions. Like other states and countries, Hawai‘i was greatly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The state experienced the highest rate of job loss in the nation, likely due to its strong dependence on the tourism and service industries, which were effectively shut down in an effort to reduce the spread of the virus. This resulted in sky-rocketing unemployment rates, reduced participation in the labor force, and a continued decline in population as individuals and families left the islands for opportunities elsewhere (Bond-Smith & Fuleky, 2022).

Not only has the pandemic affected Hawai‘i’s job market, but also the housing market. Pervasive unemployment at the start of the pandemic resulted in many families missing monthly rent or mortgage payments or not feeling confident in their ability to make

subsequent payments (Fujii-Oride, 2022). During the pandemic, the housing market became extremely competitive due to limited housing availability and low interest rates which increased buyer activity (Hawai'i Public Radio, 2020). The flexibility to work from home and the draw of Hawai'i's climate and environment enticed many from the continent to invest in or rent local homes, driving up prices and making it more difficult for local families to afford a place to live. In the early months of 2022, the state experienced a "pandemic-era property boom," as well as an increase in out-of-state buyers, that led to a rise in the median price of single-family homes (Cox, 2022). Similarly, rental prices also increased over the course of the pandemic by just under 13 percent (Salmons, 2022).

The economic conditions discussed in this report were intensified by the pandemic, increasing the importance and relevancy of continuing to explore and address these factors that contribute to migration decisions. Understanding the influence of economic factors on past migration decisions alongside how these conditions continue to evolve will help to create a better normal for everyone in the state.

Conclusion

Economic opportunities and gains are highly influential factors that individuals and families consider when deciding to leave, stay, or return to the islands. These factors are complex, shifting as the economy evolves. Hawai'i's tough and limited job market, lack of career advancement opportunities, and high cost of living are the primary economic factors that push people out of state. Many do not have an option other than relocating elsewhere in order to survive, with some remaining afar longer than they initially intend or not returning altogether. For other participants, their love for Hawai'i and their families supersede the economic burden endured by living in the islands. These individuals choose to remain in Hawai'i, often sacrificing financial stability and working multiple jobs and long hours.

Participant experiences further highlight the complexities involved in the decision or consideration to leave Hawai'i. The intricacies of the decision to move away are not only grounded in perceived economic gains of the individual, but often situated among educational and social conditions as well. For many participants, education is a path to improve economic standing and the pursuit of economic stability is a means to provide for and support family members.

The state's current economy leaves many families unable to achieve financial security. Hawai'i's economy, characterized by low paying jobs, limited career advancement, and a restrictive housing market set against the backdrop of one of the highest cost of living in the nation, makes living in the islands a persistent struggle for many. These areas need to be re-envisioned in order to support abundant and resilient communities in Hawai'i in which Native Hawaiians, and others, thrive.

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Appendix A: Participant Demographics

| Demographic | Percent of Participants |
|--|-------------------------|
| Migrant Status | |
| Stayers: Adults born in Hawai'i who have not lived outside of Hawai'i as an adult. Adults who lived outside of Hawai'i for less than one year are included in this group. | 26% |
| Movers: Adults born in Hawai'i who moved from Hawai'i as an adult, lived on the continental U.S. for one year or more, and were residing outside of Hawai'i at the time this study was conducted. | 20% |
| Returners: Adults born in Hawai'i who lived outside of Hawai'i for one year or more as an adult and subsequently returned to Hawai'i. | 54% |
| Residence | |
| Honolulu County | 39% |
| Hawai'i County | 19% |
| U.S Continent | 20% |
| Maui County | 14% |
| Kaua'i County | 8% |
| Ethnicity | |
| Native Hawaiian | 67% |
| Non-Hawaiian | 33% |
| Gender | |
| Female | 56% |
| Male | 43% |
| No response | 1% |
| Age | |
| 18 to 34 | 9% |
| 35 to 44 | 15% |
| 45 to 54 | 12% |
| 55 to 59 | 11% |
| 60 to 64 | 11% |
| 65 to 74 | 23% |
| 75+ | 18% |
| No response | 1% |
| Marital Status | |
| Married | 54% |
| Single, Never Married | 20% |
| Widowed | 13% |
| Divorced | 9% |
| Member of an unmarried couple | 2% |
| No response | 1% |
| Separated | 0% |
| Educational Attainment | |
| Less than High School | 2% |
| High School (or equivalent) | 23% |
| Some college or Associate degree | 35% |
| Bachelor's degree | 21% |
| Graduate degree | 18% |
| No response | 1% |