



From Brain Drain to Brain Gain, Oklahoma's population on the rise

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CONTACT: [Sarah Dickson](#)

OKLAHOMA CITY- The Oklahoma City Branch of the Federal Reserve of Kansas City released its latest issue of the quarterly publication the *Oklahoma Economist*, titled "[From Brain Drain to Brain Gain, Oklahoma's population on the rise.](#)"

Following several years of sluggish population growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oklahoma experienced a surge of in-migration from other states in recent years, including in 2023, according to Chad Wilkerson, senior vice president and branch executive at the Oklahoma City Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

"The recent influx of new residents was driven primarily by historic levels of domestic migration from states in the western half of the U.S., as well as a reversal of the "brain drain" that plagued the state for much of the 2010s," he said.

Wilkerson said that while Oklahoma has experienced "brain gain" since the pandemic, it has not yet been enough to make up for previous losses.

"Oklahoma gained about 6,000 college graduates in 2021 and over 4,000 in 2022 but has still cumulatively lost more than 18,000 since 2000," he said. "The state also gained nearly 2,000 college graduates from Texas, during the same timeframe, reversing a longstanding trend of brain drain to the Lone Star State."

The complete issue is available at www.kansascityfed.org/oklahomacity/oklahoma-economist.

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