Maryland's Population Gain Keeps Pace with U.S.
First Post 2010 Census Estimates

Maryland's population grew by just over 54,700 people between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011 according to estimates just released by the U.S. Census Bureau.[1] The Census Bureau's first release of post Census 2010 population estimates showed that Maryland's total gain was ranked 12th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The State's 0.9 percent increase during this time period matched the overall national percentage change and was ranked 22nd.

Maryland's 54,737 total population gain over the 15-month time span can be broken into three basic components of change: births, deaths and net migration. The biggest impact on growth was from births minus deaths, or net natural increase, which accounted for 36,928, or just over two-thirds (67.5%) of the total change. The 17,934 gain attributed to net migration was made up of an estimated 20,928 increase from international migration and a 2,944 net loss from net domestic migration (the movement between Maryland and all other states).

Annual Data Indicates Slow Down in Growth for Maryland

Estimates of the population change and its components are also given by the Census Bureau for the 12-month period between July 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011, making possible comparisons with estimates for previous 12-month periods. **Chart 1** shows the annual population change for Maryland over the last 11 years while **Chart 2** shows the percentage change. For Maryland, the total population gain been July 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011 of 42,608 was below the estimated population changes over the previous two years (an average of 44,294 per year) but was well above the growth in the middle part of the last decade which averaged 30,862 per year over the 2005/2006 thru 2007/2008 period. Growth was greatest for Maryland in the first three years of the last decade with average annual population gains of just over 61,700.

The percentage increase of 0.74 percent in the last year is slightly below the percentage increase in the prior two years (0.75% and 0.80% respectively) but greater than the growth rates in the middle of the last decade, which bottomed out at 0.46 percent in 2006/2007. Growth rates were highest in the first two years of the 2000s at around 1.2 percent per year.

The smaller numeric gain in the most recent year is due chiefly to a lower number of births and smaller gains from international migration. The estimated total number of births in the July 1, 2010 thru July 1, 2011 period of 43,606 is the smallest in the last decade (**Chart 3**), and is one of the consequences of the Great Recession which slowed household formation. And while deaths are also down somewhat (Chart 3) from previous years, the increment to total population from net natural increase (births minus deaths) is also the smallest in the last decade (**Chart 4**). As a point of comparison, the estimated 29,389 increase to Maryland's population from net natural increase in the last year was nearly 4,800 below the peak net natural change of 34,169 in 2007/2008.

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[1] Release date, December 21, 2011

Another factor in the slower population increase for Maryland in the most recent year is the smaller gains to the population from international migration (**Chart 5**). The estimated 16,435 gain in the 2010/2011 period was the second smallest over the last decade and a full 3,000 below what was occurring in the last part of the previous decade. Gains from international migration peaked in 2005/2006 at 23,279, or 6,800 above the estimate for 2010/2011. While there are many factors that affect international migration movements, its ebb and flow does generally correspond with overall economic conditions and the growth of jobs.

While Maryland did experience net domestic out migration of just over 3,100 in 2010/2011, this was well below net outflows in the latter part of the last decade (**Chart 6**). In the past, net domestic migration for Maryland has been heavily influenced by the economic climate in the State versus the rest of the nation. The State would experience net in migration when its job growth was above national averages and flip to net out migration when local job growth would fall below national rates. This is most evident in the first three years of the 2000s when Maryland's economy was stronger than the nation as a whole and as a result experienced net in migration which peaked at 12,900 in 2001/2002. During the mid part of the last decade, however, another important factor was the run up in housing prices which resulted in increased out migration of Maryland residents to neighboring states, particularly Pennsylvania, which had lower housing costs. As a result, net out migration for Maryland peaked in 2006/2007 at 33,191 just when the housing bubble peaked. The collapse of the housing bubble and the fall in housing prices, along with the general effects of the Great Recession on overall mobility, which made it difficult to both buy and sell homes, has led to a steady decline in net domestic out migration for Maryland.

Texas Leads Population Growth, District of Columbia Grows at fastest rate

Texas had the largest population gain in the U.S. over the 15-month period, growing by just over 529,000 or 2.1 percent. Population growth in Texas, aided by strong gains from both international migration (86.437, the second largest in the U.S.) and domestic migration (145,315, the largest in the U.S.) is a function of its strong economy. The Texas economy has been led by its mining sector which has been boosted by high energy prices.

Population gains in California (437,956, or 1.2%) and Florida (256,231, or 1.4%) round out the top three numeric gains. California's gain came despite the loss of 65,700 thru net domestic out migration. In contrast to this loss from domestic migration, California had the nation's largest gain from international migration (164,445). Florida, like Texas had growth from both domestic (118,756) and international (86,437) migration. Florida's gains from domestic migration, while well below peak gains of 265,000 in both 2003/2004 and 2004/2005, are a reversal of what happened toward the end of the last decade when the State experienced net outmigration as a consequence of the housing bubble collapse.

Three states were estimated to have experienced population declines over the April 1, 2000 thru July 1, 2011 period: Maine (-173), Rhode Island (-1,265) and Michigan (-7,448). Both Maine and Rhode Island have been more affected by the slow economic times than most states as evidenced that

both are near the bottom of personal income growth in the U.S. over the last year. Michigan, which has been at or near the bottom of personal income growth over the last 10 years, is beginning to show some rebound as the domestic auto industry becomes more vibrant. Michigan was the only state to experience population loss over the 2000 to 2010 period.

The District of Columbia had the largest percentage increase over the 15-month period, 2.7 percent, with a gain of 16,273. The Census Bureau reports that this was the first time that the District led the nation in population growth since the 1940s. Population growth in the District has been fueled by its strong economy which is being propelled forward by expansion of federal government employment.

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