

Central Jurisdictions Continue to Lead Maryland's Population Growth

The overwhelming majority of Maryland's population growth continues to occur in the four inner suburban jurisdictions of Montgomery, Prince George's, Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties, according to recently released population estimates for July 1, 2013 from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.¹

The latest Census Bureau's population estimates indicate that the effects on overall population mobility from the Great Recession, which lasted from December 2007 to June 2009, and the collapse of the overheated housing market of the mid 2000s, are still being played out in the third year of the current decade. Loss of jobs, followed by a slow recovery, along with a housing market saddled with foreclosures and stricter mortgage loan standards, combined to greatly impact the ability of residents to move to other locations. This reduced mobility had the greatest negative impact on rural/exurban counties in Western Maryland and on the Eastern Shore which in the past grew mostly from the migration of residents from other parts of Maryland. The greatest positive impact was on the inner suburban counties, greatly reducing net out migration from the high levels experienced in the mid-2000s.

Maryland's Population Growth Exceeds U.S

State-level estimates released in December 2013 showed that Maryland's population grew by just under 44,000 people between July 1, 2012 and July 1, 2013, ranked 14th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The State's 0.75 percent increase during this period slightly exceeded the 0.72 percent national change and was ranked 24th. The U.S. Census Bureau uses a cohort component method for population estimates, incorporating births and deaths from administrative records, as well as estimates for net domestic and international migration. (For more information on the state and national estimates, see [Maryland Estimates for 2013](#).)

International Migration and Net Natural Change Fuels Growth in Montgomery and Prince George's

Population growth in Maryland over the July 1, 2012 to July 1, 2013 period was led by Montgomery (12,209) and Prince George's (8,662) counties, the two largest counties in Maryland. (See [Table 1](#).) Growth in these two counties accounted for 47.5 percent of the *net* statewide change and was led by gains from net natural increase (i.e., births minus deaths), as well as international migration. These two counties combined for just over one-half (50.5%) of the statewide gain from net natural increase and well over one-half (57.9%) of the statewide growth from international migration. (See [Table 2](#) and [Table 3A](#).) Montgomery and Prince George's counties were also number one and two, respectively, in gains from international migration throughout the 2000s.

Despite overall population gains, both Montgomery (-4,040) and Prince George's (-3,290) experienced net domestic out migration over the last year. Montgomery's most recent net domestic out migration is substantially more than the 2,842 net loss in the previous year, while Prince George's

¹ Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, release date March 27, 2014

net domestic out migration is substantially less (-5,058 in 2011/2012). However, for both jurisdictions, recent outflows are far below what they were during the middle of the 2000s when the housing market was booming. For instance, during the four year period from 2004 thru 2007 Montgomery averaged annual net domestic out migration totals of 11,700 while Prince George's County's annual average was 11,900. (See [Table 3B](#)). Most of this net loss was to outer suburban jurisdictions in Maryland.

Rounding out the top five numeric population increases in Maryland over the most recent 12-month period are Anne Arundel (5,568), Baltimore (5,333) and Howard (5,224) counties. Besides gains from net natural increase, growth from domestic migration was key for Howard (at 1,674 the largest in the State), and Anne Arundel (1,653, the second largest in the State). For Baltimore County, international migration (3,232, third behind Montgomery and Prince George's) was a key component of its population increase.

Southern Maryland Region No Longer Fastest Growing

For most of the 2000s, the Southern Maryland Region led the State in the rate of population growth, but in the last year (and since April 1, 2010) this Region has fallen just below the Washington Suburban Region. (See [Table 4](#).) In the last year, the three counties of the Southern Maryland Region grew by 1.0 percent, just below the 1.1 percentage gain of the three counties of the Suburban Washington Region.²

Charles County had the both the largest numeric (2,154) and percentage (1.4%) increase in the Southern Maryland Region in 2013.³ Calvert County grew by just under 800 people (0.9%) in the 2012 to 2013 period, its largest increase since the boom times of the mid-2000s. During the 1990s and early 2000s Calvert County typically led the State in percentage increases with annual gains often exceeding 3.0 percent. (See [Tables 5A](#), [5B](#) and [5C](#) for annual population estimates, change and percent change from July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2013).

While Charles and Calvert counties showed larger population gains compared to recent years, St. Mary's increase of 640 (0.6%) in 2012/2013 was the smallest since before 2000. The primary reason for this significantly smaller gain was the loss of just over 300 persons through net domestic out migration. This was the first net out flow from St. Mary's since before 2000. As recently as 2010/2011, St. Mary's had a net gain of just under 1,000 people from net in migration.

Baltimore City Loses Population, but Revisions Show Stronger Gains in Prior Years

Baltimore City's estimated population loss of 313 (-0.1%) from July 1, 2012 to July 1, 2013 was a marked turnaround from the 1,430 (0.2%) gain in the prior year, which was one of the few years in which the Census Bureau's estimates program did not show a population loss. However, one positive note from the Census Bureau's latest population release were the revisions to prior year's estimates.

² Over the April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013 period, the Southern Maryland's percentage gain of 3.7 percent was just below the 3.8 percent increase for the Washington Suburban Region. (See [Table 4](#).)

³ Charles County's numeric gain in 2012/2013 was the sixth largest in the State, while its percentage increase was the second largest in the State.

For instance, the gain in 2011/2012 was originally reported as 1,126, some 300 less than the latest estimate for that year, and the total gain over the April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012 period was revised upward to just over 1,300 from the originally reported 381. Most of the increase in the revised population estimates comes from larger gains to net natural change (births minus deaths) than what was originally reported.

The City's population loss during the 2012/2013 period was due to continued net domestic out migration. In the latest year, the City experienced a net loss of just under 4,100 persons due to domestic out migration. While this outflow was substantially greater than the 2,920 net out migration in 2011/2012, that loss was the lowest since before 2000. Despite the increased out migration in 2012/2013, however, this latest outflow was well below losses which routinely occurred in the 2000s. At its height, net domestic out migration losses from the City averaged 10,900 per year between 2001 and 2004, or more than twice the outflow in the latest year. Where the City did gain in population over the last year was through international migration (1,844, the fourth largest in the State), and through net natural change (2,309, also the fourth largest in the State).

It should be pointed out that despite the overall population loss in 2012/2013; the City is still showing an increase of just under 1,000 persons (989, or 0.2%) from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013.

Four Counties with Population Losses

In addition to Baltimore City, there were four, mostly rural, counties, which also experienced population declines between July 1, 2012 and July 1, 2013. The losses in these four counties totaled a combined drop of 650 in population. This is an improvement over 2011/2012 when there were seven counties with population declines combining for a population drop of just under 1,700. By far the largest population decline in 2012/2013 was in Allegany County (-348, or -0.5%). This most recent loss, however, was less than in 2011/2012 (-626) and in 2010/2011 (-490), also the largest in the state during those two years. What drives the population declines in Allegany is both net natural *decrease* (i.e. deaths exceeding births) as well as net domestic out migration. Allegany County has averaged just over 200 in net natural decreases in each of the last three years, the largest in the State. Net natural decrease has been typically the case for the County over the last decade or so because of the older age structure of the County's population. Allegany's net domestic out migration over the last year (-120) is somewhat of an improvement over two prior years when the average net outflow was around 350.⁴

The three other counties with population losses were on the Eastern Shore: Kent (-168, or -0.8%), Queen Anne's (-25, or -0.1%) and Talbot (-109, or -0.3%). Domestic out migration was a component of these losses in Kent and Queen Anne's counties, while net natural decrease was a factor in Kent and Talbot counties. Kent's net domestic out migration in 2012/2013 (-117) was nearly identical

⁴ Allegany County typically experiences population losses through net domestic out migration, although in five out of the last 13 years, Allegany County had net gains from domestic migration. (See [Table 3B](#).) However, since the Census Bureau incorporates net changes in group quarters population into the net domestic migration estimates, and since Allegany County has a large (and growing) group quarters population (from federal and state prison facilities as well as a university), it is more than likely that these net gains from migration were the result of increased group quarters populations rather than from the movement of household population into the county.

to the prior year's loss (-115), but these were the only two years since 2000 where the County experienced net domestic out migration. While Talbot did not experience net domestic out migration in 2012/2013, its small inflow (12) in the most recent year was the smallest gain since 2000.

Western Maryland and Eastern Shore Share of Statewide Growth Still at Low Levels

While all four out of the five jurisdictions with population losses in 2012/2013 were in Western Maryland or on the Eastern Shore, the slowdown in growth in these two regions started with the collapse of the overheated housing market and the Great Recession. **Chart 1** illustrates the share of total statewide population growth attributed to these two regions in addition to two other groupings: 1) Baltimore City and the four inner suburban counties and 2) the outer suburban counties. The largest share of statewide growth for Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore occurred in 2006 and 2007 when the combined share was nearly 30 percent, up from under 10 percent in the beginning of that decade. By 2011/2012 the combined population change for these counties was actually a net loss, while the 2012/2013 share of statewide growth was just under 2.0 percent.⁵

There were several jurisdictions in these two regions which followed this rapid expansion and contraction scenario over the course of the last 13 years. For instance, Washington County, which was the major source of population growth in the Western Maryland Region over the last 13 years, averaged an annual gain of 2,000 per year from 2002 to 2006 at its peak, but has averaged only 615 per year over the last three years. In the Upper Eastern Shore Region, Cecil County also experienced a 2,000 annual average population gain from 2002 to 2006, but increased at an average of just 251 per year over the last three years.

Inner Suburban Share Increases Substantially

Inner and outer suburban counties also had expanding and contracting shares of statewide growth over the course of the last 13 years. The largest share for the outer suburban counties⁶ also occurred in the mid-2000s, peaking in 2006 at 45 percent of net statewide growth, and fell to less than one-half that share (21.2%) by 2009 before averaging around 28 percent in each of the last four years. The four inner suburban counties⁷ (paired with Baltimore City), started out at the beginning of the last decade at over one-half (54.0%) of statewide population growth before declining to around 28 percent in 2006 and 2007 when the housing bubble was peaking. Since that time, the share of these five jurisdictions of statewide population gains has risen quite dramatically and averaged nearly 72.0 percent over the last two years.

⁵ Overall, there are a total of five counties located either in Western Maryland or on the Eastern Shore which experienced population declines over the April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013 period: Allegany (-1,566), Garrett (-208), Caroline (-377), Kent (-253) and Somerset (-197).

⁶ Carroll, Harford Howard in the Baltimore Region, Frederick in the Washington Suburban Region, and Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's in the Southern Maryland Region

⁷ Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties in the Baltimore Region and Montgomery and Prince George's counties in the Washington Suburban Region

These increasing and decreasing shares, along with rising and falling numeric gains, were for the most part a function of what was happening with net domestic migration. By and large, periods of rising shares corresponded with either increasing gains through domestic migration (for the outer suburban and Western Maryland and Eastern Shore regions) or smaller net out migration losses for the four inner suburban jurisdictions. (See [Chart 2](#).) One of the main drivers for these net domestic migration patterns was what was happening with the job and housing markets. Rising home prices in the middle of the last decade led people to migrate out of the four inner suburban jurisdictions to outer or exurban jurisdictions (and even from outer counties to exurban counties) to find less expensive housing. When housing prices collapsed and mortgage loans became more difficult to obtain, along with job losses and high unemployment, overall household mobility was greatly reduced, leading to less out migration from the four inner suburban jurisdictions and less in-migration to outer suburban and exurban areas.

While domestic migration has had different impacts on inner and outer suburban counties as well as exurban counties over the course of the last 13 years, international migration has been a significant population growth factor mostly for the inner suburban counties. (See [Chart 3](#).) During the 2012/2013 period, the four inner suburban counties and Baltimore City captured 83.1 percent of the total statewide gain.

For more information, contact Mark Goldstein at mark.goldstein@maryland.gov