

Maryland's Population Growth Continues to Slow in 2015

Maryland's population gains continued to slow in 2015 for the fifth year in a row as the state experienced larger net domestic outmigration and smaller gains from net natural increase (births minus deaths) that were not fully compensated by increase gains from international migration, according to the latest release of population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.¹ However, despite the recent slowdown, Maryland has grown at a faster rate than the U.S. since the beginning of the decade.

The following are **overall highlights for the states** of the recently released annual population estimates.

- Maryland grew by 31,055 people (0.52%) between July 1, 2014 and July 1, 2015. Both the numeric change and the percentage increase were the smallest for the state since 2006/2007. (See [Chart 1](#) and [Chart 2](#).)
- Maryland's numeric gain in the most recent year was the 14th largest among the 50 states and the District of Columbia and its percentage increase was ranked 26th. Both rankings are the lowest for the state this decade. Maryland's total population of 6,006,401 is ranked 19th in the U.S., a ranking that has not changed in decades. (See [Table 1A](#), [Table 1B](#) and [Table 1C](#).)
- Since 2010, Maryland has grown by just over 232,600 people, or 4.0%. Its numeric gain over the last five plus years was the ninth largest in the U.S. and its percentage gain was ranked 22nd (and was just under the overall U.S. increase of 4.1%).
- Since April 1, 2010 Maryland has grown faster than all Northeastern States except for Delaware (and the District of Columbia) and all Midwestern states except for the Dakotas. (See [Map 1](#).)
- Nationally, the boom in oil shale extraction via the horizontal hydraulic fracturing process (or "fracking") continued to drive economic and population growth in North Dakota, which once again had the highest percentage increase in 2015 (2.28%). Since 2010, North Dakota has expanded by 12.54 percent, also tops in the U.S.
- Colorado (1.89%), the District of Columbia (1.88%), Nevada (1.85%) and Florida (1.84%), round out the top five fastest growth rates over the most recent year. Of these four, Nevada has had the most significant change in its growth path in recent years. Prior to the Great Recession of 2007-2009, Nevada had one of the fastest rates of population growth in the U.S., but became one of the hardest hit states when the housing bubble collapsed. This decade, the state has gone from experiencing net domestic outmigration in 2010 and 2011, to increasing gains from net domestic in migration over the last four years.
- Texas (490,036), Florida (365,703), California (371,107), Georgia (117,728) and Washington (107,185) and had the five largest numeric gains in 2015. Prior to 2015, Florida had the third largest numeric gains over the 2010 to 2014 period, and had surpassed New York by 2014 in total population giving it the third largest population in the U.S. (after California and Texas).

¹ Release date, December 22, 2015

The following are highlights of the components of population change for Maryland

International migration is the largest contributor to population growth in Maryland. Gains from international migration in the July 1, 2014 to July 1, 2015 period of 31,330 exceed the total net population change of 31,055. The net international migration gain in the last year was slightly above the previous year (31,027) and is the highest this decade and well above annual gains in the 2000 to 2010 period.² (See [Chart 3](#).) Since 2010, Maryland has had a total net gain of just over 148,500 persons from international migration, ranked tenth highest in the U.S. and these gains have made up 63.8% of the state's total population increase.

States with larger net international migration gains than Maryland since 2010 were California, New York, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Virginia, Illinois and Pennsylvania. (See [Table 2](#) and [Table 3](#) and [Map 2](#).) The top five states accounted for over one-half (52.7%) of the nation's total gain from international migration, while the top 10 states, accounted for over two-thirds (68.9%) of the U.S. total.

Maryland's net international migration *rate* of 4.8 per 1,000 persons ranked seventh highest among all the states over the April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015 period. States with higher net international migration rates than Maryland since 2010 include Hawaii, the District of Columbia, New York, Florida, New Jersey and Massachusetts. (See [Map 3](#).)

Gains to the population from net natural increase (births minus deaths) are decreasing in Maryland.

Over the last year, Maryland had just over 24,850 more births than deaths, about 350 below last year's net natural increase and the smallest gain since at least 2000. (See [Chart 4](#).) Net natural change peaked in the 2006/2007 period at just over 34,200 and has been declining fairly steadily since then. Most of the drop in net natural increase is due to fewer births but there also has been an uptick in the number of deaths, particularly in the last few years. Births peaked at 78,569 in 2006/2007, about 5,800 more than the most recent year, while the 2015 deaths (47,898) were about 3,500 more than in 2006/2007, and the highest number over the last 15 years. (See [Chart 5](#).) The total number of births since the peak has been greatly affected by the Great Recession and its aftermath which negatively impacted family formation. It is only in the last year has the number of births (72,754) been greater than in the previous year (72,322).

Domestic out migration for Maryland is the largest in eight years. Maryland experienced net domestic out migration of 24,738 persons in 2014/2015, the fourth consecutive net outflow, and by far the largest since 2006/2007, just before the Great Recession began to impact overall migration flows. (See [Chart 6](#).) Since April 1, 2010, Maryland has had a net loss of just over 56,054 residents through net domestic out migration, ranked 31st among the states (where "1" is the state with the highest number of net in migrants and 51 the highest number of net out migrants). (See [Table 4](#) and [Table 5](#).) Maryland is in line with most Northeast and Midwest states which also experienced net out migration. Maryland's net domestic out migration rate of -1.8 per 1,000 population since 2010 is ranked 37th.

² The higher values post 2010 could be partly a function of a change in methodology by the U.S. Census Bureau. Also, it should be noted, the movement of U.S. military and other federal employees from overseas assignments are also reflected in the international migration estimates.

In all, 23 states (including the District of Columbia) had gains through domestic migration from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, and 29 had losses. (See [Map 4](#).) The largest absolute gains were fairly concentrated with six states - Texas, Florida, Colorado, North Carolina, Arizona and South Carolina accounting for three-quarters (75.2%) of net gains to all states. (Texas and Florida alone accounted for 50.1% of all the net gains to states).

For those states which experienced net out migration since April 1, 2010, the largest losses were in New York, Illinois, New Jersey, California, Michigan and Ohio, with the top three accounting for just under one half (48.7%) of all the net losses for states.

North Dakota, which has one of the strongest economies in the nation due to its booming oil and natural gas mining sector, had by far the highest net domestic in migration rate Since April 1, 2010, (14.1 per 1,000 population). The District of Columbia had the second highest in migration rate (7.7), followed by Colorado (7.0), South Carolina (6.4) and Florida (6.3). (See [Map 5](#).)

States with the highest net domestic out migration rates since April 1, 2010 were New York (-6.4), Illinois (-6.3,) Alaska (-5.9) and New Jersey (-5.8).

As the nation's economy has gradually improved since the beginning of the decade, the general trend has been for increased mobility among the resident population of states. For instance, in the 2010/2011 period just over 386,000 residents moved to another state. By 2013/2014 this flow to and from states reached nearly 603,000 and in 2014/2015 was over 750,000. (See [Table 5](#).) The Great Recession, which included the housing price bubble collapse and high unemployment in almost every state, had severely impacted the ability of people to move from state to state.

For more information contact: mark.goldstein@maryland.gov