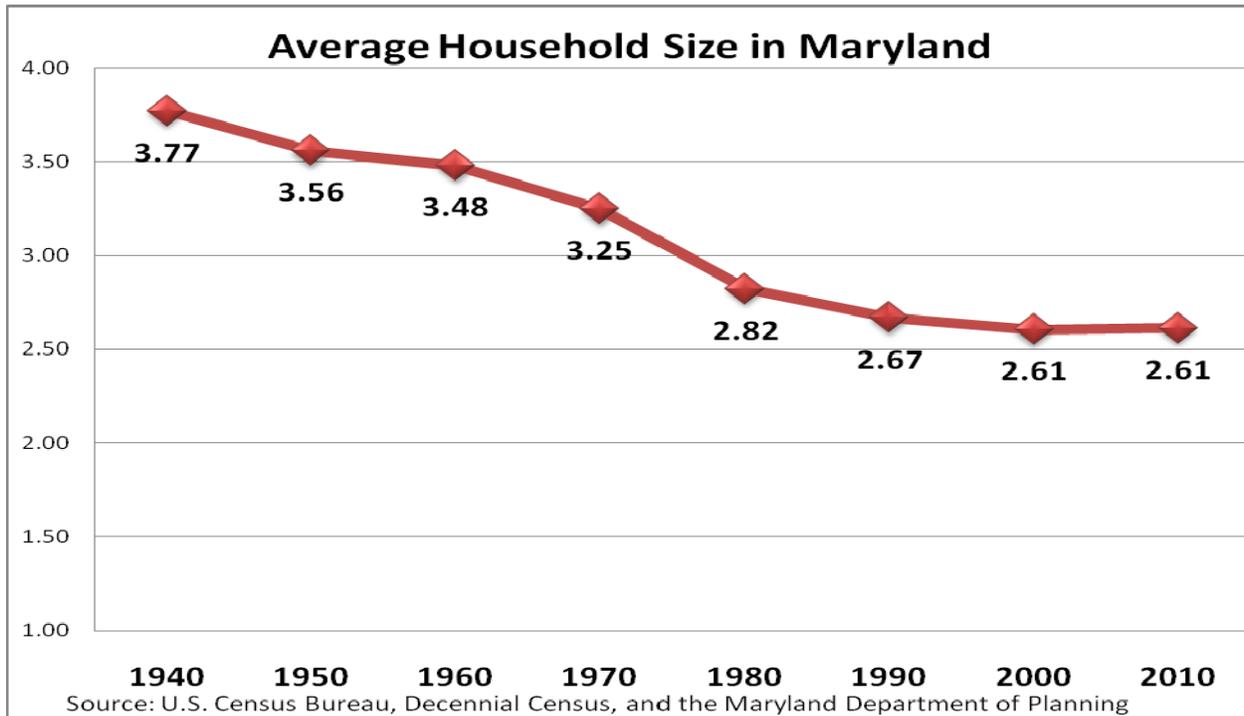


Average Household Size Stabilizes in Maryland

The average household size remained virtually the same in Maryland between 2000 and 2010, according to calculations from the Maryland Department of Planning, ending a downward trend from at least 1940.¹ And for eight jurisdictions, there was even an increase in the average household size due in part to growth of the foreign born and population gains from strong domestic migration.

The average household size in Maryland in 2010 was 2.61 virtually the same as in 2000.² In 1940 the average household size in the State was at 3.77 and fell steadily over the decades until 2000, with larger declines in the earlier decades.³



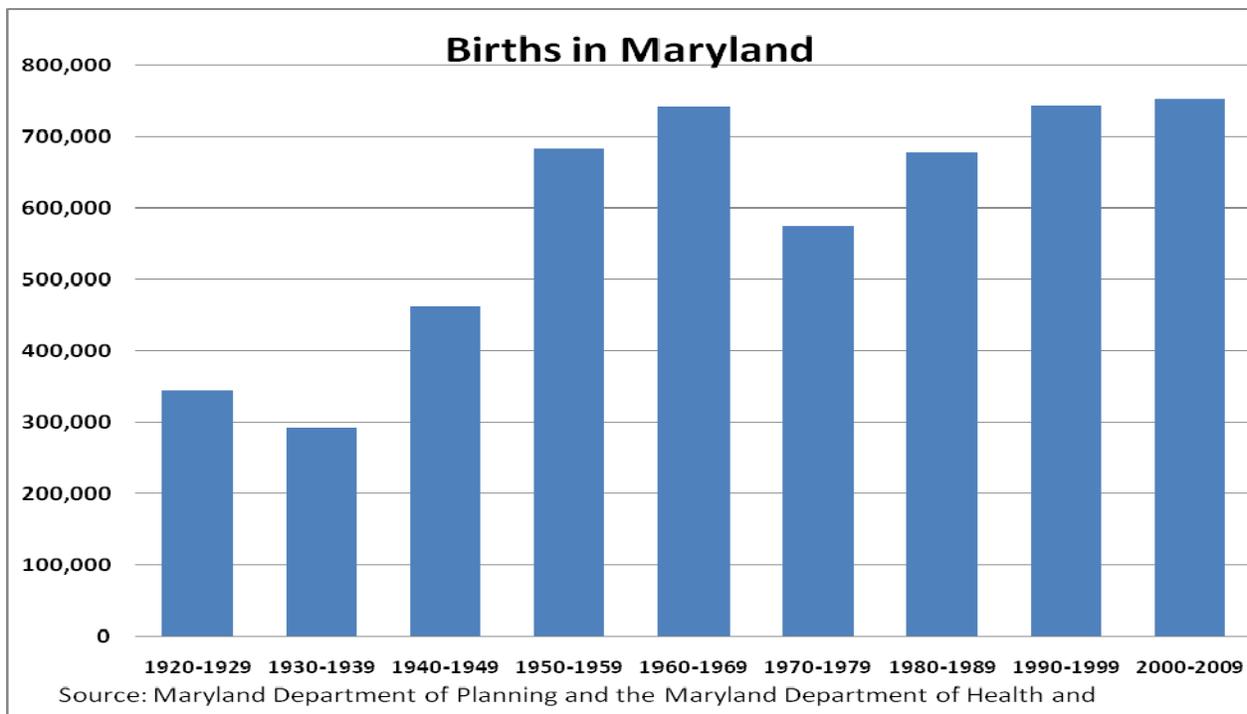
¹ Although average household size has not yet been reported from the 2010 Census data, recently released data on group quarters population (Census 2010 Advanced Group Quarters Summary File released April 20, 2011) allows for the calculation of household population by subtracting group quarters population from the total population. Dividing the household population by the number of occupied housing units (previously released along with the total population data with the PL94-171 Redistricting data in February, 2011) yields the average household size.

² When rounded to two decimal points, both the 2000 and 2010 average household size is calculated at 2.61. Unrounded, the 2010 average household size of 2.613 is actually slightly larger than the 2.606 of 2000.

³ Although there is not a consistent set of household/household size data prior to 1940, there is evidence that average household size was also decreasing prior to 1940. For example, the “population per private-dwelling family,” which is very close to the household concept, was reported to be 5.20 in 1900 and 4.58 in 1930 in Maryland. See 1930 Census of Population for Maryland, Table 17, Page, 584.

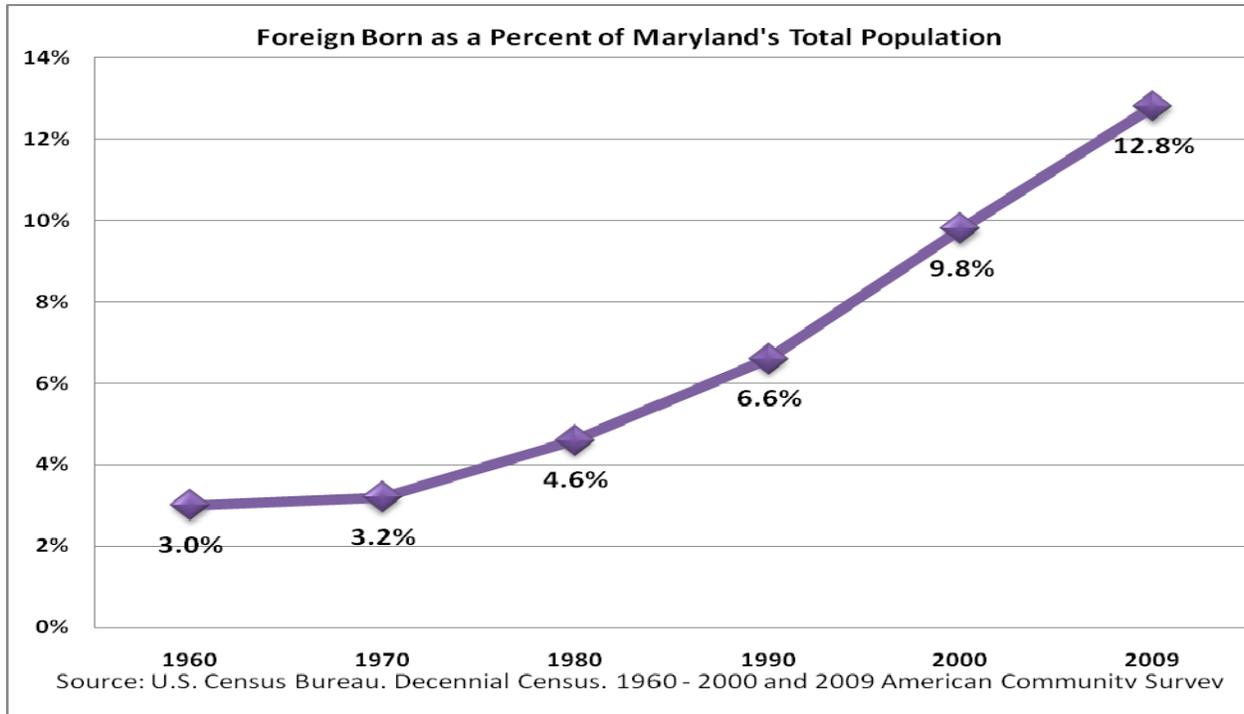
There are a number of factors which can explain the drop in average household size since 1940 as well as its stabilization over the last 10 years. Some of the reasons behind falling household size from 1940 to 2000 include the drop in multi-generational family households - primarily the result of more adults ages 65 and over being able to live on their own due to better health and economic circumstances; and, a decline in the percent of the population made up of foreign immigrants.⁴ The average household size in Maryland even continued to shrink during the record number of births in the baby boom period from 1946 thru 1964. But the change in the number of births did have an impact as the largest decline in the average household size occurred between 1970 and 1980, a time of falling numbers of births (the baby bust generation) and before there was a significant increase in the foreign born population.

A pick up in births (the baby-boom echo) beginning in the 1980s as well as an increase in the number of foreign born were factors in the slower decline in average household size in the 1980s and 1990s. Unique to the 2000-2010 decade was the Great Recession of December 2007 thru June 2009, with its devastating impacts on the job and housing markets that led many to “double up” or in the case of young, working-age adults to move back home, thereby causing larger household sizes than would have been the case in more prosperous times.



⁴ See: [The Return of the Multi-Generational Family Household from the Pew Research Center](#)

The growth of the foreign born population began to accelerate after 1980 (from 4.6% of the population) and has continued to grow through the 2000 to 2010 decade, reaching 12.8 percent of the total population by 2009.



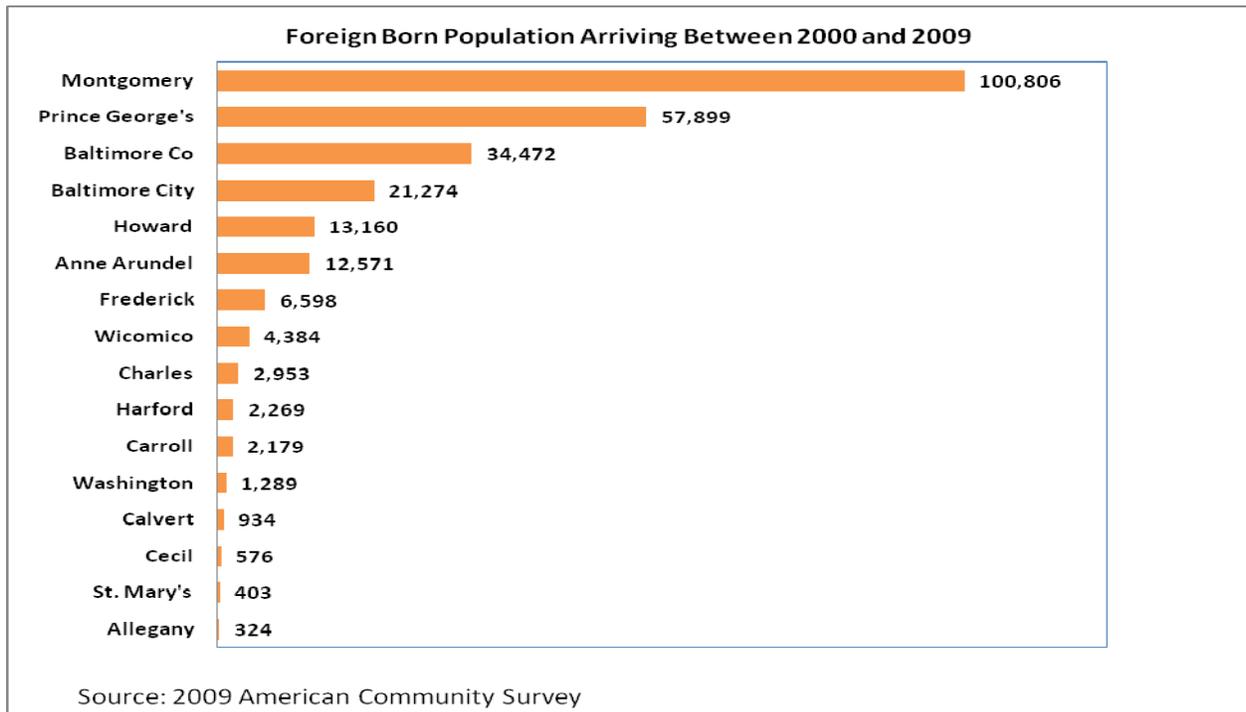
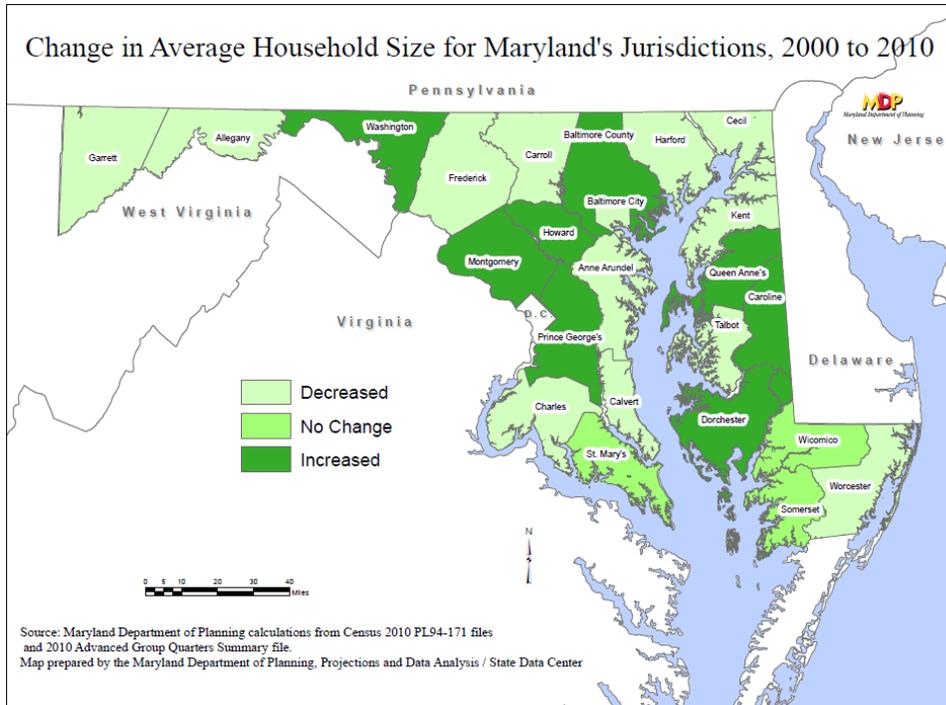
Some Jurisdictions Show Household Size Gain

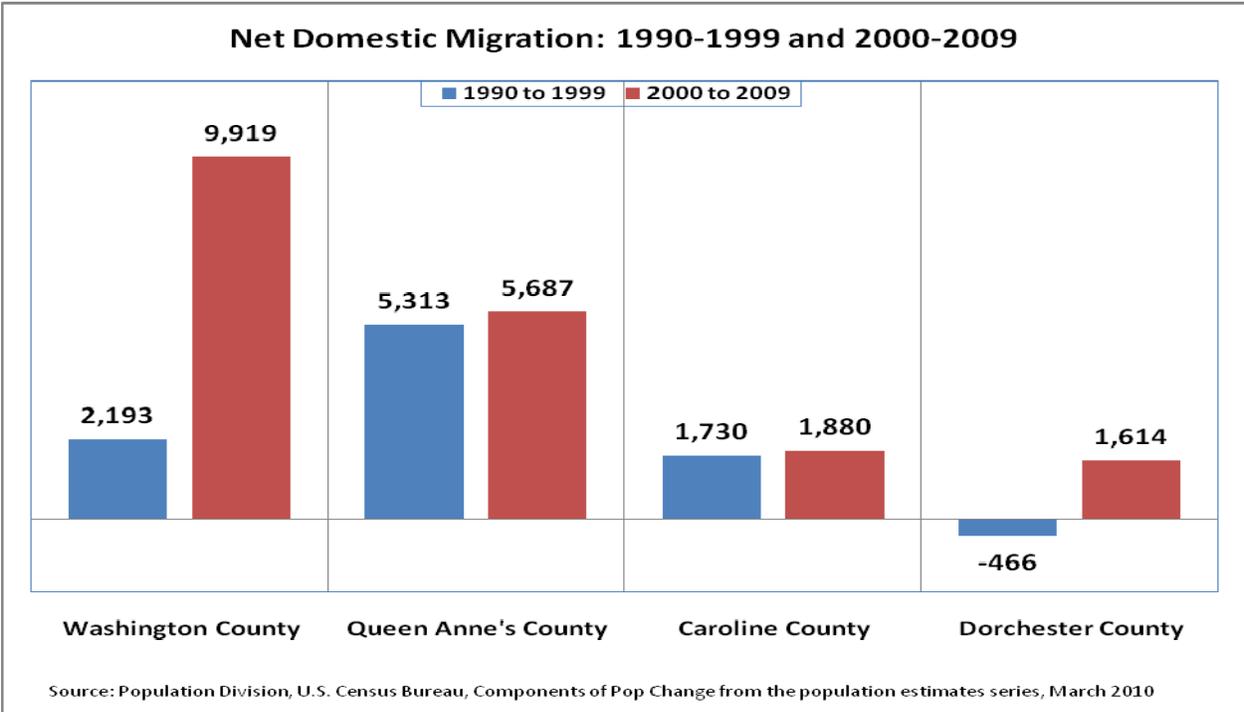
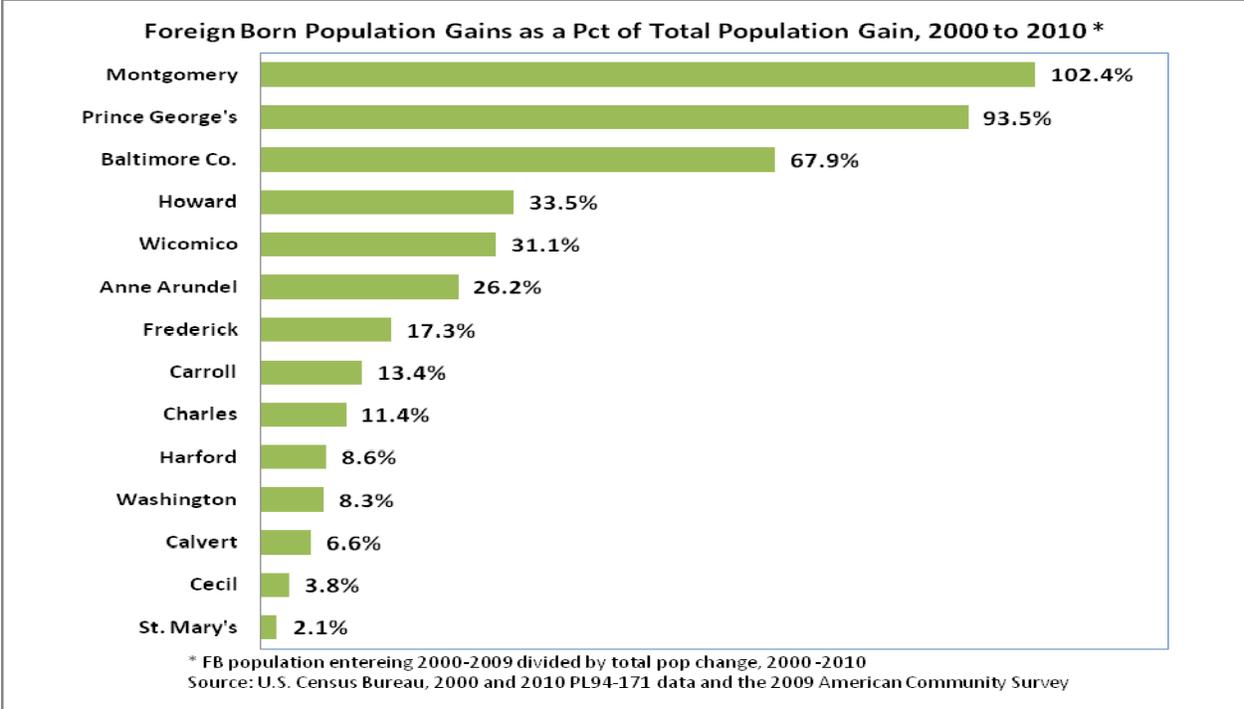
Although there was virtually no change statewide in the average household size between 2000 and 2010, among Maryland's 24 jurisdictions eight showed increases in their average household size, three were virtually the same, and 13 experienced declines. Among those jurisdictions which bucked the decades old trend of declining household size and experienced increases between 2000 and 2010 were Montgomery, Prince George's, Baltimore and Howard counties located in central Maryland. These counties were four of the top five recipients of foreign born population in Maryland during the 2000 to 2009 period. Moreover, the increase in the foreign born population as a share of total population gain in these jurisdictions was the highest in the State during the last decade.⁵

The four remaining counties which had increasing average household sizes between 2000 and 2010 – Washington County in Western Maryland and Caroline, Queen Anne's and Dorchester counties on the Eastern Shore - can all be characterized as experiencing more rapid growth in the last decade compared to the 1990s. Much of this increased growth was due to greater gains from domestic migration. For the most part, the source of these larger population gains from migration during the 2000 to 2010 period

⁵ Foreign born gains actually exceeded the total population increase for Montgomery County due to the County experiencing net domestic outmigration during the 2000 to 2010 period.

was families moving “further out” from Maryland jurisdictions with more expensive housing, as the housing bubble was inflating in the mid part of the decade, to these four jurisdictions which had relatively lower housing costs.





For [file Household Size](#) for jurisdiction household size changes, 1970 to 2010.

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