

Jurisdiction Highlights of 2010 General Demographic Characteristics for Maryland

The latest Census 2010 demographic profile released on May 26, 2011, reveals a Maryland which diverse and aging. Below are some highlights of this data at the jurisdiction level.

Median Age

There is nearly a 14-year difference between the oldest and youngest jurisdictions in Maryland, a greater gap than the 10-year difference that existed in 2000. Nine jurisdictions have a median age over 40 years, up from just four in 2000. (See [Chart 1](#) and [Map 1](#).)

The top four, and five out of the top six jurisdictions in Maryland with the oldest median ages are on the Eastern Shore, including Worcester (48.1), Talbot (47.4), Kent (45.6), Dorchester (43.3) and Queen Anne's (42.6). Other jurisdictions with a median age over 40 include the rural Western Maryland jurisdictions of Garrett (42.7) and Allegany (40.9), as well as the outer suburban counties of Carroll (41.1) and Calvert (40.1).

All but one of the jurisdictions with a median age over 40 also had increases in their median ages which exceeded the statewide average of 2.0 years over the 2000 to 2010 period. Increases were largest for Worcester (5.1 years), Garrett (4.4 years) and Kent (4.3 years). (See [Chart 2](#) and [Map2](#).) Larger increases than statewide averages can be the result of aging in place of existing households as well as in-migration of older households and loss of younger populations. In-migration and aging in place are both key components to the rising median ages on the Eastern Shore, while aging in place and out migration of younger population is more a factor in the Western Maryland counties of Allegany and Garrett.

Baltimore City (34.4) and Prince George's County (34.9) had the lowest median ages in Maryland in 2010. Both jurisdictions are majority-minority, with minority populations – which tend to have a younger age profile than non-Hispanic whites - comprising 85.1 percent in Prince George's (highest in the State) and 72.0 percent in Baltimore City. In addition, each jurisdiction had significant gains from foreign immigration relative to their overall population change.

Baltimore City actually had a drop in its median age since 2000 (-0.6 years), while the Prince George's gain (1.6 years) was below statewide averages. The decline in the Baltimore City median was due in part to the growth in the 20 to 34 year old population – the largest of any 15-year cohort in the City over the 2000 to 2010 period.

Population Ages 65 and Over

The share of a jurisdiction's population ages 65 and over varies from more than one out of five to less than one out of ten. (See [Chart 3](#) and [Map 3](#).) Corresponding to their relatively high median ages, Talbot (23.7%) and Worcester (23.2%) counties have the highest share of population ages 65 and over. As mentioned above, this concentration is due mainly to aging in

place and in migration of retirees as well as little population gain from net natural increase (births minus deaths).

The five jurisdictions with elderly population shares of around 10 percent - less than one-half the share of the Eastern Shore counties - all experienced strong overall population growth during the 2000 to 2010 period that was characterized by substantial gains from domestic migration and/or foreign immigration. Elderly shares were smallest in Prince George's (9.4%), Charles (9.5%), Howard (10.1%) and St. Mary's (10.3%) counties.

Households by Type

Much has been made over the last several decades of the decline of the nuclear family, consisting of two parents and one or more children. Indeed, the nuclear family as a share of all households in Maryland dropped from 47.5 percent in 1970 to 20.4 percent in 2010. Among Maryland's jurisdictions, the share of two-parent households with own children as a percent of all households varies from 29.3 percent in Howard County to 8.4 percent in Baltimore City.¹ (See [Chart 4](#) and [Map 4](#).) For the most part, those jurisdictions with the highest shares besides Howard; Calvert (27.5%), Carroll (27.3%), and Frederick (26.8%), are the traditional places of choice for families to locate. Besides Baltimore City, the jurisdictions with the lowest share of two-parent families with children: Somerset (12.4%), Dorchester (13.4%), Worcester (13.5%), Kent (13.7%) and Allegany (14.7%), tend to be more rural and slow growing with older populations and little migration (or mostly elderly migration in the case of Worcester).

Along with the decline in two-parent households with own children has come a rise in single-parent households with children. In 2010, single-parent families with own children in Maryland comprised 32.5 percent of all family households with children under 18, up from 30.3 percent in 2000 and 12.8 percent in 1970. Single-parent families with children range from a high of 62.5 percent in Baltimore City to a low of 19.7 percent in Carroll County. (See [Chart 5](#) and [Map 5](#).) Baltimore's single parent share is over 17 percentage points higher than the next highest share in Dorchester County (45.3%). Other counties with over 40 percent single parent with children family share include Somerset (45.2%), Prince George's (41.9%) and Wicomico (40.2%) counties. It is interesting to note that the jurisdiction with the lowest share of single-parent families in 2010 – Carroll at 19.7 percent – was higher than the overall statewide rate in 1970 of 12.8 percent.

Average Household Size

Average household size varied from 2.90 in Calvert County to 2.26 in Worcester County. (See [Chart 6](#).) Typically, average household sizes are smaller in more rural jurisdictions with older

¹ "Own children" are biological children, including step children, as well as adopted children of the householder. Own children are a subset of "related children" which would also include other related children, such as grandchildren.

populations, and this is true for Maryland with Kent (2.30), Talbot (2.33), Somerset (2.37) Dorchester (2.38) and Allegany (2.39) having the smallest household sizes in Maryland after Worcester.

While overall average household size in Maryland stabilized between 2000 and 2010 – bucking the long-term trend of declining size, there were several jurisdictions which showed actual increases. Among those jurisdictions which experienced increases between 2000 and 2010 were Montgomery, Prince George’s, Baltimore and Howard counties. (See [Map 6](#).) These counties were four of the top five recipients of foreign born population in Maryland during the 2000 to 2009 period. (See [Average Household Size Stabilizes in Maryland](#) for more information.)

Vacant Units

Housing vacancy is a function of the strength of the local economy as well as the dynamics of the local housing market in addition to whether an area is a major recreational destination. The highest vacancy rates in Maryland in 2010 were recorded for Worcester County (21.0%) even after subtracting units classified as for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.” (See [Chart 7](#) and [Map 7](#).) Even so, a majority of the vacant houses in Worcester County are probably tied to part-time homeowners.

Baltimore City had the second highest vacancy rate (15.5%), representing just over 45,700 units (when seasonal housing is subtracted), by far the largest number of vacant units in the State and an increase from its 41,000 vacant units in 2000. In fact, when seasonal units are discounted, the City’s vacant units comprise 27.4 percent of all vacant units in the State. This share is actually below the 2000 share of 32.6 percent, even with an increase in vacant units in the City, as the overall housing market in Maryland in 2010 was still being affected by the housing bust earlier in the decade.

Jurisdictions with the lowest vacancy rates in 2010 include Howard (3.8%), Carroll (3.9%) and Montgomery (4.4%) counties. These counties generally have stronger housing markets featuring high housing demand, and in the case of Montgomery and Howard counties, relatively expensive housing.

Homeownership Rates

There is a greater than 36-percentage point difference in homeownership rates among Maryland’s jurisdictions. (See [Chart 8](#) and [Map 8](#).) Homeownership rates are highest among outer suburban jurisdictions that are the recipients of migrating families. Calvert (83.8%), Queen Anne’s (82.9%) and Carroll (82.0%) counties all have homeownership rates exceeding 80 percent.

Just under one-half (47.7%) of Baltimore City households are homeowners. This low percentage, which is well below the statewide average of 67.5 percent, is a function of both lower incomes in the City, the high percentage of non-family households and the availability of a large number of rental units.