

2011 Florida Population Growth Is Third Largest in United States ... But Still Not Close to Pre-Recession Levels¹

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Introduction

The US Census Bureau released new population growth estimates for all states in December 2011. These growth estimates measure the change in population between July 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011 and should not be confused with the 2010 population estimates for the decennial census taken on April 1, 2010. The new population estimates reveal that Florida's population growth is increasing at a more rapid pace again, although not back to the levels of annual growth from the 1990s through the mid-2000s. Overall, from July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2011 Florida's population increased by almost 219,000 people, which was the third largest increase in all US states. On a percentage basis, Florida's population growth was the eighth largest (1.2%).

US Population Growth

The US Census Bureau estimated that between July 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011, the US population increased by 2.26 million people (**Table 1**). The fastest growing region was the South, which accounted for about 52 percent of the country's total growth. The slowest growing region of the country was the Northeast, with a total population growth of just over 155,000 people. Rhode Island and Michigan were the only two states with population declines during this period.

Florida's Population Growth

Florida's total population growth of 219,000 during 2010–2011 ranked third behind Texas (421,215, 1st) and California (353,714, 2nd) in the United States. Florida remains the fourth largest state in the country. The data also reveal that if Florida maintains this growth rate and if New York maintains its current growth rate, Florida will surpass New York as the third most populated state in the country sometime in the 2013–2014 timeframe. The top ten states in total population growth are presented in **Table 2**.

On a percentage basis, Florida's population growth rate of 1.2 percent ranked as the eighth fastest in the country. The fastest growth rate was in Washington, D.C. at 2.2 percent, followed by Texas at 1.7 percent and Utah at 1.5 percent. The top ten states in percentage population growth are presented in **Table 3**.

Implications for Florida

The increase in Florida's population growth between 2010 and 2011 is most likely related to continued improvements in the national and state economies, allowing people to relocate who may have been place-bound because it was difficult to sell their homes. However, the increase in population still remains around 60 percent of the typical level prior to 2006. Also, based on census data, the growth

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from 2010 to 2011 is smaller than the growth experienced from 2009 to 2010 in the state. That most likely is indicative of the fragile nature of the national and state economic recovery since the recession, which is still expected to take more time (maybe 18 to 24 months) before approaching the pre-2006 levels, particularly in terms of employment/job growth.

Still, the growth increase is welcome news, especially for some components of the state's economy when compared to growth rates well below 200,000 people per year from 2006 to 2009. While the road to full recovery for the building and housing construction market and the sale of existing homes appears a long way off, population growth improvements over the past couple of years may be beneficial to these hard-hit areas of the state's economy.

The largest component of Florida's growth rate over the period 2010–2011 was due to migration. Over 80 percent of the population growth (176,634) was from migration, with about 61 percent coming from domestic migration (from other states in the United States) and about 39 percent from abroad. In other words, new residents from abroad accounted for nearly four of every ten new residents in the state.

Population growth presents challenges as well. Diversification in the state population requires adapting services to meet the needs of people based on culture, work ethics, and family structure. Sustainable population growth also implies the need for increased employment opportunities in the state. Gains were reported in employment in Florida in 2011, but the state unemployment rate still remains about 10 percent, or 1.5 to 2 percent higher than the nation. Of

course, growth in state population also brings questions and concerns from some: Will the growth pay for itself in terms of services needed? Where will the growth occur in the state? Will the growth pattern be compact and not spread out (sprawl)? How will resources such as land and water be allocated?

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Table 1. July 1, 2011 US population estimates and percent change

Geographic Area	Population Estimates (as of July 1)		Change, 2010 to 2011	
	2010	2011	Number	Percent
United States	309,330,219	311,591,917	2,261,698	0.7
Northeast	55,366,108	55,521,598	155,490	0.3
Midwest	66,976,458	67,158,835	182,377	0.3
South	114,857,529	116,046,736	1,189,207	1.0
West	72,130,124	72,864,748	734,624	1.0
Alabama	4,785,401	4,802,740	17,339	0.4
Alaska	714,146	722,718	8,572	1.2
Arizona	6,413,158	6,482,505	69,347	1.1
Arkansas	2,921,588	2,937,979	16,391	0.6
California	37,338,198	37,691,912	353,714	0.9
Colorado	5,047,692	5,116,796	69,104	1.4
Connecticut	3,575,498	3,580,709	5,211	0.1
Delaware	899,792	907,135	7,343	0.8
District of Columbia	604,912	617,996	13,084	2.2
Florida	18,838,613	19,057,542	218,929	1.2
Georgia	9,712,157	9,815,210	103,053	1.1
Hawaii	1,363,359	1,374,810	11,451	0.8
Idaho	1,571,102	1,584,985	13,883	0.9
Illinois	12,841,980	12,869,257	27,277	0.2
Indiana	6,490,622	6,516,922	26,300	0.4
Iowa	3,050,202	3,062,309	12,107	0.4
Kansas	2,859,143	2,871,238	12,095	0.4
Kentucky	4,347,223	4,369,356	22,133	0.5
Louisiana	4,545,343	4,574,836	29,493	0.6
Maine	1,327,379	1,328,188	809	0.1
Maryland	5,785,681	5,828,289	42,608	0.7
Massachusetts	6,555,466	6,587,536	32,070	0.5
Michigan	9,877,143	9,876,187	-956	N/A
Minnesota	5,310,658	5,344,861	34,203	0.6
Mississippi	2,970,072	2,978,512	8,440	0.3
Missouri	5,995,715	6,010,688	14,973	0.2
Montana	990,958	998,199	7,241	0.7
Nebraska	1,830,141	1,842,641	12,500	0.7
Nevada	2,704,283	2,723,322	19,039	0.7
New Hampshire	1,316,807	1,318,194	1,387	0.1
New Jersey	8,799,593	8,821,155	21,562	0.2
New Mexico	2,065,913	2,082,224	16,311	0.8
New York	19,395,206	19,465,197	69,991	0.4
North Carolina	9,560,234	9,656,401	96,167	1.0
North Dakota	674,629	683,932	9,303	1.4
Ohio	11,537,968	11,544,951	6,983	0.1
Oklahoma	3,760,184	3,791,508	31,324	0.8
Oregon	3,838,332	3,871,859	33,527	0.9
Pennsylvania	12,717,722	12,742,886	25,164	0.2

Geographic Area	Population Estimates (as of July 1)		Change, 2010 to 2011	
	2010	2011	Number	Percent
Rhode Island	1,052,528	1,051,302	-1,226	-0.1
South Carolina	4,637,106	4,679,230	42,124	0.9
South Dakota	816,598	824,082	7,484	0.9
Tennessee	6,357,436	6,403,353	45,917	0.7
Texas	25,253,466	25,674,681	421,215	1.7
Utah	2,775,479	2,817,222	41,743	1.5
Vermont	625,909	626,431	522	0.1
Virginia	8,023,953	8,096,604	72,651	0.9
Washington	6,742,950	6,830,038	87,088	1.3
West Virginia	1,854,368	1,855,364	996	0.1
Wisconsin	5,691,659	5,711,767	20,108	0.4
Wyoming	564,554	568,158	3,604	0.6

Source: Table 3. Estimates of Resident Population Change for the United States, Regions, States, and Puerto Rico and Region and State Rankings: July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2011 (NST-EST2011-03), US Census Bureau, Population Division. December 2011.

Table 2. Top 10 US states in 2010-2011 population growth

State	July 1, 2010	July 1, 2011	Change
Texas	25,253,466	25,674,681	421,215
California	37,338,198	37,691,912	353,714
Florida	18,838,613	19,057,542	218,929
Georgia	9,712,157	9,815,210	103,053
North Carolina	9,560,234	9,656,401	96,167
Washington	6,742,950	6,830,038	87,088
Virginia	8,023,953	8,096,604	72,651
New York	19,395,206	19,465,197	69,991
Arizona	6,413,158	6,482,505	69,347
Colorado	5,047,692	5,116,796	69,104

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Table 3. Top 10 US states/areas by percent change in 2010-2011 population growth

State	July 1, 2010	July 1, 2011	Change	Percent Change
District of Columbia	604,912	617,996	13,084	2.2
Texas	25,253,466	25,674,681	421,215	1.7
Utah	2,775,479	2,817,222	41,743	1.5
North Dakota	674,629	683,932	9,303	1.4
Colorado	5,047,692	5,116,796	69,104	1.4
Washington	6,742,950	6,830,038	87,088	1.3
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Georgia	9,712,157	9,815,210	103,053	1.1

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