

Analysis of 2016 State Population Data

Population change over time is an important determinant of demand for many types of construction (single- and multifamily housing, schools, and retail, for instance) and a key indicator of labor force change for construction and other industries. Accordingly, AGC of America has analyzed the estimates [posted](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau on December 20, 2016, as of July 1, 2016, for the population of the United States, each state and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. (The Bureau also made small revisions to its estimates for 2010-2015.)

The attached [table](#), prepared by AGC of America from the latest Census data, shows:

2010-2016 population (Columns B-H)

2011-2016 annual percent change (Columns I-N)

2010-2016 cumulative percent change (Column O)

rankings of 2011-2016 annual percent change, from 1 to 51, including DC (Columns P-U)

ranking of 2010-2016 cumulative percent change (Column V)

2015-2016 change in number of residents (Column W) and ranking (Column X)

change from 2015 to 2016 in growth rate in percentage points (Column Y) and rank (Column Z)

change from 2015 to 2016 in numerical increase/decrease (Column AA) and rank (Column AB)

In the table, the top-ranked state (or D.C.) in columns showing annual or cumulative change is highlighted in yellow and boxed. The lowest-ranked state is highlighted in red.

U.S. population increased by 2.23 million (0.70%) from 2015 to 2016 (all dates are as of July 1). This was slightly lower than the growth rate in 2015 (0.73% or 2.33 million) and in 2011-2014 (0.70% to 0.75%). Growth has been considerably slower than in the previous decade (0.92% per year, on average), suggesting that demand for construction nationwide may grow somewhat more slowly this decade.

Two indicators of where demand may be the strongest are the year-over-year growth rate in population, particularly if the rate is sustained, and acceleration in growth from prior years. Utah was the fastest-growing state in 2016 (2.03%), followed by Nevada (1.95%), Idaho (1.83%), Florida (1.82%) and Washington (1.78%). The largest pick-up in growth rate occurred in Idaho (0.65 percentage points faster than the 2015 rate of 1.18%), followed by Alaska (an acceleration of 0.43 points, from 0.14% in 2015 to 0.57% in 2016) and Utah (acceleration of 0.37 points, from 1.66% in 2015).

The largest six-year percentage increase occurred in D.C. (12.56%, nearly triple the cumulative U.S. growth rate of 4.45%). D.C. ranked in the top 10 each year this decade and was 9th in 2016 (1.61%). However, the top-ranked state for cumulative percentage increase was North Dakota (12.37%), which was the top-ranked state in each year from 2011 through 2015 but ranked 37th in 2016 (0.15%), as the earlier boom in oil drilling in the state was followed by a bust that caused many workers to leave. North Dakota had by far the biggest reversal in growth rates (2.14 percentage points less than in 2015), followed distantly by Wyoming (deceleration of 0.68 points, from 0.50% in 2015 to -0.18% in 2016).

The largest numerical increase in 2016 occurred in Texas (433,000 or 1.58%, ranking 10th in percentage change), followed by Florida (368,000) and California (256,000 or 0.66%, ranking 20th) and Washington (128,000). Washington had the biggest numerical pickup from the previous year (22,000 more than the gain of 106,000 that occurred from 2014 to 2015).

Eight states lost population in 2016, one more than in 2015 and the largest total since the 1930s. West Virginia had the largest percentage loss for the fourth straight year (-0.54% or -10,000) and is one of four states with a cumulative population loss since 2010 (-1.25% or -23,000). Illinois had the biggest numerical decline in 2016 (-38,000) and the second-largest percentage decrease for the year (-0.29%) and cumulatively (-0.31%). Vermont was third in percentage decline for the year (-0.24% or -1,500) and six years (-0.22%), followed by Connecticut (-0.23% or -8,300 for the year, -0.10% over six years). For all four states, the rate of decrease has accelerated each year since 2013. Other 2016 decreases occurred in Wyoming (-0.18% or -1,100), Pennsylvania (-0.06% or -7,700), Mississippi (-0.02% or -700) and New York (-0.01% or -1,900).

In a [press release](#), Census noted, “Two states that had been losing population in the previous year, Maine and New Mexico, saw increases in population” of 0.15% and 0.03%, respectively.

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