

Washington State Population: Where We Are Since 2000

The Census Bureau has released the redistricting data for Washington State. These data are used by state officials to redraw federal and state legislative districts taking into account population shifts since 2000. The following is a summary of key changes that have occurred between 2000 and 2010 based on information in the following [tables](#).

1. Between 2000 and 2010, Washington State's population grew by 830,419 to a total of 6,724,540 as of April 1, 2010. This is a 14.1 percent increase from 2000, and the lowest decadal percentage growth since 1930-1940, when the Great Depression kept the growth rate down to 11.1 percent. While the growth due to natural increase was about the same in both 1990-2000 and 2000-2010 periods, growth due to net migration in 2000-2010 declined by about 30 percent from the 1990-2000 period.
2. Western and Eastern Washington continue to split the state's total population at about 80 percent and 20 percent, respectively.
3. Washington's population has become more diversified. In 2000, 78.9 percent of the Washingtonians were identified as "Non-Hispanic White" population. In 2010 this percentage declined to 72.5 percent. The fastest growing minority group is Hispanic (71.2% increase since 2000), followed by Asian (48.9% increase) and Multiracial (40.6% increase).
4. There is a shift in the ranking of the top ten fastest growing counties since last decade. Franklin County has replaced Clark as the fastest growing county. San Juan, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Skagit, and Jefferson were on the top-ten list in 2000, but they have been replaced by Benton, Mason, Kittitas, Thurston and Douglas. On the other hand, Pacific and Garfield counties saw negative growth this decade because they experienced more deaths than births and had almost zero net migration.
5. The ten most populous cities in 2010 were Seattle, Spokane, Spokane Valley, Tacoma, Vancouver, Bellevue, Everett, Kent, Yakima, and Renton. Eight of these cities ranked in the top ten in 2000. Federal Way and Bellingham were edged out by Renton, whose increase includes 22,900 new residents by annexation, and Spokane Valley, a new incorporation in the last decade.
6. Many small cities saw high growth in the last decade, and some of their rankings have changed dramatically since 2000. Snoqualmie, Moxee, and Fife, whose growth ranked below 200 last decade, have jumped to number one, three and seven respectively. On the other hand, 76 Washington cities experienced population decline last year, mostly in rural areas.
7. Washington is becoming more diversified overall. In 2000, Franklin was the only county where minority population exceeded 50 percent (52.4% in 2000, 56.8% in 2010), but in 2010, Adams (61.2%) and Yakima (52.3%) joined this category. Eight of the ten counties whose minority population exceeds 25 percent are located in Eastern Washington agricultural counties, and the other two are large metro counties on the west side of the Cascades—King and Pierce.
8. In the last decade, King County has seen a shift in minority population to the southern incorporated places. In 2000, Seattle had a minority percentage of 39.2 percent, which dropped to 30.2 percent in 2010. In contrast, the southern King County cities went from 24.2 percent minority in 2000 to 31.1 percent in 2010. Interestingly, due to overall growth, the proportion of minority population dropped in Seattle even while the total minority population in King County increased 47.2 percent since 2000, from 462,000 to 679,949.