

Press Release from New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning

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RE: 2010 Census results for Municipalities

The Census Bureau has released the 2010 census numbers for the state's cities and towns. The numbers show some continuing trends, but also some deviation from predicted trends.

At the county level, the numbers show that Hillsborough continues to be the fastest growing on a numerical basis, a status it has held since the 1960s. The county grew by about 20,000 during the past decade, less than half of its growth in the 1990s. The county holds about a third of the state's population, with over 400,000 residents. Adding two more counties, Merrimack and Rockingham, accounts for almost 65% of the state total.

Joining the league of fast growing counties was Strafford, with the highest percentage increase (9.7%). Its numerical increase of almost 11,000 for the decade was slightly more than Merrimack. Percentage wise, Carroll County was only slightly behind Strafford and added 4,000 residents, increasing its share of the state total as well.

Also of interest was that Coos County's population was virtually stable during the 2000 to 2010 period. However, its share of the state's population continues to decline. In 1960, six percent of the state's population resided in the northernmost county; today, less than three percent live there.

At the municipal level, some patterns remain the same. For instance, the 2010 numbers show that the three most populous places were Manchester, Nashua and Concord, a ranking that has endured for many years.

In the remainder of the top ten most populous, however, some patterns have changed markedly. In 1980, three old population centers, Portsmouth, Keene, and Laconia, made the top ten ranking. The 2010 numbers show that all three have now dropped out. They were replaced by Londonderry, Hudson and Merrimack. In 1980, the top twenty most populous municipalities contained 50% of the state total. By 2010, it required 24 municipalities to reach that level. This could be another indicator that in-migrants prefer to live in smaller communities, or at least outside traditional population centers.

Nevertheless, three major cities, Dover, Manchester and Concord, were in the top ten fastest growing on a numerical basis. Dover was number one, adding more than 3,000 residents. On a percentage basis the three fastest growing towns were Brentwood (40%), Springfield (39%) and Grantham (38%).

An interesting note was Derry losing 900 residents, the largest numerical decline; Allentown lost 500 and Laconia about 450. A total of 40 municipalities experienced declines in the 2000 – 2010 decade.

More information on the 2010 Census results is available online at OEP's website: <http://www.nh.gov/oep>. Any inquiries on the 2010 Census may also be directed to OEP at 603-271-2155.