



# Where We Stand: 8th Edition

## Update 4: Population

April 2020

The St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced a slight population decrease from 2018 to 2019, according to estimates released last week by the U.S. Census Bureau. The MSA had a net loss of 730 people in that time period, a decline of less than one-tenth of one percent of the region's population. This was the third annual decline in four years. This Where We Stand Update provides additional information and context for understanding recent population trends in the region.

While the recent loss of population is concerning, it is only one metric by which to measure the health of a region. In addition, while annual population estimates are the best source of regularly updated population data, the 2020 decennial census will provide a more accurate count of the population.

Table 1 provides the 2019 population for the 50 most populous MSAs (referred to as the peer regions).<sup>1</sup> Despite the population loss, St. Louis retained its ranking as the 20th largest metropolitan region in the United States.

Table 2 shows the percent change in population from 2010 to 2019. Over the last decade, St. Louis has been one of the slowest growing of the peer regions. St. Louis ranked 44th among the 50 most populous regions for growth since 2010. Even so, the St. Louis MSA did experience a small population increase over the decade, an amount equal to about 0.6 percent of the region's 2010 population. Several of the peer regions lost population over the course of the decade. These included Chicago, Hartford, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh.

**Table 1  
Population**

2019	
United States	328,239,523
1 New York	19,895,340
2 Los Angeles	13,214,799
3 Chicago	9,458,539
4 Dallas	7,634,779
5 Houston	7,066,141
6 Washington, D.C.	6,267,226
7 Miami	6,166,488
8 Philadelphia	6,102,434
9 Atlanta	6,020,364
10 Phoenix	4,948,203
11 Boston	4,873,019
12 San Francisco	4,731,803
13 Riverside	4,650,631
14 Detroit	4,319,629
15 Seattle	3,979,845
16 Minneapolis	3,640,043
17 San Diego	3,338,330
18 Tampa	3,194,831
19 Denver	2,967,239
20 St. Louis	2,803,228
21 Baltimore	2,800,053
22 Charlotte	2,612,437
23 Orlando	2,608,147
24 San Antonio	2,550,960
25 Portland	2,492,412
26 Sacramento	2,363,730
27 Pittsburgh	2,317,600
28 Las Vegas	2,266,715
29 Austin	2,227,083
30 Cincinnati	2,198,450
31 Kansas City	2,157,990
32 Columbus	2,122,271
33 Indianapolis	2,074,537
34 Cleveland	2,048,449
35 San Jose	1,990,660
36 Nashville	1,934,317
37 Virginia Beach	1,732,436
38 Providence	1,624,578
39 Milwaukee	1,575,179
40 Jacksonville	1,559,514
41 Oklahoma City	1,408,950
42 Raleigh	1,390,785
43 Memphis	1,346,045
44 Louisville	1,288,981
45 Richmond	1,284,875
46 New Orleans	1,270,530
47 Salt Lake City	1,232,696
48 Hartford	1,204,877
49 Birmingham	1,153,956
50 Buffalo	1,127,983

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

**Table 2  
Population Change**

Percent change, 2010-2019	
1 Austin	29.8
2 Raleigh	23.0
3 Orlando	22.2
4 Houston	19.4
5 San Antonio	19.1
6 Dallas	19.0
7 Phoenix	18.0
8 Charlotte	17.8
9 Nashville	17.5
10 Denver	16.7
11 Las Vegas	16.2
12 Jacksonville	15.9
13 Seattle	15.7
14 Tampa	14.8
15 Atlanta	13.9
16 Salt Lake City	13.3
17 Oklahoma City	12.4
18 Portland	12.0
19 Columbus	11.6
20 Washington, D.C.	11.2
21 Miami	10.8
22 Riverside	10.1
23 Sacramento	10.0
24 Indianapolis	9.9
25 Minneapolis	9.2
26 San Francisco	9.1
27 Richmond	8.9
28 San Jose	8.4
29 San Diego	7.8
30 Kansas City	7.4
31 Boston	7.0
32 New Orleans	6.8
United States	6.3
33 Louisville	5.1
34 Cincinnati	4.0
35 Virginia Beach	3.3
36 Baltimore	3.3
37 Los Angeles	3.0
38 Birmingham	2.3
39 Philadelphia	2.3
40 Memphis	2.3
41 New York	1.7
42 Providence	1.5
43 Milwaukee	1.2
44 St. Louis	0.6
45 Detroit	0.5
46 Chicago	0.0
47 Hartford	-0.6
48 Buffalo	-0.7
49 Cleveland	-1.4
50 Pittsburgh	-1.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

<sup>1</sup> Where We Stand tracks the St. Louis region among the 50 most populous Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), which are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). MSAs are areas with "at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties."

Table 3 shows population change from 2018 to 2019. The St. Louis region ranked 41st out of the 50 peer regions on year-over-year change. St. Louis was one of 11 regions that lost population in this time period.

Figure 1 shows net population change for each year from 2010 to 2011 through 2018 to 2019. The Census Bureau bases its annual

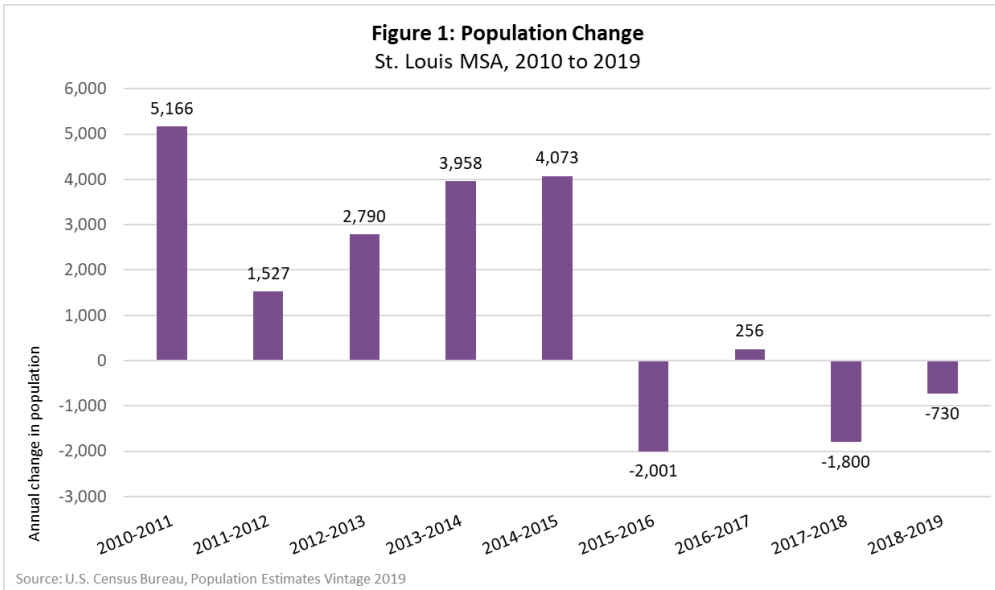
estimates on the population as of July 1 of each year. The St. Louis region showed small but steady growth from 2010 through 2015. Over the last four years, however, the region had an annual average loss of about 1,000 people. There remains considerable fluctuation in changes from one year to the next.

**Table 3**  
**Population Change**

Percent change, 2018-2019

1	Austin	2.8
2	Raleigh	2.1
3	Phoenix	2.0
4	Las Vegas	1.8
5	Jacksonville	1.8
6	Charlotte	1.7
7	Dallas	1.6
8	Nashville	1.6
9	San Antonio	1.5
10	Orlando	1.3
11	Houston	1.3
12	Tampa	1.3
13	Atlanta	1.3
14	Denver	1.2
15	Salt Lake City	1.2
16	Seattle	1.1
17	Oklahoma City	1.1
18	Indianapolis	1.1
19	Sacramento	0.9
20	Columbus	0.9
21	Richmond	0.9
22	Minneapolis	0.8
23	Riverside	0.8
24	Portland	0.8
25	Kansas City	0.6
26	Washington, D.C.	0.5
	<b>United States</b>	<b>0.5</b>
27	Cincinnati	0.4
28	Miami	0.4
29	Virginia Beach	0.3
30	Boston	0.3
31	Memphis	0.3
32	Louisville	0.2
33	Birmingham	0.2
34	Philadelphia	0.2
35	Providence	0.1
36	San Diego	0.1
37	San Francisco	0.1
38	Milwaukee	0.1
39	New Orleans	0.0
40	Baltimore	0.0
41	<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>0.0</b>
42	Detroit	-0.1
43	Hartford	-0.1
44	San Jose	-0.2
45	Buffalo	-0.2
46	Pittsburgh	-0.2
47	Cleveland	-0.3
48	Los Angeles	-0.3
49	Chicago	-0.3
50	<b>New York</b>	<b>-0.3</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates



Population change may be divided into natural change, i.e., births minus deaths, and net migration. Figure 2 shows the two components of natural change. There has been a slow but steady increase in the number of deaths in the region, and a small but steady decrease in the number of births.

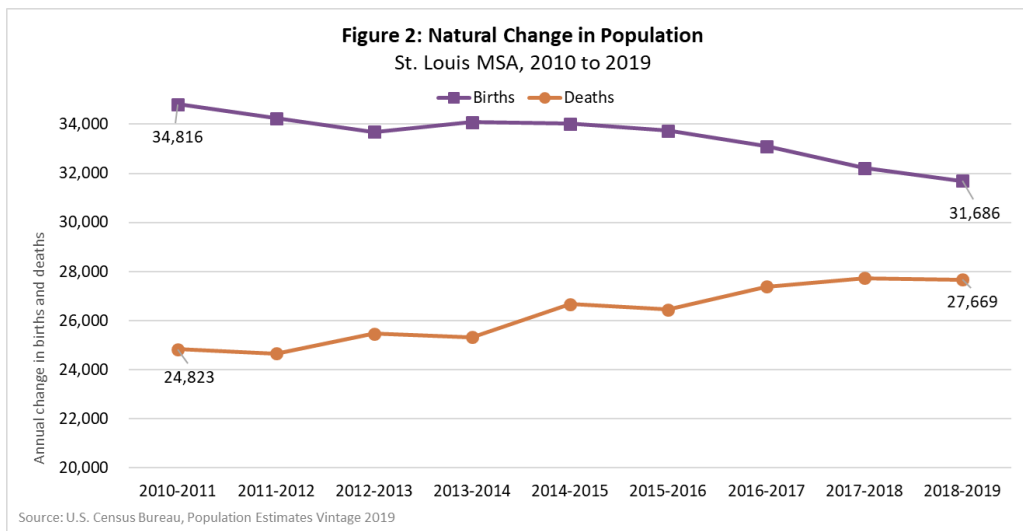


Figure 3 shows international and domestic net migration from 2010 through 2019. The region consistently experiences positive net international migration and negative net domestic migration. This means that more people move into St. Louis from other countries than leave for other countries. At the same time, more people move from St. Louis to other parts of the country than move to St. Louis from other parts of the country. The sum of net international and net domestic migration is consistently negative, meaning that more people move out of St. Louis than move into the region.

There is not a strong trend in either type of migration. Over the last four years, however, the net outflow of people domestically has declined. Between 2015 and 2016, the region lost more than 12,000 to net domestic migration. From 2018 to 2019, the net loss dropped to about 7,700. Thus, the change from net population growth earlier in the decade to net loss more recently cannot be attributed to changes in migration. Rather, changes in birth and death rates account for the shift from net population growth to net population decline.

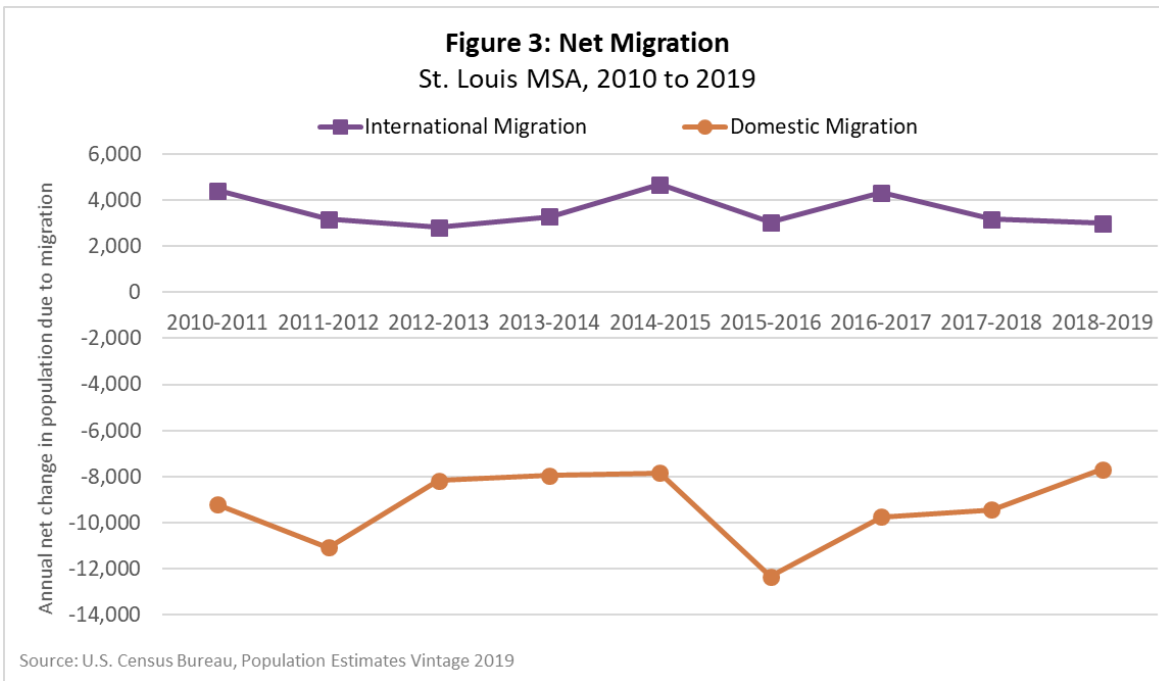


Table 4 (see Page 4) provides county population totals and rates of change for the 15 counties in the St. Louis MSA. The state of Illinois is one of only four states to experience a net population loss since 2010, and Illinois had the largest decline of any state. The counties in the Illinois portion of the St. Louis MSA tended to reflect this statewide trend. Seven of the eight Illinois counties lost population since 2010; Monroe County, which gained about 1,600 people since 2010, was the only exception. In total, the eight Illinois counties lost about 21,000 people since 2010.

Among Missouri counties, St. Charles experienced the largest population gain, with a net increase of more than 40,000 people since the 2010 Census. This represented an increase of 11.5 percent from 2010 to 2019. The counties of Franklin and Jefferson both grew by between 2 and 3 percent over the course of the decade. The city of St. Louis and St. Louis County both had

net population declines. The city lost just under 6 percent of its population between 2010 and 2019, although there are signs that the population loss is slowing. From 2016 to 2018 the city averaged a loss of 4,600 per year; from 2018 to 2019, this decline dropped to 2,800. St. Louis County dropped from 998,954 in the 2010 Census to an estimated 994,205 in 2019, a loss of about 4,600, or less than one half of one percent.

It is important to remember that population growth is only one indicator of regional competitiveness. Where We Stand Update 3 (January, 2020) analyzed changes in per capita income over the last decade. Combining population data with income data shows that since 2010, 17 of the peer regions had faster population growth, but also slower income growth, than St. Louis. Population growth is an important measure of the health of a region. However, it is not the only measure, nor is it necessarily the most important.

**Table 4: Population Change**  
St. Louis MSA by County, 2010, 2018, and 2019

County	2010	2018	2019	Change	Change	Percent	Percent
				2010-2019	2018-2019	Change	Change
Bond	17,768	16,637	16,426	-1,361	-211	-7.6	-1.3
Calhoun	5,089	4,829	4,739	-357	-90	-6.9	-1.9
Clinton	37,762	37,697	37,562	-281	-135	-0.5	-0.4
Jersey	22,985	21,795	21,773	-1,222	-22	-5.3	-0.1
Macoupin	47,765	45,318	44,926	-2,871	-392	-5.9	-0.9
Madison	269,282	264,026	262,966	-6,344	-1,060	-2.3	-0.4
Monroe	32,957	34,373	34,637	1,643	264	5.1	0.8
St. Clair	270,056	261,360	259,686	-10,667	-1,674	-3.8	-0.6
Franklin	101,492	103,716	103,967	2,539	251	2.4	0.2
Jefferson	218,733	224,410	225,081	5,953	671	2.9	0.3
Lincoln	52,566	57,613	59,013	6,339	1,400	12.3	2.4
St. Charles	360,485	398,780	402,022	40,219	3,242	11.5	0.8
St. Louis	998,954	995,219	994,205	-4,635	-1,014	-0.5	-0.1
Warren	32,513	34,766	35,649	3,044	883	9.6	2.5
City of St. Louis	319,294	303,419	300,576	-18,760	-2,843	-5.9	-0.9
<b>St. Louis MSA</b>	<b>2,787,701</b>	<b>2,803,958</b>	<b>2,803,228</b>	<b>13,239</b>	<b>-730</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>St. Louis 8-County Region</b>	<b>2,571,253</b>	<b>2,585,303</b>	<b>2,583,140</b>	<b>11,887</b>	<b>-2,163</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-0.1</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Vintage 2019

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