

North Carolina Population Continues to Grow

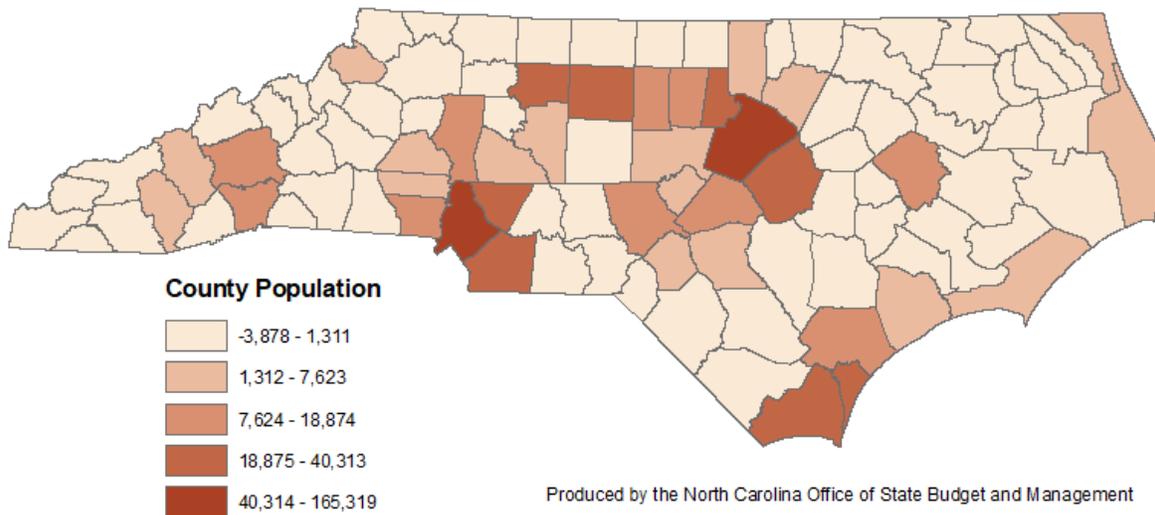
According to the latest population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 10.3 million people in North Carolina as of July 1, 2017. North Carolina remains the 9th largest state in the nation and experienced the 5th largest numeric change between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2017.

County and Metropolitan/Micropolitan population estimates released by the Census Bureau on March 22, 2018 show that as the economy has improved since the early part of this decade, more counties – both nationally and within North Carolina - have experience population growth. Between 2016 and 2017, 66 of North Carolina’s 100 counties saw population growth. This compares to 57 percent of all counties nationwide. Since 2010 the majority of North Carolina counties (53 counties) have experienced population growth.

Population increases in the state and for most counties during this decade has remained slower than the change that occurred between 2000 and 2010 (on an annualized basis). Only in four counties is the rate of growth faster than what was experienced in the previous decade: Durham, Gaston, Madison, and Cumberland Counties. These counties have added almost the same number of people in the 7 1/4 years since the last Census as they did in the previous decade.

2010 - 2017 Estimated Change in Population

Source: US Census Bureau



The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management is a member of the Federal-State Cooperative for Population Estimates (FSCPE) and is the Lead Agency for the North Carolina State Data Center (SDC).

Percent Population Change

Population growth continues to be concentrated in and around major urban areas of the state – and particularly in the Piedmont Urban Crescent as well as in the Wilmington area. Between 2010 and 2017, Brunswick County was the fastest growing county, increasing in population size by 21.8 percent (or 23,466 people). This is followed by Wake County (19.0 percent), Mecklenburg County (17.1 percent) and Pender County (16.7 percent). Twenty-two counties grew faster than the state between 2010 and 2017 (more than 7.7 percent increase).

Population and Population Change for the Twenty-Two Counties in North Carolina with the Largest Percentage Increase from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017

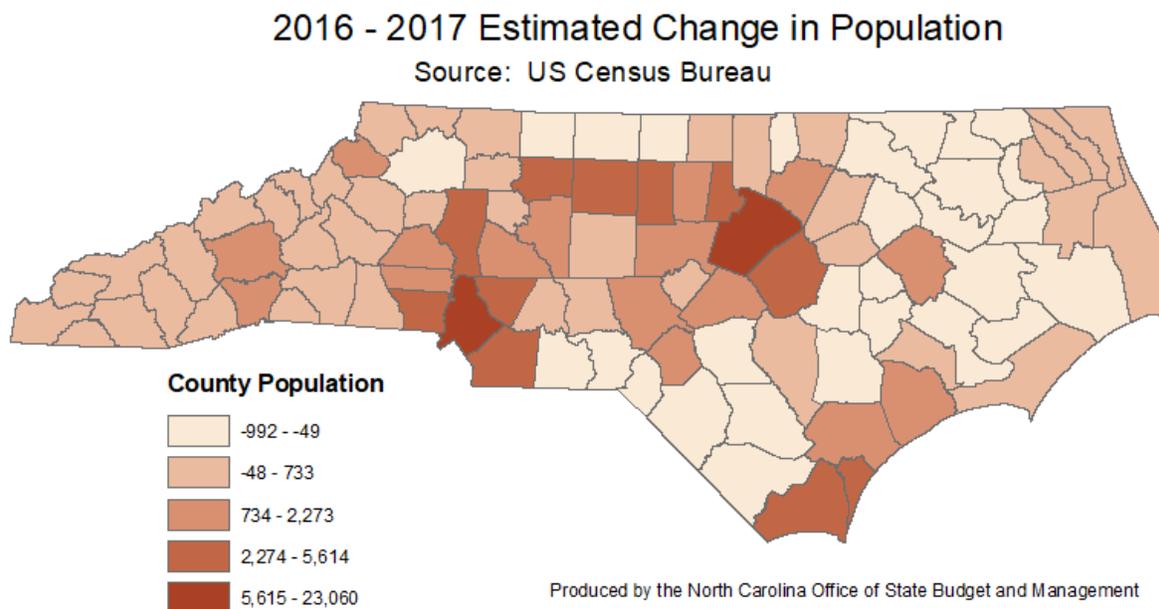
County	Population			Change 2000 - 2010		Change 2010 - 2017*	
	2000	2010	2017	Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Brunswick	73,121	107,431	130,897	34,310	46.9	23,466	21.8
Wake	627,906	900,993	1,072,203	273,087	43.5	171,210	19.0
Mecklenburg	695,348	919,628	1,076,837	224,280	32.3	157,209	17.1
Pender	41,071	52,217	60,958	11,146	27.1	8,741	16.7
Durham	223,270	267,587	311,640	44,317	19.8	44,053	16.5
Johnston	121,998	168,878	196,708	46,880	38.4	27,830	16.5
Cabarrus	131,043	178,011	206,872	46,968	35.8	28,861	16.2
Harnett	90,978	114,678	132,754	23,700	26.1	18,076	15.8
Hoke	33,708	46,952	54,116	13,244	39.3	7,164	15.3
Union	123,834	201,292	231,366	77,458	62.5	30,074	14.9
Chatham	49,396	63,505	71,472	14,109	28.6	7,967	12.5
New Hanover	160,315	202,667	227,198	42,352	26.4	24,531	12.1
Currituck	18,179	23,547	26,331	5,368	29.5	2,784	11.8
Iredell	122,631	159,437	175,711	36,806	30.0	16,274	10.2
Moore	74,772	88,247	97,264	13,475	18.0	9,017	10.2
Franklin	47,284	60,619	66,168	13,335	28.2	5,549	9.2
Onslow	150,418	177,772	193,893	27,354	18.2	16,121	9.1
Henderson	89,184	106,740	115,708	17,556	19.7	8,968	8.4
Orange	115,589	133,801	144,946	18,212	15.8	11,145	8.3
Buncombe	206,365	238,318	257,607	31,953	15.5	19,289	8.1
Guilford	420,848	488,406	526,953	67,558	16.1	38,547	7.9
Watauga	42,684	51,079	55,121	8,395	19.7	4,042	7.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, Vintage 2017 and 2000-2010 Intercensal Estimates.

*87 months change from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017.

Numeric Population Change

The two largest counties in North Carolina accounted for the largest numeric gains between 2010 and 2017 – each adding more than three times the number of people than any other county. Between 2010 and 2017, the population in Wake County increased by 171,210 people – roughly equivalent to the entire population of Iredell County. Wake County’s growth was the 20th largest numeric growth nationally during this period. Half of this increase was attributed to net domestic migration (more people moving into the county from other states and counties than moving out) – Wake County experience the 10th largest number of net migrants in the country. Mecklenburg County added a population equivalent to the size of Catawba County during this same period – adding 157,209 (ranked 21st in numeric growth nationally).



According to these estimates, 19 counties have added at least 10,000 people from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017. Five counties added between 20,000 and 30,000 people, including: Brunswick (23,466), New Hanover (24,531), Forsyth (25,650) Johnston (27,830) and Cabarrus (28,861). Three counties added between 30,000 and 50,000 people, including: Union (30,074), Guilford (38,547) and Durham (44,053).

Between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017, 34 counties lost population. Cumberland County saw the largest population decrease from 2016-2017 at -992, but the county is estimated to have grown by 13,115 persons since 2010.

Forty-seven counties lost population between April 1, 2010 (Census Day) and July 1, 2017, significantly more than the 7 counties that lost population between 2000 and 2010. Many of these counties are rural – with several located in the northeast portion of the state. According to these estimates, Edgecombe County had the largest population decrease from 2010-2017 at -3,805.

**Population and Population Change for the Twenty Counties in North Carolina
with the Largest Numeric Increase from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017**

County	Population			Change 2000 - 2010		Change 2010 - 2017*	
	2000	2010	2017	Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Wake	627,906	900,993	1,072,203	273,087	43.5	171,210	19.0
Mecklenburg	695,348	919,628	1,076,837	224,280	32.3	157,209	17.1
Durham	223,270	267,587	311,640	44,317	19.8	44,053	16.5
Guilford	420,848	488,406	526,953	67,558	16.1	38,547	7.9
Union	123,834	201,292	231,366	77,458	62.5	30,074	14.9
Cabarrus	131,043	178,011	206,872	46,968	35.8	28,861	16.2
Johnston	121,998	168,878	196,708	46,880	38.4	27,830	16.5
Forsyth	306,274	350,670	376,320	44,396	14.5	25,650	7.3
New Hanover	160,315	202,667	227,198	42,352	26.4	24,531	12.1
Brunswick	73,121	107,431	130,897	34,310	46.9	23,466	21.8
Buncombe	206,365	238,318	257,607	31,953	15.5	19,289	8.1
Harnett	90,978	114,678	132,754	23,700	26.1	18,076	15.8
Iredell	122,631	159,437	175,711	36,806	30.0	16,274	10.2
Onslow	150,418	177,772	193,893	27,354	18.2	16,121	9.1
Gaston	190,445	206,086	220,182	15,641	8.2	14,096	6.8
Cumberland	302,978	319,431	332,546	16,453	5.4	13,115	4.1
Alamance	130,750	151,131	162,391	20,381	15.6	11,260	7.5
Orange	115,589	133,801	144,946	18,212	15.8	11,145	8.3
Pitt	133,759	168,148	179,042	34,389	25.7	10,894	6.5
Moore	74,772	88,247	97,264	13,475	18.0	9,017	10.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, Vintage 2017 and 2000-2010 Intercensal Estimates.
*87 months change from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017.

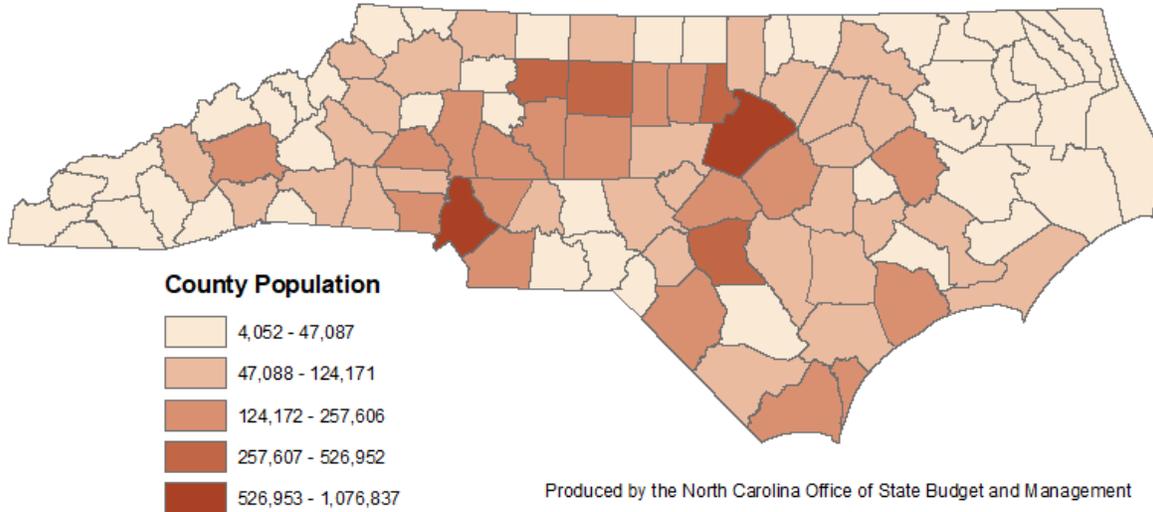
Population Size

Eleven counties had populations of over 200,000 on July 1, 2017 and two, Johnston (at 196,708) and Onslow (at 193,893) Counties are approaching that threshold. The largest counties, both consisting of over one million people each, were Mecklenburg (1,076,837) and Wake (1,072,203) Counties.

Several suburban counties have experienced substantial growth since 2000 and, as a result, have moved up in the rankings of the largest counties in North Carolina. At 231,366 people, Union County is now the 8th largest county in North Carolina (up from 10th largest in 2010 and 18th largest in 2000). Johnston County is now the 12th largest county (up from 13th largest in 2010 and up from 21st in 2000). Iredell County moved from 16th in 2010 to 15th in 2017 (the county was ranked 20th in the state in 2000). Orange County is now the 19th largest county in North Carolina (up from 22nd largest in 2010).

2017 Estimated North Carolina County Population

Source: US Census Bureau



Population and Population Change for North Carolina and the Twenty Largest Counties in North Carolina in 2017

County	Population			Change 2000 - 2010		Change 2010 - 2017*	
	2000	2010	2017	Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
North Carolina	8,046,346	9,535,483	10,273,419	1,489,137	18.5	737,936	7.7
Mecklenburg	695,348	919,628	1,076,837	224,280	32.3	157,209	17.1
Wake	627,906	900,993	1,072,203	273,087	43.5	171,210	19.0
Guilford	420,848	488,406	526,953	67,558	16.1	38,547	7.9
Forsyth	306,274	350,670	376,320	44,396	14.5	25,650	7.3
Cumberland	302,978	319,431	332,546	16,453	5.4	13,115	4.1
Durham	223,270	267,587	311,640	44,317	19.8	44,053	16.5
Buncombe	206,365	238,318	257,607	31,953	15.5	19,289	8.1
Union	123,834	201,292	231,366	77,458	62.5	30,074	14.9
New Hanover	160,315	202,667	227,198	42,352	26.4	24,531	12.1
Gaston	190,445	206,086	220,182	15,641	8.2	14,096	6.8
Cabarrus	131,043	178,011	206,872	46,968	35.8	28,861	16.2
Johnston	121,998	168,878	196,708	46,880	38.4	27,830	16.5
Onslow	150,418	177,772	193,893	27,354	18.2	16,121	9.1
Pitt	133,759	168,148	179,042	34,389	25.7	10,894	6.5
Iredell	122,631	159,437	175,711	36,806	30.0	16,274	10.2
Davidson	147,248	162,878	165,466	15,630	10.6	2,588	1.6
Alamance	130,750	151,131	162,391	20,381	15.6	11,260	7.5
Catawba	141,700	154,358	157,974	12,658	8.9	3,616	2.3
Orange	115,589	133,801	144,946	18,212	15.8	11,145	8.3
Randolph	130,503	141,752	143,282	11,249	8.6	1,530	1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, Vintage 2017 and 2000-2010 Intercensal Estimates.
*87 months change from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017.

Population Change in Metropolitan/Micropolitan Areas¹

The Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia Metro Area is the 22nd largest in the nation (ranked 24th in 2010). The Raleigh Metro Area ranks 43 (ranked 48th in 2010) and the Greensboro-High Point Metro Area is 75th (ranked 73rd in 2010) nationally. North Carolina counties are included in the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC Metro Area which ranks 37th nationally (it ranked 36th in 2010).

North Carolina is estimated to have grown by over 737,936 from 2010 to 2017, with about 62 percent of that growth occurring in the North Carolina portion of the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC and Raleigh, NC Metropolitan Areas (compared to 50.8 percent of the state's total growth between 2000 and 2010).

The Raleigh, NC Metro Area had the 9th largest growth rate (18.1%) in the nation from 2010-2017. The Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia Metro Area was 30th at 13.9%.

The Raleigh Metro Area is estimated to have grown by 2.3% from 2016 to 2017 (ranked 16th nationally), and the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC Metro Area grew by 2.0% (ranked 28th nationally).

Brunswick County is part of the Myrtle Beach-Conway-North Myrtle Beach, SC-NC Metro Area which was the 2nd fastest growing (3.7%) metro area in the United States from 2016 to 2017.

The Dunn Micropolitan area (Harnett County) is the 10th most populated micropolitan area in the nation. The population increased from 130,899 in 2016 to 132,754 in 2017, an increase of 1,855 people (6th largest numeric growth in the nation).

The Pinehurst-Southern Pines Micropolitan area (Moore County) had the 5th largest numeric change between 2016 and 2017 (1,872 people). The area is now 97,264 people.

Summary tables for all North Carolina counties can be found at: <<https://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/state-data-center/statistical-publications>>. Additional tables may be found on the U.S. Census Bureau's AmericanFactfinder <factfinder.census.gov>.

About These Estimates

The Census Bureau develops county, metro area and micro area population estimates by measuring population change since the most recent census. The Census Bureau uses administrative records on births, deaths and migration to develop estimates of population. For more detail regarding the methodology, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html>. These estimates differ from the certified population estimates produced by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (NC OSBM) due to differences in methods employed. The NC OSBM July 1, 2017 county population estimates will be available in September 2018. For information about the NC OSBM county population estimates, see <<https://www.osbm.nc.gov/demog/county-estimates>>.

¹ Statistical areas are defined by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MeSAs) are comprised of counties containing a central city of 50,000 or more in population and surrounding counties with a high level of commuting with the central city.

Micropolitan Statistical Areas (MiSAs) are organized around central towns of 10,000 but less than 50,000 in population. Both MeSAs and MiSAs may contain multiple counties, and metro areas may cross state lines.