

Salt Lake City's Changing Demographics: A Brief Overview

Pamela S. Perlich, Ph.D., Senior Research Economist with Darius Li, Research Analyst

Utah, along with the rest of the nation, is in the midst of a great demographic, economic, and cultural transformation. The 1990s were a period of significant migration to Utah, with about half of these migrants having been foreign born. As central location of Utah's major religious, cultural, commercial, financial, medical, and educational institutions, Salt Lake City has become a destination for many of these new residents. These new residents have introduced cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and intellectual diversity that has catalyzed creative synergies and new cross-cultural collaborations. However, the confluence and interplay of all these dynamics is coincident with increasing economic inequality. Importantly, patterns of this emerging complexity and diversity vary dramatically by neighborhood and community.

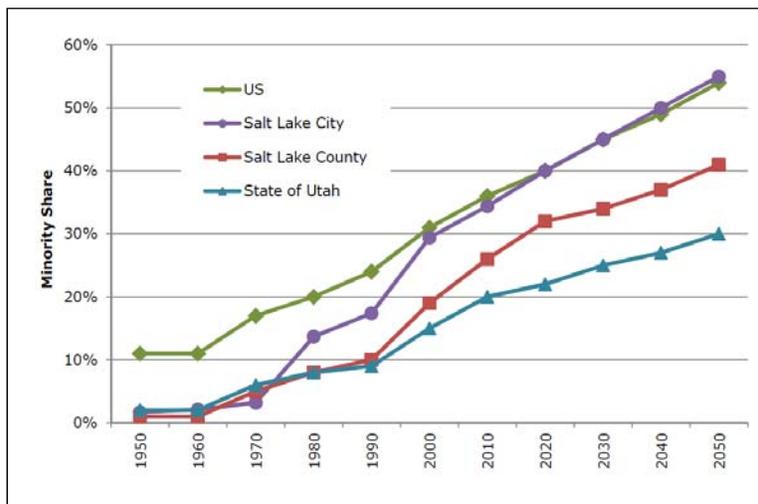
After a three-decade decline, the population has increased in Salt Lake City beginning in the early 1990s. Minority population growth, attributable to natural increase (births exceeding deaths) and net immigration (gross in-migration minus gross out-migration) accounts for all of this growth. This immigration wave that originated in the 1990s extended until the global financial crisis and onset of the Great Recession in 2008. The major origin of these immigrants was Latin America, and most of them identified

their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino in the enumeration. Not all immigrants identify as racial or ethnic minorities (e.g., persons of Middle Eastern descent), but many do self-identify as something other than White alone and not Hispanic. It is the coming of these minority immigrants and the subsequent births of their children

that account for much of the 1990 to 2010 population increase in Salt Lake City. Salt Lake City's population, which is more diverse than that of the rest of the state, has become as diverse as the nation, and is projected to continue on this path.

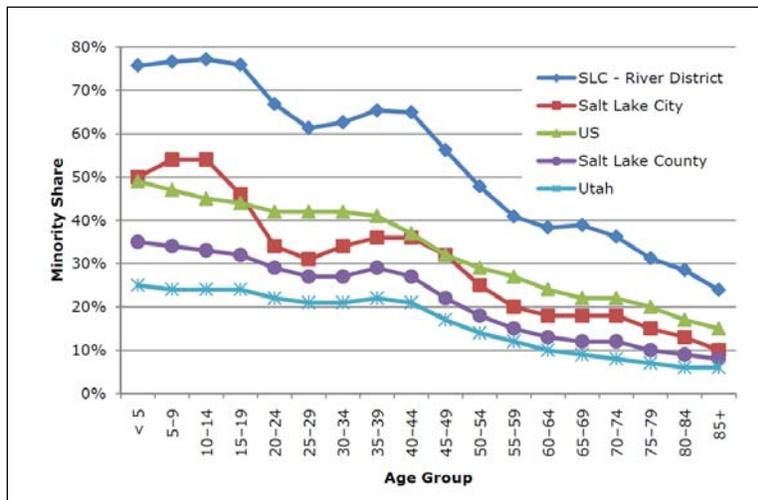
Statewide or even city-level averages do not capture the newly emerging wide range of socioeconomic conditions or demographic characteristics. Because people experience their lives in neighborhoods, an understanding of current and changing conditions that impact individual life opportunities and outcomes requires high-quality data at ever smaller geographies. There is no single Salt Lake City – there is a tapestry of many communities that create Salt Lake City. The River District (the parts of Salt Lake City to the west of Interstate 15) has emerged as a gathering place for many of the newly arriving populations. Households in the River District are on average much younger and with many more children as compared to the rest of the city. Schools in the River District report over 100 languages spoken in the homes of their students. The depth and extent

Minority Share of the Population, 1950-2050



Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Utah and BEBR calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau decennial censuses and national projections, 2012 series.

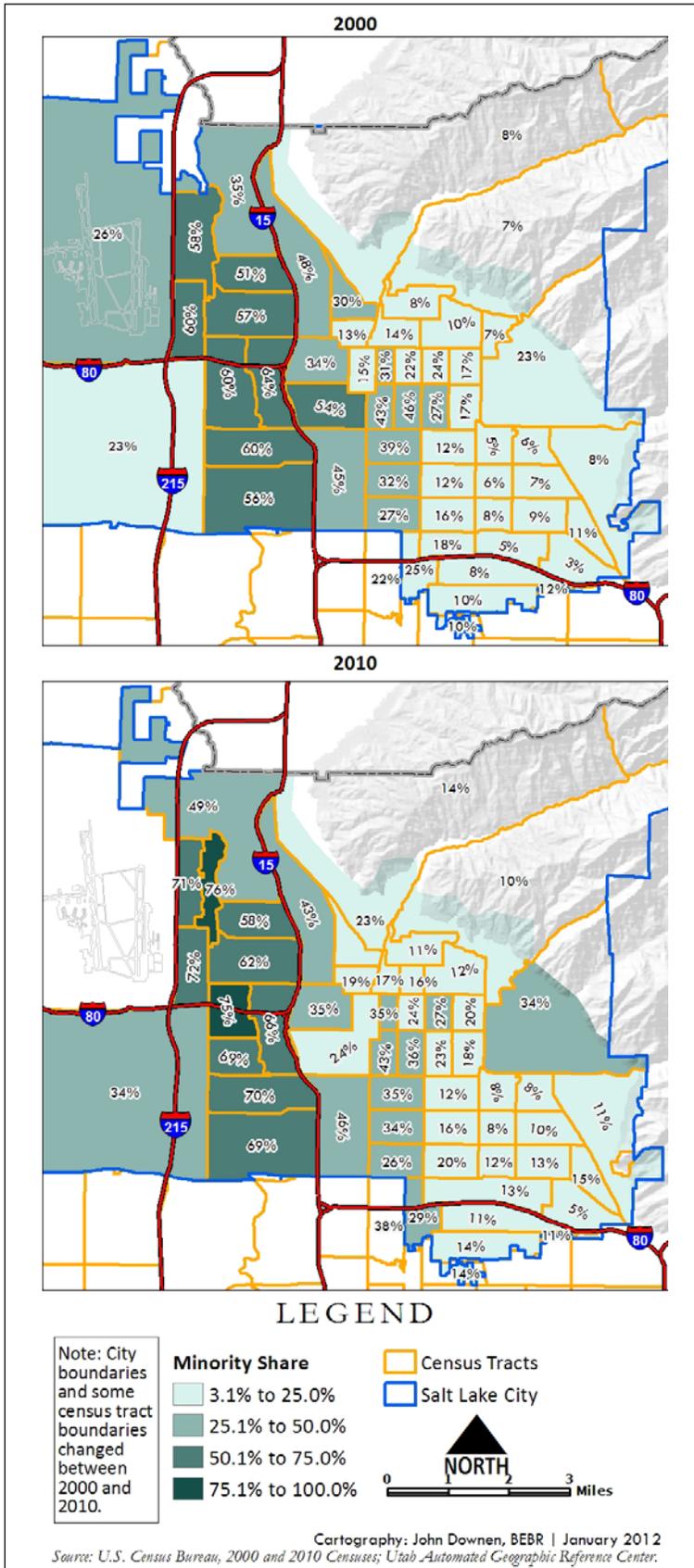
Minority Share by 5-Year Age Group, 2010



Source: Computations by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research based on U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census.

RESEARCH BRIEF

Minority Share of the Salt Lake City Population by Census Tract, 2000 and 2010



of the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and intellectual diversity of the River District are unprecedented in Utah. The greater Salt Lake City metropolitan area has emerged as a global city.

The set of graphics included in this brief illustrate some of the top level differences between the River District and the rest of Salt Lake City.

The first graphic shows historical and projected minority shares of the population for the nation, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and the State of Utah. The definition of minorities has changed over time. Currently it is all those who do not identify as White alone and not Hispanic. The second graphic displays minority shares of the population for 5-year age groups for the same areas as well as the River District for 2010. The third combined graphic displays minorities as a share of Salt Lake City census tracts from the 2000 and 2010 censuses. The final graphic shows the share of school students who qualify for meal assistance in each school in the Salt Lake City School District. This is a means tested program.

This brief is an excerpt from: "Community Data for Policy, Planning, and Community Investment: Salt Lake City Case Studies" (2013) Pamela S. Perlich, Ph.D., Senior Research Economist with Darius Li, Research Analyst. <http://www.bebrr.utah.edu/Documents/uebr/UEBR2013/UEBR2013no1.pdf>

For more information please visit www.bebrr.utah.edu or email bureau@business.utah.edu

Share of Salt Lake City Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, 2011

