

U.S. Census Bureau Estimates by County, Metropolitan, and Micropolitan Areas, 2021

Each year, the Census Bureau produces population estimates at varying levels of geography. The Census Bureau's most recent release on March 24, 2022, provides population estimates with components of population change for counties, metropolitan areas, and micropolitan areas in the United States and Puerto Rico.

The National Picture

The latest release indicates the COVID-19 pandemic left its mark on the 2021 population estimates. First, around three-quarters of the nation's counties experienced natural decrease, up from about 50% of counties in 2020. Second, domestic net migration increased, meaning more counties saw population growth this year than in previous years, even though more counties experienced natural decrease. Lastly, micropolitan areas and medium-sized counties saw more population growth than metropolitan areas and large counties, a trend reversal from previous years.

How Does Utah Compare Nationally?

This release highlighted four Utah areas – one county and three metropolitan statistical areas – for ranking in the top 10 nationally:

- **Utah County** had the tenth largest annual numeric increase, adding 21,843 new residents.
- **St. George, Provo-Orem, and Logan** metropolitan areas ranked first (5.1%), eighth (3.3%), and tenth (2.9%) highest annual percentage growth, respectively.

Utah's County Highlights

The first release of the 2021 Vintage estimates highlighted Utah as the 2nd fastest-growing state (1.7%), with the 7th largest numeric increase (56,291), from 2020 to 2021. Net migration played a larger than usual role in the components of change, contributing 59% of annual statewide growth. This is particularly unusual at the state level, where natural increase is usually the primary driver of Utah's population growth.

Table 1: 2021 Census Bureau Estimates, State of Utah and Counties

Area	2021 Estimate	2020 to 2021 Change					
		Absolute	Percent	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Share of Change	
						Natural Increase	Net Migration
State of Utah	3,337,975	56,291	1.7%	22,992	33,380	41%	59%
Beaver County	7,249	173	2.4%	38	135	22%	78%
Box Elder County	59,688	1,780	3.1%	307	1,490	17%	84%
Cache County	137,417	3,890	2.9%	1,335	2,569	34%	66%
Carbon County	20,372	-93	-0.5%	-5	-91	5%	98%
Daggett County	976	24	2.5%	2	21	8%	88%
Davis County	367,285	3,793	1.0%	2,563	1,146	68%	30%
Duchesne County	19,790	209	1.1%	123	82	59%	39%
Emery County	9,967	130	1.3%	13	118	10%	91%
Garfield County	5,129	39	0.8%	-1	38	0%	100%
Grand County	9,663	-18	-0.2%	19	-35	100%	0%
Iron County	60,519	2,879	5.0%	401	2,512	14%	87%
Juab County	12,155	331	2.8%	76	257	23%	78%
Kane County	7,992	319	4.2%	18	306	6%	96%
Millard County	13,164	149	1.1%	53	96	36%	64%
Morgan County	12,657	265	2.1%	54	214	20%	81%
Piute County	1,487	50	3.5%	2	49	4%	98%
Rich County	2,597	93	3.7%	19	76	20%	82%
Salt Lake County	1,186,421	185	0.0%	6,799	-6,759	100%	0%
San Juan County	14,489	-36	-0.2%	-22	-18	61%	50%
Sanpete County	29,106	598	2.1%	116	486	19%	81%
Sevier County	21,906	360	1.7%	41	320	11%	89%
Summit County	43,093	641	1.5%	178	465	28%	73%
Tooele County	76,640	3,359	4.6%	565	2,836	17%	84%
Uintah County	36,204	586	1.6%	242	340	41%	58%
Utah County	684,986	21,843	3.3%	8,256	13,655	38%	63%
Wasatch County	36,173	1,141	3.3%	170	981	15%	86%
Washington County	191,226	9,302	5.1%	237	9,204	3%	99%
Wayne County	2,558	61	2.4%	5	56	8%	92%
Weber County	267,066	4,238	1.6%	1,388	2,831	33%	67%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2021 Population Estimates

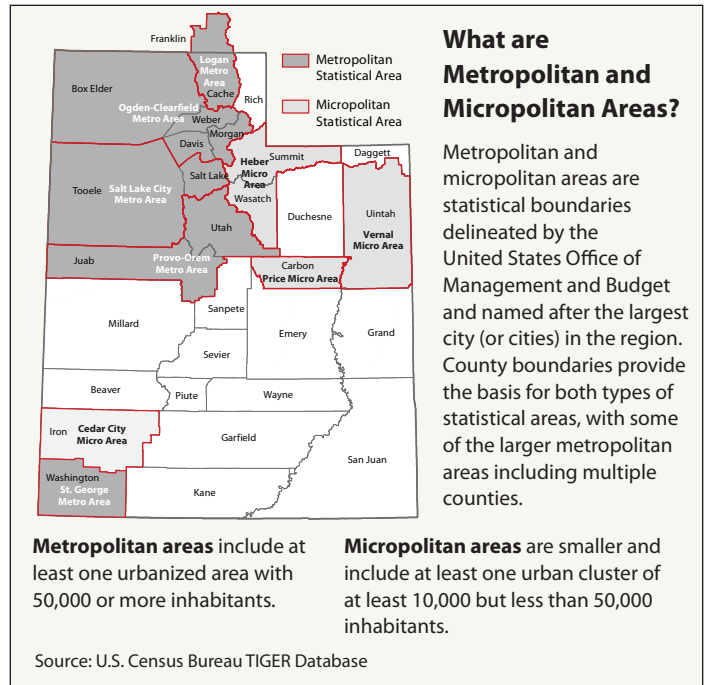
Utah and Washington counties had the most growth, adding 21,843 and 9,302 new residents, respectively, driving over half (55.3%) of statewide growth. Absent from this list is Salt Lake County, which experienced high net out-migration (-6,759) and only saw 0.02% growth since July 1, 2020, contributing almost no growth to the state. Weber, Cache, Davis, Tooele, and Iron counties contributed over 5% each to statewide growth.

In the 2021 estimates, the fastest-growing counties were Washington, Iron, Tooele, and Kane. All had growth rates of over 4%, with Washington County highest at 5.1%. While the growth in Kane was significant in relation to its size, it was the smallest absolute growth of the four counties at 319 people. Three counties experienced population decline: Carbon, Grand, and San Juan counties.

As seen nationally, net in-migration is the primary growth contributor to most of Utah's counties this year. Utah's fastest-growing counties, especially those located in Southwestern Utah and those surrounding the Wasatch Front core, are experiencing most of their growth from net migration. However, two highly populated counties, Salt Lake and Davis, had more natural increase than net migration.

Utah's Metropolitan and Micropolitan Area Highlights

St. George metropolitan area ranked first in the national percentage growth rankings with a high growth rate of 5.1% (9,302 people) increase. Provo-Orem and Logan also made the national rankings at eighth and tenth place, respectively. Salt Lake had the lowest percent change, increasing by only 0.3%. Provo-Orem had the largest increase in population between 2020 and 2021, followed by Ogden-Clearfield and St. George.



For Logan, St. George, Provo-Orem, and Salt Lake, growth was driven by a single county of the metropolitan area. However, Tooele County drove the Salt Lake metro area's growth this year rather than Salt Lake County. With four contributing counties, Ogden-Clearfield had two counties (Weber and Davis) that dominated the region's growth.

Of the four micropolitan areas, Cedar City had the largest absolute and percentage growth with a 5.0% increase (2,879 people). Heber increased by 1,782 people (2.3%), and Vernal experienced an increase of several hundred people. Price is the only micropolitan statistical area to experience a population decline (-0.5%, or 93 people).

Table 2: 2021 Census Bureau Estimates, Utah Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

Metropolitan Statistical Areas				
Area	Associated County(s)	2021 Estimate	2020 to 2021 Change	
			Absolute	Percent
Logan, UT-ID	Cache, Franklin (ID)	152,083	4,287	2.9%
Ogden-Clearfield, UT	Weber, Davis, Morgan, Box Elder	706,696	10,076	1.4%
Provo-Orem, UT	Utah, Juab	697,141	22,174	3.3%
St. George, UT	Washington	191,226	9,302	5.1%
Salt Lake City, UT	Salt Lake, Tooele	1,263,061	3,544	0.3%

Micropolitan Statistical Area				
Area	Associated County	2021 Estimate	2020 to 2021 Change	
			Absolute	Percent
Cedar City, UT	Iron	60,519	2,879	5.0%
Heber, UT	Summit, Wasatch	79,266	1,782	2.3%
Price, UT	Carbon	20,372	-93	-0.5%
Vernal, UT	Uintah	36,204	586	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2021 Population Estimates

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Table 3: County Share of Metropolitan Statistical Area Growth, 2020-2021

Ogden-Clearfield	
Weber	42.1%
Davis	37.6%
Morgan	2.6%
Box Elder	17.7%

Provo-Orem	
Utah	98.5%
Juab	1.5%

Salt Lake City	
Salt Lake	5.2%
Tooele	94.8%

Note: Logan and St. George are not included.
Source: Analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2021 Population Estimates by Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute