Fact Sheet
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Utah State and County Short-term Population Projections: 2018-2028

Overview

We project Utah's population will grow on average at 1.7 percent per year from 3,166,647 in 2018 to 3,739,193 in 2028 for a total growth of 572,546. Natural increase is the main driver contributing 339,826 people, while net migration provides the remaining 232,720. The population will become older as Baby Boomers retire and birth rates stay low. This is reflected in a median age rising by 2.8 years from 31.4 to 34.2.

The number of households is expected to grow by 274,447, from 1,061,030 in 2018 to 1,335,477 in 2028—an average growth of 2.3 percent annually. Average household size will shrink from 2.94 to 2.75 persons per household. The aging population is driving much of this change because older people tend to live in smaller households.

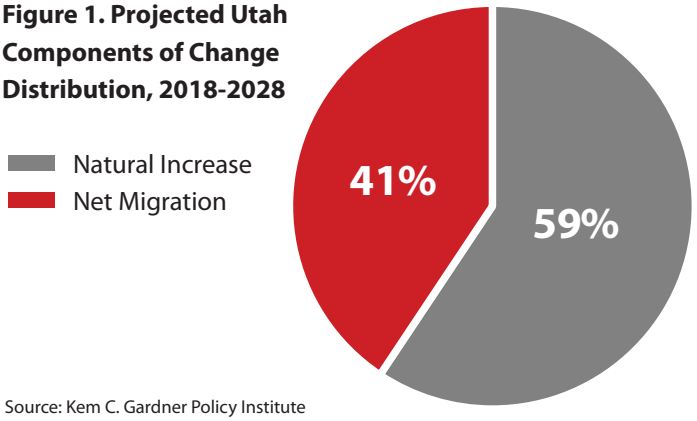
We used the Utah Demographic and Economic Model (UDEM) to produce these single-year of age and sex population projections for Utah and each of its counties.[1] The full dataset is available on our website.[2]

How do these Projections Relate to our Long-term Projections?

We previously produced long-term projections in 2017 that extended to 2065.[3] These new short-term projections extend only through 2028, but incorporate more recent data. The most important updates include additional employment figures, and estimates of population and components of change: births, deaths, and net migration.[4] Notably birth rates fell, and the retirement age population grew, faster than originally expected. Our new projections reflect these changing trends.

For analyses extending beyond 2028, users should consult our long-term projections. Use these short-term projections if your focus is the near-term horizon. We calibrated the short-term projections to interlock with the long-term. However, those wishing to perform analyses that span both periods will encounter a series break. Users are encouraged to choose the appropriate series judiciously depending upon their specific application.

Figure 1. Projected Utah Components of Change Distribution, 2018-2028



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Table 1. Projected Utah Population, Households, and Change, 2018-2028

	2018	2028	Change	Rate of Change	Average Annual Rate of Change
Population	3,166,647	3,739,193	572,546	18.1%	1.7%
Households	1,061,030	1,335,477	274,447	25.9%	2.3%
Persons per household	2.94	2.75	-0.18	-6.2%	-0.6%
Median Age	31.4	34.2	2.8	8.8%	0.8%

Natural Increase	339,826
Births	533,774
Deaths	193,948
Net Migration	232,720
Total	572,546

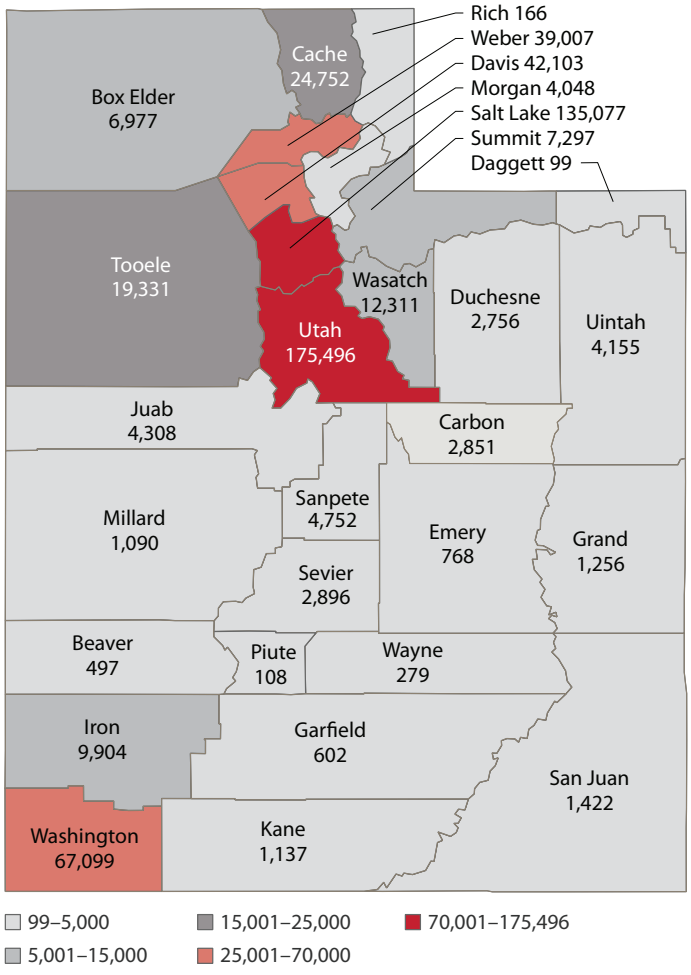
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Table 2. Projected Annual Utah Population and Household Detail, 2018-2028

Age	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total	3,166,647	3,219,116	3,270,729	3,326,920	3,384,056	3,441,769	3,500,064	3,558,948	3,618,426	3,678,506	3,739,193
Under 5	250,315	249,910	249,487	250,149	252,676	258,056	260,999	264,217	267,765	271,621	275,754
School Age (5-17)	690,731	695,057	698,990	701,290	701,549	698,579	697,964	696,624	695,437	694,925	695,032
College Age (18-24)	321,561	331,300	341,473	352,253	359,423	364,553	371,205	377,995	384,660	390,679	395,186
Working Age (18-64)	1,879,319	1,910,932	1,941,784	1,975,425	2,009,752	2,044,893	2,080,879	2,117,454	2,154,627	2,192,042	2,229,825
Under 18	941,046	944,968	948,476	951,439	954,224	956,635	958,964	960,841	963,202	966,546	970,786
Retirement Age (65+)	346,282	363,216	380,469	400,056	420,080	440,241	460,222	480,653	500,597	519,917	538,582
85+	40,403	41,302	42,427	44,228	46,062	48,067	50,181	52,489	55,061	58,146	62,005
Median Age	31.4	31.7	32.0	32.3	32.6	33.0	33.3	33.6	33.8	34.0	34.2
Youth Dependency Ratio	50.1	49.5	48.8	48.2	47.5	46.8	46.1	45.4	44.7	44.1	43.5
Retirement Dependency Ratio	18.4	19.0	19.6	20.3	20.9	21.5	22.1	22.7	23.2	23.7	24.2
Total Dependency Ratio	68.5	68.5	68.4	68.4	68.4	68.3	68.2	68.1	67.9	67.8	67.7
Households	1,061,030	1,085,491	1,109,803	1,136,492	1,163,640	1,191,306	1,219,415	1,247,948	1,276,865	1,306,012	1,335,477
Persons per Household	2.94	2.92	2.90	2.88	2.86	2.84	2.82	2.81	2.79	2.77	2.75

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Figure 2. Projected Population Change by County, 2018-2028



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Definitions:

These projections represent the "usual resident" population, meaning they reside in the area for more than half the year. Median age is the age at which half the population is older and younger. Youth dependency ratio is the population under age 18, divided by the population 18 through 64. Retirement dependency ratio is the population 65 and older, divided by the population 18 through 64. Total dependency ratio is the sum of the youth and retirement dependency ratios. Natural increase is births minus deaths.

Endnotes

1. Hollingshaus, M., Harris, E., Hogue, M.T., Perlich, P.S. (2018). The Utah Demographic and Economic Model: Version 2017. Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/udem_2017_final.pdf.
2. https://gardner.utah.edu
3. Perlich, P.S., Hollingshaus, M., Harris R., Tennert, J., & Hogue, M. (2017). Utah's Long-Term Demographic and Economic Projections Summary. Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/Projections-Brief-Final-Updated-Feb2019.pdf.
4. Harris, E. (2018). State and County Population Estimates for Utah: 2018. Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/Population-Estimates-Dec2018.pdf. Also see Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. (2019). Fact Sheet: Utah State and County Annual Population Estimates by Single Year of Age and Sex: 2010-2018. https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/Utah-Popest-CountySYAS-May2019.pdf.