

POPULATION TRENDS IN METROPOLITAN AREAS

Meyer Zitter, U.S. Bureau of the Census

It has already been noted in the popular press that the overall population counts from the recently completed census reveal few real surprises. The picture of population growth and redistribution of the 1960's emerging from the census parallel more or less population patterns reported by the Census Bureau in past years based on data from the Current Population Survey and by its independent population estimates. Yet the extent and intensity of some of these changes are worthy of additional comment and a number of individual situations rate special mention.

Metropolitanization and suburbanization of our population continued at a rapid rate during the 1960's although much below that of the 1950's. More than two-thirds of the population now live in areas defined as metropolitan. Flight from the cities continued, with the suburban areas growing heavily at the expense of the cities. Now for the first time the population of suburbia substantially exceeds that of its cities and of nonmetropolitan America. Close to 75 million of us are now suburbanites, compared with 62 million in the cities and 64 million in the balance of the country. In 1960 our population was roughly evenly distributed with 1/3, or about 60 million, in the cities, 1/3 in the suburbs, and 1/3 in the balance.

Regional Trends

Growth in metropolitan areas was pervasive; all regions of the country except the Northeast experienced more rapid population gains in metropolitan than in nonmetropolitan areas. In the South, which is at the same time both our most populous region and most rural (in terms of percent living in nonmetropolitan areas), about 55 percent now live in metropolitan areas. This proportion is still far behind the rest of the country but the differential has narrowed significantly over the past several decades. Almost 35 million (34.3) Southerners reside in metropolitan areas, not too far different than the 37 million (36.8) in metropolitan areas of our North Central States. Yet, there are still over 27 million (27.3) in the South living outside of metropolitan areas, a far larger number than in any other region. Thus, a substantial reservoir of potential migrants to metropolitan areas still exists in the South.

In the Northeast, on the other hand, it's the nonmetropolitan areas that have been growing faster, as the urbanization process spills over into the nonmetropolitan territory. Although this pattern of metropolitan-nonmetropolitan growth rate is different than that in the rest of the country, it is by no means surprising. The picture was not too different in the 1950's when the metropolitan-nonmetropolitan growth rates in the Northeast were about equal, while at the same time growth rates in metropolitan areas were far outpacing those in nonmetropolitan areas in the rest of the country. The extremely high propor-

tion of population already living in metropolitan areas in the Northeast, it was close to 80 percent as far back as 1940, and the high densities of many of the cities are factors contributing to this abnormal differential in metropolitan-nonmetropolitan growth patterns.

Population growth in the fastest growing region of our country--the West--is also primarily metropolitan in nature, with a 27 percent increase in its metropolitan population since 1960. Better than 3/4's of the 35 million persons in the West live in SMSA's. Its metropolitan percentage--77.6--is close to the 81.2 percent of the very populous Northeast.

Metropolitan growth has been far from uniform with metropolitan areas of the West and South growing far more rapidly than those of the North. Population movement has been toward the pleasant-climate and resort type areas of Florida, Arizona, Nevada, and California, making their metropolitan areas amongst the fastest growing areas in the country. But even at that, metropolitan growth rates in this decade are well below those of the preceding decade. One major factor in the lower growth rates for metropolitan areas has been the substantial drop in the birth rates during the 1960's. Overall national population growth was down to 13.3 percent compared with 18.5 percent in the 1950's. There were 2 million less babies born, and 2½ million more deaths in the 1960-70 period than in the 1950-60 period. Another factor, perhaps even more important, is that the census figures imply a significant reduction in population redistribution through net migration between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. The figures are quite striking in this respect. Roughly speaking, in the 1940's and 1950's net out-migration from nonmetropolitan areas amounted to 5½ to 6 million in each decade; in comparison net out-migration from nonmetropolitan areas amounted to only about 2½ million in the 1960's. The rate in the 1960's, about -4.0 percent, was much less than 1/2 that of the 1950's. At the receiving end, metropolitan areas in the 1960's gained about 5½ million through net migration (and net immigration from abroad), a not inconsiderable amount but much less than the 8 million net migration gain of the 1950's.

Regionally, both the South and the West gained large numbers of net migrants in their metropolitan areas, 2 million and 3 million, respectively, respectable amounts but reduced somewhat from the corresponding net gains in the 1950's. The North Central region metropolitan areas gained virtually zero net migrants in this decade, compared with gains of over one million net migrants in both the 1940's and the 1950's. One of the more remarkable trend shifts in net migration is that which occurred in the South where net out-migration for nonmetropolitan areas in the 1960's amounted to only 1½ million; in the two preceding decades the South's nonmetropolitan areas lost over 4 million in each decade. It is

this reduction in net out-migration from nonmetropolitan areas that permitted the South to register an overall net migration gain for the first time in many a decade. A significant fact that emerges from these metropolitan-nonmetropolitan shifts is that it appears that net immigration from abroad (which amounted to almost 4 million persons over the decade) played a very major role in metropolitan population growth in the 1960's. Although immigration from abroad also contributed to metropolitan growth in previous decades, out-migration from nonmetropolitan areas was by far the major component of net migration into the metropolitan areas in the previous decades.

The SMSA definition used here is as of 1970. There are almost 7 million (6.7) persons living in areas in 1970 that were not considered part of the metropolitan population in 1960, thus further reinforcing the trend toward metropolitanization. These areas grew at about the same rate as the population living in the suburban ring. About 60% of this group represent "outlying" counties that became part of the existing SMSA's. The balance represent newly-established SMSA's as the core city reached the 50,000+ class.

Pattern by Size

Rates of metropolitan population growth differ significantly by size, with the very largest and the very smallest areas showing the slowest growth. In fact, growth in SMSA's of 2 million or more and those under 1/4 million was only just about large enough to accommodate their own natural increase, suggesting little population gain (or loss) through net migration. The fastest growing appear to be the more moderate size ones, those in the 1 and 2 million class and those between 1/2 to 1 million. The former grew by about 25 percent and the latter by 17 percent during the past decade. Yet, size class is probably a very imperfect measure of place of residence preference and doesn't really explain whether Americans prefer to live in small or large metropolitan areas. The picture varies depending upon whether places are classified by size in 1960 to 1970--that is, at the beginning of the growth period or at the end. Regional variations also exist by size. Furthermore, population growth itself tends to move areas out of one size class to another. For example, SMSA's of 1/2 to 1 million population in 1960 added 5 1/2 million or 22 percent to their population--a very significant growth level--but this had the effect of increasing the population of a number of these SMSA's to well over the million mark, thus moving them into the next higher size category when viewed from the end of the period. If size is an important factor in attracting migrants to areas, this very factor of growth may lessen its attraction to later migrations.

In any event, the census population figures by size suggest that we have been and continue to be a nation of large area dwellers, and if a significant portion of our population truly yearn to return to "small-town America" they have yet to demonstrate this by their choice of residence. 1/ In 1960, when we were a nation of 180 million, about 1/4 of our population lived in

SMSA's of 2 million+ and another 1/4 of our population in SMSA's of 1/2 to 2 million (with 10 percent in SMSA's of 1 and 2 million). Now with a total population of 205 million we still find about 1/4 in SMSA's of 2 million+ and 1/4 in 1/2 to 2 million (with 13 percent in those of 1-2 million). In absolute terms, however, we find 52 million persons now living in the large SMSA's (SMSA's of 2 million+) compared with 43 million in this size category in 1960--a gain of 9 million. There are now 26 million living in SMSA's of 1 and 2 million, whereas there was less than 19 million in this size class back in 1960, an increase of 7 million or almost 40 percent. The number of people living in SMSA's of 1/2 to 1 million and 1/4 to 1/2 million increased very slightly in each instance, but we now have less people living in SMSA's of under 250,000 than was the situation 10 years earlier. Thus, in the face of or perhaps because of an increase of 18 million in metropolitan population (and an overall increase of 24 million in total population) less people are living in small SMSA's than before. I guess we need to adjust our definition of small areas to accommodate population growth which causes SMSA's to shift to larger class sizes.

Change Within Metropolitan Areas

Significant population shifts continue to take place between cities and suburbs within metropolitan areas. Although we have been expecting cities to show up poorly in the way of population growth in this past decade, as indicated by a number of special censuses conducted during the decade and from the Current Population Survey, the intensity of the losses in some cities comes as a surprise. Almost half of the 50 largest cities lost population in this last decade, in many cases intensifying losses that had occurred in the 1950's. One of the steepest declines was experienced by St. Louis City with a 19 percent population loss. This is on top of a 13 percent loss in the 1950's. Other large cities that have had population losses of more than 10 percent include Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, and Pittsburgh. In general, it's the very large cities of the Northeast and North Central regions that show the largest population declines but even moderate and small-size cities in the SMSA's of these regions lacked growth. Cities in metropolitan areas of the South and West tended to show some growth and in some instances, as in California and Arizona, they show substantial growth, but very frequently city growth in these regions is primarily a function of annexations of territory. In fact, although the figures indicate a small overall population gain for all central cities, it is likely a population loss would have resulted if it were not for annexation. What the figures suggest is that the pattern of suburbanization so well known to our larger cities has also caught up with our smaller ones.

These overall census totals give us only a very general picture of what's happening within metropolitan areas. The more interesting and significant data relate to population distribution by race and age. Unfortunately, the census data reflecting on these changes are not yet available for most of the large cities in the

country. However, let me discuss first some overall changes for the 1960-1970 decade based on figures from our Current Population Survey and then cite some figures for a few cities for which data have already become available. The survey figures on metropolitan residence are based on 1960 definitions but the picture would be about the same when converted to a 1970 base.

Although there has been very little change in the overall population in the cities between 1960 and 1970, there have been significant population shifts between cities and suburbs. There was a loss of about 2½ million of the white population of central cities of SMSA's. This was more than offset by a population gain of about 3 million Negro and other races. Stated more dramatically, the 2½ million net loss of the white population implies roughly a net out-migration of about 6 million whites. On the other hand, the majority of the 3 million gain of the Negro population in the cities was as a result of an excess of births over deaths but net in-migration also contributed significantly--about 900,000 to a million. In other words, 2/3's of the increase of Negro population of cities results from its own natural increase, and about 1/3 through net in-migration. About 55 percent of all Negroes live in central cities compared to only 25 percent of the white population. Negroes make up 21-22 percent of the population of cities in 1970 compared with 17 percent in 1960.

The white population gained about 16 million in the suburban ring--about a 30 percent increase during the period--while about 1.1 million Negroes were added to the suburbs. Although the rate of growth of Negroes in the suburbs appears to be fairly high, the overall total is still relatively small. About 3½ million Negroes live in metropolitan areas outside of central cities so that now about 15 percent of all Negroes live in suburban areas (it's almost 40 percent for whites). Negroes now represent 5 percent of the suburban population, about the same as in 1960.

Because of sampling error, the survey data do not provide a clear picture on whether, or the extent to which, Negroes have been moving into suburban areas. Whatever the situation, Negro suburbanization is bound to vary significantly from area to area so that we need to wait for more census data to fill in the story on white-nonwhite metropolitan redistribution and on the nature of Negro suburbanization, if any--i.e., a mere spillover from central cities to heavy concentration in the close-by near-in suburb; or a more diffusive pattern throughout in the suburban area. At this point, there is very little evidence of any appreciable movement of Negroes to suburban areas for the few SMSA's for which data are available, but the evidence is clear on the increasing percentage of Negroes in central cities.

The following are illustrative:

<u>City</u>	<u>Percent Negro in Selected Cities: 1960 and 1970</u>	
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
Bridgeport	10	16
Hartford	15	28
New Haven	15	26
Gary 1/	25	33
Indianapolis	14	18
Milwaukee	8	15
Wilmington	26	43

1/ Combined total for cities of Gary, Hammond and East Chicago.

To summarize, the main findings of the census totals on population growth are:

(1) Metropolitan growth continues but at rates below those of the previous decade. This reflects a product of both reduced levels of national population increase and less net out-migration from nonmetropolitan areas.

(2) Suburbanization continues with most large cities still losing population. There were significant population shifts, however, with white out-migration from central cities being offset by in-migration of Negroes and other races. Most large cities will show significant increases in percent Negro and other races.

(3) The extent of Negro suburbanization, if any, cannot be fully determined from the data now available (but such data should be forthcoming very shortly). For the areas already on hand there is hardly any evidence of appreciable movement of Negroes into suburban areas, but there is much evidence of substantial increases of Negroes in central cities.

Footnotes

1/ This paper focuses mainly on metropolitan growth trends. There are, undoubtedly, a number of nonmetropolitan areas that have also grown rapidly in the 1960-70 decade but the nature and extent of nonmetropolitan growth has not as yet been fully examined and will be the subject of a separate report. A brief review of preliminary census data suggests to this writer that many nonmetropolitan growth areas are associated with special situations such as sites of universities or military installations.

Table 1.--POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND PERCENT METROPOLITAN: 1950 TO 1970
(In thousands. Metropolitan areas as defined in 1970)

	U. S. Resident Population	Population in Metropolitan Area	Percent in Metropolitan Area
1950.....	151,326	92,913	61.4
1960.....	179,323	118,415	66.0
1970 (preliminary)...	200,252	136,261	68.0

Table 2.--PERCENT OF POPULATION IN METROPOLITAN AREAS, BY REGION: 1940 TO 1970
(In thousands)

Region	1970 Resident Population (Preliminary)	Percent metropolitan				
		1970 Definition		1960 Definition		
		1970	1960	1960	1950	1940
United States....	200,252	68.0	66.0	63.0	59.0	55.1
Northeast.....	48,417	81.2	81.6	79.0	79.1	78.8
North Central.....	55,956	65.7	63.8	60.1	56.5	52.8
South.....	61,533	55.7	52.0	48.1	41.2	34.5
West.....	34,347	77.6	74.9	71.8	67.1	62.0

Table 3.--POPULATION CHANGE BY REGION, BY METROPOLITAN RESIDENCE: 1950 TO 1970
(In thousands. 1970 data preliminary. SMSA's as defined in 1970)

Region	Metropolitan			Nonmetropolitan		
	Population 1970	Percent Change		Population 1970	Percent Change	
		1960-70	1950-60		1960-70	1950-60
United States, total ..	137,035	+15.2	26.4	63,214	+4.8	7.5
Regions						
Northeastern	39,302	+7.8	13.2	9,111	+11.0	13.1
North Central	36,774	+11.7	23.7	19,186	+2.6	6.9
The South	34,289	+20.0	36.6	27,239	+3.2	3.4
The West	26,669	+26.9	48.6	7,678	+9.2	2.3

Table 4.--POPULATION CHANGE, BY METROPOLITAN RESIDENCE, BY REGION: 1960-70
(In millions. Based on preliminary data. SMSA's as defined in 1970)

Region	Metropolitan		Central City		Ring	
	Amount of Change	Percent Change	Amount of Change	Percent Change	Amount of Change	Percent Change
United States total..	18.0	+15.2	2.8	4.7	15.3	25.6
Northeast.....	2.8	7.8	-0.7	-3.6	3.5	18.2
North Central.....	3.9	11.7	-0.1	-0.7	4.0	24.5
South.....	5.7	20.0	1.9	12.5	3.8	28.8
West.....	5.7	26.9	1.6	16.1	4.1	36.1

Table 5.--ESTIMATES OF NET MIGRATION, BY REGION, BY RESIDENCE
(In millions. Figures are rough approximations based on preliminary data. Metropolitan definition as of end of each decade.)

Region and Residence	Amount of net migration			Net migration as percent of population ^{a/}	
	1960-70	1950-60	1940-50	1960-70	1950-60
<u>Metropolitan</u> , total.....	+5.4	+8.1	+7.2	+4.5	+9.2
Northeast.....	+0.2	+0.3	+0.4	+0.5	+1.0
North Central.....	+0.1	+1.3	+1.3	+0.3	+5.3
South.....	+2.1	+2.7	+2.4	+7.4	+14.6
West	+3.0	+3.8	+3.2	+14.5	+28.8
<u>Nonmetropolitan</u> , total..	-2.4	-5.5	-5.9	-4.0	-8.7
Northeast.....	+0.2	+0.0	-0.0	+2.0	+0.4
North Central.....	-0.9	-1.4	-1.6	-4.6	-7.0
South	-1.5	-4.1	-4.6	-5.6	-14.4
West.....	-0.2	+0.0	+0.3	-2.5	+0.2

^{a/} As percent of population at beginning of period.

Table 6.--POPULATION IN SMSA'S, CENTRAL CITIES, AND
RING BY SIZE OF SMSA: 1970, 1960, AND 1950

(In thousands. Based on preliminary 1970 data. SMSA's defined as of 1970)

Size Category	Popu- lation 1970	Popu- lation 1960	Popu- lation 1950	Percent Change	
				1960-70	1950-60
United States Total.....	200,252	179,323	151,326	+11.7	+18.5
SMSA, Total.....	136,261	118,415	92,913	+15.1	+27.4
SMSA's of 2,000,000 or more.....	51,656	46,604	37,920	+10.8	+22.9
SMSA's of 1,000,000 to 1,999,999.	26,143	20,872	14,775	+25.3	+41.3
SMSA's of 500,000 to 999,999.....	24,182	20,598	15,837	+17.4	+30.1
SMSA's of 250,000 to 499,999.....	17,967	15,676	12,332	+14.6	+27.1
SMSA's of under 250,000.....	16,313	14,666	12,048	+11.2	+21.7
Central Cities, Total.....	62,161	59,396	52,999	+4.7	+12.1
SMSA's of 2,000,000 or more.....	22,837	23,567	23,566	-3.1	+0.0
SMSA's of 1,000,000 to 1,999,999.	10,657	9,615	7,863	+10.8	+22.3
SMSA's of 500,000 to 999,999.....	11,569	10,468	8,854	+10.5	+18.2
SMSA's of 250,000 to 499,999.....	8,180	7,548	6,013	+8.4	+25.5
SMSA's of under 250,000.....	8,918	8,199	6,703	+8.8	+22.3
Ring, Total.....	74,100	59,019	39,913	+25.6	+47.9
SMSA's of 2,000,000 or more.....	28,819	23,037	14,354	+25.1	+60.5
SMSA's of 1,000,000 to 1,999,999.	15,486	11,258	6,912	+37.6	+62.9
SMSA's of 500,000 to 999,999.....	12,613	10,130	6,983	+24.5	+45.1
SMSA's of 250,000 to 499,999.....	9,786	8,127	6,319	+20.4	+28.6
SMSA's of under 250,000.....	7,395	6,467	5,344	+14.4	+21.0
Non-metropolitan.....	63,991	60,908	58,413	+5.1	+4.3

PERCENT OF METROPOLITAN POPULATION LIVING IN SMSA'S

Size Category	1970	1960	1950
2,000,000+.....	37.9	39.4	40.8
1,000,000+.....	57.1	57.0	56.7
1 to 2 million	19.2	17.6	15.9
$\frac{1}{2}$ million to 1 million	17.7	17.4	17.0

Table 7.--DISTRIBUTION OF METROPOLITAN POPULATION, BY SIZE: 1960 AND 1970
(In millions)

	By size in 1970				By size in 1960			
	1970	1960	Change		1970	1960	Change	
			Num- ber	Per- cent			Num- ber	Per- cent
2 million+	52.3	47.1	5.2	11.0	48.2	43.4	4.8	11.0
1 to 2 million	26.1	20.9	5.3	25.3	22.0	18.7	3.3	17.6
1/2 to 1 million	26.7	22.7	3.9	17.3	30.5	25.1	5.5	21.8
1/4 to 1/2 million	18.2	15.7	2.4	15.3	18.9	16.8	2.1	12.7
Under 1/4 million	14.8	13.4	1.5	11.1	18.4	15.9	2.6	16.2

	1970 population by size in 1970		1960 population by size in 1960		Percent change in population 1960-70
	Number	Percent of U.S. total	Number	Percent of U.S. total	
2 million+	52.3	26.1	43.4	24.2	+20.5
1 to 2 million	26.1	13.1	18.7	10.4	+39.6
1/2 to 1 million	26.7	13.3	25.1	14.0	+6.4
1/4 to 1/2 million	18.2	9.1	16.8	9.4	+8.1
Under 1/4 million	14.8	7.4	15.9	8.9	-6.5

Table 8.--CHANGES IN METROPOLITAN POPULATION, BY COLOR: 1960-70
(In millions. Based on Current Population Survey. SMSA's as defined in 1960)

	White		Negro	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<u>Absolute change 1960-70</u>				
SMSA	+13.6	+13.7	+4.0	+32.7
Central City	-2.5	-5.2	+2.8	+29.4
Ring	+16.1	+30.8	+1.1	+45.6
<u>Percent living in:</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1960</u>
SMSA	63.8	63.1	70.6	64.7
Central City	25.3	30.0	54.8	51.5
Ring	38.5	33.1	15.8	13.2
<u>Percent of area that is of specified race:</u>				
SMSA	86.4	88.3	12.3	10.8
Central City	76.9	82.1	21.4	16.8
Ring	94.1	94.9	5.0	4.5