

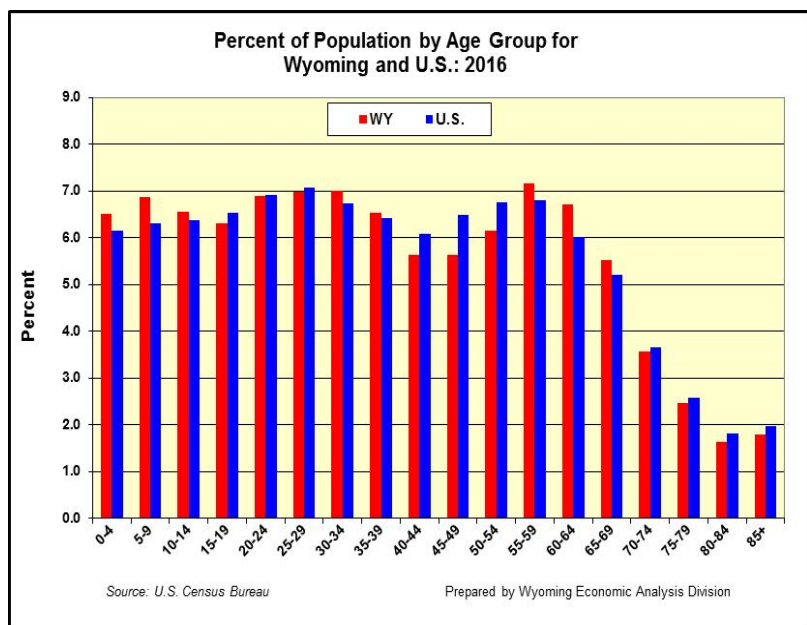
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wyoming's Population is Aging Quickly

CHEYENNE – The elderly population (age 65 and over) in the state grew 3.8 percent between July 2015 and July 2016, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. The median age (half of the population is younger, and the other half older) rose 0.3 to 37.1 years, while it increased from 37.8 to 37.9 during the same period for the U.S. The figure indicates that the aging of Wyoming's population has picked up speed, and the pace was one of the fastest in the country. Though the impact from baby boomers (age 52 to 70 in 2016) aging was the main reason, Wyoming's downturn in the energy industry also played a big role. "As a result of the reduction in employment, some younger workers left the State," said Dr. Liu, Chief Economist with the Economic Analysis Division. "Movers tend to be much younger than non-movers, and this is particularly true for Wyoming." Whenever the State experiences overall negative net migration (less people moved into Wyoming than residents moving out), the population aging will be faster. Total net migration was about -3,800 between July 2015 and July 2016. However, Wyoming was still ranked as the 15th youngest state in the nation in 2016.



The population under 18 years increased 2.6 percent since 2010. The growth was particularly significant for elementary age children. Many of them are baby boomers' grandchildren. The proportion of the State's elderly population (65 and over) was 15.0 percent in 2016, just slightly lower than the U.S. level of 15.2 percent, but this cohort grew faster than that of the U.S. "Wyoming has one of the highest proportions of the baby boom population, and one of the lowest proportion of Generation X (age 36 to 51 in 2016) in the country. Together with slow employment growth, and the rural nature of the State, Wyoming may face a labor force shortage in certain fields and faster population aging in the near future," Liu said. Wyoming's population age 65 and older increased from 70,090 in 2010 to 87,812 in 2016, or 25.3 percent, higher than the U.S.' growth rate of 22.3 percent during the same period. The elderly population in Wyoming is projected to reach 138,100, or over one-fifth of the state's total residents by 2030 when all baby boomers will be in this age group.

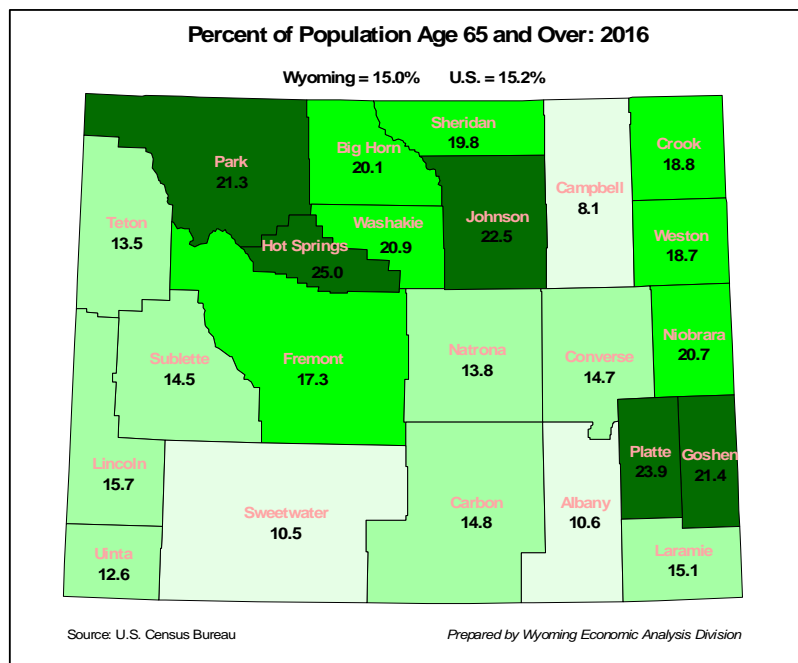
Wyoming's total minority population reached 93,256 in July 2016. Minority is defined as any group other than single-race, Non-Hispanic White. The growth of minorities since 2010 was 14,090 persons, or 17.8 percent, compared with 3.9 percent increase for the State's total population. Nearly two-thirds of the state's population growth from 2010 to 2016 was attributed to addition in the minority population. Hispanic was the largest minority group with 58,413 in July 2016, and it increased 16.3 percent during the six-year span. The Black or African-American population grew 53.0 percent during the period to 6,717. Other minority races, such as Asian and Pacific Islanders, and two-or-more races

also recorded 23.6 percent or higher growth rate, while the majority, Non-Hispanic White, increased only 1.6 percent. With 15.9 percent of the State’s total population, the proportion of minorities in Wyoming was still ranked the 9th lowest in the nation, while 38.7 percent of U.S. residents are minorities. “Both the nation and Wyoming’s population continue to grow in diversity,” said Dr. Liu.

The U.S. Census Bureau also released 2016 county population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin. Here are some highlights:

- The Black or African American population in Johnson and Park counties in 2016 was five times as much as in 2010. Niobrara and Teton also experienced growth rates of around 300.0 percent, each, during the six year period.
- The Hispanic population increased the fastest in Hot Springs County, at 96.2 percent between 2010 and 2016, followed by Niobrara and Johnson counties at 63.5 and 40.6 percent, respectively.
- Fremont County had the highest percentage minority population in 2016 at 29.9 percent, dominated by the Native American population, followed by Carbon (23.1%), Laramie (21.4%), and Sweetwater (20.4%) counties where most of the minority population was Hispanic.
- The largest county, Laramie, also had the largest minority population in 2016, including 14,356 Hispanic, 2,553 African-American, 1,149 Asian, and 2,145 Two or More Races. They comprise 24.6 percent, 38.0 percent, 21.2 percent, and 21.6 percent of the state’s total Hispanic, Black, Asian, and Two or More Races population, respectively.
- Counties with the smallest proportion of minority population in 2016 were Crook (5.7%), and Lincoln (7.3%).

- The State’s oldest county was Hot Springs, with median age of 48.7, with 25.0 percent of its population age 65 and over in 2016. Other counties with a higher proportion of elderly population (65 and over) were Platte (23.9%), Johnson (22.5%), Goshen (21.4%), Park (21.3%), Washakie (20.9%), and Niobrara (20.7%). These counties tend to have the smallest proportion of children population and their median ages were all higher than 42.8 years.



- The youngest county was Albany, with median age of 27.0 in 2016, followed by Campbell (33.3), Sweetwater (34.7), and Uinta (35.5). The median age in the state’s two largest counties, Laramie and Natrona, were 36.8 and 36.3, respectively.

- Campbell and Uinta counties had the highest percentage of preschool (under 5 years) population (7.9% each) in 2016, followed by Converse (7.5%), Fremont (7.2%), Natrona (7.0%), and Sweetwater (7.0%). The proportion was 6.5 percent Statewide in 2016.
- Campbell County had the lowest percentage of population age 65 or older, at 8.1 percent, followed by Sweetwater (10.5%), and Albany (10.6%) counties.

Complete population figures are available online at <http://eadiv.state.wy.us/pop/> or the U.S. Census Bureau’s website at <http://www.census.gov/>.