

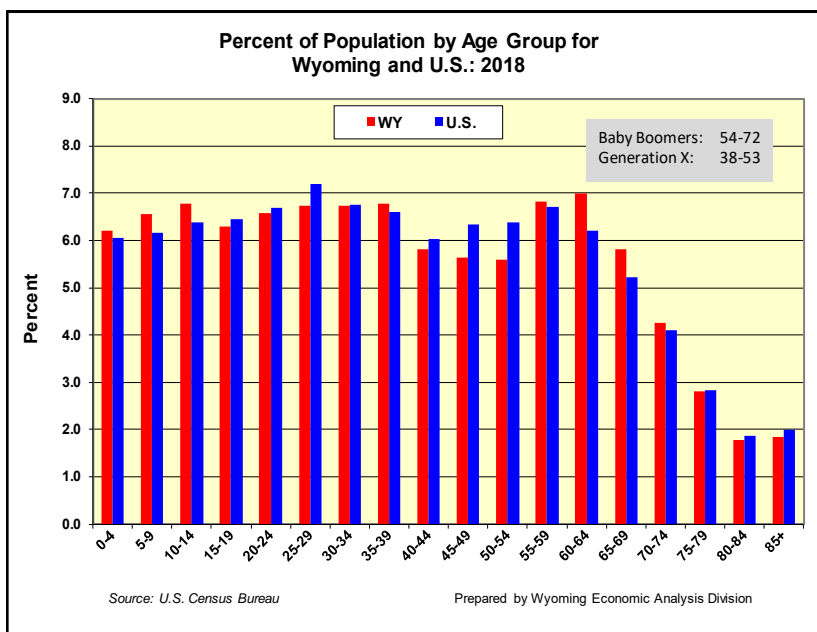
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Wyoming’s Population Continued to Age Fast from July 2017 to July 2018

CHEYENNE – The elderly population (age 65 and over) in the state grew 3.9 percent between July 2017 and July 2018, 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 38.0 years, while it increased from 38.0 to 38.2 during the same period for the U.S. The figure indicates that the aging of Wyoming’s population has slowed down, but the pace was still one of the fastest in the country. Though the impact from Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) aging was the main reason, Wyoming’s economic performance also played a big role. “Even though Wyoming’s economy has been rebounding since late 2016, the speed of the recovery was still moderate,” said Dr. Wenlin Liu, Chief Economist with the State of Wyoming, Economic Analysis Division. In addition, the labor market nationwide, particularly in neighboring states such as Colorado, Utah, and Idaho, continued to show strong growth, which drew Wyoming workers and residents. “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. The state’s total population decreased 0.2 percent, and net migration was about -3,100 between July 2017 and July 2018. Even with the fast aging, Wyoming population still ranked as the 19th youngest in the nation in 2018.



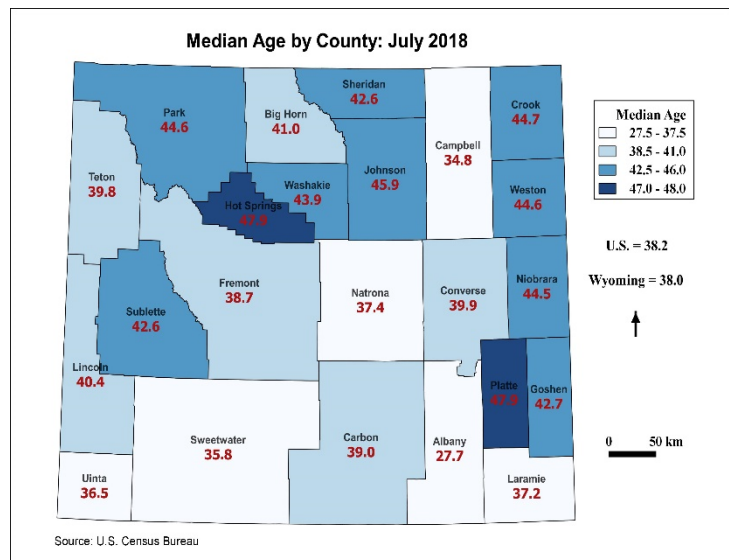
Since 2010, total population increased 2.5 percent, but the population under 18 years decreased 0.5 percent where pre-school age children declined 10.7 percent. The age 18-64 group dropped 2.9 percent during the eight-year span. The share of the State’s elderly population (65 and over) was 16.5 percent in 2018, higher than the U.S. level of 16.0 percent. Wyoming has one of the highest proportions of the baby boom (age 54-72 in 2018) population, and one of the lowest proportion of Generation X (age 38 to 53 in 2018) in the country. For example, the number of residents age 45-54 was about 15,000 (or 18.7%) less than age 55-64 group. “Wyoming does not have enough resident workers to replace retiring boomers,” Liu said. “With currently low unemployment rate (3.6%), and if millennials continue to move to big metro areas, the state may face a serious labor force shortage and faster population aging in the near future.” Wyoming’s population age 65 and older increased from 70,090 in 2010 to 95,375 in 2018, or 36.1 percent, higher than the U.S.’ growth rate of 30.2 percent during the same period. The elderly population in Wyoming is projected to reach 131,000, or well 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 93,484 in July 2018. Minority is defined as any group other than single-race, Non-Hispanic White. The growth of minorities since 2010 was 14,330 persons, or 18.1 percent, compared with 2.5

percent increase for the State’s total population. In fact, it’s the addition of the minority that contributes to all the state’s population growth from 2010 to 2018. Hispanic was the largest minority group with 58,227 in July 2018, and it increased 15.9 percent during the eight-year span. The Black or African-American population grew 50.3 percent during the period to 6,598. Other minority races, such as Asian and Two-or-More Races also recorded around 30.0 percent growth rate, while the majority, Non-Hispanic White, decreased 0.1 percent. With 16.2 percent of the State’s total population, the proportion of minorities in Wyoming was still ranked the 9th lowest in the nation, while 39.6 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 2018 county population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin. Here are some highlights:

- The Black or African-American population in Crook County in 2018 was five times as much as in 2010. Johnson, Niobrara, Park, and Teton counties also experienced growth rates of around 300.0 percent, each, during the eight-year period.
- The Hispanic population increased the fastest in Hot Springs County, at 75.2 percent between 2010 and 2018, followed by Niobrara and Johnson counties at 67.3 and 46.4 percent, respectively.
- Fremont County had the highest percentage minority population in 2018 at 30.5 percent, dominated by the Native American population, followed by Carbon (22.8%), Laramie (21.5%), and Sweetwater (20.7%) counties where most of the minority population was Hispanic.
- The largest county, Laramie, also had the largest minority population in 2018, including 14,644 Hispanic, 2,393 African-American, 1,212 Asian, and 2,306 Two or More Races. They comprise 25.1 percent, 36.3 percent, 21.0 percent, and 22.5 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 2018 were Crook (5.8%), followed by Lincoln (7.7%).
- The State’s oldest county was Platte, with median age of 47.9, with 25.6 percent of its population age 65 and over in 2018. Other counties with a higher proportion of elderly population (65 and over) were Hot Springs (26.2%), Johnson (23.7%), Park (23.2%), and Niobrara (22.6%). These counties tend to have the smallest proportion of children population and their median ages were all higher than 44.0 years.
- The youngest county was Albany, with median age of 27.7 in 2018, followed by Campbell (34.8), Sweetwater (35.8), and Uinta (36.5). The median age in the state’s two largest counties, Laramie and Natrona, was 37.2 and 37.4 years each.
- Campbell and Uinta counties had the highest percentage of preschool (under 5 years) population (7.4% and 7.3% each) in 2018, followed by Crook (7.2%), Sweetwater (6.9%), and Fremont (6.7%). The proportion was 6.2 percent Statewide in 2018.
- Campbell County had the lowest percentage of population age 65 or older, at 10.1 percent, followed by Albany (11.7%), and Sweetwater (12.1%) 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/>.