



ADMINISTRATION & INFORMATION

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS DIVISION

Mark Gordon, Governor | Patricia L. Bach, Director | Wenlin Liu, Administrator

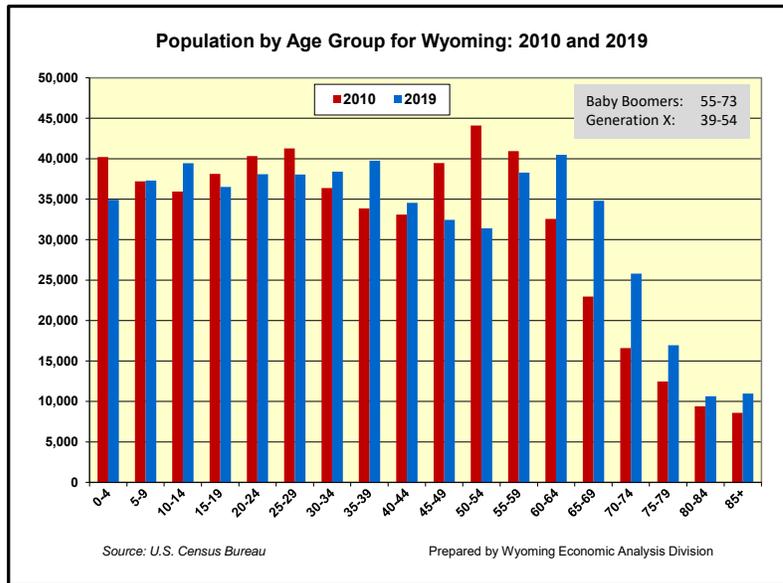
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

Contact: Dr. Wenlin Liu, Chief Economist; Emily Johnson, Senior Economist

Wyoming's Population Aged the Fastest in the Country from 2018 to 2019

CHEYENNE – The elderly population (age 65 and over) in the state grew 3.8 percent between July 2018 and July 2019, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. In comparison, Wyoming's total population only grew 0.2 percent during the same period. The median age (half of the population is younger, and the other half older) rose 0.4 to 38.4 years, while it increased from 38.2 to 38.4 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 the fastest in the country. "Though the impact from Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) aging was the main reason, outmigration of young people and decline of fertility rate also played roles," said Dr. Wenlin Liu, Chief Economist with the State of Wyoming, Economic Analysis Division. "Ever since the first Baby Boomers turned to 65 years old in 2011, there has been a rapid increase in the size of the older population." Even with the fast aging, Wyoming population still ranked as the 21st youngest in the nation in 2019.



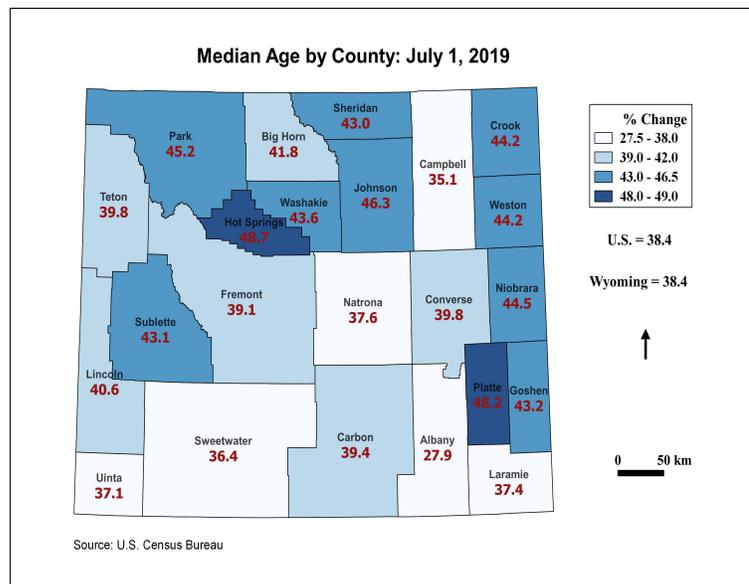
Wyoming has one of the highest proportions of the Baby Boom (age 55-73 in 2019) population, and one of the lowest proportion of Generation X (age 39 to 54 in 2019) in the country. For example, the number of residents age 45-54 was about 15,000 (or 18.9%) less than age 55-64 group. "Wyoming does not have enough resident workers to replace retiring Boomers in normal economic conditions," Liu said. However, over 20,000 payroll jobs were lost in the past few months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the leisure & hospitality and mining industries. In addition, Wyoming's unemployment rate of 8.8 percent in May was still the 3rd lowest in the U.S. "Wyoming's demographic transition and labor market environment provides good opportunity and encouragement for unemployed residents who are looking for jobs within the state as many Baby Boomers are exiting the labor force," Liu commented. Wyoming's population age 65 and older increased from 70,090 in 2010 to 99,179 in 2019, or 41.5 percent, higher than the U.S. growth rate of 34.2 percent during the same period. The share of the State's elderly population (65 and over) was 17.1 percent in 2019, higher than the U.S. level of 16.5 percent. The elderly population in Wyoming is projected to reach 135,000, or well over one-fifth of the state's total residents by 2030 when all Baby Boomers will be in this age group.

Since 2010, the population under 18 years decreased 1.2 percent where pre-school children (under 5 years) declined 13.1 percent. The age 18-64 group dropped 3.4 percent during the nine-year span. Wyoming's total minority population reached 94,379 in July 2019. Minority is defined as any group other than single-race, Non-Hispanic White. The growth of minorities since 2010 was 15,225 persons, or 19.2 percent, compared with 2.7 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 2019. Hispanic was the largest minority group with 58,609 in July 2019, an increased 16.7 percent. The

Black or African-American population grew 48.5 percent during the period to 6,520. Other minority races, such as Asian and Two-or-More Races also recorded over 30.0 percent growth rate, while the majority, Non-Hispanic White, remained the same as in 2010. With 16.3 percent of the State’s total population, the proportion of minorities in Wyoming was still ranked the 8th lowest in the nation, while 39.9 percent of U.S. residents are minorities. “Both the nation and Wyoming’s population continue to grow in racial and ethnic diversity,” said Dr. Liu.

The U.S. Census Bureau also released 2019 county population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin. Here are some highlights:

- The Black or African-American population in Crook County in 2019 was six times as much as in 2010. Niobrara, Park, and Teton counties also experienced growth rates of around 300.0 percent, each, during the nine-year period.
- The Hispanic population increased the fastest in Hot Springs County, at 87.6 percent between 2010 and 2019, followed by Niobrara and Johnson counties at 82.7 and 53.3 percent, respectively.
- Fremont County had the highest percentage minority population in 2019 at 30.5 percent, dominated by the Native American population, followed by Carbon (23.1%), Laramie (21.4%), and Sweetwater (20.7%) counties where most of the minority population was Hispanic.
- The largest county, Laramie, also had the largest minority population in 2019, including 14,843 Hispanic, 2,213 African-American, 1,220 Asian, and 2,338 Two or More Races. They comprise 25.3 percent, 33.9 percent, 19.9 percent, and 22.2 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 2019 were Crook (6.0%), followed by Lincoln (7.7%).
- The State’s oldest county was Hot Springs, with median age of 48.7 and nearly 28 percent of its population age 65 and over in 2019. Other counties with a higher proportion of elderly population (65 and over) were Platte (25.9%), Johnson (24.6%), and Park (24.4%). These counties tend to have the smallest proportion of children population and their median ages were all higher than 45.0 years.
- The youngest county was Albany, with median age of 27.9 in 2019, followed by Campbell (35.1), Sweetwater (36.4), and Uinta (37.1). The median age in the state’s two largest counties, Laramie and Natrona, was 37.4 and 37.6 years each.
- Crook and Campbell counties had the highest percentage of preschool (under 5 years) population (7.3% and 7.2% each) in 2019, followed by Fremont (6.7%), Uinta (6.7%), and Sweetwater (6.6%). The proportion was 6.0 percent Statewide in 2019.
- Campbell County had the lowest percentage of population age 65 or older, at 10.7 percent, followed by Albany (12.2%) and Sweetwater (13.0%) counties.



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