



# University of Connecticut

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Connecticut State Data Center Forecasts Weak Population Growth through 2030 State's Population Likely to Shrink without Continued Influx of Foreign-born Immigrants**

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STORRS, Conn. -- Connecticut can expect anemic population growth at best into the foreseeable future and could even see its population shrink in the coming years without the continued influx of foreign-born immigrants, in part because the state's birth rates - in every ethnic category - lag behind national averages, according to population projections released Wednesday by the Connecticut State Data Center (CtSDC) based at the University of Connecticut.

The first statewide and town-by-town population projections compiled for Connecticut in twelve years also suggest that the state, which already has among the highest levels of socio-economic segregation in the nation, is becoming more segregated and is likely to see further erosion of its middle class over the next two decades.

#### **Statewide Population**

Connecticut is expected to grow by only 207, 472 residents from 2005 to 2030, reaching a total population of 3.7 million residents, according to the CtSDC projections. The state's predicted annual growth rate of 0.27 percent - the equivalent of fewer than three new residents per every 1,000 existing residents - is less than one-third of the national annual growth rate of 0.85 percent and ranks Connecticut 38th for population growth nationwide, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

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Statewide, from 2005 to 2030, the total household population is expected to grow by 12 percent, according to the CtSDC projections. During that same period, the CtSDC forecasts that the statewide number of residents over the age of 65 will increase by nearly 75 percent while the number of children 19 and under in Connecticut will drop by about 8 percent.

Connecticut's white population, which currently accounts for 77 percent of the state's population, will account for just barely 61 percent of the state's population by 2030.

In addition to the state's decline in its white population, Connecticut also stands to lose about 3 percent - over 60,000 members - of its workforce.

The demographic shifts underway in Connecticut are part of a national pattern, but many of the trends appear more pronounced in Connecticut, said CtSDC Manager Orlando Rodriguez.

### **Immigration**

"If not for foreign-born immigration to Connecticut, which reached a 17-year high in 2005, the state would likely see its population begin to shrink, a scenario which would seriously erode Connecticut's workforce and would place Connecticut at greater risk of losing seats in the U.S. House of Representatives," Rodriguez said.

Connecticut lost one seat during the last Congressional Reapportionment in 2002.

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics, Connecticut hit a 17-year high for foreign-born immigration in 2005 with 15,335 immigrants that year. The state needs to see that trend of historically high foreign-born immigration continue each year if it is to offset its low birth rates, Rodriguez said.

### **Fertility**

A birth rate of 2.1 children per woman is needed to maintain current population levels.

Nationally, the birth rate is only 2.05 children per woman and, in Connecticut, the birth rate is even lower - 1.83 children per woman.

Even for Hispanics, who have the highest birth rate in Connecticut and nationwide, the birth rate in Connecticut falls below the national average with only 2.32 children per woman compared to 2.92 nationally.

The birth rate for Connecticut whites is 1.75 children per woman compared to 1.83 for whites nationwide. The birth rate for the state's African Americans is 1.93 children per woman compared to 2.08 nationwide. The birth rate for Connecticut residents in the U.S. Census "Other" category, which in Connecticut consists largely of Chinese and South Asian Indians, is 1.42 children per woman compared to 2.23 children per woman nationally.

While Hispanics account for the largest group of foreign-born immigrants in Connecticut, as they do nationwide, Asians are the fastest-growing group of immigrants in the state, Rodriguez explained.

Nationally, people counted as “Other” have the second-highest birth rate, but, in Connecticut, they have the lowest birth rate of all racial groups, he observed.

“Ironically, non-Hispanic foreign-born immigration is necessary to keep Connecticut growing in the foreseeable future, but it also is likely to age our population even further over time,” Rodriguez said.

### **Aging**

Just as the nation is aging, Connecticut will age even more. By 2030, the U.S. Census projects the national median age will be 39. The CtSDC forecasts the median age for Connecticut will be 41.5 at that time.

The median age for Connecticut’s white population will be 46.2, compared to 37.1 for African Americans, 31.4 for Hispanics and 40 for the group known as “Other,” which in Connecticut consists largely of Chinese and South Asian Indians.

The state’s rural areas especially are expected to age dramatically, creating an increasing demand for public services in the most remote parts of the state, Rodriguez said. But the towns where this aging population lives often will not see their tax bases grow. Also, as Connecticut’s share of retirees grows, the state will see less growth in its revenues.

Another trend emerging from the CtSDC projections is the return of elderly females to Connecticut, Rodriguez said. Between 1990 and 2000, there was a net gain of 1,458 (146 per year) females age 85 or over.

### **Future Workforce**

The state’s fertility pattern has important education, workforce and income implications for Connecticut, Rodriguez said.

“Connecticut’s low-income, urban centers, such as Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport, have the highest birth rates in the state and will increasingly be home to a disproportionate number of the state’s young people. A potentially major consequence of this demographic shift is that an increasing percentage of Connecticut’s future workforce will come from areas where educational outcomes have lagged,” Rodriguez said. “If this holds true, we expect the state’s median real personal income to fall. This outcome will be averted only if education of the state’s poorest residents improves and the state attracts higher paying jobs.”

The tension between rising demand for public services for the state’s rural, aging population, the challenge of funding urban education adequately and the potential of stable or falling state revenue is a very real scenario Connecticut may face in the near future, Rodriguez said.

### **Towns (By Category)**

For the purpose of examining trends occurring at the local as well as the state level, the CtSDC has grouped all 169 towns in Connecticut into one of five categories –Urban Core, Urban Periphery,

Suburban, Wealthy and Rural. The town groupings, as well as a town overview for the most representative town for each category, is available on the CtSDC's web site along with the detailed statewide and individual town projections. The web site is: [http://ctsdc.uconn.edu/Projections-Towns/towns\\_5groups.html](http://ctsdc.uconn.edu/Projections-Towns/towns_5groups.html).

### **Methodology**

The CtSDC statewide and town-by-town population projections are based on historical data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics, the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Connecticut Department of Education. Because the projections are based on historical population projections, Rodriguez cautioned, future events and public policy interventions can cause the pattern of population change to differ from the projections, thus the projections should be viewed as indicative of general trends.

### **On the Web**

CtSDC population projections, along with accompanying charts, graphics and town groupings, can be accessed online at: <http://ctsdc.uconn.edu/Projections-Towns/townList-css.html>.

### **About the CtSDC**

The CtSDC at UConn serves as the state's official liaison to the U.S. Census Bureau and anticipates providing a single portal for all socioeconomic data sets for the State of Connecticut and its municipalities. Prior to its creation in 2006, Connecticut was the only state in the country without a state data center. The Center's mission is to assist the state in meeting its obligations to provide reliable, updated population estimates and projections, to enable the state to evaluate the accuracy of official federal counts of Connecticut's population and to enhance state and municipalities' capacity to develop and evaluate policies and to plan future development. The CtSDC is a part of UConn's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

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