



POPULATION BRIEF

Trends in the Western U.S.

A Western Rural Development Center publication.
wrdc.usu.edu

Utah

The population of the State of Utah has grown rapidly in recent years, increasing from less than 1.5 million in 1980 to nearly 2.8 million in 2010, an 89.2 percent boost. Considering all 50 states, only Nevada and Arizona had higher growth rates during this period than Utah. In the decade from 2000 to 2010, the population of Utah grew by 530,681 persons, an increase of 23.8 percent. Again, only Nevada and Arizona had higher growth rates.

Table 1 presents data showing population changes in Utah counties from 1980 to 2010. From this table it is apparent that population change patterns varied extensively. In seven counties (Davis, Iron, Summit, Tooele, Utah, Wasatch, and Washington), the 2010 population was more than double the 1980 population. The largest population increase by percent was in Washington County where the number of residents grew from 26,065 in 1980 to 138,115 in 2010, an increase of 429.9 percent. The largest numerical increase was in Salt Lake County where the number of residents increased by 410,589 from 1980 to 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, the largest percentage population increases were in Wasatch County (54.7 percent) and Washington County (52.9 percent), while to greatest numerical increases were in Utah County (148,024 people) and Salt Lake County (131,243 people). In contrast, in two counties (Carbon and Emery) the 2010 population was lower than their 1980 population.

The Utah population has always been concentrated in the highly urbanized Wasatch Front, consisting of the four core counties of Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, and Utah. Since 1980, at least 75 percent of the Utah population has resided in these four counties. In recent years, the Wasatch Front population has expanded outwards and four additional counties (Juab, Morgan, Summit, and Tooele) have become a part of the metro areas – a determination based on the proportion of employees who work in the core counties. From 1980 to 2010, a consistent 80 percent of the Utah population has lived in the eight Wasatch Front metropolitan counties (Figure 1).

The most rapidly growing segment of the Utah population has been in the state's two other metropolitan counties – Washington County (St. George) and Cache County (Logan). As shown in

Figure 2, the population of these two counties increased by 201 percent between 1980 and 2010. Cache County's population increased by 97 percent between 1980 and 2010. As noted earlier, population growth was especially extensive in Washington County. Population growth was least extensive in the state's nonmetropolitan counties – although stable nonmetropolitan populations were certainly not universal. Overall, the states 19 nonmetropolitan counties had population increases of 55.2 percent between 1980 and 2010. In this 30 year period, the number of residents in Wasatch and Iron Counties more than doubled, and Sanpete County had a 90 percent increase.

Racial/Ethnic Composition of the Utah Population

As presented in Table 2, 80.4 percent of the Utah population was White in 2010. The proportion of the population that is White has steadily declined from 92.4 percent in 1980, while the proportion that is minority has grown from 7.6 percent in 1980 to 19.6 percent in 2010 (Figure 3). Of the 13 states in the western region, Montana, Wyoming and Idaho had minority populations that were a smaller percent of the total than Utah. Hispanic population growth has been especially rapid. In 2010, 13 percent of that state's residents were Hispanic. The proportion of the population that is Hispanic is greatest in Salt Lake and Weber Counties. In 10 Utah counties, over 90 percent of the residents were White in 2010. At the opposite extreme, only 44 percent of the residents of San Juan County were White, with over 50 percent Native American.

Educational Attainment in Utah

Over 90 percent of Utah residents' age 25 and older had at least a high school degree in 2009, while 28.7 percent of these individuals had at least a college degree (Table 3). Only Wyoming and Alaska had a higher proportion of high school graduates than Utah. In four western states, the proportion of residents with a college degree is greater than in Utah. In 13 Utah counties, over 90 percent of adults have a high school degree. In four counties (Cache, Davis, Summit, and Utah), more than 30 percent of adults have a college degree, led by Summit County where 48.2 percent are college graduates. In contrast, in eight counties the proportion with a college degree is 15 percent or less.

Educational attainment varies widely for different segments of the population. Especially significant are variations by race/ethnicity. As is evident from Figure 4, more than 90 percent of White, Black and Asian adults in Utah have completed high school, compared to only 68.9 percent of Hispanics and 75.5 percent of Native Americans. Also, 35.9 percent of Asians and 31.9 percent of Whites have a college degree, compared to 13 percent of Hispanics and 7.8 percent of Native Americans. Figure 5 shows that metropolitan residents are also more likely to have a college degree than nonmetropolitan residents (32.9 percent to 25.7 percent).

Income and Poverty in Utah

The median household income in Utah in 2009 was \$55,183 (Table 3). Five of the 13 western states had income levels higher than in Utah. Incomes varied widely by county. Median household incomes were more than \$70,000 in Morgan (\$75,164) and Summit (\$73,769) Counties, while they were less than \$40,000 in Piute (\$35,962), San Juan (\$36,038) and Grand (\$39,070) Counties. Table 3 also shows that 11.7 percent of the residents of Utah were living in Poverty in 2009. Three states in the western region had lower poverty rates than Utah. Again, there were substantial variations in poverty rates by county. Only 4.9 percent of Morgan County residents were in poverty in 2009, and poverty rates were less than 10 percent in Daggett, Davis, Summit, Tooele and Wasatch Counties. In contrast, more than one-fourth (28.3 percent) of San Juan County residents were in poverty. Table 3 also shows that the median value of owner-occupied homes in Utah was \$208,000 in 2009. These values ranged from \$457,500 in Summit County to \$95,900 in Emery County.

Incomes and poverty levels also varied widely for people with different characteristics. Figure 6A shows that while household incomes averaged more than \$50,000 for White and Asian households, they were only \$32,448 for Native Americans and \$37,830 for Hispanics. Similarly, Figure 6B shows that while 8.9 percent of Whites were living in poverty, this proportion was 27 percent for Native Americans. Figures 7A and 7B shows that incomes were higher and poverty rates lower for metro as opposed to nonmetro residents. 🧑

Table 1. Population Change for Utah Counties, 1980-2010

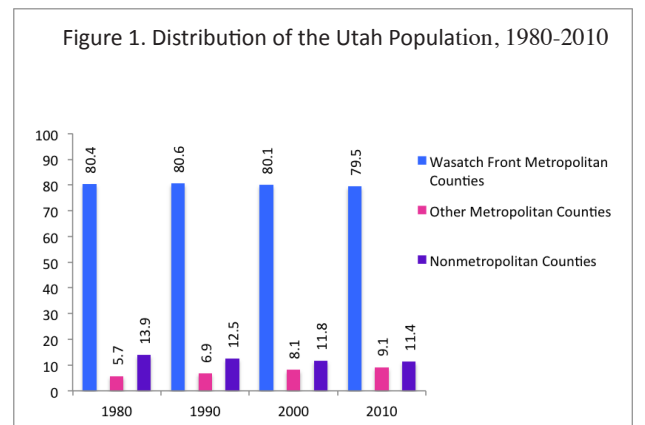
County	Population				Population Change			
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010		1980-2010	
					Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Beaver	4,378	4,765	6,005	6,629	624	10.4	2,251	51.4
Box Elder	33,222	36,485	42,751	49,975	7,224	16.9	16,753	50.4
Cache	57,176	70,183	91,391	112,656	21,265	23.3	55,480	97.0
Carbon	22,179	20,228	20,425	21,403	978	4.8	-776	-3.5
Daggett	769	690	921	1,059	138	15.0	290	37.7
Davis	146,540	187,941	238,994	306,479	67,485	28.2	159,939	109.1
Duchesne	12,565	12,645	14,371	18,607	4,236	29.5	6,042	48.1
Emery	11,451	10,332	10,962	10,976	14	0.1	-475	-4.1
Garfield	3,673	3,980	4,735	5,172	437	9.2	1,499	40.8
Grand	8,241	6,620	8,380	9,225	845	10.1	984	11.9
Iron	17,349	20,789	33,779	46,163	12,384	36.7	28,814	166.1
Juab	5,530	5,817	8,238	10,246	2,008	24.4	4,716	85.3
Kane	4,024	5,169	6,046	7,125	1,079	17.8	3,101	77.1
Millard	8,970	11,333	12,405	12,503	98	0.8	3,533	39.4
Morgan	4,917	5,528	7,129	9,469	2,340	32.8	4,552	92.6
Piute	1,329	1,277	1,435	1,556	121	8.4	227	17.1
Rich	2,100	1,725	1,961	2,264	303	15.5	164	7.8
Salt Lake	619,066	725,956	898,412	1,029,655	131,243	14.6	410,589	66.3
San Juan	12,253	12,621	14,413	14,746	333	2.3	2,493	20.3
Sanpete	14,620	16,259	22,763	27,822	5,059	22.2	13,202	90.3
Sevier	14,727	15,431	18,842	20,802	1,960	10.4	6,075	41.3
Summit	10,198	15,518	29,736	36,324	6,588	22.2	26,126	256.2
Tooele	26,033	26,601	40,735	58,218	17,483	42.9	32,185	123.6
Uintah	20,506	22,211	25,224	32,588	7,364	29.2	12,082	58.9
Utah	218,106	263,590	368,540	516,564	148,024	40.2	298,458	136.8
Wasatch	8,523	10,089	15,215	23,530	8,315	54.7	15,007	176.1
Washington	26,065	48,560	90,354	138,115	47,761	52.9	112,500	429.9
Wayne	1,911	2,177	2,509	2,778	269	10.7	867	45.4
Weber	144,616	158,330	196,533	231,236	34,703	17.7	86,620	59.9
State Total	1,461,037	1,722,850	2,233,204	2,763,885	530,681	23.8	1,302,848	89.2

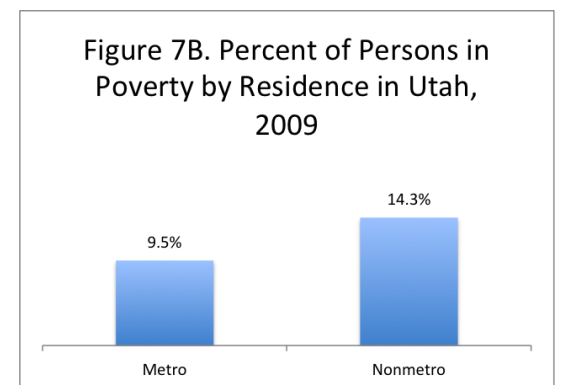
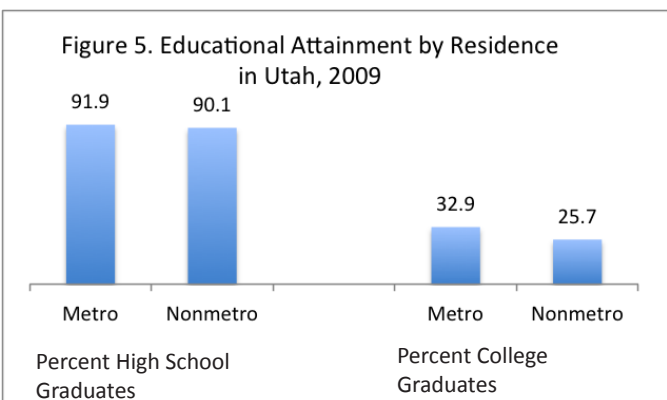
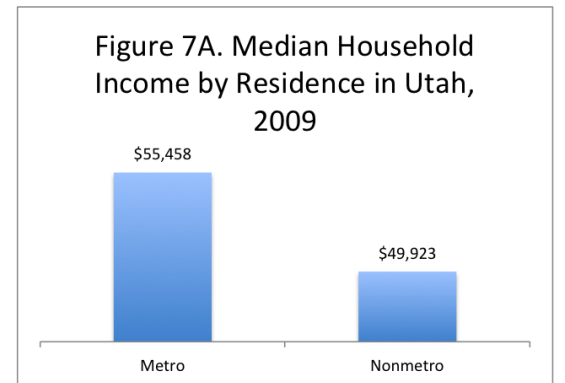
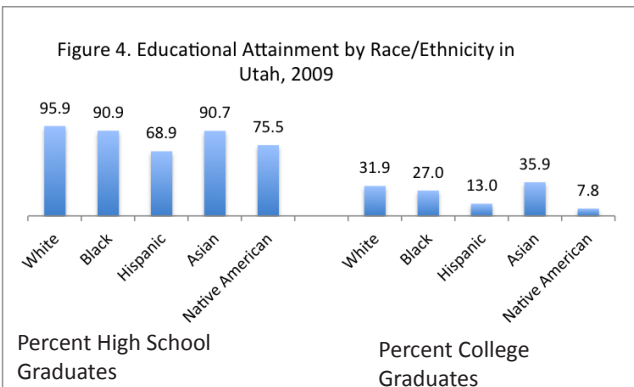
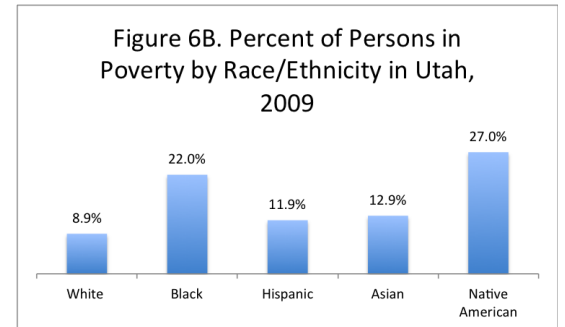
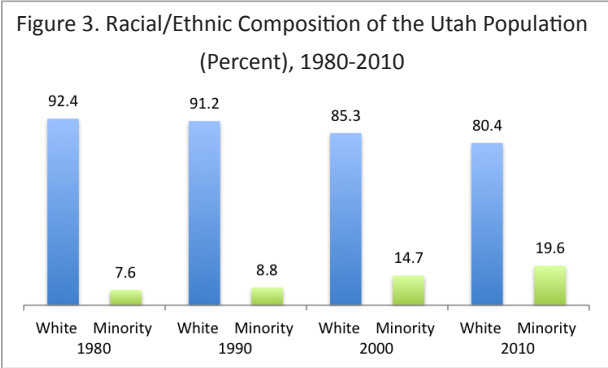
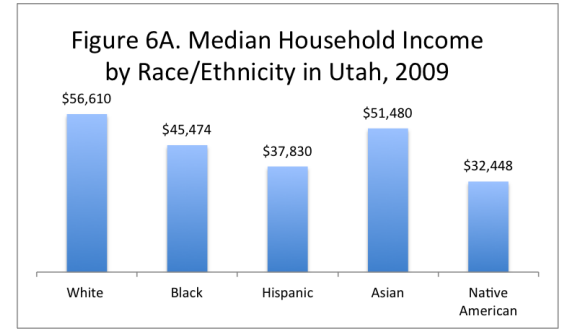
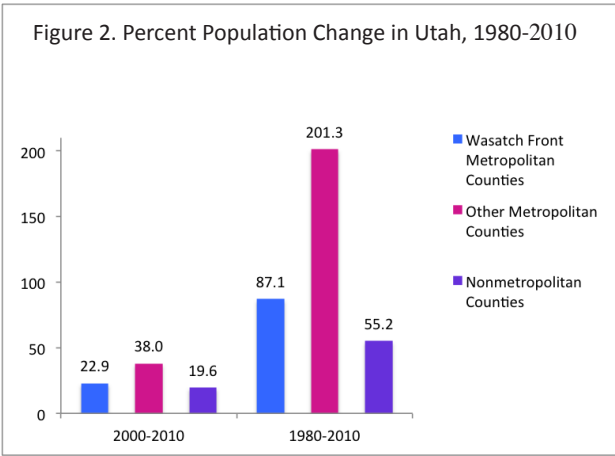
Table 2. Percentage of Population by Race/Ethnicity for Utah Counties, 2010

County	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American
Beaver	86.0	0.2	10.8	1.1	1.1
Box Elder	88.3	0.3	8.3	0.9	0.8
Cache	85.5	0.6	10.0	1.9	0.6
Carbon	84.1	0.4	12.4	0.6	1.2
Daggett	94.4	0.4	3.1	0.4	0.8
Davis	85.8	1.2	8.4	1.8	0.5
Duchesne	87.1	0.2	6.0	0.3	4.5
Emery	92.1	0.2	6.0	0.3	0.7
Garfield	91.6	0.4	4.5	1.2	1.6
Grand	84.1	0.3	9.6	0.8	4.1
Iron	87.1	0.5	7.7	0.8	2.2
Juab	94.0	0.2	3.7	0.2	0.9
Kane	93.2	0.2	3.7	0.4	1.5
Millard	84.7	0.1	12.8	0.6	1.0
Morgan	96.1	0.0	2.4	0.4	0.2
Piute	91.2	0.1	7.0	0.4	0.3
Rich	94.1	0.0	4.2	0.3	0.7
Salt Lake	74.0	1.6	17.1	3.3	0.9
San Juan	43.9	0.2	4.4	0.3	50.4
Sanpete	86.7	0.8	9.4	0.5	1.1
Sevier	92.9	0.2	4.5	0.3	1.1
Summit	85.4	0.4	11.5	1.2	0.3
Tooele	84.5	0.7	11.4	0.6	1.0
Uintah	82.8	0.4	7.1	0.5	7.7
Utah	84.2	0.5	10.8	1.4	0.6
Wasatch	84.2	0.3	13.5	0.8	0.5
Washington	85.6	0.6	9.8	0.7	1.4
Wayne	93.4	0.1	4.2	0.7	0.5
Weber	78.1	1.4	16.7	1.3	0.8
State Total	80.4	1.1	13.0	2.0	1.2

Table 3. Economic Conditions and Education for Utah Counties, 2009

County	Median Household Income	Percent of Persons in Poverty	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	Percent of Persons 25+ with High School Degree	Percent of Persons 25+ with College Degree
Beaver	\$41,761	10.9	\$143,100	89.4	11.6
Box Elder	\$52,867	9.6	\$154,200	90.5	21.7
Cache	\$47,064	16.7	\$171,900	92.2	35.0
Carbon	\$44,684	15.7	\$97,600	86.0	15.0
Daggett	\$43,940	6.6	\$158,300	83.3	14.2
Davis	\$66,220	7.0	\$214,300	94.9	32.7
Duchesne	\$53,080	10.6	\$145,100	85.2	13.9
Emery	\$51,014	11.6	\$95,900	89.6	12.7
Garfield	\$41,323	12.2	\$124,600	89.1	19.5
Grand	\$39,070	14.7	\$180,600	83.1	23.0
Iron	\$40,145	18.3	\$204,400	91.8	26.5
Juab	\$50,589	11.7	\$156,300	90.7	12.7
Kane	\$43,287	11.7	\$181,100	88.0	17.8
Millard	\$44,852	14.6	\$117,600	85.1	18.8
Morgan	\$75,164	4.9	\$240,700	96.5	25.0
Piute	\$35,962	18.8	\$135,700	87.3	14.3
Rich	\$53,783	10.1	\$131,100	94.1	26.2
Salt Lake	\$56,954	10.7	\$227,000	89.0	29.6
San Juan	\$36,038	28.3	\$100,500	79.3	16.3
Sanpete	\$42,834	16.0	\$136,300	86.0	18.3
Sevier	\$46,148	12.5	\$140,200	89.8	16.4
Summit	\$73,769	7.3	\$457,500	93.0	48.2
Tooele	\$56,053	7.2	\$174,100	92.3	19.1
Uintah	\$58,312	10.1	\$169,800	84.8	14.5
Utah	\$57,471	14.2	\$227,500	92.9	34.7
Wasatch	\$61,609	8.5	\$298,200	92.5	29.5
Washington	\$46,596	14.2	\$240,800	90.5	22.9
Wayne	\$41,785	15.2	\$167,700	90.5	25.0
Weber	\$53,094	12.5	\$160,800	88.6	21.9
State Total	\$55,183	11.7	\$208,100	90.4	28.7







Tel: 435.797.9732
Web: wrdc.usu.edu
Twitter: [westernrural](https://twitter.com/westernrural)
Blog: westernrural.wordpress.com
Video: youtube.com/thewrdc

About the WRDC

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers competitively funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each of the four Centers link the research and extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to enhance rural prosperity, create thriving communities, and support a sustainable and competitive agricultural system.

The WRDC is hosted by Utah State University and receives financial support from Cooperative Extension, and the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station. Additional one-time financial support provided by Colorado State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, Montana State University Extension, New Mexico State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, Oregon State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, Colorado State University Extension, University of Alaska Fairbanks Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, University of Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, University of California Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, University of Hawaii Extension, University of Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension, and Washington State University Extension.