



Wisconsin's County Population Estimates, 2017: Dane County Continues to Lead Growth, but Suburban, Manufacturing and Recreation/Retirement Counties Beginning to Gain In-Migrants

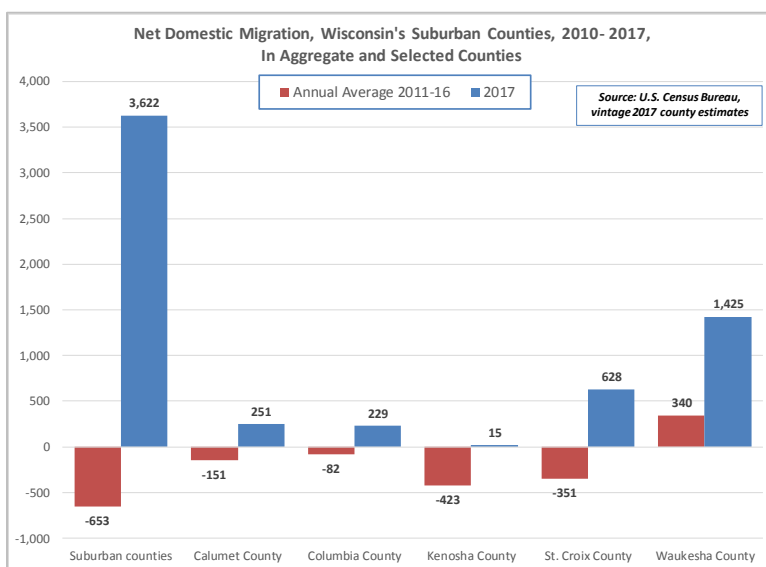
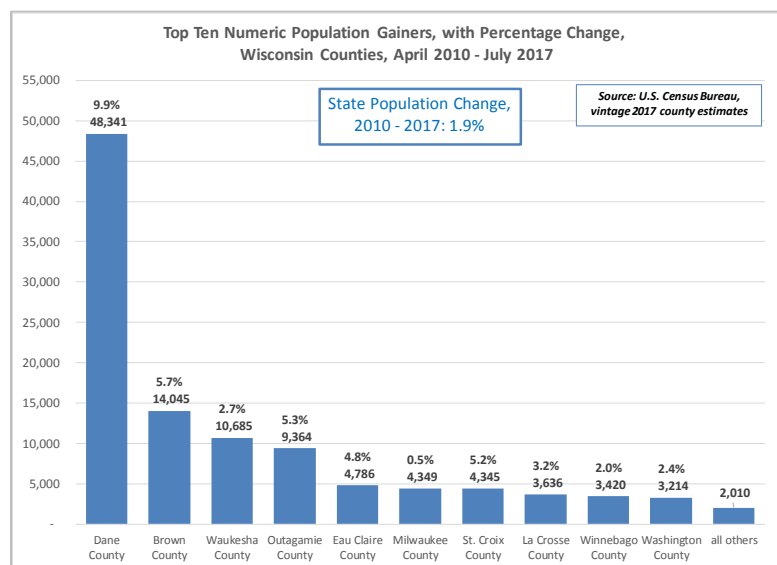
On March 28, 2018, the U.S. Census Bureau released a new set of county population estimates, referenced to July 1, 2017. These annual estimates contain not only population changes year-to-year since the 2010 Census, but also changes in vital events (births and deaths) and net migration (domestic and international).

Highlights from this year's release:

Dane County Continues to Be Largest Gainer

Dane County continued to have the largest numeric and percentage gains in the state, adding nearly 6,200 additional residents in the past year and approaching 50,000 (9.9%) since the 2010 Census.

Nine other counties—all metropolitan—have added more than 3,000 residents in the last seven years.

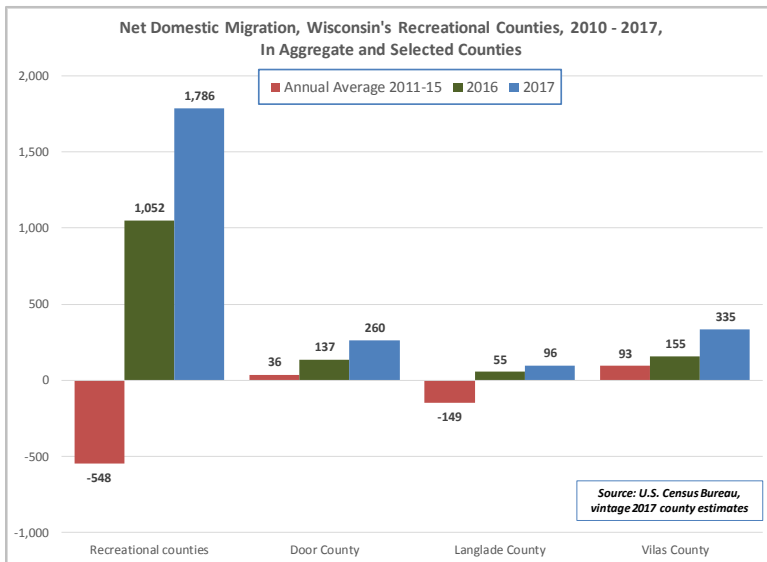
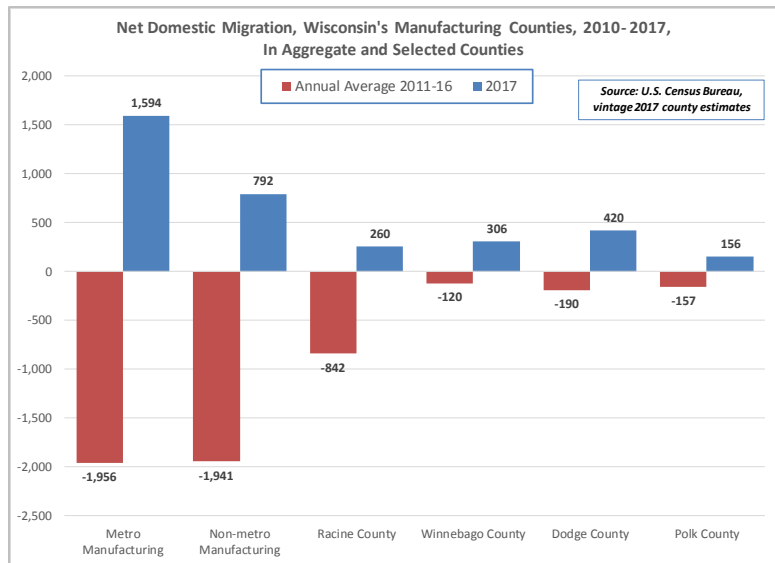


Migration in Suburban Counties Reverses from Losses to Gains

Since the 2007-09 Great Recession, suburban counties—long the recipients of in-migration—generally experienced net out-migration. However, in these latest estimates, many of Wisconsin's suburban counties showed positive domestic migration for the first year this decade.

Migration in Manufacturing Counties Turns from Negative to Positive

Wisconsin counties where the economy is heavily dependent on manufacturing—40% of the 72 counties—have also endured net migration losses since the 2007-09 Great Recession. 2017 was the first year where this pattern is beginning to reverse. Notably, the domestic migration gains were present whether the counties are metropolitan or non-metropolitan (rural).



Migration in Recreational/Retirement Counties Becoming Positive

Wisconsin counties where the economy is heavily dependent on recreation—nearly 25% of the 72 counties—and which have historically seen an influx of relocating retirees, had net migration losses or only small gains for many years following the Great Recession. This pattern began to reverse in 2016 and 2017.

Decreasing Birth Rates, and Natural Decrease, Remain Concerns: The Great Recession also reduced the number of births in Wisconsin (and nation-wide). However, there has not been a recovery in births, and birth rates have continued declining in many counties. In 45 of Wisconsin's 72 counties (62%), birth rates in 2017 were below the levels seen in 2011.

Twenty-six counties (36%) have recorded more deaths than births since 2010, a condition called "natural decrease." All of these counties are non-metropolitan. Natural decrease makes them dependent on positive migration for any population increase to occur.

Classifications of Counties in Wisconsin

Metropolitan counties: As defined by the Census Bureau, these counties have a densely-settled population core of at least 50,000 people that may consist of one or more municipalities, and surrounding counties (suburbs) that have extensive economic and commuting connections to the core county.

Metropolitan Core Counties (12)			
Brown	Dane	Eau Claire	Fond du Lac
La Crosse	Marathon	Milwaukee	Outagamie
Racine	Rock	Sheboygan	Winnebago

Metropolitan Suburb Counties (14)			
Calumet	Chippewa	Columbia	Douglas
Green	Iowa	Kenosha	Kewaunee
Oconto	Ozaukee	Pierce	St. Croix
Washington	Waukesha		

Manufacturing counties: Defined by the USDA Economic Research Service, these counties have production facilities that make up large segments of a county's total earnings and employment. Wisconsin has a preponderance of non-metropolitan manufacturing-oriented counties.

Metro Manufacturing Counties (11)		
Calumet	Chippewa	Columbia
Fond du Lac	Kewaunee	Marathon
Ozaukee	Racine	Sheboygan
Washington	Winnebago	

Non-Metropolitan Manufacturing Counties (18)				
Barron	Clark	Dodge	Iron	Jefferson
Juneau	Lincoln	Manitowoc	Marinette	Marquette
Polk	Price	Richland	Rusk	Taylor
Trempealeau	Walworth	Waupaca		

Recreational/retirement counties: Also defined by the USDA Economic Research Service, recreational counties have high levels of employment in entertainment and recreation, accommodations, and eating and drinking establishments. They are also characterized by sizeable percentages of vacant housing held for seasonal or occasional use. In Wisconsin's case, most of these counties also have large shares of older residents, many of whom have retired to these areas.

Recreational/Retirement Counties (17)								
Adams	Ashland	Bayfield	Burnett	Door	Douglas	Florence	Forest	Green Lake
Langlade	Oconto	Oneida	Sauk	Sawyer	Vilas	Washburn	Waushara	

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