Population

In early 2018, the United States Census Bureau (USCB) released its first population estimates for July 1, 2017. Kansas total population was estimated at 2,913,123, an increase of 5,834 (0.2%) from the estimate of Kansas total population for July 1, 2016 (2,907,289) released in 2017. (Table B4).

Population Density and Peer Groups

The population density of Kansas was 35.6 inhabitants per square mile in 2017, a 10.9 percent increase from 32.1 persons per square mile in 1998. For comparison, the population density of the U.S. increased from 72.4 to 92.2 persons per square mile from 1998 to 2017, a 27.3 percent increase (Figure B4).

In 2017, 36 of the state's 105 counties had population densities of less than 6.0 persons per square mile. The most sparsely populated county was Greeley, with a density of 1.6 persons per square mile. The most densely populated county was Johnson, with 1,248.8 persons per square mile (Figure B6).

Kansas counties are assigned to peer groups based on population density. (See the Technical Notes, Appendix 2 for peer group composition.) During the 2013-2017 period, the population of the urban peer group increased by 2.9 percent, while the frontier, rural, densely-settled rural, and semi-urban peer groups decreased by 3.7, 2.8, 1.8, and 1.7 percent, respectively (Table B4).

Natural Increase

In 2017, the rate of natural increase (the birth rate minus the death rate) was 3.3 persons per 1,000 population, a decrease of 19.5 percent from 4.1 per 1,000 population in 2016, and the lowest rate of natural increase in the past twenty years. Over the past 20 years (1998-2017), the rate of natural increase has fluctuated between a maximum of 6.3 persons per 1,000 population (2007) and a minimum of 3.3 persons per 1,000 population (2017) (Figure B2).

The population of Kansas increased about 211,000 from the 1990 Census to the 2000 Census, and by about 165,000 from the 2000 Census to the 2010 Census. Natural increase accounted for about 68 percent (144,000) of the increase in population in the 1990s, but it accounted for almost 96 percent (158,000) of the increase in population in the 2000s. Net in-migration accounted for about 32 percent (67,000) of the population increase in the 1990s, but it accounted for only about 4 percent (7,000) in the 2000s. (From *2011 Kansas Annual Summary of Vital Statistics*, will be updated after the 2020 Census.)

Median Age

The median age of Kansans in 2017 was 36.6 years, a 4.0 percent increase from the median age of 35.2 in 1998. The median ages of Kansas males and females in 2017 were 35.4 and 37.9 respectively (Figure B3, Table B2).

Population Characteristics

The percent increase in the Kansas total population from 1998-2017 was 10.8 percent, including a 12.4 percent increase for Kansas males and a 9.3 percent increase for Kansas females. Shifts in the Kansas population distribution by age from 1998 to 2017 included a decrease in the 35-44 age group of 17.4 percent. This decrease, and increases of 5.2 percent in residents 45-54 years of age, 75.6 percent in residents 55-64 years of age, and 43.3 percent in residents 65-74 years of age reflected the aging of the baby boomers.[1] Furthermore, there were 6.0, 2.8, 6.9, 10.7, and 10.8 percent increases in the 0-4, 5-14, 15-24, 25-34, and 75 and over age-groups respectively (Figure B5, Table B2).

According to the 2017 Census Bureau estimates, 75.9 percent of Kansans were White non-Hispanic and 5.8 percent were Black non-Hispanic. Hispanics made up 11.9 percent of Kansas' population (Tables B3 and B5).

1. Healthy People 2020 [Internet]. Washington: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; [updated 2018 Aug 31; cited 2018 Aug 30] Available from: http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/default.aspx.
2. Winnable Battles [Internet]. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; [updated 2018 May 02; cited 2018 Aug 31] Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/winnablebattles/.