

# Demographic Change

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## Overview

Demography is the study of human populations with a focus on age, birth, death, and migration. When used well, demographic projections assist government agencies, political and social organizations, and businesses prepare for the future. Policy is at its best when population projections hold a central place in decision-making and planning. This memo will focus on the demographic future of Greater Green Bay in three key areas:

- Population forecasts.
- The role of demographic change on the future workforce of Greater Green Bay.
- The impact of aging and changing demographics on the future of Greater Green Bay.

Today, Greater Green Bay is more than 80% white, has an unemployment rate of approximately 4%, and a 12% poverty rate. More than 28% of Greater Green Bay adults have a college degree and more than 90% have health insurance. The median household income is \$53,392 and the median home sale price is just north of \$150,000.

Greater Green Bay is growing fast; the area is expected to gain nearly 65,000 people from 2010 to 2040, a rate of growth that is approximately twice as large as the state of Wisconsin. The largest growth is expected to occur from 2015-2020 with an estimate population increase of 16,000 people; nearly triple the approximately 6,500 person increase from 2010-2015.

## Key Stakeholders

Demographic changes have a direct effect on social, political, and business communities. The demographic changes in Greater Green Bay will have a large impact on religious and educational institutions. Of course, changing demographics will have an impact on regional planning, public health and healthcare institutions, housing stock, and transportation.

## Trends

The demography of Greater Green Bay is changing. By 2040, Brown County's population is projected to be 312,000, a gain of more than 64,000 people, or a 25% increase, since 2010. The largest population change will come from two groups, children/youth age 0-19 and adults age 55 and over. Diversity is increasing, but Greater Green Bay remains less ethnically diverse than other large urban areas in Wisconsin.

Decade-specific trends and patterns:

### 2010-2020:

- Greater Green Bay will experience population growth of approximately 22,000 people, half of which will come from the 60-69 age group.
- Age group 40-49 will experience the largest decrease in number of people, with a decline of more than 4,000 people between 2010 and 2020.

### 2020-2030:

- The Greater Green Bay population will increase by approximately 29,000 people.
- Age group 70-79 is expected to increase by nearly 10,000 people, doubling in size from 2010-2020.

## **2030-2040:**

- The Greater Green Bay population will increase by 13,000 people.
- The oldest cohort, age group 80 & over, will experience the largest growth between 2030 and 2040, doubling in size, an increase of more than 8,000 people.
- Stratifying the population into four broad age groups, we estimate the following population changes from 2010 to 2040:
  - Ages 0-19: 27.8% in 2010 down to 25.7% of the population in 2040.
  - Ages 20-34: 20.7% in 2010 down to 18.0% of the population in 2040.
  - Ages 35-54: 28.5% in 2010 down to 24.5% of the population in 2040.
  - Ages 55 & over: 23.0% in 2010 up to 31.8% of the population in 2040.
- Age-sex distributions for 2010-2040 reflect not only an increase in Baby Boomers, but an increase in life expectancy. Older folks are living longer than ever before.
- Net migration in Brown County will consistently be the same amount or higher than the net migration of the state of Wisconsin.
- Greater Green Bay will grow consistently bifurcated; there will be a consistent increase in youth and older workers (55+), but the proportion of working adults age 20-55 will continue to decline.

## **Emerging Issues**

### **Brain Drain**

Why are young workers leaving Greater Green Bay? One of the main factors is brain drain. Brain drain is the out-migration of well-educated and skilled professionals. There is an increasing trend of people age 21-29 leaving the state of Wisconsin after they have finished their college degree; Greater Green Bay is experiencing greater brain drain than other large urban areas in Wisconsin.

### **Aging Workers**

Greater Green Bay, and Wisconsin, is aging. According to recent research, Wisconsin is one of a handful of states where Baby Boomers outnumber millennials. The aging population will have large economic and social outcomes, especially as Baby Boomers exit the workforce.

### **Growing Diversity**

Predicting diversity is challenging, but current trends suggest that the proportion of non-white residents in Greater Green Bay will double or possibly triple by 2040. The working population of Greater Green Bay will remain mostly white, but, if trends continue, there will be a large increase in non-white youth. As of 2015, 8.3% of Greater Green Bay identified as Hispanic, but more than 15% of Green Bay school children identify as Hispanic. The proportion of Hispanic residents will increase, possibly doubling, by 2040. It will be important for area businesses and public planners to embrace the growing Hispanic community.

### **Attracting young professionals**

Reducing brain drain will be helpful for retaining young professionals, but how will we attract new young professionals? With a decline in young professionals entering the area, what will Greater Green Bay do to attract young professionals from outside of Wisconsin?