

11-15-2016

# Findings from the Preliminary 2016 Population Estimates

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## Recommended Citation

Proehl, Risa and Portland State University. Population Research Center, "Findings from the Preliminary 2016 Population Estimates" (2016). *Oregon Population Estimates and Reports*. 47.  
<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/populationreports/47>

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*Findings from the Preliminary 2016 Population Estimates*  
*November 15, 2016*

**Oregon's Preliminary 2016 Population Estimates indicate 62,500 are added during the Past Year**

Portland State University's Population Research Center (PRC) released the preliminary 2016 population estimates for Oregon and its cities and counties on November 15.

According to the preliminary July 1 population estimates, Oregon's population increased from 4,013,845 in 2015 to 4,076,350 in 2016, or by 62,505. This increase represents a 1.6 percent change, slightly higher than in the previous year (1.3 percent). The increase in 2016 is over 11,000 higher than added in 2015, and surpasses the peak pre-recession growth of 58,000 in 2006 and it is closer to growth experienced in the early and mid-1990s.

Population growth consists of two factors: natural increase (the number of births minus the number of deaths) and net migration (movers-in minus movers-out). From 2015 to 2016 net migration accounted for roughly 83 percent of Oregon's population growth. During the past several years, natural increase has been contributing a shrinking share of population increase. Because of a declining fertility rate, the number of annual births has increased only slightly in recent years; and the number of annual deaths will continue to climb due to the wave of aging baby boomers.

The counties that experienced the largest gains in population from 2015 to 2016 have the largest populations. As in the previous many years, Multnomah and Washington counties added the highest number of persons—each adding around 13,000 residents. Both Clackamas, and Deschutes counties added over 5,000 to their populations; and Marion, and Lane counties each added around 4,000 to their populations; Jackson County added over almost 3,000. Collectively, these seven counties accounted for over 80 percent of the statewide population growth this year. Linn, Yamhill, Benton, and Polk counties each added at least 1,000 to their counts. Almost half of Oregon's thirty-six counties experienced increases ranging over 100 to 955 persons. Seven counties saw little population change in the past year (less than a 100 person change). One county, Grant, experienced a slight population loss due to the fire that destroyed homes in summer of 2015 and from natural decrease.

Generally, net in-migration has either boosted population growth around the state or has prevented population losses. In counties where a natural decrease is occurring (over a third of the counties experience a natural decrease, meaning there are more deaths than births), net in-migration has offset overall population decreases. Net in-migration this past year is estimated to have accelerated in most counties statewide from last year.

In terms of growth rates, or percent change, six counties saw increases at higher rates than the State. Deschutes County experienced the largest percentage gain (3.5 percent) followed by Crook, Washington, Hood River, Clackamas and Multnomah counties (2.3, 2.3, 2.0, 1.9, and 1.7 percent, respectively). Thirty-seven of Oregon's 242 cities experienced population growth in the

past year at rates higher than the State. For smaller cities, sharp spikes in the growth rate could mean the increase of just a few persons, however.

Oregon's incorporated cities have gained 39,460 people from 2015 to 2016, with a combined 2016 total population of 2,816,400. Incorporated cities collectively capture almost 70 percent of the state's population, about the same as in the last several years. Preliminary estimates also show that cities accounted almost two-thirds of Oregon's population increase, roughly the same as in 2015.

The preliminary estimates reveal at least small population increases in more than half of Oregon's 242 incorporated cities from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015, with 35 cities adding more than 100 persons. Portland, which typically and significantly outpaces Oregon's other cities in population growth, experienced the greatest increase adding 14,000 persons. Several cities added between 1,000 and about 2,500 to their populations: Eugene, Bend, Hillsboro, Salem, Beaverton, Gresham, and Happy Valley.

Thirty-nine cities and towns are estimated to have a population change of between 100 and 900 during the period, led by Albany and Wilsonville. Sharp population increases in some of the smaller cities are usually due to the construction of apartments, or the arrival of workers and contractors for industrial projects such as energy or power, or for agricultural related jobs.

Four cities, scattered throughout Oregon are estimated to have between 5 and 35 fewer persons in 2016 than in 2015. Most losses are attributed to a decrease in the group quarters population (persons living in group living situations such as jails, college dormitories, and nursing homes), the removal of mobile homes or RVs moving out, or the demolition of housing units. Fifty-one cities reported to PRC that they had no change in population during the one year period.

Eleven Oregon cities (about 5 percent) have populations over 50,000. Collectively they represent almost 40 percent of the state's total population. A third of the cities and towns have populations under 1,000, and the remaining 62 percent have populations ranging between 5,000 and 50,000.

PRC produces annual population estimates for Oregon, and its counties and incorporated cities using the most recent available data. These estimates are based on fluctuations in the numbers of housing units, persons residing in group quarter facilities, births and deaths, students enrolled in public school, persons employed, Medicare enrollees, State and Federal tax exemptions, Oregon driver license holders, and counts in other administrative data that are symptomatic of population change. Statewide housing and group quarters' population data are collected from annual questionnaires that we send directly to Oregon's cities and counties. If we do not receive updated annual data from a city, its population estimate remains the same as in the previous year. The annual population estimates are used for state revenue distribution to local governments and in program administration.

The preliminary population estimates are subject to revision during a month review period. The final July 1, 2016 population estimates will be certified by December 15, 2016. The annual population estimates are revised quarterly to account for annexations throughout the year.

The preliminary population estimates can be found on PRC's Web site at:  
<http://www.pdx.edu/prc/population-reports-estimates> . For further information or questions about the preliminary July 1, 2016 population estimates, please contact:

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