Projected 2050 Population & Political Power Series

	1990	202	
orth Dakota	3	3	
Ohio	21	17	
Oklahoma	8	7	
Oregon	7	8	
Pennsylvania	23	19	1
Rhode Island	4	4	
South Carolina	8	9	
South Dakota	3	3	
ennessee	11	11	
s	32	41	
	5		

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Shifting State Populations Show Continued Decline of Midwest and Northeast, as Most of the South and West Boom

The sixty-year trend of population shifts highlights winners and losers in the race to build the most attractive state for Americans. Broadly speaking, it is clear the states failing to keep up as evidenced by falling in the population rankings are those twenty-six states starting in the Great Plains and ending in the Northeast. These states will fall an average of 3.27 spots from 1990 to 2050, led by Missouri and Wisconsin falling eight spots. The five states that will grow the slowest are West Virginia (0.1%), Michigan (17.1%), Ohio (18.0%), Pennsylvania (19.1%), and Rhode Island (19.7%), with Connecticut (20.4%), New York (21.6%), Maine (23.1%), and Illinois (23.2%) not far behind.

One curveball that could alter these projections would be if the climate does, in fact, noticeably become hotter. Should that occur, it is possible there could be a counter-migration back to the north, as the West and South get even hotter leading people
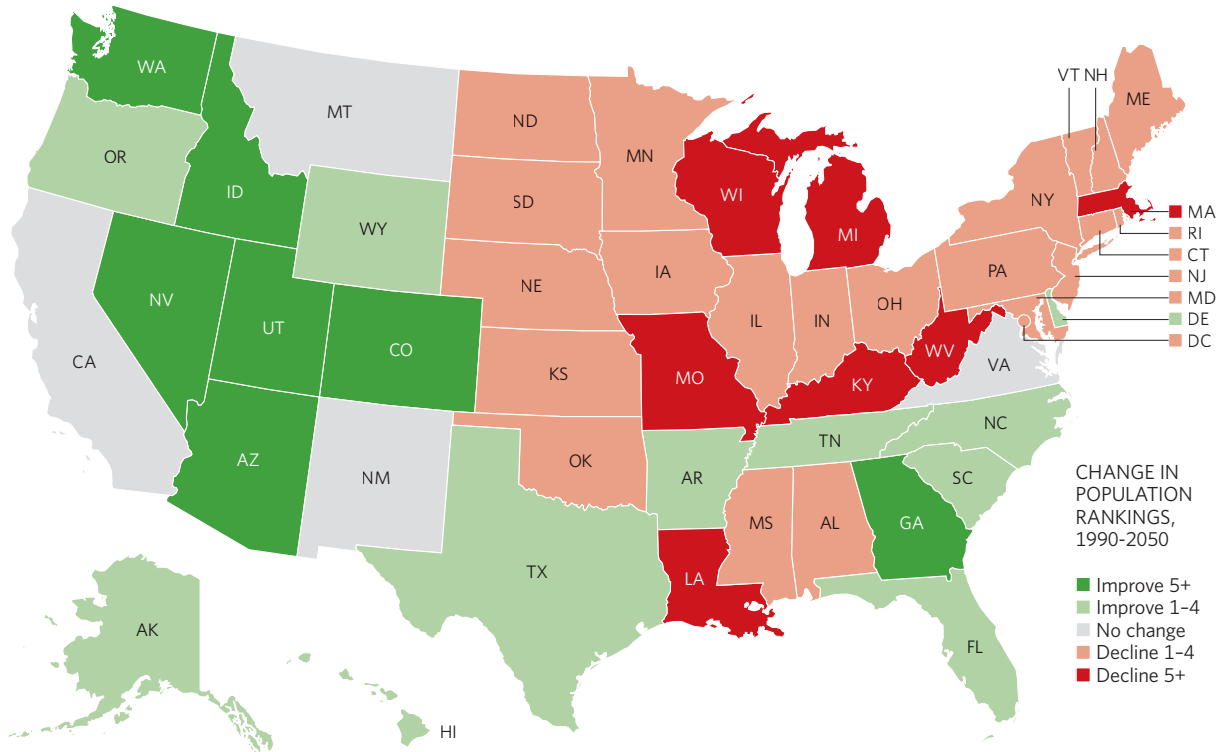
PART 1 OF 3
Opportunity Ohio's Projected 2050 Population & Political Power Series

to seek out what would be more moderate temperatures in the Great Plains, Midwest, and, possibly, Northeast. The northern states could experience slightly hotter summers, but also less severe winters. The primary beneficiaries of such an event likely would be the border states such as Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Maryland.

The only two states in the West or South that will see weak population growth and a fall in population rankings are Louisiana and Mississippi. Part of the explanation for Louisiana rests in the loss of population following Hurricane Katrina when it went from 4.5 million people in July 2005 to 4.3 million people a year later, but that event only explains a temporary loss. The more likely reason those two states face such bleak futures is both states reside in a "no man's land"—too far west to benefit from Georgia's and Florida's strong growth; too far east to benefits from Texas's boom; and too far south to benefit from the

Shifting State Population Rankings, 1990–2050

CHANGE IN POPULATION RANKINGS, 1990-2050

- ■ Improve 5+
- ■ Improve 1–4
- ■ No change
- ■ Decline 1–4
- ■ Decline 5+

State	RANKINGS		
	1990	2050	Chg.
Nevada	39	18	+21
Arizona	24	7	+17
Colorado	26	15	+11
Utah	35	27	+8
Washington	18	11	+7
Idaho	42	36	+6
Georgia	11	5	+6
North Carolina	10	6	+4
Oregon	29	25	+4
South Carolina	25	21	+4
Delaware	46	43	+3
Alaska	50	47	+3
Hawaii	41	39	+2
Texas	3	2	+1
Florida	4	3	+1
Tennessee	17	16	+1
Arkansas	33	32	+1
Wyoming	51	50	+1

State	RANKINGS		
	1990	2050	Chg.
New Mexico	37	37	0
Virginia	12	12	0
Montana	44	44	0
California	1	1	0
Maryland	19	20	-1
South Dakota	45	46	-1
New Hampshire	40	41	-1
North Dakota	47	48	-1
D.C.	48	49	-1
Minnesota	20	22	-2
Oklahoma	28	30	-2
Nebraska	36	38	-2
Kansas	32	34	-2
Vermont	49	51	-2
New York	2	4	-2
Rhode Island	43	45	-2
Indiana	14	17	-3
Iowa	30	33	-3

State	RANKINGS		
	1990	2050	Chg.
Illinois	6	9	-3
Pennsylvania	5	8	-3
Ohio	7	10	-3
Alabama	22	26	-4
New Jersey	9	13	-4
Mississippi	31	35	-4
Maine	38	42	-4
Connecticut	27	31	-4
Kentucky	23	28	-5
Massachusetts	13	19	-6
Michigan	8	14	-6
West Virginia	34	40	-6
Missouri	15	23	-8
Wisconsin	16	24	-8
Louisiana	21	29	-8

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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Wal-Mart effect in Arkansas and the Nashville explosion in Tennessee. There will be lots of infrastructure traffic just on the perimeter of those states, but not much going into them.

In stark contrast to the losing states, the fifteen winning states dominate the West and South. On average, these states will jump 6.53 spots in the rankings in 2050, which is twice the pace of the losing states. The big winners are Nevada (+21), Arizona (+17), Colorado (+11), Utah (+8), Washington (+7), Idaho (+6), and Georgia (+6). As this list demonstrates, cold weather alone can't explain the big population shift, as Idaho, Colorado, and Utah have winters as cold or colder than many of the loser states.

Obviously, both Florida and Texas didn't have much room to move given they already occupied the 4th and 3rd spots in 1990, respectively. Nonetheless, both states will move up a spot. In just sixty years, Florida's population will jump by 184%, as it heads towards 37,000,000 residents. Even more interesting, Texas will end 2050 less than 500,000 citizens behind California at 51.4 million people. Despite its perfect weather, beaches, and mountains, California's tepid 74% growth since 1990 just won't be able to compete with Texas's 202% population explosion. Certainly by 2060, Texas will become the most populous state in America…a title California will have held since 1962, or almost 100 years.

In terms of Ohio, in raw numbers its population will only grow by roughly 2,000,000 people from 1990 to 2050, which places its growth as the 27th best in America. Basically, as Ohio meandered along from 1990 to 2020 by adding 1,000,000 people, it will continue to meander along over the next 30 years with a similar increase in residents. After holding tightly to the 7th spot in population rankings for decades, by 2050, Ohio will drop to the 10th spot, as Georgia, North Carolina, and Arizona rise from the 11th, 10th, and 24th spots in 1990, respectively. Ohio's 18% net growth will represent the 3rd worst growth in America.

As covered in Part Two of this series, these population shifts will impact the political power wielded by the states and the two political parties.

Biggest Winners and Losers: Changes in State Population Rankings, 1990–2050

BIGGEST WINNERS					BIGGEST LOSERS			
State	1990	2050	Chg.		State	1990	2050	Chg.
Nevada	39	18	+21		Louisiana	21	29	-8
Arizona	24	7	+17		Missouri	15	23	-8
Colorado	26	15	+11		Wisconsin	16	24	-8
Utah	35	27	+8		Massachusetts	13	19	-6
Washington	18	11	+7		Michigan	8	14	-6
Georgia	11	5	+6		West Virginia	34	40	-6
Idaho	42	36	+6		Kentucky	23	28	-5

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.   OPPORTUNITY *Ohio*

State Population Percentage Growth, 1990–2050

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN POPULATION, 1990–2050

- ■ 150%+
- ■ 50%–150%
- ■ 20%–50%
- ■ 0–20%
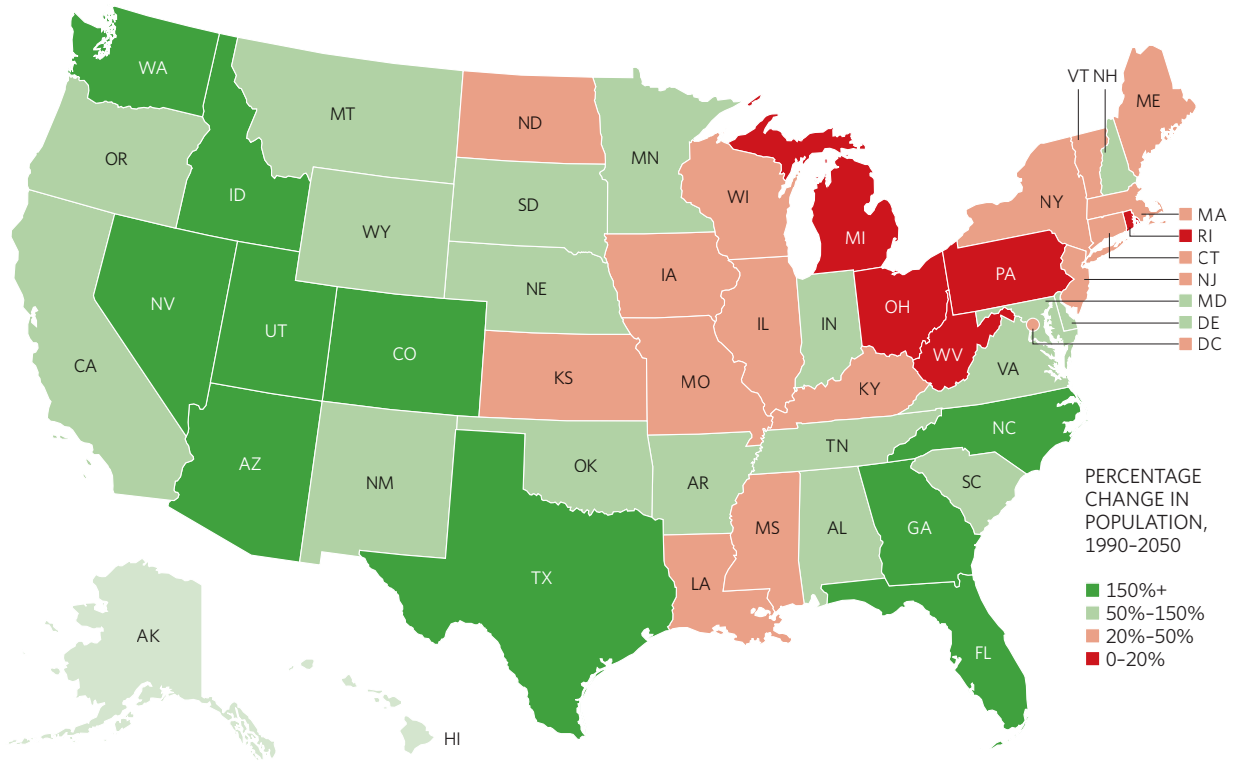
Rank	State	% Change
1	Nevada	590.6%
2	Arizona	298.4%
3	Utah	261.3%
4	Idaho	234.4%
5	Colorado	212.7%
6	Texas	202.3%
7	Florida	183.7%
8	Georgia	179.0%
9	North Carolina	154.0%
10	Washington	153.1%
11	Oregon	122.7%
12	South Carolina	121.7%
13	Delaware	121.1%
14	Tennessee	104.7%
15	New Mexico	96.5%
16	Virginia	95.3%
17	Montana	84.2%
18	Alaska	78.3%

Rank	State	% Change
19	California	74.1%
20	Hawaii	72.5%
21	Minnesota	70.3%
22	Maryland	66.3%
23	Arkansas	64.5%
24	South Dakota	62.3%
25	Wyoming	62.2%
26	Oklahoma	58.5%
27	Alabama	55.7%
28	Nebraska	54.4%
29	New Hampshire	54.4%
30	Indiana	50.8%
31	Kentucky	49.6%
32	North Dakota	49.5%
33	Missouri	45.4%
34	Wisconsin	45.4%
35	New Jersey	43.8%
36	Kansas	40.7%

Rank	State	% Change
37	Massachusetts	34.8%
38	Mississippi	32.8%
39	Iowa	32.0%
40	Vermont	30.7%
41	District of Columbia	30.3%
42	Illinois	23.2%
43	Maine	23.1%
44	Louisiana	21.9%
45	New York	21.6%
46	Connecticut	20.4%
47	Rhode Island	19.7%
48	Pennsylvania	19.1%
49	Ohio	18.0%
50	Michigan	17.1%
51	West Virginia	0.1%

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State Population Growth, 1990 vs. 2050

Rank	State	1990	2050	Change	Rank	State	1990	2050	Change
1	Texas	16,986,510	51,354,483	34,367,973	27	Ohio	10,847,115	12,796,379	1,949,264
2	Florida	12,937,926	36,710,205	23,772,279	28	Oklahoma	3,145,585	4,985,670	1,840,085
3	California	29,760,021	51,812,122	22,052,101	29	Kentucky	3,685,296	5,513,251	1,827,955
4	Georgia	6,478,216	18,074,506	11,596,290	30	Michigan	9,295,297	10,882,761	1,587,464
5	Arizona	3,665,228	14,601,746	10,936,518	31	Arkansas	2,350,725	3,867,076	1,516,351
6	North Carolina	6,628,637	16,833,575	10,204,938	32	New Mexico	1,515,069	2,977,568	1,462,499
7	Washington	4,866,692	12,318,457	7,451,765	33	Kansas	2,477,574	3,486,113	1,008,539
8	Nevada	1,201,833	8,300,377	7,098,544	34	Louisiana	4,219,973	5,143,475	923,502
9	Colorado	3,294,394	10,300,976	7,006,582	35	Iowa	2,776,755	3,665,731	888,976
10	Virginia	6,187,358	12,082,244	5,894,886	36	Nebraska	1,578,385	2,437,770	859,385
11	Tennessee	4,877,185	9,985,392	5,108,207	37	Mississippi	2,573,216	3,416,869	843,653
12	Utah	1,722,850	6,225,474	4,502,624	38	Delaware	666,168	1,472,657	806,489
13	South Carolina	3,486,703	7,729,219	4,242,516	39	Hawaii	1,108,229	1,912,110	803,881
14	New York	17,990,455	21,877,836	3,887,381	40	Montana	799,065	1,471,577	672,512
15	Oregon	2,842,321	6,330,120	3,487,799	41	Connecticut	3,287,116	3,957,292	670,176
16	New Jersey	7,730,188	11,114,827	3,384,639	42	New Hampshire	1,109,252	1,712,481	603,229
17	Maryland	4,781,468	7,951,879	3,170,411	43	South Dakota	696,004	1,129,586	433,582
18	Minnesota	4,375,099	7,450,003	3,074,904	44	Alaska	550,043	980,822	430,779
19	Indiana	5,544,159	8,359,128	2,814,969	45	North Dakota	638,800	955,310	316,510
20	Illinois	11,430,602	14,079,120	2,648,518	46	Maine	1,227,928	1,511,611	283,683
21	Idaho	1,006,749	3,366,870	2,360,121	47	Wyoming	453,588	735,804	282,216
22	Missouri	5,117,073	7,442,035	2,324,962	48	Rhode Island	1,003,464	1,200,681	197,217
23	Pennsylvania	11,881,643	14,145,874	2,264,231	49	D.C.	606,900	790,957	184,057
24	Alabama	4,040,587	6,289,206	2,248,619	50	Vermont	562,758	735,508	172,750
25	Wisconsin	4,891,769	7,111,828	2,220,059	51	West Virginia	1,793,477	1,795,493	2,016
26	Massachusetts	6,016,425	8,111,278	2,094,853					

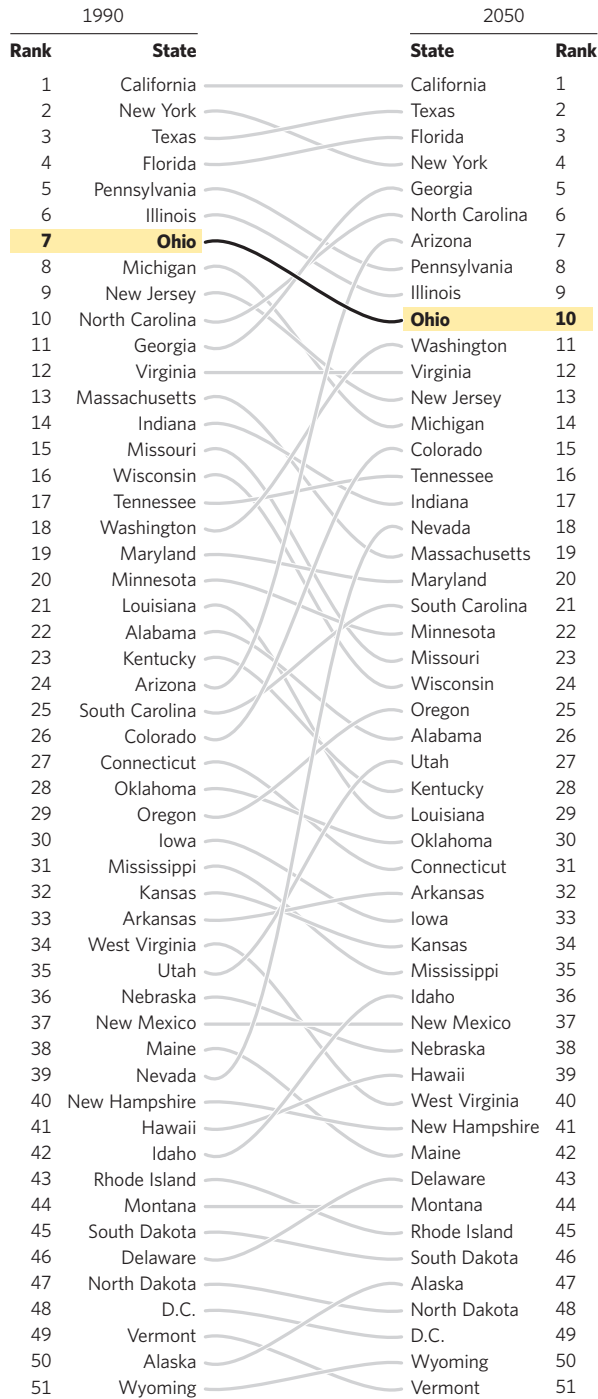SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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State Populations, 1990 vs. 2050

State	1990 Population	Rank	2050 Population	Rank	State	1990 Population	Rank	2050 Population	Rank
Alabama	4,040,587	22	6,289,206	26	Montana	799,065	44	1,471,577	44
Alaska	550,043	50	980,822	47	Nebraska	1,578,385	36	2,437,770	38
Arizona	3,665,228	24	14,601,746	7	Nevada	1,201,833	39	8,300,377	18
Arkansas	2,350,725	33	3,867,076	32	New Hampshire	1,109,252	40	1,712,481	41
California	29,760,021	1	51,812,122	1	New Jersey	7,730,188	9	11,114,827	13
Colorado	3,294,394	26	10,300,976	15	New Mexico	1,515,069	37	2,977,568	37
Connecticut	3,287,116	27	3,957,292	31	New York	17,990,455	2	21,877,836	4
Delaware	666,168	46	1,472,657	43	North Carolina	6,628,637	10	16,833,575	6
D.C.	606,900	48	790,957	49	North Dakota	638,800	47	955,310	48
Florida	12,937,926	4	36,710,205	3	Ohio	10,847,115	7	12,796,379	10
Georgia	6,478,216	11	18,074,506	5	Oklahoma	3,145,585	28	4,985,670	30
Hawaii	1,108,229	41	1,912,110	39	Oregon	2,842,321	29	6,330,120	25
Idaho	1,006,749	42	3,366,870	36	Pennsylvania	11,881,643	5	14,145,874	8
Illinois	11,430,602	6	14,079,120	9	Rhode Island	1,003,464	43	1,200,681	45
Indiana	5,544,159	14	8,359,128	17	South Carolina	3,486,703	25	7,729,219	21
Iowa	2,776,755	30	3,665,731	33	South Dakota	696,004	45	1,129,586	46
Kansas	2,477,574	32	3,486,113	34	Tennessee	4,877,185	17	9,985,392	16
Kentucky	3,685,296	23	5,513,251	28	Texas	16,986,510	3	51,354,483	2
Louisiana	4,219,973	21	5,143,475	29	Utah	1,722,850	35	6,225,474	27
Maine	1,227,928	38	1,511,611	42	Vermont	562,758	49	735,508	51
Maryland	4,781,468	19	7,951,879	20	Virginia	6,187,358	12	12,082,244	12
Massachusetts	6,016,425	13	8,111,278	19	Washington	4,866,692	18	12,318,457	11
Michigan	9,295,297	8	10,882,761	14	West Virginia	1,793,477	34	1,795,493	40
Minnesota	4,375,099	20	7,450,003	22	Wisconsin	4,891,769	16	7,111,828	24
Mississippi	2,573,216	31	3,416,869	35	Wyoming	453,588	51	735,804	50
Missouri	5,117,073	15	7,442,035	23					

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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How State Population Rankings Will Shift, 1990–2050

1990			2050
Rank	**State**	**State**	**Rank**
1	California	California	1
2	New York	Texas	2
3	Texas	Florida	3
4	Florida	New York	4
5	Pennsylvania	Georgia	5
6	Illinois	North Carolina	6
7	**Ohio**	Arizona	7
8	Michigan	Pennsylvania	8
9	New Jersey	Illinois	9
10	North Carolina	**Ohio**	**10**
11	Georgia	Washington	11
12	Virginia	Virginia	12
13	Massachusetts	New Jersey	13
14	Indiana	Michigan	14
15	Missouri	Colorado	15
16	Wisconsin	Tennessee	16
17	Tennessee	Indiana	17
18	Washington	Nevada	18
19	Maryland	Massachusetts	19
20	Minnesota	Maryland	20
21	Louisiana	South Carolina	21
22	Alabama	Minnesota	22
23	Kentucky	Missouri	23
24	Arizona	Wisconsin	24
25	South Carolina	Oregon	25
26	Colorado	Alabama	26
27	Connecticut	Utah	27
28	Oklahoma	Kentucky	28
29	Oregon	Louisiana	29
30	Iowa	Oklahoma	30
31	Mississippi	Connecticut	31
32	Kansas	Arkansas	32
33	Arkansas	Iowa	33
34	West Virginia	Kansas	34
35	Utah	Mississippi	35
36	Nebraska	Idaho	36
37	New Mexico	New Mexico	37
38	Maine	Nebraska	38
39	Nevada	Hawaii	39
40	New Hampshire	West Virginia	40
41	Hawaii	New Hampshire	41
42	Idaho	Maine	42
43	Rhode Island	Delaware	43
44	Montana	Montana	44
45	South Dakota	Rhode Island	45
46	Delaware	South Dakota	46
47	North Dakota	Alaska	47
48	D.C.	North Dakota	48
49	Vermont	D.C.	49
50	Alaska	Wyoming	50
51	Wyoming	Vermont	51

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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People Voting with Their Feet Means a Growing Republican Advantage, but Decades of Continued Political Gridlock

With the shift in population will come a shift in political power based on population in the U.S. House of Representatives and the election of the president. There are winners and losers among the states. The winners will gain political power as those states add congressional representation and Electoral Votes; conversely, loser states will lose political powers with the loss of congressional representation and Electoral Votes.

The biggest winner states are Texas (+18 Electoral Votes), Florida (+12), Arizona (+8), Georgia (+6), and Nevada (+6), followed by Colorado (+4), North Carolina (+4), Washington (+4), and Utah (+3). By the 2052 presidential election, these states will hold much greater political power in the make-up of the U.S. House and electing the president. Florida will hold 50 Electoral Votes, which will be one Electoral Vote less than California. Should Texas remain a red state, it will fully balance the oversized power California currently holds in filling the U.S. House

PART 2 OF 3
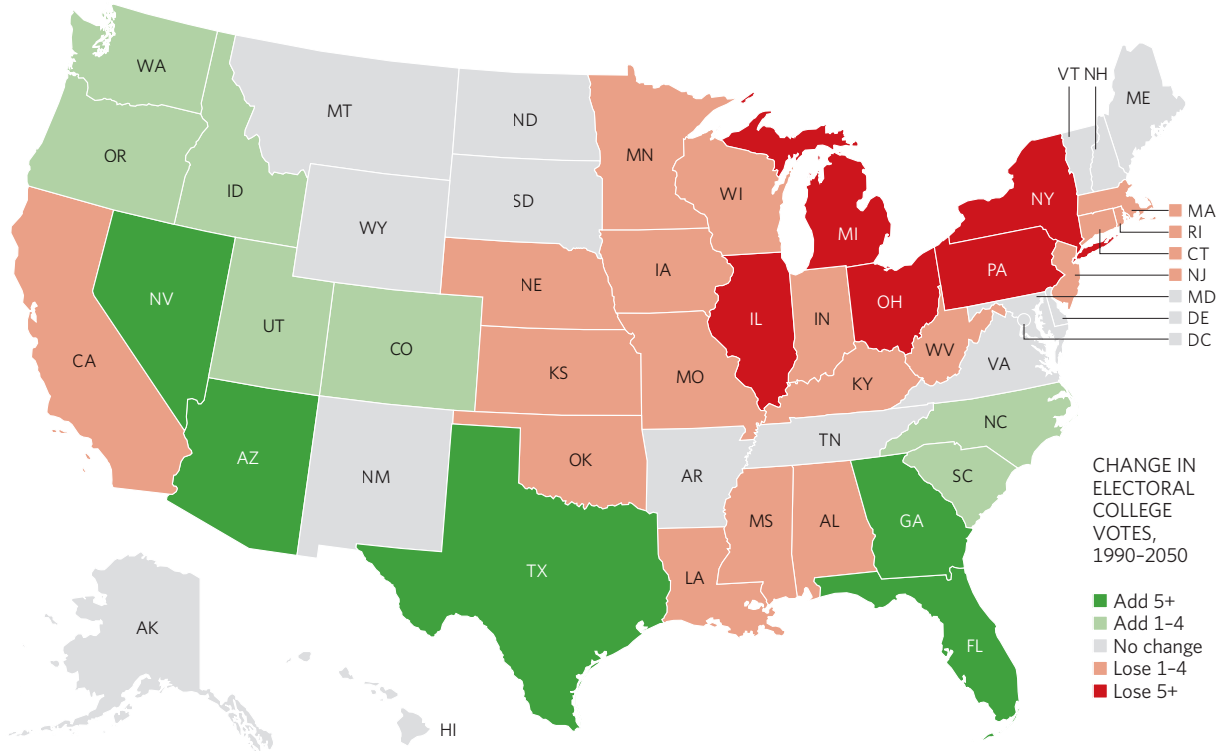**Opportunity Ohio's Projected 2050 Population & Political Power Series**

and determining who will be president.

Florida also will hold much greater political power with thirty-seven Electoral Votes—a solid fourteen Electoral Votes more than the next state, New York (23). In total, the winner states noted above will jump from 149 Electoral Votes in 2020 to 184 by 2050, which is a 24% increase in political power. Of these, 113 Electoral Votes, or 61.4%, will come from Red states that voted from Donald Trump in 2020.

The biggest loser states are New York (-10), Pennsylvania (-8), Ohio (-7), Illinois (-7), and Michigan (-6), followed by Massachusetts (-3) and California (-3). In total, these states will lose twenty-two Electoral Votes from 2020 to the 2052 presidential election. Of these twenty-two Electoral Votes, twelve Electoral Votes, or 54.5%, will come from Blue states. From 1990 to 2050, these seven states will have lost forty-four Electoral Votes, as the winner states above will have gained sixty-five Electoral Votes. The gains
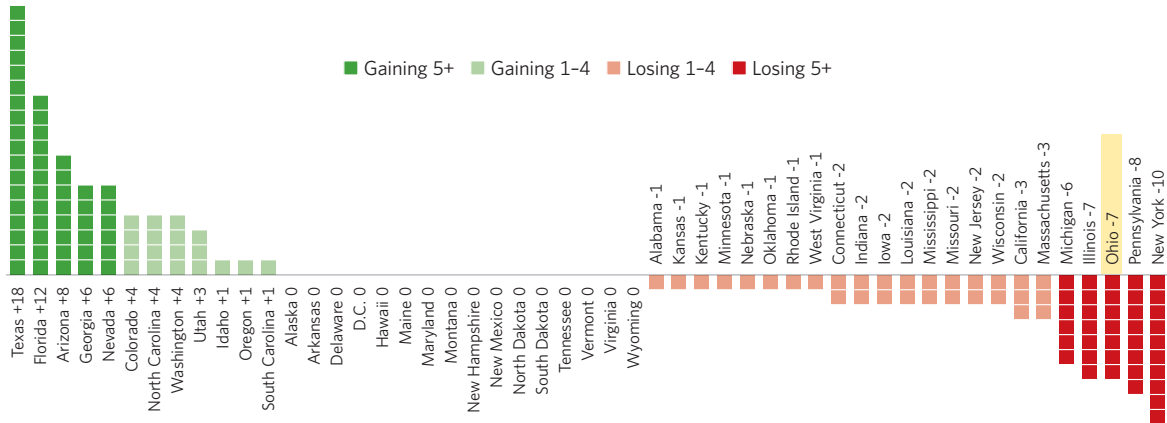
The Changing Political Landscape, 1990 to 2050

CHANGE IN ELECTORAL COLLEGE VOTES, 1990–2050

- ■ Add 5+
- ■ Add 1–4
- ■ No change
- ■ Lose 1–4
- ■ Lose 5+

State	1990	2050	Chg.
Texas	32	50	+18
Florida	25	37	+12
Arizona	8	16	+8
Georgia	13	19	+6
Nevada	4	10	+6
Colorado	8	12	+4
North Carolina	14	18	+4
Washington	10	14	+4
Utah	5	8	+3
Idaho	4	5	+1
Oregon	7	8	+1
South Carolina	8	9	+1
Alaska	3	3	0
Arkansas	6	6	0
Delaware	3	3	0
D.C.	3	3	0
Hawaii	4	4	0
Maine	4	4	0

State	1990	2050	Chg.
Maryland	10	10	0
Montana	3	3	0
New Hampshire	4	4	0
New Mexico	5	5	0
North Dakota	3	3	0
South Dakota	3	3	0
Tennessee	11	11	0
Vermont	3	3	0
Virginia	13	13	0
Wyoming	3	3	0
Alabama	9	8	-1
Kansas	6	5	-1
Kentucky	8	7	-1
Minnesota	10	9	-1
Nebraska	5	4	-1
Oklahoma	8	7	-1
Rhode Island	4	3	-1
West Virginia	5	4	-1

State	1990	2050	Chg.
Connecticut	8	6	-2
Indiana	12	10	-2
Iowa	7	5	-2
Louisiana	9	7	-2
Mississippi	7	5	-2
Missouri	11	9	-2
New Jersey	15	13	-2
Wisconsin	11	9	-2
California	54	51	-3
Massachusetts	13	10	-3
Michigan	18	12	-6
Illinois	22	15	-7
Ohio	21	14	-7
Pennsylvania	23	15	-8
New York	33	23	-10

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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How Population Changes Would Affect Electoral College Votes, 1990 to 2050

Legend: ■ Gaining 5+ ■ Gaining 1–4 ■ Losing 1–4 ■ Losing 5+

Gaining: Texas +18, Florida +12, Arizona +8, Georgia +6, Nevada +6, Colorado +4, North Carolina +4, Washington +4, Utah +3, Idaho +1, Oregon +1, South Carolina +1

No change: Alaska 0, Arkansas 0, Delaware 0, D.C. 0, Hawaii 0, Maine 0, Maryland 0, Montana 0, New Hampshire 0, New Mexico 0, North Dakota 0, South Dakota 0, Tennessee 0, Vermont 0, Virginia 0, Wyoming 0

Losing: Alabama -1, Kansas -1, Kentucky -1, Minnesota -1, Nebraska -1, Oklahoma -1, Rhode Island -1, West Virginia -1, Connecticut -2, Indiana -2, Iowa -2, Louisiana -2, Mississippi -2, Missouri -2, New Jersey -2, Wisconsin -2, California -3, Massachusetts -3, Michigan -6, Illinois -7, Ohio -7, Pennsylvania -8, New York -10

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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by Red states should result in a growing Republican advantage in securing and maintaining control of the U.S. House, governor's offices, and state legislatures. With more state-level control, Republicans should be able to draw congressional districts after the 2030, 2040, and 2050 U.S. Census counts more favorably to strengthen even more that party's control on the U.S. House.

As a point of comparison, Joe Biden-Kamala Harris won the Electoral College 306 to 232 in 2020. If the state results were identical in 2052, the population shift would shrink their victory to a 294 to 244 win, which is a 24-point swing in the Republican's favor. The Biden-Harris ticket managed to sweep virtually all of the battleground states and pull-off a big upset in Georgia in 2020. The battleground states in 2020 included Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Excluding North Carolina and adding Georgia, those six states accounted for seventy-eight Electoral Votes, or the entire margin of victory for Biden-Harris.

By the 2052 presidential election, those same six states will be worth eighty-one Electoral Votes. Assuming those states don't swing one-way or the other way, that means today's battleground states will continue to serve as battleground states in 2052. With the projected Red state gains, however, the 50-point margin in 2052 will only increase the zealous focus both political parties will place on the battleground states. It also will allow both political parties to chart out several routes to achieve the 270-vote threshold needed to win the Electoral College and, therefore, the presidency.

If Republicans can figure out how to pull Georgia and Arizona back into that party's reliable presidential tally, it would result in the 2052 election being won by the Republican ticket with an Electoral Vote tally of 279 to 259. Before 2020, Arizona hadn't gone with the Democratic ticket since Bill Clinton-Al Gore in 1996, which represented the sole instance of going Blue since 1948. Georgia hadn't gone Blue for a president since Clinton-Gore in 1992, with was the only Democratic win since 1980. Thus, given how few states flip, Republicans would be wise to focus on bringing those two states back into the Republican fold starting in 2024. Doing so in combination with keeping the other reliable Red states would put a vise grip on the presidency for many years.

If the Republicans can secure those states, that would leave just Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin as likely battleground states in the coming decades.

One development to watch closely is the current movement of the Hispanic vote from heavily favoring

Electoral College Votes: 1990, 2021, and 2050

■ Gaining 4+   ■ Gaining 1–3   ■ Losing 1–3   ■ Losing 4+

State	1990	2021	2050
Alabama	9	9	8
Alaska	3	3	3
Arizona	8	12	16
Arkansas	6	6	6
California	54	53	51
Colorado	8	10	12
Connecticut	8	7	6
Delaware	3	3	3
D.C.	3	3	3
Florida	25	30	37
Georgia	13	16	19
Hawaii	4	4	4
Idaho	4	4	5
Illinois	22	19	15
Indiana	12	11	10
Iowa	7	6	5
Kansas	6	6	5

State	1990	2021	2050
Kentucky	8	8	7
Louisiana	9	8	7
Maine	4	4	4
Maryland	10	10	10
Massachusetts	13	11	10
Michigan	18	15	12
Minnesota	10	9	9
Mississippi	7	6	5
Missouri	11	10	9
Montana	3	4	3
Nebraska	5	5	4
Nevada	4	6	10
New Hampshire	4	4	4
New Jersey	15	14	13
New Mexico	5	5	5
New York	33	28	23
North Carolina	14	16	18

State	1990	2021	2050
North Dakota	3	3	3
Ohio	21	17	14
Oklahoma	8	7	7
Oregon	7	8	8
Pennsylvania	23	19	15
Rhode Island	4	4	3
South Carolina	8	9	9
South Dakota	3	3	3
Tennessee	11	11	11
Texas	32	41	50
Utah	5	6	8
Vermont	3	3	3
Virginia	13	13	13
Washington	10	12	14
West Virginia	5	4	4
Wisconsin	11	10	9
Wyoming	3	3	3

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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Democrats to splitting its vote between the parties or favoring Republicans. Should that trend continue in 2022 and beyond, the implications in states with large Hispanic populations will be significant for U.S. Senate and presidential races. While California is a lost cause for Republicans regardless of how the Hispanic vote goes, four other key states could decide control in Washington.

Specifically, Biden won Arizona by less than 10,500 votes and it contains 2.31 million Hispanics, or 31.33% of all citizens. He won Nevada by just under 34,000 votes and it holds 917,000 Hispanics, or 28.3% of all Nevadans. Biden won New Mexico by less than 100,000 votes and it has 1.03 million Hispanics, or 48.79% of all citizens. Lastly, though Democrats have tried to win Texas, Trump won Texas by more than 630,000 votes and it houses 11.52 million Hispanics, or 39.34% of all citizens.

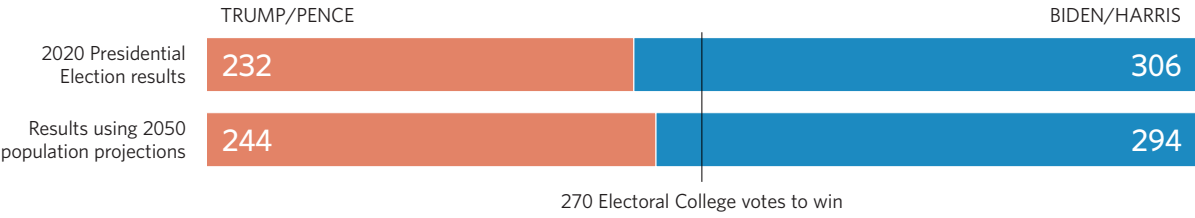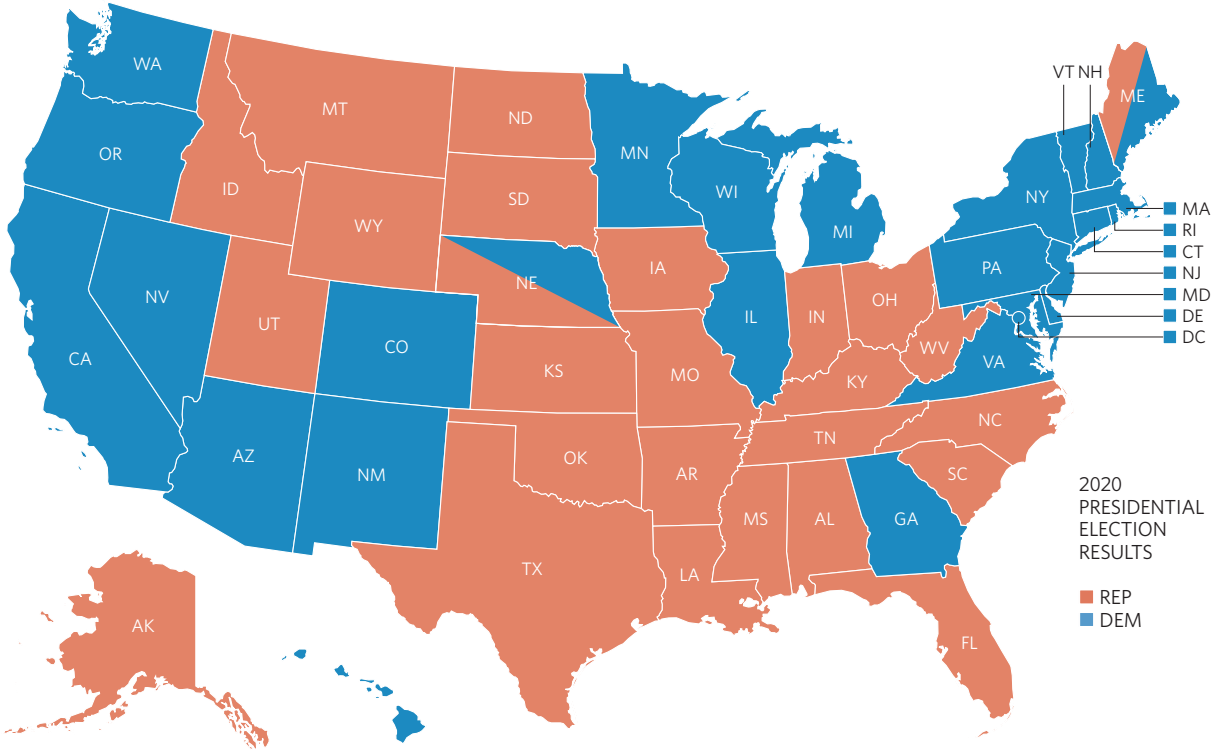As Roy Teixeira notes in his recent Substack column:

"Latino shifts toward Trump were widely dispersed geographically. Hispanic shifts toward Trump were not confined to Florida (28 points)

and Texas (18 points) but also included states like Wisconsin (20 points), Nevada (18 points), Pennsylvania (12 points), Arizona (10 points) and Georgia (8 points) … this constituency does not harbor particularly radical views on the nature of American society and its supposed intrinsic racism and white supremacy. They are instead a patriotic, upwardly mobile, working class group with quite practical and down to earth concerns."

If Texas becomes redder as Hispanics move right and Arizona, Nevada, and New Mexico follow suit, that would place eighty-one Electoral Votes, including three states Biden won in 2020 that currently are represented by six Democrat U.S. Senators, solidly in the Republican column.

The obvious curveball in this scenario is if the population shift results in Democrats leaving the Midwest and Northeast to move West and South, but not leaving their liberal-progressive voting habits behind. As Colorado vividly demonstrates, an influx of Democrats can easily turn a purple state dark blue in only a decade or two.

Presidential Elections to Remain Close for Decades as Population Shifts Slightly Favor Republicans

2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS

- REP
- DEM

	TRUMP/PENCE		BIDEN/HARRIS
2020 Presidential Election results	232		306
Results using 2050 population projections	244		294

270 Electoral College votes to win

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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Ohio's Cincinnati-Columbus-Cleveland Corridor Counties Will Thrive as Rest of State Slowly Dies

There simply is no other way to put it than to say that Ohio is increasingly becoming a fractured state. One group features the minority of wealthy and growing core and collar counties around Cincinnati and Columbus along with the suburban counties outside of Cleveland where the professional and government worker classes live. The other group contains the majority of poorer and shrinking counties around the state, especially the crescent starting in the upper northeast that runs along the Ohio River over towards Cincinnati.

On the positive side, there are twenty-one counties that will grow by 10% or more from 2010 to 2050, led by Delaware County at 81.6%, Franklin County at 57.8%, and Union County at 51.4%. Another eighteen counties will grow more slowly ranging from a high of 9.9% in Morrow County to a low of 0.5% in Highland County. Nine counties will grow less than 5% from 2010 to 2050.

PART 3 OF 3
Opportunity Ohio's Projected 2050 Population & Political Power Series

On the negative side, a whopping forty-nine out of eighty-eight counties will LOSE population from 2010 to 2050, with fifteen counties shrinking by 10% or more. The vast majority of these counties are Ohio River counties on the eastern side of the state. The other thirty-four shrinking counties will lose less than 10% of their citizens, with Fayette County, Shelby County, and Noble County losing 0.3%, 0.5%, and 0.9%, respectively.

By 2050, the population differences among the counties will grow more extreme. Franklin County will swell to nearly 1.9 million residents as Monroe County will shrink to just over 12,000 citizens, or just 0.007% of Franklin County. Only twenty-seven counties will contain 5% or more of the population living in Franklin County. Thirty-nine counties will hold 50,000 or fewer Ohioans. The vast majority of Ohio residents will live in counties near the I-71 Cincinnati-Columbus-Cleveland corridor.

The policy implications of this growing divide are severe. Here are a few:

- Should such small counties remain as is, or should Ohio look to consolidate counties or at least the political apparatus of small counties so finite resources can be leveraged more effectively? It doesn't make sense to incur the costs of county commissions and county employees in every county when such entities can be combined to lessen the cost to taxpayers, especially when Ohio's combined state and local tax burden is among America's highest.

- How will such population shifts impact the 613 school districts, especially those in rural areas? Fewer people and businesses will mean lower tax revenues or a growing burden on those who remain. As with counties, should school district administrations be consolidated so that costs can be lowered and shared more broadly?

- How should limited infrastructure funds be allocated to small counties given the growing need the larger counties will have for traffic, housing, roads, and other government services? Along similar lines, what quality of medical and retirement care will be available to the shrinking counties whose residents will on average be older and poorer, thereby needing a greater level of care?

- Having tried virtually all other policy options, is it time to make Ohio a right-to-work state so that more companies look to come to Ohio, especially with access to so much inexpensive land and low-cost energy for large manufacturing facilities?

- Given the current weakness of Ohio's major airports, should Ohio look to move Cincinnati's airport out of Kentucky to Wilmington so that more of Ohio's southeastern population can reach it more easily? Similarly, should Ohio move Columbus' landlocked airport from Franklin County to Rickenbacker straddling both Franklin and Pickaway Counties or even combine the air traffic from Columbus and Cleveland to a new large airport in Richland County (an hour from each city or roughly the same distance most of Greater Denver is from Denver International Airport)? In both cases, should Ohio look to build larger airports like Denver did in the mid-1990s to become even more attractive to businesses and citizens and seek to pull air traffic from the weather nightmare of Chicago?

- Are there ways to spur population growth in smaller counties? For example, could state government be spread more evenly and fairly across Ohio so Franklin County didn't solely benefit from taxes paid by all Ohioans? What about doing more to leverage the natural resources available in the crescent counties such as natural gas, nature, and recreation. Why does West Virginia have the Greenbrier Resort and Pennsylvania the Nemacolin Resort, but Ohio lacks a similar destination resort area despite similar beauty and topography in southeastern Ohio?

- How can more be done to ensure the Greater Toledo and northwestern Ohio areas benefit more from the automotive resurgence in Greater Detroit?

These issues represent just a few of the issues that will increasingly arise as Ohio becomes a fractured state. State, county, city, and smaller Ohio government entities must start thinking about and planning for this future, as failure to do so will only make it harder for Ohio to escape its current mediocrity and malaise.

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Ohio County Populations, 2010

1,278,326
(Cuyahoga)

13,415
(Vinton)
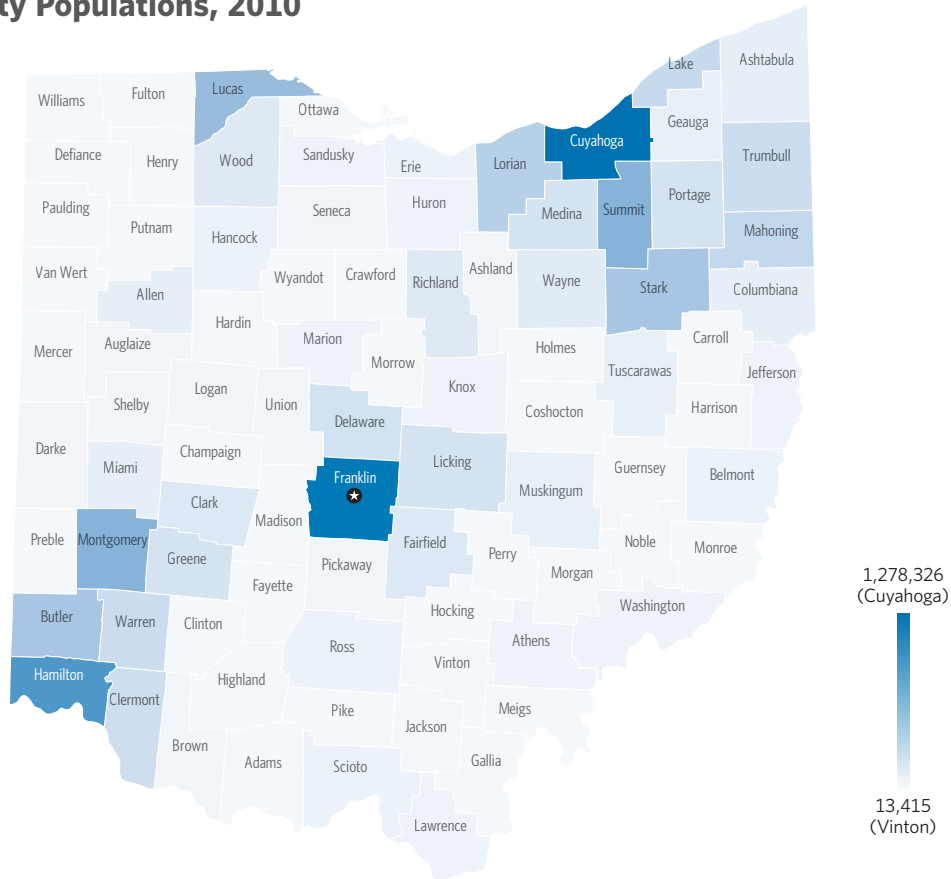
	County	Population		County	Population		County	Population		County	Population
1	Cuyahoga	1,278,326	23	Richland	124,174	45	Seneca	56,626	67	Coshocton	36,927
2	Franklin	1,166,371	24	Wayne	114,433	46	Pickaway	55,723	68	Perry	36,035
3	Hamilton	802,284	25	Columbiana	107,858	47	Ashland	53,319	69	Morrow	34,818
4	Summit	541,674	26	Allen	106,395	48	Darke	52,962	70	Putnam	34,460
5	Montgomery	536,217	27	Miami	102,478	49	Union	52,416	71	Jackson	33,273
6	Lucas	441,571	28	Ashtabula	101,394	50	Shelby	49,311	72	Hardin	32,101
7	Stark	375,470	29	Geauga	93,416	51	Auglaize	45,932	73	Gallia	31,093
8	Butler	369,078	30	Tuscarawas	92,560	52	Logan	45,765	74	Hocking	29,468
9	Lorain	301,468	31	Muskingum	86,220	53	Brown	44,878	75	Fayette	29,013
10	Mahoning	238,385	32	Scioto	79,529	54	Crawford	43,770	76	Carroll	28,825
11	Lake	230,016	33	Ross	78,099	55	Highland	43,608	77	Pike	28,732
12	Warren	213,531	34	Erie	77,036	56	Madison	43,393	78	Van Wert	28,664
13	Trumbull	209,868	35	Hancock	74,687	57	Fulton	42,614	79	Adams	28,562
14	Clermont	197,708	36	Belmont	70,318	58	Holmes	42,471	80	Henry	28,116
15	Delaware	175,148	37	Jefferson	69,614	59	Preble	42,174	81	Meigs	23,729
16	Medina	172,543	38	Marion	66,454	60	Clinton	41,903	82	Wyandot	22,592
17	Licking	166,736	39	Athens	65,221	61	Ottawa	41,394	83	Paulding	19,577
18	Greene	161,612	40	Lawrence	62,418	62	Mercer	40,784	84	Harrison	15,846
19	Portage	161,450	41	Washington	61,709	63	Guernsey	40,117	85	Morgan	15,064
20	Fairfield	146,408	42	Knox	61,087	64	Champaign	40,060	86	Noble	14,634
21	Clark	138,245	43	Sandusky	60,876	65	Defiance	39,103	87	Monroe	14,579
22	Wood	125,939	44	Huron	59,578	66	Williams	37,535	88	Vinton	13,415

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.
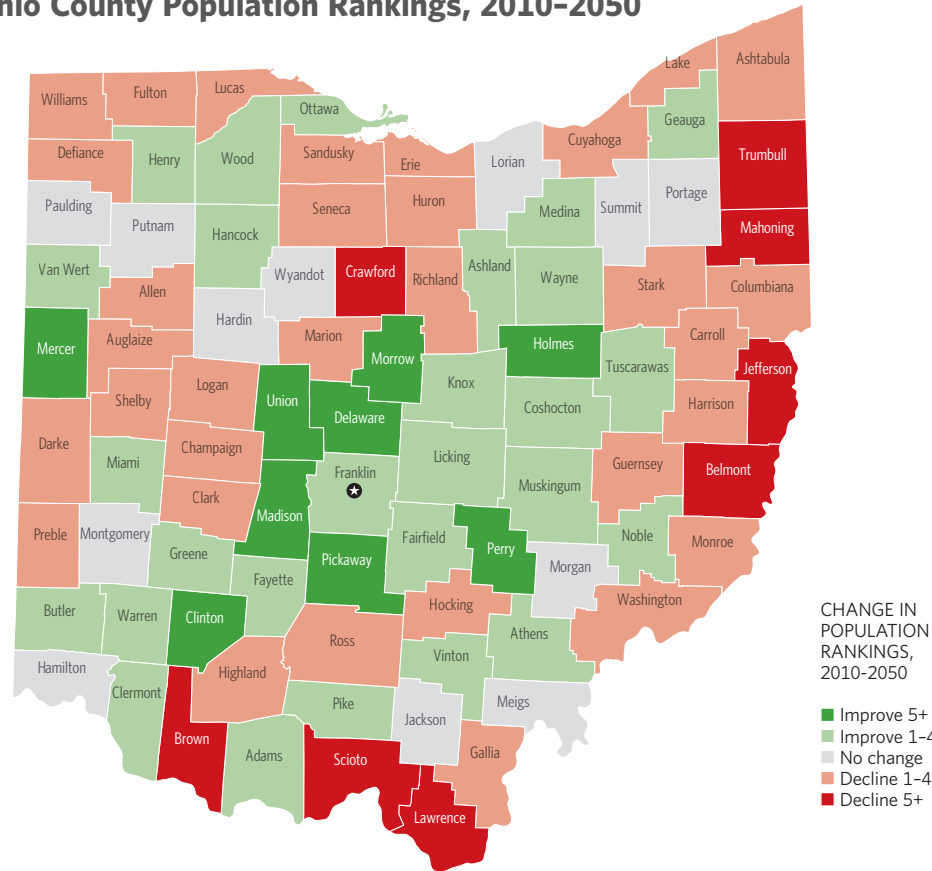
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Ohio County Populations, 2050

1,840,258
(Franklin)

12,124
(Monroe)
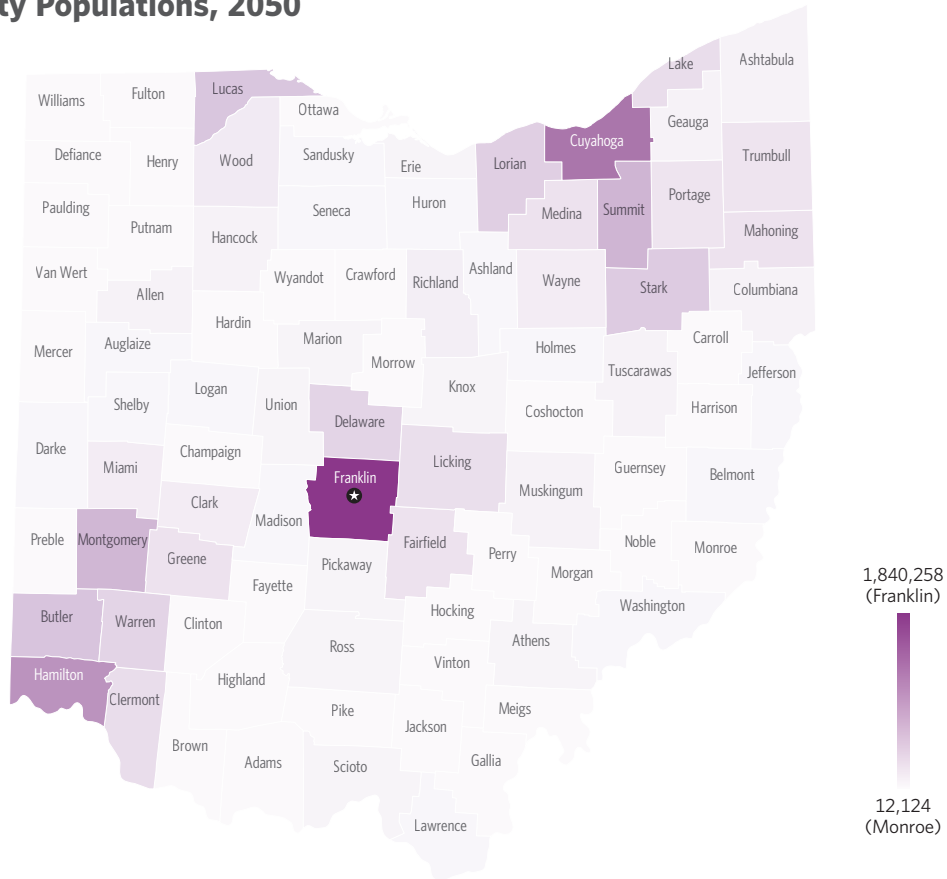
	County	Population		County	Population		County	Population		County	Population
1	Franklin	1,840,258	23	Wayne	128,189	45	Huron	57,289	67	Crawford	36,798
2	Cuyahoga	1,190,608	24	Miami	124,163	46	Sandusky	55,295	68	Defiance	36,631
3	Hamilton	907,838	25	Richland	117,620	47	Lawrence	54,989	69	Williams	36,305
4	Summit	569,175	26	Geauga	99,869	48	Seneca	53,869	70	Putnam	33,715
5	Montgomery	548,650	27	Allen	96,815	49	Holmes	51,426	71	Jackson	31,543
6	Butler	447,614	28	Tuscarawas	96,175	50	Madison	49,648	72	Hardin	30,851
7	Lucas	417,748	29	Columbiana	90,660	51	Darke	49,116	73	Fayette	28,918
8	Stark	379,824	30	Muskingum	90,381	52	Shelby	49,086	74	Van Wert	28,343
9	Lorain	352,490	31	Ashtabula	89,811	53	Auglaize	47,608	75	Gallia	28,075
10	Delaware	318,130	32	Hancock	83,727	54	Logan	46,436	76	Pike	26,805
11	Warren	309,203	33	Union	79,359	55	Clinton	44,749	77	Adams	26,367
12	Clermont	243,798	34	Ross	76,985	56	Mercer	44,236	78	Hocking	26,076
13	Lake	242,158	35	Athens	72,162	57	Highland	43,812	79	Henry	25,146
14	Licking	214,391	36	Erie	70,013	58	Fulton	43,199	80	Carroll	23,344
15	Medina	211,326	37	Pickaway	69,415	59	Brown	41,464	81	Meigs	21,790
16	Mahoning	208,608	38	Knox	67,636	60	Ottawa	40,116	82	Wyandot	20,894
17	Greene	198,370	39	Scioto	66,201	61	Preble	39,441	83	Paulding	17,047
18	Fairfield	197,812	40	Marion	64,703	62	Perry	38,296	84	Noble	14,497
19	Portage	175,274	41	Belmont	61,692	63	Morrow	38,276	85	Morgan	13,711
20	Trumbull	174,976	42	Washington	58,732	64	Guernsey	37,520	86	Harrison	13,631
21	Wood	153,920	43	Jefferson	57,541	65	Coshocton	37,442	87	Vinton	12,568
22	Clark	129,413	44	Ashland	57,337	66	Champaign	37,117	88	Monroe	12,124

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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Shifting Ohio County Population Rankings, 2010–2050

CHANGE IN POPULATION RANKINGS, 2010-2050

- Improve 5+
- Improve 1–4
- No change
- Decline 1–4
- Decline 5+

	County	RANKINGS 2010	RANKINGS 2050	Chg.
	Union	49	33	+16
	Holmes	58	49	+9
	Pickaway	46	37	+9
	Madison	56	50	+6
	Mercer	62	56	+6
	Morrow	69	63	+6
	Perry	68	62	+6
	Clinton	60	55	+5
	Delaware	15	10	+5
	Athens	39	35	+4
	Knox	42	38	+4
	Van Wert	78	74	+4
	Ashland	47	44	+3
	Geauga	29	26	+3
	Hancock	35	32	+3
	Licking	17	14	+3
	Miami	27	24	+3
	Adams	79	77	+2
	Butler	8	6	+2
	Clermont	14	12	+2
	Coshocton	67	65	+2
	Fairfield	20	18	+2

County	RANKINGS 2010	RANKINGS 2050	Chg.
Fayette	75	73	+2
Noble	86	84	+2
Tuscarawas	30	28	+2
Franklin	2	1	+1
Greene	18	17	+1
Henry	80	79	+1
Medina	16	15	+1
Muskingum	31	30	+1
Ottawa	61	60	+1
Pike	77	76	+1
Vinton	88	87	+1
Warren	12	11	+1
Wayne	24	23	+1
Wood	22	21	+1
Hamilton	3	3	0
Hardin	72	72	0
Jackson	71	71	0
Lorain	9	9	0
Meigs	81	81	0
Montgomery	5	5	0
Morgan	85	85	0
Paulding	83	83	0

County	RANKINGS 2010	RANKINGS 2050	Chg.
Portage	19	19	0
Putnam	70	70	0
Summit	4	4	0
Wyandot	82	82	0
Allen	26	27	-1
Clark	21	22	-1
Cuyahoga	1	2	-1
Fulton	57	58	-1
Guernsey	63	64	-1
Huron	44	45	-1
Lucas	6	7	-1
Monroe	87	88	-1
Ross	33	34	-1
Stark	7	8	-1
Washington	41	42	-1
Auglaize	51	53	-2
Champaign	64	66	-2
Erie	34	36	-2
Gallia	73	75	-2
Harrison	84	86	-2
Highland	55	57	-2
Lake	11	13	-2

County	RANKINGS 2010	RANKINGS 2050	Chg.
Logan	52	54	-2
Marion	38	40	-2
Preble	59	61	-2
Richland	23	25	-2
Shelby	50	52	-2
Ashtabula	28	31	-3
Darke	48	51	-3
Defiance	65	68	-3
Sandusky	43	46	-3
Seneca	45	48	-3
Williams	66	69	-3
Carroll	76	80	-4
Columbiana	25	29	-4
Hocking	74	78	-4
Belmont	36	41	-5
Brown	53	59	-6
Jefferson	37	43	-6
Mahoning	10	16	-6
Lawrence	40	47	-7
Scioto	32	39	-7
Trumbull	13	20	-7
Crawford	54	67	-13

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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Ohio County Populations and Rankings, 2010 vs. 2050

County	POPULATION 2010	2050	Chg.	RANKING 2010	2050	Chg.	County	POPULATION 2010	2050	Chg.	RANKING 2010	2050	Chg.
Adams	28,562	26,367	-2,195	79	77	+2	Licking	166,736	214,391	47,655	17	14	+3
Allen	106,395	96,815	-9,580	26	27	-1	Logan	45,765	46,436	671	52	54	-2
Ashland	53,319	57,337	4,018	47	44	+3	Lorain	301,468	352,490	51,022	9	9	0
Ashtabula	101,394	89,811	-11,583	28	31	-3	Lucas	441,571	417,748	-23,823	6	7	-1
Athens	65,221	72,162	6,941	39	35	+4	Madison	43,393	49,648	6,255	56	50	+6
Auglaize	45,932	47,608	1,676	51	53	-2	Mahoning	238,385	208,608	-29,777	10	16	-6
Belmont	70,318	61,692	-8,626	36	41	-5	Marion	66,454	64,703	-1,751	38	40	-2
Brown	44,878	41,464	-3,414	53	59	-6	Medina	172,543	211,326	38,783	16	15	+1
Butler	369,078	447,614	78,536	8	6	+2	Meigs	23,729	21,790	-1,939	81	81	0
Carroll	28,825	23,344	-5,481	76	80	-4	Mercer	40,784	44,236	3,452	62	56	+6
Champaign	40,060	37,117	-2,943	64	66	-2	Miami	102,478	124,163	21,685	27	24	+3
Clark	138,245	129,413	-8,832	21	22	-1	Monroe	14,579	12,124	-2,455	87	88	-1
Clermont	197,708	243,798	46,090	14	12	+2	Montgomery	536,217	548,650	12,433	5	5	0
Clinton	41,903	44,749	2,846	60	55	+5	Morgan	15,064	13,711	-1,353	85	85	0
Columbiana	107,858	90,660	-17,198	25	29	-4	Morrow	34,818	38,276	3,458	69	63	+6
Coshocton	36,927	37,442	515	67	65	+2	Muskingum	86,220	90,381	4,161	31	30	+1
Crawford	43,770	36,798	-6,972	54	67	-13	Noble	14,634	14,497	-137	86	84	+2
Cuyahoga	1,278,326	1,190,608	-87,718	1	2	-1	Ottawa	41,394	40,116	-1,278	61	60	+1
Darke	52,962	49,116	-3,846	48	51	-3	Paulding	19,577	17,047	-2,530	83	83	0
Defiance	39,103	36,631	-2,472	65	68	-3	Perry	36,035	38,296	2,261	68	62	+6
Delaware	175,148	318,130	142,982	15	10	+5	Pickaway	55,723	69,415	13,692	46	37	+9
Erie	77,036	70,013	-7,023	34	36	-2	Pike	28,732	26,805	-1,927	77	76	+1
Fairfield	146,408	197,812	51,404	20	18	+2	Portage	161,450	175,274	13,824	19	19	0
Fayette	29,013	28,918	-95	75	73	+2	Preble	42,174	39,441	-2,733	59	61	-2
Franklin	1,166,371	1,840,258	673,887	2	1	+1	Putnam	34,460	33,715	-745	70	70	0
Fulton	42,614	43,199	585	57	58	-1	Richland	124,174	117,620	-6,554	23	25	-2
Gallia	31,093	28,075	-3,018	73	75	-2	Ross	78,099	76,985	-1,114	33	34	-1
Geauga	93,416	99,869	6,453	29	26	+3	Sandusky	60,876	55,295	-5,581	43	46	-3
Greene	161,612	198,370	36,758	18	17	+1	Scioto	79,529	66,201	-13,328	32	39	-7
Guernsey	40,117	37,520	-2,597	63	64	-1	Seneca	56,626	53,869	-2,757	45	48	-3
Hamilton	802,284	907,838	105,554	3	3	0	Shelby	49,311	49,086	-225	50	52	-2
Hancock	74,687	83,727	9,040	35	32	+3	Stark	375,470	379,824	4,354	7	8	-1
Hardin	32,101	30,851	-1,250	72	72	0	Summit	541,674	569,175	27,501	4	4	0
Harrison	15,846	13,631	-2,215	84	86	-2	Trumbull	209,868	174,976	-34,892	13	20	-7
Henry	28,116	25,146	-2,970	80	79	+1	Tuscarawas	92,560	96,175	3,615	30	28	+2
Highland	43,608	43,812	204	55	57	-2	Union	52,416	79,359	26,943	49	33	+16
Hocking	29,468	26,076	-3,392	74	78	-4	Van Wert	28,664	28,343	-321	78	74	+4
Holmes	42,471	51,426	8,955	58	49	+9	Vinton	13,415	12,568	-847	88	87	+1
Huron	59,578	57,289	-2,289	44	45	-1	Warren	213,531	309,203	95,672	12	11	+1
Jackson	33,273	31,543	-1,730	71	71	0	Washington	61,709	58,732	-2,977	41	42	-1
Jefferson	69,614	57,541	-12,073	37	43	-6	Wayne	114,433	128,189	13,756	24	23	+1
Knox	61,087	67,636	6,549	42	38	+4	Williams	37,535	36,305	-1,230	66	69	-3
Lake	230,016	242,158	12,142	11	13	-2	Wood	125,939	153,920	27,981	22	21	+1
Lawrence	62,418	54,989	-7,429	40	47	-7	Wyandot	22,592	20,894	-1,698	82	82	0

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

OPPORTUNITY *Ohio*

Ohio County Population Gains and Losses, 2010-2050

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN POPULATION, 2010–2050

- ■ Gain 40%+
- ■ Gain 10%–40%
- ■ Gain 0%–10%
- ■ Lose 0%–10%
- ■ Lose 10%+
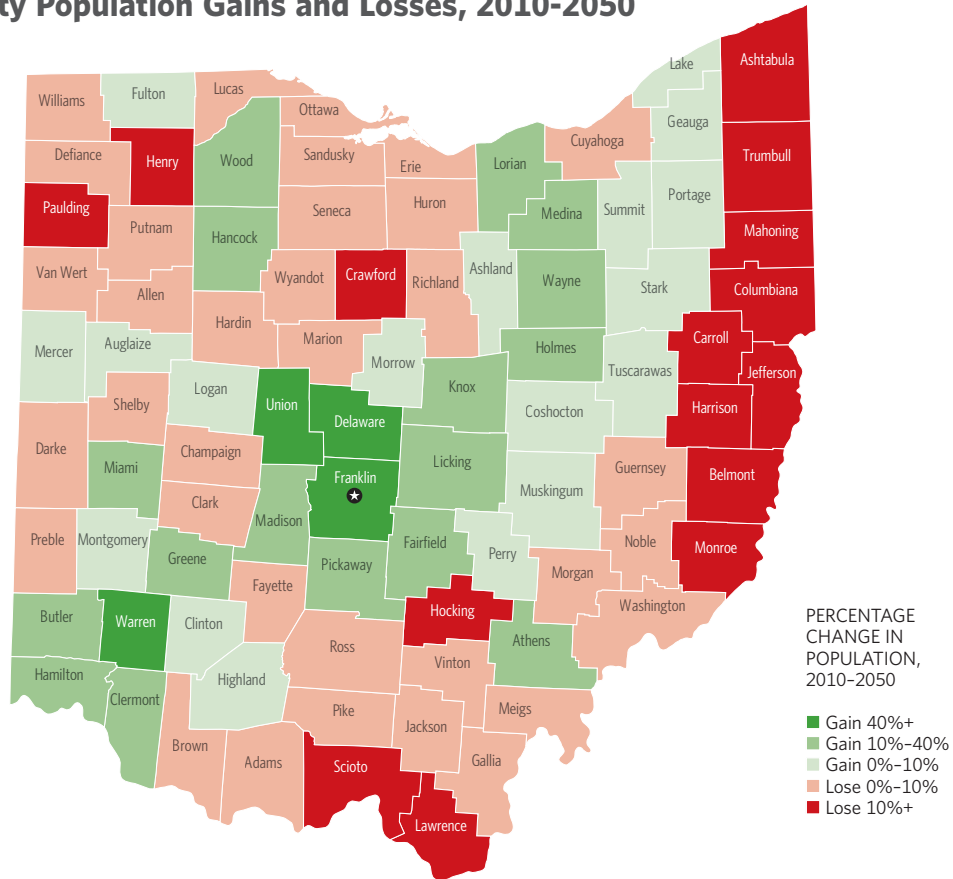
Rank	County	Change	Rank	County	Change	Rank	County	Change	Rank	County	Change
1	Delaware	81.6%	23	Portage	8.6%	45	Putnam	-2.2%	67	Adams	-7.7%
2	Franklin	57.8%	24	Mercer	8.5%	46	Marion	-2.6%	68	Meigs	-8.2%
3	Union	51.4%	25	Ashland	7.5%	47	Ottawa	-3.1%	69	Morgan	-9.0%
4	Warren	44.8%	26	Geauga	6.9%	48	Williams	-3.3%	70	Allen	-9.0%
5	Fairfield	35.1%	27	Clinton	6.8%	49	Huron	-3.8%	71	Erie	-9.1%
6	Licking	28.6%	28	Perry	6.3%	50	Hardin	-3.9%	72	Sandusky	-9.2%
7	Pickaway	24.6%	29	Lake	5.3%	51	Washington	-4.8%	73	Gallia	-9.7%
8	Clermont	23.3%	30	Summit	5.1%	52	Seneca	-4.9%	74	Henry	-10.6%
9	Greene	22.7%	31	Muskingum	4.8%	53	Jackson	-5.2%	75	Ashtabula	-11.4%
10	Medina	22.5%	32	Tuscarawas	3.9%	54	Richland	-5.3%	76	Hocking	-11.5%
11	Wood	22.2%	33	Auglaize	3.6%	55	Lucas	-5.4%	77	Lawrence	-11.9%
12	Butler	21.3%	34	Montgomery	2.3%	56	Vinton	-6.3%	78	Belmont	-12.3%
13	Miami	21.2%	35	Logan	1.5%	57	Defiance	-6.3%	79	Mahoning	-12.5%
14	Holmes	21.1%	36	Coshocton	1.4%	58	Clark	-6.4%	80	Paulding	-12.9%
15	Lorain	16.9%	37	Fulton	1.4%	59	Guernsey	-6.5%	81	Harrison	-14.0%
16	Madison	14.4%	38	Stark	1.2%	60	Preble	-6.5%	82	Crawford	-15.9%
17	Hamilton	13.2%	39	Highland	0.5%	61	Pike	-6.7%	83	Columbiana	-15.9%
18	Hancock	12.1%	40	Fayette	-0.3%	62	Cuyahoga	-6.9%	84	Trumbull	-16.6%
19	Wayne	12.0%	41	Shelby	-0.5%	63	Darke	-7.3%	85	Scioto	-16.8%
20	Knox	10.7%	42	Noble	-0.9%	64	Champaign	-7.3%	86	Monroe	-16.8%
21	Athens	10.6%	43	Van Wert	-1.1%	65	Wyandot	-7.5%	87	Jefferson	-17.3%
22	Morrow	9.9%	44	Ross	-1.4%	66	Brown	-7.6%	88	Carroll	-19.0%

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau and Opportunity Ohio calculations.

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