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Media Relations

UNH Demographer: 2010 Census Shows Slow Growth In New England; New Hampshire Posts Greatest Regional Gains

December 20, 2010

DURHAM, N.H. -- The first data from the 2010 Census shows that New England grew more slowly than the rest of the United States between 2000 and 2010, with New Hampshire the fastest-growing state in the region, according to Kenneth Johnson, professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire and senior demographer at UNH's Carsey Institute.

New England grew by 522,000 residents during the decade. The region's population was 14,445,000 on April 1, 2010. The population gain of 3.8 percent in New England was smaller than in the United States as a whole, which was 9.7 percent.

Among New England states, New Hampshire grew at the fastest rate (6.5 percent) and Rhode Island at the slowest rate (.4 percent). In terms of raw numbers, Massachusetts had the largest absolute population gain at 199,000, while Rhode Island gained only 4,200 residents.

"Nearly all of the population gain in New England was because of the excess of births over deaths. In all, such natural increase accounted for 463,000 of the total population gain. Migration accounted for the remaining 59,000 new residents. The minimal migration gain in New England was because of immigration. Many more people left New England for other U.S. destinations than came to it during the decade," Johnson said.

New Hampshire and Maine received the largest net percent gains in migration. This migration gain, coupled with natural increase, caused New Hampshire to grow faster than other states in the region. Massachusetts and Rhode Island both suffered migration losses. Minimal migration gains combined with modest natural increase caused the slow population growth in the region. This slow growth caused Massachusetts to lose one of its 10 Congressional seats.

NH's Population Gains Greatest in Region, but Still Modest






New Hampshire is the fastest growing of the New England states, with its gain fueled both by more births than deaths and by migration, Johnson said. New Hampshire's gain from natural increase was 3.7 percent because it had 45,000 more births than deaths during the decade, according to recent census estimates. In contrast, Maine, which had the least natural increase in the region, grew by only 1 percent from natural increase. The smaller excess of births over deaths in Maine is because its population is considerably older, resulting in higher mortality.

New Hampshire also gained 35,000 migrants, a 2.9 percent gain. Only Maine at 3.2 percent had a larger gain from migration. In contrast, both Massachusetts and Rhode Island experienced overall migration losses.

"Both Maine and New Hampshire's population growth has slowed recently because of reduced migration to the state. The economic recession is the primary reason for this because it makes it more difficult for people to move because of concerns about selling homes and jobs. In contrast, Massachusetts has benefited from the slowdown in migration because of the recession because fewer people have left the state to move elsewhere in the United States," Johnson said.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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Kenneth Johnson, professor of sociology and senior demographer at the UNH Carsey Institute.
http://www.unh.edu/news/img/ken_johnson.jpg

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T-hall

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