

# Rhode Island State Data Center Census Data Bulletin

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## 2013 Municipal Population Estimates Released

In May, the U.S. Census Bureau released subcounty (municipal) population estimates for 2013. Overall, the state's population has changed very little over the past three years, posting a slight gain between 2012 and 2013. However within the state, our cities and towns are growing and declining at different rates. This month's Census Data Bulletin explores some of the recent municipal population estimates data and compares them with the Census 2010 counts.

### Growth and Decline

Five municipalities in the state grew by more than 1.0% in the past three years. Exeter leads the pack with a 1.9% three-year growth rate, followed by North Smithfield, Cumberland, Jamestown, and Glocester. For Exeter, Cumberland, and North Smithfield, this growth continues growth trends of the 1990s and 2000s. Jamestown and Glocester both had population losses between 2000 and 2010, but their populations are so small that small changes have a large impact on overall rates.

The 2013 estimates find that four Rhode Island municipalities lost over 1.0% of their population between 2010 and 2013: Newport, Bristol, Richmond, and North Kingstown. Newport has been experiencing a steady loss of population for multiple decades, while Richmond's population loss is a change in a growth trend that dates at least as far back as 1990.

The state's five largest cities, Providence, Pawtucket, Warwick, East Providence, and Woonsocket have experienced little population change in the past three years. All posted three-year gains or losses less than 1.0%, although Warwick had the largest numeric loss since 2010: 700 residents.

### What Does Population Change Mean?

Population change, especially on a municipal level, occurs for a variety of reasons, and it's rare that one single driver of population change explains a gain or loss. Overall, the health of the economy is generally reflected in housing development trends, and new housing usually

## BY THE NUMBERS

**-0.1%** - Rhode Island population change, 2010-2013

**1.9%** - Exeter's three-year growth rate, highest of any R.I. municipality

**549** - Cumberland's three-year increase in population, highest of any R.I. municipality

**-2.6%** - Newport's three-year growth rate, lowest of any R.I. municipality

**700** - Warwick's three-year loss in population, largest loss of any R.I. municipality

Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates and Census 2010

attracts new residents. However, the economy is not the only factor driving population change. Median age varies greatly across Rhode Island, and younger communities tend to have a greater share of births while older communities have a greater share of deaths. Lots of lifestyle factors affect local population trends, including commuting options to area jobs and amenities like quality of schools. It's important for cities and towns to understand the drivers of their particular population changes, but it is difficult to generalize about trends in *all* Rhode Island municipalities, particularly given the modest scale of those changes between 2010 and 2013.

### Estimates Methodology

The U.S. Census Bureau derives subcounty estimates from its population estimates for larger geographies. At the nation, state, and county level, the Census uses the "components of change" method to estimate population change each year, based on the following equation:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Population in 2013} \\ = \\ \text{Population in 2012} + \text{Births} - \text{Deaths} + \text{Net Migration} \end{array}$$

The Census uses estimates of housing unit change, based on local building permit and other administrative data, to distribute the county-level population change to appropriate subcounty units. In the case of Rhode Island, the subcounty units are our cities and towns.

Geography	April 1, 2010	July 1, 2013	'10-'13 Change	'10-'13 Rate of Change
<i>Rhode Island</i>	1,052,567	1,051,511	-1,056	-0.1%
Barrington	16,310	16,293	-17	-0.1%
Bristol	22,954	22,385	-569	-2.5%
Burrillville	15,955	16,109	154	1.0%
Central Falls	19,383	19,416	33	0.2%
Charlestown	7,827	7,781	-46	-0.6%
Coventry	35,011	34,935	-76	-0.2%
Cranston	80,386	80,566	180	0.2%
Cumberland	33,506	34,055	549	1.6%
East Greenwich	13,147	13,131	-16	-0.1%
East Providence	47,037	47,149	112	0.2%
Exeter	6,425	6,546	121	1.9%
Foster	4,608	4,656	48	1.0%
Glocester	9,746	9,854	108	1.1%
Hopkinton	8,188	8,116	-72	-0.9%
Jamestown	5,405	5,472	67	1.2%
Johnston	28,769	29,045	276	1.0%
Lincoln	21,104	21,299	195	0.9%
Little Compton	3,492	3,503	11	0.3%
Middletown	16,150	16,154	4	0.0%
Narragansett	15,870	15,706	-164	-1.0%
New Shoreham	1,051	1,041	-10	-1.0%
Newport	24,672	24,027	-645	-2.6%
North Kingstown	26,486	26,184	-302	-1.1%
North Providence	32,080	32,238	158	0.5%
North Smithfield	11,967	12,178	211	1.8%
Pawtucket	71,141	71,172	31	0.0%
Portsmouth	17,389	17,383	-6	0.0%
Providence	178,042	177,994	-48	0.0%
Richmond	7,708	7,613	-95	-1.2%
Scituate	10,327	10,433	106	1.0%
Smithfield	21,430	21,410	-20	-0.1%
South Kingstown	30,637	30,615	-22	-0.1%
Tiverton	15,780	15,858	78	0.5%
Warren	10,611	10,542	-69	-0.7%
Warwick	82,671	81,971	-700	-0.8%
West Greenwich	6,135	6,105	-30	-0.5%
West Warwick	29,194	28,893	-301	-1.0%
Westerly	22,787	22,657	-130	-0.6%
Woonsocket	41,186	41,026	-160	-0.4%
<i>Bristol County</i>	<i>49,875</i>	<i>49,220</i>	<i>-655</i>	<i>-1.3%</i>
<i>Kent County</i>	<i>166,158</i>	<i>165,035</i>	<i>-1,123</i>	<i>-0.7%</i>
<i>Newport County</i>	<i>82,888</i>	<i>82,397</i>	<i>-491</i>	<i>-0.6%</i>
<i>Providence County</i>	<i>626,667</i>	<i>628,600</i>	<i>1,933</i>	<i>0.3%</i>
<i>Washington County</i>	<i>126,979</i>	<i>126,259</i>	<i>-720</i>	<i>-0.6%</i>

## TO LEARN MORE...

To explore population estimates data by county, including components of population change, visit the U.S. Census website, [American FactFinder](#). You can locate estimates data by going to Advanced Search > Topics > Year or Advanced Search > Topics > Dataset. For municipal population estimates, visit the Census webpage at <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/index.html>.

For information about R.I. State Data Center resources, contact Vincent Flood at [vincent.flood@doa.ri.gov](mailto:vincent.flood@doa.ri.gov) or Amanda Martin at [amanda.martin@doa.ri.gov](mailto:amanda.martin@doa.ri.gov) and visit the website at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/geodeminfo/data/index.php>.