

## About the Overall Population Data

Northern Virginia is on the front lines of a demographic transformation shaping the United States. There has been an extraordinary amount of population growth in Northern Virginia. The April 1st Decennial Census population of Northern Virginia was 1,466,350 in 1990, 1,815,197 in 2000, and 2,230,623 in 2010. On April 1, 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census, Northern Virginia had a population of 2,550,377.

### 2010 to 2020 Period

#### Key Facts

##### Decennial Growth

- Northern Virginia added approximately 320,000 people in this ten-year period. This is 96,000 or 23% less than the previous decade, signaling a significant slowdown in the pace of growth. However, growth still continues at a high amount.
- Virginia's population grew by 630,369, of which 50.7% of that growth was in Northern Virginia.
- In 2020 29.5% of Virginia's population was in Northern Virginia, compared to 27.9% in 2010.
- Growth peaked in 2010. Growth in Northern Virginia has been on the decline since 2010, but it is still large and impactful on the region.
- Where in Northern Virginia the growth is locating this decade is different than in the 1990s and 2000s.
  - ❖ The preponderance of population growth of Northern Virginia continues to be located in the outer-ring suburbs of Prince William, Loudoun Counties, and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. However, the share of the region's growth that is in the outer-ring has dropped from 65.1% to 61.5%.
  - ❖ Arlington has seen its share of the region's growth more than double from what it experienced in the 2000's.

- ❖ Alexandria has seen its share of the region's growth become 2.2 times what it experienced in the 2000's.
- ❖ Intensification of developmental pressures this decade in the inner-core is a response to the millennial generation preferences, demographics, urbanization, transportation and other market pressures.

### Annual Growth

- The annual growth for each of the last three years has been the lowest since 2000. Growth from 2017 to 2018, 2018 to 2019, and 2019 to 2020 was estimated to be 14,300, 19,200, and 11,700 respectively. Two factors known to be contributing to this are the region's economic dependence on the federal government and immigrants.
- Immigrants have driven Northern Virginia's growth for the past two decades. In 2000, Northern Virginia's population was 21% foreign born and today it is estimated to be approximately 28% foreign born. See the immigration section of the NOVA Region Dashboard for more information on immigration in Northern Virginia.
- The Washington metropolitan area has an economy that is heavily dependent on the federal government. When federal jobs are cut, federal contractor job cuts follow too. The presidential administration in office from January 2017 to January 2021 cutback federal jobs and federal contracting jobs until the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Federal employment (excluding contractors) in the Washington metropolitan region was 367,200 in 2016 prior to the new presidential administration. It dropped to 362,400 by 2019. In 2020 it improved to 369,000 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Slower population growth in Northern Virginia was in parallel with the federal workforce decline from 2017 to 2019.

### **Key Facts Race and Ethnicity**

A big story of the region is the majority-minority transition. There will soon be a day when the majority of people will belong to a minority group (any group other than non-Hispanic White alone). Much of this is attributed to the sizable increases in the number of Hispanics and Asians in the region.

## Decennial Census

- Northern Virginia was not majority-minority in 2010 but is now majority-minority in 2020.
  - ❖ In 2000, Northern Virginia's minority population was 34.6%, which was fairly similar to Virginia and the United States, with the difference being 4 or 5 percentage points. In 2020, this population was 52.8%.
  - ❖ Northern Virginia's rate of increase of the minority population is much greater than the United States and Virginia. The region is now more than 10 percentage points higher than Virginia and the United States.
  - ❖ From 2000 to 2010, 88 percent of the net population increase in Northern Virginia came from increases in minorities. From 2010 to 2020, it was 110 percent, meaning that minorities increased while non-minorities decreased in population in the region.
- Northern Virginia's Hispanic/Latino population share increased from 16.3% to 18.8% from 2010 to 2020. The percentage change in Hispanics during this same period was 32%.
- The Multiracial population has changed considerably since 2010 on a regional and national scale.
  - ❖ According to the Census Bureau, “The observed changes in the Multiracial population could be attributed to a number of factors, including demographic change since 2010. But we expect they were largely due to the improvements to the design of the two separate questions for race and ethnicity, data processing, and coding, which enabled a more thorough and accurate depiction of how people prefer to self-identify.” Therefore, comparisons of changes in race between 2010 and 2020 should be viewed with caution.
  - ❖ Nationally, it was measured at 9 million people in 2010 and is now 33.8 million people in 2020, a 276% increase.
  - ❖ Nationally, the multi-racial share of the population went from 2.9% in 2010 to 10.2% in 2020.

- ❖ Regionally, it was measured at 93,800 people in 2010 and is now 292,800 people in 2020, a 212% increase.
- ❖ Regionally, the multi-racial share of the population went from 4.2% in 2010 to 11.5% in 2020.

This and more information can be found on our Northern Virginia Regional Dashboard – [www.novaregiondashboard.com](http://www.novaregiondashboard.com).

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