

Every 10 years, the census records everyone living in this country. The United States Constitution requires the census. Article 1, Section 2 mandates that the government conduct a population count once every ten years. The 2020 Census is now official, marking the 24th time that the country has counted its population since 1790. The count was conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency.

Total U.S. Population - 331,449,281

According to the Census Bureau results, the total population of the United States is now 331,449,281 -- up 7.4% or 22,703,743 more people since the last census in 2010. This has reset the balance of power for the next decade in the House of Representatives and the Electoral College, where each state's share of votes is tied to its census numbers.

This is the second-smallest decade-long growth rate since the first Census was taken in 1790—only slightly higher than the 7.3% growth rate from the 1930s in the aftermath of the Great Depression. The first-ever census in 1790 recorded a population of just over 3.9 million.

Among all 50 states, 37 grew more slowly in the 2010s than in the previous decade, and three states lost population—the largest number of such states since the 1980s. The states that gained the most people in the last 10 years were Texas, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, North Dakota, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. Florida is now the third most populous state.

Despite the nation's slowing growth, projections by the Census Bureau and the United Nations show it is expected to continue growing at least through the middle of the century, approaching 400 million people by 2060. By comparison, Japan and many European countries have begun to shrink, including Germany, Poland, Portugal, and Russia. China's population is expected to peak before 2030.

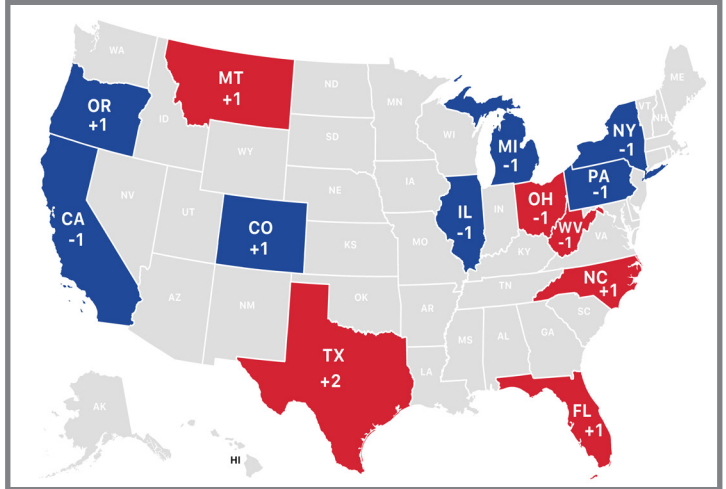
House Changes from the 2020 Census

The 2020 US Census will result in the House of Representatives being *reapportioned*. Apportionment determines which states gain or lose congressional districts based on their total population. Losing one seat each are the states of California, New York, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, while Texas gained two seats due to rapid population growth. Also gaining one seat, each are Florida, Montana, North Carolina, Colorado, and Oregon. It's the fifth consecutive decade that Michigan has lost a U.S. House seat.

Each seat in the House represents around 761,000 people, with the reapportioned Congress to convene in January 2023 as the 118th Congress. New York missed out on retaining its congressional seat by just 89 people.

Those changes appear likely to shift more power to Republicans, but the exact implications are far from clear. For instance, rapid change in Texas, where Democrats have made some inroads in recent years, makes that state less reliably Republican.

Changes in the U.S. House of Representatives for the 118th Congress (2023)



Electoral College

You will remember that the number of electoral votes per state equals the number of U.S. House of Representatives members plus the two U.S. Senators. Will large, Republican-leaning states that gained electoral votes, like Texas and Florida, become more important than they already are? While will the big Democratic states like — New York and California — become somewhat less so? Of the states Biden won in 2020, California, New York, Illinois, Michigan, and Pennsylvania will each lose a vote, while Oregon and Colorado will both gain one. Of the states Trump won in 2020, only West Virginia and Ohio lost an Electoral College vote. But Florida, North Carolina, and Montana each gained one. And Texas picked up two.

QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a *T* or *F* in the space provided.

- ___ 1. A census is taken every 25 years.
- ___ 2. Midwestern states continue lose population.
- ___ 3. The population of the United States is expected to decrease by the next census.
- ___ 4. Population changes effect the number of U.S. Senators each state receives.
- ___ 5. The changes to the U.S. House will be effective with the 118th Congress in 2023.

IDENTIFY THE STATE. Choose the correct state and two-letter abbreviation that matches the statement.

States: CA, FL, MI, NY, OR, TX

- ___ 1. Gained two seats in the U.S. House
- ___ 2. Missed retaining a congressional seat by 89 people
- ___ 3. First time losing a seat in Congress
- ___ 4. Is now the 3rd-largest state
- ___ 5. Midwest state that lost a seat for the fifth straight census
- ___ 6. West coast state that gained a House seat