COMPASS POINTS 2025

ndcompass.org

North Dakota Components of Population Change
July 1, 2020 - July 1, 2024

- 2020-2021: 2,263 / -3,513
- 2021-2022: 2,466 / 620
- 2022-2023: 2,814 / 5,181
- 2023-2024: 2,725 / 4,835

Legend: Natural change / Net migration
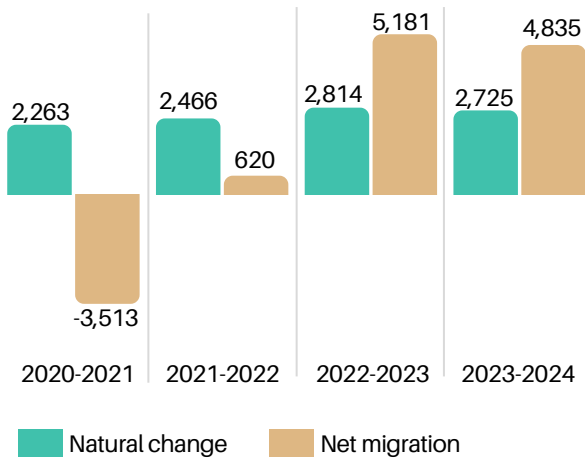
North Dakota ranks first among Midwest states in population growth rate for 2023-2024.

As of July 1, 2024, North Dakota's population reached 796,568 people, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Population and Housing Estimates Program. This marks an increase of 7,521 people (1%) from the revised 2023 estimate of 789,047. Notably, this one percent growth rate ranks North Dakota first among Midwest states and 16th among all U.S. states.

This growth is attributed to positive natural change (births exceeding deaths by 2,725 people) and a net migration of 4,835 people. The positive net migration was largely driven by international migration, which added 5,126 residents, offsetting a domestic migration loss of 291 in 2023-2024.
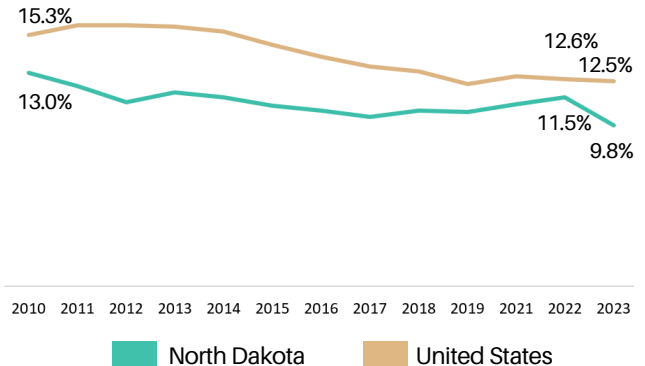
Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population and Housing Unit Estimates Vintage 2024 Estimates

---

Poverty rate decreased in North Dakota from 2022 to 2023 but varied by demographic group.
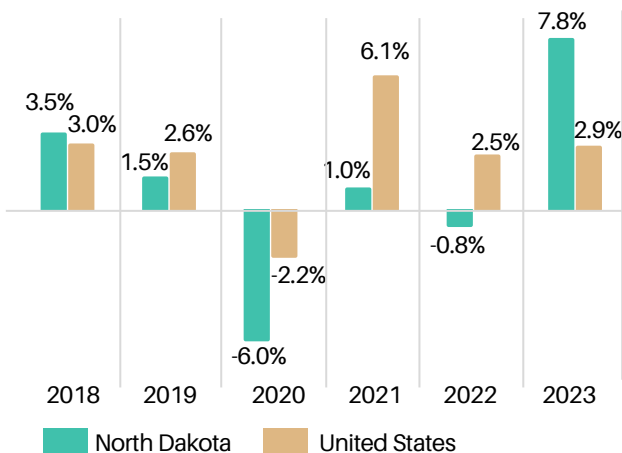
In North Dakota, 10% of the population lived below the poverty line in 2023, a notable decrease from 12% in 2022 and lower than the national average of 13% in 2023. Among North Dakota children younger than 18 years, the poverty rate also dropped, from 13% in 2022 to 9% in 2023.

However, not all demographic groups in North Dakota experienced the same trend. From 2022 to 2023, poverty rates declined for all age groups except adults age 65 and older, whose rate slightly increased. Women continued to experience higher poverty rates than men (12% compared to 8%), although rates for both genders declined over the same period. Similarly, the foreign-born population had a higher poverty rate than the native-born population (13% versus 10%), though both groups saw improvement from the previous year.

Percent of population below the poverty level
North Dakota and United States

- 15.3% ... 12.6% / 12.5%
- 13.0% ... 11.5% / 9.8%

Years: 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2021 2022 2023

Legend: North Dakota / United States

Annual Real GDP Change
North Dakota and United States

- 2018: 3.5% / 3.0%
- 2019: 1.5% / 2.6%
- 2020: -6.0% / -2.2%
- 2021: 1.0% / 6.1%
- 2022: -0.8% / 2.5%
- 2023: 7.8% / 2.9%

Legend: North Dakota / United States

In 2023 North Dakota led the nation in annual real GDP growth.

North Dakota's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) varies as a result of fluctuations in commodity prices in the energy and agriculture sectors. After experiencing moderate growth before 2020, the state's economy was significantly impacted by the pandemic, leading to a substantial GDP decline in 2020. However, by 2023, North Dakota had the highest annual GDP growth of any state (7.8%), more than double the national average of 2.9%.

At the local level, North Dakota's GDP varies regionally. Energy producing regions of the state typically have higher GDP per capita. Urban counties such as Cass, Burleigh, and Grand Forks have more diverse economies and also generally report higher and more stable GDP levels. Rural counties typically have lower per capita GDP.

Measuring Progress. Inspiring Action.

State of the State

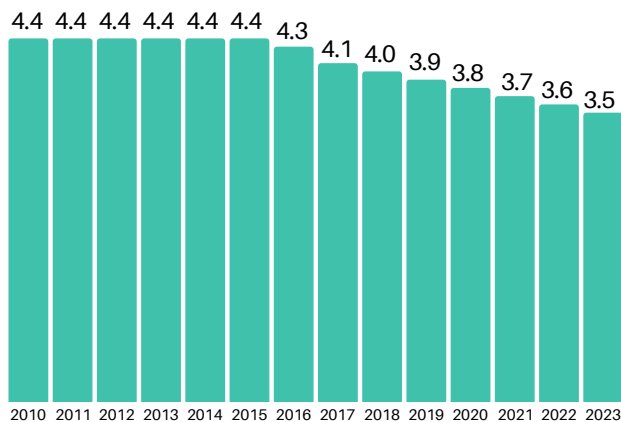| Topic	National Rank	Key Measures	Current	Previous
AGING	15	Adults (age 65+) with at least one disability	30.5%	30.6%
	20	Adults (age 65+) who volunteer	32.7%	36.1%
	30	Median household income, head of household (age 65+)	$53,059	$58,628
CHILDREN & YOUTH	-	High schoolers who binge drink	10.3%	14.0%
	-	High schoolers who have ever had sex	35.2%	36.6%
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	-	Voted in presidential election (voting-eligible)	62.6%	62.7%
	27	Residents (age 16+) who volunteer	31.6%	29.2%
EARLY CHILDHOOD	6	Babies born at low birth weight	7.1%	7.1%
	50	Children enrolled in preschool	26.8%	29.1%
	1	Children (under age 6) with working parents	75.9%	71.2%
ECONOMY	1	Annual change in real Gross Domestic Product	7.8%	-0.8%
	-	Total nonfarm payroll jobs	437,400	428,100
	21	Real median household income	$76,525	$74,921
	8	Poverty rate	9.8%	11.5%
EDUCATION	-	3rd graders who are proficient in reading	40.0%	40.3%
	-	8th graders who are proficient in math	37.0%	34.6%
	-	Students who graduate high school on time	82.4%	82.7%
ENVIRONMENT	47	Population with low access to a grocery store	30.7%	-
	-	Days air quality was rated "good" (Cass County)	50.3%	78.1%
HEALTH	31	Adults (age 18+) who are obese	35.6%	35.4%
	6	Adults (age 18+) with diabetes	9.5%	9.6%
	5	Residents (under age 65) who are uninsured	5.3%	7.5%
HOUSING	42	Homeownership rate	63.7%	65.1%
	2	Households that are cost-burdened	23.0%	25.0%
WORKFORCE	1	Proportion of adults (age 16-64) working	80.5%	79.2%
	29	Adults (age 25+) with bachelor's degree or higher	33.6%	31.8%
	30	Graduation rate at 4-year institutions (within 6 years)	59.8%	60.4%

National Rank (1 = Best); Current = most recent data available on ndcompass.org at the time of creating this document; Previous = previous year; Missing values (-) = ranking unavailable or unable to compare due to change in methodology.

MAJOR TRENDS

Old Age Dependency Ratio
North Dakota, 2010-2023

Year	Ratio
2010	4.4
2011	4.4
2012	4.4
2013	4.4
2014	4.4
2015	4.4
2016	4.3
2017	4.1
2018	4.0
2019	3.9
2020	3.8
2021	3.7
2022	3.6
2023	3.5

Fewer Working-Age Adults per Older Adult: A Growing Challenge for North Dakota.

Shifts in the population's age structure have significant implications for society. Nationwide, declining birth rates, combined with increased life expectancy and the aging of the baby boomer generation, have led to a shrinking working-age population (ages 18 to 64) relative to the older adult population (ages 65 and older).

In North Dakota, this trend is also evident. There were approximately 4.4 working-age individuals for every older adult in 2010. By 2020, this ratio dropped to 3.8, and by 2023, it declined further to just 3.5 working-age individuals per older adult.

Despite having one of the youngest median ages in the nation (36.0 in 2023), North Dakota's working-age-to-older-adult ratio is expected to continue decreasing. This trend presents growing challenges for workforce availability, retirement systems, health care services, and elder care.
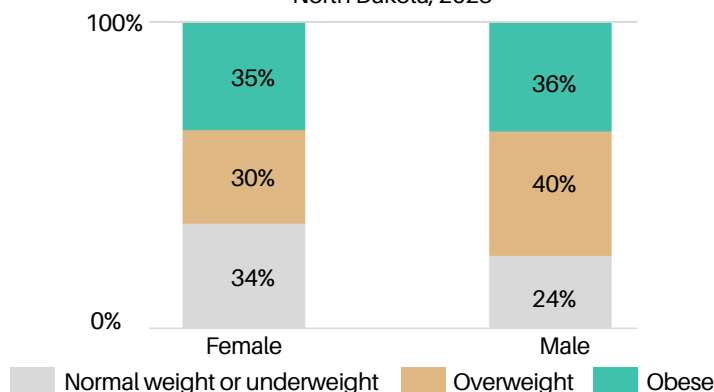

More than 3 in 4 North Dakota adult males are overweight or obese.

Data from the 2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) reveals that 36% of North Dakota adults are overweight, while another 36% are classified as obese.

Males are more likely than females to be overweight or obese. In 2023, 40% of males were overweight, and 36% were obese, compared to 30% of overweight and 35% of obese females. While the percentage of overweight adults has changed little over time, obesity rates have risen. Among adult males, obesity rate increased from 30% in 2011 to 36% in 2023. Similarly, the obesity rate among adult females grew from 25% to 35% over the same period.
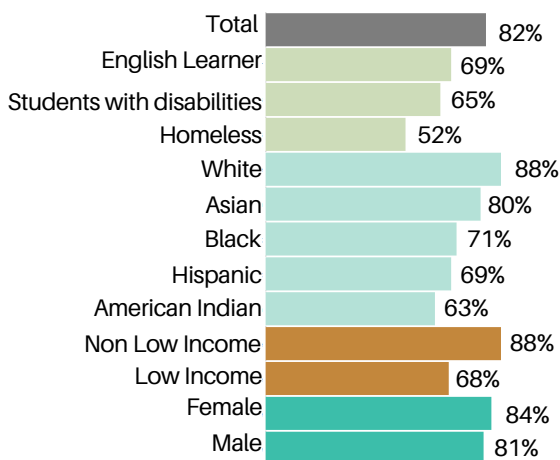
Adults Overweight or Obese By Gender
North Dakota, 2023

Category	Female	Male
Obese	35%	36%
Overweight	30%	40%
Normal weight or underweight	34%	24%

Disparities in High School Graduation Rates
North Dakota, 2024

Group	Rate
Total	82%
English Learner	69%
Students with disabilities	65%
Homeless	52%
White	88%
Asian	80%
Black	71%
Hispanic	69%
American Indian	63%
Non Low Income	88%
Low Income	68%
Female	84%
Male	81%

Disparities in High School Graduation Rates Persist in North Dakota.

North Dakota's on-time high school graduation rates remained fairly steady until 2020. However, after reaching 89% in 2020, the rate consistently declined to 82% in 2024.

Significant disparities in high school graduation rates among student groups continue into 2024. White students have the highest graduation rate at 88%, while rates are lower among other racial and ethnic groups. Economically disadvantaged students (low income) face a substantial gap, graduating at a rate 20 percentage points lower than their higher-income peers. Female students graduate at slightly higher rates than male students. Special populations—including English learners and students with disabilities—also experience lower graduation rates. The greatest challenge is faced by homeless students, with only 52% graduating on time.

Unless otherwise noted, data for the 2025 Compass Points are provided by North Dakota Compass, with the most recent data updated in February 2025. Data sources, years, margins of error, and additional notes are available on ndcompass.org.

COMPASS POINTS
2025
ndcompass.org

North Dakota Compass provides and promotes the use of reliable, accurate, and unbiased demographic, economic, and socio-economic data to support informed decision making and community engagement in North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA'S POPULATION AT A GLANCE

	2010		2023	
Population	672,591	-	796,568*	-
Children & youth (age 0-17)	149,871	22.3%	184,734	23.6%
Working age residents (age 20-64)	403,179	59.9%	440,976	56.3%
Older adults (age 65+)	97,477	14.5%	133,316	17.0%
People of color (non-white)	74,155	11.0%	136,236	17.4%
American Indian population	36,948	5.5%	41,390	5.3%
Individuals with at least one disability	68,797	10.4%	95,182	12.5%
Individuals (age 25+) with a bachelor's degree or higher	122,299	27.6%	174,474	33.6%
People in poverty	84,895	13.1%	73,841	9.8%

*2024 data

2025 Compass Points sponsored by

DMF
Dakota Medical Foundation

THANKYOU

Funders

North Dakota Compass, a project of the Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, is financially supported by major foundations and organizations who understand the value of data-driven decision making.

BUSH FOUNDATION

Join the community, use North Dakota Compass!