

# Population Trends

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NORTH DAKOTA

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# Population Trends Summary

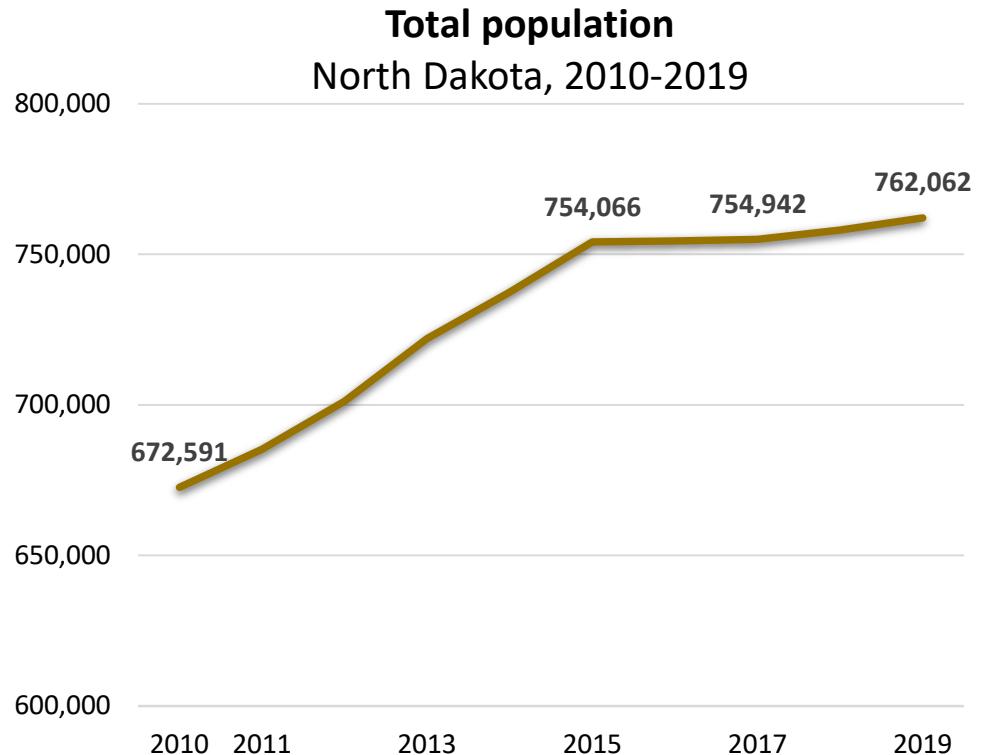
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- North Dakota's population increased by 3,982 people from 2018 to 2019. Despite the stabilizing of the growth rate, North Dakota continued to have one of the largest percentage growth of all states from 2010 to 2019.
- For five years, North Dakota's population grew younger as the median age continually decreased from 37.0 in 2010 to 34.8 in 2015. While the median age slightly increased to 35.3 in 2019, North Dakota was still the only state with a younger median age when compared to 2010.
- While both the male and female population remained relatively stable after 2015, North Dakota is one of few states where males outnumber females overall.
- Racial and ethnic diversity continued to grow in North Dakota. The increase in non-White population from 2010 to 2019 was by far the greatest percentage change of any state.

# Total population

After five years of continuous growth (2010-2015), [North Dakota's population](#) remained relatively unchanged from 2015 to 2017. However, from 2017 to 2019, North Dakota's population increased by 7,120 people.

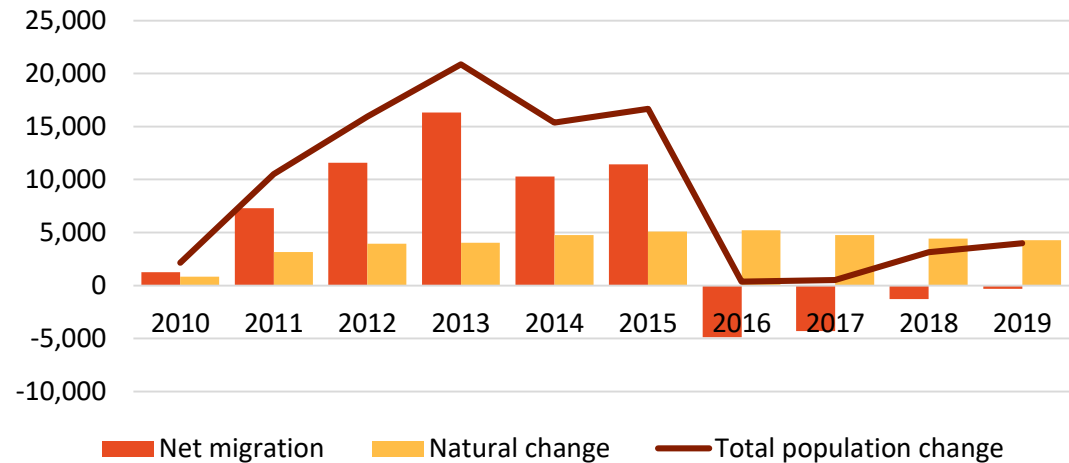
On a larger scale, from 2010 to 2019, North Dakota gained 89,471 people. This represents a 13 percent increase and ranks North Dakota 8th highest in population percentage increase during this time period among the 50 states.



# Components of change

Most of the increase in population from 2018 to 2019 is attributed to natural growth (more births than deaths). The net migration continued to be negative, although it was a very small number (316 people) ([U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 Population and Housing Unit Estimates](#)).

**Population change by components of change**  
North Dakota, 2010-2019



**Note:**

Net migration = number of people who enter the state (in-migration) minus the number of people who leave the state (out-migration)

Natural change = Number of births minus number of deaths

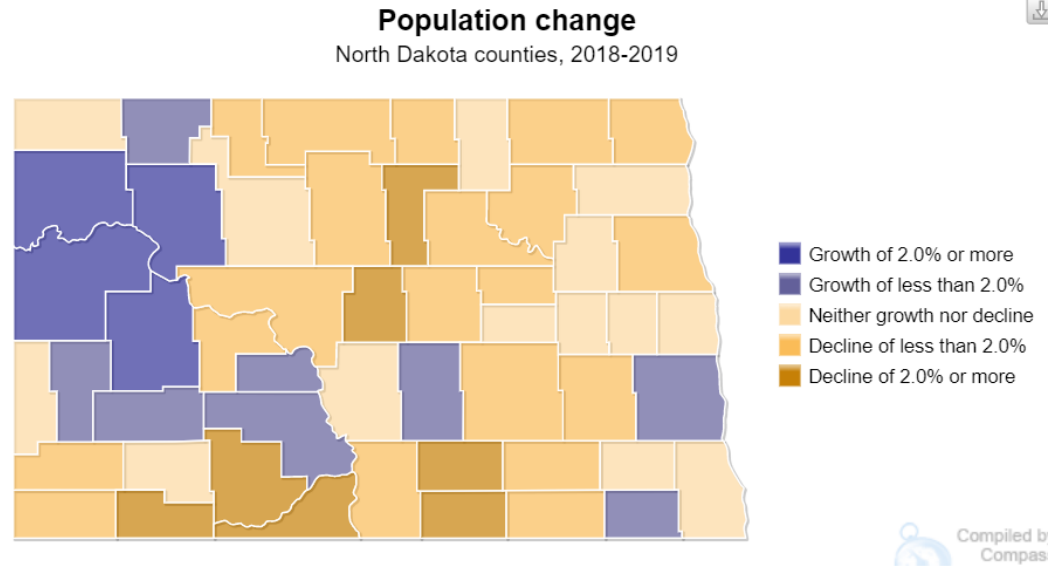
Total population change = Net migration + Natural change

# Population change by county

North Dakota's counties continued to experience differential population change from 2018 to 2019.

McKenzie and Williams counties, two of the core oil and gas producing counties in North Dakota, had the largest percentage of population growth (10.5% and 6.0% population growth, respectively). Mountrail and Dunn counties also saw over 2 percent increase in population from 2018 to 2019 (3.0% and 2.2%, respectively).

However, most counties still continued to lose population, with Grant and Sioux counties losing more than 3 percent of their population from 2018 to 2019 (-3.4% each).



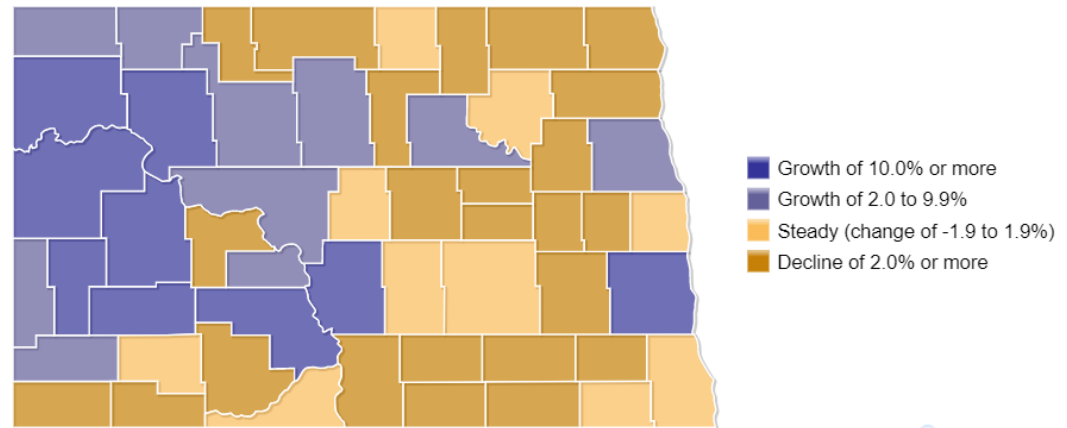
# Population change by county

Western North Dakota counties experienced extraordinary growth when compared to the 2010 decennial census. McKenzie County more than doubled its population (136% increase) and Williams County grew by adding more than half of its previous population (68% increase).

In addition, seven additional counties, mainly in the west and metropolitan areas grew 10 percent or more while 11 counties saw modest growth (ranging from 2% to 9.9%).

However, in contrast to this growth, population in the remaining 33 counties remained steady or decreased during this time period.

**Population change**  
North Dakota counties, 2010-2019

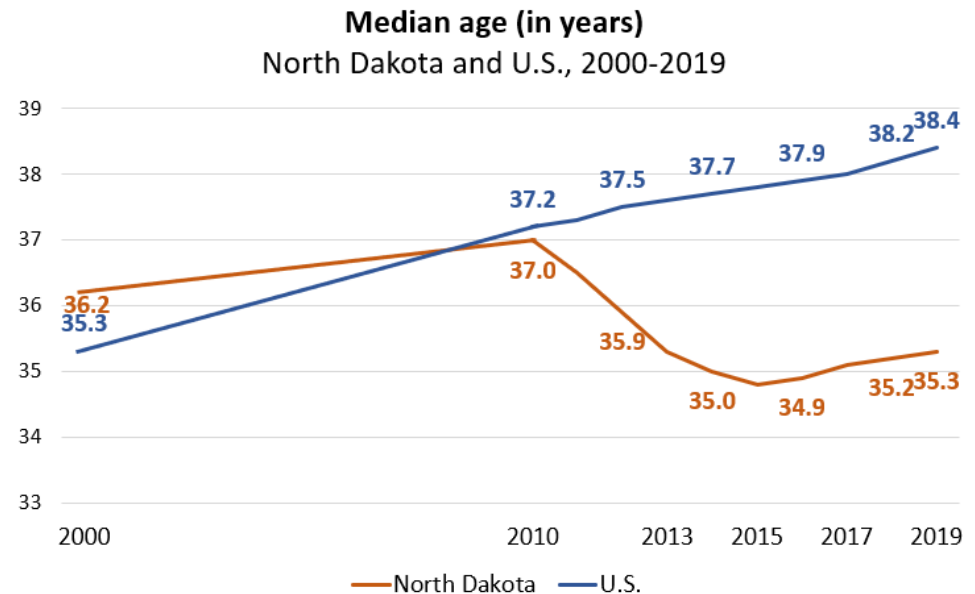


Compiled by  
Compass

# Median age

The population in most states has increasingly become older. The increase in the median age (the age where half of the population is younger and the other half older) is largely a result of the aging baby boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) and increased life expectancy. The [median age in the U.S.](#) steadily increased from 35.3 in 2000, to 37.2 in 2010, to 38.4 in 2019.

However, North Dakota was one of the few states that has reversed this trend. For five years, [North Dakota's](#) population kept growing younger as the median age continually decreased from 37.0 in 2010 to 34.8 in 2015. While the median age started to increase in 2016, North Dakota was still the only state in 2019 with a younger median age compared to 2010 (37.0 years in 2010 to 35.3 years in 2019).



# Population by age

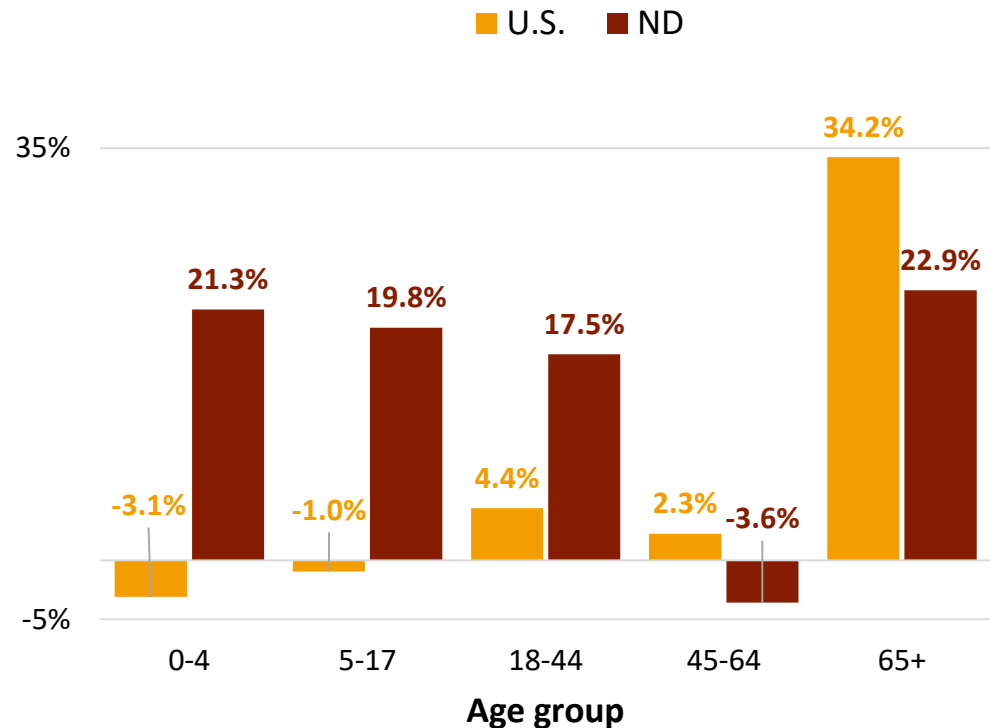
A look at the population change by age groups in North Dakota and the U.S. explains some of the difference in median age trends.

From 2010 to 2019, the number of pre-school age children (age 0 to 4) increased by 21 percent in North Dakota as compared to a 3 percent decrease in the U.S. The number of older children (age 5-17) in North Dakota increased by 20 percent and this age group decreased by one percent in the U.S.

The only age group that experienced a decrease from 2010 to 2019 in North Dakota was the 45-64 age group. In addition, the number of older adults (age 65 and older) grew at a slower rate in North Dakota than in the U.S.

[\(U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program\)](#)

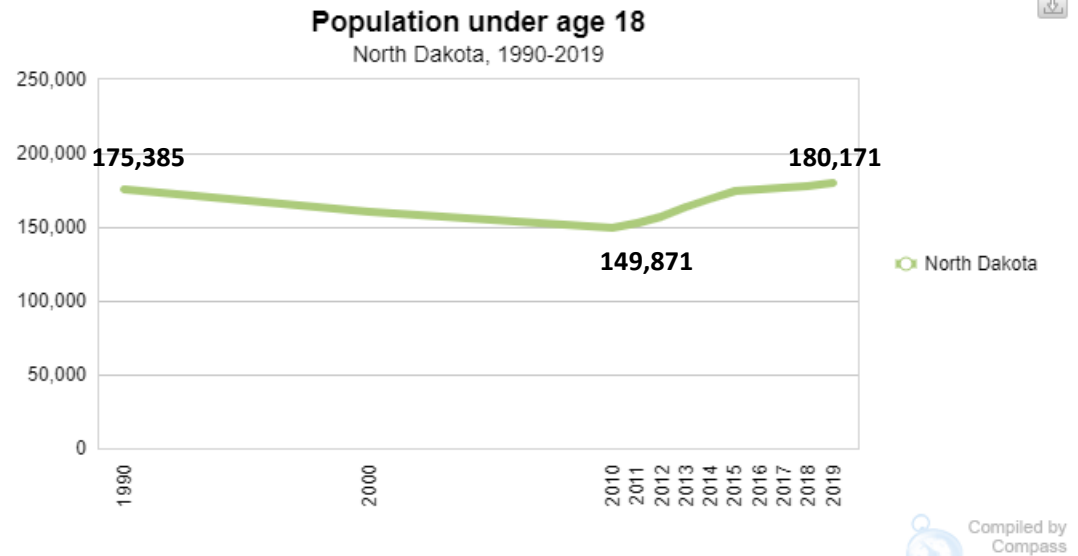
## Population change by age group North Dakota and U.S., 2010-2019





# Child & youth population

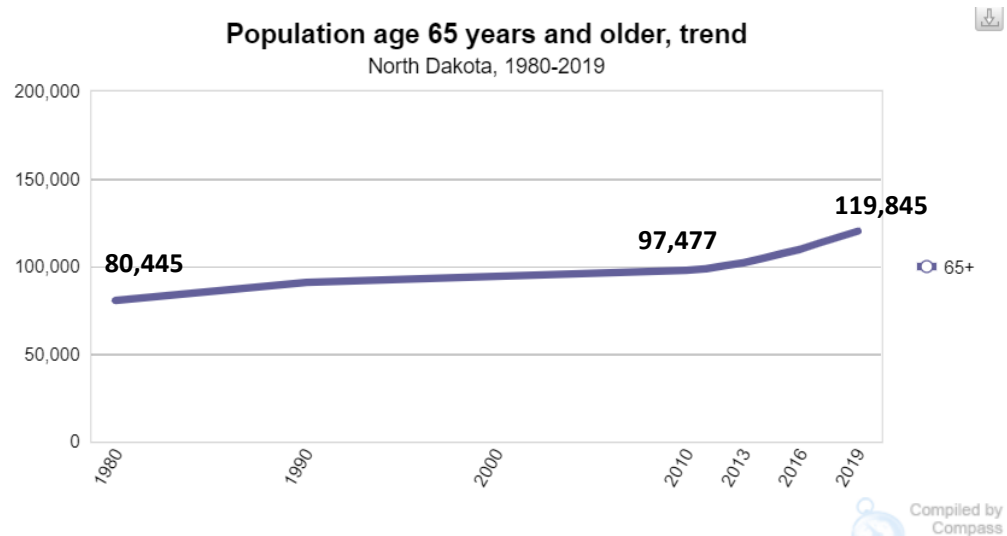
After decades of decline, the number of children and youth (under 18 years old) has continued to grow since 2010. While the growth rate slowed in 2016, the number of children and youth increased by 30,300 from 2010 to 2019, reaching a population of 180,171 in 2019. In 2019, children and youth (under age 18) comprised 23.6 percent of the total population in North Dakota, a slight increase from 22.3 percent in 2010.



# Older adult population

There were **119,845 older adults** (65 years and older) in North Dakota in 2019, representing 15.7 percent of the total population.

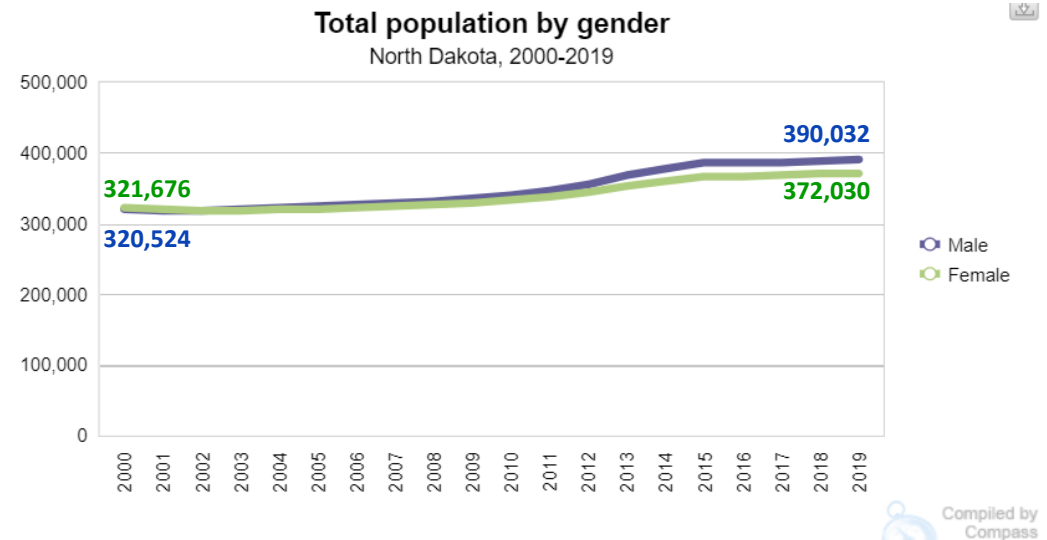
With the aging of the baby boom generation (the large cohort of people born between 1946 and 1964), the share of older adults in North Dakota's population is expected to continue to increase.



# Population by gender

North Dakota is currently one of a few states where males outnumber females.

Back in 2000 however, females outnumbered males in the state. From 2003 through 2015, the male population grew, on average, a half percent per year faster than females, resulting in more males than females. After 2015, both the male and female populations remained relatively steady.



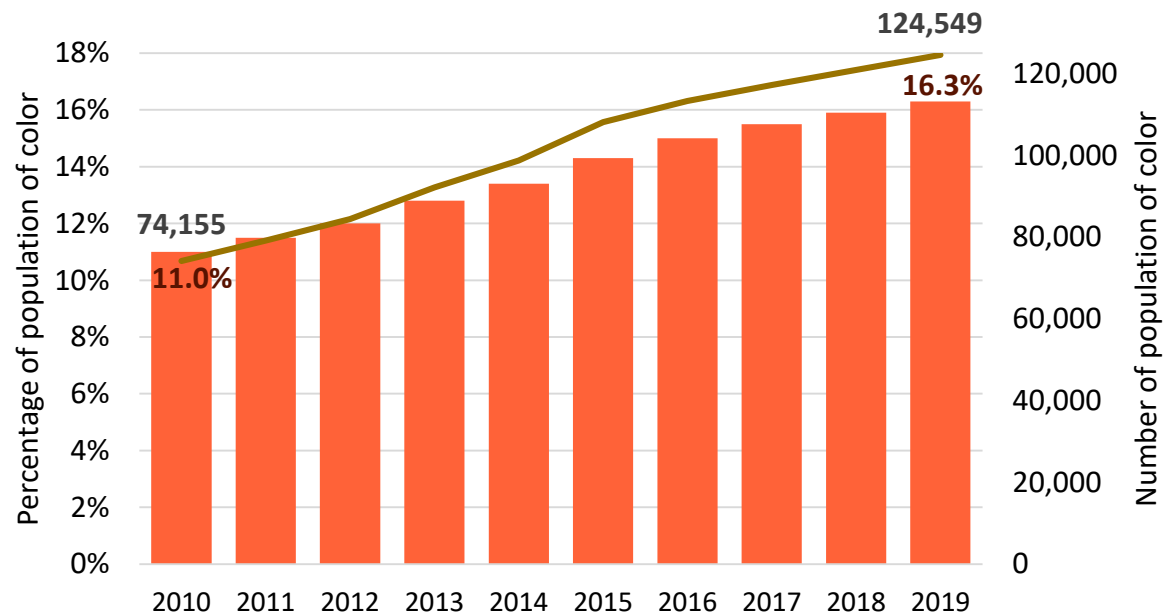
# Population by race

Combined, American Indian, Black, Asian, people reporting multiple races, and people who are of Hispanic ethnicity (i.e., population of color) in North Dakota comprised 16.3 percent of the total population in 2019 as compared to 11.0 percent in 2010.

Compared to 2010, North Dakota's population of color saw a 68.0 percent increase, from 74,155 people in 2010 to 124,549 people in 2019. The increase in the population of color from 2010 to 2019 was by far the largest percentage change of any state. For comparison, the U.S. population of color increased by 17.5 percent for the same time period, 2010 to 2019.

However, despite the increase in the population of color, North Dakota was less racially and ethnically diverse than most states (42<sup>nd</sup> out of 50 states) in 2019.

**Population of color**  
(number and percentage in total population)  
North Dakota, 2010-2019



# Population by race

Among the racial and ethnic groups in North Dakota, the Black population increased from 8,248 in 2010 to 25,984 in 2019 (215.0% increase).

The Hispanic population more than doubled, from 13,467 in 2010 to 31,532 in 2019 (134.1% increase).

The Asian population also nearly doubled from 2010 to 2019 (83% increase).

The American Indian population continues to make up the largest minority population in North Dakota (42,465 residents in 2019) and saw a 14.9 percent increase from 2010 to 2019.

For comparison, the white, non-Hispanic population grew 6.5 percent from 2010 to 2019.

Change in population by race and ethnicity  
North Dakota, 2010-2019

