



The  
**STEPHEN S. FULLER INSTITUTE**  
for Research on the Washington Region's Economic Future

# Demographic Change in the Washington Region: 1990 - 2015

The Stephen S. Fuller Institute  
for Research on the Washington Region's Economic Future  
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## Executive Summary

Between 1990 and 2015, the number of people living in the Washington region increased by 46.7 percent, exceeding the national growth rate (29.2 percent) and gains in all but five of the 15 largest employment metros. During this 25-year period, the composition of the residents in the region changed. The age distribution of the region, like the nation, shifted and older adults accounted for a larger share of residents in 2015 than in 1990. The region also became more racially and ethnically diverse, becoming majority-minority in 2008. The percentage of female residents in the region declined slightly between 1990 and 2015 but remained higher than the national rate. Other findings include

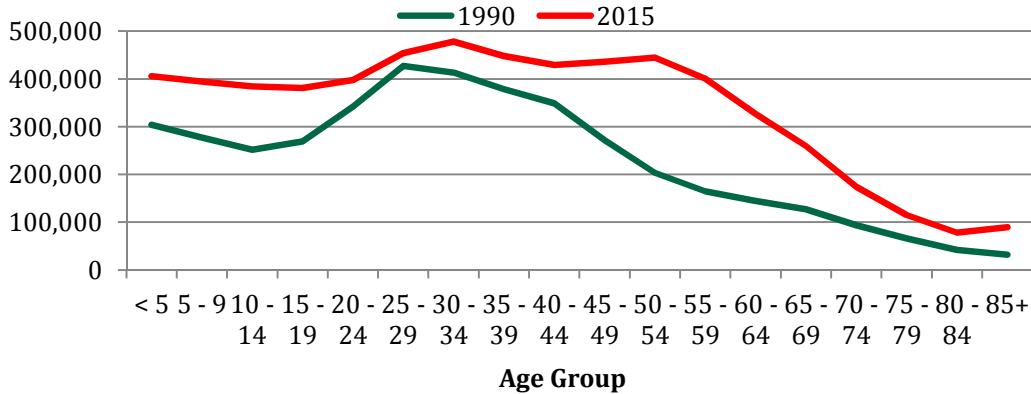
- A larger proportion of the residents in the Washington region were over 50 years old in 2015 compared to 1990;
- The Washington region had a higher concentration of 25-54 years old than the nation and all but two of the largest 15 employment metros in 2015;
- The Washington region became home to a higher share of the nation's residents between 1990 and 2015. Despite this, the Washington region captured the same percentage of the nation's 25-34 year olds in 2015 when compared to 1990, suggesting that the region has lost some competitive advantage when attracting this age cohort;
- The Washington region transitioned from a majority-white non-Hispanic population to a majority-minority population between 1990 and 2015;
- Children and young adults were more likely to be Hispanic, non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander or multi-racial than other racial and ethnic groups in 2015. Conversely, older adults were more likely to be non-Hispanic white in 2015; and
- The Washington region had a relatively high concentration of females compared to the nation in 2015 but had a similar share when compared to the 15 largest employment metros.

Over the past 25 years, the number of residents in the Washington region aged 70 years and older has grown quickly and adults over 70 now account for 7.5 percent of the population, rising from 5.6 percent in 1990. The share of adults between 50 and 69 years old has also had significant growth, due to the large presence of younger Baby Boomers in the region. Combined, the share of adults over 50 years old in the region has climbed from 21.1 percent in 1990 to 31.0 percent in 2015.

In 1990, the Washington region had a higher concentration of 20 to 29 years olds than the nation. While this relative concentration remained in 2015, it has lessened suggesting that the Washington region has been less able to capture Millennials

when compared to Baby Boomers 20 years ago. Even so, the Washington region remains relatively younger than the 15 largest employment metros and attracts a disproportionate share of working-aged residents.

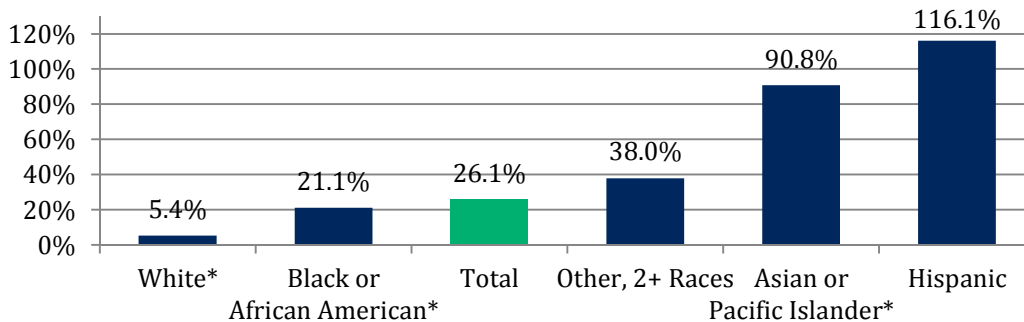
### Population by Age, Washington Region in 1990 and 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

The Washington region became majority-minority over the past 15 years, driven by growth in the number of Hispanic residents and non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents. The growth in both non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black or African American residents lagged and each group became a smaller share of the population over this period. Compared to both the U.S., the Washington region is more diverse, although Hispanic residents are relatively underrepresented.

### Growth Rate by Race and Ethnicity between 2000 and 2015 Washington Region



\*One race, alone

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Over the next 25 years, the Washington region and the nation are forecasted to have a growing share of older adults and minorities. The implications of the changing components of the Washington region's population on housing, transportation, education, retail and other attributes will be studied through a series of reports issued by The Stephen S. Fuller Institute in the coming months.

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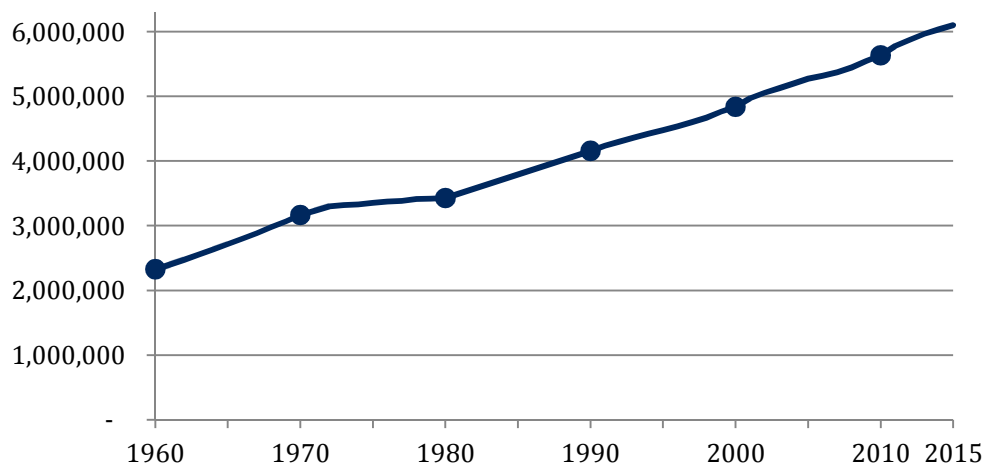
## Demographic Change in the Washington Region: 1990 - 2015

### Population Growth in the Washington Region

The number of residents in the Washington region increased steadily between 1990 and 2015, in contrast with earlier decades. During this period, the region's growth exceeded the national rate and ranked sixth among the 15 largest employment metros. Over the next 25 years, population growth in the region is forecasted to moderate somewhat but remain higher than the national rate.

The population of the Washington region nearly tripled between 1960 and 2015, growing from 2,326,932 to 6,097,684 (Figure 1). During the first decade of this period, the region increased by 873,414 residents or an average of 3.1 percent per year. Growth slowed in the 1970s, increasing by 0.8 percent annually. The relatively slow growth was a result of population declines in five jurisdictions in the region. The growth rate rebounded between 1980 and 1990 and the region increased at an average annual rate of 2.0 percent. Over the next 25 years, the population of the Washington region increased at an average annual rate of 1.5 percent, with modest fluctuations within the period.

**Figure 1. Population in the Washington Region between 1960 and 2015**



Note: Annual data not shown between 1960 and 1970.

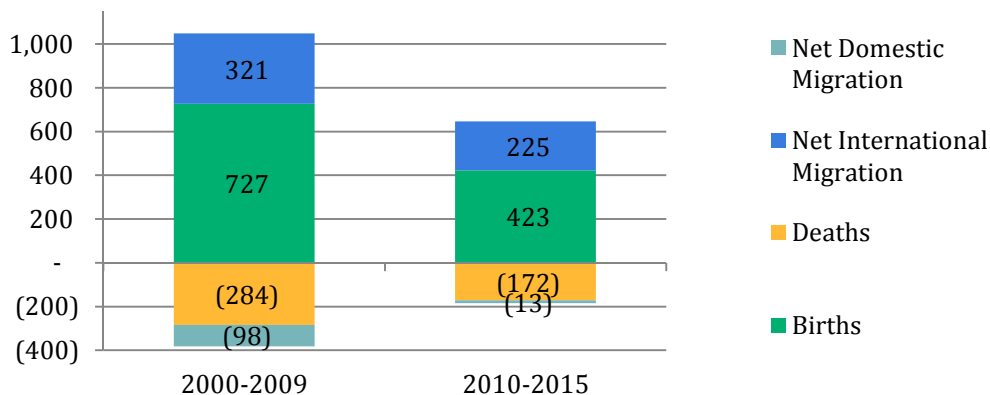
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, 1970-1980, 1990-2000 and 2000-2010 Intercensal Population Estimates, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Between 1990 and 2015, population growth peaked at the turn of the millennium, growing between 2.0 and 2.2 percent each year between 1998 and 2001. This population growth coincided with significant job growth; between 1999 and 2000 the region gained the most jobs on record, with data beginning in 1990. Similarly, the population increase in the region during the recent post-recession period was somewhat elevated, rising between 1.9 percent and 2.1 percent during the 2008-2011 period, in part due to a relatively stronger employment market in the

Washington region compared to elsewhere in the nation. In recent years, population growth has been relatively subdued and increased 1.1 percent between 2014 and 2015.

Between 2000 and 2015, the largest component of population growth was the natural increase, or the difference between the number of births in the region and the number of deaths (Figure 2). Between 2010 and 2015, 54.4 percent of the population increase was driven by the natural increase, as a result of 422,676 births and 171,606 deaths. Net migration, both domestic and international, accounted for the remaining 45.9 percent of the population growth.<sup>1</sup> The number of people who moved into the Washington region exceeded the number of people who moved out by 211,921. All of this increase was due to international migration and the net domestic migration during this time was negative; 12,586 more people moved out of the region to elsewhere in the U.S. than moved in to the region from other parts of the nation. A similar trend occurred between 2000 and 2009. The natural increase drove nearly 65 percent of the gains and net migration resulted in about 35 percent of population gains. Similar to the 2010-2015 period, net domestic migration was negative and the gains from migration were a result of international moves.

**Figure 2. Population Change By Component  
Washington Region, 2000-2009 and 2010-2015, in thousands**

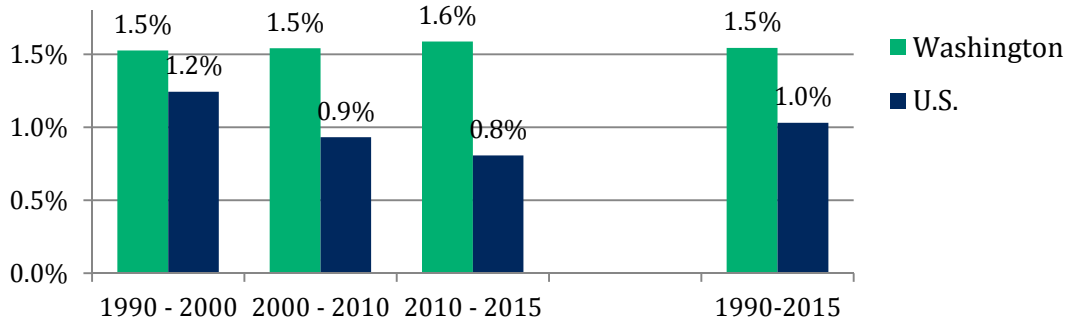


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Vintage 2009 and Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

The Washington region's population grew at a faster rate than the nation between 1990 and 2015 (Figure 3). Between 1990 and 2000, the nation added residents at an average rate of 1.2 percent per year. During the same period, the region's population grew by an average of 1.5 percent annually. The region maintained this growth rate in the following decade, even as the national rate slipped to 0.9 percent per year. Between 2010 and 2015, the region's population grew twice as fast as the nation's, rising 1.6 percent per year compared to the national growth rate of 0.8 percent. On average during the 1990-2015 period, population growth in Washington region exceeded the national population growth by 0.5 percentage points.

<sup>1</sup> The estimation residual accounted for -0.4 percent of the change between 2010 and 2015.

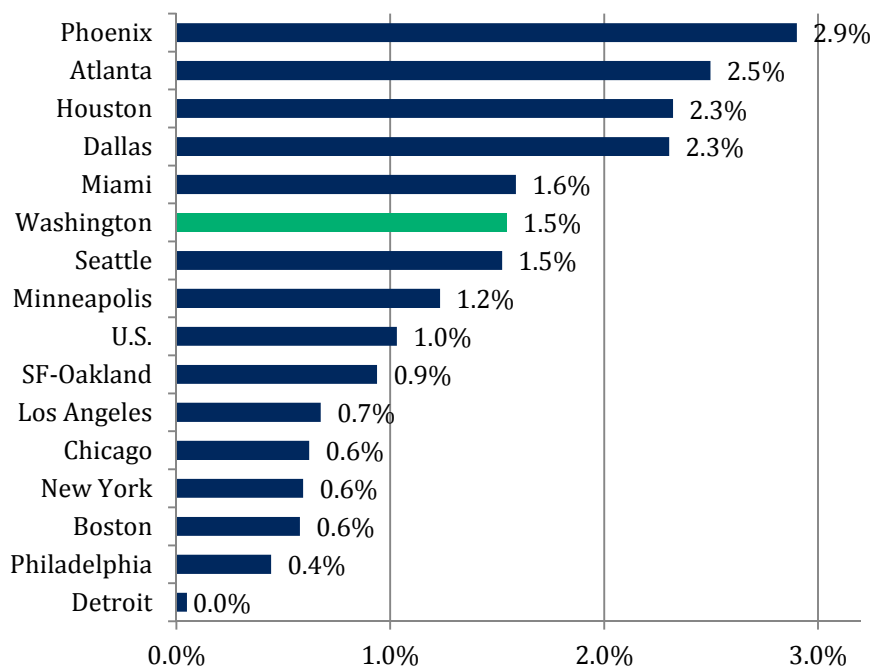
**Figure 3. Average Annual Population Growth Rate between 1990 and 2015  
Washington Region and U.S.**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Of the 15 largest employment metros, the Washington region had the sixth highest population growth between 1990 and 2015 (Figure 4). Growth was led by Phoenix which increased an average of 2.9 percent per year. Phoenix was the least populous of the 15 largest employment metros in 1990 but ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in 2015, surpassing Detroit, Minneapolis and Seattle over this 25-year period. Detroit had the smallest growth during this period, increasing 1.3 percent on average between 1990 and 2015. Detroit's population peaked around 2001, declined sharply between the mid-2000s and 2010, and stabilized during the 2010-2015 period.

**Figure 4. Average Annual Population Growth Rate between 1990 and 2015  
Top 15 Employment Metros**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Among these 15 metros, the Washington region was the sixth most populous metro in 1990. In 2000, the region's rank dropped to seventh, surpassed by Dallas and Miami while surpassing Detroit. The region ranked seventh for most years between 2000 and 2014, falling briefly to eighth between 2006 and 2008 because of rapid growth in the Houston population. In 2015, the Washington region returned to being the sixth most populous metro after exceeding the population of Philadelphia.

Between 2015 and 2040, population growth in the Washington region is forecasted to slow modestly, growing by 1.1 percent per year.<sup>2</sup> Growth is forecasted to step-down from 1.3 percent annually in the early forecast period to 0.9 percent per year between 2035 and 2040. The decrease for the region is forecasted to be milder than the decrease for the nation. Nationally, population growth is forecasted to be about 0.7 percent per year over the next 25 years, falling from 0.8 percent early in the forecast period to 0.5 percent annually between 2035 and 2040.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Cooperative Forecasts, Round 9.0, and The Stephen S. Fuller Institute

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2014 National Population Projections)

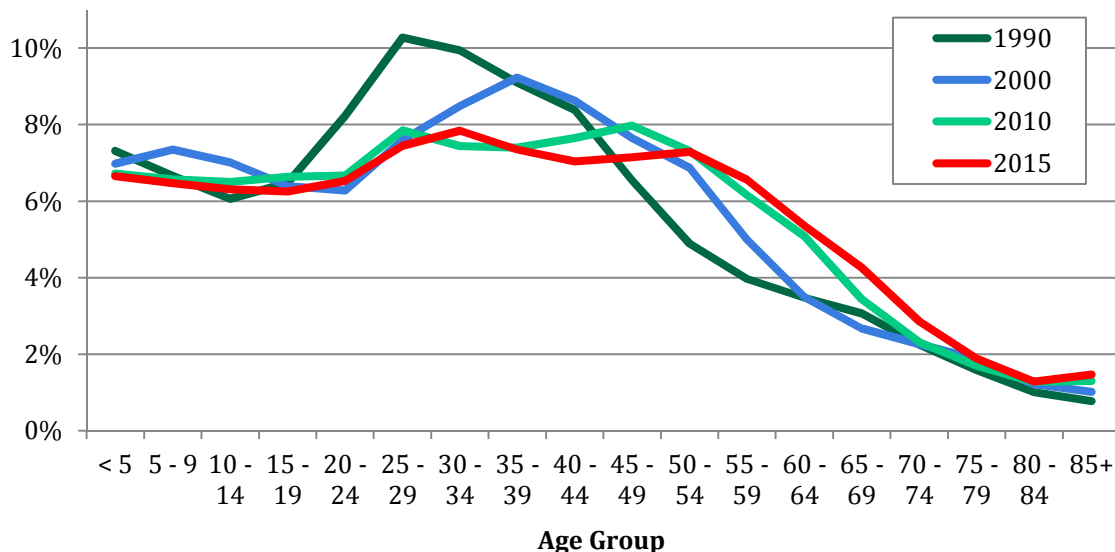


## Population by Age in the Washington Region

Between 1990 and 2015, the age distribution of the Washington region shifted, with older adults accounting for a larger share of the population. This shift occurred gradually throughout the 25-year period, driven by the aging of the Baby Boomer<sup>4</sup> population. Nationally, a similar change occurred and the Washington region remained relatively younger than the nation, albeit less so in 2015 than in 1990. In 2015, the region also was relatively younger than all but three of the 15 largest employment metros.

In 1990, Baby Boomers were between 26 and 44 years old and accounted for about 37 percent of Washington region residents (Figure 5). The largest five-year age group was 25-29 year olds, followed closely by 30-34 year olds. This cohort of younger Baby Boomers largely stayed in the region over the next decade. In turn, the largest five-year age cohort in 2000 was 35-39 year olds, followed by 40-44 year olds. While relatively fewer Baby Boomers were in the region by 2010, the most populous five-year age group, 45-49 year olds, still belonged to the youngest Boomers. But the second largest age group was 25-29 year olds, reflecting the emergence of the Millennial generation.<sup>5</sup> In 2015, the two most populous five-year age groups, 30-34 year olds and 25-29 years olds, belong to the Millennial generation.

**Figure 5. Distribution of Population by Age, Washington Region in 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 and 2000 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

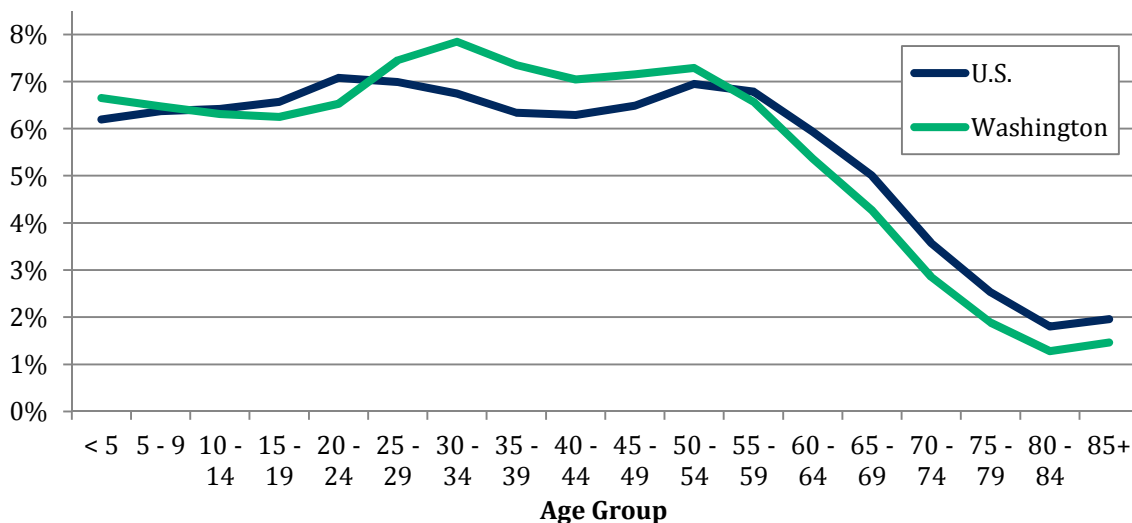
<sup>4</sup> The Census defines Baby Boomers as people born between 1946 and 1964; no other generation has an official Census definition.

<sup>5</sup> While there is no universally accepted definition of Millennials, a common definition includes those born between 1982 and 2000.

Even with the emergence of the Millennials, the share of older adults in the region has grown significantly. Baby Boomers were about 50 to 69 years old in 2015 and nearly one fourth (23.5 percent) of all residents in the region were in this age group. In 1990, just 15.4 percent of the region's residents were between 50 and 69 years old. The Silent Generation,<sup>6</sup> those over 70 years old in 2015, were also more concentrated in the region when compared to the same age group in 1990, largely due to improvements in health care. Altogether, 31.0 percent of the region's population was over 50 years old in 2015, compared to just 21.0 percent in 1990.

Nationally, a similar shift occurred over the past 25 years and the Washington region remained relatively younger than then nation overall (Figure 6). In 2015, the Washington region had a higher concentration of 25 to 54 year olds, primarily due to the concentration of job opportunities. Conversely, the region had relatively fewer 10 to 24 year olds and adults over 55 years old. Of the five-year age groups, the region had the highest relative concentration of 30-34 year olds in 2015. Nationally, this age group was 6.7 percent of the total population. Regionally, 7.8 percent of residents were between 30 and 34 years old. Thirty-five to 39 year olds were similarly over represented in the Washington region (+1.0 percentage points).

**Figure 6. Distribution of Population by Age  
Washington Region and U.S. in 2015**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

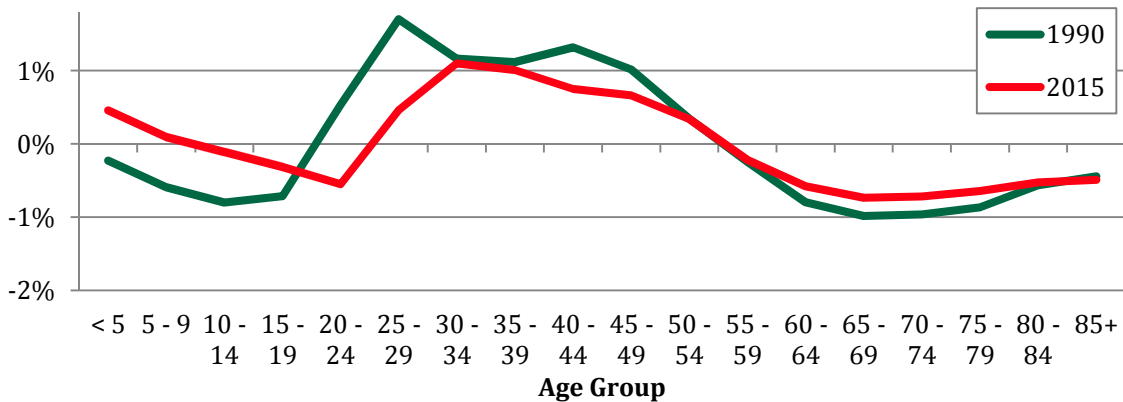
Adults aged 65 to 69 and 70 to 74 were the most underrepresented in the Washington region compared to the nation in 2015. Residents aged 65-69 years old constituted 4.3 percent of the Washington region's population, 0.7 percentage points less than the national share of 5.0 percent. Seventy to 74 year olds accounted

<sup>6</sup> The Silent Generation generally includes those born between 1920 and 1945, although no formal definition exists from the Census.

for 2.9 percent of the Washington region compared to 3.6 percent of the nation, also a difference of 0.7 percentage points.

When compared to 1990, the Washington region had a relatively lower concentration of working-aged residents in 2015. Figure 7 shows the difference between the age distribution in the Washington region and the nation. A difference of zero means that the Washington region had the same share of residents in that age group as the nation did. The flatter the line, the more similar the region's population is to the nation's population. In 2015, the age distribution in the Washington region was somewhat more similar to the nation than it was in 1990.

**Figure 7. Difference in Population Distribution by Age  
Washington Region vs U.S. in 1990 and 2015**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

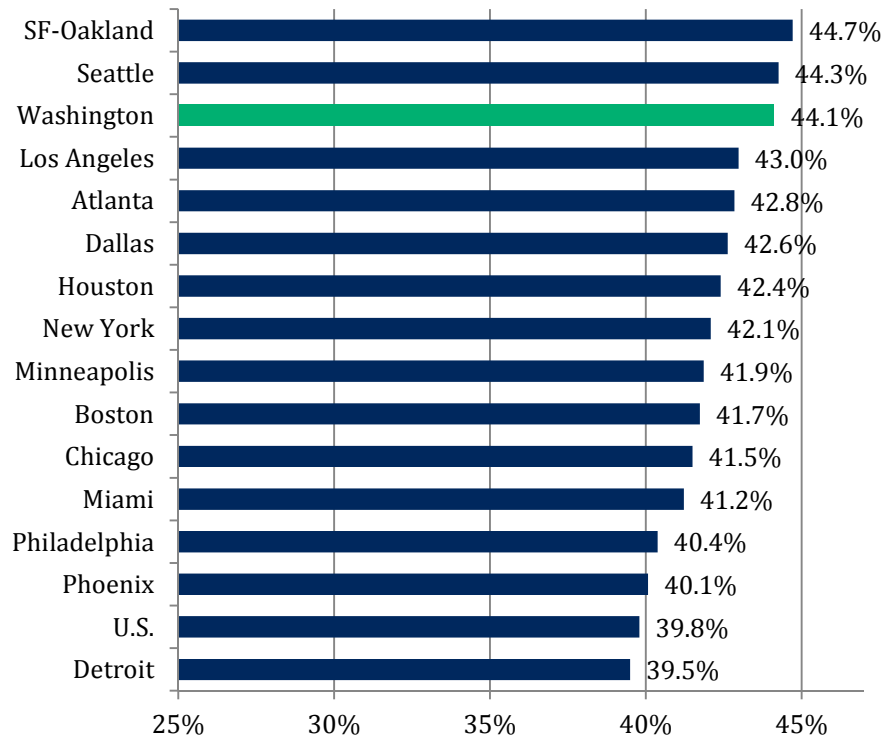
In 1990, 25-29 year olds accounted for 10.3 percent of the region's population but only 8.6 percent of the nation's. The difference of 1.7 percentage points was the largest of the age groups, but five age groups differed by at least +/- 1.0 percentage points. By 2015, the differences between the age groups were smaller, with only two five-year age groups differing by more than +/- 1.0 percentage points: 30-34 year olds and 35-39 year olds. This change may indicate that the Washington region was somewhat less attractive to younger working-aged Millennials compared to Baby Boomers of the same age in 1990.

Net migration was a key source of population growth for younger, working-aged residents in Washington region between 1990 and 2015. Residents between 30 and 34 years old move in at the greatest rates compared to out-migrants, followed by resident aged 25 to 29 and 35 to 39 years old. More generally, net migration has resulted in growth in residents younger than 50 years old.

Compared to the 15 largest employment metros in 2015, the Washington region had the third highest proportion of residents aged 25 to 54 years old, lagging San Francisco-Oakland and Seattle (Figure 8). Within this age group, the Washington region ranked second both for the share of 35-39 year olds and 45-49 year olds,

behind San Francisco-Oakland and Atlanta, respectively. The Washington region had the fourth lowest share of residents aged 70 and over; Houston, Dallas and Atlanta had a smaller proportion.

**Figure 8. 25 to 54 Year Olds as a Share of Population  
Top 15 Employment Metros in 2015**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Between 2015 and 2040, the share of adults over 65 years old in the Washington region is forecasted to continue to increase, rising from 12 percent in 2015 to 17 percent in 2040.<sup>7</sup> Nationally, this age group is projected to rise from 15 percent in 2015 to 22 percent in 2040.<sup>8</sup> Compared to the nation, the region is projected to have relatively fewer adults over 65 years old over the next 25 years.

By 2040, relatively fewer adults in the region are projected to be between 20 and 34 years old, as the generation following the Millennials<sup>9</sup> is likely to have a smaller presence both in the region and in the nation. Regionally, the share of 20 to 34 year olds is forecasted to decline to 20 percent in 2040 from 22 percent in 2015. By 2040, 19 percent of the nation's population is forecasted to be between 20 and 34 years old, down from 21 percent in 2015. Compared to the nation, the Washington region is projected to remain somewhat younger, but less so than in the past.

<sup>7</sup> The Stephen S. Fuller Institute projections

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2014 National Population Projections)

<sup>9</sup> Generation Z, estimated to be born in the first two decades of this century

## Population by Race and Ethnicity in the Washington Region

The Washington region became majority-minority in 2008 and has continued to become increasingly diverse. The region was relatively more diverse than the nation and the majority of the 15 largest employment metros in 2015. Between 2000 and 2015, the number of Hispanic residents in the region had the largest absolute increase and the fastest growth, followed by the increase in non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander (one race, alone) residents. The non-Hispanic white and black or African American populations lagged overall growth during this time. As a result, both groups account for a smaller share of the population in 2015 than in 1990. Hispanic residents in the region tend to be relatively younger than other groups, while the non-Hispanic white population has the highest share of adults over 50 years old.

The U.S. Census Bureau has changed race and ethnicity categories over time to better reflect the nation's population. The 1990 Decennial Census did not allow for the selection of multiple races. When this option was added in 2000, 1.8 percent of the nation's non-Hispanic population and 2.2 percent of the Washington region's non-Hispanic population identified as such. Changes to the placement of the questions and the instructions in 2000 also may have altered responses. These modest changes to the Decennial Census questionnaire make direct comparisons between the 1990 Census and later Censuses inaccurate.

In 1990, the Washington region was 64.0 percent white non-Hispanic, inclusive of any multi-racial people for whom this was the closest option (Table 1). About one-quarter (25.3 percent) of the region's residents identified as primarily black or African American and non-Hispanic. Just 5.5 percent were Hispanic and 4.8 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander.

**Table 1. Population by Race and Ethnicity, Washington Region in 1990**

	Residents	% of Total
Not Hispanic		
White	2,661,832	64.0%
Black or African American	1,052,906	25.3%
Asian, Pacific Islander	199,483	4.8%
Other	15,395	0.4%
Hispanic	227,711	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,157,327</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

In 2000, 55.5 percent of the Washington region's residents were non-Hispanic white and only one race. The decrease in share from 1990 is due primarily to a

diversifying population but also reflects the ability of respondents to select multiple races. The second largest race and ethnic group in 2000 was non-Hispanic black or African American (one race, alone) who accounted for 26.1 percent of the residents in the region. Hispanic residents of any race(s) were 8.9 percent of the population and 6.8 percent were non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander (one race, alone). Multi-racial, non-Hispanic residents constituted 2.2 percent of the population and those of non-Hispanic residents of other races were 0.5 percent of the region's residents. Hereafter, white, black or African American, and Asian or Pacific Islander will refer to one race, alone.

Between 2000 and 2015, the white non-Hispanic population remained the largest among the race and ethnic groups but had the slowest growth (Table 2). Over this 15-year period, the number of non-Hispanic white residents in the Washington region increased 0.4 percent per year or by 144,890 residents. The largest absolute increase and the fastest growth was among the Hispanic population of any race. The number of Hispanic residents in the region increased by 500,150 between 2000 and 2015 for an annual growth rate of 5.3 percent. The non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific Islander population had the second largest increase, rising by 299,795 residents during this period and an average of 4.4 percent annually. Non-Hispanic residents of multiple races or other races increased 2.2 percent per year on average between 2000 and 2015. The non-Hispanic black or African American population increased 1.3 percent annually during this period and had the second slowest growth behind the white population.

**Table 2. Population by Race and Ethnicity  
Washington Region in 2000, 2010 and 2015**

	Residents			2000 - 2015	
	2000	2010	2015	Change	Annual Growth
Not Hispanic					
White*	2,686,063	2,751,393	2,830,953	144,890	0.4%
Black / African American*	1,260,387	1,417,003	1,526,439	266,052	1.3%
Asian / Pacific Islander*	330,296	517,777	630,091	299,795	4.4%
Other / 2+ Races	130,045	174,879	179,414	49,369	2.2%
Hispanic	430,637	775,180	930,787	500,150	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,837,428</b>	<b>5,636,232</b>	<b>6,097,684</b>	<b>1,260,256</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

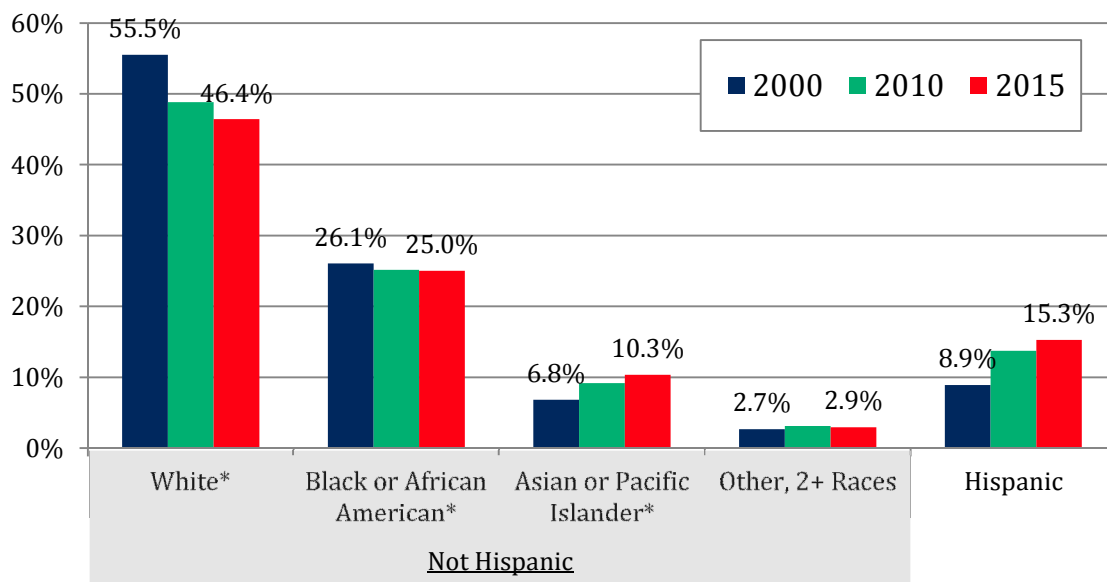
\*One race, alone

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

The region became majority-minority in 2008 and continued to diversify over the next seven years. By 2010, 48.8 percent of the regions' residents were white non-

Hispanic, down 9.1 percentage points from 2000 (Figure 9). This share had decreased to 46.4 percent in 2015. The share of the non-Hispanic black or African American population also declined modestly between 2000 and 2015. In 2000, non-Hispanic black or African American residents constituted 26.1 percent of the population. By 2010, this share had declined to 25.1 percent. The decrease in share between 2010 and 2015 was modest, falling from 25.1 percent in 2010 to 25.0 percent in 2015.

**Figure 9. Population Distribution by Race and Ethnicity  
Washington Region in 2000, 2010 and 2015**



\*One race, alone

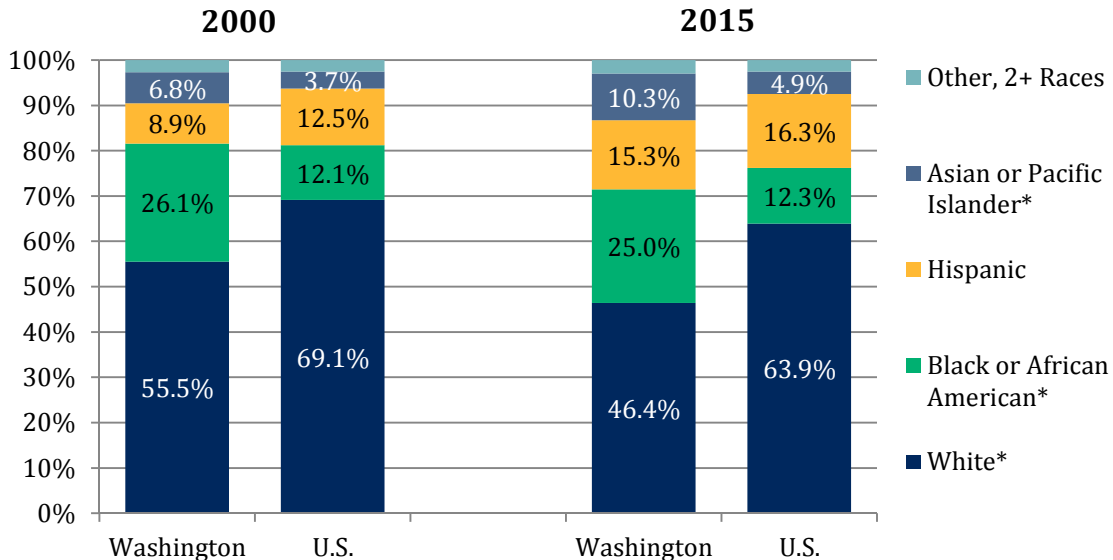
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

The Hispanic population, of any race, increased from 8.9 percent of the population in 2000, to 13.8 percent in 2010 and 15.3 percent in 2015. The share of non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents in the region also increased sharply rising from 6.8 percent in 2000 to 10.3 percent in 2015. The proportion of non-Hispanic residents of multiple or other races was little changed during this period, rising modestly from 2.7 percent in 2000 to 2.9 percent in 2015.

The Washington region was more diverse than the nation in both 2000 and 2015 (Figure 10). The Washington region had a higher concentration of non-Hispanic black or African American residents than the nation in 2000 and 2015. However, the non-Hispanic black or African American population accounted for a growing share of the national population in 2015 compared to 2000, while the share in the region decreased. The Washington region also had a relatively higher concentration of non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents in both periods. The non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander population increased its share both regionally and nationally over this 15 year period. The Washington region had relatively fewer Hispanic residents

than the nation did both in 2000 and 2015. But the number of Hispanic residents increased more quickly in the region and Hispanic residents were only modestly underrepresented in 2015.

**Figure 10. Population Distribution by Race and Ethnicity  
U.S. and Washington Region in 2000 and 2015**



\*Not Hispanic, one race alone

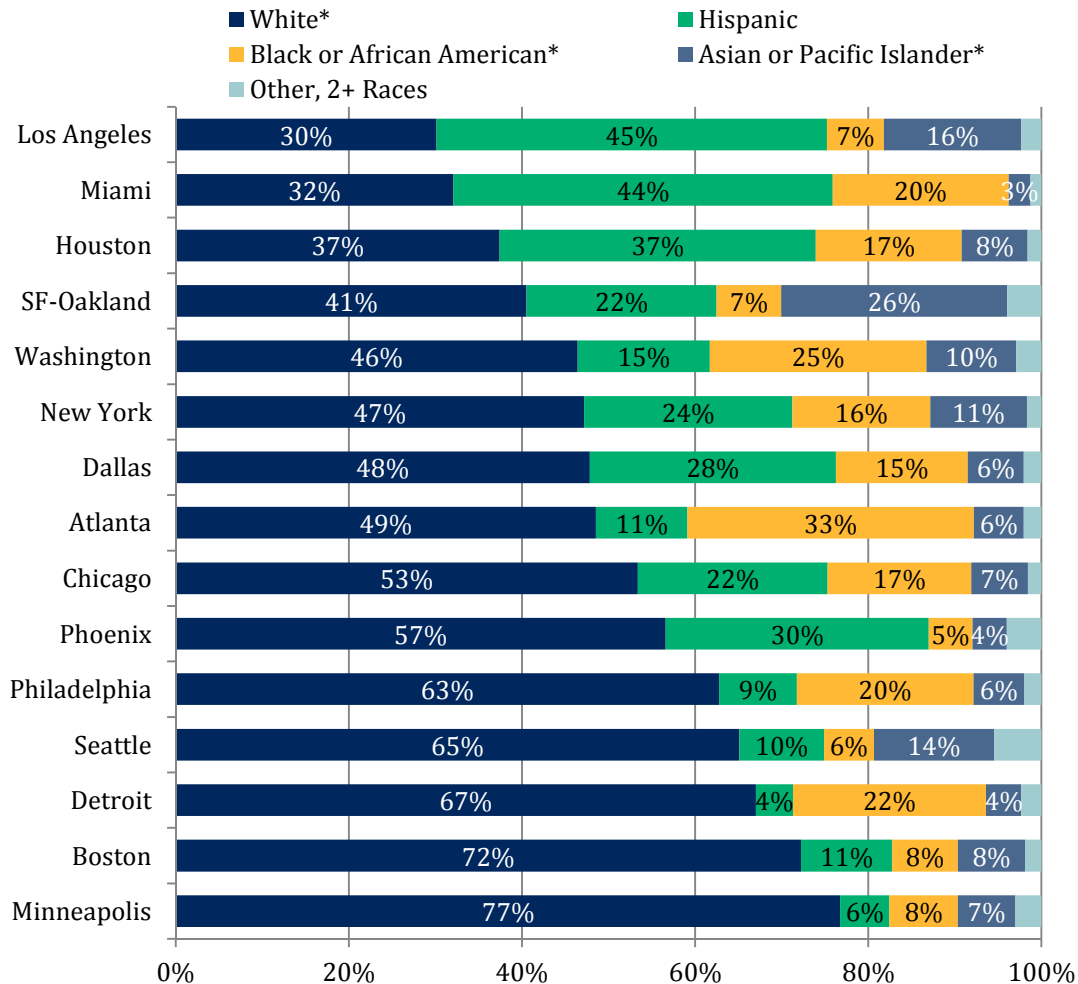
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Compared to the 15 largest employment metros, the Washington region had the fifth lowest share of white non-Hispanic residents in 2015 (Figure 11). Eight of the fifteen metros were majority-minority and only four metros had a higher concentration of non-Hispanic white residents than the nation. Geography plays a role the distribution of race and ethnicity of each metro. Hispanic residents generally comprise a larger share of the population in metros near the Mexican border, while Western metros are more likely to have larger non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander populations.

In 2015, Los Angeles had the lowest share of non-Hispanic white residents (30.1 percent) and the largest share of Hispanic residents (45.1 percent) among the large metros. Minneapolis was the least diverse metro and 76.8 percent of its residents were white, non-Hispanic. Atlanta had the largest proportion of non-Hispanic black or African American residents which accounted for one-third (33.1 percent) of the metro's population. The Washington region had the second largest share of non-Hispanic black or African American residents (25.0 percent). San Francisco-Oakland had the largest percentage of non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents which accounted for 26.1 percent of the metro's population. At 10.3 percent, the Washington region had the fifth highest concentration of non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents.



**Figure 11. Population Distribution by Race and Ethnicity  
15 Largest Employment Metros in 2015**



\*Not Hispanic, one race alone

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

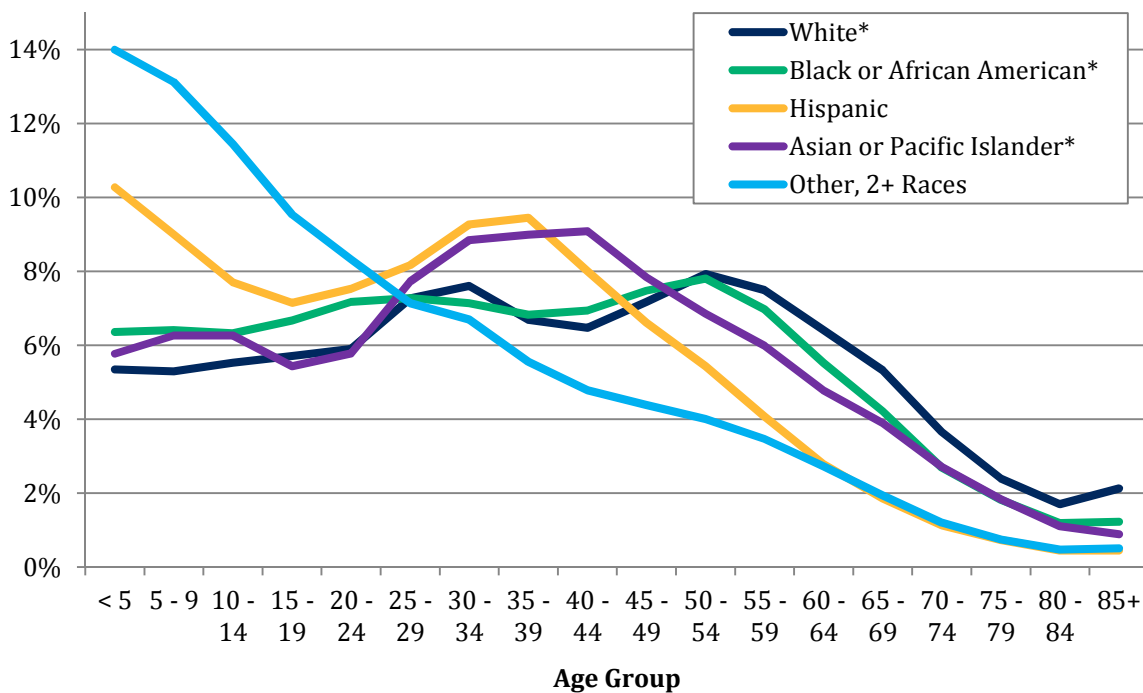
In the Washington region in 2015, the age distribution of each racial and ethnic group varied considerably (Figure 12). The multi-racial non-Hispanic population was far more likely to be young than any other group and almost one-half (48.1 percent) were younger than 20 years old. This reflects both the increased prevalence of interracial couples and the relative newness of the multi-racial Census designation.

The Hispanic population was also younger than other race and ethnic groups in 2015. About one-third (34.1 percent) of Hispanic residents were younger than 20 years old, the second largest share of any group. Hispanic residents were more likely to be between 25 and 39 years old than any other group and 26.9 percent of the Hispanic residents in the region were in this age group. The non-Hispanic Asian

or Pacific Islander population had a similarly large share of 25-39 year olds (25.6 percent) as well as the highest share of 40 to 49 year olds.

Non-Hispanic white residents in the Washington region were the most likely to be older than 50 years old than any other group and the least likely to be younger than 15 years old in 2015. Non-Hispanic black or African American residents were also somewhat older than all residents but about as likely to be younger than 20 years old.

**Figure 12. Population Distribution by Race and Ethnicity and Age Group  
Washington Region in 2015**



\*Not Hispanic, one race alone

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Over the next 25 years, the nation is projected to continue to diversify.<sup>10</sup> The share of non-Hispanic white residents is forecasted to decrease to 51 percent in 2040 from 64 percent in 2015. Hispanic residents are forecasted to continue to grow at a faster rate and rise to 24 percent of the population in 2040. The non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander, alone, population, is forecasted to increase rapidly and rise from 5 percent of the population to 13 percent of the population in 2040. The non-Hispanic black or African American population is projected increase modestly from 12 percent of the population to 13 percent in 2040. In the future, the Washington region will also likely continue to become more diverse and mirror the faster growth in the Hispanic and non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander populations.

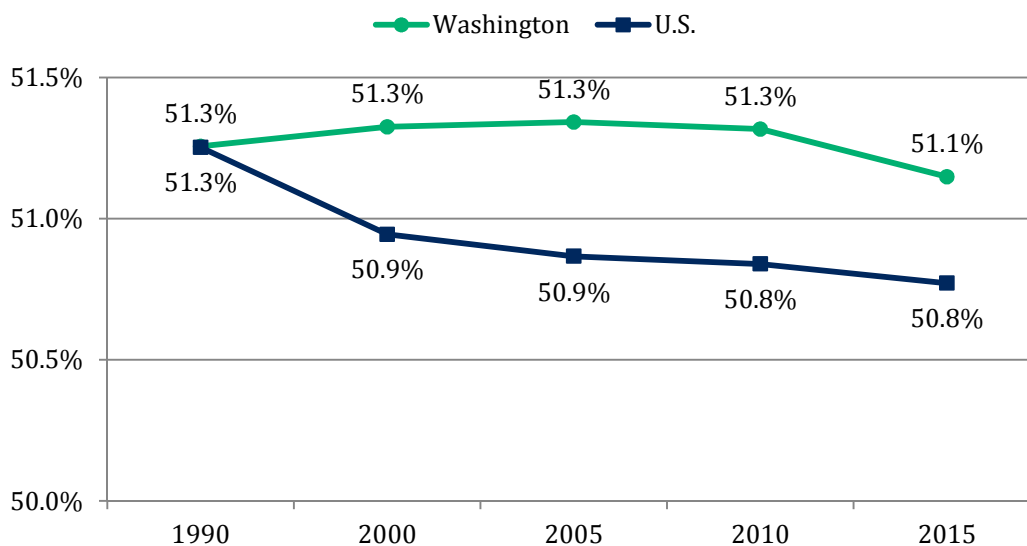
<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census (2014 National Population Projections)

## Population by Sex in the Washington Region

The Washington region, like the nation, had more female residents than male residents throughout the 1990-2015 period. The regional and the national rate decreased over this 25-year period, but the national rate decreased more quickly. As a result, females were relatively overrepresented in the Washington region in 2015. In 2015, females in the region outnumbered males in all age groups except for zero to 19 years old. Females over 70 years old significantly outnumber males; however, the difference between the number of females and males in these age groups has declined since 1990 as a result of faster growth in the older male population. The share of females varied by race and ethnicity in 2015. The majority of Hispanic residents were male and were the only racial and ethnic group with more males than females.

In 1990, 51.3 percent of the population in both the Washington region and the nation was female (Figure 13). Over the next 20 years, the percentage of females in the Washington region held constant while the national rate declined. In 2015, there was a modest decrease in the share of female residents in the Washington region, falling to 51.1 percent. Even with the modest decrease, females were overrepresented in the Washington region compared to the nation in 2015.

**Figure 13. Females as a Share of Population, Washington Region and U.S. between 1990-2015**



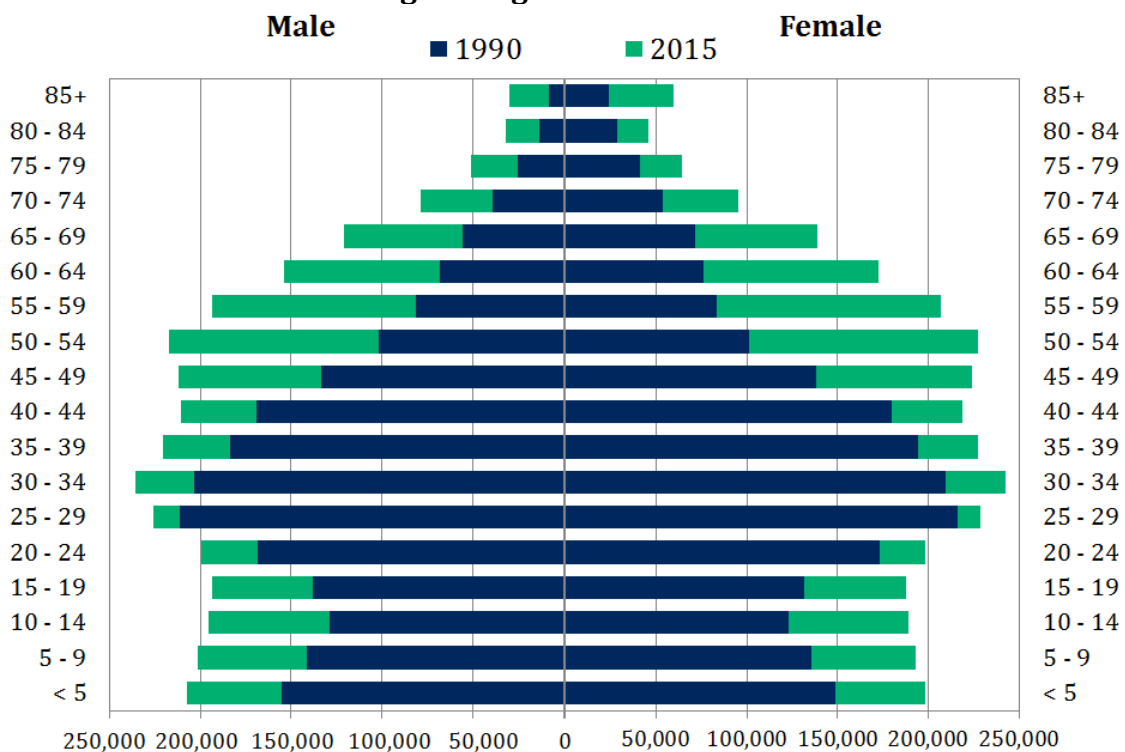
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates, Intercensal Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Females were the majority in all of the top 15 largest employment metros, with only modest variations in the share. Philadelphia had the highest share of females, at 51.7, followed by New York and Atlanta, both at 51.6 percent. One-Half (50.01 percent) of the residents in Seattle were female, the lowest share of the largest metros. Only five

other metros had a lower percentage of females than the nation: Houston (50.3 percent), Phoenix (50.3 percent), Minneapolis (50.5 percent), San Francisco-Oakland (50.6 percent) and Los Angeles (50.7 percent). The Washington region ranked in the middle and had the seventh highest (ninth lowest) percentage of females of the 15 largest employment metros.

As shown in Figure 14, females were more likely to be older than males both in 1990 and 2015, primarily due to longer average lifespans. In 1990, there were three times as many females older than 85 years old than males, and twice as many 80-84 year olds. In 2015, this difference decreased but females over 85 years old still outnumbered males two-to-one. In both 1990 and 2015, there were more females in nearly every adult age group. There were more males than females younger than 20 years old both in 1990 and 2015. In 2015, males also outnumbered females between 20 and 24 years old.

**Figure 14. Population by Age Group and Sex  
Washington Region in 1990 and 2015**

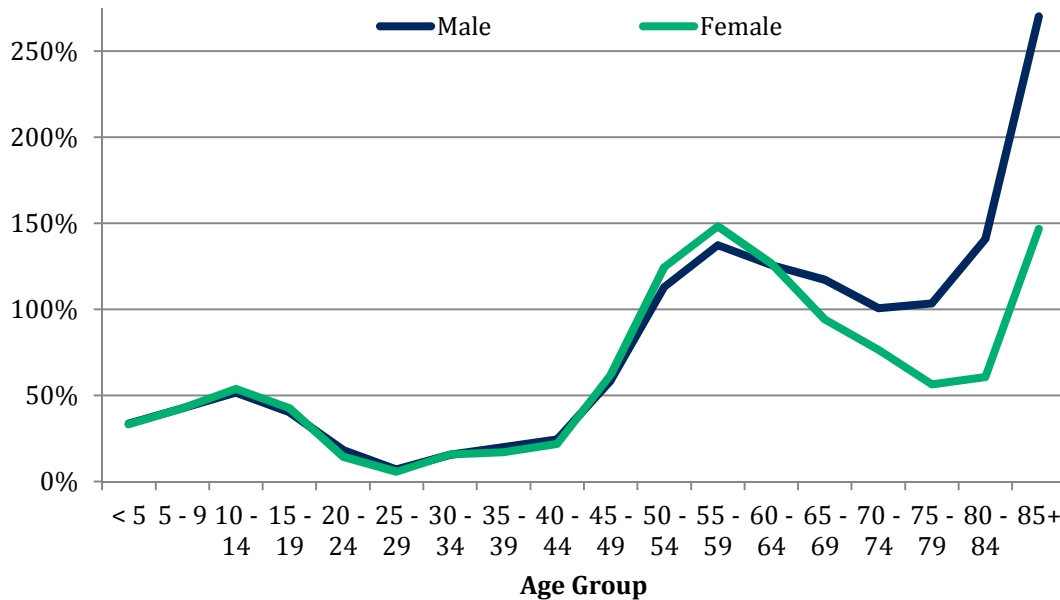


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Between 1990 and 2015, the number of residents older than 45 years old in the Washington region had the fastest growth (Figure 15). The fastest growth was among males aged 85 years old and older, which increased 270.2 percent during this time. Among females, this age group had the second fastest growth, rising 146.7 percent. Relatively fast growth occurred for both male and female residents aged 75

years and older, reflecting improvements in health care and the ability to work in later years.

**Figure 15. Growth Rate by Age and Sex between 1990 and 2015  
Washington Region**

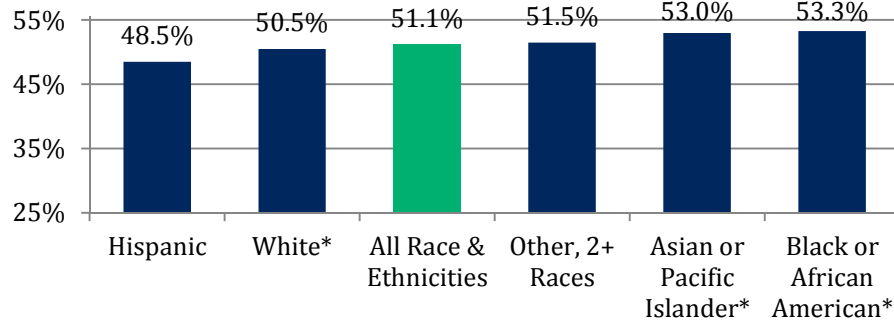


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990 Decennial Census, Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

The large number of younger Baby Boomers in the region resulted in relatively fast growth for both male and female residents aged 50 to 69 years old. Among females, the number of 55 to 54 year olds increased the fastest of any age group, rising 148.2 percent. Millennials had less of an impact on growth but were a larger cohort than their Baby Boomer predecessors; the number of 25 to 34 year olds increased about 11 percent for both males and females.

The share of females varied by race and ethnicity in the Washington region in 2015, but modestly so (Figure 16). Hispanic residents were the least likely to be female and only 48.5 percent were in 2015. Hispanic residents were the only group to have fewer females than males. Females accounted for 50.5 percent of non-Hispanic white residents, the second lowest share of the race and ethnicity groups. Non-Hispanic black or African American residents were the most likely to be female in 2015 (53.3 percent), followed by non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander residents (53.0 percent).

**Figure 16. Share of Females by Race and Ethnicity  
Washington Region in 2015**



\*Not Hispanic, One Race Alone

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Vintage 2015 Population Estimates); The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at the Schar School, GMU

Over the next 25 years, the share of females in the Washington region is forecasted to remain relatively stable at slightly higher than 51 percent.<sup>11</sup> Nationally, the rate is forecasted to remain slightly above 50 percent.<sup>12</sup> Females are projected to remain overrepresented in the Washington region when compared to the nation.

<sup>11</sup> The Stephen S. Fuller Institute projections

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2014 National Population Projections)

## Conclusion

Between 1990 and 2015, the residents in the Washington region became more diverse and more likely to be over 50 years old. The Washington region had a relatively high share of younger residents when compared to the nation in 2015 but this concentration is lower than it was in 1990. In 2015, older adults were more likely to be non-Hispanic white or non-Hispanic black or African American while children in the region were more likely to be multi-racial or Hispanic, reflecting the overall change in demographics within the region.

Over the next 25 years, the region and the nation are projected to have an ever-increasing share of older adults. The continued shift is projected to be the result of the aging of the Baby Boomers, who will all be over 75 years old by 2040. While the Millennial cohort has a significant presence in the Washington region, the generation following it is projected to be somewhat smaller. As a result,

- The retirement of the Baby Boomers in conjunction with a smaller post-Millennial population will likely result in a tighter labor supply. Subsequently, employee retention and attraction may become a larger concern among employers within the region;
- The housing and transportation preferences among both Baby Boomers and Millennials will shift as they age. Baby Boomers will likely down-size and have an increased demand for walkable communities. Millennials, conversely, may desire to “up-size,” although household incomes and student debt may be limitations; and
- Relatively fewer young adults are projected to be in the region to replace the Millennials, suggesting urban, multi-family and/or rental properties may have less traditional sources of demand going forward.

The region and the nation are projected to continue to diversify between 2015 and 2040, changing the landscape of household composition and education. The region's school-aged children have become significantly more diverse over the past 25 years and about 60 percent of children in the region were minorities in 2015. Over the next 25 years, the share of minority children is projected to increase, which may have implications for schools.

The implications of the changing components of the population on housing, transportation, education, retail and other attributes will be studied through a series of reports issued by The Stephen S. Fuller Institute in upcoming months.

## About These Data

The 2013 metro region delineations are used throughout for all metros and all years. The Decennial Census estimates are as of April 1, while the Population Estimates are as of July 1, so annual comparisons are not exact. The Intercensal Population Estimates are used for all periods between Decennial Censuses, except when examining the components of change. While the the Vintage 2009 Population Estimates have been superseded, they remain a comprehensive source estimating the drivers of population growth and were used for consistency. The data for 2011 through 2015 are Vintage 2015 Population Estimates (released in 2015).