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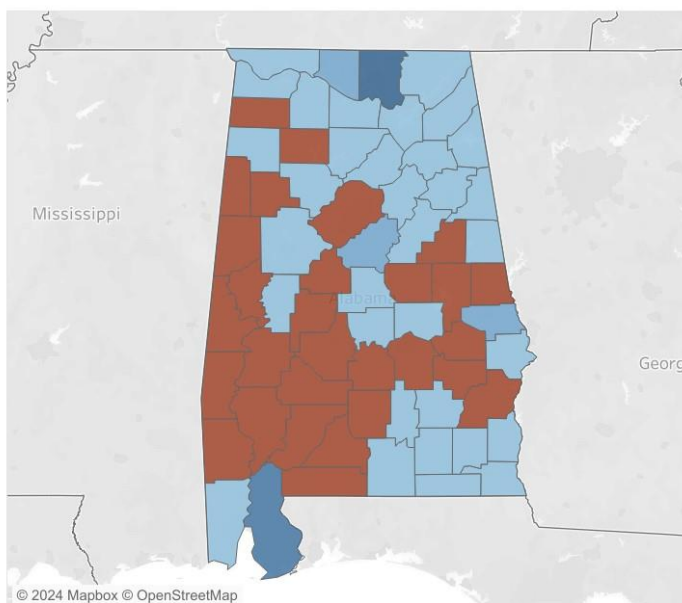
Huntsville and Baldwin Continue Population Gains, Birmingham Remains in Top 50 of U.S. Metros

By Thomas Spencer, March 25, 2024

Huntsville and Baldwin counties continue to add more new residents. At the same time, growth in Shelby County and St. Clair County helped the Birmingham Metro Area return to the positive after two years of population loss. That's according to new estimates of population change in U.S. counties and metro areas published by the U.S. Census Bureau. The new estimates identify population totals and components of population change as of July 1, 2023.

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | Rate of Change | Domestic and International Migration | Births and Deaths | Components of Change | Nu m e.. |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|

2022-2023 One-Year Numeric Change



- Numeric Change
- Population Estimate 2023
- 2022-2023 One-Year Numeric Change
- Cumulative Change Since 2020 Census
- Cumulative Natural Increase Since 2020 Census
- Cumulative Domestic Migration Since 2020 Census
- Cumulative International Migration Since 2020 Census

2022-2023 One-Year Numeric Change

| Ctyname | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Alabama | 34,565 |
| Madison County | 8,995 |
| Baldwin County | 6,976 |
| Limestone County | 3,786 |
| Shelby County | 2,967 |
| Lee County | 2,517 |
| St. Clair County | 1,671 |
| Cullman County | 1,353 |
| Marshall County | 1,328 |
| Lauderdale County | 939 |
| Morgan County | 902 |
| Elmore County | 841 |
| Coffee County | 803 |
| Tuscaloosa County | 683 |

In addition to the growth in Shelby and St. Clair, Birmingham’s metro population got a boost from an accounting change. In the 2022 estimates, the Birmingham-Hoover MSA ranked No. 50 in population among metropolitan areas and seemed destined to fall out of the top 50 metro areas.

However, in 2023, Walker County was re-added to the Birmingham metro, which boosted the Birmingham MSA population by almost 65,000 and allowed it to climb to the 47th most populous metropolitan area.

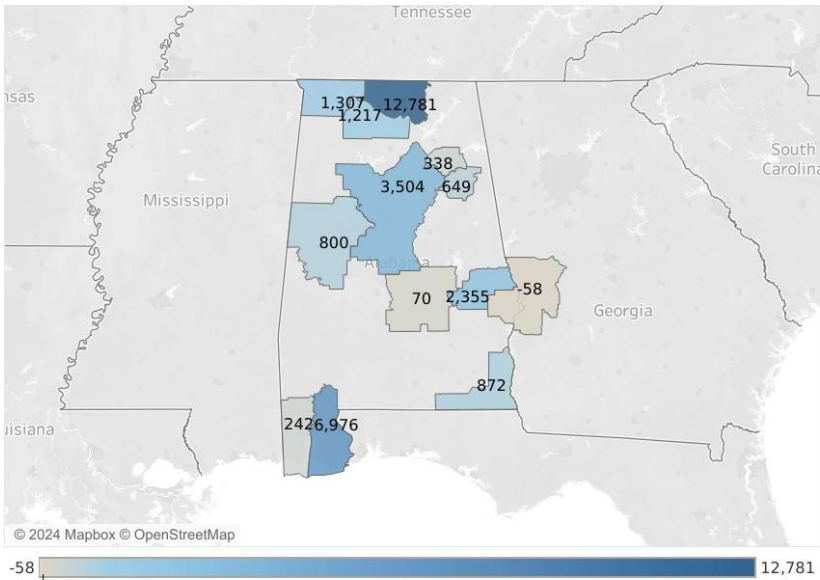
Metro areas are clusters of counties where a significant percentage of the population moves back and forth across county lines for work and commerce. According to the most recent data, about 26% of Walker County’s resident workforce commuted to work in Jefferson County or other counties in the MSA. That’s above the 25% threshold that triggers inclusion in the MSA. Walker was historically part of the MSA.

Consisting of 7 counties with a population of 1.2 million, Birmingham is the state’s largest metro area. Huntsville’s MSA, comprised of Limestone and Madison Counties, is second with 527,254.

Alabama MSA Population Estimates and Change, 2022

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | MSA Population Change by Year | Change Visualization | Alabama Population Change Table | USA Numeric Change | US A Pe r.. |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|

2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change



Numeric Change

- Population Estimate 2023
- 2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change
- Cumulative Change Since 2020 Census

2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change

| Name | ### |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Huntsville, AL | 527,254 |
| Daphne-Fairhope-Foley, AL | 6,976 |
| Birmingham, AL | 3,504 |
| Auburn-Opelika, AL | 2,355 |
| Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL | 1,307 |
| Decatur, AL | 1,217 |
| Dothan, AL | 872 |
| Tuscaloosa, AL | 800 |
| Anniston-Oxford, AL | 649 |
| Gadsden, AL | 338 |
| Mobile, AL | 242 |
| Montgomery, AL | 70 |

Trends

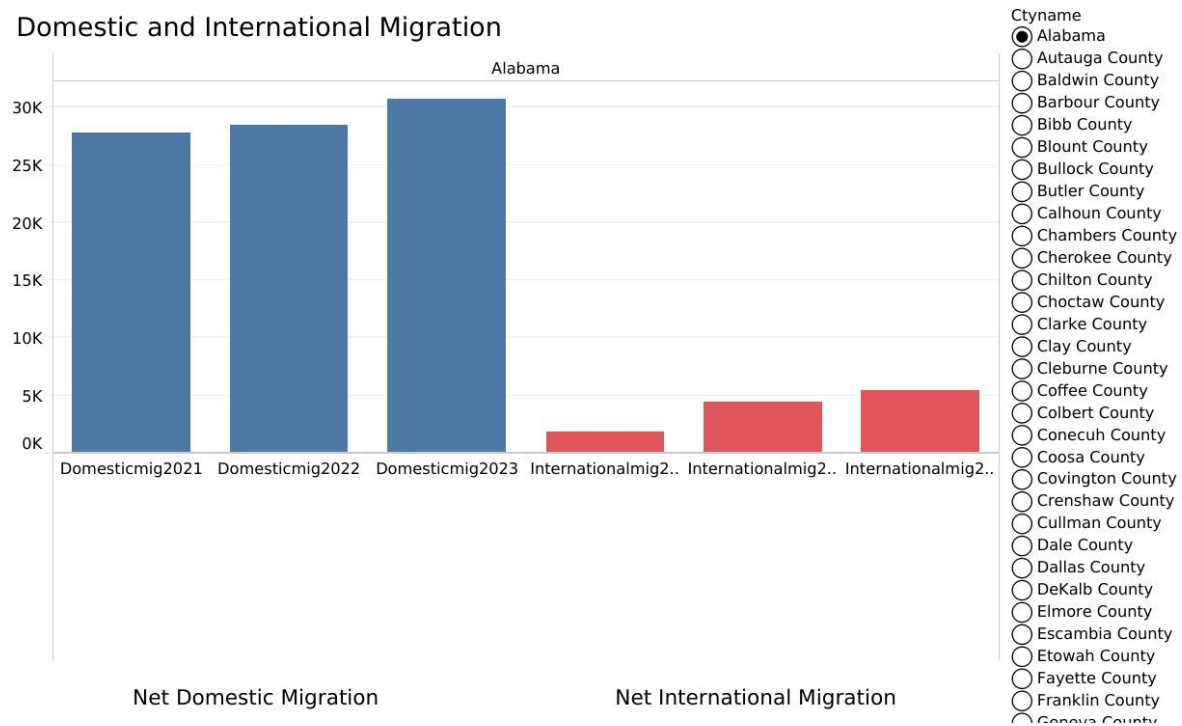
As observed in the [PARCA’s analysis of state-level estimates](#) released earlier this year, the decline in deaths related to the Covid-19 pandemic improved baseline conditions for population growth. In the 2021 and 2022 estimates, deaths far outnumbered births. In 2023, the number of deaths in Alabama continued to drop, though, due to an aging population and lower birth rate, deaths still outnumbered births.



International immigration to Alabama remains low, but domestic immigration continues to accelerate, according to the estimates. Alabama netted 30,744 new residents through domestic in-migration in 2023, building on an upward trend.

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | Rate of Change | Domestic and International Migration | Births and Deaths | Components of Change | Numeric Change by Year by Cou.. |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|

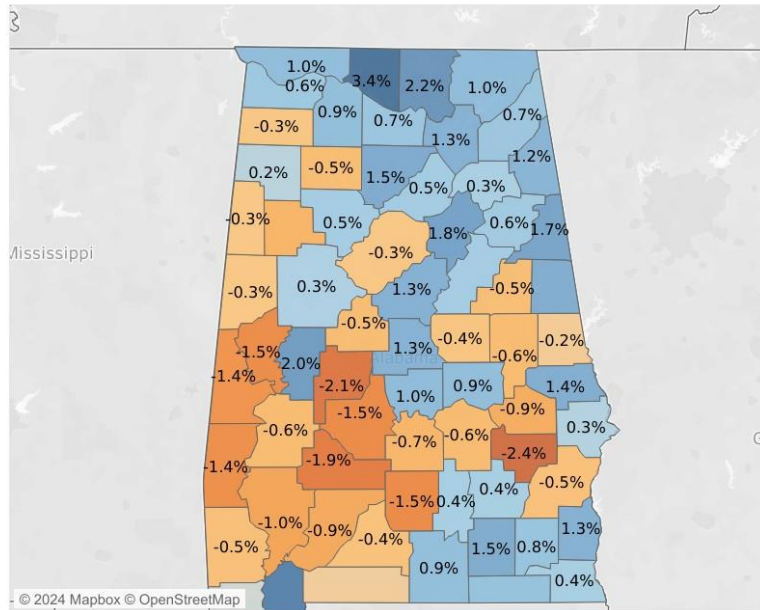
Domestic and International Migration



Domestic in-migration is powering population growth in hot spots like Madison, Limestone County, and Baldwin, as well as in suburban counties around Birmingham and Montgomery. In the latter cases, the central county is losing population while suburban counties gain. Across Alabama, 38 of the 67 counties are seeing more people moving into the county than moving out.

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | Rate of Change | Domestic and International Migration | Births and Deaths | Components of Change | Nu m e.. |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|

2022-2023 % Change



Percentage Change
 ● 2022-2023 % Change
 ○ 2020-2023 % Change

2022-2023 % Change

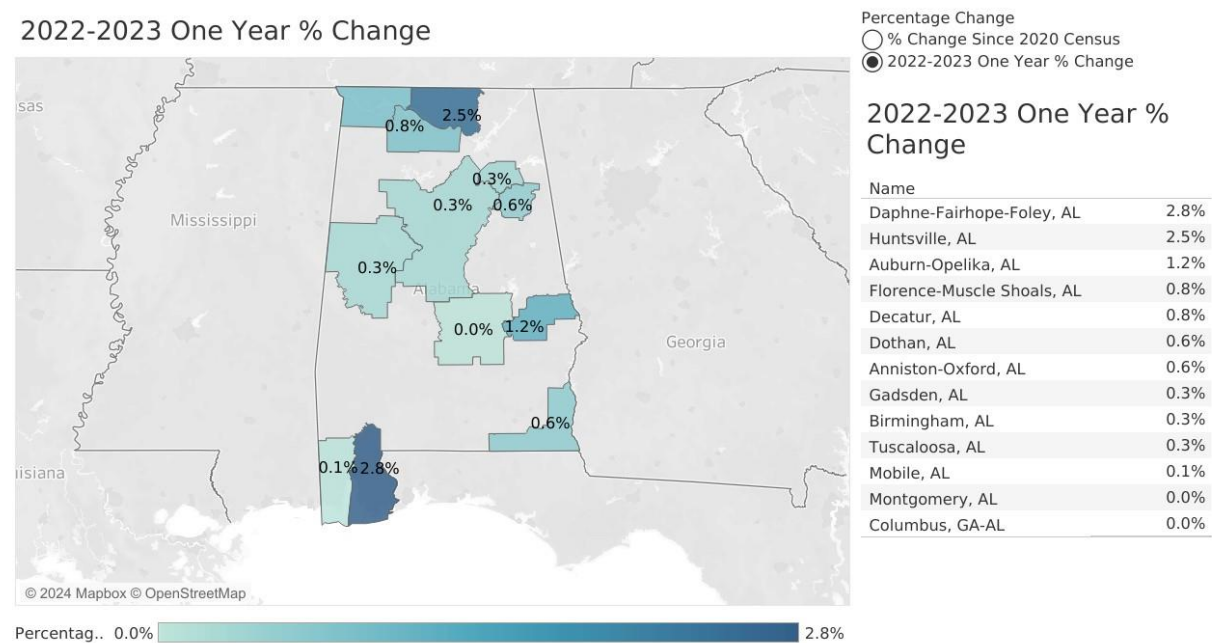
| Ctyname | |
|-------------------|------|
| Limestone County | 3.4% |
| Baldwin County | 2.8% |
| Madison County | 2.2% |
| Hale County | 2.0% |
| St. Clair County | 1.8% |
| Cleburne County | 1.7% |
| Cullman County | 1.5% |
| Coffee County | 1.5% |
| Randolph County | 1.5% |
| Lee County | 1.4% |
| Marshall County | 1.3% |
| Henry County | 1.3% |
| Shelby County | 1.3% |
| Chilton County | 1.3% |
| Cherokee County | 1.2% |
| Autauga County | 1.0% |
| Jackson County | 1.0% |
| Lauderdale County | 1.0% |
| Lawrence County | 0.9% |



Calhoun and Etowah counties, home to Anniston and Gadsden, respectively, are showing population growth after years of decline. Mobile County also grew, breaking a streak of decline. In fact, all of the state's metro areas posted population gains except for the Columbus, GA—Metro Area, which includes Phenix City and Russell County.

Alabama MSA Population Estimates and Change, 2022

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | MSA Population Change by Year | Change Visualization | Alabama Population Change Table | USA Numeric Change | US A Pe r.. |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|



Rural counties, particularly in Alabama's Black Belt, continued to lose population. The biggest drop in percentage terms was Bullock County, where the population declined by 2.4%, or 246 residents, according to the estimates. Hale County was the exception to the Black Belt trend. Hale added 289 residents, which amounts to a 2% population increase in a year.

In numeric terms, Jefferson County lost the most people, with a decline of 2,186. That is less of a loss than in 2021 or 2022. Deaths were down, births were up, resulting in a positive natural change of 394. International migration added 818, a slight increase over the year before. However, domestic migration remained a drain, with 3,417 more people moving out of the county than moved in, according to estimates.

Montgomery County also continues to see significant domestic outmigration, but a slight rise in international migration and births and a drop in deaths helped offset the outmigration. Montgomery County's population has decreased by 1,321. Autauga, Elmore, Chilton, and Lee counties grew.

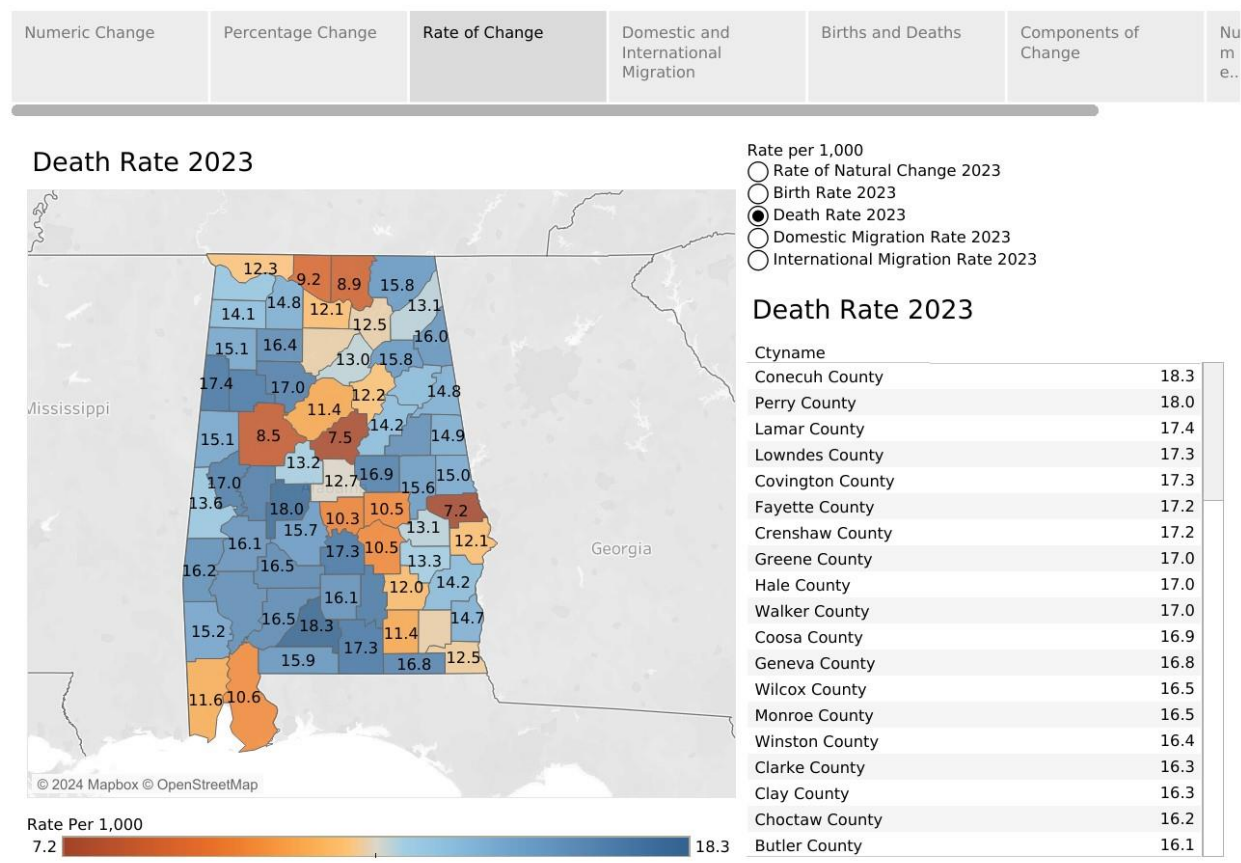
Mobile County grew with a smaller net decline in domestic migration, a slight increase in international migration, and a return to positive natural change (more births than deaths). According to the estimates, Mobile County posted a net addition of 242 residents.

Next-door neighbor Baldwin County added 6,976 people, mostly because of people moving to the coastal county. In percentage terms, the Baldwin County metro area, officially the Daphne-Fairhope-Foley MSA, grew faster than any of the state’s other metro areas.

However, the Huntsville MSA netted the most new residents, with Madison County adding 8,995 and Limestone County adding 3,786. Adjacent North Alabama counties like Lauderdale, Morgan, Marshall, Jackson, Lawrence, and Cullman grew.

The Dothan-area Wiregrass counties also saw population growth, as did counties on the Alabama-Georgia Border like Cleburne, Randolph, and Cherokee.

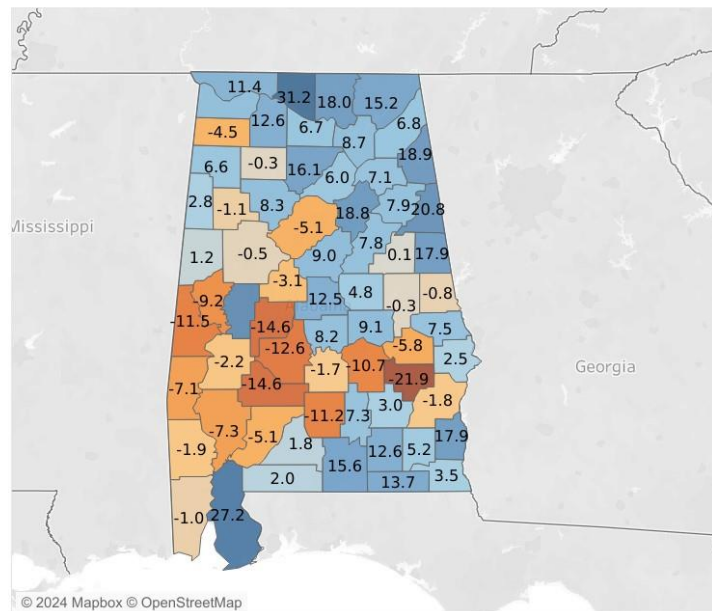
Most counties bordering Mississippi lost population. The median age in rural counties tends to be higher, which correlates with higher death rates.



Those counties also tend to experience more people moving out than moving in.

| Numeric Change | Percentage Change | Rate of Change | Domestic and International Migration | Births and Deaths | Components of Change | Nu m e.. |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|

Domestic Migration Rate 2023



Rate Per 1,000

-21.9 31.2

Rate per 1,000

☐ Rate of Natural Change 2023

☐ Birth Rate 2023

☐ Death Rate 2023

☒ Domestic Migration Rate 2023

☐ International Migration Rate 2023

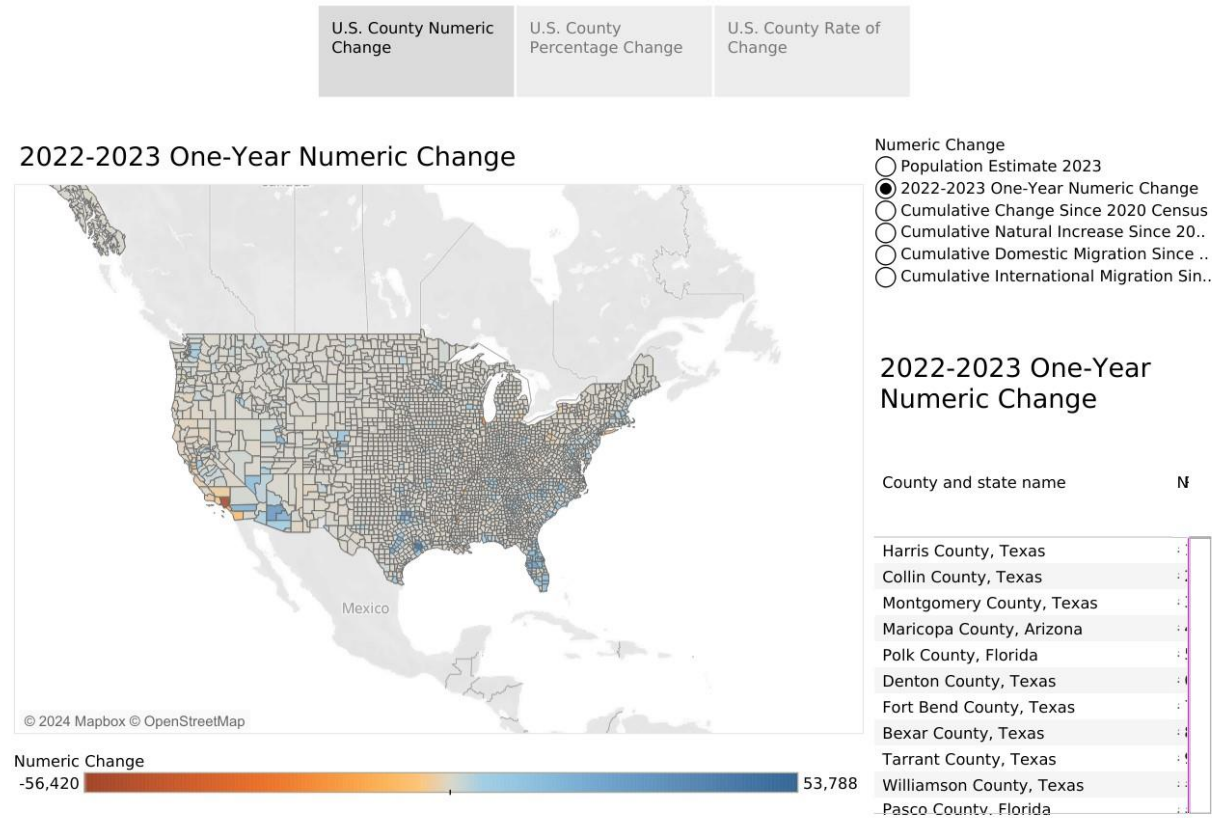
Domestic Migration Rate 2023

Ctyname

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Limestone County | 31.2 |
| Baldwin County | 27.2 |
| Hale County | 22.2 |
| Cleburne County | 20.8 |
| Cherokee County | 18.9 |
| St. Clair County | 18.8 |
| Madison County | 18.0 |
| Henry County | 17.9 |
| Randolph County | 17.9 |
| Cullman County | 16.1 |
| Covington County | 15.6 |
| Jackson County | 15.2 |
| Geneva County | 13.7 |
| Lawrence County | 12.6 |
| Coffee County | 12.6 |
| Chilton County | 12.5 |
| Lauderdale County | 11.4 |
| Elmore County | 9.1 |
| Shelby County | 9.0 |

Click on each chart or visit the blog post [here](#) to take you to the interactive visualization. Use the tabs and menus to explore the estimates for counties and metros you are interested in. If you want to see how Alabama compares with the rest of the United States, visualizations of the population estimates and changes are available for counties and metros across the country.

USA County Population Change

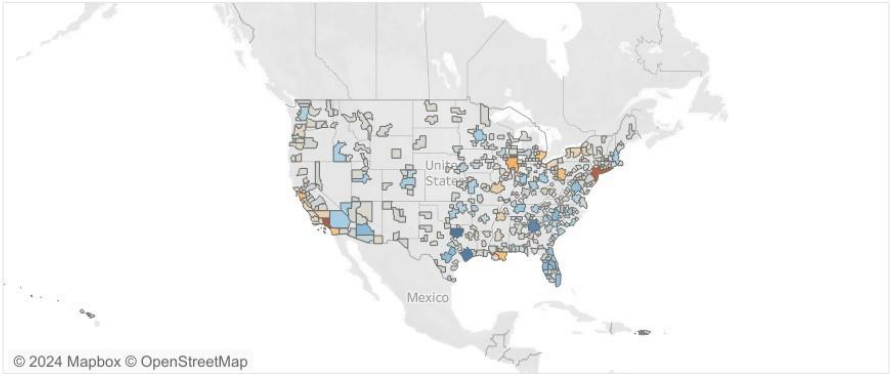


Similar stats are available for metro areas as well. Use the controls to zoom in on areas of interest.

Alabama MSA Population Estimates and Change, 2022

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|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Pe rc en t.. | MSA Population Change by Year | Change Visualization | Alabama Population Change Table | USA Numeric Change | USA Percentage Change | National MSA Cumulative Change Table |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|

2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change



- Numeric Change
- ☐ Population Estimate 2023
 - ☒ 2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change
 - ☐ Cumulative Change Since 2020 Census



2022-2023 One Year Numeric Change

| Name | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX | 152,598 |
| Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands, TX | 139,789 |

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