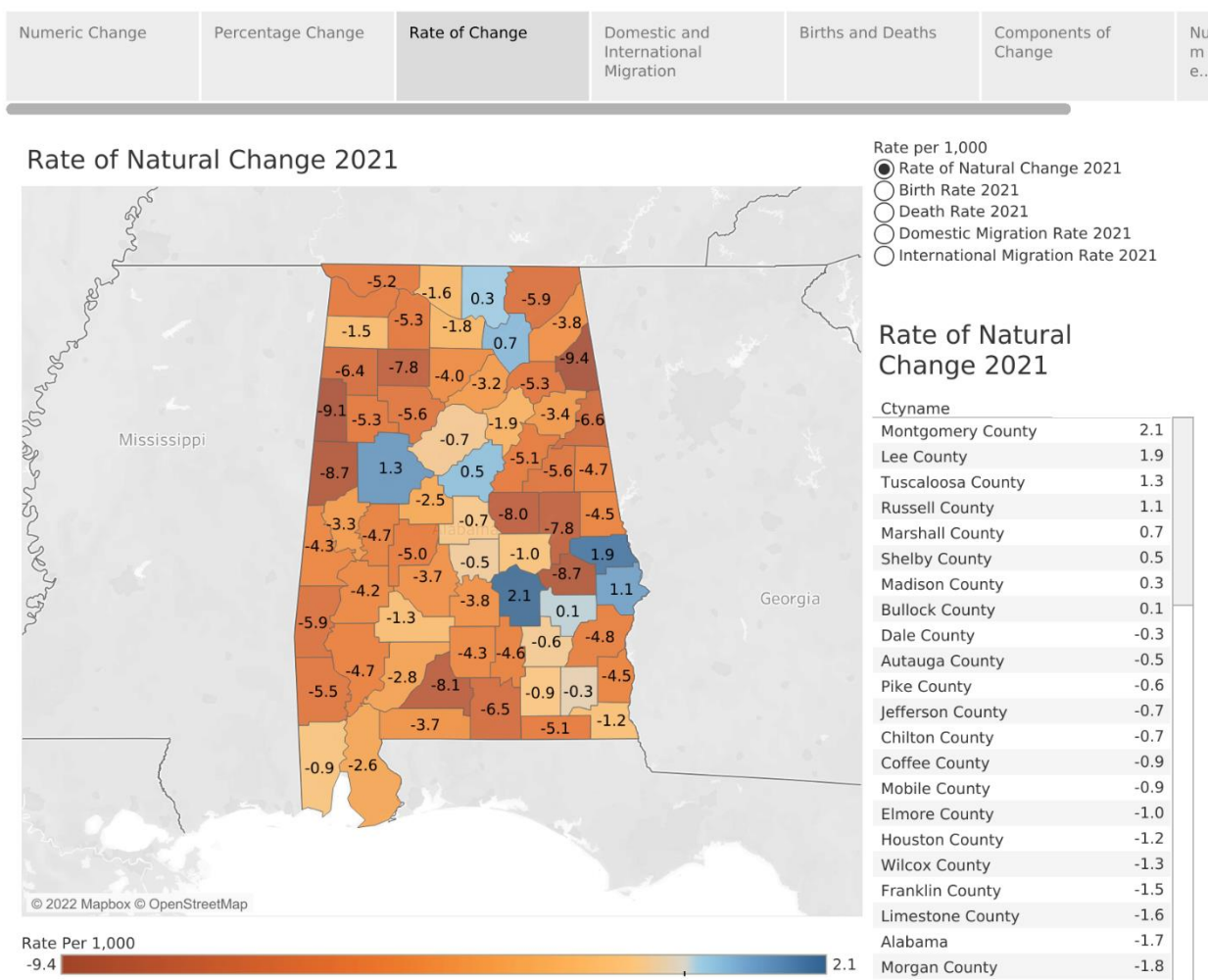


Deaths outnumber births, but population grows through domestic migration

By [Thomas Spencer](#) on March 29th, 2022 in : in [Education & Workforce Development](#), [Quality of Life](#), [Workforce Development](#) [\[Edit\]](#)

New estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau show that more than half of Alabama counties lost population between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, losses driven by an aging population, a declining birthrate, and an elevated death rate during the Covid-19 pandemic. Statewide, the 65,868 deaths outnumbered 56,320 births, leading to a net loss through natural change of 8,548. In the visualization below, counties are shaded by their rate of natural change. Only eight counties, those in blue, saw more births than deaths. Alabama had the 4th highest death rate in the U.S., behind West Virginia, Mississippi, and Maine.

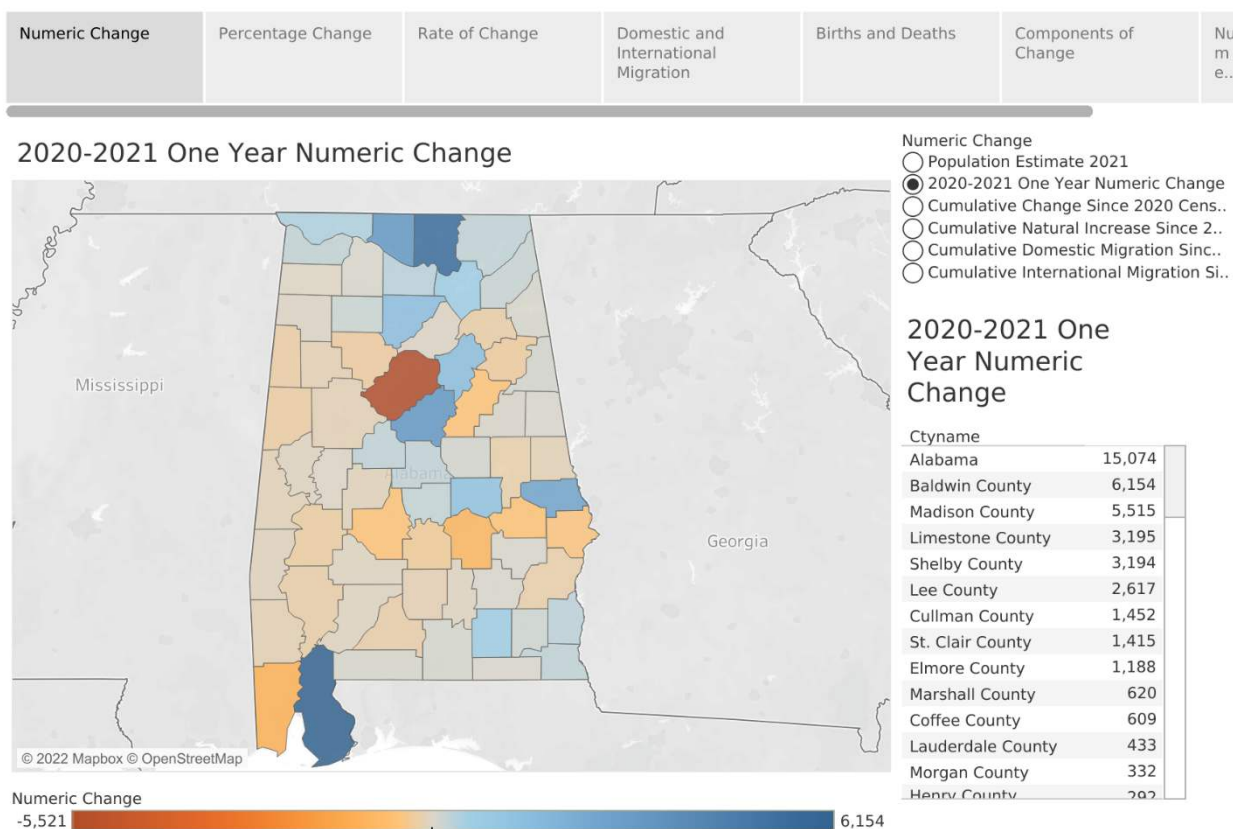
Alabama Counties Population Estimates and Change 2021



However, stronger growth through domestic migration (individuals moving from other states to Alabama, but excluding movers who are foreign-born) helped the state offset those losses. Estimates issued earlier this year put Alabama's population at 5,039,877, up by about 15,000 or 0.3%, from 2020. A net total of 22,136 domestic migrants moved to Alabama, offsetting the loss from natural change.

Two counties accounted for about half that growth, with coastal Baldwin adding 6,780 net new residents through migration and Madison County adding 5,335. Madison County's neighbor, Limestone, added 3,388. Other north Alabama counties like Cullman, Lauderdale, Jackson, Morgan, Marshall, and Dekalb also saw gains from domestic migration. The counties containing the three other large population centers — Jefferson, Mobile, and Montgomery — saw population declines, according to the estimates. Meanwhile, counties linked to those metro core counties — counties like Shelby and St. Clair, Elmore and Lee, and Baldwin — saw growth. Modest growth also occurred in some Wiregrass counties — Coffee, Houston, and Henry.

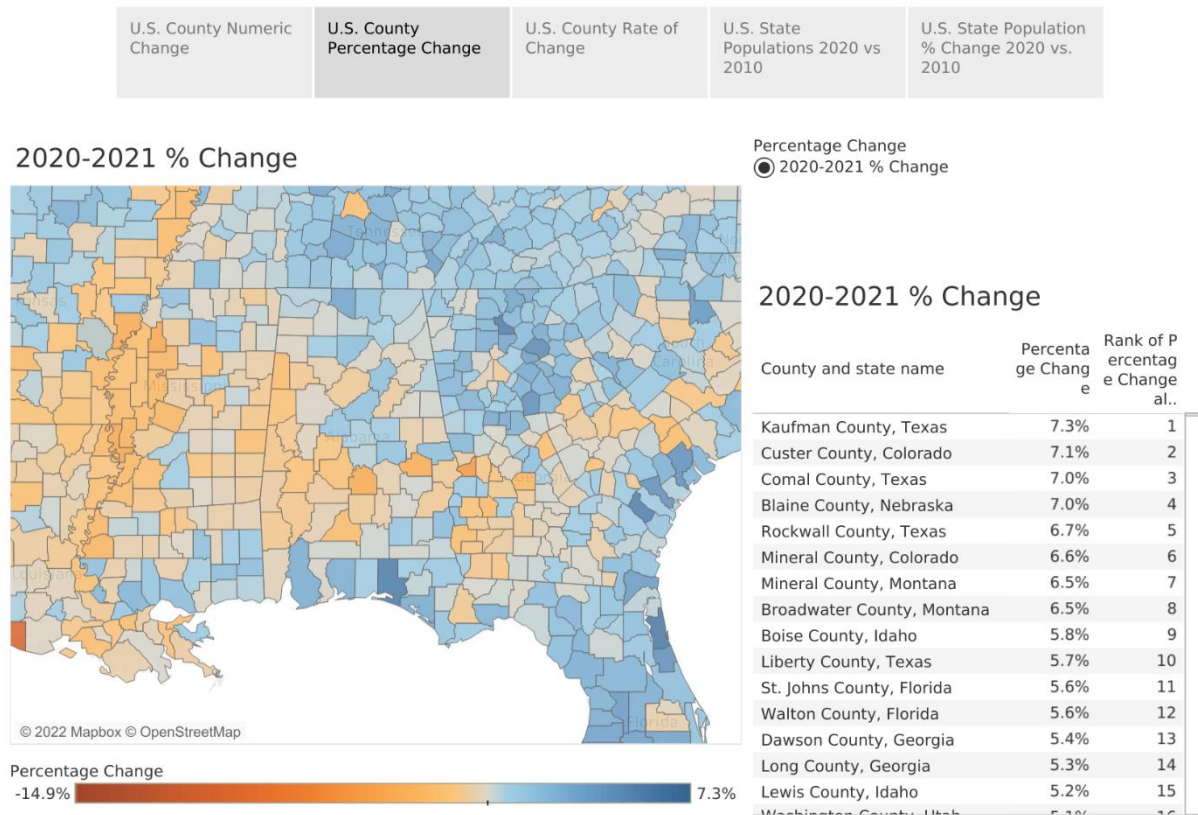
Alabama Counties Population Estimates and Change 2021



Zooming out to look at the Southeast, similar patterns are evident. Core counties in Atlanta, Charlotte, Nashville, and Memphis lost population while surrounding metro counties grew. Generally, growth was more widespread in Tennessee, Florida, the Carolinas, and the northern half of Georgia. In general, Alabama counties bordering Georgia, Tennessee, and

Florida are growing. Coastal counties on the Southeast's East and Gulf coasts have seen growth. Counties along the interstates benefit throughout the region. Still, rural counties and whole swaths of the interior South, including counties in central and western Alabama, continue to lose population, not yet connected to the regional engines of growth.

USA County Population Change



When it comes to counties grouped into metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), The Daphne-Fairhope-Foley, Huntsville, and Auburn-Opelika MSAs continue to show strong population growth. Among the 358 U.S. metros, they rank No. 16, 40, 50, respectively, in terms of percentage population change.

On the other hand, metro Birmingham is still not seeing the pace of growth of other Southeastern metros. Gains in Shelby, St. Clair, Bibb, and Blount counties weren't enough to overcome Jefferson County's estimated population loss of 5,521. Over the past decade, Jefferson County's natural increase plus population gains from international immigration offset a steady stream of domestic outmigration. But in 2021, deaths outnumbered births by 438, and international migration accounted for a gain of only 153 people. Meanwhile, the estimates show a net loss of 5,238 domestic residents moving out of Jefferson. That produced a net population loss for the MSA in 2021. The Birmingham-Hoover metropolitan statistical area ranked 258 out of 358 U.S. metros in percentage change.

Alabama MSA Population Estimates and Change, 2021

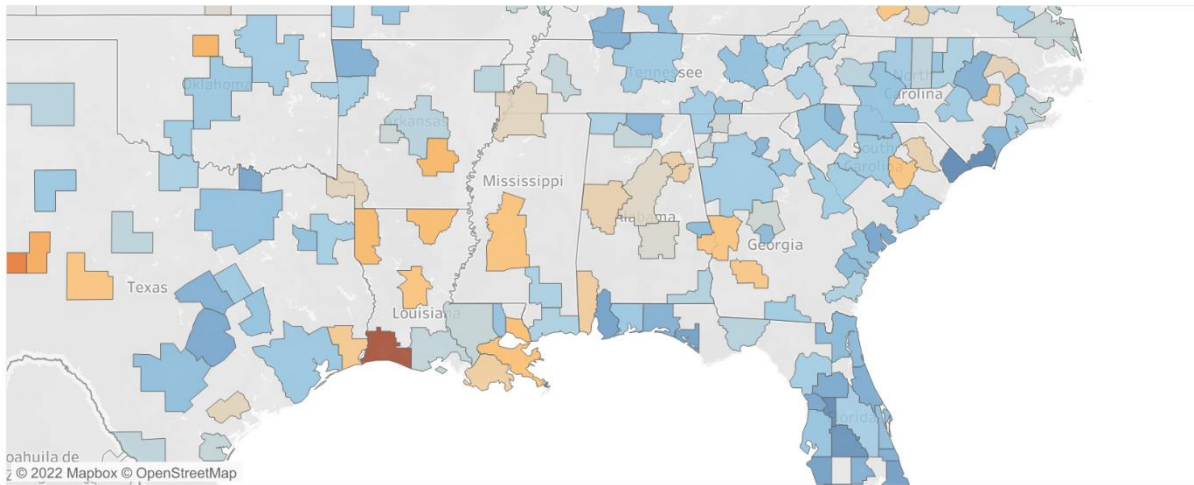
M SA P..	Change Visualization	Alabama Population Change Table	USA Numeric Change	USA Percentage Change	Regional Percentage Change	National MSA Cumulative Change Table
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Percentage Change

○ % Change Since 2020 Census

● 2020-2021 One Year % Change

2020-2021 One Year % Change



Percentage Change

-5.3%

5.1%

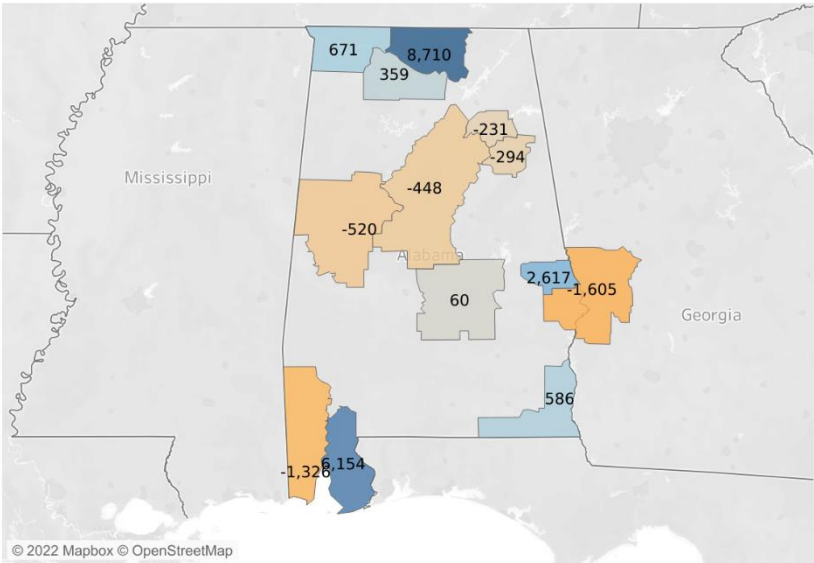
Montgomery ranked No. 248, with a slight population gain, and the Mobile MSA ranked No. 305, with a population loss of 1,326. After strong growth over the past decade, Tuscaloosa County and its metro area lost population in 2021, according to the estimate. Its growth rank ranked it No. 284 among U.S. metros.

The Auburn-Opelika MSA added 2,617 residents, according to the estimates, a growth rate of 1.5%. Dothan, Decatur, and the Florence-Muscle Shoals MSAs also showed positive growth. The Anniston and Gadsden MSAs continued to post slight declines.

Alabama MSA Population Estimates and Change, 2021

Numeric Change	Percentage Change	MSA Population Change by Year	Change Visualization	Alabama Population Change Table	USA Numeric Change	US A P..
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2020-2021 One Year Numeric Change



- Numeric Change
- Population Estimate 2021
 - 2020-2021 One Year Numeric Change
 - Cumulative Change Since 2020 Census
 - Cumulative Natural Change Since 2020 Ce..
 - Cumulative Domestic Migration Since 202..
 - Cumulative International Migration Since 2..

2020-2021 One Year Numeric Change

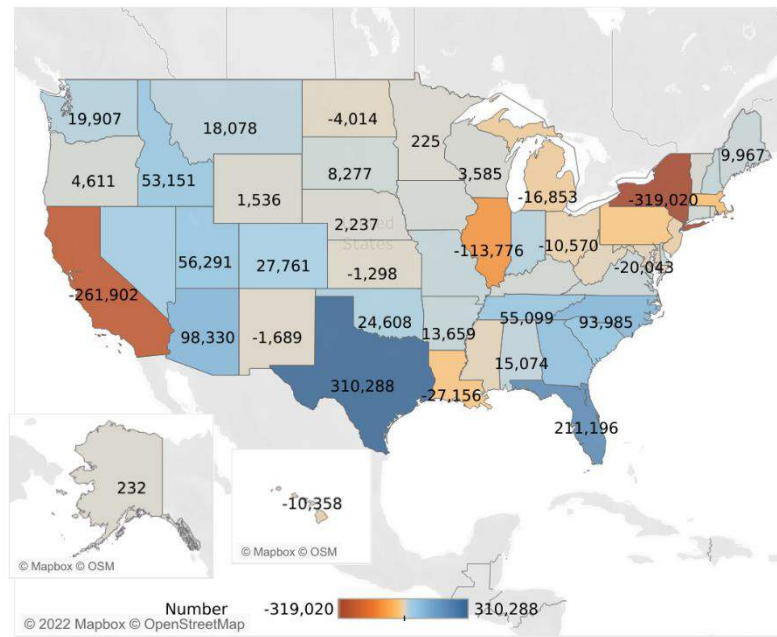
Name	
Huntsville, AL	8,710
Daphne-Fairhope-Foley, AL	6,154
Auburn-Opelika, AL	2,617
Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL	671
Dothan, AL	586
Decatur, AL	359
Montgomery, AL	60
Gadsden, AL	-231
Birmingham-Hoover, AL	-448
Tuscaloosa, AL	-520
Mobile, AL	-1,326
Columbus, GA-AL	-1,605

Using the menus and tabs in the visualizations above, you can explore birth and death rates, numerical and percentage change of counties and MSAs in Alabama and across the U.S. The state population estimates and components of change released earlier this year are below.

U.S. Census Population Estimates for 2021

Numeric Change	Percentage Change	Rates of Change	Comparison Table	Components of Change	Year by Year estimated change
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2020-2021 Numeric Change



- Numeric Change
- Population Estimate 2021
 - 2020-2021 Numeric Change
 - 2010-2021 Cumulative Change

2020-2021 Numeric Change

Name	Number
Texas	310,288
Florida	211,196
Arizona	98,330
North Carolina	93,985
Georgia	73,766
South Carolina	59,976
Utah	56,291
Tennessee	55,099

U.S. 2020-2021 Numeric Change

United States	392,665
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And the final visualization looks back to the results of the 2020 Census and compares population counts from April 2020 and April 2010.

USA County Population Change

U.S. County Numeric Change	U.S. County Percentage Change	U.S. County Rate of Change	U.S. State Populations 2020 vs 2010	U.S. State Population % Change 2020 vs. 2010
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Percentage Change Between 2010 and 2020

