

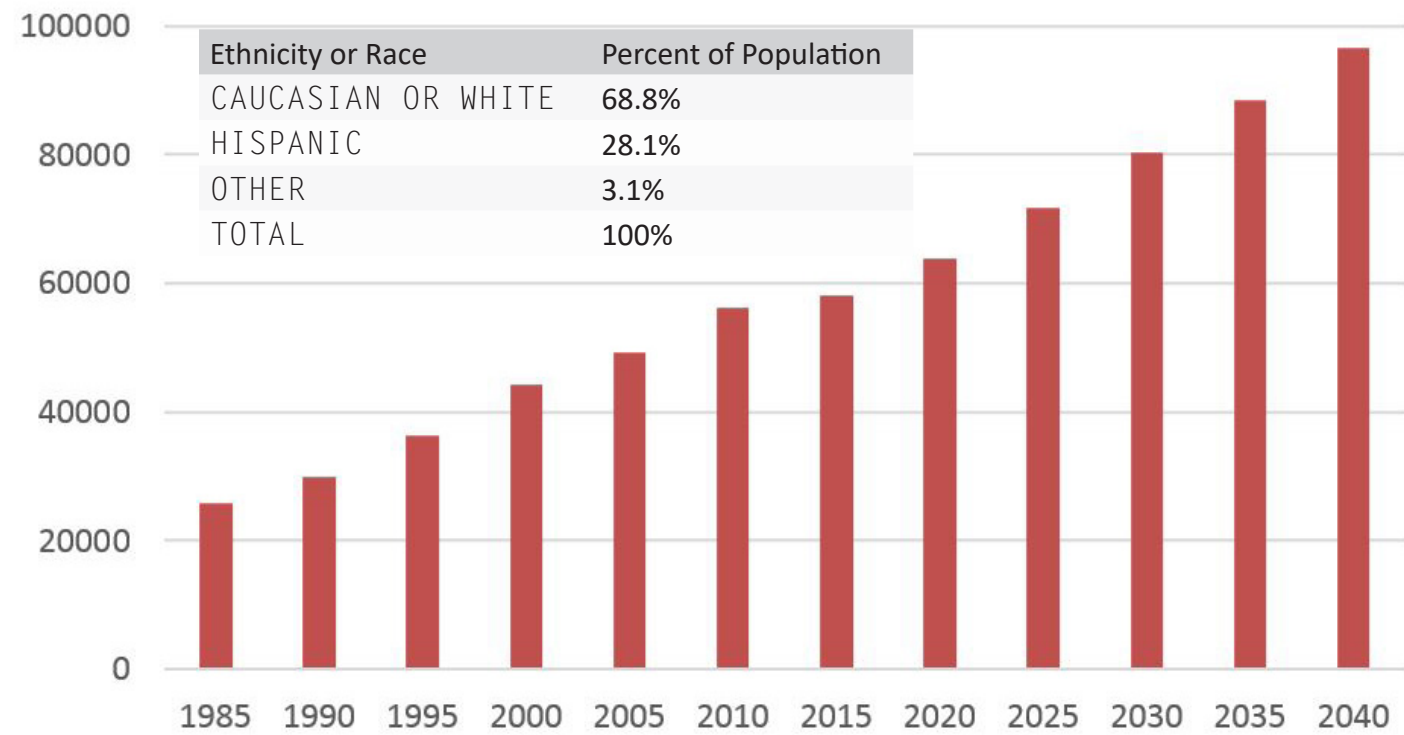
POPULATION

U.S. Census numbers indicate that 59,118 people resided in Garfield County in 2017. Garfield is the 12th most populated county of Colorado’s 64 counties. Garfield County has experienced a steady increase in population over the past few decades, with more rapid growth of 2.7 percent occurring between 2004 and 2009. That growth was largely the result of a burgeoning natural gas extraction industry, but also due to an ongoing expansion of tourism, second home development, health care, and regional services. During this period, there was a significant in-migration of new workers and families, which fueled housing development, retail expansion, and rapid wage growth. At times during this period, Garfield County experienced shortages of labor and a rapidly appreciating housing market.

In 2008, an abundance of new natural gas reserves were uncovered elsewhere around the country and the value of natural gas began a national decline. The Great Recession also cut spending on travel, tourism, and second home development, with predictable declines in all measures of local economic activity.

Due to the recession, population declined slightly between 2009 and 2011, and has been increasing modestly since 2012 at rate of 0.9 percent. Forecasts

Figure 3: Population growth and ethnicity
Source: State Demography Office



project that the population of Garfield County will resume more rapid growth in 2020, and will continue at a pace in excess of two percent over the next 20 years, reaching a projected doubling of population by 2040.

Garfield County has five municipalities that stretch along the Colorado River and the Interstate 70 corridor, and one municipality, Carbondale, that is situated along State Highway 133 and the Roaring Fork River. In 2015, Garfield County also recognized the Town of Carbonate as an incorporated town located in the heart of the Flat Tops Wilderness Area; this town, however, has no permanent residents. Glenwood Springs remains the largest community in the county. In the period from 1990 to 2010, the Town of Rifle, which is about 25 miles west of Glenwood Springs, absorbed the majority share of the county’s new growth, largely because of Rifle’s proximity to the most active natural gas development areas. Population in unincorporated areas, as a percent of total county residents, shrank from 57 percent of all county residents in 1990 to 39 percent in 2016. Each municipality has experienced different rates of growth, with New Castle and Silt having the largest percentage of growth in population over the past 10 years.

The County grew at an average annual percent change of 0.74 percent between 2010 and 2017.

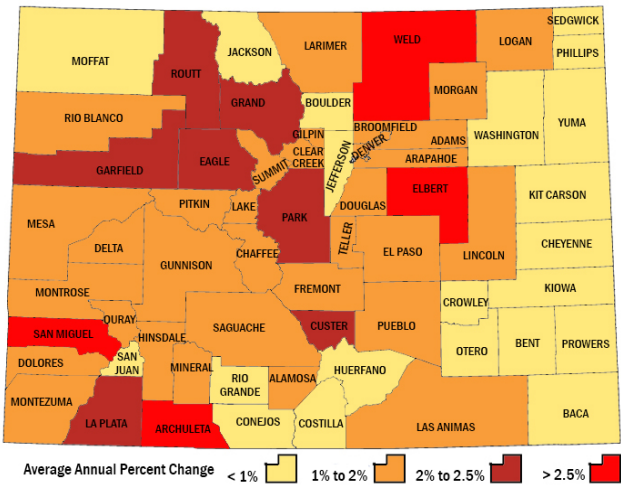


Figure 4: Population Growth Colorado (2010-2040)
Source: Colorado Division of Local Government

ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Like much of western Colorado, Garfield County has a largely Caucasian population, with a significant Hispanic minority population, which grew rapidly during the mid-2000’s energy boom. The county’s proportion of Hispanic and Anglo populations mirrors that of the state as a whole, with almost 30 percent of the population of Hispanic ethnicity. The state’s ethnic diversity is projected to continue to increase over the next 25 years, with the majority of that growth being in the Hispanic population, especially in the population under 25 years.

MIGRATION

The county historically has seen a large out-migration of high school graduates or similarly aged youth, followed by a large influx of adults between the ages of 30 and 35. The in-migration is presumed to be strong due to the high quality of life and amenities that exist within the county for young families, and early career opportunities. The county also experiences a steady out-migration trend relative to age, with the most significant figures happening after retirement age. During the recent recession, the county also had a significant out-migration of some of the workforce. Starting in 2015, the county had an increasing net positive migration.



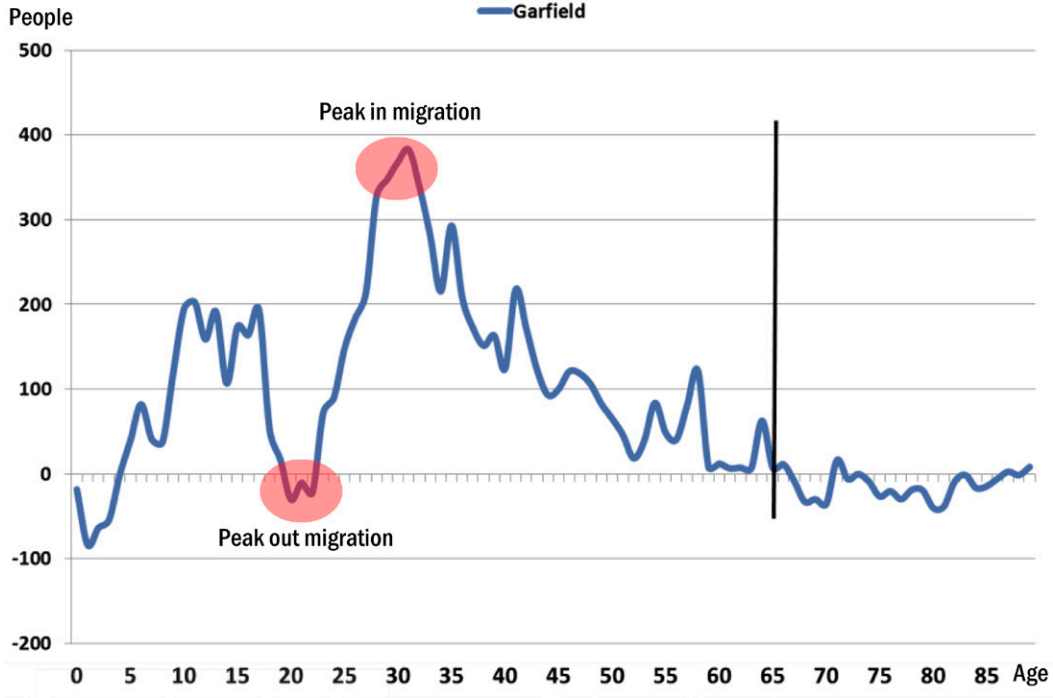


Figure 6: County Migration by Age: 2000 to 2010
Source: Colorado State Demography Office and U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 7: Colorado Population by Race/Ethnicity
Source: Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office.

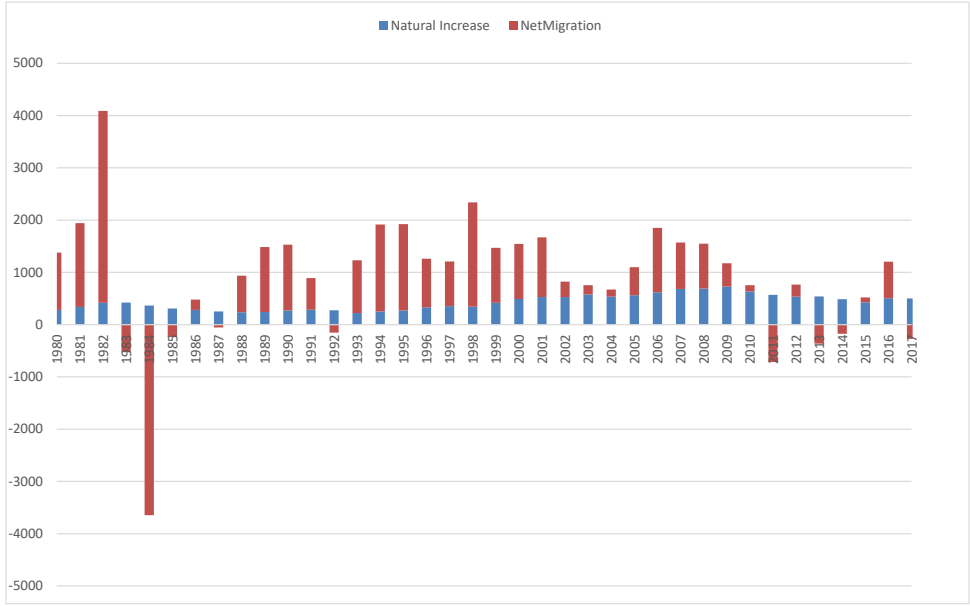


Figure 5: Garfield County Components of Population Change
Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office

