

SPECIAL INTEREST

Portland 2010-2020

A Decade of Population Growth, Increasing Diversity and Tightening Housing Market

2020 U.S. Decennial Census

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a full count to determine the actual number of people living in the country. It is called the decennial census and this national effort is a constitutional mandate. The count occurs in years ending in zero, on Census Day, which is April 1. The first U.S. Census was in 1790 and at the time the nation’s population was 3,929,625. Oregon had not yet attained statehood.

According to the 13th Census in 1910, Oregon’s population was 672,765 while Portland, its largest city, had a population of 207,214 and accounted for just over 30% of the State’s population. Fast forwarding 110 years to the 24th Census count in 2020, Oregon’s population is at 4,237,256 while Portland’s population is 652,503 (very close to Oregon’s population in 1910) and accounts for just over 15% of the State’s population. Portland has continued to grow, as have other principal cities like Salem, Eugene and Bend—largely a consequence of the greater housing affordability they are offering compared to Portland.

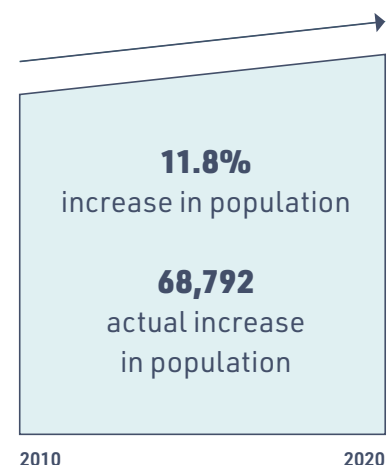
Portland’s Population: A Decade of Growth

The new 2020 census numbers reveal robust growth in many large US cities, and Portland is no exception. The city added well over 68,000 new residents between 2010 and 2020. The rate of growth was close to 12 percent, exceeding the growth rate from 2000–2010.

Based on the 2020 census count, Portland ranks as the 25th largest city in the United States, coming in just behind Boston. The following illustration provides a comparison of Portland’s population in 2010 and 2020:

From 2010 to 2020, Portland’s population grew from **583,711** to **652,503**

Source: 2020 U.S. Decennial Census



It is always of interest to compare how Portland's population growth compares to that of the nation, state and to the two large neighboring cities of Seattle to the north and San Francisco to the south:

Portland's Population Growth Compared to the Nation, Oregon State, and Major West Coast Cities

Geography	2010	2020	Change	% Change
United States	308,745,392	331,449,281	22,703,889	7.4%
Oregon State	3,831,072	4,237,256	406,184	10.6%
Portland	583,711	652,503	68,792	11.8%
Seattle	608,668	737,015	128,347	21.1%
San Francisco	805,210	873,965	68,755	8.5%



How does Portland's population growth compare?

The table clearly shows that Portland grew faster than the nation, state, and our neighbor to the south, while the neighboring city of Seattle far surpassed Portland's population growth.

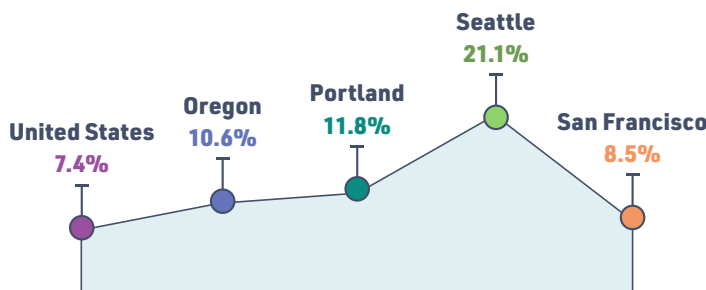


Fig 1.01 Portland's Population Growth Compared to the Nation, Oregon State, and Major West Coast Cities, percent change 2010-2020

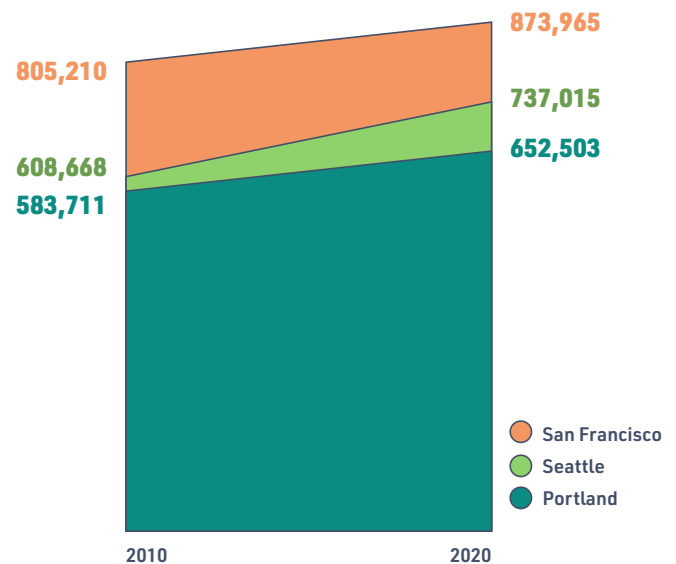


Fig 1.01 Portland's Population Growth Compared to other Major West Coast Cities, actual 2010-2020

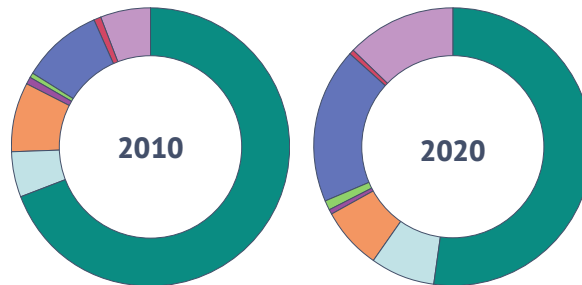
Race and Ethnicity: A Decade of Increasing Diversity

At the beginning of the 21st century, just over 75 percent of Portland’s population was white. The city ranked as the least diverse in comparison with other large cities in the nation when it came to race-ethnic composition. In the two decades since then, US and its large cities continue to diversify and grow largely because of the growing number of nonwhite racial and ethnic groups—especially people identifying as Latinx or Hispanic, Asian American, or two or more races. Portland has followed a similar trend and for the first time in recorded census history, the proportion of white as a racial category dropped close to 6 percent. See chart below for a comparison of changes in race-ethnic categories between 2010 and 2020.

Fig 1.01 Race and Ethnicity in Portland, 2010 and 2020

Race/Ethnicity	2010	2020	2010-2020 Change
White	72.3%	66.4%	-5.8%
Black	6.1%	5.7%	-0.4%
Asian	7.1%	8.0%	0.9%
Native American	0.8%	0.7%	-0.1%
Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.6%	0.1%
Hispanic-Latinx	9.4%	11.1%	1.7%
Other Races	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%
2+ Races	3.7%	7.0%	3.2%

From 2010 to 2020, Portland’s white population had the greatest rate of change, declining by **5.8%**



Sources: Social Explorer; U.S. Census 2020, PL94 Redistricting Data, U.S. Census Bureau Dataset

Notes: The data reported here for the 2010 Census may not exactly match the data as originally reported in 2010. To make the 2010 data comparable and place it on the 2020 boundaries the 2010 block population and characteristics were allocated to the 2020 blocks. The 2010 data were then aggregated to the 2020 geographies. Because of this the population and characteristics may be different than those reported officially by the Census Bureau in 2010. There are several reasons for this 1) Some of the boundaries were redrawn due to annexation or in some case remapping and correction of the previous boundaries; 2) The data allocation was based upon the land area occupied so there may be some slight differences injected because of that. This method does make it possible to directly compare at various levels of geography the changes between 2010 and 2020 because it uses the same areas. Among the areas that officially changed boundaries between the 2010 and 2020 Census were most of the blocks, tracts, and block groups, as well as some counties, minor civil divisions and places. Except for annexation, remapping and other changes in the actual geography of the areas, the other differences are minor. You should also note that the 2020 data has had noise injected into it because of the Census’s new Disclosure Avoidance System (DAS). This can mean that population counts and characteristics, especially when they are particularly small, may not exactly correspond to the data as collected. As such caution should be exercised when examining areas with small counts. Ron Jarmin, acting director of the Census Bureau posted a discussion of the redistricting data, which outlines what to expect with the new DAS. For more details on accuracy you can read it here. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/director/2021/07/redistricting-data.html>

Portland is still the least diverse when compared to other largest cities in the nation. The following table highlights numeric change in the population of the various race-ethnic groups in Portland and it can be noted that the greatest contribution to growth has come from the subpopulation of 2+ Races:

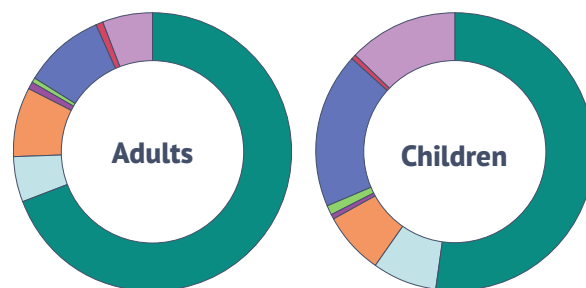
Race/Ethnicity	2020 Population	2010-2020 Change
White	433,445	11,721
Black	36,975	1,518
Asian	52,245	11,687
Native American	4,273	108
Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	3,755	777
Hispanic-Latinx	72,336	17,494
Other Races	4,118	2,820
2+ Races	45,356	23,650
Total	652,503	68,792

From 2010 to 2020, Portland's multiracial population increased the most, by **23,650**

Any discussion of diversity is incomplete without highlighting the much higher diversity mix among the child populations (persons under age 18) in the nation and across all the big cities in the US. It is evident from the 2020 census results that racial and ethnic diversity is far more pronounced for the nation and for many of the large cities in the country. When considering the 50 largest cities in the nation, Portland is only one of two cities that still has a majority white youth population of 52 percent in 2020. This share is down nearly 4 percent from the 2010 composition. In comparison, in all other big cities, Non-Hispanic White youth have become a minority racial group. See chart below for a side-by-side comparison of adult vs. youth population for Portland:

Fig 1.01 Race and Ethnicity of Adults and Children in Portland, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	Adults	Children
White	69.4%	52.2%
Black	5.2%	7.7%
Asian	8.2%	7.2%
Native American	0.7%	0.6%
Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	0.5%	1.0%
Hispanic-Latinx	9.7%	18.0%
Other Races	0.6%	0.7%
2+ Races	5.8%	12.5%



Housing Stock: A Decade of Tightening Housing Market

A growing city like Portland needs a housing stock that can match the demands of its growing population. Ideally, the housing stock needs to be affordable to renters and homeowners with varied income levels who are likely to enter the housing market. However, Portland’s housing market has grown increasingly unaffordable to a majority of area residents making low to moderate household incomes. The Housing Market Affordability section of this report provides a detailed analysis of affordability by unit type for various household types in all the neighborhoods of Portland. This analysis tethers affordability to the ability of households to keep their housing cost at or below 30 percent of their monthly income as anything above this threshold is designated as a housing cost burden. The Census Bureau makes available estimates on number of cost burdened households for various geographies by tenure through their American Community Survey (ACS) data releases. Based on the most recent ACS 5-year estimates from 2019, in Portland, just under half of the renter households (47 percent) are cost burdened or severely cost burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. By the same measure, amongst homeowners, a little over one-third (37.4 percent) are cost burdened or severely cost burdened. See illustration below:

How is Cost Burden Defined?

If less than 30% of your income goes to housing costs, you are

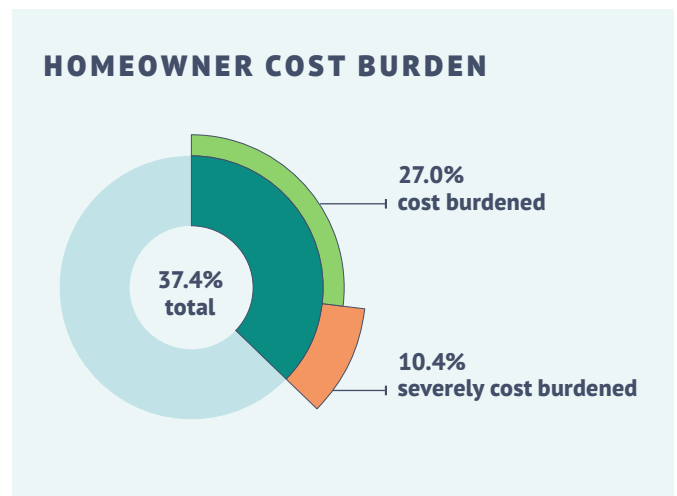
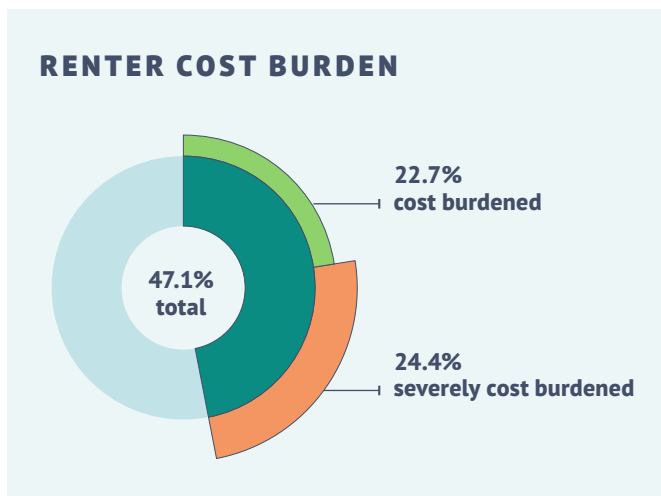
Not Cost Burdened

If 30-50% of your income goes to housing costs, you are

Cost Burdened

If 50% or more of your income goes to housing costs, you are

Severely Cost Burdened



Sources: ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates); U.S. Census Bureau

Construction of new housing units can ease some of the pressures of housing demand and impact housing affordability for renters and homeowners. Portland did in fact experience a construction boom during the 2010- 2020 time period. During this decade, well over 36,000 new housing units were added to the existing stock.

The new construction translates close to a 14 percent increase in the housing stock with overall vacancy rates hovering close to 7 percent. While this vacancy rate characterizes a healthy housing market, the steep increases in rent and home sale prices continues to transform Portland's housing market into one of the least affordable in the nation.

Concluding Thoughts

A full census count of people and housing units spotlights the nature of population growth or decline across the United States. In keeping with the national trend, Portland grew sizably between 2010-2020. But it is also clear that besides growing in numbers, the city is further diversifying with its youth population being far more diverse than the adult residents.

As a city grows, it needs units to house the new area residents. While construction activity between 2010-2020 has been robust in Portland, the crisis in housing affordability indicates that the housing demand far outpaces supply. As there are no indications that Portland may see a decline in population growth and diversity anytime soon, the implications for the housing market are clear: construction of housing units needs to keep up in numbers, nature and price ranges that can mitigate Portland's ongoing housing crisis and help us meet the City's goals.

