

Immigration and Population Change in Northern Virginia

by

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Introduction

During the past decade, the demographic profile of Northern Virginia has undergone a remarkable transformation.¹ As will be shown, in the 1990s, not only did Northern Virginia experience rapid population growth, but the diversity of its population changed significantly. According to census data, population in this region increased from 1.7 million in 1990 to 2.16 million in 2000. As Table 1 shows, the growth rate in Northern Virginia (25.1%) was considerably higher than for the State of Virginia (14.4%), the Washington Metropolitan Area (16.6%), and the United States (13.2%)

Table 1
Population growth in US, Virginia and Northern Virginia (1990-2001)

	Population 1990*	Population 2000*	Growth rate % 1990 - 2000
United States	248,709,873	281,421,906	13.2%
Washington PMSA	4,222,830	4,923,153	16.6%
Virginia	6,187,358	7,078,515	14.4%
Northern Virginia	1,732,377	2,167,756	25.1%

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

Throughout this period, the growth rates among the jurisdictions that comprise Northern Virginia have varied. Some counties (and/or cities) have experienced even more impressive population increases, while others have experienced only minor growth (see Table 2).

Table 2
Population growth in Northern Virginia by political jurisdictions (1990-2001)

	Population 1990*	Population 2000*	Growth rate % 1990 - 2000
United States	248,709,873	281,421,906	13.2%
Washington PMSA	4,222,830	4,923,153	16.6%
Virginia	6,187,358	7,078,515	14.4%
Northern Virginia	1,732,377	2,167,756	25.1%
Fairfax County	818,584	969,749	18.5%
Prince William County	215,686	280,813	30.2%
Arlington County	170,936	189,453	10.8%
Loudoun County	86,129	169,599	96.9%
Alexandria City	111,183	128,282	15.4%
Stafford County	61,236	92,446	51.0%
Spotsylvania County	57,403	90,395	57.5%
Fauquier County	48,741	55,139	13.1%
Manassas City	27,957	35,135	25.7%
Culpeper County	27,791	34,262	23.3%
Warren County	26,142	31,584	20.8%
Fairfax City	19,622	21,498	9.6%
Fredericksburg City	19,027	19,279	1.3%
King George County	13,527	16,803	24.2%
Clarke County	12,101	12,652	4.6%
Falls Church City	9,578	10,377	8.3%
Manassas Park City	6,734	10,290	52.8%

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

¹ In this report, Northern Virginia includes the Counties of and independent cities of Alexandria, Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax City, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Fauquier, Fredericksburg, King George, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford and Warren.

The census data show that in the 1990s Fairfax County had the largest population gain in absolute terms (151,165), followed by Loudoun County (83,470) and Prince William County (65,127). The jurisdictions that grew the least were Fredericksburg City (252), Clarke County (551), and Falls Church City (799). Table 2 also reports that the highest growth rates took place in Loudoun (96.9%) and Spotsylvania Counties (57.5%).

Racial composition of the population in Northern Virginia

The census data show that during the 1990s Northern Virginia experienced a wide variation in its changing racial and ethnic composition. Tables 3 and 4 present this information at the county/city level for 1990 and 2000. A comparison of both tables shows that the region became more racially diverse over the decade.

In both census counts, individuals that identified themselves as being “white” remained the majority of the region’s population. In 1990, 1.41 million individuals identified themselves as “white”; ten years later, the same group accounted for 1.57 million. During this period, the growth rate of “whites” was 10.9%; however, this rate was less than half of the growth rate for the entire Northern Virginia population (25.1%). Consequently, the relative share of “whites” in the total population decreased: in 1990, “whites” accounted for 81.7% of the population; ten years later, “whites” accounted for 72.5%. Four jurisdictions actually had a lower number of “whites” in 2000 than in 1990; these were Arlington County (which went from 130,873 in 1990 to 130,533 in 2000), Alexandria City (from 76,789 to 76,713), Fairfax City (from 16,830 to 15,672), and Fredericksburg City (from 14,468 to 14,112). In Northern Virginia, Loudoun County experienced the highest growth percentage of “Whites” (82.1%).

Over the 1990s, the ratio of “whites” to “non-whites” diminished: in 1990, for every 4.5 “whites” there was 1 “non-white”, in 2000, there were 3 “whites” for every “non-white”. Within Northern Virginia, these patterns varied across jurisdictions. Alexandria is the most racially balanced jurisdiction: in 2000, for every 1.66 “whites” there was 1 “non-white”. Prince William and Arlington Counties also had relatively high degrees of racial diversity, with a ratio of “whites” to “non-whites” of 2.5 and 2.6, respectively.

Table 3
1990 Racial Composition in Northern Virginia by Political Jurisdictions

	Population*	White	Black or African American	American Indian	Asian persons	Other race					
United States	248,709,873	80.3%	199,686,070	12.1%	29,986,060	0.8%	1,959,234	2.9%	7,273,662	3.9%	9,804,847
Virginia	6,187,358	77.5%	4,797,739	18.8%	1,162,994	0.2%	15,282	2.6%	159,053	0.9%	58,290
Northern Virginia	1,732,377	81.7%	1,416,188	9.9%	171,415	0.3%	4,738	5.7%	99,463	2.3%	40,573
Fairfax County	818,584	81.3%	665,399	7.7%	63,325	0.2%	2,038	8.5%	69,338	2.3%	18,484
Prince William County	215,686	83.3%	179,709	11.6%	25,078	0.3%	718	3.0%	6,569	1.7%	3,612
Arlington County	170,936	76.6%	130,873	10.5%	17,940	0.3%	537	6.8%	11,560	5.9%	10,026
Alexandria City	111,183	69.1%	76,789	21.9%	24,339	0.3%	333	4.2%	4,632	4.6%	5,090
Loudoun County	86,129	89.5%	77,095	7.2%	6,168	0.2%	177	2.4%	2,101	0.7%	588
Stafford County	61,236	90.7%	55,546	7.0%	4,304	0.4%	233	1.2%	746	0.7%	407
Spotsylvania County	57,403	87.5%	50,220	10.8%	6,178	0.3%	197	1.1%	607	0.4%	201
Fauquier County	48,741	87.5%	42,657	11.2%	5,462	0.2%	113	0.6%	291	0.4%	218
Manassas City	27,957	83.5%	23,332	10.3%	2,889	0.3%	90	3.1%	867	2.8%	779
Culpeper County	27,791	81.2%	22,569	17.2%	4,783	0.3%	87	1.1%	292	0.2%	60
Warren County	26,142	94.3%	24,646	4.9%	1,292	0.2%	45	0.3%	72	0.3%	87
Fairfax City	19,622	85.8%	16,830	4.9%	966	0.2%	43	7.2%	1,409	1.9%	374
Fredericksburg City	19,027	76.0%	14,468	21.6%	4,115	0.1%	27	1.1%	205	1.1%	212
King George County	13,527	78.3%	10,597	20.2%	2,734	0.3%	37	0.9%	119	0.3%	40
Clarke County	12,101	90.8%	10,984	8.7%	1,054	0.1%	14	0.2%	30	0.2%	19
Falls Church City	9,578	89.1%	8,533	3.1%	298	0.4%	42	4.8%	456	2.6%	249
Manassas Park City	6,734	88.2%	5,941	7.3%	490	0.1%	7	2.5%	169	1.9%	127

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

Table 4
2000 Racial Composition in Northern Virginia by Political Jurisdictions

	Population*	White	Black or African American	American Indian	Asian persons	Other race					
United States	281,421,906	75.1%	211,347,851	12.3%	34,614,894	0.9%	2,532,797	3.6%	10,131,189	5.5%	15,478,205
Virginia	7,078,515	72.3%	5,120,110	19.6%	1,390,293	0.3%	21,172	3.7%	261,025	2.0%	138,900
Northern Virginia	2,167,756	72.5%	1,570,610	11.3%	244,512	0.3%	6,855	8.2%	178,208	4.3%	92,557
Fairfax County	969,749	69.9%	677,855	8.6%	83,398	0.3%	2,909	13.0%	126,067	4.5%	43,639
Prince William County	280,813	68.9%	193,480	18.8%	52,793	0.4%	1,123	3.8%	10,671	4.3%	12,075
Arlington County	189,453	68.9%	130,533	9.3%	17,619	0.3%	568	8.6%	16,293	8.3%	15,725
Loudoun County	169,599	82.8%	140,428	6.9%	11,702	0.2%	339	5.3%	8,989	2.3%	3,901
Alexandria City	128,282	59.8%	76,713	22.5%	28,863	0.3%	385	5.7%	7,312	7.4%	9,493
Stafford County	92,446	82.0%	75,806	12.1%	11,186	0.5%	462	1.6%	1,479	0.1%	92
Spotsylvania County	90,395	82.9%	74,937	12.5%	11,299	0.3%	271	1.4%	1,266	1.0%	904
Fauquier County	55,139	88.4%	48,743	8.8%	4,852	0.3%	165	0.6%	331	0.6%	331
Manassas City	35,135	72.1%	25,332	12.9%	4,532	0.4%	141	3.4%	1,195	7.9%	2,776
Culpeper County	34,262	78.3%	26,827	18.2%	6,236	0.3%	103	0.7%	240	1.1%	377
Warren County	31,584	92.7%	29,278	4.8%	1,516	0.3%	95	0.4%	126	0.5%	158
Fairfax City	21,498	72.9%	15,672	5.1%	1,096	0.3%	64	12.2%	2,623	6.2%	1,333
Fredericksburg City	19,279	73.2%	14,112	20.4%	3,933	0.3%	58	1.5%	289	2.6%	501
King George County	16,803	77.7%	13,056	18.7%	3,142	0.5%	84	1.0%	168	0.5%	84
Clarke County	12,652	91.1%	11,526	6.7%	848	0.2%	25	0.5%	63	0.6%	76
Falls Church City	10,377	85.0%	8,820	3.3%	342	0.2%	21	6.5%	675	2.5%	259
Manassas Park City	10,290	72.8%	7,491	11.2%	1,152	0.4%	41	4.1%	422	8.1%	833

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

In 1990 and 2000, African-Americans were the second largest racial group in Northern Virginia; in 1990, the region had 171,415 African-Americans and ten years later 244,512 (growth rate of 42.6%). However, growth rates across political jurisdictions show that their increase has not been even. Prince William County has experienced the largest increase of African Americans from 1990 to 2000 (27,715 individuals); Manassas Park City had the largest one in relative terms (135%). In contrast, four counties have seen a decrease in their African-American population from 1990 to 2000: Arlington County (17,940 to 17,619), Fauquier County (5,462 to 4,852), Fredericksburg City (4,115 to 3,993), and Clarke County (1,054 to 848).

The third largest racial group in Northern Virginia is Asian. During the 1990s, Asians increased by 79%, from 99,463 to 178,208. Although the Asian community, unlike the other racial groups, is concentrated primarily in one county (71% live in Fairfax County), they have increased their numbers in absolute terms in almost every jurisdiction. Only in Culpeper County did the Asian population decrease from 1990 to 2000 (from 292 to 240).

Finally, it is important to point out that among racial groups, those individuals that identified themselves as “other” had the greatest growth rate during the 1990s (128%). Several factors could explain this increase. First, there were some methodological adjustments that the US Census carried out in an attempt to improve the racial count. Secondly, it could be the case that some individuals, for instance Hispanics, do not consider that the options provided in the Census questionnaire applies to them.

Ethnic composition of the population in Northern Virginia

The ethnic composition of Northern Virginia’s population experienced significant change during the 1990s.² Tables 5 and 6 provide data regarding the Hispanic/Latino population. According to the Census, 218,418 Hispanics/Latinos lived in Northern Virginia representing 10.1% of the region’s total population (for the entire United States, Hispanics account for 12.5%).

Tables 5 and 6
Ethnic Composition in Northern Virginia by Political Jurisdictions

	1990		2000	
	Population*	Hispanic/Latino origin	Population*	Hispanic/Latino origin
United States	248,709,873	9.0%	281,421,906	12.5%
Virginia	6,187,358	2.6%	7,078,515	4.7%
Northern Virginia	1,732,377	6.1%	2,167,756	10.1%
Fairfax County	818,584	6.3%	969,749	11.0%
Prince William County	215,686	4.5%	280,813	9.7%
Arlington County	170,936	13.5%	189,453	18.6%
Alexandria City	111,183	9.7%	169,599	5.9%
Loudoun County	86,129	2.5%	128,282	14.7%
Stafford County	61,236	2.0%	92,446	3.6%
Spotsylvania County	57,403	1.5%	90,395	2.8%
Fauquier County	48,741	1.2%	55,139	2.0%
Manassas City	27,957	5.7%	35,135	15.1%
Culpeper County	27,791	0.7%	34,262	2.5%
Warren County	26,142	0.9%	31,584	1.6%
Fairfax City	19,622	5.9%	21,498	13.6%
Fredericksburg City	19,027	2.4%	19,279	4.9%
King George County	13,527	1.2%	16,803	1.8%
Clarke County	12,101	0.7%	12,652	1.5%
Falls Church City	9,578	6.3%	10,377	8.4%
Manassas Park City	6,734	4.7%	10,290	15.0%

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

² Ethnicity refers to an individual's place of origin.

During the past decade, the growth of the Hispanic population in Northern Virginia has been impressive; it has increased from 105,075 in 1990 to 218,418 in 2000. The net growth of Hispanics during this period (113,343) accounted for 26% of the Northern Virginia population growth. The Hispanic population growth rate (108%) was almost five times faster than that of the region's population (23.3%).

The Hispanic population increased in every jurisdiction in the region. However, the growth rates varied across them. Among the largest jurisdictions, Loudoun County had the highest increase (364%), followed by Prince William County (182%), Fairfax County (106%), Alexandria (75%), and Arlington (53%). In 9 out of 15 jurisdictions, Hispanics grew by more than 100% (Clarke Co., Culpeper Co., Fairfax City, Loudoun Co., Prince William Co., Spotsylvania Co., Stafford Co., Warren Co., Manassas City, and Manassas Park City). Fairfax County experienced the highest Hispanic population increase in absolute terms (54,798).

For some jurisdictions, growth of the Hispanic population accounted for a very high percentage of total growth. For instance, in Fairfax City, the growth of the Hispanic/Latino community represented 94% of the city's total growth. In Arlington, Hispanic growth accounted for 65% of the county's growth; in Manassas City, 51%; and, in Alexandria, 47%.

Table 7
Race / Ethnicity by age groups (2000)

	White			Black or African American			Asian persons			Hispanic/Latino origin			
	All ages	18 years +	Under 18	All ages	18 years +	Under 18	All ages	18 years +	Under 18	All ages	18 years +	Under 18	
United States	281,421,906	211,460,626		34,658,190			10,242,998			35,305,818			
Virginia	7,078,515	5,120,110	77%	23%	1,390,293	71%	29%	261,025	77%	23%	329,540	69%	31%
Northern Virginia	2,157,466	1,570,761	76%	24%	243,048	70%	30%	177,840	76%	24%	217,434	70%	30%
Fairfax County	969,749	677,904	76%	24%	83,098	71%	29%	126,038	75%	25%	106,958	70%	30%
Prince William County	280,813	193,574	72%	28%	52,691	65%	35%	10,701	74%	26%	27,338	64%	36%
Arlington County	189,453	130,601	86%	14%	17,705	79%	21%	16,327	84%	16%	35,268	74%	26%
Loudoun County	169,599	140,419	71%	29%	11,683	70%	30%	9,067	72%	28%	10,089	66%	34%
Alexandria City	128,282	76,702	88%	12%	28,915	76%	24%	7,249	85%	15%	18,882	73%	27%
Stafford County	92,446	75,807	70%	30%	11,211	64%	36%	1,512	74%	26%	3,342	61%	39%
Spotsylvania County	90,395	74,924	71%	29%	11,255	67%	33%	1,243	73%	27%	2,536	61%	39%
Fauquier County	55,139	48,740	73%	27%	4,844	76%	24%	324	79%	21%	1,114	66%	34%
Manassas City	35,135	25,316	72%	28%	4,535	68%	32%	1,206	72%	28%	5,316	64%	36%
Culpeper County	34,262	26,816	75%	25%	6,220	74%	26%	225	80%	20%	858	70%	30%
Warren County	31,584	29,280	75%	25%	1,526	72%	28%	136	78%	22%	494	69%	31%
Fairfax City	21,498	15,675	81%	19%	1,090	73%	27%	2,617	79%	21%	2,932	71%	29%
Fredericksburg City	19,279	14,108	87%	13%	3,935	70%	30%	289	82%	18%	945	74%	26%
King George County	16,803	13,055	73%	27%	3,148	70%	30%	169	80%	20%	301	62%	38%
Clarke County	12,652	11,532	77%	23%	852	81%	19%	62	77%	23%	185	71%	29%
Falls Church City	10,377	8,817	77%	23%	340	77%	23%	675	80%	20%	876	70%	30%
Manassas Park City	10,290	7,491	71%	29%	1,149	65%	35%	422	71%	29%	1,544	64%	36%

Source: CRA with U.S. Census data

An interesting aspect of the racial and ethnic diversity in Northern Virginia concerns the age groups among these communities. In Table 7, the population of Whites, African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics is divided into two groups (under 18 and 18 or above). The data show that for Whites and Asians, 76% of their population is 18 years of age or higher. In the case of African Americans and Hispanics, the same age group represents 70%. Although the data do not indicate the average age

among each group, in general terms Hispanics tend to be younger. Table 7 highlights those counties and cities in which the ‘under 18 years of age’ category accounts for more than one-third of its specific racial or ethnic group.³ In the case of Hispanics, in 7 counties, 33% or more of its members are 18 years of age or younger; for African Americans, this takes place in only 3 counties.

Characteristics of the Foreign Born Population

In 2000, 28.4 million foreign-born persons resided in the United States, representing 10.4% of the total US population. In that same year, 399,922 foreigners lived in Northern Virginia, representing 18.4% of the region’s population (see Table 8).⁴ Table 8 divides the population of each jurisdiction among US born and foreign-born individuals. The data show that the jurisdictions with the highest percentage of foreigners are Arlington, Fairfax City, Alexandria, and Fairfax County.

For the entire region, the majority of foreigners concentrated in four jurisdictions: Fairfax County (237,677 or 59.8% of total foreigners in the region), Arlington County (52,693 or 13.2% of total), the city of Alexandria (32,600 or 8.2% of total), and Prince William County (32,186 or 8.1% of total).

Table 8
Native vs. foreign-born Population in Northern Virginia (2000)

	Total population		Native (US)		Foreign born	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Northern Virginia	2,167,756		1,767,835	81.6	399,922	18.4
Fairfax County	969,749		732,072	75.5	237,677	24.5
Prince William County	280,813		248,627	88.5	32,186	11.5
Arlington County	189,453		136,760	72.2	52,693	27.8
Loudoun County	169,599		150,483	88.7	19,116	11.3
Alexandria City	128,282		95,683	74.6	32,600	25.4
Stafford County	92,446		88,733	96.0	3,713	4.0
Spotsylvania County	90,395		87,478	96.8	2,917	3.2
Fauquier County	55,139		53,157	96.4	1,982	3.6
Manassas City	35,135		30,162	85.8	4,973	14.2
Culpeper County	34,262		33,069	96.5	1,193	3.5
Warren County	31,584		30,907	97.9	677	2.1
Fairfax City	21,498		16,047	74.6	5,451	25.4
Fredericksburg City	19,279		18,282	94.8	997	5.2
King George County	16,803		16,578	98.7	225	1.3
Clarke County	12,652		12,340	97.5	312	2.5
Falls Church City	10,377		8,710	83.9	1,667	16.1
Manassas Park City	10,290		8,747	85.0	1,543	15.0

³ Admittedly, 33% is arbitrary; however, it is intended to highlight the differences among the racial/ethnic groups.

⁴ It could be the case that the actual number of foreign-born individuals in the United States is higher than what the census data indicate. Foreigners who arrive to the US and remain here illegally may not participate in government-sponsored activities such as the census. The actual magnitude of the population undercount is difficult to estimate.

Table 9 presents information regarding the date foreigners in Northern Virginia entered the United States. The data show that 195,542 foreigners arrived to the region between 1990 and 2000 representing almost half of all foreign-born residents in Northern Virginia (48.9%). This population gain accounted for 45% of the entire population growth in Northern Virginia during the decade.

Table 9
Composition of foreign-born population in Northern Virginia (2000)

	Population NVA		Foreign born			
	Total	%	Entered March 1990 to March 2000		Total	%
			Total	%		
Northern Virginia	2,167,756		399,922		195,542	
Fairfax County	969,749		237,677	24.5	112,491	11.6
Prince William County	280,813		32,186	11.5	13,479	4.8
Arlington County	189,453		52,693	27.8	30,502	16.1
Loudoun County	169,599		19,116	11.3	8,819	5.2
Alexandria City	128,282		32,600	25.4	18,986	14.8
Stafford County	92,446		3,713	4.0	1,017	1.1
Spotsylvania County	90,395		2,917	3.2	814	0.9
Fauquier County	55,139		1,982	3.6	772	1.4
Manassas City	35,135		4,973	14.2	2,635	7.5
Culpeper County	34,262		1,193	3.5	651	1.9
Warren County	31,584		677	2.1	190	0.6
Fairfax City	21,498		5,451	25.4	2,881	13.4
Fredericksburg City	19,279		997	5.2	482	2.5
King George County	16,803		225	1.3	84	0.5
Clarke County	12,652		312	2.5	89	0.7
Falls Church City	10,377		1,667	16.1	695	6.7
Manassas Park City	10,290		1,543	15.0	957	9.3

Note: All percentages are with respect to total population.
 For instance, in Arlington County 16.1% of the population (30,543) entered Arlington between 1990 and March 2000

Table 10 identifies the continent or region of origin for the foreign-born population in the different jurisdictions in Northern Virginia. The data confirms that Asians are the largest group (42.2%), followed by Latin Americans (36%), Europeans (11.1%) and Africans (8.8%). Immigrants from North America (Canada) account for 1.5% of foreigners in the Northern Virginia; foreigners from Oceania (which includes Australia and New Zealand) represent the smallest group (0.4%).

Table 10
Continent of origin (2000)

	Foreign pop #	Europe		Asia		Africa		Oceania		Latin America		North America	
		%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#		
Northern Virginia	399,914	11.1%	44,440	42.2%	168,772	8.8%	35,120	0.4%	1,542	36.0%	143,907	1.5%	6,111
Fairfax County	237,677	9.9	23,530	50.5	120,027	7.4	17,588	0.4	951	30.5	72,491	1.3	3,090
Arlington County	52,693	10.0	5,269	29.2	15,386	9.5	5,006	0.4	211	49.5	26,083	1.4	738
Alexandria City	32,600	8.6	2,804	24.7	8,052	23.5	7,661	0.2	65	41.6	13,562	1.4	456
Prince William County	32,186	13.8	4,442	28.7	9,237	9.4	3,025	0.2	64	46.6	14,999	1.3	418
Loudoun County	19,108	17.4	3,325	41.4	7,911	6.0	1,146	0.7	134	30.7	5,866	3.8	726
Fairfax City	5,451	10.5	572	47.4	2,584	2.3	125	1.0	55	37.8	2,060	1.1	60
Manassas City	4,973	9.1	453	15.7	781	2.8	139	0.1	5	71.8	3,571	0.4	20
Stafford County	3,713	28.0	1,040	38.5	1,430	2.3	85	0.3	11	27.1	1,006	3.1	115
Spotsylvania County	2,917	28.6	834	37.9	1,106	2.3	67	-	25.3	738	6.0	175	
Fauquier County	1,982	39.1	775	25.8	511	2.2	44	1.3	26	25.0	496	6.7	133
Falls Church City	1,667	21.5	358	37.9	632	6.7	112	0.7	12	30.4	507	2.8	47
Manassas Park City	1,543	3.8	59	28.5	440	1.0	15	-	65.8	1,015	0.8	12	
Culpeper County	1,193	19.0	227	23.1	276	0.5	6	-	56.0	668	1.4	17	
Fredericksburg City	997	22.0	219	12.1	121	2.9	29	-	58.2	580	4.8	48	
Warren County	677	47.4	321	23.0	156	5.2	35	-	18.6	126	5.8	39	
Clarke County	312	39.1	122	18.3	57	5.8	18	2.9	9	28.5	89	5.4	17
King George County	225	40.4	91	29.8	67	7.6	17	-	22.2	50	-	-	

Summary of findings

This report presents some of the important population changes occurring in Northern Virginia during the 1990s. Although it analyzes census data at a broad level, the report indicates that the region is experiencing significant demographic changes. The following are the principal findings of this analysis:

- Northern Virginia experienced very high population growth. In the 1990s, its population grew 25.1% (435,379), almost doubling the national growth rate (13.2%).
- Although “whites” as a racial group remain the majority in Northern Virginia’s population, it experienced the slowest growth rate (10.9%). Conversely, individuals who “identified” themselves as “other” grew the fastest (128.1%).
- The growth of the Hispanic population has been very large (113,343). In the 1990s, Hispanics accounted for 6.1% of the population in Northern Virginia; by 2000, they represented 10.1% of its population. The growth rate of Hispanics (108%) was almost five times faster than that of the region’s population (23%)
- In 2000, 18.4% of Northern Virginia’s total population was born outside the United States. During the decade, 195,542 foreigners moved to Northern Virginia, accounting for 45% of Northern Virginia’s population growth during the decade.

Finally, it is important to point out that these demographic trends have a wide impact. From a policy perspective, population changes have short- and long-term implications including the need for additional public services (e.g., education and job training, health services, and transportation), as well as the expansion of and changes in markets, the workforce, and tax base. These demographic changes in Northern Virginia are cumulative and have shaped its economy and will continue to impact its economy going forward.

Data sources

U.S. Census (1990, 2000) at www.census.gov