FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2018

Older People Projected to Outnumber Children for First Time in U.S. History

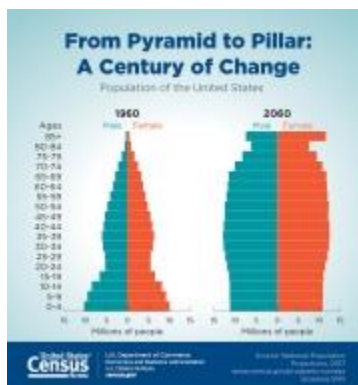***REVISED SEPT. 6, 2018***

Note: The 2017 National Population Projections were revised after their original release date March 13 to correct an error in the calculation of infant mortality rates. The files were removed from the website on August 1, 2018 and an erratum note was posted. The error erroneously caused an increase in the number of deaths projected in the total population. The revised calculation in the infant mortality rate results in a decrease in the number of deaths and a slight increase in the total projected population in the revised series. The error did not affect the other two components of population change used in the projections series (fertility and migration). Additionally, major demographic trends, such as an aging population and an increase in racial and ethnic diversity, remain unchanged.

The corrected data files are [now available here](#). Six statements in the news release have been corrected and are highlighted in red below. Please disregard any previous versions. Other applicable news products will be available soon.

2030 Marks Important Demographic Milestones for U.S. Population

SEPT. 6, 2018 — The year 2030 marks an important demographic turning point in U.S. history according to the U.S. Census Bureau's [2017 National Population Projections](#). By 2030, all baby boomers will be older than age 65. This will expand the size of the older population so that 1 in every 5 residents will be retirement age.

"The aging of baby boomers means that within just a couple decades, older people are projected to outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history," said Jonathan Vespa, a demographer
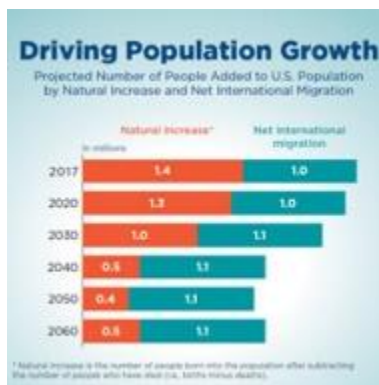
with the U.S. Census Bureau. "By 2035, there will be 78.0 million people 65 years and older compared to 76.7 million (previously 76.4 million) under the age of 18."

The 2030s are projected to be a transformative decade for the U.S. population. The population is expected to grow at a slower pace, age considerably and become more racially and ethnically diverse. Net international migration is projected to overtake natural increase in 2030 as the primary driver of population growth in the United States, another demographic first for the United States.

Although births are projected to be nearly four times larger than the level of net international migration in coming decades, a rising number of deaths will increasingly offset how much births are able to contribute to population growth. Between 2020 and 2050, the number of deaths is projected to rise substantially as the population ages and a significant share of the population, the baby boomers, age into older adulthood. As a result, the population will naturally grow very slowly, leaving net international migration to overtake natural increase as the leading cause of population growth, even as projected levels of migration remain relatively constant.
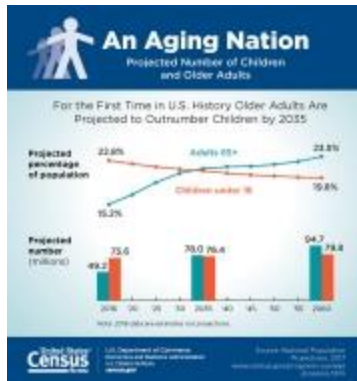
Other highlights:

Population Growth

- By 2060, the United States is projected to grow by 79 million (previously 78 million) people, from about 326 million today to 404 million. The population is projected to cross the 400-million threshold in 2058.
- In coming years, the rate at which the U.S. population grows is expected to slow down. The population is projected to grow by an average of 2.3 million people per year until 2030. But that number is expected to decline to an average of 1.9 million (previously 1.8 million) per year between 2030 and 2040, and continue falling to 1.6 million (previously 1.5 million) per year from 2040 to 2060.

Aging

- As the population ages, the ratio of older adults to working-age adults, also known as the old-age dependency ratio, is projected to rise. By 2020, there will be about three-and-a-half working-age adults for every retirement-age person. By 2060, that ratio will fall to just two-and-a-half working-age adults for every retirement-age person.
- The median age of the U.S. population is expected to grow from age 38 today to age 43 by 2060.

Race and Ethnicity

- The non-Hispanic White-alone population is projected to shrink over the coming decades, from 199 million in 2020 to 179 million in 2060 — even as the U.S. population continues to grow. Their decline is driven by falling birth rates and a rising number of deaths over time among non-Hispanic Whites as that population ages. In comparison, the White-alone population, regardless of Hispanic origin, is projected to grow from about 253 million to 275 million over the same period.
- The Two or More Races population is projected to be the fastest growing over the next several decades, followed by single-race Asians and Hispanics of any race. The causes of their growth are different, however. For Hispanics and people who are Two or More Races, their high growth rates are largely the result of high rates of natural increase, given the relatively young age structures of these populations. For Asians, the driving force behind their growth is high net international migration.

Children

- By 2020, less than half of children in the United States are projected to be non-Hispanic white alone (49.8 percent of the projected 74.0 million (previously 73.9 million) children under age 18). In comparison, about 72 percent of children are projected to be White alone, regardless of Hispanic origin.
- The share of children who are Two or More Races is projected to more than double in coming decades, from 5.3 percent today to 11.3 percent in 2060.
- The racial and ethnic composition of younger birth cohorts is expected to change more quickly than for older cohorts. In 2060, over one-third of children are projected to be non-Hispanic white alone compared with over one-half of older adults (36.4 percent (previously 36.5 percent) with 55.1 percent, respectively).

Background on the 2017 Projections Series

The 2017 National Population Projections are the third set of projections based on the 2010 Census. This series updates the prior series released in 2014, which was the first to incorporate separate assumptions about the fertility of native-born and foreign-born women living in the United States, since the latter tend to have higher fertility rates.

The 2017 series extends that work to include assumptions about the mortality of native-born and foreign-born people. For the first time, the national population projections will account for the generally lower mortality rates and higher life expectancy of the foreign-born, which allows us to better project for the effects of international migration on the population of the United States. The 2017 series also includes projections of the racial and ethnic composition of children and older adults for the first time.

See population projections for more information or visit census.gov.

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