

Boomer and Post-Boomer Bellwethers

Large metros with greatest shares of Baby Boomer and Post-Boomer/Young Adults in 2000.

RANK	METROPOLITAN AREA*	SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION
BABY BOOMERS**		
1	Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA CMSA	32.1%
2	Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV CMSA	32.0%
3	Richmond-Petersburg, VA MSA	31.7%
4	Denver-Boulder-Greeley, CO CMSA	31.6%
5	San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA CMSA	31.5%
6	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI MSA	31.5%
7	Atlanta, GA MSA	31.3%
8	Hartford, CT NECMA	31.2%
9	Colorado Springs, CO MSA	31.0%
10	Louisville, KY-IN MSA	31.0%
11	Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA-NH-ME-CT CMSA	30.9%
12	Nashville, TN MSA	30.9%
POST-BOOMER/YOUNG ADULTS***		
1	Austin-San Marcos, TX MSA	28.2%
2	Madison, WI MSA	26.3%
3	Lexington, KY MSA	26.0%
4	Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC MSA	25.9%
5	Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT MSA	24.5%
6	Atlanta, GA MSA	24.5%
7	Dallas-Fort Worth, TX CMSA	24.0%
8	San Diego, CA MSA	24.0%
9	Lansing-East Lansing, MI MSA	23.9%
10	Columbus, OH MSA	23.7%
11	Salinas, CA MSA	23.6%
12	Denver-Boulder-Greeley, CO CMSA	23.5%

* Among 102 metros with populations greater than 400,000 in 2000. Metro areas refer to CMSAs, MSAs, and (in New England) NECMAs, defined by the Office of Management and Budget.
 **Ages 35-54 in 2000 (Born 1946-1965)
 ***Ages 20-34 in 2000 (Born 1966-1980)

Source: William H. Frey analysis of 2000 U.S. Census

Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland and Virginia (surrounding the greater Washington, D.C., area), following close behind, according to Census 2000 findings.

Neighboring states, as well as Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, have retained a good share of the Boomer population and many are located in suburban areas where housing prices have escalated out of the reach of most Young Adults.

The metropolitan counties with the largest share of Boomers include Falls

Church County, Va., in suburban Washington, D.C.; Marin County, Calif., in suburban San Francisco; and Putnam County, N.Y., in suburban New York. However, about half (38) of the 75 U.S. counties with the largest Boomer shares are located outside of metro areas. Fifteen of these non-metro Boomer counties are in Colorado, while others are situated in western New England and eastern coastal states.

Among metros with the largest Boomer shares are several areas known

for attracting “yuppie” Baby Boomers in the 1970s and 1980s—including some in Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta and Washington, D.C. Many of these territories that attracted the Boomers have matured along with their Boomer residents in terms of their cultural attractions and amenities. The housing prices have generally escalated as Boomer incomes rose.

Several other metros not often associated with Boomers, are on the list. Over the past decade, cities such as Denver and Nashville, Tenn., have attracted Boomers to their fast-growing job markets. Metros such as Minneapolis and Colorado Springs, Colo., have retained or enticed Boomers with their cultural or natural attractions.

Clearly Boomers represent a large market segment in most parts of the country, including the fast-growing areas that are attracting Young Adults. (See maps, left and page 24.) However, the Boomer nests are areas in which Boomers still have some dominance in market share, political clout and in the general social and cultural scene. Their influence is likely to persist in these locales, since most are likely to remain during their retirement years.

Young Adult Country

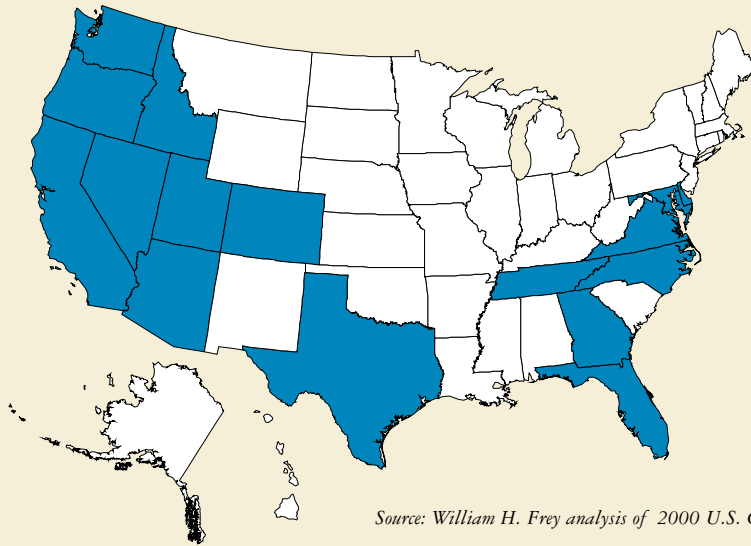
Post-Boomer/Young Adults were born in the late 1960s and 1970s and fell in the 20- to 34-year-old age group in 2000. The states with the greatest share of Young Adults show little overlap with the states having the largest Boomer shares—only Atlanta and Denver appear on both lists. (See chart, left.)

Prominent among Young Adult-dominated metros are faster growing Sun Belt areas—Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; Salt Lake City; Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas—as well as those with large populations of recent immigrants—such as Salinas, Calif., and Los Angeles. Perhaps most prominent on this list are metros that have large universities, including Midwest locations such as Madison, Wisc.; Lansing-East Lansing, Mich.; and Columbus, Ohio.

Because these Post-Boomers are still in their high-migration years, and the group also includes a significant share of new immigrants, it is

Post-Boomer/Young Adult Magnets

Shown in blue are states in which Post-Boomer/Young Adult growth between 1990 and 2000 exceeded 108 percent.



Source: William H. Frey analysis of 2000 U.S. Census

Post-Boomer Belts

Large metros with the greatest Post-Boomer/Young Adult growth between 1990 and 2000.

RANK	METROPOLITAN AREA*	POST-BOOMER GROWTH**
1	Las Vegas, NV-AZ MSA	206%
2	Austin-San Marcos, TX MSA	165%
3	Phoenix-Mesa, AZ MSA	156%
4	Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC MSA	156%
5	Atlanta, GA MSA	155%
6	Denver-Boulder-Greeley, CO CMSA	150%
7	Boise City, ID MSA	148%
8	Dallas-Fort Worth, TX CMSA	142%
9	Orlando, FL MSA	140%
10	West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL MSA	139%
11	Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC MSA	138%
12	Portland-Salem, OR-WA CMSA	137%
13	Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL CMSA	133%
14	Nashville, TN MSA	133%
15	Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA CMSA	131%
16	San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA CMSA	131%
17	Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX CMSA	127%
18	Fort Myers-Cape Coral, FL MSA	127%
19	Colorado Springs, CO MSA	125%
20	Lexington, KY MSA	124%

* Among 102 metros with populations greater than 400,000 in 2000. Metro areas refer to CMSAs, MSAs, and (in New England) NECMAs, defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

** Size of 20- to 34-year-old population in 2000, as percent of 10- to 24-year-old population in 1990.

Source: William H. Frey analysis of 2000 U.S. Census

more meaningful to examine metro areas that are experiencing the greatest growth in this Post-Boomer population from 1990 through 2000. In fact, five of the eight largest growth magnets for Post-Boomers also made the list of areas with greatest Baby Boomer and Post-Boomer shares. (See charts, below left and page 23.) These five metros are: Austin-San Marcos; Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill; Atlanta; Denver; Boulder-Greeley; and Dallas-Fort Worth.

It is noteworthy that only six of the top 20 Post-Boomer/Young Adult growth magnet metros overlap with the list of metros with large Boomer shares. What distinguishes the former is their ability to attract large numbers of the younger and immigrant populations, who find the Boomer nests either too expensive or not economically attractive in terms of job prospects.

As a consequence, there is a clear generational divide between the regions of the country dominated by Boomers and those attracting Young Adults. Compared with the regions with large Boomer shares, those that are magnets for Young Adults are heavily concentrated in the South and most of the West, with only little presence in the Midwest and East.

The attraction of Post-Boomer/Young Adult singles, families with children and new immigrants to all parts of the growing "new" Sun Belt is bound to shape emerging regional distinctions between the now "aging" Boomers and a generation which is much more multicultural, entrepreneurial and Web-savvy than their elders. Even politically, the spatial division of generations draws a discernible line between the somewhat more liberal Boomer Belt states, and regions with Post-Boomer/Young Adults, who came of age during the more conservative Reagan-Bush years. Further Census 2000 results, to be released over the next year, will continue to cast light on this spatial generation gap. ■

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