

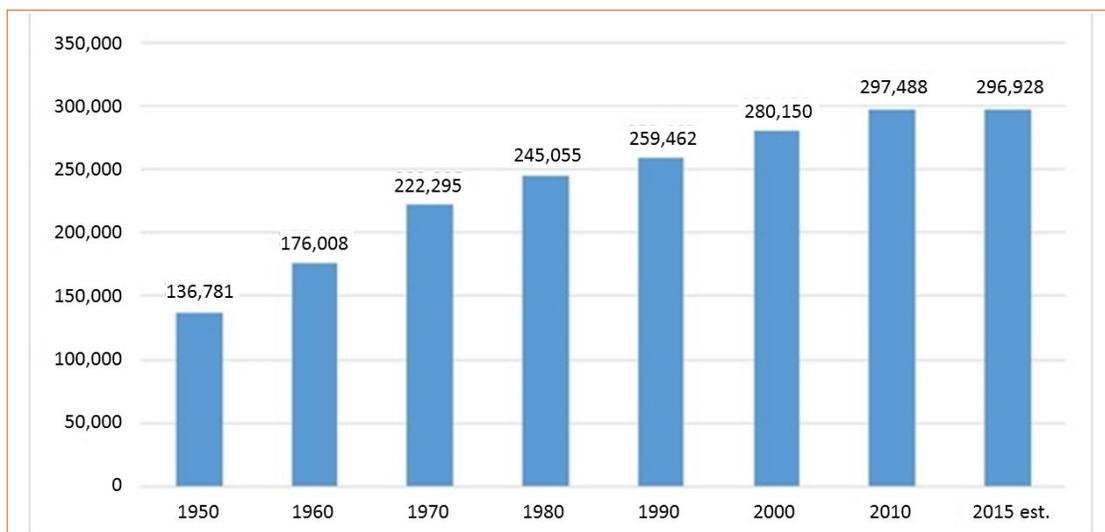
## Demographic Trends: Planning for the Future

By Janet Tissiere, Junior Planner

The United States Census Bureau is currently preparing for the 2020 Decennial Census, which will be the 24th national census. Approaching this, we can start to think about emerging population trends and what affect they may have on our communities.

### Population Growth Projections

Population growth was rapid from 1950 to 2010. The global population almost tripled and the U.S. population doubled. On a local level, Dutchess County's population more than doubled between 1950 and 2010, from 136,781 to 297,488. The future, however, may look quite different as population growth from 2010 to 2050 is projected to be significantly slower, in part to declining birth (fertility) rates. The demographic shift edges strongly to a growing older population across the United States, as well as locally in Dutchess County.



*Population change in Dutchess County from 1950 to 2015. [Data source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and ACS 5-Year Estimates Program]*

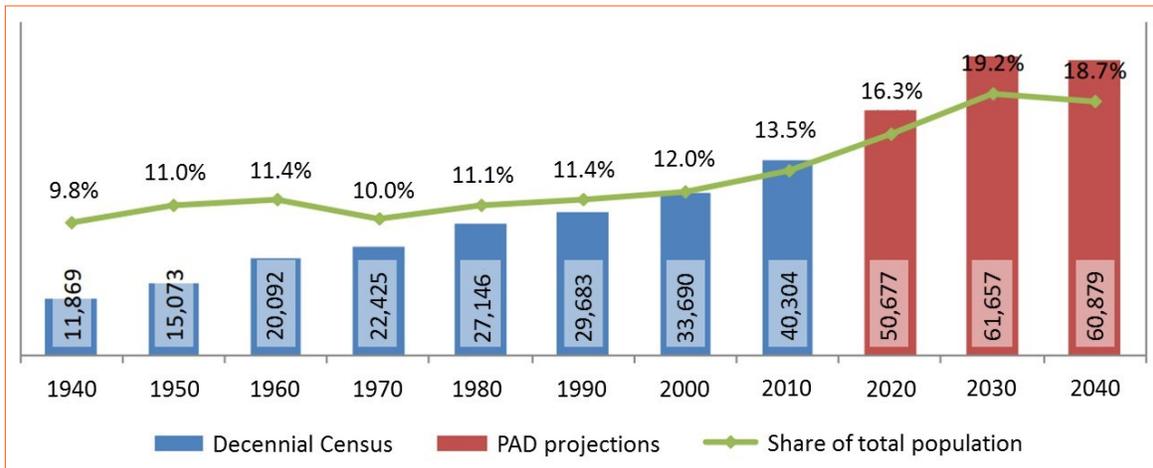
### Aging Population

The US Department of Health & Human Services, Administration on Aging (AoA) published a Profile of Older Americans in 2015. The following are a few highlights:

- In 2014, there were 46.2 million people age 65 or older, representing 14.5% of the U.S. population, or 1 in every 7 Americans;
- By 2040, the percentage of people age 65+ is expected to grow to 21.7% of the population;
- By 2060, this age group will number closer to 98 million, or double their 2014 population total.

The AoA report found that the proportion of people 65 or older varied considerably by state. In 2014, almost two-thirds (63%) of people age 65+ lived in just 14 states, New York being one of them with nearly 2.9 million people in that age group.

Cornell University’s [Program on Applied Demographics \(PAD\)](#) focuses on demographic analysis of New York State and its jurisdictions. The following bar graph shows [Dutchess County’s](#) actual population change from 1940 to 2010 for the segment of the population age 65 and over, and the projected population change for the same age group from 2010 through the 2040 Decennial Census. According to Cornell’s PAD, Dutchess County is projected to increase its population of those age 65+ by approximately 50%.



*Population age 65 and over in Dutchess County from 1940 to 2040. [Data source: 1940-2010 Decennial Census and projections by Cornell Program on Applied Demographics]*

The U.S. Census Bureau identifies one indicator of aging to be the median age, which is the age that divides a population group into numerically equal shares of younger and older people. The median age in Dutchess County increased over 12% between 2000–2015, and is now almost 10% higher than the national average.

Median Age (years)			
Jurisdiction	2000 Census	2010 Census	2015 ACS Estimate
United States	35.3	37.2	37.6
New York State	35.9	38.0	38.3
<b>Dutchess County</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>41.2</b>

### Changing American Family

Not only are Americans having fewer children, but today 4 in 10 births occur to single women or women living with a non-marital partner (cohabiting). The American family is becoming smaller as fertility rates are on the decline. Family structure has also transformed as an increasing number of mothers take on the role of wage-earner.

The traditional family form is fading as new family structures abound. We now see an increased number of children living with single or cohabiting (unmarried) parents. The number of traditional two-parent households is declining as divorce, remarriage and cohabitation are on the increase. To illustrate this point, the distribution of children in 2014 was:

- 46% lived in a two-parent household
- 15% lived with two parents remarried
- 7% lived with cohabiting parents
- 26% lived with a single parent
- 5% of children resided in a household without a parent present

Compare this with the 1960 statistics where 73% of children lived with two parents in a first marriage household, and it is clear that there is no one dominant type of family structure anymore. Families truly do come in all shapes and sizes.

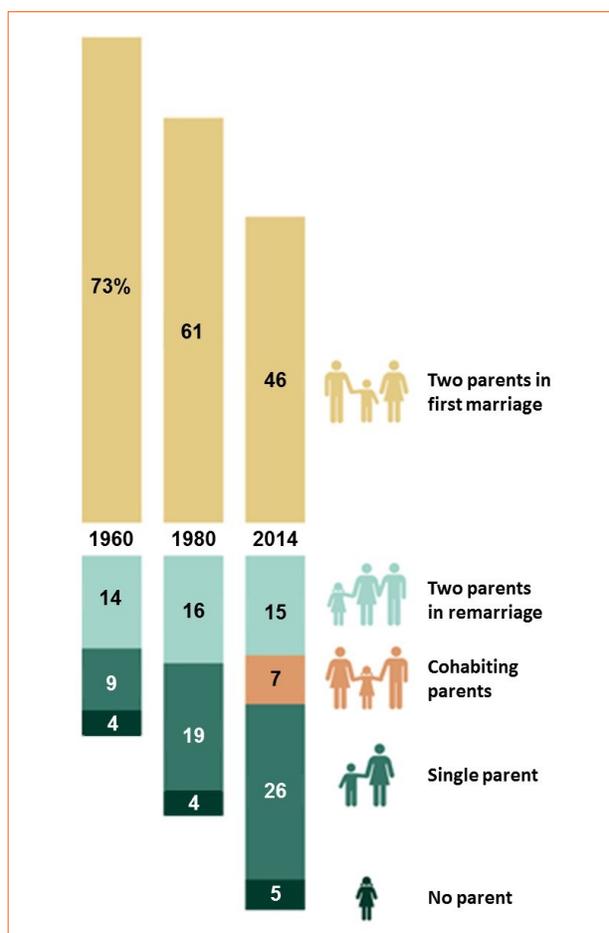
### Impact of Demographics on Schools

Dutchess County’s average family size in 2016 was 3.19 persons, down from 4.15 in 1960. Although this may not seem like a big change on the surface, it represents a 23% reduction in family size, which is significant. As families become smaller, public school enrollment is also on the decline. The New York State Education Department reported Dutchess County’s K-12 public school enrollment for the 2015-2016 school year at 39,809 students. This total represents a 13.8% decrease from 2009-2010, when 46,189 students were enrolled.

Some Dutchess County school districts have already experienced the effects of this decreased enrollment through school closures and consolidations. The Cornell PAD projects an overall continued decline in school enrollment through school year 2023-2024. Specifically in Dutchess County, most school districts are projected along that decline, with a few remaining flat while only the Beacon City School District shows a potential increase in enrollment during that timeframe.

### Millennial Generation

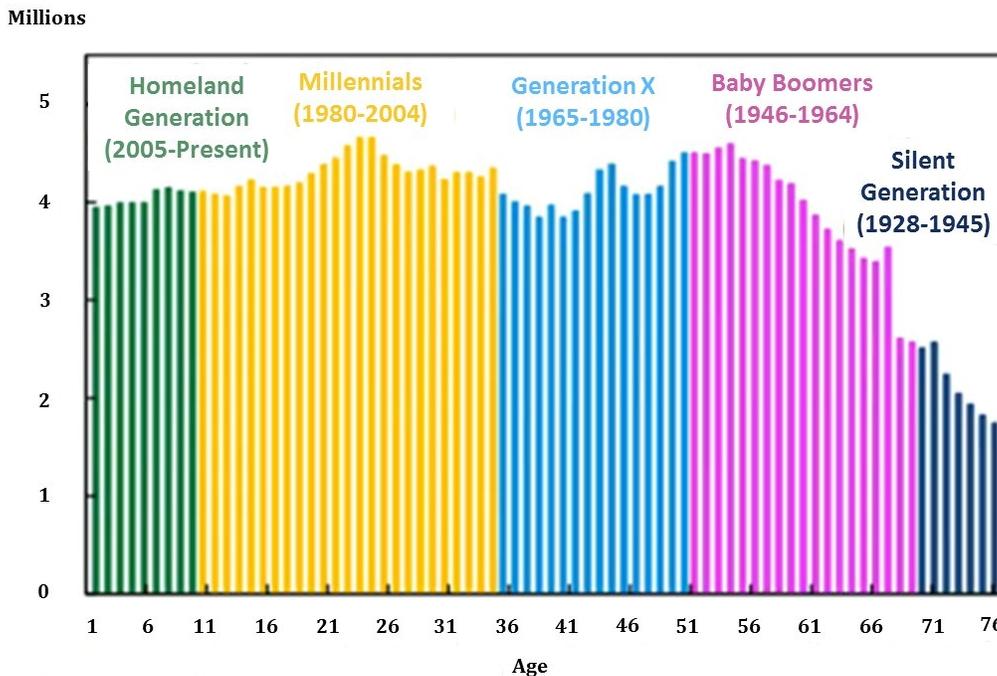
Another prominent trend of note is that Millennials, the generation born between the early 1980s and 2004, have likely surpassed Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) as the largest U.S. generation.



*This infographic from the Pew Research Center illustrates the growing diversity in family living arrangements, and specifically shows the percentage of children living within each arrangement. [Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 1960 and 1980 decennial census and 2014 American Community Survey.]*

*Note: Based on children under 18. Data regarding cohabitation are not available for 1960 and 1980; in those years, children with cohabiting parents are included in “one parent.” for 2014, the total share of children living with two married parents is 62% after rounding. Figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding.*

This age group is more racially diverse, with 43% identifying as non-white, the highest share of any previous generation. They are also on track to be the most educated generation to date, with both men and women showing a higher percentage to have completed at least a bachelor’s degree. Millennials are also continuing a trend first seen with Gen Xers, where more women than men are obtaining college degrees.



*U.S. Population distribution by age (2013) [Source: U.S. Census Bureau]*

Many Millennials struggle to pay school debt, with a large share of students coming from lower-income families who rely on loans to finance rising tuition costs. Many live at home, contributing to an increase in the household population of “doubled ups” Doubled-up households consist of one or more adults in addition to the head of household and spouse or partner, such as an adult child living at home or two unrelated families residing together, or a parent living with an adult child.

During 2015, 49% of Millennials were living in doubled-up households. Included in this group were 33% living in a household headed by a parent or other adult relative, and 16% living in households headed by a non-relative or heading their own households with an extra adult (which may or may not include a family member).

### So What Does It All Mean for Planning?

What is the takeaway from these current and projected demographic changes? We’ve discussed a rapidly aging population, as well as trends associated with our new largest generation, the Millennials. Families are smaller and there is no longer a predominant “traditional” family form. Although these demographic groups may seem very different, on some levels they are looking for very similar things: affordable living, opportunities for social interaction, transportation and infrastructure, and proximity to retail and services.

Since many people prefer to remain in familiar surroundings as they age, localities will need to anticipate and plan for a change in housing needs as older people look for smaller, more manageable housing choices located closer to shopping, services and transportation. And if Millennials continue to struggle financially with balancing housing and education costs, they could add to a slowing of demand for traditional single-family homes and an increase in the demand for more affordable multifamily rental housing. Communities will need to be nimble as they figure out how to accommodate this variety of changing trends, needs and desires.

## More Information

[Cornell Program on Applied Demographics \(PAD\)](#)

[Dutchess County Profile \(2017\)](#), Cornell PAD

[The American Family Today](#), Pew Research Center

[The Changing American Family](#), The New York Times

[More Millennials Living with Family Despite Improved Job Market](#), Pew Research Center

[Millennials Shape the Future of Aging](#), AARP's *The Journal*

[15 Economic Facts About Millennials](#), The White House Council of Economic Advisers

[Ten Things Planners Need to Know About Demographics and the Future Real Estate Market](#), NRDC Switchboard Blog Post

[Click here to view past issues of Plan On It.](#)

This newsletter was developed by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, in conjunction with the Dutchess County Planning Federation.

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