

IMMIGRATION CALLED KEY TO AREA'S FUTURE< MOST NEW RESIDENTS OF PA. AND N.J. THROUGH 2025< WILL BE FOREIGN-BORN, ACCORDING TO CENSUS PROJECTIONS.

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Body

Over the next three decades, population growth in Pennsylvania and New Jersey will be driven primarily by immigration, according to the latest projections of the Census Bureau.

Of a projected 1.6 million new residents in New Jersey, 1.2 million are expected to be foreign-born, according to the Census Bureau. In Pennsylvania, immigrants are expected to represent 80 percent of the 600,000 new residents projected for the state by 2025.

Those predictions were part of a Census Bureau analysis of national demographic trends expected from 1995 to 2025. Released every two years, the projections use historical trends to produce a portrait of the future.

Overall, according to the analysis, residents in Pennsylvania and New Jersey can expect their neighbors to be older and less likely white.

In addition, by 2025, both states will have slipped in the national rankings by population. Pennsylvania, its population expected to grow from 12.1 million to 12.7 million, will drop from fifth to sixth nationwide as it is overtaken by Illinois. New Jersey will drop from 10th to 11th, despite a population growth from 8 million to 9.6 million.

California will retain its ranking as the country's largest state in 2025, and the other top gainers, including Texas, Florida, Georgia and North Carolina, will reflect continuing movement to warmer, southern climes.

New Jersey and Pennsylvania will see slower growth largely because they are among the least popular destinations for other Americans. Over the next three decades, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are projected to rank 44th and 45th respectively as places to move to from within the country.

"People don't come here," Temple University associate professor David Elesh said of Pennsylvania. "People have gone elsewhere because manufacturing industries have not as yet been replaced to provide a measure of vitality that would attract people to the state."

The engine for population growth will thus be immigration.

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New Jersey will continue to be the fourth-largest magnet for immigrants.

The **New** York City metropolitan area, and major airports, account for much of the international **immigration**, said James Hughes, dean of the Edward **J.** Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University.

Immigration will have a major effect on **New Jersey's future** racial makeup. The white, non-Hispanic population **will** drop from 71 percent to 55 percent - which Hughes said would result, in part, from **immigration**.

The state's Hispanic population is projected to increase to 19 percent from 11 percent. The number of Asians is forecast to increase to 10 percent from 4 percent; and African Americans **will** make up 15 percent of the population, up from 13 percent.

The **Census** Bureau predicts that **Pennsylvania's** ranking for **immigration will** continue to be 10th in the nation.

But its racial makeup **will** shift only slightly. The white, non-Hispanic population is projected to decline from 87 percent to 80 percent by **2025**. Asians are projected to shift from more than 1 percent to 3 percent of the population; persons of Hispanic origin **will** increase to 5 percent from 2 percent; African Americans **will** increase to 11 percent from 9 percent.

Both states can expect an older population as baby boomers age. In **New Jersey**, the percentage of **residents** 65 or over is expected to grow to 17.3 percent from 13.7 percent. **Pennsylvania** can expect its percentage of senior citizens to grow to 21 percent from 15.9 percent.

Experts on both sides of the Delaware River debated the value of **projections** so far into the **future**.

But for his part, Hughes accepted the **projections**.

"There's always been that movement to **new**, virgin, low-cost areas, nonunion areas," said Hughes. But in older, more mature areas, including **Pennsylvania** and **New Jersey**, such forecasts in the **future** - such as those predicted by the **Census** Bureau yesterday - can be considered more reliable, he said.

Graphic

CHART;

CHART (4)

1-2. **Immigration** Trends - **New Jersey**: 1995; **2025**

3-4. **Immigration** Trends - **Pennsylvania**: 1995; **2025** (SOURCE: **Census** Bureau, Inquirer analysis by Jere Downs; The Philadelphia Inquirer, JOHN DUCHNESKIE)

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