



# Michigan's Path to a Prosperous Future: Population and Demographic Challenges and Opportunities

## Paper 1 in a Five-Part Series

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## About the Series

Altarum and the Citizens Research Council of Michigan have joined forces to present a realistic, data-informed vision of Michigan's future based on current trends and trajectories across multiple dimensions – economic, demographic, workforce, infrastructure, environment, and public services. The papers are available on both organizations' websites.

Research for this project was conducted in two phases. Phase I involved a landscape scan of existing resources and expert knowledge of trends and challenges. For each domain, published and grey literature were reviewed and interviews with stakeholders were conducted to answer questions such as:

- Where is Michigan now – strengths, weaknesses, major challenges?
- What data is available to characterize the current situation and to track progress? Are there existing forecasts, either descriptive or data-driven?
- How does Michigan compare to other states, especially in the Midwest?
- What path are we on currently, and where are opportunities to shift the path through policies and investment?

Phase 2, as represented in an Executive Summary and a series of five papers, built on Phase 1 to include data and context.

Altarum ([altarum.org](http://altarum.org)) is a nonprofit organization focused on improving the health of individuals with fewer financial resources and populations disenfranchised by the health care system.

The Citizens Research Council ([crcmich.org](http://crcmich.org)) works to improve government in Michigan by providing factual, unbiased, independent information concerning significant issues of state and local government organization, policy, and finance.

The project was funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Hudson-Webber Foundation, Grand Rapids Community Foundation, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, Michigan Health Endowment Fund, The Joyce Foundation, The Skillman Foundation, and the Ballmer Group.



# Report Highlights

- **Michigan’s population growth has lagged the nation for 50 years.** Michigan’s population growth tracked the nation’s until the 1970s, when Michigan’s growth began to slow. The state has since fallen from 7th to 10th most populous state and has lost six seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. From 2000 to 2020, Michigan grew more slowly than all but one state.
- **This slow growth path is projected to continue.** Projections to 2050 show that Michigan is on a path to continue to grow more slowly than the rest of the country, and to begin to lose population in the 2040s.
- **International immigration provides a consistent inflow to Michigan’s population.** The natural increase in the population (births minus deaths) is currently positive but is projected to turn negative (more deaths than births) by 2040. Domestic migration represents a net loss in population as more people are leaving for other states than are moving to Michigan, and the state is projected to lose an additional 270,000 people on net to other states by 2050. International immigration has been a net addition to Michigan’s population and is projected to add about 22,000 people per year, or more than 600,000 people in the coming decades, but after 2046 this will not be enough to offset the other losses.
- **Michigan’s population is older than average and getting older.** By 2050, it is projected that the population of children and young adults will shrink by 6 percent and the working age population will be stagnant (falling over the next decade, then recovering to just above the current level), while the population of people aged 65 and older will grow by 30 percent. The shift to fewer workers per retiree presents challenges for the workforce, customer base, and tax base.
- **Michigan’s population is projected to become more racially and ethnically diverse.** Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other groups are growing while the non-Hispanic White population is declining. By 2050, 40 percent of the working age population will be people of color.
- **Strategies to keep more people in Michigan, especially young people, and to attract more people to the state offer the potential to shift the state’s population and demographic path.**

## Introduction

Population and demographic trends represent fundamental challenges for Michigan’s future. Michigan’s population is barely growing and will begin to decline in a generation, even under assumptions of higher levels of domestic and international immigration than we see today. Too many young people are leaving the state; by 2030, the working age population is projected to shrink by more than 150,000 people. At the same time, Michigan is a relatively old state that is getting older; by 2030, the retirement age population will grow by more than 450,000 people. Michigan is also becoming more diverse, with all the state’s population growth coming from populations of color.

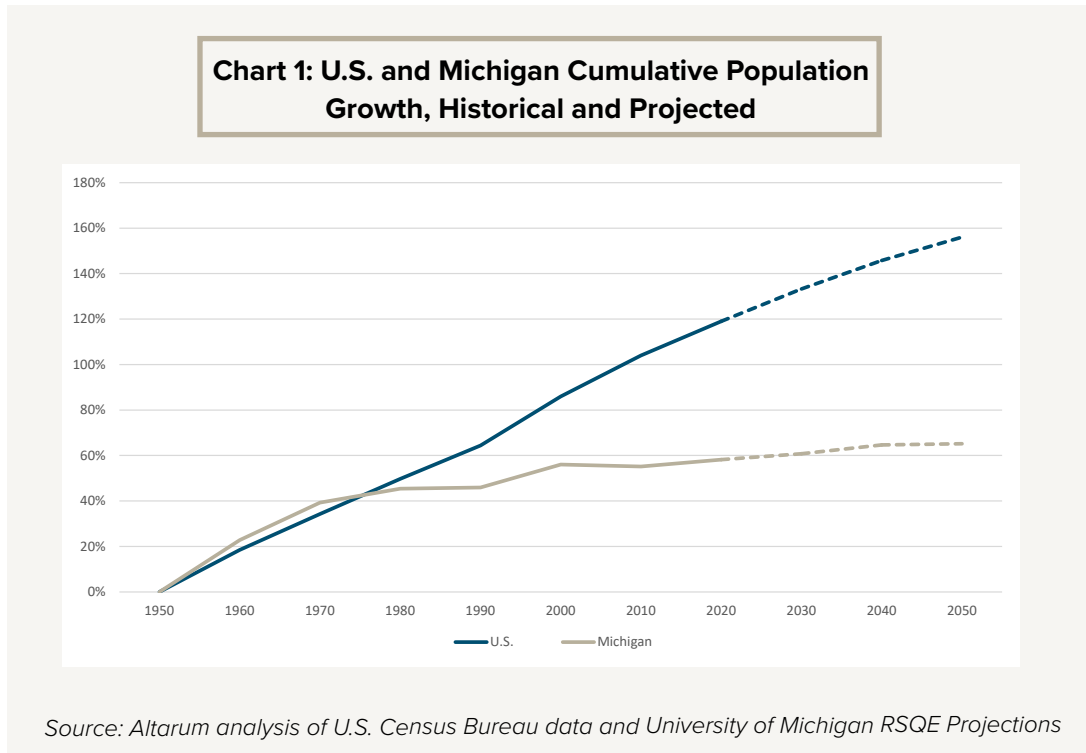
These population trends will affect the talent pipeline, the level of employment, the demand for goods and services, the tax base and fiscal environment, and the potential for economic growth over the next decade and beyond. To quote the University of Michigan’s Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE) in their 2022 Michigan Outlook report, Michigan’s population trajectory “will impose a speed limit” on Michigan’s growth in the long run.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Burton J, Ehrlich G, Grimes D, Henson K, Manaenkov D, & M. R. McWilliams, “The Economic and Demographic Outlook for Michigan Through 2050,” University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics, July 29, 2022. Available at: [https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/econ-assets/Econdocs/RSQE%20PDFs/UM\\_RSQE\\_Economic\\_Demographic\\_Outlook\\_for\\_Michigan\\_through\\_2050.pdf](https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/econ-assets/Econdocs/RSQE%20PDFs/UM_RSQE_Economic_Demographic_Outlook_for_Michigan_through_2050.pdf)



# Overall Population Growth

Michigan has been among the country's ten most populous states since the late 1800s. From the 1940s through the 1960s, the state attracted people from all over the country. During this period, Michigan was the 7<sup>th</sup> most populous state in the U.S. and the population was growing as fast or faster than the rest of the country.



From the 1970s onward, Michigan's population continued to grow but at a much slower rate, and more slowly than the U.S. overall (**Chart 1**). Net domestic migration (the number of people moving to Michigan from other states relative to those leaving Michigan for other states) became negative as emigration to other states increased. As of the 1980 Census, Michigan had dropped to the 8<sup>th</sup> most populous state.

In the 2000s, due to demographic and economic factors, the state's population began to decline, falling at a rate of 0.3 percent per year from 2004 to 2010. Indeed, the 2000s is sometimes referred to as Michigan's "lost decade" of declining manufacturing jobs and population.<sup>2</sup> In the 2010s, Michigan's population began to grow again, but the state still experienced the second slowest population growth of all states between 2000 and 2020, with only West Virginia growing more slowly (**Table 2**).

<sup>2</sup>Gentert, T. "Michigan's 'Lost Decade' Was Historic," CapCon, October 5, 2014. Accessed at <https://www.michiganconfidential.com/20563>.

**Table 1: State Ranking of Population Growth, 2000 to 2020**

			Population growth		
Rank	State	2000 to 2020	Rank	State	2000 to 2020
1	Nevada	55%	26	Minnesota	16%
2	Utah	47%	27	Oklahoma	15%
3	Idaho	42%	28	Nebraska	15%
4	Texas	40%	29	Alabama	13%
5	Arizona	39%	30	Arkansas	13%
6	Florida	35%	31	Indiana	12%
7	Colorado	34%	32	Kentucky	11%
8	Georgia	31%	33	New Hampshire	11%
9	Washington	31%	34	Massachusetts	11%
10	North Carolina	30%	35	New Jersey	10%
11	South Carolina	28%	36	Missouri	10%
12	Delaware	26%	37	Wisconsin	10%
13	Oregon	24%	38	Kansas	9%
14	Virginia	22%	39	Iowa	9%
15	Tennessee	21%	40	Maine	7%
16	North Dakota	21%	41	New York	6%
17	District of Columbia	21%	42	Connecticut	6%
18	Montana	20%	43	Pennsylvania	6%
19	Hawaii	20%	44	Vermont	6%
20	South Dakota	17%	45	Rhode Island	5%
21	Alaska	17%	46	Louisiana	4%
22	Wyoming	17%	47	Mississippi	4%
23	California	17%	48	Ohio	4%
24	Maryland	17%	49	Illinois	3%
25	New Mexico	16%	<b>50</b>	<b>Michigan</b>	<b>1%</b>
			51	West Virginia	-1%
				<b>United States</b>	<b>18%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Population Change Data, available at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/pop-change-data-text.html>

Recovery from the losses of the 2000s was also interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Michigan’s population declined in both 2020 and 2021, due to higher mortality, lower birth rates, and a steep drop in international migration. As of the 2020 Census, Michigan had fallen from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> most populous state.

Declining population growth has also resulted in a decline in political influence as the state has lost seats in the U.S. House of Representatives every decade over the past 50 years. From a high of 19 House seats in 1970, Michigan’s representation has fallen to 13 House seats after the 2020 Census reallocation.

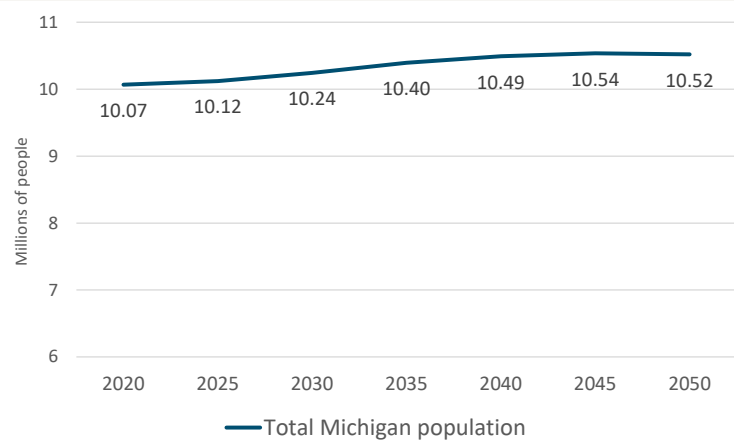
Looking ahead, economic and population projections recently developed for the Michigan Department of Transportation by the University of Michigan RSQE provide a rigorous and detailed set of projections for Michigan’s population growth over the next three decades.<sup>3</sup> These projections are the latest in a longstanding series of RSQE projections and are based on state and national economic and population projection models that allow for interactions between trends in economic conditions and population flows.

The sections that follow explore various dimensions of these projections and their underlying assumptions, highlighting both important trends and opportunities to shift the trajectory. Data and projections are broken out by age group, race/ethnicity and by the three major components of state population change: natural increase, domestic migration, and international migration. Breaking out the projected patterns of change by age group reveals trends relevant to K-12 education, Michigan’s colleges and universities, the size and composition of the potential workforce, and the needs of Michiganders of retirement age and older. Examining projected growth by race/ethnicity quantifies the increasing diversity of Michigan’s population. Breaking out the major components of state population change and highlighting the associated assumptions that are built into the baseline projections allows assessment of the impact that efforts to retain the current population and increase domestic and international in-migration could have on the demographic story.

## Total Michigan Population Projections

After population losses in 2020 and 2021, the RSQE projections reflect an additional slight loss in Michigan’s population in 2022, followed by a return to modest growth. Between 2020 and 2050, Michigan’s population is projected to grow slightly from 10,068,000 to 10,522,000 people (**Chart 2**). This represents an annual growth rate of only 0.15 percent over this period, about one-third of the projected U.S. population growth rate of 0.45 percent. Michigan’s total population is projected to peak in 2046 at 10.54 million people, after which it will begin to decline.

**Chart 2: Projection of Total Michigan Population, 2020 to 2050**

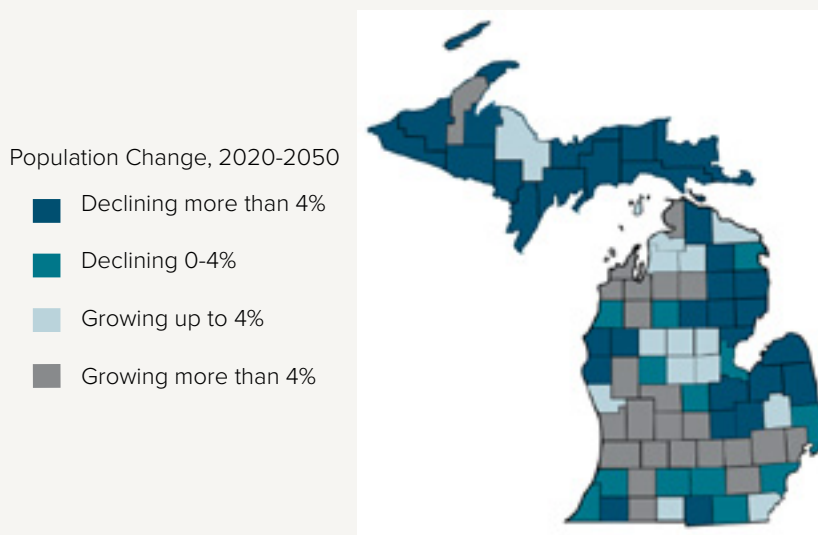


Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

## Substate Variation in Population Trends

Patterns of population change vary across the state, with some areas growing while others are declining (**Chart 3**). Parts of southeast Michigan such as Macomb and Oakland Counties, the Grand Rapids area, and the Traverse City area are growing, while the northeast, Upper Peninsula and the “Thumb” regions of the state are declining in population. As seen, population challenges are especially acute in rural Michigan.

**Chart 3: County-Level Total Population Change in Michigan, 2020 to 2050**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

<sup>3</sup>Burton J, Ehrlich G, Grimes D, Henson K, Manaenkov D, & M. R. McWilliams, “The Economic and Demographic Outlook for Michigan Through 2050,” University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics, July 29, 2022. Available at: [https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/econ-assets/Econdocs/RSQE%20PDFs/UM\\_RSQE\\_Economic\\_Demographic\\_Outlook\\_for\\_Michigan\\_through\\_2050.pdf](https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/econ-assets/Econdocs/RSQE%20PDFs/UM_RSQE_Economic_Demographic_Outlook_for_Michigan_through_2050.pdf)

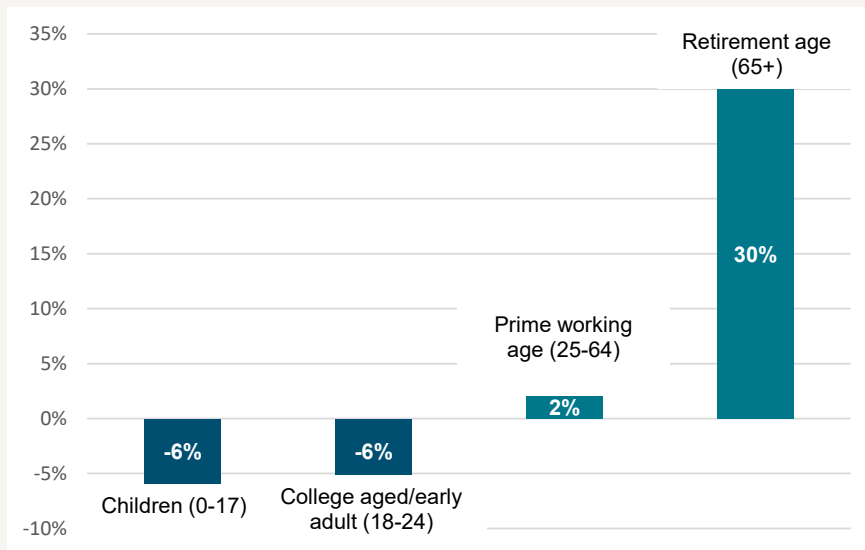
# Michigan Population Trends by Age Group

While the size of Michigan’s population is projected to change little over the next few decades, the age distribution is shifting older. The aging of the population is a trend playing out throughout the U.S. but is especially notable for Michigan, a state that is starting with a population that already is older than average and is not growing in the younger age groups.

Over the next 30 years, there will be fewer children and more people of retirement age in Michigan than there are today (**Chart 4**). Between 2020 and 2050 the population of children (aged 0 through 17) is projected to fall by six percent, while the population of retirement age (aged 65 and older) is projected to grow by 30 percent. The working age population (aged 18 through 64) is projected to decline between 2020 and 2030, then grow slowly to 2050, increasing by only 0.7 percent between 2020 by 2050.

These trends mean that in the coming decades there will be fewer people of working age for each person of retirement age. In 2010, there were 4.5 people of working age for every person of retirement age in Michigan. In 2020, this ratio is estimated at 2.9 and it is projected to fall to 2.5 people of working age for every person of retirement age by 2035.

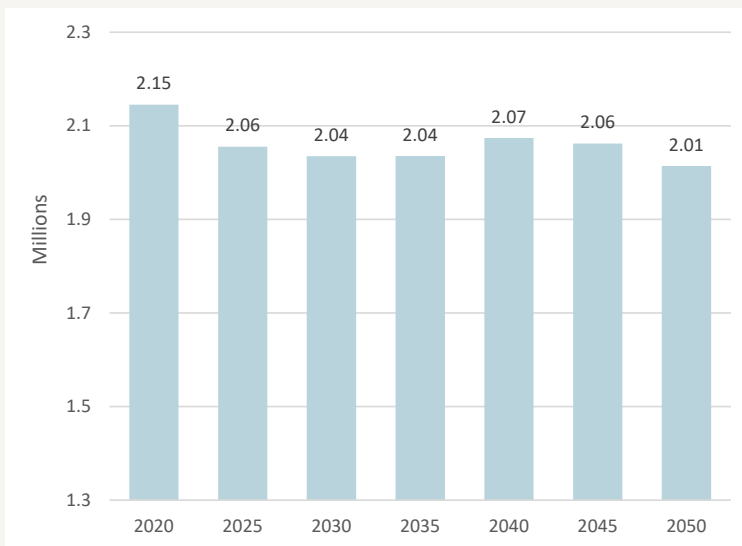
**Chart 4: Projection of Michigan Population by Major Age Group, 2020 to 2050**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

**Chart 5** displays data on the size of the child population in Michigan in 2020 and projections of this population through 2050. The number of children in Michigan, 2.15 million in 2020, is projected to decline by nearly 110,000, or more than five percent, between 2020 and 2030. The number of children is then expected to rise slightly between 2030 and 2040 before falling again to the 2050 estimate of 2.01 million children, the lowest level over the period.

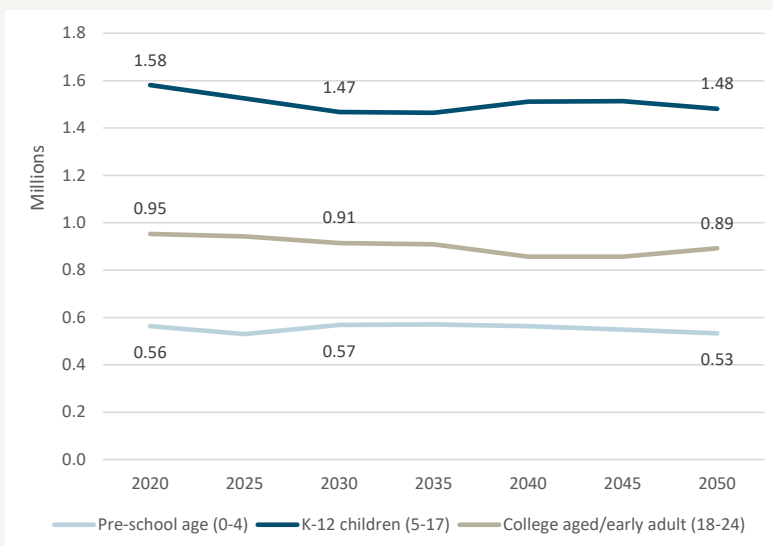
**Chart 5: Projection of Michigan's Child Population, Ages 0-17**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

**Chart 6** breaks out the child population projections into pre-school aged and K-12 school aged and adds information on the college aged/early adult group. All three groups are projected to decline over the next three decades.

**Chart 6: Projection of Michigan's Child and Young Adult Population by Age Group**

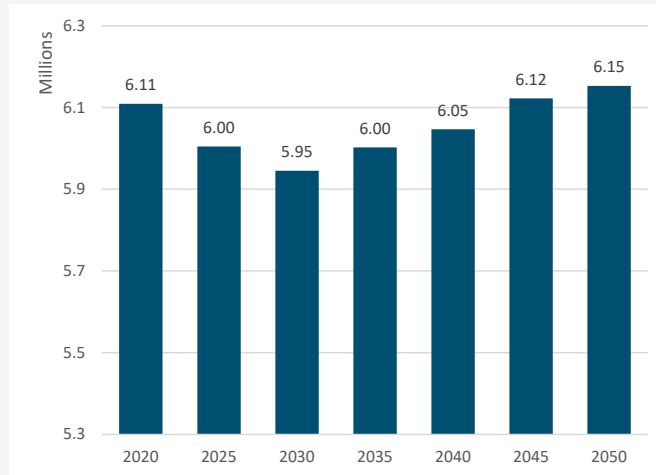


Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

The working age population is projected to decline by more than 160,000 people between 2020 and 2030, a 2.7 percent decline (**Chart 7**). The economic modeling that RSQE integrates with the population modeling is projecting an increase in the demand for workers that raises wages in Michigan in the 2030s and drives a modest increase in domestic migration to the state between 2031 and 2041. The working age population is projected to rise accordingly but is not expected to return to the 2020 level until after 2040. By 2050, this group is projected to be only 0.7 percent above the level of 2020.



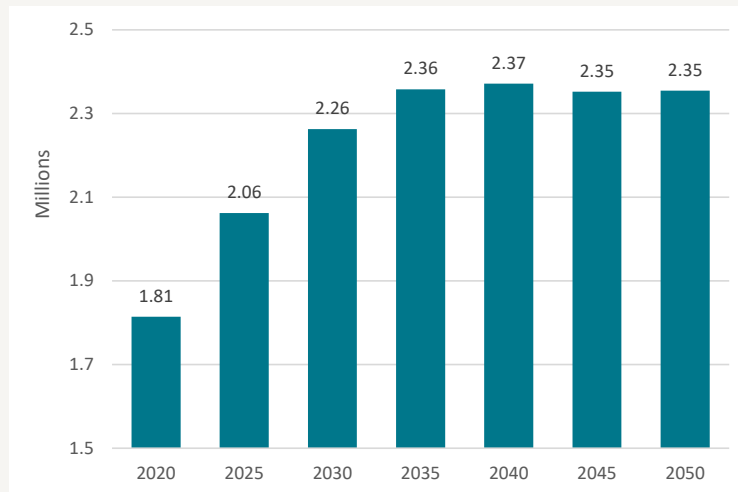
**Chart 7: Projection of Michigan's Working Age Population (ages 18-64)**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

In contrast to trends just described for the younger populations, the population aged 65 and older is projected to grow steadily through 2040, leveling off at 2.35 million people by 2050, an increase of more than half a million people over 2020 (**Chart 8**).

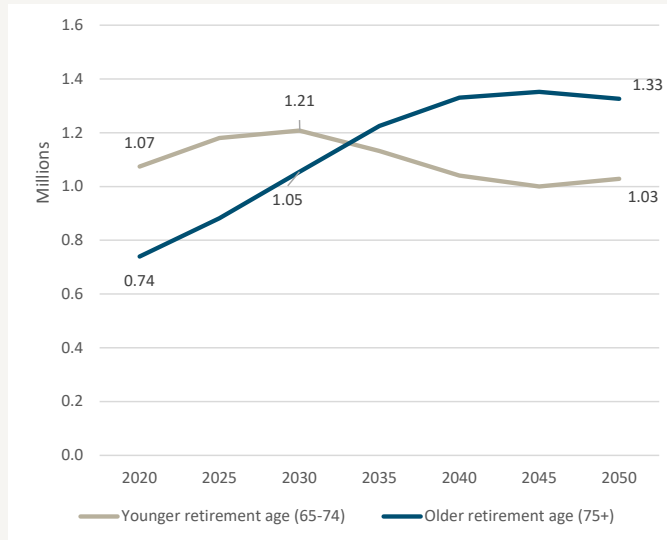
**Chart 8: Projection of Michigan's Retirement Age Population (age 65 and older)**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

This trend holds even as Michigan loses retirees to Florida and other states each year. **Chart 9** further breaks out the trends in the retirement age population into those aged 65 through 74 and those 75 and older. There are currently many more people in the younger retirement age group than the older retirement age group, reflecting Baby Boomers currently aging into the younger group. As the Baby Boomers age, the older age group will become the larger of the two groups by 2035. The growth in this oldest age group has implications for the demand on Michigan's health care system and health workforce, as touched on in another paper in this series. Combining the decline in children with the rapid growth in the oldest age group, these projections show that by 2050 the population of Michiganders aged 75 and older (1.33 million) will be only slightly smaller than the entire K-12 school aged population (1.48 million).

**Chart 9: Projection of Michigan's Younger and Older Retirement Age Population**



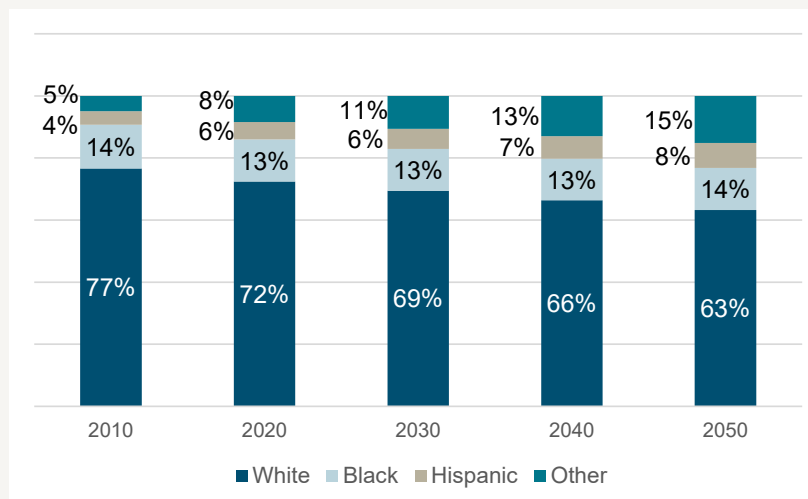
Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

## Trends by Race and Ethnicity

All the projected growth in Michigan's population is projected to come from the state's populations of color. Between 2020 and 2050, the non-Hispanic White population is projected to decline by nine percent, from 7.3 million people in 2020 to 6.65 million people in 2050. The Black population is projected to grow at a modest rate similar to the overall Michigan population, increasing by 4.6 percent over this period and growing from 1.36 million people in 2020 to 1.42 million in 2050. The Hispanic population is projected to grow by just over 50 percent, from 564,000 to 850,000 people, and the "Other" category, including Asian Americans, American Indians, and those of more than one race, is projected to grow by nearly 90 percent, from 850,000 to 1.6 million people.

As a share of the total Michigan population, populations of color were 23 percent of the population in 2010 and are projected to grow to 37 percent by 2050 (**Chart 10**).

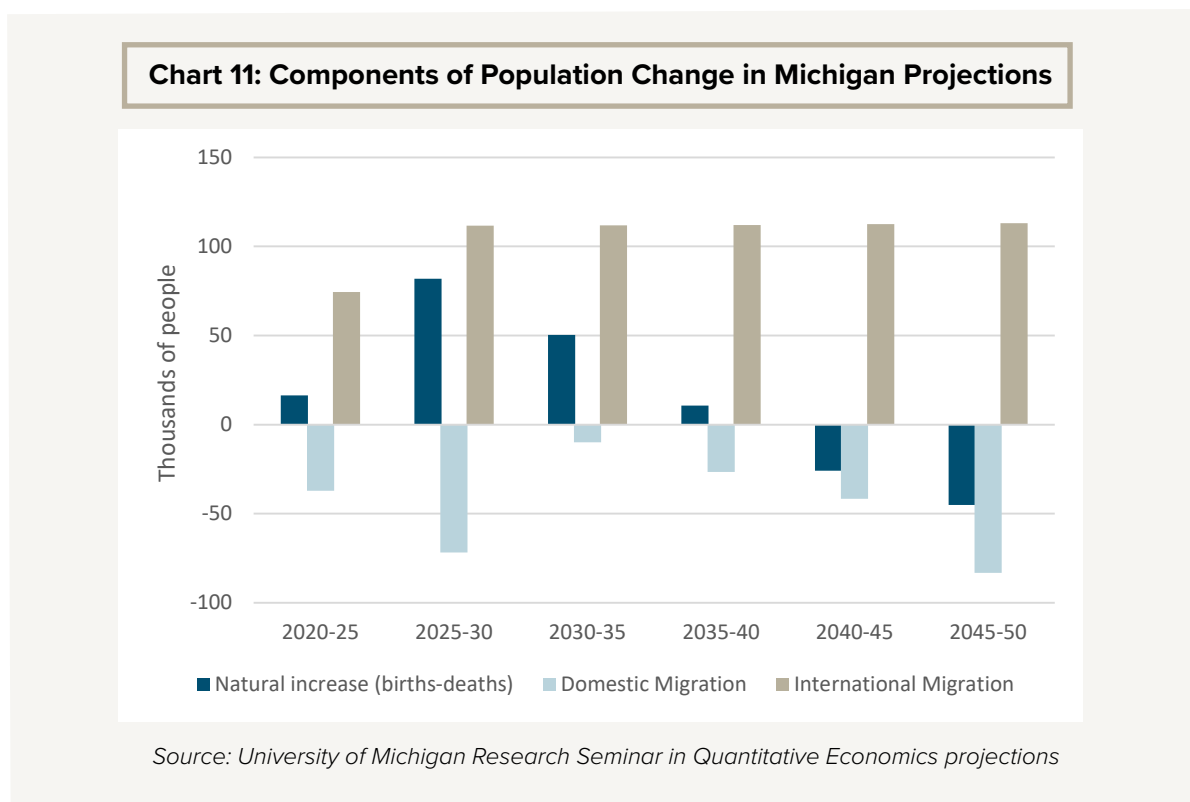
**Chart 10: Projection of Changing Racial/Ethnic Composition of the Michigan Population**



Source: University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics projections

## Elements of Population Change

To better understand potential leverage points in shifting the population and demographic trends in a favorable direction for the state, it is useful to break down the projections into trends in the existing population and movements into and out of the state (**Chart 11**).



### Trends in the Natural Increase

The first of these components – the number of births minus the number of deaths each year – is termed the “natural increase” in the population. Michigan is currently growing slightly through natural increase, but as the population ages, the gap between births and deaths is narrowing, and by 2040, deaths will exceed births. From 2040 to 2050, “natural increase” will be drawing down the population. Again, as seen in the overall projections, by 2045, the assumed levels of positive international immigration will not be enough to offset this negative natural increase and Michigan’s total population will begin to decline.

In terms of net changes from year to year, the University of Michigan RSQE population projections reflect about 20,000 more births than deaths per year in the 2010 to 2015 period, falling to about 15,000 more births than deaths per year in the 2015 to 2020 period. Death rates increased significantly, and birth rates declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, so that the natural increase in the population is projected to average only about a net gain of 3,000 people per year in the 2020 to 2025 period. After the effects of the pandemic play out, natural increase is expected to rise again to add about 16,000 people per year to the Michigan population, but aging will drive a narrowing of the gap between births and deaths. By the 2035 to 2040 period, births and deaths draw even, and in the 2040 to 2045 period, Michigan’s population, absent immigration, begins to fall.

## Trends in Domestic Migration to and from Michigan

Over the next 30 years, Michigan's net domestic migration is expected to be negative as more people are expected to move to other states than to move here. The loss is projected to be smaller in the 2030s as a projected tight labor market increases the flow of working age people into the state; however, the outflow is expected to rise again, and over the next 30 years domestic migration is projected to represent a net loss of more than 270,000 people.

To shed light on where Michigan residents are going, the study team examined data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), which tracks the movement of residents between states each year. These data were examined through 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both domestic and international migration dropped abruptly during the pandemic, and while this contributed to a drop in Michigan's population, the 2020 and 2021 migration patterns are not considered to be representative of typical or likely future patterns. The projections described in this report assume a return to more typical pre-pandemic patterns of both domestic and international migration.

Based on late 2010s pre-pandemic patterns, roughly 150,000 people are moving from Michigan to other states each year, while 130,000 to 150,000 people are moving into the state each year. ACS data show that Michigan's net domestic migration was flat in 2017 while Michigan lost about 19,000 people to other states in 2019 and lost about 13,000 people in 2018.

Movements between states fluctuate from year to year, but Florida is consistently the top state for out-migration from Michigan, both in gross and net terms. From 2017 through 2019, about 20,000 Michiganders moved to Florida each year. About one-third of those moving to Florida are aged 65 and older, with most of the movement occurring among 65- to 74-year-olds, who represent one in five of those moving from Michigan to Florida. The number of people moving from Florida to Michigan varied, but on net, Michigan has been losing on the order of 10,000 people to Florida each year.

There is also considerable population movement within the six neighboring Midwestern states of Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. About 40,000 people each year move from Michigan to one of these five other Midwestern states, more than a quarter of the total out-migration from the state. Again, the numbers of other Midwesterners moving into Michigan, and so the balance of population movement between states, varies from year to year, but the most recent data prior to the atypical COVID-19 pandemic period show that Michigan tends to lose population on net to Ohio, Wisconsin, and Minnesota and gain population from Indiana, with the balance shifting back and forth between Illinois and Michigan.

While some of these patterns look consistent over time, many state-to-state trends vary considerably from year to year, pointing to the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on Michigan's population growth through policies and investments that improve the attractiveness of the state to people in the Midwest and around the country.

## Trends in International Immigration

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, net international immigration to the U.S. stood at just over one million people per year in the early 2010s, grew to more than 1.4 million people per year in the middle of the decade, then fell to about 1.2 million per year at the end of the decade before the COVID-19 pandemic. Not surprisingly, migration around world dropped sharply during the pandemic, with immigration to the U.S. falling to under one million people in 2020 and about half a million people in 2021.<sup>4</sup>

Michigan has historically received about two percent of the net international migration to the U.S., or on the order of 20,000 people per year. The population projections described in this report reflect lower levels of international migration for several years, followed by a return to more typical levels of international immigration. Michigan is assumed to receive a steady two percent of a projected 1.2 million U.S. international immigrants from 2025 through 2050, for a gain of about 22,000 people per year.

<sup>4</sup>Data downloaded October 2022 from: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/12/net-international-migration-at-lowest-levels-in-decades.html>

## Conclusions and Implications for the Future of Michigan

While only 22<sup>nd</sup> in land mass, Michigan has been among the top 10 most populous states since the late 1800s. An influx of people in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century created a large population base that generated steady population growth as the baby boom generation lived and worked and had children of their own. However, the state's population growth began to slow in the 1970s, and between 2000 and 2020, Michigan saw the slowest population growth of all states except West Virginia.

Michigan is an older than average state and so will see the impacts of an aging population ahead of much of the nation. As Michigan's population ages, the gap between births and deaths is narrowing, and in two decades the natural increase in the population is projected to be negative. Net domestic migration is already negative and is projected to remain negative for most of the next 30 years. Michigan will require more than a return to historical international immigration patterns assumed in the current population projections to forestall a declining population in the 2040s and beyond.

The projected decline and aging of Michigan's population could be mitigated by retaining more people, especially young people, or by attracting more people to the state. Strategies to retain the current population can overlap with and reinforce strategies to attract new residents to the state. To spur both domestic and international immigration, it may also be important to invest in strategically promoting all Michigan has to offer as a place to live and work. In a mobile country of more than 330 million people, with more than seven million people moving from state to state each year and more than one million international immigrants, there is real opportunity for Michigan to grow its population.

Climate change may drive opportunities for Michigan to increase both domestic and international migration, as southern and coastal parts of the country and the world experience longer periods of very high temperatures, rising ocean levels, droughts, and more extreme weather<sup>5</sup>. The rise of remote work that accelerated during the pandemic may also offer opportunities to both retain workers and attract people who no longer need to live where they work. Michigan could benefit from having a lower cost of living than many parts of the country that have historically attracted young workers.<sup>6</sup>

Considerable state-to-state migration occurs each year, with shifts of as many as 150,000 people moving out of and into the state. Whether this movement results in a net increase or a net decrease to Michigan's population can be driven by relatively modest shifts in these patterns. The RSQE population projections assume a peak in net domestic migration into Michigan of those aged 64 and under of about 5,000 people per year during the 2030-2035 period. If this level of domestic migration could be maintained through favorable economic conditions or other factors through 2050, Michigan's population would be about 140,000 people larger by 2050, depending on assumptions about births and other factors. This increase would be enough to offset the decline in natural increase to maintain growth in the Michigan population through 2050.

Looking at the potential impact of efforts to increase international immigration to Michigan, current projections assume that Michigan will receive two percent of U.S. international immigrants each year. This is the share the state would receive if immigrants were distributed equally among all 50 states. However, Michigan has a larger population than most states, representing about three percent of the U.S. population. There are two major factors determining international immigration to Michigan – the total number of immigrants to the U.S. and Michigan's share of the total. While federal policies and global events will have a greater impact on the number of immigrants to the U.S.

<sup>5</sup>Hauer M, "Migration Induced by Sea-Level Rise Could Reshape the US Population Landscape," *Nature Climate Change*, Volume 7, May 2017

<sup>6</sup>From the Cost of Living Index by State 2023, Michigan is in the bottom quarter of states for cost of living, ranking 37 out of 50 states, where states are ranked from highest to lowest cost of living. Available at <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/cost-of-living-index-by-state>

than state actions, Michigan could look to increase the share coming to the state. A reasonable target might be to receive international immigrants in the same proportion as Michigan's share of the U.S. population. If international immigration into Michigan grew to be three percent of the U.S. total starting in 2025, we estimate that this would represent an average of about 33,500 immigrants per year, rather than the current projection of about 22,000 per year. This would translate to an additional 250,000 to 300,000 Michiganders by 2050, depending on assumptions about associated changes in births and other factors. Note that the same result would be achieved if Michigan maintained its 2 percent share but the number of immigrants to the U.S. increased from 1.2 million per year (consistent with the late 2010s) to 1.7 million per year (somewhat higher than the peak of 1.4 million seen in the mid-2010s).

Together, the combination of maintaining a slightly positive flow of net domestic migration starting in 2030 and attracting three percent rather than two percent of 1.2 million immigrants to the U.S. starting in 2025 would result in Michigan's population approaching 11 million people by 2050. These potential increases in domestic and international migration are meant to be illustrative, but not infeasible, targets for shifting Michigan's population trajectory and maintaining Michigan's status as a top 10 most populous state.

## Recap

Based on U.S. Census Bureau data and projections from the most recent population and economic outlook forecast developed for the state, this report has documented that Michigan is on a path of slowing population growth leading into a declining population in a generation. The population is already older than the average state, and will be shifting even older, with fewer children and young adults and more people of retirement age in the coming decades. Michigan's population, like most of the country, is also becoming more diverse, with all of the population growth coming from populations of color even as these groups experience the persistent disparities in health, education, earnings, and other life outcomes documented in other papers in this series.

The consequences of these trends affect a broad range of issues, including the future of the state's workforce, customer base, and tax base.

Yet in a mobile country with more than seven million people moving from state to state each year, a country that typically draws more than a million international immigrants each year from around the world, there is real opportunity for a state to impact its population future. Efforts to address the challenges posed by Michigan's population and demographic trends could focus on advancing three broad and overlapping goals:

1. Retain Michigan's current population, especially the state's young people
2. Attract new people from around the country and the world
3. Invest in the skills, opportunities, and wellbeing of Michiganders