

Regional Population Changes: 1980-Present

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) is a Metropolitan Planning Organization serving New Castle County, DE and Cecil County, MD. Our mission is to serve the citizens and stakeholders of the region by carrying out a comprehensive, continuing and cooperative regional transportation planning process consistent with federal transportation legislation. This series of data reports is designed to summarize various data and information about our region to allow decision makers and members of the public to better understand the changes within our region.

23 Years of Change

The WILMAPCO region has witnessed significant growth over the past two decades. To put this growth into perspective, table 1 shows countywide population changes for the WILMAPCO region as compared to the nine counties which surround the region, as illustrated in figure to the right. From this we can conclude that:

- The total 11-county region has added just over 700,000 people since 1980. This represents about 1% of the national population in 2003.
- The total 11-county region has grown roughly at the same pace (29.04%) as the rest of the nation (28.4%).
- The WILMAPCO region has grown at a rate that is slightly higher than the 11 county region, growing 32.55% since 1980.



Table 1: Population Changes by County: 1980-2003

State	County	1980	1990	2000	2003*	Absolute Change 1980-2003	% Change 1980-2003
Delaware	Sussex	98,004	113,229	156,638	168,027	70,023	71.45%
	Kent	98,219	110,993	126,697	134,390	36,171	36.83%
	New Castle	398,115	441,946	501,933	515,074	116,959	29.38%
Maryland	Cecil	60,430	71,347	85,951	92,746	32,316	53.48%
	Harford	145,930	182,132	218,590	232,175	86,245	59.10%
	Kent	16,695	17,842	19,197	19,680	2,985	17.88%
New Jersey	Salem	64,676	65,294	64,285	64,854	178	0.28%
	Gloucester	199,917	230,082	254,673	266,962	67,045	33.54%
Pennsylvania	Delaware	555,007	547,651	550,864	554,432	-575	-0.10%
	Chester	316,660	376,396	433,501	457,393	140,733	44.44%
	Lancaster	362,346	422,822	470,658	482,775	120,429	33.24%
Total 11 county region		2,315,999	2,579,734	2,882,987	2,988,508	672,509	29.04%
Total - WILMAPCO Region		458,545	513,293	587,884	607,820	149,275	32.55%
Total- United States		226,545,805	248,709,873	281,421,906	290,809,777	64,263,972	28.37%

Source: U.S. Census; Delaware Population Consortium. *- Estimate

County Highlights

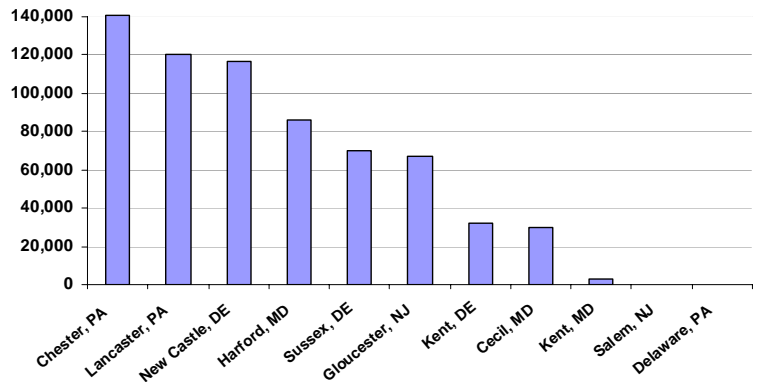
While the overall population of the 11-county region has been close to the national average, changes on a county-by-county basis tell a different story. Figure 1 illustrates the absolute changes in population for each county from 1980-2003.

Absolute Changes

Chester and Lancaster Counties in Pennsylvania and New Castle County, Delaware have experienced the largest amount of growth. All three counties have grown by more than 100,000 people since 1980.

Delaware County has actually seen its population fall by 575 people over the time period. It has since, however, begun to increase based on the 2003 census estimates.

Figure 1: Absolute Population Changes by County 1980-2003



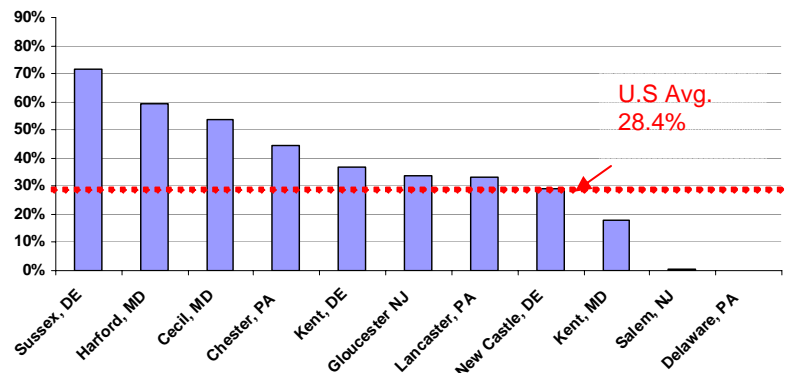
Source: U.S. Census, Delaware Population Consortium

Percentage Changes

While the absolute changes are helpful, one can look at percentage change to get a better feel for how quickly certain counties are growing. Figure 2 lists the countywide population changes by percent from 1980-2003. The red line through the chart represents the national average. Some items of note are that:

Overall, the list is roughly inverted from the absolute changes. While counties such as Sussex, Harford and Cecil Counties had relatively smaller growth totals, their growth rate has been very high over the time period.

Figure 2: Countywide Population Percent Changes



Source: U.S. Census, Delaware Population Consortium

Population Changes by Planning District

Looking more closely at the two counties that make up our region, the planning district level is a good level of geography to use to gauge changing growth patterns. Planning districts allow us to see which sub county areas have grown the most. Table 2 shows the population changes since 1980 for the 11 planning districts that make up New Castle County. Figure 4 shows the district boundaries.

Figure 4: New Castle County Planning Districts

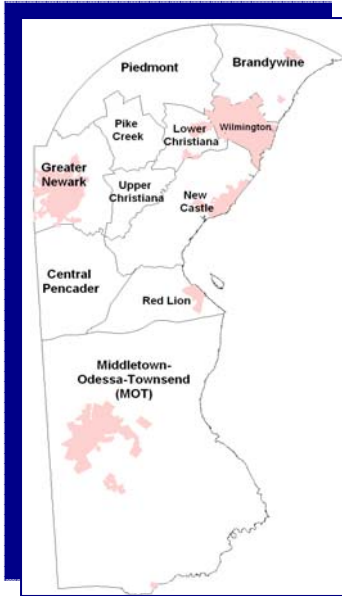


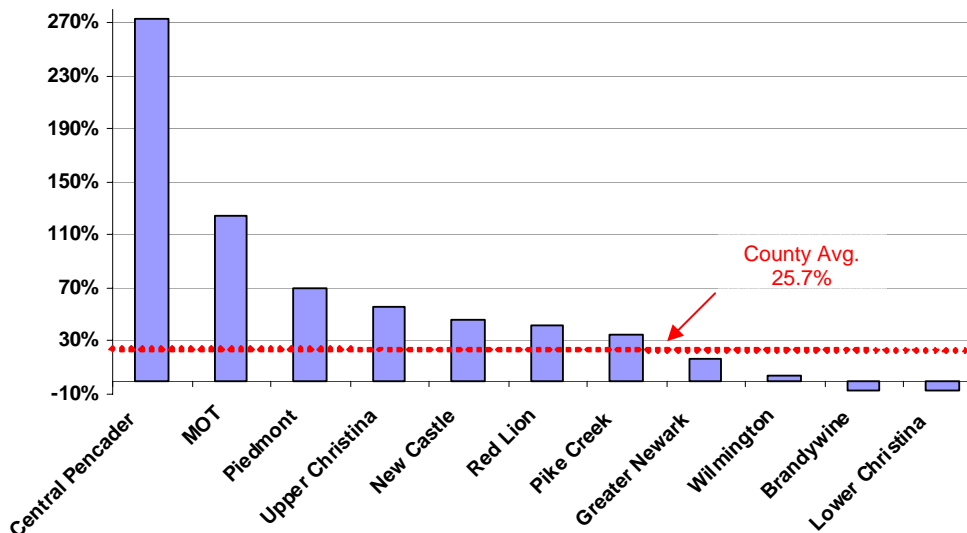
Table 2: Population Changes by Planning District-New Castle 1980-2003

Planning District	1980	1990	2000	2003	Change 1980-2003	Percent Change 1980-2003
New Castle	56,139	67,798	82,021	83,566	27,427	46.1%
Central Pencader	8,605	17,719	32,096	34,777	26,172	273.0%
MOT	13,187	18,578	29,682	33,948	20,761	125.1%
Piedmont	17,295	24,402	29,388	30,272	12,977	69.9%
Pike Creek	31,519	38,733	42,312	42,575	11,056	34.2%
Greater Newark	57,475	61,003	67,114	67,948	10,473	16.8%
Upper Christina	15,724	21,177	24,529	24,927	9,203	56.0%
Wilmington	70,195	71,526	72,664	72,774	2,579	3.5%
Red Lion	3,930	4,033	5,589	6,330	2,400	42.2%
Lower Christina	39,280	36,543	36,250	36,657	-2,623	-7.7%
Brandywine	84,766	80,434	78,620	79,143	-5,623	-7.3%
TOTALS	398,115	441,946	500,265	512,918	102,150	25.7%

Source: WILMAPCO, Delaware Population Consortium, 2002 ; NOTE: County totals differ from 2003 Census countywide totals

- New Castle, Central Pencader and MOT have all experienced growth greater than 20,000 people. These areas have absorbed nearly 73% of the county’s growth since 1980. Two of the three have seen the largest percentage increase as well as shown in Figure 5.
- Lower Christina and Brandywine planning districts have both experienced a loss in population over the time period. These areas make up the bulk of the “first generation suburbs”, containing an older population.
- The Piedmont planning district was one of faster growing areas between 1980-1990. It increased by 41%, from 17,295 to 24,402 during the decade. It has since slowed considerably. It had near stagnant growth from 2000-2003. Central Pencader more than doubled over the same time period, climbing 105% from 8,605 in 1980 to 17,719 in 1990.

Figure 5: Population Percentage Changes by Planning District-New Castle 1980-2003



Population Changes by Planning District (cont.)

Table 3 is a breakdown of population changes since 1980 for the 9 planning districts that make up Cecil County. Figure 6 is a map showing the district boundaries.

Figure 6: Cecil County Planning Districts

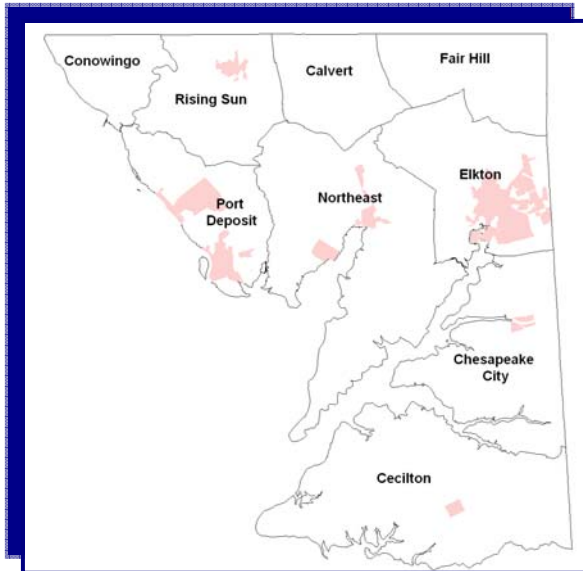


Table 3: Population Changes by Planning District-Cecil County 1980-2003

Planning District	1980	1990	2000	2003	Change 1980-2003	Percent Change 1980-2003
Elktion	15,864	18,093	22,523	23,589	7,725	42.0%
Northeast	12,507	15,631	18,673	19,133	6,626	49.3%
Rising Sun	6,201	7,215	9,102	9,426	3,225	46.8%
Fair Hill	6,005	6,570	8,082	8,366	2,361	34.6%
Calvert	2,522	3,548	4,295	4,447	1,925	70.3%
Port Deposit	8,628	9,514	10,325	10,549	1,921	19.7%
Chesapeake City	3,714	4,537	5,351	5,533	1,819	44.1%
Conowingo	2,109	2,853	3,667	3,887	1,778	73.9%
Cecilton	2,880	3,386	3,933	4,051	1,171	36.6%
TOTALS	60,430	71,347	85,951	88,980	25,521	42.2%

Source: WILMAPCO 2002; NOTE: County totals differ from 2003 Census countywide totals

- As Table 3 indicates, Elktion and Northeast planning districts have seen the largest increase in population, both growing by over 6,000 people. Since 1980, these 2 areas represent 56% of the growth experienced by the entire county.
- Conowingo and Calvert planning districts have seen the largest percentage increase. Both have grown over 70%.

Figure 7: Population Percentages Changes by Planning District-Cecil County 1980-2003

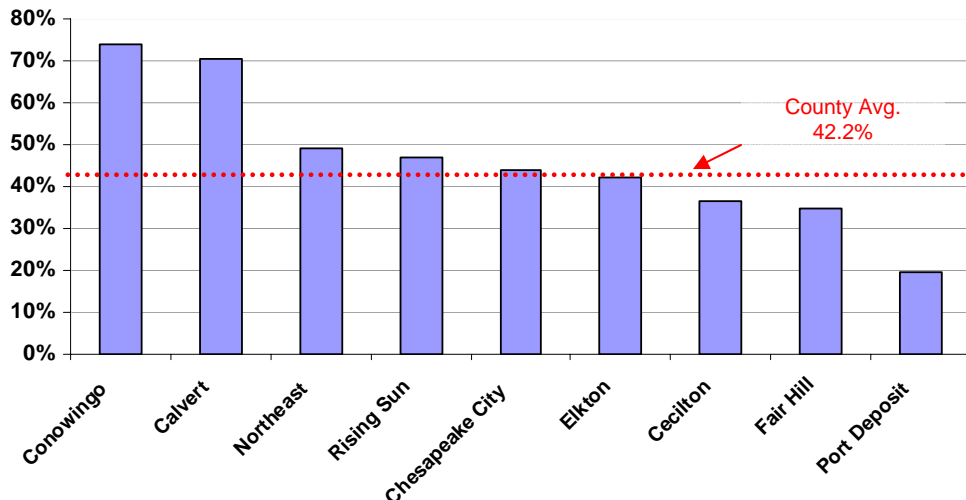


Table 4: Population Changes in Cecil County
Municipalities 1980-2002**Municipal Population Changes**

Our municipalities have traditionally served as core concentrations of population and employment. Tables 4 and 5 show the population changes in each of the 21 municipalities in New Castle & Cecil Counties.

Cecil County

Overall, Cecil County has seen an increase in most of its larger municipalities. In total, the population in municipalities increased by 10,355 bringing the total municipal population to 24,289 people. This represents an increase of 74.3% since 1980.

Town	1980	1990	2000	2002*	Changes 1980-2002	Pct Change 1980-2002
Elkton	6,468	9,073	11,893	13,094	6,626	102.4%
Perryville	2,018	2,456	3,672	3,693	1,675	83.0%
North East	1,469	1,913	2,733	2,745	1,276	86.9%
Rising Sun	1,160	1,263	1,702	1,757	597	51.5%
Charlestown	713	578	1,019	1,068	355	49.8%
Cecilton	496	489	474	475	-21	-4.2%
Port Deposit	699	685	676	673	-26	-3.7%
Chesapeake City	911	735	787	784	-127	-13.9%
Total	13,934	17,192	22,956	24,289	10,355	74.3%

Source: U.S. Census; * -Estimate

- Elkton has by far experienced the greatest amount of growth, both in absolute and percentage population increases. It alone added more than 13,000 of the 24,000 in total municipal population growth.
- The three smallest towns, Cecilton, Port Deposit and Chesapeake City, have seen their population fall over the time period.

New Castle County

New Castle has not fared as well as Cecil County when it comes to municipal growth. Overall, New Castle County municipalities have added a net total of 8,754 people.

- Newark, Middletown, Wilmington and Ardentown represent the only cities with a positive population growth.
- The other 9 cities have lost a combined total of 1,574 people.
- Middletown has more than doubled its population, adding 2,308 people to a total of 6,333. Its has also added considerably to its size unlike Newark and Wilmington. Its municipal boundaries have roughly doubled since 1980.

Table 5: Population Changes in New Castle County Municipalities
1980-2002

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	2002*	1980- 2002 Changes	Pct Change 1980-2002
Newark**	25,247	25,098	28,547	29,798	4,551	18.0%
Middletown**	2,946	3,834	6,161	6,333	3,387	115.0%
Wilmington	70,195	71,529	72,664	72,503	2,308	3.3%
Ardentown	223	325	300	305	82	36.8%
Ardencroft	288	282	267	272	-16	-5.6%
Bellefonte	1,279	1,243	1,249	1,263	-16	-1.3%
Newport	1,167	1,240	1,122	1,123	-44	-3.8%
New Castle	4,907	4,837	4,862	4,830	-77	-1.6%
Arden	579	477	474	475	-104	-18.0%
Odessa	398	303	286	282	-116	-29.1%
Townsend	475	322	346	351	-124	-26.1%
Delaware City	1,858	1,682	1,453	1,476	-382	-20.6%
Elsmere	6,493	5,935	5,800	5,798	-695	-10.7%
Total	116,055	117,107	123,531	124,809	8,754	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census; * -Estimate

** - Municipalities have annexed significant land since 1980

Municipal Population Changes (cont.)

Traditionally, our municipalities have served as hubs of economic growth and activity, as well as being sources of cultural & historic tourist attractions. Typically, they have transit supportive patterns of land use that also promote walking, bicycling, and shorter trip distances. Their history, design, or other intrinsic qualities make these places treasures that should be supported.

Incorporated areas in the New Castle County portion of the region have had difficulty in keeping their share of the population as illustrated in Table 6. While the population has been increasing in municipalities, it is being vastly outpaced by non-municipal growth in rest of the county. Cecil County's municipal share has actually increased since 1980.

Table 6: Population Changes within Municipalities 1980-2002

	1980	1990	2000	2002*
Cecil County	60,430	71,347	85,951	90,335
Total Municipal Population	13,394	17,192	22,956	24,289
Percent of County	22.2%	24.1%	26.7%	26.9%
New Castle County	398,115	441,946	500,265	512,370
Total Municipal Population	116,055	117,107	123,531	124,809
Percent of County	29.2%	26.5%	24.7%	24.4%
Regional Totals	458,545	513,293	586,216	602,705
Total Municipal Population	129,449	134,299	146,487	149,098
Percent of Region	28.2%	26.2%	25.0%	24.7%

Source: U.S. Census; *-Estimate

SEPTEMBER 2004 WILMAPCO DATA REPORT #1

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) is the federally mandated and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), for the Wilmington urbanized region of Cecil County, MD and New Castle County, DE. We partner with transportation agencies, state and local governments, and the public to ensure that the transportation investments that are made will satisfy the needs of our stakeholders and be consistent with federal transportation policy and local goals.



Address: WILMAPCO
 850 Library Avenue, Suite 100
 Newark, DE 19711
 Phone: 302.737.6205
 Cecil County Toll Free (888) 808-7088
 Fax: 302.737.9584