

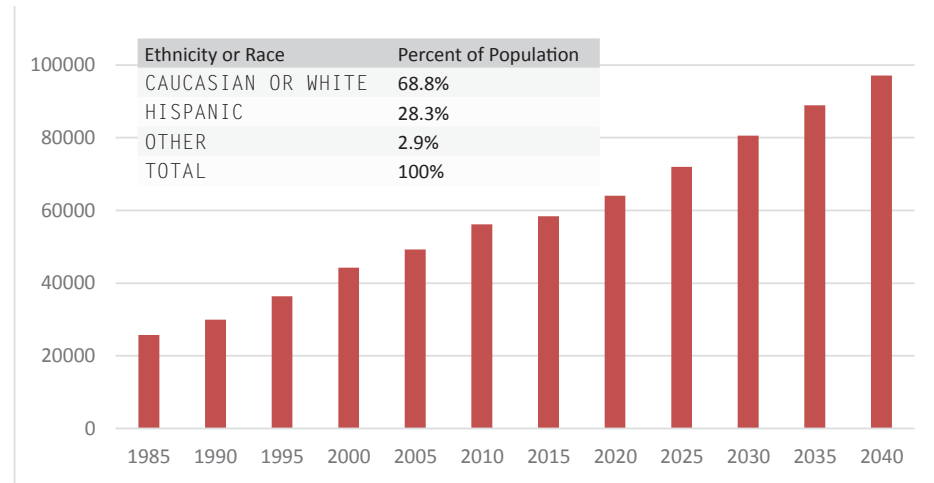
# POPULATION

U.S. Census numbers indicate that 57,302 people resided in Garfield County in 2013. The County is the 12th most populated county of Colorado's 64 counties. Garfield County has experienced a steady increase in population over the past few decades, but with more rapid growth of 2.7 percent, occurring between 2004 and 2009. The growth was largely the result of a burgeoning natural gas extraction industry, but also due to an ongoing expansion of tourism, second home development, health care, and regional services. During this period, there was a significant in-migration of new workers and families, which fueled housing development, retail expansion, and rapid wage growth. At times during this period, Garfield County experienced shortages of labor and a rapidly appreciating housing market.

In 2008, an abundance of new natural gas reserves were uncovered elsewhere around the country and the value of natural gas began a national decline. The national recession also cut spending on travel, tourism, and second home development, with predictable declines in all measures of local economic activity.

Due to the recession, population declined slightly between 2009 and 2011, and has been increasing modestly since 2012 at rate of 0.7 percent. Forecasts

Figure 3: Population growth and ethnicity  
Source: State Demography Office



project that the population of Garfield County will resume more rapid growth in 2015, and will continue at a pace in excess of two percent over the next 20 years, reaching a projected doubling of population by 2040.

Garfield County has five municipalities that stretch along the Colorado River and the Interstate 70 corridor, and one municipality, Carbondale, that is situated along State Highway 133 and the Roaring Fork River. In 2015, Garfield County also recognized the Town of Carbonate as an incorporated town located in the heart of the Flat Tops Wilderness Area; this town, however, has no permanent residents. Glenwood Springs remains the largest community in the County. In the period from 1990 to 2010, the Town of Rifle, which is about 25 miles west of Glenwood Springs, absorbed the majority share of the County's new growth, largely because of Rifle's proximity to the most active natural gas development areas. Population in unincorporated areas, as a percent of total county residents, shrank from 57 percent of all county residents in 1990 to 40 percent in 2013. Each municipality has experienced different rates of growth, with New Castle and Silt having the largest percentage of growth in population over the past 10 years.

The County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, with an average annual percent change of 2.4 percent between 2000 and 2010.

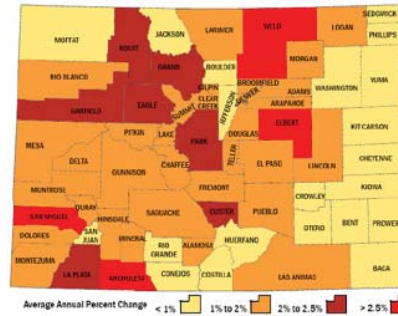


Figure 4: Population Growth Colorado (2010-2040)  
Source: Colorado Division of Local Government

Area	Population 2004	Population 2014	10 Year % Change
CARBONDALE	5542	6558	15.49%
GLENWOOD SPRINGS	8651	9862	12.28%
NEW CASTLE	3176	4577	30.61%
SILT	2190	3013	27.31%
RIFLE	7604	9289	18.14%
PARACHUTE	1010	1096	7.85%
UNINCORPORATED AREAS	19983	23153	13.69%
TOTAL	50160	57548	12.84%

# ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Like much of western Colorado, Garfield County has a largely Caucasian population, with a significant Hispanic minority population, which grew rapidly during the mid-2000s energy boom. The County's proportion of Hispanic and Anglo populations mirrors that of the state as a whole, with almost 30 percent of the population of Hispanic ethnicity. The state's ethnic diversity is projected to continue to increase over the next 25 years, with the majority of that growth being in the Hispanic population, especially in the population under 25 years.

# MIGRATION

The County historically has seen a large out migration of high school graduates or similarly aged youth, followed by a large influx of adults between the ages of 30 and 35. The immigration is presumed to be strong due to the high quality of life and amenities that exist within the County for young families and early career opportunities. The County also experiences a steady out-migration trend relative to age, with the most significant out-migration happening after retirement age. During the recent recession, the County also had a significant out-migration of some of the workforce, but out-migration has slowed and is projected to have a net increase of migration in 2015.



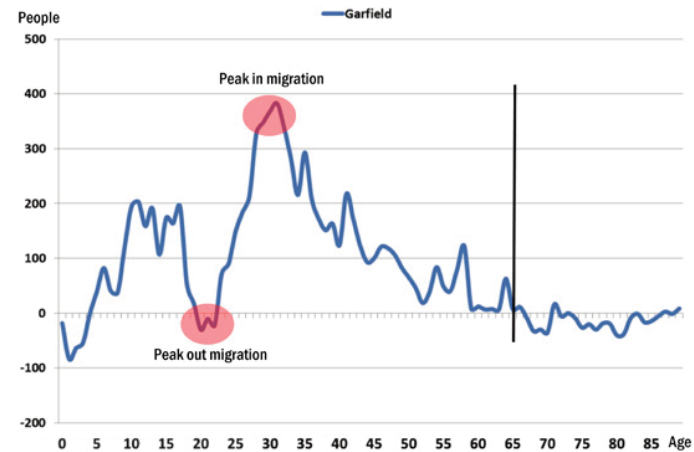


Figure 6: County Migration by Age: 2000 to 2010  
Source: Colorado State Demography Office and U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 7: Colorado Population by Race/Ethnicity  
Source: Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office.

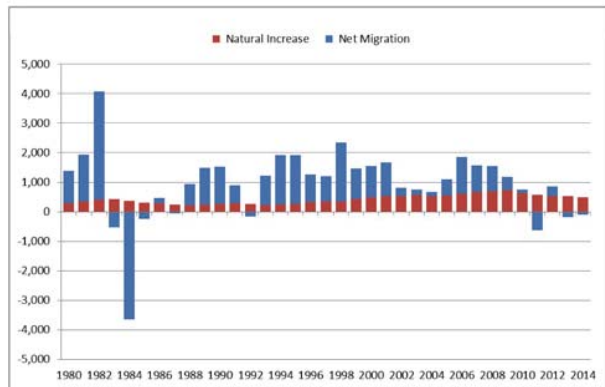


Figure 5: Garfield County Components of Population Change  
Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office

