

INCREASE OF POPULATION
IN THE UNITED STATES
1910-1920

A STUDY OF CHANGES IN THE POPULATION OF DIVISIONS,
STATES, COUNTIES, AND RURAL AND URBAN AREAS,
AND IN SEX, COLOR, AND NATIVITY, AT
THE FOURTEENTH CENSUS

BY

WILLIAM S. ROSSITER



CENSUS MONOGRAPHS

I

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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENSUS.

The text of the main reports of the Fourteenth Census is for the most part limited to such explanatory matter as was deemed necessary for a correct understanding of the statistical tables. This limitation was decided upon in order to expedite the publication of the main reports and with a view to the preparation of a series of supplementary monographs analyzing and interpreting some of the more important subjects covered by the census inquiries. While the adoption of this policy marks a departure from usual census procedure, it is clearly a long step in advance in the effort to make the decennial census of as much practical value to the Nation as possible. I have pleasure in adding that the decision of the bureau to publish this series of monographs is in line with the policy long urged by individuals and scientific organizations interested in the widest use of census returns and in the highest efficiency of the bureau.

The first of this series is submitted herewith. To Mr. William S. Rossiter, of Concord, N. H., long an official of this bureau, chairman of the advisory committee to the Director of the Census and president of the American Statistical Association, was assigned the task of preparing a study of the increase of population as shown at the last census. His knowledge of the bureau and his previous work in the field of population analysis were believed especially to qualify him for this undertaking. Having but limited time available, Mr. Rossiter was fortunate in securing the assistance of Mr. Willard L. Thorp, instructor in Social and Economic Institutions at Amherst College, of whose untiring and invaluable assistance in preparing data and writing much of the text he desires me to make full and grateful acknowledgment.

Mr. Rossiter also expresses keen appreciation of the expert aid rendered by Mr. LeVerne Beales of this bureau, who supervised the preparation of tables, edited manuscript, and contributed sections here and there which have greatly aided in strengthening this narrative of population change.

It is appropriate that the first of this new series of census publications should deal with population increase as recorded by the historic decennial census of the United States. Accordingly, in the following pages is presented an orderly but not over-detailed narrative, which it is hoped will be found to gather interest and significance as it proceeds, of the increase of the Nation from 1910 to 1920, with some analysis of the changes which occurred during that period in the composition and residence of the population.

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INTRODUCTORY SURVEY.

Four quarto volumes comprise the tabular presentation of the detailed returns of population at the Fourteenth Census of the United States. Within these volumes can be found all facts usually collected by the Government as a statistical record of the people. They form the basis for reaching decisions in innumerable official and private transactions, but for the average citizen, who in the end bears the responsibility and expense of the enterprise, they possess little real interest.

Although the census volumes are available to all and are to be found in the principal libraries, the size and tabular character of the volumes deter the ordinary inquirer from attempts to learn the significance of census returns. In consequence, the population census, decade after decade, has been of interest principally to students of statistics, political economy, and government. The full public usefulness of these tabular records is seldom realized by Nation, state, or community, because much of the significance of the returns is not properly brought out by consistent and adequate analysis. Heated controversies, indeed, have arisen and writers have been subjected to criticism merely because accurate interpretation of census figures led to public knowledge of unpleasant civic truths.

An attempt is here made to present a statistical picture of national progress. Anyone who desires to read the history of the United States in terms of changing numbers, racial strains, and places of residence, during a decade crowded with epoch-making events, may do so in these pages. It is especially the hope of the Director of the Census and of the author that this narrative, though dealing solely with the results of the census returns, will be so illuminated by the vast national changes which the census records that the element of human interest will be ever present. Beyond all interest to individuals, however, is the possibility that clear presentation of the facts of population change may be of real help to some of the states or smaller subdivisions of the Union, where local problems of increase or decrease of inhabitants or change in race proportions may have become unsettling influences. Upon such matters it is generally the case that the Federal census alone offers authoritative information.

The purpose of this monograph is primarily to describe the location and the group characteristics of the men, women, and children who composed the increase which took place from 1910 to 1920 in the population of the United States. This increase was 13,738,354 and represented the excess of inhabitants in the Nation enumerated by the Fourteenth Census, 1920, over the number enumerated at the Thirteenth Census, 1910. Clearly enough, these persons were not in existence or not in the United States April 15, 1910, the enumeration date of the Thirteenth Census. This increment, however, represented but approximately one-half of the actual change which took place in the American people. The population of the United States at the Thirteenth Census was 91,972,266. How many of these persons were again enumerated at the Fourteenth Census, 1920? The answer to this question proves exceedingly interesting, since "increase of population" is commonly considered to represent merely the excess shown at a given enumeration over the last preceding enumeration.

Between the taking of the Thirteenth Census and that of the Fourteenth, a scant 10 years (April 15, 1910, to January 1, 1920) elapsed. During that period the estimated number of deaths of persons enumerated in 1910 was 11,240,000,¹ hence the survivors of the Thirteenth Census available for enumeration at the Fourteenth Census, if in the United States, numbered only 80,730,000 on January 1, 1920. Not all these persons, however, were in this country on that date.

The decade was unusual for the great number of departures of aliens and foreign-born and native-born citizens to take part in the World War or to participate in hospital or other activities connected with it. The number of survivors, in 1920, of the emigrants who left the United States between 1910 and 1920 has been estimated at 2,280,000.² Hence, the survivors in this country of the Thirteenth Census, as previously specified, were further reduced

¹ Davis and Foudray, U. S. Census Bureau, 1922. This estimate was made from United States Life Tables, 1910, for both sexes and all races (p. 16), and the annual mortality rates for the death-registration area (Mortality Statistics, 1919, p. 9).

² Emigration of aliens, April 15, 1910, to December 31, 1919, 2,070,000; emigration of citizens, July 1, 1917, to December 31, 1919, 130,000 (not recorded prior to July 1, 1917); excess of citizens departing (including nonemigrants) over citizens arriving (assumed to represent returning nonemigrants), April 15, 1910, to June 30, 1917, 240,000; estimated total emigration, 2,440,000; estimated mortality to January 1, 1920 (included in total mortality, 11,240,000, among persons enumerated in 1910), 160,000; estimated survivors January 1, 1920, of emigrants during decade, 2,280,000.

by that number, leaving 78,450,000.¹ Therefore, instead of there being some 90,000,000 persons to enumerate again, together with the normal decennial increase, as might be supposed, the number of persons to be counted at the Fourteenth Census who had been counted before at least once did not greatly exceed the population enumerated 20 years before, 76,000,000.

It remained for the Nation, when the count was made in 1920, to have made good by births and by immigration, first, the shrinkage noted from the population returned at the previous census, and second, having replaced the losses, to supply additional numbers to represent a normal increase over the total shown 10 years before.

This replacement and increase were accomplished about as follows:

Natives under 5 years of age, 1920.....	11,528,000
Natives from 5 to 9 years of age, inclusive, 1920.....	17,228,000
Total natives under 10 years of age.....	28,756,000
Survivors of natives born between January 1 and April 15, 1910.....	630,000
Surviving natives born since April 15, 1910.....	22,126,000
Surviving immigrants ²	5,345,000
Total additions (stated as a multiple of 10,000).....	27,470,000
Survivors of the Thirteenth Census.....	78,450,000
Estimated population, 1920.....	105,920,000

The close similarity between the total thus estimated and the number actually enumerated at the Fourteenth Census (105,710,620) constitutes credible evidence of the substantial completeness of the Fourteenth Census enumeration. Moreover, it is possible, or even probable, that the difference of only 210,000, or one-fifth of 1 per cent, between the total as estimated and as enumerated is due in large part to an error in the estimated mortality.

¹ The actual number of Thirteenth Census survivors in this country was somewhat larger, for the reason that the 2,280,000 survivors of the emigrants during the decade 1910-1920 included an indeterminate number of persons who had immigrated to this country within the same decade. The error resulting from the assumption that all the emigrants during the decade were persons who had been enumerated in 1910 is, however, offset by the assumption that all the survivors of the immigrants during the same decade were in the United States in 1920.

² Total immigration, April 15, 1910, to December 31, 1919, 5,775,000; estimated mortality between arrival in the United States and December 31, 1919, 430,000; survivors, 5,345,000.

It is clear that vast changes in the composition and distribution of the population of the United States must have occurred in this brief period of 10 years, involving the reclassification of a much larger number of persons than the 13,700,000 representing the net increase of population at the Fourteenth Census.

By the act of Congress providing for the taking of the Thirteenth Census of the United States (1910) the date of enumeration was set as of April 15. This act broke the long-established precedent of taking the census as of June 1 of the census year. It also made impossible the comparison of exact decennial periods. The Thirteenth Census, in consequence of this change, fell one and one-half months short of covering a full decade. As the Fourteenth Census approached, the law providing for it again involved a change, setting January 1 of the census year as the date of enumeration. Thus another decade was "short," this time three and a half months less than a full decade, while the enumeration fell five months less than 20 years after the Twelfth Census.

In all of the computations employed in this monograph it has been impossible to take these fractional shortages into account. Since the labor involved would have been prohibitive, the two periods specified have in general been accepted as full decades, and all calculations have been made on that basis.

Nevertheless, these shortages are of some consequence statistically. In delicate computations, the differences involved might prove important. If the Thirteenth Census had been taken June 1, 1910, instead of April 15, 1910, and a full decade covered, the result would have been approximately as follows:

Estimated population June 1, 1910.....	92,149,155
Actual population June 1, 1900.....	75,994,575
Estimated 10-year increase.....	16,154,580
Increase during official census period.....	15,977,691
Difference.....	176,889
Estimated 10-year per cent of increase.....	21.3
Official per cent of increase.....	21.0

There is a difference, for the short period of 45 days, of 177,000, or three-tenths of 1 per cent. If a corresponding estimate be made

to cover a full decade from the census of 1910 to that of 1920, the following result appears:

Estimated population April 15, 1920.....	106,123,300
Actual population April 15, 1910.....	91,972,266
Estimated 10-year increase.....	14,151,034
Increase during official census period.....	13,738,354
Difference.....	412,740
Estimated 10-year per cent of increase.....	15.1
Official per cent of increase.....	14.9

For the shortage of three and a half months here involved, a marked difference appears of over 400,000, or five-tenths of 1 per cent. If, however, these changes prove in the end to be of service in leading to the permanent adoption of the best date for census taking, the temporary inaccuracies here noted will be of little consequence.

To analyze the growth of population from 1910 to 1920 most effectively, it is advisable, first, to sketch the economic background, describing very briefly the changes and the forces at work from 1910 to 1920 which might influence population increase as recorded at the Fourteenth Census, and second, to summarize concisely the results of previous censuses and the changing rates of national growth. With the economic condition of the nation and the facts of previous population change clearly before the reader, it is then possible to sketch the increase or decrease recorded in 1920 of the nation as a whole and of its geographic divisions, states, and smaller subdivisions, and then to analyze the population by its racial elements, with continual references to the more vital and significant changes and tendencies of the decade. Discussion of actual increase or decrease and accompanying changes naturally ends here, but no study of this character would be complete for 1920 without some reference, more or less detailed, to the influence upon population of changes in the family, in marriage, birth, and death rates, and also in manufactures and agriculture during a decade when they exerted unwonted influence upon population.

WILLIAM S. ROSSITER.