

# 1950 CENSUS OF POPULATION

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### POPULATION OF RHODE ISLAND: APRIL 1, 1950

(This is one of a series of reports presenting final population figures for selected areas in each State. In this series, reports are numbered alphabetically by States. Additional reports will be issued as final figures for other States become available)

The total population of Rhode Island on April 1, 1950, was 791,896, according to final figures for the State released today by Roy V. Peel, Director, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. During the previous 10 years, the population of the State increased by 78,550, or 11.0 percent, over the 713,346 persons enumerated in 1940. Among the States and the District of Columbia, Rhode Island ranked thirty-seventh in population. The 1950 population of Rhode Island was more than 11 times as large as its population 160 years ago when it was enumerated in the first Federal census.

According to the new urban definition, Rhode Island had 667,212 persons living in urban territory and 124,864 in rural territory. The urban population comprised 84.3 percent of the population of the State.

All five of the counties in Rhode Island increased in population between 1940 and 1950. The rates of gain ranged from 4.5 percent for Providence County to 49.4 percent for Washington County. The largest numerical increase was recorded in Providence County, which increased by 24,675. The counties in Rhode Island ranged in size from Bristol with a population of 29,079 to Providence with a population of 574,973.

Rhode Island had 7 places incorporated as cities and 17 unincorporated places of 1,000 inhabitants or more. There were 539,523 persons in the cities and 47,427 in the unincorporated places. All the cities had 2,500 inhabitants or more. Of the inhabitants of the unincorporated places, 20,024 were in the 13 places of 1,000 to 2,500 inhabitants. The cities ranged in size from Central Falls with a population of 23,550 to Providence with a population of 248,674.

Under the urban definition established for use in the 1950 Census, the urban population comprises all persons living in (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, boroughs, towns,<sup>1</sup> and villages; (b) the densely settled urban fringe; including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, around cities of 50,000 or more; and (c) unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside any urban fringe. The remaining population is classified as rural. According to the urban definition used in previous censuses, the urban population comprised all persons living in incorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more and areas (usually minor civil divisions) classified as urban under special rules relating to population size and density.

In both definitions, the most important component of the urban territory is the group of incorporated places having 2,500 inhabitants or more. A definition of urban territory restricted to such places, however, would exclude a number of equally large and densely settled places, merely because they were not incorporated places. Under the old definition, an effort was made to avoid some of the more obvious omissions by the inclusion of the places urban under special rules. Even with these rules, however, many large and closely built-up places were excluded from the urban territory. To improve the situation in the 1950 Census, the Bureau of the Census set up, in advance of enumeration, boundaries for urban-fringe areas around cities of 50,000 or more and for unincorporated places outside urban fringes. All the

<sup>1</sup> Except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin, where "towns" are minor civil divisions of counties and are not necessarily densely settled centers like the towns in other States.

population residing in urban-fringe areas and in unincorporated places of 2,500 or more is classified as urban according to the 1950 definition. (Of course, the incorporated places of 2,500 or more are urban in their own right.) Consequently, the special rules of the old definition are no longer necessary.

According to the new urban definition, the 1950 urban population of Rhode Island consisted of the following components: (1) The 539,523 inhabitants of the seven cities in the State, all of which had more than 2,500 inhabitants; (2) the 27,403 inhabitants of the four specially delineated unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more; and (3) the 100,286 persons living outside of incorporated urban places in the Rhode Island parts of the urban-fringe areas of Providence and Fall River, Mass. There were 12 towns which were classified as urban under special rule according to the old definition.

The 1950 urban population under the old definition, therefore, consisted of the 539,523 inhabitants of the 7 cities and the 160,887 inhabitants of the 12 places urban under special rule. According to the new definition, 95,079 of the inhabitants of the places urban under special rule were urban because they were in urban-fringe areas, 22,179 were urban because they were in unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more, and 43,629 were included in the rural population. On the other hand, the new definition included in the urban population 5,224 persons living in an unincorporated place of 2,500 inhabitants or more and an additional 5,207 persons living in urban-fringe areas outside the 12 places urban under special rule, who would have been included in the rural population according to the old definition. The net loss in the urban population which resulted from the change in definition, therefore, is 33,198.

Table 1.--POPULATION OF RHODE ISLAND, URBAN AND RURAL:  
1790 TO 1950

(For description of new and old urban definitions, see text)

Date	Population			Percent urban
	Total	Urban	Rural	
New urban definition, 1950 (Apr. 1)..	791,896	667,212	124,684	84.3
Old urban definition:				
1950 (Apr. 1).....	791,896	700,410	91,486	88.4
1940 (Apr. 1).....	713,346	653,383	59,963	91.6
1930 (Apr. 1).....	687,497	635,429	52,068	92.4
1920 (Jan. 1).....	604,397	555,146	49,251	91.9
1910 (Apr. 15).....	542,610	493,938	48,672	91.0
1900 (June 1).....	428,556	378,471	50,085	88.3
1890 (June 1).....	345,506	294,843	50,663	85.3
1880 (June 1).....	276,531	226,618	49,913	82.0
1870 (June 1).....	217,353	162,107	55,246	74.6
1860 (June 1).....	174,620	110,535	64,085	63.3
1850 (June 1).....	147,545	82,084	65,461	55.6
1840 (June 1).....	108,830	47,662	61,168	43.8
1830 (June 1).....	97,199	30,372	66,827	31.2
1820 (Aug. 7).....	83,059	19,086	63,973	23.0
1810 (Aug. 6).....	76,931	17,978	58,953	23.4
1800 (Aug. 4).....	69,122	14,353	54,769	20.8
1790 (Aug. 2).....	68,825	13,096	55,729	19.0

Table 2.--POPULATION OF RHODE ISLAND, BY COUNTIES: 1950 AND 1940

County	Population		Percent increase, 1940 to 1950
	1950	1940	
The State.....	791,896	713,346	11.0
Bristol.....	29,079	25,548	13.8
Kent.....	77,763	58,311	33.4
Newport.....	61,539	46,696	31.8
Providence.....	574,973	550,298	4.5
Washington.....	48,542	32,493	49.4

Table 3.--POPULATION OF ALL INCORPORATED PLACES AND OF UNINCORPORATED PLACES OF 1,000 OR MORE: 1950 AND 1940

("Uninc." designates an unincorporated place. Figures for 1940 are not available for unincorporated places. Specific unincorporated places in urban-fringe areas have not been separately identified and therefore are not listed in this table)

Place	County	Population		Place	County	Population	
		1950	1940			1950	1940
Ashaway (uninc.).....	Washington.....	1,022	...	Mapleville-Oakland (uninc.).....	Providence.....	1,241	...
Bradford (uninc.).....	Washington.....	1,024	...	Narragansett Pier (uninc.)	Washington.....	1,247	...
Bristol (uninc.).....	Bristol.....	10,335	...	Newport.....	Newport.....	37,564	30,532
Central Falls.....	Providence.....	23,550	25,248	Pascoag-Bridgeton (uninc.)	Providence.....	2,421	...
Cranton.....	Providence.....	55,060	47,085	Pawtucket.....	Providence.....	81,436	75,797
Georgiaville (uninc.).....	Providence.....	1,247	...	Providence.....	Providence.....	248,674	253,504
Harrisville (uninc.).....	Providence.....	1,055	...	Slatersville (uninc.).....	Providence.....	1,780	...
Hope Valley-Wyoming (uninc.).....	Washington.....	1,315	...	Wakefield-Peacedale (uninc.).....	Washington.....	5,224	...
Island Park-The Hummocks (uninc.).....	Newport.....	1,322	...	Warwick.....	Kent.....	43,028	28,757
Jamestown (uninc.).....	Newport.....	1,757	...	Westerly (uninc.).....	Washington.....	8,415	...
Kingston (uninc.).....	Washington.....	2,156	...	Wickford (uninc.).....	Washington.....	2,437	...
Manville (uninc.).....	Providence.....	3,429	...	Woonsocket.....	Providence.....	50,211	49,303

Table 4.--POPULATION OF COUNTIES, BY MINOR CIVIL DIVISIONS: 1950

County and minor civil division	Population, 1950	County and minor civil division	Population, 1950	County and minor civil division	Population, 1950
BRISTOL COUNTY.....	29,079	NEWPORT COUNTY--Con.		PROVIDENCE COUNTY--Con.	
Barrington town.....	8,246	Newport city.....	37,564	North Smithfield town.....	5,726
Bristol town.....	12,320	New Shoreham town.....	732	Pawtucket city.....	81,436
Warren town.....	8,513	Portsmouth town.....	6,578	Providence city.....	248,674
		Tiverton town.....	5,659	Scituate town.....	3,905
KENT COUNTY.....	77,763			Smithfield town.....	6,690
Coventry town.....	9,869	PROVIDENCE COUNTY.....	574,973	Woonsocket city.....	50,211
East Greenwich town.....	4,923	Burrillville town.....	8,774		
Warwick city.....	43,028	Central Falls city.....	23,550	WASHINGTON COUNTY.....	48,542
West Greenwich town.....	847	Cranton city.....	55,060	Charlestown town.....	1,598
West Warwick town.....	19,096	Cumberland town.....	12,842	Exeter town.....	1,870
		East Providence town.....	35,871	Hopkinton town.....	3,676
NEWPORT COUNTY.....	61,539	Foster town.....	1,630	Narragansett town.....	2,288
Jamestown town.....	2,068	Glocester town.....	2,682	North Kingstown town.....	14,810
Little Compton town.....	1,556	Johnston town.....	12,725	Richmond town.....	1,772
Middletown town.....	7,382	Lincoln town.....	11,270	South Kingstown town.....	10,148
		North Providence town.....	13,927	Westerly town.....	12,380