County Population Change: 1930 to 1940

The U.S. population grew by 7.3 percent between 1930 and 1940, the lowest rate of increase of any decade before or since, and less than half the 16.2 percent increase for the 1920s. The slowdown in the nation’s population growth was due in part to reduced immigration and lower fertility levels and reflected the impact of the Great Depression.

Population declines exceeded 25 percent for the 1930s in some largely rural and agricultural counties of southwestern Kansas and the panhandle of Oklahoma that were impacted by the Dust Bowl. These declines were typically under 10,000.

Clark County, Nevada, home to Las Vegas, nearly doubled in population during the 1930s to 16,000 people. Its growth was boosted in part by the construction of Hoover Dam during the decade.

California had sizable population growth in the 1930s, bolstered by migration from the Great Plains region. Los Angeles County had the biggest numeric increase in population of any county in the 1930s, growing by more than 0.5 million people.

NOTES: Data are from the 1930 and 1940 censuses and the figures are for counties and county equivalents in the 48 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii. County geography is as of 2010.