



Poor National and Local Economies Keep People from Moving An Analysis of 2009 County Population Estimates for Northeast Ohio¹

Prepared by

Mark Salling, Ph.D.

The Center for Community Solutions

and

Northern Ohio Data & Information Service (NODIS)

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

Cleveland State University

March 26, 2010

This week, the U.S. Census Bureau released its 2009 population estimates for counties and metropolitan areas. This paper reports on some of the data for Cuyahoga County and the seven-county region—Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit Counties.

While the data provide indications of recent trends, it should be emphasized that they are estimates and that the 2010 Census will provide a more accurate measure of population changes since the 2000 Census. In a year from now, when the 2010 Census counts are released, we will be able to be more definitive about changes in population. Nevertheless, the current estimates suggest trends that will impact the 2010 counts.

Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga County's population losses have apparently slowed in the last year or two, compared to the more precipitous declines seen in the mid-2000s (Figure 1). Figure 2 shows annual percentage losses increasing from 2000 through the first half of the decade and a decline in the rate of loss over the last three years.

Between July 1, 2000, and July 1, 2008, Cuyahoga County lost an estimated 109,193 persons, an annual rate of 13,649 per year. That was a 7.84 percent loss in population. But in the last year, Cuyahoga County lost an estimated 7,171 persons, a 0.56 percent loss of population.

Comparison with Other Large Counties

Only Wayne County, with Detroit as its major city, lost more population than Cuyahoga County from 2000 to 2009 – 132,910 persons – and lost 109,734 of those from 2000 to 2008, a rate of 13,716

¹ See <http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.html>

per year. Like Cuyahoga, Wayne County slowed in its loss in the last year – to 23,176 persons or 1.19 percent of its 2008 population.

Significant losses were also seen in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh) in the 2000 to 2009 period (40,247 or 4.24 percent), though it had an estimated gain of 267 persons in the last year. Other counties with major cities that lost substantial population from 2000 to 2009 include: Chicago's Cook County (89,824), although it rebounded with a gain of 30,332 from 2008 to 2009; Buffalo's Erie County (40,247), with a drop in losses to only 611 in the last year; St. Louis County (23,956), also reversing its losses to a small gain (77) in the last year; Essex County, NJ., home of Newark and other medium-sized cities in the New York metropolitan area, with a loss of 25,227 in the first eight years of the decade, but with growth of 2,569 in the last year; Baltimore County with initial losses of 10,563, but a reduced loss of only 673 in the 2008 to 2009 period.

In Ohio, most other major counties either saw stable population totals or some growth. Montgomery County (Dayton) saw losses (Figure 3).

These significant reductions and reversals of earlier population losses in major Midwest and Eastern counties and in Ohio in the last year or more have resulted from declines in outmigration.

The Region and Migration

Migration from urban places that are hard-hit by declining manufacturing industries--such as Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and others--is slowed when the national economy is poor and offers few opportunities to move in order to find jobs. Furthermore, the current housing and credit-crunch for new housing construction slows the outward movement of households to suburbanizing counties.

Because of Cuyahoga County's losses, the seven-county region experienced losses in population throughout the nine-year period from 2000 to 2009 (Figure 4). The region lost an estimated 51,740 persons in that period. The surrounding counties gained population through migration from Cuyahoga County. These counties, except Ashtabula, grew modestly in population (Figure 5). Medina had the fastest rate of population growth; Geauga leveled off in growth in the last few years. Together, the counties surrounding Cuyahoga grew by over 66,000 persons from 2000 to 2009 (Figure 6).

Aside from the gains due to migration from Cuyahoga County to other counties, population growth in the region is attributable to natural increases, i.e., more births than deaths. The 321,777 births in the seven-county region more than offset the 255,682 deaths, resulting in a net of 66,095 persons. However, the region lost significant numbers of persons through migration. While an estimated 34,626 persons were added through international migration, losses to other parts of the state and nation amounted to an estimated 154,257 persons, a net of -119,931.

The last year saw reductions in outmigration in the region and Cuyahoga County in particular (Figures 7 and 8). The six counties around Cuyahoga saw net domestic migration losses in the last year (Figure 9).

The slowing of population loss in Cuyahoga County is due to reduced losses from migration. The estimated annual domestic migration loss from 2000 to 2008 was 18,038; it was only 10,875 in the last year, a decline of almost 40 percent in the rate of net domestic migration.

Figures 10 through 15 report the components of population change for the other six counties in the region.

Summit County (Figure 10) had the greatest population losses. Summit and Cuyahoga counties provide the bulk of households moving to Medina County (Figure 11). After seeing positive migration from 2000 to 2008 (principally from Cuyahoga County), Geauga and Lorain counties (Figures 12 and 13) experienced losses from domestic migration in the last year. Little changed in Lake County's profile (Figure 14), including its relatively small migration numbers. Portage County (Figure 15) gained from migration – likely at the expense of Summit and because of its university student population.

The State

Maps 1 and 2 show the population changes statewide, first for the annual change from 2000 to 2008, and then for the change from 2008 to 2009.

Heavy losses of population in Cuyahoga, Mahoning, Trumbull, and Montgomery counties are contrasted by large population gains in some of the suburban counties around Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton Counties. By 2008, the urban counties were recovering—those that were losing population had started growing or at least slowed their population losses. Hamilton, which grew in the 2000 to 2008 period, grew faster in the year from 2008 to 2009.

Conclusion

Overall, these changes support the generalization that counties with large cities stopped bleeding population as rapidly as earlier in the decade.

It is expected that the Census Bureau will issue 2009 population estimates for county subdivisions in the summer of 2010. Those data will indicate whether the apparently slowed outmigration of population from urban counties like Cuyahoga is also having a dampening effect on outmigration from their central cities. Speculation of dire population losses in Cleveland may be allayed should those estimates reflect such a reduced trend in outmigration. Of course, only the 2010 Census count will settle the issue.

Figure 1

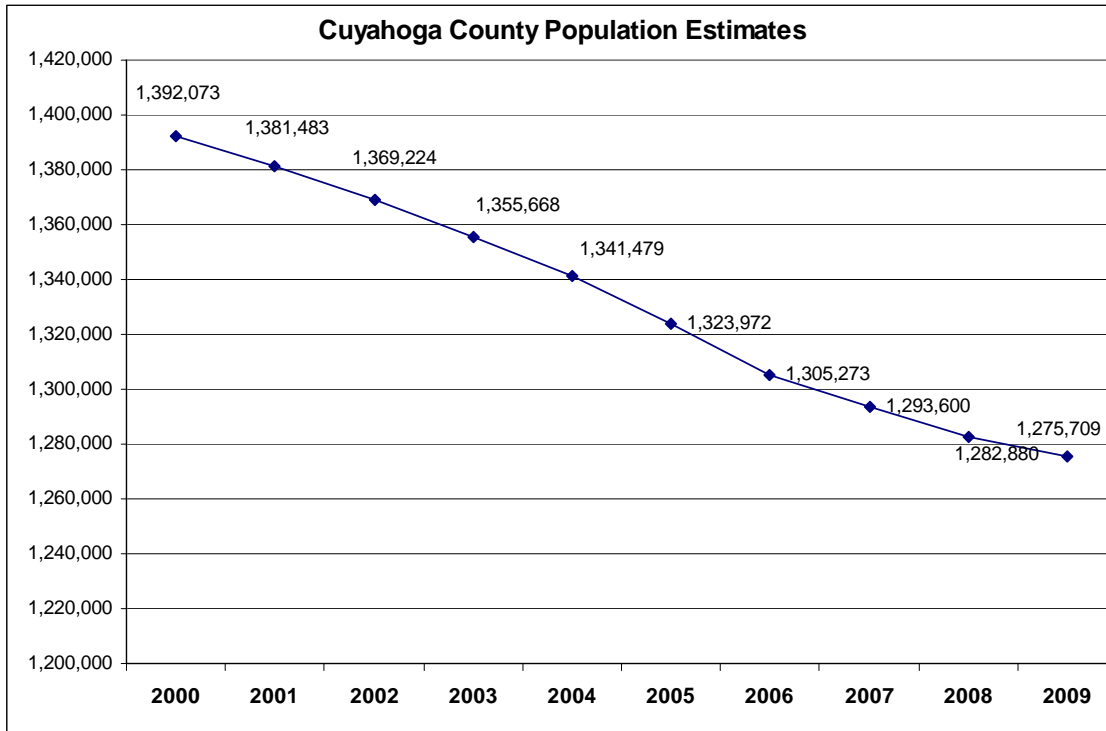


Figure 2

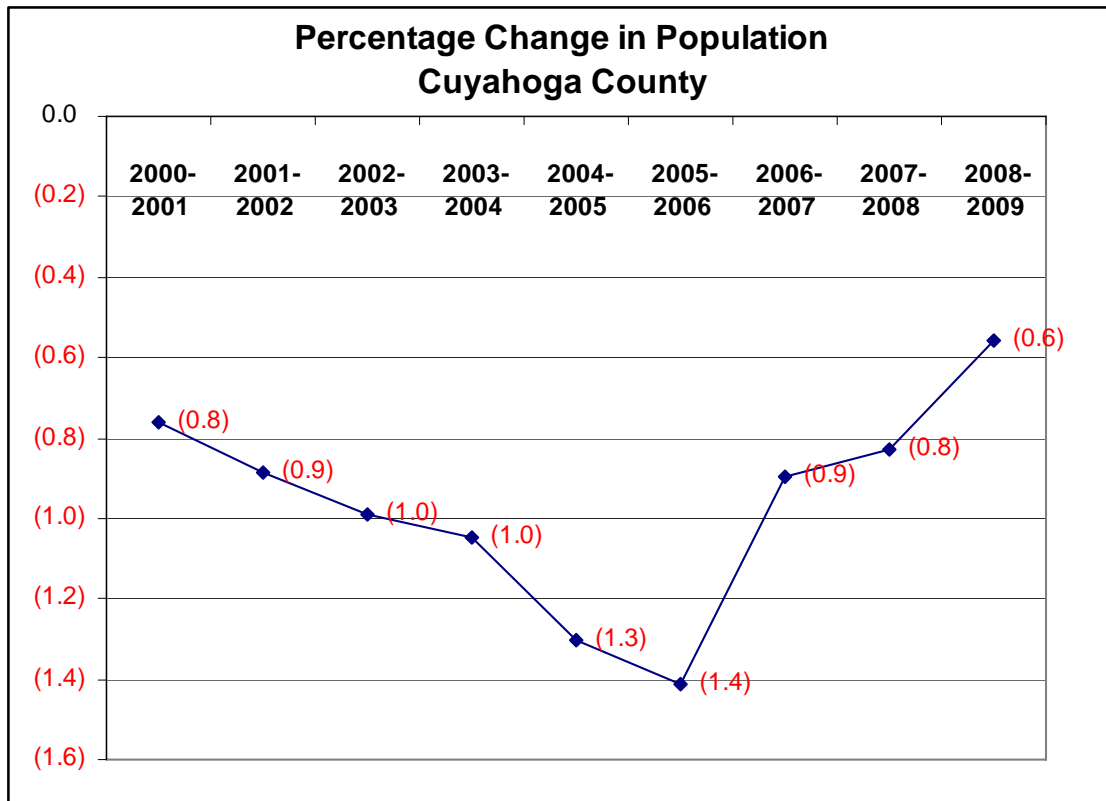


Figure 3

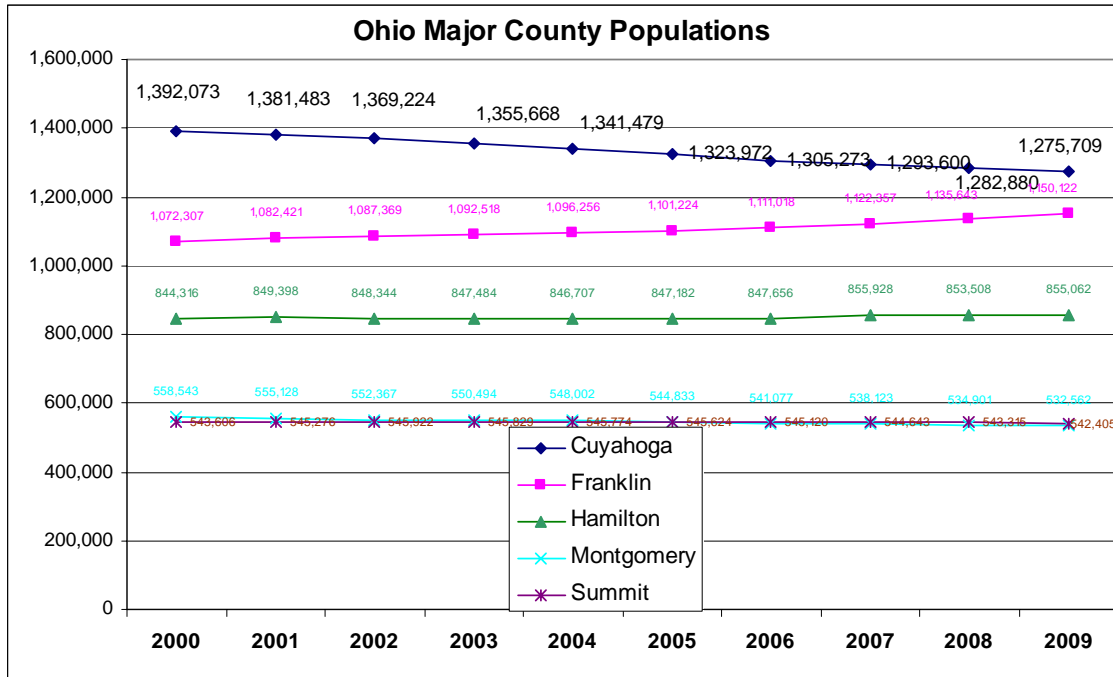


Figure 4

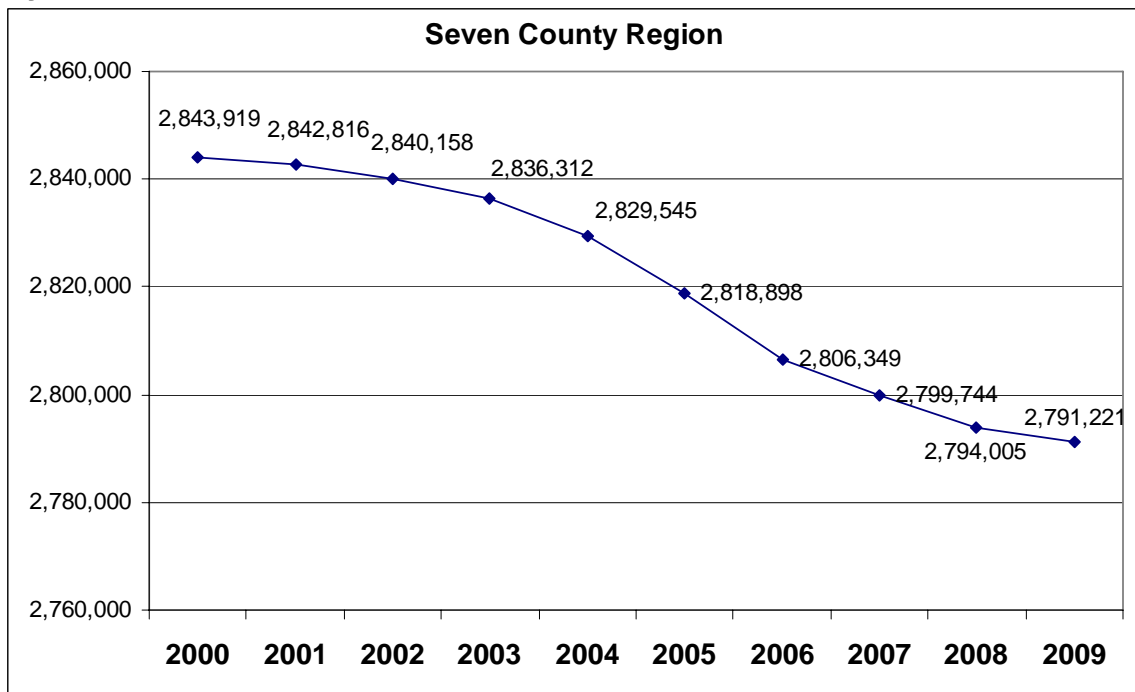


Figure 5

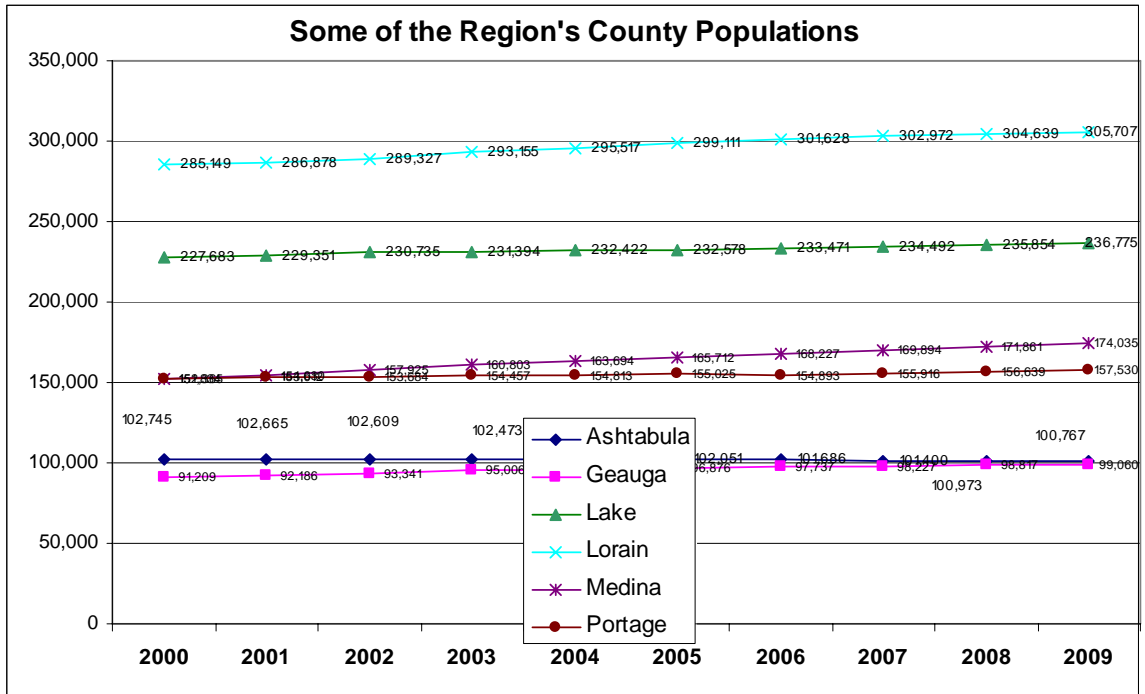


Figure 6

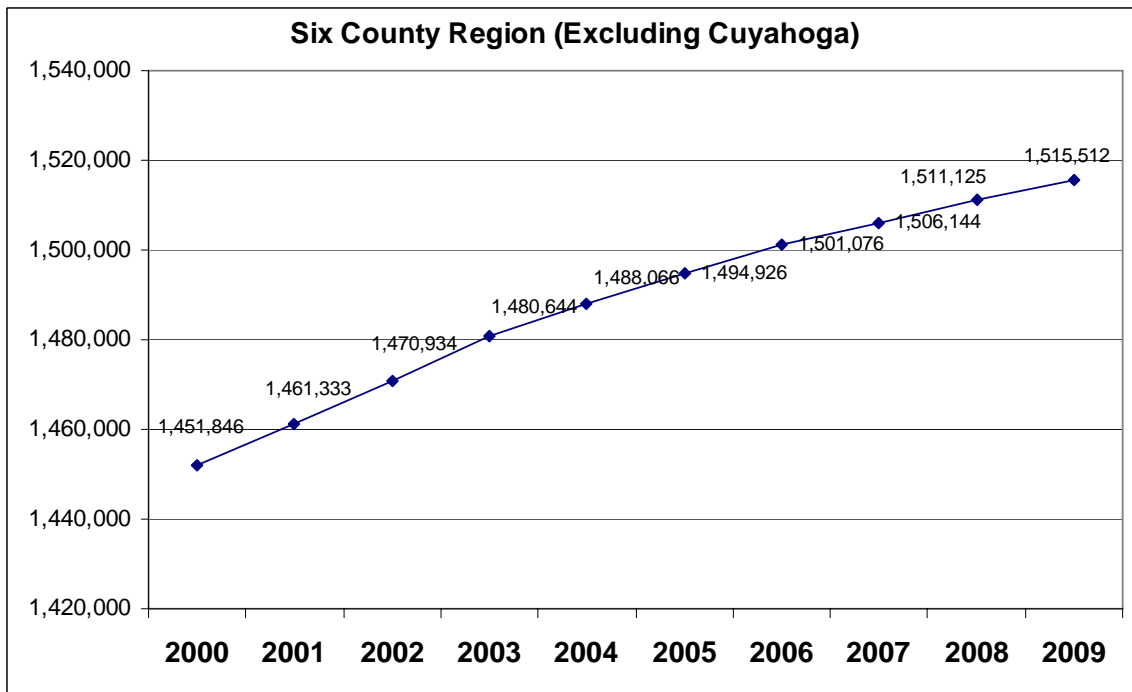


Figure 7

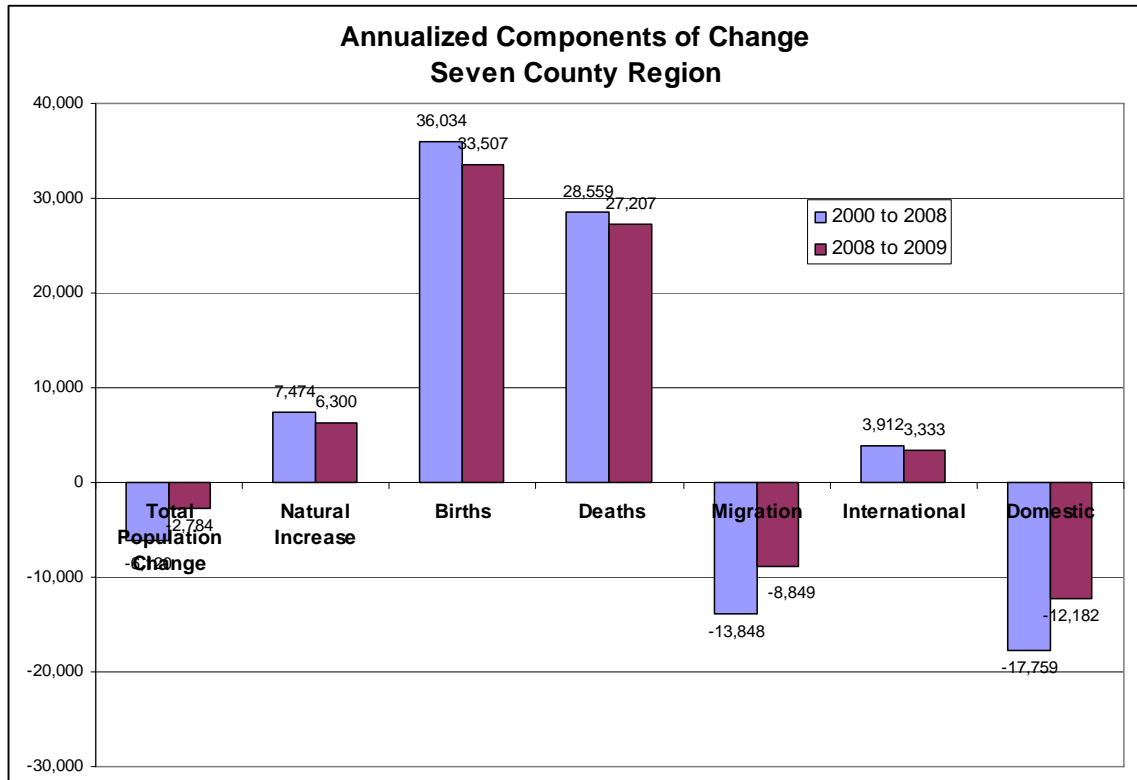


Figure 8

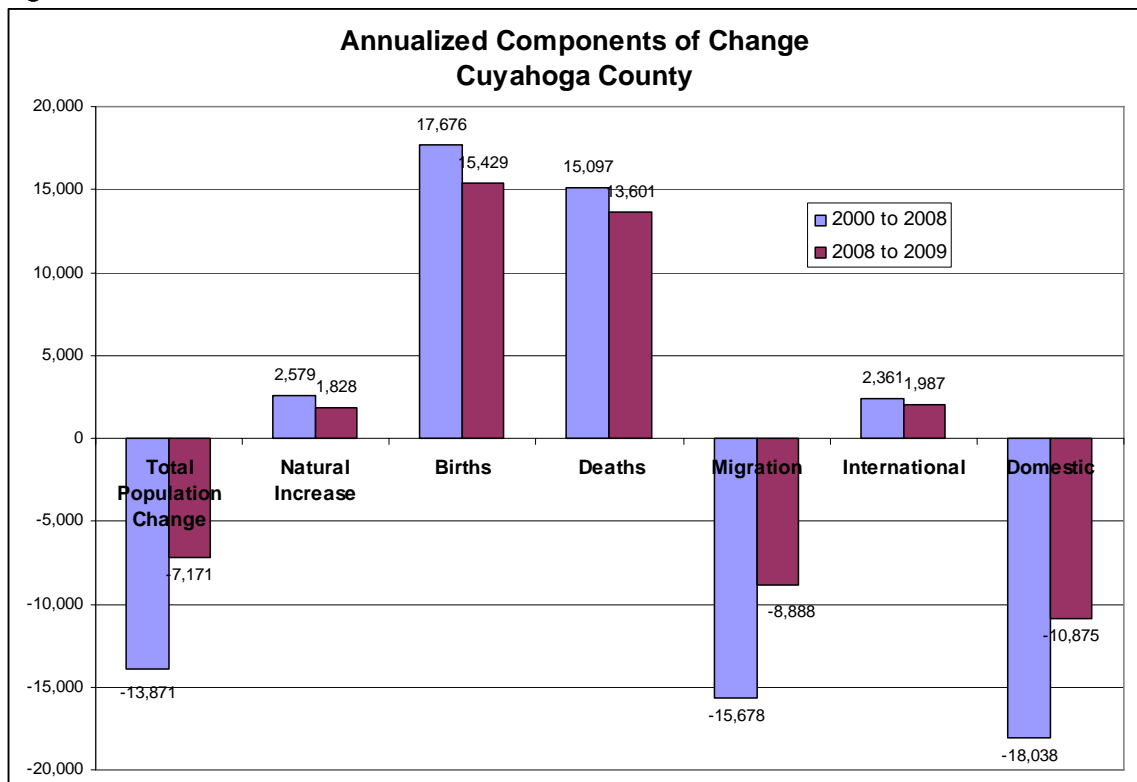


Figure 9

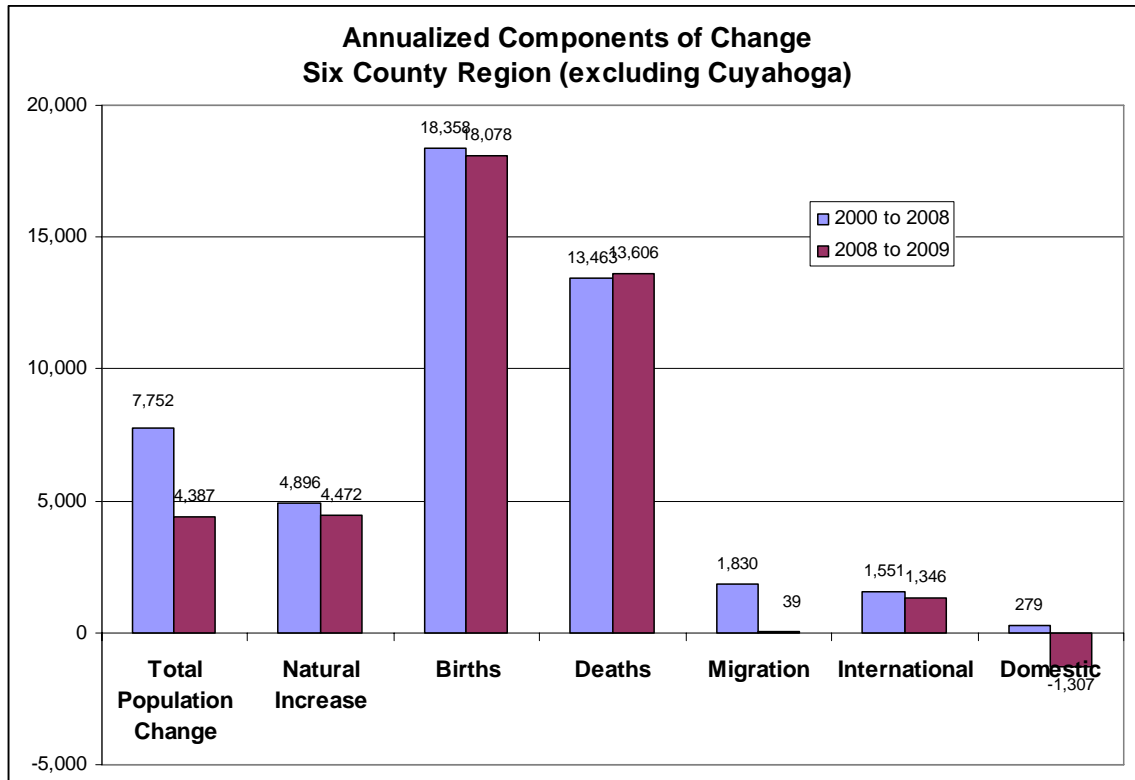


Figure 10

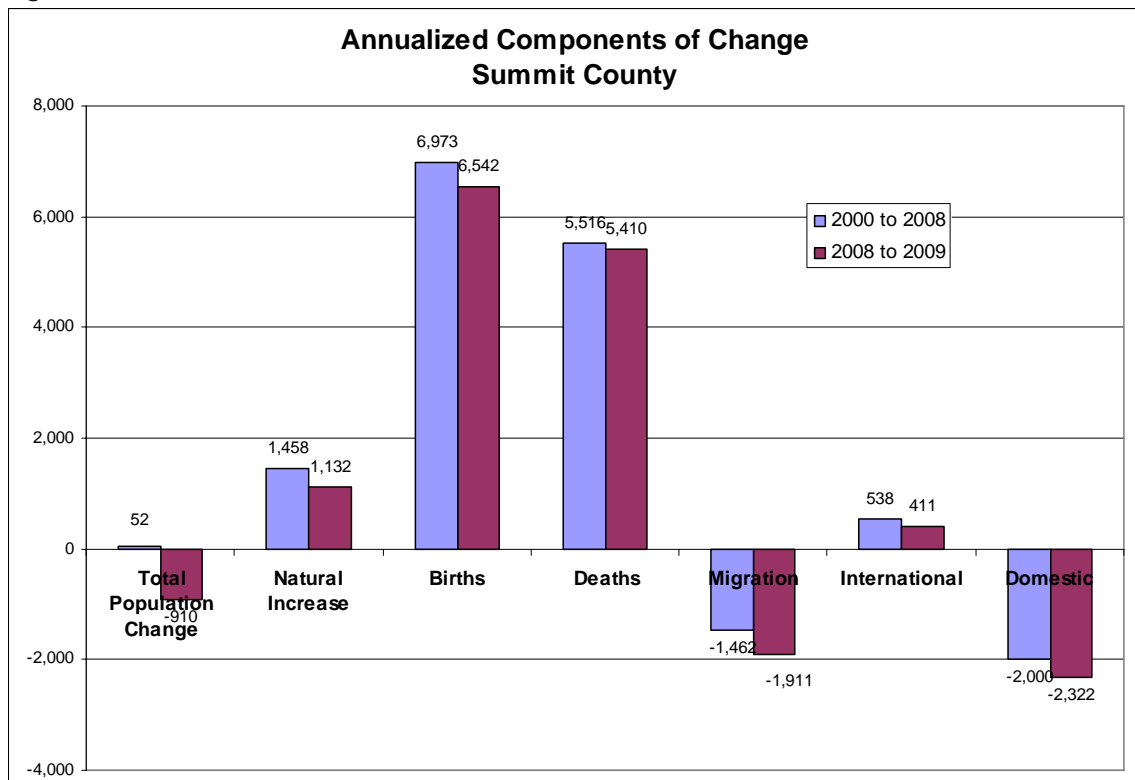


Figure 11

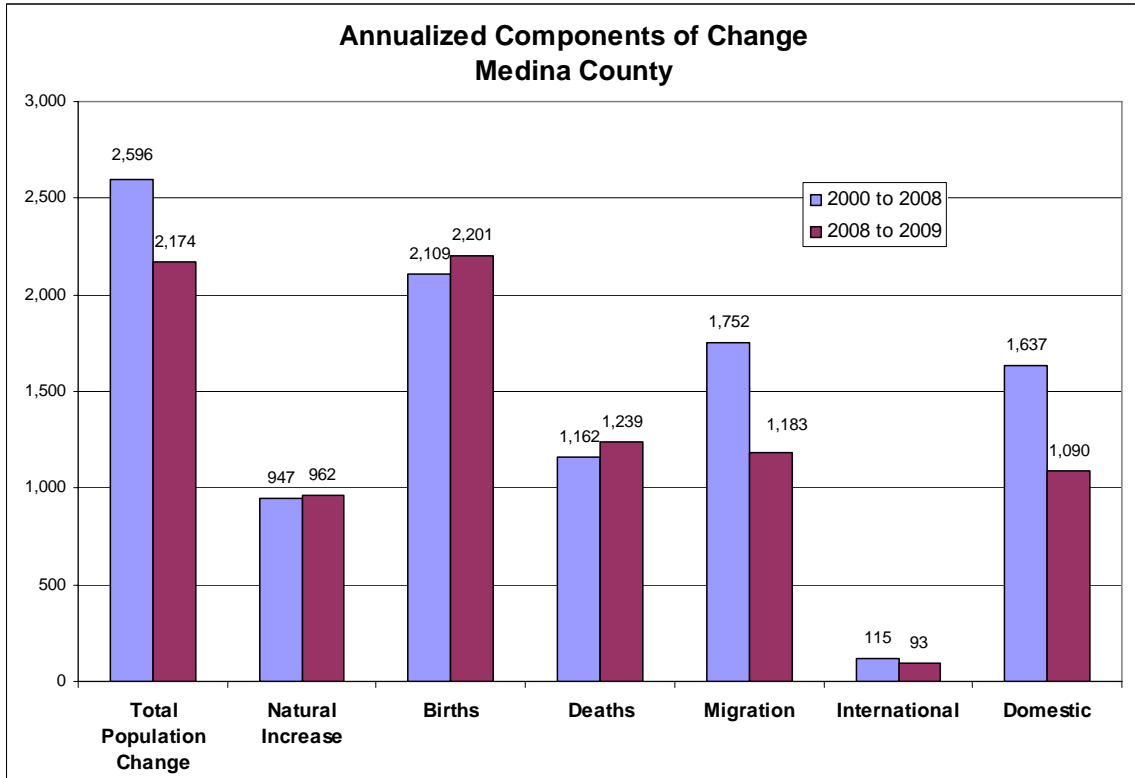


Figure 12

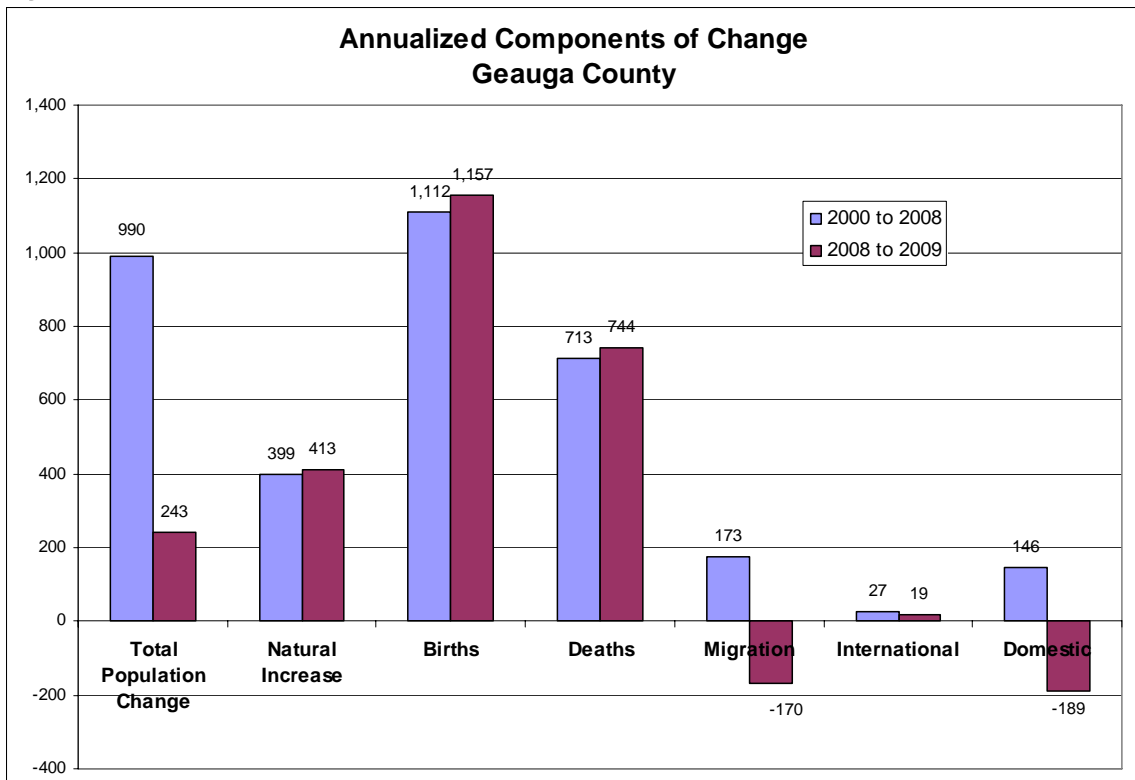


Figure 13

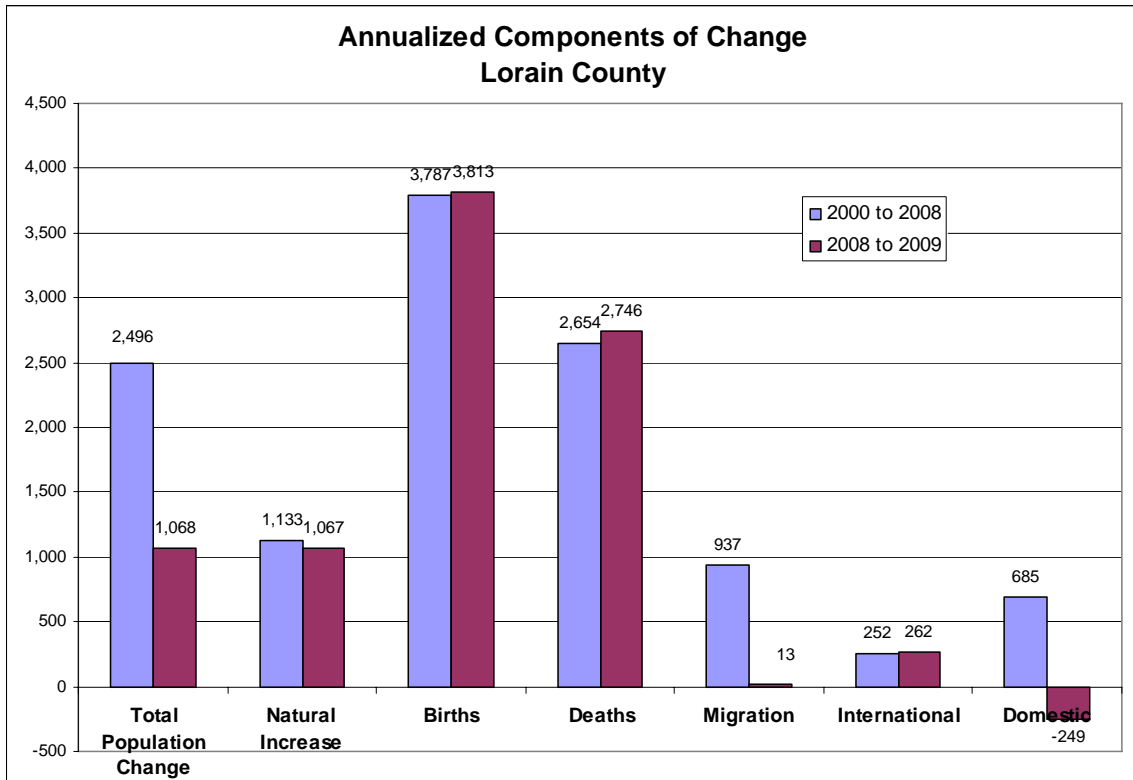


Figure 14

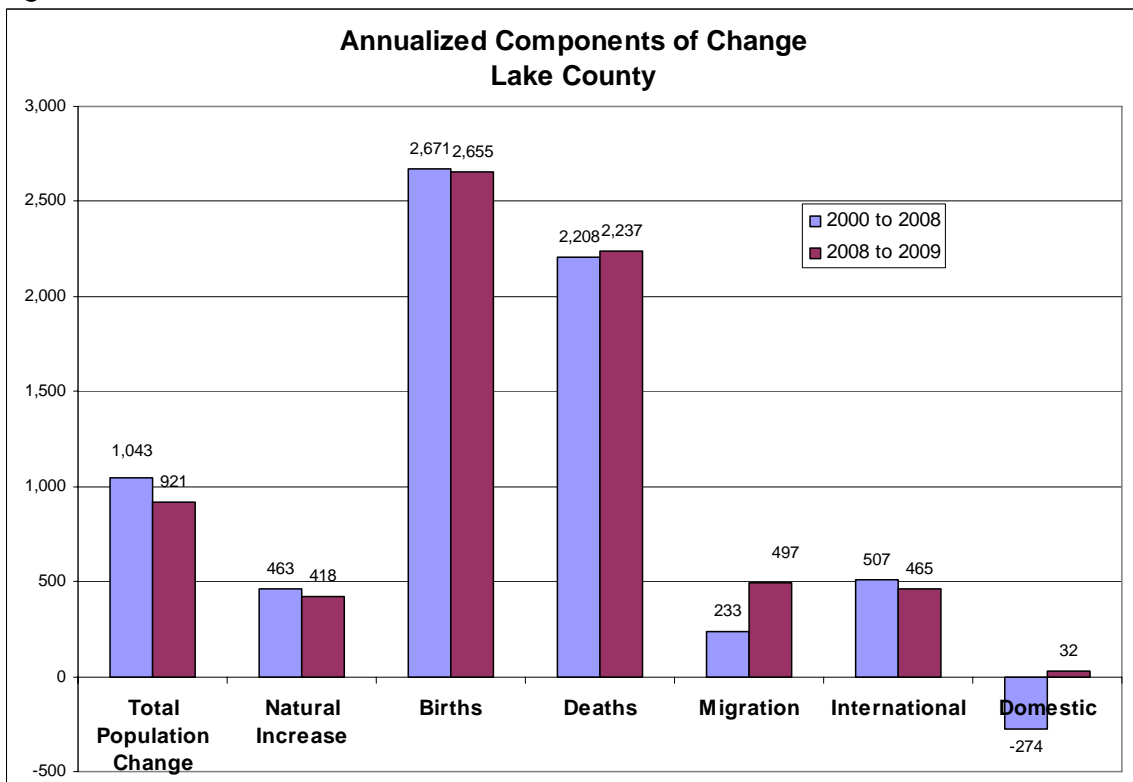
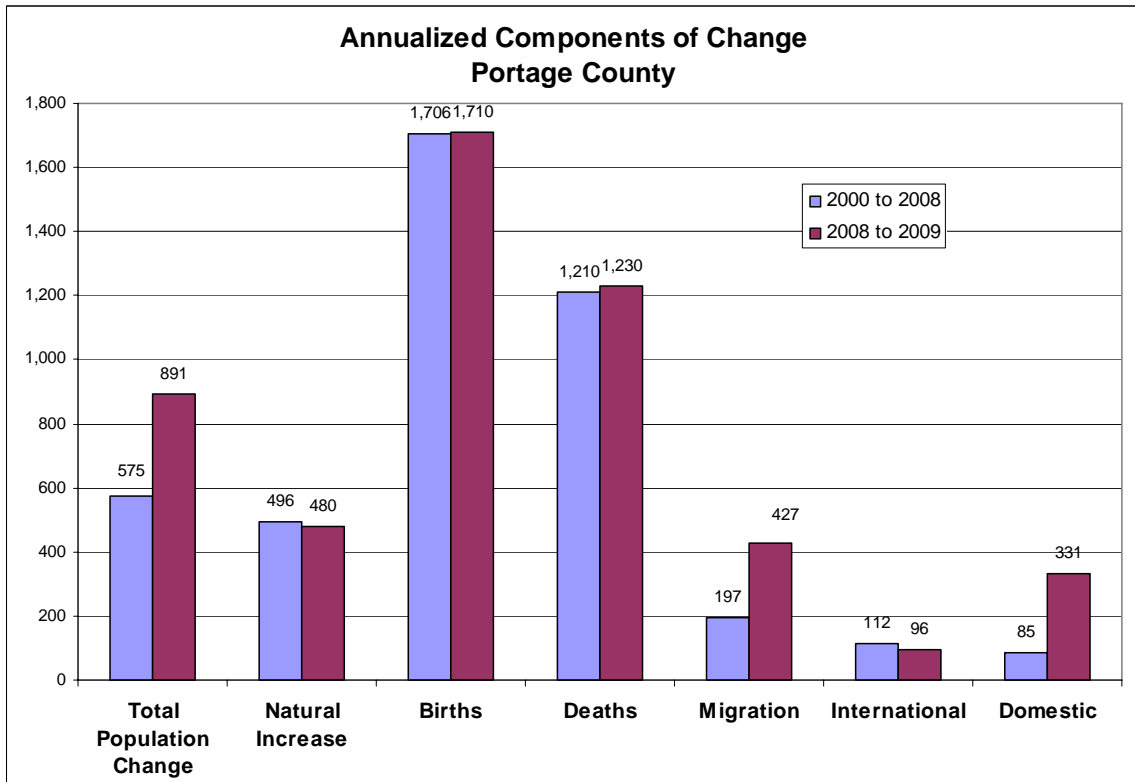
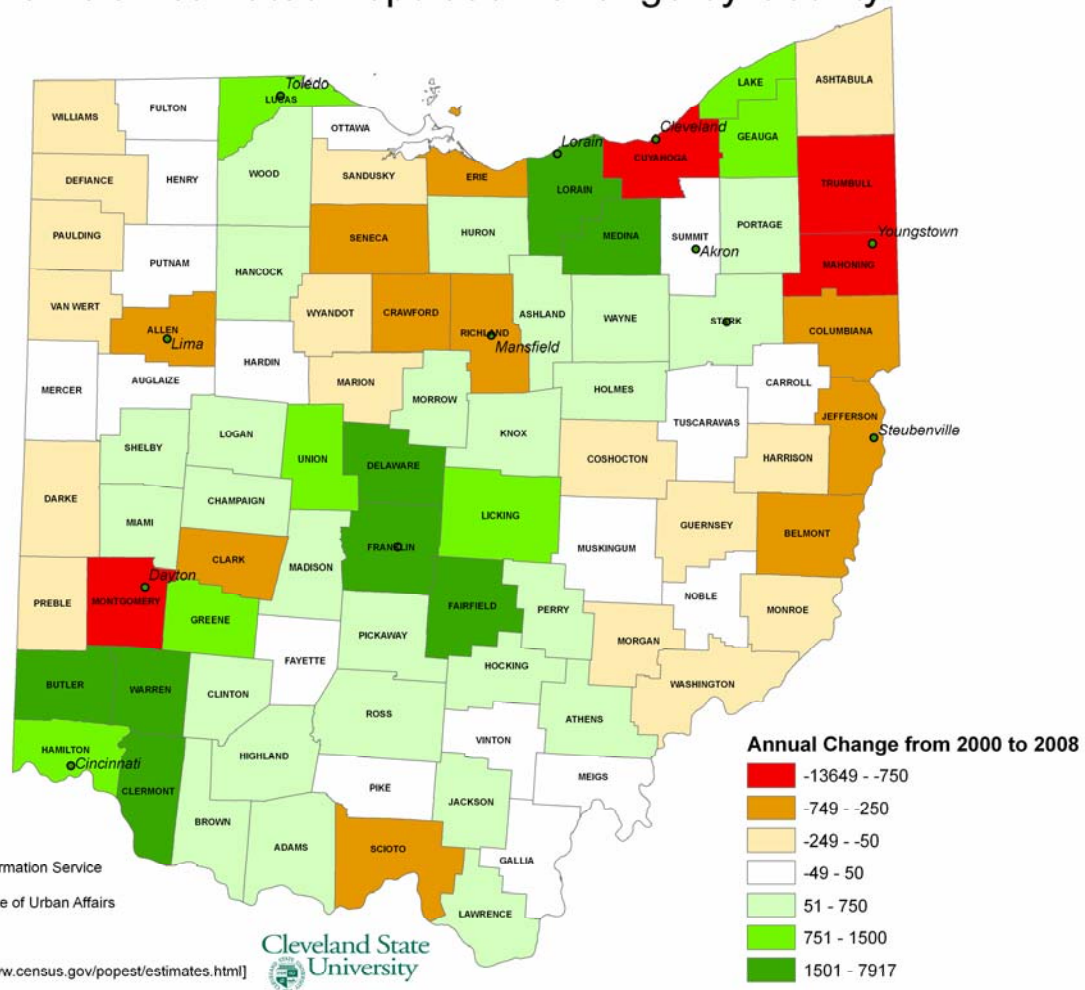


Figure 15



Map 1

Ohio's Estimated Population Change by County



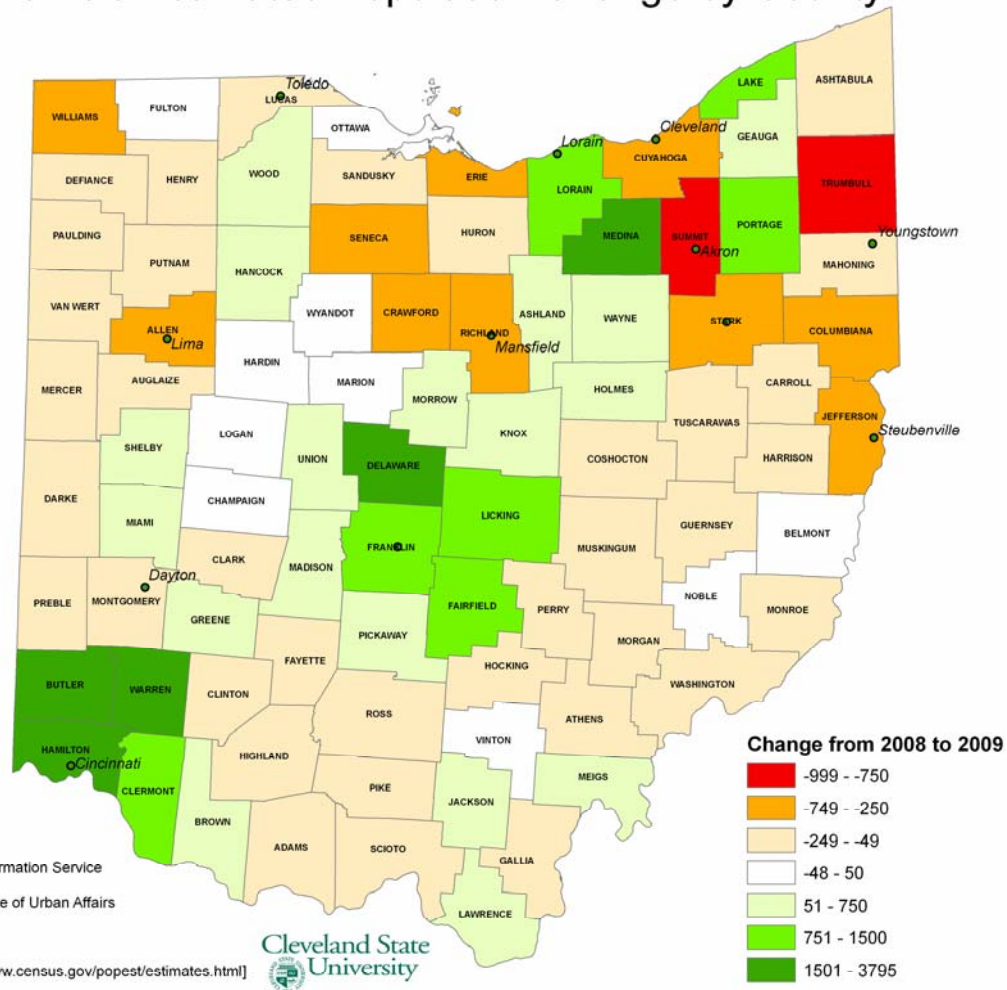
Prepared by:
The Northern Ohio Data & Information Service
NODIS
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University
March 23, 2010 mjs

Source: U.S. Census [<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.html>]



Map 2

Ohio's Estimated Population Change by County



Prepared by:
 The Northern Ohio Data & Information Service
 NODIS
 Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
 Cleveland State University
 March 23, 2010 mjs

Source: U.S. Census [<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.html>]

