Utah is Nation's Fastest-Growing State, Census Bureau Reports

Utah's population crossed the 3.0 million mark as it became the nation's fastest-growing state over the last year. Its population increased 2.0 percent to 3.1 million from July 1, 2015, to July 1, 2016, according to U.S. Census Bureau national and state population estimates released today.

"States in the South and West continued to lead in population growth," said Ben Bolender, Chief of the Population Estimates Branch. "In 2016, 37.9 percent of the nation's population lived in the South and 23.7 percent lived in the West."

Following Utah, Nevada (2.0 percent), Idaho (1.8 percent), Florida (1.8 percent) and Washington (1.8 percent) saw the largest percentage increases in population.

North Dakota, which had been the fastest-growing state for the previous four years, mostly from people moving into the state, fell out of the top ten in growth due to a net outflow of migrants to other parts of the country. Its growth slowed from 2.3 percent in the previous year to 0.1 percent.

Nationally, the U.S. population grew by 0.7 percent to 323.1 million. Furthermore, the population of voting-age residents, adults age 18 and over, grew to 249.5 million, making up 77.2 percent of the population in 2016, an increase of 0.9 percent from 2015 (247.3 million).

Eight states lost population between July 1, 2015, and July 1, 2016, including Pennsylvania, New York and Wyoming, all three of which had grown the previous year. Illinois lost more people than any other state (-37,508).

Two states that had been losing population in the previous year, Maine and New Mexico, saw increases in population of 0.15 and 0.03 percent respectively.

In addition to the population data for the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the new estimates show that Puerto Rico had an estimated population of 3.4 million, a decline from 3.5 million in 2015. Estimates of the components of population change (births, deaths, and migration) were also released today.