



How To Guide:

How has my region's population grown?

Understanding the dynamics of regional population growth is important for colleges to track. Simply put, growth areas can create more potential demand for educational services. This can influence not only college growth strategies, but may also factor into how colleges staff satellite campuses. There are a number of population sources, and one of the most common and trusted annual sources comes from the US Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program. The population estimates program develops estimates for the nation, states, counties, cities and towns, and metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas. In this example, we will look at the population trends for the counties in the Gadsden State Community College service area in Alabama.

1. Go to the population estimates homepage at: <http://www.census.gov/popest/>
2. For population data since 2010, select the 'Current Estimates Data' link on the left hand side of the page under 'Quick Links'.
 - a. As an aside, for population estimates from 2000-2010 click on 'Historical Data' in the same menu.
3. In the row marked 'Counties' click on the link for Total Population in the 'Most Current Data' column, the link is 'V2014'.
4. Under the County Totals: Vintage 2014 page, select the link for 'Annual Population Estimates', and on the next page select the link for 'Alabama'.
5. The next page will provide the population estimates for all Alabama counties between 2010 and 2014.
 - a. The five counties in Gadsden State's service area—Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah and St. Clair counties—will be listed alphabetically.
6. These data can be downloaded into an Excel format by clicking on the 'Download' option at the top of the page.
 - a. Doing so may allow you to sum up the data from the five counties and create a regional population estimate.



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