



## **New Census data show that St. Johns County grew at rate of 3.7 percent**

By Stuart Korfhage  
March 23, 2017

With signs of St. Johns County's growth nearly everywhere, a new report from the U.S. Census Bureau has provided some hard numbers.

The new information released Thursday showed that between July 1, 2015, and July 1, 2016, the county gained a net of 8,429 residents for a total population of 235,000. That rate of 3.7-percent growth left the county just outside of the fastest-growing counties (percentage wise) in the country.

The top 10 counties with the highest percentage of growth — and with a population of at least 10,000 — saw their population increase from 7.6 to 4.2 percent. But all of the counties on that list had lower population totals than St. Johns County, most significantly lower.

Only Hays County in Texas came close to matching St. Johns County with a population of more than 204,000. San Juan County, Utah, was the fastest-growing county in the United States among counties with populations of 10,000 or more in 2015-16. It grew by 7.6 percent to almost 17,000 residents.

Maricopa County, Arizona, replaced Harris County, Texas, as the county with the nation's highest annual population growth, according to a Census Bureau release.

Harris County was the largest numeric gainer for eight years in a row.

Maricopa County gained 81,360 people between July 1, 2015, and July 1, 2016, or about 222 people per day. Maricopa County, home to Phoenix, primarily grew through the addition of 43,189 residents from net domestic migration, a measure of how many people move to or from an area versus other parts of the United States.

In addition, Maricopa grew the fastest among the top 10 largest counties at 1.95 percent.

For St. Johns County, the strong rate of growth is simply the continuation of a trend. Since 2010, the county has seen a population increase of about 45,000 people. The number of residents has almost doubled since 2000 when the Census Bureau reported a population of about 124,000.

There were fewer than 85,000 residents here in 1990.

Not surprisingly, many areas of Florida saw impressive growth last year.

For the fourth year in a row, The Villages, a metro area west of the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford metro area, was the nation's fastest-growing metro area, with a 4.3-percent population increase between 2015 and 2016.

Hillsborough County, which includes Tampa, was the 10th largest-gaining county by total residents with an increase of about 29,000 people.

A total of 10 metro areas in Florida made the list of the top 25 fastest-growing metro areas (percent change).

The Jacksonville area, which includes St. Johns County, saw a population increase of about 30,000 between 2015 and 2016, an increase of 2.1 percent to 1.47 million.

#### Fastest growing areas in US

##### **population percent of**

##### **location increase Growth**

The Villages, Fla. 5,114 4.3%

Myrtle Beach-Conway, N. Myrtle Beach, S.C. 16,802 3.9%

Bend-Redmond, Ore. 6,365 3.6%

Greeley, Colo. 9,879 3.5%

Cape Coral-Fort Myers, Fla. 22,051 3.1%

Source: US Census