

Media Advisory



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

REGIONAL
commission

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Newly Released US Census Bureau Data Shows Continued Growth in Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area

Population in the Roanoke MSA Grew 2.1% Over the Last Decade

Thursday, August 12th – (Roanoke, VA). An initial analysis of data released today by the U.S. Census bureau showed continued population growth in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes the counties of Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke, and the cities of Roanoke and Salem. According to the 2020 census, population in the MSA grew 2.1% over the previous decade. Statewide, population increased by 7.9%, which represents a lower growth rate than the previous 2000-2010 Census.

“We’re pleased to see that the region continues to grow,” says Matt Miller, Director of Information Services for the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, who performed the analysis. “And while the growth rate was lower than in previous years, this tracks with trends we are seeing nationally.”

The City of Roanoke, with a 3.1% growth rate, saw its population increase to over 100,000 for the first time since the 1980 Census. At 4.9%, Roanoke County saw the largest population growth of the jurisdictions covered by the Commission. Overall, the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission area – which stretches from Franklin County to Alleghany County – saw a growth of 1.6%.

“Overall, this data affirms trends we’ve seen the last few decades,” added Miller. “Small but consistent growth in our urban areas, and loss of population in our rural counties, cities, and towns.”

While more data is expected to be released by the Census, these population estimates will be used in the near term to help governments redraw local, congressional, and state legislative districts.

2010-2020 Population Change

Area	2010 Total Population	2020 Total Population	2010-2020 Percent Change
Alleghany County*	16,250	15,223	-6.3%
Botetourt County	33,148	33,596	1.4%
Covington City	5,961	5,737	-3.8%
Craig County	5,190	4,892	-5.7%
Franklin County*	56,159	54,477	-3.0%
Roanoke City	97,032	100,011	3.1%
Roanoke County*	92,376	96,929	4.9%
Salem City	24,802	25,346	2.2%
Roanoke MSA	308,707	315,251	2.1%
RVARC Region	330,918	336,211	1.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2021 (*includes towns)

Table Caption: Population change data in Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission jurisdictions

About the RVARC

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) is one of 21 regional planning agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Member governments include the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke; the cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; and the towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton. The mission of the Regional Commission is to be a leader in driving collaboration and strategy within our communities on issues that are critical to the economic growth, quality of life, and the sustainability of this region.

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