

Population

Introduction

The Maine Office of Policy and Management (OPM) provides population and demographic data discussed in this section. Actual population figures are provided by the decennial US Census while projections are based on a methodology that uses Aroostook County level projections derived from more detailed information than is available at the local level. Town projections are calculated using recent growth or decline in the town's share of the County's population and the County level population projections. The local, town level, population projections are based on assumptions and past trends that may or may not hold into the future.

In 2010, Easton's population was 1,287, an increase of 38 (3%) from 2000. Beginning in 2007 the Amish began moving to Easton and it is estimated that over 10 percent of Easton's population is Amish. The population in 2015 is likely closer to 1,350. Maine's population grew during the time period.

Total Population, 1970-2010

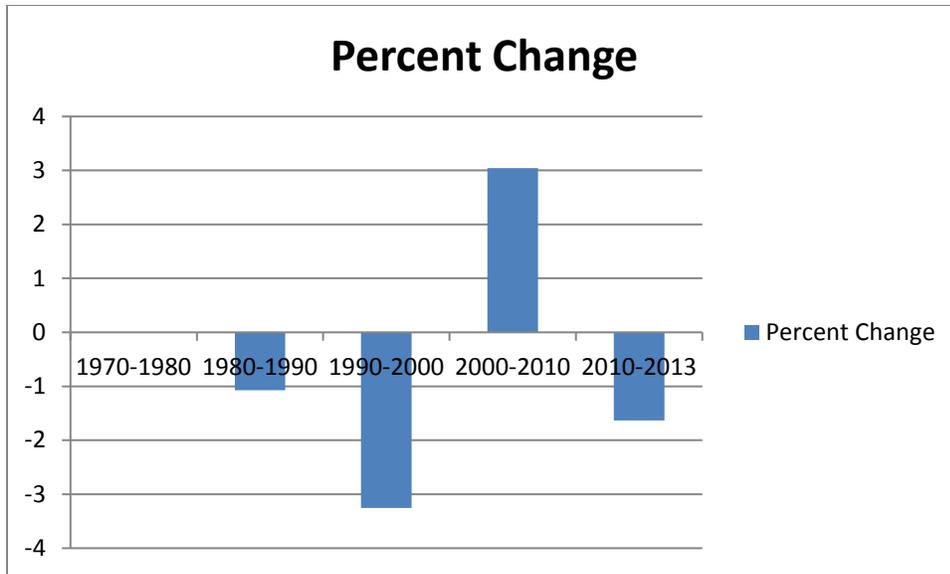
Town	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Easton	1,305	1,305	1,291	1,249	1,287
Aroostook County	92,463	91,331	86,936	73,938	71,870
Maine	993,722	1,125,043	1,227,928	1,274,923	1,328,361

Source: US Census 1970-2010.

The Maine Office of Policy and Management (OPM) acknowledge that they do not know the details of Easton's plans for the future. However, their population estimates provide a starting point for assessing community needs based on projected change in population and demographics. Easton has made strong efforts over the past 10 years in maintaining quality of life for its residents, attracting visitors, and in distinguishing itself as a place where the Amish community has wanted to relocate to. It is exactly these types of efforts that often defy projections and that help underpin community sustainability.

Rate of Change

The following graph shows Easton's decennial population change on a percentage basis from 1970 – 2012. Overall, the data suggest a relatively stable population. Over the a 40 year period, or 4 U.S. Census periods, starting in 1970, the town's population remained the same between 1970 and 1980, lost 1.1% between 1980-1990, lost 3% between 1990 and 2000, and gained 3% between 2000 and 2010.



Source: US Census 1970-2010

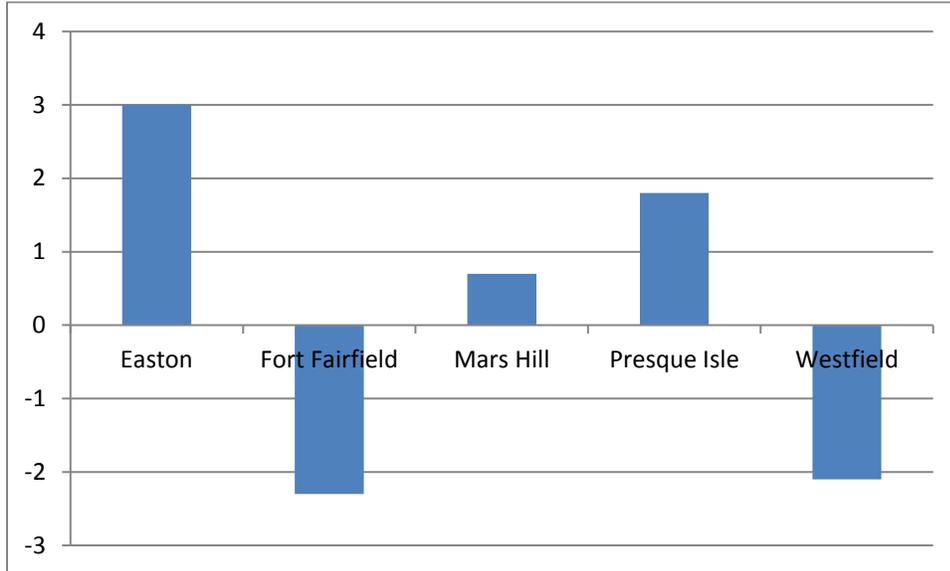
The table and graph below compares population and percent population change for selected central Aroostook communities. The five selected communities show a mixture of growth and decline in the 2000s with Easton having the highest rate increase at 3 percent, followed by Presque Isle, and Mars Hill. Fort Fairfield and Westfield both showed a slightly over 2 percent decline in population during the period.

In the late 2000s, Easton and Fort Fairfield began seeing a large influx of Amish who purchased many of the vacant farms that were for sale within these communities. Antidotally, this population is expected to increase in the next few years and more families are planning to move to the area (if land is available). Easton also has two large employers McCain Foods USA and J.M. Huber Corporation that attract residents and the town is also a bedroom community to Presque Isle as the cost of living is less.

Town	Population			Projected Population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Easton	1,326	1,249	1,287	1,284	1,291	1,295	1,293
Fort Fairfield	4,004	3,572	3,490	3,402	3,340	3,273	3,194
Mars Hill	1,762	1,480	1,490	1,450	1,430	1,408	1,380
Presque Isle	10,781	9,498	9,673	9,596	9,590	9,565	9,497
Westfield	570	556	548	537	529	520	510

Source: Maine Office of Policy and Management, 2013 and US Census 1990-2010

Percent Population Change 2000-2010



Source: US Census 2010

Projections prepared by OPM shown in the table above indicate a population increase in Easton from 2015 to 2025 and then only a slight loss of population between 2025 and 2030. In actual numbers of persons, Easton is projected to gain a total of 9 people for this period. This implies that Easton should continue to provide public services at present levels. Town officials are also looking at developing residential subdivisions to help increase the town's population.

Demographic Shifts

Easton's population distribution is similar to that of Aroostook County as a whole, with a somewhat higher percent of residents at both ends of the spectrum - under the age of 5 and 65 or older.

In 2010, over thirty percent of the population was between 45 and 64, accounting for Easton's median age of 42.2, which was lower than the median age of Aroostook (44) and only slightly higher than the State as a whole (42). Approximately 24 percent of the population is under 18, and 16 percent are over the age of 65. Just under one half of Easton's residents are between the ages of 30 and 65 which is considered the working age population. As stated above, the older portion of the age group (45-64) makes up approximately 30 percent of that amount. These figures should be considered in light of the fact that Maine, as a whole has an older population the oldest in the country.

Easton Age Group Distribution 2000-2010

Age Group	2010	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total	Percent Change 2000-2010
Under 5 years	84	6.53%	69	5.52%	21.74
5 to 9 years	75	5.83%	72	5.76%	4.17
10 to 14 years	83	6.45%	88	7.05%	-5.68
15 to 17 years	63	4.90%	59	4.72%	6.78
18 and 19 years	24	1.86%	30	2.40%	-20.00
20 years	6	0.47%	17	1.36%	-64.71
21 years	11	0.85%	20	1.60%	-45.00
22 to 24 years	37	2.87%	33	2.64%	12.12
25 to 29 years	82	6.37%	51	4.08%	60.78
30 to 34 years	63	4.90%	83	6.65%	-24.10
35 to 39 years	72	5.59%	89	7.13%	-19.10
40 to 44 years	84	6.53%	130	10.41%	-35.38
45 to 49 years	114	8.86%	103	8.25%	10.68
50 to 54 years	105	8.16%	90	7.21%	16.67
55 to 59 years	85	6.60%	50	4.00%	70.00
60 and 61 years	34	2.64%	38	3.04%	-10.53
62 to 64 years	61	4.74%	40	3.20%	52.50
65 to 69 years	54	4.20%	58	4.64%	-6.90
70 to 74 years	59	4.58%	51	4.08%	15.69
75 to 79 years	36	2.80%	35	2.80%	2.86
80 to 84 years	34	2.64%	25	2.00%	36.00
85 years and over	21	1.63%	18	1.44%	16.67
Total	1,287		1,249	100.00%	

Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

The following table shows the age group distribution between Easton and its surrounding communities and Maine. According to the 2010 US Census, Easton has a very similar makeup as its surrounding communities. However, this may be skewed slightly due to the Amish population influence who then to have large families. Town officials project that there may be up to 130 additional residents.

Town	Under 5	5-17	18-29	30-44	45-64	65-74	75+
Easton	6.5%	17.2%	12.4%	17.0%	31.0%	8.8%	7.1%
Fort Fairfield	5.3%	17.2%	11.6%	17.9%	30.8%	9.6%	7.6%
Mars Hill	6.8%	14.1%	13.3%	16.6%	26.9%	9.7%	12.5%
Presque Isle	5.0%	14.6%	18.7%	17.7%	27.7%	7.5%	8.7%
Westfield	3.8%	15.1%	9.7%	17.3%	35.0%	9.7%	9.5%
Aroostook County	4.9%	15.1%	12.7%	16.9%	31.4%	10.0%	9.0%
State of Maine	5.2%	15.4%	14.2%	18.3%	30.9%	8.5%	7.4%
United States	6.5%	17.5%	9.9%	30.2%	26.4%	8.9%	15.3%
Source: 2010 US Census							

Gender Distribution

In 2010, Easton's population was made up of 639 males (49.6%) and 648 females (50.4%). While this is not too dissimilar from comparable towns, it is much closer to a 50-50 split than the others. In most cases (Westfield is the exception) females outnumber males.

Gender Distribution, 2010		
	Male	Female
Easton	639	648
Fort Fairfield	1,691	1,805
Mars Hill	701	792
Presque Isle	4,674	5,018
Westfield	279	270
Aroostook County	35,607	36,805
State of Maine	649,666	677,999
United States	151,781,326	156,964,212
Source: 2010 US Census		

Households

There were 512 households in Easton in 2010, with an average household size of 2.40, somewhat larger than both Aroostook County and the State. This may be indicative of a child bearing age populations that still have school aged children at home.

Average Household Size, 2010	
	Size
Easton	2.40
Fort Fairfield	2.34
Mars Hill	2.33
Presque Isle	2.19
Westfield	2.40
Aroostook County	2.26
State of Maine	2.32
United States	2.58

Source: 2010 US Census

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Easton in 2010 was two times higher than that for Aroostook County, and slightly higher than the State. Approximately 8 percent of Easton’s population did not have a high school diploma compared to 16.1% in Aroostook County and 10.2% statewide. Approximately 36% of Easton had at least a high school diploma and 20.5% had completed four or more years of college. Comparable figures for Aroostook County were 39.0% and 4.4%. (It should be noted that because educational attainment in the 2010 Census was not an actual count, the margin of error in these statics can be very high).

Educational Attainment, 2010	Easton	Percent of Total	Aroostook County	Maine
Less than 9th grade	23	3%	4,089	35,336
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	40	5%	4,272	59,859
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	271	36%	20,176	326,777
Some college, no degree	186	25%	10,257	178,022
Associate degree	69	9%	4,619	82,580
Bachelor's degree	113	15%	6,116	159,601
Graduate or professional degree	42	6%	2,259	87,126
% High School Graduate or Higher	91.5		83.9	89.8
% Bachelor's Degree or Higher	20.8		16.2	26.5

Source: US Census 2010

Analysis

Easton serves a dual role as an employment center with McCain Foods USA and J.M. Huber Corporation as well as serving as a bedroom community for Presque Isle. Easton's residents enjoy the conveniences and challenges that exist with living in a small rural community. They have easy access to larger population centers yet retain the quality of life found in a smaller community. They also have access to high paying and stable jobs located right in the town. These attributes could potentially attract additional population in the future depending on possible industries and/or businesses expansions. Town officials need to be watchful of the age group breakdown trends and the impact to municipal services and future programs. A large loss of Pre-school and School age populations can have significant impacts on school funding and prospective economic development in the future. Likewise, the increase of retirement age groups can impact social, health, and recreational programs.

The town should continue to seek strategies to increase its current population and encourage growth. Just as greater economic opportunities outside an area can cause a population decline, a trend of modest growth can occur in a community due to its recreational opportunities, social services, and the quality of life it affords. The potential for Easton, with its unique culture, and quality of life attributes, may substantiate more positive projections. Additional population growth in Easton may be stimulated by encouraging additional small scale commercial and industrial growth that creates a range of income opportunities.

Finally, Easton must monitor the effects of an aging population on the public services offered and monitor the trend towards a smaller youth segment of the population. A smaller youth segment combined with an aging population can have an effect on school, recreational, cultural, and other community programs, as well as the ability to fund them. An aging population will create a need to develop additional programs for the elderly such as walking programs, shopping excursions, recreation, and social activities. Town officials may wish to examine the possibility of increased public transportation and/or additional elderly housing and services, as they continue to balance available services with the needs of the population.