Center for an Urban Future

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Keeping Pace with an Aging New York State

New York State's older adult population is booming, with more residents ages 65 and above—nearly 3.5 million—than the entire population of 21 states. An expanding share of the state's older adults are immigrants and people of color. Alarmingly, older New Yorkers living below the poverty line increased by 37 percent over the past decade.

by Jonathan Bowles, Eli Dvorkin, and Charles Shaviro

- View the press release for this report by clicking here.

From the shores of Lake Erie to the tip of Long Island—and nearly everywhere in between—New York State's older adult population is booming. New York is home to more residents ages 65 and above—nearly 3.5 million—than the entire population of 21 states. Older adults are also driving most of the state's population growth. Over the past decade, from 2011 to 2021, the number of New Yorkers ages 65 and over grew by an incredible 31 percent—an increase of 815,166 older adults. During the same period, the state's under-65 population declined by 2.6 percent, or 444,450 people. Today, nearly 1 in 5 New Yorkers is 65 and above (18 percent), a larger share of the state's population than ever before.

The boom in the over-65 population is accelerating in cities and counties all over the state, with the fastest increases over the past decade occurring in Rochester (+64 percent), Saratoga County (+50 percent), Syracuse (+43 percent), Queens County (+39 percent), Dutchess County (+37 percent), New York City (+36 percent), and Orange County (+36 percent). In fact, the growth of New York's older adult population is outpacing overall population growth in every one of the state's 19 largest counties and most of its largest cities, including Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, Albany, and New York City.

This policy brief—which includes detailed breakdowns of the growth in older adults in each of the state's major regions—also features other noteworthy findings, including:

- New York's older adult population is experiencing an increase in poverty. Alarmingly, the number of older New Yorkers

living below the poverty line increased by 37.4 percent over the past decade, while the poverty rate among older New Yorkers rose from 11.8 in 2011 to 12.3 percent in 2021, reversing years of steady declines.

- An expanding share of the state's older adults are immigrants and people of color.
    - During the past decade, the population of older immigrants has almost doubled in Oswego County (85 percent increase), closely followed by Staten Island (+67 percent), Queens County (+60 percent), Albany County (+56 percent), Nassau County (+52 percent), and Rockland County (+51 percent).
    - New York's older adults are also increasingly likely to be African American, Hispanic, and/or Asian. Today, one-third (33.4 percent) of older adults in the state are non-white, up from 27.6 percent ten years ago. The number of Hispanic older adults nearly quintupled in both Rensselaer County (an increase of 399 percent) and Saratoga (an increase of 365 percent), the 65-plus Asian population increased by 165 percent in Niagara County and by 138 percent in Nassau County, and the number of older African American residents shot up by 86 percent in Niagara County and by 66 percent in Albany.
- Life expectancy in New York State declined for the first time in decades as the COVID-19 pandemic first hit, going from an all-time high of 80.7 years in 2019 to 77.7 in 2020 (the most recent year for which official CDC data is available).[1] As a result, the population of New Yorkers over 85 declined 4.7 percent between 2019 and 2021, from 436,221 to 415,781.
- Even after taking into account COVID-related declines in life expectancy, the state still saw a significant increase in the oldest New Yorkers, those ages 85 and over. The 85-plus population increased by 3 percent from 2011 to 2021, still outpacing the total population growth of 1.8 percent. Over the past decade, Rockland County had the largest increase in the 85-plus population (+37 percent), followed by Saratoga County (+31 percent), St. Lawrence County (+27 percent), and Oswego County (+26 percent).

A RAPIDLY AGING STATE

Between 2011 and 2021, the state's 65 and over population increased by 815,166 (30.6 percent)—from 2,662,499 to 3,477,665. More than half of this growth occurred outside of New York City.

Long Island alone has 113,670 more older adults than a decade ago. In Erie County, the number of older adults increased by 32,888. Five other upstate counties all experienced gains of at least 10,000 older adults: Saratoga County (an increase of 15,292 residents ages 65 and over), Orange County (+15,258), Dutchess County (+14,959), Albany County (13,283), and Rockland County (+10,173).

In New York City, the 65-plus population increased by 363,339 over the past decade, bringing the total older adult population in the five boroughs to 1,373,495 (up from 1,010,156 in 2011). Two boroughs added more than 100,000 older adults in the past decade: Queens (+113,797) and Brooklyn (+104,507). Today, three boroughs on their own have more residents ages 65 and over than the entire population of any other city in the state: Queens (with a total 65-plus population of 403,004), Brooklyn (with 397,532 older adults), and Manhattan (with 290,328 older adults).

Today, New Yorkers 65-plus account for a record 20.7 percent of the population in Chautauqua County (up from 16.9 percent a decade ago); 20.4 percent in Niagara County (up from 16.1 percent); 19.3 percent in Saratoga County (up from 13.8 percent), 18.7 percent in Erie County (up from 15.8 percent), and 18.6 percent in Dutchess County (up from 13.6 percent). The cities with the highest share of the population ages 65-plus are Yonkers (17.3 percent), New York City (16.2 percent), and Syracuse (15.6 percent).

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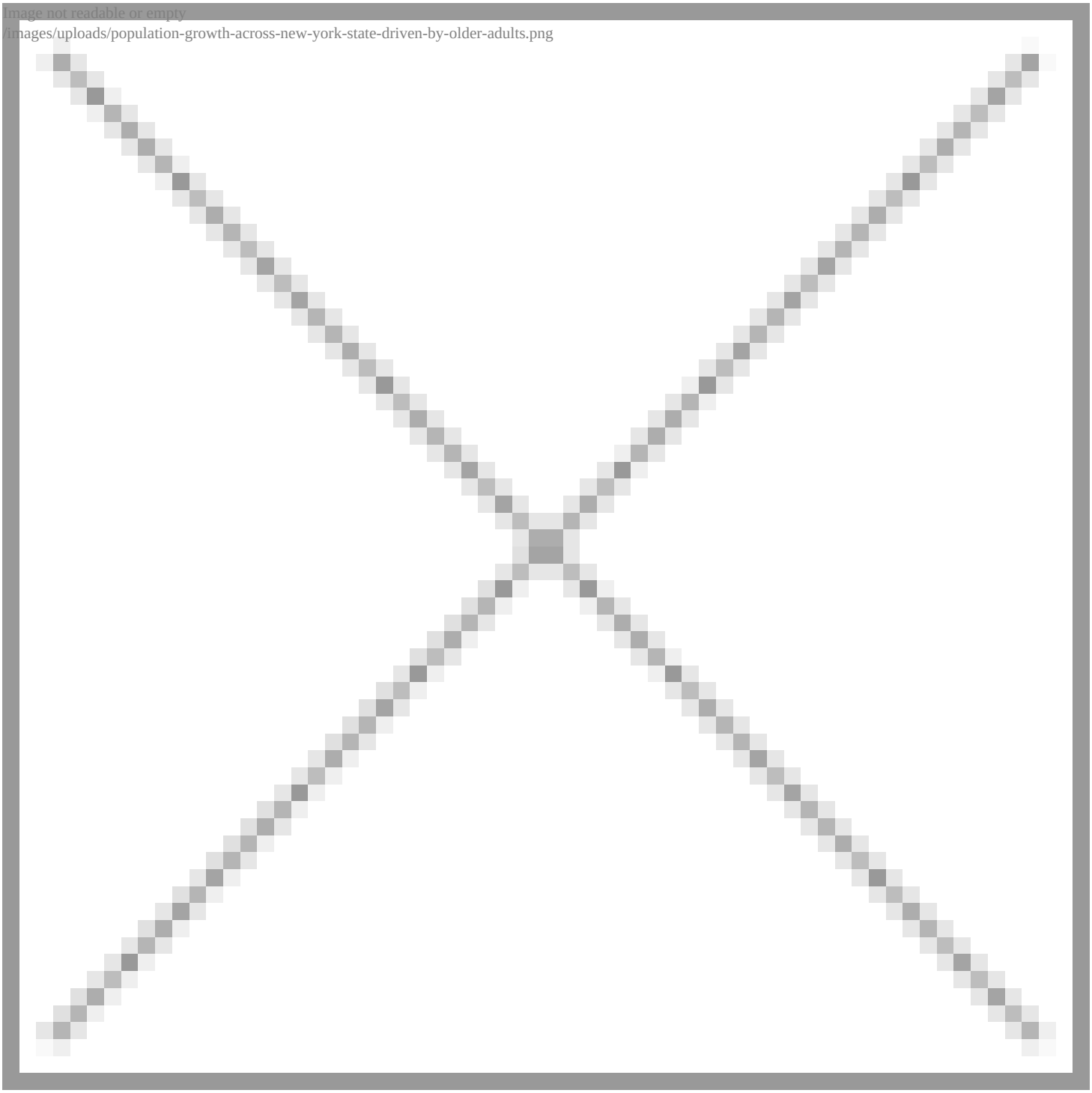

In 13 of 19 large counties and in 4 of 6 big cities—including Albany County, Rochester, Syracuse, Dutchess County, and Suffolk County—the older adult population surged during the past decade even as the under-65 population actually decreased. For example:

- On Long Island, the 65-plus population increased by 113,670 while the under-65 population declined by 39,457.
- In Niagara County, the number of residents ages 65 and over increased by 8,531 while the under-65 population dropped by 13,055.
- In Dutchess County, the 65-plus population increased by 14,959 while the under-65 population shrunk by 15,329.
- In Chautauqua County, the 65-plus population grew by 3,555 while the under-65 population declined by 11,334.

- In St. Lawrence County, the 65-plus population spiked by 3,925 even as the under-65 population fell by 7,677.
- In Oswego County, the 65 and over population increased by 4,996 and the under-65 population declined by 9,490.
- In Albany County, the 65-plus population grew by 13,283 and the under-65 population decreased by 2,600.
- In Rochester, the 65 and over population jumped by 11,679 while the under-65 population fell by 11,230.

See the bottom of this data brief for extensive data breakdowns for each of the state's major regions.

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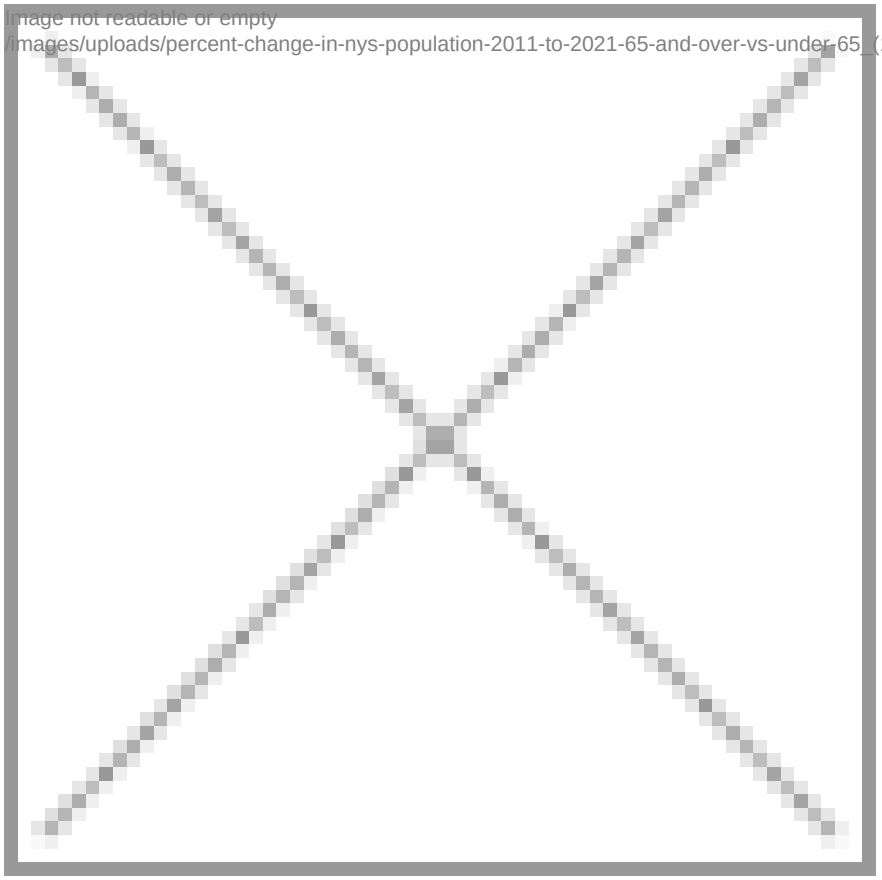

NEW YORK STATE'S AGING POPULATION IS INCREASINGLY DIVERSE

This report also finds that New York's 65-plus population has become more diverse than ever. The number of older immigrants statewide is growing at nearly double the rate of U.S.-born older adults, increasing 42 percent compared to 26.6 percent since 2011. Outside New York City, the older immigrant population in the state has increased by 28 percent, compared to a 27 percent increase in the U.S.-born older adult population. In New York City, the older immigrant population has grown even faster, increasing 49 percent over the past decade. Ten years ago, 26 percent of the state's older adult population was foreign-born, compared to more than 28 percent today.

Over the past decade, the population of older immigrants has almost doubled in Oswego County (85 percent increase) and been closely followed by Staten Island (+67 percent), Queens County (+60 percent), Albany County (+56 percent), Nassau County (+52 percent), and Rockland County (+51 percent).

New York's U.S.-born older adults are also increasingly likely to be African American, Hispanic, and/or Asian. Today, one-third (33.4 percent) of U.S.-born older adults in the state are non-white, a share that has increased from 27.6 percent ten years ago. Over the past decade, the number of African American residents ages 65 and above nearly doubled in Niagara

County (86 percent increase), and grew by more than half in Albany (66 percent increase) and Schenectady (54 percent increase).

The number of Hispanic residents ages 65 and above more than quadrupled in Rensselaer County (399 percent), Saratoga County (365 percent); more than tripled in Chautauqua County (247 percent increase); and more than doubled in Albany County (142 percent) and Dutchess County (189 percent). It also nearly doubled in Rockland County (93 percent), Nassau County (96 percent), and Suffolk County (99 percent).

Niagara County registered the fastest-growing Asian older adult population of any county (165 percent increase), followed by Nassau County (138 percent), Brooklyn (114 percent), Dutchess County (110 percent), and Erie County (107 percent).

Over the past decade, the number of Black older adults has grown faster than the older white population in all of the state's six major cities, and in 9 major counties outside of New York City: Albany, Dutchess, Nassau, Niagara, Orange, Rockland, St. Lawrence, Schenectady, and Suffolk counties.

The number of Hispanic older adults has outpaced that of the older white population in all of the state's six major cities and in 11 counties outside New York City: Albany, Chautauqua, Dutchess, Erie, Nassau, Orange, Oswego, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, and Suffolk counties.

Likewise, the pace of increase in the population of Asian older adults has outpaced that of the older white population in four of the six major cities in the state (Buffalo, Rochester, New York City, and Yonkers), and in 7 counties outside New York City: Albany, Dutchess, Erie, Nassau, Niagara, Rockland, and Suffolk counties.

NEARLY 1 IN 8 OLDER NEW YORKERS IS LIVING IN POVERTY, WITH HIGHER RATES FOR BLACK, HISPANIC, ASIAN, AND IMMIGRANT OLDER ADULTS

As New York's older adult population grows, the number of older residents living in poverty has surged. The number of older adults in poverty increased from 302,987 in 2011 to 416,246 in 2021—a 37.4 percent increase. Concerningly, this analysis also finds that the total poverty rate among older New Yorkers has increased by 4 percent statewide (or 0.5 percentage points) since 2011—from 11.8 percent in 2011 to 12.3 percent in 2021—reversing years of steady declines.

A closer look at older adult poverty statewide finds that some populations and regions of the state are experiencing poverty rates significantly above the statewide average. Hispanic New Yorkers age 65 and older are experiencing the highest rates of older adult poverty of any population, at 23.5 percent. Asian older adults have the second-highest poverty rate, at 19.1 percent, followed by African American older adults at 16.6 percent, and white older adults at 8.7 percent.

The poverty rate for older immigrants is 17.5 percent statewide, with higher rates for Asian immigrant older adults (19.5 percent) and Hispanic immigrant older adults (21.9 percent). Notably, U.S.-born Black and Hispanic older adults are experiencing even higher poverty rates. The poverty rate in 2021 for U.S.-born Black older adults was 18.6 percent; for U.S.-born Hispanic older adults, it was 25.6 percent—higher than any other demographic group.

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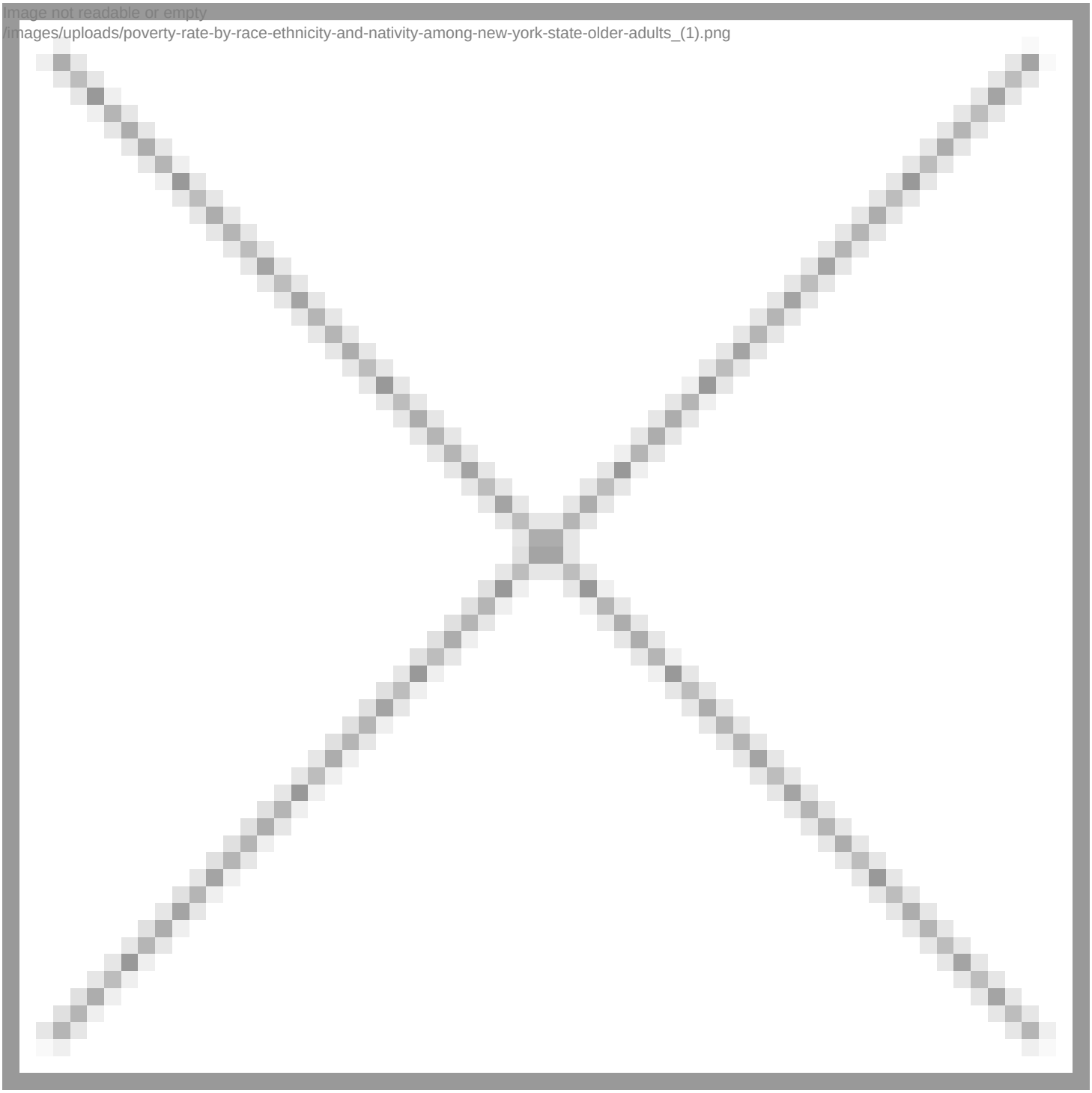


The Bronx has the highest older adult poverty rate of any county or city we examined, at 25 percent. Rochester's poverty rate for 65-plus residents was next highest, at 21.7 percent, followed by Syracuse at 21.3 percent, Brooklyn at 20.9 percent, Buffalo at 18.1 percent, and Manhattan at 16.3 percent. Outside of New York City, the counties with the highest older adult poverty rate are: Niagara County at 11.7 percent, St. Lawrence County at 10.3 percent, and Chautauqua county at 9.8 percent, Erie County at 9.8 percent, and Saratoga County at 9.8 percent.

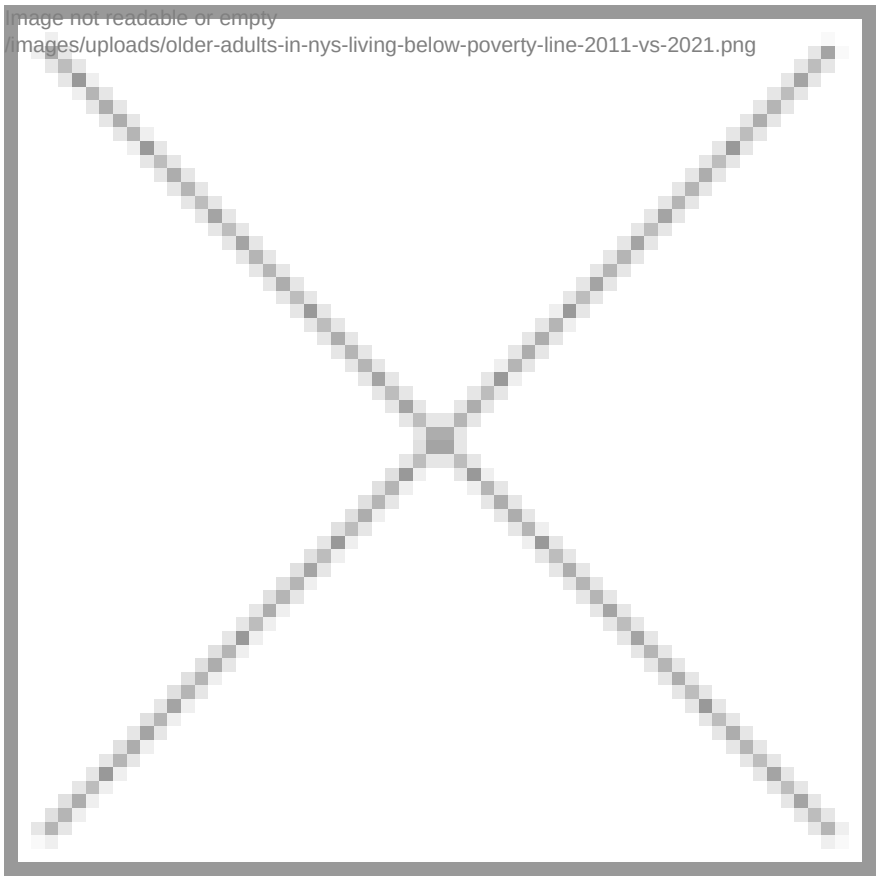
While the poverty rate for older adults statewide rose from 11.8 percent in 2011 to 12.3 percent in 2021, this analysis finds variation across the counties. In 13 of 19 large counties in the state, the poverty rate for older adults increased, led by Saratoga County, where the poverty rate for older adults jumped 5.6 percentage points, from 4.2 percent in 2011 to 9.8 percent in 2021. The next-largest jump was in Oswego County (+3.7 points) from 4.2 percent in 2011 to 7.9 percent in 2021,

followed by St. Lawrence County (+3.4 points), from 6.9 percent in 2011 to 10.3 percent in 2021, and Rensselaer County (+3.2 points) from 4.1 percent in 2011 to 7.3 percent in 2021.

In a few counties, the poverty rate among older adults decreased significantly: in Brooklyn, it dropped the furthest (–3.3 percentage points), from 24.2 percent in 2011 to 20.9 percent in 2021. In Rockland County, it dropped next fastest, by 1.7 percentage points from 8 percent in 2011 to 6.3 percent in 2021, followed by Manhattan (-1.4 points) dropping from 17.7 percent in 2011 to 16.3 percent in 2021, and by Queens (-1.0 percentage points) from 15.2 percent in 2011 to 14.3 percent in 2021.

In the Bronx, the older adult poverty rate has increased from 24 percent to 25 percent, and the borough's older adult population in poverty has swelled by 14,482 people over the past decade.

Despite these ongoing challenges, our analysis surfaced some areas of improvement. For instance, the poverty rate for older immigrants statewide declined from 19.3 percent in 2011 to 17.5 percent in 2021. Still, among older immigrants, poverty rates have increased in several parts of the state, including Staten Island, where the poverty rate among older immigrants went from 8.4 percent in 2011 to 13.5 percent in 2021; the Bronx (from 25.1 percent in 2011 to 29.8 percent in 2021); Albany County (8.4 percent to 10.6 percent), Suffolk County (5.5 to 6.9 percent), and Nassau County (7.4 to 8.6 percent).



ADAPTING STATE AND LOCAL POLICY TO KEEP PACE WITH AN AGING STATE

The dramatic trends outlined in this report suggest that policymakers in New York—from Governor Hochul and the Legislature to local officials in cities and counties across the state—will need to take new steps to support older New Yorkers and plan for the aging of the state's population. At the state level, this should include new policies that combat the alarming rise in poverty among older New Yorkers and provide enhanced financial security. But it will also require a new level of

support for the nonprofits and community-based organizations that form the backbone of the state's older adult services system; an expansion of senior housing and other initiatives that help New Yorkers age in place; new investments that address social isolation, elder abuse, and other health and mental health issues; a multi-agency effort to make sure that a lot more of the older New Yorkers who are eligible for federal, state, and local government benefit programs actually take advantage of them; and deeper cooperation with county and city governments on everything from transportation improvements, local healthcare infrastructure, and arts programming to workforce development initiatives and entrepreneurial supports that are tailored to the needs of older adults.

With older adults driving the population growth across New York, state and local leaders should also seize opportunities to tap the many strengths of older New Yorkers—to fill employment vacancies, create new businesses, and serve as volunteers and mentors. In addition to addressing the needs of older New Yorkers, policymakers should view this growing population as a positive force and take action to realize its full potential.

The following are findings for each of the state's major regions:

Capital Region

SARATOGA COUNTY

- Saratoga County experienced a 50 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, making it the fastest-growing older adult population in the state.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 15,292—from 30,602 in 2011 to 45,894 in 2021.
- The number of residents age 85 and above grew by 31 percent, a blistering pace but still slower than the age 65 to 84 population.
- Older adults now account for 19 percent of the county's overall population, up from just 14 percent a decade ago.
- The under-65 population of the county, meanwhile, has remained flat over the past ten years.
- Immigrants make up 4 percent of the county's older adult population, unchanged from 4 percent a decade ago.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Saratoga County increased by 252 percent—from 1,255 in 2011 to 4,421 in 2021.

ALBANY COUNTY

- Albany County experienced a 32 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 13,238—from 41,652 in 2011 to 54,935 in 2021.
- The number of residents ages 85 and above increased 10 percent—from 6,809 to 7,502.
- Older adults now account for 18 percent of the county's overall population, up from 14 percent a decade ago.
- Immigrants make up 10 percent of the county's older adult population, up from 8 percent a decade ago, and the number of foreign-born older adults increased at a faster rate (56 percent) than U.S.-born older adults (30 percent) over the past decade.

- Albany County's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 13 percent non-white, up from 9 percent in 2011.
- Albany County experienced an 10 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 6,809 in 2011 to 7,502 in 2021.
- In Albany County, 6 percent of older adults live in poverty, up from 5 percent a decade ago. Currently, 3,423 older adults live in poverty in the county.

ALBANY (CITY)

- The city of Albany experienced a 27 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the city increased by 3,438—from 12,662 in 2011 to 16,100 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 15 percent of the city's overall population, up significantly from 12 percent in 2011.
- Immigrants make up 10 percent of the city's older adult population, flat from a decade ago. The city's older immigrant population grew by 25 percent from 2011 to 2021, while the US-born older adult population grew 27 percent.
- The city's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 23 percent non-white, up from 18 percent in 2011.
- The city's Black older adult population has grown 44 percent over the past decade, while the city's white older adult population has grown 20 percent.
- In the city of Albany, 11 percent of older adults live in poverty, a 5 percentage point increase over the past decade. Currently 1,718 older adults live in poverty in the city.

RENSSELAER COUNTY

- Rensselaer County experienced a 30 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, compared to a 4 percent decline in the population under 65.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 6,762—from 22,195 in 2011 to 28,957 in 2021.
- This growth has been driven by residents ages 65 to 84; the population ages 85 and above actually declined 34 percent during the same period.
- Older adults now account for 18 percent of the city's overall population, up from 14 percent in 2011.
- Immigrants make up 8 percent of the city's older adult population, down from 11 percent a decade ago.
- The county's Hispanic older adult population increased faster than any other county in the state, growing 399 percent over the past decade—from 125 in 2011 to 624 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Rensselaer County increased by 142 percent—from 860 in 2011 to 2,078 in 2021.

SCHENECTADY COUNTY

- Schenectady County experienced a 17 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade—the

second lowest increase among the state's largest counties.

- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 4,031—from 23,309 in 2011 to 27,340 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 17 percent of the county's overall population, up from 15 percent in 2011.
- Immigrants make up 9 percent of the county's older adult population, down from 13 percent a decade ago.
- The county's U.S.-born older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 12 percent non-white, up from 8 percent in 2011.
- The county's African American older adult population increased 54 percent, going from 839 to 1,294.
- Schenectady County experienced a significant decline in its 85-plus population over the past decade, decreasing 39 percent from 5,140 in 2011 to 3,122 in 2021.
- The poverty rate among older adults in Schenectady stayed flat at 7 percent, unchanged from a decade ago.
- But the number of older adults in poverty in Schenectady County grew by 20 percent, rising from 1,623 in 2011 to 1,942 in 2021.

Western New York

ROCHESTER

- The city of Rochester notched a 64 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, the highest rate of any major city in the state, even as the under age 65 population dropped 6 percent.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the city increased by 11,679—from 18,295 in 2011 to 29,974 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 14 percent of the city's overall population, up from 9 percent a decade ago.
- Today, 47 percent of Rochester's older adults are non-white, making Rochester the major city with the second most diverse older adult population in the state.
- Immigrants make up 12 percent of the county's older adult population, down slightly from 13 percent a decade ago.
- Rochester's older adults have the second highest poverty rate of any city or county in the state, at 22 percent. This rate is only lower than that of the Bronx, where the poverty rate among older adults is 25 percent.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Rochester increased by an alarming 70 percent—from 3,633 in 2011 to 6,175 in 2021.

BUFFALO

- The city of Buffalo experienced a 24 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, the smallest increase of any city in the state.
- During that same period, Buffalo's under age 65 population increased 4 percent.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the city increased by 7,041—from 29,446 in 2011 to 36,487 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 13 percent of the city's overall population, up from 11 percent a decade ago.
- Buffalo has the third-most diverse population of older adults in the state; 43 percent of Buffalo's older adults are non-

white.

- Older African Americans comprise 33 percent of Buffalo's older adult population—the largest share of any city or county in the state.
- Immigrants make up 7 percent of the city's older adult population, down from 8 percent a decade ago.
- The number of older immigrants increased 14 percent, while the number of U.S.-born older adults grew 25 percent.
- Buffalo has the third-highest poverty rate among older adults of New York's major cities, at 18 percent.
- In Buffalo, there are 47 percent more older adults living in poverty now than a decade ago, as the number has swelled from 4,377 in 2011 to 6,429 in 2021.

ERIE COUNTY

- Erie County saw a 23 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, compared to a 0.1 percent increase in the population under 65.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 32,888—from 145,066 in 2011 to 177,954 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 19 percent of the county's overall population, up from 16 percent a decade ago.
- Immigrants make up 7 percent of the county's older adult population, down from 8 percent as a decade ago.
- The county's older adult population is growing more diverse. It's now 13 percent non-white, up from 12 percent in 2011.
- Erie County experienced a 7 percent decrease in its 85-plus population over the past decade, as the age 65-84 population powered the county's growth.
- In Erie County, 10 percent of older adults live in poverty, a 1 percentage point increase over the past decade. Currently, 17,026 older adults live in poverty in the county.

NIAGARA COUNTY

- Niagara County experienced a 25 percent increase in its older adult population, compared to a 7 percent decline in the population under 65.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 8,531—from 34,709 in 2011 to 43,240 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 20 percent of the county's overall population, 4 percentage points higher than 16 percent a decade ago.
- Immigrants make up 6 percent of the county's older adult population, down from 8 percent a decade ago.
- The county's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 9 percent non-white, up from 7 percent in 2011.
- Niagara County experienced a 14 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 5,399 in 2011 to 6,134 in 2021.
- In Niagara County, 12 percent of older adults live in poverty, up from 10 percent a decade ago. Currently 4,993 older adults live in poverty in the county.

Hudson Valley

Throughout the Hudson Valley, the number of older adults increased by 29 percent while the overall population increased by 4 percent and the under-65 population stayed largely flat, increasing by 0.1 percent. The number of older adults across the region increased from 321,345 in 2011 to 415,736 in 2021.

ORANGE COUNTY

- Orange County experienced a 36 percent increase in its older adult population, the fifth-fastest increase of any of the state's largest counties. In contrast, the under-65 population grew just 5 percent.
- Overall, the number of older adults in the county increased by 15,542—from 42,977 in 2011 to 58,235 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 14 percent of the county's overall population, up from 11 percent a decade ago.
- Immigrants make up 14 percent of the county's older adult population, down half a percentage point from a decade ago.
- The county's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 22 percent non-white, up from 19 percent in 2011.
- Orange County's age 85-plus population grew just 4 percent over the past decade, slower than the age 65-84 and under-65 population.
- In Orange County, 9 percent of older adults live in poverty, down half a percentage point from 2011. Currently 5,188 older adults in the county live in poverty.

DUTCHESS COUNTY

- Dutchess County experienced a 37 percent increase in its older adult population, third-highest of the state's largest counties. Meanwhile, the under-65 population declined by 6 percent.
- The number of older adults in the county increased by 14,959 during the past decade, from 40,417 to 55,376.
- Older adults now account for 19 percent of the county's overall population, five percentage points higher than a decade ago.
- Immigrants make up 12 percent of the county's older adult population, down from 14 percent a decade ago.
- The county's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 19 percent non-white, up from 11 percent in 2011.
- The county's population of Hispanic older adults has almost tripled over the past decade, rising from 1,026 to 2,961.
- Dutchess County experienced a 10 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, from 5,656 in 2011 to 6,238 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Dutchess County increased by 34 percent—from 2,233 in 2011 to 2,982 in 2021.

ROCKLAND COUNTY

- Rockland County registered an increase of 10,173 older adults, a 24 percent surge.
- The number of older adults jumped from 43,031 in 2011 to 53,204 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 16 percent of the county's overall population, up from 14 percent a decade ago.
- Rockland has experienced rapid growth in its population of foreign-born older adults (+51 percent since 2011). A third of older adults in the county now are immigrants (32 percent), up from 26 percent a decade ago.
- The county's older adult population is growing increasingly diverse. It's now 29 percent non-white, up from 21 percent in 2011.
- Rockland County's population of Hispanic older adults (+93 percent) and Asian older adults (+107 percent) have doubled over the past decade. As of 2021, the county is home to 4,787 Hispanic older adults and 4,653 Asian older adults.
- Rockland County experienced a 37 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, the fastest growth rate of any of the state's largest counties, increasing from 4,758 in 2011 to 6,955 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Rockland County increased by 11 percent—from 6,343 in 2011 to 8,692 in 2021.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

- Westchester experienced a 25 percent increase in its older adult population, an increase of 35,834 people. In contrast, the county's under-65 population barely budged, growing by 0.7 percent.
- Older adults now account for 18 percent of the county's overall population, up from 15 percent a decade ago.
- Westchester County experienced a 9 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 23,636 in 2011 to 25,741 in 2021.
- In Westchester County, 11 percent of older adults live in poverty, a 2 percentage point decline over the past decade. Currently 17,388 older adults live in poverty in the county.

YONKERS

- The city of Yonkers experienced a 28 percent growth in its older adult population, an increase of 7,816—from 28,369 in 2011 to 36,185 in 2021. In contrast, the city's under-65 population grew just 3 percent.
- With 17 percent of its population being age 65 and above, Yonkers is the oldest major city in the state.
- However, this growth has been driven by residents ages 65 to 84; the population ages 85 and above declined 11 percent during the same period.
- Over the past decade, the share of non-white older adults in Yonkers grew from 36 percent of the population in 2011 to 42 percent in 2021—the largest increase of any major city or county in the state.
- Hispanic and Black older adults led that growth, growing 51 percent and 46 percent, respectively. The Hispanic older adult population increased from 5,362 in 2011 to 8,084 in 2021, and the Black older adult population grew from 3,060 to 4,473.

- More than a third of the older adults in Yonkers (34 percent) are foreign-born, and the number of foreign-born older adults increased at a faster rate (41 percent) than native born older adults (21 percent) over the past decade.
- In Yonkers, 12 percent of older adults live in poverty, up one percentage point from a decade ago. Currently 4,340 older adults live in poverty in the city.

ULSTER & SULLIVAN

- Ulster and Sullivan Counties experienced a 34 percent increase in their older adult population, with the number of older adults increasing by 13,585—from 39,699 in 2011 to 53,284 in 2021. In contrast, the counties' under-65 population declined by 5 percent.
- The counties' older adults now account for 20 percent of their total population, up from 15 percent in 2011.
- This growth has been driven by residents ages 65 to 84; the population ages 85 and above grew just 4 percent during the same period.
- The age 85 and older population increased by 223 people over the last decade, from 5,318 in 2011 to 5,541 in 2021.

Long Island

Long Island's older adult population increased by 28 percent during the past decade, from 412,238 residents aged 65 and over in 2011 to 525,908 in 2021. In contrast, Long Island's overall population increased by 3 percent (from 2,843,004 to 2,917,217) and the under-65 population decreased by 2 percent (from 2,430,766 to 2,391,309).

NASSAU COUNTY

- Nassau County experienced a 25 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, with the number of 65-and-over residents increasing by 51,593—from 205,110 in 2011 to 256,703 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 18 percent of the county's overall population.
- In Nassau County, the population of foreign-born older adults increased much faster than native born older adults: by 52 percent over the past decade, compared to US-born older adults' 17 percent.
- Nassau County is now home to more than 75,000 foreign-born older adults. Immigrants now make up 29 percent of the county's older adult population, up from24 percent a decade ago.
- The population of non-white older adults expanded much faster than the white population over the past decade. The number of Asian older in the county more than doubled (+138 percent), from 8,690 in 2011 to 20,714 in 2021, while the Hispanic older adult population nearly double (+96 percent, from 11,258 to 22,115 older adults), and the Black older adult population increased by 34 percent (from 16,222 to 21,882).
- Nassau County's age 85+ population remained largely unchanged, decreasing by 1 percent over the past decade.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Nassau County increased by 66 percent—from 12,366 in 2011 to 20,473 in 2021.

SUFFOLK COUNTY

- Suffolk County is now home to over a quarter of a million residents 65 and over. It has more older adults than all but three counties in the state (Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan).
- The county experienced a 30 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, with the number of older adults increasing by 62,077—from 207,128 in 2011 to 269,205 in 2021.
- In contrast, the county's under-65 population declined by 3 percent.
- Older adults now make up 18 percent of the overall population in Suffolk County, up from 14 percent in 2011.
- The population of Hispanic older adults nearly doubled in Suffolk County, increasing by 11,505, the largest increase in the state outside of New York City.
- Suffolk County is now home to 41,512 foreign-born older adults.
- Immigrants account for 16 percent of all older adults in the county, the same share as a decade ago.
- Suffolk County saw a 12 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 28,743 in 2011 to 32,145 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Suffolk County increased by 64 percent—from 10,767 in 2011 to 17,610 in 2021—the sixth-fastest increase among the state's major cities and counties, including the five boroughs of New York City.

Northern and Central New York

SYRACUSE

- Syracuse experienced a 43 percent increase in its older adult population over the past decade, the third largest increase of any major city or county in the state
- In Syracuse, the number of older adults increased by 6,834—from 15,971 in 2011 to 22,805 in 2021.
- This growth has been driven by residents ages 65 to 84; the population ages 85 and above declined 26 percent during the same period.
- Immigrants now make up 7 percent of the city's older adult population, down slightly from 9 percent a decade ago.
- In Syracuse, 20 percent of the city's older adult population is African American—the fourth-highest share of any city in the state.
- While the number of white older adults in the city increased by 33 percent, the number of Hispanic older adults swelled by 250 percent, from 178 in 2011 to 623 in 2021, and the number of older African Americans grew 63 percent, from 2,807 to 4,567.
- The number of older adults in poverty in the city of Syracuse more than doubled over the last decade, increasing by 110 percent—from 2,173 in 2011 to 4,553 in 2021.

ONONDAGA

- Onondaga County saw 29 percent growth in the older adult population over the last decade, entirely powering the county's overall 1 percent population growth, as the under-65 population declined by 3 percent.
- The older adult population in the county increased by 19,109 people, from 66,408 in 2011 to 85,517 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 18 percent of the county's total population, up from 14 percent in 2011.
- Onondaga County's 85 and older population declined by 7 percent over the decade, decreasing from 11,269 in 2011 to 10,490 in 2021.

JEFFERSON & LEWIS

- Jefferson & Lewis Counties experienced a 29 percent increase in their older adult population, with the number of older adults increasing by 5,050—from 17,122 in 2011 to 22,172 in 2021. In contrast, the counties' under-65 population declined by 5 percent.
- The counties' older adults now account for 16 percent of their total population, up from 12 percent in 2011.
- This growth has been entirely driven by residents ages 65 to 84; the population ages 85 and above declined by 4 percent during the same period.
- Jefferson & Lewis Counties' age 85 and older population decreased from 2,468 in 2011 to 2,358 in 2021.

New York City

BROOKLYN (KINGS COUNTY)

- Brooklyn is now home to the second-most older adults (397,532) of any county in the state, having been just surpassed by Queens (403,004).
- The borough was one of just two counties in the state (with Queens) to see its older adult population increase by over 100,000 over the past decade. The number of older adults increased by 36 percent—jumping from 293,025 in 2011 to 397,532 in 2021.
- Older adults now make up 15 percent of the borough's population, up from 12 percent in 2011.
- Brooklyn's growth in its older adult population is largely driven by the 46 percent growth in the older immigrant population over the past decade. The borough experienced a 24 percent increase in the U.S.-born older adult population over the same period.
- Immigrants now account for 229,978 of Brooklyn's 397,532 older adults, or 58 percent. This is up from 54 percent a decade ago.
- Brooklyn has the third-lowest share of white older adults of any county or city in the state, at 39 percent.
- While the older white population in the borough has increased just 18 percent over the past decade—an increase of 23,206 people—the African American older adult population has increased 31 percent (an increase of 28,200 people), the Hispanic older adult population increased 34 percent (+15,084 people), and the Asian older adult population has shot up by 114 percent (+24,926 people).
- Brooklyn's age 85 and older population grew by 7,957 people, the largest increase of any county in the state. The

county's age 85+ population grew 19 percent from 41,184 to 49,141.

- Brooklyn saw the third-largest increase in the number of older adults living in poverty of any county in the state, as the number rose by 11,550 from 69,535 to 81,085. The poverty rate dropped from 24 percent (highest of any county in the state) in 2011 to 21 percent, and second-highest, in 2021.
- Currently 81,085 older adults in the county live in poverty, second-most of any county, and more than the total population of all but 8 counties in the state.

QUEENS

- Queens has the largest older adult population of any county in the state, with over 400,000 residents age 65 and older.
- The borough's older adult population increased by 39 percent over the past decade, faster than any other county in the state. The number of older adults rose by 113,793—from 289,211 to 403,004.
- Older adults now account for 17 percent of the borough's population, up from 13 percent a decade ago.
- In Queens, the foreign-born older adult population increased by a whopping 60 percent, while the U.S.-born older adult population increased 14 percent.
- Queens has the second-most diverse older adult population in the state, as just 35 percent are white, 25 percent are Asian, 20 percent are Hispanic, and 16 percent are Black.
- While the white older adult population in the borough grew just 5 percent over the past decade—an increase of 6,321 people—the African American older adult population grew 35 percent (an increase of 17,089 people), the Hispanic older adult population grew 68 percent (+32,389 people), and the older Asian population increased 96 percent (an increase of 48,817 people).
- Queens experienced a 14 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 43,606 in 2011 to 49,742 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Queens increased by 32 percent—from 42,598 in 2011 to 56,098 in 2021. The poverty rate among older adults in Queens is 14 percent, fourth highest of any county in the state.

MANHATTAN (NEW YORK COUNTY)

- Manhattan saw the third-largest jumps in older adults of any county in the state between 2011 and 2021, with the number of residents 65 and over increasing by 71,267.
- The number of older adults in Manhattan increased by 33 percent, going from 219,061 in 2011 to 290,328 in 2021, compared to a 7 percent decline in the population under-65.
- Older adults now make up 18 percent of the borough's population, up from 14 percent in 2011.
- There are more residents ages 65 and above in Manhattan (New York County) than there are people under the age of 21.
- In Manhattan, the immigrant older adult population increased by 43 percent, a faster rate than the growth in US-born older adults (27 percent).
- Immigrants currently comprise 40 percent of all older adults in the borough, the third highest share of any county in the state.
- Manhattan saw NYC's fastest growth, and the state's second-fastest growth, in the population of white older adults

over the past decade. That population grew 33 percent, an increase of 37,313 people.

- Manhattan's 85-plus population grew 13 percent over the past decade, increasing by 4,129, the third-highest numerical increase in the state. It grew from 31,375 in 2011 to 35,504 in 2021.
- The number of older adults in poverty in Manhattan increased by 23 percent—from 37,639 in 2011 to 46,314 in 2021.

BRONX

- The older adult population in the Bronx increased by 35 percent over the past decade, the sixth fastest rate among New York's major counties.
- The number of older adults jumped by 52,128, increasing from 147,161 in 2011 to 199,289 in 2021.
- Older adults now account for 14 percent of the borough's population, up from 11 percent in 2011.
- The Bronx has the most diverse U.S.-born older adult population in the state, which is 82 percent non-white.
- The white older adult population in the Bronx dropped 6 percent over the last decade, making it the only county in the state with a decrease.
- The Bronx has by far the largest share of U.S.-born Latinx older adults in the state, comprising 41 percent of the borough's older adults.
- The Bronx's population of older immigrants increased by 30 percent over the past decade, while the number of U.S.-born older adults grew 39 percent.
- The Bronx saw its 85-plus population stay nearly flat over the past decade, going from 20,669 to 20,672.
- The Bronx has by far the highest poverty rate among older adults for any county in the state, at 25 percent. Just one other county (Brooklyn) has a poverty rate above 17 percent.
- The number of older adults in poverty in the Bronx increased by 44 percent, from 32,881 in 2011 to 47,363 in 2021. That's the largest numerical increase of any county in the state.

STATEN ISLAND

- The older adult population on Staten Island increased by 35 percent, compared to just a 0.5 percent increase in the population under-65.
- The number of older adults in the borough rose by 21,644, from 61,698 in 2011 to 83,342 in 2021.
- Staten Island's older adults make up 17 percent of the borough's population, up from 13 percent a decade ago.
- Over the past decade, the immigrant older adult population grew by 67 percent, the fastest rate in New York City and the second-fastest among all counties in the state. The US-born older adult population in the borough increased 24 percent.
- Today, 31 percent of all older adults on Staten Island are immigrants, up from 25 percent in 2011.
- While Staten Island's white older adult population expanded by 26 percent over the past decade, the African American older adult population grew 37 percent, adding 1,239 people, the Hispanic older adult population grew 60 percent, adding 2,745 people, and the Asian older adult population grew 99 percent, adding 4,233 people.
- Staten Island experienced a 19 percent increase in its 85-plus population over the past decade, increasing from 7,708 in 2011 to 9,176 in 2021.

- The number of older adults in poverty on Staten Island increased by 63 percent—from 5,132 in 2011 to 8,380 in 2021.

METHODOLOGY

To produce this report, the Center for an Urban Future analyzed data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey's 2011 and 2021 1 year-estimates. This detailed analysis includes the 6 cities and 22 counties in New York State for which detailed data was available. For 19 counties and 6 cities, data is available for both 2011 and 2021. Of the remaining three counties, two have data available for 2021 but not 2011 (Tompkins County, Monroe County), and one has data available for 2011 but not 2021 (Ontario County). American Community Survey 1-year data is not available for Westchester and Onondaga Counties; for those two counties, this analysis uses supplementary data acquired via data analytics firm Lightcast.

To provide data on smaller counties for which American Community Survey data is not available, due to sample size limitations, we grouped counties together where necessary and analyzed data from Lightcast. This applies to the following counties: Ulster and Sullivan Counties; Onondaga County; and Jefferson and Lewis Counties.

DATA APPENDIX

Population Growth Across New York State Driven by Older Adults, 2011-2021

County/City	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Under Age 65 Pop Growth (#)
NYC	363,339	-138,633
QUEENS	113,793	-29,076
BROOKLYN	104,507	4,081
MANHATTAN	71,267	-97,125
SUFFOLK	62,077	-35,964
BRONX	52,128	-18,426
NASSAU	51,593	-3,493
WESTCHESTER	35,834	5,638
ERIE	32,888	544
STATEN ISLAND	21,644	1,913
ONONDAGA	19,109	-13,552

Population Growth Across New York State Driven by Older Adults, 2011-2021		
County/City	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Under Age 65 Pop Growth (#)
SARATOGA COUNTY	15,292	339
ORANGE	15,258	15,542
DUTCHESS	14,959	-15,329
ALBANY COUNTY	13,283	-2,600
ROCHESTER	11,679	-11,230
ROCKLAND	10,173	13,321
NIAGARA	8,531	-13,055
YONKERS	7,816	4,395
BUFFALO	7,041	8,369
SYRACUSE	6,834	-6,036
RENSSELAER	6,762	-5,865
OSWEGO	4,996	-9,490
SCHENECTADY COUNTY	4,031	-985
ST LAWRENCE	3,925	-7,677
CHAUTAUQUA	3,555	-11,334
ALBANY CITY	3,438	-3,614
NY STATE	815,166	-444,450

New York State's 65+ Population Is Booming, 2011-2021				
County/City	2021 Age 65+ Pop	2011 Age 65+ Pop	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (%)
ROCHESTER	29,974	18,295	11,679	63.8%

New York State's 65+ Population Is Booming, 2011-2021				
County/City	2021 Age 65+ Pop	2011 Age 65+ Pop	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (%)
SARATOGA COUNTY	45,894	30,602	15,292	50.0%
SYRACUSE	22,805	15,971	6,834	42.8%
QUEENS	403,004	289,211	113,793	39.3%
DUTCHESS	55,376	40,417	14,959	37.0%
NYC	1,373,495	1,010,156	363,339	36.0%
BROOKLYN	397,532	293,025	104,507	35.7%
ORANGE	58,235	42,977	15,258	35.5%
BRONX	199,289	147,161	52,128	35.4%
STATEN ISLAND	83,342	61,698	21,644	35.1%
MANHATTAN	290,328	219,061	71,267	32.5%
OSWEGO	20,417	15,421	4,996	32.4%
ALBANY COUNTY	54,935	41,652	13,283	31.9%
RENSSELAER	28,957	22,195	6,762	30.5%
SUFFOLK	269,205	207,128	62,077	30.0%
ONONDAGA	85,517	66,408	19,109	28.8%
YONKERS	36,185	28,369	7,816	27.6%
ALBANY CITY	16,100	12,662	3,438	27.2%
WESTCHESTER	177,508	141,674	35,834	25.3%
NASSAU	256,703	205,110	51,593	25.2%

New York State's 65+ Population Is Booming, 2011-2021				
County/City	2021 Age 65+ Pop	2011 Age 65+ Pop	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Age 65+ Pop Growth (%)
ST. LAWRENCE	19,632	15,707	3,925	25.0%
NIAGARA	43,240	34,709	8,531	24.6%
BUFFALO	36,487	29,446	7,041	23.9%
ROCKLAND	53,204	43,031	10,173	23.6%
ERIE	177,954	145,066	32,888	22.7%
SCHENECTADY COUNTY	27,340	23,309	4,031	17.3%
CHAUTAUQUA	26,150	22,595	3,555	15.7%
NY STATE	3,477,665	2,662,499	815,166	30.6%

Growing Share of Local Population Is Now 65+, 2011-2021		
County/City	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2021	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2011
CHAUTAUQUA	20.7%	16.9%
NIAGARA	20.4%	16.1%
SARATOGA COUNTY	19.3%	13.8%
ERIE	18.7%	15.8%
DUTCHESS	18.6%	13.6%
MONROE	18.5%	-
NASSAU	18.4%	15.3%
MANHATTAN	18.4%	13.7%
ST LAWRENCE	18.2%	14.1%

Growing Share of Local Population Is Now 65+, 2011-2021		
County/City	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2021	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2011
ONONDAGA	18.1%	14.2%
RENSSELAER	18.1%	13.9%
WESTCHESTER	17.8%	14.8%
SUFFOLK	17.7%	13.8%
ALBANY COUNTY	17.5%	13.8%
OSWEGO	17.4%	12.6%
SCHENECTADY COUNTY	17.3%	15.0%
QUEENS	17.3%	12.9%
YONKERS	17.3%	14.4%
STATEN ISLAND	16.9%	13.1%
NYC	16.2%	12.3%
ROCKLAND	15.7%	13.6%
SYRACUSE	15.6%	11.0%
ALBANY CITY	15.4%	12.1%
TOMPKINS	15.3%	-
BROOKLYN	15.0%	11.6%
ORANGE	14.4%	11.5%
ROCHESTER	14.2%	8.7%
BRONX	14.0%	10.6%
BUFFALO	13.2%	11.3%
ONTARIO	-	15.5%

Growing Share of Local Population Is Now 65+, 2011-2021		
County/City	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2021	Age 65+ Share of Total Population, 2011
NY STATE	17.5%	13.7%

New York's 85+ Population Is Growing in Cities and Counties Across the State				
County/City	2021 Age 85+ Pop	2011 Age 85+ Pop	2011-2021 Age 85+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Age 85+ Pop Growth (%)
ROCKLAND	8,692	6,343	2,349	37.0%
SARATOGA COUNTY	5,282	4,022	1,260	31.3%
ST LAWRENCE	2,040	1,608	432	26.9%
OSWEGO	2,292	1,818	474	26.1%
ALBANY CITY	2,693	2,246	447	19.9%
BROOKLYN	49,141	41,184	7,957	19.3%
STATEN ISLAND	9,176	7,708	1,468	19.0%
QUEENS	49,742	43,606	6,136	14.1%
NYC	164,235	144,542	19,693	13.6%
NIAGARA	6,134	5,399	735	13.6%
MANHATTAN	35,504	31,375	4,129	13.2%
SUFFOLK	32,145	28,743	3,402	11.8%
DUTCHESS	6,238	5,656	582	10.3%
ALBANY COUNTY	7,502	6,809	693	10.2%
ORANGE	6,548	6,310	238	3.8%

New York's 85+ Population Is Growing in Cities and Counties Across the State				
County/City	2021 Age 85+ Pop	2011 Age 85+ Pop	2011-2021 Age 85+ Pop Growth (#)	2011-2021 Age 85+ Pop Growth (%)
BRONX	20,672	20,669	3	0.0%
NASSAU	34,792	35,151	-359	-1.0%
ERIE	21,338	22,913	-1,575	-6.9%
YONKERS	4,044	4,529	-485	-10.7%
BUFFALO	3,531	4,039	-508	-12.6%
SYRACUSE	2,422	3,274	-852	-26.0%
RENSSELAER	2,688	4,046	-1,358	-33.6%
SCHENECTADY COUNTY	3,122	5,140	-2,018	-39.3%
ROCHESTER	1,923	3,232	-1,309	-40.5%
CHAUTAUQUA	2,196	3,871	-1,675	-43.3%
MONROE	15,187	-	-	-
TOMPKINS	1,630	-	-	-
ONTARIO	-	2,074	-	-
NY STATE	415,781	403,680	12,101	3.0%

Cities and Counties with the Highest Share of Older Adult Poverty, 2021		
County/City	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2021	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2011
BRONX	25.0%	24.0%
ROCHESTER	21.7%	22.1%
SYRACUSE	21.3%	15.3%
BROOKLYN	20.9%	24.2%
BUFFALO	18.1%	15.4%

Cities and Counties with the Highest Share of Older Adult Poverty, 2021		
County/City	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2021	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2011
NYC	17.9%	19.2%
MANHATTAN	16.3%	17.7%
QUEENS	14.3%	15.2%
NY STATE	12.3%	11.8%
YONKERS	12.2%	11.2%
NIAGARA	11.7%	9.5%
ALBANY CITY	11.2%	5.7%
STATEN ISLAND	10.3%	8.6%
ST. LAWRENCE	10.3%	6.9%
CHAUTAUQUA	9.9%	7.9%
ERIE	9.8%	9.1%
SARATOGA COUNTY	9.8%	4.2%
ORANGE	9.2%	9.7%
MONROE	9.0%	-
NASSAU	8.2%	6.2%
OSWEGO	7.9%	4.2%
SCHENECTADY COUNTY	7.4%	7.3%
RENSSELAER	7.4%	4.1%
SUFFOLK	6.7%	5.4%
ALBANY COUNTY	6.5%	5.3%
ROCKLAND	6.3%	8.0%

Cities and Counties with the Highest Share of Older Adult Poverty, 2021		
County/City	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2021	Poverty Rate for Age 65+, 2011
DUTCHESS	5.6%	5.8%
TOMPKINS	4.6%	-

Notes

[1] https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/life_expectancy/life_expectancy.htm

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