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Nebraska Counties by Decade: 1950s to
Present

David Drozd

UNO Center for Public Affairs Research

December 2009

Natural Change (Births - Deaths) in Nebraska Counties by Decade: 1950s to Present

Source: Nebraska Vital Statistics Reports, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Compiled and Prepared by: David Drozd, Center for Public Affairs Research, UNO on 12-2-09

County	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-08	1980s vs. 2000s
Adams	4,035	1,959	972	1,194	908	1,104	-90
Antelope	1,468	452	275	490	2	-35	-525
Arthur	137	55	31	19	8	9	-10
Banner	175	84	76	92	10	-4	-96
Blaine	182	83	43	34	33	12	-22
Boone	1,501	544	179	315	25	-102	-417
Box Butte	2,156	787	687	1,403	488	259	-1,144
Boyd	693	208	-20	-29	-93	-149	-120
Brown	573	166	117	29	-27	-88	-117
Buffalo	3,178	2,375	2,586	2,826	2,500	2,762	-64
Burt	1,112	253	-59	-175	-330	-245	-70
Butler	1,224	374	70	213	-25	-32	-245
Cass	2,037	1,806	1,322	1,579	1,171	943	-636
Cedar	2,766	1,460	527	646	126	3	-643
Chase	581	191	182	214	-58	-50	-264
Cherry	1,387	838	448	426	194	45	-381
Cheyenne	3,562	1,444	407	443	159	206	-237
Clay	680	222	272	149	-14	-33	-182
Colfax	1,128	295	125	284	357	882	598
Cuming	1,996	1,044	470	456	115	40	-416
Custer	1,891	526	228	111	-270	-228	-339
Dakota	2,032	1,808	1,745	1,694	1,811	2,106	412
Dawes	1,216	582	419	457	128	106	-351
Dawson	3,174	1,687	1,379	1,038	1,491	1,853	815
Deuel	407	109	-15	-4	-104	-80	-76
Dixon	1,074	321	160	185	81	96	-89
Dodge	4,313	3,497	1,879	1,408	431	767	-641
Douglas	53,899	54,521	35,275	36,907	35,553	41,096	4,189
Dundy	533	57	-25	-24	-104	-99	-75
Fillmore	746	159	-154	-83	-180	-236	-153
Franklin	550	-76	-225	-124	-252	-176	-52
Frontier	594	161	108	153	24	8	-145
Furnas	771	-9	-261	-357	-405	-264	93
Gage	2,445	720	79	285	-381	-36	-321
Garden	469	125	-35	-44	-214	-164	-120
Garfield	329	123	-44	-42	-116	-145	-103
Gosper	274	87	97	1	-35	-42	-43
Grant	225	134	83	69	43	18	-51
Greeley	805	233	46	33	-16	-39	-72
Hall	5,376	3,904	3,485	3,658	3,453	3,967	309

County	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-08	1980s vs. 2000s
Hamilton	955	452	365	568	215	95	-473
Harlan	559	87	-141	50	-140	-124	-174
Hayes	367	95	91	94	12	7	-87
Hitchcock	711	153	104	108	-104	-106	-214
Holt	2,246	1,301	770	1,011	167	-75	-1,086
Hooker	166	52	-9	-1	-81	-47	-46
Howard	736	460	253	173	53	45	-128
Jefferson	1,000	36	-163	38	-392	-230	-268
Johnson	673	180	-49	-132	-165	-40	92
Kearney	647	224	209	329	82	81	-248
Keith	1,466	1,049	648	534	7	-65	-599
Keya Paha	277	119	105	56	7	21	-35
Kimball	1,465	1,171	368	262	-84	-111	-373
Knox	2,000	727	70	71	-302	-290	-361
Lancaster	23,303	22,379	13,901	16,950	16,753	20,587	3,637
Lincoln	4,795	2,682	2,971	2,518	1,147	1,347	-1,171
Logan	187	43	86	60	4	15	-45
Loup	157	48	12	41	-6	-2	-43
Madison	2,904	2,020	1,582	2,446	2,059	1,893	-553
McPherson	149	37	37	32	9	22	-10
Merrick	1,032	651	463	314	100	31	-283
Morrill	1,156	458	209	222	-49	36	-186
Nance	643	235	65	30	-48	-128	-158
Nemaha	753	174	133	129	-168	-72	-201
Nuckolls	1,252	249	-16	44	-284	-201	-245
Otoe	1,676	709	108	91	-195	91	0
Pawnee	326	-149	-207	-144	-244	-206	-62
Perkins	703	212	145	118	-110	-41	-159
Phelps	1,204	489	240	299	97	31	-268
Pierce	1,341	590	296	475	48	46	-429
Platte	4,283	3,484	2,604	2,929	2,215	1,943	-986
Polk	608	151	-37	-13	-146	-5	8
Red Willow	1,772	1,252	607	626	206	68	-558
Richardson	1,112	170	-429	-291	-459	-525	-234
Rock	351	191	89	114	-45	-57	-171
Saline	681	43	-110	88	-226	336	248
Sarpy	5,276	10,829	12,013	14,522	14,919	15,807	1,285
Saunders	1,798	975	511	670	586	580	-90
Scotts Bluff	6,616	4,407	3,215	2,500	1,257	953	-1,547
Seward	1,408	738	641	763	149	250	-513
Sheridan	1,524	517	276	260	-139	-117	-377
Sherman	727	340	71	-19	-80	-97	-78
Sioux	261	124	100	59	17	14	-45
Stanton	816	401	446	574	355	271	-303
Thayer	860	7	-148	-116	-365	-290	-174

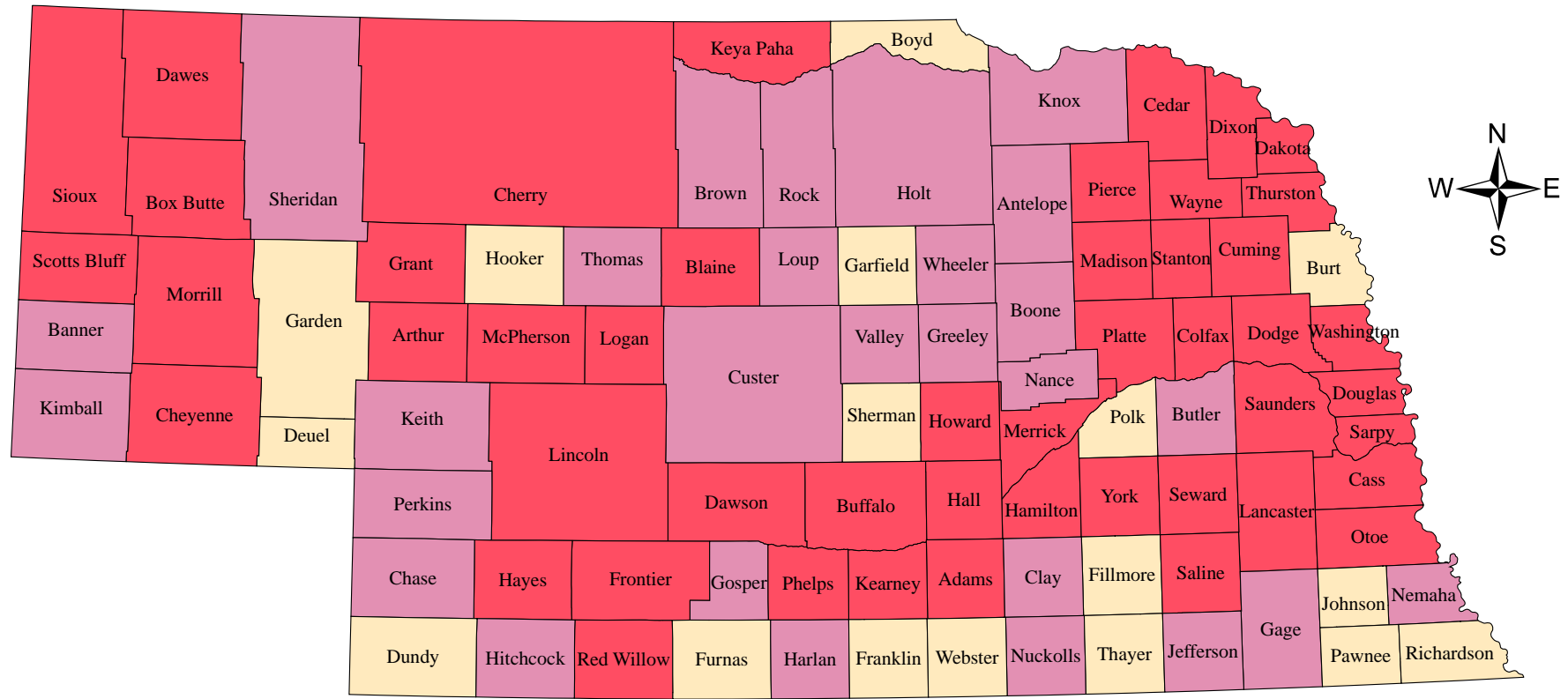
County	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-08	1980s vs. 2000s
Thomas	151	38	47	71	7	-2	-73
Thurston	1,332	923	477	935	705	762	-173
Valley	764	147	-11	82	-161	-122	-204
Washington	1,264	741	738	722	467	553	-169
Wayne	1,459	799	348	628	444	311	-317
Webster	473	-75	-281	-192	-307	-238	-46
Wheeler	169	136	82	132	54	-1	-133
York	1,270	619	607	985	284	311	-674
Nebraska total	201,518	147,199	97,436	108,744	84,612	97,350	-11,394
Number Nat. Increase	93	89	72	76	52	48	-28
Number @ 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number Nat. Decrease	0	4	21	17	41	45	28
Metropolitan	92,091	94,118	66,306	73,992	71,490	82,018	8,026
Non-metropolitan	109,427	53,081	31,130	34,752	13,122	15,332	-19,420
Metro Core	77,202	76,900	49,176	53,857	52,306	61,683	7,826
Metro Outlying	14,889	17,218	17,130	20,135	19,184	20,335	200
Micro Core	41,119	26,735	20,752	20,802	15,080	16,553	-4,249
Micro Outlying	6,037	2,799	2,235	2,199	612	432	-1,767
Other, has city of 2500	31,619	14,154	6,346	8,761	1,042	1,443	-7,318
Other, no city of 2500	30,652	9,393	1,797	2,990	-3,612	-3,096	-6,086

Note #1: Having births exceed deaths is a major contributor to population growth (the other is the net immigration of persons) and such natural increase is largely viewed as being positive for an area.

Note #2: The current 2000s decade has 1 fewer year than the completed 1980s decade so natural change occurring in 2009 could lead the 2000s decade to having changes that are more similar to the 1980s in some cases (e.g. Adams County). Comparisons should be made with caution.

Key points: In most cases, the counties that had natural loss in the 1980s have had an even larger natural loss thus far in the 2000s. There are 28 counties that had a natural increase in the 1980s that are no longer gaining but rather losing population via natural change in the 2000s. Most Nebraska counties (76 of 93) had a natural increase during the 1980s, when the "baby boom echo" (baby boomers having children) occurred during the early 1980s. In the 2000s when births are again higher due to the "echo of the echo" or 3rd wave of increased births is occurring, only about half of Nebraska's counties are experiencing natural increase (48 of 93). Since a net outmigration of persons is occurring in most Nebraska counties (both currently and historically), those 28 counties now losing persons due to natural loss are almost guaranteed to lose population unless a change in trend occurs. The 17 counties that had a natural loss in the 1980s have depopulated both then as well as currently, with apparently no break in that trend coming anytime soon. In general, larger counties or those located near metropolitan areas are having better natural changes currently versus smaller counties or those in more remote areas, which are struggling with natural loss most greatly.

Natural Change (Births - Deaths) in Nebraska Counties: 1980-1989 (1980s) compared to 2000-2008



Natural Change in 1980s and 2000-2008

(Natural Increase = Births > Deaths; Natural Loss = Births < Deaths)

- Natural Increase in both 1980s and 2000-2008 (48)
- Natural Increase in 1980s but Natural Loss in 2000-2008 (28)
- Natural Loss in both 1980s and 2000-2008 (17)

Source: Nebraska Vital Statistics Reports, Nebraska Health and Human Services System NOTE: 2000-2008 has 1 less year than completed 1980s decade.

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