Demographic Trends in Colorado Ski Towns

Colorado Association of Ski Towns
Greg Totten, March 5, 2024
State Demography Office, Department of Local Affairs
Demography.dola.colorado.gov

COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs

Key Takeaways

Everything is connected – a job is a person and a home is where that person sleeps at night

Population Growth is slowing

- Births down, deaths up, slowing net migration
- Less kids here means more need for net migration to sustain growth

Aging

- The US is aging, Colorado is aging, Ski Towns are aging
- An older population creates new dynamics (jobs, service demands, tax etc)

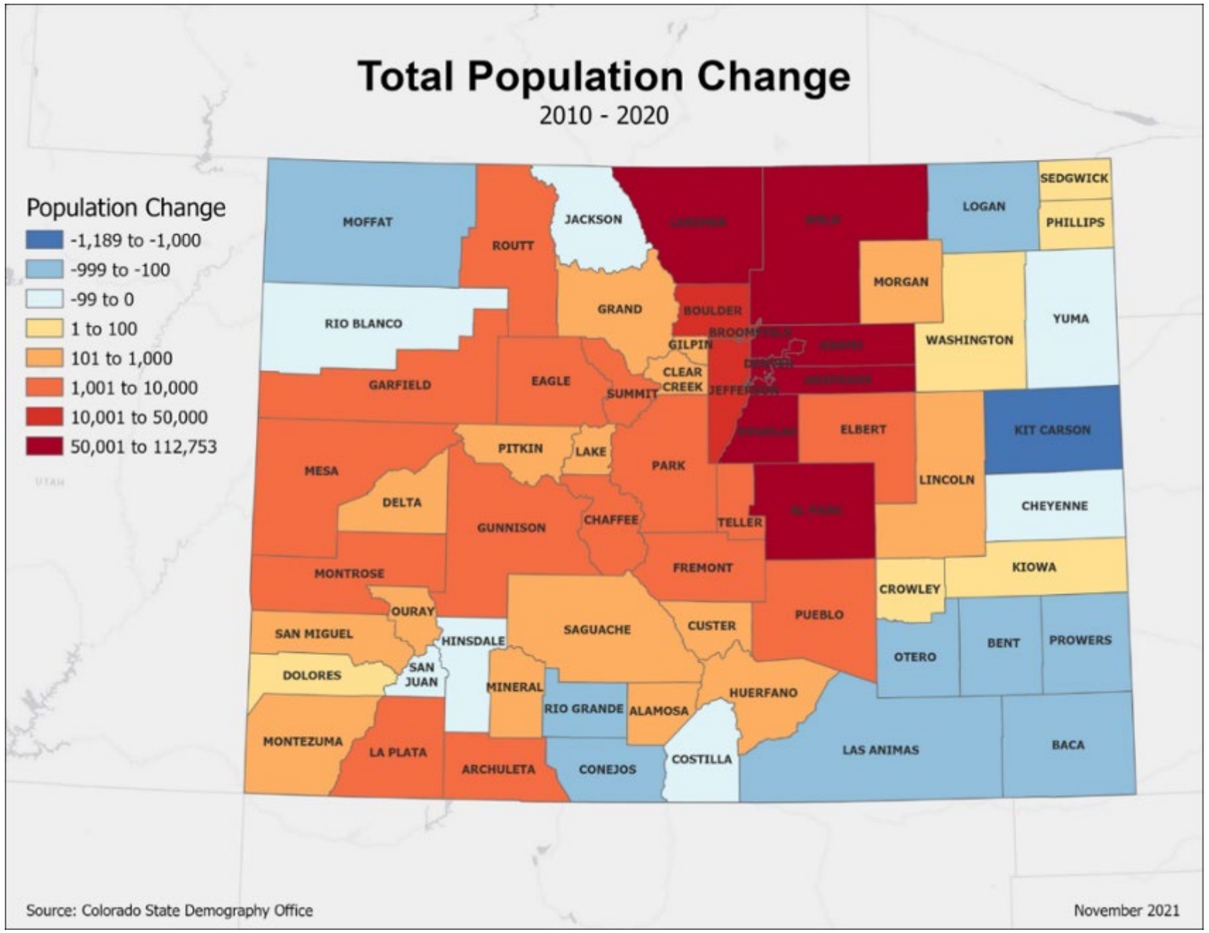
Job Growth slowing

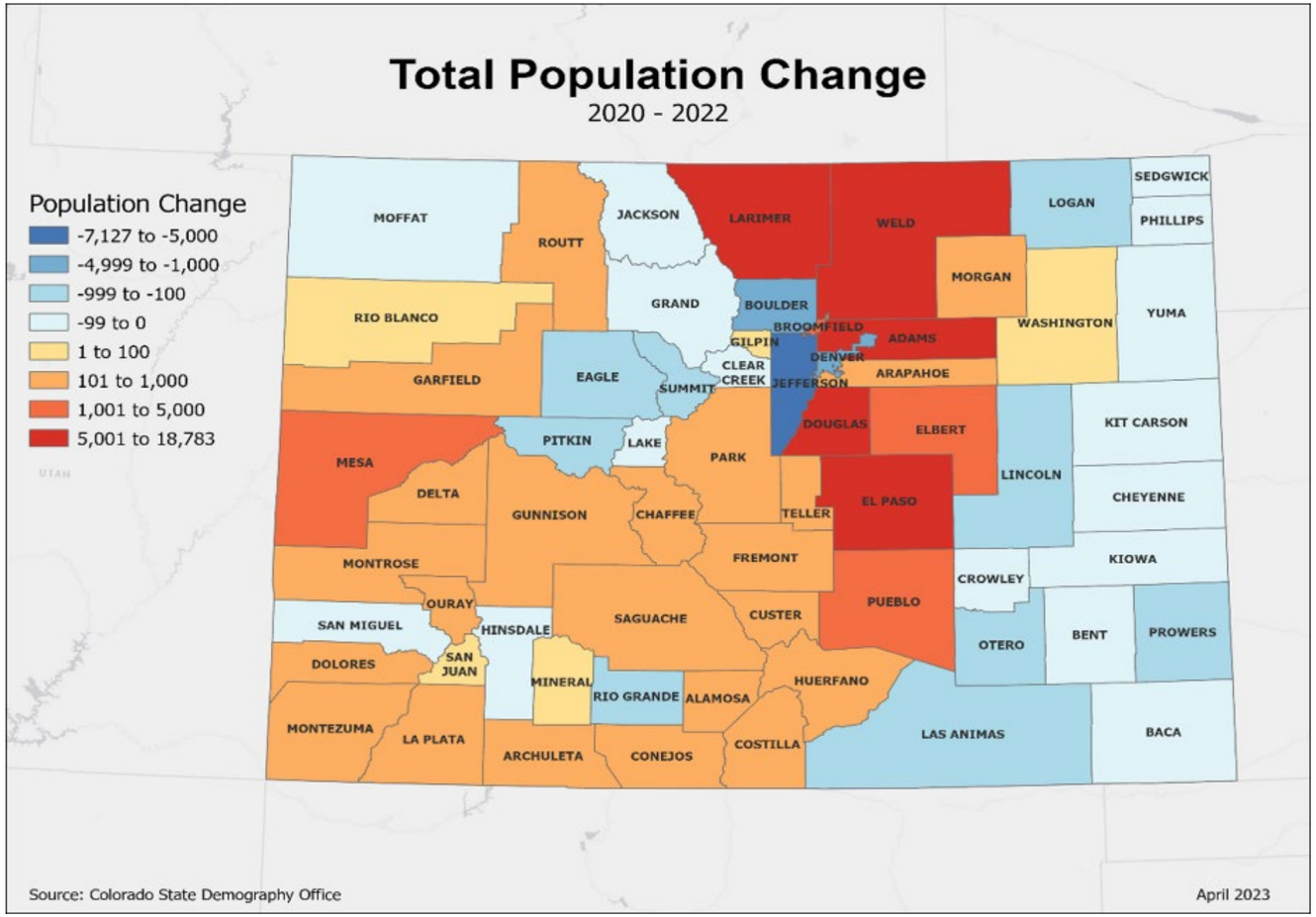
- Not necessarily because job demand is slowing, but due to labor supply
- Retirements mean more jobs that need to be replaced
- Less young people means less people to fill those jobs

Big Picture Numbers

	2010-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-23	
United States	22.3MM	7.4%	520k	0.1%	1.256MM	0.4%	1.643	.5%
Colorado	744.5k	14.8%	26.5k	0.5%	27.7k	0.5%	36.5	.6%
Colorado Rank	9th	6th	11th	20th	12th	19th	9th	18th

- 2010 – 2020
  - Second slowest decade for US in terms of growth
- 2020 – 2021 – slowest ever recorded growth rate
  - 17 states lost population
- 2021 – 2022
  - 19 states lost population
- 2022-2023
  - 8 states lost population – fewer deaths, immigration increase





2010 to 2020 - 95% of population and job growth along Front Range

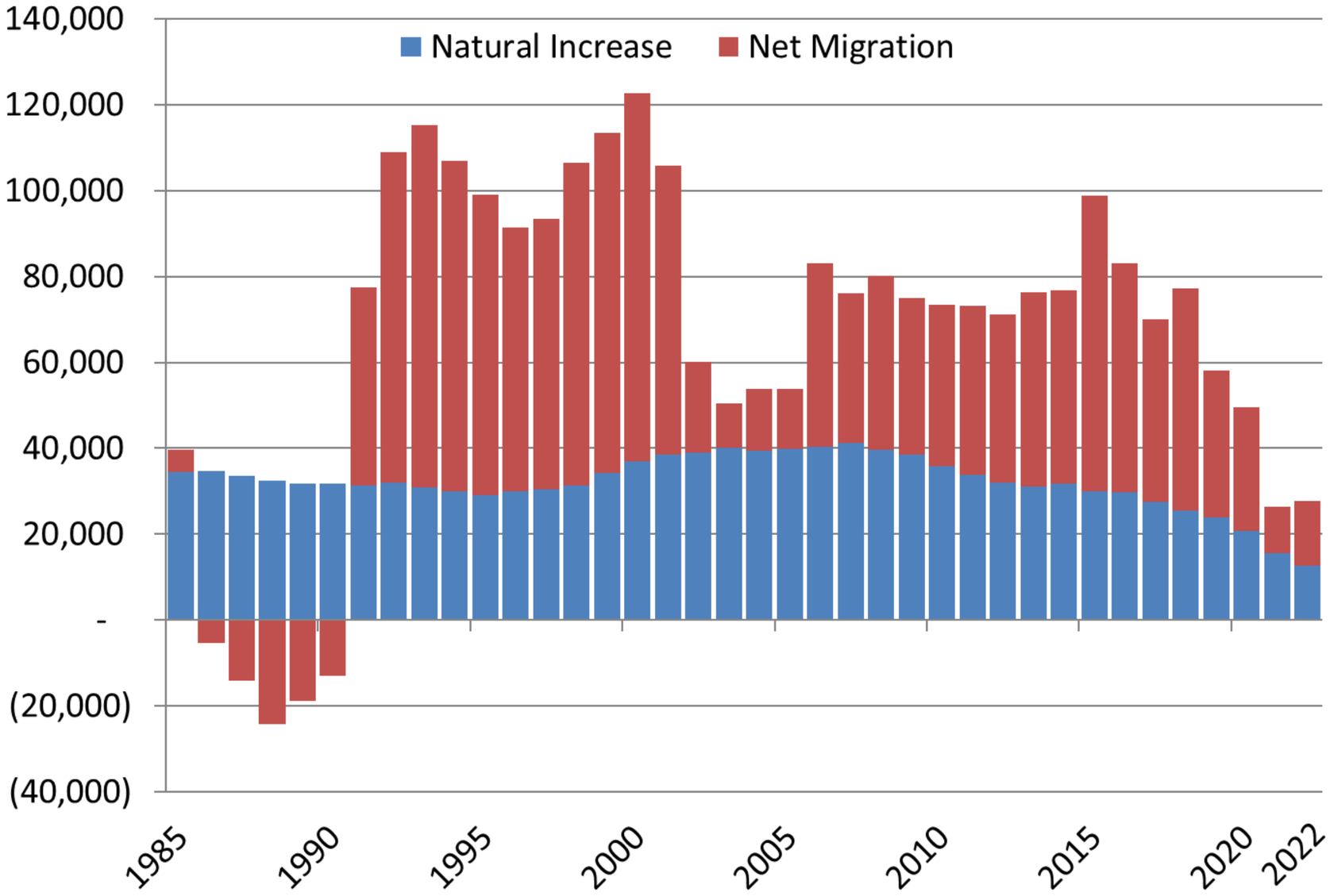
2020 to 2022 – Decreased to 75%, with a number of Denver Metro Counties losing population
2022 to future – Forecast to return more of a pre-COVID trend

Source: 2010 and 2020 Colorado State Demography Office Population Estimates, Accessed March, 2023

Population

Components of Change

Components of Colorado Population Change, 1985-2022

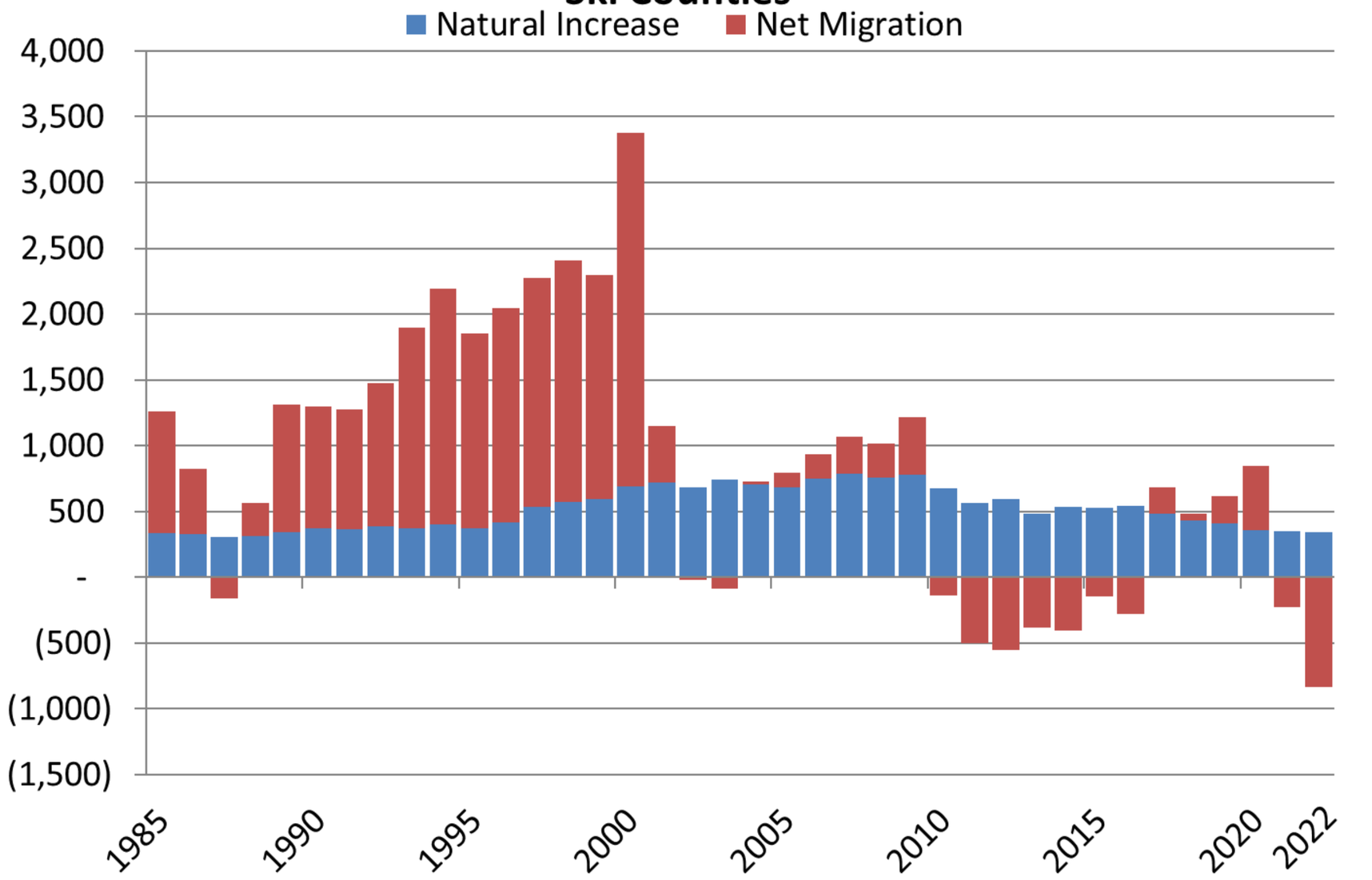


	2010-2019	
	Total	Ann Avg
Births	652,888	65,289
Deaths	(351,479)	(35,148)
Net Migration	456,651	45,665
Total Population	758,060	75,806
Percentage	13.6%	1.3%

	2020-2022	
	Total	Ann Avg
Births	187,082	62,361
Deaths	(138,380)	(46,127)
Net Migration	55,121	18,374
Total Population	103,823	34,608
Percentage	0.9%	0.3%

Source: State Demography Office

Components of Population Change 1985-2022, Colorado Ski Counties



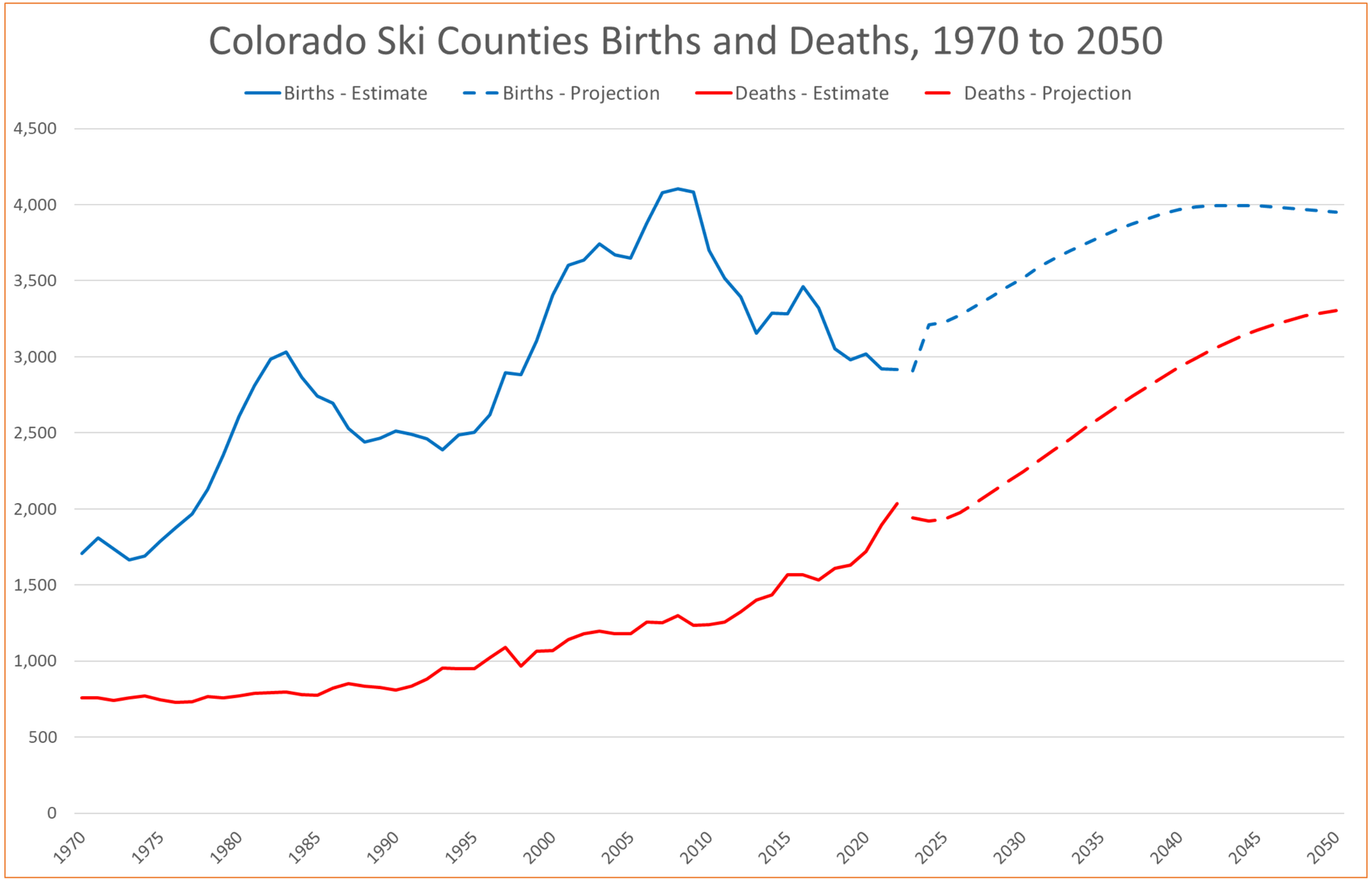
	2010-2019	
	Total	Ann Avg
Births	33,153	3,315
Deaths	(14,573)	(1,457)
Net Migration	6,843	684
Total Population	25,423	2,542
Percentage	7.2%	0.7%

	2020-2022	
	Total	Ann Avg
Births	8,853	2,951
Deaths	(5,648)	(1,883)
Net Migration	1,541	514
Total Population	4,746	1,582
Percentage	0.6%	0.2%

Source: State Demography Office

Population

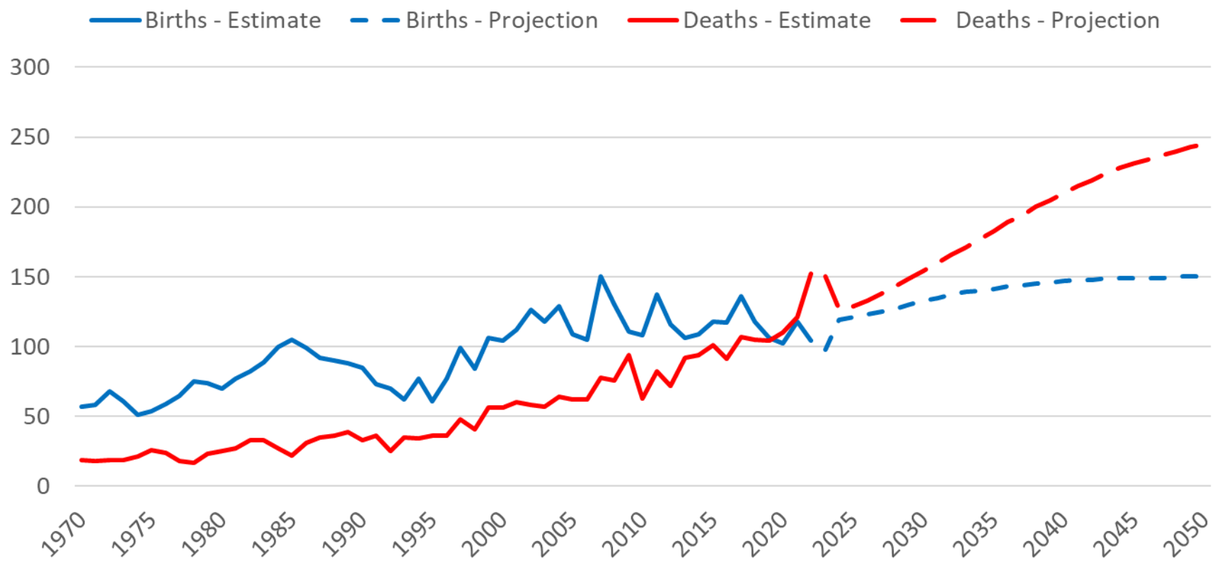
Births and Deaths



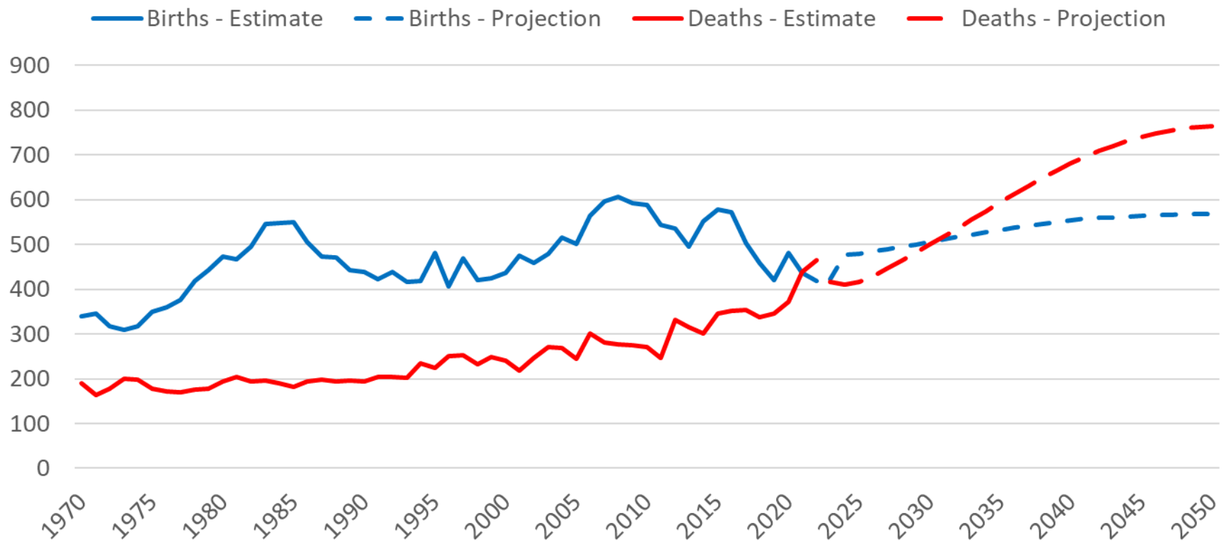
Counties with a similar trend and expected continued growth from natural increase:

Eagle
Garfield
Grand
Gunnison
Lake
Pitkin
Routt
San Miguel
Summit

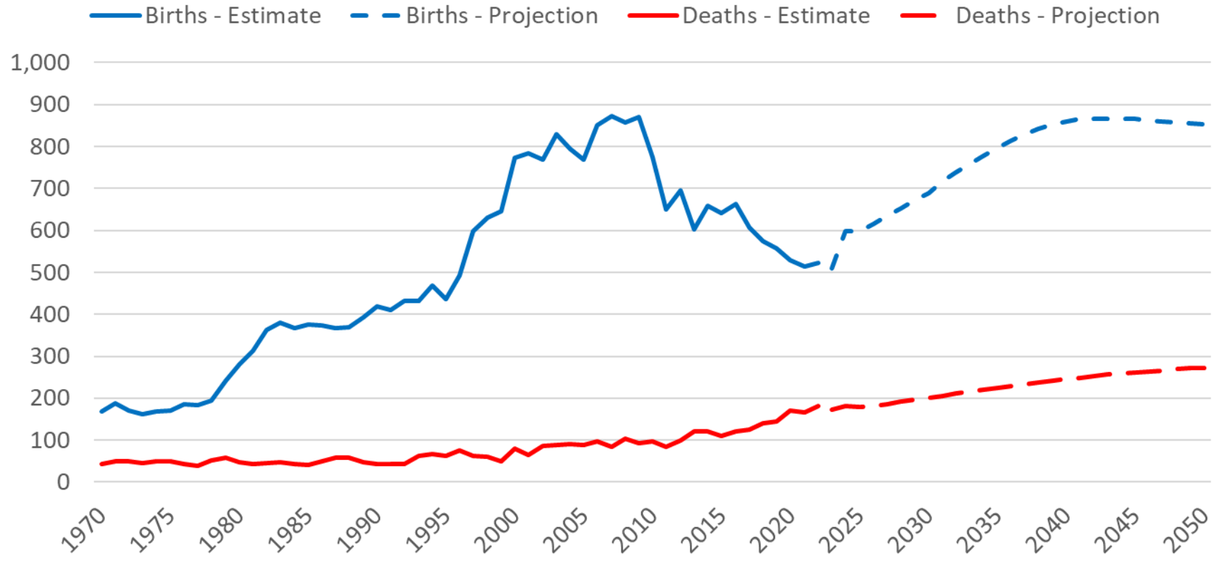
Archuleta County Births and Deaths, 1970 to 2050



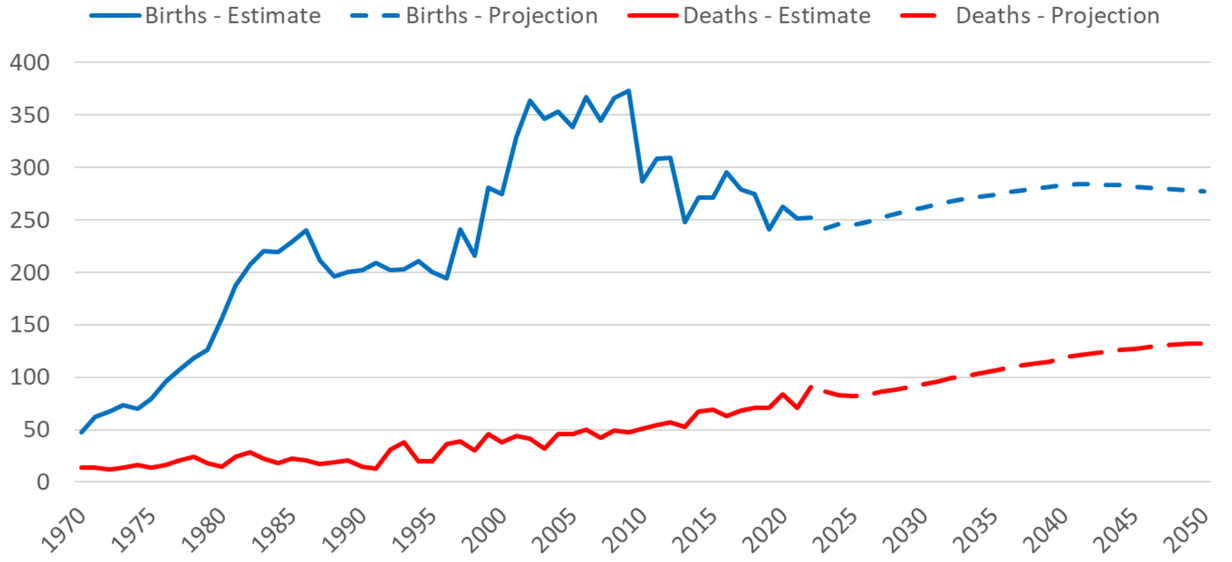
La Plata County Births and Deaths, 1970 to 2050

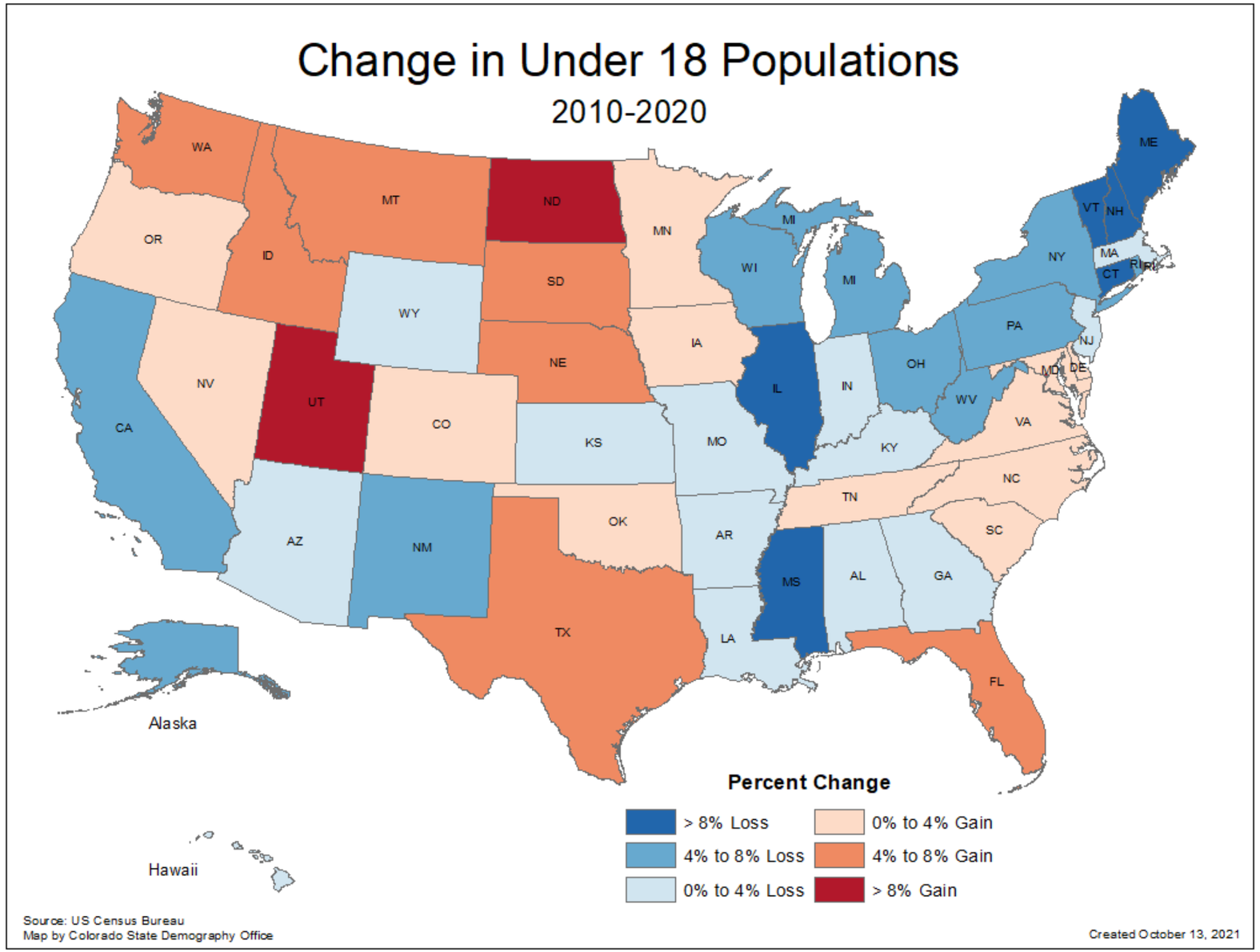


Eagle County Births and Deaths, 1970 to 2050



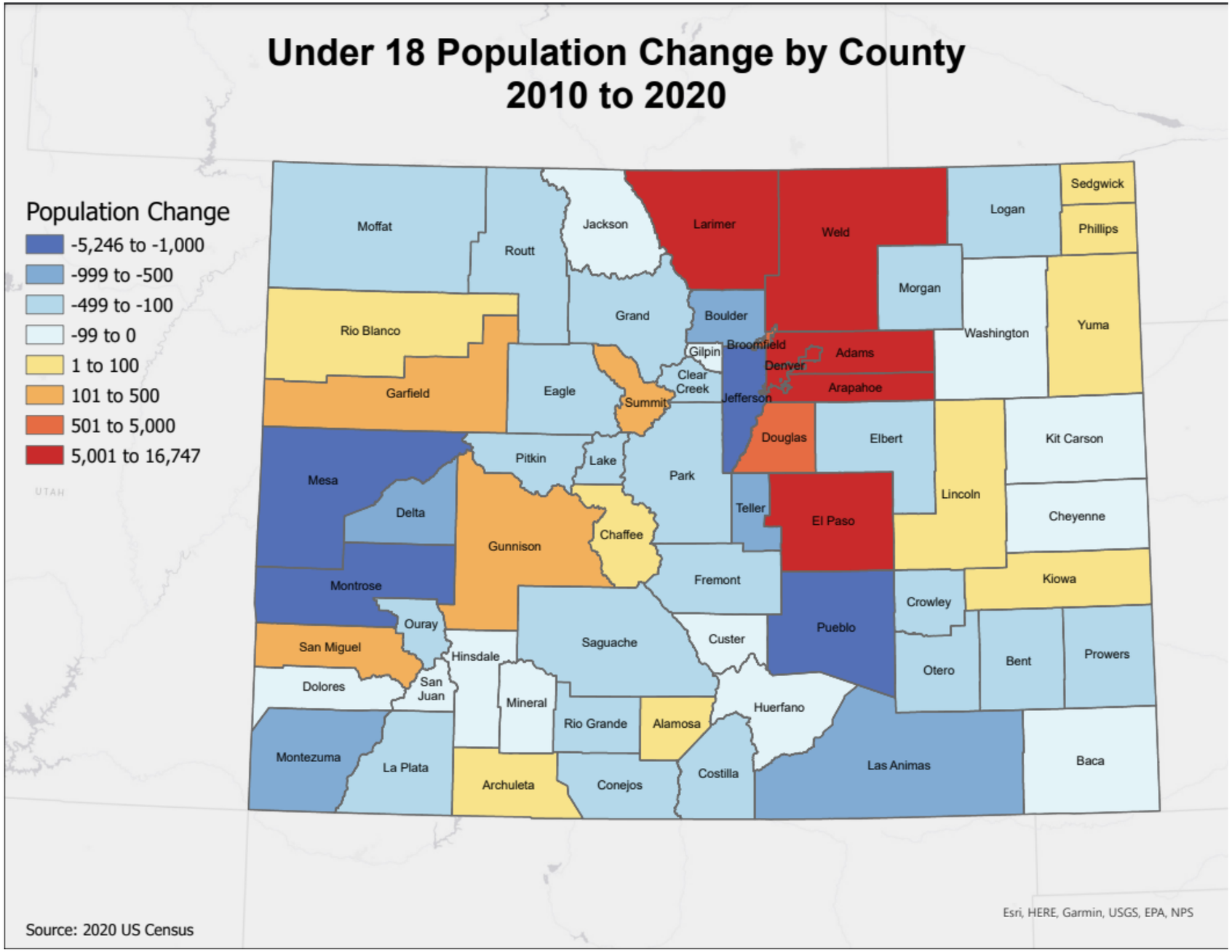
Summit County Births and Deaths, 1970 to 2050





- Births down 650,000 in the US compared to peak in 2007.
- Population Under 18 Declined by over 1,000,000 over the decade
- 27 states lost population under 18

Under 18 Population Change by County
2010 to 2020



Source: 2020 US Census

Natural Increase

Births Down

- Births in the state have been decreasing since 2007
- Some counties are projected to see increasing births due to net migration of younger adults
- Decreasing under 18 population in donor states and many Colorado counties
- Births still largest driver of population growth in the state (more than net migration)

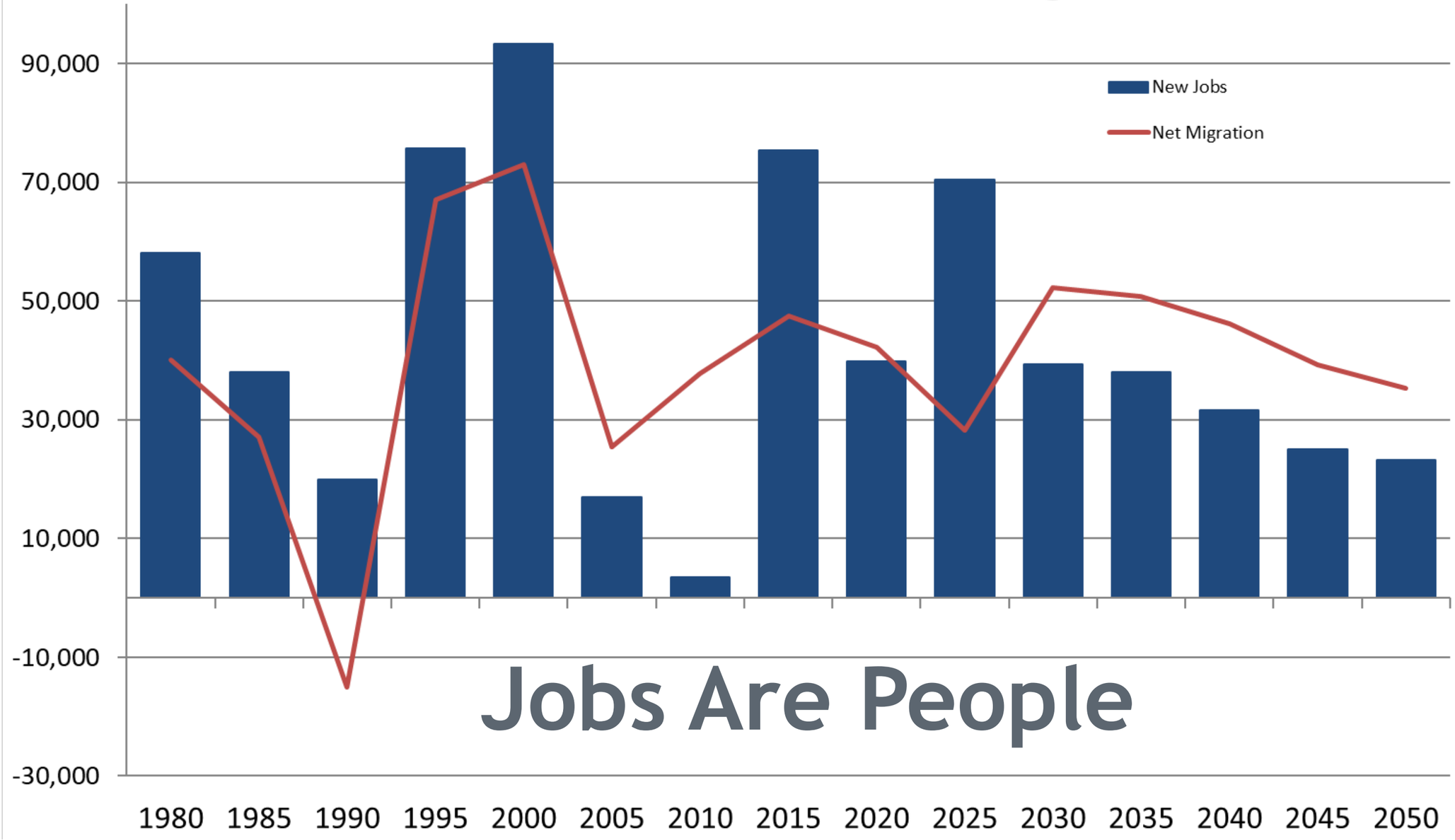
Deaths Up

- Colorado is getting older

Population

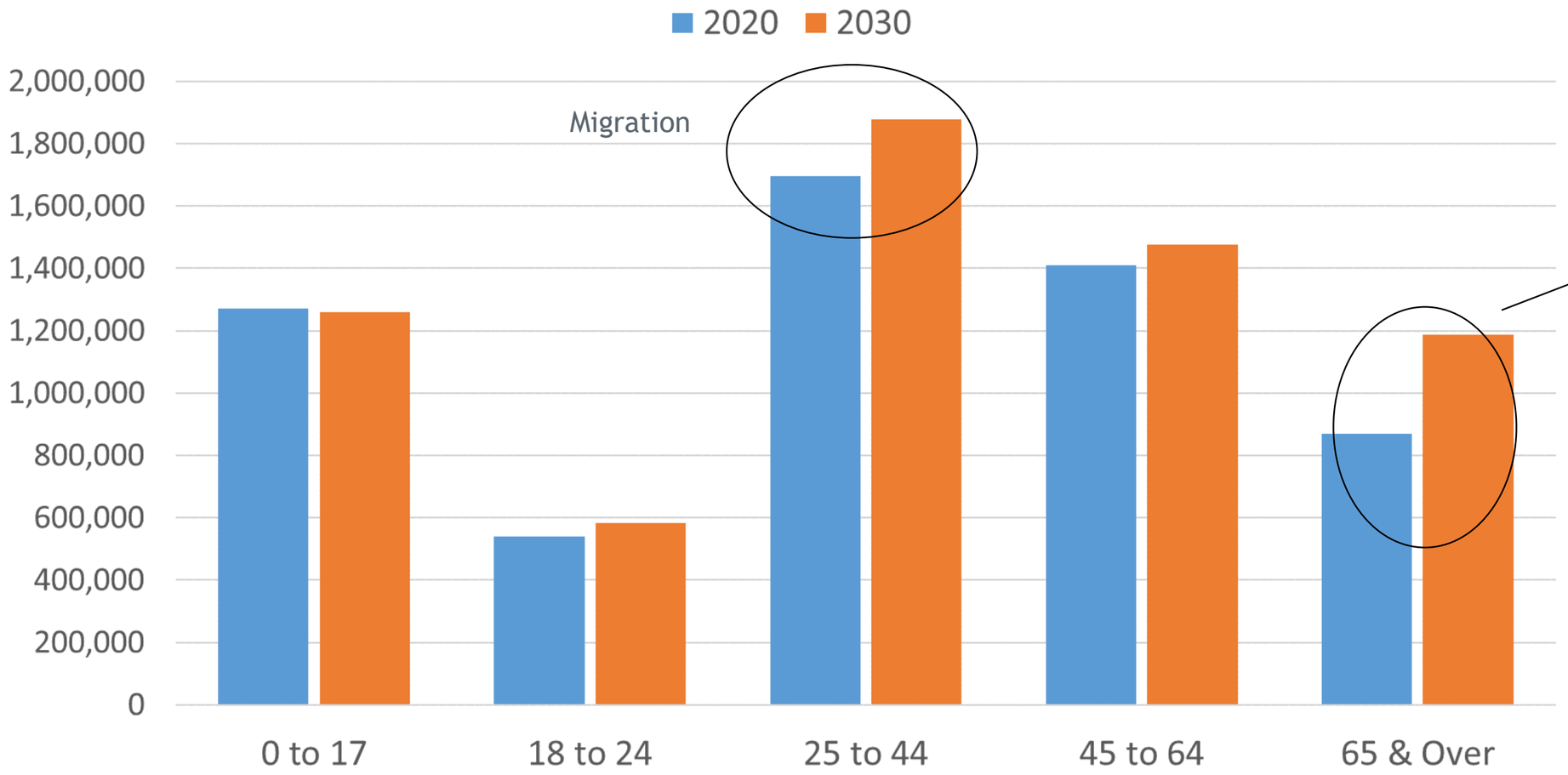
Migration

Colorado New Jobs and Net Migration



Jobs Are People

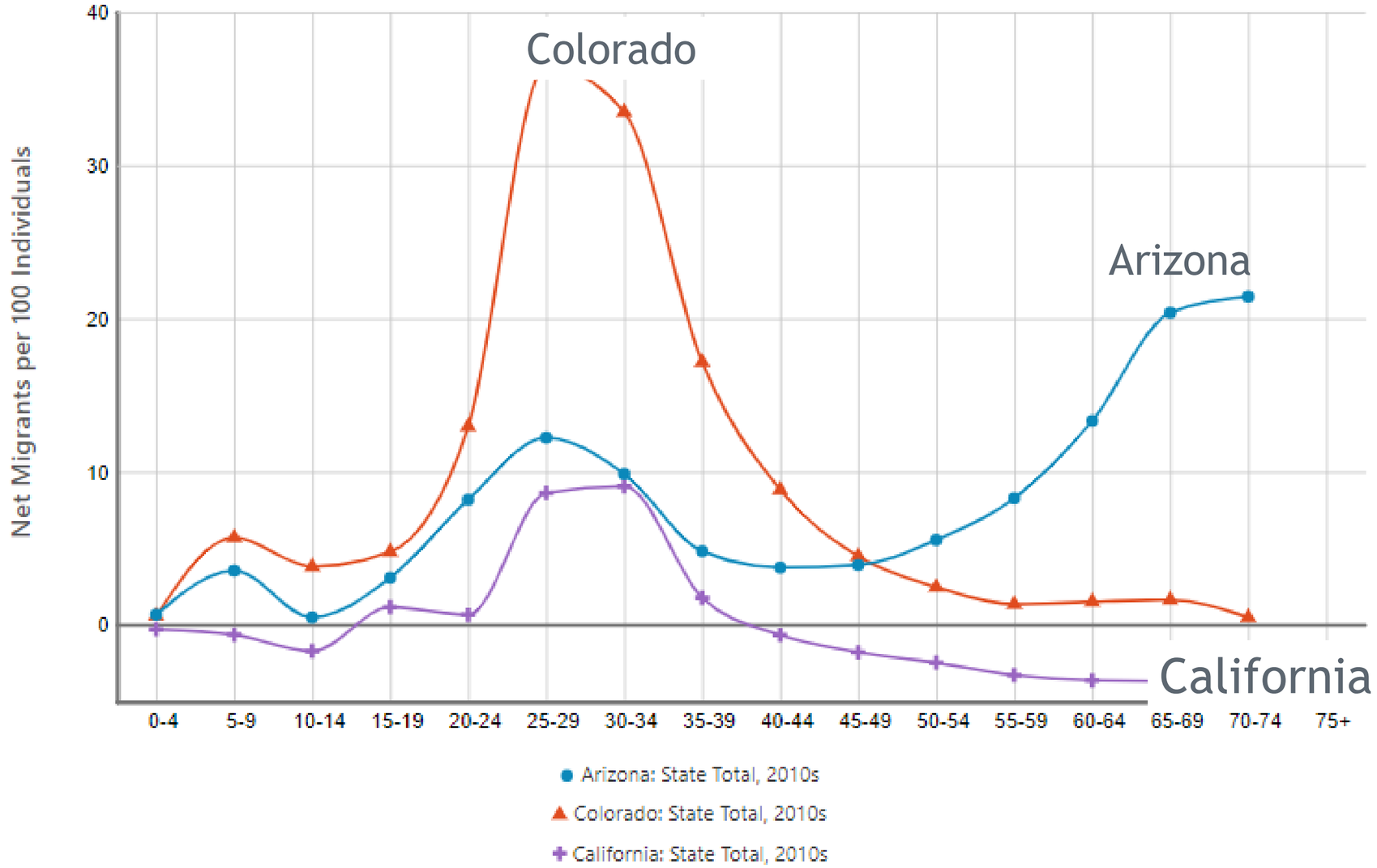
Colorado Population By Age, 2020 to 2030



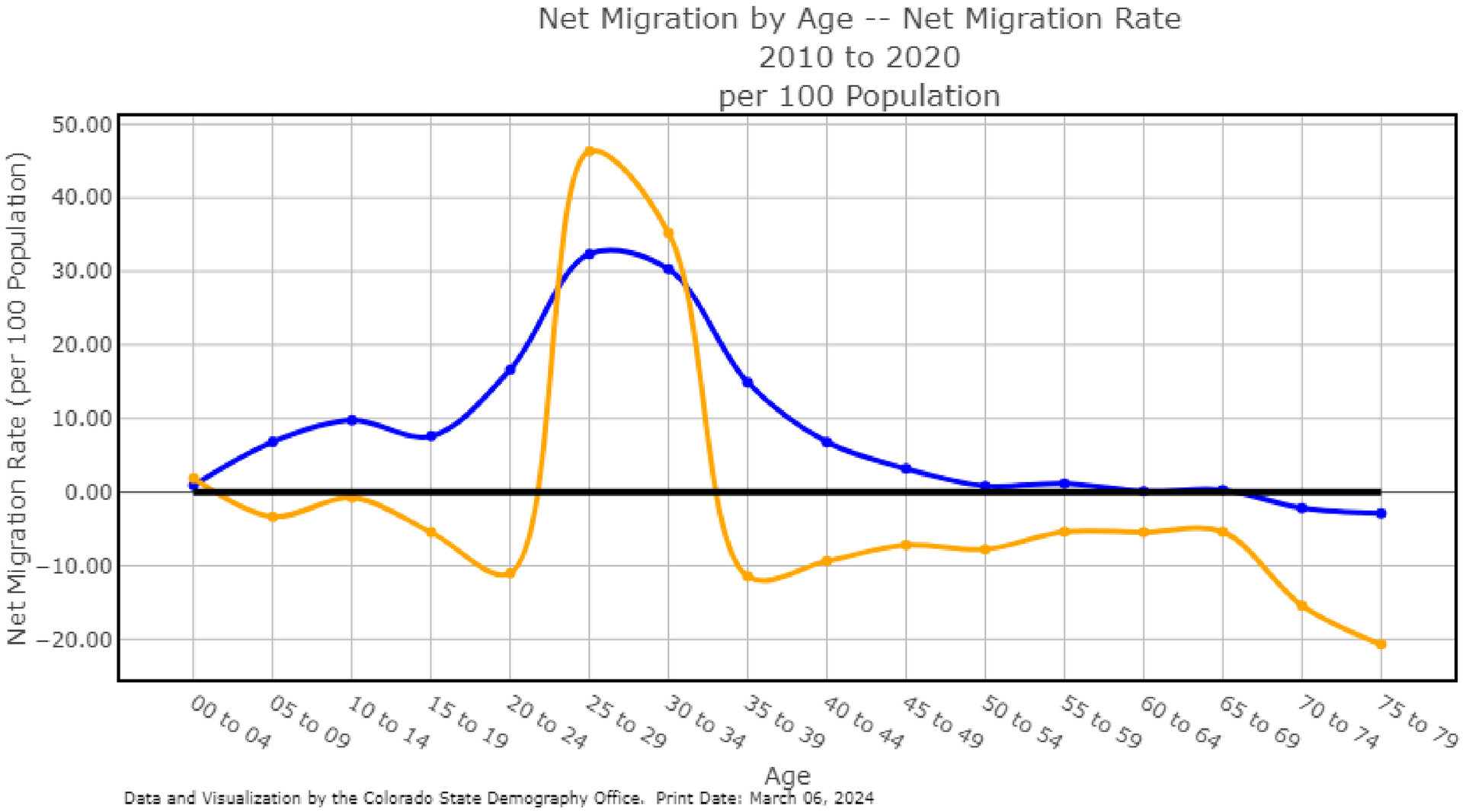
Most of these folks already live here and most of them own their house.

	0 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over	Total
2020	1,270,519	539,144	1,694,991	1,410,374	869,556	5,784,584
2030	1,260,203	584,329	1,878,133	1,477,443	1,186,435	6,386,542
Change	-10,316	45,185	183,142	67,069	316,879	601,958
Pct Ch	-0.8%	8.4%	10.8%	4.8%	36.4%	10.4%

Net Migration by Age

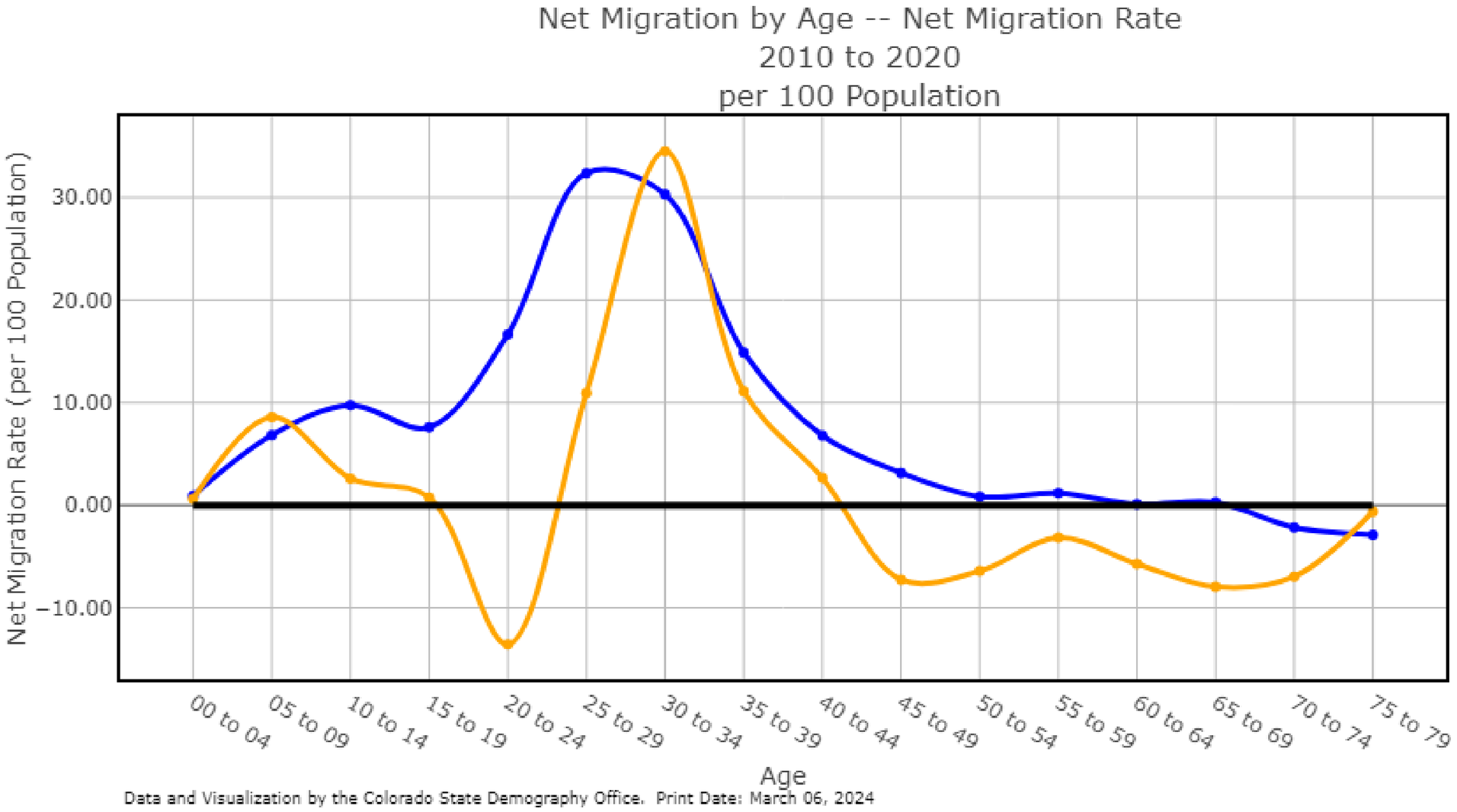


Egan-Robertson, David, Katherine J. Curtis, Richelle L. Winkler, Kenneth M. Johnson, and Caitlin Bourbeau, Age-Specific Net Migration Estimates for US Counties, 1950-2020. Applied Population Laboratory, University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2023 (Beta Release). Web.



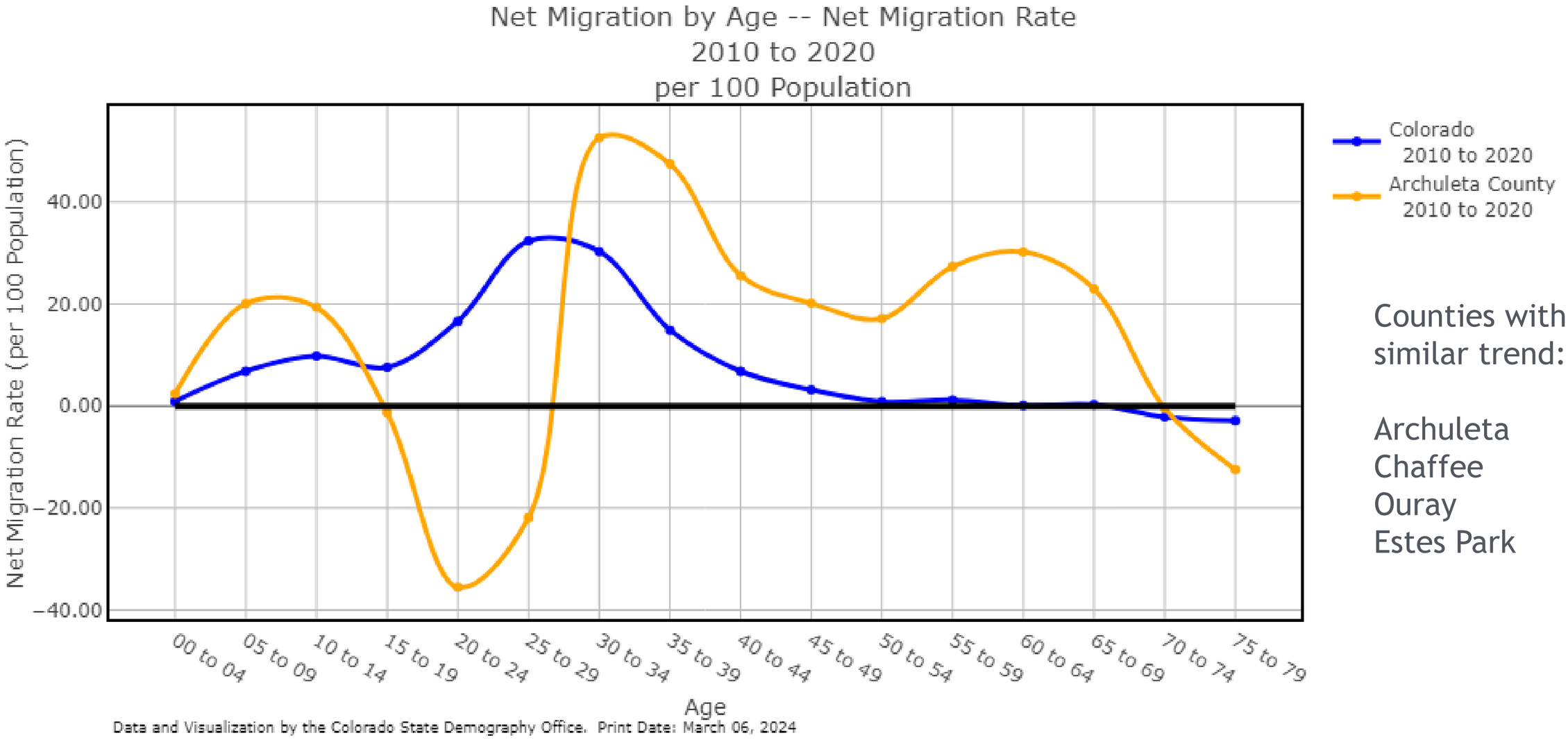
Counties with a similar trend:

Gunnison
Lake
La Plata
Pitkin
Routt
San Miguel
Summit



Counties with a similar trend:

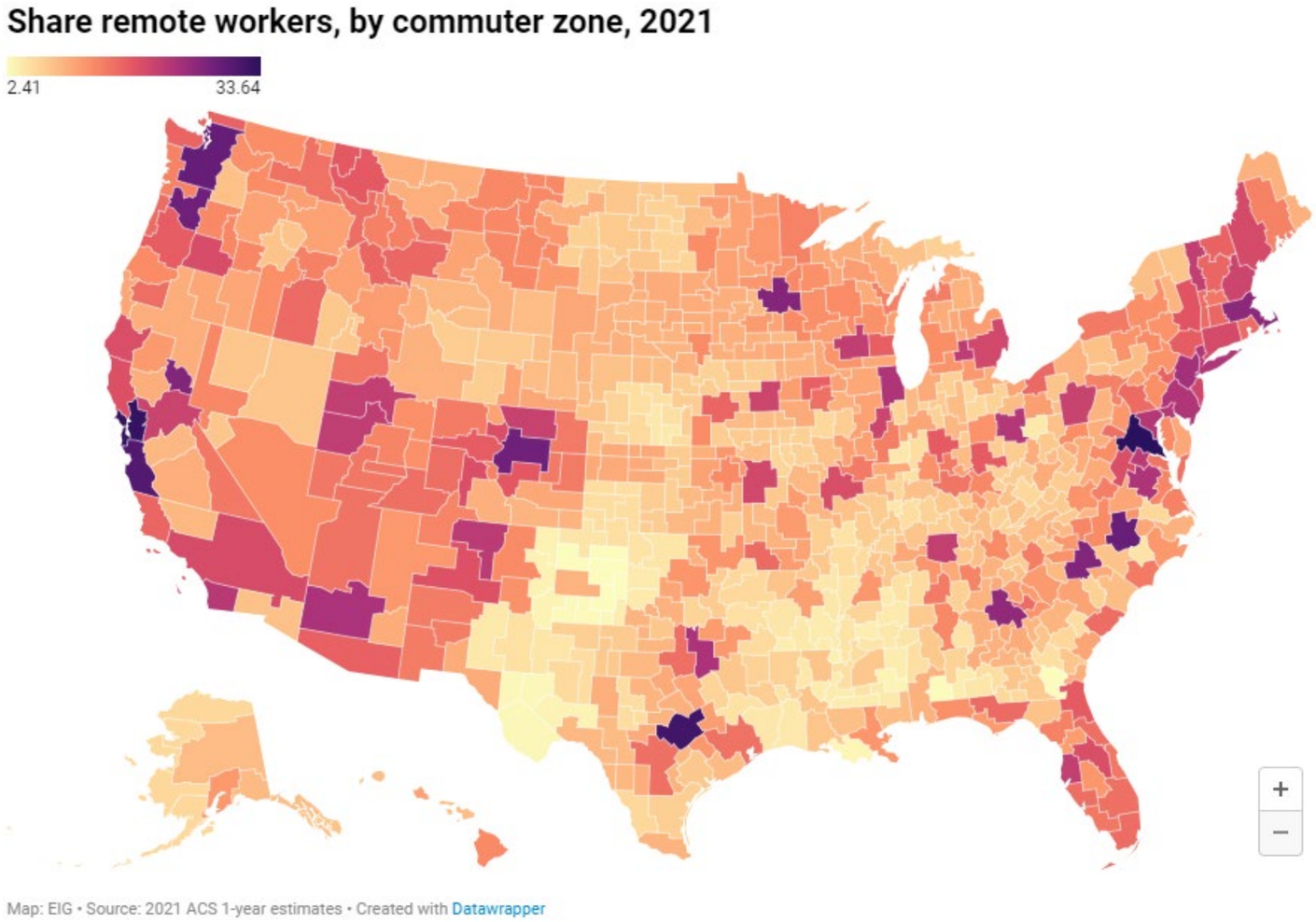
Eagle
Garfield
Grand



Counties with a similar trend:

Archuleta
Chaffee
Ouray
Estes Park

Work from home - ACS



Top commuting zones by telework share

Washington D.C.	34%
San Francisco	33%
Austin	32%
San Jose	30%
Seattle	29%
Raleigh	29%
Portland	28%
Denver	28%

Gunnison & Granby	19%
Glenwood Sprgs (I-70)	18%
Grand Junction	17%

Economic Innovation Group, 2021 ACS 1-year estimates, https://eig.org/the-uneven-geography-of-remote-work/

Jobs and Net Migration

Jobs are People

- Historically job growth has driven net migration to the state

Who are migrants

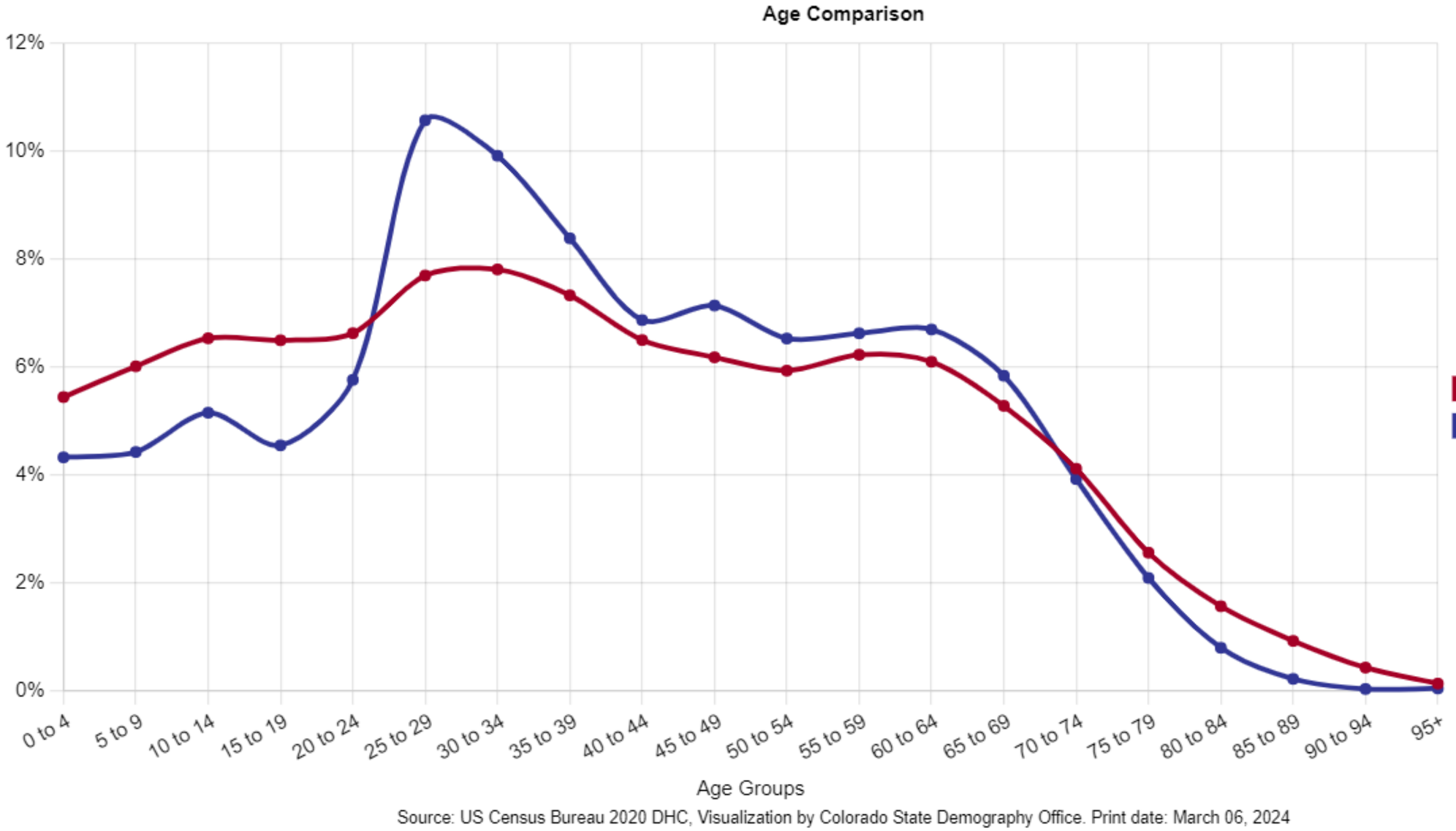
- Generally younger (20s and 30s)
- Not all counties – some may attract older adults

The Future

- Vacancies mean more young people required just to fill existing jobs
- Work from home means a job doesn’t have to be created in Colorado to exist here
- Likewise Colorado firms can hire people in other states
- What trends will stay?

Trends

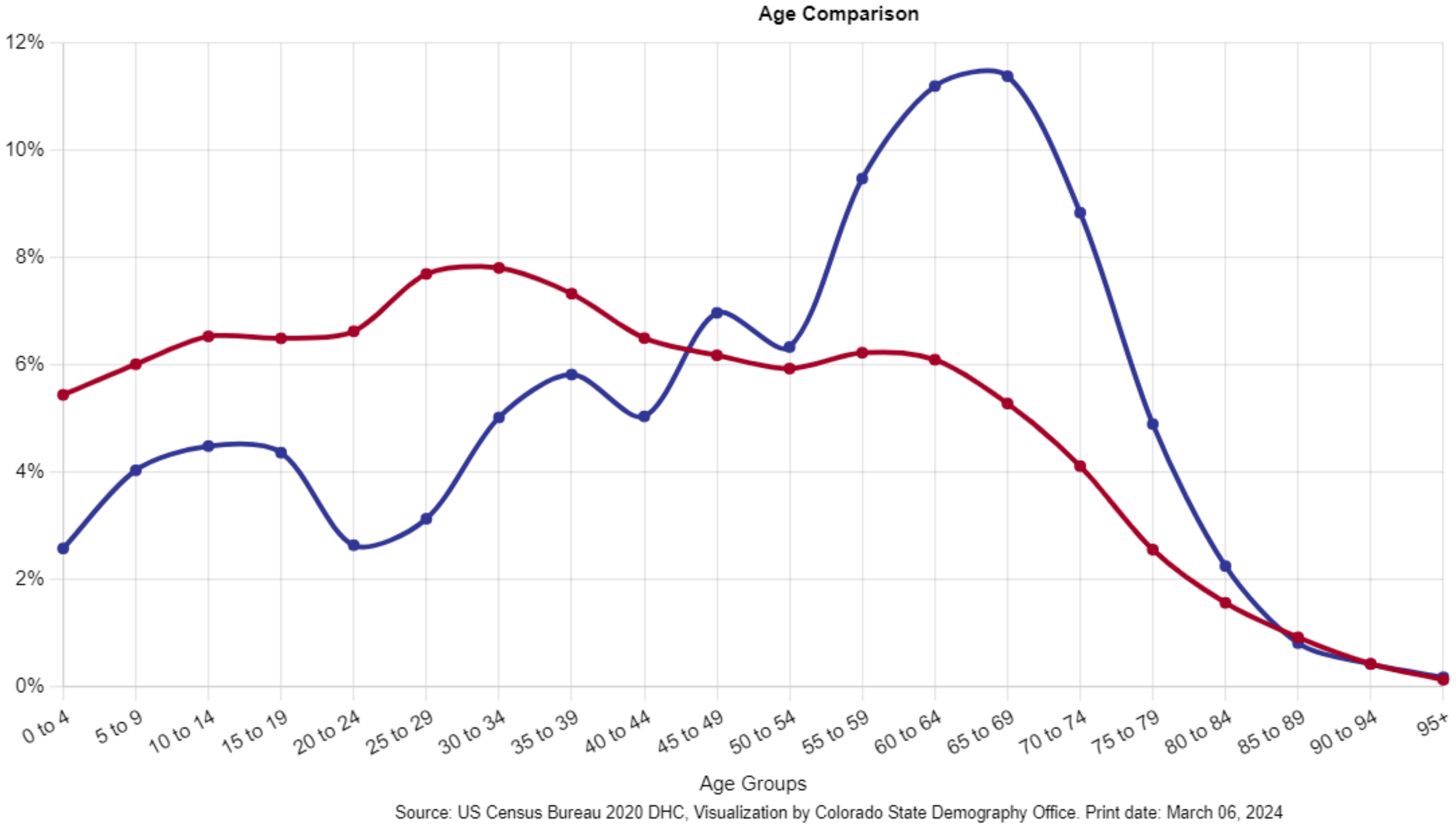
Aging



Colorado
Summit County

Counties with a similar trend:

Gunnison
Lake
Pitkin
Routt
San Miguel
Summit

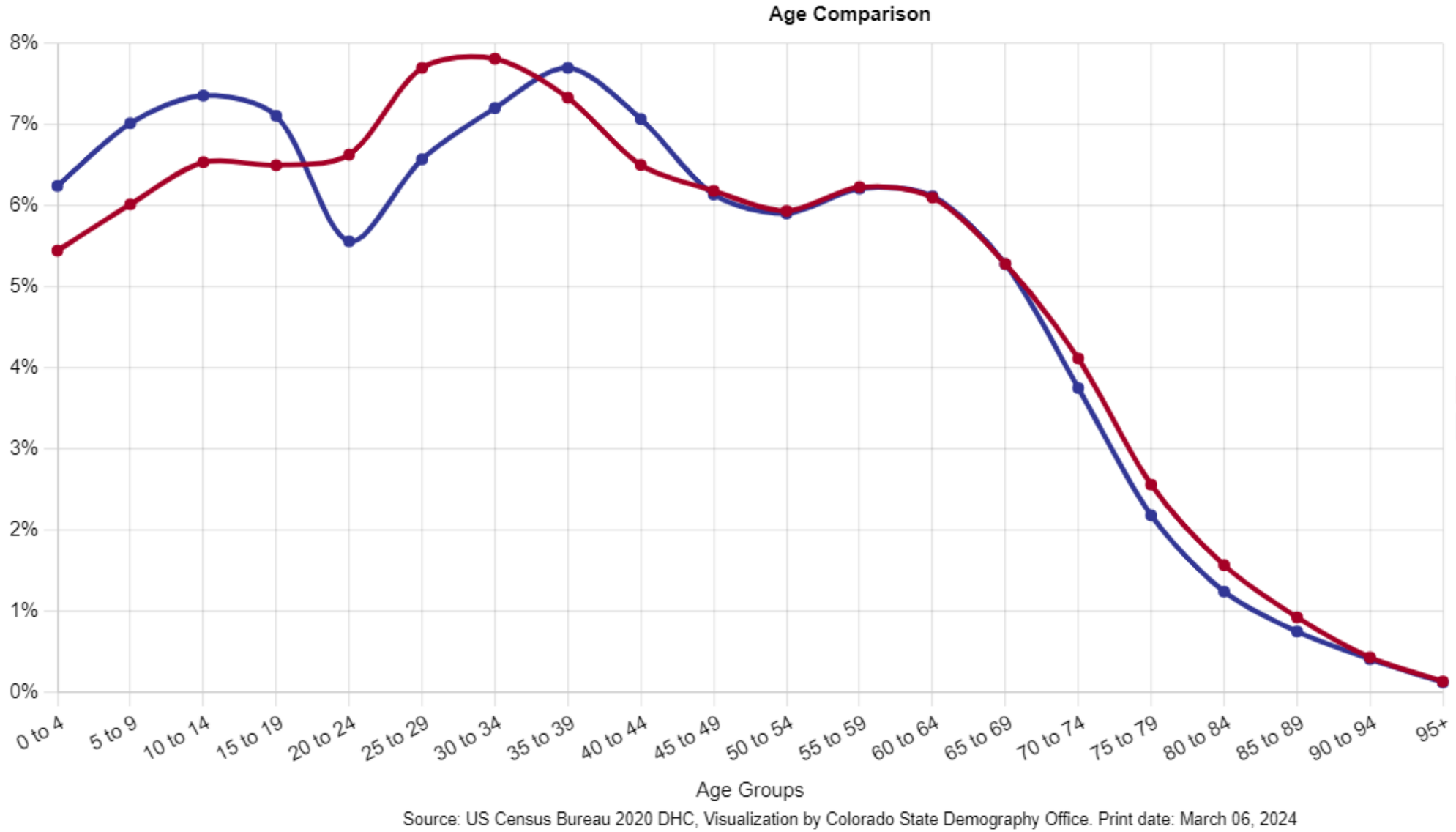


Colorado
Ouray County

Counties with a similar trend:

Archuleta
Chaffee
Grand
Ouray

Estes Park



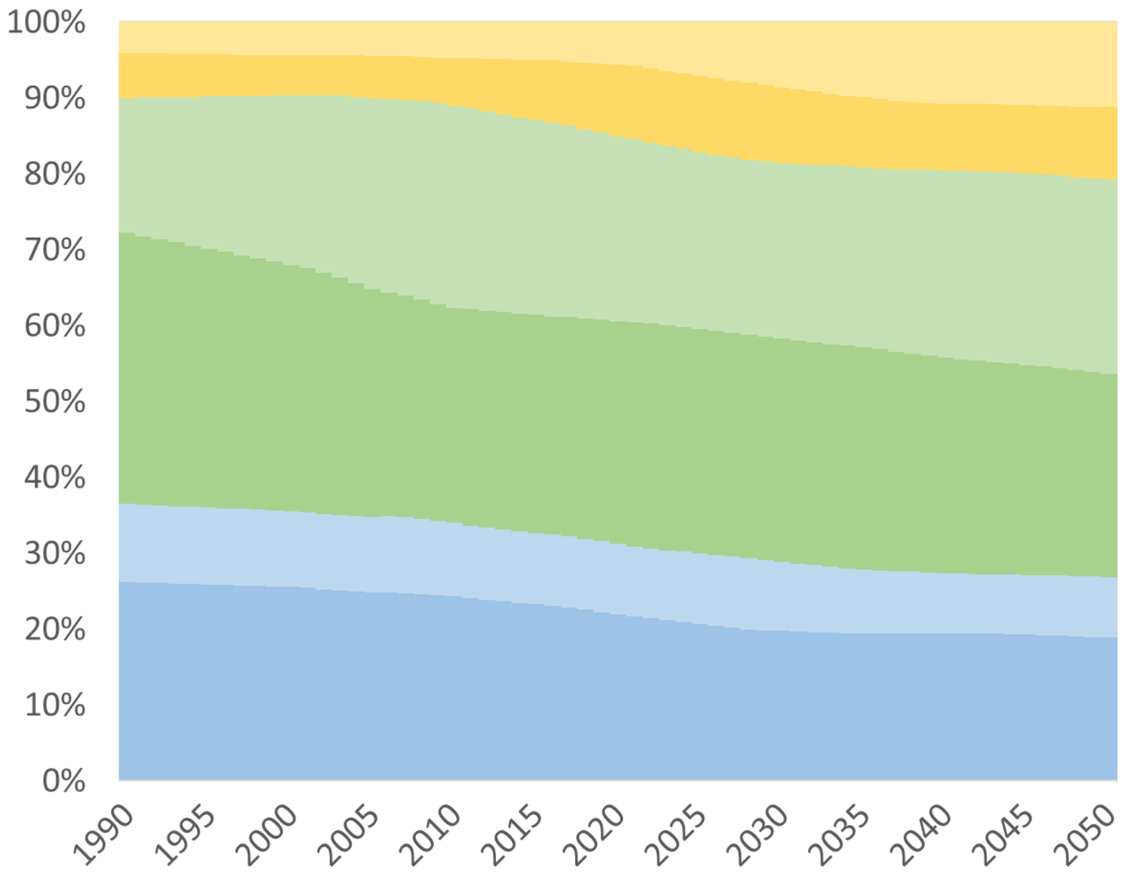
Colorado

Garfield County

Counties with a similar trend:

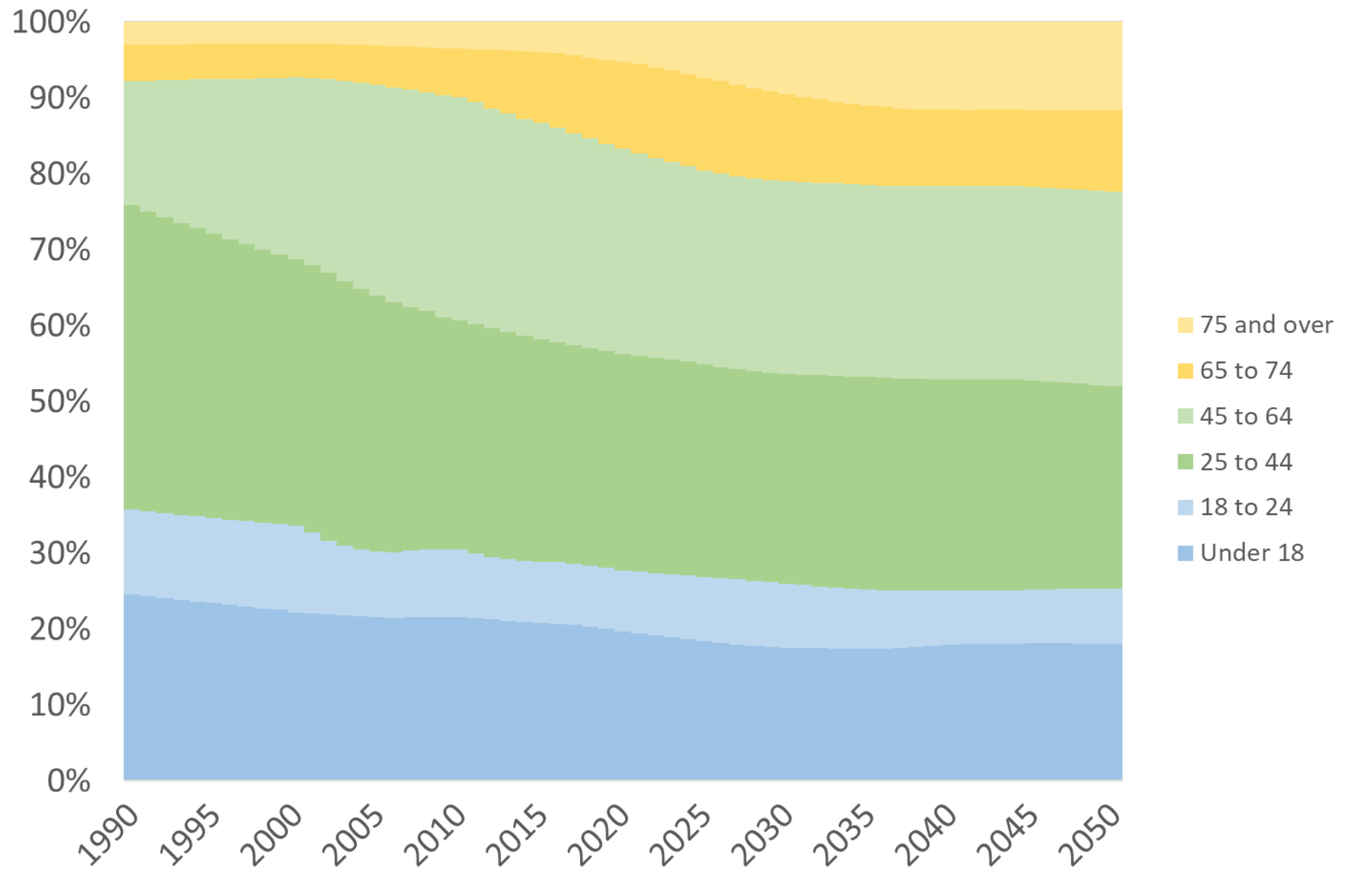
Eagle
Garfield
La Plata

Age Distribution by Year, Colorado



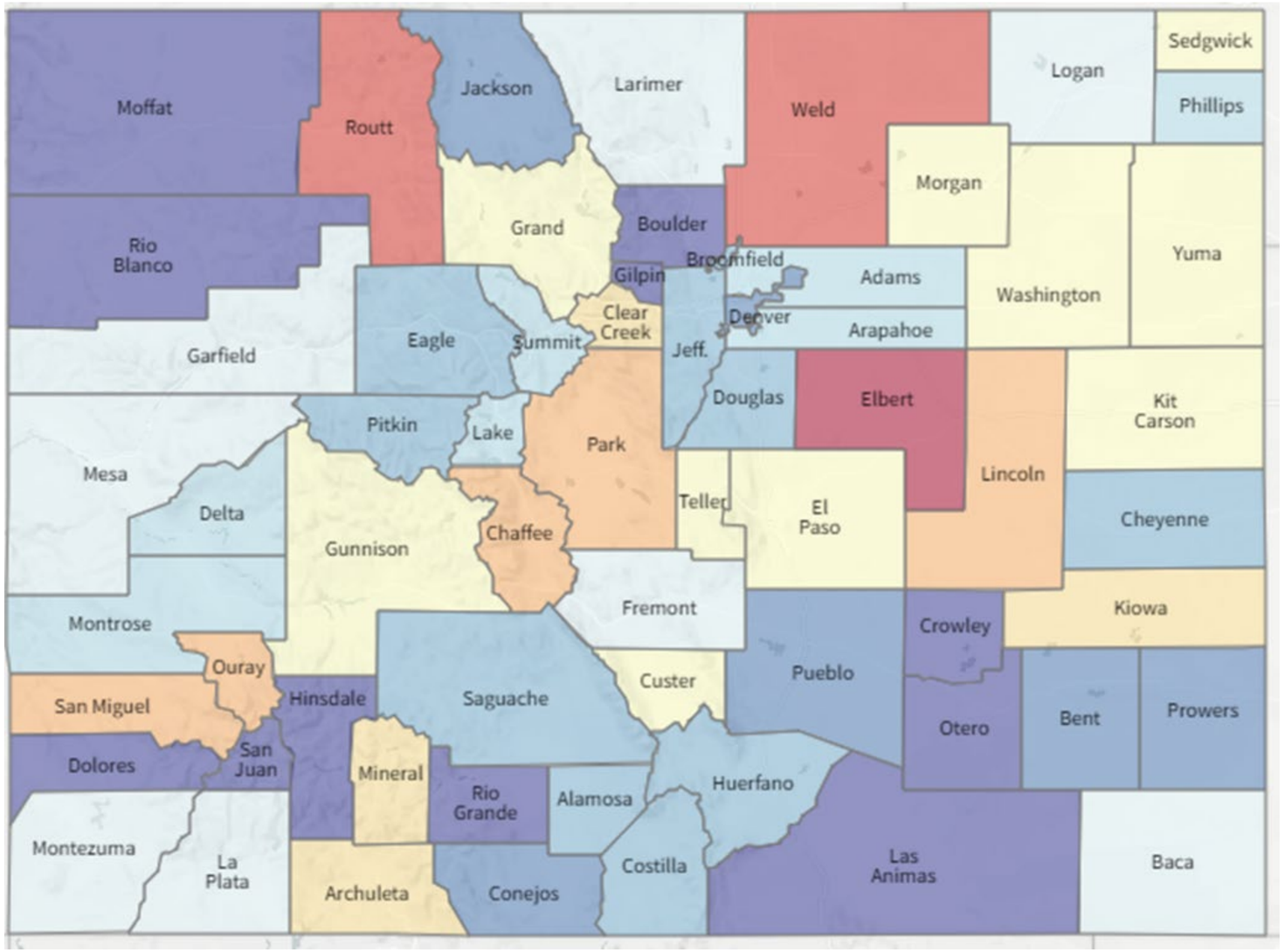
	1990	2023	2050
Under 35	55.1%	45.7%	39.5%
35 to 64	35.0%	38.0%	39.8%
65 and Over	10.0%	16.3%	20.7%

Age Distribution by Year, Colorado Ski Counties



	1990	2023	2050
Under 35	56.1%	41.2%	37.8%
35 to 64	36.1%	40.3%	39.9%
65 and Over	7.8%	18.5%	22.3%

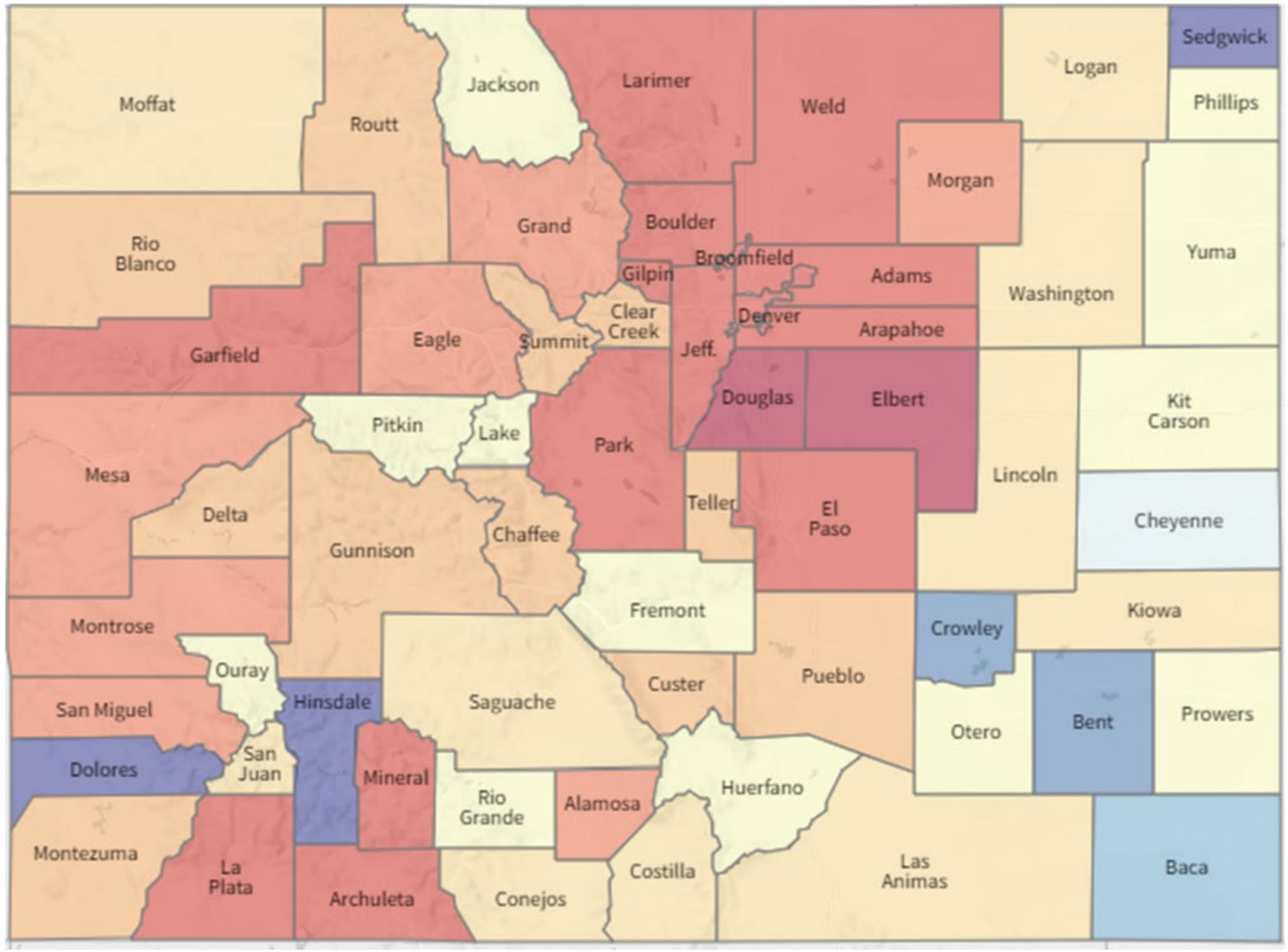
Change in the School Age Population
2020-2030



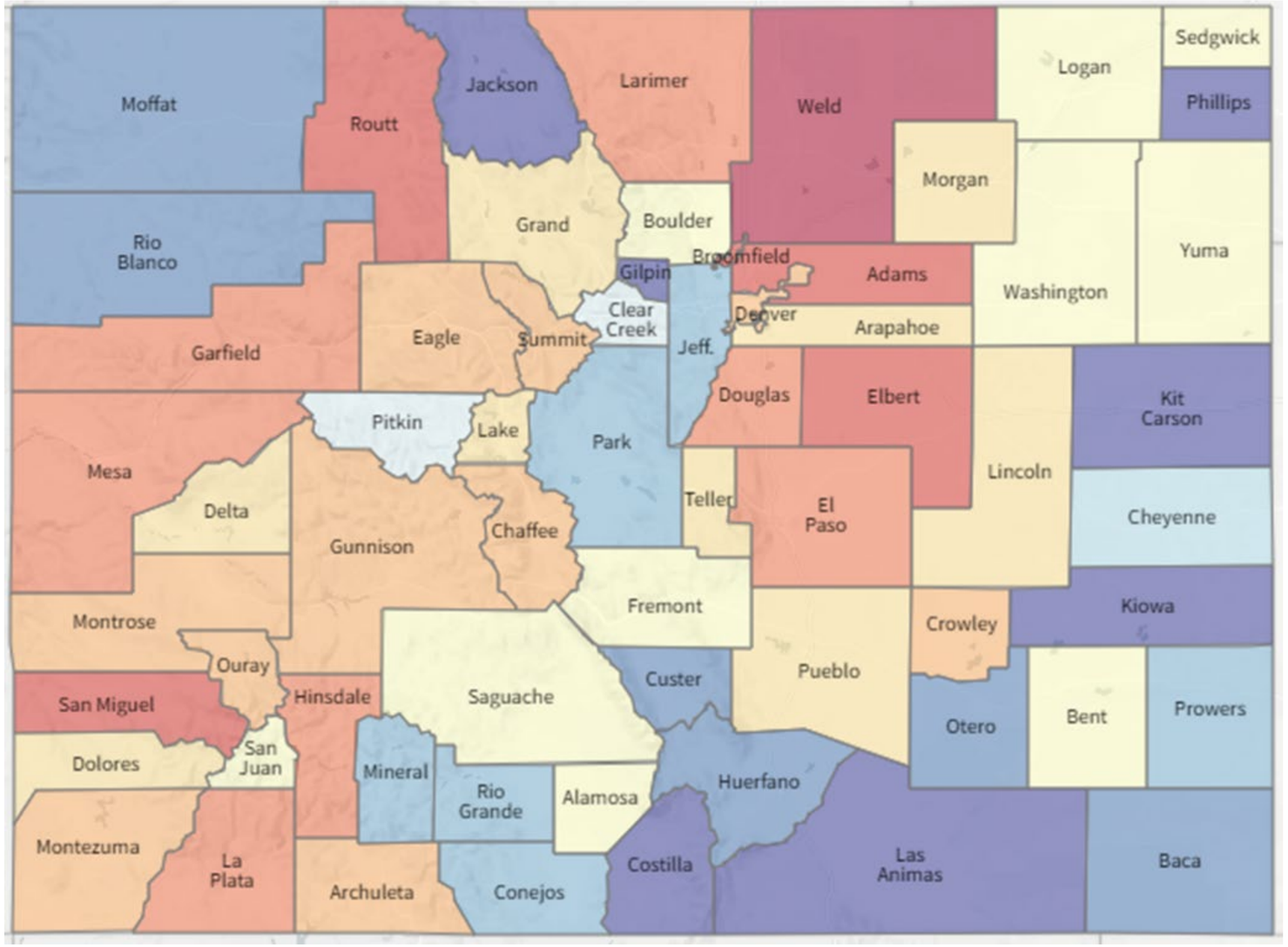
	<=	-11.4%	
-11.3%	to	-8.0%	
-7.9%	to	-4.6%	
-4.5%	to	-2.3%	
-2.2%	to	0.0%	
0.1%	to	2.5%	
2.6%	to	5.1%	
5.2%	to	8.8%	
8.9%	to	12.6%	
12.7%	to	19.0%	
19.1%	+		

Percent change in selected age groups from year to year

Change in the Older Adult Population
2020-2030



Change in the Working Age Population
2020-2030



	<=	-6.1%	
-6.0%	to	-4.3%	
-4.2%	to	-2.5%	
-2.4%	to	-1.2%	
-1.1%	to	0.0%	
0.1%	to	2.9%	
3.0%	to	5.7%	
5.8%	to	10.1%	
10.2%	to	14.4%	
14.5%	to	21.5%	
21.6%	+		

Percent change in selected age groups from year to year

Age and Aging

Consumer demand

- Job creation, occupations, wages

Labor force

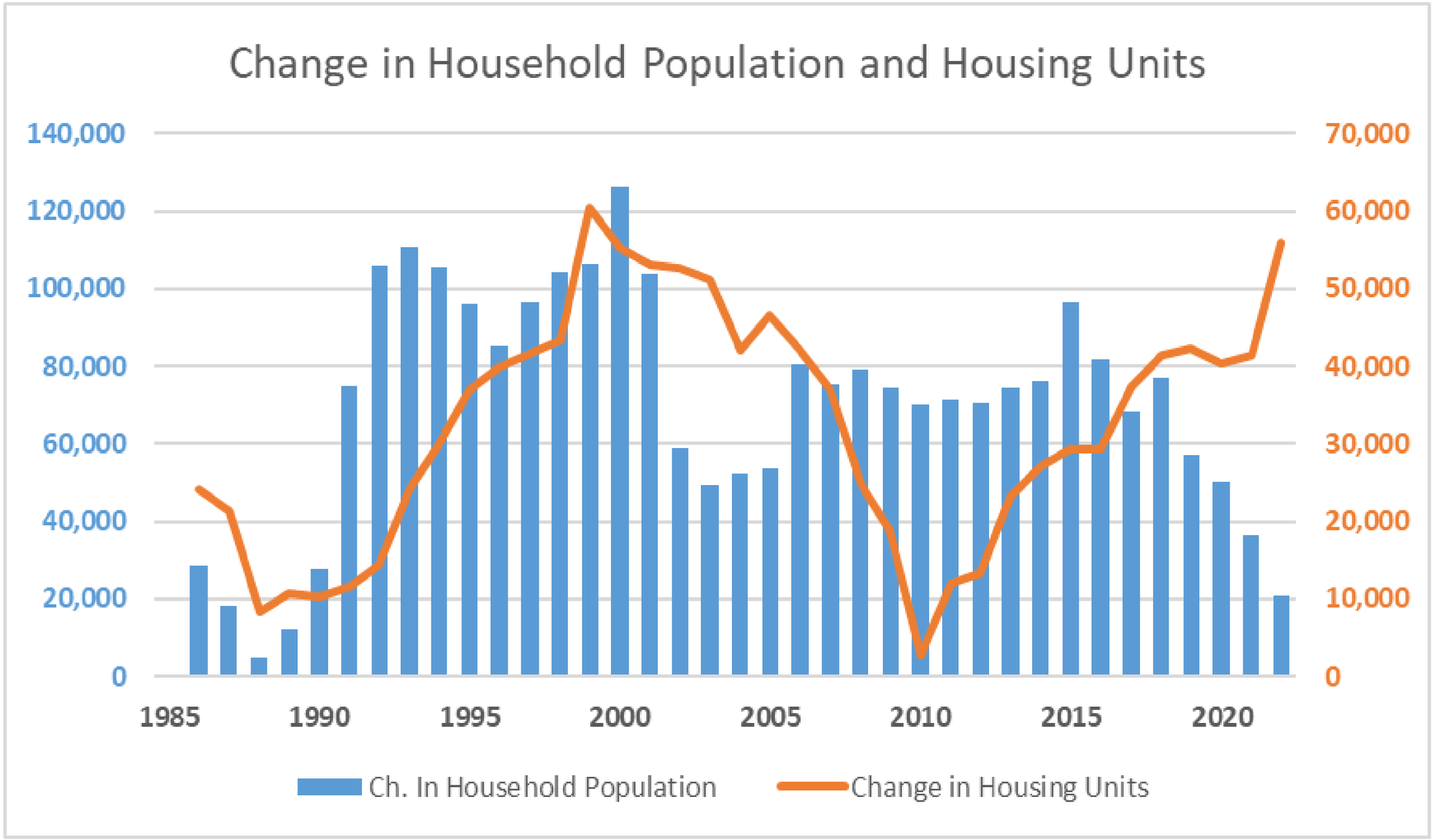
- Older, retirements
- Slower growth in working age, especially after 2027 given lower level of births
- Over the next 5 years 200,000 retirements, assuming increased participation for everyone ages 55+

Housing

- Household size, mobility, owners, accessibility
- Retirees aging in place. Where will new workers live?
- Millennials aging into prime home buyers and 2nd home ownership
- Gen Z aging into apartments and first time home buying
- Services for older adults, if they can’t age in place will have to leave

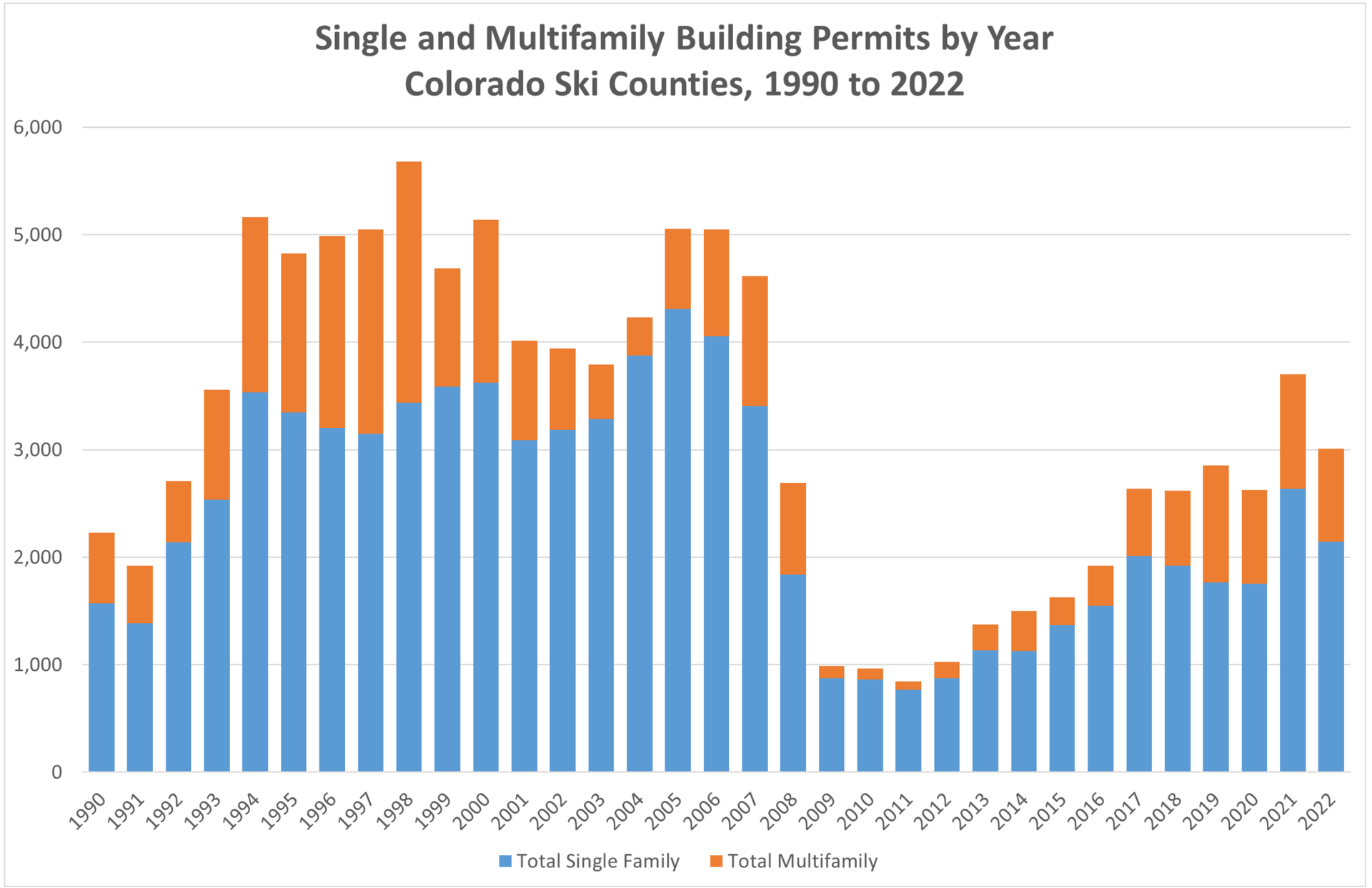
Trends

Housing



Concern with:

- Boom and bust cycle of housing construction.
- Creates long run impacts on the industry.
- Long run impact on housing costs.
- Ability to support business

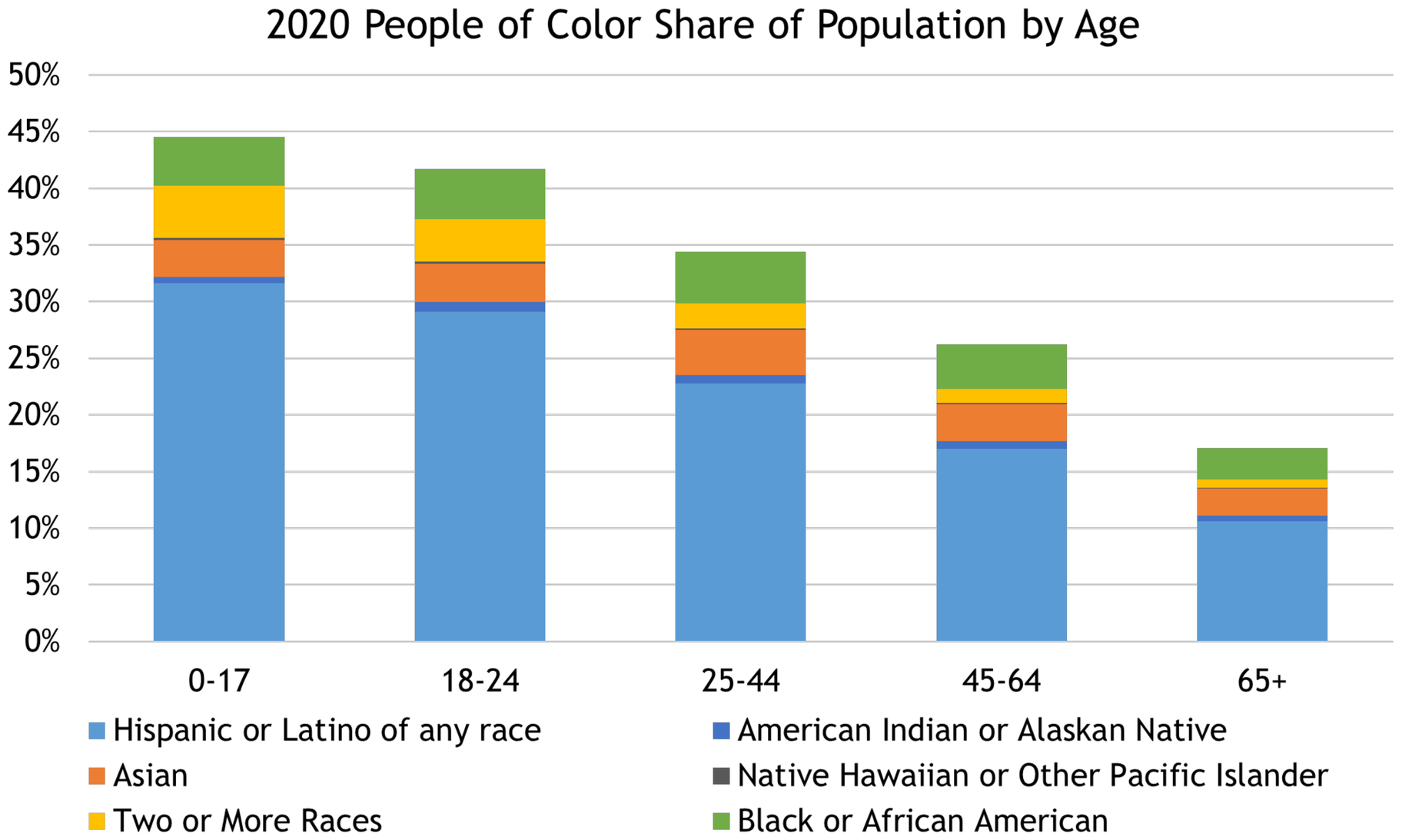


Source; US Census Bureau Building Permit Survey

Race and Ethnicity

Becoming More Diverse

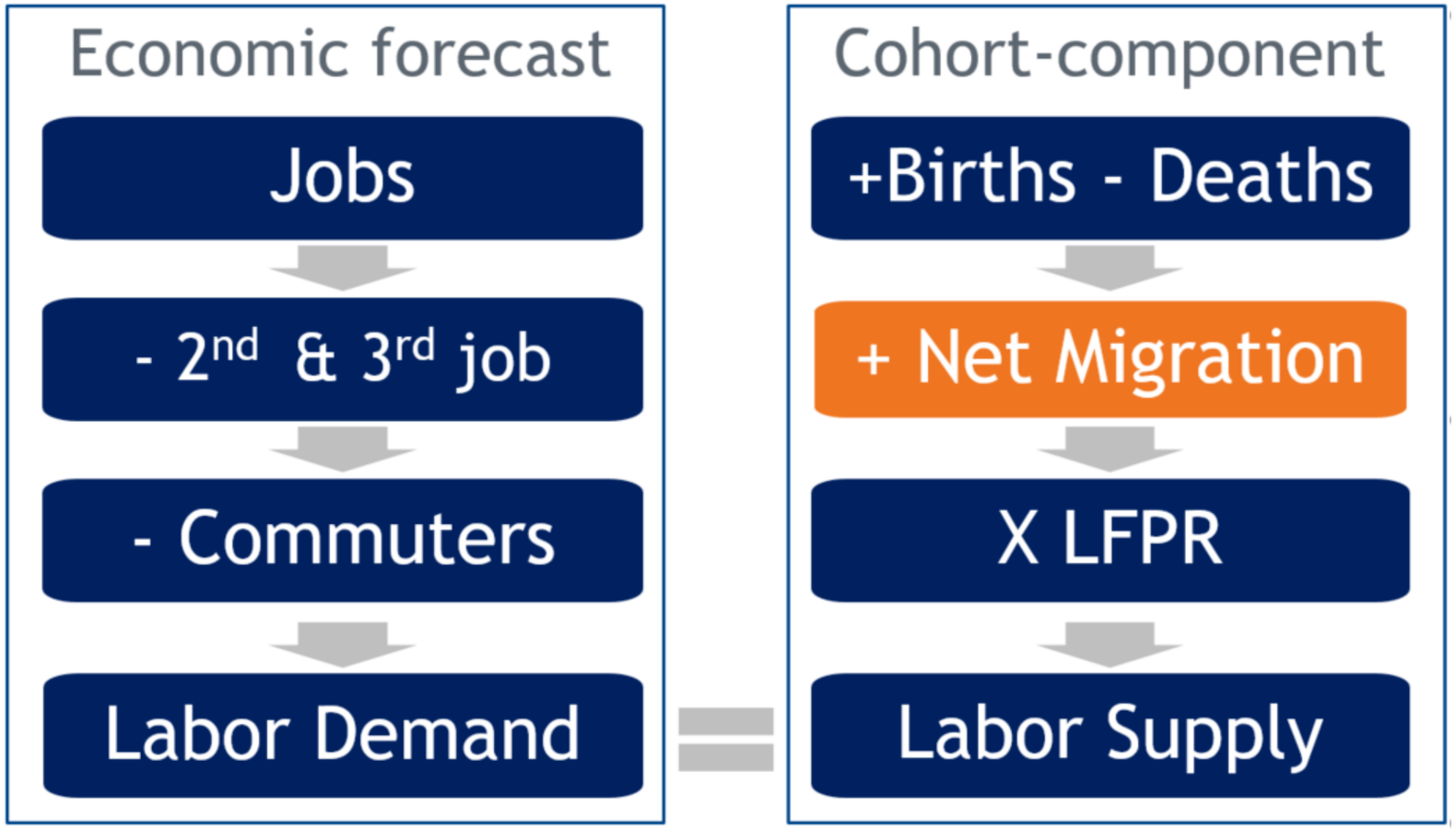
Diversity by Age



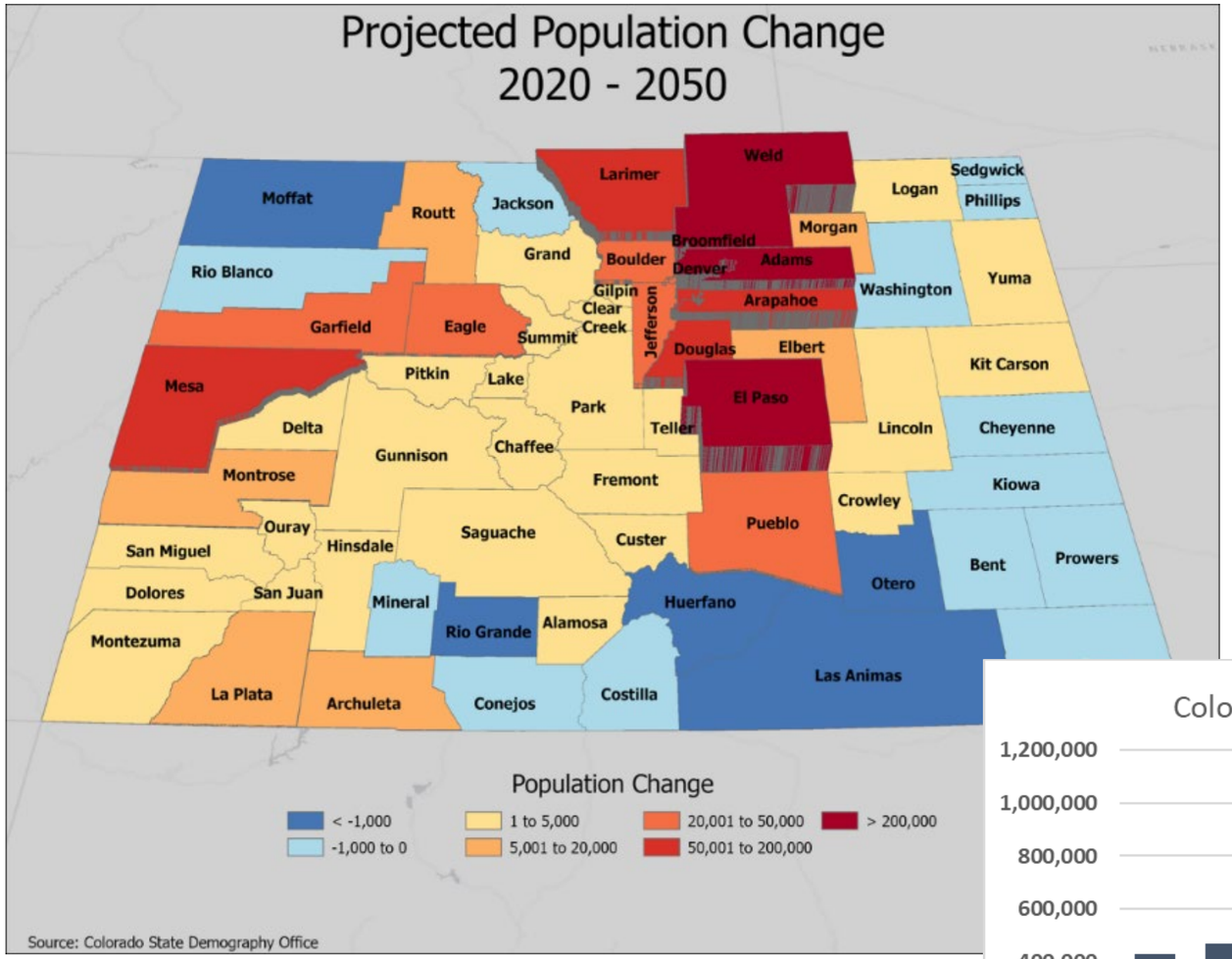
Source: State Demography Office

Forecast

Colorado population forecast methodology

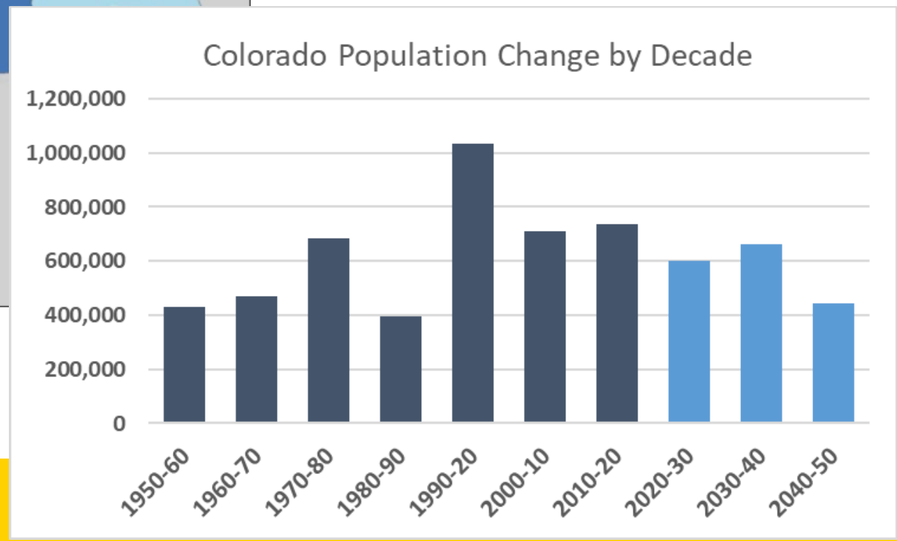


5.7 to 7.5 Million



Change 2020-2050

State: 1.7 million
Front Range: 1.49M
Western Slope: 200K
Central Mtns: 4K
San Luis Valley: -2K
Eastern Plains: 11K



Thank you

State Demography Office
Department of Local Affairs
Greg Totten
greg.totten@state.co.us
303-864-7751
Demography.dola.colorado.gov

COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs