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Ebbs and Flows, Deaths and Births: Natural Increase in NYS

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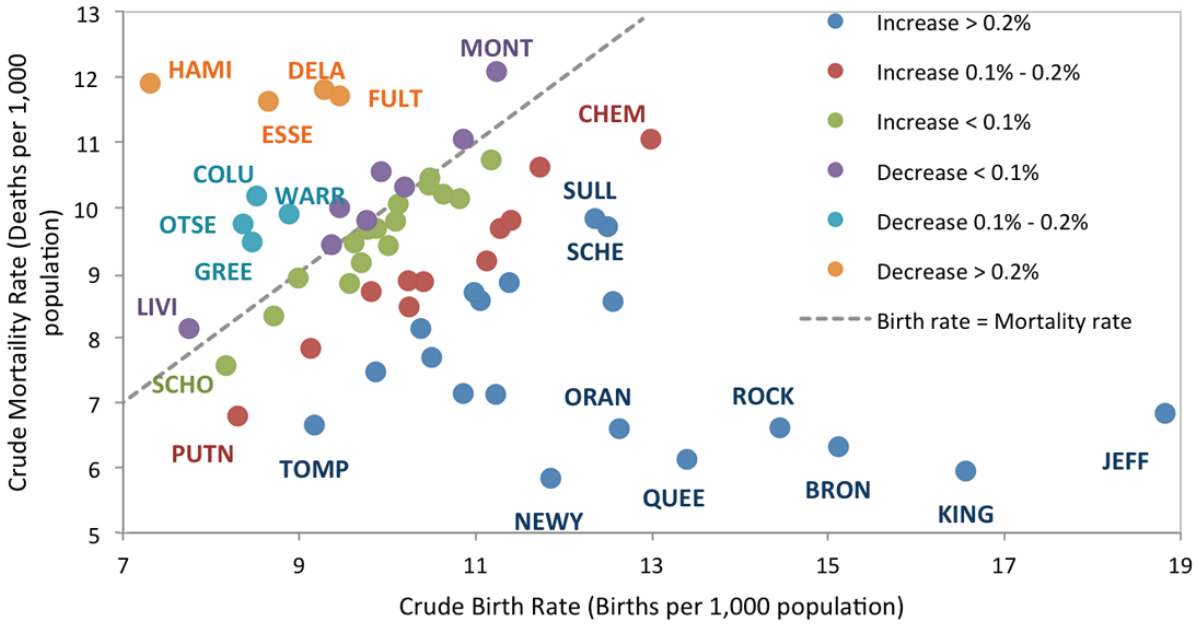
Population size changes as a result of births, deaths and migration. When the number of births exceeds the number of deaths the difference is termed *natural increase* – or *natural decrease* when deaths exceed births. Across New York State (NYS), trends in natural increase and decrease vary significantly. In 2012, there were 16 counties in NYS with more deaths than births, and with an aging population this number is likely to increase in the coming years. In order for these counties' population to grow or even remain stable, *positive* net migration (more people moving in than moving out) must occur. On opposite ends of the natural increase/decrease spectrum are Hamilton County in the Adirondacks (which lost 0.46% of its population in 2012 due to natural decrease) and many of the counties in the New York City (NYC) region (which gained more than 0.2% in 2012 due to natural increase). Hamilton County has the lowest birth rate in the state, yet among the highest death or mortality rates. In comparison, many counties in the NYC area have very low death rates but high birth rates. Understanding these trends, along with their causes and consequences, is an important step for communities as they plan for the future. The links below provide additional information on these issues and trends.



Sources: New York State Department of Health, U.S. Census Bureau population estimates

Additional Resources (click on title for link)

The Continuing Incidence of Natural Decrease in American Counties. Kenneth M. Johnson. Rural Sociology, Vol. 76, Issue, pages 74-100. March 2011

Johnson, K.M., and D. T. Lichter. (2012). "Rural Natural Increase in the New Century: America's Third Demographic Transition?" Pp. 17-34 in International Handbook of Rural Demography (eds., L.J. Kulcsar and K. Curtis). New York: Springer.

Natural Increase/Decrease by NYS County, 2012. Cornell Program on Applied Demographics (PAD).

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