

W. Frank Barton School of Business

Center for Economic Development and Business Research

Kansas Population Projections, 2014-2064

Youth Population



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The Center for Economic Development and Business Research (CEDBR), part of the W. Frank Barton School of Business at Wichita State University, recently released population projections by age cohort from 2014 to 2064 for every Kansas county¹. In these projections, the overall Kansas population is forecast to grow from 2,904,321 to 3,538,277, a 21.8 percent increase. The youth population of the state, which includes all Kansans under the age of 18, is forecast to grow much more slowly over this period, growing from 724,437 to 735,508, a 1.5 percent increase. The over 65 population is projected to grow rapidly in Kansas, and the working age population is also projected to grow faster than the youth population.

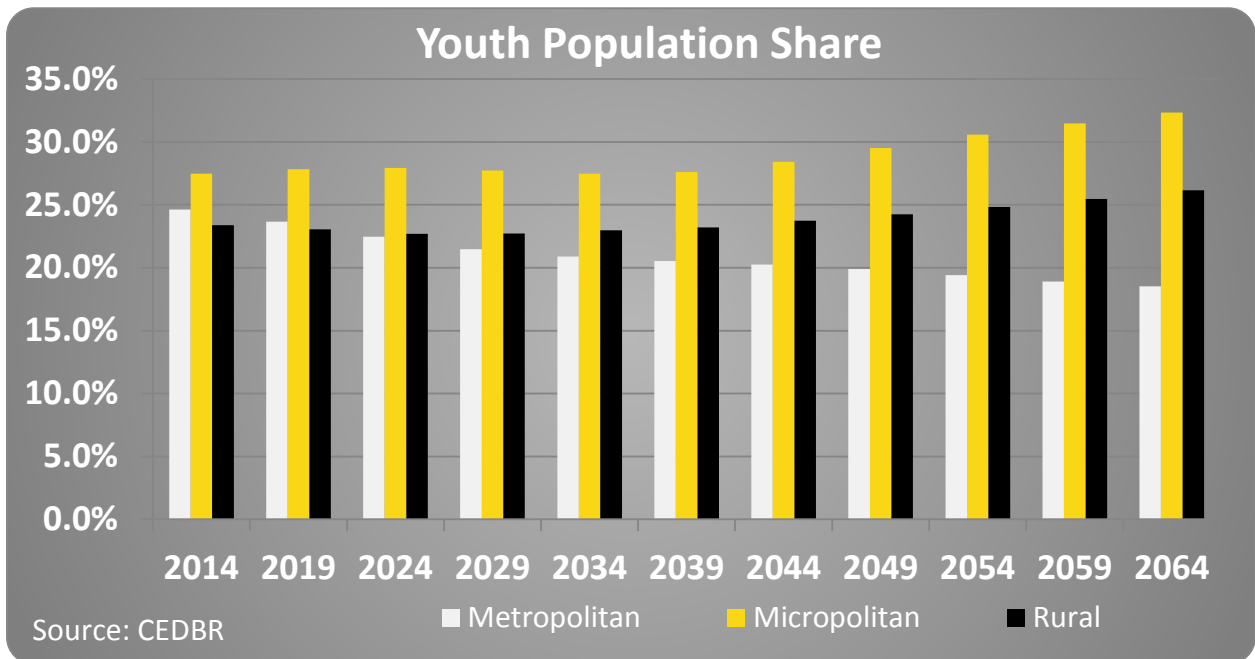
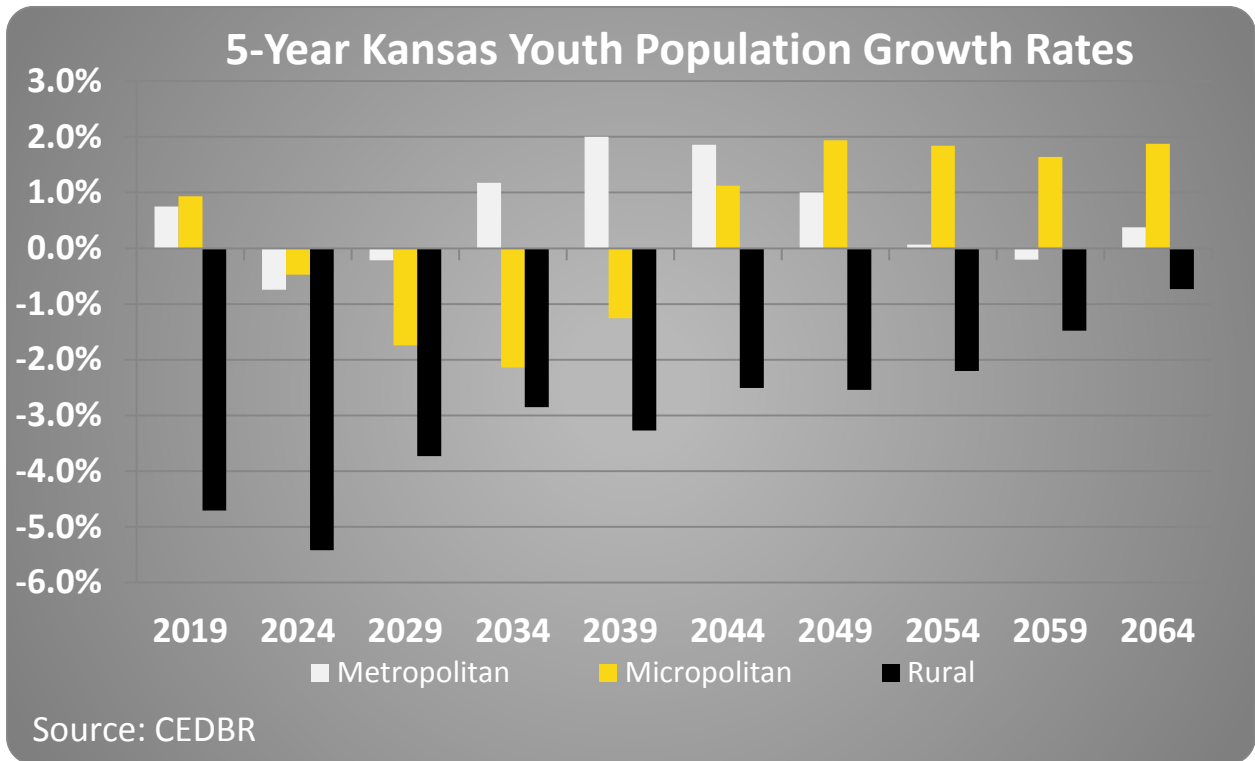
While the overall growth in the youth population is expected to be very modest, some portions of the state are projected to have a faster growing youth population than others. Birth rates are projected to decline modestly throughout the state, so the largest factor in determining which counties are forecast to experience youth population growth is the fraction of the county's population that is between the ages of 18 and 39. Over the next fifty years, the youth population in counties that are in metropolitan statistical areas are expected to grow by 6.2 percent. The metro areas, as of 2014, had a combined youth population of 495,080, making up over 65 percent of the total youth population in the state, and the fraction of the youth population in metro areas is projected to continue to grow.

The metro area with the largest youth population is Kansas City, KS, with over 225,000 youths. The Kansas City, KS metro area is expected to have the 4.3 percent growth in its youth population from 2014 to 2064, which is slightly less than the average for Kansas metro areas. The two metro areas projected to have the fastest youth population growth are the Manhattan and Lawrence metropolitan areas, which are forecast to have increases of 57 and 46 percent, respectively. They are forecast to grow from a combined population of 47,390 in 2014 to 72,239 in 2064.

The Wichita and Topeka metro areas are projected to have the slowest youth population growth among metro areas in Kansas. The Wichita metro area youth population is expected to remain approximately flat, growing by 0.5 percent from 2014 to 2064. The Topeka metro is forecast to be the only Kansas metro area to have a youth population decline, dropping by over 9 percent, from 56,212 to 51,442.

Outside of the metro areas, youth population growth is projected to be lower in Kansas. The micropolitan areas, consisting of 17 counties, are forecast to have their youth population grow 3.6 percent, from 134,504 to 139,464. The rural counties, which are part of neither a metropolitan or micropolitan area, are projected to experience a 25.1 percent decline in youth population from 2014 to 2064. These counties had a youth population of 94,852 in 2014, which is forecast to decline to 70,288 by 2064, with an average annual decline of 0.6 percent.

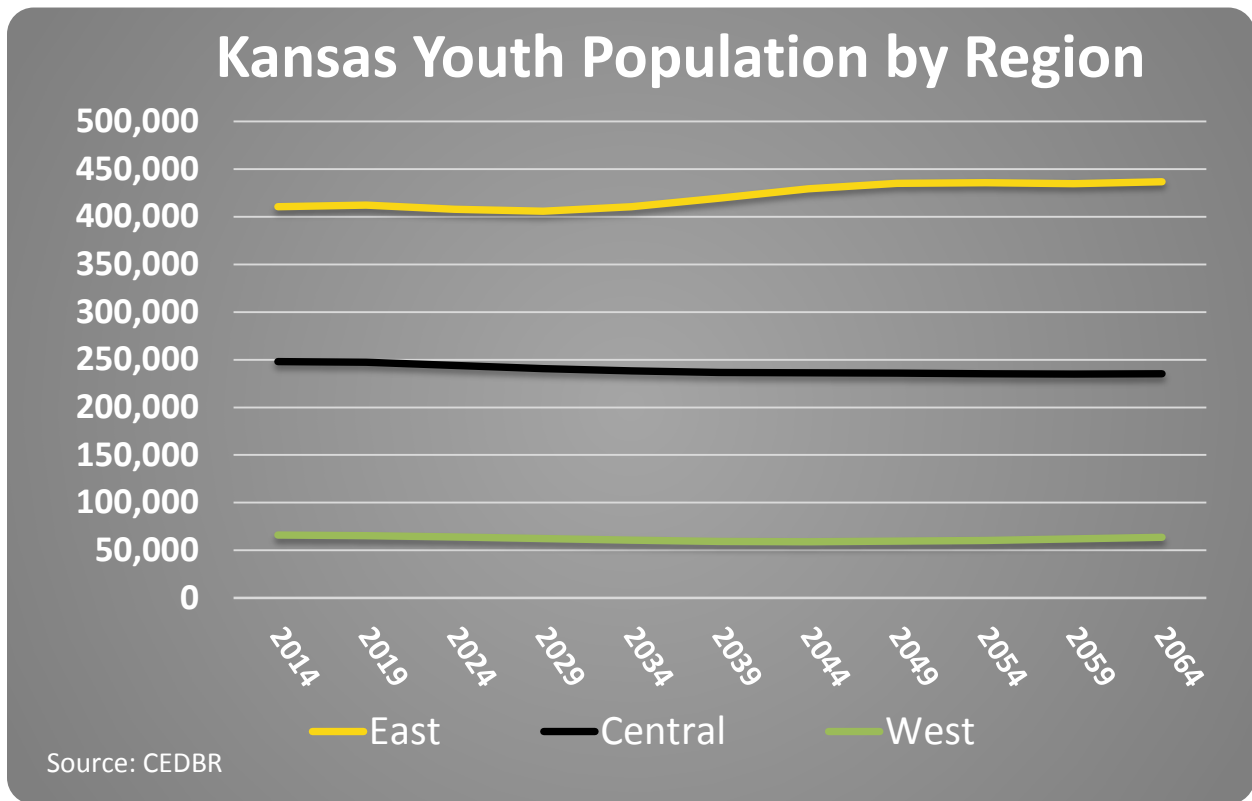
¹ The projections, as well as articles about metropolitan, regional, elderly and micropolitan population growth, can be found at population.cedbr.org.



In 2014, 24.9 percent of the total population in Kansas was under 18, with slight variations by urban density. The micropolitan counties had the highest share of their total population under 18, with 27.5 percent, while 24.6 percent of the metropolitan counties' total population was under 18. The rural counties had the lowest share, with only 23.4 percent of their population under 18.

The metropolitan areas are projected to have a substantially different trend in youth population share than the micropolitan and rural areas. The metropolitan areas are forecast to have their youth population share decline consistently, dropping from 24.6 percent to 18.5 percent. This is because that, while the metropolitan areas' youth population is projected to increase, the over 65 population in the metropolitan areas is projected to increase at an even faster rate.

The micropolitan and rural counties are expected to follow a less even path, both seeing some increases and declines in their youth population share from 2019 through 2034. After 2034, both the micropolitan and rural counties are projected to see increases in their youth population shares, with micropolitan counties having the largest increase, to 32.3 percent. The rural areas are forecast to have a smaller increase, rising from a nadir of 22.7 percent to 26.2 percent in 2064. The increase is forecast to occur even while the youth population is declining in rural areas because the older population is declining at a more rapid rate due to persistent out migration from these areas.



The regions of Kansas are forecast to follow different trends in youth population growth. The eastern region, with the bulk of the youth population in the state, is projected to have the strongest growth in youth population. While some small declines are expected in the next decade, the eastern region's youth population is predicted to grow by 6.4 percent over the full fifty year period forecasted, growing from 410,552 to 436,768. This growth is largely driven by the growth in youth population in the four metropolitan areas in the eastern region of the state. However, since growth in the adult population in this region is projected to be strong, the youth share of the eastern region's population is forecast to drop from 24.6 percent to 18.9 percent.

The central region has the second highest youth population, as well as the second highest overall population of the three regions in the state. The central region is forecast to have the largest decline in its youth population, with a 5.2 percent decline. This decline is most concentrated in the rural areas of the central region, while the Wichita metropolitan area's youth population is projected to remain approximately flat, with no substantial increase or decrease. The decline in youth population is anticipated to also cause the youth share of the central region's population to drop from 25.1 percent to 23.1 percent.

The western region has by far the smallest population, both youth and total, of the three regions in Kansas. The youth population in this region is projected to decline modestly, from 65,933 to 63,633, a 3.5 percent decline. Due to the adult population declining at an even faster rate in this region, the youth share of the total population is expected to increase from 26.9 percent to 31.1 percent.

View more detailed data released in this forecast at www.population.cedbr.org or subscribe to CEDBR's e-Connection Newsletter at www.subscribe.cedbr.org. The Center for Economic Development and Business Research can customize forecasts upon request. Contact Jeremy Hill at 316-213-3673 for cost and availability.