



Demographic Indicators for Nevada Elders

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In 2011, the first members of the baby boomer generation born after World War II will start turning 65 years old. Never before in the history of the United States has such a large portion of the population been 65 and older. Nevada, too, will be a part of this demographic shift. Businesses, government and private households will all be affected by this change. This factsheet examines some basic demographic indicators for Nevada seniors. Except where noted, data is from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey Three Year Estimates for the 2005-2007 period.

Growth of Nevada Senior Population

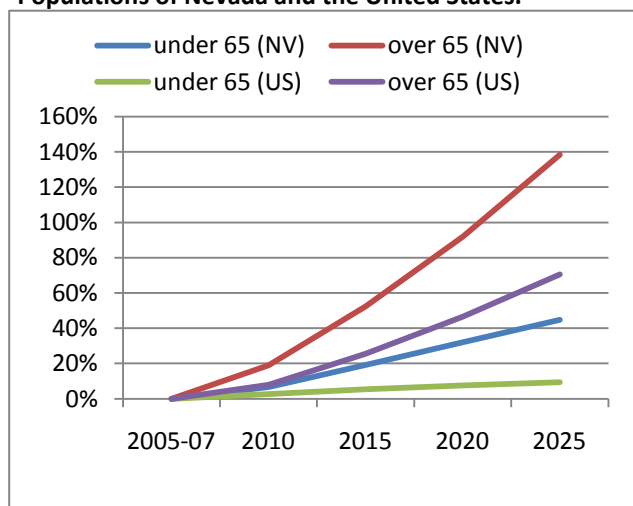
Nevada has been the fastest growing state for several decades. Along with a fast growing younger population, Nevada has an even faster growing older population. In 2005-2007, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 276,842 seniors in Nevada, or 11 percent of the total population. By 2025, the Census Bureau projects the senior

population will be 659,700, or 17 percent of Nevada's projected 2025 population. Figure 1 compares the projected growth in Nevada's older population with the growth in the U.S. older population as well as the growth of the under-65-year-old populations of both the U.S. and Nevada. The Census Bureau expects the under-65-year-old population of Nevada to grow by about 45 percent as compared to a 138 percent increase in the senior population. For the U.S., the Census Bureau predicts the under-65-year-old population will increase by only 9 percent while the senior population will increase by 68 percent.

Variation by County

The proportion of the population that is 65 or over varies by county. For counties with 20,000 or more people, Nye and Douglas had the largest estimated proportion of seniors at 22 percent and 18 percent respectively (Table 1). Clark County had a relatively low proportion of seniors (10 percent).

Figure 1. Projected Population Growth for the Senior Populations of Nevada and the United States.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey and Projections.

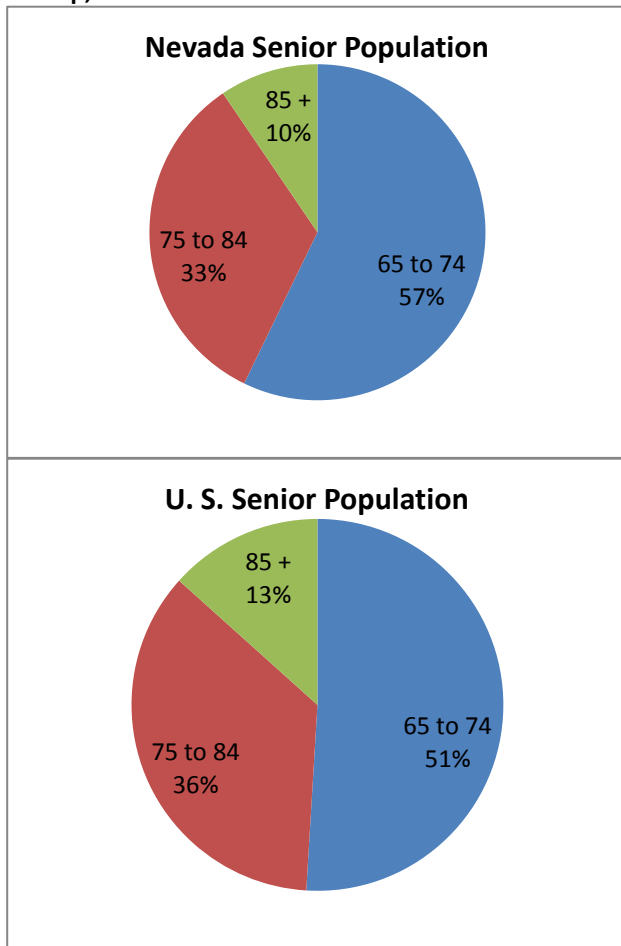
Table 1. Senior Population, 2005-2007.

Region	Population, age 65 or older	Percent of total population
Churchill	3,399	14%
Clark	184,873	10%
Douglas	8,293	18%
Elko	3,513	8%
Lyon	6,514	13%
Nye	9,074	22%
Washoe	45,275	11%
Carson City	8,720	16%
Nevada	276,842	11%
United States	37,265,110	12%

Nevada Seniors Younger than U.S. Seniors

Nevada has a somewhat younger population than the U.S. as a whole. Only 11 percent of Nevadans are 65 years or older as compared to 12 percent nationwide (Table 1). In addition, Nevada seniors are younger than their U.S. counterparts. As shown in Figure 2, 57 percent of Nevada seniors are in the younger age group, from 65 to 74, while only 51 percent of U.S. seniors are in this younger age group.

Figure 2. Nevada and U.S. Senior Population by Age Group, 2005-2007.



Seniors Living Alone

Seniors who live alone are important to policymakers. Although the relationship between living arrangements, age and health is complex, living alone can be associated with an increased risk for poverty and social isolation.

As shown in Table 2, a smaller percentage of seniors in Nevada live alone (25 percent) than do U.S. seniors (28 percent). The majority of seniors living alone are women, both nationwide and in Nevada, in large part because females outlive

males. In Nevada, the ratio of female to male seniors living alone is much lower than the U.S. ratio. There are an estimated 1.8 female Nevada seniors living alone for each senior male living alone, while for the U.S. the ratio is 2.8 females for each male. This may be in part because Nevada's senior population is younger than the U.S. senior population, since the imbalance between males and females increases with age. In addition, Nevada has a higher proportion of males to females in working age groups in comparison with U.S. averages and this carries over into older age cohorts.

Nevada counties varied from a low of 21 percent of seniors who live alone in Douglas County to 33 percent in Churchill County. The ratio of female to male seniors living alone did not vary as widely across counties.

Table 2. Senior Population Living Alone.

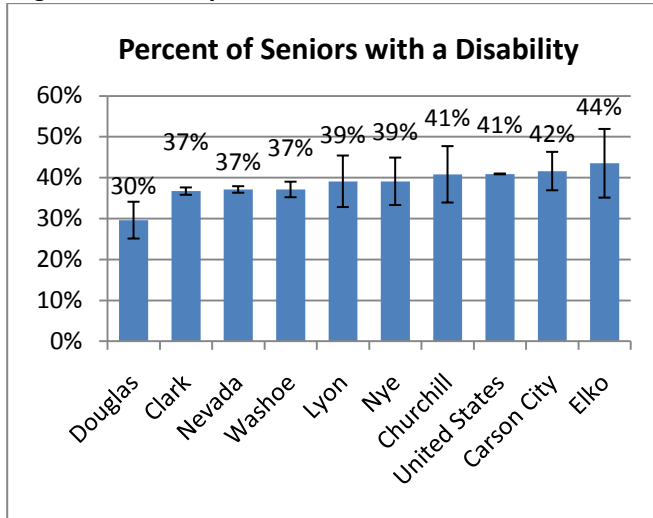
Region	Number Living Alone	% 65+ Living Alone	Female to Male Ratio
United States	10,248,440	28%	2.8
Nevada	69,041	25%	1.8
Churchill	1,120	33%	1.6
Clark	44,083	24%	1.8
Douglas	1,764	21%	1.8
Lyon	1,746	27%	2.0
Nye	1,813	20%	1.9
Washoe	12,976	29%	1.9
Carson City	2,341	27%	2.1

Disability

As people age, they report more disabilities. For the U.S., about 41 percent of people 65 and older report a disability (Figure 3). In contrast, about 12 percent of people from age 16 to 64 report having a disability. In Nevada, 37 percent of seniors reported having a disability. The rate of reported disability ranged from 37 percent to 44 percent for Nevada counties. American Community Survey data on disabilities does not include seniors who live in nursing homes, 97 percent of whom are disabled (Brault, 2008).

Ninety percent confidence intervals are included in Figure 3. Disability rates, particularly at the county level, are estimated with a fairly large range of uncertainty. Similar uncertainty levels exist for other estimates reported in this fact sheet with larger uncertainty for the counties with the smallest populations.

Figure 3. Disability Rates for Nevada Seniors, 2005-2007.



Group Quarters Population

Group quarters are either institutions such as nursing homes, prisons or mental hospitals or non-institutionalized, group-living arrangements such as college dorms, military barracks, halfway houses and religious group homes. Most of the senior population living in group quarters is in nursing homes. At the time of the most recent census in 2000, 78 percent of seniors living in group quarters were in nursing homes as compared to 68 percent of Nevada seniors. The American Community Survey estimated the number of Nevada seniors in group quarters in the 2005-2007 period to be 6,366 or about 2.3 percent of the senior population. In the U.S. as a whole, 5 percent of seniors were estimated to be living in group quarters.

Dependency Ratios

A dependency ratio for seniors gives the number of people 65 years and older per 100 people in the so-called “working age group” (18 to 64). This measure gives a rough estimate of how many workers are available to support nonworkers. Broadly speaking, the higher the dependency ratio, the fewer workers there are to support the older population. The measure does not perfectly represent dependency, however, since many seniors work and some younger people do not work.

Nevada had an estimated 17.6 seniors per 100 working age people. The U.S. had a higher dependency ratio, at 19.8 seniors per 100 working age people (Table 3). Nevada counties had a wide range of old-age dependency ratios from a low of 12.0 in Elko County to a high of 37.8 in Nye County. Dependency ratios are projected to rise throughout

the U.S. including in Nevada. Nevadans may be able to preview future decades by carefully observing conditions in higher dependency ratio counties such as Nye County.

Table 3. Old Age Dependency Ratios, 2005-2007.

Region	Old Age Dependency Ratio
United States	19.8
Nevada	17.6
Churchill	23.6
Clark	16.5
Douglas	29.1
Elko	12.0
Lyon	22.9
Nye	37.8
Washoe	17.7
Carson City	26.1

High Net Migration of Seniors

Table 4 compares net migration rates for seniors from different age groups and regions. Using the data from the 2000 Census, the Census Bureau found that Nevada had the highest rate of net migration of seniors from 1995 to 2000. There were 114 net older migrants per thousand Nevada seniors (Table 4). Nevada ranked highest in net migration for each older age group including 65 to 74, 75 to 84 and 85 and older, although migration was lower in the older age groups. The Nevada counties with the highest rates of net migration of seniors were Nye, Storey, Clark, Esmeralda, Douglas and Lyon.

Table 4. Net Internal Migration for the Population 65 Years and Over by Region and Age: 1995 to 2000.

Region	Total 65+	65 to 74	75 to 84	85 and over
Nevada	114.2	132.7	86.6	88
Mountain West	44.4	56.8	30.1	28
Pacific West	-7	-12.7	-2.6	4.9
Northeast	-23.5	-31.5	-15.2	-13.6
Midwest	-13	-31.5	-6.5	-4.1
South	19.2	27.6	10.6	5.9

Net migration rate: net migrants per 1000 1995 population of seniors. Source: He and Schacter, 2003.

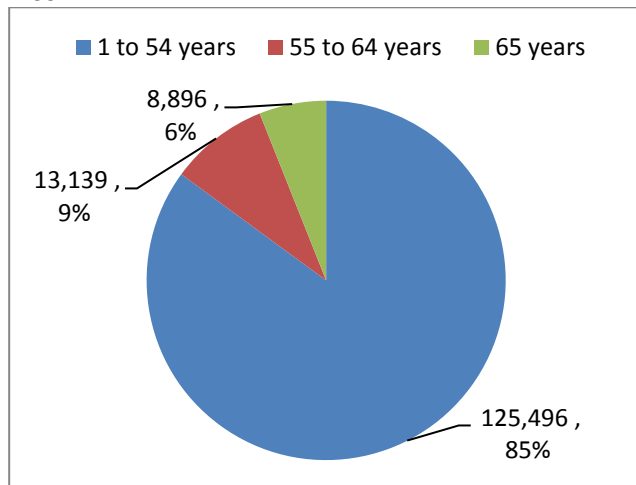
More Younger Migrants

Despite the high migration rates for seniors, migration into Nevada was dominated by younger working-age families, according to American Community Survey estimates. In the 2005-2007 period, only 3 percent of Nevada seniors moved into

Nevada from a residence in another state or country each year, but 6 percent of Nevadans age 1 to 54 reported moving to Nevada from an out-of-state residence. Five percent of the age group from 55 to 64 had moved to Nevada from out of state the previous year. From Figure 4, on average for the 2005-2007 period, nearly 150,000 people a year were estimated to have moved into Nevada from another state or country; 85 percent of those movers were age 1 to 54, 9 percent were age 55 to 64 and 6 percent were 65 and over. Another way to look at this is that almost six people under age 55 moved to Nevada for each person over 55 who moved into Nevada from outside the state. The largest group of seniors moving into Nevada came from California, as did the largest group of younger age in-migrants.

Out-migration data from the more recent American Community Survey has not yet been analyzed at the age group level, so the Census Bureau has not yet estimated net migration by age group for more recent years.

Figure 4. In-Migration to Nevada by Age Group, 2005 to 2007.



Total Deaths by Age Group

In 2005, the Center for Disease Control reported that a total of 12,629 Nevada seniors died. In Nevada, a larger percentage of total deaths reported were in younger age groups (Table 5). For example, 14 percent of all Nevada deaths were people in the 55-to-64-year-old age group as compared to 11 percent of total U.S. deaths. A smaller percentage of Nevada deaths, 19 percent, were people 85 years and older as compared to 29 percent of U.S. deaths. Sixty-six percent of all

Nevada deaths were deaths in the senior age group 65 and older. In comparison, 73 percent of all U.S. deaths were in the senior age groups. The average Nevadan dies at a younger age than does the average U.S. citizen.

Table 5. Percent of Total Deaths by Age Group, 2005.

	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Nevada	14%	20%	27%	19%
US	11%	16%	28%	29%

Source: Center for Disease Control, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System.

Conclusion

Nevada has a somewhat younger population than the U.S. as a whole. Nevada also has a lower old age dependency ratio, fewer seniors with disabilities or in nursing homes, and fewer seniors living alone. However, because the baby boomer generation is reaching retirement age and because older workers and retirees are migrating into Nevada, the older population is projected to increase rapidly over the next two decades. All sectors of the economy will need to make adjustments to accommodate this large older population.

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Note: The authors have added their own calculations and charts to the underlying source data throughout this fact sheet.

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