

Population data shows most Valley counties on growth track

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California's population grew by 335,000 in the last year. All Central Valley counties, with the exception of one, saw rising population rates in the last year, according to new data from the state Department of Finance.

The estimates are of the state's population on July 1 of this year compared to the same time last year. California's population grew by 335,000 in the time period for a total of 38.5 million.

Fresno County's population estimate was 967,491 on July 1, adding 10,524 residents since July 2013 for an increase of 1.1 percent.

That ranks Fresno County No. 10 on the list of the most populated California counties.

The Department of Finance last year projected that Fresno County's population would reach 988,970 in 2015, and would eclipse the 1-million mark for a total projected population of 1,071,728 by 2020.

Fresno is on a list of counties projected to exceed a population of one million by 2060 that includes Kern, San Joaquin and Ventura.

Tulare County had 459,176 residents, a gain of 3,800, or 0.83 percent, in the last year. That ranks Tulare County No. 20 in the state.

Madera County grew by 0.93 percent in the last year to 154,278 residents, with a year-over gain of 1,421. It's the state's 32nd most populated county.

Kings County's population fell by 0.48 percent to a total 149,788 residents. It lost 719 residents in the last year, giving it the distinction of having the largest numeric population loss of all 58 California counties.

Kings County is No. 33 of the state's most populated counties.

Other highlights of the report:

- California's least populated county is Alpine, with just more than 1,100 residents. Los Angeles County is the largest with more than 10 million residents.
- The states nine largest counties — Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Alameda, Sacramento and Contra Costa — are home to 70 percent of California residents.
- To the west, San Benito County had the largest percentage of population growth in the state, growing by 1.48 percent for a population of 57,993 residents.

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