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San Bernardino County's mid-1977 estimated population stood at 737,700, and the county's estimated population growth during the 1970-77 period was 53,628 — 5.2 percent of the 10 Southern California counties' total population growth.

San Diego County

Between April, 1970, and mid 1977, San Diego County's population increased by an estimated 319,946, which accounted for 31 percent of the 10-county region's total population increase. About three-quarters of San Diego County's population growth was due to in-migration, and the county's annual population growth rates exceeded 3 percent for almost every year of the 1970-77 period. This steady, rapid population expansion contrasts with a more sporadic pattern experienced during the 1960's, when the county's economy was less diversified and more vulnerable to reversals in aerospace industry activity.

Particularly rapid population growth during the 1970-1977 period was registered by San Diego's north county (which includes the incorporated cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, and Vista and the unincorporated San Dieguito and Fallbrook areas) and the northern part of the City of San Diego (from Mission Bay and Kearny Mesa north to Mira Mesa and Rancho Bernardo).

San Luis Obispo

San Luis Obispo County's mid-1977 population was estimated at 136,400 — 30,710, or 29.1 percent, above the April, 1970, census figure. Furthermore, over this 7-year period, it is estimated that more than 90 percent of the county's population growth was due to in-migration.

Despite its rapid population growth rate, the county remains relatively sparsely populated, with an estimated average of 41 people per square mile. The City of San Luis Obispo has instituted a slow-growth policy in an effort to preserve an attractive environment, and sizeable amounts of land in the county are reserved for agricultural or recreational uses. Among the communities registering high rates of population growth in recent years have been the suburban areas of Baywood Park and Los Osos and the town of Atascadero.

Santa Barbara

By earlier standards, Santa Barbara County's population growth between 1970 and 1977 was modest. From a 4.5 percent average annual rate of population growth between 1960 and 1970, the county's average yearly population growth rate fell to an estimated 1.3 percent between April, 1970, and mid-

1977. This decline resulted largely from lower levels of net in-migration. Net in-migration to Santa Barbara County was held down by measures instituted by several communities to control growth. Indications are that large numbers of young people with families have been leaving the county.

The county's mid-1977 population was estimated at 288,900, which was 24,576 or 9.3 percent above the April, 1970, census total. Net in-migration accounted for about half of the county's population growth over the 7-year interval.

Ventura County

Like other counties bordering Los Angeles County, the County of Ventura has experienced rapid population growth since 1970. The county's mid-1977 population is estimated at 468,600 — 24.5 percent, or 92,170, above the 1970 census figure. Net in-migration to Ventura County during the 1970-1977 period averaged 8,160 people per year, or over 60 percent of the county's annual average increase in total population. Within Ventura County, the greatest population increases were concentrated in the Simi Valley-Westlake-Thousand Oaks area and in the Oxnard area.

As implied in the preceding discussions, divergent levels of net in-migration are a major factor accounting for differences in the 10 counties' population growth levels. The table below shows estimated net in-migration to each county between mid-1970 and mid-1977.

County	Net In-migration Mid-1970 to Mid-1977
Orange	258,795
San Diego	250,208
Riverside	93,963
Ventura	57,181
San Luis Obispo	27,883
San Bernardino	22,229
Santa Barbara	11,287
Imperial	6,658
Inyo	1,413
Los Angeles	—366,264
Total	363,353

Sources: California Department of Finance, California Department of Public Health; 1977 estimates by Research Department, Security Pacific Bank.

Although there are no recent data specifying patterns of population flow between counties, the figures in the above table imply a significant population movement from Los Angeles County to surrounding areas. Such a trend could be

SOURCES OF POPULATION GROWTH 10 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNTIES 1951-1977

Year-End * Population	Annual Increase	Births**	Deaths**	Natural Increase	Net In- Migration	Net In- Migration as % of Annual Increase
1951 6,230,750	325,900	138,458	56,598	81,860	244,040	74.9
1952 6,562,150	331,400	151,063	58,825	92,238	239,162	72.2
1953 6,883,700	321,550	162,882	60,390	102,492	219,058	68.1
1954 7,214,300	330,600	170,697	60,907	109,790	220,810	66.8
1955 7,579,950	365,650	177,482	64,969	112,513	253,137	69.2
1956 7,970,300	390,350	192,642	67,615	125,027	265,323	68.0
1957 8,346,750	376,450	205,050	70,351	134,699	241,751	64.2
1958 8,694,800	348,050	204,259	71,526	132,733	215,317	61.9
1959 9,034,900	340,100	208,507	72,470	136,037	204,063	60.0
1960 9,379,400	344,500	215,882	77,111	138,771	205,729	59.7
1961 9,722,550	343,150	221,317	78,058	143,259	199,891	58.3
1962 10,074,350	351,800	221,048	81,154	139,894	211,906	60.2
1963 10,413,500	339,150	224,692	84,741	139,951	199,199	58.7
1964 10,712,750	299,250	222,173	86,731	135,442	163,808	54.7
1965 10,961,950	249,200	210,784	88,249	122,535	126,665	50.8
1966 11,169,000	207,050	199,690	90,607	109,083	97,967	47.3
1967 11,358,900	189,900	200,343	90,516	109,827	80,073	42.2
1968 11,553,750	194,850	204,588	93,668	110,920	83,930	43.1
1969 11,748,050	194,300	214,153	96,874	117,279	77,021	39.6
1970 11,893,550	145,500	220,531	96,931	123,600	21,900	15.1
1971 11,974,700	81,150	196,975	99,216	97,759	—16,609	—20.5
1972 12,061,000	86,300	183,165	98,774	84,391	1,909	2.2
1973 12,191,900	130,900	180,405	100,321	80,084	50,816	38.8
1974 12,343,100	151,200	189,435	99,297	90,138	61,062	40.4
1975 12,515,200	172,100	192,885	98,986	93,899	78,201	45.4
1976 12,707,950	192,750	201,214	99,224	101,990	90,760	47.1
1977 12,915,650	207,700	210,236	99,750	110,486	97,214	46.8

*California Department of Finance, Year-end population figures interpolated from mid-year estimates.

**California Department of Health; 1977 estimates by Research Department, Security Pacific Bank.

partially explained by the fact that new job opportunities in the greater Los Angeles 5-county area have become more decentralized in recent years, with Orange, Ventura, and Riverside-San Bernardino counties reporting higher rates of employment growth than Los Angeles County. Specifically between 1972 and 1977, Los Angeles County's total civilian employment increased 9.2 percent (or 260,000). By comparison, employment growth rates for the metropolitan areas surrounding Los Angeles County were 36.4 percent (220,400) for Orange County, 18.2 percent (26,400) for Ventura County, an 10.0 percent (41,000) for the two-county Riverside-San Bernardino labor market area. Incidentally, civilian employment in San Diego County grew by 21.7 percent (or 106,800) between 1972 and 1977, while Santa Barbara County's 1972-7 civilian employment growth was 22.100, which yields a growth rate of 22.1 percent.

Employment growth figures, however, could only partially explain the movement of population from Los Angeles to surrounding counties. Another explanation is suggested by the generally lower home price levels in eastern Ventura County and western Riverside and San Bernardino counties relative to the home prices in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Homebuilding activity and sales of homes in communities of eastern Ventura County and western Riverside & San Bernardino counties have been at very high levels in recent years, and indications are that many residents of these communities commute to jobs in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

The factors just noted — home price levels and job opportunities — are important considerations that can partially account for differences in migration patterns among communities, counties, and states. Other factors that may explain differences in migration levels include population density and environmental quality, tax rates and the overall cost of living, the quality of community facilities and services, and policies that either encourage growth (such as preferential tax rates or discouraging growth (such as moratoriums on building, water deliveries, etc.).

Population Projections

The state Department of Finance publishes population projections for all counties in California. Their most recent projections, published August 1, 1977, involve the assumption of a statewide net in-migration of 150,000 per year and fertility rate of 2.1. (Both of these assumptions conform to current experience.) On these assumptions, the Department of Finance projected for mid-1980 a total state population of 22,798,900 and a population of 13,352,100 for the 10 Southern California counties. Compared with Southern California's estimated mid-1977 population, the projections for mid-1980 indicate a 1977-80 growth rate of 4.2 percent, the same population growth rate projected for the entire state.

It should not be surprising that Southern California's projected population increase of 540,300 between mid 1977 and mid 1980 reflects different growth levels and rates among the region's 10 counties. The largest population increase over the three-year period are projected for Orange County (140,400), San Diego County (126,300), and Los Angeles County (112,800).

1977-80 projected growth rates for the 10 Southern California counties are 4.2 percent for Los Angeles County, 3.8 percent for Orange County, 3.6 percent for San Diego County, 3.5 percent for Riverside County, 3.4 percent for Ventura County, 3.3 percent for San Bernardino County, 3.2 percent for Kern County, 3.1 percent for Santa Barbara County, 3.0 percent for Tulare County, and 2.9 percent for Inyo County.

Employment growth rates for the 10 Southern California counties are 36.4 percent for Orange County, 18.2 percent for Ventura County, 10.0 percent for the two-county Riverside-San Bernardino labor market area, 9.2 percent for Los Angeles County, 21.7 percent for San Diego County, 22.1 percent for Santa Barbara County, 22.0 percent for Tulare County, 21.0 percent for Inyo County, 19.0 percent for Kern County, and 17.0 percent for Kern County.

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County	Population	Projected Population	Projected Growth Rate
Los Angeles	11,280,000	13,352,100	4.2%
Orange	2,900,000	3,364,400	3.8%
San Diego	2,600,000	2,926,300	3.6%
Riverside	1,200,000	1,320,000	3.5%
Ventura	800,000	840,000	3.4%
San Bernardino	1,000,000	1,040,000	3.3%
Kern	500,000	525,000	3.2%
Santa Barbara	400,000	416,000	3.1%
Tulare	300,000	318,000	3.0%
Inyo	100,000	107,000	2.9%