

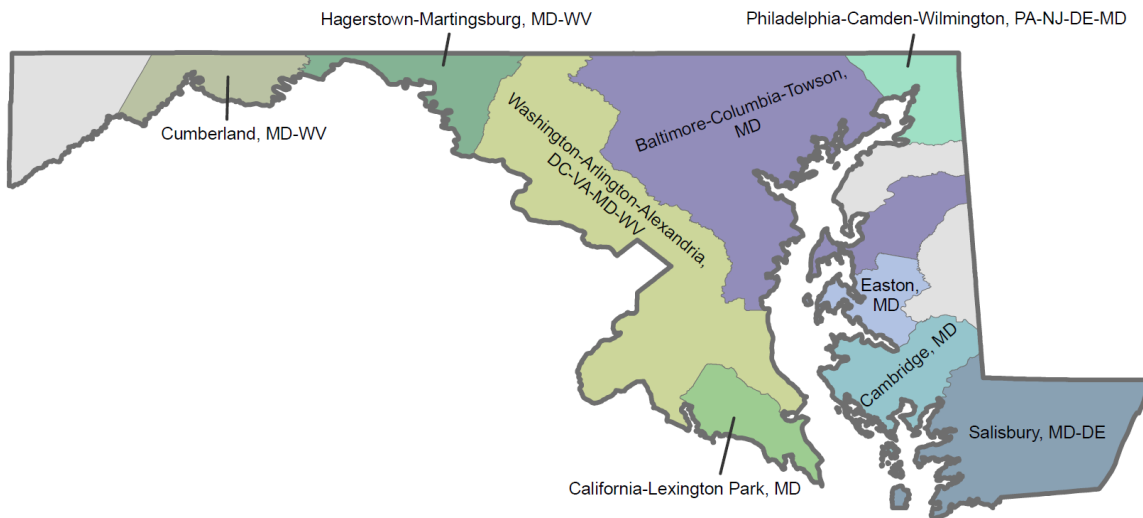
Maryland is Metropolitan

An Urban State Dominated by Large Metros

Maryland is metropolitan. Ranging from the Atlantic Ocean to the Appalachian Mountains, seven Metropolitan Statistical Areas and two Micropolitan Statistical Areas span nearly the entire geography of Maryland. While some counties have extremely rural areas, nearly all counties are economically tied to nearby cities.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas that cover Maryland include: Cumberland, Hagerstown-Martinsburg, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, California-Lexington Park, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, and Salisbury. Five metros in Maryland are part of larger economic regions that cross state boundaries. For Example, only a single Maryland county is included in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington MSA (Figure 1). The two MSAs entirely within Maryland are Baltimore-Columbia-Towson and California-Lexington Park. The Baltimore-Columbia-Towson MSA is the only MSA that is not geographically contiguous, comprised of counties on both the western and eastern shores of the Chesapeake Bay. The two Micropolitan Statistical Areas, Easton and Cambridge, both fall on Maryland's eastern shore. There are only three counties (Caroline, Garrett, and Kent, shown in grey) economically separate from either a Metropolitan or Micropolitan Statistical Area. While Metropolitan Statistical Areas are larger than Micropolitan Statistical Areas (more detail [here](#)), both will be referred to as MSAs or metros.

Figure 1. Maryland MSAs



In terms of population, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson and Washington-Arlington-Alexandria (referred to as Baltimore MSA and Washington MSA respectively) are by far the largest MSAs in Maryland (Table 1). The largest MSA by population is Baltimore. The Baltimore MSA had an estimated population of 2,808,175 in 2017, accounting for 46.4 percent of Maryland’s population. The second largest MSA in the state is Maryland’s portion of the Washington MSA. Maryland’s portion of the Washington MSA had an estimated population of 2,312,091 in 2017, accounting for 40.9 percent of the state’s population. Combined, the Baltimore and Washington MSAs accounted for 87.3 percent of Maryland’s population in 2017. The MSAs with more than 100,000 people accounted for 96.3 percent of the state’s population. The smallest MSA in Maryland is Cambridge, which had an estimated population of 32,162 in 2017. However, this is expected given that Micropolitan Statistical Areas are, by definition, smaller than Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

Table 1. Maryland MSA Populations

Metropolitan/Micropolitan Statistical Area	2010 Population	2017 Population	2010-2017 Population % Change
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	2,715,503	2,808,175	3.4%
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV*	2,312,091	2,474,790	7.0%
Salisbury, MD-DE*	176,915	180,531	2.0%
Hagerstown-Martinsburg, MD-WV*	147,724	150,578	1.9%
California-Lexington Park, MD	105,764	112,667	6.5%
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD*	101,172	102,746	1.6%
Not in MSA	83,392	81,810	-1.9%
Cumberland, MD-WV*	74,977	71,615	-4.5%
Easton, MD	37,879	37,103	-2.0%
Cambridge, MD	32,682	32,162	-1.6%
Grand Total	5,788,099	6,052,177	4.6%

Source: Census Population Estimates

*MD portion of MSA

In general, larger metros in Maryland grew more quickly from 2010 to 2017 than smaller metros. The fastest growing MSA over this period was Maryland’s portion of the Washington MSA, which grew 7.0 percent from 2010 to 2017. California-Lexington Park was the second fastest growing MSA, gaining 6.5 percent over the period. From 2010 to 2017, these were the only two metros where population growth exceeded the overall state (+4.6 percent). However, every MSA with more than 100,000 people grew from 2010 to 2017. The four smallest MSAs in Maryland all experienced population declines. The population of Cumberland declined the most (-4.5 percent), followed by Easton (-2.0 percent) and Cambridge (-1.6 percent).

There are only three counties in Maryland that are economically detached from a core city. While the smaller MSAs in Maryland experienced population declines, the largest metros that account for nearly all of the state’s population all grew from 2010 to 2017. Although the picturesque regions around the Chesapeake Bay or Deep Creek Lake may capture imaginations, Maryland is metropolitan.