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USVI Population Drops a Stunning 18.1 Percent to 87,146 From 106,405

Top Stories / **Published On October 28, 2021 12:30 PM /**

Staff Consortium **October 28, 2021**

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Aerial view of Williams Delight, St. Croix. By. ERNICE GILBERT/VICONSORTIUM

The U.S. Census Bureau on Thursday released the 2020 Census population and housing unit counts for the U.S. Virgin Islands, revealing data Governor Albert Bryan warned [would "shock"](#) Virgin Islanders.

According to the U.S. Census, as of April 1, 2020, the U.S. Virgin Islands' population was 87,146, representing a decrease of 18.1% from the 2010 Census population of 106,405. The housing unit count was 57,257 in 2020, representing an increase of 2.4% from the 2010 Census housing unit count of 55,901.

These population and housing unit count data, as of April 1, are collected once a decade during the decennial census. The 2020 Island Areas Censuses counted people living in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Census Bureau said it conducts the decennial census in partnership with the Island Areas governments in compliance with Title 13 of the United States Code and to meet the specific data needs of the Island Areas.

According to the Census, St. Croix's population fell to 41,004 from 50,601 in 2010, a difference of 9,697. On St. Thomas, the drop in population was almost the same, with 42,261 currently from 51,634 in 2010, a difference of 9,373. On St. John, the population dropped to 3,881 from 4170 in 2010, realizing the smallest decrease of 289.

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The Census Bureau has [released a set of four data tables for the U.S. Virgin Islands](#). Tables 1 and 3 provide population and housing unit counts with numeric and percent changes for each Island Area, and the following geographies:

- Districts and counties in American Samoa.
- Municipalities and districts in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Municipalities in Guam.
- Islands, subdistricts, towns and census designated places in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Tables 2 and 4 provide population and housing counts for smaller geographies, including:

- Villages in American Samoa.
- Municipalities and villages in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Census designated places in Guam.
- Estates in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Census Bureau said it uses a long-form census questionnaire to meet the Island Areas' data needs for detailed demographic, social, economic and housing unit information because other surveys, such as the American Community Survey (ACS), are not conducted in the Island Areas. This long-form census questionnaire is similar to the ACS questionnaire used in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Additional detailed data products will be available in the future.

“We appreciate the collaborative efforts of our Island Areas partners to complete this important count,” said Dr. Jennifer Kim, the Decennial Census Management Division's assistant division chief for Content, Translation, Puerto Rico and Island Area Operations. “Working together to provide an accurate count of the Island Areas population helps ensure that every person counts.”

The USVI saw the steepest decline in all of the US territories. According to the Census, Puerto Rico's population declined 11.8 percent from 2010 to 3,285,874; the Northern Mariana Islands by 12.2 percent to 47,329; Guam by 3.5 percent to 153,836, and American Samoa by 10.5 percent to 49,710.