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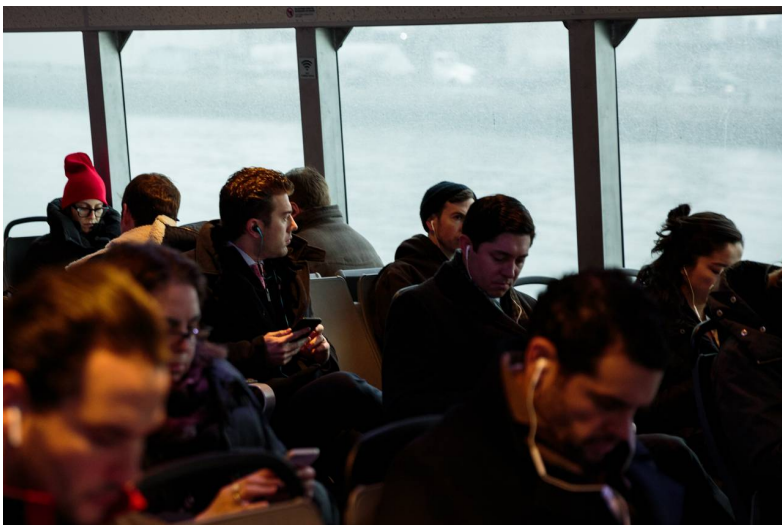
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New York City's Population Dips for First Time in Over a Decade

Only Staten Island, among the five boroughs, had small gains



New York City, like Los Angeles County and Chicago, reported declines in population. Shown, commuters taking the ferry from Brooklyn to Wall Street on Feb. 11.

PHOTO: SARAH BLESENER FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

By *Joseph De Avila*

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The nation's largest city is losing population for the first time in more than a decade, new federal estimates show.

International migration into New York City's five boroughs tapered off, as more residents left, shrinking the city's population in 2017 and 2018, according to U.S. Census Bureau numbers released Thursday.

New York's population dropped 0.47% to 8.4 million by July 2018, compared with the previous year. Census officials previously estimated that New York's population grew by about 7,000 in 2017, but revised figures show it actually dipped by about 38,000, a

0.45% decline from the prior year.

Officials with New York City's Department of City Planning said it appeared that the city's robust population expansion, fueled by new young residents, in the past decade appears to have begun its inevitable slowdown. Overall, the number of residents in the five boroughs grew by 2.7% from 2010 to 2018.

"You cannot maintain that level of growth forever," said Joseph Salvo, city planning's chief demographer.

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Net migration, the sum of all people moving in and out of the city, has also decreased in recent years. In 2011, that number increased by about 14,300, a reversal of a decadeslong downward trend. That number began to fall again in 2013

and shrank by about 87,000 in 2018, as the city reverted back to its previous trend, city planning officials said.

A few other major metro areas in the U.S. also reported declines. The Los Angeles metro area shrank by 0.1%, and Chicago declined by 0.2%. Pittsburgh and Cleveland also showed similar drop-offs.

Los Angeles County—the nation's largest county, which includes the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach and Pasadena—also posted losses in 2018 because of a slowdown in international migration and more residents leaving. The number of residents in the county dipped to 10.10 million, a 0.1% decline. The county's population was essentially flat in 2017.

The new data show international migration into New York grew slower in recent years than in previous estimates. Census officials previously estimated the city added an annual average of 78,000 residents from abroad from 2010 to 2017. It was actually about 54,000 annually, according to the revised numbers.

However, city planning officials said a change in how the census counts international migration is likely undercounting this category, producing a lower overall number for New York. The Census Bureau's population estimate is likely too low considering the number of new housing units built over the past few years, city planning officials said.

President Trump has made immigration a priority, saying this month that the country

couldn't take more immigrants because it is full. Demographers say that maintaining a flow of immigrants is key to preventing the U.S. from becoming an older society where spending on the elderly absorbs an outsize share of the federal budget. The White House didn't respond to a request for comment Wednesday.

Every borough except Staten Island, which had small gains, showed declines in 2017 and 2018. Queens had the biggest drop-off in 2018 with nearly 18,000 fewer people calling the borough home.

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