

### Chapter 3. Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Population, and Large Metropolitan Areas

The general concept of a metropolitan area (MA) is a large population nucleus with surrounding territory that has a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus. The first systematic attempt to define MAs in the United States was in the 1910 census when metropolitan districts (MDs) were defined for central cities of 200,000 or more population and their densely settled surrounding area. By 1940, MDs were defined for central cities of 50,000 or more population. The historical data presented here on MDs are based (with one modification noted below) on the extensive research of Todd Kelly Gardner (1998, published in *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*), who used the 1940 criteria to delineate MDs for the 1790 to 1940 period. MDs, for which the primary building block was minor civil divisions, were replaced in the 1950 census with Standard Metropolitan Areas (SMAs), for which the primary building block was counties, except that minor civil divisions were used in the New England states. There have been many changes in the criteria for defining MAs (e.g., commuting data were first used after the 1960 census) and in the classification and titling of MAs. MAs were defined as Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) in 1960, except that larger Standard Consolidated Areas (SCAs) were defined for New York and Chicago. After the 1970 census, Standard Consolidated Statistical Areas (SCSAs), which combined SMSAs, were defined for some MAs with over 1,000,000 population, and these SCSAs are used here for showing 1970 data. This two-tiered system has been continued. Census publications for 1990 and 2000 show data for Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), which are free-standing, and for Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (CMSAs) and their component Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs). The data presented here are restricted to MAs with 100,000 or more population for all years, even though the sources include smaller MAs, generally with a central city of 50,000 or more population. The first two MAs to meet the 100,000 population threshold were Philadelphia (106,000) and New York (101,000), both in 1810.

For the 2010 census, the metropolitan area concept was replaced by the core-based statistical areas concept, and the two concepts differ significantly. In brief, core-based statistical areas (CBSAs) consist of one or more counties associated with at least one core (urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, or urban cluster of 10,000 to 49,999 population) plus adjacent counties with strong commuting ties. Metropolitan areas are those CBSAs associated with at least one urbanized-area, and micropolitan areas are those CBSAs associated with at least one urbanized-cluster core. Combined Statistical Areas (CSA's) consist of two or more CBSAs that have substantial employment interchange. CSAs may include (1) only metropolitan areas, (2) only micropolitan areas, or (3) a combination of one or more metropolitan areas and one or more micropolitan areas. In addition, the central city concept was replaced by the principal city concept. In general, principal cities include the largest incorporated place in the CBSA plus any additional places (incorporated or not) that meet one or more additional criteria based on population or employment.

Unfortunately, the CBSA concept as implemented for 2010 does not provide for the ranking of metropolitan areas (including consolidated areas) by population in a way that is demographically meaningful. In order to show data that are generally comparable with metropolitan area data for 2000 and preceding years, the 2010 CBSA data have been adjusted. First, the metropolitan population is restricted to metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more

population (as was done before). Second, data for CSAs of 1,000,000 or more population are used (corresponding to the use of data for consolidated areas from 1970 through 2000; however, for 2010, the CSA data have been adjusted to exclude micropolitan areas. To illustrate the effect of these adjustments to data for 2010, selected populations are given in as shown in the Chartbook compared with corresponding populations without adjustment (in parentheses). Metropolitan population in Figure 3-1: 256.5 (258.3). Percent metropolitan in Figure 3-2: 83.1 (83.7). Ten largest metropolitan areas in Figure 3-7: New York CSA: 21,896 (22,086). Los Angeles CSA: 17,877 (17,877). Chicago CSA: 9,686 (9,686). Wash-Balt CSA: 8,421 (8,573). SJ-SF-Oak CSA: 7,468 (7,468). Bos-Prov CSA: 7,353 (7,559). Philadelphia CSA: 6,534 (6,534). Dallas-FW CSA: 6,493 (6,731). Houston CSA: 5,947 (6,051). Miami MSA: 5,565 (5,565).

For further information on metropolitan areas and core-based statistical areas, see References, Decennial Census Publications.

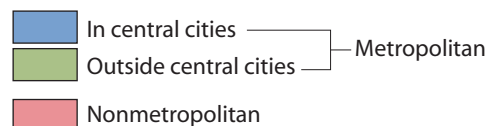
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Figure 3-1.

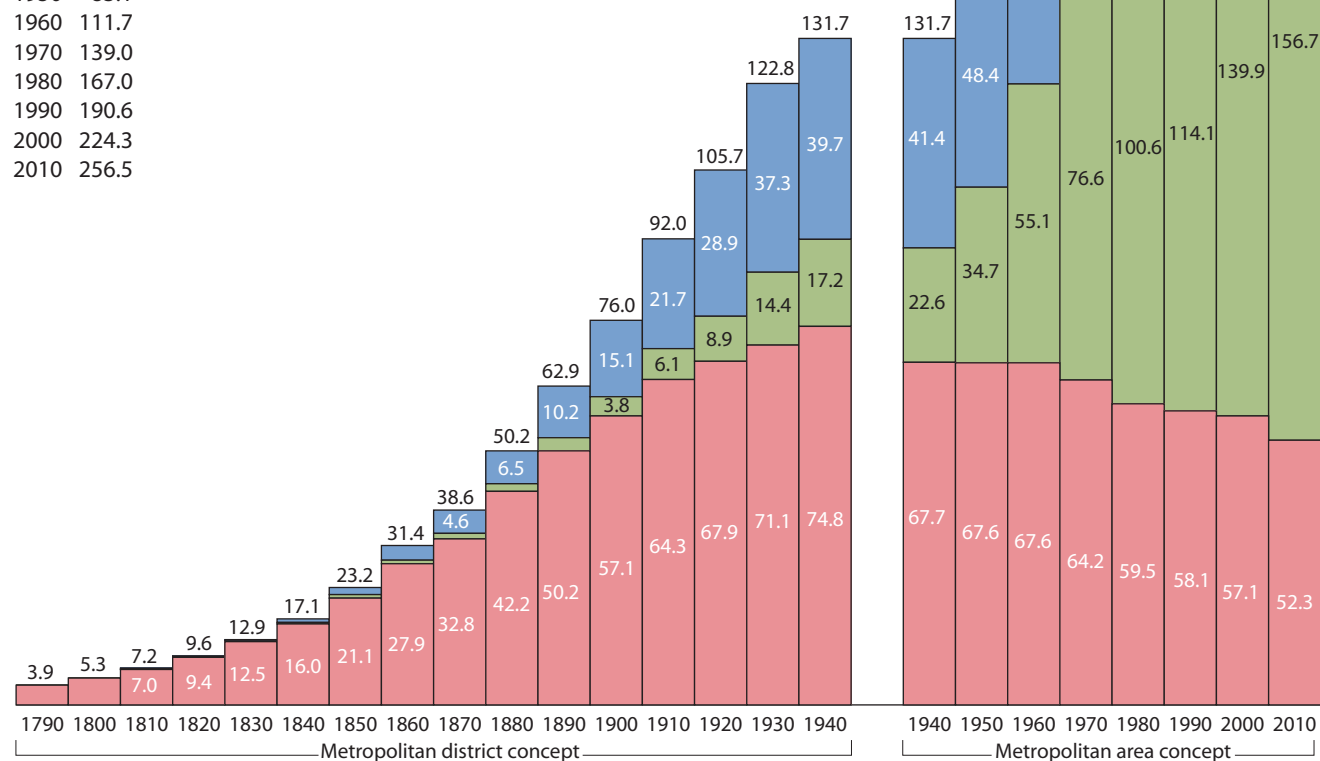
# Population by Metropolitan-Nonmetropolitan Residence for the United States: 1790 to 2010

(Numbers in millions. Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)



Populations not shown on figure:

Metropolitan	In central cities
1810 0.2	1810 0.2
1820 0.3	1820 0.2
1830 0.4	1830 0.3
1840 1.0	1840 0.7
1850 2.1	1850 1.4
1860 3.6	1860 2.9
1870 5.8	
1880 8.0	
1890 12.7	
1900 18.9	
1910 27.7	
1920 37.8	
1930 51.7	
1940 56.9	
	<b>Outside central cities</b>
	1810 0.1
	1820 0.1
	1830 0.1
	1840 0.3
	1850 0.7
	1860 0.7
	1870 1.1
	1880 1.5
	1890 2.6
1940 64.0	
1950 83.1	
1960 111.7	
1970 139.0	
1980 167.0	
1990 190.6	
2000 224.3	
2010 256.5	



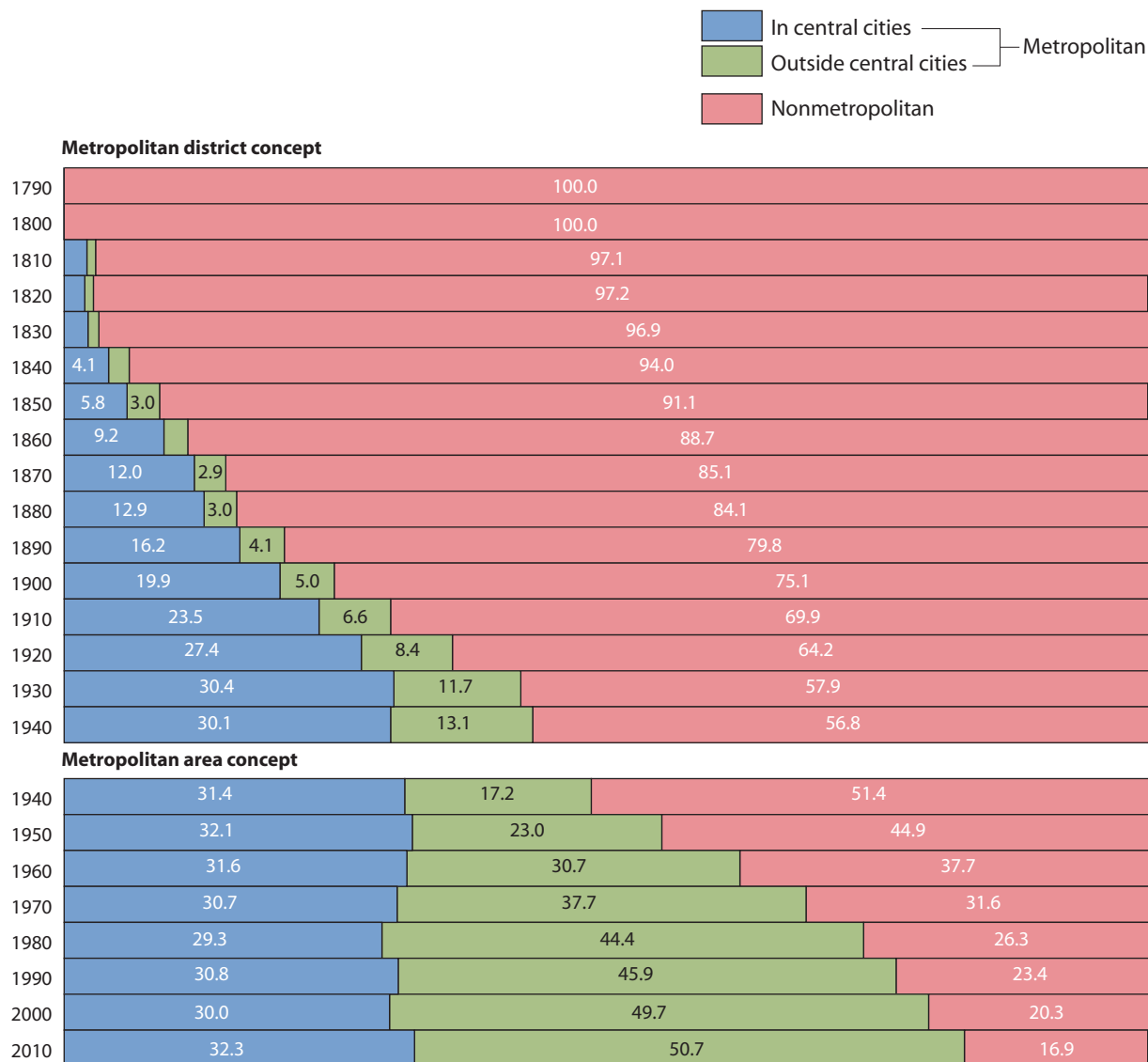
Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com](http://www.demographicchartbook.com), References. Copyright © 2013 by Campbell Gibson. Graphics may be copied for personal use or for educational purposes, but may not be sold.

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Figure 3-2.

## Percent Distribution of the Population by Metropolitan-Nonmetropolitan Residence for the United States: 1790 to 2010

(Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)



Percentages not shown on figure:

In central cities		Outside central cities	
1810	2.1	1810	0.8
1820	1.9	1820	0.8
1830	2.2	1830	1.0
		1840	1.9
		1860	2.2

Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com](http://www.demographicchartbook.com), References. Copyright © 2013 by Campbell Gibson. Graphics may be copied for personal use or for educational purposes, but may not be sold.

Figure 3-3.

### Number of Metropolitan Districts and Metropolitan Areas by Population Size for the United States: 1810 to 2010

(Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)

Year	Total	5,000,000- or more	2,500,000- 4,999,999	1,000,000- 2,499,999	500,000- 999,999	250,000- 499,999	100,000- 249,999
<b>Metropolitan district concept</b>							
1810.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1820.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1830.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1840.....	5	-	-	-	-	2	3
1850.....	7	-	-	-	1	2	4
1860.....	10	-	-	1	1	1	7
1870.....	16	-	-	1	2	4	9
1880.....	18	-	-	2	2	5	9
1890.....	27	-	1	2	2	8	14
1900.....	42	-	1	3	3	10	25
1910.....	58	1	-	4	7	10	36
1920.....	77	1	1	4	10	18	43
1930.....	98	1	2	7	8	24	56
1940.....	106	1	3	7	9	24	62
<b>Metropolitan area concept</b>							
1940.....	129	1	3	7	10	34	74
1950.....	151	2	3	9	19	44	74
1960.....	186	3	4	15	27	48	89
1970.....	193	4	5	19	28	55	82
1980.....	258	5	7	22	32	62	130
1990.....	259	5	9	25	34	61	125
2000.....	256	9	10	30	32	63	112
2010.....	296	12	9	30	39	66	140
<b>CUMULATIVE NUMBER IN SIZE CATEGORY AND LARGER</b>							
<b>Metropolitan district concept</b>							
1810.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1820.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1830.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
1840.....	5	-	-	-	-	2	5
1850.....	7	-	-	-	1	3	7
1860.....	10	-	-	1	2	3	10
1870.....	16	-	-	1	3	7	16
1880.....	18	-	-	2	4	9	18
1890.....	27	-	1	3	5	13	27
1900.....	42	-	1	4	7	17	42
1910.....	58	1	1	5	12	22	58
1920.....	77	1	2	6	16	34	77
1930.....	98	1	3	10	18	42	98
1940.....	106	1	4	11	20	44	106
<b>Metropolitan area concept</b>							
1940.....	129	1	4	11	21	55	129
1950.....	151	2	5	14	33	77	151
1960.....	186	3	7	22	49	97	186
1970.....	193	4	9	28	56	111	193
1980.....	258	5	12	34	66	128	258
1990.....	259	5	14	39	73	134	259
2000.....	256	9	19	49	81	144	256
2010.....	296	12	21	51	90	156	296

Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com/References](http://www.demographicchartbook.com/References).

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Figure 3-4.

### Percent Metropolitan in the Population by Size of Metropolitan District or Metropolitan Area for the United States: 1810 to 2010

(Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)

Year	Total	5,000,000- or more	2,500,000- 4,999,999	1,000,000- 2,499,999	500,000- 999,999	250,000- 499,999	100,000- 249,999
<b>Metropolitan district concept</b>							
1810.....	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	2.9
1820.....	2.8	-	-	-	-	-	2.8
1830.....	3.1	-	-	-	-	-	3.1
1840.....	6.0	-	-	-	-	3.9	2.1
1850.....	8.9	-	-	-	3.3	3.1	2.4
1860.....	11.3	-	-	4.4	2.0	1.3	3.7
1870.....	14.9	-	-	4.9	3.3	3.1	3.6
1880.....	15.9	-	-	7.0	2.4	3.4	3.1
1890.....	20.2	-	5.4	3.9	2.4	4.6	3.9
1900.....	24.9	-	6.3	6.2	2.6	4.9	4.8
1910.....	30.1	7.4	-	7.7	4.8	4.0	6.2
1920.....	35.8	7.8	3.1	6.3	7.0	5.4	6.2
1930.....	42.1	8.6	5.9	9.5	4.6	6.5	6.9
1940.....	43.2	8.6	7.8	8.2	4.8	6.3	7.4
<b>Metropolitan area concept</b>							
1940.....	48.6	8.9	8.0	8.5	5.3	8.8	9.1
1950.....	55.1	12.2	7.3	9.9	8.2	9.7	7.7
1960.....	62.3	15.8	7.5	12.0	10.1	8.8	8.1
1970.....	68.4	19.8	9.1	14.8	9.5	8.8	6.4
1980.....	73.7	20.4	10.0	15.2	9.8	9.5	8.8
1990.....	76.6	21.2	12.7	16.2	10.0	8.7	7.8
2000.....	79.7	29.9	11.9	15.7	7.9	8.2	6.3
2010.....	83.1	34.9	9.4	15.5	8.7	7.5	7.1
<b>CUMULATIVE PERCENT IN SIZE CATEGORY AND LARGER</b>							
<b>Metropolitan district concept</b>							
1810.....	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	2.9
1820.....	2.8	-	-	-	-	-	2.8
1830.....	3.1	-	-	-	-	-	3.1
1840.....	6.0	-	-	-	-	3.9	6.0
1850.....	8.9	-	-	-	3.3	6.4	8.9
1860.....	11.3	-	-	4.4	6.3	7.6	11.3
1870.....	14.9	-	-	4.9	8.2	11.3	14.9
1880.....	15.9	-	-	7.0	9.4	12.8	15.9
1890.....	20.2	-	5.4	9.3	11.7	16.3	20.2
1900.....	24.9	-	6.3	12.6	15.2	20.1	24.9
1910.....	30.1	7.4	7.4	15.2	20.0	24.0	30.1
1920.....	35.8	7.8	10.9	17.2	24.2	29.6	35.8
1930.....	42.1	8.6	14.5	24.0	28.6	35.1	42.1
1940.....	43.2	8.6	16.5	24.7	29.5	35.8	43.2
<b>Metropolitan area concept</b>							
1940.....	48.6	8.9	16.9	25.4	30.8	39.5	48.6
1950.....	55.1	12.2	19.6	29.5	37.7	47.4	55.1
1960.....	62.3	15.8	23.3	35.3	45.4	54.2	62.3
1970.....	68.4	19.8	28.9	43.7	53.2	62.0	68.4
1980.....	73.7	20.4	30.4	45.6	55.4	65.0	73.7
1990.....	76.6	21.2	34.0	50.2	60.2	68.8	76.6
2000.....	79.7	29.9	41.7	57.4	65.3	73.4	79.7
2010.....	83.1	34.9	44.3	59.8	68.5	76.0	83.1

Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com/References](http://www.demographicchartbook.com/References).

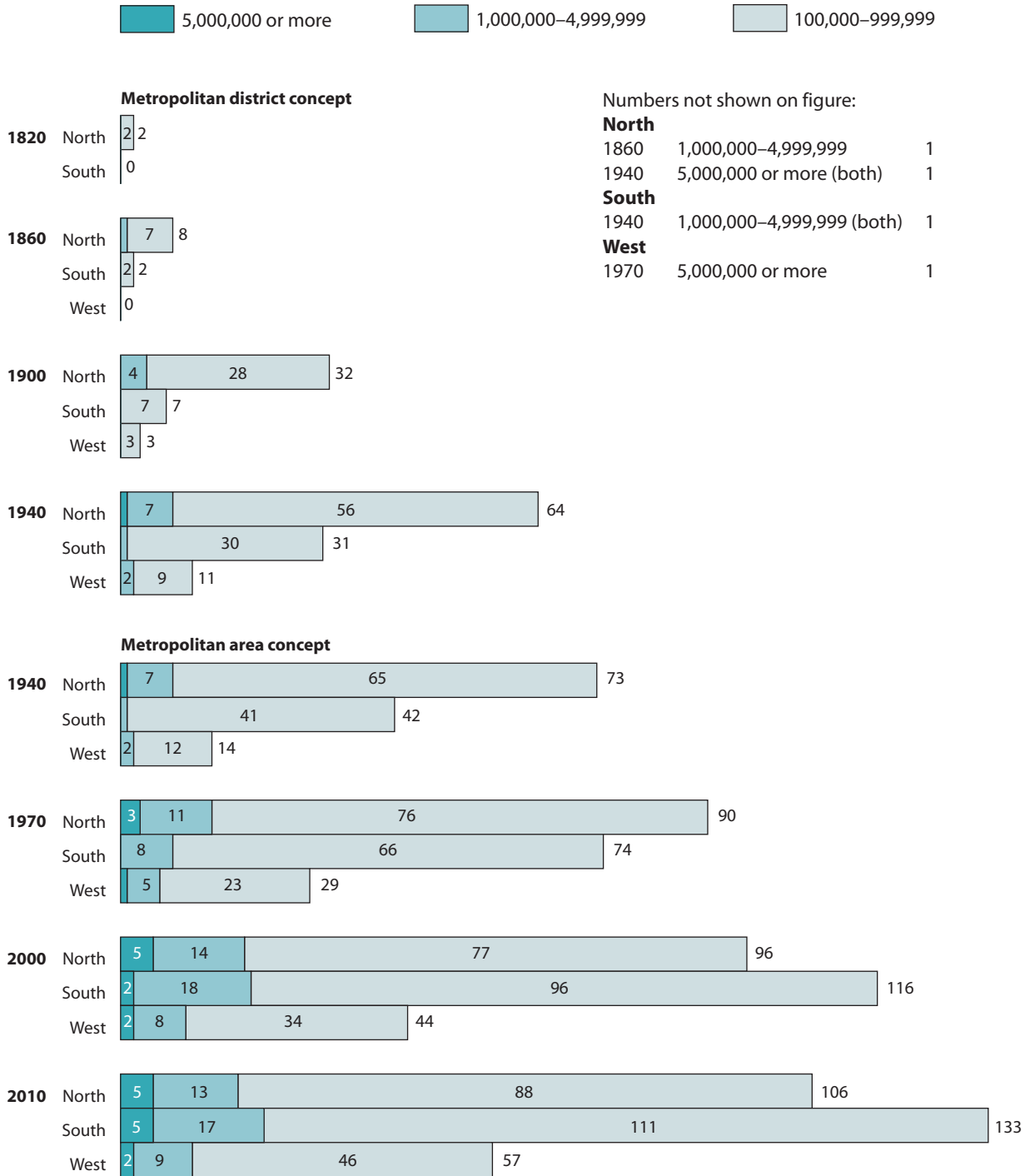
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Figure 3-5.

### Number of Metropolitan Districts and Metropolitan Areas by Population Size for the United States by Region: 1820, 1860, 1900, 1940, 1970, 2000, and 2010

(Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)

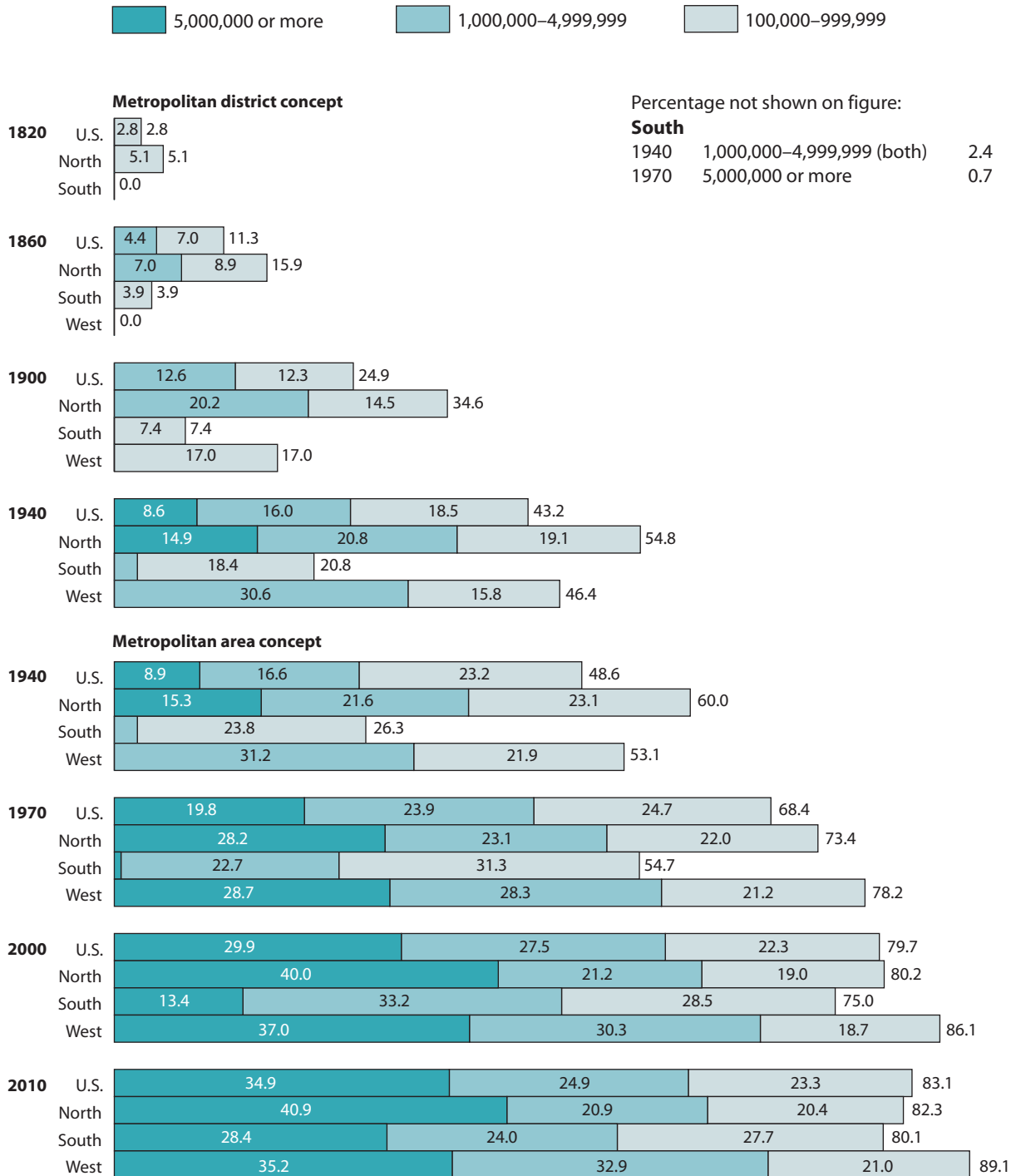


Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com](http://www.demographicchartbook.com), References. Copyright © 2013 by Campbell Gibson. Graphics may be copied for personal use or for educational purposes, but may not be sold.

Figure 3-6.

### Percent Metropolitan in the Population by Size of Metropolitan District or Metropolitan Area for the United States by Region: 1820, 1860, 1900, 1940, 1970, 2000, and 2010

(Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population. Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2000)



Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com](http://www.demographicchartbook.com), References. Copyright © 2013 by Campbell Gibson. Graphics may be copied for personal use or for educational purposes, but may not be sold.



Figure 3-7.

**Ten Largest Metropolitan Districts and Metropolitan Areas in the United States: 1810 to 2010**

(Population in thousands. Based on metropolitan districts and metropolitan areas of 100,000 or more population.

Data for 2010 are based on the core-based statistical area concept and have been adjusted to be generally comparable to data shown for 2010. See Chapter 3 text regarding the acronyms used from 1950 to 2010: SMA, SCA, SMSA, SCSA, CMSA, MSA, and CSA)



North  
South  
West

1790		1800		1810		1820	
1 .....	None	None		Philadelphia	106	Philadelphia	135
2 .....				New York	101	New York	133
1830		1840		1850		1860	
1 .....	New York 216	New York 411		New York 773		New York 1,381	
2 .....	Philadelphia 186	Philadelphia 260		Philadelphia 441		Philadelphia 615	
3 .....		Boston 151		Boston 274		Boston 398	
4 .....		New Orleans 105		Baltimore 184		Baltimore 231	
5 .....		Baltimore 102		Cincinnati 144		Cincinnati 211	
6 .....				New Orleans 135		New Orleans 181	
7 .....				Albany-Troy 105		St. Louis 165	
8 .....						Pittsburgh 138	
9 .....						Albany-Troy 136	
10 .....						Chicago 111	
1870		1880		1890		1900	
1 .....	New York 1,893	New York 2,490		New York 3,417		New York 4,825	
2 .....	Philadelphia 772	Philadelphia 1,003		Philadelphia 1,284		Chicago 1,860	
3 .....	Boston 509	Boston 648		Chicago 1,167		Philadelphia 1,602	
4 .....	St. Louis 326	Chicago 567		Boston 978		Boston 1,271	
5 .....	Chicago 307	Baltimore 378		Pittsburgh 549		Pittsburgh 798	
6 .....	Baltimore 289	St. Louis 360		Baltimore 478		St. Louis 636	
7 .....	Cincinnati 272	Cincinnati 356		St. Louis 470		Baltimore 572	
8 .....	Pittsburgh 218	Pittsburgh 331		Cincinnati 437		Cincinnati 499	
9 .....	New Orleans 198	San Fran-Oak 280		San Fran-Oak 371		San Fran-Oak 450	
10 .....	Albany-Troy 175	New Orleans 223		Minn-St. Paul 302		Cleveland 420	
1910		1920		1930		1940 (MDs)	
1 .....	New York 6,830	New York 8,265		New York 10,590		New York 11,378	
2 .....	Chicago 2,486	Chicago 3,255		Chicago 4,377		Chicago 4,501	
3 .....	Philadelphia 1,963	Philadelphia 2,392		Philadelphia 2,848		Los Angeles 2,909	
4 .....	Boston 1,552	Boston 1,800		Los Angeles 2,321		Philadelphia 2,889	
5 .....	Pittsburgh 1,116	Pittsburgh 1,323		Boston 2,106		Detroit 2,186	
6 .....	St. Louis 860	Detroit 1,182		Detroit 1,989		Boston 2,140	
7 .....	San Fran-Oak 687	St. Louis 974		Pittsburgh 1,569		Pittsburgh 1,612	
8 .....	Baltimore 660	Cleveland 930		San Fran-Oak 1,240		San Fran-Oak 1,333	
9 .....	Cleveland 613	San Fran-Oak 904		St. Louis 1,220		St. Louis 1,302	
10 .....	Cincinnati 568	Los Angeles 899		Cleveland 1,201		Cleveland 1,217	
1940 (MAs)		1950		1960		1970	
1 .....	New York 11,661	New York SMA 12,912		New York SCA 14,759		New York SCSA 17,029	
2 .....	Chicago 4,581	Chicago SMA 5,495		Chicago SCA 6,794		Los Angeles SCSA 9,972	
3 .....	Philadelphia 3,064	Los Angeles SMA 4,368		Los Angeles SMSA 6,743		Chicago SCSA 7,612	
4 .....	Los Angeles 2,916	Philadelphia SMA 3,671		Philadelphia SMSA 4,343		Philadelphia SCSA 5,621	
5 .....	Boston 2,140	Detroit SMA 3,016		Detroit SMSA 3,762		Detroit SCSA 4,665	
6 .....	Detroit 2,123	Boston SMA 2,370		San Fran-Oak SMSA 2,783		SF-Oak-SJ SCSA 4,423	
7 .....	Pittsburgh 1,872	San Fran-Oak SMA 2,241		Boston SMSA 2,589		Boston SCSA 3,526	
8 .....	San Fran-Oak 1,413	Pittsburgh SMA 2,213		Pittsburgh SMSA 2,405		Cleveland SCSA 3,000	
9 .....	St. Louis 1,407	St. Louis SMA 1,681		St. Louis SMSA 2,060		Washington SMSA 2,861	
10 .....	Cleveland 1,267	Cleveland SMA 1,466		Washington SMSA 2,002		Pittsburgh SMSA 2,401	
1980		1990		2000		2010	
1 .....	New York SCSA 16,121	New York CMSA 18,087		New York CMSA 21,200		New York CSA 21,896	
2 .....	Los Angeles SCSA 11,498	Los Angeles CMSA 14,532		Los Angeles CMSA 16,374		Los Angeles CSA 17,877	
3 .....	Chicago SCSA 7,870	Chicago CMSA 8,066		Chicago CMSA 9,158		Chicago CSA 9,686	
4 .....	Philadelphia SCSA 5,548	SF-Oak-SJ CMSA 6,253		Wash-Balt CMSA 7,608		Wash-Balt CSA 8,421	
5 .....	SF-Oak-SJ SCSA 5,180	Philadelphia CMSA 5,899		SF-Oak-SJ CMSA 7,039		SJ-SF-Oak CSA 7,468	
6 .....	Detroit SCSA 4,618	Detroit CMSA 4,665		Philadelphia CMSA 6,188		Bos-Prov CSA 7,353	
7 .....	Boston SCSA 3,448	Boston CMSA 4,172		Boston CMSA 5,819		Philadelphia CSA 6,534	
8 .....	Houston SCSA 3,101	Washington MSA 3,924		Detroit CMSA 5,456		Dallas-FW CSA 6,493	
9 .....	Washington SMSA 3,061	Dallas-FW CMSA 3,885		Dallas-FW CMSA 5,222		Houston CSA 5,947	
10 .....	Dallas-FW SCSA 2,975	Houston CMSA 3,711		Houston CMSA 4,670		Miami MSA 5,565	

Sources of data: Todd Kelly Gardner (1998), *The Metropolitan Fringe: Suburbanization in the United States Before World War II*; U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census publications; U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1975), *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (revised edition). See [www.demographicchartbook.com](http://www.demographicchartbook.com), References.

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