

Demographic Trends in Maine and Greater Portland

Leadership Portland

January 27, 2026

Amanda Rector

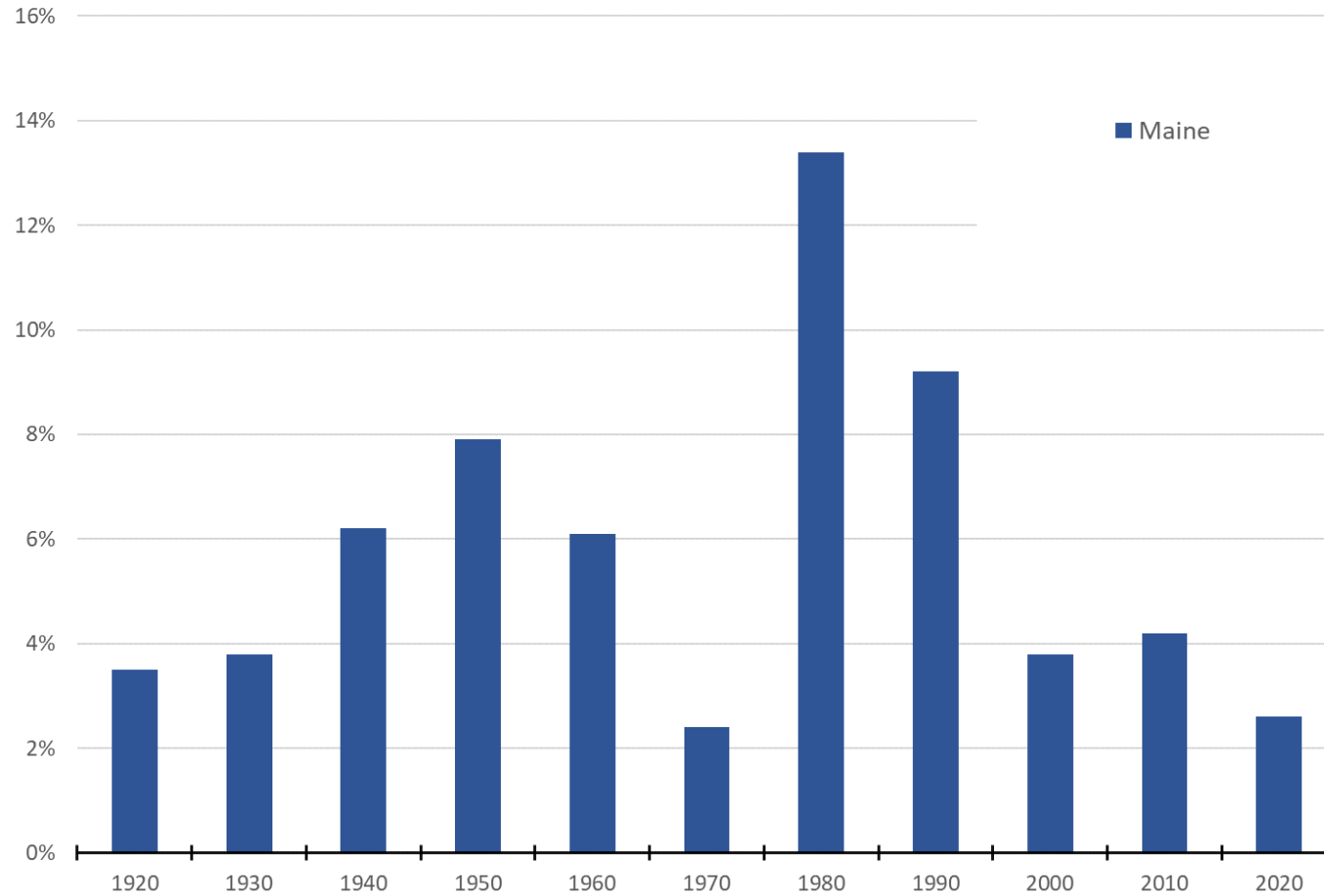
Maine State Economist

What are we going to talk about?

- Population change
- Housing
- Demographics
- Socioeconomic indicators
- Labor force and employment

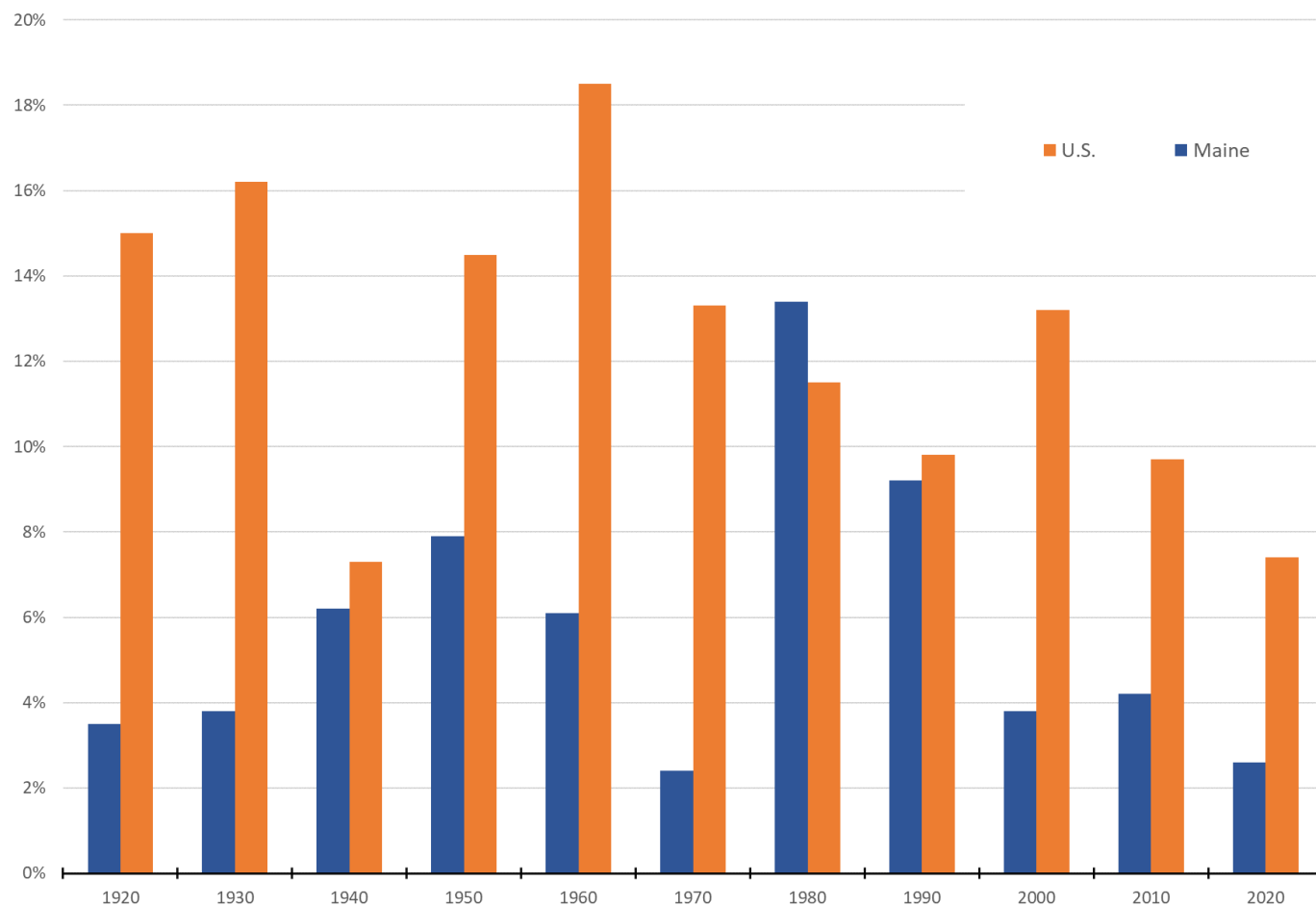
Population Change

Population Growth from Previous Decade



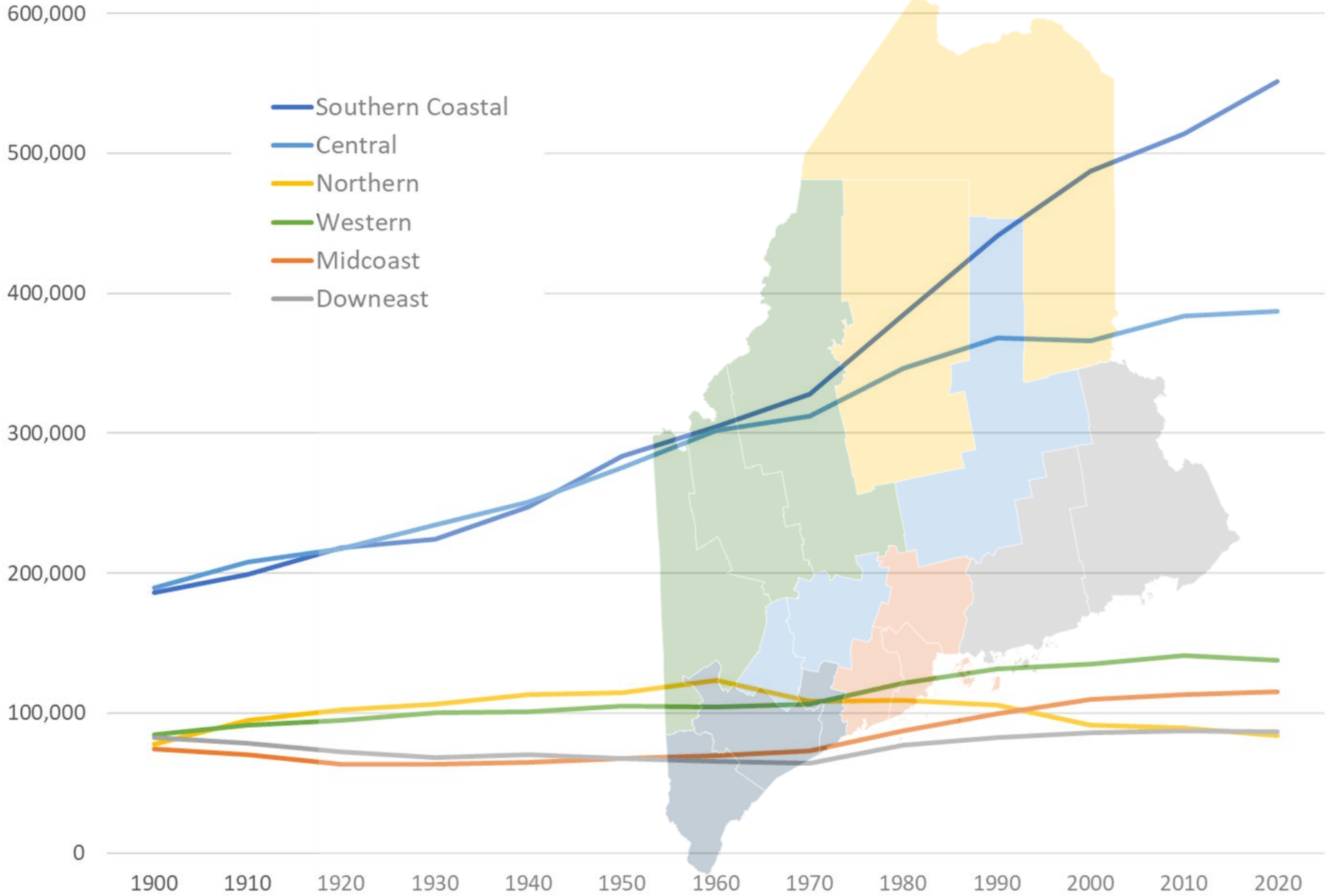
Maine population growth peaked during “back to the land” movement in the 1970s

Population Growth from Previous Decade

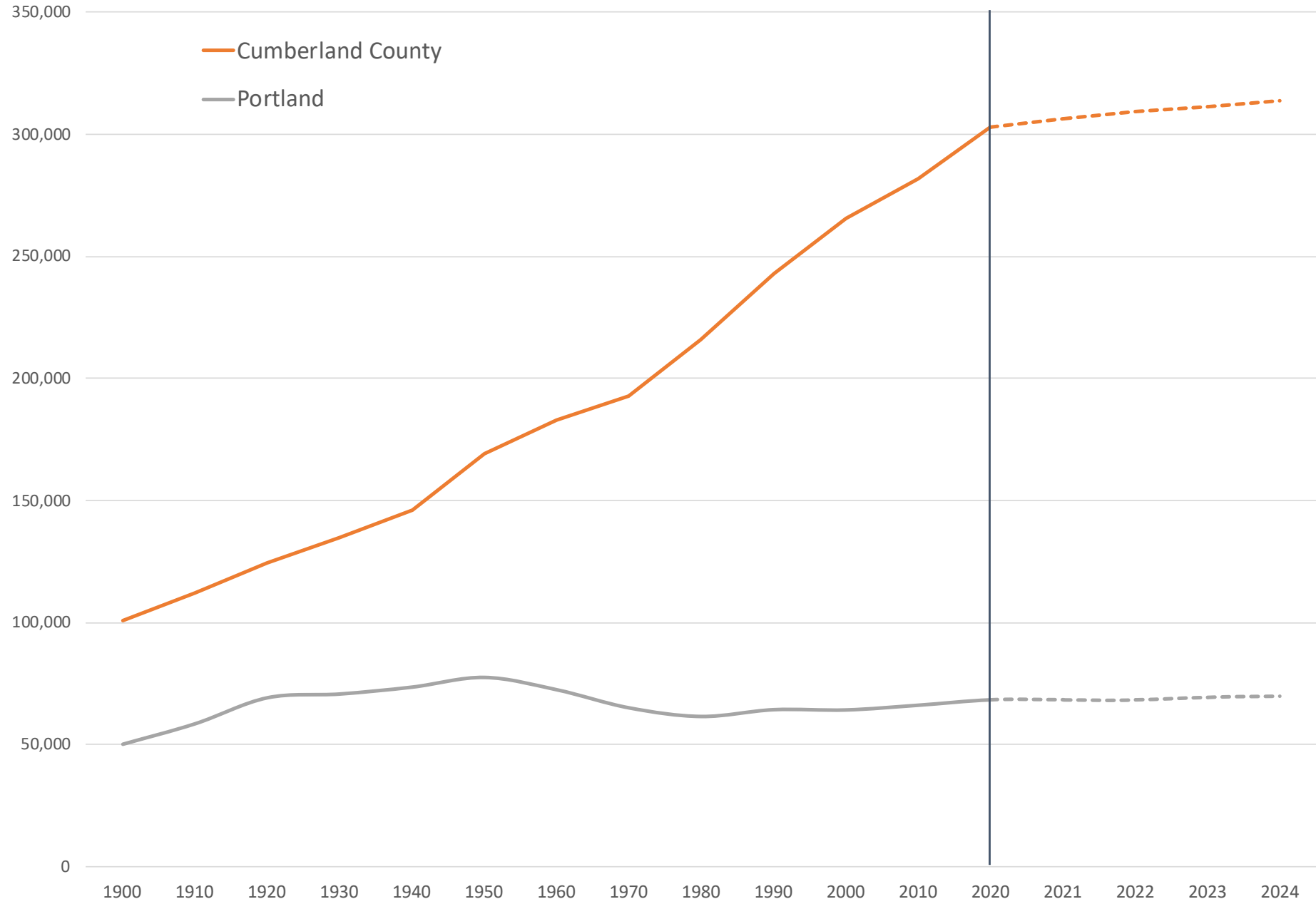


U.S. population growth has generally been faster than Maine, apart from 1980, but the growth in 2020 was the slowest since 1940.

Population by Region



Total Population

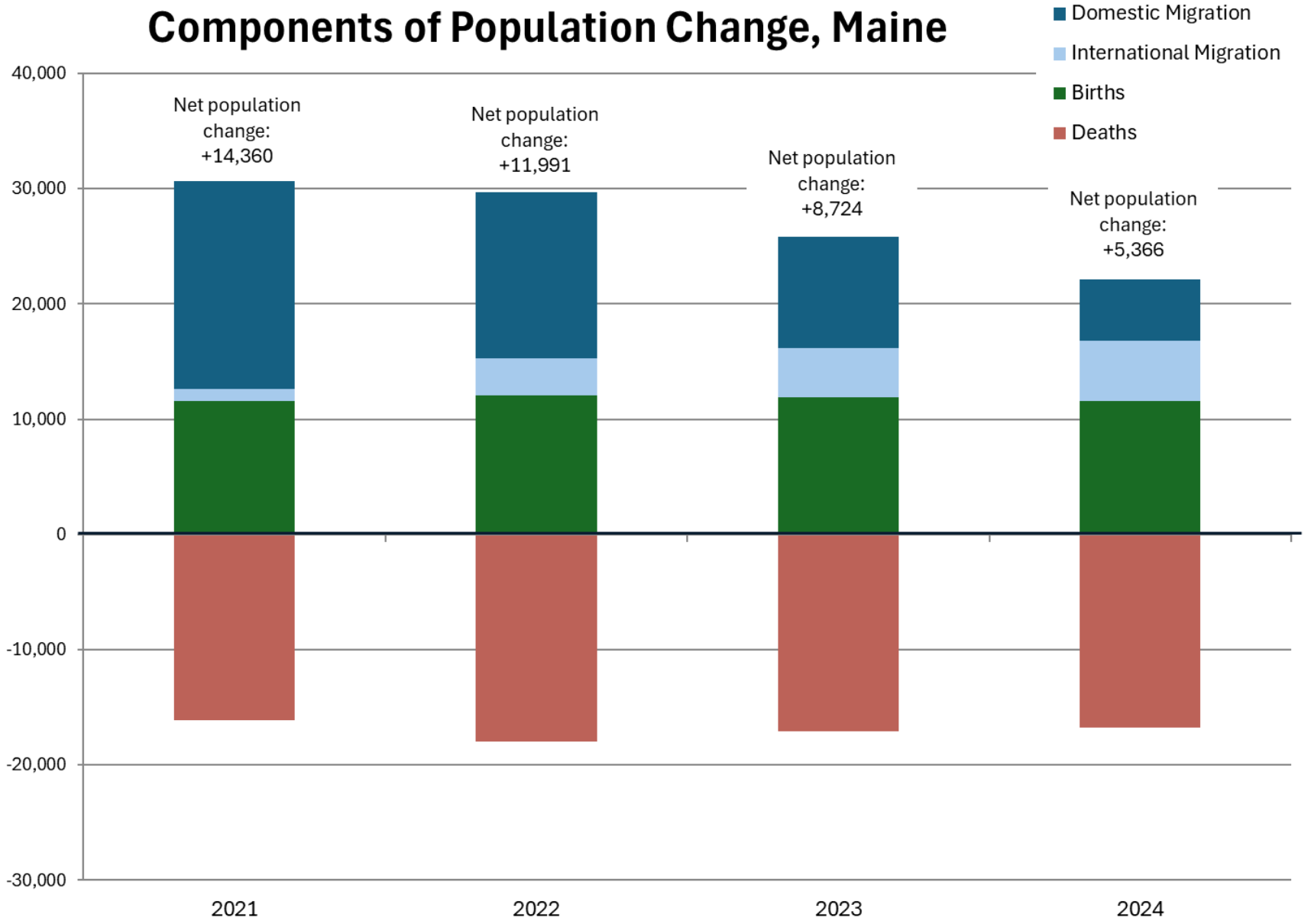


Population increase of 2.6% from 2010-2020 (42nd in U.S.)

Population increase of 3.1% from 2020-2024 (17th in U.S.)

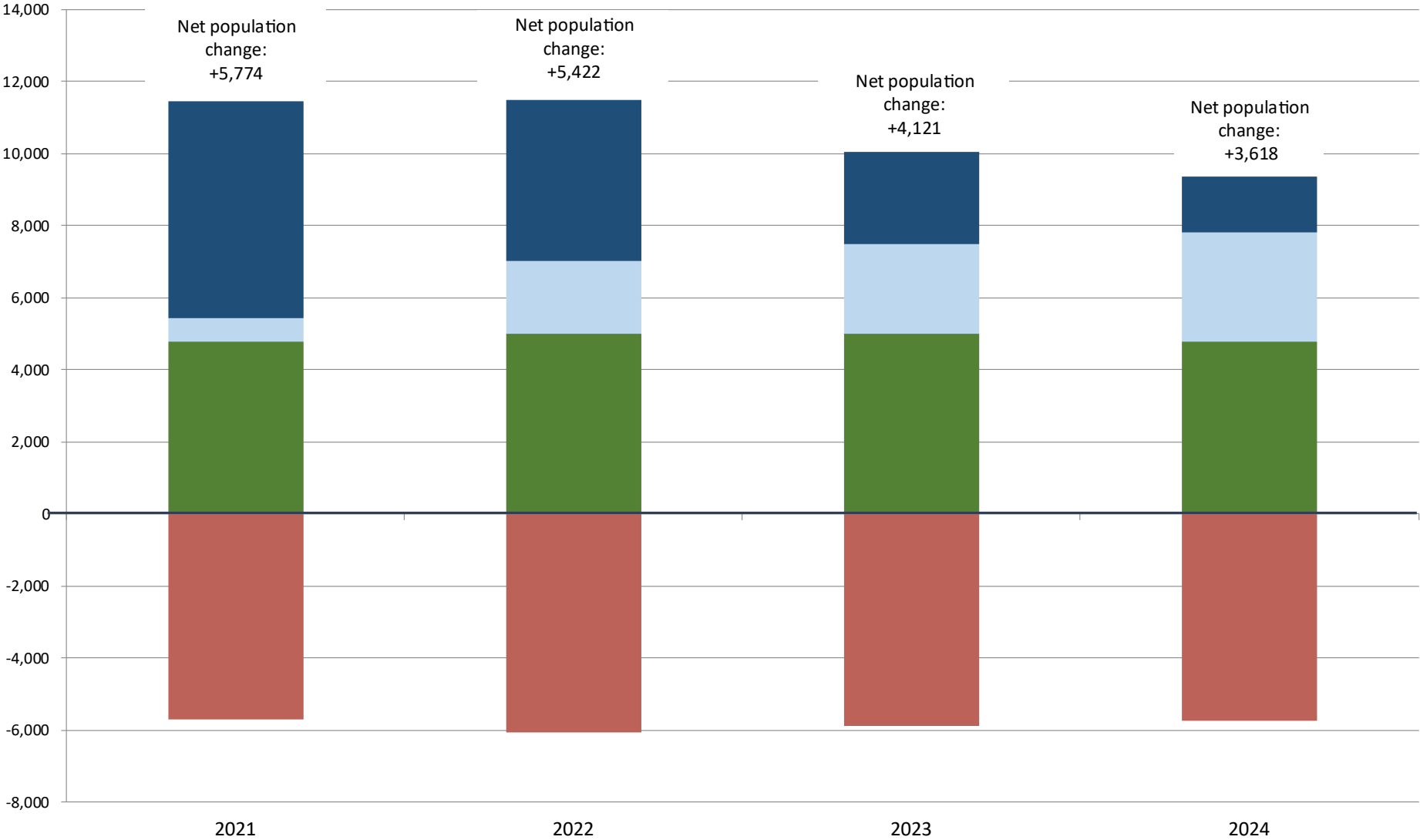
11th for net domestic migration and 41st for net international migration in 2024

Components of Population Change, Maine



Components of Population Change, Portland MSA

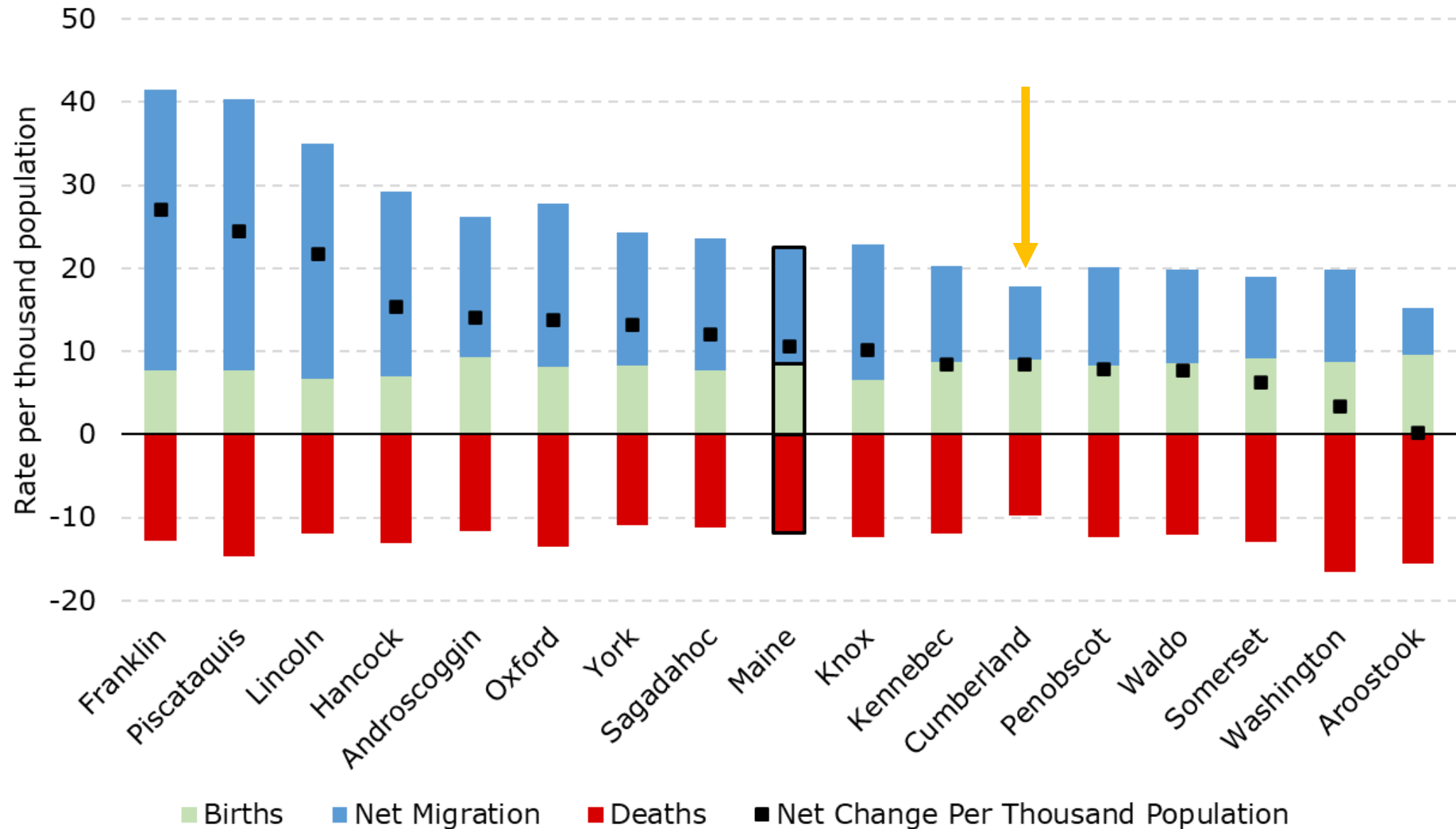
- Domestic Migration
- International Migration
- Births
- Deaths



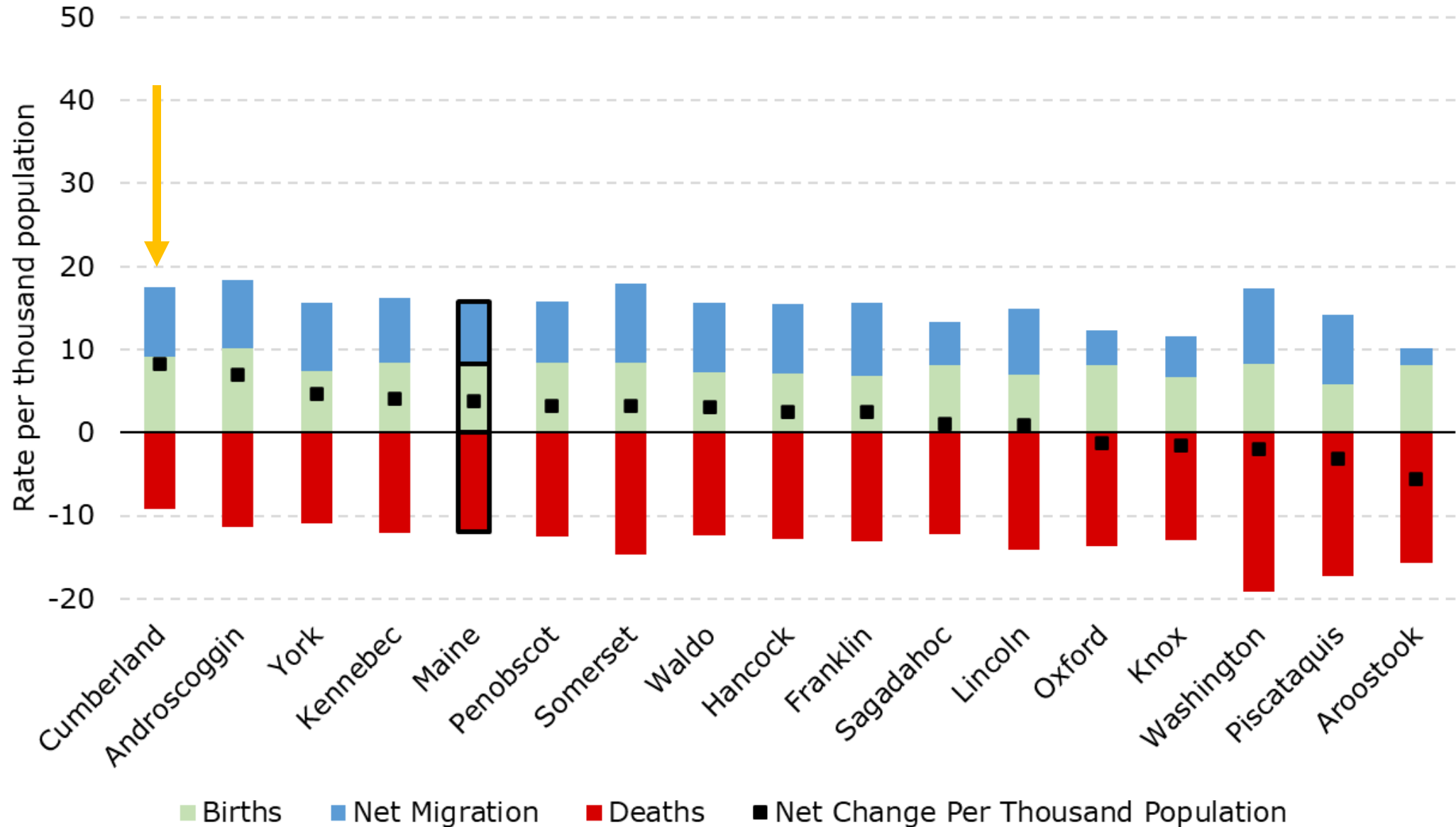
Net international migration accounted for 84% of U.S. population growth from 2023-2024

U.S. Census Bureau made significant methodological changes in 2024 to better account for humanitarian migrants

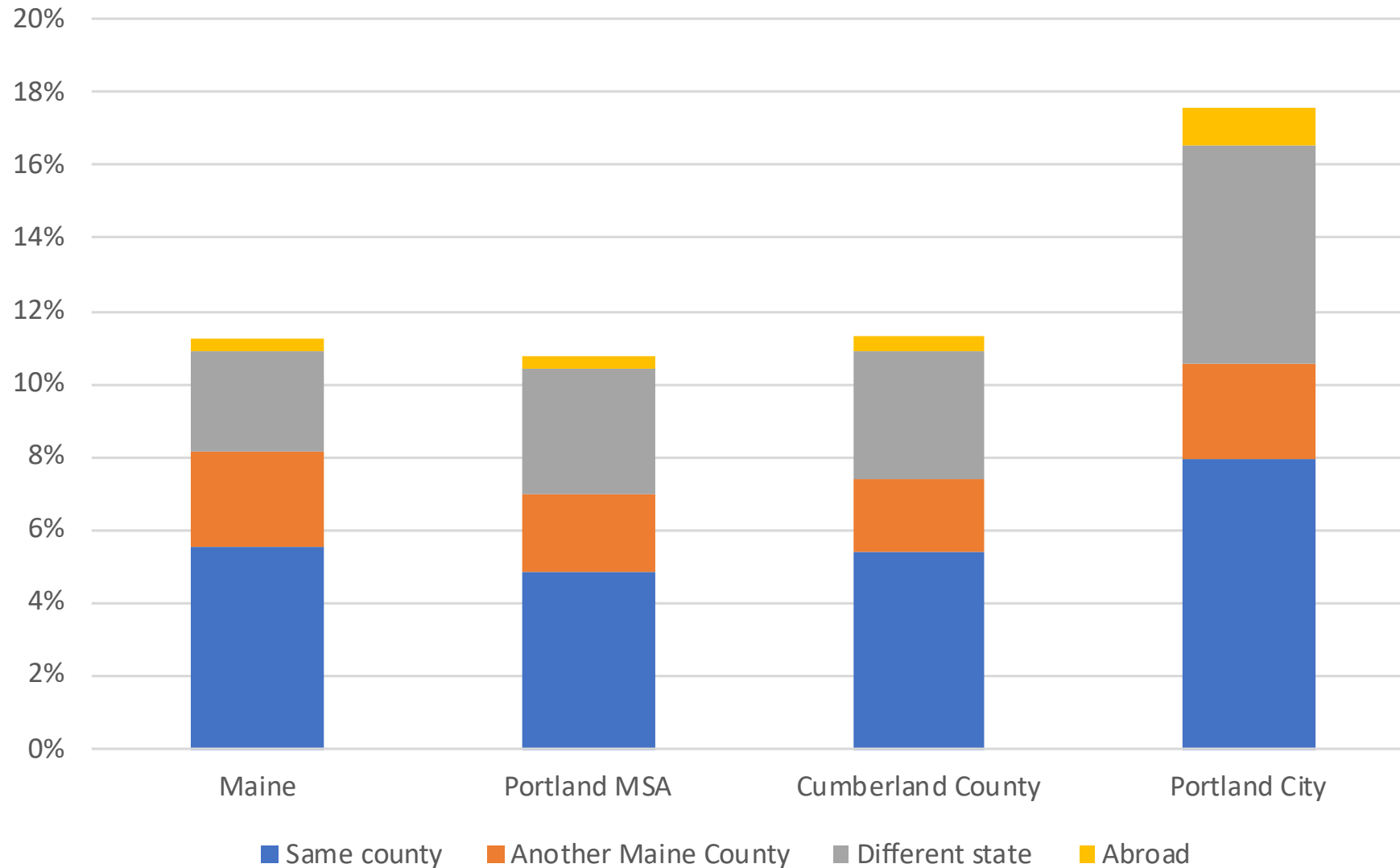
Components of Population Change, 7/1/2020-7/1/2021 Rate per thousand population



Components of Population Change, 7/1/2023-7/1/2024 Rate per thousand population

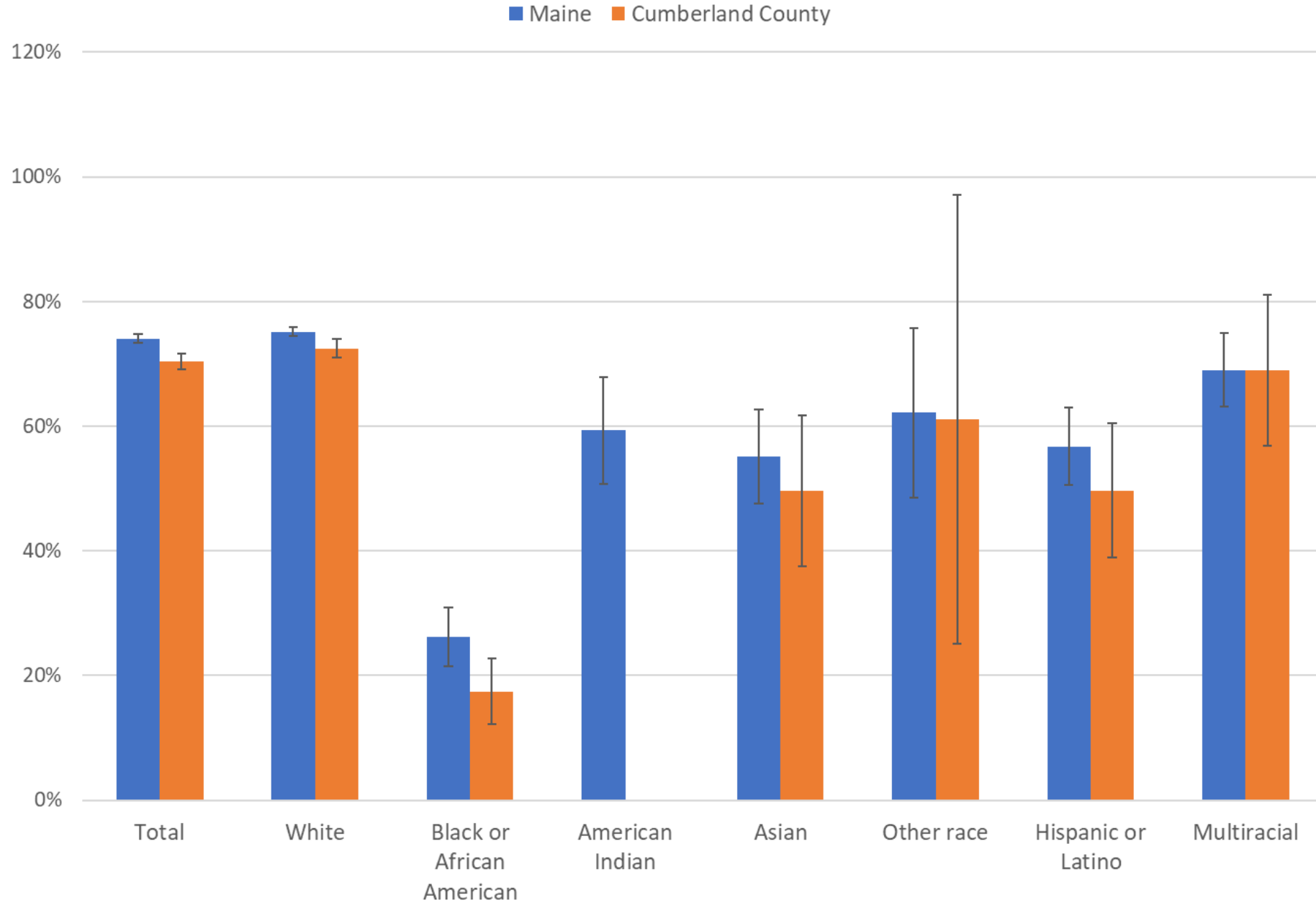


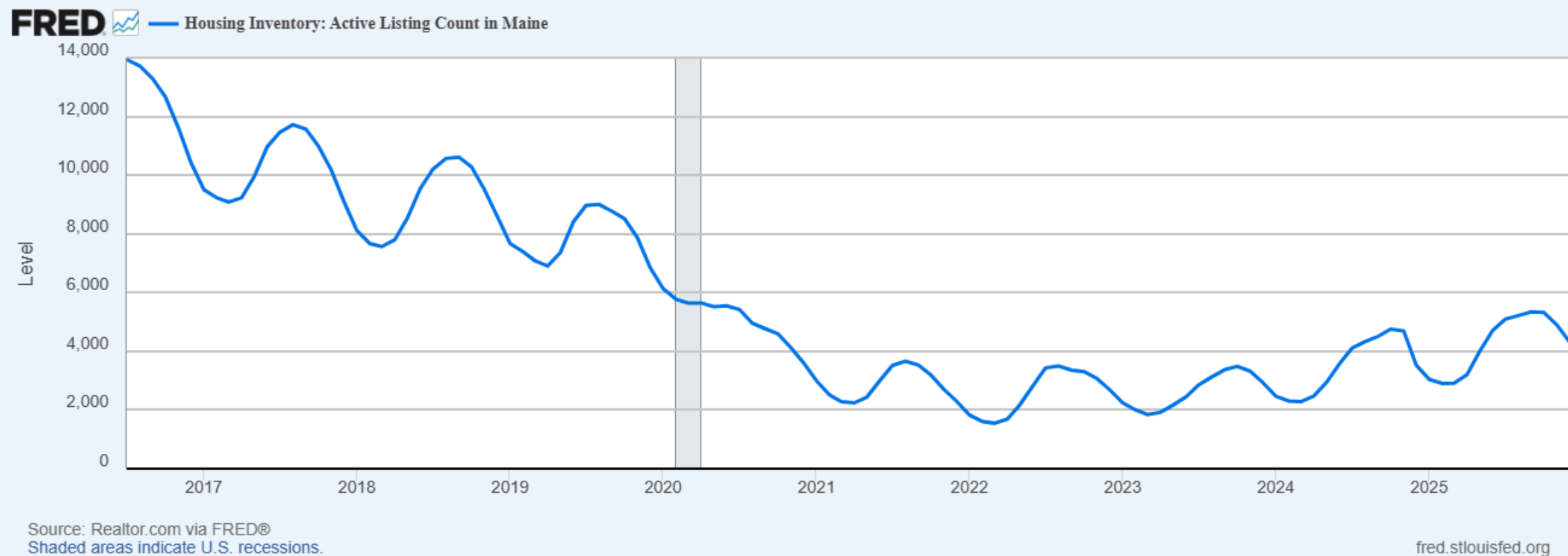
Percent Changing Residence in the Last Year, By Origin, 2023



Housing

Homeownership Rates

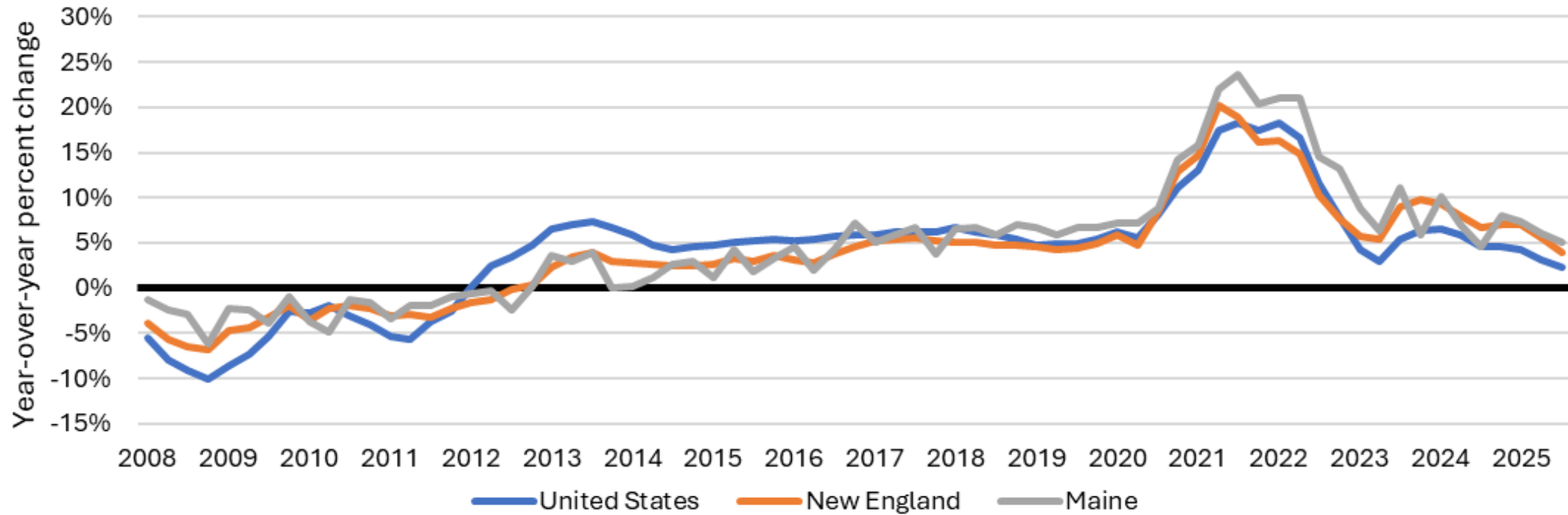




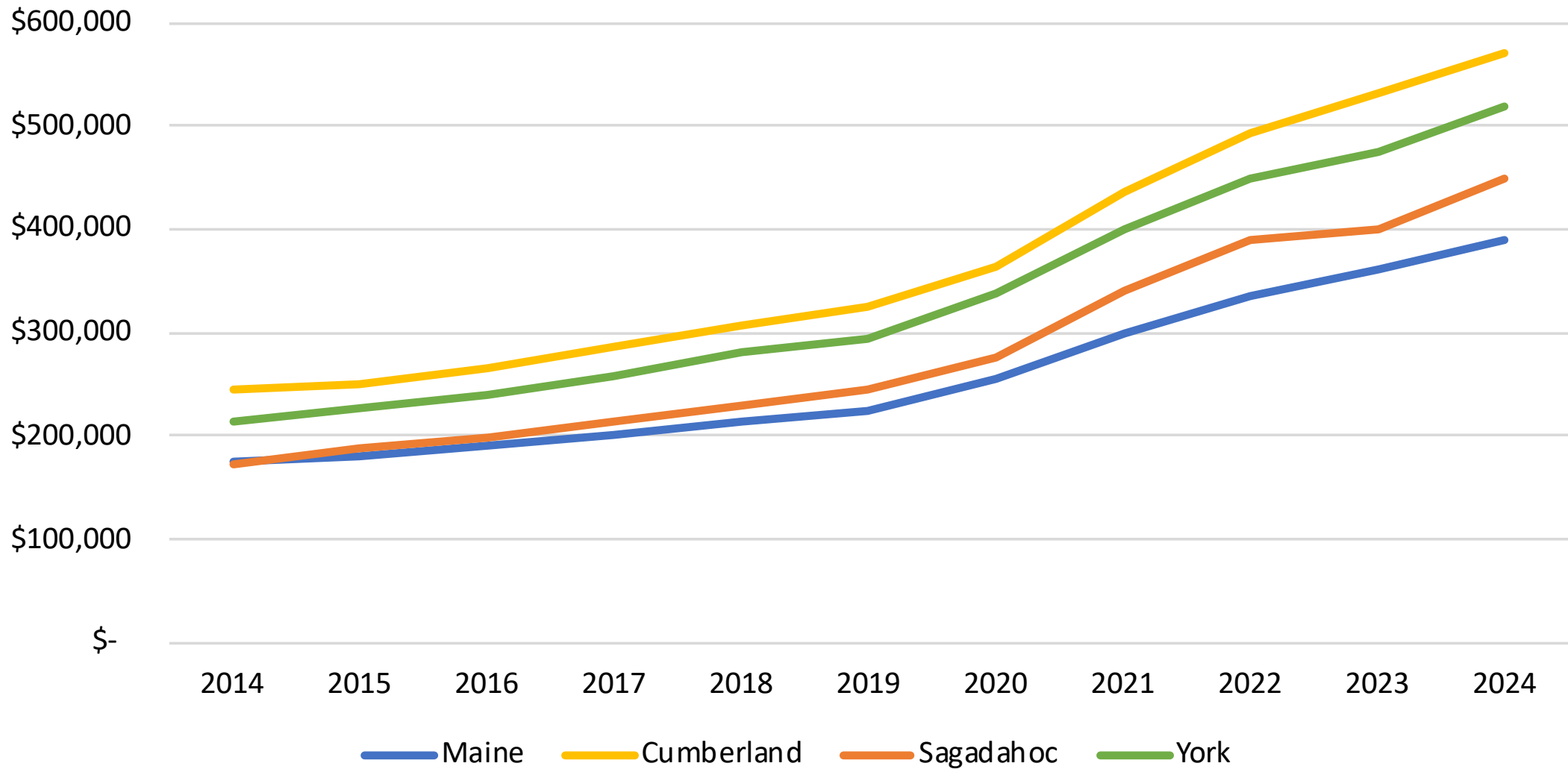
Migration into the state drove up demand for housing and further reduced the available supply while high mortgage rates locked people into existing homes, but there's been some improvement:

Dec. 2025 about 23% higher than Dec. 2024

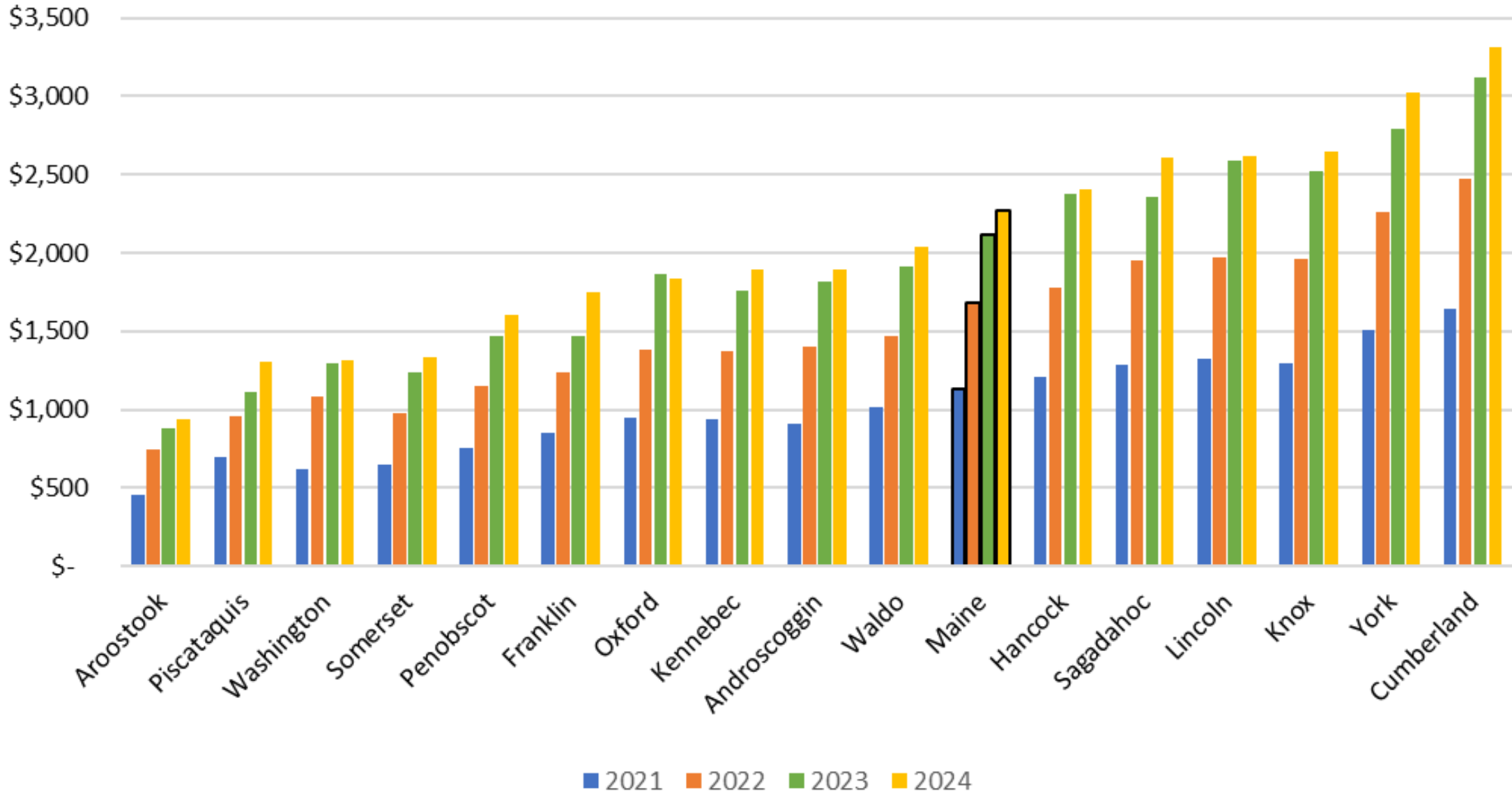
Percent Changes, Year-over-year in FHFA House Price Index (Seasonally Adjusted)



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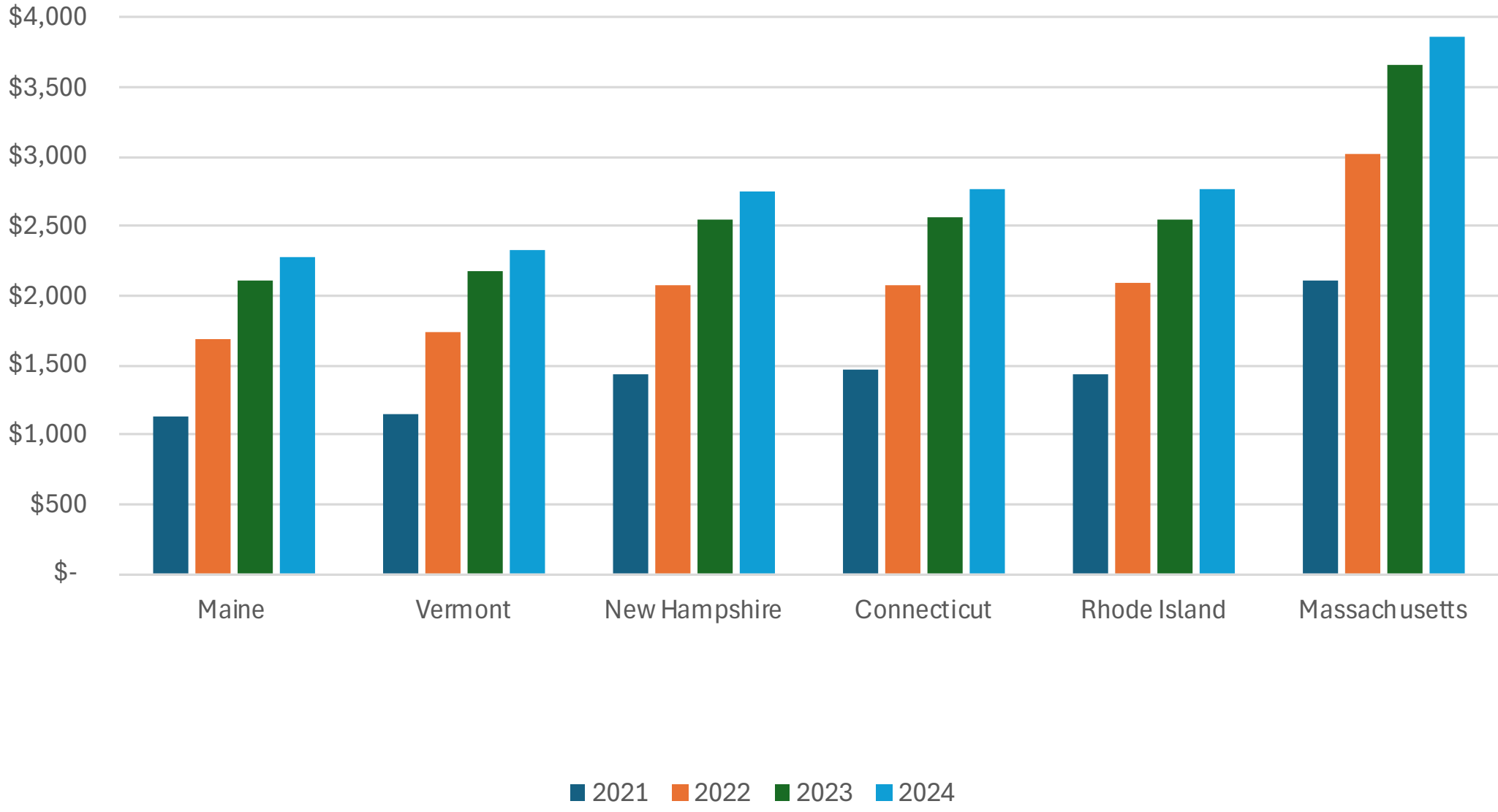


Monthly Mortgage Payment at the Median Sales Price 2021-2024



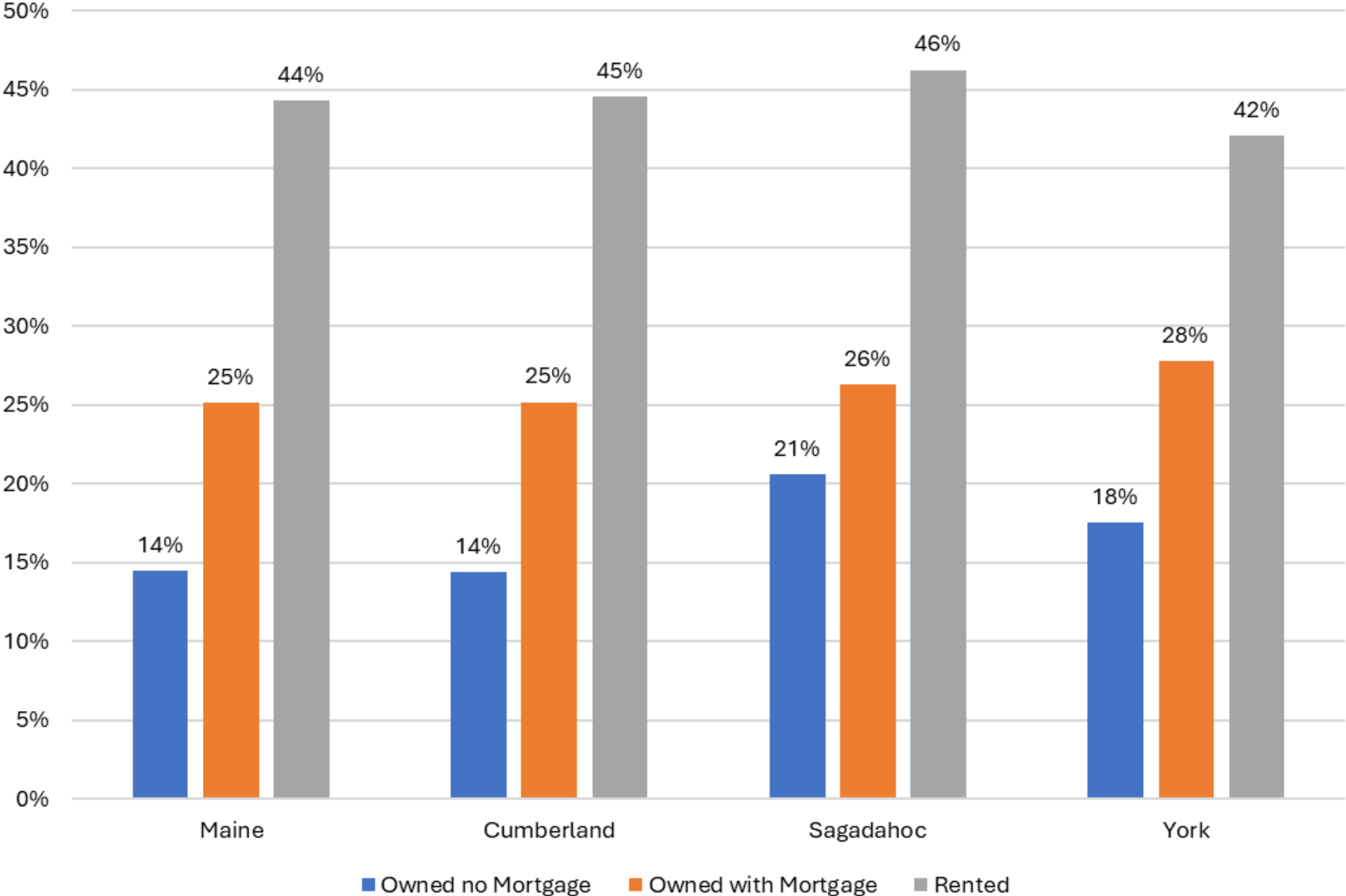
Sources: Maine Association of Realtors (median sale prices), FRED 30-year fixed rate mortgage rates, weekly (average of all weeks in the year). Assumes 30-year fixed rate mortgage and 10% down payment on a home at the median sales price.

Monthly Mortgage Payment at the Median Sales Price 2021-2024



Sources: Moody's Analytics (median sale prices), FRED 30-year fixed rate mortgage rates, weekly (average of all weeks in the year). Assumes 30-year fixed rate mortgage and 10% down payment on a home at the median sales price.

Housing Costs >30% of Household Income by Tenure



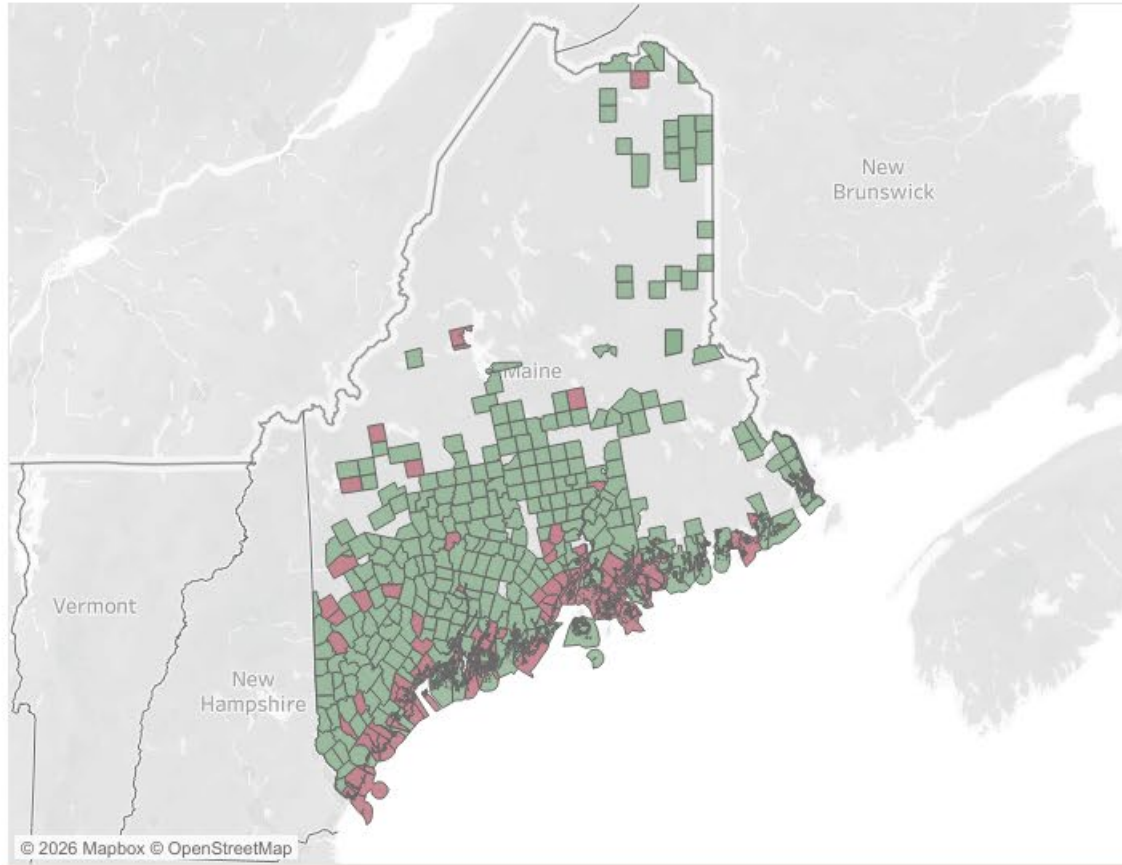
Homeownership Affordability Maps

Year

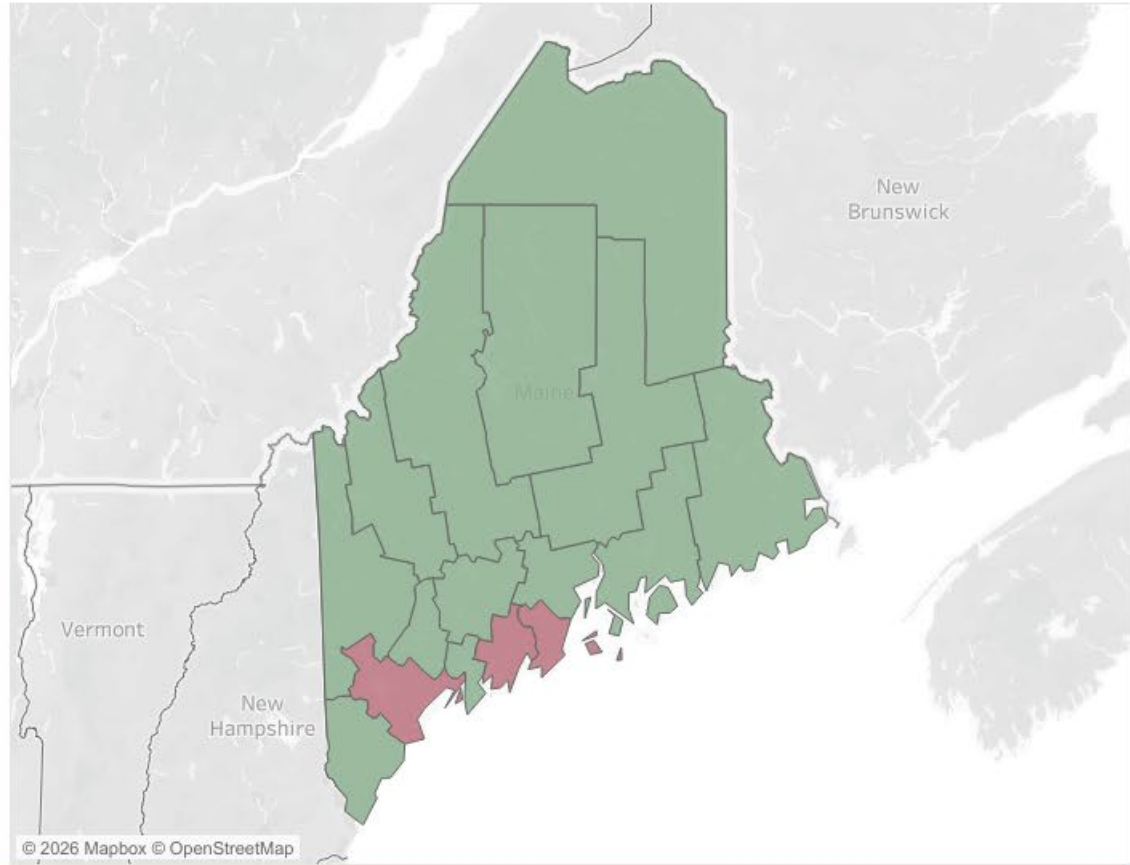
2020

Show history

Affordability By Town - 2020



Affordability By County - 2020



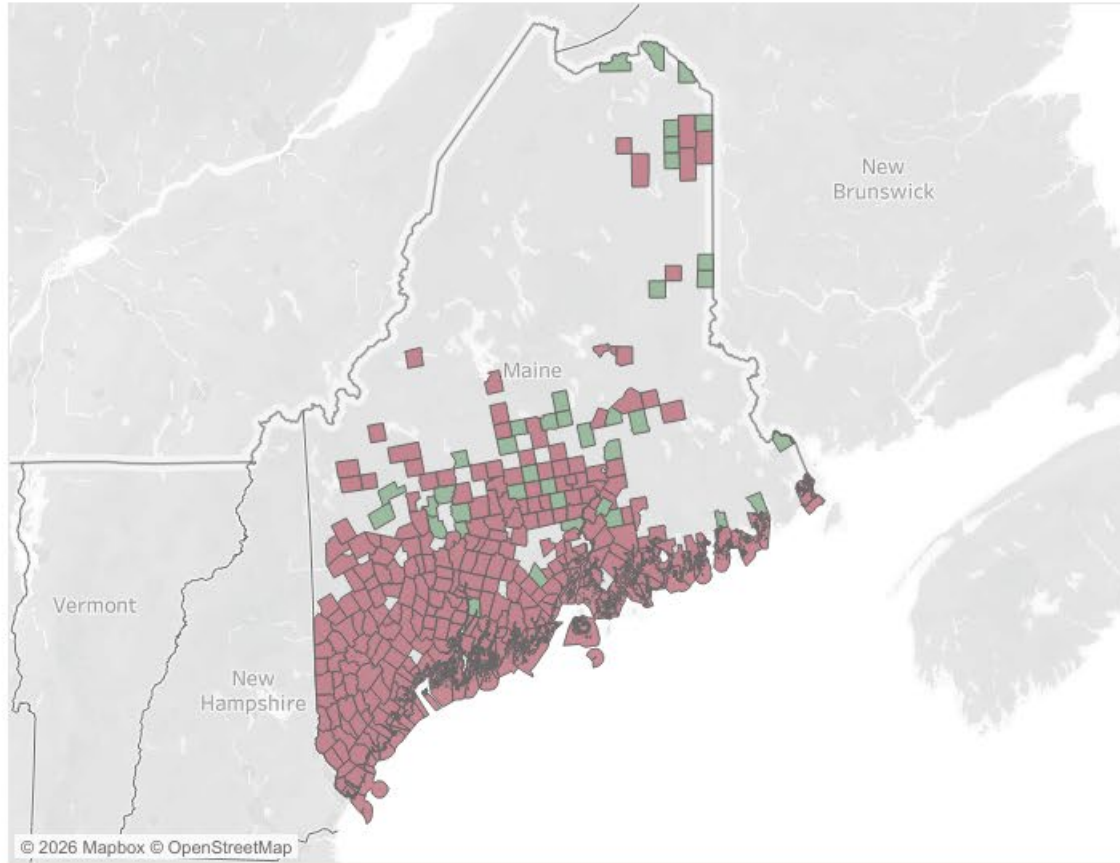
Homeownership Affordability Maps

Year

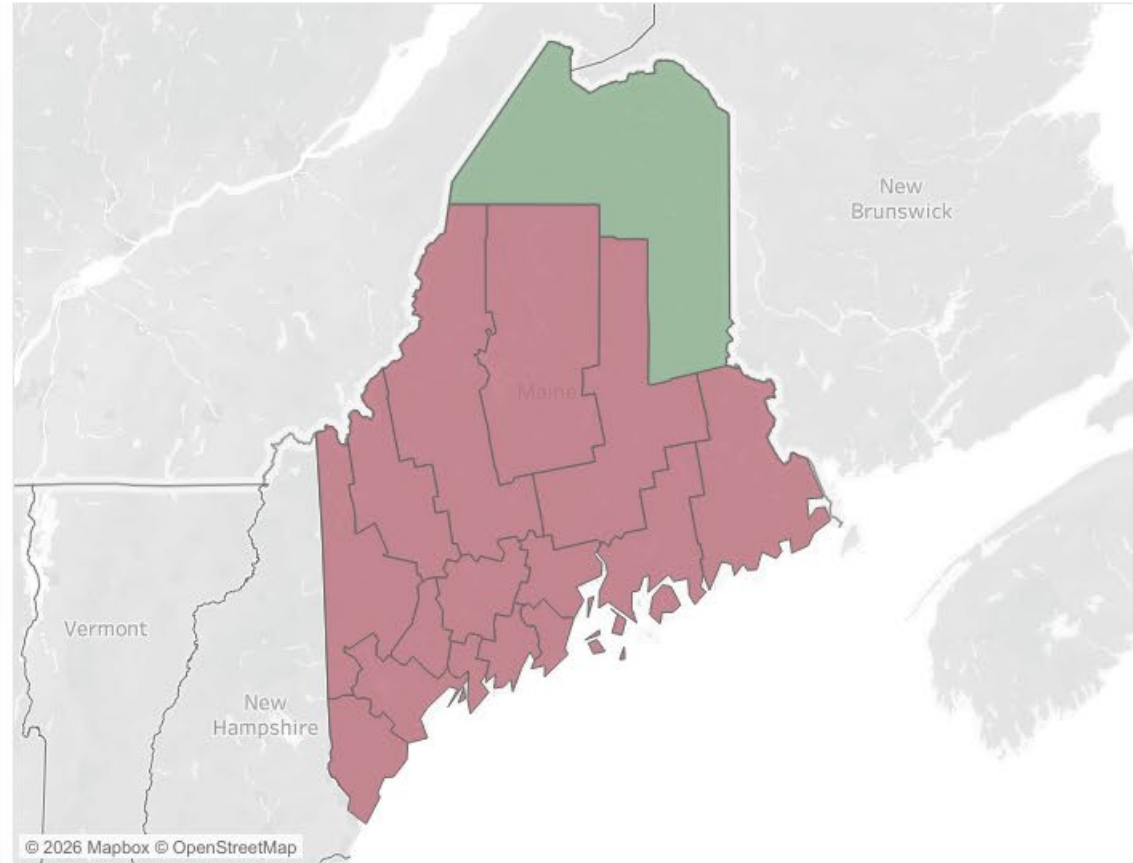
2024

Show history

Affordability By Town - 2024



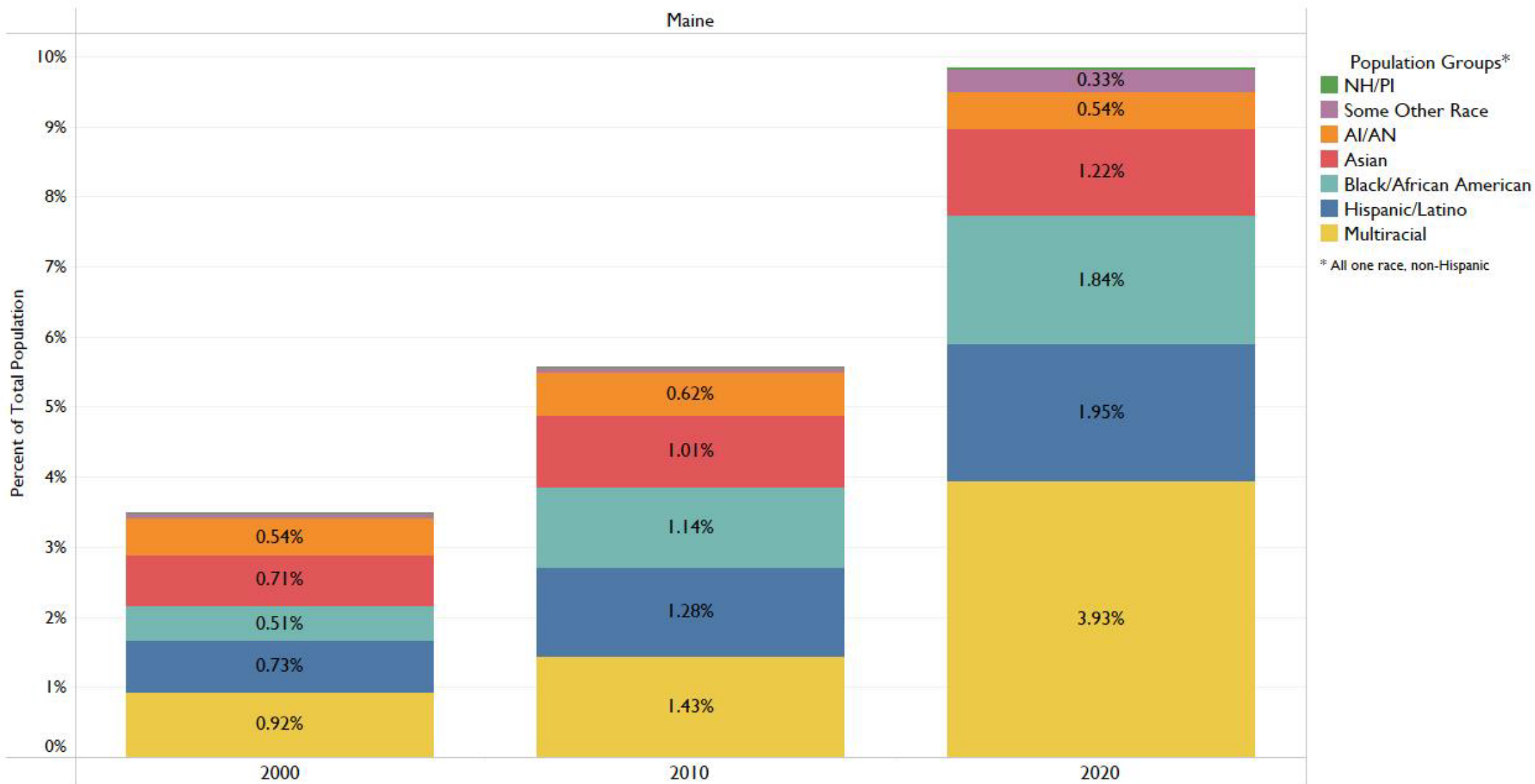
Affordability By County - 2024



Demographics

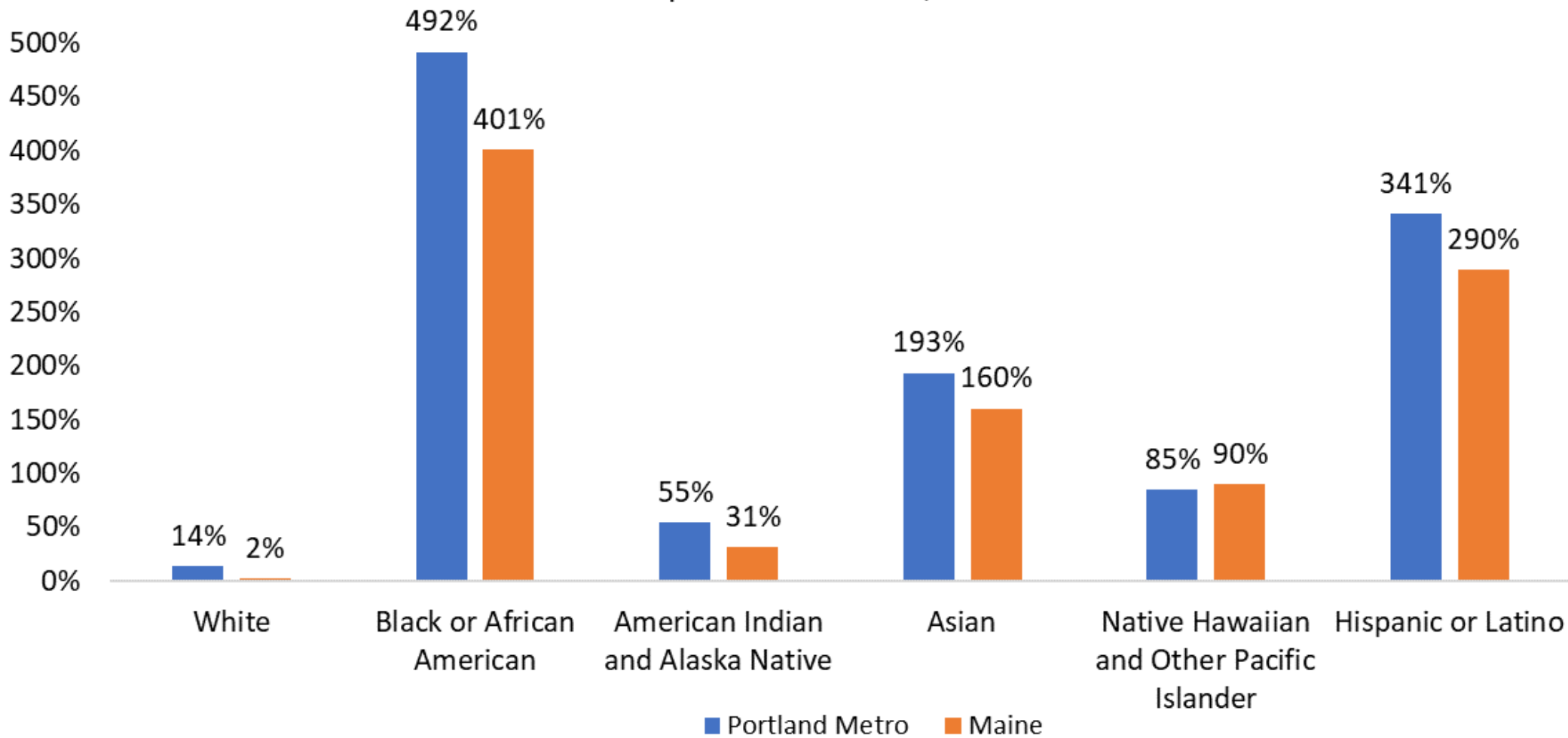
Share of Total Population by Population Group | Maine

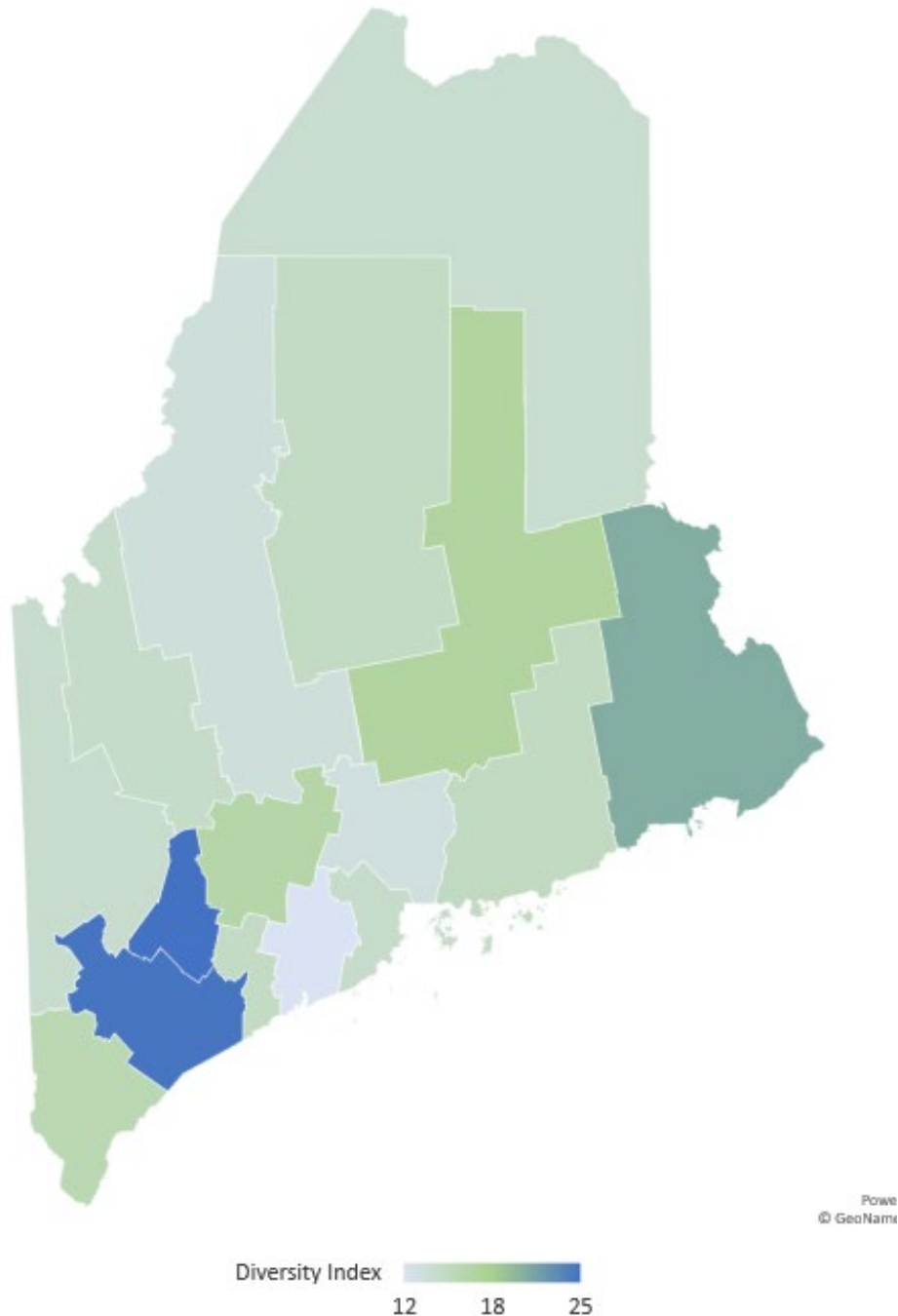
Data source: 2000, 2010, and 2020 U.S. Decennial Census



Note: Bars with less than 0.10% are not labeled for clarity and the White population is excluded from this figure because it comprises over 90% of the population.

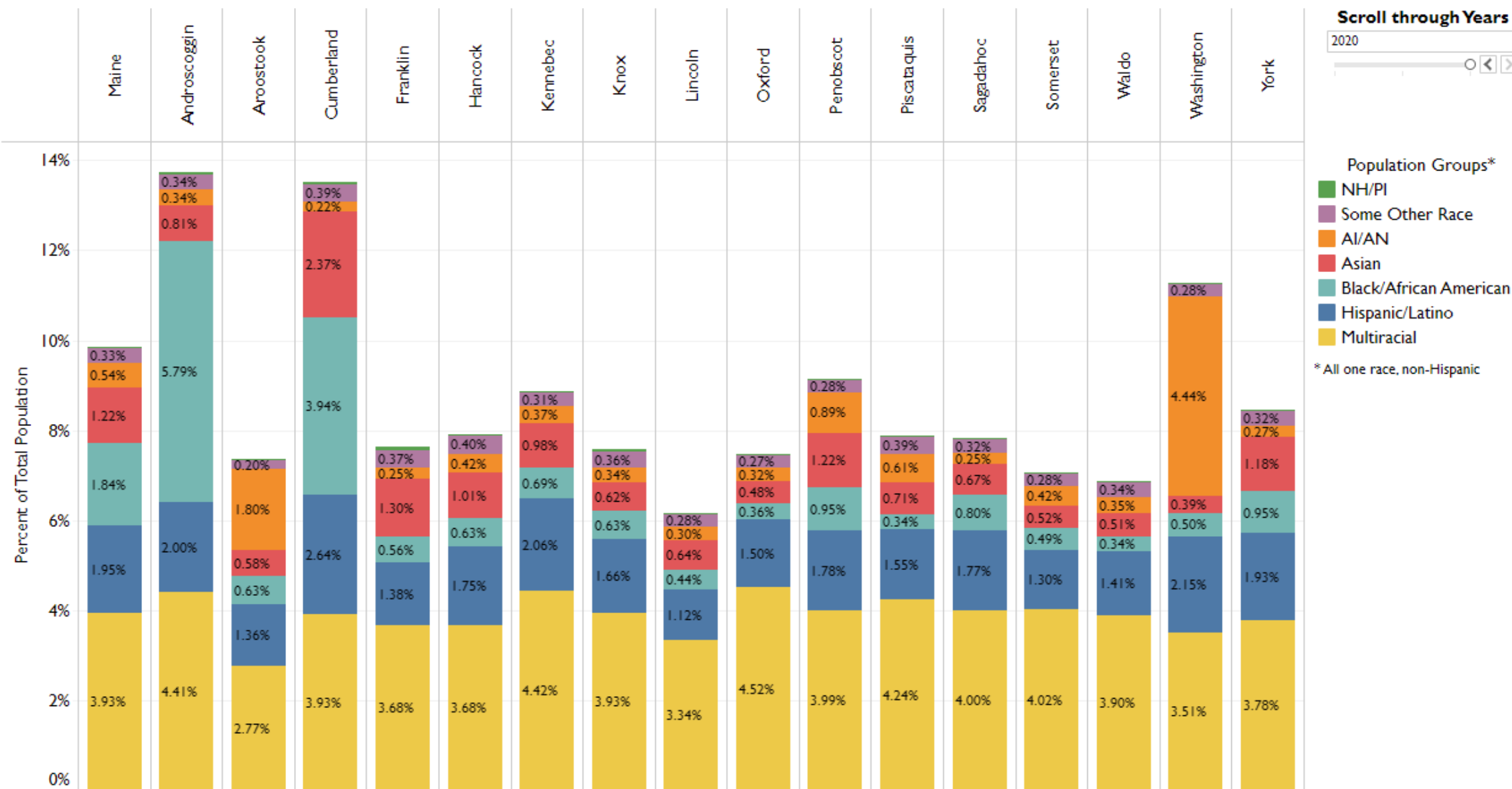
Population Growth, 1990-2020





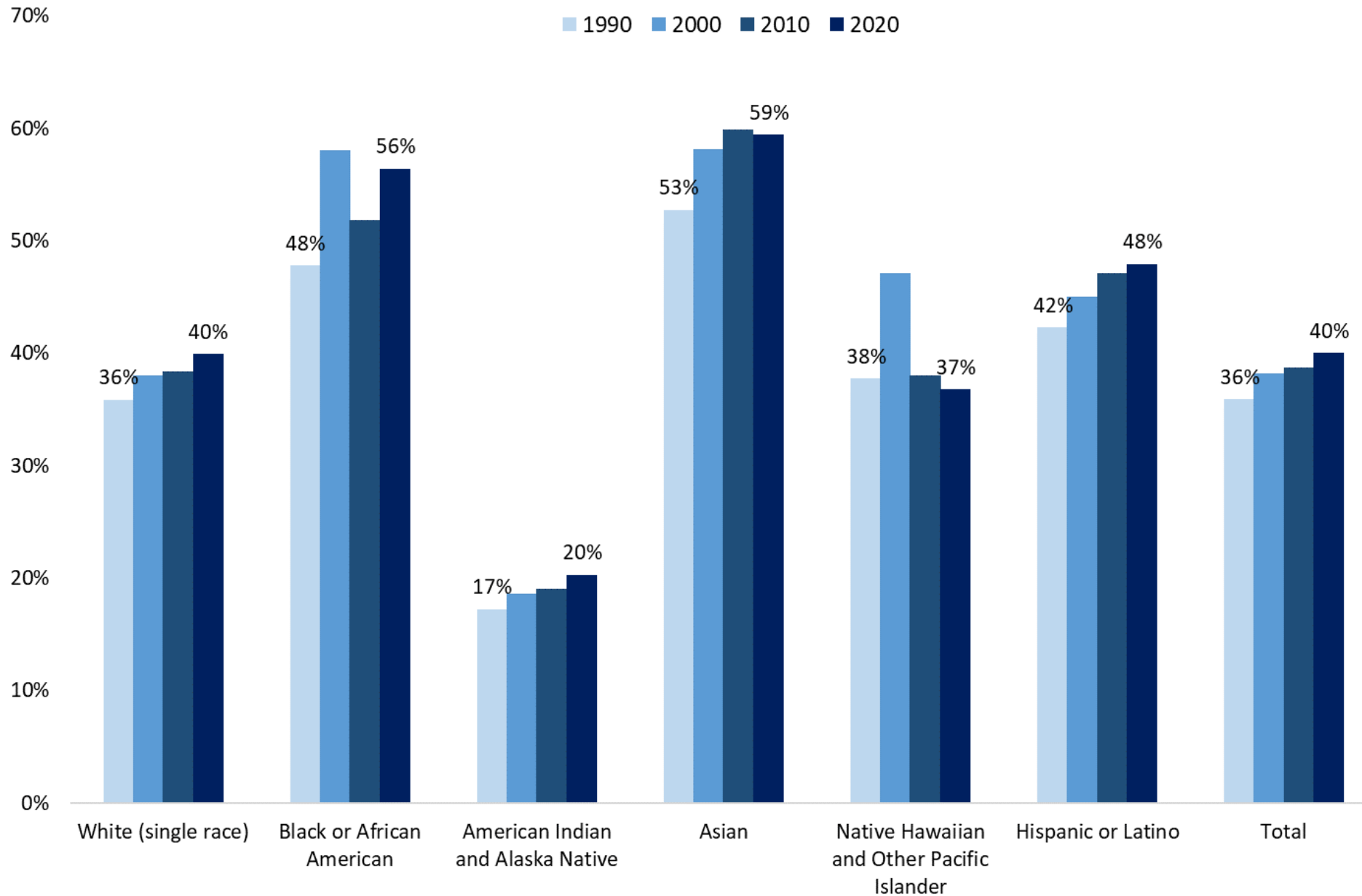
The diversity index tells us the chance that two people selected at random will be from different race or ethnicity groups

- In 2020, Maine ranked as the least diverse state in the U.S.
 - ME index = 18.5
 - U.S. index = 61.1
- But there is regional variation: Cumberland, Androscoggin, and Washington counties are more diverse

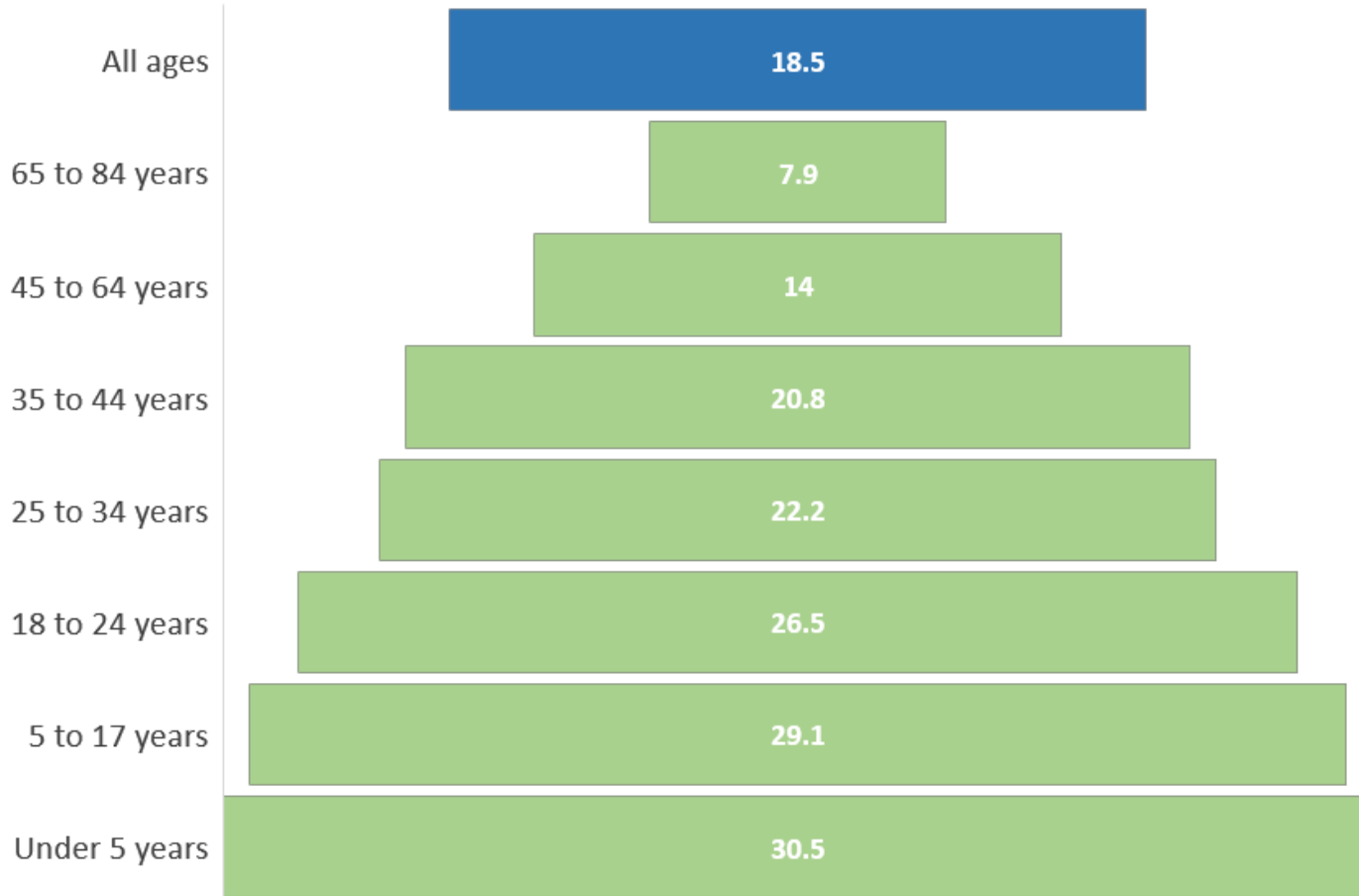


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percent of Maine's population living in the Portland-South Portland MSA



Diversity Index in Maine, 2020: Selected Age Groups

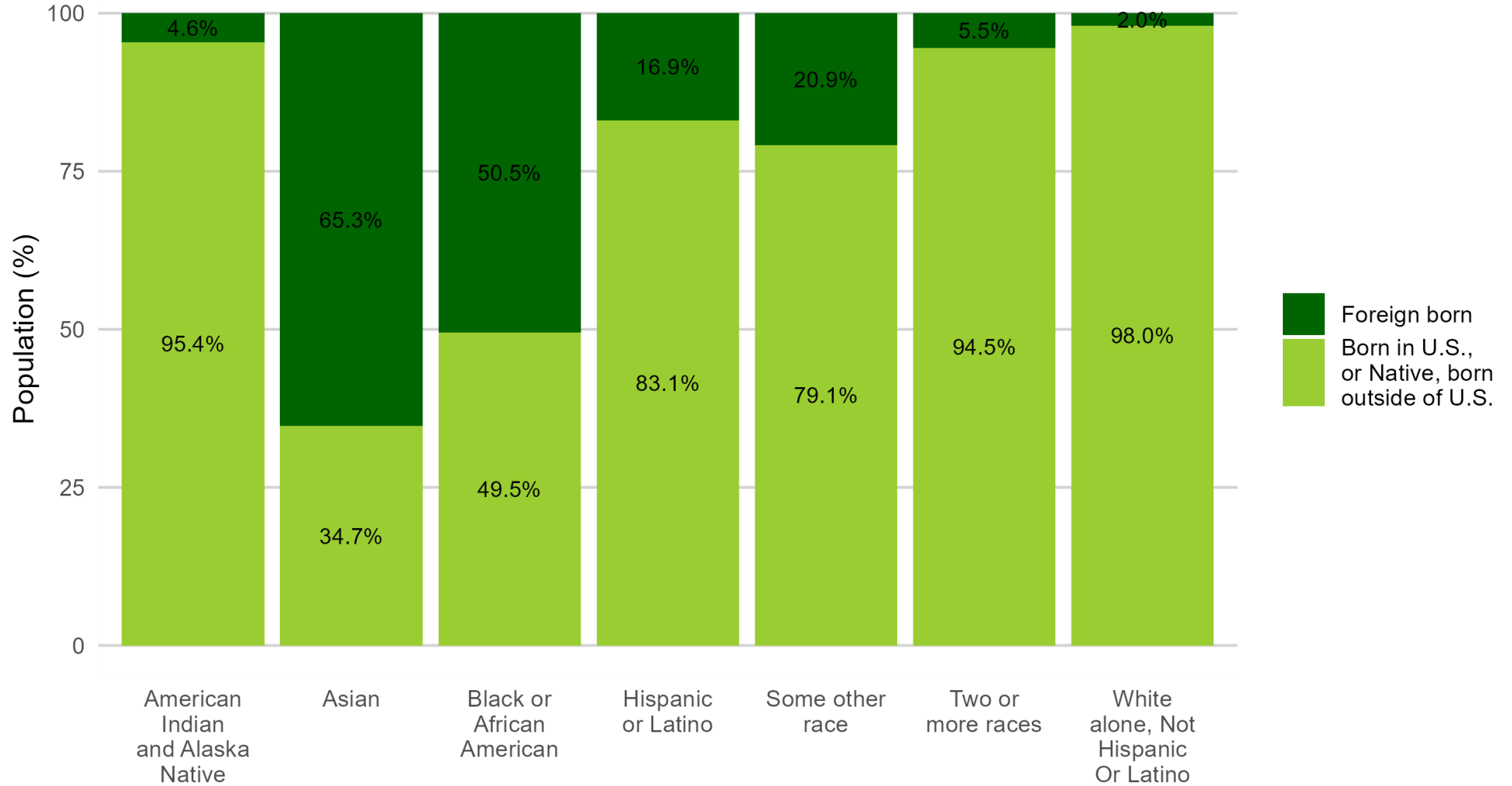


Younger generations in Maine are more diverse than older generations

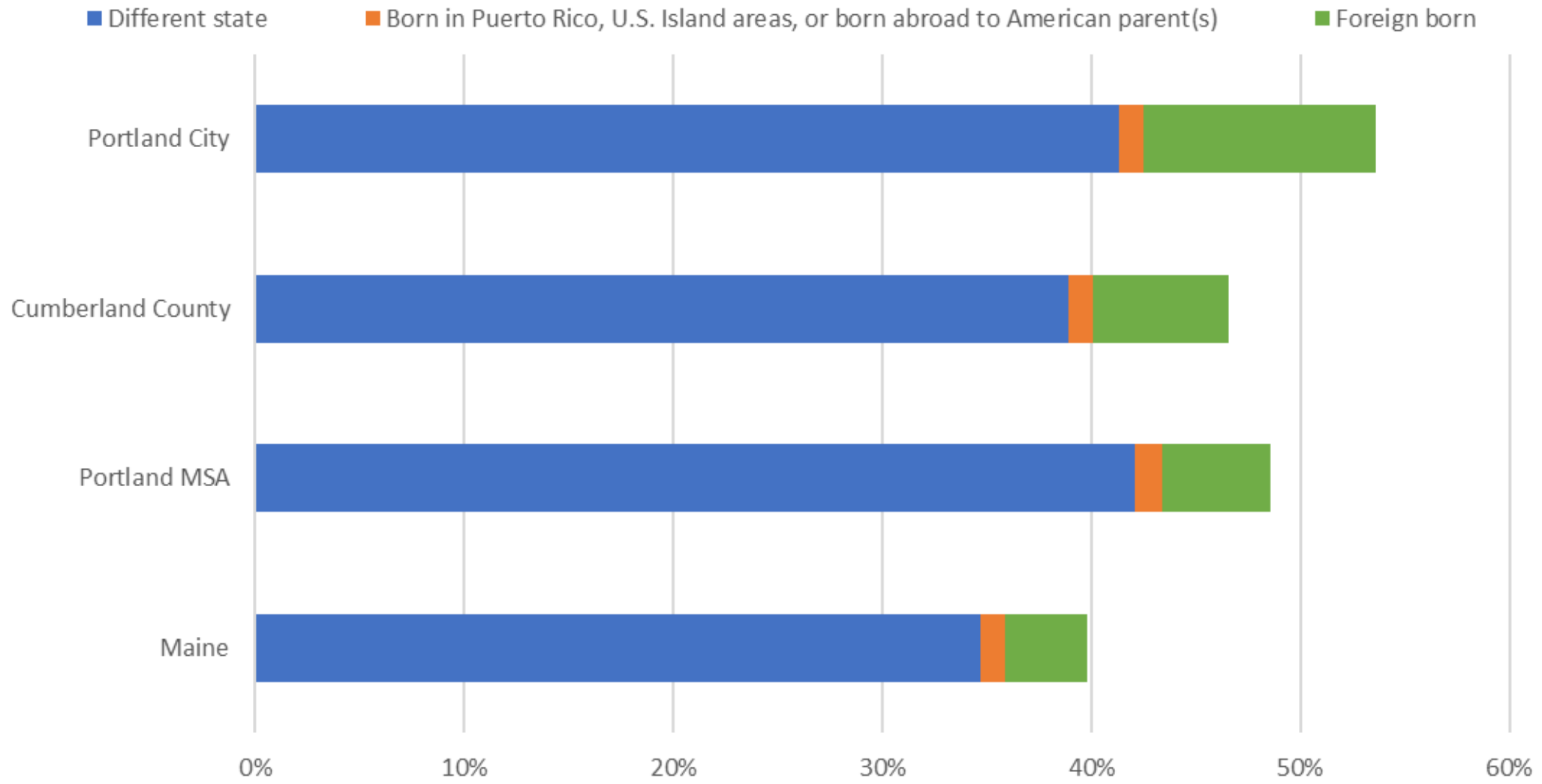
Share of Maine Population by Region of Birth by Race/Ethnicity, 2023

Foreign born statewide, 3.8%

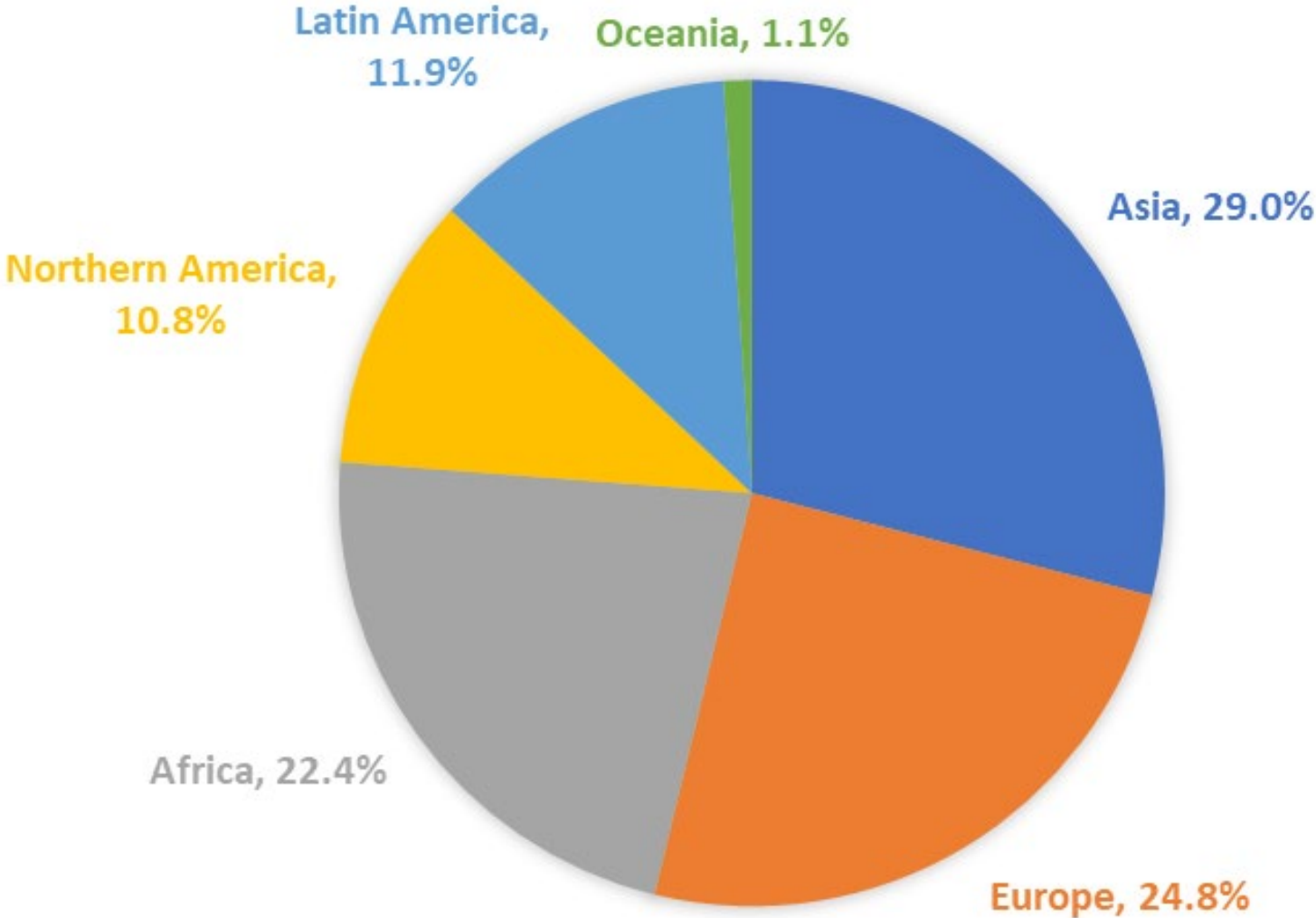
Race and/or ethnicity is not the same as place of birth



Percent of Population Born Outside of Maine, 2023

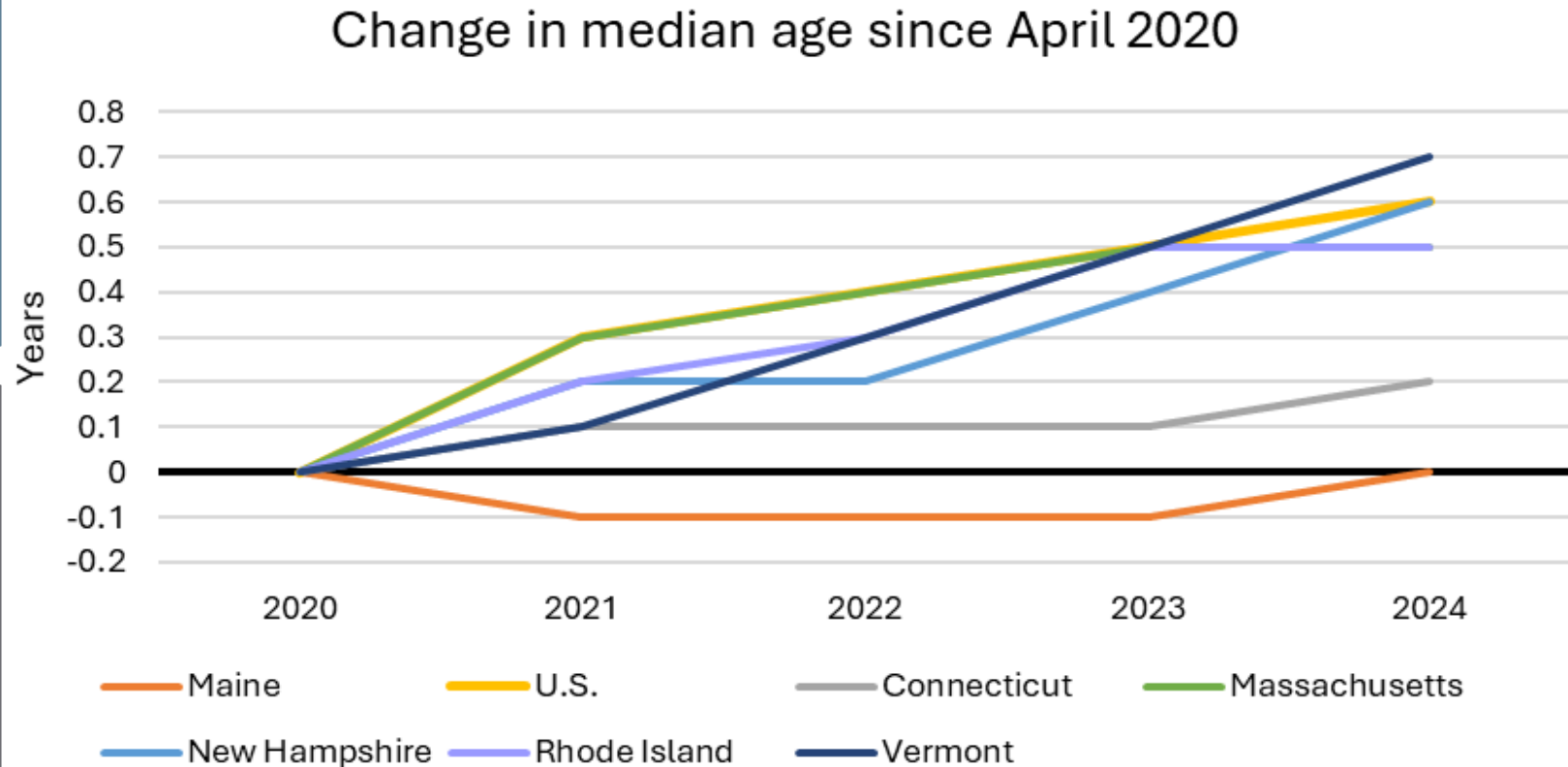


Region of Birth, % of Foreign-Born Population Portland-South Portland MSA, 2023



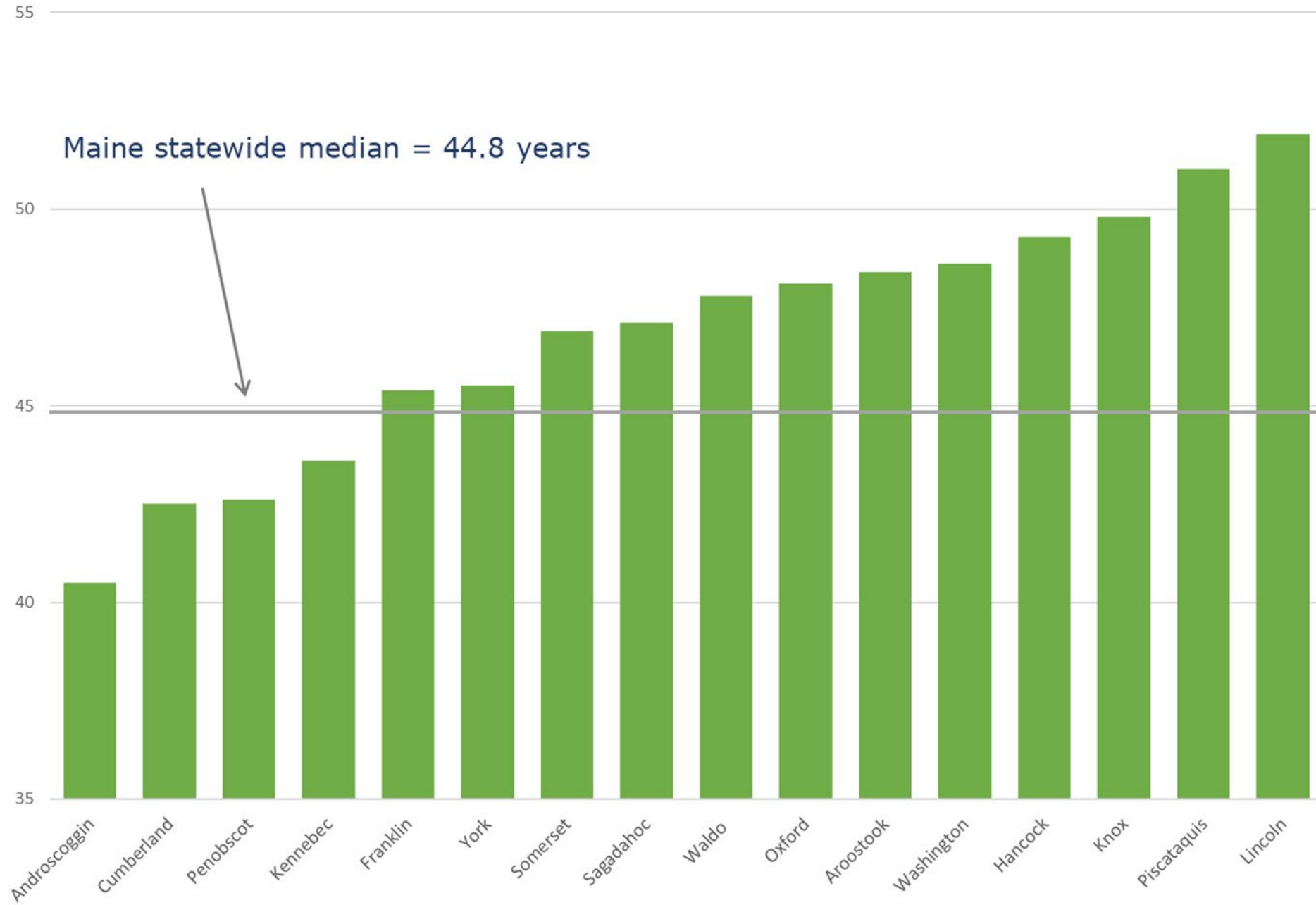
Maine's median age in 2024 is unchanged from 2020, while the U.S. median age has increased 0.6 years

Maine still has the highest median age in the nation at 44.8 years; Vermont and New Hampshire are tied for second at 43.6 years



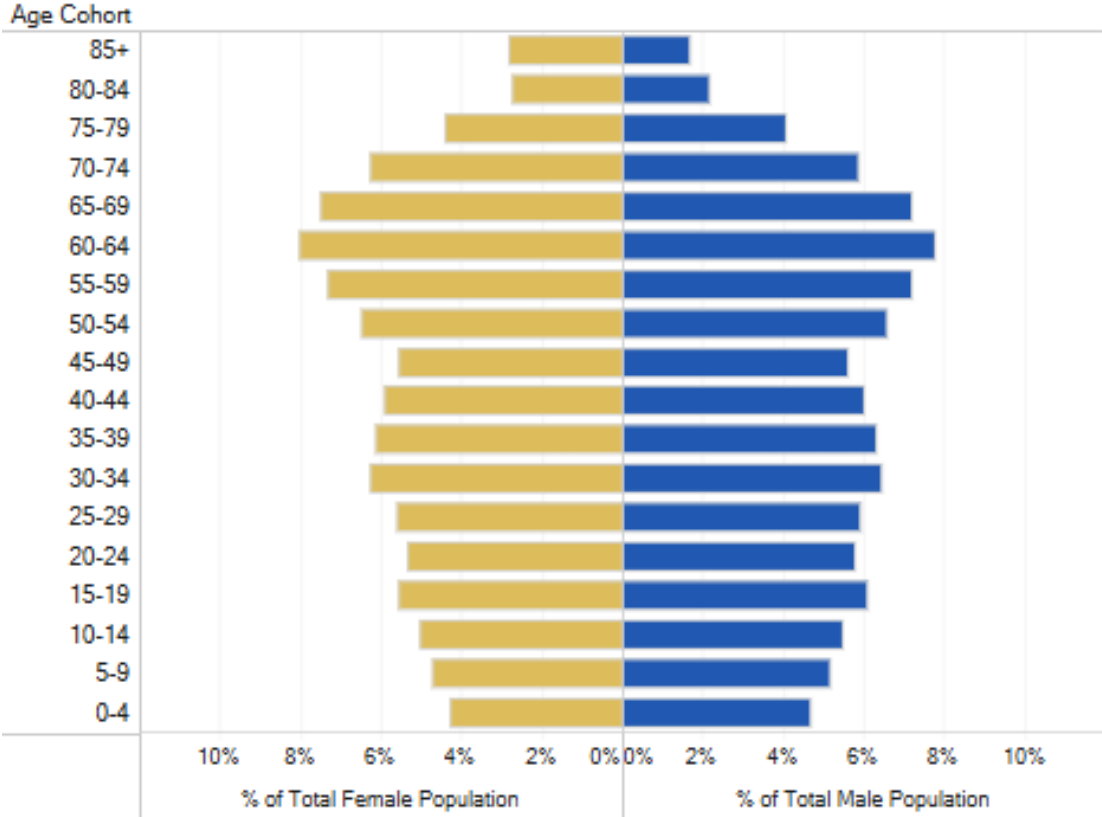
Median age of recent movers to Maine is 31

Median Age by County 2024

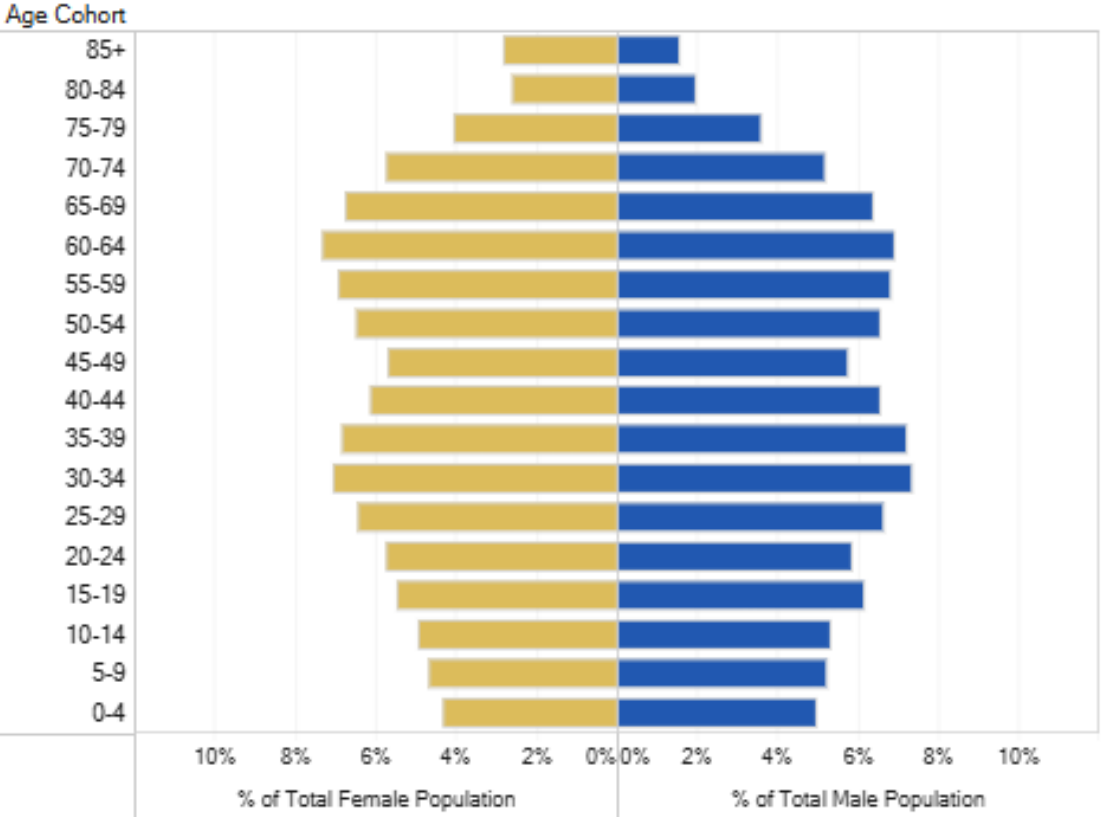


Change in population distribution by age and sex

Maine | 2022, Historical population

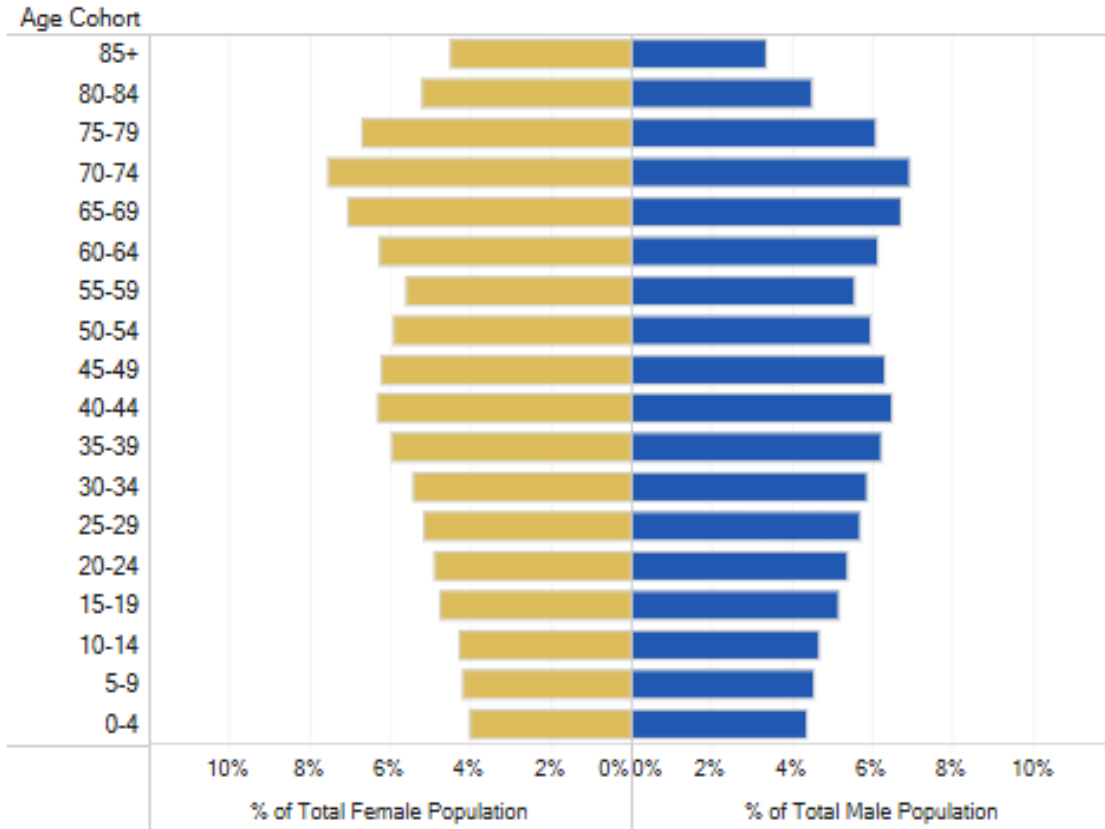


Cumberland | 2022, Historical population

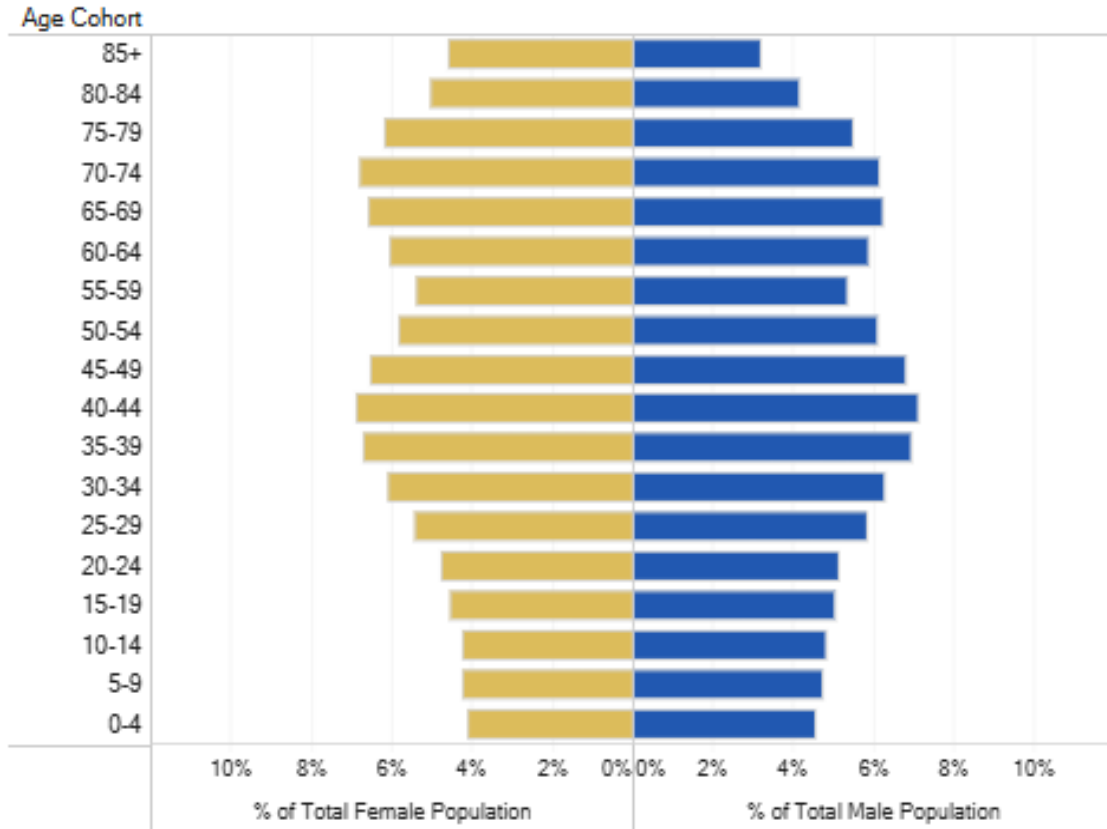


Change in population distribution by age and sex

Maine | 2032, Projected population

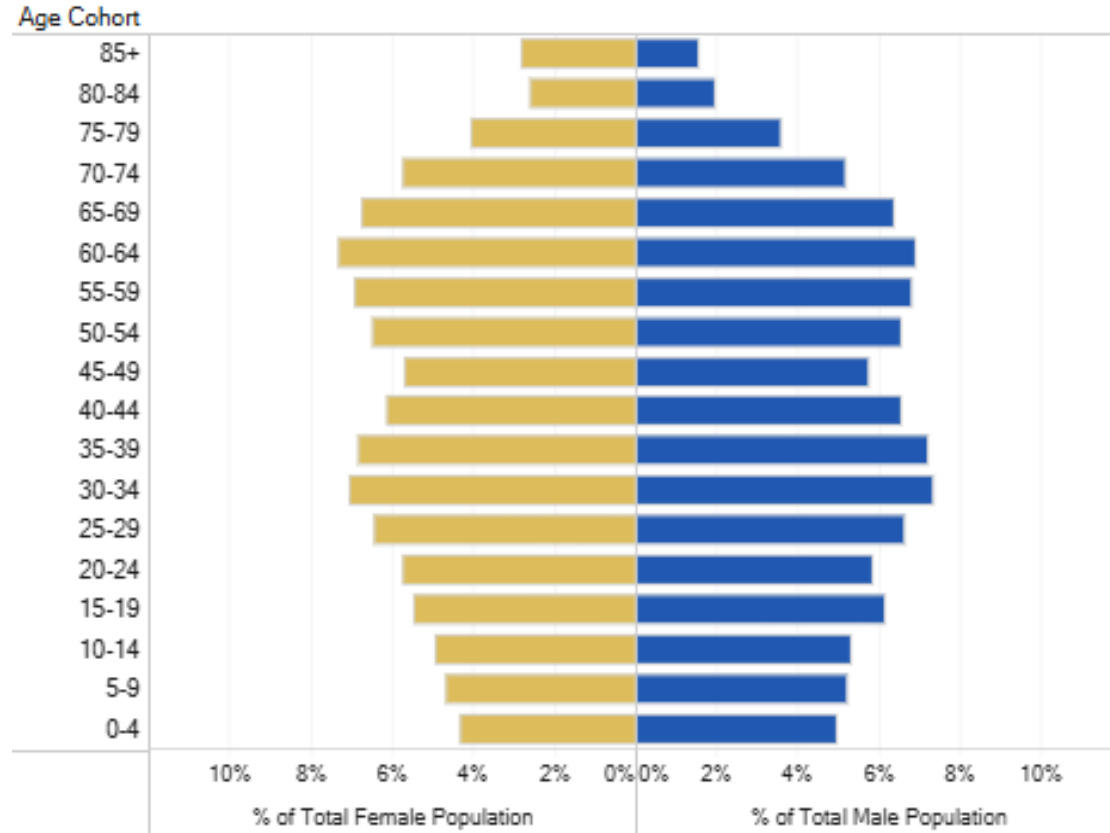


Cumberland | 2032, Projected population

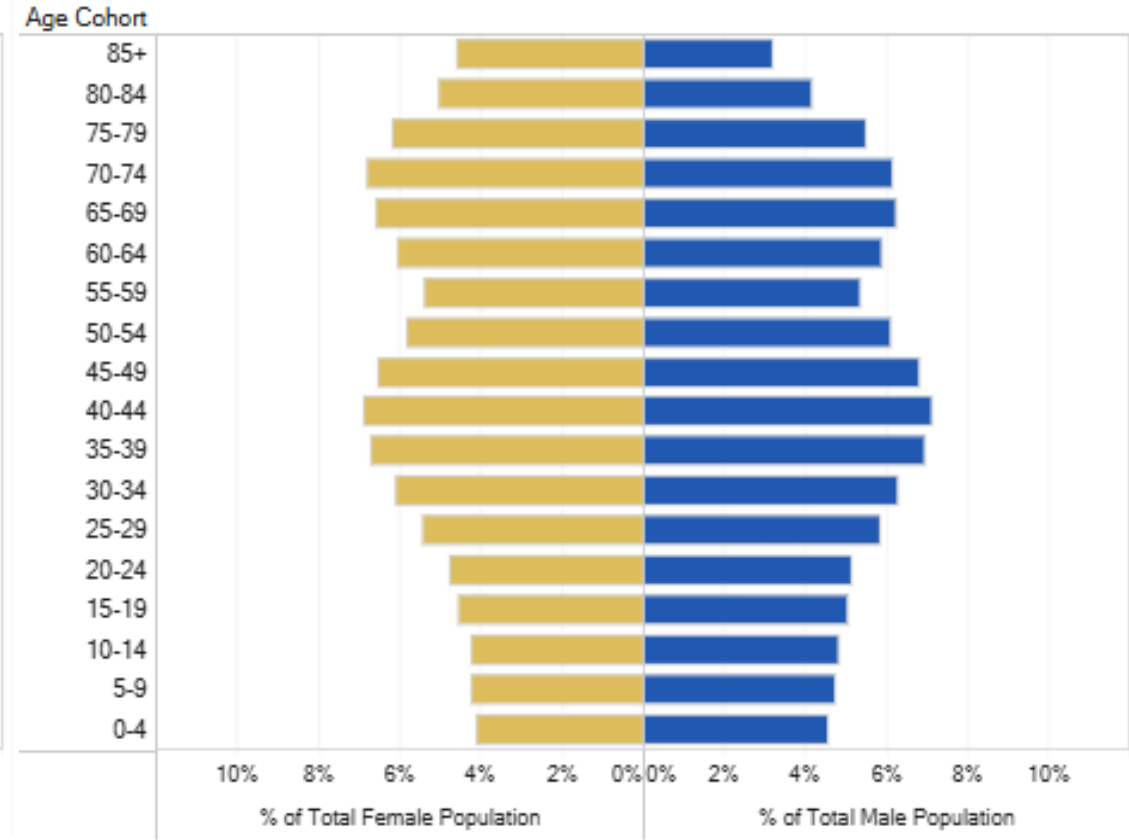


Change in population distribution by age and sex

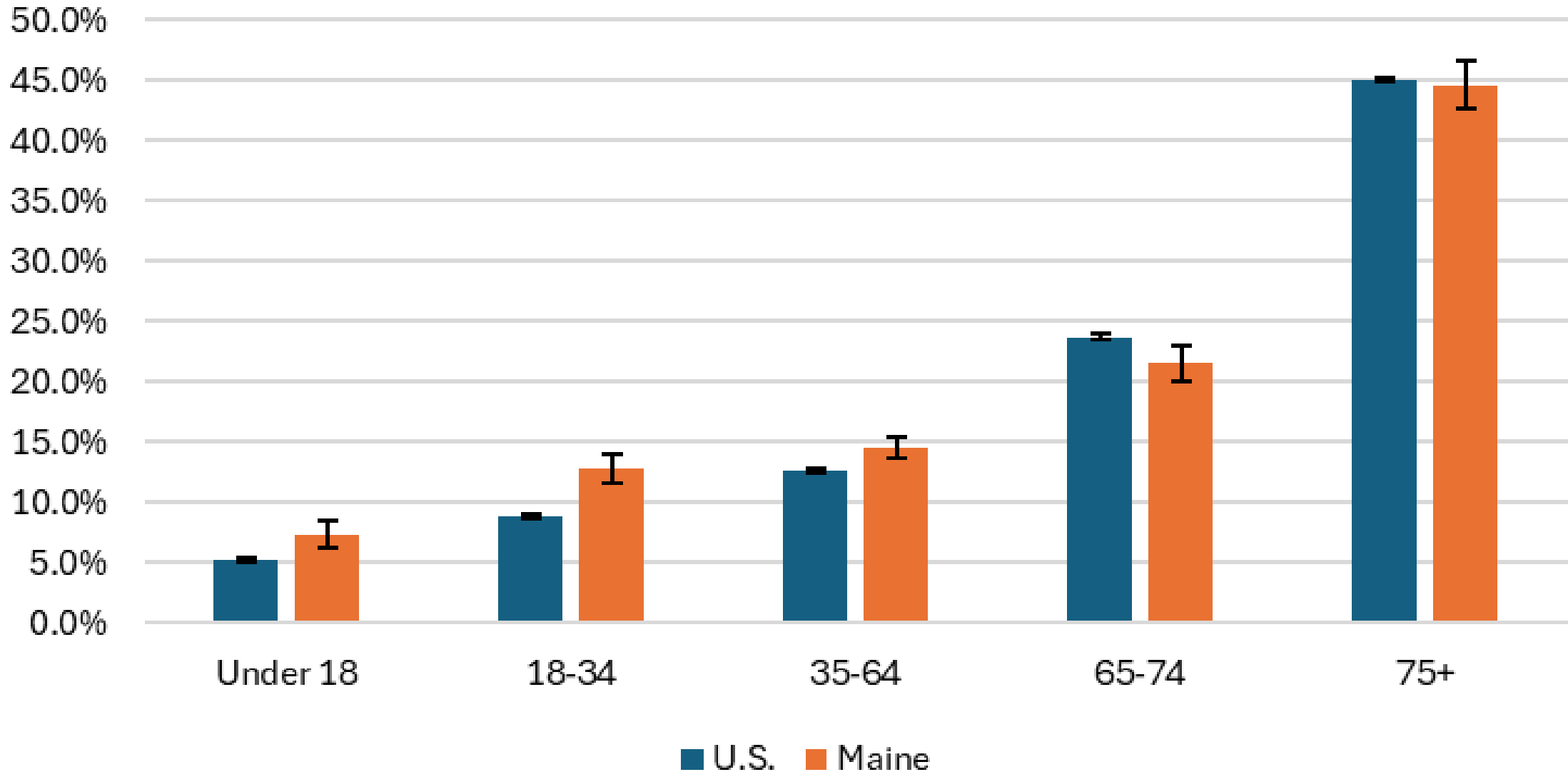
Cumberland | 2022, Historical population



Cumberland | 2032, Projected population

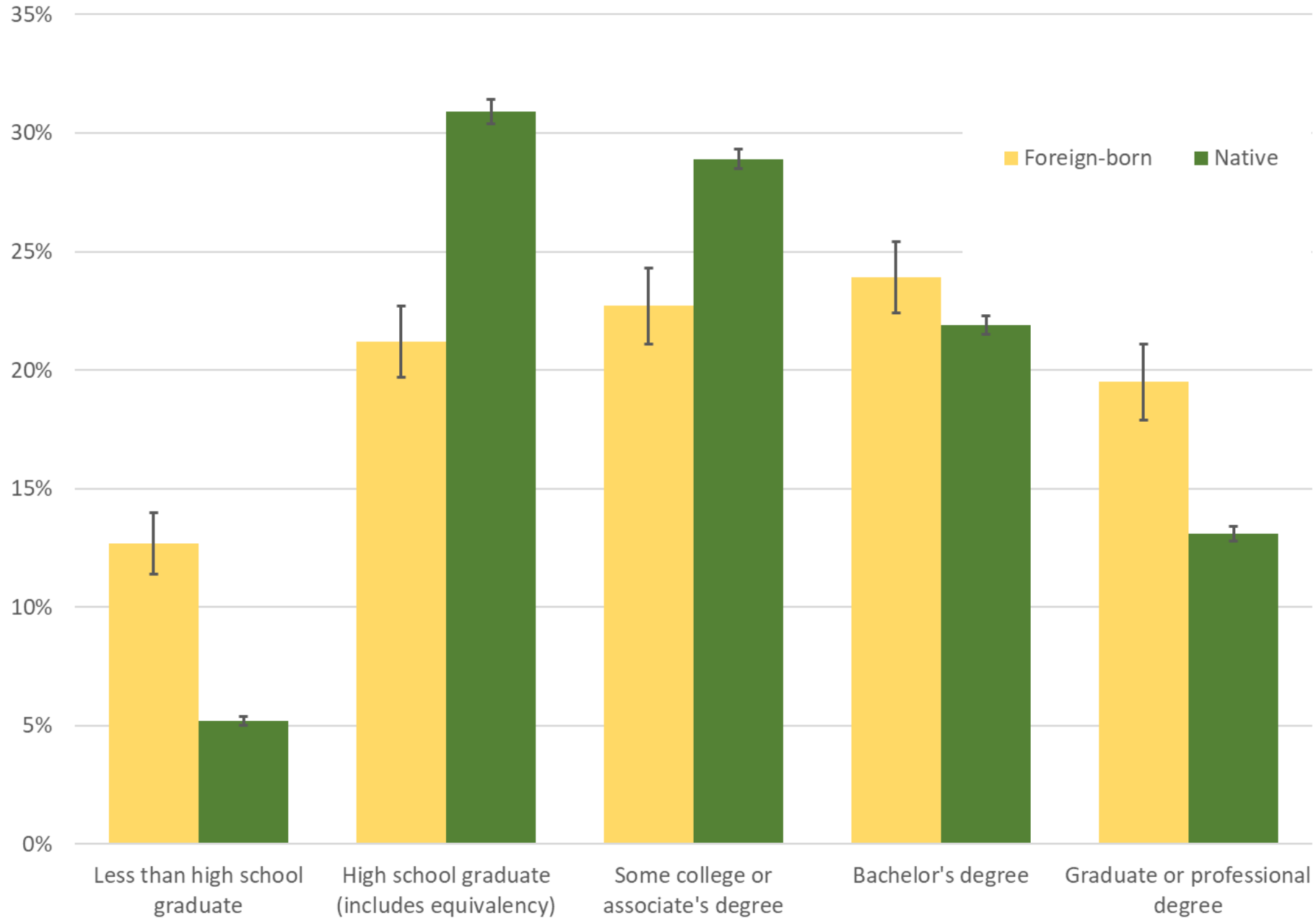


Disability Rate by Age Group, 2024

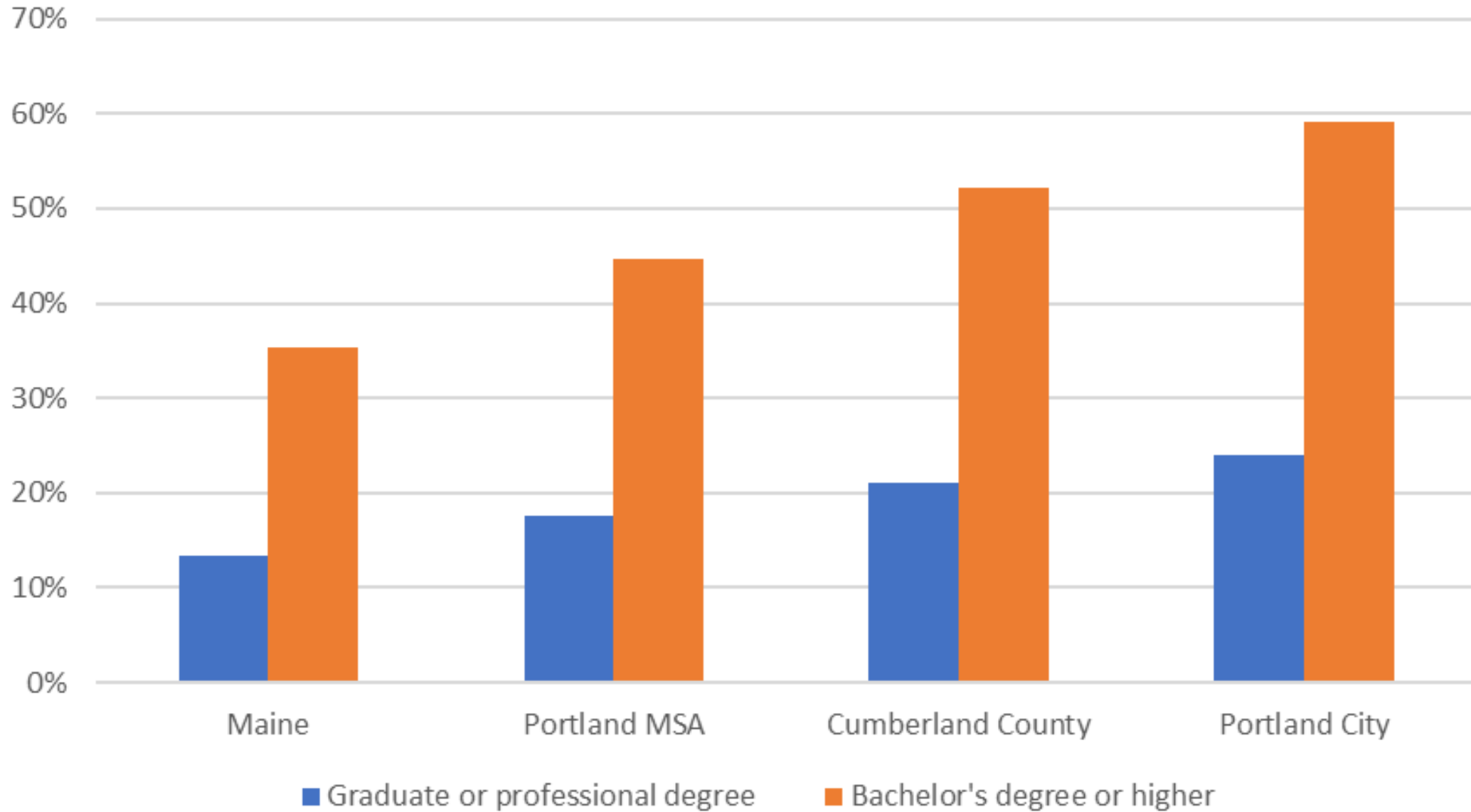


Socioeconomic Indicators

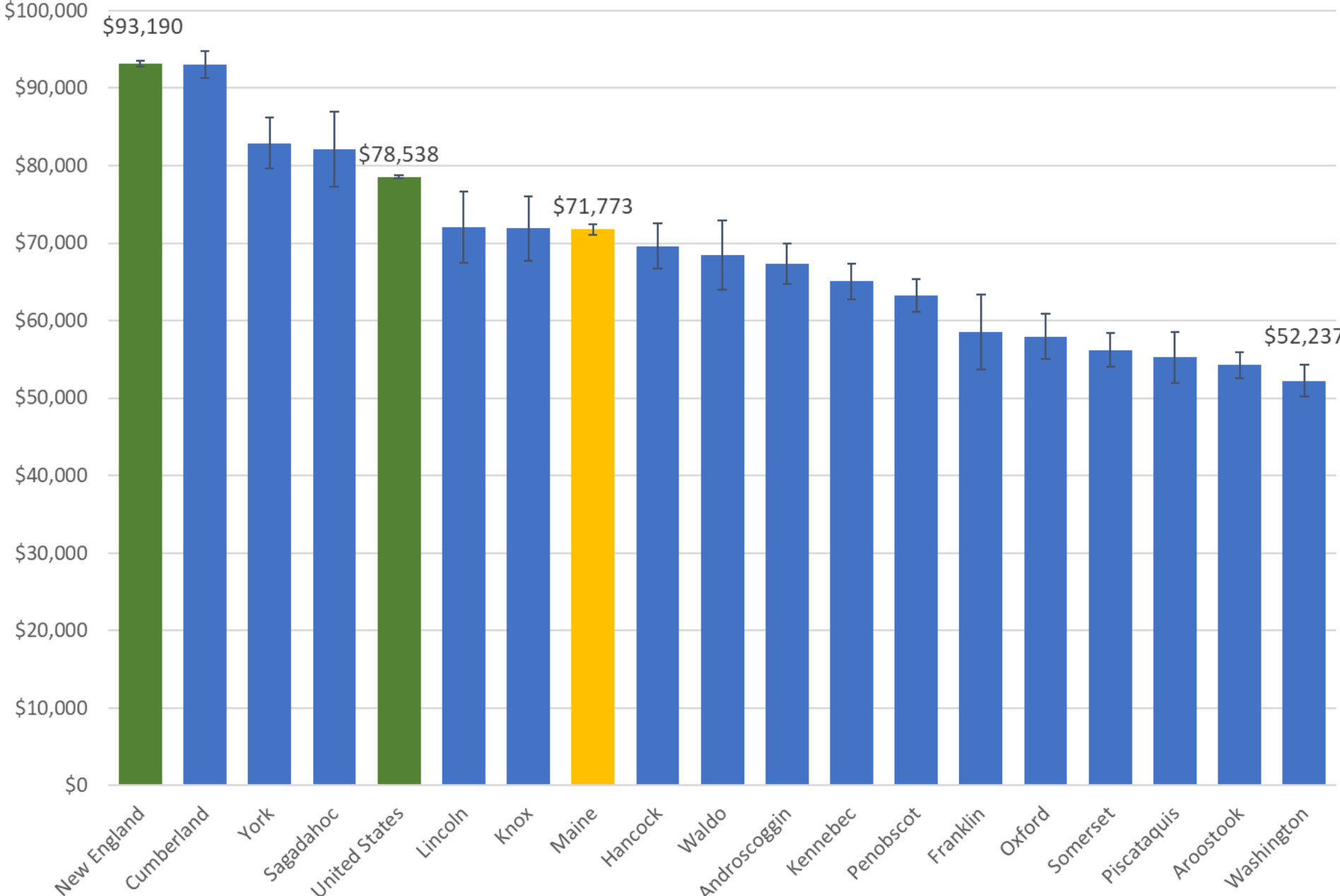
Educational Attainment of Maine Population Age 25+



Bachelor's/Graduate Degree Educational Attainment

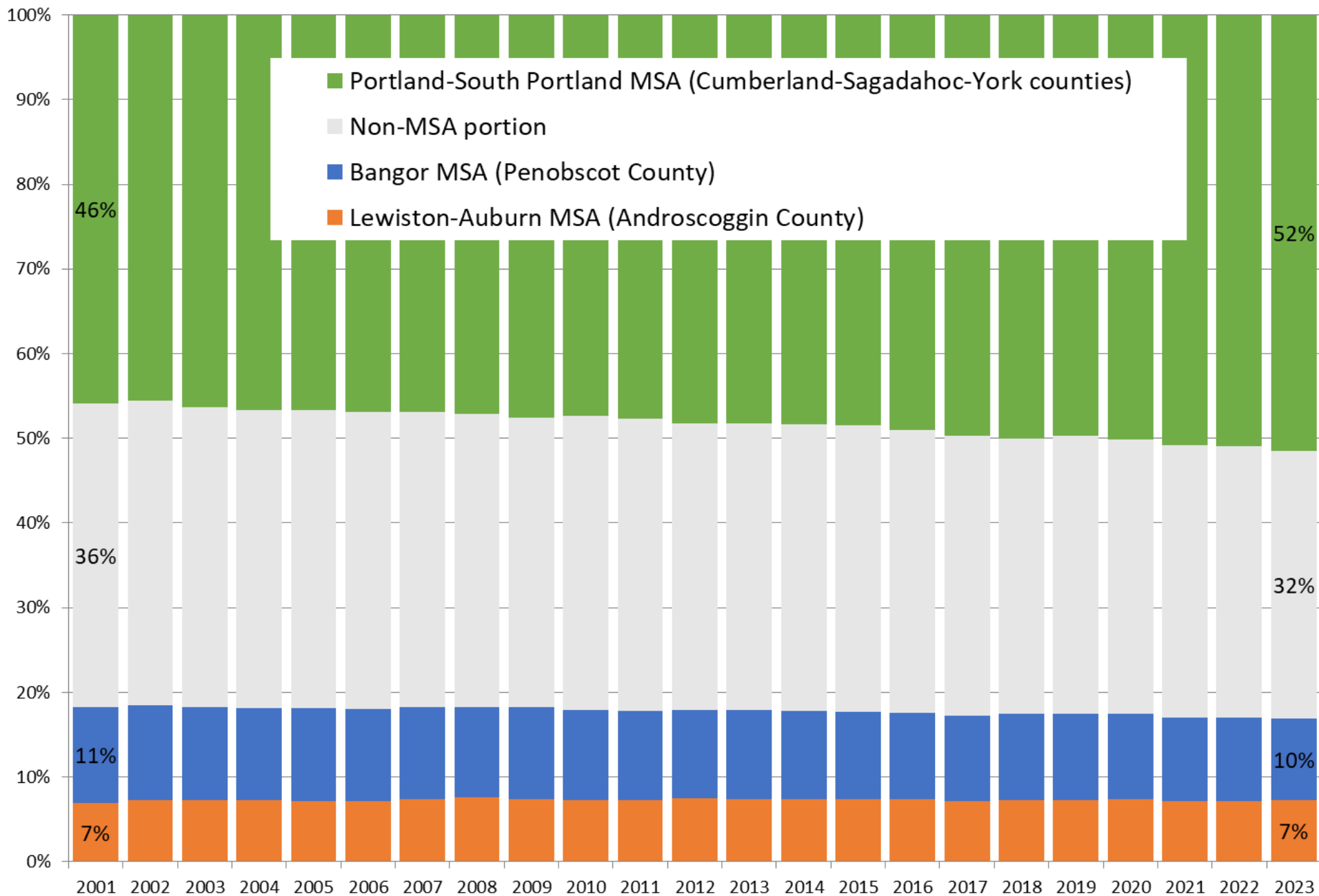


Median Household Income

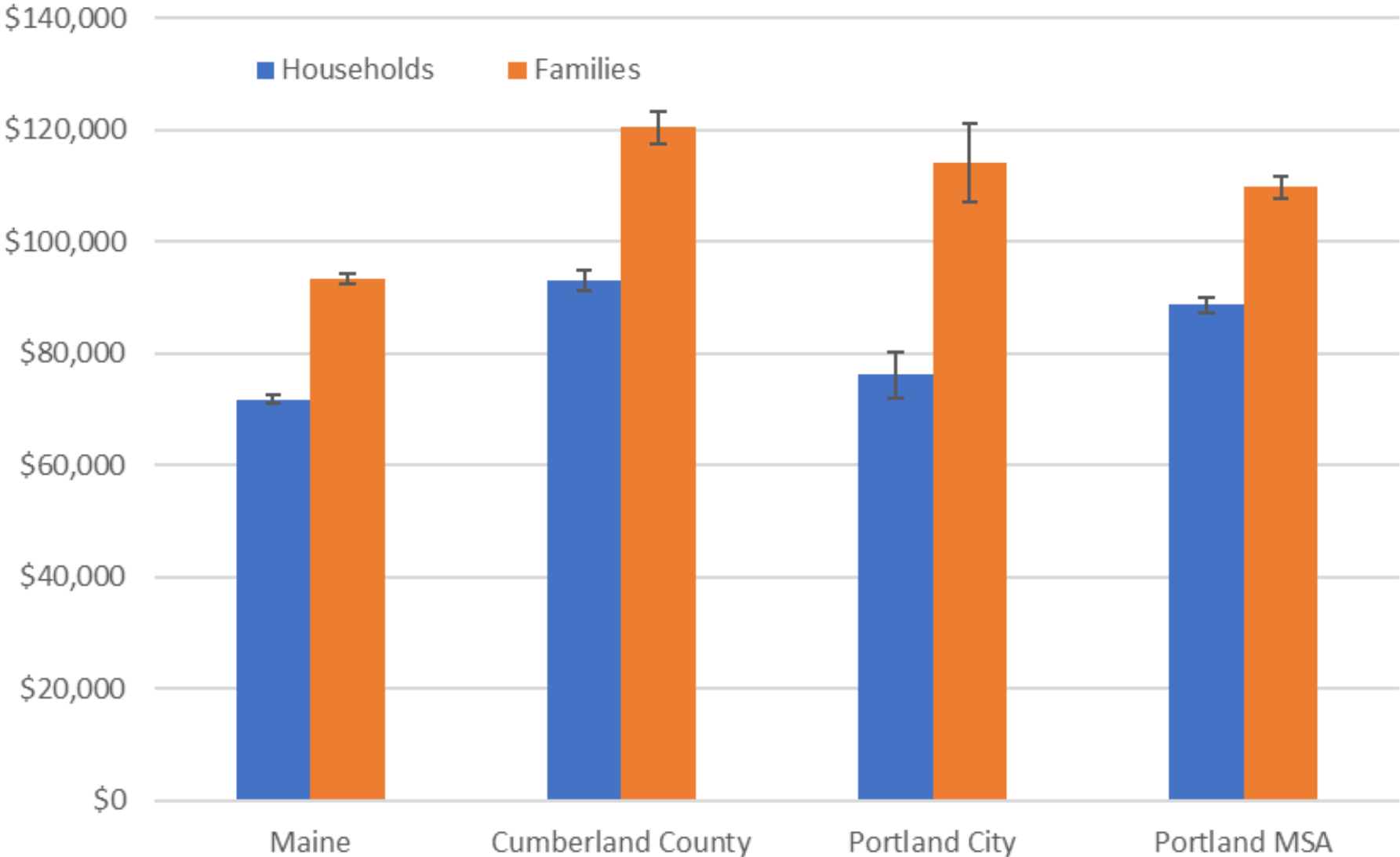


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

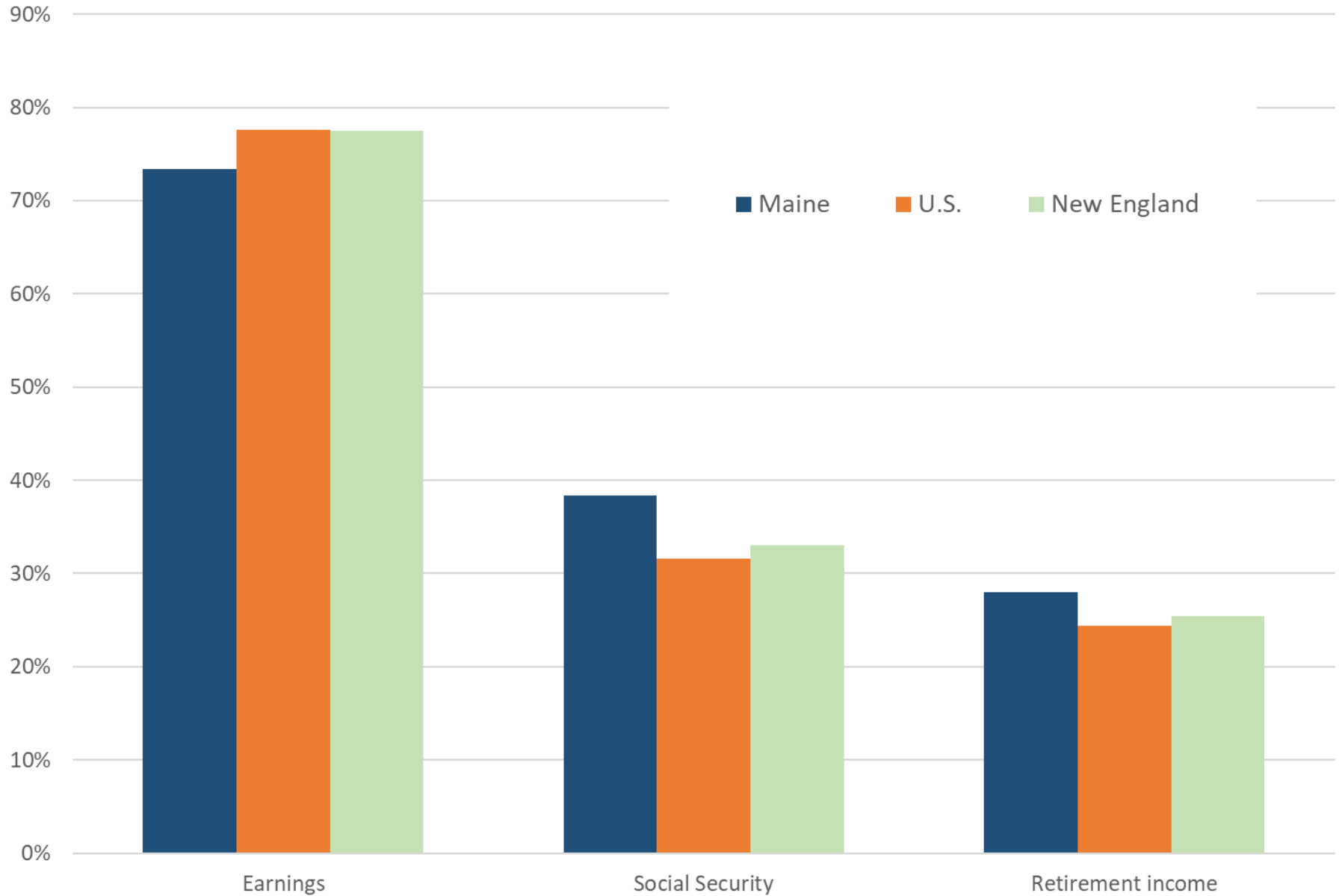
Share of Maine GDP by Metropolitan Area



Median Income

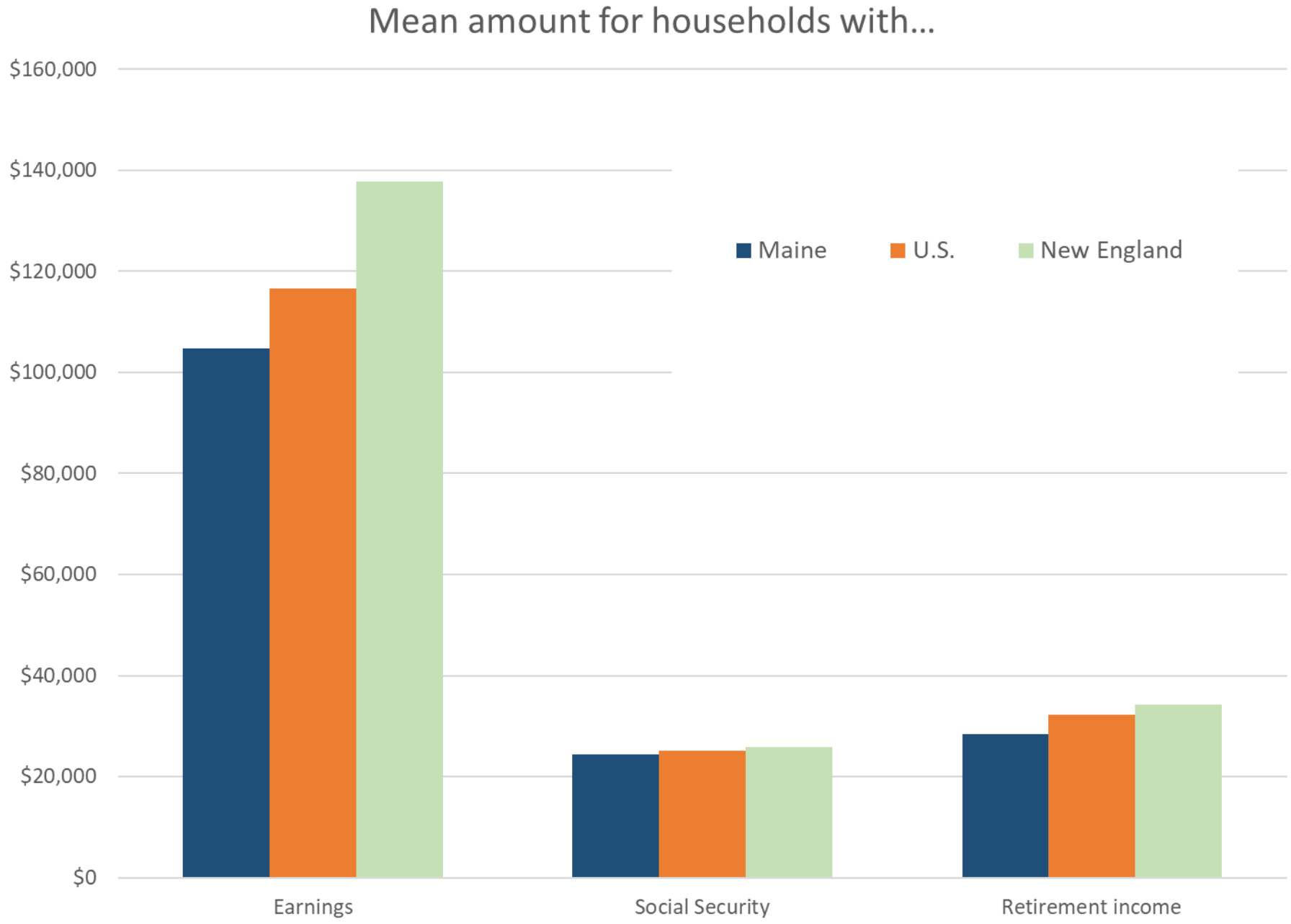


Percent of households with...

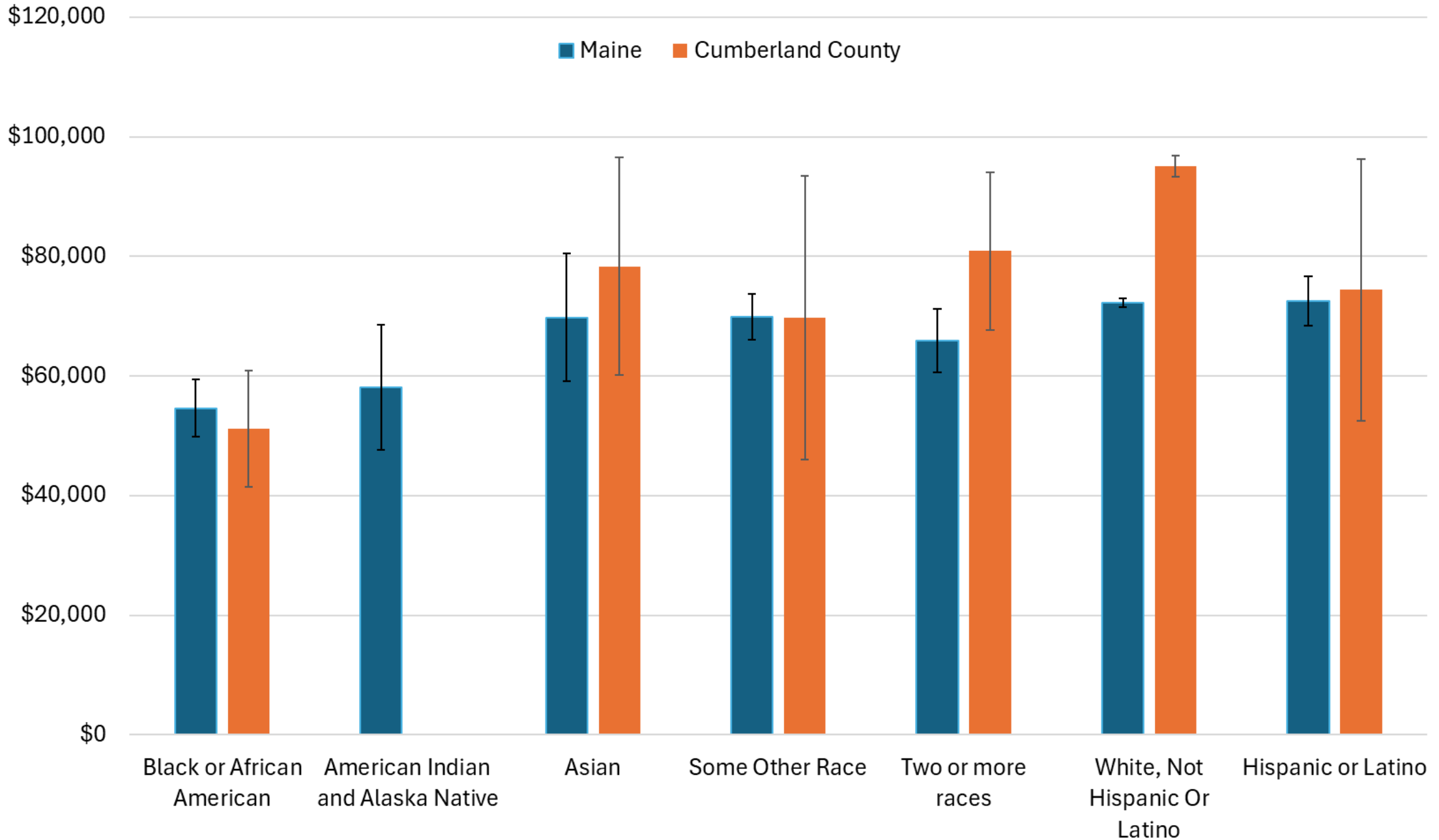


Maine has a higher share of households with Social Security and retirement income and a lower share of households with earnings

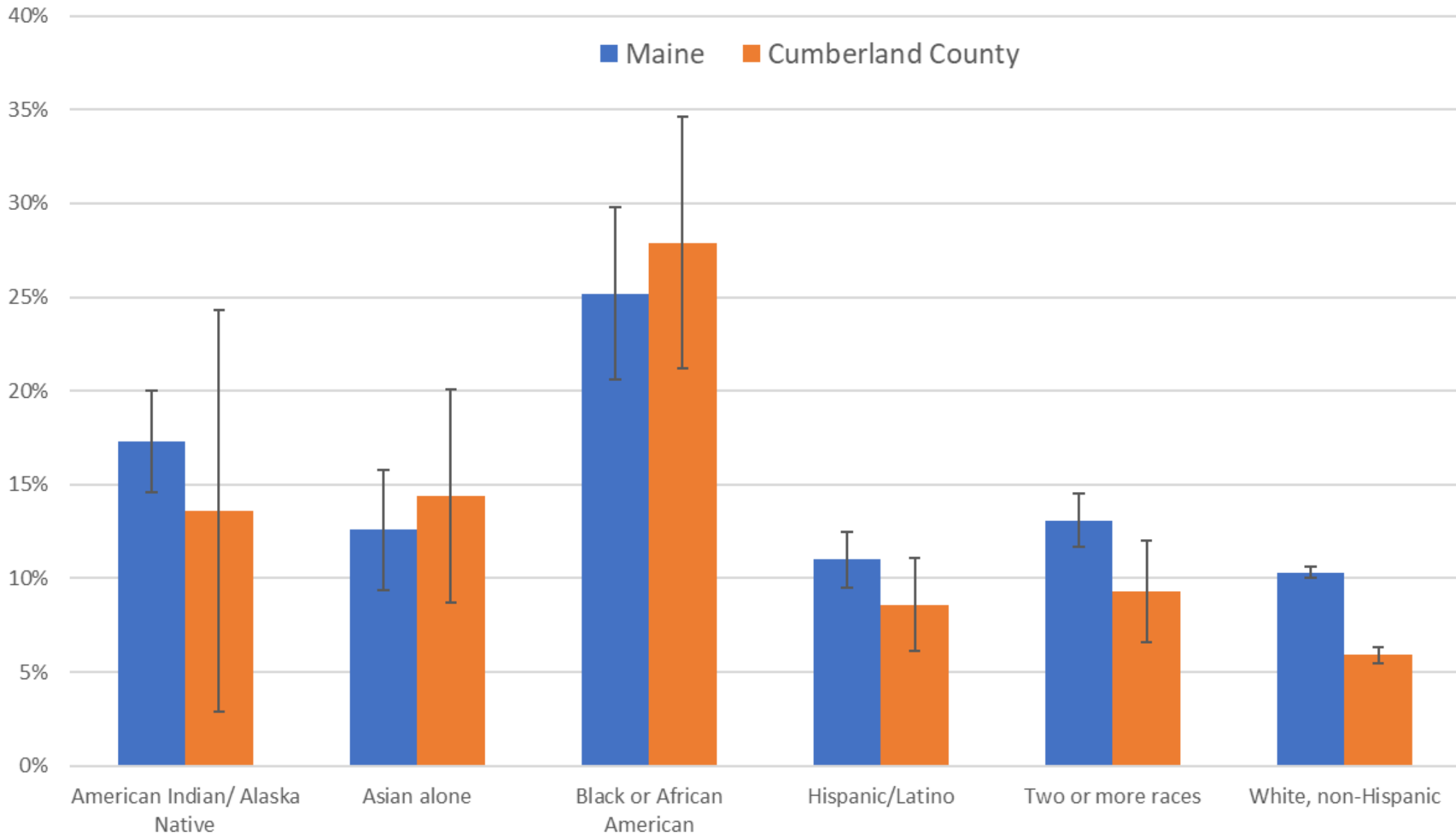
The amount of income from earnings is much higher than Social Security or retirement



Median Household Income by Race/Ethnicity

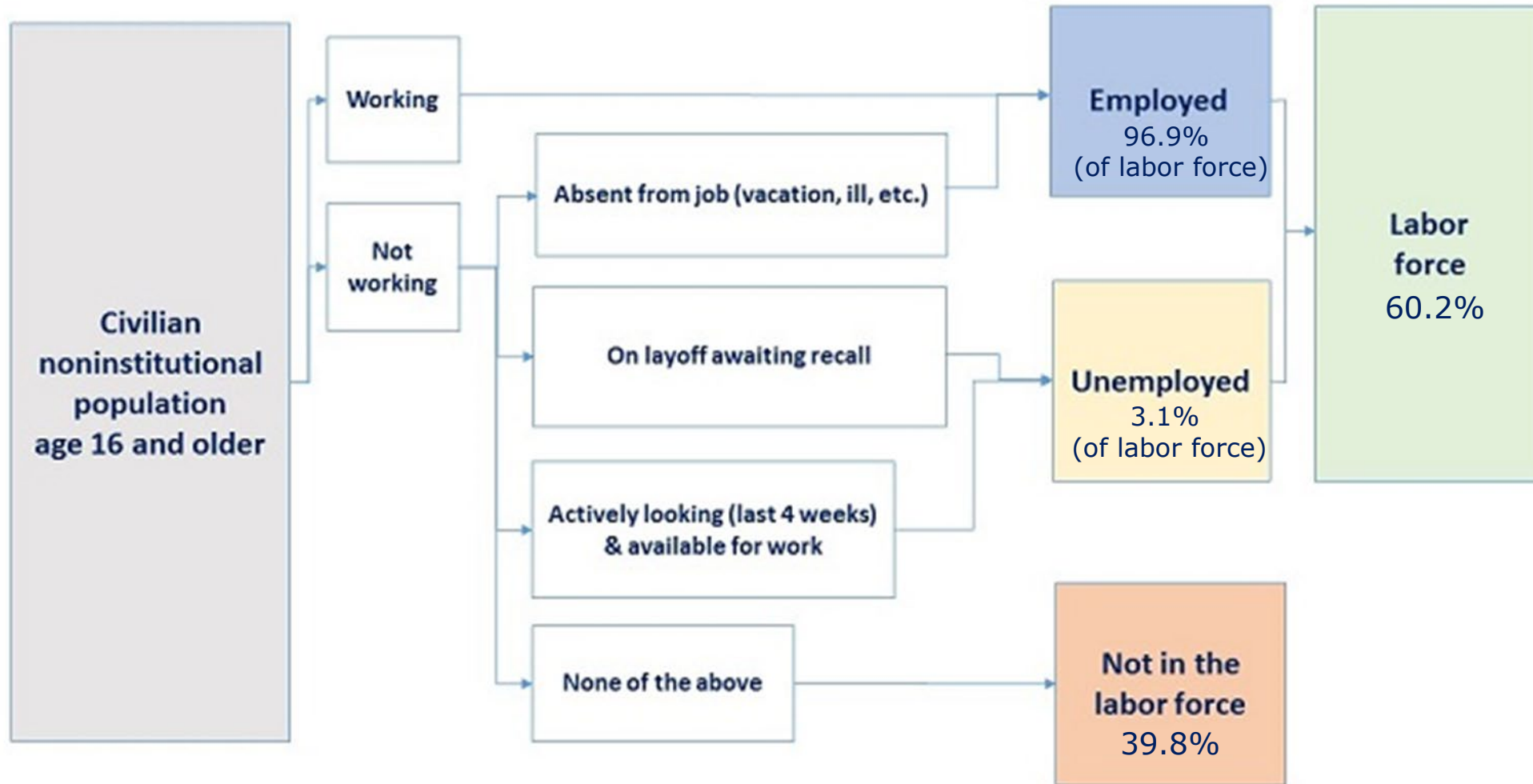


Poverty Rates by Race/Ethnicity



Labor Force and Employment

Who is in the labor force?



What are the reasons people nationally are not in the labor force?

Retirement (primarily age 55+)

$\frac{3}{4}$ of difference in nonparticipation from 1999-2022 due to retirements

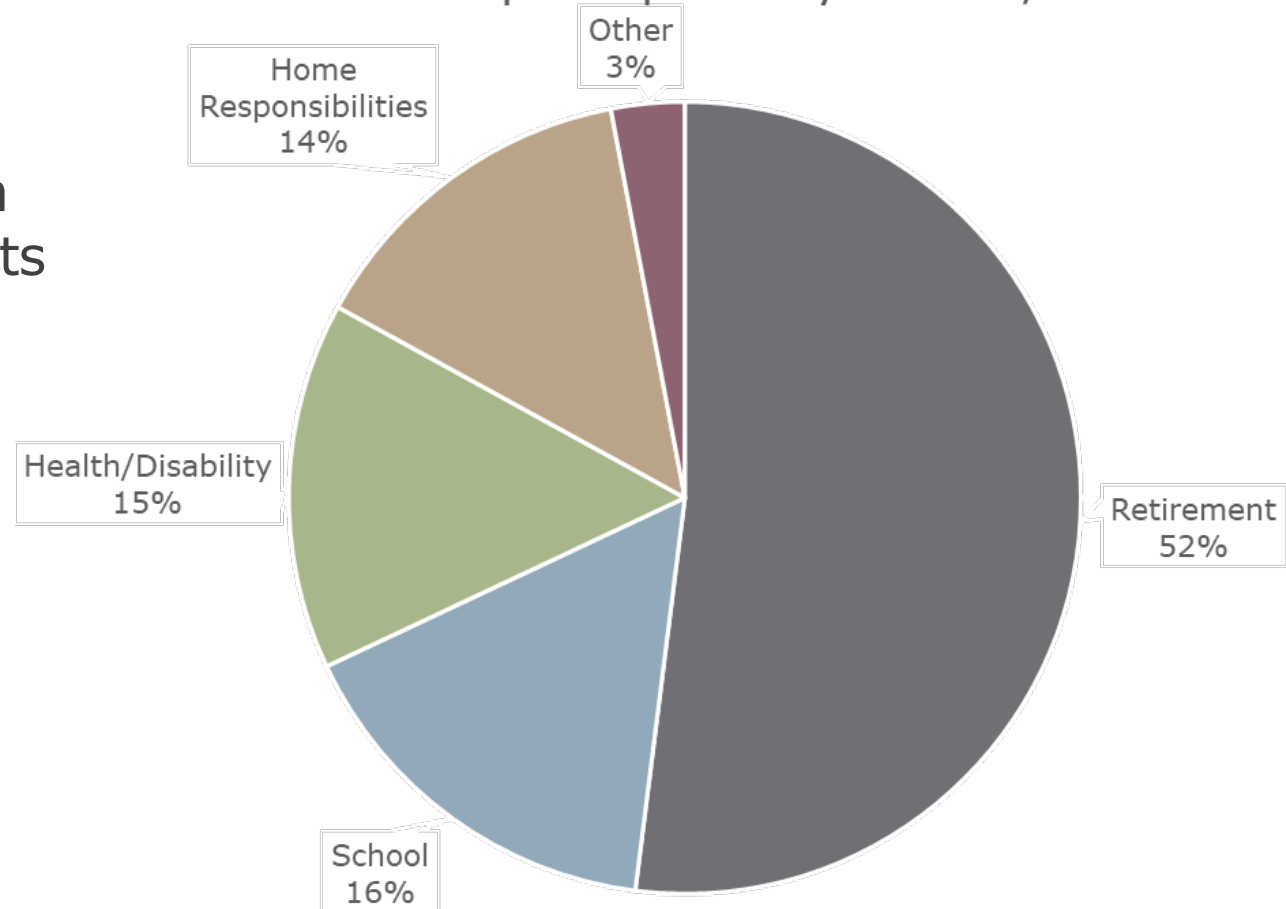
School attendance

Health/disability

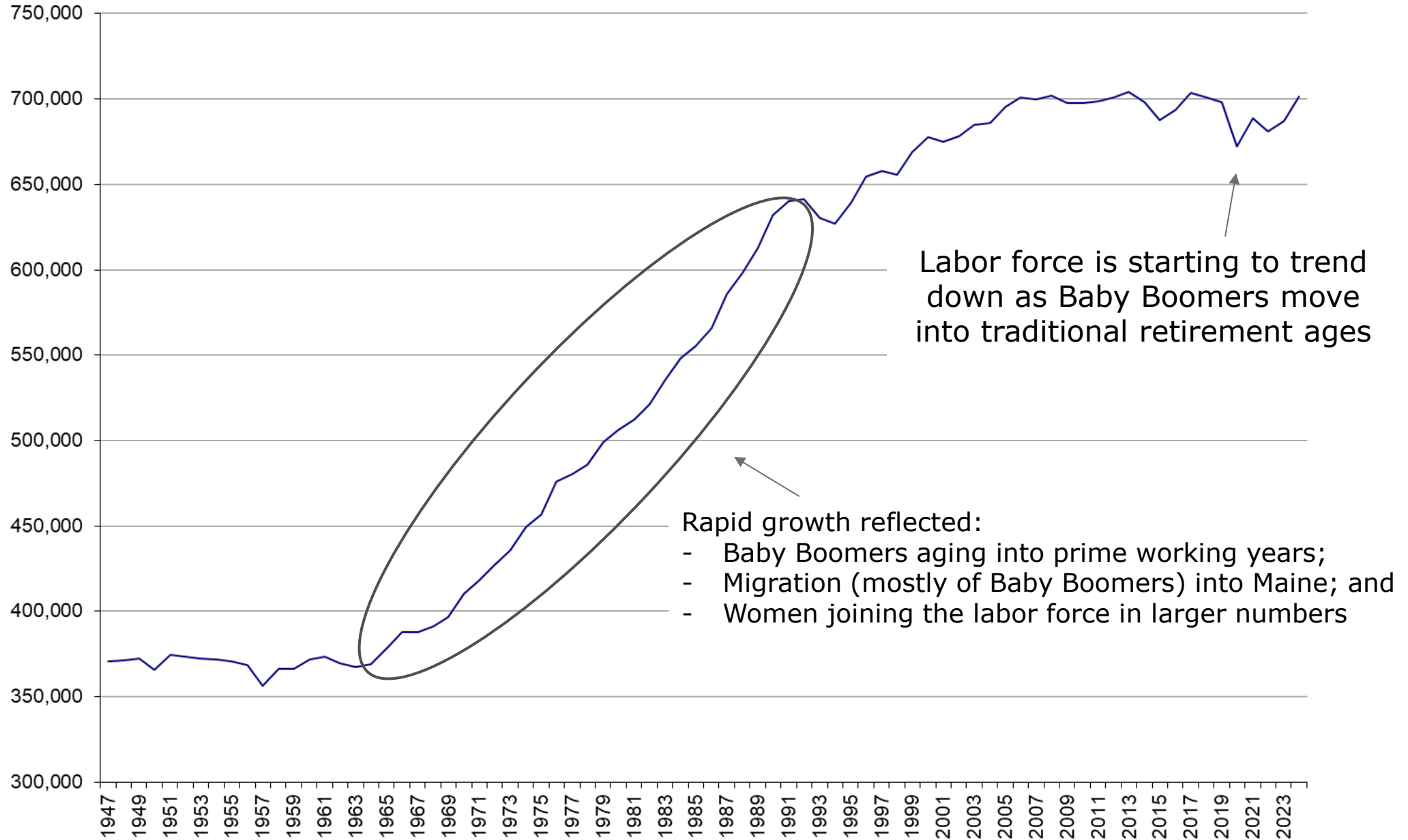
Home responsibilities

Other reasons

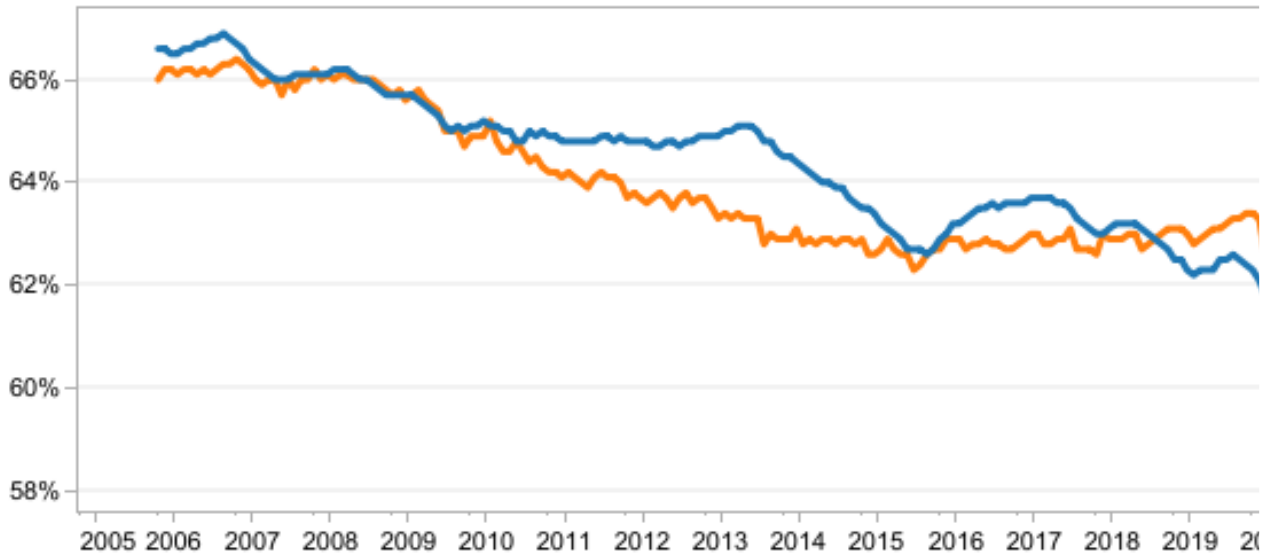
Share of Nonparticipants by Reason, 2022



Maine Civilian Labor Force



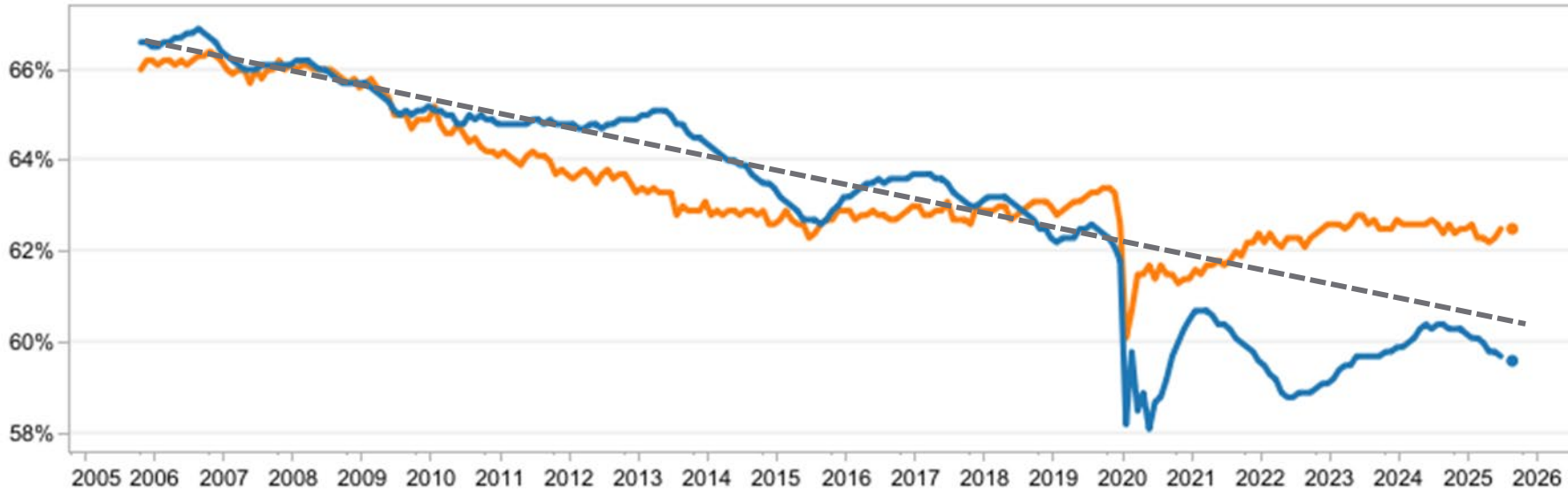
Labor Force Participation Rate (seasonally adjusted)



Dec, 2005 to Nov, 2025

- Unemployment Rate
 - Labor Force & Employment
 - Unemployment
 - Labor Force Participation Rate
 - Employment to Population Ratio
- Maine
■ United States

Labor Force Participation Rate (seasonally adjusted)

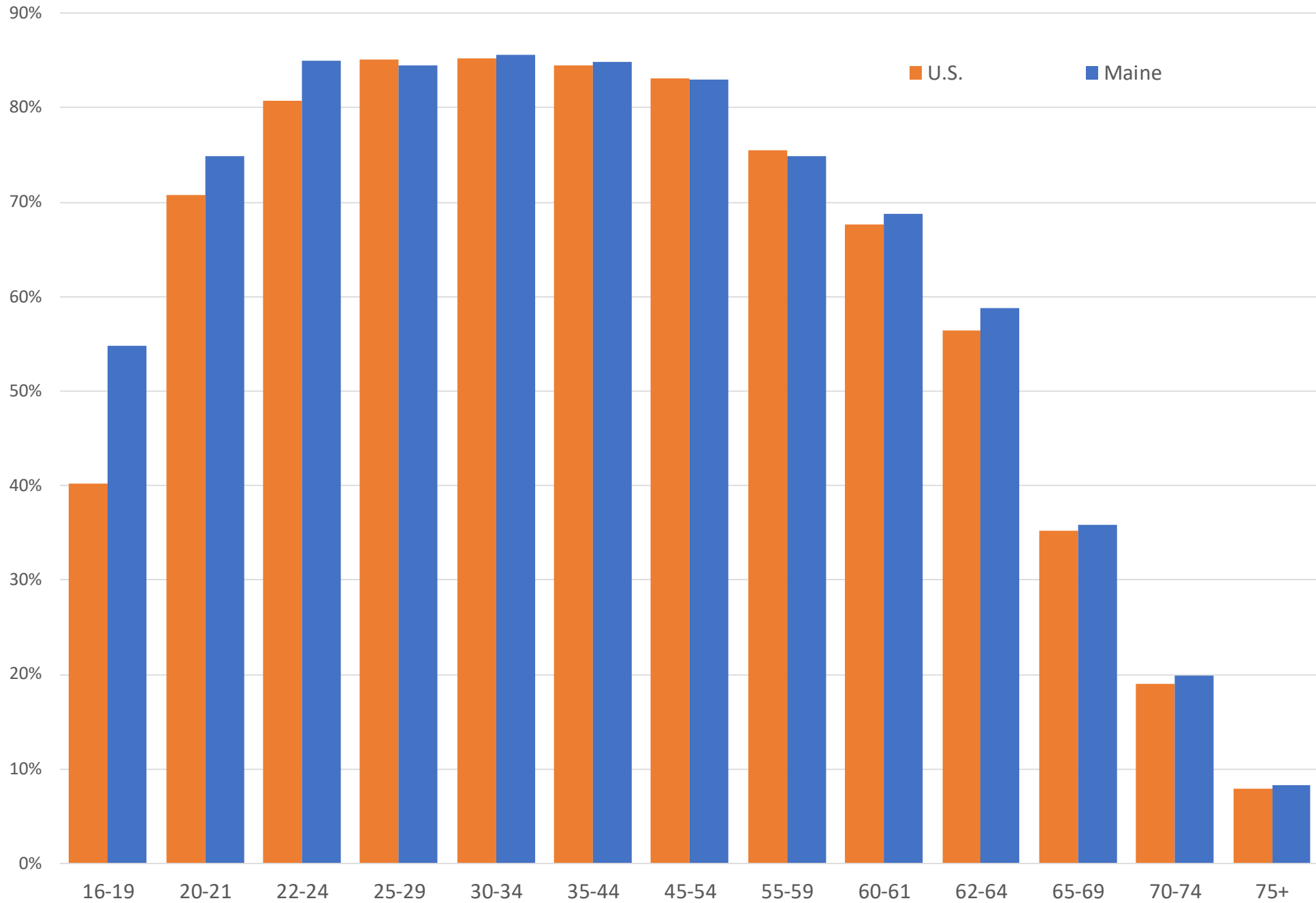


Dec, 2005 to Nov, 2025

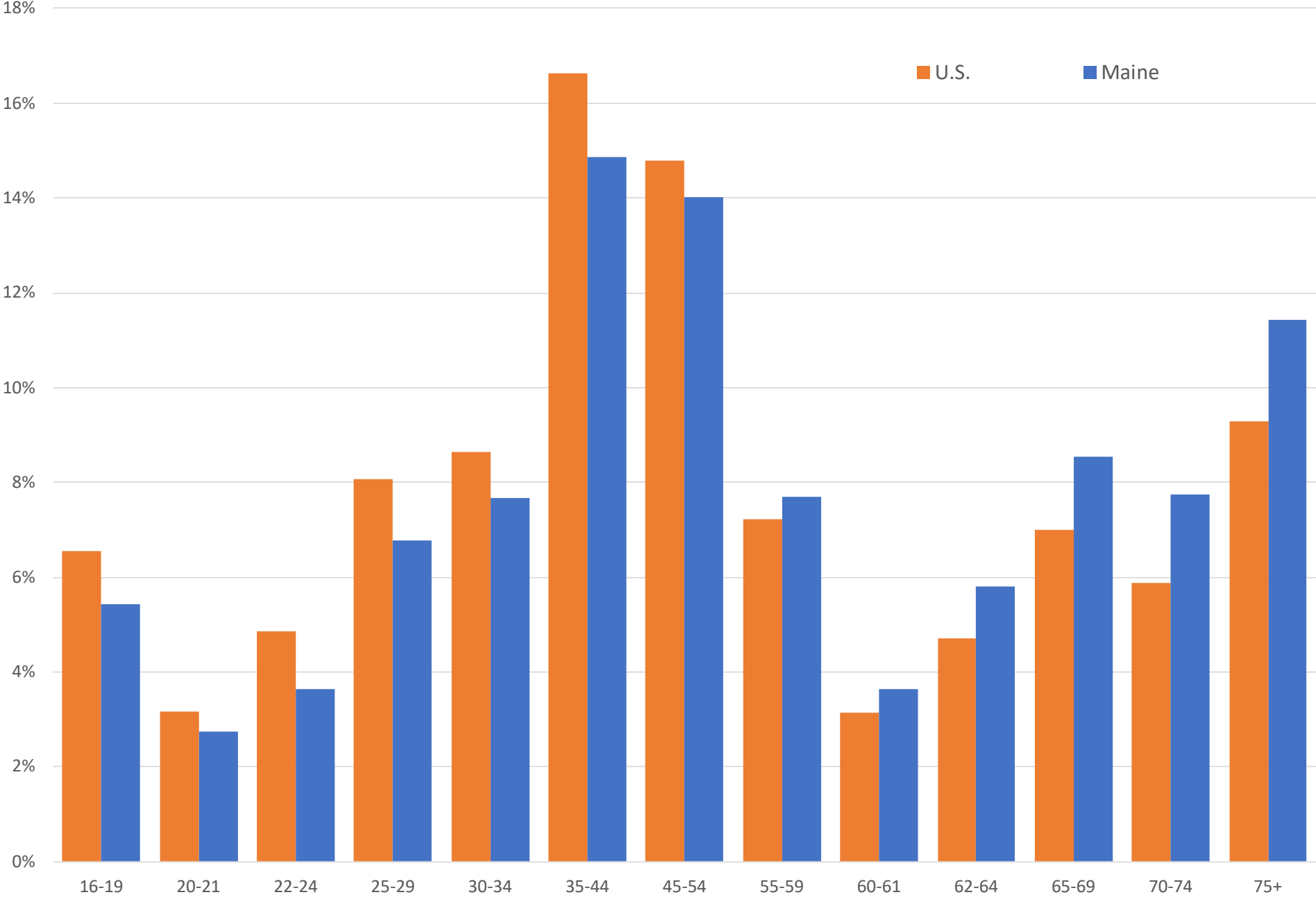
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■ Maine
■ United States

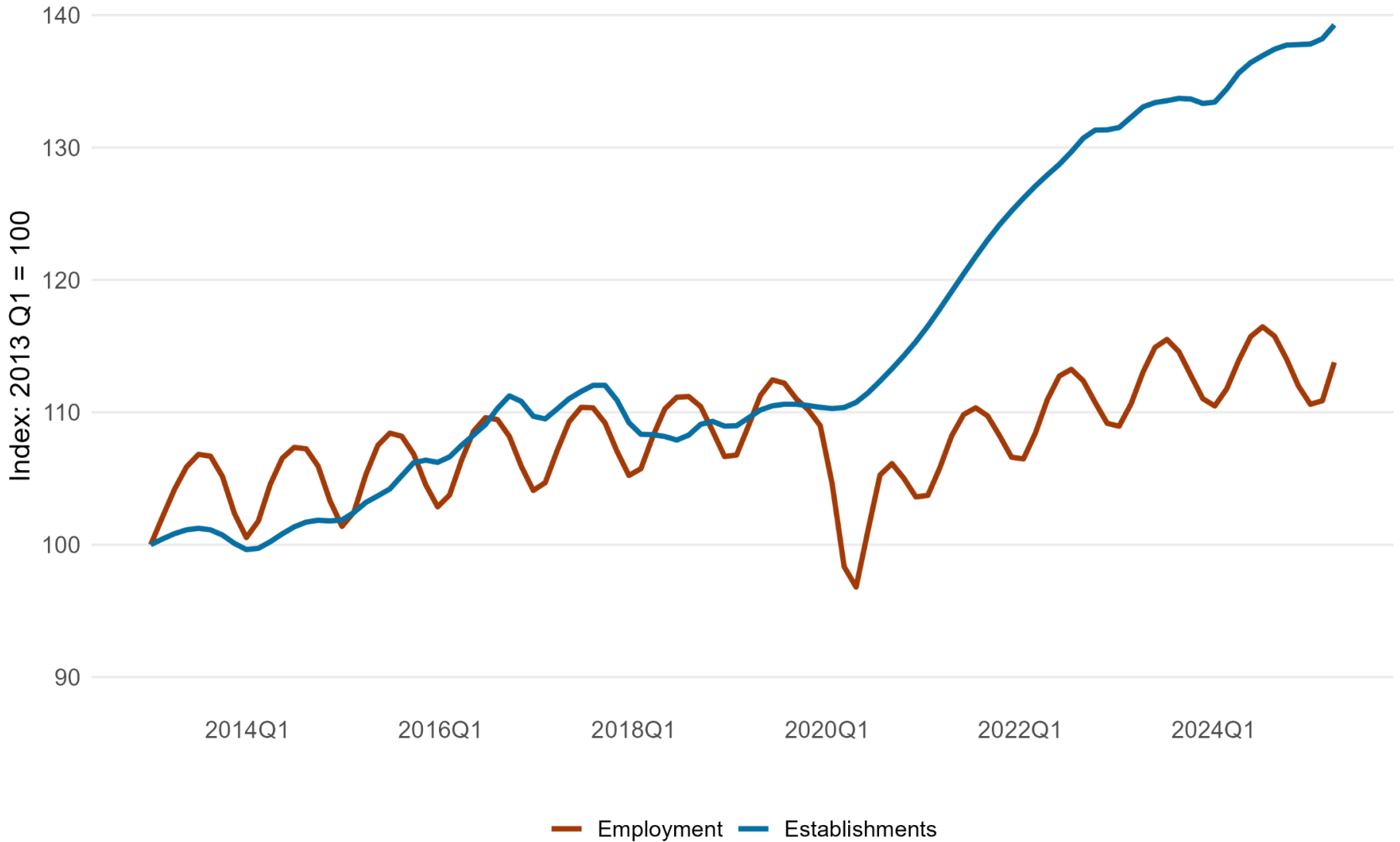
2024 Labor Force Participation Rate



Share of 16+ Population by Age, 2024

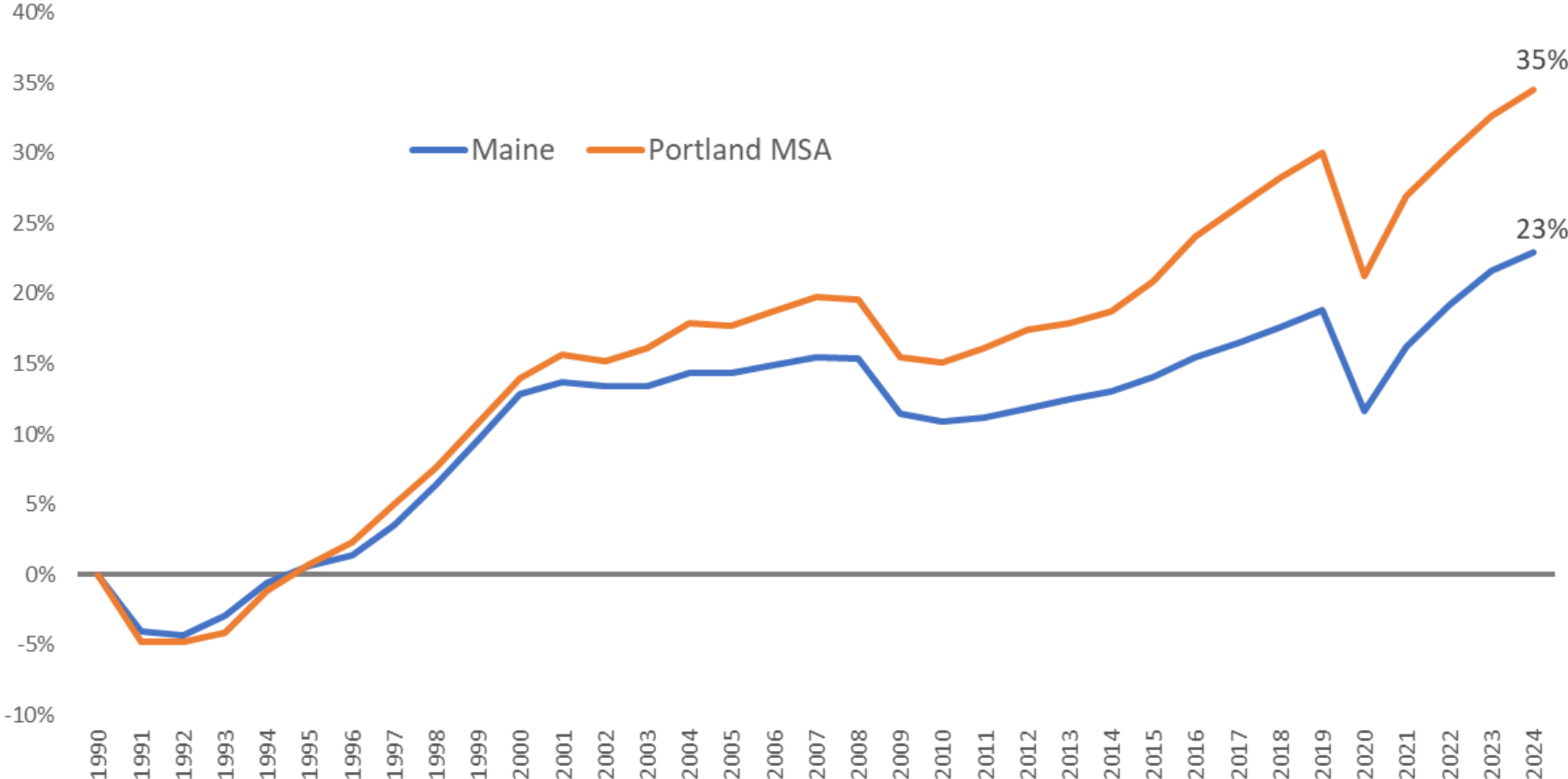


Maine Wage and Salary Employment & Private Employer Establishments



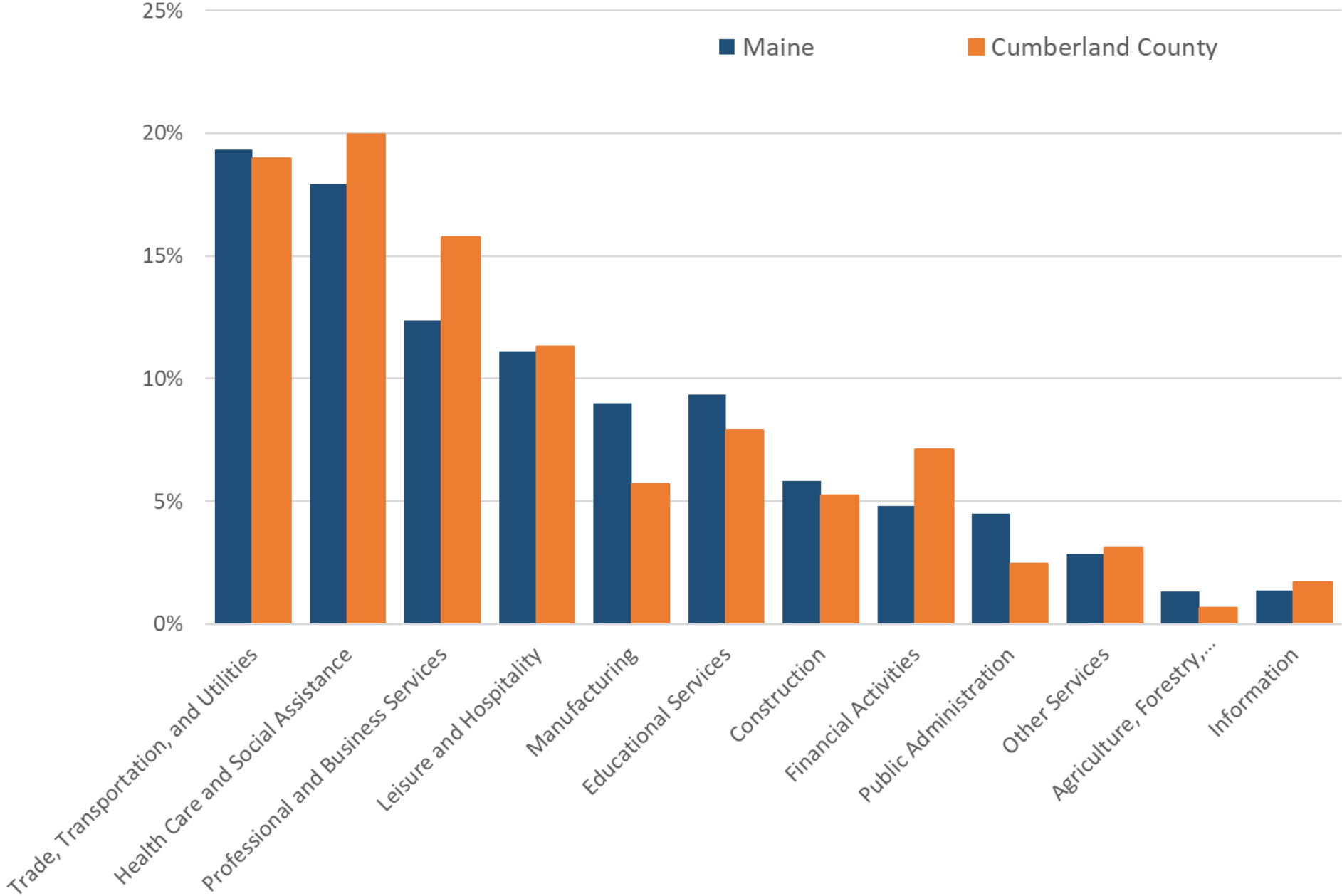
As remote work grew during the pandemic, Maine saw employer establishments grow at a faster rate than jobs as out-of-state firms reported small numbers of workers now in Maine

Nonfarm Employment Growth Since 1990

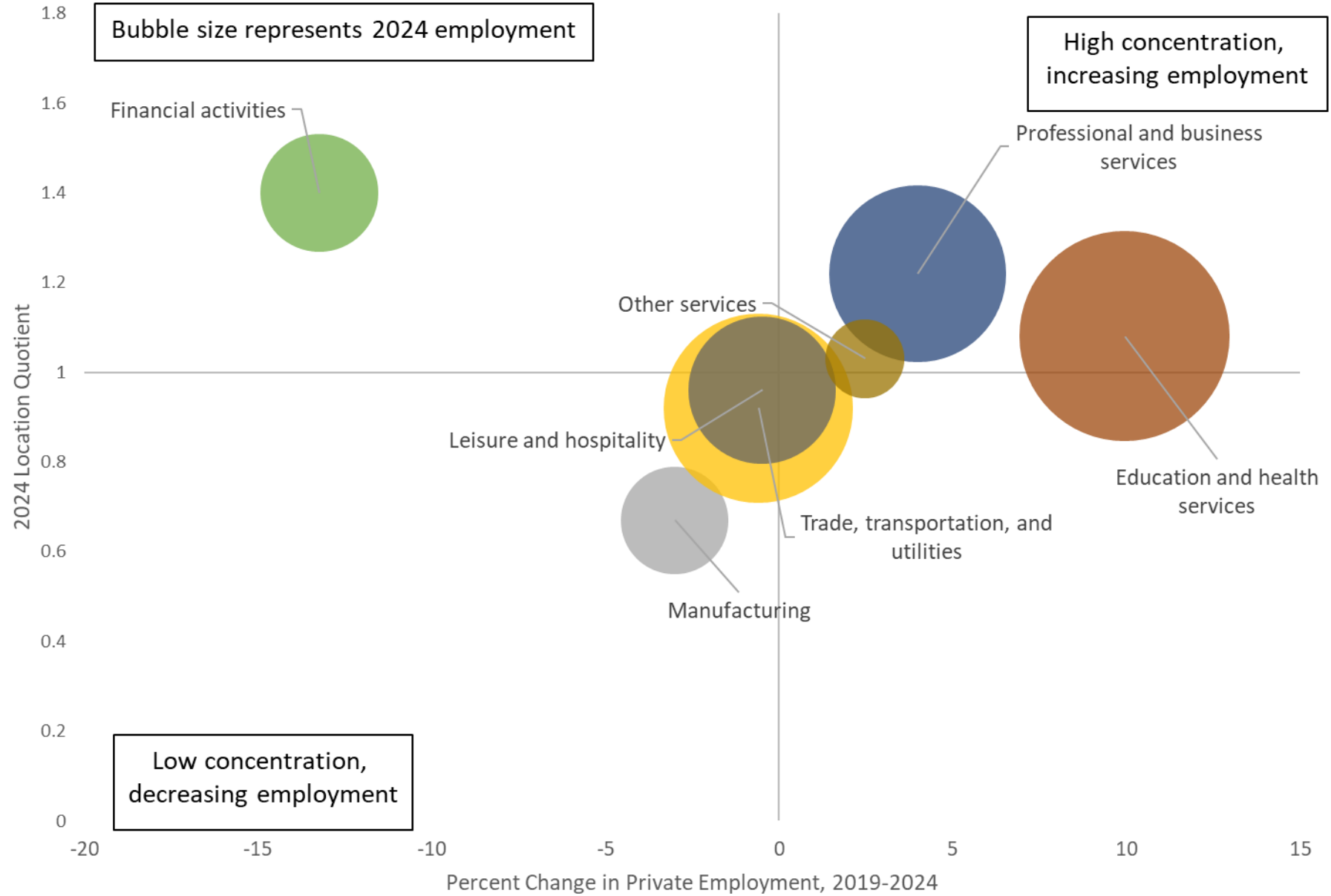


Source: Maine Department of Labor

Share of 2024 Employment by Industry

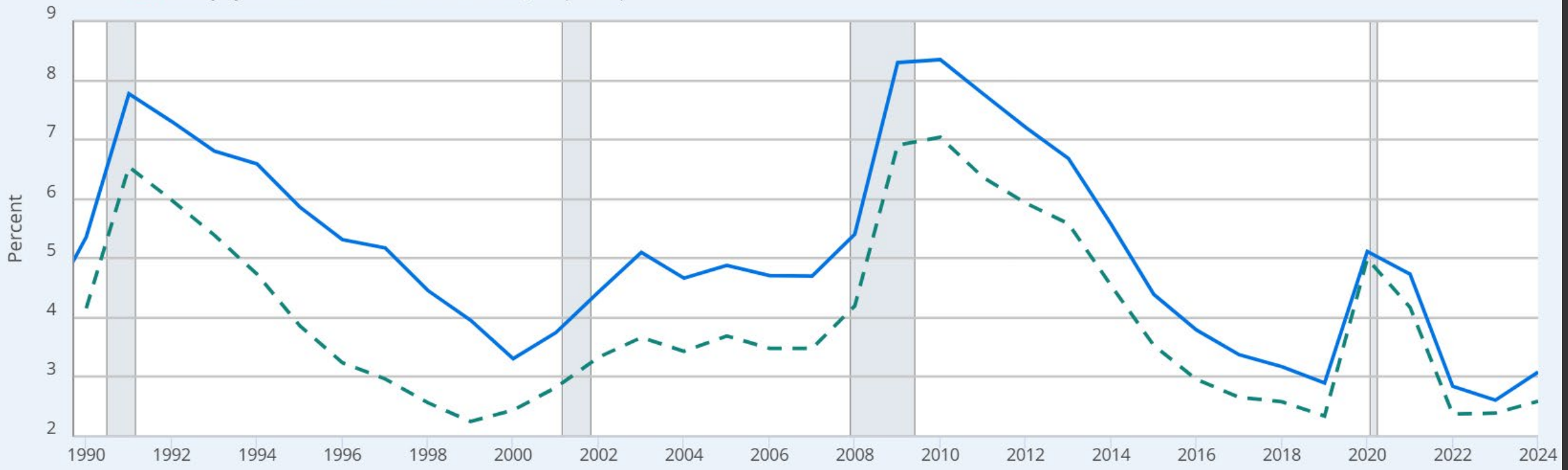


Cumberland County Location Quotients for Private Industry Super Sectors, 2019-2024



Source: Maine Department of Labor; calculations by staff in Office of the State Economist

Unemployment Rate in Maine
Unemployment Rate in Portland-South Portland, ME (NECTA)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED®

Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

fred.stlouisfed.org

Fullscreen

Maine's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate of 3.2% in November 2025 was below both the U.S. and New England rates. Cumberland County has one of the lowest rates in Maine.

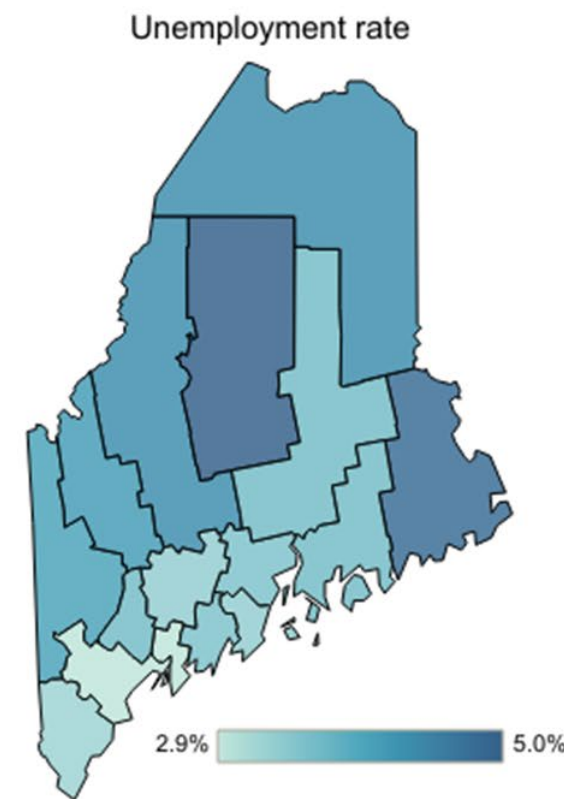
County Rates (not seasonally adjusted)

November, 2025

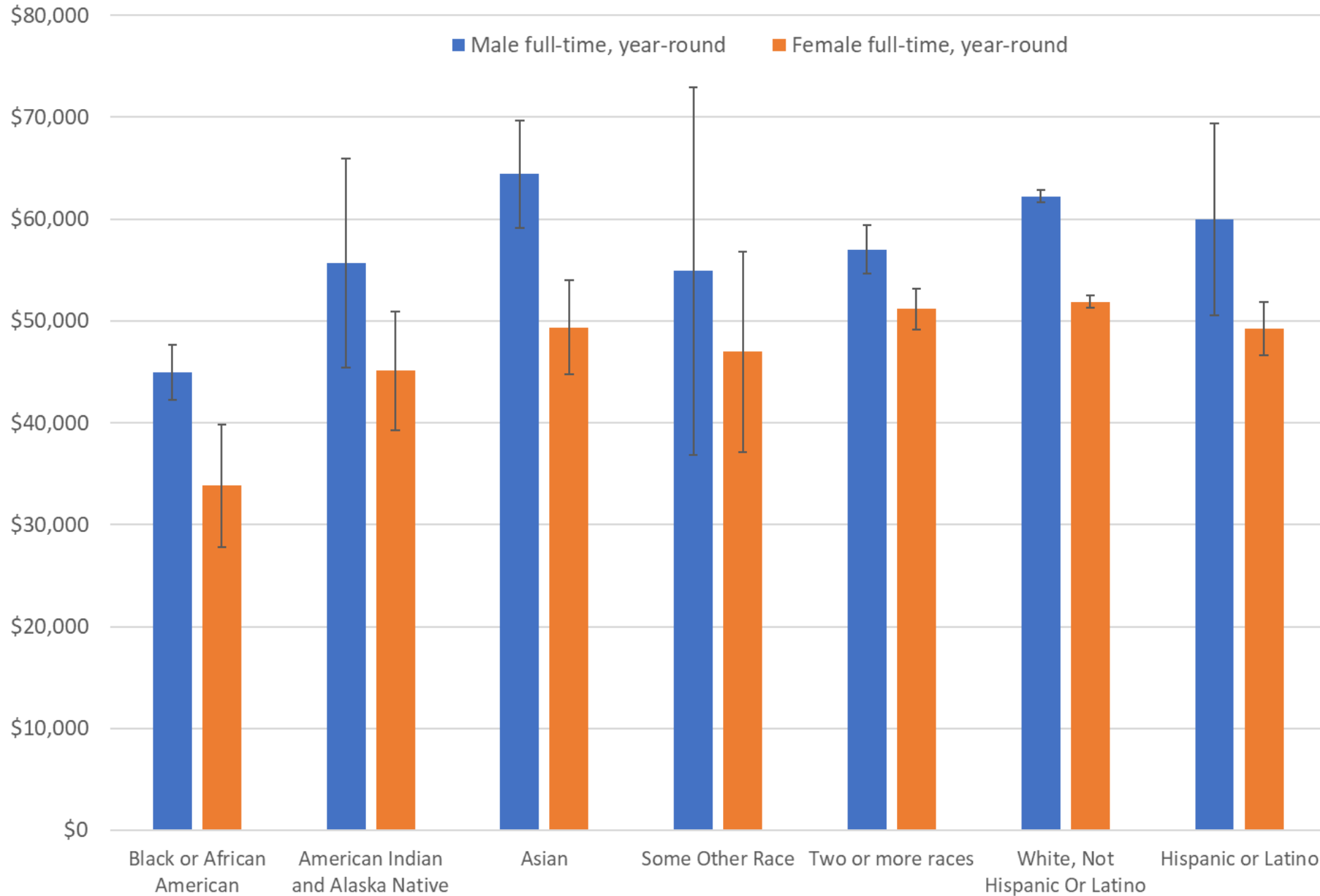
Table
 Graph

Map/Graph Display
 Unemployment rate
 One-year change

| County | Rate | Year ago | One-yr change |
|--------------|------|----------|---------------|
| Maine | 3.4% | 3.6% | -0.2 |
| Androscoggin | 3.6% | 3.8% | -0.2 |
| Aroostook | 4.3% | 4.4% | -0.1 |
| Cumberland | 2.9% | 3.1% | -0.2 |
| Franklin | 4.1% | 4.5% | -0.4 |
| Hancock | 3.6% | 3.9% | -0.3 |
| Kennebec | 3.3% | 3.5% | -0.2 |
| Knox | 3.3% | 3.8% | -0.5 |
| Lincoln | 3.5% | 4.0% | -0.5 |
| Oxford | 4.0% | 4.2% | -0.2 |
| Penobscot | 3.6% | 3.9% | -0.3 |
| Piscataquis | 5.0% | 5.4% | -0.4 |
| Sagadahoc | 2.9% | 3.2% | -0.3 |
| Somerset | 4.3% | 4.5% | -0.2 |
| Waldo | 3.5% | 3.9% | -0.4 |
| Washington | 4.8% | 4.8% | 0.0 |
| York | 3.2% | 3.3% | -0.1 |



Median Earnings by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, Maine



Contact Information

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