

SOUTH CAROLINA DEMOGRAPHICS: POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Presented to

SC Association of Counties

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Who is RFA?

- **Mission:** To provide independent research, analysis, and resources to facilitate informed policy decisions and administration of services
- **Vision:** To be a leader in value-added public service by providing the most trusted, customer-focused information and solutions
- **Staff:** The agency has a staff of approximately seventy comprised of analysts, statisticians, epidemiologists, database administrators, web developers, GIS analysts, economists, surveyors, and project and program managers

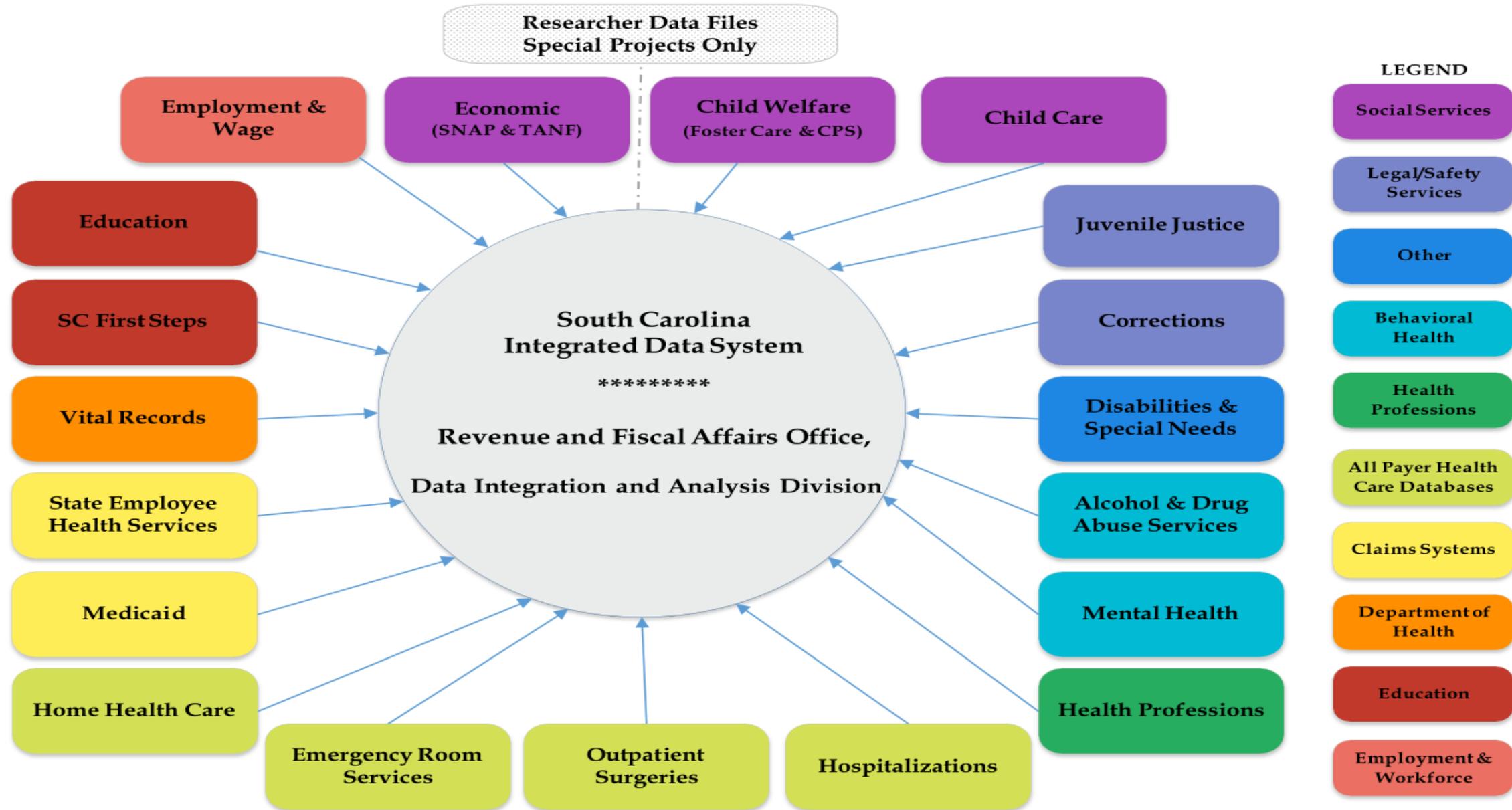
Current Agency Overview



RFA has 4 divisions:

1. Mapping & Operations
2. Data Integration & Analysis
3. Fiscal Analysis
4. Compliance, Communications, and Technology





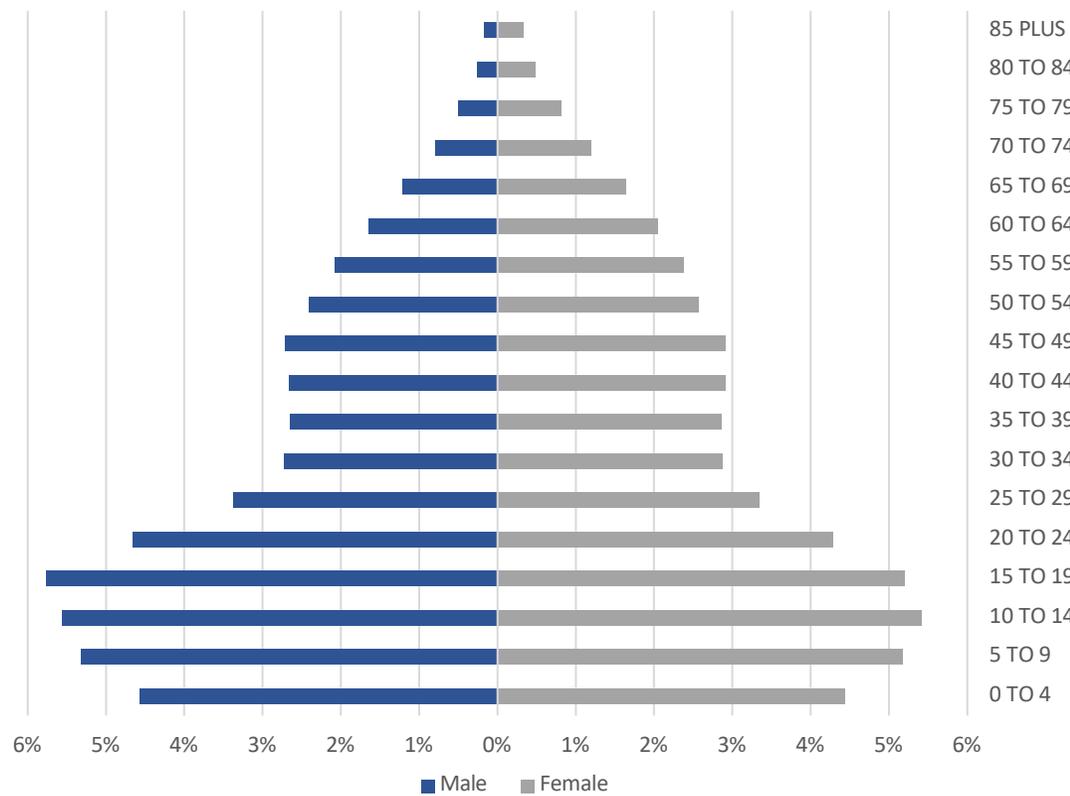
Statewide Population Trends and Projections



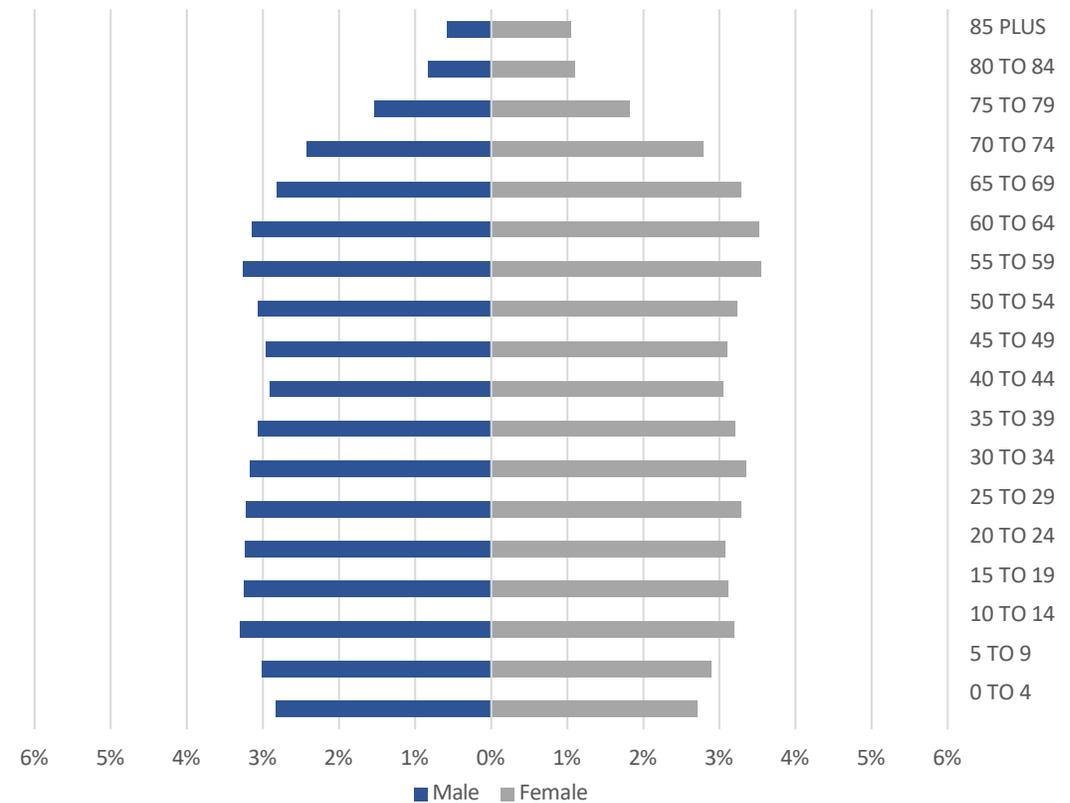
SC Population Pyramid

The age distribution of the state's population has shifted dramatically since 1970; the median age has increased from 24 in 1970 to 40 in 2020

1970 POPULATION PYRAMID



2020 POPULATION PYRAMID



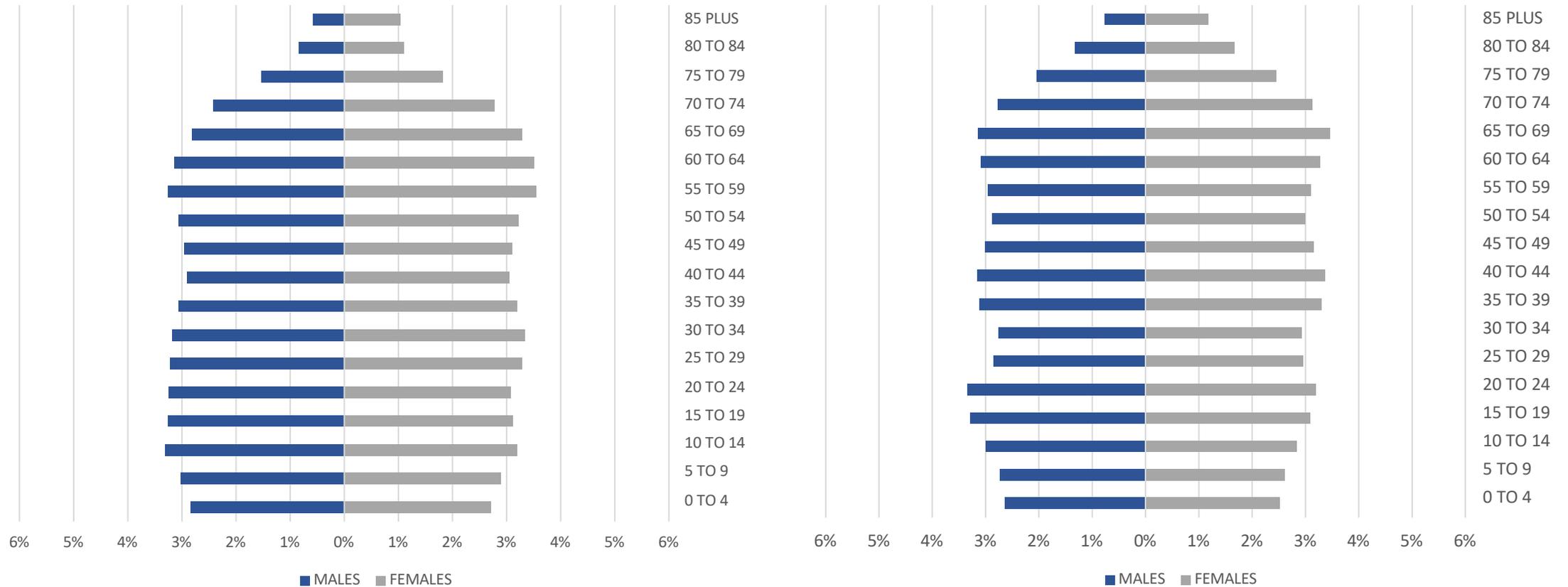
Source: S.C. Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office 320 /08/25/2020

SC 2030 Population Projections

The median age is expected to increase from 40 to 42 over the next decade;
all baby boomers will be older than 65

2020 POPULATION PYRAMID

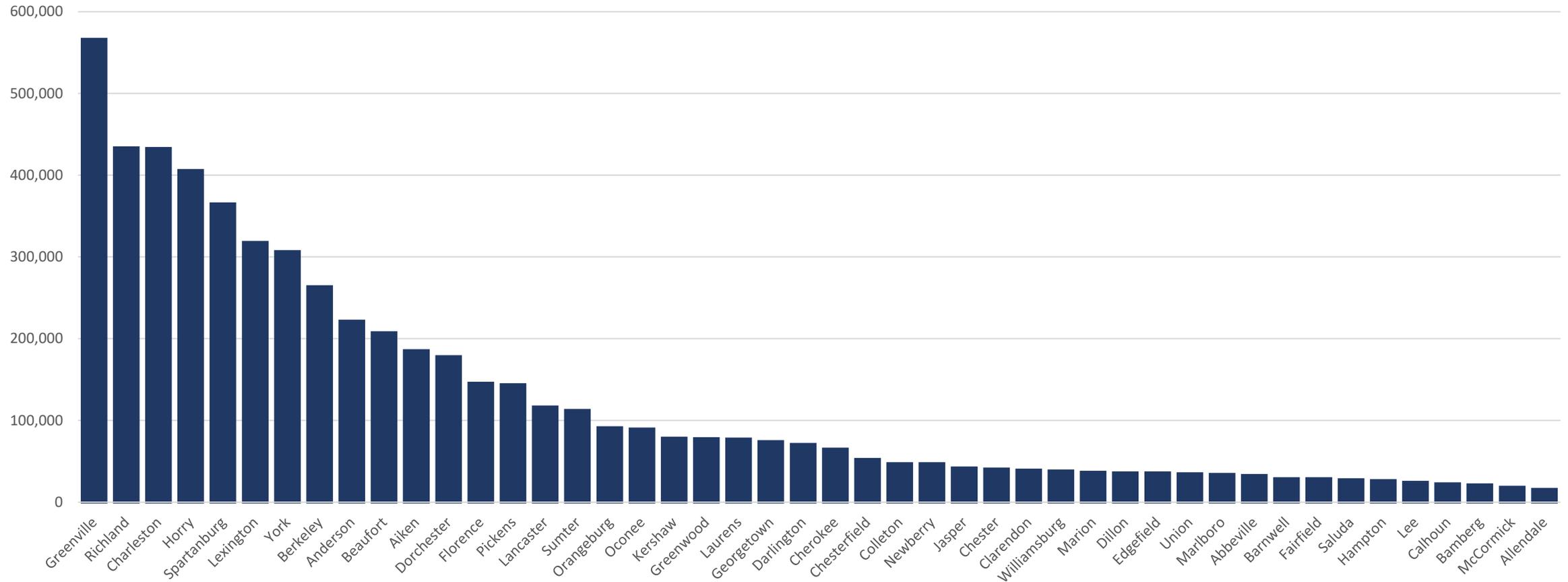
2030 POPULATION PYRAMID



Source: US Census Bureau, Estimates, Projections by S.C. Revenue and Fiscal Affairs

South Carolina Population, 2023

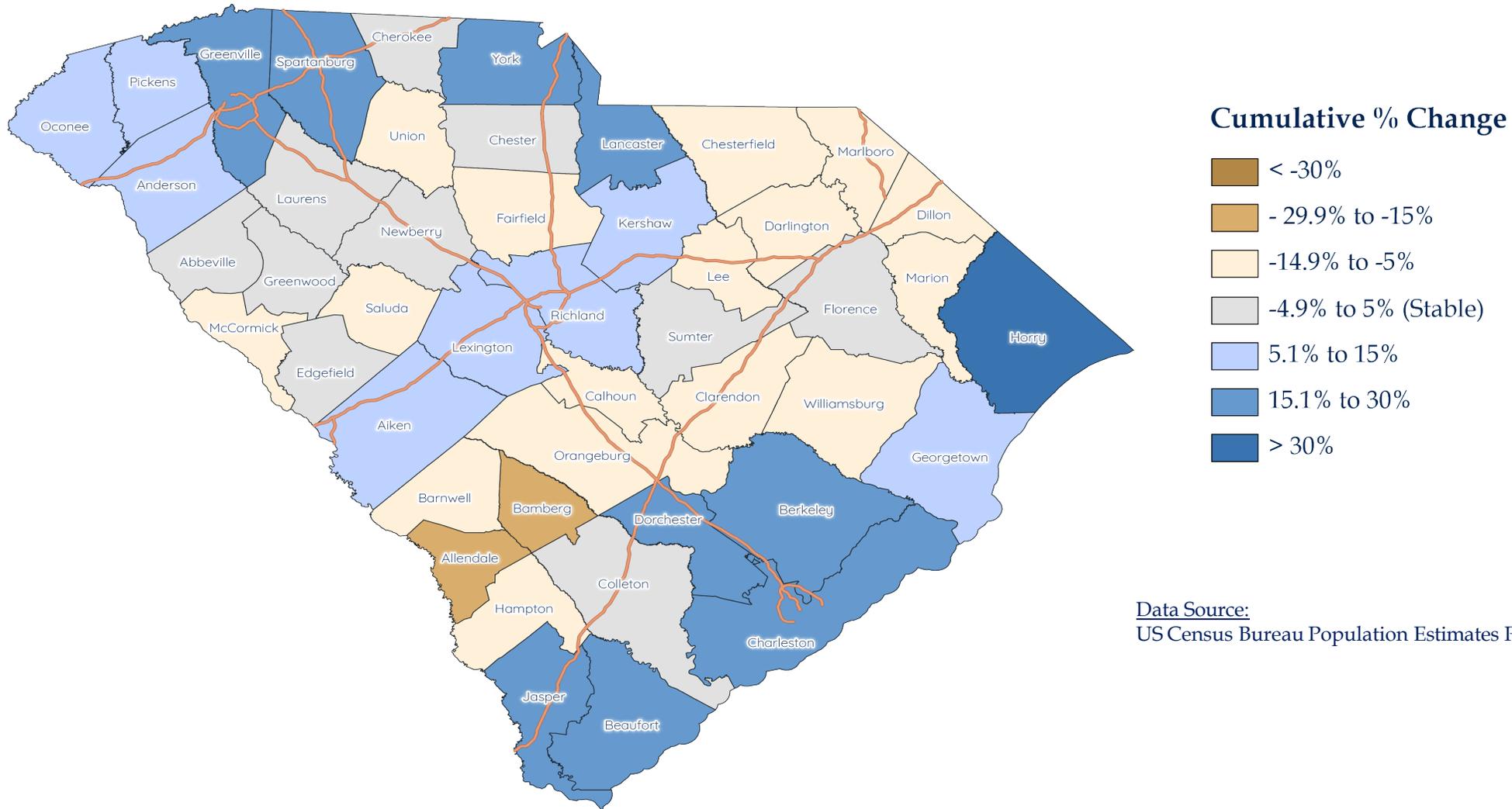
Five Largest: Greenville, Richland, Charleston, Horry, Spartanburg
Five Smallest: Allendale, McCormick, Bamberg, Calhoun, Lee



Source: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2023 Postcensal Estimates

South Carolina's Population Change, 2010 - 2020

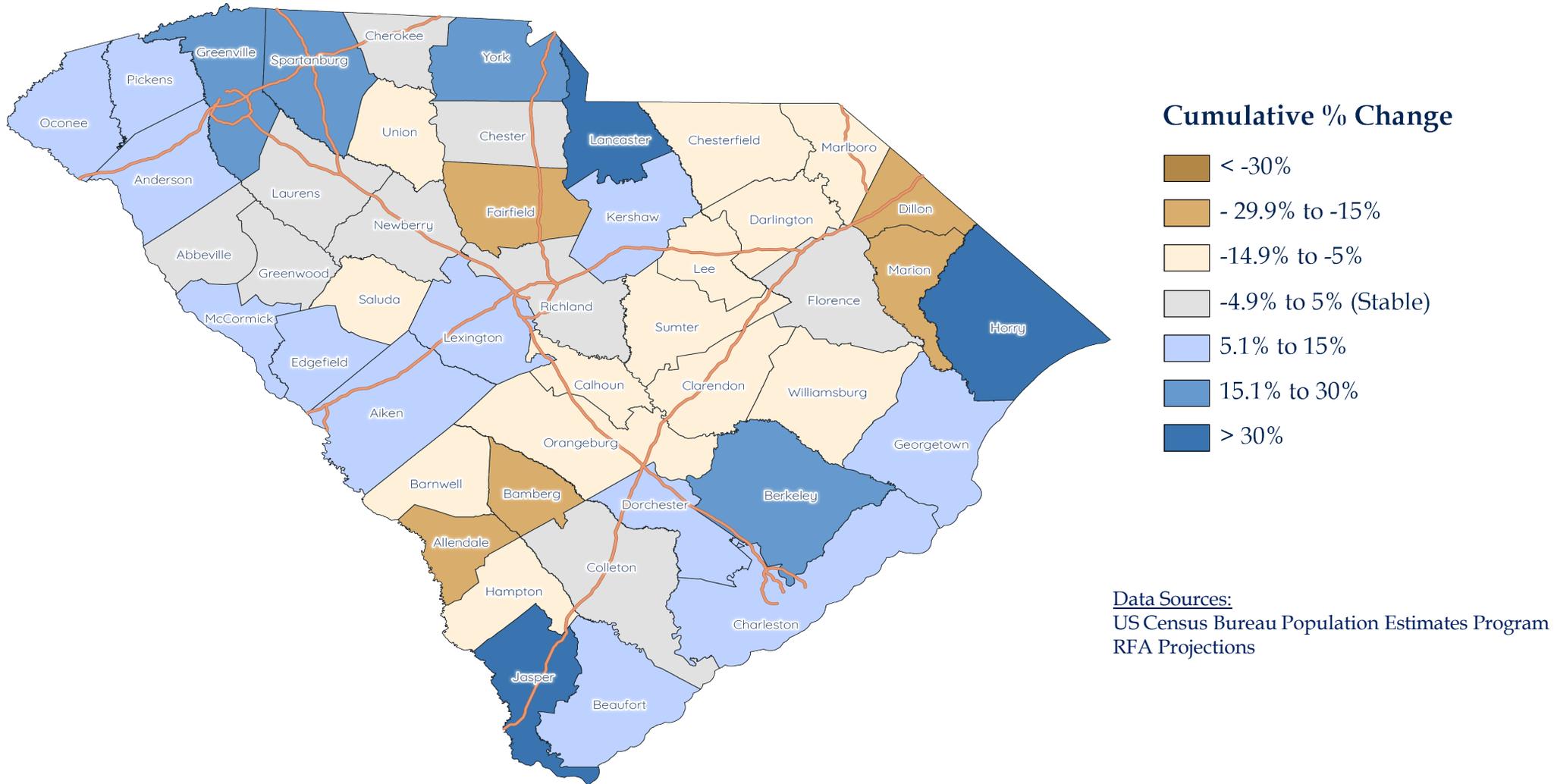
Varied by county from +30.9% (Horry) to -23.4% (Allendale)



Data Source:
US Census Bureau Population Estimates Program

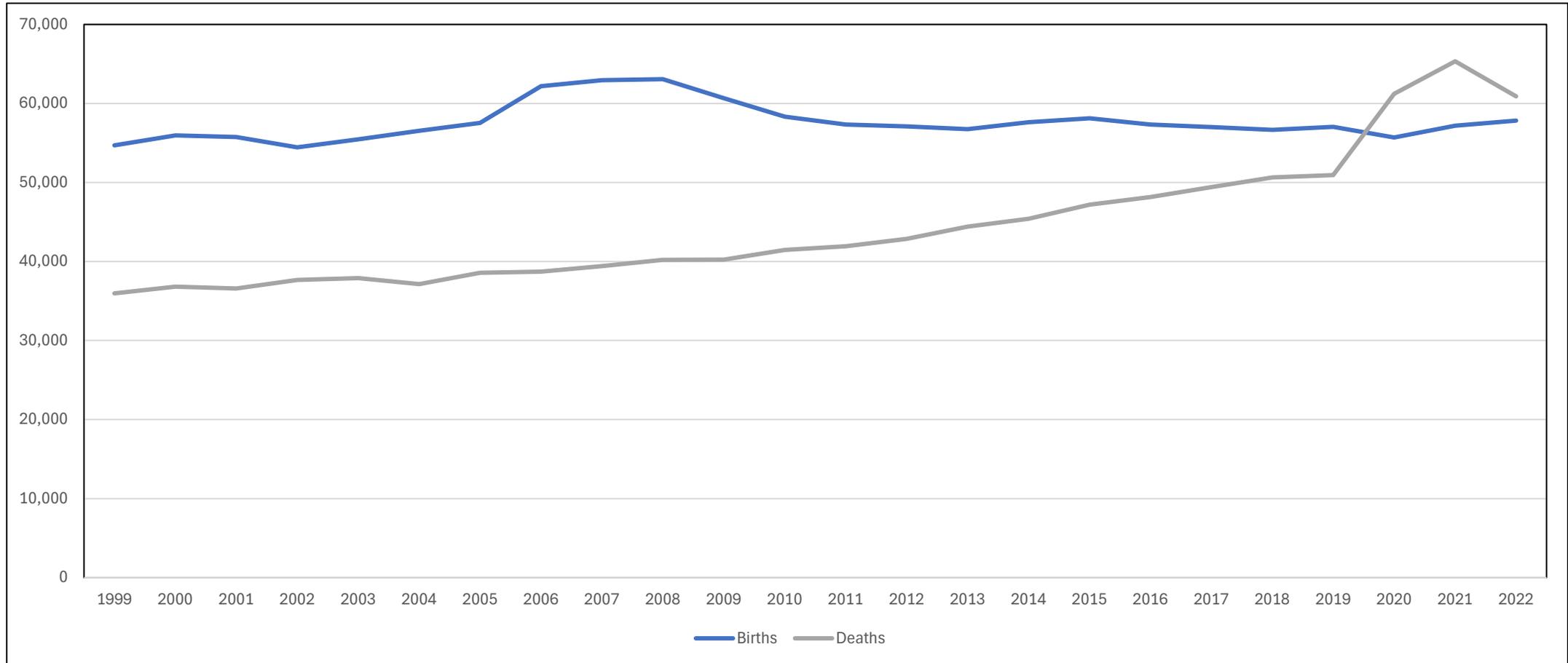
South Carolina's Population Change, 2020 - 2030

Varied by county from +34.4% (Jasper) to -28.0% (Allendale)



South Carolina Births and Deaths, 1999 - 2022

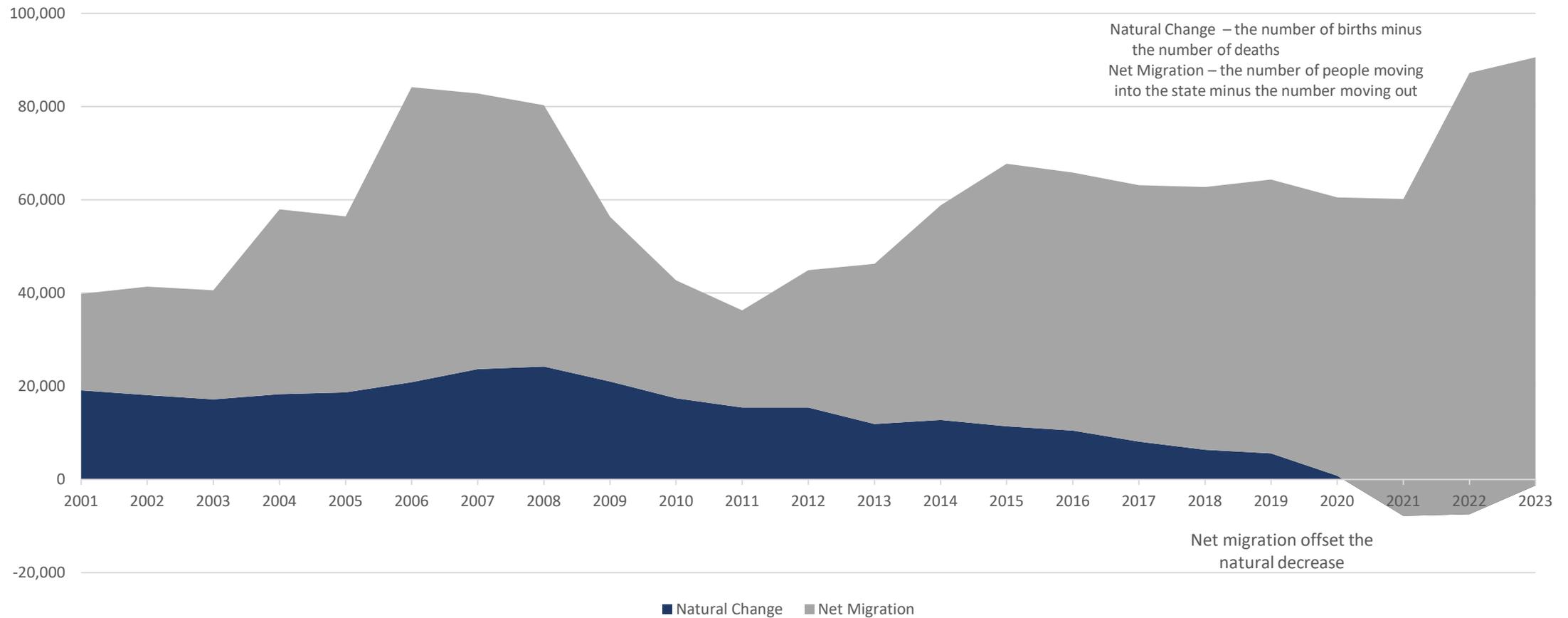
The number of births remains relatively constant while deaths increased each year until 2022, surpassing births in 2020.



Source: SC Department of Public Health, Vital Records

Components of Population Change

Migration into the state accounted for all recent population growth as deaths have outnumbered births in recent years



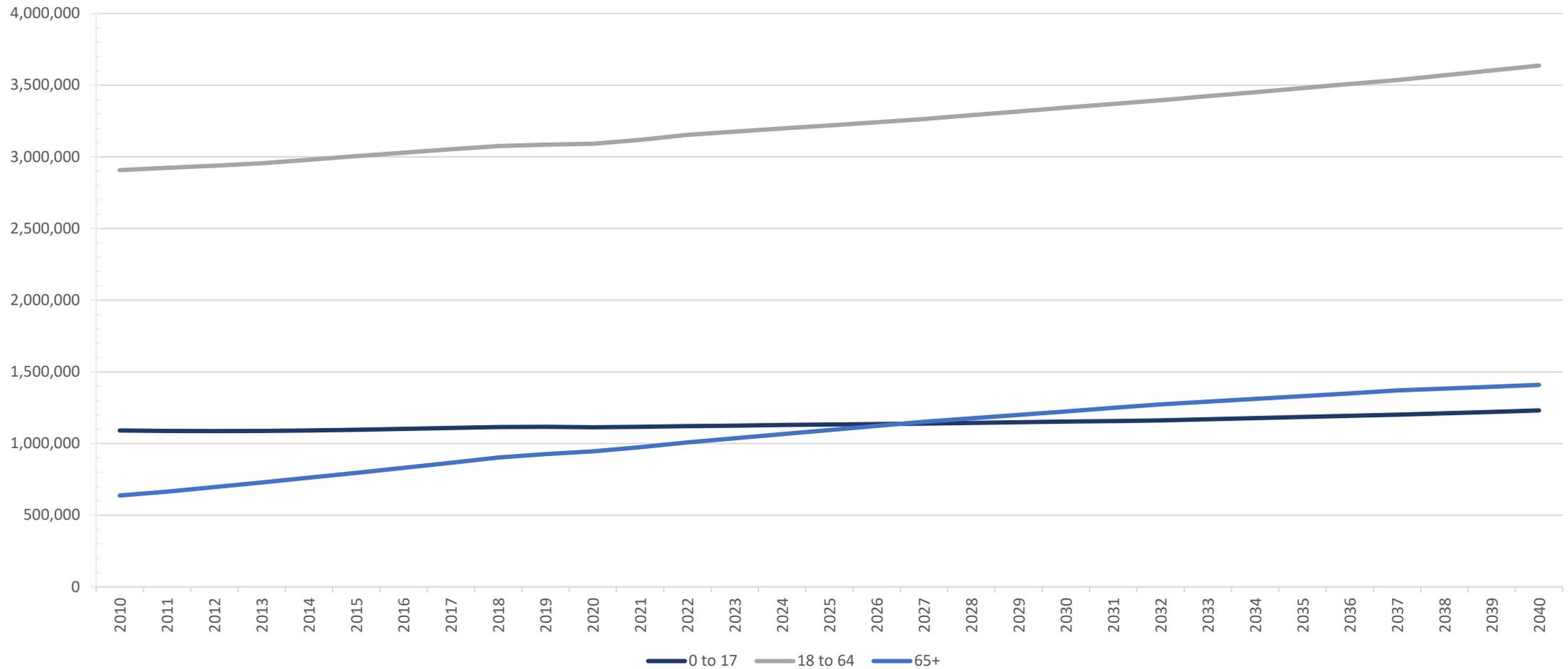
Source: US Census Bureau Population Estimates

Statewide Age Trends



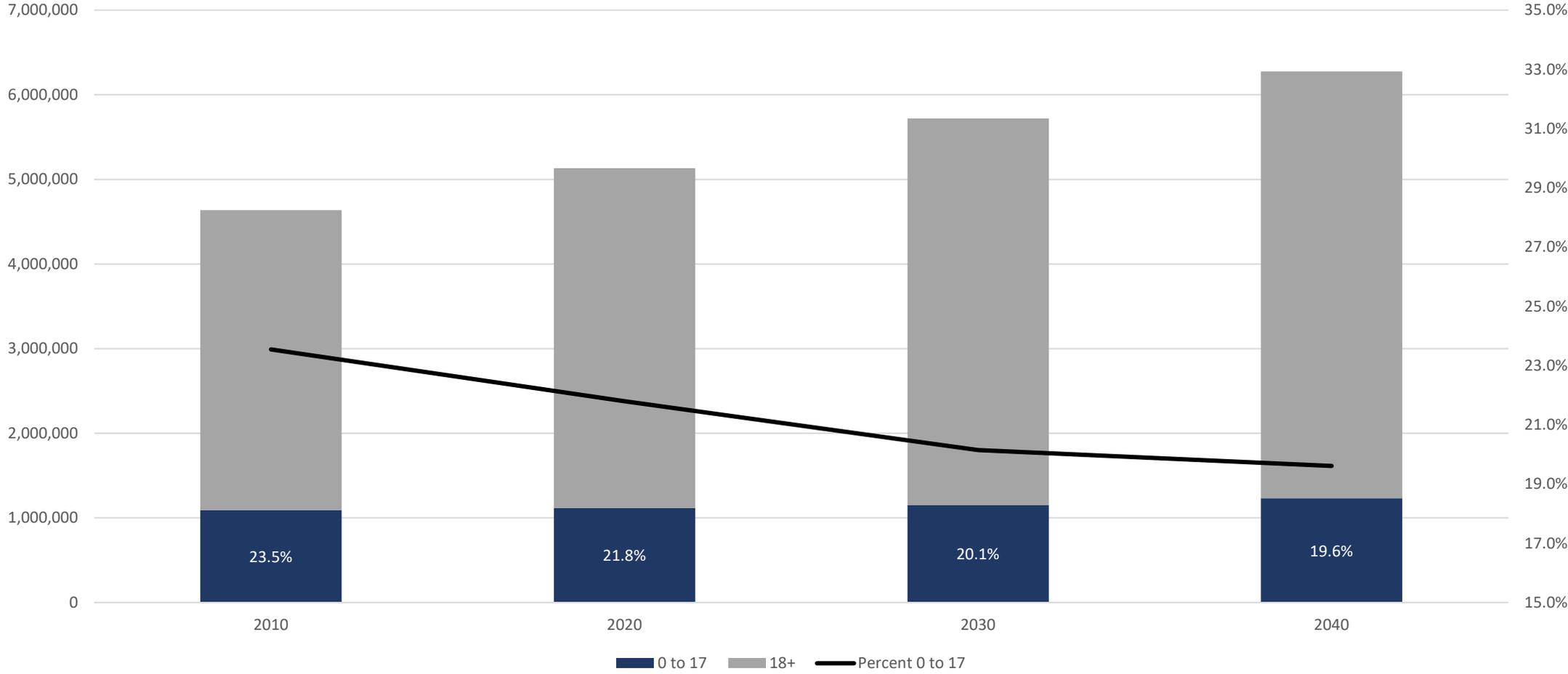
SC Population by Age Group – South Carolina

Population in the 65 plus age range is projected to surpass the under 0-17 age range by 2027



SC Age 0 - 17 Population

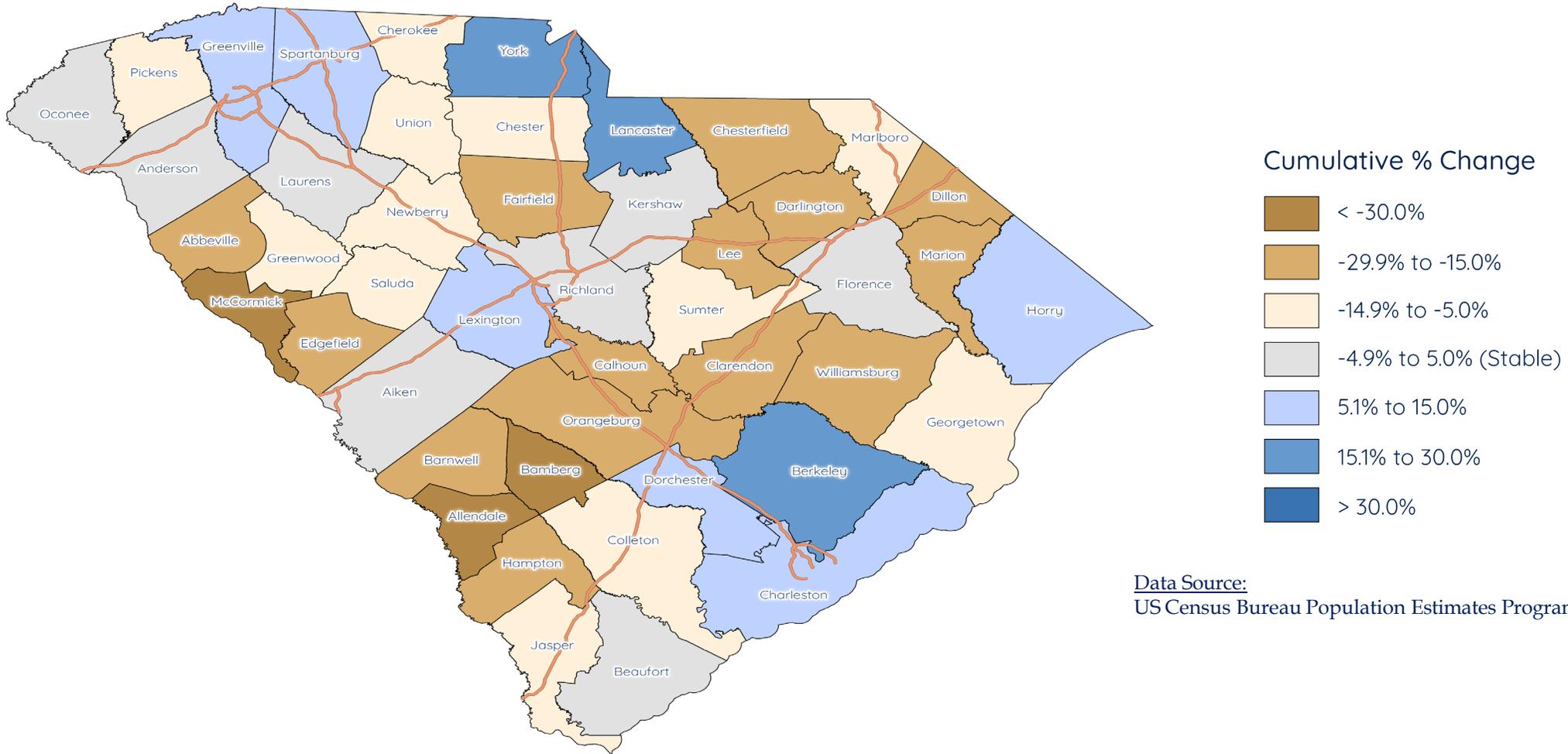
Projected to decline to less than 20% of total population by 2040



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates and RFA Population Projections

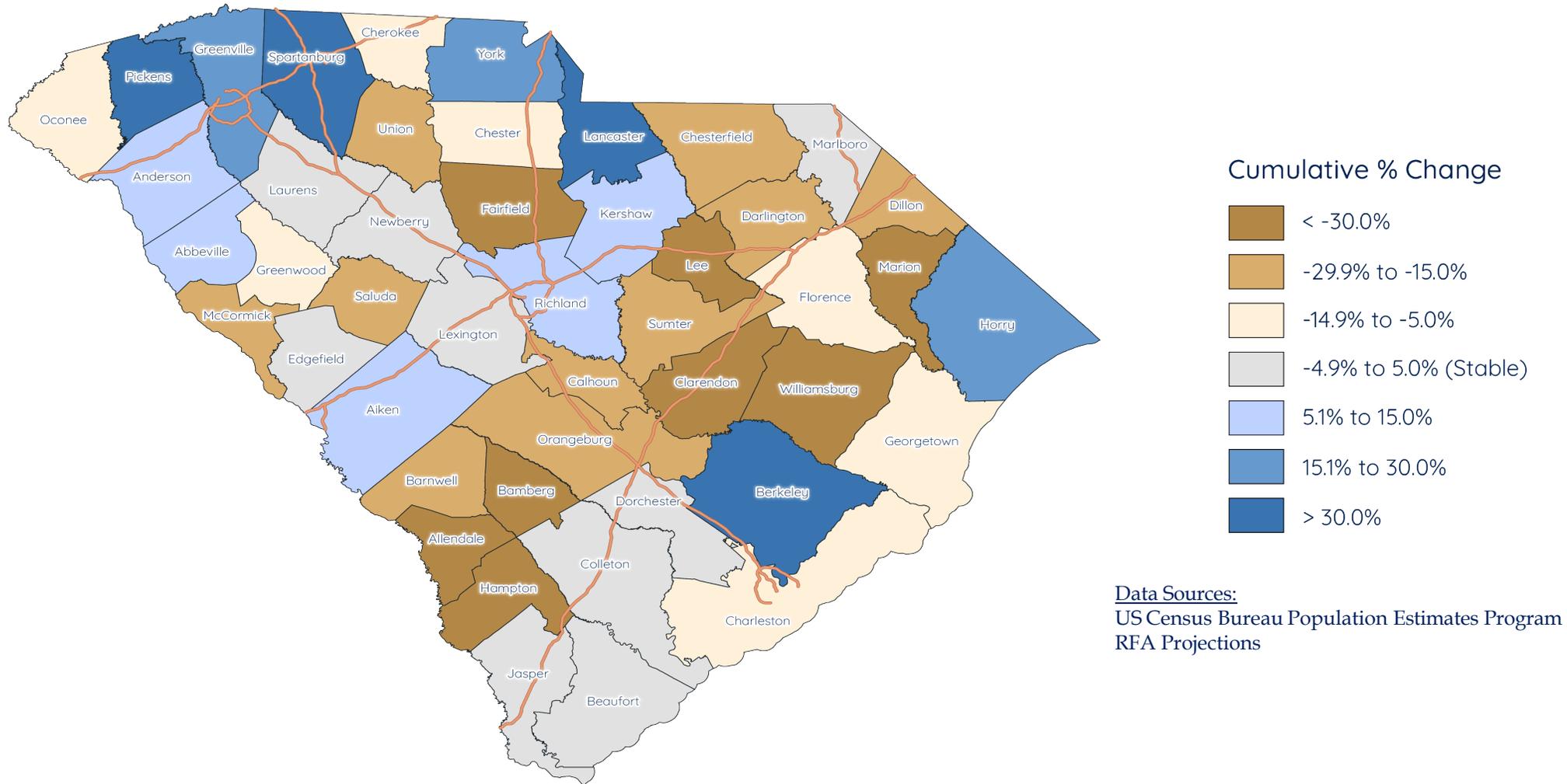
South Carolina Age 0 – 17 Population Change, 2010 - 2020

Only nine counties increased in this age group



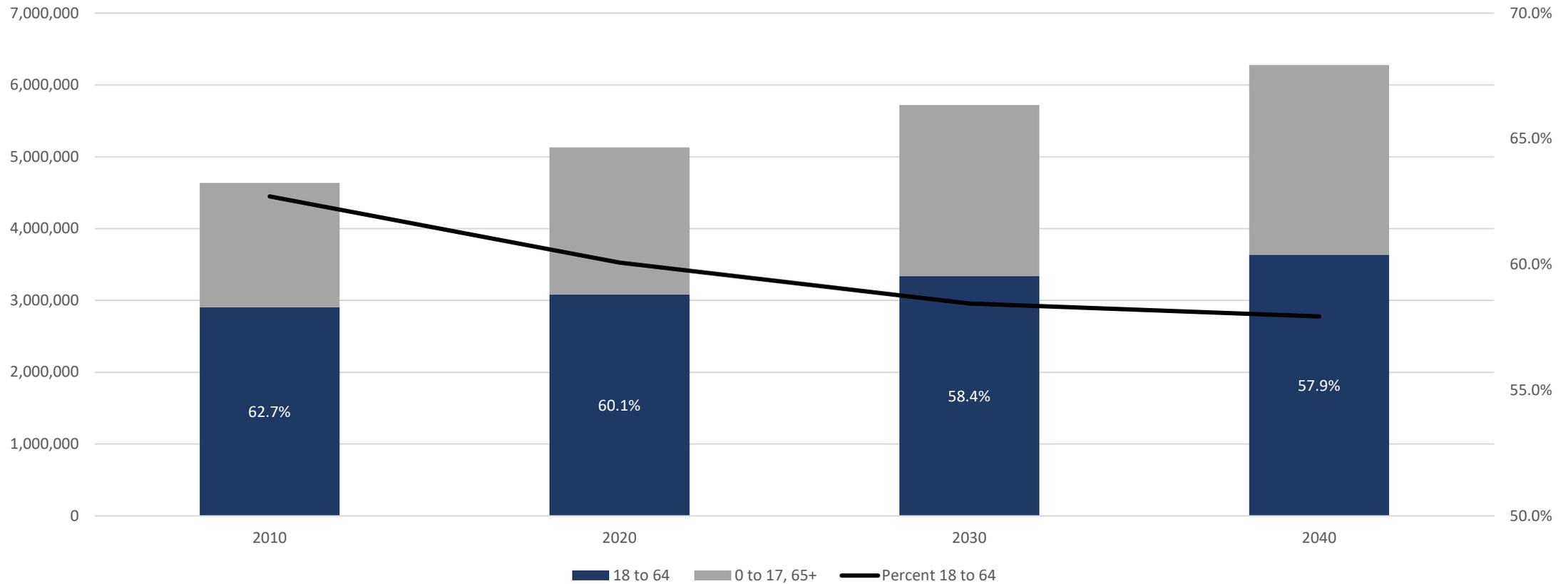
South Carolina Projected Age 0 - 17 Population, 2020 - 2040

Twelve counties are projected to increase in this age group



SC Workforce Population, Age 18 - 64

The workforce age population is expected to comprise a smaller percentage of the total SC population; employers may be faced with more demand for goods and services but a smaller pool of workers

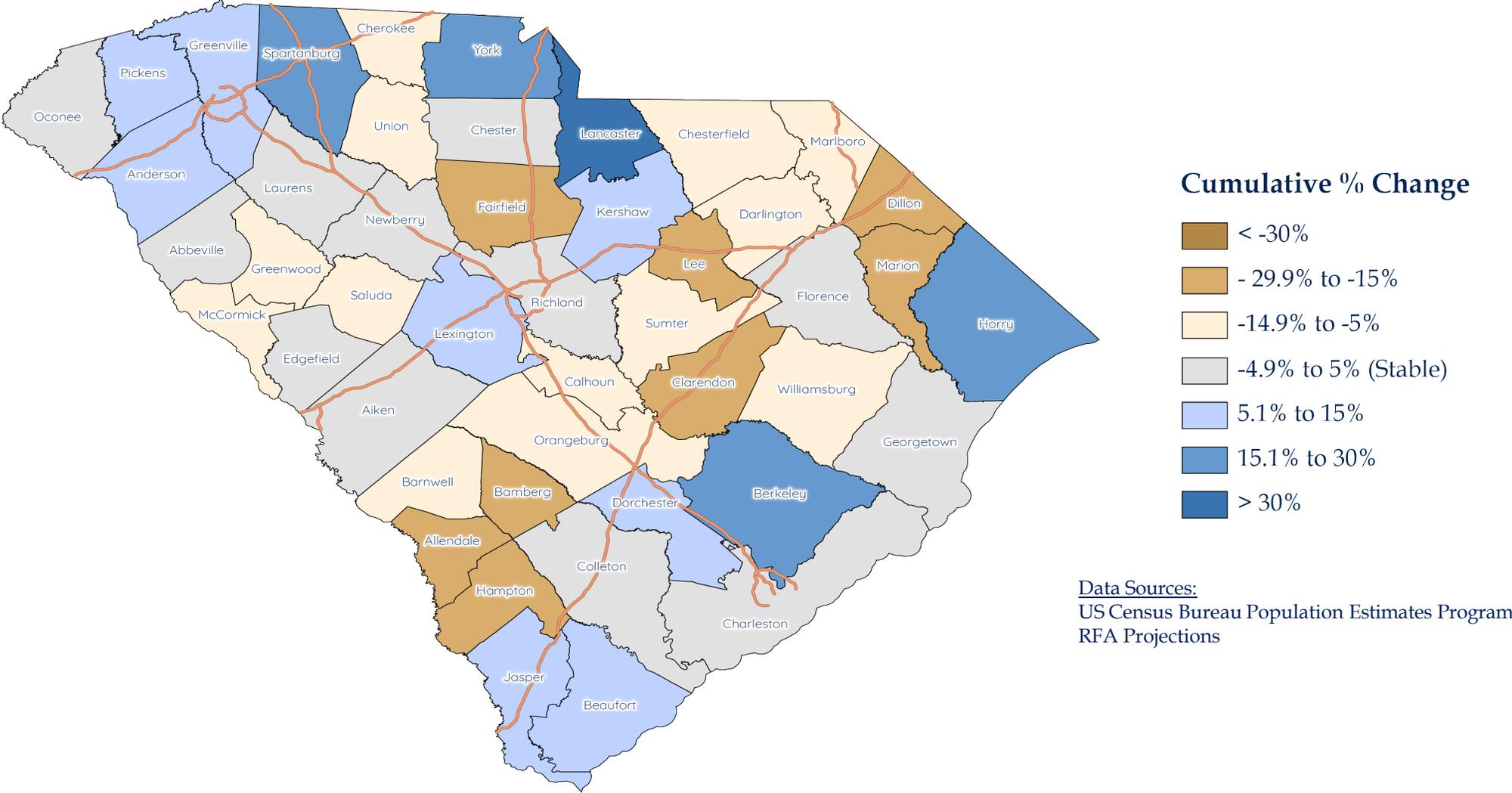


Source: US Census Bureau Estimates; RFA Projections



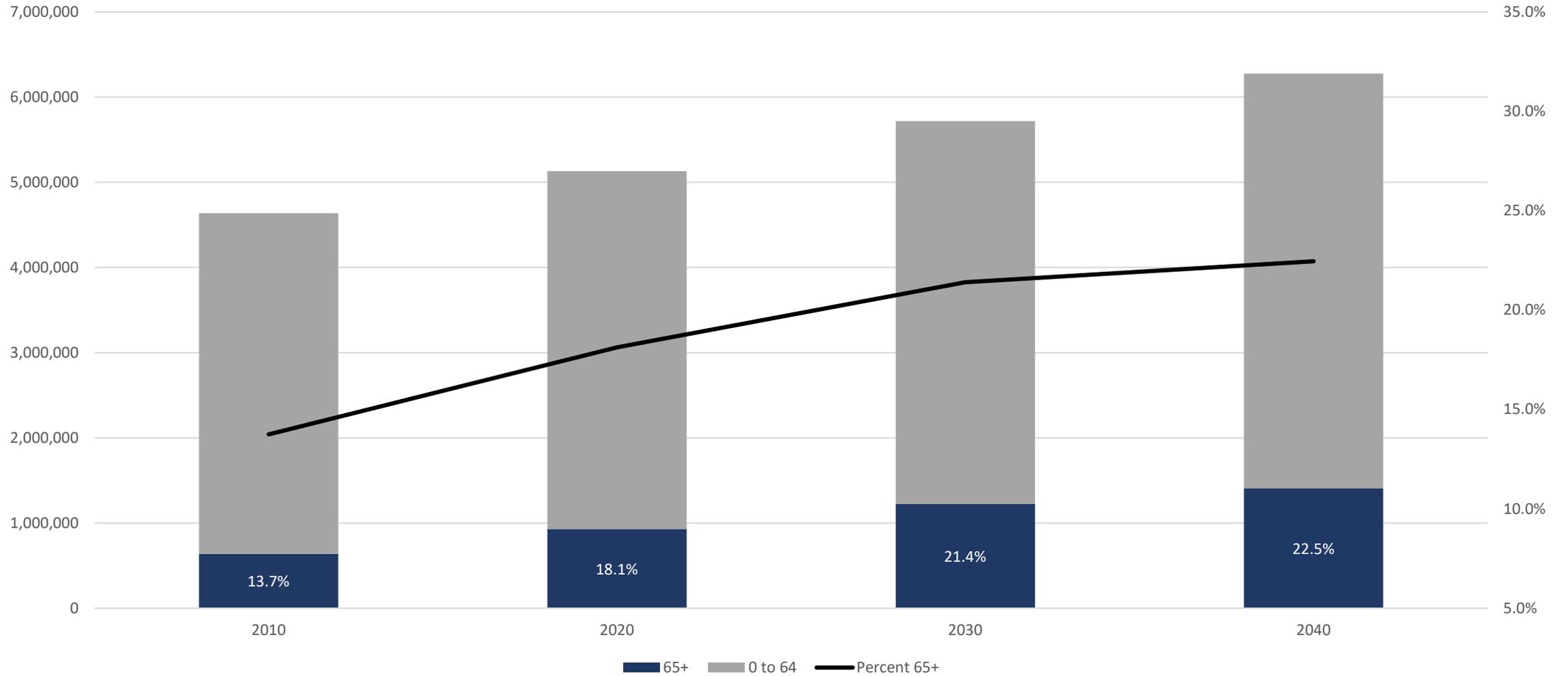
SC Estimated Workforce Age (18 – 64) Population, 2020 – 2030

Thirteen counties are projected to increase in this age group



SC Projected Age 65+ Population

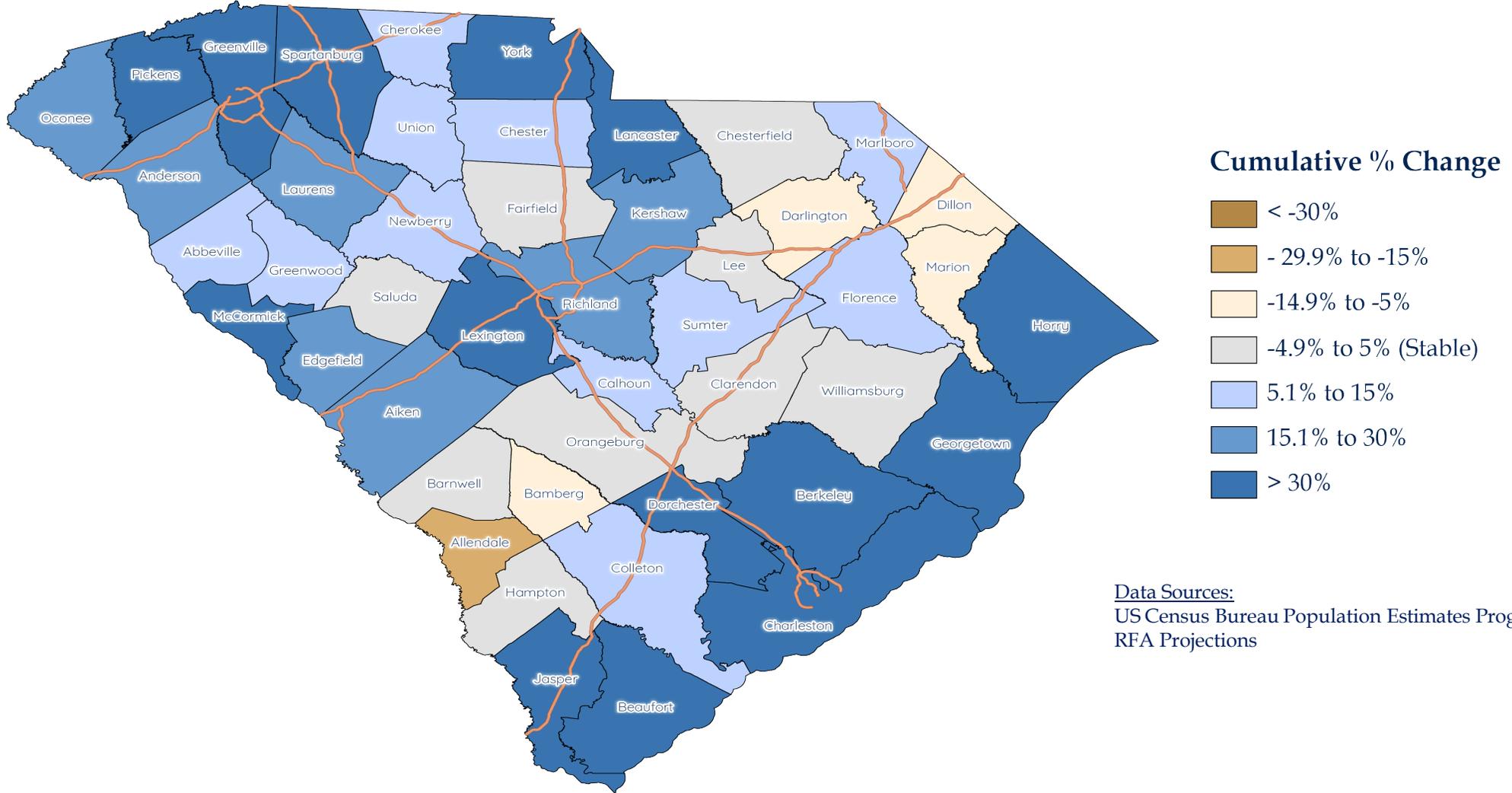
Projected to increase to over 22% of total population by 2040



Source: US Census Bureau Estimates; RFA Projections

SC Estimated Retirement Age (65+) Population, 2020 - 2030

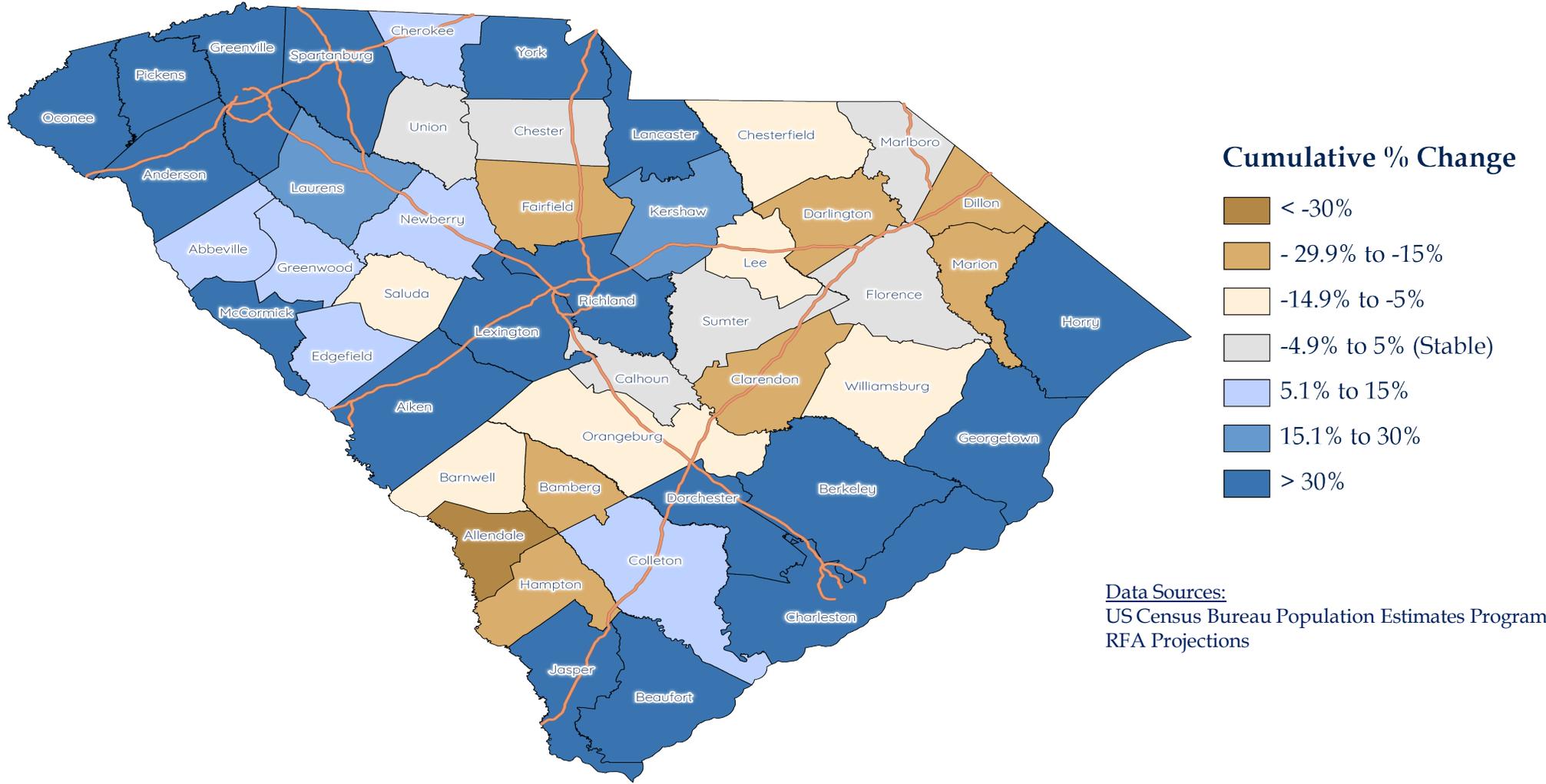
Thirty-two counties projected to increase in this age group



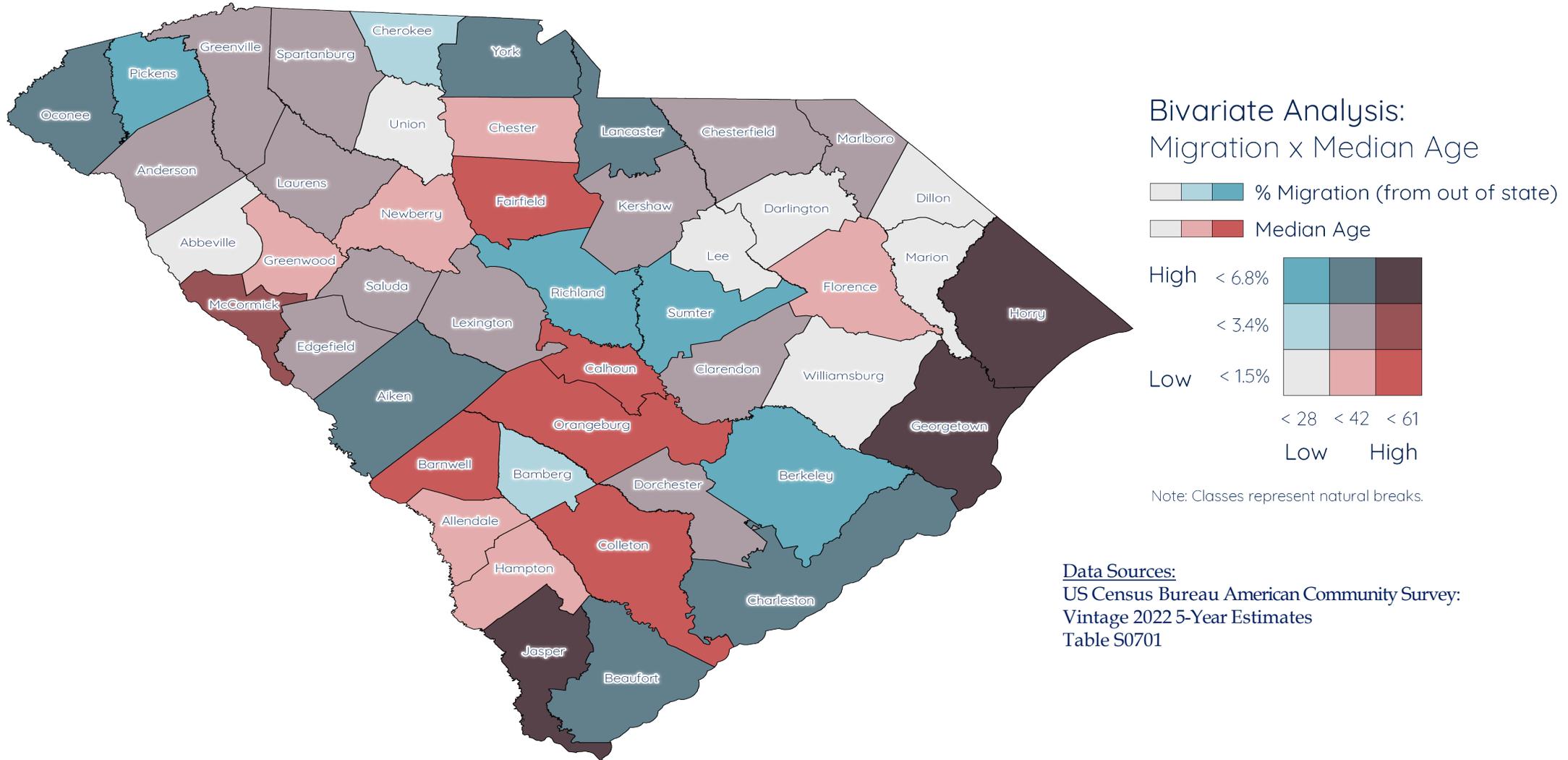
Data Sources:
US Census Bureau Population Estimates Program
RFA Projections

SC Estimated Retirement Age (65+) Population, 2020 - 2040

Twenty-Six counties projected to increase in this age group



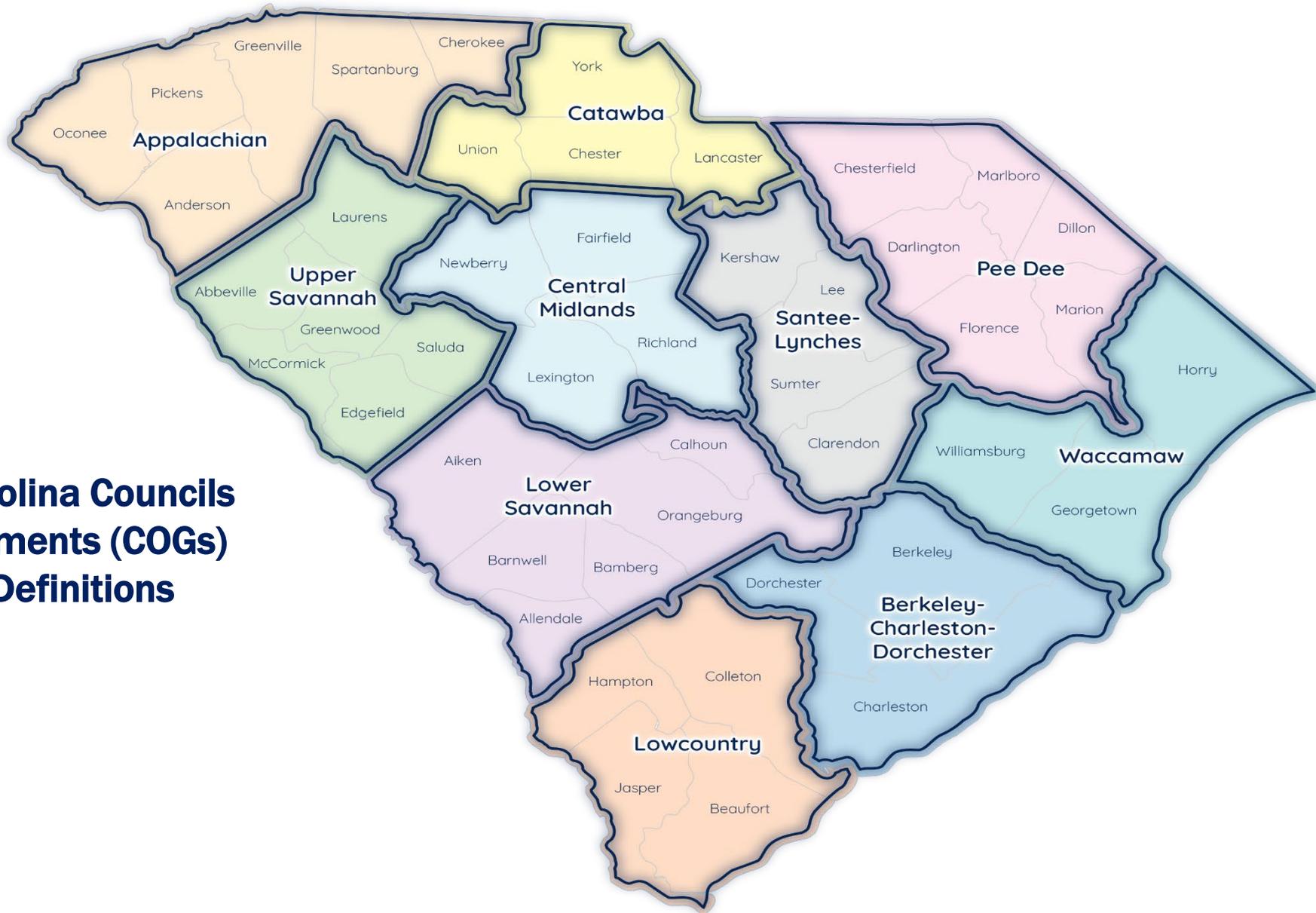
SC Bivariate Analysis of Population Migration and Age: 2022



COG and State Population Comparison By Age



South Carolina Councils of Governments (COGs) Regional Definitions



Projected Population Change by COG, 2020 to 2040

COG	2020 Population	2030 Projected Population	2030 Change	2030 Percent Change	2040 Projected Population	2040 Change	2040 Percent Change
Appalachian	1,327,511	1,548,227	220,716	17%	1,786,286	458,775	35%
BCD	803,475	912,993	109,518	14%	1,011,883	208,408	26%
Catawba	440,081	528,221	88,140	20%	624,298	184,217	42%
Central Midlands	769,336	816,312	46,976	6%	846,632	77,296	10%
Lowcountry	274,017	306,561	32,544	12%	329,615	55,598	20%
Lower Savannah	309,016	308,082	-934	0%	299,854	-9,162	-3%
PeeDee	326,774	302,419	-24,355	-7%	274,213	-52,561	-16%
Santee Lynches	218,446	211,834	-6,612	-3%	202,312	-16,134	-7%
Upper Savannah	215,307	215,290	-17	0%	210,458	-4,849	-2%
Waccamaw	448,188	569,438	121,250	27%	690,926	242,738	54%

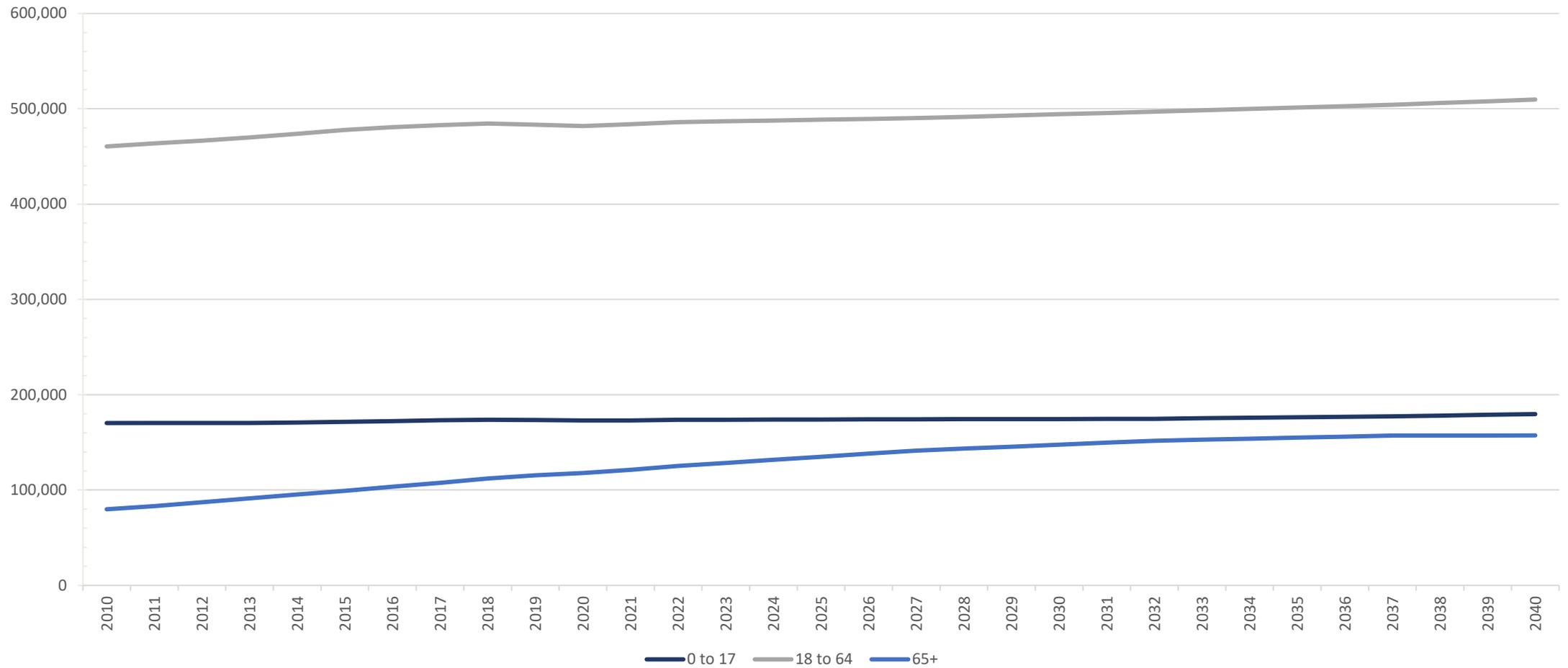
Source: US Census Bureau Population Estimates and RFA Population Projections



COGs With a Similar Pattern to the State

- In South Carolina, the 18 to 64 and 65 plus age groups are growing at a similar pace while the 0-17 population is projected to remain steady into the future.
- COGs with similar patterns:
 - Central Midlands

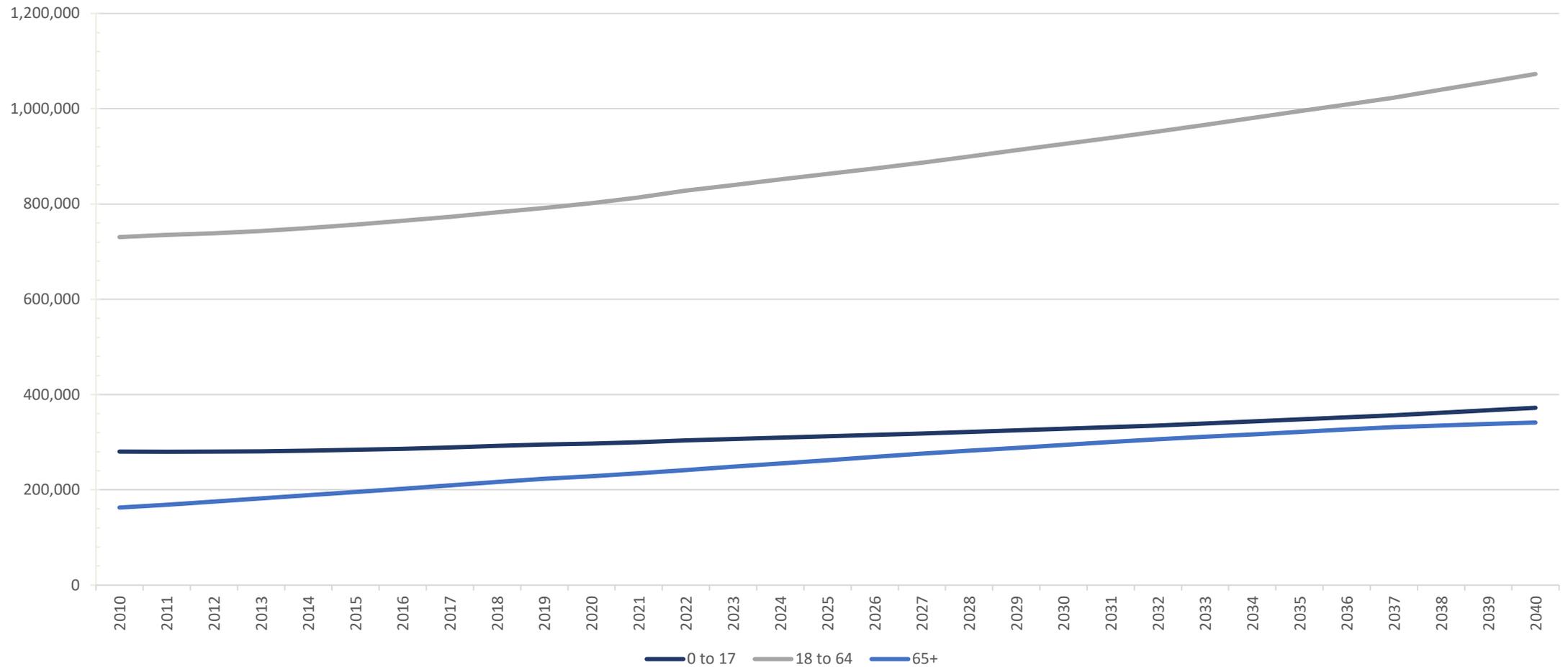
SC Population by Age Group – Central Midlands



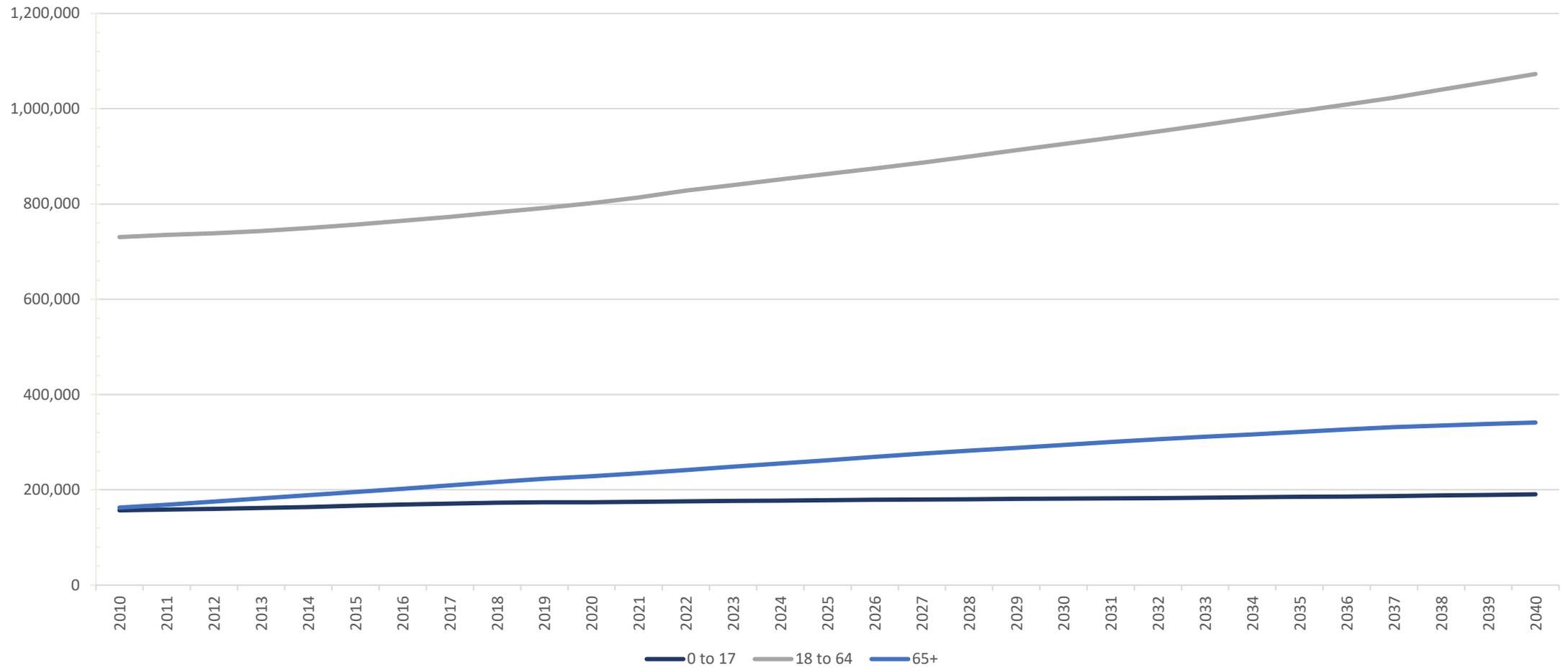
COGs With a Growing Workforce

- In these areas the 18 to 64 age group is projected to grow more quickly than the 0 to 17 or 65 plus age groups.
- COGs:
 - Appalachia
 - Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester
 - Catawba

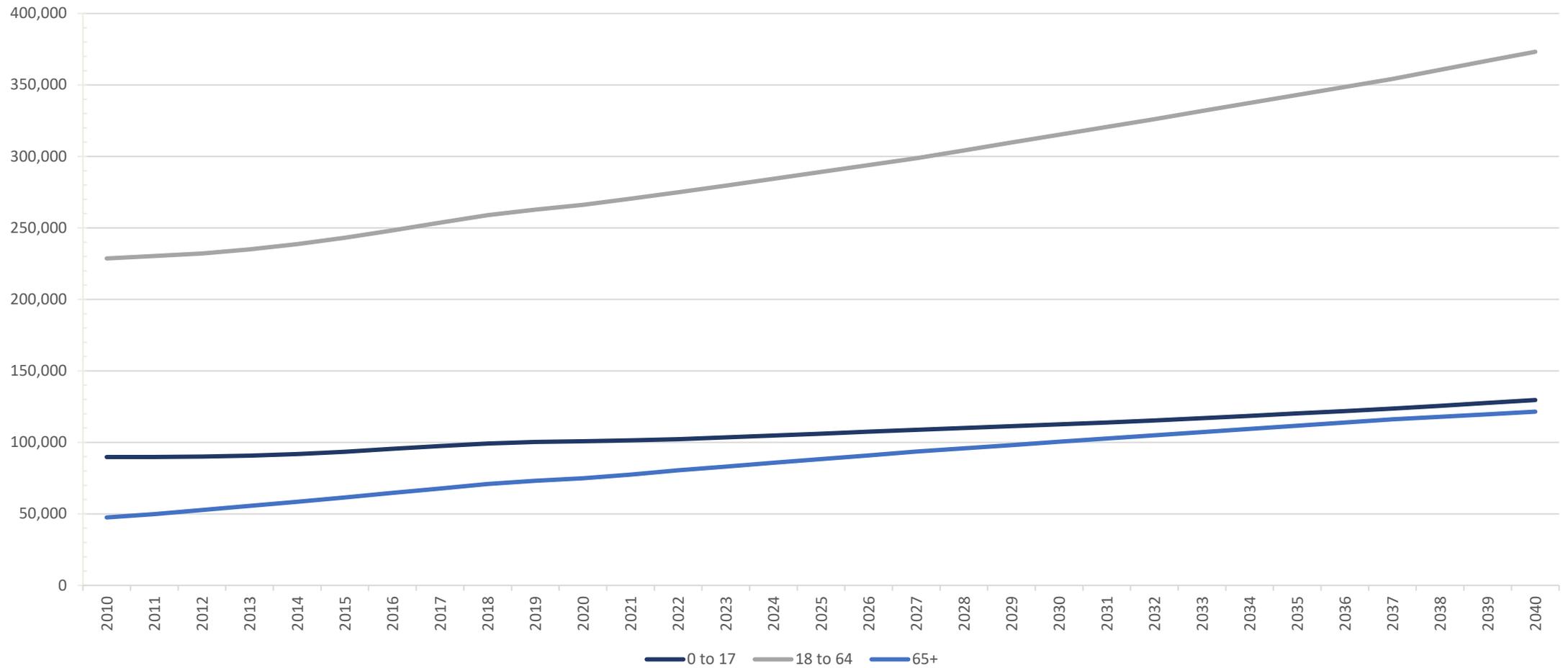
SC Population by Age Group - Appalachia



SC Population by Age Group – Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester



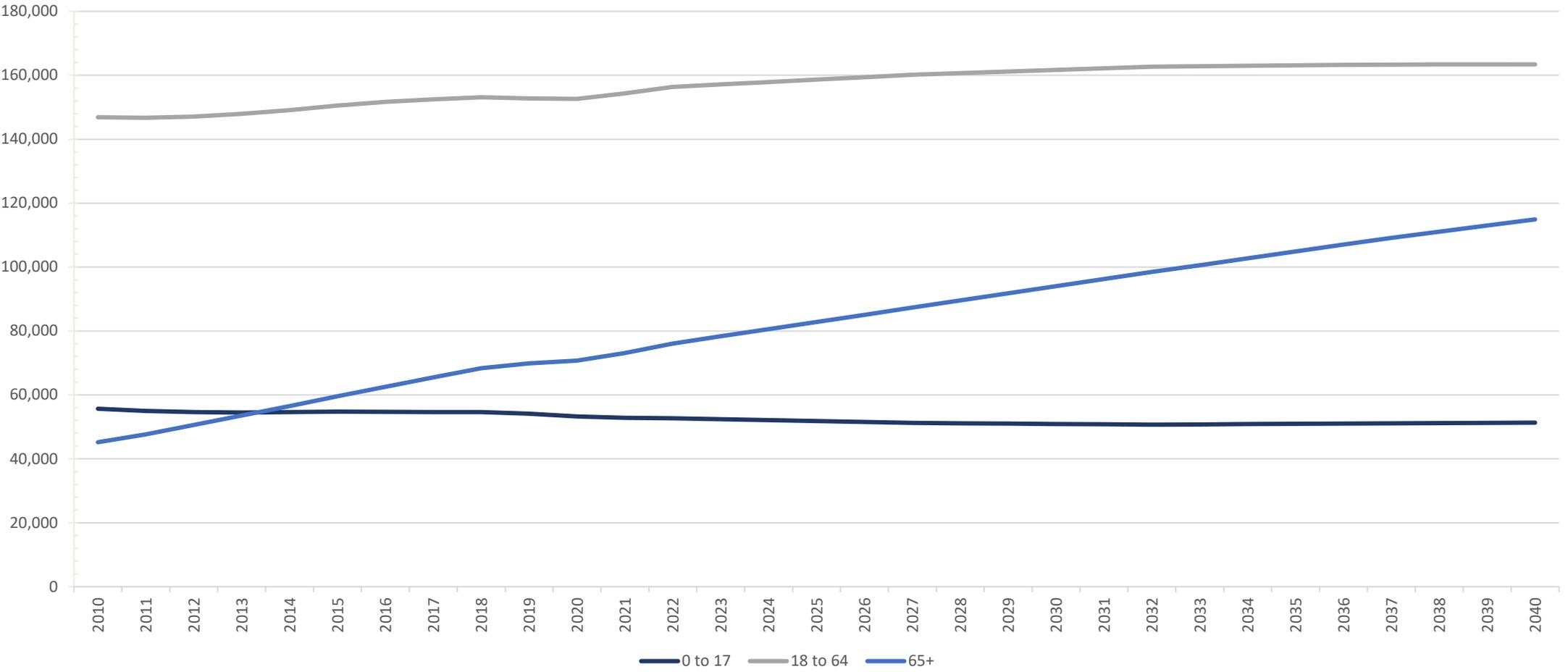
SC Population by Age Group - Catawba



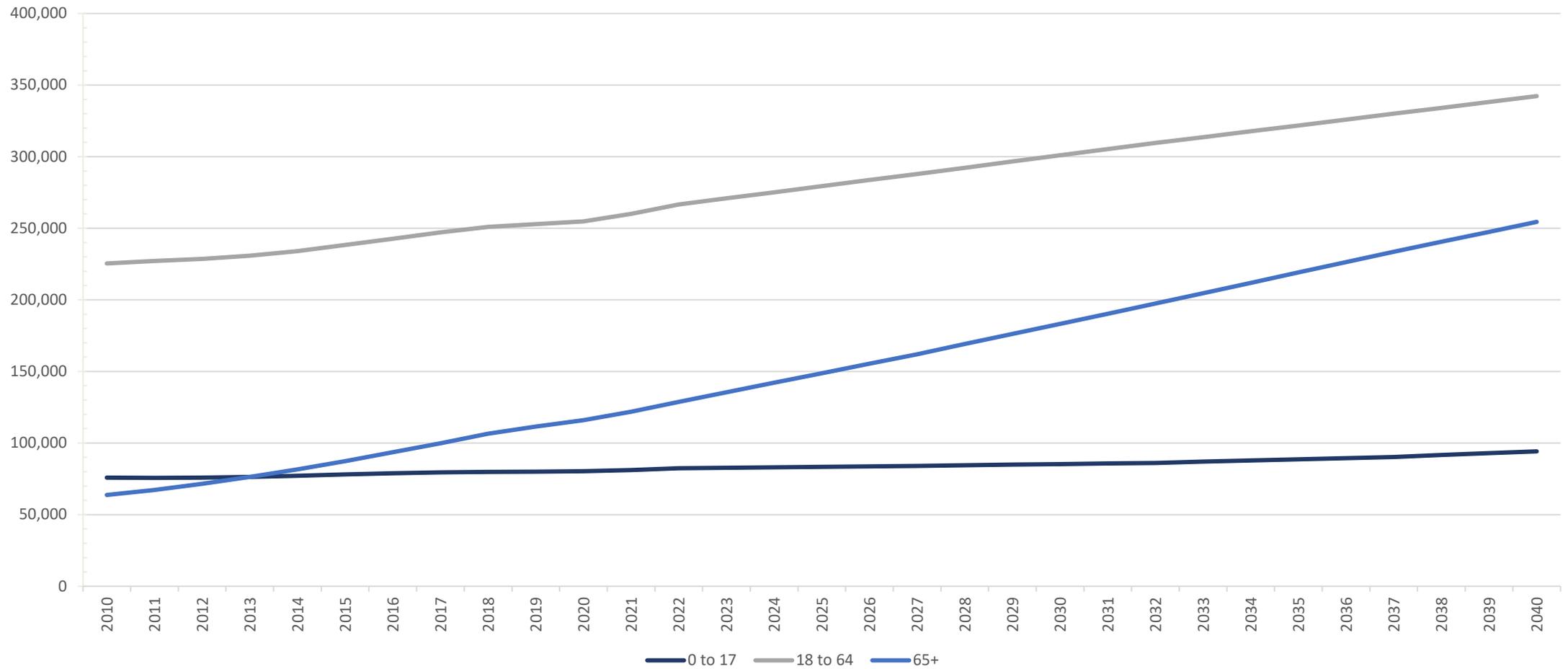
COGs With a Growing Population Over the Age of 65

- In these areas the number of potentially retired people is projected to grow much faster than the younger student or working age groups.
- COGs:
 - Lowcountry
 - Waccamaw

SC Population by Age Group - Lowcountry



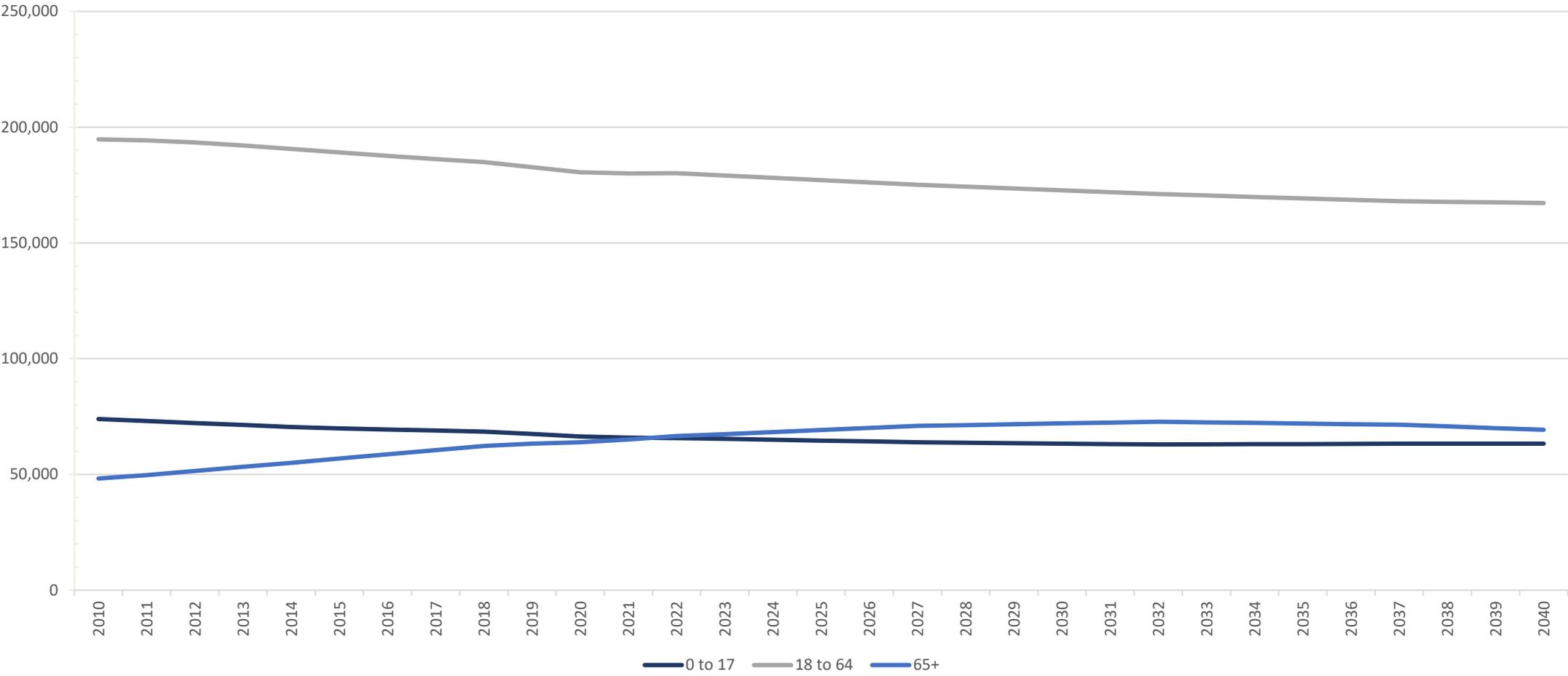
SC Population by Age Group - Waccamaw



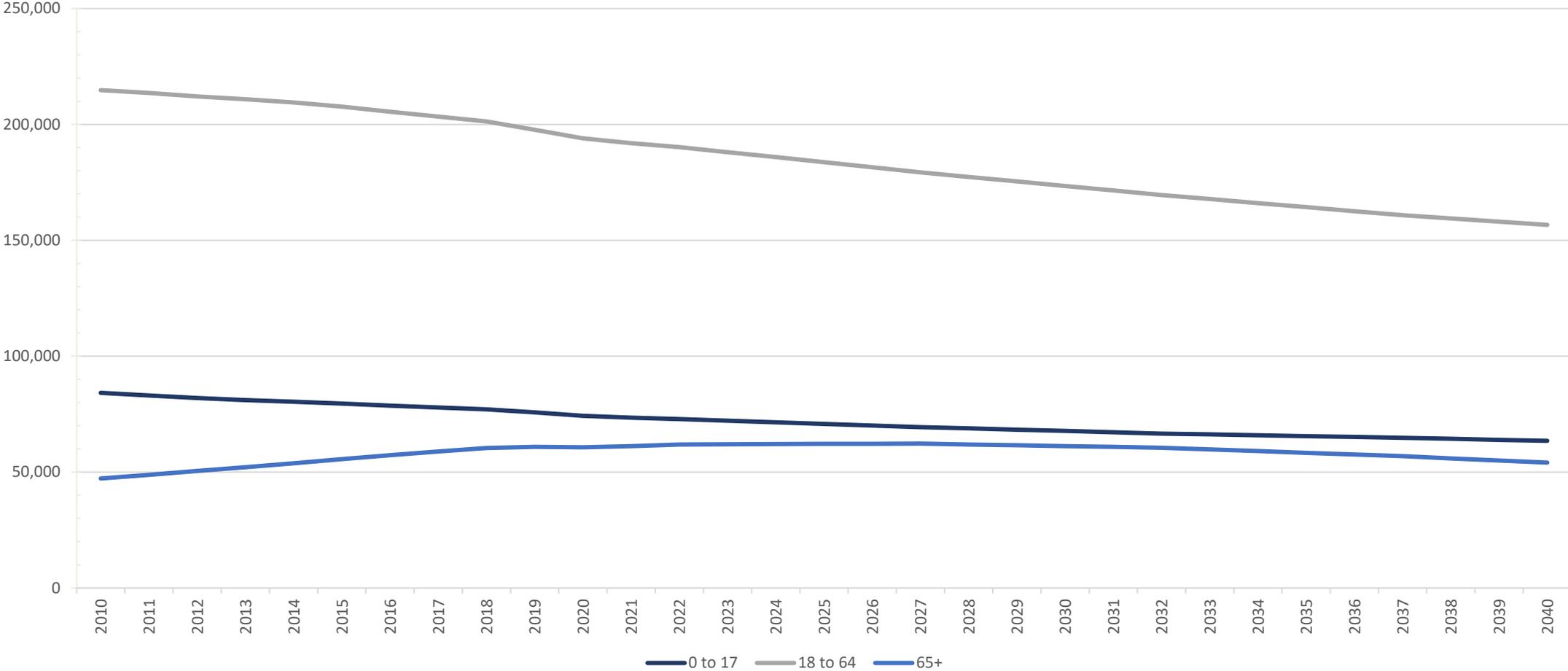
COGs Declining in Population Across All Age Groups

- The population in these areas is projected to decrease or remain stable across all age groups.
- COGs:
 - Lower Savannah
 - Upper Savannah
 - PeeDee
 - Santee Lynches

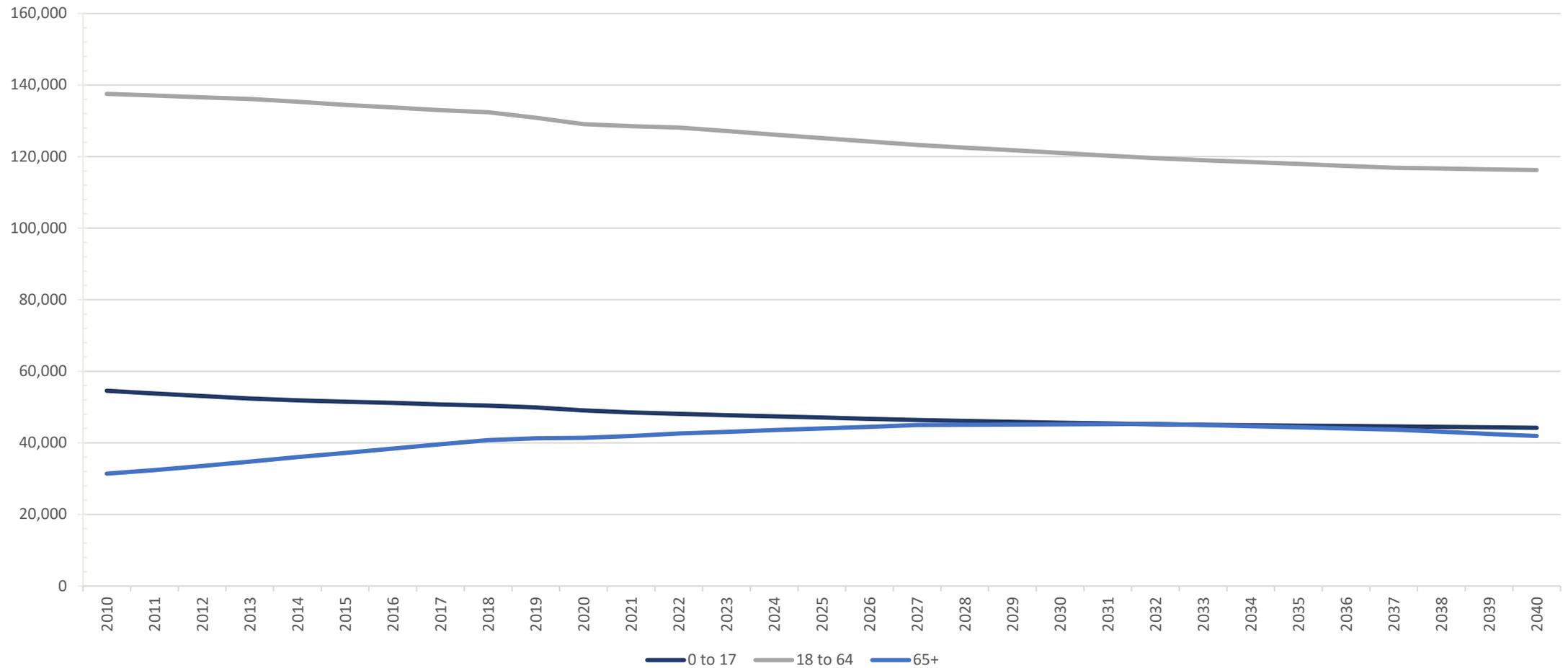
SC Population by Age Group – Lower Savannah



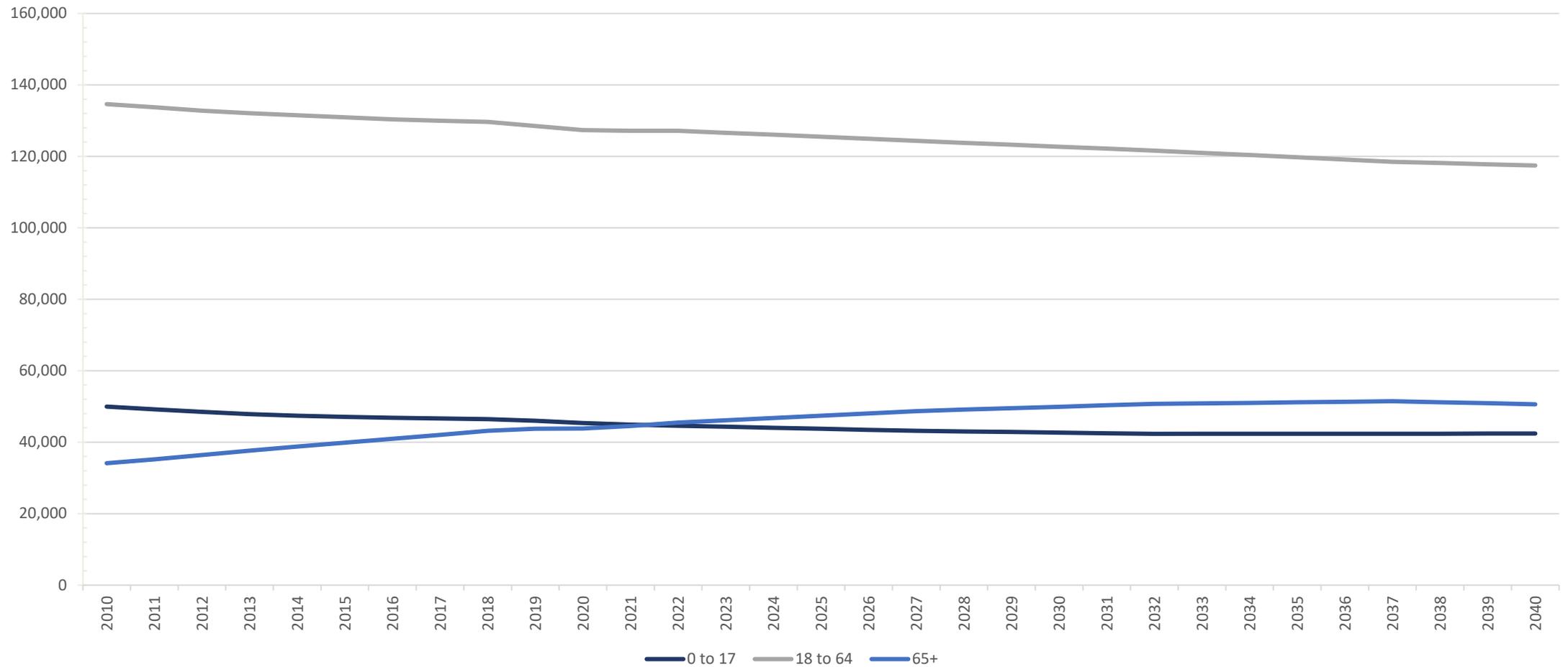
SC Population by Age Group – Pee Dee



SC Population by Age Group – Santee Lynches



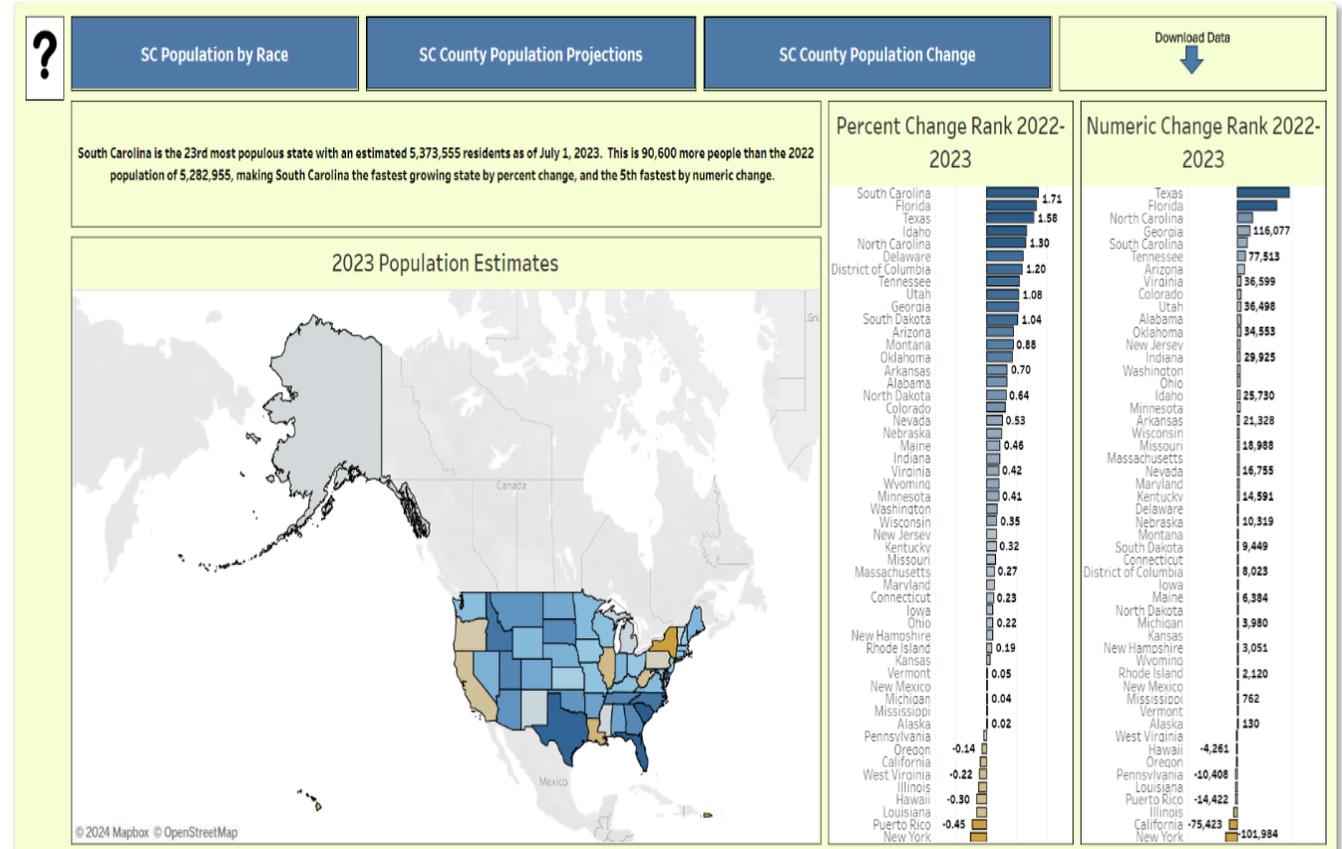
SC Population by Age Group – Upper Savannah



- **South Carolina Population Estimates and Projections**

- The South Carolina Census State Data Center at RFA is the U.S. Census Bureau's premier partner in our state for making census data more easily accessible, and for providing guidance in the use of Census Bureau data products.

- [Check out RFA's website to view the dashboard](#)



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