From 1980 to 2000 the population in Megalopolis grew by over 40.5%. Within the region the figures have a wide variation from 17.2% loss of population in Baltimore City to the massive 195.3% increase in Loudon VA.

Three distinct patterns can be noted. First, the central cities experienced either a decline or only modest increases. Joining Baltimore City in the declining category were Washington DC and Philadelphia which both saw population declines of approximately 10%. In all three cities there was a significant urban to suburban shift. In the metro areas of Boston and New York population increases were modest as in the 7.1% increase in Middlesex MA and the 7.6% increase in New York. While the absolute numbers are substantial the small relative increase also reflects growing suburbanization of the population.

Second, areas of decline were also noted in some of the more peripheral areas such as Lackawanna and Luzerne PA, and Berkshire MA where declines of 6% were recorded. Too far for large commuting and without dynamic economic growth these areas saw a loss of population.

Third, there was a significant area of growth in the southern part of the region. Around Washington and the Washington-Baltimore corridor. These formerly predominantly rural areas were transformed with an influx of jobs and people. In Howard MD, for example, which had increases of 109%, green fields were paved over with roads and houses of the new town of Columbia. In the northern Virginia counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania and Loudon growth rates reached well above 100%.