

POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU

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## FIRST RESULTS FROM THE 2010 CENSUS

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BY MARK MATHER,  
KELVIN POLLARD, AND  
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# FIRST RESULTS FROM THE 2010 CENSUS

Every 10 years, the United States conducts a census to look into the mirror and see how the nation has changed. On April 1, 2010, there were 308,745,538 people living in the United States, 27.3 million more than in 2000—a 9.7 percent increase. Although the U.S. population is still growing rapidly compared with most developed countries, the rate of growth from 2000 to 2010 was the lowest since the 1930s.

The 2010 Census repeated a process that has taken place each decade since 1790 and is a cornerstone of America’s democracy. State population counts from the census are used to reapportion seats in the House of Representatives across the 50 states, as required by the U.S. Constitution. State and local officials use census results to help redraw congressional, state, and local district boundaries to meet the one-person, one-vote rule. Planners analyze census data to determine the need for new roads, hospitals, schools, and businesses. And every year, census data are used to distribute more than \$400 billion in federal funds to states and local communities.

The Census Bureau conducted a “short-form only” census in 2010, marking a significant shift in decennial census operations (see Box, page 2). “10 Questions, 10 Minutes” was one of the slogans the Census Bureau used to encourage people to mail back their forms. With so few questions, the 2010 Census data are limited in scope, but they still provide a wealth of information about how the U.S.

population is changing. For example, where has the population increased or declined? What proportion of people are racial/ethnic minorities and how has this changed since 2000? What are the demographic characteristics of the population under age 18 and how do they compare with those in older age groups? Although the subject matter is limited, the census is rich in geographic detail, providing information for areas as small as city blocks.

In February and March of 2011, the Census Bureau released the first detailed data from the decennial census: the PL94-171 (redistricting) data. The redistricting data include information on the racial and ethnic characteristics of the total and voting-age (18 and older) populations, as well as data on the occupancy status of housing units.

In this report, we summarize some of the key findings from this first wave of data from the 2010 Census. We start by discussing trends in U.S. population growth, followed by the changing racial/ethnic characteristics of the population, and patterns of state and local population growth and decline. Later in 2011, more detailed data from the 2010 Census will be available on the Census Bureau’s website, [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

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## HOW THE 2010 CENSUS IS DIFFERENT

Just as the U.S. population has changed, so have the methods used to conduct the decennial census. In 1910, the decennial census enumerated 92.2 million people living in 46 states and Washington, D.C. The 1910 Census was conducted on April 15, cost \$16 million, and employed about 70,000 enumerators. In contrast, the 2010 Census enumerated the population as of April 1, counted nearly 309 million people living in the 50 states and Washington, D.C., cost \$12.9 billion—roughly \$100 per housing unit—and employed 635,000 enumerators.<sup>1</sup> Every decennial census from 1940 through 2000 used two questionnaires to collect information: a “short form” with only basic questions such as age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and relationship to the householder; and a “long form,” sent to a sample of households, that included the short-form questions plus more detailed items on socioeconomic and housing characteristics. However, the 2010 Census was a short-form-only census, ushering in the most significant change in decennial census operations in 70 years. For 2010, the decennial census long form was replaced by the American Community Survey (ACS)—a nationwide, continuous survey designed to provide reliable and timely demographic, housing, social, and economic data every year.

The Census Bureau introduced other changes to the 2010 Census to boost participation rates. The bureau expanded its paid advertising program, first introduced in Census 2000, to increase awareness of the census and motivate people to mail back their forms. And for the first time, the Census Bureau sent bilingual questionnaires to predominantly Spanish-speaking neighborhoods and—after an initial period of time—replacement questionnaires to residents in hard-to-count areas with historically low response rates. The use of bilingual and replacement questionnaires increased mail response rates, reduced the Census Bureau’s nonresponse follow-up workload, and saved millions of dollars.<sup>2</sup>

Evaluation of the 2000 Census data revealed a large number of duplicate records—around 5.8

million—so the Census Bureau took extra precautions in 2010 to reduce erroneous enumerations.<sup>3</sup> The 2010 Census included two new questions designed to improve the accuracy of the census count by making sure that people were counted only once and in the right place:

- Were there any additional people staying here April 1, 2010, that you did not include in Question 1?
- Does Person X sometimes live or stay somewhere else?

The 2020 Census is sure to bring even more changes, including a possible Internet response option and the use of administrative data—such as birth and death records—to fill in some of the data gaps for households that cannot be reached through traditional methods.<sup>4</sup> Both of these changes are intended to reduce the costs of conducting an accurate census, which have nearly doubled in each census since 1970. The Government Accountability Office projects that the 2020 Census could cost \$25 billion unless the Census Bureau introduces more cost-effective methods to enumerate the population.<sup>5</sup>

### References

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Fast Facts,” accessed at [www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/fast\\_facts](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/fast_facts), on April 17, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Groves and Frank Vitrano, “The Decennial Census and the ACS: Looking Back and Looking Ahead,” presentation at the Population Reference Bureau, March 16, 2011, accessed at [www.prb.org/pdf11/policy-seminar-groves-vitrano-march-2011.pdf](http://www.prb.org/pdf11/policy-seminar-groves-vitrano-march-2011.pdf), on April 15, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Mule, “A.C.E. Revision II Results: Further Study of Person Duplication,” accessed at [www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/pp-51r.pdf](http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/pp-51r.pdf), on April 17, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Groves and Vitrano, “The Decennial Census and the ACS.”

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Preliminary Lessons Learned Highlight the Need for Fundamental Reforms,” testimony of Robert Goldenkoff before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, April 6, 2011.

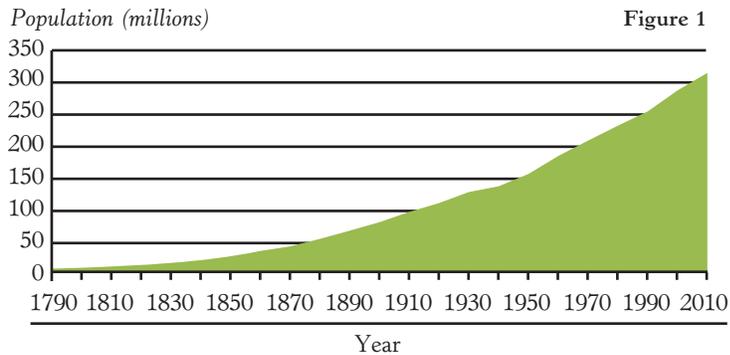
# POPULATION CHANGE

The U.S. population has increased each decade since the inaugural census of 1790, when there were 3.9 million people living in the United States (see Figure 1). By 1920, the census had recorded more than 100 million people, and by 1970, we had passed the 200 million mark. The 2010 Census shows that the U.S. population now exceeds 300 million. Although the pace of population growth has slowed compared with the 1990s, the increase in population from 2000 to 2010 was the third-largest in U.S. history. During the past decade, 27.3 million people were added to the U.S. population.

U.S. population growth fluctuated during the 20th century, ranging from a low of 7 percent during the 1930s to a high of 19 percent during the 1950s. The 10 percent growth since 2000 continues the relatively steady population growth in the United States since the 1940s—the decade that marked the beginning of the post-World War II baby boom. By the mid-1960s, the baby boom had subsided but was replaced by rising immigration levels. In recent decades, immigrants and their children have fueled continuing population growth in the United States, even as the fertility rate dropped to replacement level, at around 2.1 births per woman. Between 2000 and 2010, the growth of the population under age 18—at 1.9 million—was driven entirely by racial/ethnic minorities (see Box figure, page 5).

At 309 million people, the United States remains the world's third-largest country. Although it is well behind China and India,

THE U.S. RESIDENT POPULATION HAS INCREASED EACH DECADE SINCE THE INAUGURAL CENSUS IN 1790.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

EUROPE'S POPULATION GROWTH WAS ONE-SIXTH THE GROWTH OF THE UNITED STATES FROM 2000 TO 2010

**Table 1**

	Population (millions)		Percent change
	2000	2010	
<b>United States</b>	<b>281.4</b>	<b>308.7</b>	<b>9.7</b>
<b>Europe</b>	<b>726.8</b>	<b>738.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Russia	146.8	143.0	-2.6
Germany	82.3	82.3	-0.1
France	59.0	62.8	6.3
United Kingdom	58.9	62.0	5.4
Italy	57.0	60.6	6.3
Spain	40.3	46.1	14.4
Ukraine	48.9	45.4	-7.0
Poland	38.3	38.3	-0.1
Romania	22.2	21.5	-3.2
Netherlands	15.9	16.6	4.7

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Censuses; and United Nations Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, CD-ROM edition (2011)*.

the United States is the largest of the more developed countries. Russia, with 143 million people, comes closest in size, but its numbers are dwindling because it has more deaths than births each year.

Japan, at 127 million, is in third place among the more developed countries but faces a similar demographic predicament due to the rapid aging of its population.

Europe is likely to be the first

## TRENDS IN THE CHILD POPULATION

BY WILLIAM P. O'HARE

In 2010, there were 74.2 million people under age 18 in the United States—an all-time high. However, at 24 percent, the proportion of U.S. residents who are children is at an all-time low. Children accounted for 40 percent of Americans in 1900, but the under-18 share has not reached that level since. Even during the height of the baby boom in 1960, only 36 percent of the population was under age 18. And by 2010, just 50 years later, this share had fallen an additional 12 percentage points to just under one-fourth of the total U.S. population (see table). Population aging is not unique to the United States, and in many developed countries—including Japan, France, Germany, and Canada—the share of the population under age 18 is substantially lower than in the United States.

Nationwide, the number of children grew by only 1.9 million between 2000 and 2010. This increase contrasts sharply with the 1990s, when the child population grew by almost 9 million—not to mention the 1950s, when the United States added 17.5 million children to the population during the peak “baby boom” years (see table). Yet the modest growth since 2000 also contrasts with the 1970s and 1980s, when the number of children actually declined. Two demographic trends account for the long-term changes in the number and share of children. First, the movement toward

smaller families over the past century meant fewer children were born in recent decades compared with early in the 20th century. Second, increases in life expectancy have led to a larger adult population relative to those under age 18.

Unlike the 1950s baby boom when the number of children grew because of more births to mostly non-Hispanic white parents, all of the increase since 2000 has been fueled by minority population growth (see figure, page 5). Between 2000 and 2010, the number of non-Hispanic white children in the United States actually declined 10 percent to 39.7 million, while the number of minority children increased 22 percent to 34.5 million. Hispanic children accounted for most of the minority child population growth, increasing by 39 percent from 12.3 million in 2000 to 17.1 million in 2010. There was also rapid growth in the number of Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and multiracial children, while the number of African American and American Indian children declined during the 2000s.

The modest growth of the child population between 2000 and 2010 was not spread evenly across the country. The number of children increased at least 10 percent in nine states: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, Utah, and Texas. However, 23 states and Washington, D.C., experienced declines, with

THE PERCENTAGE OF THE U.S. POPULATION UNDER AGE 18 HAS DECLINED SINCE 1910.

Year	Population under age 18		Change over previous decade	
	Number (thousands)	Percent	Number (thousands)	Percent
1910	35,061	37.9	4,346	14.1
1920	39,622	37.2	4,561	13.0
1930	43,008	34.9	3,386	8.5
1940	40,359	30.5	-2,649	-6.2
1950	47,060	31.0	6,701	16.6
1960	64,525	35.7	17,465	37.1
1970	69,702	34.0	5,177	8.0
1980	63,755	28.1	-5,947	-8.5
1990	63,604	25.6	-151	-0.2
2000	72,294	25.7	8,690	13.7
2010	74,182	24.3	1,887	2.6

Sources: 1990 to 2000 data were taken from William P. O'Hare, "The Child Population: First Data From the 2000 Census," accessed at [www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org), on April 20, 2011; 2010 data derived from U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Census Bureau Delivers Final State Census Population Totals for Legislative Redistricting," CB-11-CN.123, March 24, 2011.

Michigan, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, D.C., losing 10 percent or more of their child populations over the decade.<sup>1</sup> The child population is growing most rapidly in states where child well-being is among the worst in the country. For example, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas all rank in the bottom third of states in terms of child well-being based on the *KIDS COUNT Data Book*.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, many of the states where children are faring the best—such as Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Vermont—saw their child populations decrease

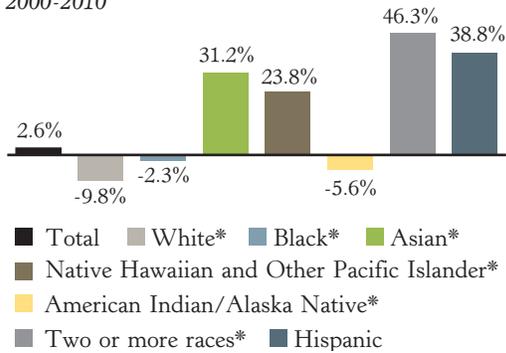
over the past decade.

Demographic changes in the size and characteristics of the child population have important implications for the future of the United States. Although the share of children in the population is projected to remain at its current level (24 percent) over the next 20 years, the share who are ages 65 and older is projected to rise from 13 percent to 19 percent over that same period. The increasing costs of providing for an older population may reduce the public resources that go to children. Additionally, some of the subgroups of children that have grown most rapidly over the past decade tend to have the highest poverty and school dropout rates and lowest standardized test performance. These trends raise questions about whether today's children will have the resources they need to support America's burgeoning elderly population.

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MINORITIES FUELED THE INCREASE IN CHILD POPULATION FROM 2000 TO 2010.

Percent change in the population under age 18, 2000-2010



\*Non-Hispanic

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Censuses.

References

<sup>1</sup> William P. O'Hare, "What the First Data From the 2010 Census Tell Us About the Changing Child Population of the United States," Annie E. Casey Foundation Working Paper (Baltimore: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011), available at [www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org). State population gains and losses were rounded to the nearest whole percent.

<sup>2</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation, *KIDS COUNT Data Book* (Baltimore: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010).

world region in history to experience long-term population decline resulting from low fertility rates.<sup>1</sup> Europe's population grew just 1.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, about one-sixth the population growth in the United States (see Table 1, page 3). In addition to Russia, several other large European countries experienced population loss since 2000, including Germany, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine.

Whereas the U.S. population is projected to increase at least until 2050, the combined population of the other more-developed countries is projected to decline beginning in 2016.<sup>2</sup> Recent population projections put the U.S. population at 400 million by 2039; however, the rate of increase depends largely on future trends in immigration.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. population could increase to 399

million, 423 million, or 458 million by 2050—depending on immigration trends over the next 40 years.<sup>4</sup>

Future immigration levels in the United States are hard to predict because they depend on a complex mix of "push" and "pull" factors. Historically, the United States has been attractive to immigrants because of its strong economy and demand for both low-skilled and high-skilled workers. The availability of work in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing has attracted millions of low-skilled workers from Latin America, especially Mexico. Many Asians come to the United States to attend college or pursue careers in science and technology and, in 2009, more than two-thirds of Asian Americans were foreign-born.<sup>5</sup> However, immigration levels have dropped since

the onset of the recession in 2007, mostly due to a decline in new arrivals rather than immigrants returning to their home countries.<sup>6</sup> Future immigration trends depend on the availability of jobs as well as changes in federal and state immigration laws.

## HOW ACCURATE?

Because the census results are so important, the accuracy of the data has come under increased scrutiny. The Census Bureau uses several programs to measure the accuracy and completeness of the data. The most important is the Census Coverage Measurement Program, which is using a post-enumeration survey

to measure coverage error and the extent to which people were missed or counted more than once. Results from that survey will not be available until 2012; however, we do have some preliminary indications about accuracy from two other sources: the Census Bureau’s population estimates program and demographic analysis.

The Census Bureau’s population estimates program produced independent estimates of the total population for the nation, states, and counties in 2010, which can be compared with results from the 2010 Census enumeration. These 2010 estimates put the U.S. population at 308.5 million, just 300,000 fewer people than the official 2010 Census count. Most estimates of total population by state were also closely aligned with results from the 2010 Census. (Exceptions were Arizona, with a census count that was 4 percent lower than expected; and Hawaii, which came in 5 percent higher than expected.)<sup>7</sup> This is a significant improvement compared with 2000, when the national population count—at

281 million—was 7 million people higher than expected based on population estimates.

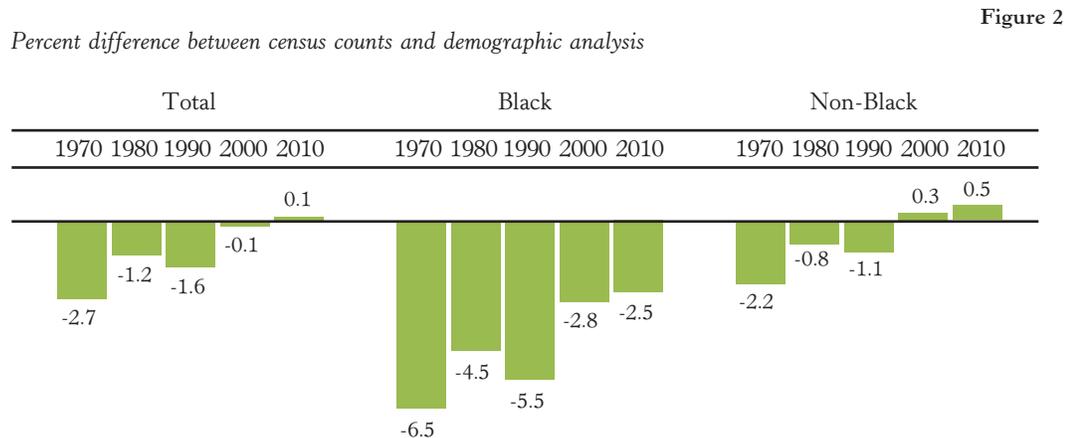
Historically, demographic analysis has been considered one of the best ways to gauge the accuracy of the census. Demographic analysis uses administrative records to produce independent estimates of the national population by age, sex, and race. Given the complexity of these procedures, however, these estimates have been subject to errors and revisions, particularly as estimation procedures have improved over the years.<sup>8</sup>

The demographic analysis “middle series” estimate of the total population in 2010—308.5 million—was very closely aligned with the 2010 Census national total.<sup>9</sup> However, this national comparison obscures important variations in coverage across different subgroups of the population. The census has historically missed a higher percentage of minorities and children, and this trend continued in 2010.<sup>10</sup> Demographic analysis shows that the 2010 Census had a net undercount of African Americans of 2.5 percent

(see Figure 2), while for other racial groups, there was a slight net overcount of 0.5 percent. This is an improvement over recent censuses, but still represents nearly 1 million African Americans who were missed. The results also showed that more than 1 million children under age 18 (1.7 percent) may have been missed in the 2010 Census.<sup>11</sup>

Hispanics are another group that is disproportionately missed in the census. Tracking the rapid growth of the Latino population is not an easy task, since many Hispanics were born outside of the United States, may be undocumented, and may have difficulty speaking English. However, it is likely that the Census Bureau’s use of bilingual questionnaires in Spanish-speaking communities improved response rates for the Latino population.<sup>12</sup> We will know more about the census undercount for Hispanics (and other segments in the population) when data from the Census Coverage Measurement Program are released in 2012.

BLACKS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE MISSED IN THE CENSUS,  
BUT THE COVERAGE GAP HAS IMPROVED OVER TIME.



Source: Victoria Velkoff, “Demographic Evaluation of the 2010 Census,” paper presented at the Population Association of America Annual Meetings in Washington, D.C., March 2011.

# GROWING RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

The rapid growth in the U.S. Latino population during the past several decades has been one of the most significant demographic trends in U.S. history. In 2010 there were 50 million Hispanics living in the United States, making up nearly one in six U.S. residents (see Table 2). The Latino population increased 43 percent since 2000 and has more than doubled since 1990. Latinos—and, to a lesser extent, Asian Americans and people

who identify with more than one race—are contributing to a rapid increase in racial/ethnic minorities in the U.S. population. Between 2000 and 2010, the non-Hispanic white population fell from 69 percent to 64 percent. Overall, minorities accounted for 92 percent of the total U.S. population growth during the past decade, and Hispanics accounted for over half of the increase.

Asian American population growth matched that of Hispanics,

with a 43 percent increase since 2000. But Asians still make up a relatively small share of the total U.S. population—less than 5 percent—compared with Latinos (16 percent). Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Asians added to the population (4.3 million) exceeded the increase in African Americans (3.7 million). Asian population growth often is overshadowed by the rapid increase in Hispanics, but the Census Bureau projects that Asians will make up a grow-

MINORITIES, ESPECIALLY HISPANICS,  
MAKE UP A GROWING SHARE OF THE U.S. POPULATION.

Table 2

Population group	2000		2010	
	Number (thousands)	Percent	Number (thousands)	Percent
<b>Total</b>	281,422	100.0	308,746	100.0
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>				
White	194,553	69.1	196,818	63.7
Black	33,948	12.1	37,686	12.2
Asian	10,123	3.6	14,465	4.7
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	354	0.1	482	0.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	2,069	0.7	2,247	0.7
Some Other Race	468	0.2	604	0.2
Two or more races	4,602	1.6	5,966	1.9
<b>Hispanic</b>	35,306	12.5	50,478	16.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Censuses.

ing share of the population in the coming decades. Like Hispanics, Asians are a diverse group with a wide range of national origins, cultures, and languages. Census 2010 data from Summary File 1, to be released starting in June 2011, will provide more detailed demographic portraits of the Asian American and Latino populations.

Immigration is the driving force behind these racial/ethnic changes. Immigrants with different racial and ethnic characteristics than the U.S.-born population contribute directly to minority population growth. Immigrants also contribute to racial/ethnic change through family formation and childbearing after they arrive in the country. Fertility rates among Asian American women are relatively low, at around 2.1 births per women, but the Latina fertility rate, at 2.9 births per woman, is significantly higher than the national average (2.1).<sup>13</sup>

The rapid increase in racial/ethnic minorities has put the United States on a fast track toward “majority-minority” status, when less than half of the U.S. population will be non-Hispanic white. The latest Census Bureau projections show the country passing that threshold in 2042.<sup>14</sup> However, the exact year the United States reaches majority-minority status depends in large part on future trends in immigration and fertility rates.

## CHANGING VIEWS OF RACE

The census questions about race and ethnicity have evolved over time, as have Americans’ views about racial and ethnic identification.<sup>15</sup> A century ago, enumerators in the 1910 Census were instructed

to identify people as “White,” “Black,” “Mulatto,” “Chinese,” “Japanese,” “American Indian,” or “Other.”<sup>16</sup> Through the 1950 Census, census enumerators’ personal observations, rather than individuals’ self-identification, still determined most racial/ethnic classification. The 1980 Census was the first to include a separate question about Spanish/Hispanic origin on the short-form questionnaire.<sup>17</sup> Yet 30 years later, many Latinos still do not distinguish between race and ethnicity as defined by the federal government.<sup>18</sup> Many Hispanics use the “Some Other Race” category to express their nationalities—for example, Mexican or Salvadoran—which for them have more meaning than the

Hispanic designation. In 2010, 37 percent of Hispanics marked “Some Other Race,” compared with only 0.2 percent of the non-Hispanic population.

Although many Hispanics remain ambivalent about racial classification, the share of Latinos identifying themselves as white increased between 2000 and 2010, from 48 percent to 53 percent. This trend could be linked to new instructions on the 2010 Census questionnaire that read, “For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.” Another factor may be the rising share of Hispanics who are born in the United States.<sup>19</sup> U.S.-born Latino children of immigrants are more likely to identify themselves as white, compared with their first-

NINE MILLION PEOPLE SELECTED MORE THAN ONE RACE IN THE 2010 CENSUS.

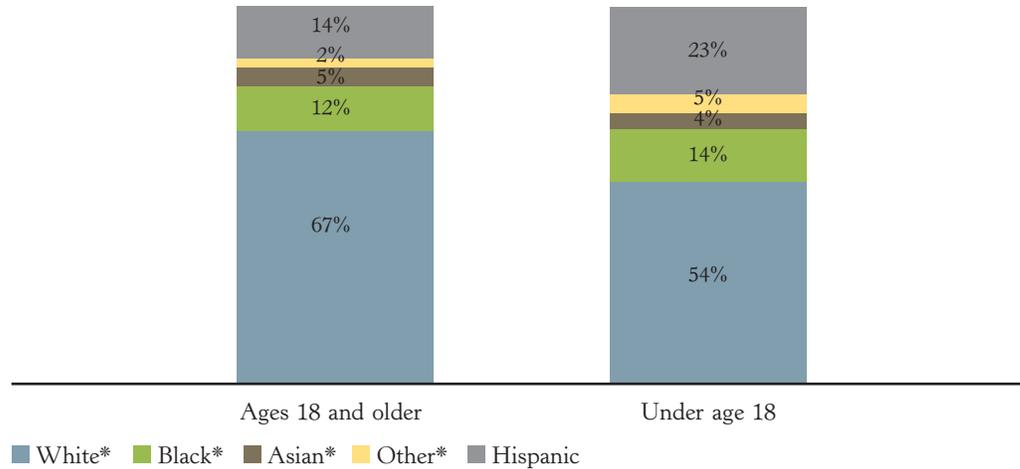
	Population (thousands)	Percent
<b>Two or more races</b>	9,009	
<b>Most common racial combinations in 2010</b>		
White and Black	1,834	20.4
White and Some Other Race	1,741	19.3
White and Asian	1,623	18.0
White and American Indian/ Alaska Native	1,432	15.9
Black and Some Other Race	315	3.5
Black and American Indian/ Alaska Native	269	3.0
Asian and Some Other Race	234	2.6
White, Black, and American Indian/ Alaska Native	231	2.6
Black and Asian	186	2.1
White and NHOPI*	170	1.9

\*NHOPI = Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

CHILDREN ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE RACIAL/ETHNIC MINORITIES THAN ADULTS.

Figure 3

Percent of the population in each racial/ethnic group, 2010



\*Non-Hispanic.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

generation parents.<sup>20</sup> As more Hispanics become familiar with U.S. traditions and culture, the share who identify themselves as white (or other racial groups) is likely to increase.

The 2000 Census was the first to include the option for people to select more than one race. The 2010 Census counted 9 million people who identified with two or more races, up from 5.8 million a decade earlier.<sup>21</sup> This included 2.6 million people who reported “Some Other Race” in combination with one or more other races (84 percent of whom were Hispanic). People who reported their race as white in combination with black, Some Other Race, Asian, or American Indian made up nearly three-fourths of the total population selecting two or more races (see Table 3, page 8). The number of people identifying themselves as both white and black more than doubled since 2000. Overall, the proportion of people identifying with two or more races increased from 2.1 percent in 2000 to 2.9 percent in 2010.

The increase in the multiracial population can be linked to the rise in interracial couples and marriages in the United States.<sup>22</sup> In 2008, one in seven new marriages included spouses with different racial or ethnic backgrounds.<sup>23</sup> The children of these interracial unions are forming a new generation that is much more likely to identify with multiple racial/ethnic groups. In 2010, 5.6 percent of children under age 18 reported two or more races, compared with 2.1 percent of the population ages 18 and older.

## MINORITY YOUTH BULGE

In the United States, racial/ethnic minorities are not evenly distributed across age groups. While nearly half of people under age 18 are racial/ethnic minorities, two-thirds of the adult population is non-Hispanic white (see Figure 3). This racial/ethnic gap is most pronounced in the

Latino population. Roughly 14 percent of the voting-age population is Latino, compared with 23 percent of the population under age 18. Since 2000, the share of children who are racial/ethnic minorities increased 7 percentage points, from 39 percent to 46 percent.

The latest Census Bureau projections show that minorities will make up 50 percent of the population under age 18 by 2023. The new 2010 Census results, however, suggest that children may reach majority-minority status even earlier, possibly before the next census is conducted in 2020.<sup>24</sup> This “minority youth bulge” is being driven primarily by children in immigrant families.<sup>25</sup> Children of immigrants account for 23 percent of the population under age 18, and are the fastest-growing segment of children and youth.<sup>26</sup> They are transforming America’s schools, and in a generation they will transform the racial/ethnic composition of the U.S. workforce.

# STATE POPULATION TRENDS

Since the first census in 1790, the population of the United States has been unequally distributed across regions and states. That year's population of 3.9 million was distributed across 13 states and four districts/territories in the Northeast and South, ranging from 748,000 in Virginia to 36,000 in Tennessee.<sup>27</sup> In 1930, the Midwest had the largest population among the four census regions, with nearly one-third of all Americans. By contrast, just one in 10 Americans that year lived in the West. And as recently as 1940, New York State's population was larger than the combined populations of California and Texas.<sup>28</sup>

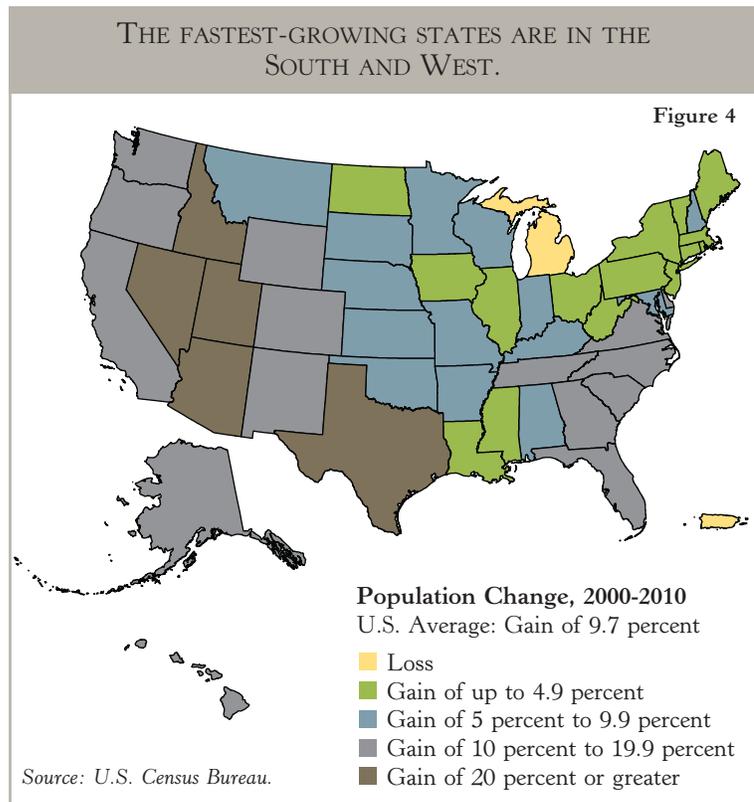
By the end of the 20th century, the distribution of the U.S. population had shifted dramatically. Since the 1950s, the population has shifted to the South and West—and this trend has continued over the last 10 years. The South and West both grew 14 percent during the 2000s, significantly faster than the national average and more than three times the growth rate of the Northeast and Midwest. Three in five Americans lived in the South and West in 2010. And for the first time, the West has overtaken the Midwest as the second most-populous census region—just as it overtook the Northeast 20 years earlier.

In some ways, however, population growth patterns during the 2000s deviated from previous de-

acades. The economic downturn that hit during the latter part of the decade suppressed U.S. mobility rates, which reached their lowest levels since the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey first collected mobility data more than 60 years ago. Across the country, population growth slowed with the lagging economy, and unlike the 1990s, when every state gained population, Michigan's population actually declined between 2000 and 2010. The restructuring of the automobile industry hit Michigan hard, and the state had

among the highest unemployment rates in the country at the end of the last decade. According to the most recent Census Bureau estimates, Michigan lost more than three times as many people to other states between 2000 and 2010 as it gained through net immigration.<sup>29</sup> The population also dropped in Puerto Rico, where the unemployment rate reached 16 percent in 2010.<sup>30</sup> Washington, D.C., which had lost population during the 1990s, grew 5 percent—the first increase since the 1940s (see Figure 4).

Nevada had the fastest popu-



lation growth rate, although its 35 percent increase was the state's lowest in 70 years. Four other states—Arizona, Idaho, Texas, and Utah—also grew by more than 20 percent between 2000 and 2010. In fact, the 24 fastest-growing states in the past decade were all in the West or South. For the first time since 1920, California did not have the largest numerical growth, as it was outpaced by Texas. The Lone Star State gained 4.3 million residents since 2000—more than the population gain of all the states in the Northeast and Midwest combined. Put another way, the number of residents Texas added during the 2000s exceeded the 2010 populations of 24 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.

Besides Michigan's and Puerto Rico's losses between 2000 and 2010, Louisiana, Ohio, and Rhode Island all grew by less than 2 percent during the decade. The displacement resulting from Hurricane Katrina in 2005 likely factored in Louisiana's minimal population growth, as thousands of residents fled to other states. In addition, much of the state's economy has been slow to recover from the storm's aftermath. Conversely, the displacement from Katrina might have aided part of Texas' population growth, since many of the evacuees settled there.

California, Texas, and New York remain the three most-populous states; in fact, the top eight states all maintained their 2000 rankings in 2010. There was a change in the top 10, however, with North Carolina (up from 11th to 10th) replacing New Jersey (down from ninth to 11th). Georgia, 10th in population size a decade ago, now ranks ninth. Arizona, one of the fastest-growing states, improved its ranking from 20th in 2000 to 16th in 2010. Meanwhile, Louisiana fell

in the population rankings from 22nd to 25th.

While the 2000s ended with a severe economic downturn, the U.S. economy expanded during much of the decade. So the recent recession may have simply kept states such as Arizona, Florida, and Nevada (all of which were hard hit by the housing bubble) from registering even more rapid growth. In many other states, mostly in the Northeast, net immigration over the decade prevented population loss. Census Bureau intercensal estimates from 2009 suggest that without international migration, seven states would have lost population in the 2000s—including such “gateway” states as New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts. California's growth rate also would have been sharply cut.<sup>31</sup>

As the last decade shows, state population trends are difficult to predict. They depend on a variety of factors, including regional economic growth and future patterns of domestic and international migration. During the next decade, many baby boomers will reach retirement age, so their decisions as to where to migrate—assuming they do migrate—also will affect state population trends. After the 2010 Census data are fully released and analyzed, the Census Bureau plans to release new state population projections, which will provide a preliminary look at what could happen over the next 20 years.

## RACIAL AND ETHNIC PATTERNS

**F**our states (California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Texas) are majority-minority—that is, minority groups make up more than

50 percent of the state population. Texas became majority-minority during the 2000s, and eight additional states are at the “tipping point” of possibly attaining this status within the next decade: Minorities are between 40 percent and 50 percent of their populations. In six of these tipping point states (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, and Nevada), minorities already are a majority of the population under age 18. (New Jersey and New York are the other 40 percent minority states.) By contrast, minorities make up less than one-fifth of the populations in 18 states, and fewer than one in 10 residents of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia is minority.

Just as they are nationally, Hispanics, and to a lesser extent Asians, are fueling the changing racial/ethnic mix among the states. Between 2000 and 2010, the Latino population grew 50 percent or more in 37 states and more than doubled in nine (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Tennessee). Meanwhile, the Asian American population more than doubled in Nevada and grew between 50 percent and 99 percent in 26 other states. By contrast, the non-Hispanic white population actually declined in 15 states; the African American population fell in six (plus Washington, D.C.). And the numerical change in the Latino population between 2000 and 2010 exceeded that of blacks in 46 states and Washington, D.C. In 33 states, Latinos' numerical change exceeded that of whites.

Washington, D.C., provides an interesting exception. While the combined Latino and Asian share of the population grew from 10 percent to 13 percent during the 2000s, the total minority share of the District's population

actually fell during the decade. Two developments drove this change: an 11 percent decline in the District’s African American population between 2000 and 2010, and a corresponding 32 percent increase among the city’s white residents. Non-Hispanic whites now make up more than one-third of the District’s population.

## ALLOCATING CONGRESSIONAL SEATS

The results from the 2010 Census also determined how many seats each state will get in the House of Representatives during the next decade—effective when the 113th Congress takes office in January 2013. Congressional seats are redistributed based on population change over the 10-year period. As expected, southern and western states will gain seats—mostly at the expense of states in the Northeast and Midwest.

Eight states will gain seats in the new apportionment (see Table 4). In the South, Texas will add four seats, Florida will pick up two, and Georgia and South Carolina will gain one seat each. In the West, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and Washington will each pick up one seat.

The 12 total seats gained by these states will come at the expense of 10 other states. Louisiana is one of the states losing a seat—largely a consequence of people leaving New Orleans after

### SOUTHERN AND WESTERN STATES WILL GAIN SEATS IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHILE NORTHEASTERN AND MIDWESTERN STATES WILL LOSE SEATS.

Table 4

State	House seats		Change in House seats
	2000	2010	
Arizona	8	9	1
Florida	25	27	2
Georgia	13	14	1
Illinois	19	18	-1
Iowa	5	4	-1
Louisiana	7	6	-1
Massachusetts	10	9	-1
Michigan	15	14	-1
Missouri	9	8	-1
Nevada	3	4	1
New Jersey	13	12	-1
New York	29	27	-2
Ohio	18	16	-2
Pennsylvania	19	18	-1
South Carolina	6	7	1
Texas	32	36	4
Utah	3	4	1
Washington	9	10	1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Hurricane Katrina. Nine states in the Northeast and Midwest will also lose House seats: New York and Ohio will each lose two, while Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania will lose one seat each. The population totals used for the new apportionment include not only the resident population of each state, but also the number of military and civilian employees of the U.S. government (plus their dependents) who are posted overseas.

Even with the expected gains for the South and West, the new apportionment numbers contained several surprises. Apportionment projections based on 2009 population estimates had indicated that Florida would pick up one seat and Texas would gain three, but each state added one more seat than had been anticipated. In addition, New York had been projected to lose just one seat while Missouri’s congressional representation had been expected to remain unchanged.<sup>32</sup>

# LOCAL POPULATION CHANGES

Population change also varies widely within states. Parts of Michigan and many slow-growing states in the Midwest and Northeast, for example, grew faster than the national average, while some local areas within rapid-growth states such as Nevada and Texas lost population between 2000 and 2010 (see Figure 5). In fact, Con-

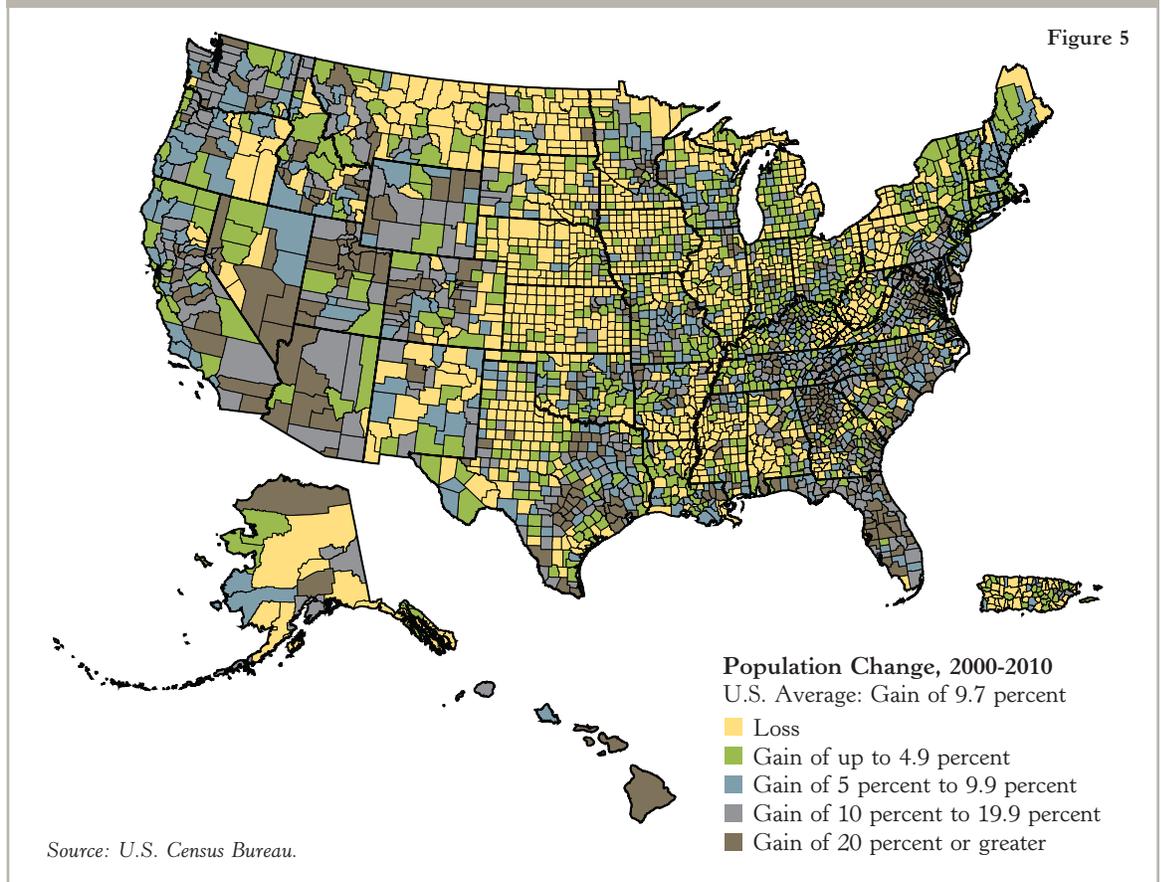
necticut, Delaware, and Utah were the only states where every county gained population since 2000.

Areas with the fastest growth included suburbs of metropolitan areas in the South and West, such as the region around Orlando, Fla.; the “Research Triangle” area of North Carolina; the northern Virginia exurbs of Washington,

D.C.; and the areas surrounding such cities as Las Vegas, Atlanta, and several Texas cities (Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Austin).

As in previous decades, many rural areas lost population, including much of the Great Plains and northern and central Appalachia. In fact, nearly half of the 1,104 counties that lost people

COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE VARIES WIDELY WITHIN STATES.



during the 2000s were counties that were isolated from metropolitan areas and had small or non-existent urban populations—the most rural areas. Several of these counties have been losing people for decades: Parts of the Great Plains have seen their population steadily decline since before the Great Depression.<sup>33</sup> Older industrial areas in the Northeast and Midwest also lost population, as people continued to leave these areas in search of better job opportunities. Many parts of the Rust Belt have been plagued by high rates of out-migration since the 1970s.

The nation’s shift toward a more service-based economy (as well as its aging population) is reflected in the types of counties that have gained or lost population since 2000. Retirement-destination counties—ones that are attractive to people age 60 or older—were among the big demographic “winners” during the 2000s. One-third of the 440 retirement counties grew at least 20 percent (more than twice the national average) between 2000 and 2010; so did one-fifth of services-dependent counties. By contrast, two-thirds of the nation’s farming-dependent counties, nearly half of the mining-dependent ones, and one-third of counties reliant on manufacturing all lost population in the last 10 years.<sup>34</sup>

Rapid population change in local areas has important implications for policymakers and for residents in those communities. For counties gaining population, the key policy issues are often high housing costs, environmental damage, crowded schools, traffic congestion, and—in the case of immigrant magnets—adapting to new cultures and languages. Communities with declining populations face different concerns. Instead of managing growth, they are dealing with the consequences of out-migration,

including aging populations, job losses, declining tax revenues, and shrinking schools and neighborhoods. A key policy issue for areas with declining populations is how to attract and retain residents—and businesses—in their communities.

## METRO AREAS

Today, more than 80 percent of U.S. residents live in metropolitan areas, continuing a steady, long-term shift in the population from rural areas to urban and suburban communities. The growth in the metropolitan

population can result from two factors: population increase in urbanized areas, and the expansion of metropolitan areas into territory that previously had been considered rural.

Using the most recent metropolitan definitions and boundaries from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, the metropolitan population grew 11 percent during the 2000s, more than double the rate for areas outside metros. Not surprisingly, the metro population grew fastest in the South and West. As a group, southern and western metros grew 17 percent and 14 percent, respectively; while the

METROPOLITAN AREAS WITH THE FASTEST RATES OF GROWTH ARE MOSTLY IN THE SOUTH AND WEST; THE FASTEST RATES OF DECLINE TEND TO BE IN THE NORTHEAST AND MIDWEST.

Table 5

Metropolitan area	2010 Population (thousands)	Change, 2000-2010	
		Number (thousands)	Percent
<b>Fastest rate of growth</b>			
Palm Coast, Fla.	96	46	92.0
St. George, Utah	138	48	52.9
Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	1,951	576	41.8
Raleigh-Cary, N.C.	1,130	333	41.8
Cape Coral-Fort Myers, Fla.	619	178	40.3
<b>Fastest rate of decline</b>			
New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, La.	1,168	-149	-11.3
Pine Bluff, Ark.	100	-7	-6.6
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, Ohio-Pa.	566	-37	-6.2
Johnstown, Pa.	144	-9	-5.9
Steubenville-Weirton, Ohio-W.Va.	124	-8	-5.7

Note: Metropolitan areas are as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in December 2009. The lists do not include metropolitan areas in Puerto Rico. Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

metro population in the Northeast and Midwest increased at less than half the national rate. Indeed, the metros with the fastest growth since 2000 tended to be in the South and West as well (see Table 5, page 14): Nearly all the metros that grew 20 percent or more were in those two regions. By contrast, the Northeast and Midwest had eight of the 10 metros that registered the biggest declines. Interestingly, however, the two metros with the fastest rates of decline were outside those regions: Pine Bluff, Ark., an area highly dependent on farming and government services; and New Orleans, which was devastated by the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.<sup>35</sup>

Within metropolitan areas, most U.S. population growth during the past century has taken place in suburban areas, rather than central cities (see Figure 6).<sup>36</sup> Especially in recent decades, the principal cities of many metro areas have lost population as many middle-class families have

moved out to suburbs based on expectations of better schools, safer neighborhoods, and more stable property values. Meanwhile, rural areas have gradually been swallowed up by the rapid expansion of suburban and exurban populations. A century ago, just 7 percent of the U.S. population lived in suburban areas, while 21 percent lived in central cities. Since the 1930s, the share of the population living in urban areas has remained relatively constant at around 30 percent, while the suburban population has exploded. By 2010, 51 percent of the population lived in suburbs.

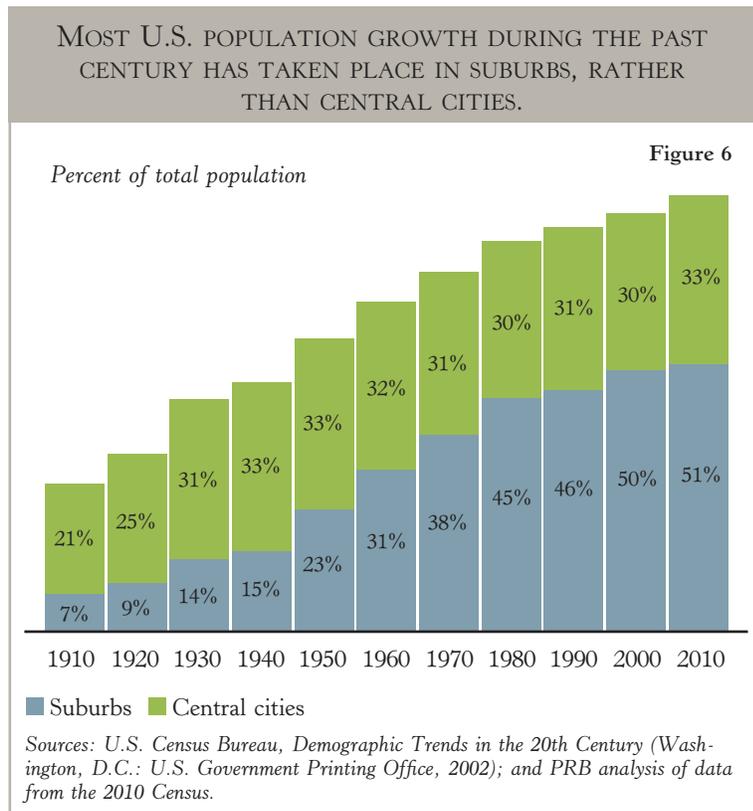
In the last decade, however, the population living in central cities has rebounded somewhat, increasing by 3 percentage points. One-third of the U.S. population now lives in central cities, the highest proportion since 1950. Part of this increase may be due to the recession of the late 2000s, which has pushed many people back to urban areas in search of employment. Others may have

been unable to migrate away from cities because they could not sell their homes.<sup>37</sup>

Most of the past decade's urban growth has taken place in mid-sized and smaller cities, which grew faster than the national average. As a group, cities with populations between 100,000 and 1 million grew at an average rate of 1.1 percent per year during the 2000s. The smallest of these cities—those that have between 100,000 and 250,000 persons—grew even faster, at 1.3 percent annually.

As for America's largest cities, data from the 2010 Census show that their population growth has slowed dramatically compared with the rapid increases of the 1990s.<sup>38</sup> Population growth in the nation's 10-largest cities averaged 1 percent annually during the 1990s—about the national rate. But during the 2000s, the population in these cities grew by an average of just 0.3 percent per year. With the exception of Philadelphia, which lost population during the 1990s but saw a population increase during the 2000s, every city in the top 10 had slower growth during the 2000s than in the previous decade. Among the largest cities, Chicago was the only one to lose population during the 2000s. Immigrants, many of whom still settle in large “gateway” cities, played a key role in preventing population loss in many of these urban areas.

Overall, eight cities with populations of at least 100,000 lost 10 percent or more of their residents between 2000 and 2010. Most of these were aging industrial cities, such as Detroit, Cleveland, or Buffalo, that had been losing population since the 1960s and were hard hit by the economic downturn of the late 2000s. Detroit, which witnessed the wholesale restructuring of the automobile industry that remains a mainstay of its economy, lost



25 percent of its residents to drop to its lowest population total in a century. Meanwhile, Hurricane Katrina's impact likely caused New Orleans' population to fall 29 percent to its lowest level since 1910, pushing it off the list of the 50 largest cities nationwide.

## LOCAL DIVERSITY

Racial/ethnic diversity is increasing in local areas across the United States. Results from the 2010 Census show that 11 percent (341) of the country's 3,143 counties already have become majority-minority—less than 50 percent non-Hispanic

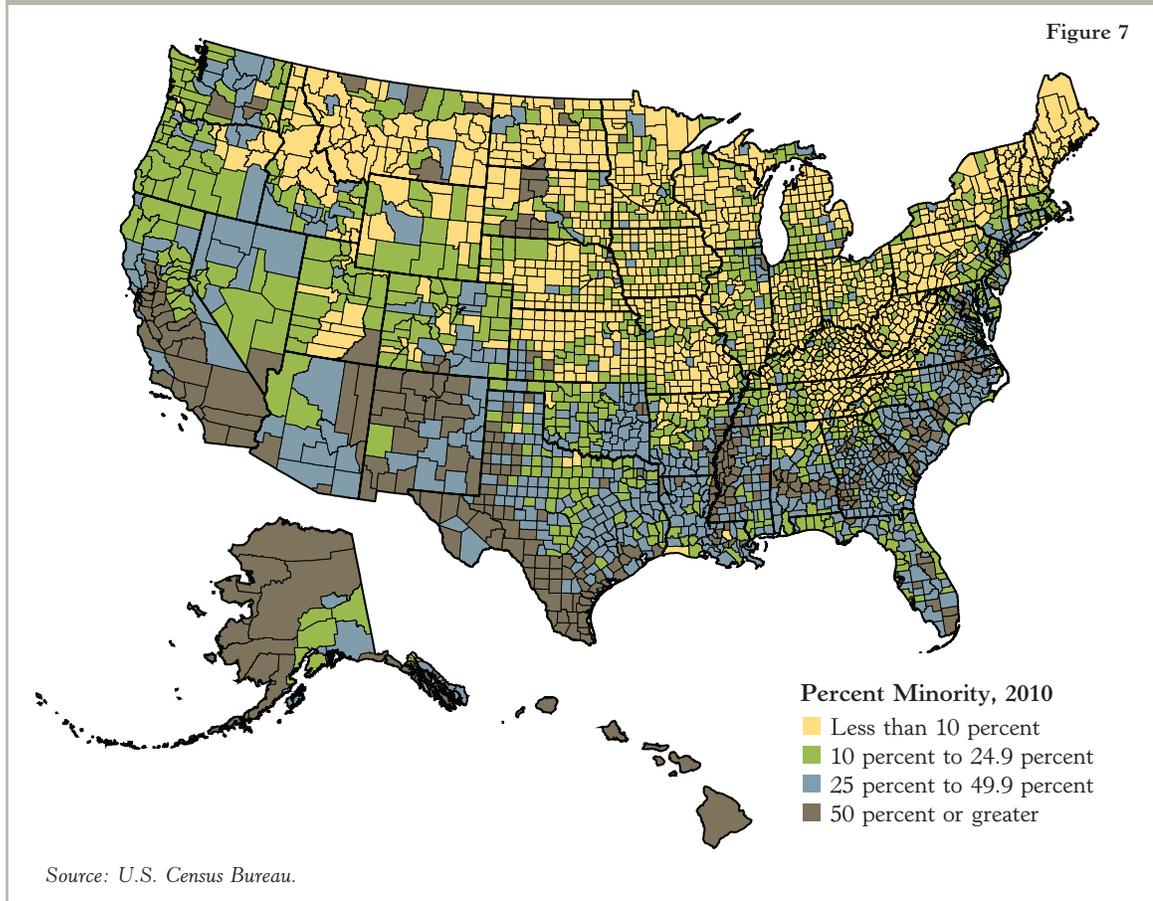
white. And another 225 counties have reached the “tipping point” toward becoming majority-minority sometime in the next decade: Between 40 percent and 50 percent of the population in those counties are minorities.

Majority-minority counties vary from large counties in major metropolitan areas (such as the Bronx in New York City) to small rural counties (such as Todd County in South Dakota). The counties are highly concentrated in certain parts of the country (see Figure 7)—in particular, the Southeast, the Southwest (especially along the Mexican border), central and Southern California, parts of the rural Great Plains, most of Alaska, and Hawaii.

In most majority-minority

counties, a single minority group makes up more than 50 percent of the county population. In the Southeast, most majority-minority counties are African American. Counties that are majority Hispanic are largely in the Southwest, as well as in southern Florida and parts of California. And American Indians and Alaska Natives are the majority group in several counties in Alaska, the Great Plains, and the “four corners” area, including Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah—many of which house reservations and trust lands. In other cases, the combination of two or more minority groups creates a majority-minority county. In 136 of the 341 majority-minority counties, no single minority group was a

MAJORITY-MINORITY COUNTIES ARE CONCENTRATED IN THE SOUTHEAST, SOUTHWEST, CALIFORNIA, PARTS OF THE GREAT PLAINS, AND ALASKA AND HAWAII.



numerical majority.

But it is not just the majority-minority counties that are feeling the impact of racial and ethnic diversity. In the last 10 years, minorities have made inroads in many counties where their presence had previously been relatively minor. The Latino population provides the most striking example. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Hispanics increased by at least 50 percent in two-thirds (2,005) of U.S. counties, and more than doubled in 910 of them. The impact was felt in counties with rapid growth, slow growth, and population decline. In 945 of the 1,104 U.S. counties that lost population in the last decade, the number of Latinos actually grew, minimizing the area's overall population decline. An additional 352 counties avoided population loss because the Hispanic population grew during the 2000s. Just about every state had at least one county affected

by this surge; most of these are places where Latinos make up less than one-fourth of the total county population.

Children and youth are at the forefront of the racial/ethnic transformation. The 2010 Census found that in 594 counties—almost one in five nationwide—at least 50 percent of the under-18 population belonged to a minority group. An additional 298 counties (9 percent) had minority youth populations between 40 percent and 50 percent. That means that minority youth make up at least 40 percent of the under-18 population in 28 percent of U.S. counties. Looking at the racial and ethnic composition of youth gives us a glimpse of what the U.S. working-age population might look like—and where they might live—in about 20 years if current trends continue.

The changing racial/ethnic composition also can be found in the nation's largest cities and

metropolitan areas. Between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic population increased in each of the 20 largest U.S. cities, and the Asian population grew in 19 of them. Sixteen of those 20 cities lost white residents over that period, continuing a longer-term trend in large urban areas. But in a more recent development, large cities have been losing African Americans. In eight of the 10 largest U.S. cities (and 11 of the top 20), the black population declined during the past decade. Some of these declines were steep: Detroit's black population fell by nearly one-fourth, while Chicago's dropped by one-sixth and Washington, D.C.'s by one-ninth. Suburbanization, intercity migration (in this case, movement to economically vibrant centers in the South and West), and the aging of the black population have been cited as factors.<sup>39</sup>

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2020

The size and demographic composition of the U.S. population is constantly changing, and by 2020, the country will likely look very different than it does today. As of this writing, the Census Bureau has not yet issued population projections based on the 2010 Census results. But here are some of the significant demographic events that could occur before the next census, if recent trends continue:

- The U.S. population may increase to more than one-third of a billion people.
- Hispanics could account for one in five U.S. residents.
- The proportion of children who are racial/ethnic minorities could pass 50 percent of the population under age 18.
- Florida may replace New York as the third-largest state.

- One in six U.S. residents could be age 65 or older as a large number of baby boomers reach retirement age.

For each of these demographic events, the question is not really *whether* they will occur, but *when*. Future demographic trends are already built into the current age and racial/ethnic composition of the U.S. population. For example, even if we closed the borders to new immigrants, the Latino population would continue to grow because of its young age structure, which creates population momentum through a large number of couples who are starting families. Immigration and growing racial/ethnic diversity among America's youth have put the United States on a path to become majority-minority within a generation.

By 2020, the methods that the Census Bureau uses to enumer-

ate the U.S. population are also expected to change. Census Bureau officials acknowledge that the current methods of conducting the census are too expensive and not sustainable in the long term. Many of the same demographic changes that are illuminated by the decennial census—such as rapid population growth and increasing racial/ethnic diversity—also contribute to the rising costs of conducting an accurate census. Each decade, there are more people to count, but the growing racial/ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the U.S. population makes it impossible to implement a one-size-fits-all strategy. Just as the methods of conducting the census have changed every 10 years since 1790, we can expect additional changes in 2020 to ensure an accurate count of the U.S. population.

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34 Retirement-destination counties are ones where the number of residents ages 60 and older grew at least 15 percent between 1990 and 2000 due to in-migration. Services-dependent counties had at least 45 percent of the county’s average annual earnings derived from retail trade, finance, insurance, real estate, and generalized services during 1998-2000. Farming-dependent counties either had at least 15 percent of the county’s average annual earnings derived from farming during 1998-2000 or employed at least 15 percent of the county’s resident workers in farm occupations in 2000. Mining-dependent counties had mining as the source of at least 15 percent of the county’s average annual earnings during 1998-2000. Manufacturing-dependent counties had at least 25 percent of the county’s average annual earnings derived from manufacturing during 1998-2000. Retirement-destination counties may also be classified in one of the four economic typologies mentioned in this report. For more information about county typologies, see Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Briefing Rooms, *Measuring Rurality: 2004 County Typology Codes*, accessed at [www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/Typology/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/Typology/), on Apr. 19, 2011.

35 Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Data Sets, “2004 County Typology Codes,” accessed at [www.ers.usda.gov/Data/TypologyCodes/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/TypologyCodes/), on Apr. 19, 2011.

36 In this report, suburbs include metropolitan areas outside of central or principal cities.

37 Linda A. Jacobsen and Mark Mather, “Social and Economic Trends Since 2000,” *Population Bulletin* 65, no. 1 (2010).

38 In rank order, the 10-largest cities in 2010 were: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, and San Jose. Detroit was among the 10-largest cities in 1990 and 2000 but dropped off the list because of its population loss.

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