

# **Overview of Demographic Changes: 2006-2016**

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*This report is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed on issues are those of the author and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.*

# The Big Numbers

- The U.S. population reached 300 million inhabitants on October 17, 2006.
- By July 1, 2016, we will have reached 325 million.

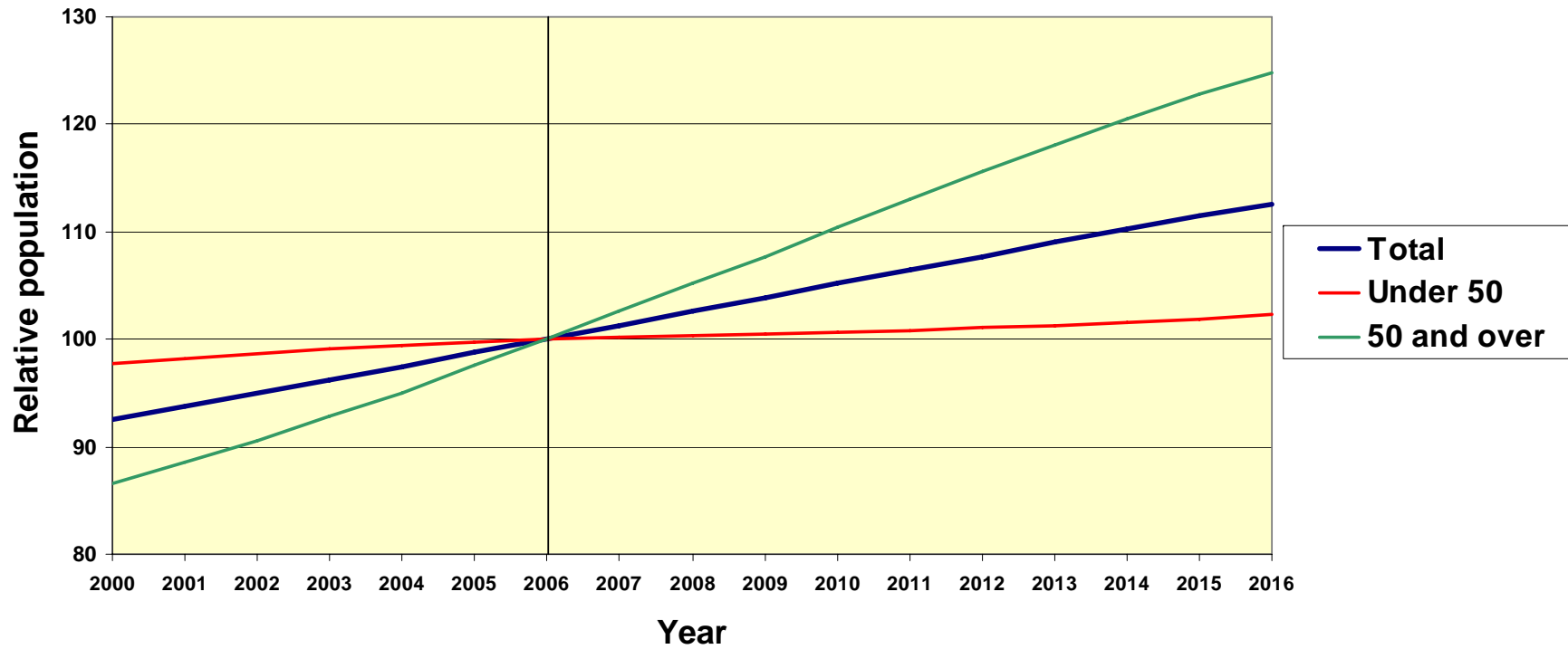
# Socio-Demographic Trends, Among Others

- Years of education have increased.
- Labor force participation of women has increased.
- There have been steady increases in “unconventional” and multi-generational households.
- Demand for health care is on the increase.
- The foreign-born population grows steadily.

# **Within the Big Numbers: Two Macro-Demographic Phenomena**

- Our population is aging.
- We are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse.

### Total Population, Under 50 Years, and 50 and Over, Relative to 2006

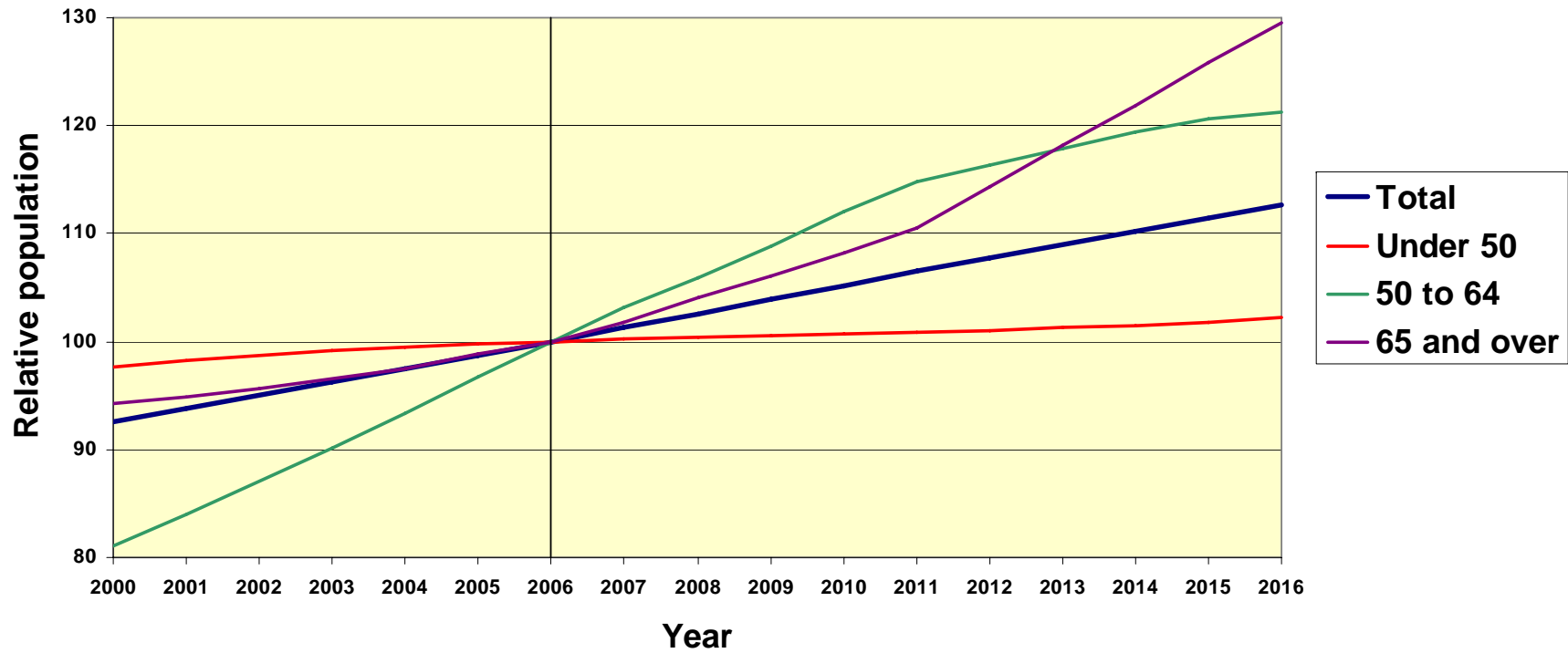


# Why do older population groups outgrow younger ones?

There are three reasons.

- Declining mortality at advanced ages causes people to live longer, boosting the growth of older categories.
- Births were once on the rise, and the increase ended or slowed.
- In some cases, immigration can play a role, too.

### Total Population, Age Under 50 years, 50-64, and 65 and Over, Relative to 2006

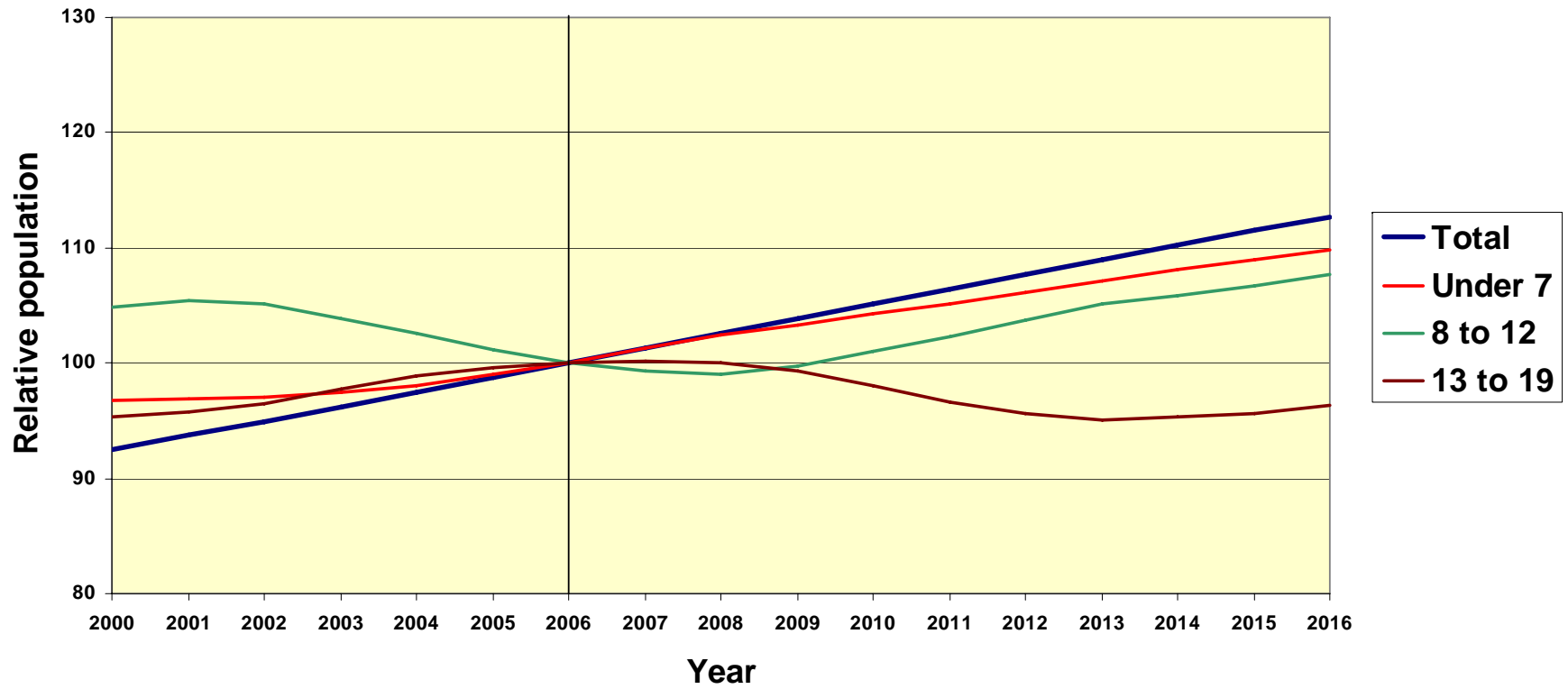


# The population under 20 grows less rapidly

- The age groups of small children, “tweens” (age 8 to 12) and teens were (will be) born during a period without major trend in childbearing levels, as we project its continued stability.
- The population of childbearing women fluctuates, however.



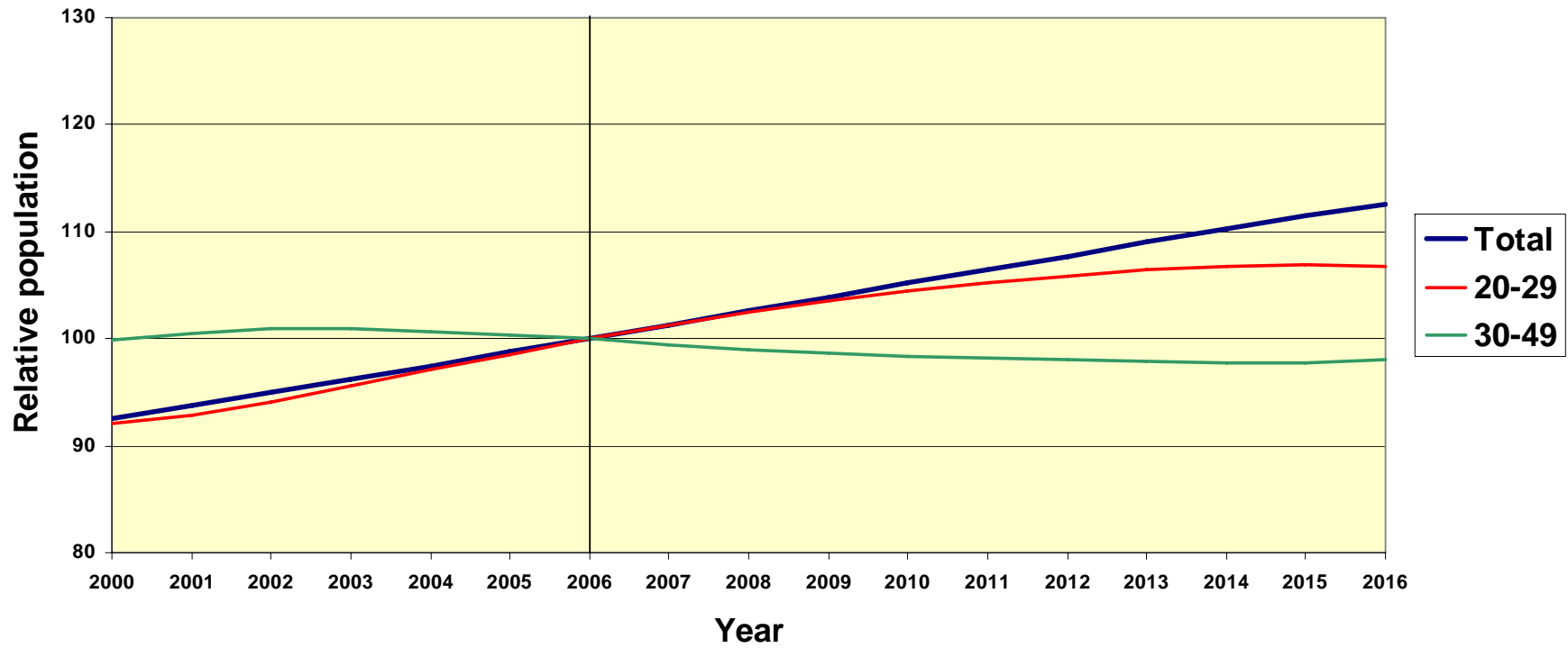
### Total Population, Small Children, "Tweens", and Teens Relative to 2006



# **The 20s follow the total population; 30-49 declines**

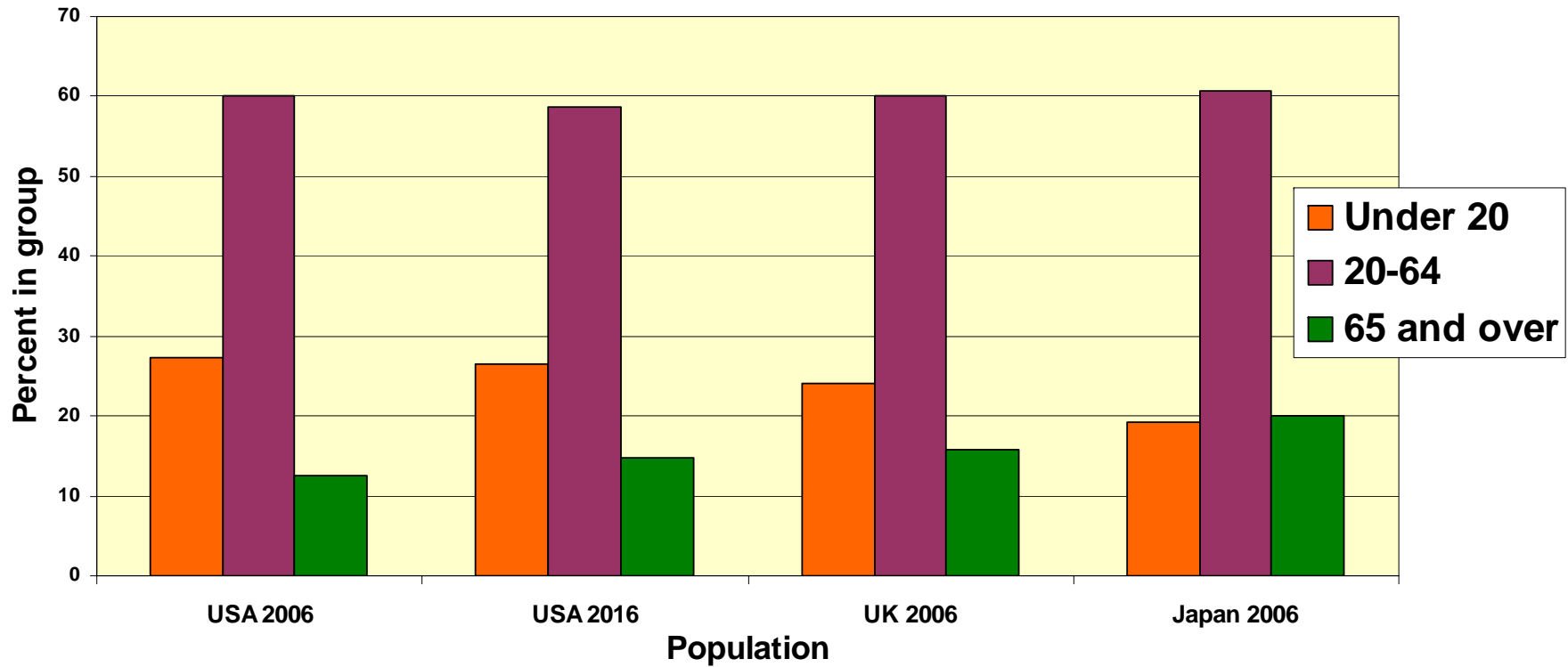
- People 30-49 will be increasingly dominated by the post-boomers, born after the late 1960s.
- Young adults 20-29 would fall behind, but are bolstered by the effects of immigration.

### Total Population, Age 20-29 Years, and 30-49 Years, Relative to 2006



**Are we becoming a nation  
of old people??**

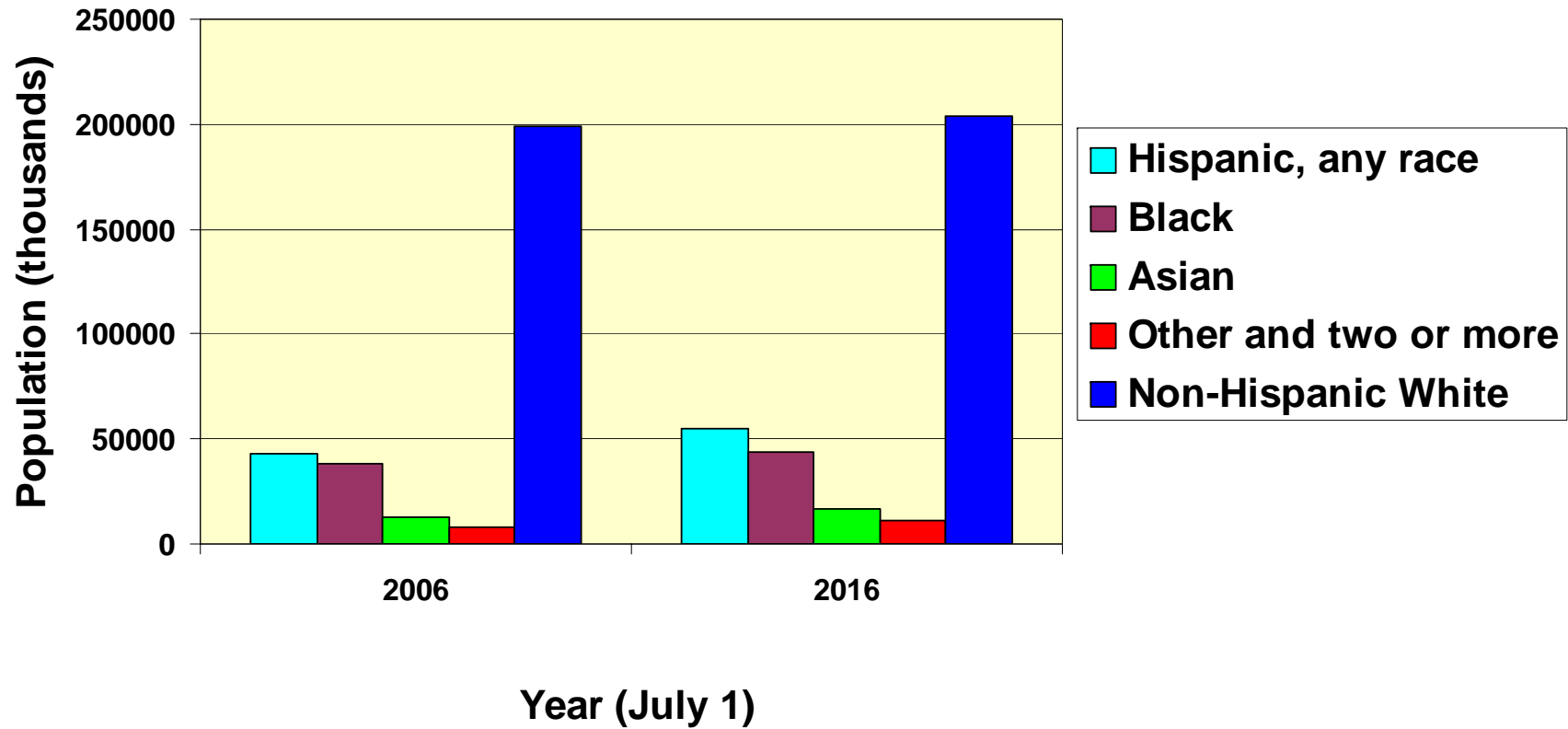
Percentage in Three Large Age Groups, USA in 2006 and 2016 (Projected), and UK and Germany in 2005



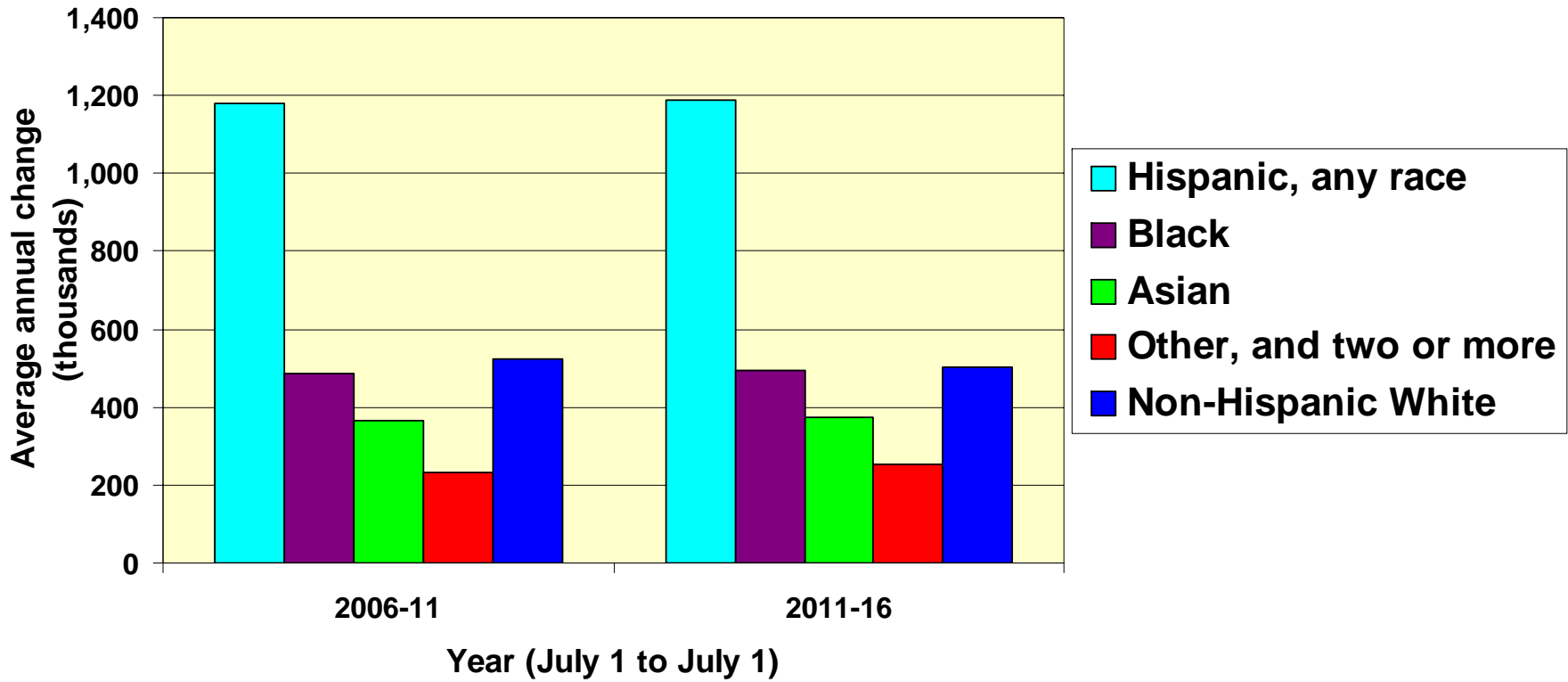
# **We are becoming more diverse**

- The Hispanic population is increasing rapidly in both numeric and percentage terms.
- The Asian population, while smaller than the Hispanic population, is growing rapidly in percentage terms.

Population in Large Race and Hispanic Origin Categories, 2006 and 2016



### Average Annual Increase for Racial and Hispanic Origin Population Categories





# Cautions and reassurances

- Population projections are grounded on assumptions about fertility, mortality, and international migration that can be proven wrong.
- Nevertheless, we are pretty comfortable with projections of the older population—primarily because we “know” most of them, from our last census.

# Cautions and reassurances (continued)

- Projections of young adults and those of immigrant background (e.g., Asians and Hispanics) are more tenuous, because of the difficulty of foreseeing changes in international migration.
- Major changes in fertility have belied our projections in the past, especially of children.

# Concluding thoughts

- The age, race, and ethnic composition of our population is changing.
- BUT, we should beware of the tendency to impose a “demographic determinism” on consumption trends.
- While some phenomena are age-related (e.g. health care) others relate to when we were born and grew, such as computer literacy and demand for “cutting edge” technological resources.

**Thank you!**

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

