

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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**Facts** for  
Features

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## Older Americans Month: May 2009

A meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens resulted in President John F. Kennedy designating May 1963 as Senior Citizens Month, encouraging the nation to pay tribute in some way to older people across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter's proclamation changed the name to Older Americans Month, a time to celebrate those 65 and older through ceremonies, events and public recognition.

### 37.9 million

The number of people 65 and older in the United States on July 1, 2007. This age group accounted for 13 percent of the total population. Between 2006 and 2007, this age group increased by 635,000 people.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>>

### 88.5 million

Projected population of people 65 and older in 2050. People in this age group would comprise 20 percent of the total population at that time.

Source: Population projections <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/012496.html>>

### 518 million

Projected 2009 midyear world population 65 and older. Projections indicate the number will increase to 1.6 billion by 2050.

Source: Population projections <<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb>>

## Income and Wealth

### \$28,305

Median 2007 income of households with householders 65 and older, statistically unchanged, in real terms, from the previous year.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2007  
<[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income\\_wealth/012528.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/012528.html)>

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## **9.7%**

Poverty rate for people 65 and older in 2007, statistically unchanged from 2006. There were 3.6 million seniors in poverty in 2007, up from 3.4 million in 2006.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2007

<[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income\\_wealth/012528.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/012528.html)>

## **\$190,100**

Median net worth for families in 2004 whose head was between 65 and 74.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>> (Table 699)

# **Serving Our Nation**

## **9 million**

Estimated number of people 65 and older who were military veterans in 2007.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

## **Jobs**

## **5.8 million**

Number of people 65 and older who were in the labor force in 2007. Projections indicate that by 2016, the number will reach 10.1 million.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>> (Table 568)

## **15%**

Percentage of people 65 and older in the labor force in 2007.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

## **Education**

## **74%**

Proportion of people 65 and older in 2007 with at least a high school diploma.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

## **19%**

Percentage of the population 65 and older in 2007 who had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

## **7.3 million**

Number of people 66 and older taking adult education courses in 2004-05, comprising about 8 percent of these students.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>> (Table 294)

## **Marital Status and Living Arrangements**

### **54%**

Percentage of people 65 and older who were married in 2007.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

### **31%**

Percentage of people 65 and older in 2007 who were widowed.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

### **65%**

Percentage of people 65 and older in 2007 who lived with relatives. Another 27 percent lived alone, while 5 percent lived in group quarters and 2 percent in a household with nonrelatives. In addition, 6 percent lived in their children's home.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

### **1.5 million**

Number of people 65 and older who lived in nursing facilities in 2007. These residents comprised 4 percent of all people in this age group.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>

## **Voting**

### **78%**

Percentage of citizens 65 and older registered to vote in the 2006 congressional election.

Sixty-three percent of citizens in this age group reported actually casting a ballot.

Source: Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2006

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/012234.html>>

## **Homeownership**

### **80%**

Percentage of householders 65 and older in 2007 who owned their homes. This compares with 42 percent for householders at the other end of the age spectrum — younger than 35.

Source: Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/hvs.html>>

# Population Distribution

## Nation

**73**

The number of men 65 and older on July 1, 2007, for every 100 women in this age group. For those 85 and older, it drops to 48 men per 100 women.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>>

**5.5 million**

The number of people 85 and older in the United States on July 1, 2007.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>>

**96,548**

Estimated number of centenarians in the United States on Nov. 1, 2008.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/2007-nat-res.html>>

**601,000**

Projected number of centenarians in the United States in 2050.

Source: Population projections <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/012496.html>>

## States and Counties

**4 million**

Number of people 65 and older living in California on July 1, 2007, the highest total of any state. Florida, with 3.1 million, was the runner-up.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>>

**17%**

Percentage of Florida's population 65 and older in 2007, which led the nation. States with the next-highest percentages of older people included West Virginia (15.5 percent) and Pennsylvania (15.2 percent).

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>>

## 32%

Percentage of the population of La Paz County, Ariz., that was 65 and older on July 1, 2007, which led the nation. There were 24 counties with at least one-quarter of their population 65 and older. Nine of those counties were in Florida, with four in Texas and three in Michigan.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/012463.html>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day
Super Bowl	Grandparents Day
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Thanksgiving Day
Mother's Day	The Holiday Season (December)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <[pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)>.