

U.S. Census Bureau News

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Black (African-American) History Month: February 2011

To commemorate and celebrate the contributions to our nation made by people of African descent, American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week. The first celebration occurred on Feb. 12, 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist/editor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded into Black History Month. Each year, U.S. presidents proclaim February as National African-American History Month.

The population figures shown here are based on various sources but not on the 2010 Census. We expect to release 2010 figures for the black population and other races by April 1, 2011.

Population

41.8 million

As of July 1, 2009, the estimated population of black residents in the United States, including those of more than one race. They made up 13.6 percent of the total U.S. population. This figure represents an increase of more than a half-million residents from one year earlier.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2009-srh.html>>

65.7 million

The projected black population of the United States (including those of more than one race) for July 1, 2050. On that date, according to the projection, blacks would constitute 15 percent of the nation's total population.

Source: Population projections

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb08-123.html>>

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Number of states with an estimated black population on July 1, 2009, of at least 1 million. New York, with 3.5 million, led the way. The other 17 states on the list were Alabama, California,

Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/SC-EST2009-04.html>>

38%

Percentage of Mississippi's population that was black in 2009. Although New York had the largest number of blacks of any state, Mississippi had the largest share of blacks in its total population. Blacks also made up more than a quarter of the population in Louisiana (33 percent), Georgia (31 percent), Maryland (31 percent), South Carolina (29 percent) and Alabama (27 percent). They comprised 55 percent of the population in the District of Columbia.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/SC-EST2009-04.html>>

72,100

The increase in Texas' black population between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2009, which led all states.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/SC-EST2009-04.html>>

23

Number of states in which blacks were the largest minority group in 2009. These included Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Blacks were also the largest minority group in the District of Columbia. (Note: Minorities are part of a group other than single-race non-Hispanic white.)

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/SC-EST2009-04.html>>

1.4 million

The number of blacks in Cook County, Ill., as of July 1, 2009, which led the nation's counties in the number of people of this racial category. Harris County, Texas, had the largest numerical increase in the black population between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2009 (15,700).

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/>>

Among counties with total populations of at least 10,000, Claiborne County, Miss., had the largest percent of population that was black (85 percent). Claiborne led 77 majority-black counties or equivalents.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/>>

30%

The proportion of the black population younger than 18 as of July 1, 2009. At the other end of the spectrum, 8 percent of the black population was 65 and older.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2009-asrh.html>>

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the estimates in this section refer to the population that was either single-race black or black in combination with one or more other races.

Serving Our Nation

2.3 million

Number of single-race black military veterans in the United States in 2009.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>.

Education

84%

Among blacks 25 and older, the proportion who had at least a high school diploma in 2009.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2009/tables.html>>

19%

Percentage of blacks 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2009/tables.html>>

1.5 million

Among blacks 25 and older, the number who had an advanced degree in 2009 (e.g., master's, doctorate, medical or law). A decade earlier, in 1999, about 900,000 blacks had this level of education.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2009/tables.html>>

2.5 million

Number of black college students in fall 2008. This was roughly double the corresponding number from 25 years earlier.

Source: School Enrollment – Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 2008

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/education/2009-11-02_education.html>

Voting

16.1 million

The number of blacks who voted in the 2008 presidential election, up by about 2.1 million from the 2004 presidential election. The total number of voters rose by 5.4 million, to 131.1 million.

Source: Voting and Registration in the Election of 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/voting/cb09-110.html>>

55%

Turnout rate in the 2008 presidential election for the 18- to 24-year-old citizen black population, an 8 percent increase from 2004. Blacks had the highest turnout rate in this age group.

Source: Voting and Registration in the Election of 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/voting/cb09-110.html>>

65%

Turnout rate among black citizens in the 2008 presidential election, up about 5 percentage points from 2004. Looking at voter turnout by race and Hispanic origin, non-Hispanic whites and blacks had the highest turnout levels.

Source: Voting and Registration in the Election of 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/voting/cb09-110.html>>

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$32,584

The annual median income of single-race black households in 2009, a decline of 4.4 percent (in 2009 constant dollars) from 2008.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb10-144.html>

25.8%

Poverty rate in 2009 for single-race blacks, up from 24.7 percent in 2008.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb10-144.html>

21.0%

The percentage of single-race blacks lacking health insurance in 2009, up from 19.1 percent in 2008.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb10-144.html>

Families and Children

64%

Among households with a single-race black householder, the percentage that contained a family. There were 8.6 million black family households.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

44%

Among families with single-race black householders, the percentage that were married couples.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

1.3 million

Number of single-race black grandparents who lived with their own grandchildren younger than 18. Of this number, 50 percent were also responsible for their care.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Homeownership

44%

Nationally, the percentage of households with a householder who was single-race black who lived in owner-occupied homes.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Jobs

28%

The percentage of single-race blacks 16 and older who worked in management, professional and related occupations.

Source: 2009 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Businesses

\$137.4 billion

Receipts for black-owned businesses in 2007, up 55.1 percent from 2002. The number of black-owned businesses totaled 1.9 million in 2007, up 60.5 percent.

37.6%

Percentage of black-owned businesses in 2007 in health care and social assistance, repair and maintenance and personal and laundry services.

28.2%

Percentage of businesses in the District of Columbia in 2007 which were black-owned, which led all states or state-equivalents. Georgia and Maryland followed, at 20.4 percent and 19.3 percent, respectively.

Source for statements in this section: Preliminary Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, Race and Veteran Status: 2007

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/economic_census/cb10-107.html>

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

Black 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>.