



1970 CENSUS OF POPULATION

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

Educational Attainment by Age, Sex, and Race, for the United States: 1970

(The data presented here are extracted from table 199 of Final Report PC(1)-D1, **Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary**, which contains additional information on education and other characteristics as well as more technical explanations)

The decade of the 1960's was a period of considerable change in the educational attainment levels of the American population. Over half, 52 percent, of Americans 25 years old and over in 1970 were at least high school graduates, as compared with 41 percent in 1960 and 34 percent in 1950.

There was considerable variation in educational attainment levels in 1970 among the various age groups in the population. For example, among older Americans 75 years old and over only 21 percent were high school graduates, but among the younger adults, those 20 to 24 years old, who would have recently completed their high school education, 78 percent were high school graduates.

At each preceding younger age from 75 years old and over down to 20 to 24 years, the median number of years of school completed rises. For example, among those 75 years old and over, the median years of school completed was 8.3 years for men and 8.6 years for women. Among those 50 to 54 years old, the median was 12.0 for the men and 12.1 for the women. The median reached a high of 12.7 years for the men 20 to 24 years old and 12.6 years for the women of this age.

Negroes and persons of Spanish heritage lagged behind the total population in educational attainment, but they are making considerable gains. In 1970, 31 percent of Negroes 25 years old and over had graduated from high school, however, among the younger Negroes, 20 to 24 years old, 62 percent were high school graduates. Among persons of Spanish heritage, 36 percent of those 25 years old and over were high school graduates as compared with 58 percent of those 20 to 24 years old.

Age.—The age classification is based on the age of the person in completed years as of April 1, 1970, and was determined from the reply to questions on age and on month and year of birth.

Race.—Information on race was obtained primarily through self-enumeration, and the data represent essentially self-classification by people according to the race with which they identify themselves. For persons of mixed parentage who were in doubt as to their classification, the race of the person's father was to be used.

The category "white" includes persons who indicated their race as white, as well as persons who did not classify themselves in one of the specific race categories on the questionnaire but entered Mexican, Puerto Rican, or a response suggesting Indo-European stock.

The category "Negro" includes persons who indicated their race as Negro or black, as well as persons who did not classify themselves in one of the specific race categories on the questionnaire but had such entries as Jamaican, Trinidadian, West Indian, Haitian, and Ethiopian. The term "Negro and other races" includes persons of all races other than white.

SPANISH HERITAGE

In this report, social and economic characteristics are presented for the population

of Spanish heritage, which is identified in various ways, using information derived from the 15-percent sample. In 42 States and the District of Columbia, this population is identified as "Persons of Spanish language"; in five Southwestern States, as "Persons of Spanish language or Spanish surname"; and in the three Middle Atlantic States, as "Persons of Puerto Rican birth or parentage." The specific definitions involved in identifying these population groups are given below.

Spanish language.—Persons of Spanish language comprise persons of Spanish mother tongue and all other persons in families in which the head or wife reported Spanish as his or her mother tongue.

Spanish surname.—In five Southwestern States (Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas) persons with Spanish surnames were identified by means of a list of over 8,000 Spanish surnames originally compiled by the Immigration and Naturalization Service¹ (and later updated by the Bureau of the Census). In the five Southwestern States the population of Spanish heritage consists of persons of Spanish language combined with all other persons of Spanish surname. The number of these additional persons is shown in the category "Other persons of Spanish surname."

Puerto Rican birth or parentage.—The population of Puerto Rican birth or parentage includes persons born in Puerto Rico and persons born in the United States or an outlying area with one or both parents born in Puerto Rico. In New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, the population of Spanish heritage consists of persons of Puerto Rican birth or parentage.

¹U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Supplement to Manual of Immigration, Spanish-Spanish Personal Names*, selected by Inspector George Lockwood, New York, 1936.

Years of school completed.—The information on years of school completed was based on responses to two questions. The first called for the highest grade attended, regardless of "skipped" or "repeated" grades. Persons whose highest grade of attendance was in a foreign school system, or in an ungraded school whose highest level of schooling was measured by "readers," or whose training was received through a tutor were instructed to report the approximate equivalent grade in the regular United States school system. The second question on educational attainment asked whether or not the highest grade attended had been finished.

The number in each category of highest grade of school completed represents the combination of (a) persons who reported that they had attended the indicated grade and had finished it, (b) those who had attended the next higher grade but had not finished it, and (c) those still attending the next higher grade. Persons who have not completed the first year of elementary school are classified as having no years of school completed.

SAMPLE SIZE, DERIVED FIGURES, AND SYMBOLS

The data presented here for the total, white, and Negro populations are based on the 20-percent sample; those for persons of Spanish heritage are based on the 15-percent sample.

The median number of school years completed was computed after the statistics on years of school completed had been converted to a continuous series of numbers (e.g., completion of the 1st year of high school was treated as completion of the 9th year and completion of the 1st year of college as completion of the 13th year). Persons completing a given school year were assumed to be distributed evenly within the interval from .0 to .9 of the year.

A dash "-" signifies zero. Three dots "..." mean not applicable, or that the base for the derived figure is too small for it to be shown.