

The Population With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2006–2010

American Community Survey Briefs

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INTRODUCTION

This report examines people aged 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher among racial and Hispanic-origin groups. As the U.S. population becomes more racially and ethnically diverse, it is important to examine educational attainment among population groups, which is a strong predictor of economic well-being. Also, government agencies require data on educational attainment for funding allocations and program planning and implementation, while local governments use information on educational attainment to attract potential employers to their areas.

The estimates presented in this report are based on 2006–2010 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates from the Selected Population Tables and the American Indian and Alaska Native Tables. These two new data products use ACS data aggregated over a 5-year period to provide more reliable estimates of detailed social, economic, and housing characteristics for many race, tribal, Hispanic, and ancestry population groups at multiple levels of geography.

In this brief, estimates are presented at the national and state levels. These estimates come from a question on educational attainment classified by the highest degree or the highest level of school completed. Those currently enrolled in school were requested to report the level of the previous grade attended or the highest degree received. This brief presents estimates for the population that is 25 years and older by the highest degree completed: bachelor's degree, master's degree, professional degree beyond a bachelor's degree, or a doctorate degree.

The U.S. Census Bureau collects race and Hispanic origin information in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).¹ The question on race asks respondents to report the race or races they consider themselves to be. There are a minimum of five race categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Also, the U.S. Census Bureau includes a Some Other Race category for respondents unable to identify with any of the five OMB race categories. Respondents are permitted to report more than one race. The question on Hispanic origin asks respondents if they are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race. All the estimates in this report are based on self-identification.

NATIONAL FINDINGS

The proportion of the total population 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher was 28 percent. Table 1 shows the population 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher by race and Hispanic origin in the United States. About one-half of those who identified their race as Asian alone had received a bachelor's degree or higher, the highest proportion among

¹ *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*, issued by OMB in 1997, is available at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html.

Table 1.

Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2006–2010

(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

Hispanic or Latino origin and race	Total population 25 years and over	Margin of error ¹ (±)	Percent with bachelor's degree or higher ²	Margin of error ¹ (±)	Percent with bachelor's degree ²	Margin of error ¹ (±)	Percent with graduate or professional degree ²	Margin of error ¹ (±)
HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN								
Total population	199,726,659	18,056	27.9	0.1	17.6	0.1	10.3	0.1
Not Hispanic or Latino	174,163,009	19,023	30.1	0.1	18.9	0.1	11.2	0.1
Hispanic or Latino	25,563,650	5,989	13.0	0.1	8.9	0.1	4.1	0.1
RACE								
Total population	199,726,659	18,056	27.9	0.1	17.6	0.1	10.3	0.1
White alone	153,788,252	25,448	29.3	0.1	18.5	0.1	10.8	0.1
Black or African American alone	22,758,269	11,852	17.7	0.1	11.6	0.1	6.1	0.1
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,445,770	9,222	13.0	0.2	8.7	0.2	4.4	0.1
Asian alone	9,545,809	7,107	50.2	0.2	30.0	0.1	20.3	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	284,837	2,735	14.4	0.5	10.4	0.5	4.0	0.3
Some Other Race alone	9,008,935	33,931	10.0	0.1	7.1	0.1	2.9	0.1
Two or More Races	2,894,787	29,192	24.5	0.2	15.8	0.2	8.7	0.1

¹ Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

² Some percentages for bachelor's degree and graduate or professional degree do not sum to total bachelor's degree or higher due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables.

the racial categories.² Twenty-nine percent of the White alone population had a bachelor's degree or higher. They were followed by the Two or More Races (24 percent), Black or African American alone (18 percent), Native Hawaiian and

² First, the "race alone population" refers to people who reported a single race group. For example, we refer to the Asian alone population. Second, the "race in combination population" refers to people who reported more than one race group: for example, people who reported both White and Asian or people who reported both Black or African American and Asian. These two examples are included in the Asian in combination population. Third, the "race alone or in combination population" reflects the sum of the first two groups. It includes all people who reported a particular race group, either alone or in combination with one or more other race groups. For example, the Asian alone or in combination population represents all people who reported Asian, either alone or in combination with one or more other race groups. As a matter of policy, the Census Bureau does not advocate the use of the alone population over the alone-or-in-combination population or vice versa. The use of the alone population in sections of this brief does not imply that it is the preferred method of presenting or analyzing data. Data on race from the ACS can be presented and discussed in a variety of ways.

Other Pacific Islander (NHPI) alone (14 percent), American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) alone (13 percent), and Some Other Race alone (10 percent) populations.³

Overall, Hispanics were less likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher (13 percent) compared with the non-Hispanic population (30 percent).⁴

Among the race groups, the Asian alone population also had the highest proportion with a bachelor's degree only education (30 percent). It was followed by White alone

³ For detailed definitions of the racial categories used in this brief, see the Race section of the 2010 ACS Subject Definitions Guide at www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/Def.htm. Also, the following terms are used interchangeably in this report: "Black or African American" and "Black"; "American Indian and Alaska Native" and "AIAN"; and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander" and "NHPI."

⁴ For detailed definitions of the Hispanic origin categories used in this brief, see the Hispanic origin section of the 2010 ACS Subject Definitions Guide at www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/Def.htm.

(18 percent), Two or More Races (16 percent), Black alone (12 percent), NHPI alone (10 percent), AIAN alone (9 percent), and Some Other Race alone (7 percent).

About one-half as many Hispanics had a bachelor's degree only education (9 percent) compared with the non-Hispanic population (19 percent).

Within the Asian alone population 25 years and over, 1 in 5 had received a graduate or professional degree. About 1 in 10 in the White alone population had earned a graduate or professional degree. The proportion of those 25 years and over with a graduate or professional degree was less than 10 percent for the other race groups, and ranged from 3 percent for the Some Other Race alone population to 9 percent for the Two or More Races population.

Table 2.

Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by Detailed Hispanic Group: 2006–2010

(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

Hispanic or Latino origin ¹	Total population 25 years and over	Margin of error ² (±)	Percent with bachelor's degree or higher	Margin of error ² (±)
Total population	199,726,659	18,056	27.9	0.1
Not Hispanic or Latino	174,163,009	19,023	30.1	0.1
Hispanic or Latino	25,563,650	5,989	13.0	0.1
DETAILED HISPANIC GROUP				
Argentinean	149,966	4,043	38.9	0.9
Bolivian	63,778	2,257	34.0	1.7
Chilean	82,148	2,790	35.9	1.5
Colombian	578,045	7,898	31.3	0.6
Costa Rican	78,584	2,878	25.3	1.3
Cuban	1,175,669	9,101	25.0	0.3
Dominican (Dominican Republic)	754,537	8,454	15.2	0.4
Ecuadorian	364,472	6,998	18.2	0.6
Guatemalan	574,854	8,937	8.7	0.4
Honduran	358,040	7,203	10.3	0.5
Mexican	15,540,582	23,169	9.1	0.1
Nicaraguan	222,332	5,474	19.4	0.8
Panamanian	99,762	3,064	30.8	1.1
Peruvian	342,070	6,450	30.5	0.7
Puerto Rican	2,443,481	13,230	15.9	0.2
Salvadoran	943,896	11,519	7.8	0.2
Spaniard	355,315	5,844	30.3	0.7
Uruguayan	37,399	2,258	20.6	1.6
Venezuelan	131,137	3,566	49.7	1.3

¹ The Hispanic groups included in this table have estimated total populations 25 years and over of at least 25,000 at the national level.

² Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables.

Hispanics were relatively less likely to have received a graduate or professional degree (4 percent) than the non-Hispanic population (11 percent).

Table 2 presents data on detailed Hispanic groups with a bachelor's degree or higher in the United States. Among the selected detailed Hispanic groups, the Venezuelan-origin population had the highest percent with a bachelor's degree or higher (50 percent). Seven additional detailed Hispanic groups reported at least 30 percent of those 25 years and over held a bachelor's degree or higher. Among these eight detailed Hispanic groups, the majority were of South American origin (Venezuelan, 50 percent; Argentinean, 39 percent;

Chilean, 36 percent; Bolivian, 34 percent; Colombian, 31 percent; and Peruvian, 30 percent). Additionally, 31 percent of Panamanians, the highest among the Central American Hispanic detailed groups, and 30 percent of Spaniards had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Among the Caribbean Hispanic groups, Cubans (25 percent—the highest percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher among the Caribbean groups), Puerto Ricans (16 percent), and Dominicans (15 percent) were more likely than the total Hispanic population (13 percent) to hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 3 provides information on those aged 25 and over with a

bachelor's degree or higher by detailed group in the United States. Among the selected AIAN alone tribes, Choctaw had the highest proportion with a bachelor's degree or higher (19 percent).⁵ However, for all selected AIAN alone tribes, the proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher were below the national level of 28 percent.

Five selected detailed Asian alone groups had more than 50 percent of their population 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher: Taiwanese (74 percent), Asian Indian (71 percent), Pakistani (55 percent),

⁵ "Detailed group alone" refers to people who reported a single specified group and no other group or race.

Table 3.

Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by Detailed Group: 2006–2010

(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

Race and detailed group ¹	Total population 25 years and over	Margin of error ² (±)	Percent with bachelor's degree or higher	Margin of error ² (±)
Total population	199,726,659	18,056	27.9	0.1
WHITE ALONE	153,788,252	25,448	29.3	0.1
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	138,362,204	7,233	30.9	0.1
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN ALONE	22,758,269	11,852	17.7	0.1
Black alone, not Hispanic or Latino	22,340,413	9,384	17.7	0.1
AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE ALONE	1,445,770	9,222	13.0	0.2
Cherokee alone	172,708	3,018	16.5	0.6
Chippewa alone	25,145	872	13.5	1.5
Choctaw alone	46,324	1,623	18.5	1.1
Lumbee Indian Tribe alone	41,434	1,273	12.4	1.4
Navajo Nation alone	159,114	2,276	8.5	0.5
ASIAN ALONE	9,545,809	7,107	50.2	0.2
Asian Indian alone	1,797,516	12,127	70.7	0.3
Bangladeshi alone	55,633	2,747	49.6	2.4
Burmese alone	29,743	1,956	38.6	2.9
Cambodian alone	134,321	3,942	14.5	0.8
Chinese alone, except Taiwanese	2,187,761	12,824	51.8	0.4
Filipino alone	1,785,110	13,045	48.1	0.3
Hmong alone	87,297	2,959	14.4	0.9
Indonesian alone	46,241	1,853	48.7	2.0
Japanese alone	664,787	8,377	47.3	0.5
Korean alone	948,106	9,529	52.9	0.5
Laotian alone	122,780	4,074	12.1	0.6
Pakistani alone	163,834	4,309	55.1	1.2
Taiwanese alone	84,567	2,948	73.7	1.3
Thai alone	126,427	3,265	42.8	1.1
Vietnamese alone	1,009,271	11,239	26.3	0.4
NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER ALONE	284,837	2,735	14.4	0.5
Guamanian or Chamorro alone	47,052	2,213	16.8	1.3
Native Hawaiian alone	103,877	2,465	15.9	0.8
Samoan alone	51,008	2,403	10.0	1.2
TWO OR MORE RACES	2,894,787	29,192	24.5	0.2
American Indian and Alaska Native; Some Other Race	29,196	1,219	12.0	1.3
Asian; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	77,624	2,237	23.7	1.2
Asian; Some Other Race	61,611	2,193	41.8	1.6
Black or African American; American Indian and Alaska Native	164,888	3,616	22.0	0.7
Black or African American; Asian	52,924	1,955	32.6	1.4
Black or African American; Some Other Race	71,292	2,235	19.9	1.1
White; American Indian and Alaska Native	952,147	6,187	18.2	0.3
White; Asian	418,400	7,874	42.5	0.5
White; Asian; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	46,539	1,673	23.5	1.2
White; Black or African American	353,525	5,625	24.8	0.6
White; Black or African American; American Indian and Alaska Native	85,114	2,407	29.4	1.1
White; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	61,346	2,185	20.9	1.2
White; Some Other Race	406,527	10,123	18.5	0.5

¹ The American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Asian groups, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander groups, and Two or More Races groups included in this table have estimated total populations 25 years and over of at least 25,000 at the national level.

² Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables and 2006–2010 American Community Survey American Indian and Alaska Native Tables.

Korean (53 percent), and Chinese, except Taiwanese (52 percent). The Taiwanese and Asian Indian populations had higher educational attainment levels than any other detailed race or ethnic group examined in this brief. Other selected detailed Asian alone groups that had proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher significantly greater than the national level included Bangladeshi (50 percent), Indonesian (49 percent), Filipino (48 percent), Japanese (47 percent), Thai (43 percent), and Burmese (39 percent). On the other hand, for several Southeast Asian groups, including Vietnamese (26 percent), Cambodian (14 percent), Hmong (14 percent), and Laotian (12 percent), the proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher were below the national level of 28 percent.⁶

Among the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone groups, Guamanians or Chamorros and Native Hawaiians (about 16 percent each) had higher proportions of their populations who had received a bachelor's degree or higher than Samoans (10 percent).

All of the selected multiple-race combinations where the proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher exceeded the national level included "Asian," with one exception: White **and** Black **and** AIAN, 29 percent. In fact, among all selected multiple-race combinations shown, White **and** Asian and Asian **and** Some Other Race had

⁶ The percentages who had received a bachelor's degree or higher for Bangladeshi alone, Japanese alone, and Indonesian alone were not statistically different from each other. The percentage who had received a bachelor's degree or higher for Bangladeshi alone was not statistically different from Chinese (except Taiwanese) alone and Filipino alone. The percentages who had received a bachelor's degree or higher for Filipino alone and Indonesian alone were not statistically different from each other. The percentages who had received a bachelor's degree or higher for Cambodian alone and Hmong alone were not statistically different from each other.

the highest proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher, each above 40 percent (43 percent and 42 percent, respectively).⁷

STATE FINDINGS

Among states (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) where the specified race groups and the Hispanic-origin population numbered at least 10,000, attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher varied (Figure 1). The highest proportion of the population aged 25 and over who completed a bachelor's degree or higher was in the District of Columbia (49 percent). Rounding out the top five were Massachusetts (38 percent), Colorado and Maryland (about 36 percent each), and Connecticut (35 percent).

The lowest proportions of the total population who completed a bachelor's degree or higher were in Mississippi and Arkansas (19 percent each) and West Virginia (17 percent).

Almost 9 out of 10 non-Hispanic White alone residents aged 25 years and over in the District of Columbia (87 percent) had received a bachelor's degree or higher. This proportion far outpaced those in Hawaii and Colorado (about 42 percent each) and Massachusetts and Maryland (about 40 percent each). At the other end of the spectrum, fewer than 1 out of 5 of the non-Hispanic White alone population in West Virginia had received a bachelor's degree or higher (17 percent).

At least 20 percent of Hispanics aged 25 and over had a bachelor's degree or higher in multiple areas along the east coast. In the

⁷ The race-in-combination categories use the conjunction **and** in bold and italicized print to link the race groups that compose the combination. The percentages among the Two or More Races population 25 years and over who had received a bachelor's degree or higher were not statistically different from each other for White **and** Asian and Asian **and** Some Other Race.

upper Northeast, 26 percent and 20 percent of Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher in New Hampshire and Maine, respectively. In Maryland and Virginia, at least 1 in 5 Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher. In the District of Columbia, over one-third of Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher, which was the highest proportion for Hispanics in the nation. Additionally, 21 percent of Hispanics in Florida and Puerto Rico had a bachelor's degree or higher.

States where at least one-fifth of the Black alone population aged 25 and over held a bachelor's degree or higher were primarily concentrated in the Northeast and the West, while most states in the Midwest and the South had proportions with a bachelor's degree or higher below 20 percent.

Among the states with 10,000 or more AIAN alone, two had about 20 percent of the population aged 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher—Massachusetts (22 percent) and Maryland (21 percent).⁸ Alaska (6 percent) had the lowest proportion of AIAN alone who had a bachelor's degree or higher.

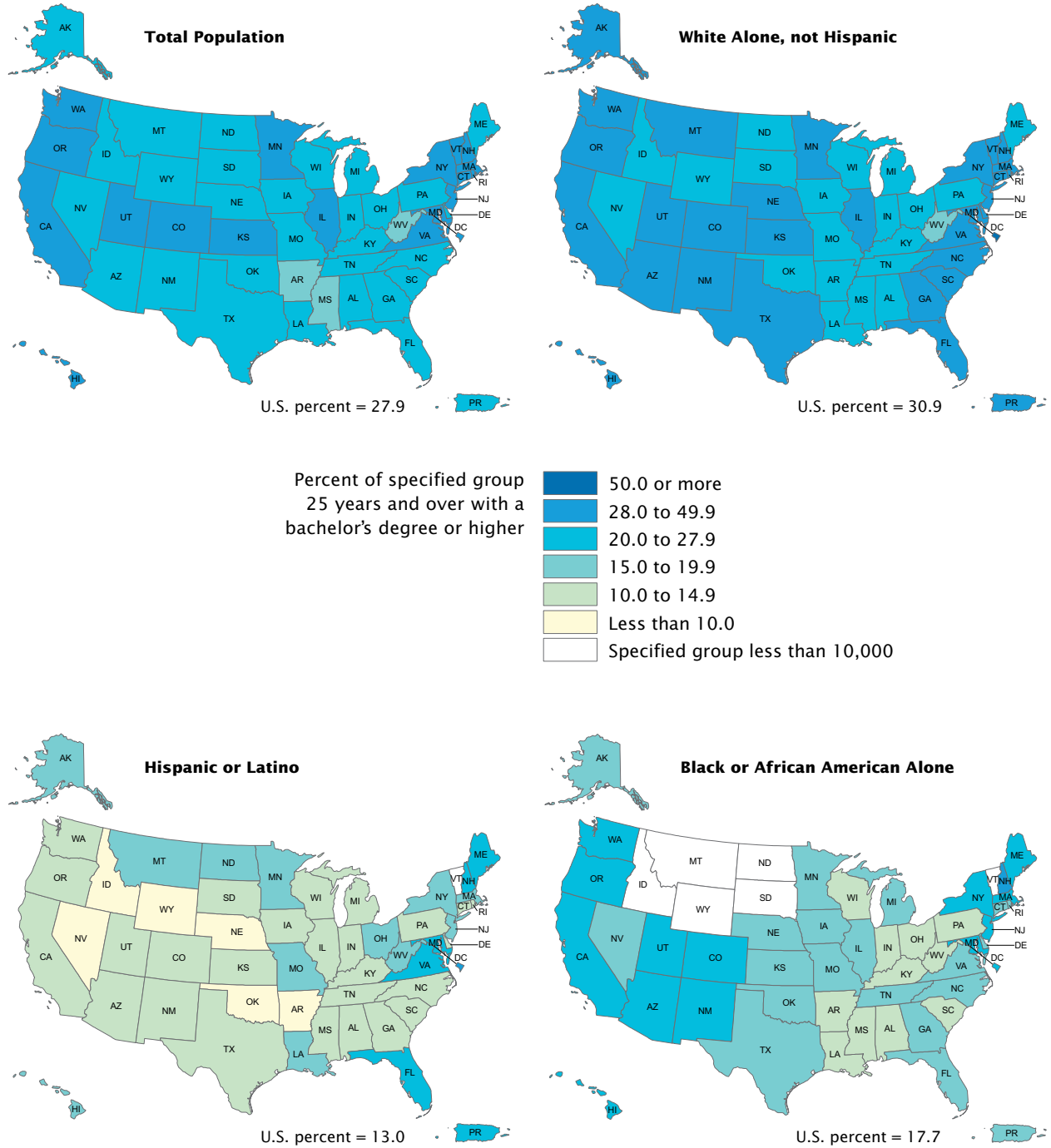
Nearly one-half of all states with at least 10,000 or more Asian alone had 50 percent or more of the Asian alone population who had received a bachelor's degree or higher. The District of Columbia had the highest proportion of Asian alone who had received a bachelor's degree or higher (77 percent).

The NHPI alone populations in Florida and Oregon (17 percent each) and Texas and Arizona (16 percent each) were more likely to have completed a bachelor's degree or higher than those in

⁸ The percentages for Massachusetts and Maryland were not statistically different from each other and several other states.

Figure 1.
**Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by State:
 2006–2010**

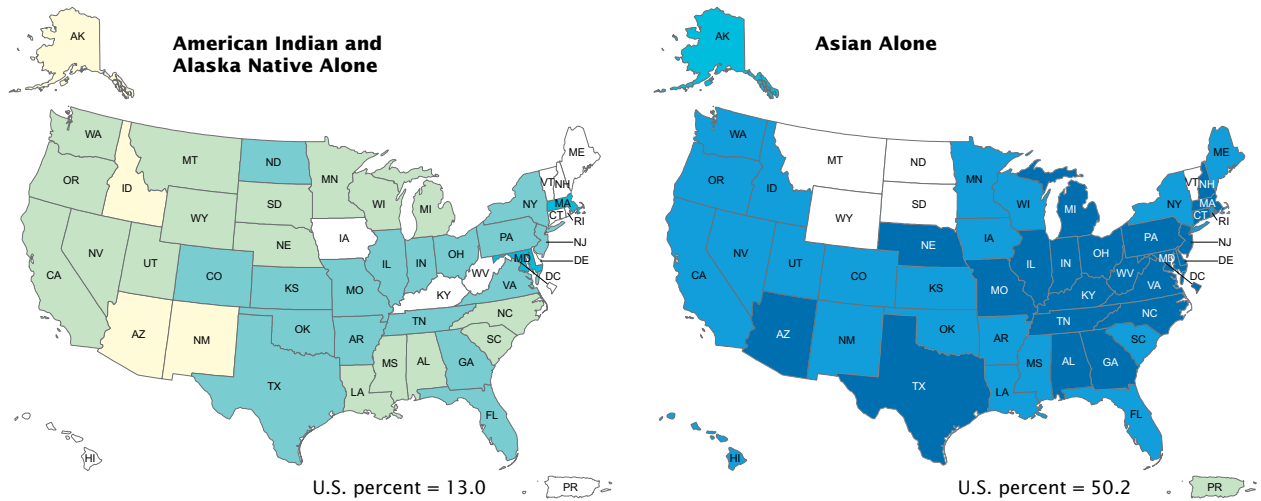
(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)



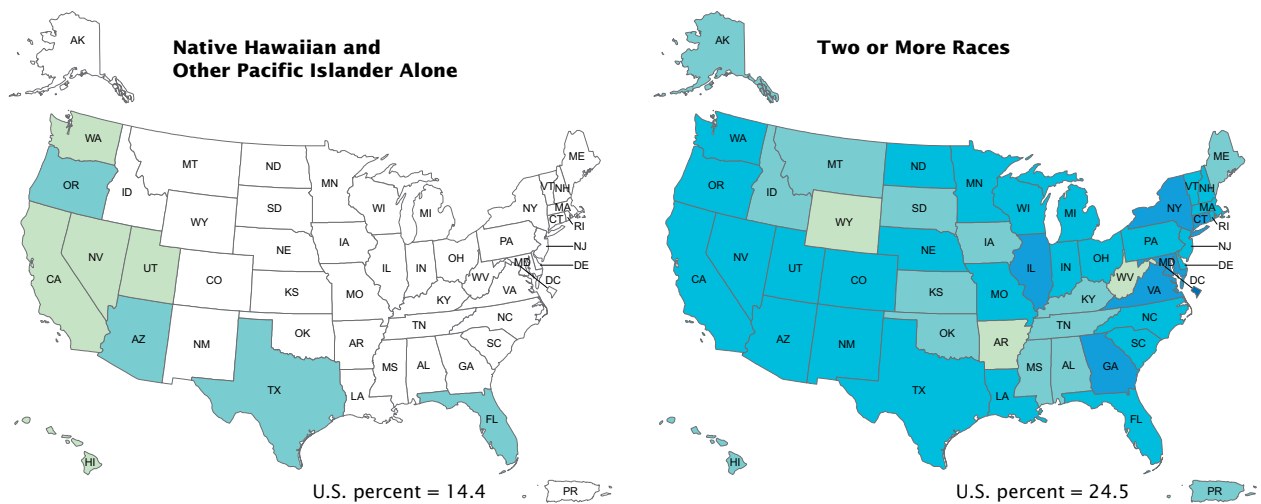
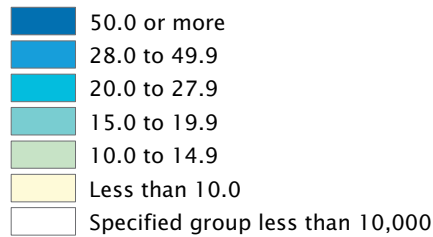
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Figure 1.
**Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher by State:
 2006–2010—Con.**

(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)



Percent of specified group
 25 years and over with a
 bachelor's degree or higher



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables.

Hawaii, Nevada, and Washington (about 11 percent each).⁹

In over half of the states, about 1 in 5 of the Two or More Races population aged 25 and over had a bachelor's degree or higher. The proportion of the Two or More Races population with a bachelor's degree or higher exceeded the national level of 28 percent in the District of Columbia (61 percent) and in four states—Virginia and Maryland (about 35 percent each) and Illinois and New York (about 29 percent each).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The U.S. Census Bureau Web site provides more data on educational attainment in the United States and Puerto Rico. Varying categories of educational attainment for detailed geographies, race, Hispanic-origin groups, and ancestry groups can be found at the American FactFinder Web site at <factfinder2.census.gov>.

⁹ The percentages for Florida, Oregon, Texas, and Arizona were not statistically different from each other.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY

Estimates presented in this report are based on people and households that responded to the ACS between 2006 and 2010. The resulting estimates are representative of the entire population. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. Due to rounding, some details may not sum to totals. For information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the “ACS Accuracy of the Data” document located at <www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/MultiyearACSAccuracyofData2010.pdf>.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. During this period, the annual sample size was about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing facilities and prisons).

The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit <www.census.gov/acs/www>.