

U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233



CB10-FF.04
Jan. 5, 2010

Irish-American Heritage Month (March) and St. Patrick's Day (March 17): 2010

Originally a religious holiday to honor St. Patrick, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into a celebration for all things Irish. The world's first St. Patrick's Day parade occurred on March 17, 1762, in New York City, featuring Irish soldiers serving in the English military. This parade became an annual event, with President Truman attending in 1948. Congress proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1995, and the President issues a proclamation each year.

Population Distribution

36.3 million

Number of U.S. residents who claimed Irish ancestry in 2008. This number was more than eight times the population of Ireland itself (4.4 million). Irish was the nation's second most frequently reported ancestry, trailing only German.

Sources: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>> and Ireland Central Statistics Office <<http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/population/current/popmig.pdf>>

135,000

Number of Irish-born U.S. residents in 2008. Those from Ireland are much older (a median of 56 years old) and have a higher median household income (\$70,591) than U.S. residents as a whole (37 years and \$52,029, respectively).

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

24%

Percent of Massachusetts residents who were of Irish ancestry in 2008. This compares with a rate of 12 percent for the nation as a whole.

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

Irish-Americans Today

32%

Percentage of people of Irish ancestry, 25 or older, who had a bachelor's degree or more education. In addition, 92 percent of Irish-Americans in this age group had at least a high school diploma. For the nation as a whole, the corresponding rates were 28 percent and 85 percent.

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

\$59,290

Median income for households headed by an Irish-American, higher than the \$52,029 for all households. In addition, 9 percent of people of Irish ancestry were in poverty, lower than the rate of 13 percent for all Americans.

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

39%

Percentage of employed civilian Irish-Americans 16 or older who worked in management, professional and related occupations. Additionally, 27 percent worked in sales and office occupations; 15 percent in service occupations; 10 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations; and 8 percent in construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations.

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/>>

71%

Percentage of householders of Irish ancestry who owned the home in which they live, with the remainder renting. For the nation as a whole, the homeownership rate was 67 percent.

Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/>>

Places to Spend the Day

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Number of places in the United States named Shamrock, the floral emblem of Ireland. Mount Gay-Shamrock, W.Va., and Shamrock, Texas, were the most populous, with 2,623 and 1,807 residents, respectively. Shamrock Lakes, Ind., had 153 residents and Shamrock, Okla., 123. (Statistic for Mount Gay-Shamrock is from Census 2000; the other statistics are 2008 estimates.)

Sources: American FactFinder and population estimates
<<http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/SUB-EST2008-4.html>>

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Number of places in the United States that share the name of Ireland's capital, Dublin. Since Census 2000, Dublin, Calif., has surpassed Dublin, Ohio, as the most populous of these places (44,297 compared with 38,536, respectively, as of July 1, 2008).

If you're still not into the spirit of St. Paddy's Day, then you might consider paying a visit to Emerald Isle, N.C., with 3,641 residents. Other appropriate places in which to spend the day: the township of Irishtown, Ill., several places or townships named "Clover" (in South Carolina, Illinois, Minnesota and Pennsylvania) and the township of Cloverleaf, Minn.

Sources: American FactFinder and population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/SUB-EST2008-4.html>>.

The Celebration

40.7 billion and 2.5 billion

U.S. beef and cabbage production, respectively, in pounds, in 2008. Corned beef and cabbage is a traditional St. Patrick's Day dish. The corned beef that celebrants dine on may very well have originated in Texas, which produced 6.5 billion pounds worth of beef. The largest producers of cabbage are New York, which produced 584 million pounds and California, which produced 528 million pounds.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1101>> and

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1183>>

\$35 million

Value of potted florist chrysanthemum sales at wholesale in 2008 for operations with \$100,000 or more sales. Lime green chrysanthemums are often requested for St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1072>>

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>.