

U.S. Census Bureau News

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Facts for
Features

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Black (African-American) History Month: February 2010

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.

Population

41.1 million

As of July 1, 2008, the estimated population of black residents in the United States, including those of more than one race. They made up 13.5 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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013733.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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/012496.html>>

18

Number of states with an estimated black population on July 1, 2008, 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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

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38%

Percentage of Mississippi's population that was black in 2008, highest of any state. Blacks also made up more than a quarter of the population in Louisiana in 2008 (32 percent), Georgia (31 percent), Maryland (30 percent), South Carolina (29 percent) and Alabama (27 percent). They comprise 56 percent of the population in the District of Columbia.

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

67,000

The increase in Georgia's black population between July 1, 2007, and July 1, 2008, which led all states. Texas (64,000), North Carolina (45,000) and Florida (41,000) also recorded large increases. Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

24

Number of states or equivalents in which blacks were the largest minority group in 2008. These included Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, 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. (Note: Minorities are part of a group other than single-race non-Hispanic white.)

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

1.4 million

The number of blacks in Cook County, Ill., as of July 1, 2008, which led the nation's counties in the number of people of this racial category. Orleans Parish, La., had the largest numerical increase in the black population between July 1, 2007, and July 1, 2008 (16,400).

Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

Among counties with total populations of at least 10,000, Claiborne County, Miss., had the largest percent of population that was black (84.4 percent). Claiborne led 77 majority-black counties or equivalents, all of which were in the South. Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013734.html>>

30%

The proportion of the black population younger than 18 as of July 1, 2008. At the other end of the spectrum, 8 percent of the black population was 65 and older. Source: Population estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/013733.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 2008. More military veterans are black than any other minority group.

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

Education

83%

Among blacks 25 and older, the proportion who had at least a high school diploma in 2008.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/013618.html>>

20%

Percentage of blacks 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2008.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/013618.html>>

1.4 million

Among blacks 25 and older, the number who had an advanced degree in 2008 (e.g., master's, doctorate, medical or law). In 1998, 857,000 blacks had this level of education.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2008

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/013618.html>>

2.5 million

Number of black college students in fall 2008. This was roughly double the corresponding number from 15 years earlier.

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

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/014354.html>>

Voting

About 2.1 million

The increase in the number of black voters between the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, to 16.1 million. 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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/013995.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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/013995.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/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/013995.html>>

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$34,218

The annual median income of single-race black households in 2008, a decline of 2.8 percent (in 2008 constant dollars) from 2007.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/014227.html>

24.7%

Poverty rate in 2008 for single-race blacks, statistically unchanged from 2007.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/014227.html>

19.1%

The percentage of single-race blacks lacking health insurance in 2008, not statistically different from 2007. Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/014227.html>

Families and Children

63%

Among households with a single-race black householder, the percentage that contained a family. There were 8.5 million black family households.

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

44%

Among families with single-race black householders, the percentage that were married couples. Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

1.2 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: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Homeownership – the American Dream

46%

Nationally, the percentage of households with a householder who was single-race black who lived in owner-occupied homes. Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Jobs

27%

The percentage of single-race blacks 16 and older who worked in management, professional and related occupations. Source: 2008 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Businesses

\$88.6 billion

Revenues for black-owned businesses in 2002. The number of black-owned businesses totaled nearly 1.2 million in 2002. Black-owned firms accounted for 5 percent of all nonfarm businesses in the United States.

129,329

The number of black-owned firms in New York in 2002, which led all states. New York City alone had 98,080 such firms, which led all cities.

10,716

The number of black-owned firms operating in 2002 with receipts of \$1 million or more. These firms accounted for 1 percent of the total number of black-owned firms in 2002 and 55 percent of their total receipts, or \$49 billion.

969

The number of black-owned firms with 100 or more employees in 2002. Firms of this size accounted for 24 percent of the total revenue for black-owned employer firms in 2002, or \$16 billion.

Source: Black-Owned Firms: 2002 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csblk.pdf>>

Note: The 2007 Preliminary Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, and Race will be available in July 2010 and the more detailed 2007 Black-Owned Businesses report will be published in February 2011.

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>.