

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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

Methodology

## More Than 300 Counties Now “Majority-Minority”

Nearly one in every 10 of the nation’s 3,141 counties has a population that is more than 50 percent minority. In 2006, eight counties that had not previously been majority-minority pushed the national total to 303, the U.S. Census Bureau reported today.

The two largest counties passing this threshold between July 1, 2005, and July 1, 2006, are Denver County, Colo., and East Baton Rouge Parish, La., with total populations of 566,974 and 429,073, respectively. Three other counties were in Texas (Winkler, Waller and Wharton), with one each in Montana (Blaine), New Mexico (Colfax) and Virginia (Manassas Park, an independent city and considered a county equivalent).

Los Angeles County, Calif., had the largest minority population in the country in 2006. At 7 million, or 71 percent of its total, Los Angeles County is home to one in every 14 of the nation’s minority residents. The county’s minority population is higher than the total population of 38 states, with the largest population of Hispanics, Asians, and American Indians and Alaska Natives in the country. It also has the second largest population of blacks and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders.

Harris County, Texas, gained 121,400 minority residents between 2005 and 2006, which led the nation. Harris (Houston is its largest city) now has a minority population of 2.5 million, comprising 63 percent of its total. Its minority population ranks third nationally, not far behind second place Cook County, Ill. (Chicago).

Based on total population, Starr County, Texas, located on the Mexican border, had the highest proportion of all counties that was minority, at 98 percent. Among the nation’s 25 most populous counties, Miami-Dade County, Fla., had the highest proportion minority, at 82 percent.

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**Editor’s Note: The embargoed data can be accessed at**  
<[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/embargoed\\_releases/index.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/embargoed_releases/index.html)>.  
After the release time, go to <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>.

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## **Hispanic**

- Los Angeles County had the largest Hispanic population (4.7 million) in 2006, followed by Harris County, Texas, and Miami-Dade (1.5 million each). (See table.)
- Maricopa County, Ariz. (home of Phoenix), had the biggest numerical increase in the Hispanic population (71,000) since July 2005, followed by Harris County, Texas (63,000).
- Starr County, Texas had the highest Hispanic proportion of its total population in 2006, at 97 percent. In fact, each of the 11 counties with the highest Hispanic proportion of its total population was in Texas.

## **Black**

- Cook County had the largest black population (1.4 million) in July 2006, followed by Los Angeles County (1 million).
- Harris County had the largest numerical increase (52,000) between 2005 and 2006, with East Baton Rouge Parish next (19,000).
- Claiborne County, Miss., had a population that was 85 percent black in 2006, which led the nation. All 50 counties with the highest percentage black population were in the South.

## **Asian**

- Los Angeles County had the largest Asian population (1.4 million) in 2006, with Santa Clara County, Calif. (home of San Jose) the runner-up (556,000).
- Santa Clara County had the largest numerical increase (17,600) from 2005 to 2006, followed by Los Angeles (15,700).
- Honolulu County, Hawaii, led the nation with a population that was 59 percent Asian. One other county – Kauai, Hawaii – was also majority Asian. San Francisco County, Calif., led the continental United States, with 34 percent of its population Asian.

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL: 12:01 A.M. EDT, THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2007**

## **American Indian and Alaska Native**

- Los Angeles County had the largest population of American Indians and Alaska Natives in 2006 (150,000) with Maricopa County, Ariz., ranking second (95,000).

- Maricopa County had the largest numerical increase between 2005 and 2006 (3,700), followed by Riverside County, Calif. (1,600).
- Shannon County, South Dakota led the country in 2006, with 88 percent of its total population of 13,800 being a member of this group in 2006. Shannon was first of 10 counties/county equivalents that were majority American Indian and Alaska Native.

### **Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander**

- Honolulu County had the largest population of this race (177,000) in 2006, with Los Angeles County (59,000) second.
- Hawaii County, Hawaii and Clark County, Nev. (home of Las Vegas) had the largest numerical increases in this race since July 2005, around 900.

### **Non-Hispanic White Alone**

- Los Angeles County had a nation-leading 2.9 million residents who were part of this group in 2006, with Cook, Ill., second at 2.4 million.
- The largest numerical increase from 2005 to 2006 belonged to Maricopa County, Ariz. (35,500). Wake, N.C. (home of Raleigh), ranked second, gaining 18,700.
- Magoffin County, Kentucky, with an estimated 13,400 total residents, and Mitchell County, Iowa, with an estimated 10,900 total residents, led the nation with 98.9 percent of their population being non-Hispanic white alone in 2006.

Tabulations by age released today showed:

- The 10 counties with the highest proportion of people 65 and older is dominated by Florida which contributed four counties to the list, led by Charlotte County at 31.2 percent.

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL: 12:01 A.M. EDT, THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2007**

- Georgia, Alaska and Colorado combined accounted for seven of the 10 counties with the lowest proportion of people 65 and older. Chattahoochee County, Ga. — home of the Army's Fort Benning — had the lowest percentage

in the country at 2.6 percent.

- Seven of the 10 counties with the highest proportion of their population younger than 5 were in Texas, South Dakota or Utah. Webb County, Texas (home of Laredo), topped the list at 13.1 percent.

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**The minority population is defined as anyone who indicated that they were either Hispanic or a race other than white alone. The percent rankings for race, Hispanic origin, and age are based on counties with population in 2006 of 10,000 or more in 2006.**

Unless otherwise specified, the data refer to the population who reported a race alone or in combination with one or more other races. The detailed tables show data for both this group and those who reported a single race only. Censuses and surveys permit respondents to select more than one race; consequently, people may be one race or a combination of races. Hispanics may be any race.

The federal government treats Hispanic origin and race as separate and distinct concepts. In surveys and censuses, separate questions are asked on Hispanic origin and race. The question on Hispanic origin asks respondents if they are Spanish, Hispanic or Latino. Starting with Census 2000, the question on race asked respondents to report the race or races they consider themselves to be. Thus, Hispanics may be of any race. (See *U.S. Census Bureau Guidance on the Presentation and Comparison of Race and Hispanic Origin Data*.) More detailed information on race and Hispanic origin can be found at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/compraceho.html> >.

These data are based on estimates of U.S. population for July 1, 2006. The Census Bureau estimates population change from the most recent decennial census (Census 2000) using annual data on births, deaths and international migration. More detailed information on the methodology used to produce these estimates can be found at [http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/methodology/2006\\_st\\_char\\_meth.html](http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/methodology/2006_st_char_meth.html).