

# Census: US more diverse, white population grows least

By LAURIE KELLMAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States is growing older and more ethnically diverse, a trend that could strain government programs from Medicare to education, the Census Bureau reported Thursday.

Every ethnic and racial group grew between 2015 and 2016, but the number of whites continued to increase at the slowest rate — less than one hundredth of 1 percent, or 5,000 people, the Census estimate shows. That's a fraction of the rates of growth for non-white Hispanics, Asians and people who said they are multi-racial, according to the government's annual estimates of population.

President Donald Trump's core support in the racially divisive 2016 election came from white voters, and polls showed that it was especially strong among those who said they felt left behind in an increasingly racially diverse country. In fact, the Census Bureau projects whites will remain in the majority in the U.S. until after 2040.

"Even then, (whites) will still represent the nation's larg-

est plurality of people, and even then they will still inherit the structural advantages and legacies that benefit people on the basis of having white skin," said Justin Gest, author of "The New Minority," a book about the 2016 election.

## An aging nation

The Census Bureau reported that the median age of Americans — the age at which half are older and half are younger — rose nationally from just over 35 years to nearly 38 years in the years between 2000 and 2016, driven by the aging of the "baby boom" generation.

The number of residents age 65 and older grew from 35 million to 49.2 million during those 16 years, jumping from 12 percent of the total population to 15 percent.

That's a costly leap for taxpayers as those residents move to Medicare, government health care for seniors and younger people with disabilities, which accounted for \$1 out of every \$7 in federal spending last year, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. By 2027, it will cost \$1 out of every \$6 of federal money spent. Net Medicare



AP Photo/Gregory Bull

Duncan Wallace drives a golf cart from his house to his golf club as a group of landscape workers take a break in Vista, Calif., in 2016. The United States is growing older and more ethnically diverse, a trend that is could put strains on government programs from Medicare to education, the Census Bureau reported Thursday.

spending is expected to nearly double over the next decade, from \$592 billion to \$1.2 trillion, the KFF reported.

Sumter County, Florida, home of The Villages, a large retirement community, had the highest median age increase, rising from 49 years old in 2000 to 67 years old in 2016. Over that time period, 56 U.S. counties showed a median age increase of 10 years or more.

## Boom in young people

The Census report also showed that children in the U.S. born from 2001 through 2016 were the nation's fastest-growing age group, with a 6.8 percent jump in the year beginning July 1, 2015. Other age groups either lost or gained population by less than a percentage point, according to the Census Bureau.

That means more demand

on taxpayers for schools, bilingual education and accommodations for English language learners, as well as recruiting a corps of educators that reflects the nation's students. Robert Hull, executive vice president of the National Association of State Boards of Education, said a majority of students in the U.S. are not white, but that 82 percent of teachers are white.

"It's not just the services offered or what we do for the students but who is delivering those services," Hull said.

The number of English language learners in U.S. public schools was about 4.6 million in the 2014-2015 school year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

## Face of a nation

All race and ethnic groups grew in the year before July 1, 2016, the Census reported.

The Asian population and those who identified as being of two or more races grew by 3 percent each, to 21 million and 8.5 million, respectively. Hispanics grew by 2 percent to 57.5 million. The black population grew by 1.2 percent to nearly 47 million.

The number of non-Hispanic whites grew by only 5,000, leaving that population relatively steady at 198 million of the nation's 325 million people.

A Pew Research Center analysis of the Census' current population survey found that white turnout increased in the 2016 election, while black turnout dropped and the non-white share of the U.S. electorate remained flat compared with the 2012 election.

"Any sort of impact on politics may be several decades in the future," said Mark Hugo Lopez, director of Hispanic research for the Pew Research Center.

California had both the largest number of whites and non-white Hispanics in 2016, 30 million and 15.3 million, respectively.

Texas had the largest numeric increase in both the white and non-white Hispanic populations.

As for the share of a state's overall population, New Mexico had the highest percentage of nonwhite Hispanics at 48.5 percent. Maine had the largest percentage of whites, nearly 97 percent.

# Summer vacation: Never mind the hike. Where's the hammock?

By EMILY SWANSON  
and BETH J. HARPAZ  
Associated Press

Never mind the hike. Where's the hammock?

A new poll about summer travel finds that the No. 1 thing Americans want to do on vacation is ... nothing.

Almost three-fourths of Americans say resting and relaxing is very or extremely important to them when they go on vacation, according to the survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Among those dreaming about kicking back is Yari Blanco of Brooklyn, New York, who recently tweeted, "Your girl needs a vacation. The kind where you lay by a crystal blue beach and nap in a hammock." Blanco, who's been busy working on a website she recently launched called TheGirlMob, hopes to squeeze in some relaxation time in July and maybe a trip later this year to Portugal.

## Staycations and unplugging

Interestingly, most Americans say staying home and doing nothing isn't ideal. Instead, they want a change of scenery. Of those who plan a summer vacation, 92 percent are going away and only 8 percent are making it a staycation. More than half of those polled said relaxing at home doesn't count as a real vacation.

How about unplugging? Only 22 percent "completely disconnect" while on vacation. A third don't even try to get away from the internet and social media. Some of those surveyed — 42 percent — say they dial back their time online a little.

Americans under 30 are the most plugged in. Just 13 percent say they're likely to completely disconnect on vacation.

But most Americans do avoid working on vacation. Sixty percent of workers say they don't check in with work at all when they're on vacation, while 32 percent say they work or check in with work a little. Eight percent may fall into the workaholic category: They work or check in with the office "a lot."

The term "bleisure" has been a buzzword recently in the travel industry, describing a combination of business and leisure travel. But most Americans (69 percent) don't consider extending a business trip to be a real vacation.

## Top vacation activities

Sightseeing was ranked important by 55 percent of those surveyed, followed by experiencing local culture and cuisine (51 percent), visiting family (46 percent) and spending time in nature (45 percent).

But there's a gender gap.



Carl Juste/Miami Herald

Kristiina Nurk, 34, enjoys a good book underneath the blue summer-like skies and weather as she vacations in Miami for a second day while on holiday in May. A new survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that resting and relaxing is very or extremely important to three-fourths of Americans while on vacation.

Shopping is more popular with women than men (22 percent versus 9 percent), and women also prioritize sightseeing (60 percent versus 49 percent) and visiting family (52 percent versus 40 percent) more than men.

## Airline regulations

Many Americans support more government regulations on airlines — perhaps a logical response to recent headlines over passengers being hauled off flights in disputes with airline staff. Six in 10 respondents want the government to regulate airline policies for bumping passengers and handling overbooked flights. Nearly half would like to see more regulation regarding

flight delays and cancellations.

Shiva Rajagopal of Fort Lee, New Jersey, is among those supporting regulations to bar airlines from forcing people off flights. "I've had a couple of bad experiences being bumped out of flights," he said. Airlines shouldn't be able to do it "no matter what the compensation is," he said, because sometimes "you have to be in a particular place at a particular time."

## Traveling companions

The stereotypical image of families piling into a car for a summer trip isn't too far from reality. Among married couples, 87 percent vacation with their spouses. Among par-

ents, 87 percent vacation with their kids. Three-fourths of vacationing parents will drive rather than fly.

Most vacationers, married or not, travel with others. Overall, 68 percent will travel with a spouse or significant other and 49 percent will travel with other relatives or friends. Just 14 percent of vacationers will travel solo, including about a quarter of unmarried travelers.

Sixty-one percent of vacationers say they'll drive, 31 percent will fly and 4 percent will cruise. Another 1 percent will go by train, 2 percent by bus.

## Time versus money

Half of the public expects to spend less than \$1,000 for their summer holiday and half anticipate laying out more.

Time is the luxury most people desire. Nearly two-thirds of Americans would prefer a less extravagant vacation but longer vacation.

## Lodging

For accommodations, hotels and motels are most popular, used by 45 percent of summer vacationers. Another 22 percent will stay with friends or relatives. Rentals of homes, condos or apartments were the choice of 17 percent, while 9 percent will sleep in a tent, cabin or RV.

## Non-vacationers

The poll also found, in results released previously, that 43 percent of Americans won't take a summer vacation, with 49 percent of non-vacationers saying they can't afford it. Another 11 percent said they can't take time off from work, while 3 percent said they don't like to be away from work. The survey also found that 41 percent of working Americans do not get paid vacation time from their employers.

Online: <http://www.apnorc.org/>



AP Photo/Ed Andrieski

A rack of rifles at Firing-Line gun store in Aurora, Colo. A new survey by the Pew Research Center shows Americans have grown more divided over gun issues.

# Americans and guns: It's complicated

By LISA MARIE PANE  
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Americans have long had a complex relationship with guns.

Now, a new study shows that the country's deep political divide is reflected in attitudes toward gun control. The Pew survey released Thursday found a sharp drop in overall support for gun control despite common ground on some key issues.

For example, when people were asked whether it was more important to protect gun rights or control gun ownership, 51 percent favored gun control and 47 percent favored gun rights. Compare that with responses in 2000, when two-thirds of those surveyed said they supported gun control measures.

People in the new survey were in broad agreement when asked about specific gun control measures.

Some 89 percent supported preventing the mentally ill from buying guns and 84 percent of all adults supported background checks for private sales and at gun shows.

Barring gun purchases for people on no-fly lists won support from 83 percent, while 71 percent of adults, including a small majority of gun owners, supported a federal database tracking gun sales.

The survey showed wide

disparities in how people view firearms along political, gender, racial and geographic lines. The gaps came at the start of President Donald Trump's term. He is seen as one of the most gun-friendly presidents and could be supported by a GOP-controlled Congress, although there has been little action on gun issues since January.

About half of the public said making it more difficult to purchase a firearm would mean fewer mass shootings, while a little over one-third said it would have no impact.

Most people attribute gun violence to the ease in illegally getting access to a firearm, and the public can't decide whether making it easier to legally purchase a firearm would lower or raise the crime rate.

Republicans have made the most significant shifts on guns while Democrats have remained consistent in their views, said Kim Parker, Pew's director of social trends research.

"This reflects that the issue has really become more polarized, more driven by partisan attitudes," Parker said.

The study also showed that people in the United States, whether they own a firearm or not, have broad exposure to guns. At least two-thirds have lived in a household with guns and about 70 percent have fired a gun.

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