



Diversity spreads to all corners of the U.S.

By Haya El Nasser, USA TODAY

Updated 15h 7m ago

[Recommend](#) 67 | [41](#) | [4](#)

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

The number of nearly all-white communities has plummeted since 1980, dramatic evidence that the nation's growing racial and ethnic diversity has spread far beyond large metropolitan centers into smaller towns and rural parts of the heartland, new research shows.

Communities where whites are the majority are still the norm (82.6%), but those where they dominate are gradually disappearing, according to an analysis of Census data by Penn State's Population Research Institute. In 1980, about two-thirds of all places were at least 90% white. By 2010, only a third were. The number of places where no group is a majority has more than quintupled.

"This trend is pretty geographically pervasive, and even residents of small towns and rural areas are encountering diversity face to face," says Barrett Lee, Penn State sociologist and demographer and lead author of the study released today. "It's not something they just read about in the newspapers anymore."

Places that have the most balanced mix of non-Hispanic whites, Hispanics, blacks, Asians and others are most prevalent in the West and South and other traditional immigrant magnets. Large cities and their suburbs — San Francisco; Washington, D.C.; New York; Los Angeles; Houston — have the greatest share of diversity.

"It's really the kids who are driving all this," says Kenneth Johnson, demographer at the University of New Hampshire's Carsey Institute. "As population continues to age and minority child population increases, these numbers are going to go up fast."

The impact is striking in rural areas where white populations are shrinking as young people leave and the elderly who stay die. When Hispanics and Asians move in, minority kids are born and alter the dynamics. Many rural schools have added English-as-a-second-language classes and social service agencies have hired translators.

"There are literally hundreds of American counties that would be losing population if it were not for minority growth," Johnson says. "This diversity is bringing them young people they had been losing for a long time and new opportunities."

Marketers have been tracking the changes through spikes in sales of ethnic food products — from soy sauce to tortillas. "Food is often an early indicator," says Jim Lucas, executive vice president for global retail insight and strategy at Drafftcb, a Chicago advertising and marketing company.

By Rich Pedroncelli, AP

The St. Vincent's Hill neighborhood is seen in Vallejo, Calif. The city ranks among the most diverse in the nation, a study finds.

Sponsored Links

Mom Makes \$72/Hr Online
 Providence: She Makes \$4,000/Month From Home. You Won't Believe How...
www.daily-consumer-tips.org
2547% Penny Stock Picks?
 Our last pick exploded 2547% - Join our free newsletter today!
www.PennyStockAdvice.com
Enter to WIN...
 an Alaska Cruise Tour for two! Plus, get your free planning guide.
www.hollandamerica.com

[Buy a link here](#)

Videos you may be interested in

[Bill Clinton makes case for Obama's re-election](#) | [USA TODAY Newsmaker: San Antonio Mayor J...](#) | [Frenzy Over New Diet Pill](#) [ConsumerOnHealthR](#)
 by [Taboola](#)
[More videos](#)

Most Popular

Stories

- Obama: Voters face 'clearest choice' in a...
- Fact check: Obama and Biden at the DNC
- Fact check: Bill Clinton at the DNC
- Small earthquake shakes L.A. area
- Ouch! Hospital to review woman's \$83,046...

Videos

- Gabby Giffords delivers pledge, brings tears
- 92-year-old faced with intruder has no need for 911
- Father of girl with bubonic plague 'thought she died'

Photos

- The Democratic National Convention
- Jessica Simpson through the years
- The week in pictures

Most Popular E-mail Newsletter

Sign up to get:

Top viewed stories, photo galleries and community posts of the day

Most popular right now:
[ESPN's hilarious 'SportsCenter' commercial](#)



Sign up for USA TODAY E-mail newsletters

Lucas' firm, which works with Kikkoman, Kraft, Oreo, Nivea and Kmart among others, has witnessed the rising diversity outside of traditional immigrant centers.

Lee warns that diversity does not end segregation. People of all races can live in the same city but still in separate neighborhoods.

The Penn State research (www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Data/Data.htm), one in a series on

recent trends in American society by the US2010 Project, found that California cities dominate the list of most diverse places (Oakland, Vallejo and Suisin City). Most of the least diverse are Northeastern and Midwestern towns that are still predominantly white (Altoona, Pa.; Wheeling, W. Va.; Bangor, Maine) or in Texas cities where Hispanics dominate (Laredo, Muniz, [Agua Dulce](#), Siesta Acres).

"Younger people who have grown up in diverse communities take this demographic profile as a given," the report says. "But older whites who have watched the 30-year increase find themselves having to adjust their notion of 'America' sometimes reluctantly."

USA TODAY Digital Services

- Mobile | [E-Newsletters](#) | [RSS](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Widgets](#) | [e-Edition](#) | [USA TODAY for iPad](#) | [Kindle Edition](#) | [Subscribe to Home Delivery](#)
- [Reprints & Permissions](#) | [USA TODAY Topics](#) | [Reporter Index](#) | [Corrections/Clarifications](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Archives](#)

- [Home](#) | [News](#) | [Travel](#) | [Money](#) | [Sports](#) | [Life](#) | [Tech](#) | [Weather](#) | [Visit our Partners: USA WEEKEND](#) | [Sports Weekly](#) | [Education](#) | [Space.com](#) | [Travel Tips](#)

For more information about [reprints & permissions](#), visit our FAQ's. To report corrections and clarifications, contact Standards Editor Brent Jones. For publication consideration in the newspaper, send comments to letters@usatoday.com. Include name, phone number, city and state for verification. To view our corrections, go to corrections.usatoday.com.

Posted 10h 43m ago | Updated 15h 7m ago



More from USATODAY

Another 'Saturday Night Live' star exits
USATODAY.COM in LifeLine Live

CNN poll: Obama 52%, Romney 45%
USATODAY.COM in The Oval

High court case looks at affirmative action at universities *USATODAY.COM in News*

Affirmative action case at high court could restart old debate *USATODAY.COM in News*

Disney Fantasy Nearing Completion *(Vacation Cruises Info)*

More from the web

Where Does The Car Dealer Make Money
Edmunds

T. Boone Pickens: "They Don't Know Anything About Energy In Washington" *Money Morning*

Daley: We Do Have a Year Round Campaign Mentality *Bloomberg*

9 tips to keep your home safe while you're away *Progressive*

Billionaires Dumping Stocks, Economist Knows Why *Moneynews*

[?]

USA TODAY is now using Facebook Comments on our stories and blog posts to provide an enhanced user experience. To post a comment, log into Facebook and then "Add" your comment. To report spam or abuse, click the "X" in the upper right corner of the comment box. To find out more, read the [FAQ](#) and [Conversation Guidelines](#).

33 comments

Add a comment

Contact



Robert Squire III · Top Commenter · Daytona Beach, Florida

"Younger people who have grown up in diverse communities take this demographic profile as a given," the report says. "But older whites who have watched the 30-year increase find themselves having to adjust their notion of 'America' sometimes reluctantly.

Is this what the far right conservative movement fear? Is this what they're fighting against when they say "take OUR country back"? Is this why a black president has sent them all into a fit? Unequivically, YES!

Awesome... god bless "a diverse" America.....

Reply · 16 · Like · 10 hours ago



Al Sanchez · Top Commenter · Los Angeles, California

YOU'RE AN IDIOT IF YOU THINK THAT MORE MEXICANS AND LATINOS ARE CONSIDERED DIVERSE! YOU MUST BE LICKIN' THE BROWN ONE ON A DAILY BASIS TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT AS YOU DID! I'M LATINO!!! DO YOU THINK I WANT TO NECESSARILY LIVE NEXT TO MY PEOPLE? THANK GOD I LIVE IN A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE NEIGHBORHOOD--I'M PROUD TO SAY! I'VE SEEN DIVERSITY HERE IN LOS ANGELES AND IT'S UGLY! YOU ARE JUST TOO STUPID TO TALK TO OR TO EVEN UNDERSTAND THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THIS SO CALLED DIVERSITY THING. THE BROWN TIDAL WAVE WILL WIPE YOU OUT WITH NO APOLOGIES! THE ILLEGALS AND THE LATINOS DON'T GIVE A HOOT ABOUT YOU OR ANY OTHER NATIONALITY. THEY WANT STUPID WHITE PEOPLE LIKE YOU TO HELP THEM OUT BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT THERE ARE SO MANY OF YOU! IDIOT!

A. SANCHEZ

Reply · 17 · Like · 10 hours ago



Al Sanchez · Top Commenter · Los Angeles, California

ACTUALLY, STUPID BLACK PEOPLE LIKE YOU!

Reply · Like · 10 hours ago



Cesar Sepulveda · Top Commenter

hey Al you need a new keyboard because it only types in CAPS....

Reply · 13 · Like · 10 hours ago

[View 54 more](#)



Dale Yancy · Top Commenter · Univ. of California - Fullerton

For a liberal rag like USAToday, diversity is always about the color of your skin, never about diversity of thought or ideas. In their view, conservatives and the Tea Party crowd should have no place at the table.

Reply · 13 · Like · 4 hours ago



Anthony Todd · Top Commenter

Key word "RAG." Best used to line bird cages.

Reply · 5 · Like · 4 hours ago



Phil Bowman · Top Commenter · University of Iowa

And how do you line a bird cage with an internet newspaper?

Reply · 3 · Like · 2 hours ago



Sam Wall · Artist/landlord, etc at Self

Rant on, Dale, but the first sentence of the article makes it clear that their topic is "racial and ethnic diversity", not political or intellectual diversity.

Reply · 2 · Like · 2 hours ago

Sponsored

QUAN Hot Stock Pick

Volume Quadruples in One Day, Don't Miss Out - Buy Now!

www.QuantumInnovators.com

Map Your Flood Risk

Find Floodplan Maps, Facts, FAQs, Your Flood Risk Profile and More!

www.floodsmart.gov

GTSO Smart Investment

Rising Demand, Limited Resources - Stock Could Soar.

www.GTSOResources.com



Preston Lenze · Top Commenter · George Washington High school, New York, NY

The idea that without government intervention, certain groups would prosper at the expense of others ~~is~~ **isn't** here become ingrained in the liberal mentality of our day.

Reply · us | [Advertise](#) | [Pressroom](#) | [Jobs](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Reprints/Permissions](#) | [Privacy Notice/Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Site Index](#)



Theodosius Mandelbrot · Top Commenter · © 2012 USA TODAY, a division of Gannett Co. Inc. Works at All continents but Antarctica.

Not even close, Preston.

Reply · Like · about an hour ago



Joseph L Cooke · Top Commenter · Works at Tac56 Consulting

Right on the money, Preston.

Reply · 1 · Like · 47 minutes ago



Theodosius Mandelbrot · Top Commenter · Works at All continents but Antarctica.

Joseph L Cooke -- funny how you folks think you know what other people think. You could star in "The Mentalist."

Reply · Like · 39 minutes ago

[View 1 more](#)



Don Coupeze · Top Commenter · Shoreline, Washington