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## NEWS ARCHIVE

# Hispanics next major minority

January 22, 2003

BY [LUCIO GUERRERO](#) AND [MARK SKERTIC](#) STAFF REPORTERS

If it hasn't already happened, it will imminently: Hispanics will become the major minority, according to census figures released Tuesday.

The figures show that Hispanics are surging past African Americans as the largest minority in the United States. It's just not clear whether the change has taken place.

"Which group is larger is all semantics. The trend is clear--sometime in the recent past or sometime in the near future, Hispanics will be the largest group," said John Logan, director of the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research at the University of Albany in New York.

### U.S. POPULATION

All groups include people who selected that particular race alone or in combination with one or more others. Hispanic is an ethnicity choice, not a race. Period measured is April 1, 2000-July 1, 2001.

#### WHITE

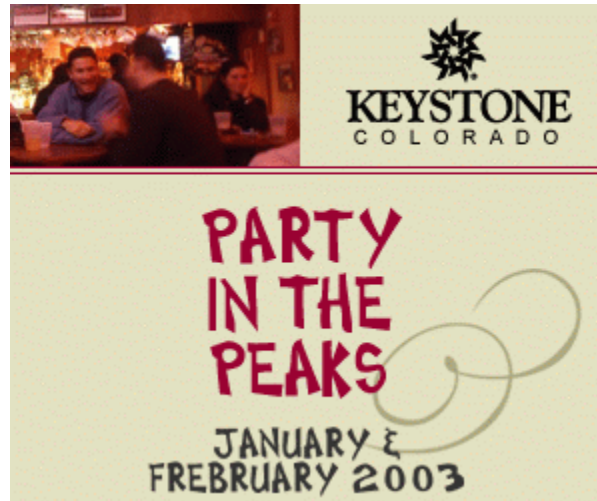
- 233,779,961
- 1.0 percent increase

#### BLACK

"The Hispanic population continues to grow faster than the black population, faster than the Asian population and faster than the white population."

The new population figures--based mainly on birth and death records--are the first such estimates the bureau has released since Census 2000 was taken in April that year.

The number of people who




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- 37,741,270
- 1.7 percent increase

#### HISPANIC

- 37,561,380
- 4.7 percent increase

#### ASIAN

- 12,469,083
- 3.8 percent increase

#### NATIVE AMERICAN

- 4,319,257
- 2.2 percent increase

#### NATIVE HAWAIIAN

- 935,590
- 3.2 percent increase

differences between the two minorities are not really relevant. What's more important, experts say, is that the Hispanic growth rate is outpacing the African-American rate.

Because of high birth and immigration rates, the Hispanic population more than doubled during the 1990s, the 2000 census found.

Many new arrivals were drawn by the booming U.S. economy and settled in areas in the South and Midwest that previously attracted few Latinos.

"This undoubtedly is a benchmark with powerful symbolic value," said Roberto Suro, director of the Pew Hispanic Center, a Washington, D.C.-based research group. "But it doesn't automatically translate into any tangible benefits for Latinos."

Much of the growth in Hispanics can be seen throughout mainstream American culture.

"There will be a profound change on how Americans see themselves," said Allert Brown-Gort, associate director of the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Brown-Gort said much of the Latinization of America can be seen in everyday places such as the grocery store, where there is a familiarity with Hispanic products.

The surge in Hispanics also means that business will reach out even more to get a piece of the spending pie. Hispanics are estimated to represent as much as \$630 billion in annual spending power.

"When you look around in stores and see who is shopping and working in

said they were Hispanic rose to 37.6 million from April 2000 to July 2001, a 4.7 percent increase.

The overall black population increased 1.7 percent, to 37.7 million. But, if you subtract blacks who are also Hispanic from the African-American count, the black population increased only 1.6 percent, to 36.1 million.

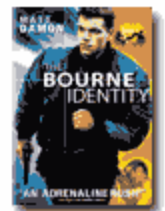
Whites remain the largest single population group, numbering 233.8 million in July 2001, or almost 70 percent of all U.S. residents, the Census Bureau reports. That figure included about 34 million whites who also said they were Hispanic.

Because the data the bureau released is almost 18 months old, the slim

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them--it's Latinos," said Leon Potasinski, senior vice president of marketing services for La Agencia de Orci & Asociados, a Hispanic marketing agency in Chicago and Los Angeles.

And it will mean more representation of Latinos through the media. Earlier this month, three English-speaking radio stations in Chicago were sold to a Hispanic radio company. A new Spanish language television station started broadcasting from Chicago.

Democrats and Republicans have placed increased emphasis on the Hispanic vote.

Last year, the two top Democratic candidates for governor of Texas debated in Spanish. Also, the Republican National Committee sent representatives to citizenship ceremonies to register Hispanic immigrants.

The 2000 census, for the first time, allowed people to check off more than one racial category.

The nation's population was 284.3 million in July 2001, an increase of 3.4 million people from April 2000.

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