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Census 2000

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 USA TODAY index charts rise in nation's diversity

By Haya El Nasser and Paul Overberg, USA TODAY

The nation's diversity increased dramatically over the past decade, according to the USA TODAY Diversity Index. That's because of a huge increase in immigrants, particularly Hispanics, in more regions of the country. There is nearly a 1 in 2 chance that two people selected at random are racially or ethnically different, according to the index. USA TODAY used 2000 Census numbers released this week to calculate the nation's diversity. The index for 2000 is 49, up 23% from 40 in 1990. The index means that there is a 49% chance that two people are different.

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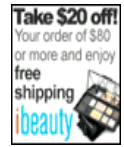
But this increased diversity doesn't necessarily mean more integration, say researchers at the University of Albany who analyzed 2000 Census data for 64 metropolitan areas. The USA TODAY Diversity Index is based on each of the five race categories recognized by the federal government and what percentage they are of the total population.

The categories are: white, black, Asian, American Indian and Native Hawaiian. The index also is based on the percentages of Hispanics and non-Hispanics, who can be of any race.

Much of the increase in diversity is attributed to the rise in the number of Hispanics

The USA TODAY Diversity Index was created in 1991 to measure how racially and ethnically diverse a population is. It calculates the probability that two people picked at random will be of a

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nationwide and even more dramatic increases in parts of the country that were not very diverse 10 years ago.

The Census Bureau is releasing state-by-state population numbers by race, ethnicity and voting age through the end of the month. The index shows diversity is up in many of the states where data have been released so far.

In Kansas, for example, the Diversity Index rose from 21 in 1990 to 31 in 2000, although it was much higher in some parts of the state. In Finney County in southwestern Kansas, the index went from 46 to 59.

Even in an already diverse state such as Texas, the index went from 55 to 62. And in a state with little diversity, such as Iowa, it went from 8 to 14.

"It's not just a jump nationally," says Robert Lang, an urban expert at the Fannie Mae Foundation, who is analyzing Census data for USA TODAY. "This translates to a good deal more local diversity as well."

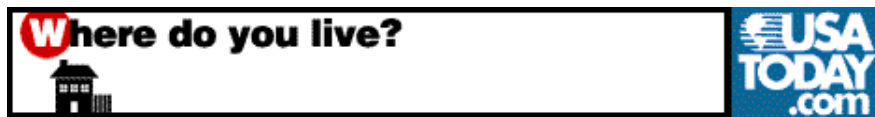
Another factor adding to diversity is the almost 7 million people who reported that they were of more than one race on Census forms they filled out last year. For the first time, the Census Bureau gave people the option to pick more than one race.

Researchers at the University of Albany are finding that despite increased diversity, segregation continues. The researchers analyzed 2000 Census data for 64 metropolitan areas, including those in diverse states such as New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Indiana. Despite a shift of the black population to the suburbs, racial segregation went up in suburbia and declined only slightly in cities.

"These findings will disappoint those who had hoped that the growth of the black middle class would translate into more integrated neighborhoods in cities and suburbs," says John Logan, professor of sociology at the University of Albany. But the research did find less segregation between blacks and new immigrants, including Hispanics and Asians.

random will be of a different race and ethnicity. It takes the percentage of each race in the overall population, and calculates the chance that any two people are white, black, Asian, American Indian or Native Hawaiian. Then, it calculates the probability of ethnicity - that any two people are Hispanic or non-Hispanic. Those racial and ethnic probabilities are multiplied together.

The 2000 diversity index is 49. That means that the chance of two randomly chosen U.S. residents being different is 49 out of 100, or almost 1 out of 2.



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