

Black (African-American) History Month: February 2016

To commemorate and celebrate the contributions to our nation made by people of African descent, American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week. The first celebration occurred on Feb. 12, 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist/editor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded into Black History Month. Each year, U.S. presidents proclaim February as National African-American History Month.

Note: The reference to the black population in this publication is to single-race blacks ("black alone") except in the first section on "Population." In that section the reference is to black alone or in combination with other races; a reference to respondents who said they were one race (black) or more than one race (black plus other races).

Population

45.7 million

The number of blacks, either alone or in combination with one or more other races, on July 1, 2014, up 1.3 percent from July 1, 2013.

Source: 2014 Population Estimates

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2014/PEPSR5H?slice=Year~est72014>>

74.5 million

The projected black, either alone or in combination, population of the United States (including those of more than one race) for July 1, 2060. On that date, according to the projection, blacks would constitute 17.9 percent of the nation's total population.

Source: 2014 Population Projections, Table 10

<<http://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html>>

3.8 million

The black population in New York, which led all states as of July 1, 2014. Texas had the largest numeric increase since 2013 (88,000). The District of Columbia had the highest percentage of blacks (50.6 percent), followed by Mississippi (38.2 percent).

Source: 2014 Population Estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html>>

1.3 million

Cook County, Ill. (Chicago) had the largest black population of any county in 2014 (1.3 million), and Harris, Texas (Houston) had the largest numeric increase since 2014 (21,000). Holmes, Miss., was the county with the highest percentage of blacks in the nation (82.5 percent).

Source: 2014 Population Estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html>>

Businesses

2.6 million

The number of black-owned firms nationally in 2012, up from 1.9 million or 34.5 percent from 2007.

Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners-Black or African American Owned Firms: 2012
<<http://census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-209.html>>

649,896

The number of African-American/black-owned firms in “other services”— which includes repair and maintenance (automotive, consumer electronics, etc.) and personal/laundry services (hair/nail salons, dry cleaning, pet care) — the largest sector of black-owned businesses. The “other services” sector is followed by health care and social assistance (492,983 black-owned firms); administrative, support, waste management and remediation (294,977); professional, scientific and technical support (206,942); and transportation and warehousing (184,777).

Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners-Black or African American Owned Firms: 2012
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/SBO/2012/00CSA01/0100000US>>

Serving Our Nation

2.2 million

Number of black military veterans in the United States in 2014.

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/C21001B>

Education

84.4%

The percentage of blacks 25 and over with a high school diploma or higher in 2014.

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/S0201//popgroup~004>

19.7%

The percentage of blacks 25 and over who had a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2014.

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/S0201//popgroup~004>

1.8 million

Among blacks 25 and over, the number who had an advanced degree in 2014.

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/B15002B>

2.9 million

Number of blacks enrolled in undergraduate college in 2014 compared with 2.8 million in 2009, a 5.3 percent increase.

Source: 2009 and 2014 American Community Survey

<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/B14007B>

<http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/09_1YR/B14007B>

Voting

17.8 million

The number of blacks who voted in the 2012 presidential election. In comparison to the 2008 election, about 1.7 million additional black voters reported going to the polls in 2012.

Source: The Diversifying Electorate — Voting Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin 2012

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p20-568.pdf>>

66.2%

Percent of blacks who voted in the 2012 presidential election, higher than the 64.1 percent of non-Hispanic whites who did so. This marks the first time that blacks have voted at a higher rate than whites since the Census Bureau started publishing statistics on voting by the eligible citizen population in 1996.

Source: The Diversifying Electorate — Voting Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin 2012

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p20-568.pdf>>

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$35,398

The annual median income of black households in 2014, compared with the nation at \$53,657.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014

<<http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf>>

26.2

Poverty rate in 2014 for blacks, while nationally it was 14.8 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014

<<http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf>>

88.2%

Percentage of blacks that were covered by health insurance during all or part of 2014. Nationally, 89.6 percent of all races were covered by health insurance.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2014

<<http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-253.pdf>>

Families and Children

61.3%

Among households with a black householder, the percentage that contained a family in 2014. There were 9.9 million black family households.

Source: 2014 Current Population Survey, Families and Living Arrangements, Table H1
<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/families/data/cps2014H.html>>

50.0%

Among families with black householders, the percentage that were married couples in 2014.
Source: 2014 Current Population Survey, Families and Living Arrangements, Table H1
<<http://www.census.gov/hhes/families/data/cps2014H.html>>

1.2 million

Number of black grandparents who lived with their own grandchildren younger than 18 in 2014.
Of this number, 44.0 percent were also responsible for their care.
Source: 2014 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/B10051B>

Jobs

28.6%

The percentage of civilian employed blacks 16 and over who worked in management, business, science and arts occupations, while 36.9 percent of the total civilian employed population worked in these occupations.
Source: 2014 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/S0201//popgroup~004>
<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/14_1YR/S0201>

The following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	The Fourth of July (July 4)
Super Bowl	Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act (July 26)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Back to School (August)
Women's History Month (March)	Labor Day
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Grandparents Day
Earth Day (April 22)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Older Americans Month (May)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Mother's Day	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Father's Day	Thanksgiving Day
	The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines.

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