

The Black Population

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The Black population is projected to reach 35 million by the year 2000.

The Black population was estimated at 33.0 million persons in 1994 and constituted 12.7 percent of the total population, up from about 11.7 percent in 1980 and 12.3 percent in 1990. The Black population has grown faster than either the total or White population since the 1980 decennial census. By the year 2000, the Black population is expected to reach 35.5 million and represent 12.8 percent of the total population (similar to the 1994 proportion). Eighty-four percent of the growth in the Black population since 1980 was due to natural increase, while immigration accounted for the remaining 16 percent.

An increasingly larger proportion of Black families are maintained by either males or females with no spouse present.

Less than one-half (47 percent) of all Black families were married couples in 1994,

compared with 68 percent in 1970 and 56 percent in 1980. The increase in the proportion of Black families maintained by either a male or female with no spouse present was greater between 1970 and 1980 than it was between 1980 and 1994 (32 to 44 percent and 44 to 54 percent, respectively). In 1970, 4 percent of all Black families were male-householder families with no spouse present, compared with 6 percent in 1994. This trend is occurring in both Black and White families.

The annual high school dropout rate for young Blacks declined.

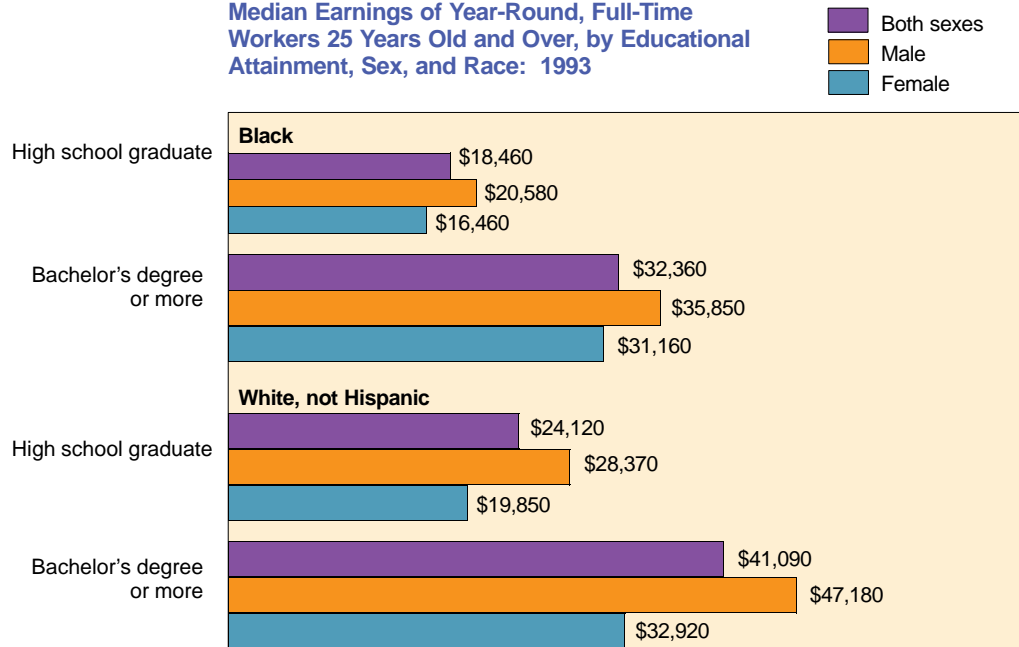
Fewer Blacks are dropping out of high school. The annual high school dropout rate for Blacks enrolled in grades 10 through 12 declined from 11 percent in 1970 to 5 percent in 1993. The corresponding dropout rates for Whites changed slightly from 5 percent in 1970 to 4 percent in 1993. In 1993, there was no statistical difference in the

annual high school dropout rate of Blacks and Whites and of males and females. Blacks have thus closed the historical differential between their annual high school dropout rates and those of Whites. Consistent with a lower dropout rate is the growing proportion of Blacks with at least a high school education. In 1994, 73 percent of Blacks 25 years old and over were at least high school graduates, and 13 percent had attained at least a bachelor's degree. The corresponding educational attainment rates were 34 and 4 percent in 1970 and 51 and 8 percent in 1980.

The unemployment rate for Blacks continues to be higher than for Whites.

In 1994, a higher proportion of Whites (67 percent) than Blacks (63 percent) 16 years old and over were in the civilian labor force. However, Blacks were more likely than Whites to be unemployed. The civilian unemployment rate for Blacks was more than

Median Earnings of Year-Round, Full-Time Workers 25 Years Old and Over, by Educational Attainment, Sex, and Race: 1993



twice that of Whites in both 1994 and 1980 (11 versus 5 percent and 14 versus 6 percent, respectively). The unemployment rate for Blacks grew from 14 percent in 1980 to a high of 20 percent in 1983 (just after the end of the 1981-82 recession). It then dropped to 11 percent in 1989, increased to 13 percent in 1993, and then dropped to 11 percent in 1994. The unemployment rate for Whites also fluctuated from a high of 9 percent in 1982 to a low of 4 percent in 1989. In 1994, 5 percent of all White civilians in the labor force were unemployed.¹

Median earnings of Black year-round, full-time workers increase as educational attainment increases.

The value of more education is most evident in the substantial earnings differences between year-round, full-time

workers with only a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree or more. In 1993, the median earnings of Blacks 25 years old and over, who worked year-round, full-time, and had only a high school diploma was \$18,460, compared with \$32,360 for those with at least a bachelor's degree. Only 15 percent of Black college graduates earned less than \$20,000, compared with 55 percent of those with just a high school diploma. Black women with only a high school diploma who worked year-round, full-time had median earnings of \$16,460, about 80 percent of comparable Black men and 83 percent of comparable non-Hispanic White women. Among college graduates, Black women earned 87 percent of comparable Black men and 95 percent of comparable non-Hispanic White women. Among those with just a high school diploma, Black men earned 73 percent of what non-Hispanic White men earned; the ratio was 0.76 among the college graduates. The median earnings ratios of Black men to non-Hispanic White men who worked

year-round, full-time were similar at both the high school and bachelor's degree levels.

The median income of Black married-couple families was higher in families with children.

In 1993, Black married-couple families with children had a median income of \$36,670, about 12 percent higher than that of Black married-couple families without children (\$32,810). Non-Hispanic White married-couple families with children had a median income of \$48,630 — 33 percent higher than that of comparable Black families and 17 percent higher than that of non-Hispanic White married-couple families without children (\$41,440). Black families maintained by women with children had a median income of only \$10,380 — a mere 28 percent of that for Black married-couple families with children (\$36,670). Non-Hispanic White families had a median income almost twice that for all Black families in 1993 (\$41,110 versus \$21,550).²

Wages or salary (including self-employment) was the only source of income in 22 percent of all Black families in 1993. Six percent received public assistance only, and an additional 1 percent received a combination that included public assistance. In contrast, wages or salary was the only source of income in 10 percent of White non-Hispanic families in 1993. One percent received public assistance only, and an additional 0.2 percent received a combination including public assistance. Eighty-eight percent of non-Hispanic White and 65 percent of Black families had incomes from earnings

combined with income from other sources (including, for example, Social Security, public assistance, retirement and survivor's benefits, interest, and dividends). Two percent of non-Hispanic White and 6 percent of Black families either had incomes not related to earnings or no income at all.

About one-third of poor Black persons 15 years old and over worked in 1989.

In 1993, one-third of all Black persons were poor, up from 31 percent in 1979. Nearly half (46 percent) of all poor Black persons were related children under 18 years old. Among poor persons 15 years old and over, 35 percent of all Blacks and 42 percent of all non-Hispanic Whites worked. A similar proportion of poor Black men and women worked (35 percent), while among non-Hispanic Whites a larger proportion of men than women were working poor (51 percent versus 36 percent). However, there were more Black women (1.5 million) than Black men (0.8 million) among the working poor.

For Further Information

See: Current Population Reports, Series P20-480, *The Black Population in the United States: March 1994 and 1993*.

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¹Data for 1994 are not directly comparable with data for 1993 and earlier years. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1994" in the February 1994 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

²The median income for non-Hispanic White families (\$41,110) was not statistically different from that of non-Hispanic White married-couple families without children (\$41,440).

