

# Excerpts from the U.S. Census Press Release<sup>1</sup>, with Massachusetts Comparisons Added by the UMass Donahue Institute

Prepared by:

UMass Donahue Institute  
Economic and Public Policy Research  
Population Estimates Program

**For Release May 25, 2023**

---

## Background

On May 25, 2023, the U.S. Census Bureau released the 2020 Census Demographic Profile and Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC). These products provide the next round of data available from the 2020 Census, adding more detail to the population counts and basic demographic and housing statistics previously released for the purposes of [congressional apportionment](#) and [legislative redistricting](#).

The newly released 2020 Census data products go beyond the data already available on the total population, the voting-age (age 18 and older) population, race, Hispanic origin and housing occupancy. **This release contains more detailed age groups, the first data available on sex from the 2020 Census, information on families and households, and more detail on housing.** They also show the intersection of many of these topics by race and Hispanic origin.

\* Note that all text below is taken from the U.S. Census [Bureau's Census Demographic Profile and Demographic and Housing Characteristics Press Kit](#), except for Massachusetts statistics, which are added by the UMass Donahue Institute using data from the DHC release.

## Age and Sex

- Between 2010 and 2020, median age in the U.S. grew older due to an increase in the older population. **The median age in Massachusetts in 2010 was 39.1 years old and the median age in 2020 increased to 39.9 years old.**
- **Among the states in 2020:** Fourteen states had a median age over 40, twice as many as in 2010. The **Massachusetts median age** in 2020 was 39.9 years old which is **ranked 15<sup>th</sup>**.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2023/2020-census-demographic-profile-and-dhc.html>



- In 2020, there were 55.8 million people age 65 and over **in the United States** (16.8% of the total population), up 38.6% from 40.3 million in 2010. This growth primarily reflected the aging baby boom cohort.
- **In Massachusetts**, there were 902,724 (13.8% of the population) people age 65 and over in 2010 and **in 2020, that number increased to 1,231,788 (17.5% of the population)** people age 65 and over. The number of people aged 65 and over in 2020 is up 36.5% from 2010.
- The highest percentage of residents 65 years and over **in Massachusetts Counties** is in Barnstable County at 32.2%, followed by Dukes County at 27.0%, and Berkshire County at 24.4%.
- **In the United States**, Centenarians grew 50% since 2010, the fastest recent census-to-census percent change for that age group
- **Twenty-five states** in 2020 had higher shares of population age 65 and older than Florida had in 2010 (17.3%), when it had the highest share of any state. In 2020, **Maine** had the highest share at 21.8%, followed by Florida (21.2%) and Vermont (20.6%). **Massachusetts** ranks 24<sup>th</sup> with 17.5% of the population 65 years and over.
- **Massachusetts** saw a 7.4% decrease in its children under 5 years old population, with 367,087 (5.6% of the population) children under 5 years in 2010 and 340,020 (4.8% of the population) children under 5 years in 2020. **Essex County** has the highest percentage of residents under 5 years old at 5.1%, followed by **Nantucket, Norfolk, Worcester, Hampden, and Plymouth Counties** which all have 5.0% of its residents under 5.
- **Massachusetts** saw a 3.7% decrease in its children population under 18 years old, with 1,418,923 (21.7% percent of the population) children under 18 years in 2010 and 1,366,194 (19.4% of the population) children under 18 years in 2020. **Hampden County** has the highest percentage of residents under 18 years old at 21.1%, followed by **Plymouth County** at 21.0%, and **Essex County** at 20.9%.
- **In the U.S.:** in 2020, there were over 73.1 million children under age 18 (22.1% of the total U.S. population), down 1.4% from 74.2 million in 2010. The biggest decline was among the under-5 age group, whose share of the population dropped by 8.9% or 1.8 million. This finding is consistent with the [decline in the total number of births and the birth rate](#) for the United States since 2015.
- **Utah and Maine** were the youngest and oldest states (as they were in 2010). Nearly half of Utah's population was under age 31 while more than half of Maine's population was over age 45.
- In 2020, the total **dependency ratio in the United States** was 63.6 children under age 18 and adults age 65 and older for every 100 working-age people ages 18 to 64. The total dependency ratio

provides a rough approximation of economic dependency in a population by dividing the dependent-age populations (children and adults age 65 and older, who are not generally expected to work) by the working-age population (ages 18 to 64).

- **The Massachusetts dependency ratio in 2020** is 58.6, which is ranked 49<sup>th</sup> out of all States and the District of Columbia (with the highest dependency ratio being ranked 1).
- Ten of the **12 states with the highest total dependency ratios** in 2020 were in the West and Midwest. South Dakota and Idaho had the nation's highest total dependency ratios of any state (73.0 and 72.4, respectively).

The public can explore these age and sex statistics in two data visualizations:

- [Exploring Age Groups in the 2020 Census](#). This interactive map shows certain measures — percent of population, percent change from 2010, percent female and racial and ethnic diversity index and prevalence — for a variety of age groups for the nation, states, counties and census tracts. The visualization also provides ranking lists of the measures.
- [How Has Our Nation's Population Changed?](#) This interactive visualization shows population pyramids and ranked age and sex measures for the total population, as well as race and Hispanic origin groups, for the nation, states, metropolitan areas, micropolitan areas and counties in 2020, 2010 and 2000.
- A series of downloadable ranking tables related to each visualization is also available.

More information about age and sex is also available in the America Counts stories: [An Aging U.S. Population With Fewer Children in 2020](#) and [2020 Census: 1 in 6 People in the United States Were 65 and Over](#), and two briefs: [Age and Sex Composition: 2020](#) and [The Older Population: 2020](#).

## Race and Hispanic Origin by Age and Sex

The DHC provides age and sex data on the major race and ethnic groups defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. The data show the following about the age and sex composition of race and ethnic groups:

- The Multiracial population was **the nation's** youngest race group in 2020, with 32.5% of its population under age 18. Between 2010 and 2020, the Multiracial population increased for every broad age category (under age 18, 18 to 44 years, 45 to 65 years, and 65 years and over) by over 164%.
- The Multiracial population was also the youngest race group **in Massachusetts** with 32.6% its population under age 18. From 2010 to 2020, the Multiracial population increased by 254.0% and increased for every broad age category by over 168.5%.
- **In 2020 in the U.S.**, over one-quarter of the Some Other Race alone (28.6%), the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone (28.3%), and the American Indian and Alaska Native alone (27.1%)

populations were under age 18. All broad age categories for these populations increased from 2010.

- **In 2020 in Massachusetts**, over one-quarter of the Hispanic or Latino population (30.0%), the Some Other Race alone population (26.9%), and the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population (25.0%) were under the age of 18. All broad age categories for these populations increased from 2010 in Massachusetts.
- The White alone population was the oldest of all race groups in 2020 **in the U.S.**, with a median age of 43.1, and decreased between 2010 and 2020 in every age category except the population 65 years and over, which grew by more than 25%.
- **In Massachusetts**, the White alone population was the oldest of all race groups in 2020, with a median age of 45.0, and decreased between 2010 and 2020 in every age category except the population 65 years and over, which grew by 27.1%.
- The Asian alone population was **the nation's** second-oldest race group in 2020, with a median age of 37.0. Over the decade, every age category of this population increased by 23% or more. **In Massachusetts**, the Asian alone population was also the second-oldest race group, with a median age of 33.6. In Massachusetts, this population increased by 45.2% from 349,768 in 2010 to 507,934 in 2020.
- **In the U.S.**, the Black or African American alone population increased for all broad age categories except under age 18, which decreased by more than 6% from 2010 to 2020. **In Massachusetts**, the Black or African American alone population increased for all broad age categories from 2010 to 2020.
- **In the U.S.**, Over the decade, all race in combination groups saw growth across each age category with the Some Other Race in combination population growing the fastest — over 482% for each age category.
- **In the U.S.**, The Hispanic or Latino population, which includes people of any race, was younger in 2020 than the non-Hispanic population. Its median age was 30.0, compared to 41.1 for the non-Hispanic population.
- **In Massachusetts**, the Hispanic or Latino population was younger in 2020 than the non-Hispanic population. Its median age was 29.1, compared to 41.9 for the non-Hispanic population.

More information about Hispanic origin is available in the America Counts story: [Hispanic Population Is Younger But Aging Faster](#).

In September, through the [Detailed DHC-A](#) product, the Census Bureau will release 2020 Census population counts and sex-by-age statistics for approximately 370 detailed racial and ethnic groups, such as German, Lebanese, Jamaican, Chinese, Native Hawaiian and Mexican, as well as about 1,200 detailed American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages, such as the Navajo Nation.

**Comparisons between the 2020 Census and 2010 Census race data should be made with caution** and take into account [improvements](#) the Census Bureau made to the Hispanic origin and race questions and the ways it codes what people report in their responses.

Accordingly, data from the 2020 Census show different but reasonable and expected distributions from the 2010 Census for the White alone population, the Some Other Race alone or in combination population, and the Multiracial population, especially for people who self-identify as both White and Some Other Race. These results are not surprising as they align with Census Bureau research this past decade, particularly with the results from the [2015 National Content Test](#), about the impacts of question format on race and ethnicity reporting. The improvements more accurately illustrate the richness and complexity of how people identify their race and ethnicity in the 21st century.

## Families and Households

The 2020 Census provides information on U.S. households, defined as all the people living in a housing unit, including people living alone or in families (two or more people living together related by birth, marriage or adoption).

- Over one-quarter (27.6%) of occupied U.S. households consisted of one person living alone, up from 7.7% in 1940. In Massachusetts, 28.8% of occupied households consisted of one person living alone.
- 7.2% of family households were multigenerational. In Massachusetts, 4.1% of households were multigenerational.
- 6.1 million or 8.4% of children under age 18 lived in their grandparents' home, up from 5.8 million (7.9%) in 2010. In Massachusetts, 87,807 or 6.4% of children under age 18 lived in their grandparents' home.
- Over half (53.2%) of U.S. households were coupled households, those in which the householder has a spouse or partner living with them. In Massachusetts, over half (51.9%) of households were coupled households as well.
- Same-sex couples made up 1.7% of coupled households. In Massachusetts, 2.3% of coupled households were made up of same-sex couples.
- The majority (89.1%) of the 323.2 million people living in U.S. households were either the householder, their spouse or partner or their children. In Massachusetts, the majority (89.6%) of the 6,784,399 people living in households were either the householder, their spouse or partner or their children.

- Family households accounted for about two-thirds of all U.S. households, as they did in 2010. In Massachusetts, family households accounted for 62.5% of all MA households in 2020, down just slightly from 63.0% in 2010.
- The majority (71%) of family households were married couples. In Massachusetts, the majority (71.7%) of family households were married couples.
- There were 126.8 million households, up 8.7% from 116.7 million in 2010. In Massachusetts, there were 2,749,225 households in 2020, up 7.9% from 2,547,075 in 2010.

More information about families and households is available in the America Counts stories: [Family Households Still the Majority](#) and [Share of U.S. Coupled Households Declined in 2020](#).

## Housing

The 2020 Census provides information about occupied and vacant housing units. For occupied units, it includes information on tenure — whether the householder owns or rents the home. For vacant units, the 2020 Census provides information on the reasons for vacancy — whether the unit is for rent, for sale, held for seasonal use, etc.

- Of the 126.8 million **occupied housing units** in 2020 in the U.S., 80.1 million (63.1%) were **owner-occupied**. This percentage is also called the homeownership rate. The 2020 rate was the lowest since 1970. It decreased by 2.0 percentage points since 2010, when it was 65.1%.
- **In Massachusetts**, of the 2,749,225 occupied housing units in 2020, 1,660,042 (60.4%) were owner-occupied. The Massachusetts homeownership rate decreased by 1.9 percentage points since 2010, when it was 62.3%
- In 2020, 46.8 million (36.9%) of the occupied housing units in the U.S. were **renter-occupied**.
- **In Massachusetts**, in 2020, 1,089,183 (39.6%) of the occupied housing units were renter-occupied.
  - Renter-occupied units in the U.S. increased 14.8% from 40.7 million in 2010 to 46.8 million in 2020. **In Massachusetts**, renter-occupied units increased 13.5% from 959,917 in 2010 to 1,089,183 in 2020.
  - The growth of renter-occupied units continues to outpace the growth of owner-occupied units in the U.S., as it also did between 2000 and 2010. This is also true for **Massachusetts** from 2010 to 2020, however, from 2000 to 2010, owner-occupied units grew faster than renter-occupied units.
- **Only five states** experienced an increase in their **homeownership rate** between 2010 and 2020. Hawaii saw the largest percentage-point increase (1.2), followed by Alaska (0.8), Idaho (0.5), South Carolina (0.4) and Wyoming (0.1).
- The **Massachusetts homeownership rate** saw a percentage-point decrease of 1.9 from 2010 to 2020 which ranks 29<sup>th</sup> in the nation in percentage-point difference from 2010 to 2020.
  - West Virginia and Maine had the highest homeownership rates in 2020 at 72.6% and 71.1%, respectively. The District of Columbia had a lower homeownership rate (38.3%) than all 50 states. ([Housing Ranking Table 1: Ranking of Homeownership Rate](#))

[Differences Between 2010 and 2020 for States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico](#)).

- The Massachusetts homeownership rate in 2020 was 60.4, which ranks 44<sup>th</sup> in the nation in homeownership rate
- **Among the top 10 metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas** with the highest homeownership rates, three were in Florida and three were in Michigan. The Florida areas with the highest homeownership rates were The Villages (88.3%), Homosassa Springs (82.1%) and Punta Gorda (81.3%). Michigan’s high homeownership areas were Holland (82.5%), Iron Mountain (79.6%) and Traverse City (79.3%). ([Housing Ranking Table 2: Ranking of the Ten Highest Homeownership Rates in 2020 for Metropolitan or Micropolitan Areas](#))
- **In the U.S.: By race, homeownership rates** were highest among White (70.5%) householders followed by Asian (58.5%) householders and Two or More Races (54.2%) householders. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander householders had the lowest homeownership rate (39.6%) in 2020.
- **In Massachusetts**, homeownership rates were also highest among White (67.8%) householders followed by Asian (51.8%) householders and Two or More Races (39.6%) householders. Some Other Race alone householders had the lowest homeownership rates in Massachusetts at 26.4%.
- **Nationally, the homeowner vacancy rate** — the proportion of the homeowner housing inventory that is vacant for sale — in 2020 was 1.5%, a decrease of 0.9 percentage points from 2010, when the rate was 2.4%. All but three states experienced a decline in their homeowner vacancy rates. Nevada (-3.7), Arizona (-2.2), Idaho (-1.9), Georgia (-1.8) and Florida (-1.8) had the largest percentage-point decreases. **In Massachusetts**, the homeowner vacancy rate was 0.9%, a 0.7 percentage-point decrease from 2010 when the rate was 1.6%.
- In 2020, the national rental vacancy rate was 7.4%, down from 9.2% in 2010. Of the metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas with the 10 largest household populations, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX, had the highest rental vacancy rate at 10.4%, and was the only one with a rate greater than 10.0% in 2020. ([Housing Ranking Table 3: Ranking of Rental Vacancy Rates in 2020 for the Metropolitan Areas with the Ten Largest Household Populations](#))
- There were 4.4 million U.S. vacant units in 2020 classified as “vacant – for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use,” down from 4.6 million in 2010. As in 2010, Florida was still the leader among states in the absolute number of these units. The 667,000 homes in Florida accounted for 15.3% of the nation’s seasonal, recreational or occasional use units in 2020. Florida was followed by California (295,000), New York (248,000), Michigan (243,000) and Texas (192,000).

**More information about housing** is available in the America Counts story: [See a Vacant Home? It May Not be For Sale or Rent](#).

## Guidance on Using the Data

*From the U.S. Census Bureau:* As with all Census Bureau data products, the data in (the May 25 DHC) release use disclosure avoidance methods to protect respondent confidentiality. To ensure that no one can link the published data to a specific person or household with any certainty, “statistical noise” — small, random additions or subtractions — was added to the data. The Census Bureau worked closely with the data user community to implement these protections. To assist with understanding how the new disclosure avoidance protections work, visit [Disclosure Avoidance and the 2020 Census: The Top Down Algorithm](#) and [Why the Census Bureau Chose Differential Privacy](#).

When using DHC and Demographic Profile data, the Census Bureau encourages data users to aggregate small populations and geographies to improve accuracy and diminish implausible results. More information about how the statistical noise affects the data is available in the blog: [What to Expect: Disclosure Avoidance and the 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File](#). Additionally, the Census Bureau released metrics today (*available May 25*) to help data users understand the disclosure avoidance-related variability in the DHC. The 2020 Census is the first to be able to quantify this variability because it uses a more sophisticated approach for disclosure avoidance. For information on 2020 Census data collection, confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, subject definitions, and guidance on using the data, visit the [2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File Summary File \(DHC\) Technical Documentation](#) webpage. The results from the [Post-Enumeration Survey](#) and [Demographic Analysis](#) also offer additional insight about the quality of the 2020 Census.

## For More Information

The full [Demographic Profile](#) and [DHC](#) are available on the Census Bureau’s data dissemination platform, [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov). This platform allows data users to search geographies and access the data through tables, maps and downloads:

- Data tables: Users can select geographies, sort by topic, or add other applicable filters. Data can be reordered, pinned and hidden with drag and drop functionality.
- Mapping: Data users can display data across collections of geographies in a thematic map for a more visual representation.
- Data downloads: Users can download multiple tables for 2020 and 2010 censuses at the same time for easier reference.

Instructional videos and how-to guides on accessing the DHC data, finding tracts using a map, exploring data for urban and rural areas, downloading and exporting data, and comparing 2020 and 2010 data are available on the 2020 Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC) webpage (*available May 25*).

*Massachusetts summary prepared by:*

Denis McAuliffe, Research Analyst

Susan Strate, Population Estimates Program Senior Manager

