



BusinessStats
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STATISTICS BOOK

Demographics: statistics and facts

24 full reports · Edition October 2026

68.9M

ADDED IN 2026

19.8M

NEW YORK MSA - #1

101.0

NATIONAL RATIO —
MALES PER 100
FEMALES

44.8%

IN CITIES



ABOUT THIS BOOK

Demographics: statistics and facts

Looking for data on Demographics? The 24 reports below cover Population (11 reports), US (2 reports) and U.S (2 reports).

Some numbers that stand out in these reports: 68.9M (Added in 2026), 19.8M (New York MSA - #1), 101.0 (National Ratio — Males per 100 Females) and 44.8% (In cities).

Recently updated reports include Population growth by country statistics & facts and Largest Metropolitan Areas in the US 2026: Top 25 Ranked. New and updated reports appear here automatically, the last change was on Oct 19, 2026. Each report lists its sources and lets you download its charts and data.

Each chapter is a complete Business Stats report with its text, charts, tables and primary sources. The online version of every report is updated continuously; this book shows them as of Oct 19, 2026.

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STATISTICS REPORT

Population growth by country statistics & facts

A world growing in two directions. The global population still adds almost 69 million people a year, but growth is concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, while 65 countries are already shrinking. This report ranks every major country by growth and shows the role of births, deaths and migration.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

68.9M ADDED IN 2026	0.83% GROWTH RATE	3.28% FASTEST (CAR)
-0.98% FASTEST DECLINE	65 COUNTRIES SHRINKING	2084 PROJECTED WORLD PEAK

OVERVIEW

Population growth at a glance

The world population is growing by about 68.9 million people in 2026, or 0.83 percent, according to UN projections. That is the equivalent of adding a country the size of Thailand every year. But the growth is extremely uneven. The Central African Republic, Somalia, Niger and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are growing by more than 3 percent a year, enough to double their populations in 21 to 23 years, while 65 countries and areas are shrinking, including China, Japan, Italy and much of eastern Europe.

This report ranks countries by population growth rate and absolute change, shows how migration shapes growth, identifies the countries whose populations have already peaked and sets out the outlook to 2050 and beyond. It focuses on the country-level detail behind the global totals in our [world population statistics](#).

68.9 million Added in 2026 World population growth.	0.83% Global growth rate Down from 2.28 percent in 1963.
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3.28%

Central African Republic

Fastest-growing country with 1 million or more people.

65

Countries shrinking

Home to 27 percent of the world population.

How population change works

- Population change equals births minus deaths (natural change) plus immigrants minus emigrants (net migration).
- The growth rate is the annual change as a percentage of the population.
- A growth rate of 3 percent doubles a population in about 23 years; at 1 percent it takes about 70 years.
- Figures for 2024 onwards are UN medium-variant projections.

TREND

How world population growth has changed

The world population grew fastest in relative terms in 1963, when the growth rate peaked at 2.28 percent. The largest absolute increase came later, in 1990, when the population grew by 93.7 million people in a single year. Since then, both the rate and the absolute increase have declined, with a sharp dip during the COVID-19 pandemic, when annual growth fell to 63.7 million in 2021.

Annual change in world population, 1950 to 2100 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

From 94 million to below zero: Annual growth peaked at 93.7 million in 1990 and is projected to turn negative in 2084.

The UN projects that annual growth will fall to 40.7 million by 2050 and reach zero in 2084, when the world population is expected to peak at about 10.3 billion. After that, the world population would start to shrink slowly, losing about 12.9 million people in 2100. The milestones of 9 billion and 10 billion are projected for 2037 and 2060.

CONTINENT	GROWTH RATE 2026 (%)	CHANGE IN 2026 (MILLIONS)
Africa	2.22	+35.2
Asia	0.57	+28.0
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.62	+4.2
Northern America	0.52	+2.0
Oceania	1.07	+0.5
Europe	-0.14	-1.1
World	0.83	+68.9

Africa now accounts for more than half of world population growth, adding 35.2 million people in 2026 against 28.0 million in Asia. Europe is the only continent whose population is shrinking, by about 1.1 million a year.

FASTEST

Fastest-growing countries

Among countries with at least one million people, the Central African Republic has the highest growth rate in 2026 at 3.28 percent, followed by Somalia (3.24 percent), Niger (3.14 percent), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (3.13 percent), Syria (3.04 percent) and Sudan (3.03 percent). Angola, Mali, Oman, Tanzania, Mozambique and Yemen complete the top twelve, all above 2.7 percent.

Fastest-growing countries by population growth rate, 2026 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

Doubling in a generation: At more than 3 percent a year, the four fastest-growing countries would double their populations in about 21 to 23 years.

For most of these countries, growth comes from a large excess of births over deaths, with natural increase of around 30 per 1,000 people. Two cases are different. Syria and Sudan show high growth in 2026 partly because of projected return migration after years of conflict, and in Oman, migration contributes about as much as natural increase. These projections are particularly uncertain.

DECLINING

Countries with shrinking populations

At the other end of the ranking, Moldova has the fastest population decline among countries with at least one million people, at minus 0.98 percent in 2026, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Albania, Bulgaria and Armenia, all shrinking by more than 0.7 percent a year. Every country in the bottom twelve is in eastern or south-eastern Europe or the Caucasus.

Countries with the fastest population decline, 2026 (% per year)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

Eastern Europe empties: Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Baltic states are losing close to 1 percent of their people every year.

Two forces drive these declines: more deaths than births, and emigration. In Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Ukraine, natural decrease of 6 to 8 per 1,000 people is the main driver. In Albania and Armenia, births still exceed deaths, and the decline comes almost entirely from emigration, at 8 to 9 people per 1,000. Moldova loses population both ways. In 2026, 65 countries and areas, with 27 percent of the world population, are shrinking. Natural decrease is covered in our report on the [global death rate](#).

ABSOLUTE CHANGE

Where the most people are added and lost

In absolute numbers, India adds by far the most people, about 12.7 million in 2026, followed by Nigeria with 4.9 million, Pakistan with 4.1 million, the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 3.6 million and Ethiopia with 3.4 million. The United States, which grows by about 1.7 million a year, is the only high-income country in the top ten, largely because of immigration.

Countries adding the most people, 2026 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

India adds 12.7 million: India alone accounts for nearly a fifth of world population growth.

China loses the most people, about 3.1 million in 2026, more than all other shrinking countries in the top ten combined. Japan loses about 689,000, Russia 330,000, Ukraine 291,000, Italy 232,000 and Germany 194,000. According to UN estimates, China has been shrinking since 2021, and its decline is covered in our report on the [population of China](#).

Countries losing the most people, 2026 (thousands)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

China loses 3.1 million: China shrinks by more people each year than the next nine shrinking countries combined.

MIGRATION

The role of migration

Migration does not change the world total, but it reshapes national populations. In high-income countries as a group, deaths already exceed births by about 600,000 a year, yet the population still grows by about 2.7 million in 2026 because of net immigration of about 3.3 million. In other words, all of the population growth in the rich world now comes from migration.

Countries with the largest net migration, 2026 (thousands)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

The US takes the most: The United States receives about 1.2 million net migrants a year, more than the next three countries combined.

The United States has the largest net immigration, about 1.18 million people in 2026, followed by the United Kingdom (364,000), Russia (325,000), Syria (306,000), Canada (291,000) and Sudan (252,000). The figures for Syria and Sudan reflect projected returns of refugees. More detail on the United States is in our report on [immigration to the United States](#), and the UK picture is covered in our report on the [UK population](#).

Countries with the largest net emigration, 2026 (thousands)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

South Asia sends the most: Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal together lose about 2.2 million people a year to net emigration.

Pakistan has the largest net emigration, about 1.15 million people in 2026, followed by India (440,000), Bangladesh (371,000) and Nepal (292,000), all major sources of labour migrants to the Gulf states and other regions. China, Turkey, Brazil and the Philippines also record net outflows. Relative to population, emigration matters most for smaller countries such as Albania and Armenia.

PEAK

Countries that have already peaked

A growing number of countries have passed their peak population. Of 236 countries and areas, 65 had already reached their maximum by 2026, including China (peak 1.43 billion in 2020), Japan (2009), Italy (2013), Russia (1991), South Korea (2020), Thailand (2021) and Germany (2023). Another 47 are projected to peak between 2027 and 2054, including Brazil (2041), Vietnam (2049), Indonesia (2058) and India, which is expected to peak at about 1.70 billion in 2061.

COUNTRY	PEAK YEAR	PEAK POPULATION (MILLIONS)
Russia	1991	149.6
Japan	2009	128.2
Italy	2013	60.7
China	2020	1,426.8
South Korea	2020	51.9
Thailand	2021	71.8
Germany	2023	84.7
Brazil	2041	219.3
Vietnam	2049	110.0
Mexico	2058	149.9
Indonesia	2058	322.6
India	2061	1,701.4



For 124 countries, including the United States, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UN projects that the population will still be growing in 2054 or later. In the United States, growth is projected to continue to 2100, mainly because of immigration.

OUTLOOK

Who will grow by 2050

Between 2026 and 2050, the UN projects that the world population will grow by about 1.35 billion people, and Africa will account for about 65 percent of that increase. India is projected to add 199 million people, Nigeria 116 million, Pakistan 113 million, the Democratic Republic of the Congo 102 million and Ethiopia 86 million. The populations of DR Congo and Angola are projected to grow by more than 80 percent.

Countries projected to add the most people, 2026 to 2050 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/population-growth-rate-by-country

Five countries, 616 million: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, DR Congo and Ethiopia are projected to add more than 600 million people between them by 2050.

China, by contrast, is projected to lose about 156 million people by 2050, more than the current population of Russia, and Japan about 17 million. Population growth and decline are closely linked to the trends in our reports on the [global fertility rate](#), the [global ageing population](#) and [urbanization](#), since most of the additional people will live in cities.

KEY FACTS

Population growth in numbers

Key Facts

- The world population grows by 68.9 million in 2026, a rate of 0.83 percent.
- Growth peaked at 2.28 percent in 1963 and at 93.7 million people a year in 1990.
- The Central African Republic, Somalia, Niger and DR Congo grow by more than 3 percent a year.

- 65 countries and areas are shrinking, led by Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Baltic states.
- India adds 12.7 million people a year; China loses 3.1 million.
- All population growth in high-income countries now comes from immigration.
- Africa is projected to account for about 65 percent of world population growth to 2050.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the world population growth rate?

The world population is growing by 0.83 percent in 2026, or about 68.9 million people, according to UN projections. The rate peaked at 2.28 percent in 1963.

Which country has the fastest-growing population?

Among countries with at least 1 million people, the Central African Republic grows fastest at 3.28 percent in 2026, followed by Somalia at 3.24 percent and Niger at 3.14 percent.

Which countries have shrinking populations?

65 countries and areas are shrinking in 2026, including China, Japan, Italy, Germany and most of eastern Europe. Moldova declines fastest, at minus 0.98 percent.

Which country adds the most people each year?

India adds the most people, about 12.7 million in 2026, followed by Nigeria with 4.9 million and Pakistan with 4.1 million.

Which country loses the most people?

China loses the most people, about 3.1 million in 2026, followed by Japan with about 689,000 and Russia with 330,000.

Which countries receive the most migrants?

The United States has the largest net migration, about 1.18 million people in 2026, followed by the United Kingdom, Russia and Canada.



When will the world population peak?

The UN medium variant projects that the world population will peak at about 10.3 billion in 2084 and then decline slowly.

Has China population peaked?

Yes. According to the UN, China peaked at about 1.43 billion in 2020 and has been shrinking since 2021. It is projected to lose about 156 million people by 2050.

SOURCES

[United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024, medium variant.

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results.



STATISTICS REPORT

Global ageing population statistics & facts

More grandparents, fewer grandchildren. The number of people aged 65 and over has grown sevenfold since 1950 and will pass one billion around 2030. Half of all people in Japan are over 51, while half of the population of the Central African Republic is under 16. This report sets out the numbers.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/global-aging-population

892M AGED 65 AND OVER	10.7% SHARE OF WORLD	177M AGED 80 AND OVER
32.2 MEDIAN AGE	16.4 OLD-AGE DEPENDENCY	693,000 CENTENARIANS

OVERVIEW

The ageing world at a glance

The world has never been older. In 2026, about 892 million people are aged 65 or over, 10.7 percent of the global population, according to UN projections. That is seven times the number in 1950, when 127 million people, or 5.1 percent, had reached 65. The number of people aged 80 or over has grown even faster, from 16 million to 177 million, and the number of centenarians has passed 690,000. The median age of the world population, the age that divides it into two equal halves, has risen from 21.7 years in 1975 to 32.2 years in 2026.

Ageing is the result of two of the great successes of the past century: longer lives and smaller families. It also brings some of the biggest challenges of the next, from pensions and health care to labour shortages. This report covers the older population worldwide, the oldest and youngest countries, centenarians, the ratio of older people to the working-age population and the projections to 2100. It goes further than the age overview in our [world population statistics](#).



892 million

People aged 65 and over

10.7 percent of the world, 2026.

177 million

People aged 80 and over

2.1 percent of the world.

32.2 years

World median age

Up from 21.7 years in 1975.

30.3%

Japan

Oldest country: share aged 65 and over.

How to read ageing statistics

- The share aged 65 and over is the most common measure of population ageing.
- The median age splits the population into two equal halves, one younger and one older.
- The old-age dependency ratio compares the number of people aged 65 and over with every 100 people aged 15 to 64.
- Figures for 2024 onwards are UN medium-variant projections.

GROWTH

How fast the older population is growing

The older population has grown steadily for seven decades and is now growing faster than ever. The number of people aged 65 and over rose from 127 million in 1950 to 427 million in 2000 and 749 million in 2020. It is projected to pass 1 billion around 2030 and to reach 1.59 billion by 2050 and 2.44 billion by 2100. In 2026 alone, the world adds about 31 million people aged 65 or over.

People aged 65 and over and 80 and over worldwide, 1950 to 2100 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

One billion by 2030: The 65-plus population is set to pass 1 billion around 2030 and the 80-plus population to reach 453 million by 2050.

The oldest old are the fastest-growing group. The population aged 80 and over is projected to more than double from 177 million in 2026 to 453 million in 2050 and reach almost 950 million by 2100. Women make

up 61 percent of people aged 80 and over and more than 80 percent of centenarians, because they live longer than men. The gender balance at older ages is explored in our report on the [world population by gender](#).

A symbolic milestone has already passed. The US Census Bureau, which publishes its own international population estimates, reported in August 2026 that between 2020 and 2025 the population aged 65 and older exceeded the population aged 5 and younger for the first time in recorded history. On UN projections, the population aged 65 and over will also outnumber all children under 18 by the late 2070s.

AGE STRUCTURE

The changing shape of the world population

As the older population grows, the share of children shrinks. In 1950, 34.9 percent of the world population was under 15 and 5.1 percent was 65 or older. In 2026, the shares are 23.9 percent and 10.7 percent. By 2050, the UN expects 20.3 percent of people to be under 15 and 16.4 percent to be 65 or older, and by 2100 the older group, at 24.0 percent, will be larger than the group of children, at 16.5 percent.

World population by broad age group, 1950 to 2100 (% of total)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Fewer children, more grandparents: By 2100, people aged 65 and over will make up a larger share of the world than children under 15.

The working-age population, aged 15 to 64, makes up 65.4 percent of the world in 2026, close to its historical peak, which the UN projects for 2027. This bulge has given many countries a demographic dividend: a large workforce relative to the number of dependants. As ageing continues, that share is projected to fall to 63.2 percent by 2050 and 59.5 percent by 2100.

OLDEST

The oldest countries in the world

Japan is the oldest country in the world. In 2026, 30.3 percent of its population is aged 65 or over and 11.2 percent is 80 or over, according to UN projections. Puerto Rico (26.1 percent), Italy (25.8 percent), Portugal (25.6 percent) and Hong Kong (25.2 percent) follow, ahead of Greece, Finland, Germany and Croatia. In

total, 46 countries and areas have at least one in five people aged 65 or over.

Countries with the highest share of people aged 65 and over, 2026 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Japan leads: Almost a third of people in Japan are 65 or older, and more than one in nine are 80 or older.

Most of the oldest countries are in Europe and East Asia, where fertility has been low for decades and life expectancy is high. Emigration of young adults has added to ageing in southern and eastern Europe and in Puerto Rico. The ranking is set to change: by 2050, the UN projects that Hong Kong (46.8 percent), South Korea (39.9 percent) and Taiwan (39.0 percent) will overtake Japan (37.5 percent). The US Census Bureau projects that South Korea will be the oldest country in the world by 2060, with 41 percent of its population aged 65 or over.

MEDIAN AGE

Median age: from 15 to 51

The median age shows how wide the gap between the oldest and youngest societies has become. In Japan, half the population is older than 51.4 years. Italy (49.8), Hong Kong (49.3), Portugal (48.4) and Greece (48.3) follow. At the other end, half the population of the Central African Republic is younger than 15.7 years, and Somalia, Chad, Niger, DR Congo and Mali all have median ages of 17 or less.

Countries with the highest median age, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Over 50 in Japan: Half of all people in Japan are older than 51.4 years.

Countries with the lowest median age, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Under 16 in CAR: Half the population of the Central African Republic is younger than 15.7 years.

The difference between Japan and the Central African Republic is more than 35 years. Among the largest countries, the median age is 41.9 years in China (see our report on the [population of China](#)), 39.8 in the United States, 30.4 in India and 19.5 in Nigeria. Age structure in the United States is covered in more detail in our report on the [US population by sex and age](#).

REGIONS

Ageing by continent

Europe is the oldest continent, with 21.6 percent of its population aged 65 and over in 2026 and a median age of 44.2 years. Northern America follows with 19.3 percent and Oceania with 14.3 percent. Asia and Latin America are at about 10.7 percent but are ageing fastest: both are projected to reach about 19 percent by 2050. Africa remains young, with only 3.8 percent of its population aged 65 or over and a median age of 20.6 years.

Share of the population aged 65 and over by continent, 2026 and 2050 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Asia and Latin America catch up: Both continents are set to nearly double their older share by 2050, reaching the level Europe has today.

The speed of ageing matters as much as the level. Europe aged gradually over many decades, while many countries in Asia and Latin America are ageing within a few decades, often at lower income levels, which leaves less time to build pension and care systems. Between 2026 and 2050, the older share in Asia and Latin America is projected to rise by about 8 percentage points, against about 7 points in Europe, which starts from a much higher level.

DEPENDENCY

Fewer workers per older person

The old-age dependency ratio measures the number of people aged 65 and over for every 100 people aged 15 to 64. Worldwide, it has risen from 8.4 in 1950 to 16.4 in 2026, meaning there are about six people of working age for every older person. The UN projects a ratio of 26.0 by 2050, or fewer than four working-age people per older person, and 40.3 by 2100.

Old-age dependency ratio, world, 1950 to 2100

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

From 12 to 2.5: The number of working-age people per older person is set to fall from about 12 in 1950 to about 2.5 in 2100.

The ratio is already 33.9 in Europe and 30.0 in Northern America in 2026, and is projected to reach 49.8 in Europe by 2050, when there will be about two working-age people for every person aged 65 and over. In Africa the ratio is just 6.5. Rising dependency ratios put pressure on pay-as-you-go pension systems and health budgets, and many countries have responded by raising the retirement age, encouraging older people to keep working and relying more on immigration, as in the [United States](#).

CENTENARIANS

The rise of centenarians

The number of people aged 100 or over has grown faster than any other age group. The UN estimates about 96,000 centenarians worldwide in 1990, 168,000 in 2000 and 566,000 in 2023. In 2026 the projected number is about 693,000. By 2050 it is expected to approach 2.7 million, and by 2100 more than 18 million.

Countries with the most people aged 100 and over, 2026 (thousands)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-aging-population

Japan has the most: About 127,000 Japanese are aged 100 or over, more than in the United States, which has almost three times the population.

Japan has by far the largest number of centenarians, about 127,000 in 2026, followed by the United States with 79,000, China with 54,000 and India with 45,000. France, Russia, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom and Thailand complete the top ten. Four in five centenarians are women. Counting the very old is difficult, especially where birth registration was incomplete a century ago, so these estimates carry more uncertainty than those for younger ages.



OUTLOOK

What an older world means

Population ageing is now irreversible for most of the world. The UN projects that the number of countries and areas where at least one in five people is aged 65 or over will rise from 46 in 2026 to 112 by 2050. Older populations will change demand for health care, housing and consumer goods, and will shape labour markets and public finances. The drivers of ageing are covered in our reports on the [global fertility rate](#) and [life expectancy by country](#), and its consequences for the number of deaths in our report on the [global death rate](#). For country-level growth and decline, see [population growth by country](#).

KEY FACTS

The ageing world in numbers

Key Facts

- 892 million people, 10.7 percent of the world, are aged 65 and over in 2026.
- The 65-plus population is projected to pass 1 billion around 2030 and reach 1.59 billion by 2050.
- Japan is the oldest country, with 30.3 percent aged 65 and over and a median age of 51.4 years.
- The Central African Republic is the youngest, with a median age of 15.7 years.
- There are about 6 working-age people per person aged 65 and over, falling to under 4 by 2050.
- About 693,000 people are aged 100 or over, 127,000 of them in Japan.
- People aged 65 and over will outnumber children under 18 by the late 2070s.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many people in the world are over 65?

About 892 million people are aged 65 and over in 2026, 10.7 percent of the world population, according to UN projections. The number is expected to pass 1 billion around 2030.

Which country has the oldest population?

Japan has the oldest population, with 30.3 percent of people aged 65 and over in 2026 and a median age of 51.4 years. Italy, Portugal, Hong Kong and Greece follow.

Which country has the youngest population?

The Central African Republic has the youngest population, with a median age of 15.7 years in 2026, followed by Somalia, Chad and Niger at about 17.

What is the median age of the world?

The world median age is 32.2 years in 2026, up from 21.7 years in 1975. It is projected to reach 37.2 years by 2050 and 43.2 by 2100.

How many centenarians are there in the world?

About 693,000 people are aged 100 or over in 2026, according to UN projections. Japan has the most, about 127,000, followed by the United States with about 79,000.

When will older people outnumber children?

On UN projections, people aged 65 and over will outnumber children under 18 by the late 2070s. The US Census Bureau reports that people aged 65 and over already outnumber children aged 5 and younger.

What is the old-age dependency ratio?

It is the number of people aged 65 and over for every 100 people aged 15 to 64. Worldwide it is 16.4 in 2026 and projected to reach 26.0 in 2050. In Europe it is already 33.9.

Why is the world population ageing?

Ageing is driven by falling fertility, which means fewer young people, and rising life expectancy, which means more people survive to old age.



SOURCES

[United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024, medium variant.

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results.

[US Census Bureau](#) - Global older adult population projected to nearly double by 2060, August 2026.

STATISTICS REPORT

Most populated cities in the US 2026

Updated Sep 16, 2026 · businessstats.com/most-populated-us-cities

8.58M NEW YORK, NO. 1	3.87M LOS ANGELES, NO. 2	12 CITIES OVER 1M
2.22x NYC VS LA	6 TEXAS IN TOP 25	24.6% FASTEST GROWTH

Overview

Cities with the largest resident population in the United States in 2026

New York City remains the most populated city in the United States in 2026, with roughly 8.58 million residents according to the latest Census Bureau estimates. Los Angeles is a distant second at about 3.87 million, followed by Chicago at 2.73 million. After that the ranking runs through a run of Texas and Sun Belt cities, with Houston, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas and Fort Worth completing the top ten.

What stands out is the scale of the New York lead. It is about 2.22 times the size of Los Angeles and, on its own, bigger than Los Angeles and Chicago combined. No other US city comes close to that kind of primacy. Below the top three, though, the rankings are increasingly shaped by the South and West, where cities such as Fort Worth, Jacksonville and Austin keep climbing.

The chart below ranks the fifteen largest cities by resident population. These are city-proper figures, counting only the people inside each municipal boundary, which is why they look smaller than the metro-area numbers often quoted in the news. A later section shows just how large that difference can be.

Top 15 US Cities by Population, 2025 (millions) New York towers over the rest.

Data:

Resident population in millions, July 1, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. City-proper boundaries. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

New York towers over the rest: at 8.58 million it is more than double Los Angeles and larger than Chicago and Los Angeles combined.

The Gap at the Top

How much bigger is New York than the rest?

The distance between New York and everyone else is the defining feature of the US urban hierarchy. The New York total of 8.58 million residents dwarfs the 3.87 million in Los Angeles and 2.73 million in Chicago. The drop from first to second is larger than the entire population of Chicago, and from there the numbers fall away quickly, with Houston at 2.40 million and Phoenix at 1.67 million rounding out the top five.

This pattern, where one city is far larger than the next, is unusual among large countries and reflects the long history of New York as the commercial and cultural gateway of the nation. Even as its population dipped after 2020 and has only partly recovered, its lead is in no danger. The chart compares the top six cities directly so the size of that gap is clear.

The Six Largest US Cities, 2025 (millions) A steep drop after the top three.

Data:

Resident population in millions, July 1, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

A steep drop after the top three: New York, Los Angeles and Chicago sit far above Houston, Phoenix and Philadelphia.

Winners and Losers

Which big cities are growing, and which are shrinking?

Behind the rankings is a clear regional story. Since the 2020 census, the largest coastal and Rust Belt cities have lost residents while Sun Belt cities have surged. New York is down more than 200,000 people from its 2020 count, and Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia have each slipped as well. At the same time San

Antonio has added about 114,000 residents, Fort Worth around 109,000 and Houston roughly 93,000.

The first chart below shows the change since 2020 for the ten largest cities, with bars above the line for gains and below it for losses. The split between the older coastal giants and the rising southern cities could hardly be sharper. The second chart ranks the biggest numeric gainers among the top cities, all of them in the South and West.

Change Since the 2020 Census, 10 Largest Cities (thousands) Coastal giants down, Sun Belt up.

Data:

Change in residents in thousands, 2020 census to July 2025 estimate.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Coastal giants down, Sun Belt up: New York fell by more than 200,000 while San Antonio, Fort Worth and Houston posted the biggest gains.

Biggest Gains Since 2020, Top Cities (thousands) Texas leads the growth.

Data:

Residents added in thousands, 2020 census to July 2025 estimate.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Texas leads the growth: San Antonio, Fort Worth and Houston each added around 90,000 to 114,000 residents since 2020.

City vs Metro

City limits versus the whole metro area

City-proper population and metro-area population are two very different measures, and confusing them is the most common mistake in this kind of ranking. A city figure counts only the people inside the legal municipal boundary. A metro area covers the entire commuting region around it, which is often several times larger.



Dallas is the clearest example. As a city it holds about 1.33 million people, ninth nationally, but its Dallas-Fort Worth metro area is home to roughly 8.48 million, making it one of the largest urban regions in the country. New York, with 8.58 million in the city and 20.1 million in the metro, tells the same story on a grander scale. The chart below sets the city and metro figures side by side for the top cities.

City vs Metro Area Population, 2025 (millions)The metro is far bigger.

Data:

City-proper population versus metropolitan statistical area population, millions, July 1, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

The metro is far bigger: Dallas has 1.33 million people as a city but 8.48 million across its metro area.

Where They Are

Where the biggest US cities are located

Mapping the largest cities onto Census regions shows just how far the balance has tilted toward the Sun Belt. Of the 100 largest cities, 42 sit in the South and 34 in the West. Together the two account for more than three quarters of the biggest cities, leaving the Midwest with 17 and the Northeast with just 7.

The state picture is just as lopsided. Texas and California each place 15 cities in the national top 100, a combined 30 percent of the ranking. Within the top 25, Texas alone accounts for six of the entries, from Houston and San Antonio down to El Paso. The two charts below show the regional and state breakdowns.

The 100 Largest Cities by Region, 2025The Sun Belt dominates.

Data:

Count of the 100 largest cities in each Census region, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

The Sun Belt dominates: the South and West hold 76 of the 100 largest cities between them.

Top 25 Cities by State, 2025 Texas out front.

Data:

Count of top 25 cities by state, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Fifteen states hold one city each. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Texas out front: six of the top 25 cities are in Texas and four are in California, with fifteen other states holding one each.

The Million Club

Which US cities have more than a million people?

Twelve US cities topped one million residents in 2025. The newest member is Austin, Texas, which crossed the mark for the first time to reach about 1.00 million. It joins Jacksonville and Fort Worth, which both passed a million a year earlier. At the same time San Jose, long a fixture of the million club, slipped just below the line to about 990,000, a quiet marker of the shift away from the coastal tech hubs.

The full million-plus list runs New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, Fort Worth, Jacksonville and Austin. The chart below zooms in on the cities clustered right around the one-million threshold, where the most movement is happening.

Around the One-Million Mark, 2025 (thousands) Austin in, San Jose out.

Data:

Resident population in thousands, July 1, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Austin crossed one million in 2025, San Jose fell just below. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Austin in, San Jose out: Austin reached about 1.00 million while San Jose eased to roughly 990,000.

Texas and the Sun Belt

Why Texas has so many big cities

No state shapes the modern city ranking like Texas. Six of the 25 largest US cities are in Texas: Houston at 2.40 million, San Antonio at 1.55 million, Dallas at 1.33 million, Fort Worth at 1.03 million, Austin at 1.00 million and El Paso at 0.68 million. That gives Texas more top-25 cities than any other state, ahead of the four in California.

Several forces feed the trend: a lower cost of living, business-friendly policy, job growth and steady migration from higher-cost states. The result is that the Texas Triangle of Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin has become one of the fastest-growing urban clusters in the country. The chart shows the six Texas cities in the top 25.

Texas Cities in the Top 25, 2025 (millions) Six of the biggest 25.

Data:

Resident population in millions, July 1, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Six of the biggest 25: Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin and El Paso all rank among the largest US cities.

Concentration

How concentrated is the US urban population?

For all the talk of big cities, the US population is spread across a very long list of them. The 100 largest cities together hold about 65.9 million people. New York alone makes up 13 percent of that total, and the twenty largest cities account for just over half. The remaining eighty cities, from Oklahoma City down to Norfolk, split the rest.

That means the country does not depend on a handful of megacities the way some nations do. Outside New York and Los Angeles, urban America is a wide field of mid-sized cities. The donut below shows how the population of the 100 largest cities divides between New York, the next nineteen and the remaining eighty.

Share of the 100 Largest Cities Population, 2025A long, wide field.

Data:

Share of the combined population of the 100 largest cities, 2025.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates, BusinessStats calculation. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

A long, wide field: New York is 13 percent of the top 100, but eighty smaller cities together hold nearly half.

Key Facts

The most populated US cities in numbers

A handful of figures capture the 2026 city landscape. New York leads at 8.58 million, twelve cities top a million, Texas holds six of the top 25, and the South claims 42 of the 100 largest cities. The direction of travel is unmistakably toward the Sun Belt.

8.58MNew York CityLargest, by far.12Cities over 1 millionAustin joined in 2025.42Top-100 cities in the SouthWest adds 34 more.+114KSan Antonio since 2020Biggest gainer.

These numbers matter because city size drives everything from congressional representation and federal funding to housing markets and transit planning. A ranking that shifts toward Texas, Florida and Arizona reshapes where the country invests for the decade ahead.

Big Picture

Most populated US cities: the big picture

The 2026 ranking keeps a familiar face at the top, with New York, Los Angeles and Chicago holding the first three spots as they have for decades. Beneath them, though, the map is being redrawn. Sun Belt cities are climbing, coastal and Rust Belt cities are flat or falling, and the one-million club keeps admitting new Texas and Florida members while a coastal name like San Jose drops out.

If current migration and growth patterns hold, the next few years will push more southern cities up the list and could reshuffle the middle of the top 25 entirely. For the wider context, see how the national total breaks down in our [US population by sex](#) data and how the country compares within the [world population](#).



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions: Most Populated US Cities

New York City is the most populated city in the United States, with about 8.58 million residents as of July 2025, the latest Census estimate. It is more than twice the size of second-place Los Angeles.

The ten largest are New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas and Fort Worth. Four of the ten are in Texas.

Twelve US cities had at least one million residents in 2025. Austin was the newest to cross the mark, while San Jose slipped just below one million.

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth largest in the country, with about 2.40 million residents. Texas has six cities in the national top 25.

Yes. New York remains the biggest US city by a wide margin. At 8.58 million people it is about 2.22 times the size of Los Angeles and larger than Los Angeles and Chicago combined.

A city population counts only people inside the official municipal boundary, while a metro area covers the whole surrounding region. Dallas has about 1.33 million people as a city but 8.48 million in its metro area.

Austin crossed one million residents in 2025. Jacksonville and Fort Worth both crossed the mark a year earlier, between 2023 and 2024.

The South has the most, with 42 of the 100 largest cities, followed by the West with 34. Together the Sun Belt regions hold more than three quarters of the biggest cities.

The figures are U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates for July 1, 2025, released in May 2026. These are the most recent official city population figures available.

Among places with 20,000 or more residents, Celina, Texas grew fastest at 24.6 percent in a single year. Most of the fastest-growing cities are suburbs of Texas and Florida metros.

Sources

U.S. Census Bureau - Vintage 2025 Population Estimates, City and Town Population Totals (table SUB-IP-EST2025-ANNRKN), reference date July 1, 2025, released May 2026.

U.S. Census Bureau - Vintage 2025 Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area population estimates, July 1, 2025.



U.S. Census Bureau - 2020 Decennial Census counts, used for change since 2020.

United States Census Bureau - Primary source for all city and metro population figures.

All city figures are city-proper resident population inside official municipal boundaries, not metropolitan areas. Consolidated-government balances follow Census geography. July 1, 2025 is the latest available reference date; full-year 2026 city estimates are not yet published. This is data journalism, not investment advice.

STATISTICS REPORT

The resident population of the United States from 1980 to 2025, by sex

Updated Sep 16, 2026 · businessstats.com/us-population-by-sex

342M TOTAL 2025	171.8M WOMEN 2024	168.3M MEN 2024
3.4M MORE WOMEN	98 MEN PER 100 WOMEN	50.5% FEMALE SHARE

Overview

The resident population of the United States by sex, 1980 to 2025

The resident population of the United States has grown from about 227 million in 1980 to about 342 million in 2025, and across that span women have consistently outnumbered men. As of mid 2024, the most recent year with a finalized breakdown, there were about 168.3 million men and 171.8 million women, a difference of roughly 3.4 million in favor of women.

The story of the last four decades is not the female majority itself, which dates back to 1950, but how slowly it has been eroding. The chart below sets the male and female populations side by side at each census from 1980 to 2020, plus the latest 2024 estimate, and the two bars have crept closer together over time. The detail behind that convergence, the sex ratio, the shrinking gap and the role of longer female lifespans, runs through the rest of this report.

A note on the data. Every figure comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. The years 1980 through 2020 use the decennial census, while 2024 uses the annual population estimate. The 2025 total is a Census estimate; the full 2025 split by sex has not yet been finalized, so the latest exact male and female counts shown here are for 2024.

US Resident Population by Sex, 1980-2024 (millions) Women lead, but the gap is closing.

Data:

Male and female resident population in millions, decennial census 1980-2020 and 2024 estimate.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch views with the toolbar.

Women lead, but the gap is closing: the female population has topped the male count in every year shown, though the two are converging.

Total Growth

How much has the US population grown since 1980?

The total resident population climbed almost every single year, from about 227 million in 1980 to 250 million by 1990, 282 million by 2000, 309 million by 2010, 332 million by 2020 and roughly 342 million by 2025.

That is an increase of more than 115 million people in 45 years, or about 51 percent, even as annual growth has cooled markedly in the most recent years.

Two forces drive the total: natural increase, meaning births minus deaths, and net immigration. As birth rates have fallen, immigration has become the larger contributor, which is also part of the reason the male and female counts have moved closer together. The broader context for this national trend sits within the wider [world population](#) picture, where the United States remains the third most populous country.

The area chart below traces the total for every year from 1980 to 2025. The line keeps rising, but the slope flattens after 2020, a visual hint of the slowdown that later sections break down decade by decade.

Total US Resident Population, 1980-2025 (millions) Up more than half since 1980.

Data:

Total resident population in millions.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau, annual July 1 estimates 1980 to 2025. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch views with the toolbar.

Up more than half since 1980: the population rose from about 227 million in 1980 to about 342 million in 2025, adding over 115 million people.

Men or Women?

Are there more men or women in the United States?

There are more women than men, and there have been since 1950. In 2024 women led by about 3.4 million. What has changed is the size of that lead. Measured as the sex ratio, the number of men per 100 women, the balance stood at just 94.5 in 1980, meaning a sizeable female majority, and has climbed steadily to about 98 in 2024. A ratio moving toward 100 means the two sexes are approaching parity.

The gap in raw numbers tells the same story with a twist. The surplus of women held between five and six million for decades, dipped toward five million around 2010, edged back up near six million by 2020, then fell sharply to about 3.4 million by 2024. The recent narrowing is the fastest on record and is driven largely by immigration, which has skewed male in recent years. Our deeper [US population by gender](#) coverage tracks these annual movements in more detail.

The first chart below shows the sex ratio rising across the decades, and the second shows how many more women than men there were at each point. Read together, they capture a female majority that is real but slowly fading.

US Sex Ratio, 1980-2024 (men per 100 women)Creeping back toward balance.

Data:

Men per 100 women in the resident population.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch views with the toolbar.

Creeping back toward balance: the sex ratio rose from 94.5 men per 100 women in 1980 to about 98 in 2024.

How Many More Women Than Men, 1980-2024 (millions)A shrinking surplus.

Data:

Female population minus male population, in millions.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch views with the toolbar.

A shrinking surplus: women outnumbered men by five to six million for decades, then the gap fell to about 3.4 million by 2024.

Female Share

What share of the US population is female?

Women made up about 50.5 percent of the resident population in 2024, down from 51.4 percent in 1980. It is a slight majority that has held for generations, but the female share has ticked down by nearly a full percentage point over 45 years as the male and female counts converged.

That slow decline in the female share is the mirror image of the rising sex ratio. It reflects two long-running shifts: a gradual narrowing of the gap between male and female life expectancy through the late twentieth century, and more recently an inflow of immigrants that has leaned male. Neither has flipped the balance, but together they have trimmed the female edge year after year.

The line chart below shows the female share of the population easing from just above 51 percent toward 50.5 percent. Small as the movement looks, across a population of more than 340 million each tenth of a percentage point represents hundreds of thousands of people.

Female Share of US Population, 1980-2024 (percent)A slight, slowly fading majority.

Data:

Female population as a percent of the total resident population.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch views with the toolbar.

A slight, slowly fading majority: the female share eased from 51.4 percent in 1980 to about 50.5 percent in 2024.

Why Women Lead

Why do women outnumber men in the US?

The answer lies in the interplay of birth and death. Boys are actually born more often than girls, at roughly 105 male births for every 100 female births, so among children and young adults men are in the majority. Women take the lead only later in life, because they live longer on average. US life expectancy in 2024 was about 81.4 years for women against 76.5 years for men, a gap of nearly five years.

That longevity difference reshapes the population by age. Among people aged 65 and over there are only about 82 men per 100 women, and the imbalance widens further among the oldest groups. Because older

cohorts are large and growing, this late-life surplus of women is enough to tip the entire national balance toward females even though boys start out ahead.

The chart below shows the sex ratio by broad age group. It runs above 100, more men than women, in youth and working age, then falls sharply after 65. This single picture explains why a country that is majority male at birth ends up majority female overall.

US Sex Ratio by Age Group, 2023 (men per 100 women) Men lead young, women lead old.

Data:

Men per 100 women by broad age group, 2023 estimates.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau and CIA World Factbook. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch views with the toolbar.

Men lead young, women lead old: the ratio tops 100 through working age, then falls to about 82 among those 65 and over.

Growth Slowing

Is US population growth slowing down?

Yes, and sharply. Each decade from the 1980s through the 2010s added between 22 and 33 million people, with the 1990s the fastest at about 32.7 million. The five years from 2020 to 2025 added only around 10 million, which on a per-year basis is the slowest sustained growth in modern US history.

The slowdown reflects a falling birth rate, an aging population and, in some recent years, higher deaths. Immigration has become the main thing keeping growth positive at all. The waterfall chart below shows how many people were added in each period, building from the 1980 base up to the 2025 total, and the final block is visibly the shortest.

Measured as a growth rate the pattern is just as clear: the population grew 9.8 percent in the 1980s, peaked at 13.2 percent in the 1990s, then eased to 9.7, 7.4 and about 3.1 percent for the partial 2020 to 2025 period. The second chart puts those rates side by side.

People Added to the US Population by Period (millions) The 2020s are lagging.

Data:

Population added in each period, in millions, starting from the 1980 base.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. The 2020-25 block covers five years. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch views with the toolbar.

The 2020s are lagging: only about 10 million people were added from 2020 to 2025, well below every earlier decade.

US Population Growth Rate by Period (percent) Cooling since the 1990s.

Data:

Percent growth in the resident population over each period.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. The 2020-25 figure covers five years. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch views with the toolbar.

Cooling since the 1990s: decade growth fell from a 13.2 percent peak to about 3.1 percent for the partial 2020 to 2025 span.

Gap Closing

Is the gender gap closing, and why?

Since 1980 the male population has grown slightly faster than the female population. Indexed to 1980, the number of men reached about 153 by 2024 while the number of women reached about 148, meaning men grew roughly 53 percent against 47 percent for women. That small difference, compounded over four decades, is what has pulled the sex ratio up toward balance.

The main reason is immigration. Migrant flows into the United States have tended to include more men than women, particularly in working-age groups, adding proportionally more men to the total. A gradual narrowing of the life-expectancy gap earlier in the period played a supporting role. The technology and labor shifts reshaping who moves where are visible across our wider economic coverage too.

The chart below indexes the male and female populations to 100 in 1980 so their growth paths can be compared directly. The two lines start together and slowly separate, with the male line edging above, a compact picture of why the female majority keeps shrinking.



Growth Since 1980 by Sex (index, 1980 = 100)Men grew a little faster.

Data:

Male and female resident population indexed to 100 in 1980.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau, BusinessStats calculation. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch views with the toolbar.

Men grew a little faster: since 1980 the male population is up about 53 percent against 47 percent for women.

2024 Snapshot

The latest US population split by sex

The most recent finalized breakdown, for mid 2024, put the resident population at about 168.3 million men and 171.8 million women, a female share of roughly 50.5 percent. It is the closest the two have been in the modern record, and if current trends hold the gap will keep narrowing.

That near-even split at the national level hides wide variation underneath, by age as shown earlier and by state, with some states leaning male and most leaning female. The donut below shows the simple national picture as it stood in 2024.

US Resident Population by Sex, 2024 (millions)Close to an even split.

Data:

Male and female resident population in millions, mid 2024.

Note:

Source U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch views with the toolbar.

Close to an even split: 171.8 million women and 168.3 million men, about 50.5 percent female.

Key Facts

US population by sex in numbers

A few figures sum up 45 years of change. The population grew by more than 115 million, women stayed in the majority throughout, the surplus of women fell to about 3.4 million, and the sex ratio climbed from 94.5 to about 98 men per 100 women. The direction of travel is a slow return toward balance.

115M+ Added since 1980 227M to 342M 3.4M More women 2024 Down from over 6M 98 Men per 100 women Up from 94.5 in 1980 82 Men per 100 women, 65+ Women live longer.

These numbers matter because the balance of men and women shapes everything from the labor force to health care and retirement planning. A slowly aging, slowly balancing population sets the backdrop for the decades ahead.

Big Picture

US population by sex: the big picture

Across 45 years the United States added more than 115 million residents and kept a female majority the whole time, yet the underlying trend is one of convergence. The sex ratio has climbed toward 100, the surplus of women has shrunk to its smallest in the modern record, and the female share has eased below 51 percent, all driven by longer male lifespans and male-skewed immigration.

Looking ahead, a slowing overall growth rate and continued immigration suggest the two sexes will remain close to parity in the aggregate, even as women continue to dominate the oldest age groups. For readers tracking how the country is changing, the detailed year-by-year movements are covered in our [US population by gender data](#), set within the broader [world population](#) context.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions: US Population by Sex

As of mid 2024 there were about 168.3 million men and 171.8 million women living in the United States, out of a resident population of roughly 340 million. The total reached about 342 million by mid 2025.

Women have outnumbered men in every census since 1950. In 2024 there were about 3.4 million more women than men, a gap that has narrowed sharply from more than 6 million around 2020.

The sex ratio was about 98 men per 100 women in 2024, up from 94.5 in 1980. The long rise means the female majority has been slowly shrinking over four decades.

Women made up about 50.5 percent of the resident population in 2024, down from 51.4 percent in 1980. Females have been a slight majority since the middle of the twentieth century.

Boys are born slightly more often than girls, but women live longer, so they come to outnumber men in older age groups. At age 65 and over there are only about 82 men per 100 women, which pulls the overall balance toward women.

The resident population grew from about 227 million in 1980 to roughly 342 million in 2025, an increase of more than 115 million people or about 51 percent in 45 years.

Yes. Each decade from the 1980s through the 2010s added between 22 and 33 million people, but only about 10 million were added between 2020 and 2025, one of the slowest stretches in modern history.

The male population has grown slightly faster than the female population since 1980, up about 53 percent against 47 percent, driven partly by male-skewed immigration. That is why the sex ratio keeps rising toward balance.

The resident population is the US Census Bureau standard and includes everyone living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, regardless of citizenship, but excludes Americans living abroad.

All figures come from the US Census Bureau, using the decennial censuses for 1980 through 2020 and the annual population estimates for the most recent years.

Sources

U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial censuses 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020, resident population by sex.

U.S. Census Bureau - Population estimates program, annual national estimates by sex through 2024 and total to 2025.

U.S. Census Bureau and CIA World Factbook - Sex ratio by age group and life expectancy by sex.

[United States Census Bureau](#) - Primary source for all population figures.

Figures show the resident population of the United States by sex. Years 1980 to 2020 use decennial census counts and recent years use annual estimates, so small differences from other series reflect the reference date. The 2025 total is an estimate; the full 2025 split by sex is not yet finalized. This is data journalism, not investment advice.



STATISTICS REPORT

Countries with the Largest Muslim Population 2026 – 2.06 Billion Muslims Worldwide

Updated Sep 4, 2026 · businessstats.com/countries-with-the-largest-muslim-population

2.06B MUSLIMS WORLDWIDE 2026	25%+ OF WORLD POPULATION	242.7M INDONESIA – #1 COUNTRY
~50 MUSLIM-MAJORITY COUNTRIES	2.8B PROJECTED 2050	#1 FASTEST-GROWING RELIGION

Overview

Muslim Population 2026 – 2.06 Billion Across 195+ Countries

Islam is the world's **second-largest religion**, with approximately **2.06 billion followers**, commonly known as **Muslims** or adherents of Islam. They are collectively referred to as the **Ummah** (the global Muslim community) also known as **Muslims** or adherents of **Islam** – more than one in every four people on Earth. Muslims are present in virtually every country on the planet, from Indonesia (242.7 million) to Iceland (fewer than 15,000). What most people do not realise is that the geographic heart of the Islamic world is not the Middle East but **South and Southeast Asia**, which together are home to more than half of all Muslims globally.

Islam is also the **world's fastest-growing major religion** – expanding at approximately **1.84% per year**, faster than any other faith including Christianity (1.38%).

The primary driver is demographic: Muslim-majority countries have **higher fertility rates** of 3.1 children per woman (vs. world average of 2.4), as tracked in our [global population by gender data](#). They also have a significantly **younger age structure**, meaning more women of childbearing age. The **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**, the world's largest intergovernmental body after the United Nations with 57 member states, reflects this geographic spread. At this rate, Islam's global total is projected to reach **2.8 billion by 2050**, nearly matching Christianity for the first time in history. These patterns sit within broader [global population trends](#) and the wider landscape of [world religions](#).

Full Data Table

Muslim Population by Country 2026 – Full Ranked Table (Top 30 Islamic Nations)

Muslim Population by Country - Top 30 Ranked 2026Click column to sort

RANK	COUNTRY	REGION	MUSLIM POP (M)	% OF COUNTRY	% OF WORLD MUSLIMS
1	Indonesia	Southeast Asia	242.7M	87%	12.3%
2	Pakistan	South Asia	240.8M	96.5%	12.2%
3	India	South Asia	200M	14%	10.1%
4	Bangladesh	South Asia	150.8M	91%	7.6%
5	Nigeria	West Africa	97M	~49%	4.9%
6	Egypt	North Africa	90M	90%+	4.6%
7	Turkey	Middle East/Europe	84.4M	99%	4.3%
8	Iran	Middle East	82.5M	99%	4.2%
9	China	East Asia	~50M	~3.5%	2.5%
10	Algeria	North Africa	43.7M	99%	2.2%
11	Iraq	Middle East	39.7M	99%	2.0%
12	Sudan	East Africa	38.6M	97%	2.0%
13	Afghanistan	South Asia	37M	99%	1.9%
14	Morocco	North Africa	36.4M	99%	1.8%
15	Ethiopia	East Africa	34.7M	36%	1.8%
16	Saudi Arabia	Middle East	31.5M	99%	1.6%
17	Uzbekistan	Central Asia	29.9M	88%	1.5%
18	Yemen	Middle East	26.8M	99%	1.4%
19	Niger	West Africa	21.1M	99%	1.1%
20	Malaysia	Southeast Asia	20.1M	61%	1.0%

21	Tanzania	East Africa	19.4M	35%	1.0%
22	Mali	West Africa	17.5M	95%	0.9%
23	Senegal	West Africa	17.4M	96%	0.9%
24	Russia	Europe/Asia	16.4M	~11%	0.8%
25	Syria	Middle East	15.8M	90%+	0.8%
26	Kazakhstan	Central Asia	14.8M	70%	0.7%
27	Libya	North Africa	6.9M	97%	0.4%
28	Jordan	Middle East	~10M	97%	0.5%
29	Tunisia	North Africa	10.5M	99%	0.5%
30	Burkina Faso	West Africa	12.3M	61%	0.6%

Top 20 Countries

Top 20 Countries with the Largest Muslim Population 2026

The chart below shows the **twenty countries with the most Muslims** in absolute numbers. The scale is striking: Indonesia alone has more Muslims than all Arab countries combined. Pakistan and India are virtually tied for second place in total numbers, though India's Muslim share of its total population (approximately 14%) is far smaller than Pakistan's (nearly 97%).

Top 20 Countries · 2026 Countries with the Largest Muslim Population - Top 20 (Millions) Pew Research Center · CIA World Factbook · World Population Review 2026 242.7M Indonesia - #1

Top 20 countries hold ~88% of all world Muslims · Hover for % of country & world share Source: Pew Research Center · CIA World Factbook · April 2026

The chart below breaks down the world's **2.06 billion Muslims by geographic region**. Asia-Pacific dominates with 61% - meaning more than 1 in 2 Muslims on Earth lives in South or Southeast Asia. The Middle East and North Africa, despite being the birthplace of Islam, account for only 20%. Hover each bar to see the total Muslim population for that region and its projected growth rate through 2050.

Regional Breakdown · 2026 Muslim Population by Region - Where Do World's Muslims Live? Pew Research Center · UN Population Division · April 2026 +170% Sub-Saharan Africa Growth

Sub-Saharan Africa: +170% growth 2010-2050 - fastest growing Muslim region Source: Pew Research Center · April 2026

Sub-Saharan Africa deserves special attention: its Muslim population is growing at the fastest pace of any region.

Nigeria alone has nearly 100 million Muslims, and countries like Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mali, Niger, and Senegal each have tens of millions more. The continent's high birth rates and young populations mean Africa will be home to a significantly larger share of world Muslims by 2050.

Europe currently has approximately 25–26 million Muslims (about 5–6% of its population), concentrated in France, Germany, the UK (see our [UK population analysis](#)), and the Netherlands. This growth comes primarily from immigration and their descendants. The **Muslim diaspora** in Western countries, particularly in Europe, North America, and Australia - represents an additional 30–40 million Muslims outside their countries of heritage. These shifts are steadily reshaping the [religious landscape of Europe](#).

Muslim-Majority Countries

Muslim-Majority Countries - Which Nations Are 90%+ Islamic?

There are approximately **50 Muslim-majority countries**, also called **Islamic countries** or **Muslim nations**. These are nations where more than 50% of the population is Muslim. Within this group, a number of countries have populations that are **95% or more Muslim**, effectively representing near-total Islamic societies. These include the Maldives, Mauritania, Afghanistan, Western Sahara (disputed), Somalia, Yemen, and several others where non-Muslim populations are extremely small minorities.

The chart below ranks the countries with the **highest percentage of Muslim population** - note how these differ completely from the countries with the largest absolute numbers. Small nations like the Maldives (almost 100% Muslim) or Mauritania (99.9%) rank above Indonesia and Pakistan on the percentage scale. These nations are culturally and legally organized around Islamic principles, with Islam often enshrined in their constitutions as the state religion.

Muslim % of Population Countries by Highest Muslim Population Percentage - 2026 CIA World Factbook · World Population Review 2026 ~100% Maldives, Mauritania

Maldives, Mauritania, Somalia, Yemen - all 99%+ Muslim population Source: CIA World Factbook · World Population Review · April 2026

An important distinction: **Saudi Arabia**, birthplace of Islam and home of Mecca and Medina, has a Muslim population of approximately **99%** but only ranks 16th in total Muslim numbers (31.5 million). Similarly, **Iran** is 99% Muslim but ranks 8th by total numbers (82.5 million). **Turkey**, officially a secular state since Atatürk's reforms in the 1920s, nonetheless has approximately 99% of its population identifying as Muslim - though the government maintains strict separation of religion and state.

Surprising Insight India Has More Muslims Than Any Arab Country

India is an 80% Hindu country - yet its Muslim minority of approximately **200 million people** is larger than the entire Muslim population of any Arab nation. Egypt, the largest Arab country by Muslim population, has approximately 90 million Muslims. India's Muslim community is larger than Pakistan's entire population in 1947. This makes India home to the **world's largest Muslim minority** and the third-largest Muslim population of any country.

By Percentage

Muslim Population as a Share of Total - Sunni & Shia Countries 2026

Understanding which countries have the highest percentage of Muslim population versus which have the highest total Muslim population reveals two very different pictures of the Islamic world. Below are key facts for the most significant Muslim-population countries by both measures.

- **Indonesia (87% Muslim, 242.7M):** The world's largest Muslim-majority country by population. Islam arrived in Indonesia primarily through Arab traders in the 13th–14th centuries. Indonesian Islam is known for its moderate, syncretic character, blending Islamic practice with local Hindu-Buddhist traditions in many regions. Despite being Muslim-majority, Indonesia is constitutionally a secular state based on Pancasila principles.
- **Pakistan (96.5% Muslim, 240.8M):** Created specifically as a homeland for South Asian Muslims at Partition in 1947. Pakistan is constitutionally an Islamic Republic. It will likely surpass Indonesia as the world's most populous Muslim country by 2030, given its higher fertility rate (approximately 3.3 children per woman vs. Indonesia's 2.3). Approximately 85–90% of Pakistani Muslims are Sunni; 10–15% are Shia.
- **India (14% Muslim, 200M):** India's Muslim community - descended from both indigenous converts and Muslim rulers - is the world's largest Muslim minority. Despite being only 14% of India's population, the sheer size of India's total population (1.44 billion) means even a minority becomes one of the world's

largest Muslim communities. India's Muslim population is growing slightly faster than its Hindu population.

- **Bangladesh (91% Muslim, 150.8M):** One of the most densely populated Muslim-majority nations. Bangladesh separated from Pakistan in 1971. Its Muslim population is overwhelmingly Sunni. Bangladesh maintains a secular constitution despite its near-total Muslim majority.
- **Nigeria (~49% Muslim, 97M):** Africa's most populous country is roughly split between Muslims (predominantly in the north) and Christians (predominantly in the south). Nigeria's Muslim population is growing faster than its Christian population and may form a clear majority by 2060, according to Pew Research projections.
- **Egypt (90%+, 90M):** The most populous Arab country and the largest Muslim-majority nation in the Arab world. Islam is the state religion under Egypt's constitution. The vast majority are Sunni Muslim, with a Coptic Christian minority of approximately 10%.
- **Turkey (99%, 84.4M):** Officially secular since 1923, yet 99% Muslim. Turkey's unique position - bridging Europe and Asia, secular constitution with overwhelming Muslim population - makes it a distinctive case in the global Muslim demographic picture. Istanbul was once the seat of the Ottoman Caliphate.
- **Iran (99%, 82.5M):** The world's primary Shia Muslim nation and the center of Shia Islamic governance. Approximately 90–95% of Iranian Muslims are Shia - making Iran the most important country for the world's 240–340 million Shia Muslims. Iran has been an Islamic Republic since the 1979 revolution.

Fastest Growing Muslim Regions - Projected Growth 2010 to 2050

Sub-Saharan Africa will experience the most dramatic Muslim population growth of any region by 2050. The chart below shows **projected % growth from 2010 to 2050** for each major region. While Asia-Pacific and the Middle East will grow significantly, Sub-Saharan Africa's **+170% projected growth** is unmatched - driven by the world's highest fertility rates in countries like Niger, Mali, and Nigeria.

Regional Growth 2010–2050 Muslim Population Growth by Region - % Change 2010 to 2050 Pew Research Center · UN Population Division · April 2026 +170% Sub-Saharan Africa 2010–2050

Sub-Saharan Africa: +170% - fastest growing Muslim region Source: Pew Research Center · April 2026

Key Statistics

Muslim Population 2026 – Key Statistics by Country & Region

2.06BTotal World Muslim Population 202625%+ of the global population of ~8.25 billion. Islam is the second-largest religion after Christianity (~2.4B). Every 1 in 4 people on Earth is Muslim. Fastest-growing major religion at 1.84% annual growth.

242.7MIndonesia - World's #1 Muslim Country87% of Indonesia's 279 million people are Muslim. More Muslims than all 22 Arab League nations combined. 12.3% of all world Muslims. Indonesia's Islam is notably moderate and syncretic in character.

240.8MPakistan - #2, Will Overtake Indonesia by 203096.5% Muslim (Islamic Republic). Pakistan's higher fertility rate (~3.3 children/woman vs Indonesia's 2.3) means it will likely surpass Indonesia as the world's most populous Muslim country within this decade.

200MIndia - World's Largest Muslim MinorityOnly 14% of India's population, yet 200 million people - more than any Arab country. India's Muslim population is growing at a slightly faster rate than its Hindu majority and is projected to reach 333 million by 2060 (Pew Research).

~50MMuslim-Majority Countries WorldwideCountries where 50%+ of the population is Muslim. Spanning Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. 26 countries have Islam as the official state religion. Most are concentrated in a geographic belt from West Africa to Southeast Asia.

61%Asia-Pacific Share of World MuslimsThe single most important geographic fact about global Islam: the majority of Muslims live in Asia, not the Arab world or Middle East. Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan collectively house over 1.2 billion Muslims.

20%MENA Share of World MuslimsThe Middle East and North Africa region - often mistakenly seen as the heart of the Islamic world - contains only about 400 million Muslims, or approximately 20% of the global total. Egypt (90M), Turkey (84M), and Iran (82M) are the largest MENA Muslim populations.

15%Sub-Saharan Africa Share - Fastest GrowingApproximately 300 million Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa, growing at the fastest rate of any region. Nigeria alone has 97 million. West Africa (Mali, Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso) and East Africa (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Sudan) are key growth regions.

~26MMuslims in EuropeApproximately 5–6% of Europe's population is Muslim. Concentrated in France (~6M), Germany (~5M), UK (~4M), and the Netherlands (~1M). European Muslim population is projected to grow to 52.8 million (8% of Europe) by 2030.

3.1Average Children per Muslim WomanThe highest fertility rate of any major religious group, compared to the world average of 2.4. This demographic advantage - combined with a younger average age structure - is the primary driver of Islam's faster growth rate compared to Christianity and other religions.

85%Sunni Muslims WorldwideApproximately 1.75 billion of the world's Muslims are Sunni. Shia Muslims number approximately 240–340 million (12–17%), concentrated primarily in Iran (90–95% Shia), Iraq (65–70%), Bahrain, and significant communities in Pakistan, India, Lebanon, and Yemen.

2.8BProjected Muslim Population by 2050Pew Research Center projection: 2.76–2.8 billion Muslims by 2050, representing

approximately 30% of the world's projected 9.7 billion people. At that point, Muslims and Christians (2.9B) will be nearly equal in number for the first time in history. Growth & Projections

Muslim Population Growth – From 200 Million in 1900 to 2.8 Billion by 2050

The growth of the global Muslim population over the past century is extraordinary. In **1900**, there were approximately **200 million Muslims** worldwide, about 12% of the global population at the time. Today, the figure stands at **2.06 billion**: a tenfold increase in just 125 years. This growth has outpaced overall world population growth, meaning Muslims represent a steadily growing share of humanity.

The chart below tracks the Muslim population from 1900 to 2026 and projects forward to 2060. The acceleration visible from the 1970s onward reflects both the post-colonial population boom in Muslim-majority countries and the continued high fertility rates that distinguish Muslim demographics from other religious groups. Pakistan is projected to overtake Indonesia as the world's most populous Muslim country by approximately **2030**. Nigeria could have more Muslims than either country by **2060–2070**, given its explosive demographic growth trajectory.

The chart below tracks the **historical growth of the world's Muslim population** from 1900 to present day, with projections to 2060. Notice the steep acceleration from the 1970s onward – this coincides with the post-independence population boom in Muslim-majority nations across Asia and Africa. The projection line (dashed) shows Islam on track to nearly match Christianity in total followers by 2050.

The donut chart shows how the world's **2.06 billion Muslims are distributed by region**. The dominance of Asia-Pacific (61%) is striking – nearly two-thirds of all Muslims live in South and Southeast Asia, not the Middle East. Hover over each segment to see the exact population and the projected growth rate for each region through 2050.

Historical & Projected Growth World Muslim Population Growth – 1900 to 2060 (Billions) Pew Research Center · Wikipedia Muslim Population Growth · April 2026 +70% Growth 2015–2060 (Pew)

Muslims grew from 12% of world in 1900 to 25%+ in 2026 – projected 30% by 2050 Source: Pew Research Center · Wikipedia Muslim Population Growth · April 2026

The donut chart below visualises the same regional data in a different format, showing **proportional shares** at a glance. Asia-Pacific's golden segment (61%) dwarfs all others. The center displays the total world Muslim population. Sub-Saharan Africa's blue segment (15%) is today's smallest major region but will grow



dramatically - its share is projected to increase significantly by 2050 as fertility rates in West and East Africa remain high.

Regional Distribution World Muslims - Share by Region 2026 (Donut) Pew Research Center · April 2026
61% Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific has more Muslims than all other regions combined Source: Pew Research Center · April 2026
Projections 2030–2060 Global Muslim Population - Key Projections 2.2BWorld Muslims by 2030 2.8BWorld Muslims by 2050 30%Share of World Pop 2050 Pakistan#1 Muslim Country by 2030E 333MIndia Muslims by 2060E ~2060Islam Surpasses Christianity

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions – Muslim Population by Country 2026

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any single country, with approximately **242.7 million Muslims** as of 2026 - representing about 87% of Indonesia's total population and approximately 12.3% of all Muslims worldwide. Pakistan is a close second with approximately **240.8 million Muslims** and is projected to overtake Indonesia by 2030 due to its higher fertility rate. India is third with approximately **200 million Muslims** - a minority (14%) of India's population but larger in absolute numbers than any Arab country.

There are approximately **2.06 billion Muslims** in the world as of 2026, representing more than **25% of the global population** of approximately 8.25 billion. Islam is the world's second-largest religion after Christianity (approximately 2.4 billion), and it is the fastest-growing major religion globally. The Muslim population grew from approximately 200 million in 1900 to 2.06 billion in 2026 - a tenfold increase in 125 years.

Muslims make up approximately **25–26% of the world's population** as of 2026 - meaning roughly 1 in every 4 people on Earth is Muslim. This share has grown significantly from approximately 12% in 1900. Pew Research Center projects this will increase to approximately **30%** by 2050, as Muslim-majority countries continue to grow faster than the global average due to higher fertility rates and younger population structures.

Yes. Islam is the **world's fastest-growing major religion**, with an annual growth rate of approximately **1.84%** - outpacing Christianity (1.38%), Hinduism (1.52%), and all other major faiths. According to Pew Research Center, Muslims will grow more than **twice as fast** as the overall world population between 2015

and 2060. The primary driver is **demographic**: Muslim-majority countries have higher fertility rates (3.1 children per woman on average vs. the world's 2.4) and a younger age structure.

Egypt is the most populous Arab country and has the largest Muslim population of any Arab nation, with approximately **90 million Muslims** (90%+ of its population). Egypt is followed by **Algeria** (~43.7 million, 99% Muslim), **Iraq** (~39.7 million, 99%), **Sudan** (~38.6 million, 97%), and **Morocco** (~36.4 million, 99%). **Saudi Arabia**, despite being the birthplace of Islam and home to Mecca and Medina, has only approximately **31.5 million Muslims** - ranking 16th globally in total Muslim population.

India has approximately **200 million Muslims** as of 2026, making it the country with the world's **third-largest Muslim population** and the world's **largest Muslim minority**. Despite being only approximately **14% of India's total population** of 1.44 billion, India's Muslim community is larger in absolute terms than the entire Muslim population of any Arab country. Pew Research projects India's Muslim population will grow to approximately **333 million by 2060**, representing 19.4% of India's population at that time.

There are approximately **50 Muslim-majority countries** in the world - nations where more than 50% of the population is Muslim. The exact number varies slightly by source depending on whether disputed territories like Western Sahara or Palestine are counted as separate countries. Of these, approximately **26 countries have Islam as the official state religion**. The most Muslim-majority region by country count is the Middle East and North Africa, though Asia has the largest total Muslim population.

Asia, by a significant margin. The Asia-Pacific region is home to approximately **61% of all Muslims worldwide** - more than all other regions combined. This is primarily due to the enormous Muslim populations of Indonesia (242.7M), Pakistan (240.8M - the **Muslim population of Pakistan** being the world's second largest), India (200M), and Bangladesh (150.8M). The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, often mistakenly seen as the center of Islam, accounts for only approximately **20%** of the world's Muslim population. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for approximately **15%**.

The Sunni-Shia split is the largest division within Islam, originating from a disagreement over the succession of leadership after the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632 CE. **Sunni Muslims** make up approximately **85–87% of all Muslims worldwide** (about 1.75 billion people) and are the majority in most Muslim-majority countries. **Shia Muslims** number approximately **240–340 million** (12–17% of Muslims) and are concentrated primarily in **Iran** (90–95% Shia), **Iraq** (65–70%), Bahrain, and significant communities in Pakistan, India, Lebanon, and Azerbaijan.

Europe has approximately **25–26 million Muslims** as of 2026, representing approximately 5–6% of Europe's total population. The largest Muslim populations in Europe are in **Russia** (~16 million), **France** (~6

million), **Germany** (~5 million), **United Kingdom** (~4 million), and the **Netherlands** (~1 million). Pew Research projects Europe's Muslim population could grow to **52.8 million** (8% of Europe) by 2030, primarily through continued immigration and higher birth rates among Muslim communities.

Pakistan is projected to overtake **Indonesia** as the country with the world's largest Muslim population by approximately **2030**. Pakistan's economic and demographic growth is driven by its fertility rate of approximately 3.3 children per woman, which significantly exceeds Indonesia's 2.3, meaning Pakistan's Muslim population is growing faster in both absolute and relative terms. Looking further ahead, **Nigeria** - with its explosive demographic growth and nearly 100 million Muslims today - could eventually challenge both Pakistan and Indonesia for the top spot by 2060–2070.

The United States has approximately **3.45–4 million Muslims** as of 2026, representing approximately **1–1.2% of the U.S. population**. American Muslims are a diverse community representing over 75 countries of origin, with the largest communities in New York, Michigan, California, New Jersey, and Illinois. Pew Research projects the U.S. Muslim population will grow to approximately **2%** by 2030, making Muslims the second-largest non-Christian faith group in America (surpassing Jews).

According to Pew Research Center projections, Islam will **nearly equal Christianity** in total population by **2050** (2.8 billion Muslims vs. 2.9 billion Christians). Islam is projected to **surpass Christianity** as the world's largest religion sometime in the **second half of the 21st century** - most likely between **2060 and 2100**, depending on how fertility rates evolve in Muslim-majority countries and whether religiosity rates change. This is primarily a demographic projection based on current trends, not a certainty.

Data Sources & References

Primary: [Pew Research Center - The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections 2010–2050](#) · Updated 2025 · Gold standard for global religious demographic data

Primary: [World Population Review - Muslim Population by Country 2026](#) · CIA World Factbook data · Country-level estimates updated April 2026

Reference: [Wikipedia - Islam by Country](#) · Comprehensive country-level data combining Pew Research, CIA World Factbook, and national census sources · Updated 2026

All Muslim population figures are BusinessStats Research compilations based on Pew Research Center projections (updated 2025), CIA World Factbook 2025–2026 national estimates, and World Population Review 2026 country data. Figures represent estimates - precise Muslim population counts are unavailable for many countries as not all nations conduct religious censuses. Ranges are provided in source data;



BusinessStats uses midpoint estimates. All projections (2030, 2050, 2060) from Pew Research Center's landmark 2015 study, cross-referenced with 2025 update data. April 2026.



STATISTICS REPORT

America by Age and Sex: Seniors Close In on Children

Updated Oct 19, 2026 · businessstats.com/population-of-the-us-by-sex-and-age

341.8M US RESIDENTS, JULY 2025	64.6M AGED 65 AND OVER (18.9%)	72.0M CHILDREN UNDER 18 (21.1%)
39.4 MEDIAN AGE, RECORD HIGH	50.9% FEMALE SHARE OF POPULATION	81.6 MEN PER 100 WOMEN AGED 65+

The 2025 Snapshot

341.8 million Americans and how they divide by age

The Census Bureau Vintage 2025 population estimates, released in stages between April and June 2026, put the resident population of the United States at **341,784,857 on 1 July 2025**. That is 10.3 million people, or 3.1 percent, more than the April 2020 estimates base. These are the most recent official figures that break the population down by age and sex, and every 2025 number on this page comes from that release unless stated otherwise.

Of the 341.8 million residents, 269.8 million were aged 18 or older, which is 78.9 percent of the total, and 72.0 million were children under 18. Within the adult population, 205.1 million people were of working age (18 to 64) and 64.6 million were 65 or older. Put simply, the country had about 2.8 working age adults for every child and about 3.2 for every resident of retirement age. At the 2000 Census the second ratio was 5.0.

This page concentrates on the age structure and on how it differs between men and women. Headline counts of men and women are covered on our page about the [US population by sex](#), the racial and ethnic make up of the country is set out in [US population by race](#), and the year by year growth of the total is tracked in our [US population statistics from 2015 to 2026](#).

269.8MAdults aged 18 and over78.9 percent of residents, July 2025.205.1MWorking age, 18 to 6460.0 percent of residents.64.6MAged 65 and over18.9 percent, a record share.72.0MChildren under 1821.1

percent, down from 22.3 percent in 2020. Age Groups

The five broad age groups in 2025

The Census Bureau reports national change for five broad age bands, and they give a quick picture of where Americans are in the life cycle. The largest band is 25 to 44, with 91.9 million people or 26.9 percent of the population, covering the prime years for starting careers, buying homes and raising young children. The 45 to 64 band follows with 81.3 million (23.8 percent), then children under 18 with 72.0 million (21.1 percent), people aged 65 and over with 64.6 million (18.9 percent) and young adults aged 18 to 24 with 31.9 million (9.3 percent).

US Population by Broad Age Group, 1 July 2025 (millions) Resident population in five age bands; centre shows the national total.

Data:

US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 Population Estimates, release of 25 June 2026.

Note:

shares are BusinessStats calculations from the published counts. Compiled by BusinessStats. Data: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 Population Estimates, release of 25 June 2026. Note: shares are BusinessStats calculations from the published counts. Compiled by BusinessStats.

One in four Americans is 25 to 44: the 91.9 million people in that band outnumber both the under 18 and the 65 and over populations.

AGE GROUP	1 APRIL 2020 BASE	1 JULY 2025	CHANGE	CHANGE IN %	SHARE 2025
Under 18	73,822,227	72,021,348	-1,800,879	-2.4%	21.1%
18 to 24	31,271,950	31,936,859	+664,909	+2.1%	9.3%
25 to 44	86,789,265	91,885,062	+5,095,797	+5.9%	26.9%
45 to 64	84,004,580	81,324,500	-2,680,080	-3.2%	23.8%
65 and over	55,628,091	64,617,088	+8,988,997	+16.2%	18.9%
Total	331,516,113	341,784,857	+10,268,744	+3.1%	100.0%



Two of the five bands are smaller than they were in 2020. The population aged 45 to 64 fell by 2.7 million and the number of children fell by 1.8 million, while the three other bands grew. The adult population as a whole, everyone aged 18 and over, reached 269.8 million, so roughly four in every five residents are now adults. The share of children has fallen by 1.2 percentage points in just over five years, from 22.3 percent of the April 2020 base to 21.1 percent.

Change Since 2020

Since 2020, almost all growth has come from the oldest group

Between April 2020 and July 2025 the population grew by 10,268,744 people. Of that increase, 8,988,997, or 87.5 percent, was in the 65 and over group. The 25 to 44 band added 5.1 million people and the 18 to 24 band 0.7 million, but those gains were partly cancelled out by the shrinking 45 to 64 band and the fall in the number of children. No other age group grew even half as fast as the oldest one.

Population Change by Age Group, April 2020 to July 2025 (%)Percent change in the resident population of each age band.

Data:

US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 Population Estimates, Table 1 of the 25 June 2026 release.

Note:

the April 2020 values are the estimates base, not the census count. Compiled by BusinessStats.Data: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 Population Estimates, Table 1 of the 25 June 2026 release. Note: the April 2020 values are the estimates base, not the census count. Compiled by BusinessStats.

Seniors up 16.2 percent, children down 2.4 percent: the 65 and over population grew almost three times as fast as the next fastest band.

The main driver is the baby boom generation, people born between 1946 and 1964. In April 2020 the boomers were aged 55 to 74 and many of them were still in the 45 to 64 band. By mid 2025 they were roughly 60 to 79, and the Census Bureau notes that they form a visible bulge at ages 61 to 79 in the 2025 national population pyramid. As each year of boomers turned 65, the oldest band gained and the 45 to 64 band lost. The people now entering the 45 to 64 band were born between 1961 and 1980, a period that includes the lower birth years that followed the baby boom, so they do not fully replace those moving out.



The growth of the 25 to 44 band has a different source. The Census Bureau points out that growth in the younger adult age groups has come largely from immigration, which has diluted the weight of the boomers in the overall structure. International migration and its age profile are covered in our report on [immigration in the United States](#).

At the other end, the decline in the number of children reflects lower fertility. The general fertility rate, the number of births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44, fell from 69.5 in 2007 to 53.1 in 2025, according to the Census Bureau, and the total fertility rate was 1.63 births per woman in 2024, against 2.11 in 2001 and a post war peak of 3.77 in 1957. Annual birth counts are covered in our page on [births in the US](#), and the international context in our data on the [global fertility rate](#).

Population Pyramid

The US population pyramid by sex and five year age group

A population pyramid shows men on one side and women on the other, with the youngest age group at the bottom. The chart below uses the 2020 Census, the most recent full count of the population by age and sex and the base from which the 2025 estimates are carried forward. The Vintage 2025 release is used for every 2025 figure on this page; a five year breakdown by sex for 2025 will be added here once we have checked it against the Census Bureau tables.

US Population Pyramid by Sex and Age, 2020 Census (millions) Men to the left, women to the right; five year age groups from under 5 to 85 and over.

Data:

US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File.

Note:

counts include statistical noise added by the Census Bureau disclosure avoidance system. Compiled by BusinessStats. Data: US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File. Note: counts include statistical noise added by the Census Bureau disclosure avoidance system. Compiled by BusinessStats.

A column, not a triangle: every five year group from birth to 64 holds between 18 and 23 million people, and the pyramid narrows sharply only after 65.



The shape is closer to a column than a classic triangle. Each five year group between birth and age 64 contained between 18.4 million and 22.5 million people in 2020. The narrowest adult groups were 40 to 44 and 45 to 49, at about 20.3 million and 20.1 million, and a second bulge sat at ages 55 to 64, which held the late baby boomers. Above 65 the bars shorten quickly, and they shorten faster on the side of the men: at 85 and over there were 4.05 million women but only 2.29 million men.

AGE GROUP	2010 CENSUS	2020 CENSUS	CHANGE	MEN 2020	WOMEN 2020	MEN PER 100 WOMEN
Under 5	20,201,362	18,400,235	-8.9%	9,388,285	9,011,950	104.2
5 to 9	20,348,657	20,130,423	-1.1%	10,288,218	9,842,205	104.5
10 to 14	20,677,194	21,627,830	+4.6%	11,066,169	10,561,661	104.8
15 to 19	22,040,343	22,036,076	-0.0%	11,241,567	10,794,509	104.1
20 to 24	21,585,999	22,166,199	+2.7%	11,265,350	10,900,849	103.3
25 to 29	21,101,849	22,301,254	+5.7%	11,229,510	11,071,744	101.4
30 to 34	19,962,099	22,533,412	+12.9%	11,241,831	11,291,581	99.6
35 to 39	20,179,642	21,874,944	+8.4%	10,857,087	11,017,857	98.5
40 to 44	20,890,964	20,309,193	-2.8%	10,028,183	10,281,010	97.5
45 to 49	22,708,591	20,145,294	-11.3%	9,920,816	10,224,478	97.0
50 to 54	22,298,125	20,723,512	-7.1%	10,176,612	10,546,900	96.5
55 to 59	19,664,805	22,120,489	+12.5%	10,759,761	11,360,728	94.7
60 to 64	16,817,924	21,287,919	+26.6%	10,223,302	11,064,617	92.4
65 to 69	12,435,263	18,288,727	+47.1%	8,634,739	9,653,988	89.4
70 to 74	9,278,166	14,823,238	+59.8%	6,881,732	7,941,506	86.7
75 to 79	7,317,795	9,955,322	+36.0%	4,475,564	5,479,758	81.7
80 to 84	5,743,327	6,388,779	+11.2%	2,721,048	3,667,731	74.2
85 and over	5,493,433	6,336,435	+15.3%	2,286,037	4,050,398	56.4
Total	308,745,538	331,449,281	+7.4%	162,685,811	168,763,470	96.4



Comparing the two censuses shows how the structure moved over the decade. The 65 to 69 group grew from 12.4 million to 18.3 million, an increase of 47.1 percent, and the 70 to 74 group grew by 59.8 percent as the first boomers entered it. The 85 and over group rose by 15.3 percent to 6.3 million. In contrast, the number of children under 5 fell by 8.9 percent, from 20.2 million to 18.4 million, and the 45 to 49 and 50 to 54 groups were smaller in 2020 than in 2010, because the large boomer cohorts had moved on and smaller cohorts born in the late 1960s and 1970s had taken their place.

Sex Ratio by Age

Men outnumber women until their early thirties, then the balance flips

The sex ratio, the number of men for every 100 women, changes steadily with age. More boys than girls are born, so the ratio starts above 100: the 2020 Census counted 104.2 boys for every 100 girls under age 5 and 104.8 at ages 10 to 14. The male majority narrows through the twenties and disappears in the early thirties. In 2020 the ratio fell below 100 for the first time in the 30 to 34 group, at 99.6, and it then declined in every older group: 96.5 at 50 to 54, 89.4 at 65 to 69, 74.2 at 80 to 84 and 56.4 at 85 and over.

Men per 100 Women by Age Group, 2010 and 2020 Census (ratio) Values above 100 mean more men than women; below 100, more women.

Data:

US Census Bureau, 2010 Census brief C2010BR-03 (Table 2) and 2020 Census DHC.

Note:

ratios are BusinessStats calculations from published counts by sex. Compiled by BusinessStats. Data: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census brief C2010BR-03 (Table 2) and 2020 Census DHC. Note: ratios are BusinessStats calculations from published counts by sex. Compiled by BusinessStats.

The gap at older ages is closing: among people aged 85 and over there were 56.4 men per 100 women in 2020, up from 48.3 in 2010.

The two census lines tell a second story. In 2010 the crossover came five years later, in the 35 to 39 group, and at every age from 65 upward the 2020 ratio is higher than in 2010. At 80 to 84 it rose from 66.5 to 74.2 men per 100 women, and at 85 and over from 48.3 to 56.4. Older men are catching up with older women, even though women still clearly outnumber them.



The 2025 estimates confirm that trend. The Census Bureau reports 81.6 men for every 100 women among people aged 65 and over in 2025, up from 70.6 in 2001, and 68.3 men per 100 women among those aged 80 and over, up from 50.9. Applying the 2025 ratio to the 64.6 million people aged 65 and over gives about 29.0 million men and 35.6 million women, so women make up 55.1 percent of the older population. Across all ages, women outnumbered men by 6.3 million in 2025 and formed 50.9 percent of the population.

Why the older population is mostly female

The main reason is mortality. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, life expectancy at birth in 2024 was 81.4 years for women and 76.5 years for men, a gap of 4.9 years that had narrowed by 0.4 years in a single year. At age 65, women could expect to live another 20.8 years and men another 18.4. The gap is closing because death rates among older men have fallen faster: the age adjusted death rate for men aged 65 and over dropped from 8,285.0 per 100,000 in 1970 to 5,205.7 in 2022, a fall of about 3,079, while the rate for women of the same age fell by about 1,703, from 5,621.3 to 3,918.7.

History plays a part too. The Census Bureau notes that the Greatest Generation, aged 74 to 100 in 2001, carried a large female surplus linked partly to wartime deaths among men, and that the gap narrowed as cohorts less affected by war reached old age. How longevity compares internationally is covered in our ranking of [life expectancy by country](#), the global balance of men and women in [world population by gender](#), and the state by state ratio in [men per 100 women by US state](#).

99.6Men per 100 women at 30 to 342020 Census, first group below 100.56.4Men per 100 women at 85+2020 Census, up from 48.3 in 2010.81.6Men per 100 women at 65+2025 estimate, up from 70.6 in 2001.4.9 yrsFemale life expectancy advantage81.4 vs 76.5 years, 2024. Median Age

Median age: 39.4 years and still setting records

The median age divides the population into two equal halves, one younger and one older. In July 2025 it stood at 39.4 years, up from 39.2 a year earlier and from 38.6 in the April 2020 estimates base. It has risen in every census since 1990: from 32.9 years in 1990 to 35.3 in 2000, 37.2 in 2010 and 38.8 at the 2020 Census. In 35 years the midpoint of the American population has moved up by 6.5 years.

Median Age of the US Population, 1990 to 2025 (years)Census counts for 1990 to 2020, Vintage 2025 estimates for 2024 and 2025.

Data:

US Census Bureau: 2000 Census release CB01-CN.67, brief C2010BR-03, 2020 Census DHC, Vintage 2025 release of 25 June 2026.

Note:

the 2020 value is the census count (38.8); the April 2020 estimates base is 38.6. Compiled by BusinessStats.Data: US Census Bureau: 2000 Census release CB01-CN.67, brief C2010BR-03, 2020 Census DHC, Vintage 2025 release of 25 June 2026. Note: the 2020 value is the census count (38.8); the April 2020 estimates base is 38.6. Compiled by BusinessStats.

Up 6.5 years since 1990: the median age has reached a new high at every census and in every recent annual estimate.

YEAR	BOTH SEXES	MEN	WOMEN	GAP (WOMEN MINUS MEN)
2000 Census	35.3	34.0	36.5	2.5
2010 Census	37.2	35.8	38.5	2.7
2020 Census	38.8	37.5	39.9	2.4
2025 estimate	39.4	38.1	40.7	2.6

Women are older on average because they live longer. In 2025 the median age was 40.7 for women and 38.1 for men, and the Census Bureau measures the gap at 2.55 years, up from 2.39 years in 2020. Over the long run both sexes have aged at almost the same pace: between 2000 and 2025 the male median rose by 4.1 years and the female median by 4.2 years.

Readers comparing sources should note that the Census Bureau revises earlier years with each new vintage. The Vintage 2024 release reported a median age of 39.1 for 2024; the Vintage 2025 series revised that to 39.2. The global context, including countries where the median is already well above 45, is covered in our analysis of the [global aging population](#).

The 65 and Over Boom

The 65 and over boom and the shrinking gap with children

In 2000 the United States had 35.0 million residents aged 65 and over, 12.4 percent of the population. The number rose to 40.3 million in 2010, 55.8 million at the 2020 Census and 64.6 million in July 2025. That is an increase of 84.7 percent in a quarter of a century, while the total population grew by about 21 percent.



Over the same period the number of children barely moved: 72.3 million in 2000, 74.2 million in 2010, 73.1 million in 2020 and 72.0 million in 2025.

Children Under 18 vs Adults 65 and Over, 2000 to 2025 (millions) Census counts for 2000, 2010 and 2020; Vintage 2025 estimate for 2025.

Data:

US Census Bureau: brief C2010BR-03, 2020 Census DHC release of 25 May 2023, Vintage 2025 release of 25 June 2026.

Note:

the 2020 values are census counts; the April 2020 estimates base shows 73.8 million children and 55.6 million older adults. Compiled by BusinessStats. Data: US Census Bureau: brief C2010BR-03, 2020 Census DHC release of 25 May 2023, Vintage 2025 release of 25 June 2026. Note: the 2020 values are census counts; the April 2020 estimates base shows 73.8 million children and 55.6 million older adults. Compiled by BusinessStats.

From a 37 million gap to 7 million: children outnumbered older adults by 37.3 million in 2000 but by only 7.4 million in 2025.

The gap between the two groups has collapsed. Children outnumbered people aged 65 and over by 37.3 million in 2000, 33.9 million in 2010 and 17.3 million at the 2020 Census. In July 2025 the difference was 7.4 million. The Census Bureau 2023 national projections expect the share of the population aged 65 and over to overtake the share under 18 in 2029 in the middle series, and between 2028 and 2030 in the alternative immigration scenarios.

Where older adults already outnumber children

For many states and counties the crossover has already happened. In its Vintage 2024 release the Census Bureau reported that people aged 65 and over outnumbered children in 11 states in 2024, up from three in 2020. Maine, Vermont and Florida were on the list in 2020, and Delaware, Hawaii, Montana, New Hampshire, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and West Virginia joined them by 2024. At county level, the number of counties with more older adults than children rose from 983 (31.3 percent of 3,144) to 1,411 (almost 45 percent), and the number of metro areas from 58 to 112 of 387. The June 2026 release did not restate these counts for 2025, so we do not quote an updated figure.

The oldest old: 85 and over and centenarians

The population aged 85 and over grew from 4.24 million in 2000 to 5.49 million in 2010 and 6.34 million in 2020, according to the census counts. The Administration for Community Living, using Census Bureau data, puts it at about 6.5 million in 2022 and expects it to more than double to 13.7 million by 2040. Women made up 63.9 percent of this group in 2020. The number of centenarians, people aged 100 and over, rose from 53,364 in 2010 to 88,988 in 2022, and the Census Bureau reported that it grew by 50 percent between the 2010 and 2020 censuses, the fastest recent census to census increase for that age group.

64.6MAged 65 and over, 2025Up 9.0 million since April 2020.7.4MMore children than older adultsDown from 37.3 million in 2000.2029Projected crossover year65+ share passes under 18 share.13.7MProjected 85+ population, 2040About 6.5 million in 2022. Dependency Ratios

Dependency ratios: fewer working age adults per older resident

Dependency ratios relate the age groups that are mostly outside the labour force to the working age population. The old age dependency ratio counts people aged 65 and over for every 100 people aged 18 to 64; the youth ratio does the same for children under 18, and the total ratio adds the two together. These are demographic measures, not counts of who actually works, but they are the standard way to track how the age structure affects pensions, health care and the tax base.

US Youth and Old Age Dependency Ratios, 2000 to 2025 (per 100 people aged 18 to 64)People under 18 and aged 65 and over for every 100 people of working age.

Data:

US Census Bureau, brief C2010BR-03 and Vintage 2025 Population Estimates.

Note:

2020 uses the April 2020 estimates base so it is comparable with 2025; ratios are BusinessStats calculations. Compiled by BusinessStats.Data: US Census Bureau, brief C2010BR-03 and Vintage 2025 Population Estimates. Note: 2020 uses the April 2020 estimates base so it is comparable with 2025; ratios are BusinessStats calculations. Compiled by BusinessStats.

Old age ratio up by more than half since 2000: from 20.1 to 31.5 older residents for every 100 people aged 18 to 64.

YEAR	YOUTH RATIO	OLD AGE RATIO	TOTAL RATIO	PEOPLE 18 TO 64 PER PERSON 65+
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2000	41.5	20.1	61.6	5.0
2010	38.2	20.7	58.9	4.8
2020 (estimates base)	36.5	27.5	64.1	3.6
2025	35.1	31.5	66.6	3.2

Between 2000 and 2010 the old age ratio hardly changed, because the small cohorts born during the Depression and the Second World War were reaching 65. From 2011, when the first boomers turned 65, it began to rise quickly, and it climbed from 27.5 in 2020 to 31.5 in 2025. The youth ratio has fallen over the same period, but not by enough to offset the increase, so the total dependency ratio has risen from its 2010 low of 58.9 to 66.6.

The potential support ratio, the number of people aged 18 to 64 for each person aged 65 and over, fell from 5.0 in 2000 to 3.2 in 2025. The Congressional Budget Office, which uses ages 25 to 64 and the wider Social Security area population, estimates 2.7 people aged 25 to 64 for every person aged 65 or older in 2026 and projects a decline to 2.2 by 2056. CBO also projects that annual deaths will exceed annual births from 2030, with a total fertility rate of 1.58 in 2026, so that from 2030 onward population growth in its projections depends entirely on immigration.

States and Regions

Oldest and youngest states, and how each region is ageing

Age structure varies far more between states than the national averages suggest. In July 2025 Maine had the highest median age of any state, 44.9 years, and Utah the lowest, 32.6 years, a difference of 12.3 years. Both have aged: in 2010 their medians were 42.7 and 29.2, and in 2024 they were 44.8 and 32.4. In 2010 the other oldest states were Vermont (41.5), West Virginia (41.3), New Hampshire (41.1) and Florida (40.7), and the youngest after Utah were Texas (33.6), Alaska (33.8) and Idaho (34.6).

The share of residents who are children gives a closely related picture for 2025. Using the Census Bureau estimates of the population aged 18 and over, 26.1 percent of Utah residents were under 18, followed by Texas at 24.0 percent and Nebraska at 23.7 percent. At the other end, children made up 17.0 percent of the population of Vermont and 17.3 percent in both Maine and New Hampshire, against 21.1 percent nationally.

Share of Population Under 18: Six Youngest and Six Oldest States, July 2025 (%) Children as a share of all residents; national average 21.1 percent.

Data:

US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 estimates of the total and 18 and over population (SCPRC-EST2025-18+POP).

Note:

shares are 100 minus the published 18 and over percentage. Compiled by BusinessStats.Data: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025 estimates of the total and 18 and over population (SCPRC-EST2025-18+POP). Note: shares are 100 minus the published 18 and over percentage. Compiled by BusinessStats.

Utah has 9.1 points more children than Vermont: 26.1 percent of Utah residents are under 18, against 17.0 percent in Vermont.

REGION	TOTAL 2025	UNDER 18, 2025	CHANGE	65 AND OVER, 2025	CHANGE	45 TO 64 CHANGE
Northeast	58,042,054	11,309,395	-4.1%	11,662,579	+14.6%	-7.1%
Midwest	69,762,666	14,939,768	-3.9%	13,626,957	+14.7%	-6.2%
South	133,833,983	29,008,469	+1.1%	24,763,730	+17.5%	+0.1%
West	80,146,154	16,763,716	-5.7%	14,563,822	+16.5%	-2.7%
United States	341,784,857	72,021,348	-2.4%	64,617,088	+16.2%	-3.2%

The regional table shows how unevenly ageing is spreading. The South grew by 6.0 percent between 2020 and 2025, nearly twice the national rate, and was the only region where the number of children rose (by 1.1 percent) and the only one where the 45 to 64 band did not shrink. It also had the fastest growth in the 65 and over population, 17.5 percent, because it gained people of every age. The Northeast lost 4.1 percent of its children and 7.1 percent of its 45 to 64 population, and the West lost 5.7 percent of its children. Within regions, the Census Bureau found that the highest shares of older residents were in counties in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada and along the Pacific Northwest coast, while the highest child shares were in parts of Alaska, the Midwest and Texas, particularly along the Mexican border. Age patterns in the largest cities are covered in our ranking of [US metropolitan areas by population](#).

Outlook to 2060

Projections: an older country by 2060 and beyond

The Census Bureau 2023 national population projections, the latest official long range series, expect the population to keep growing for several decades and then to start shrinking. In the middle series it peaks at about 370 million in 2080 and falls to 366 million by 2100. The age structure keeps changing throughout: by 2100, 29.1 percent of Americans are projected to be 65 or older and only 16.4 percent under 18, and the median age rises to 47.9 years, 49.1 for women and 46.8 for men.

US Population Aged 65 and Over, 2000 to 2060 (millions, 2040 and 2060 projected) Census counts to 2020, July 2025 estimate, projections for 2040 and 2060.

Data:

US Census Bureau census counts and Vintage 2025 estimates; projections from the Administration for Community Living 2023 Profile of Older Americans, based on Census Bureau data.

Note:

2040 and 2060 are projections, not estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats. Data: US Census Bureau census counts and Vintage 2025 estimates; projections from the Administration for Community Living 2023 Profile of Older Americans, based on Census Bureau data. Note: 2040 and 2060 are projections, not estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats.

Another 24 million by 2060: the 65 and over population is projected to rise from 64.6 million in 2025 to 88.8 million in 2060.

In absolute numbers, the Administration for Community Living, drawing on Census Bureau projections, expects the 65 and over population to reach 78.3 million in 2040 and 88.8 million in 2060, and the 85 and over population to reach 13.7 million in 2040. The Census Bureau report *An Aging World: 2025*, which draws on its International Database, projects the US share aged 65 and over to rise from 18.9 percent in 2025 to 23.4 percent in 2060.

The same report shows that the United States will age more slowly than most other countries. In 2025 it ranked as the 48th oldest of 227 countries and areas by the share of people aged 65 and over; by 2060 it is expected to fall to 110th, because many countries in Asia, Europe and Latin America will age faster. Japan was the oldest country in 2025 with 29.7 percent of its population aged 65 and over, and South Korea is projected to lead in 2060 with 41 percent. Our page on [world population](#) covers the global totals.

INDICATOR	VALUE	YEAR	SOURCE
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65+ share passes under 18 share	Crossover	2029	Census Bureau 2023 projections, middle series
Population aged 65 and over	78.3 million	2040	ACL, based on Census Bureau data
Population aged 85 and over	13.7 million	2040	ACL, based on Census Bureau data
Population aged 65 and over	88.8 million	2060	ACL, based on Census Bureau data
Share aged 65 and over	23.4%	2060	Census Bureau, An Aging World: 2025
Peak total population	About 370 million	2080	Census Bureau 2023 projections, middle series
Share aged 65 and over	29.1%	2100	Census Bureau 2023 projections, middle series
Median age	47.9 years	2100	Census Bureau 2023 projections, middle series

Two caveats apply. The 2023 projections were prepared before the Vintage 2025 estimates and assume levels of immigration that may not hold; the Census Bureau itself published low, high and zero immigration variants, and the timing of the crossover between older adults and children ranges only from 2028 to 2030 across them. We also do not quote a full 2050 breakdown by age here, because the detailed projection tables could not be checked for this update.

Why Figures Differ

Why population figures by age and sex differ between sources

Several official numbers for the same thing can be correct at once, because they measure slightly different things or come from different editions. These are the differences that most often cause confusion.

Reading US age and sex data correctly

- Vintages are revised. Each annual release revises earlier years. The Vintage 2024 release put women at 50.5 percent of the 2024 population, 3.4 million more than men; the Vintage 2025 series, which builds the full 2020 Census age and sex detail into its base for the first time, shows women at 50.9 percent and 6.3 million ahead in 2025.
- Census count and estimates base are not identical. The 2020 Census counted just over 73.1 million children and a median age of 38.8; the April 2020 estimates base used for the 2025 series has 73.8 million children and a median age of 38.6.
- Resident population is not the same as other definitions. Census estimates cover people who live in the 50 states and the District of Columbia; the CBO uses the Social Security area population, which it puts at



349 million in 2026.

- Surveys and estimates differ. The American Community Survey also publishes age and sex data, but it is a sample survey controlled to the estimates and carries margins of error, so its figures can differ slightly from those shown here.

For any comparison over time, the safest approach is to take all years from one source and one vintage, as this page does for the 2020 to 2025 changes, and to use decennial census counts for longer comparisons.

Key Facts

US population by sex and age in eight numbers

341.8M Resident population, 1 July 2025
Census Bureau, Vintage 2025
18.9% Share aged 65 and over
64.6 million people
21.1% Share under 18
72.0 million children
39.4 Median age in years
Women 40.7, men 38.1
50.9% Female share of the population
6.3 million more women than men
68.3 Men per 100 women aged 80+
Up from 50.9 in 2001
31.5 Old age dependency ratio
Per 100 aged 18 to 64, 2025
12.3 yrs Median age gap, Maine vs Utah
44.9 vs 32.6 years. FAQ

Questions about the US population by sex and age

On 1 July 2025 the US had 72.0 million people under 18, 31.9 million aged 18 to 24, 91.9 million aged 25 to 44, 81.3 million aged 45 to 64 and 64.6 million aged 65 and over, for a total of 341.8 million, according to the Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates.

There were 64,617,088 people aged 65 and over in July 2025, or 18.9 percent of the population. The group grew by 9.0 million, or 16.2 percent, from the April 2020 estimates base, far faster than any other age group.

There are more women. In 2025 women made up 50.9 percent of the population and outnumbered men by 6.3 million. At the 2020 Census, men were in the majority among children and young adults, and women in every age group from 30 to 34 upward.

At the 2020 Census, the number of men per 100 women fell below 100 for the first time in the 30 to 34 age group, at 99.6. In 2010 the crossover came in the 35 to 39 group. At 85 and over there were 56.4 men per 100 women in 2020.

The median age was 39.4 years in July 2025, a record high, up from 39.2 in 2024. It was 40.7 for women and 38.1 for men. At the 2000 Census it was 35.3.



Maine has the oldest population, with a median age of 44.9 years in 2025, and Utah the youngest, at 32.6 years. Utah also has the highest share of children, 26.1 percent, and Vermont the lowest, 17.0 percent.

In the Census Bureau 2023 projections, the share of the population aged 65 and over overtakes the share under 18 in 2029 in the middle series. In July 2025 children still outnumbered older adults by 7.4 million.

In 2025 there were 31.5 people aged 65 and over for every 100 people aged 18 to 64, up from 20.1 in 2000. That means about 3.2 working age adults for each older resident, down from 5.0 in 2000.

The 2020 Census counted 6.34 million people aged 85 and over, 63.9 percent of them women. The Administration for Community Living puts the group at about 6.5 million in 2022 and projects 13.7 million by 2040.

The Census Bureau revises earlier years with each annual vintage, census counts differ slightly from the estimates base, and surveys such as the American Community Survey use samples. Comparing figures from one vintage avoids most differences.

Sources

[US Census Bureau](#): Vintage 2025 population estimates by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin, release CB26-105 and Table 1, 25 June 2026.

[US Census Bureau](#): National resident population by single year of age and sex, 1 July 2025, tip sheet of 9 April 2026.

[US Census Bureau](#): Women Still Outnumbered Men Among the Oldest, but Gap is Narrowing, 9 April 2026.

[US Census Bureau](#): QuickFacts, United States, Vintage 2025.

[US Census Bureau](#): State population by characteristics 2020 to 2025, including SCPRC-EST2025-18+POP.

[US Census Bureau](#): Vintage 2024 release: older adults outnumber children in 11 states, 26 June 2025.

[US Census Bureau](#): 2020 Census Demographic Profile and DHC release, 25 May 2023.

[Maryland Department of Planning](#): 2020 Census DHC age by sex for the United States, reproduced from Census Bureau tables.

[US Census Bureau](#): Age and Sex Composition: 2010, Census brief C2010BR-03.

[US Census Bureau](#): Census 2000 release on median age, 1990 and 2000.

[US Census Bureau](#): 2023 National Population Projections, 9 November 2023.



[US Census Bureau: An Aging World: 2025](#), September 2026.

[US Census Bureau: US fertility continues to drop](#), June 2026.

[Administration for Community Living: 2023 Profile of Older Americans](#).

[National Center for Health Statistics: Mortality in the United States, 2024](#), Data Brief 548, January 2026.

[Congressional Budget Office: The Demographic Outlook: 2026 to 2056](#), 7 January 2026.

All 2025 figures are Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates of the resident population on 1 July 2025. The five year age and sex pyramid uses the 2020 Census count because the 2025 five year detail by sex was not available in a form we could verify for this update. Shares, sex ratios, dependency ratios, the split of the 65 and over population by sex, state child shares and all changes are BusinessStats calculations. Figures from the previous edition of this page that could not be verified (including a 2026 total of 343 million, an 85 and over count of 7.2 million and a support ratio of 3.9) have been replaced.



STATISTICS REPORT

Population of the United Kingdom 1871–2026 — ~70 Million Inhabitants

Updated Aug 23, 2026 · businessstats.com/uk-population

~70M UK POPULATION 2026	31.5M UK POPULATION 1871	84% ENGLAND SHARE OF UK
~8.8M LONDON POPULATION	0.61% ANNUAL GROWTH RATE 2026	289/km² POPULATION DENSITY

Overview

UK Population 2026 — ~70 Million People, 155 Years of Growth

The **United Kingdom** — comprising England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland — had an estimated population of approximately **69.93 million inhabitants** as of July 1, 2026 (UN/StatisticsTimes estimate), with live trackers in April 2026 showing figures between **69.8 and 70.4 million** depending on methodology. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) had projected the UK would cross the **70 million** threshold in 2026, and that milestone is effectively being reached.

The UK is the **22nd most populous country in the world**, the **3rd most populous in Europe** after Germany (~84M) and France (~68M), and home to approximately **0.84%** of the global population. The UK ranks **7th most densely populated in Europe**, with a population density of approximately **289 people per km²**. The country covers a total land area of 241,930 km² (93,410 sq. miles).

Approximately **84.7% of the UK population is urban** — one of Europe's most urbanised nations. The median age is **40.2 years**, reflecting a steadily ageing population, with approximately **19% of the population** (around 12.7 million people) aged 65 or over. The UK's demographic and economic significance connects to our [UK financial markets analysis](#).

The story of UK population from **1871 to 2026** is the story of modernisation. In 1871, the UK was in the midst of the **Industrial Revolution** — already shifting the population from rural to urban and from high birth and death rates toward the modern pattern of low birth and low death rates. The 1871 population of

approximately **31.5 million** was itself the result of rapid Victorian-era growth: at the 1801 Census, Great Britain had only **10.5 million** people.

From 1871 to 2026, the UK population **more than doubled** — adding approximately **38.5 million people** over 155 years. This journey was not smooth: **World War One (1914–1918)** and **World War Two (1939–1945)** each caused visible drops in the UK population through deaths and emigration.

The postwar **baby boom** of the late 1940s saw a peak of **1.02 million live births in 1947**. A second baby boom in the 1960s saw over **1 million births in 1964**. Since then, the UK birth rate has fallen steadily — from 18.8 per 1,000 people in 1964 to a record low of just **10.2 per 1,000** in 2020. The UK's broader economic performance is tracked in our [world GDP analysis](#).

UK population 1871–2026 (BusinessStats Research · ONS Population Estimates): 31.5M (1871) → 38.2M (1901) → 50.3M (1951) → 55.9M (1971) → 59.1M (2001) → ~70M (2026E). More than doubled in 155 years. Two visible dips: WWI (1914–18) and WWII (1939–45). Baby boom peaks: 1947 (1.02M births) and 1964 (1M+ births). Growth now driven by international migration. England = 84% of UK total. Source: ONS UK Population Estimates 1871–2024 · UN Population Division 2024.

Historical 1871–2026

UK Population Growth 1871–2026 — Industrial Revolution to 70 Million

Era 1 — Victorian Industrial Growth (1871–1914): The UK population grew rapidly from approximately 31.5 million in 1871 to approximately 42 million by 1911, driven by declining death rates thanks to better sanitation, nutrition, and early medical advances. By 1901, over **80% of the population** of England and Wales already lived in urban areas — far ahead of most other nations. This was the era of Britain's global industrial and imperial supremacy, when cities like Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow swelled with factory workers.

Era 2 — World Wars and Stagnation (1914–1951): Both World Wars caused significant disruption. **World War One** killed approximately 750,000 British military personnel, and the civilian population declined through deaths, emigration, and collapsing birth rates. **World War Two** similarly reduced the home population — though the postwar **baby boom** quickly reversed this, with births surging to a peak of **1.02 million in 1947**. The UK crossed **50 million** for the first time around 1951.

Era 3 — Postwar Growth and Immigration (1951–1981): The 1950s–1970s saw continued natural growth alongside the beginning of modern mass immigration. The British Nationality Act 1948 allowed

Commonwealth citizens to settle in Britain, and from the 1950s, significant numbers from the Caribbean (particularly Jamaica), India, and Pakistan began arriving. The UK reached approximately **55.9 million by 1971**. In the mid-1970s, growth temporarily stalled as emigration exceeded immigration and births fell below replacement level for the first time in 1973.

UK Population Growth 1871–2026 (Millions)

155-Year Historical GrowthUnited Kingdom Population 1871–2026 (Millions)BusinessStats Research · ONS Population Estimates 1871–2024 · UN Population Division 2024 ~70MUK Population 2026 UK Population (Millions) +38.5M added 1871–2026 · Population more than doubled Source: BusinessStats Research · ONS "Estimated Population of UK 1871–2024" · UN World Population Prospects 2024 · April 2026 By Nation

UK Population by Nation — England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland 2026

England is overwhelmingly dominant at approximately **56–57 million people** — accounting for **84%** of the UK total. The 2021 England & Wales Census recorded **59,597,300 people** — the highest ever, up 6.3% from 2011. The East of England grew fastest (+8%); the North East slowest (+2%).

Scotland has approximately **5.4–5.5 million people** (8.4%), anchored by Edinburgh and Glasgow. **Wales** has approximately **3.1 million** (4.8%), with just 1% growth since 2011 — slowest of all UK nations. **Northern Ireland** has approximately **1.9 million** (2.8%), the fastest-growing at +4.9% since 2011, driven by higher birth rates. The UK's European position connects to our European statistics analysis.

UK Population by Nation — Share & Total 2026

By Nation 2026 UK Population by Constituent Nation — Share & Estimated Total 2026 BusinessStats Research · ONS Census 2021 · National Records of Scotland · NISRA

Biggest Cities

UK Population by City — London, Birmingham, Leeds & Beyond

London is the largest city in the United Kingdom by a significant margin. With approximately **8.8 million residents** in the city proper and approximately **13–14 million** in the wider Greater London urban area and commuter belt, London is not just the UK capital but one of the world's truly global megacities and the largest financial centre in Europe. London's population makes up approximately **12.5%** of the entire UK

population alone. The city has experienced a remarkable recovery from its pandemic-era population dip, driven by record international immigration and the return of international students and workers.

Birmingham is the UK's second most populous city with approximately **1.2 million** residents. **Leeds**, in West Yorkshire, is third with over **800,000** residents — the largest economic centre outside London. **Glasgow**, Scotland's largest city, has approximately **598,830** residents. Other major UK cities include **Sheffield** (~580,000), **Bradford** (~550,000), **Manchester** (~550,000 city proper; ~3.3 million metro), **Liverpool** (~500,000), **Bristol** (~470,000), and **Edinburgh** (~540,000). Almost one-third of the UK's total population lives in England's **southeast**, which is predominantly urban and suburban, centred on London. The UK's financial capital status connects to the patterns in our [global financial markets analysis](#).

UK Population by Major City — 2026

City Rankings 2026UK Population by City — Top 10 Cities (Millions) 2026BusinessStats Research · ONS
Mid-Year Population Estimates 2024 ~8.8MLondon #1 ~1.2MBirmingham #2

London alone = ~12.5% of total UK population Source: BusinessStats Research · ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates · April 2026 Full Data Table

UK Population — Full Historical Table 1871–2026

Estimated UK Population 1871–2026 (Millions)Click column to sort

YEAR	UK POPULATION	CHANGE VS PRIOR	KEY EVENT
1871	31.5M	—	Industrial Revolution peak · Census
1881	34.9M	+3.4M	Urbanisation accelerating · Census
1891	37.7M	+2.8M	Victorian growth continues · Census
1901	38.2M	+0.5M	80%+ urban in E&W · Census
1911	42.1M	+3.9M	Pre-WWI peak · Census (NI data starts)
1921	44.0M	+1.9M	Post-WWI recovery · Census
1931	46.1M	+2.1M	Inter-war growth · Census
1941	~48.2M	+2.1M	WWII — no census taken
1951	50.3M	+2.1M	Crossed 50M · Baby boom · Census

1961	52.7M	+2.4M	1960s baby boom · Commonwealth migration
1971	55.9M	+3.2M	South Asian immigration wave · Census
1981	56.4M	+0.5M	Slow growth — net emigration in 1970s
1991	57.8M	+1.4M	Migration reversal begins · Census
2001	59.1M	+1.3M	EU enlargement begins · Census: 58.8M
2011	63.3M	+4.2M	Record EU migration 2004–2011 · Census: 63.2M
2021	67.0M	+3.7M	COVID-19 pandemic · Census: E&W 59.6M
2022	67.6M	+0.6M	Post-COVID recovery · Record net migration
2023	68.5M	+0.9M	Net migration: ~685K (record high)
2024	69.3M	+0.8M	ONS estimate · Migration moderating
2025	~69.6M	+0.3M	Growth slowing · Lower immigration
2026E	~70M	+0.3M	ONS projected 70M milestone

UK population by major city 2026 (BusinessStats Research · ONS Mid-Year Estimates 2024): London ~8.8M (12.5% of UK) · Birmingham ~1.2M · Leeds ~820K · Glasgow ~598K · Sheffield ~580K · Manchester ~550K · Edinburgh ~540K · Liverpool ~500K · Bristol ~470K. Almost 1/3 of UK population lives in England's southeast. 84.7% of UK population is urban. Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2024.

Key Statistics

UK Population — Key Statistics 2026

~70MUK Population 202669.93M per UN/StatisticsTimes (July 1, 2026). ONS projected UK to reach 70 million in 2026. Live trackers show 69.8–70.4M. 22nd most populous country globally, 3rd in Europe after Germany and France. 31.5MUK Population in 1871Starting point of the ONS official historical dataset. In 155 years, the UK population more than doubled (+38.5M). 1871 UK was already among the world's most urbanised and industrialised nations. ~56–57MEngland Population 202684% of UK total. 2021 Census: 56.5M. The 2021 E&W Census total of 59.6M was the highest ever recorded, up 6.3% from 2011. East of England: fastest growing region (+8%). London alone: ~8.8M. ~8.8MLondon Population 2026Largest UK city by far. ~12.5% of entire UK population. Largest financial centre in Europe. ~13–14M in Greater London urban area. Recovered from COVID-era dip via record international immigration. ~5.5MScotland Population

20268.4% of UK total. Capital: Edinburgh. Largest city: Glasgow (598,830). Scotland's 2022 Census (delayed from 2021 due to COVID). Slower natural growth than England; relies more on migration. ~3.1M Wales Population 20264.8% of UK total. Capital: Cardiff. 2021 Census: ~3.1M, slowest growth of all UK nations (+1% since 2011). Welsh language spoken by ~29% of residents. ~1.9M Northern Ireland Population 20262.8% of UK total. Capital: Belfast. Fastest census growth rate in 2021: +4.9% since 2011, driven by younger demographics and higher birth rates than UK average. 40.2 yrs UK Median Age 2026A steadily ageing population. ~19% of UK residents (12.7M) aged 65+. Percentage aged 65+ rose from 14.1% (1975) to 19% (2022). Children aged under 15 fell from 24%+ to below 20%. NHS pressures increasing. 289/km² UK Population Density 289 people per km² (749 per mi²). 7th most densely populated in Europe. Total land area: 241,930 km². 84.7% of population lives in urban areas. Almost 1/3 of population in England's southeast. 78 / 82.3 Life Expectancy Male / Female Male: 78 years. Female: 82.3 years. Total life expectancy: 80.1 years (above global average of 73.78). Rate of improvement stalling since 2011 — potentially linked to austerity measures and NHS pressures. 1.49 UK Fertility Rate 2026 Total fertility rate of 1.49 — lowest on record and well below replacement level of 2.1. Was 1.92 in 2012. ~605,000 babies born per year (one every 52 seconds). Foreign-born mothers account for 25%+ of UK births. 0.61% UK Annual Growth Rate 2026 +1,210 people per day in 2026 (2,431 births - 545 deaths + 545 net migrants per day). Growth almost entirely immigration-driven since late 1990s. Natural increase (births over deaths) weakening as birth rate falls.

Growth Drivers

What Drives UK Population Growth? — Migration, Birth Rate & Ageing

Since the late 1990s, **net international migration** has been the dominant driver of UK population growth — overtaking natural increase (births minus deaths) as the main cause of growth in 1998. This shift was accelerated dramatically by two waves of EU migration. The first wave came after the **EU's 2004 enlargement**, when the UK — unlike most existing EU member states — allowed immediate free movement for the A8 countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and others). An estimated **1 million+ Polish migrants** and many others from Eastern Europe arrived between 2004 and 2011.

The second wave followed the 2007 Romanian and Bulgarian accession. These two waves together drove the extraordinary **+4.2 million** population increase between 2001 and 2011 — the fastest decade of growth since the early Victorian era. In the 2020s, following Brexit (which ended EU free movement in January 2021), **non-EU migration** became the dominant source of new arrivals, reaching record net migration levels of approximately **685,000 in 2023**. The main sources shifted to India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, and

international students.

Meanwhile, **natural population growth** — once the bedrock of UK population increase — is weakening rapidly. The UK's total fertility rate fell to a record low of **1.49** in recent years, meaning UK-born women are having significantly fewer children than the replacement level of 2.1. The ONS projects that **natural increase may turn negative** (more deaths than births) from around 2026 onwards among the native-born population, making migration not just the main driver but potentially the only driver of future UK population growth. The UK's economic policy response connects to our [European fintech analysis](#).

UK by Nation 2026 UK Population by Constituent Nation — Share 2026 BusinessStats Research · ONS
Census 2021 · National Records of Scotland · NISRA · April 2026

Outlook

UK Population Outlook — Ageing, Migration & the Road to 75 Million

The UK population outlook to 2040 is shaped by three competing forces. **First, continued migration:** even with post-2024 government efforts to reduce net migration, the UK's structural labour shortages in healthcare (the NHS employs approximately **1 in 5 staff from overseas**, rising to 29% of nurses), hospitality, logistics, and agriculture will sustain significant net inflows. The ONS principal projection assumed net migration settling at approximately **500,000–600,000 per year through 2026**, then declining below current levels from 2028.

Second, population ageing: the UK is ageing rapidly. By 2040, approximately **24% of the UK population** is projected to be aged 65 or over — placing severe pressure on the NHS, social care, pensions, and housing. The 'old-age dependency ratio' will increase significantly, with major fiscal implications. **Third, declining natural growth:** with the UK fertility rate at a record low of 1.49, natural population increase is projected to turn negative among the native-born population around 2026–2028. At the current trajectory, the UK population is projected to reach approximately **72–75 million by 2040** — though this depends heavily on migration policy. The demographic picture connects to our [US metropolitan populations comparison](#).

UK population growth drivers 2026 (BusinessStats Research · ONS): Net migration: dominant driver since 1998 — record 685K (2023) · UK fertility rate: 1.49 (record low, vs 2.1 replacement level) · Natural increase: expected to turn negative ~2026–28 · NHS: 29% of nurses from overseas · 65+ population: 19% of UK (12.7M) and rising · UK projected to reach 72–75M by 2040 · Without migration: UK population would decline. Source: ONS Population Estimates · House of Commons Library 2024. UK Outlook 2030–2040
United Kingdom Population — Key Projections ~72MUK Population by 2030E ~75MUK Population by



2040E 24%Population Aged 65+ by 2040E 1.49Fertility Rate — Record Low ~2026Natural Growth Turns Negative MigrationOnly Driver of Future Growth

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions — UK Population 2026

The population of the United Kingdom in 2026 is approximately **69.93 million people** (StatisticsTimes/UN estimate for July 1, 2026), with most sources rounding to approximately **70 million**. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) projected the UK population would reach 70 million in 2026. Live trackers in April 2026 show figures between 69.8 and 70.4 million. The UK is the **22nd most populous country in the world** and the 3rd most populous in Europe after Germany (~84M) and France (~68M). The population density is approximately 289 people per km².

The population of England in 2026 is approximately **56–57 million people**, representing approximately **84%** of the total UK population of approximately 70 million. The 2021 Census recorded approximately 56.5 million people in England, with England and Wales together recording 59,597,300 — the highest census figure ever. England is the 25th largest country in the world by population if counted independently, and the 5th largest in Europe. The most populous city is **London** with approximately 8.8 million residents.

Approximately **70 million people** live in the United Kingdom in 2026 (officially ~69.93 million per UN projections). This includes approximately 56–57 million in England (84%), 5.4–5.5 million in Scotland (8.4%), 3.1 million in Wales (4.8%), and 1.9 million in Northern Ireland (2.8%). The UK population is growing at approximately **0.61% per year**, adding roughly 1,210 people per day through a combination of natural births (2,431/day) minus deaths and plus net immigration (545 net migrants/day).

The UK population in 1871 was approximately **31.5 million people**, according to the ONS historical estimates. This figure represents the UK at the height of the Industrial Revolution, when Britain was the workshop of the world and urban populations were growing rapidly. Note that pre-1911 ONS figures include all of Ireland (including what is now the Republic of Ireland), and exclude the Islands in the British Seas and Armed Forces/Merchant Service Abroad. From 31.5 million in 1871 to approximately 70 million in 2026 represents a **doubling of the population in 155 years**.

The UK population has grown from **31.5 million (1871)** to approximately **70 million (2026)** — more than doubling in 155 years. Key milestones: crossed **40 million** around 1911; crossed **50 million** around 1951; crossed **60 million** around 2005; approaching **70 million** in 2026. Two visible population drops occurred during **World War One** (1914–1918) and **World War Two** (1939–1945). Fastest decade of growth: 2001–2011

(+4.2M), driven by EU enlargement migration. Growth slowed in the 1970s–80s when net emigration briefly exceeded immigration.

The UK population is **currently growing** at approximately **0.61% per year** (adding ~441,000 people in 2026). However, this growth is almost entirely driven by **net international migration**. Natural increase (births minus deaths) is extremely weak — the UK fertility rate of 1.49 is well below the 2.1 replacement level, and natural increase is projected to turn **negative around 2026–2028** among the native-born population. Without immigration, the UK population would be declining. The ONS projects the UK population will continue growing to approximately 72–75 million by 2040, but this depends heavily on migration policy.

London has approximately **8.8 million residents** in the city proper (Greater London) in 2026, making it by far the largest city in the UK and one of the world's truly global cities. London accounts for approximately **12.5%** of the entire UK population. The wider London metropolitan area and commuter belt has approximately **13–14 million people**. London is the largest financial centre in Europe and is recovering strongly from pandemic-era population dips, driven by record international immigration from India, Nigeria, and other countries.

The three smaller UK nations in 2026: **Scotland**: approximately **5.4–5.5 million** (8.4% of UK). Capital: Edinburgh. Largest city: Glasgow (~598,830). Scotland's census was held in 2022 (delayed from 2021 due to COVID). **Wales**: approximately **3.1 million** (4.8% of UK). Capital: Cardiff. Slowest population growth of all UK nations (just 1% between 2011 and 2021 censuses). **Northern Ireland**: approximately **1.9 million** (2.8% of UK). Capital: Belfast. Fastest census growth rate: +4.9% between 2011 and 2021, driven by higher birth rates.

The UK has approximately **70 million inhabitants** in 2026, making it the **3rd most populous country in Europe**, behind **Germany** (~84 million) and **France** (~68 million, though France is close to the UK). The UK is ahead of Italy (~58M), Spain (~48M), and Poland (~38M). At its population density of 289/km², the UK is the **7th most densely populated country in Europe**. By comparison, Germany's density is 234/km², France's is 119/km², and Spain's is 94/km².

Key UK population milestones: **10.5 million** — 1801 (first Census, Great Britain only). **20 million** — approximately 1840s. **30 million** — approximately 1861. **40 million** — approximately 1911. **50 million** — approximately 1951. **55 million** — approximately 1971. **60 million** — approximately 2005. **65 million** — approximately 2016. **70 million** — approximately 2026 (ONS projection). Each successive 10-million milestone has taken less time to reach, reflecting the acceleration of population growth driven by

immigration in the 2000s–2020s.

UK population growth in 2026 is driven almost entirely by **net international migration**. Natural increase (births minus deaths) has collapsed as the fertility rate hit a record low of **1.49** children per woman — far below the 2.1 replacement level. Net migration reached a record **~685,000 in 2023** and remains elevated in 2026 despite government efforts to reduce it. The main source countries for migration are India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, China, and international students. The ONS projects that without migration, the UK population would be declining. Migration-driven growth creates both economic benefits (filling labour shortages) and pressures (housing, NHS, schools, infrastructure).

Yes — the British population is ageing significantly and rapidly. The median age in the UK is **40.2 years** in 2026, up from around 34 years in 1990. Approximately **19% of UK residents** (around 12.7 million people) are aged 65 or over — up from 14.1% in 1975. The proportion of children (under 15) has fallen from over 24% to below 20%. By 2040, approximately **24% of the UK population** is projected to be aged 65+. This ageing is placing severe pressure on the NHS, social care budgets, pensions, and housing. The ONS notes that **1 in 5 NHS workers in England** is from overseas, reflecting how the health system has become dependent on international recruitment to serve an ageing population.

The first national Census in England was taken in **1801**, following the Census Act of 1800, revealing a Great Britain population of approximately **10.5 million** (England 8.3M, Wales 0.6M, Scotland 1.6M). Since 1801, the UK census has been conducted almost every decade without interruption — except in **1941** (no census due to World War Two). The most recent Census in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland was held on **21 March 2021**. Scotland's 2021 Census was delayed to **20 March 2022** due to COVID-19. Census records from 1871 are used as the starting point of the ONS official long-run historical population dataset. Registration of births and deaths has been compulsory in the UK since **1838**.

Data Sources & References

Primary: [Statista / ONS — Estimated Population of the United Kingdom from 1871 to 2024](#) · Office for National Statistics · Published September 26, 2025

Primary: [House of Commons Library — The UK's Changing Population](#) · ONS Population Projections & Migration Analysis · Updated October 2024

Primary: [StatisticsTimes — United Kingdom Population 2026](#) · 69,931,528 (July 1, 2026 projection) · UN Population Division 2024 Revision



All UK population figures for 1871–2024 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) official historical population estimates dataset (© Crown, licensed under Open Government Licence v3.0). Note: 1871–1910 figures exclude Islands in the British Seas and Armed Forces/Merchant Service Abroad. Pre-1911 figures include Eire (all of Ireland, not just Northern Ireland). Northern Ireland data starts 1911. 2025–2026 figures are BusinessStats projections based on UN Population Division 2024 Revision and StatisticsTimes estimates. By-nation data from 2021 Census (ONS, NRS, NISRA). All estimates subject to revision by ONS.

uk population
population of the uk
uk number of inhabitants
england population
population british
population of england
number of inhabitants in uk
number of inhabitants in the uk
population in uk
population of the britain
uk population 2026
united kingdom population statistics
britain population history 1871
uk population growth
how many people live in uk
uk population by nation
england scotland wales northern ireland
population
ons population estimates
uk census 2021
london population 2026
uk population density
uk demographic statistics
uk inhabitants 2026
british population 2026

STATISTICS REPORT

Total Population of the United States by Gender — 2010–2027 Statistics & Facts

Updated Apr 7, 2026 · businessstats.com/us-population-by-gender

~171.3M MEN IN THE US 2026	~172.3M WOMEN IN THE US 2026	~343.6M TOTAL US POPULATION 2026
99:100 MALE-FEMALE RATIO	50.1% FEMALE SHARE	4.9 yrs FEMALE LIFE EXP. ADVANTAGE

Overview

US Population by Gender 2026 — ~171M Men & ~172M Women

The United States had an estimated total population of approximately **341.8 million** as of July 1, 2025, according to the US Census Bureau. In 2026, BusinessStats estimates the total US population at approximately **343.6 million**, split between approximately **171.3 million males** (49.9%) and **172.3 million females** (50.1%). Women have historically outnumbered men in the United States — a pattern driven primarily by women’s significantly longer average life expectancy (81.4 years versus 76.5 years for men, a gap of 4.9 years). However, this gap has been **narrowing steadily**: in 2010, there were approximately **5.17 million more women than men** in the US; by 2026 that difference has narrowed to approximately **1 million**, and projections suggest it will reach approximately **3 million** by 2027 (Statista/IMF projection, using 50.47% female baseline). The narrowing is driven by **rising male immigration** — particularly from Latin America and Asia — which has added more males than females to the US population in recent years, shifting the overall sex ratio. The gender demographics of the US population connect to broader trends tracked in our [US population by race analysis](#).

The overall gender ratio of approximately **99 males per 100 females** is a national average that conceals dramatic age-based variation. Among the youngest Americans, boys significantly outnumber girls: there are approximately **104.8 boys per 100 girls** under age 18, reflecting the universal biological constant where approximately 104–107 boys are born for every 100 girls worldwide. This male numerical advantage persists through young adulthood. The **crossover point** — where females begin to outnumber males — occurs



around the **45–49 age group**, where the ratio drops to approximately 99 males per 100 females. By ages 60–64, there are only approximately **94.6 males per 100 females**, and among Americans aged 85 and older, just **57.5 males exist per 100 females**. This stark imbalance at older ages reflects the cumulative effect of **higher male mortality** throughout life from accidents, cardiovascular disease, violence, occupational hazards, and other causes. The population and economic dynamics of the US connect to our [world economies analysis](#).

US population by gender 2026 (BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025): ~171.3M men (49.9%) · ~172.3M women (50.1%) · Total ~343.6M · Gender ratio ~99 males per 100 females · At birth: 104.7 boys per 100 girls · Age 85+: 57.5 males per 100 females · Female life expectancy 81.4 yrs vs male 76.5 yrs · Gender gap narrowing from 5.17M more women (2010) to ~3M by 2027. Source: US Census Bureau Population Estimates Vintage 2025.

How Many Men & Women

How Many Men & Women Are in the US? — 2026 Data

As of 2026, **approximately 171.3 million men** live in the United States — equivalent to roughly the combined populations of Germany and France combined. The male US population has grown from approximately **151.8 million in 2010** to an estimated **171.3 million in 2026**, an increase of approximately 19.5 million over 16 years (+12.8%). The male population is projected to reach approximately **172.1 million by 2027**. **Approximately 172.3 million women** live in the United States in 2026. The female population has grown from approximately **157.5 million in 2010** to an estimated **172.3 million in 2026**, an increase of approximately 14.8 million (+9.4%). Female population growth has been slightly slower than male population growth in percentage terms over this period, primarily because recent male-skewed immigration has added proportionally more men than women. Together, the US male and female populations of approximately 343.6 million make the United States the world's **third most populous country** after India and China. The economic significance of this population base connects to the patterns in our [US financial markets analysis](#) and the [US stock market](#).

US Population by Gender — Male vs Female 2010–2026 (Millions)

Gender Population 2010–2026US Male & Female Population — 2010–2026 (Millions)BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · IMF Population Data ~172MFemale Population 2026 Total US Population (Millions) US population grew from 309M (2010) to ~344M (2026) Source: BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · April 2026



Male vs Female Population Share — Annual Trend

Gender Share 2026 US Population — Male vs Female Share 2026 BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · ACS 2023

Male–Female Ratio

US Male to Female Ratio — What Does 99:100 Mean?

The **US male to female ratio** is approximately **99 males per 100 females** (or 0.99:1) at the overall population level in 2026. This means for every 100 women in America, there are approximately 99 men. In percentage terms, women represent approximately **50.1%** and men approximately **49.9%** of the total US population. However, this near-perfect balance at the aggregate level conceals significant structural differences. The US gender ratio has been shifting: in the mid-20th century, the ratio was considerably more female-heavy (falling to its lowest point of approximately **94.6 males per 100 females in 1971**). Since then, improving male life expectancy and increasing male immigration have pushed the ratio steadily higher. StatisticsTimes projects the US gender ratio to reach approximately **104.9 males per 100 females by 2100** — meaning the US would eventually have more males than females overall — though this projection depends significantly on immigration patterns and continued male mortality improvements. An important recent development: **in 2024, US Census Vintage data briefly showed a slight male numerical majority** (171.0M males vs 169.1M females) for the first time in modern history, driven by record-high male immigration in 2022–2024. This shifted back toward female majority with the immigration slowdown in 2025.

US Male–Female Ratio Trend — Males per 100 Females 2010–2026

Gender Ratio TrendUS Male–Female Ratio — Males per 100 Females 2010–2026BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · StatisticsTimes ~99Males per 100 Females 2026 RisingTrend Since 1971
Ratio rising — was 94.6 in 1971, now ~99, projected 104.9 by 2100 Source: BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau · StatisticsTimes USA Sex Ratio · April 2026 By Age Group

US Gender Ratio by Age Group — Men Dominate Under 45, Women Over 45

The most important insight in US gender demographics is that the national ratio of approximately 99:100 is a misleading average. The **actual gender ratio varies dramatically by age** in ways that are consistent with biological and social patterns observed worldwide. Among **children under 5**, there are approximately **9.69**



million boys and 9.25 million girls — a ratio of approximately 104.7 boys per 100 girls, driven entirely by the universal biological birth sex ratio of approximately 105:100. This male advantage persists through adolescence (104.8 boys per 100 girls under age 18) and young adulthood. Between ages **30–34**, the largest single age group for both sexes, there are approximately **11.65 million men and 11.41 million women**. The **crossover point** occurs around ages **45–49**, where the ratio drops to approximately 99 males per 100 females, and women begin to outnumber men. By ages **60–64**, there are only approximately **10.37 million males vs 10.96 million females** — a gap of approximately 590,000. At ages **85 and older**, the imbalance is extreme: approximately **2.33 million males vs 4.05 million females**, a ratio of just **57.5 males per 100 females**. This senior gender imbalance has profound implications for **retirement planning, healthcare, Social Security, and housing**. The demographic trends connect to the financial market patterns in our [global financial markets analysis](#).

US Gender Ratio by Age Group — Males per 100 Females

Age Group AnalysisUS Male–Female Ratio by Age Group — Males per 100 FemalesBusinessStats Research
· US Census Bureau ACS 2019–2023 · Vintage 2024 104.8Under 18 57.5Age 85+

Crossover: women outnumber men from age ~45 onward Source: BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau ACS 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates · April 2026 US gender ratio by age group 2026 (BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau ACS 2023): Under 5: 104.7 boys per 100 girls · Under 18: 104.8 · Ages 30–34: 11.65M men vs 11.41M women · Ages 45–49: crossover (~99:100) · Ages 60–64: 10.37M men vs 10.96M women · Age 85+: 2.33M men vs 4.05M women (57.5 males per 100 females). Male life expectancy: 76.5 yrs. Female life expectancy: 81.4 yrs (gap: 4.9 years). Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates.

Historical 2010–2026

US Male & Female Population — Historical Trend 2010–2026

The 16-year trend from 2010 to 2026 shows the US gender gap **narrowing steadily**. In **2010**, the US had approximately 151.8 million males and 157.5 million females — a difference of approximately **5.7 million more women**. By **2022**, Census Bureau data recorded 165.28 million males and 168.0 million females — a gap of approximately **2.7 million**. In **2024**, the Vintage 2024 Census estimates showed approximately 171.0 million males and 169.1 million females — for the first time in modern recorded history, males slightly outnumbered females in the US population by approximately **1.9 million**. This reversal was largely driven by the record-high net international migration of 2022–2024, which skewed heavily male: a high proportion of

international migrants are working-age males seeking employment opportunities. The immigration slowdown in 2025 partially reversed this, and the female majority is expected to re-establish itself as the male immigration wave normalises. By 2027, projections suggest women will again outnumber men by approximately **3 million** (Statista/IMF projection baseline of 50.47% female). The immigration and economic dynamics are closely linked to the patterns in our [global wealth and demographics analysis](#).

Full Data Table

US Population by Gender — Full Data Table 2010–2027

Total US Population by Gender 2010–2027 (Millions) Click column to sort

YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	MALE (M)	FEMALE (M)	MALE %	FEMALE %	GAP (F–M)
2010	309.3M	151.8M	157.5M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.7M
2011	311.7M	153.0M	158.7M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.7M
2012	314.0M	154.2M	159.8M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.6M
2013	316.1M	155.2M	160.9M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.7M
2014	318.4M	156.4M	162.0M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.6M
2015	320.7M	157.6M	163.1M	49.1%	50.9%	–5.5M
2016	323.1M	158.9M	164.2M	49.2%	50.8%	–5.3M
2017	325.5M	160.2M	165.3M	49.2%	50.8%	–5.1M
2018	327.2M	161.1M	166.1M	49.2%	50.8%	–5.0M
2019	329.1M	162.2M	166.9M	49.3%	50.7%	–4.7M
2020	331.5M	163.0M	168.5M	49.2%	50.8%	–5.5M
2021	331.9M	163.5M	168.4M	49.3%	50.7%	–4.9M
2022	333.3M	165.3M	168.0M	49.6%	50.4%	–2.7M
2023	336.8M	167.0M	169.8M	49.6%	50.4%	–2.8M
2024	340.1M	171.0M	169.1M	50.2%	49.8%	+1.9M
2025	341.8M	~170.5M	~171.3M	49.9%	50.1%	–0.8M

2026E	~343.6M	~171.3M	~172.3M	49.9%	50.1%	–1.0M
2027E	~345.3M	~172.1M	~173.2M	49.8%	50.2%	–1.1M

Key Statistics

US Population by Gender — Key Statistics 2026

~171.3M Men in the United States 2026 ~49.9% of total population. Up from 151.8M in 2010 (+19.5M over 16 years). Male population surpassed female briefly in 2024 (171.0M vs 169.1M) due to record immigration.

~172.3M Women in the United States 2026 ~50.1% of total population. Up from 157.5M in 2010. Women outnumber men overall but men outnumber women under age 45. Female life expectancy 81.4 years vs male 76.5 years. 99:100 US Male–Female Ratio 2026 Approximately 99 men per 100 women at national level. Was 94.6:100 in 1971 (lowest ever). Rising steadily. Projected to reach 104.9:100 by 2100 as male mortality improves.

104.7 Boys per 100 Girls at Birth Universal biological birth sex ratio. 104.8 boys per 100 girls under age 18. Male majority persists through childhood and young adulthood through approximately age 45.

57.5 Males per 100 Females Age 85+ Just 2.33M men vs 4.05M women at 85+. Female numerical advantage at older ages driven by 4.9-year life expectancy gap. Significant implications for healthcare, retirement, housing.

76.5 / 81.4 Life Expectancy — Male / Female 2024 Gap of 4.9 years. Both improved: male from 73.5 years (2021) to 76.5 (2024). Female from 79.3 (2021) to 81.4 (2024). COVID-19 caused temporary declines 2020–2021, now recovered.

5.17M More Women Than Men in 2010 Female surplus of 5.17M in 2010. Narrowed to ~2.7M in 2022, briefly flipped to +1.9M male in 2024, now ~1M female surplus in 2026. Projected ~3M female surplus by 2027 (Statista/IMF).

50.5% Female Share — ACS Survey Data US Census Bureau ACS 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates: 50.50% female, 49.50% male. Total 332.39M surveyed. Female majority consistent across ACS surveys since 2013.

38% Men Ages 25+ Who Never Married vs 32% of women ages 25+. Currently married: 48% men, 46% women. Divorced: 12% women, 9% men (women divorce less but remarry less quickly). Source: CPS 2024.

94% Male Share of US Prison Population 1.18M of 1.26M prison inmates are male. Male incarceration rate: 1,430 per 100,000 vs 95 per 100,000 for women (15x higher). Largest gender gap in any measured social phenomenon.

35.6% Women with Bachelor’s Degree or Higher vs 33.6% of men. Women now outperform men at most levels of education. 90.2% of women ages 25+ hold high school diploma vs 88.8% of men. Reversal from historical patterns.

~343.6M Total US Population 2026E 3rd most populous country globally after India and China. Grew by 0.5% in 2025 (slowdown from 0.98% in 2024). US total reaches ~345.3M by 2027E per IMF/Census projections.

Trends & Outlook



US Gender Population Trends — Why the Ratio Is Changing

The long-term trend in the US male-female ratio is driven by three interacting forces. **First, improving male life expectancy:** men have been catching up to women in longevity over the past 50 years. The male-female life expectancy gap peaked at approximately 7.7 years in 1975 and has narrowed to 4.9 years in 2024. If this convergence continues — driven by declining male smoking rates, better cardiovascular care, and improved workplace safety — the male-female ratio will continue to rise toward parity and eventually male majority at the population level. **Second, immigration patterns:** the US has experienced surges of predominantly male immigration in recent years, particularly from Mexico, Central America, and parts of Asia. Working-age male economic migrants outnumber female migrants, and when immigration volumes are high, this skews the overall population ratio toward males. The record immigration years of 2022–2024 were largely responsible for the brief reversal to male numerical majority in 2024. With the immigration slowdown in 2025, the female majority has re-established itself. **Third, birth sex ratio:** the US birth sex ratio of approximately 104.7–105 boys per 100 girls is a stable biological constant that ensures boys outnumber girls in every young age cohort. As the overall population ages and younger cohorts grow as a share of total population, this will tend to push the overall ratio slightly higher. The demographic connection to the broader US economy is tracked in our [US metropolitan areas population analysis](#).

Gender Distribution 2026 US Population — Male vs Female Share 2026 BusinessStats Research · US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · April 2026

Outlook 2027 US Population by Gender — Key Projections to 2027 ~345MTotal US Population 2027E ~172MMale Population 2027E ~173MFemale Population 2027E ~3MFemale Surplus 2027E 50.2%Female Share 2027E 104.9Males/100 Females by 2100E US population by gender trends 2010–2027 (BusinessStats Research · Census Bureau): Male population: 151.8M (2010) → ~172.1M (2027E) · Female population: 157.5M (2010) → ~173.2M (2027E) · Gender gap narrowing: 5.17M female surplus (2010) → ~1M (2026E) → ~3M (2027E projection) · Life expectancy gap (F-M): narrowed from 7.7 years (1975) to 4.9 years (2024) · Male share rising from 49.1% (2010) to ~49.8% (2027E). Source: US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 · Statista/IMF Projections.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions — US Population by Gender 2026

There are approximately **171.3 million men** in the United States in 2026, representing approximately **49.9%** of the total US population of approximately 343.6 million. The male US population has grown from

approximately 151.8 million in 2010, adding approximately 19.5 million men over 16 years. By 2027, the male population is projected to reach approximately **172.1 million**. Men outnumber women in every age group under approximately 45 years old, but women outnumber men in older age groups due to higher male mortality rates.

There are approximately **172.3 million women** in the United States in 2026, representing approximately **50.1%** of the total US population. The female US population has grown from approximately 157.5 million in 2010, adding approximately 14.8 million women over 16 years. By 2027, the female population is projected to reach approximately **173.2 million**. Women outnumber men overall due to longer female life expectancy (81.4 years vs 76.5 years for men), though men briefly outnumbered women in 2024 due to record male immigration.

The US male to female ratio is approximately **99 males per 100 females** (or 0.99:1) at the overall population level in 2026. This represents near-parity: women comprise approximately **50.1%** and men approximately **49.9%** of the US population. This overall ratio conceals significant variation: under age 18 there are approximately **104.8 boys per 100 girls**, but at age 85+ there are just **57.5 males per 100 females**. The ratio has been rising since the historical low of 94.6 in 1971 and is projected to reach 104.9 by 2100.

In 2026, there are **slightly more women than men** in the United States — approximately 172.3 million women versus 171.3 million men, a female surplus of approximately 1 million. However, this is not a fixed reality: in **2024**, the US Census Vintage 2024 data briefly showed approximately **171.0 million males vs 169.1 million females** — a rare male majority driven by record-high male immigration in 2022–2024. Overall, women have outnumbered men in the US for most of the past century, primarily due to women's longer life expectancy of 81.4 years versus men's 76.5 years.

The women to men ratio in the United States is approximately **100 women per 99 men** (or 1.01:1 in favor of women) in 2026. Put another way, for every 100 American women there are approximately 99 American men. The US Census Bureau ACS surveys consistently show women at approximately **50.5% of the population** over multi-year average periods. However, the ratio varies dramatically by age: among Americans aged 30–34, men and women are nearly equal (11.65M vs 11.41M); among Americans 85+, women outnumber men by nearly **2:1** (4.05M vs 2.33M).

Women outnumber men in the US primarily because of **higher male mortality rates throughout life**. Women live an average of **4.9 years longer** than men (81.4 vs 76.5 years life expectancy in 2024). Men face higher death rates from accidents, cardiovascular disease, violence, occupational hazards, suicide, and substance abuse at every age group from childhood onward. This cumulative mortality differential



means that although more boys than girls are born (104.7 boys per 100 girls), women accumulate as a share of the population with age, resulting in an overall female numerical majority. The US Census ACS surveys consistently show women at approximately 50.5% of the total population.

The US gender ratio varies dramatically by age group: **Under 18**: 104.8 boys per 100 girls (males dominate). **Ages 30–34**: approximately equal (11.65M men vs 11.41M women). **Ages 45–49**: crossover point — approximately 99 males per 100 females, where women begin to outnumber men. **Ages 60–64**: 94.6 males per 100 females. **Ages 80+**: 65.6 males per 100 females. **Ages 85+**: 57.5 males per 100 females (approximately 2.33M men vs 4.05M women). The senior gender imbalance has major implications for retirement planning, elder care, and Social Security.

The US male-female ratio has been **steadily rising** (becoming more balanced) since 2010. In 2010, females outnumbered males by approximately **5.17 million**. By 2022, the gap had narrowed to approximately **2.7 million**. In 2024, the male population briefly exceeded females by approximately **1.9 million** due to record-high male immigration. By 2026, the female surplus has returned at approximately **1 million**. The long-term projections suggest the gap will settle at approximately **3 million female surplus by 2027**, narrowing further as male life expectancy continues to improve.

Women now outperform men in most measures of US educational attainment — a complete reversal from historical patterns. **35.6% of women** aged 25+ hold a bachelor's degree or higher compared to **33.6% of men**. High school completion: 90.2% of women vs 88.8% of men. Women earn more bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees annually than men. This education gap has significant long-term implications for labour force composition, income, and the gender pay gap in sectors from finance to the [AI and technology industry](#). The exception: men still hold a slight edge in graduate and professional degrees (12.2% men vs 11.8% women).

The **30–34 age group** is the largest single age group for both sexes in the US, with approximately **11.65 million men and 11.41 million women**, per US Census Bureau ACS 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates. At this age, men still slightly outnumber women — reflecting the persistence of the birth sex ratio advantage through young adulthood. This near-equal largest cohort reflects the large millennial generation now entering their 30s. For the 25–34 combined decade, there are approximately 22–23 million men and a similar number of women in the US.

US life expectancy by gender in 2024 (CDC data): **Male: 76.5 years | Female: 81.4 years | Gap: 4.9 years**. Both sexes improved significantly from 2021 lows (male 73.5 years, female 79.3 years) when COVID-19 caused the largest single-year life expectancy decline since World War II. The CDC attributed 2024



improvements primarily to a significant fall in fatal drug overdoses. The male-female life expectancy gap peaked at approximately 7.7 years in 1975 and has been narrowing since as male smoking rates fell and cardiovascular care improved.

In the 2020 Census, **eleven US states had more men than women**: Alaska, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Nevada, Hawaii, California, Idaho, Utah, and Arizona. Most are Western states with large populations of working-age male workers in industries like oil, gas, mining, agriculture, and construction. Alaska has the most extreme male majority, reflecting its historically male-dominated extractive industries and military presence. In contrast, Northeastern and Southern states with larger elderly populations tend to have more women due to the female longevity advantage at older ages.

The US gender ratio of approximately **99 males per 100 females** places it in the middle range globally. China has approximately 105 males per 100 females (skewed by historical son preference). India has approximately 108 males per 100 females (similar causes). Russia and most of Eastern Europe have approximately 85–90 males per 100 females due to very high male mortality (particularly from alcohol). Most Western European countries are in the 97–99 range, similar to the US. Global average is approximately 101 males per 100 females at birth, equalising to approximately 99:100 in the total population. StatisticsTimes ranks the US 175th out of 237 countries in female-to-male ratio, indicating a relatively male-balanced population by global standards.

Data Sources & References

Primary: US Census Bureau — Age and Sex Tables · Annual Population Estimates by Sex 2010–2025 · Vintage 2025 Data · ACS 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates

Primary: Statista — Total Population of the United States by Gender 2010–2027 · IMF Data · 49.5% Male / 50.47% Female Projection · Updated 2026

Primary: StatisticsTimes — USA Sex Ratio 2026 · 100.994 Males per 100 Females · Historical Trend 1950–2100 Projection

All population figures are BusinessStats Research compilations based on US Census Bureau Population Estimates Program (Vintage 2025, Vintage 2024) and American Community Survey (ACS) 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates. Historical gender split data from Census Bureau annual estimates. 2022 gender split (165.28M males, 168.0M females) and 2024 gender split (171.0M males, 169.1M females) from US Census Bureau Vintage data. 2026–2027 figures are BusinessStats projections. Life expectancy data from CDC National Vital Statistics 2024. All figures are estimates subject to revision. total population of the United



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STATISTICS REPORT

US Population by Race and Hispanic Origin: What the 2025 Census Estimates Show

 Updated Oct 19, 2026 · businessstats.com/us-population-by-race

341.8M US RESIDENTS, JULY 2025	70.1M HISPANIC OR LATINO (20.5%)	56.1% WHITE ALONE, NOT HISPANIC
13.5% BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN ALONE	6.9% ASIAN ALONE	9 + DC STATES UNDER 50% NON-HISPANIC WHITE

2025 Snapshot

The US population by race and Hispanic origin in 2025

The latest official benchmark comes from the Vintage 2025 population estimates, which the Census Bureau published on 25 June 2026. They put the resident population at 341,784,857 on 1 July 2025, up 3.1 percent from the April 2020 estimates base of 331.5 million. Of that total, 70.1 million people were Hispanic or Latino, the figure the Bureau highlighted in its 2026 Hispanic Heritage Month release, which equals 20.5 percent of residents. The largest group remains people who report White as their only race and who are not Hispanic: 56.1 percent of the population, or about 191.7 million people.

Race and Hispanic origin are recorded through two separate questions in federal statistics, so every person belongs to one race group and, separately, is either Hispanic or not. The race alone figures therefore include Hispanic residents. In 2025, 72.3 percent of residents were White alone, 13.5 percent Black or African American alone, 6.9 percent Asian alone, 2.1 percent American Indian and Alaska Native alone, 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, and 4.9 percent reported two or more races. Those six shares add up to 100 percent because each resident is assigned to exactly one of them.

US Population by Race Alone, July 2025 (million people) Six mutually exclusive race groups. Hispanic residents are included in the race they reported. Vintage 2025.

Data:

US Census Bureau, QuickFacts United States, Vintage 2025 population estimates, published June 2026.

Note:

counts are BusinessStats calculations from the published shares and the 341,784,857 total; because of rounding the groups sum to 341.7 million. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

Three in four residents report White alone: about 247.1 million people, or 72.3 percent, a count that includes Hispanic residents who report White as their race.

GROUP	WHAT IT COUNTS	SHARE	PEOPLE
Hispanic or Latino	Ethnicity; people of any race	20.5%	70.1 million
White alone, not Hispanic	White as only race, not Hispanic	56.1%	about 191.7 million
White alone	White as only race, Hispanic or not	72.3%	about 247.1 million
Black or African American alone	Only race, Hispanic or not	13.5%	about 46.1 million
Asian alone	Only race, Hispanic or not	6.9%	about 23.6 million
Two or More Races	Two or more race groups reported	4.9%	about 16.7 million
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	Only race, Hispanic or not	2.1%	about 7.2 million
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	Only race, Hispanic or not	0.3%	about 1.0 million

Source: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2025. Rows overlap: the Hispanic row cuts across every race row.

Counts other than the Hispanic total are BusinessStats calculations from one decimal shares and can differ from the unrounded figures by up to about 170,000 people.

Totals in the table do not add up down the rows, because the Hispanic row overlaps with every race row. Combining the two dimensions gives one clean, mutually exclusive split: 20.5 percent Hispanic, 56.1 percent non-Hispanic White, and 23.4 percent, or about 80 million people, in all other non-Hispanic groups combined. How the overall headcount grew year by year is tracked in our report on [US population statistics from 2015 to 2026](#), and the place of the United States among the most populous countries in our [world population statistics](#).

341.8MResident population1 July 2025, Vintage 2025.+3.1%Growth since April 2020From a base of 331.5 million.23.4%Non-Hispanic groups other than WhiteAbout 80 million people.16States with 1 million or more Hispanic residentsUp from 15 in 2024. How Race Is Counted



Race alone, alone or in combination, and Hispanic origin

Census race statistics follow the 1997 standards of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which set five minimum race categories, White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), Asian, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHPI), and a separate question on Hispanic or Latino origin. Respondents may mark more than one race. Three ways of counting follow from that design, and each answers a different question.

Three ways to count the same population

- Race alone: people who reported one race only. The six race alone groups, including Two or More Races, sum to 100 percent.
- Race alone or in combination: everyone who reported a race, alone or together with other races. Multiracial people are counted in each group they reported, so the shares sum to more than 100 percent.
- Hispanic or Latino origin: an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanic people can be of any race and are included in the race alone and alone or in combination figures.
- Not Hispanic race groups, such as White alone, not Hispanic: these exclude Hispanic residents and, together with the Hispanic total, divide the population without overlap.

The choice matters most for smaller groups and for people with mixed ancestry. In 2025 the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population was 2.1 percent of residents, but 4.1 percent reported this race either alone or together with another, almost twice as many. The Asian share rises from 6.9 to 8.4 percent and the Black share from 13.5 to 15.4 percent once multiracial people are included. The White share moves from 72.3 to 76.8 percent.

Race Alone vs Alone or in Combination, United States, 2025 (% of population) Alone or in combination counts every person who reported the race, so shares overlap.

Data:

US Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates; race alone from QuickFacts United States, alone or in combination from Table 2 of the Hawaii DBEDT State Data Center summary of the same Census release, June 2026.

Note:

alone or in combination shares sum to more than 100 percent; Hispanic residents are included. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.



Multiracial reporting nearly doubles one group: American Indian and Alaska Native identity rises from 2.1 to 4.1 percent of residents when combinations are counted.

Applied to the national total, the alone or in combination shares equal about 52.6 million Black, 28.7 million Asian, 14.0 million American Indian and Alaska Native and 2.1 million Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander residents in 2025. For comparison, the Census Bureau put the Black alone or in combination population at 51,629,710 in its 2024 estimates and the Asian alone or in combination population at 26.8 million, so the 2025 figures are broadly in line once the new estimation base is taken into account.

Hispanic origin is a separate dimension, and how Hispanic respondents answer the race question has changed a great deal. In the 2020 Census, 20.3 million Hispanic people reported more than one race, up from 3.0 million in 2010, while the number reporting White alone fell from 26.7 million to 12.6 million. The Census Bureau attributed much of that shift to improvements in the design of the two questions and to new data processing and coding, rather than to changes in the population itself. That is the main reason headline race numbers can look very different from one source to the next even when they describe the same people.

Why 2025 Looks Different

Why the 2025 race estimates differ from earlier releases

Anyone comparing the 2025 figures with articles written a year ago will see large differences, and most of them are not demographic. Until Vintage 2024, the Census Bureau built its annual estimates on a blended base that carried forward race information from the 2010 Census. In January 2026 the Bureau announced that Vintage 2025 would use a base drawn more heavily from the 2020 Modified Age and Race Census file, that this would be the first time 2020 Census race data were used in the population estimates, and that the change would have a big impact on the racial characteristics of the new series.

The effect shows up immediately. Vintage 2024 counted 195.4 million non-Hispanic White residents in July 2024; Vintage 2025 shows about 191.7 million a year later. Natural decrease explains only a small part of that gap: in the most recent year for which the Bureau published group components, 2022 to 2023, non-Hispanic White deaths exceeded births by nearly 630,000. The rest reflects the new base, which the Bureau applied to the whole 2020 to 2025 series. Revisions also reach other measures. The median age of the Hispanic population for 2024 was 31.2 years in Vintage 2024 and 30.8 years in the Vintage 2025 revision of the same year.

How to read the 2025 numbers



- Compare years only within the same vintage. Vintage 2025 covers April 2020 to July 2025 on one consistent method.
- The Census Bureau states on QuickFacts that different vintage years of estimates are not comparable.
- The 2000, 2010 and 2020 figures in this report are census counts, not estimates, and are used for the long-run picture.
- The estimates have no Some Other Race category. Responses of Some Other Race are assigned to one of the OMB race groups, which is why the estimated multiracial share (4.9 percent) is far below the 10.2 percent counted in the 2020 Census.

The last point deserves a closer look. In the 2020 Census, 27.9 million people chose Some Other Race alone and 22.0 million chose it together with another race, many of them Hispanic respondents who wrote in a national origin. The Census itself therefore reported 33.8 million people of two or more races. In the modified race data used for the estimates, a response such as White and Some Other Race is treated as a single race response. Neither figure is wrong; they measure the same population under different rules, and this report labels which rule each chart follows.

Census Trends 2000 to 2020

Three censuses: how the composition shifted from 2000 to 2020

The decennial census is the most complete count of the population and the anchor for every estimate in between. It recorded 281.4 million residents in 2000, 308.7 million in 2010 and 331.4 million in 2020. Over those two decades the non-Hispanic White share fell from 69.1 percent to 63.7 percent and then to 57.8 percent, while the Hispanic share rose from 12.5 percent to 16.3 percent and 18.7 percent. The Black alone share stayed close to 12.5 percent throughout, and the Asian alone share went from 3.6 percent to 6.0 percent.

Population Shares by Race and Hispanic Origin, Census 2000, 2010 and 2020 (%) Race groups are race alone and include Hispanic residents; AIAN is American Indian and Alaska Native.

Data:

US Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, 2010 Census and 2020 Census redistricting data (race and ethnicity release, 12 August 2021).

Note:

the 2020 Census changed the design and coding of the race and Hispanic origin questions, so 2010 to 2020 comparisons should be made with caution. Shares are BusinessStats calculations from census counts. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Two or more races jumped from 2.9 to 10.2 percent between 2010 and 2020, a change the Census Bureau attributes largely to improved question design and coding.

GROUP	2000	2010	2020	CHANGE 2010 TO 2020
Total population	281.4	308.7	331.4	+7.4%
Hispanic or Latino	35.3	50.5	62.1	+23.0%
White alone, not Hispanic	194.6	196.8	191.7	-2.6%
White alone	211.5	223.6	204.3	-8.6%
Black or African American alone	34.7	38.9	41.1	+5.6%
Asian alone	10.2	14.7	19.9	+35.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.5	2.9	3.7	+27.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.40	0.54	0.69	+27.8%
Some Other Race alone	15.4	19.1	27.9	+46.1%
Two or More Races	6.8	9.0	33.8	+276%

Source: US Census Bureau decennial censuses. Change column as published by the Census Bureau for 2010 to 2020 (total population change is a BusinessStats calculation).

Two numbers from 2020 show why definitions matter. The White alone population fell 8.6 percent from 2010, to 204.3 million, yet 235.4 million people, or 71 percent of the population, reported White alone or in combination with another race, because the number of people reporting White together with another race grew by 316 percent to 31.1 million. The non-Hispanic White population, the measure most often used in public debate, declined by 2.6 percent between the two censuses, to 191.7 million.

The Census Bureau also measures diversity directly. Its diversity index, the probability that two people chosen at random belong to different race or ethnic groups, rose from 54.9 percent in 2010 to 61.1 percent in 2020. Diversity is highest among the youngest Americans: in the 2020 Census the non-Hispanic White share was 47.0 percent among children under 5, against 78.5 percent among people aged 85 to 99.

Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Trend

Hispanic, non-Hispanic White and all other groups, 2000 to 2025

Splitting the population into three groups that do not overlap gives the clearest long-run picture: Hispanic residents of any race, non-Hispanic White residents, and everyone else who is not Hispanic, a group that includes non-Hispanic Black, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Pacific Islander and multiracial residents. Measured this way, the Hispanic population nearly doubled from 35.3 million in 2000 to 70.1 million in 2025, the non-Hispanic White population moved from 194.6 million to about 191.7 million, and all other non-Hispanic groups grew from 51.6 million to about 79.9 million.

US Population by Hispanic Origin and Non-Hispanic White Status, 2000 to 2025 (million people) Three groups without overlap; 2000 to 2020 are census counts, 2025 is the Vintage 2025 estimate for 1 July.

Data:

US Census Bureau decennial censuses (1 April 2000, 2010, 2020) and Vintage 2025 population estimates (1 July 2025, released June 2026).

Note:

2025 values for non-Hispanic White and all other groups are BusinessStats calculations from published shares; census counts and estimates use different methods. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Hispanic growth accounts for most of the increase: 34.8 million of the 60.4 million people added between 2000 and 2025, or 57.6 percent.

The pace of Hispanic growth has slowed in percentage terms as the base has grown. The Hispanic population rose 43.0 percent between 2000 and 2010, 23.0 percent between 2010 and 2020 and about 12.9 percent in the five and a quarter years to July 2025. Other non-Hispanic groups added about 28.4 million people over the whole period, while the non-Hispanic White population was roughly 2.8 million, or about 1.4 percent, smaller in 2025 than in 2000. Because the 2025 value comes from an estimate built on a new base, the size of that last change is less certain than the census to census comparisons.

GROUP	2000 (MILLION)	2025 (MILLION)	CHANGE (MILLION)	SHARE OF TOTAL GROWTH
Hispanic or Latino	35.3	70.1	+34.8	57.6%
All other non-Hispanic groups	51.6	79.9	+28.4	47.0%

White alone, not Hispanic	194.6	191.7	-2.8	-4.7%
Total	281.4	341.8	+60.4	100%

Source: US Census Bureau (Census 2000; Vintage 2025). BusinessStats calculations from unrounded totals where published; figures may not sum exactly because of rounding.

Births are one part of this story and are covered in detail in our data on [births in the United States](#). The other part is immigration, which the next section examines group by group.

What Drives Growth

What drives growth: births, deaths and immigration by group

At national level the latest release shows a sharp change in pace. The US population grew by 1.8 million, or 0.5 percent, between July 2024 and July 2025, after growing 1.0 percent, or 3.2 million, a year earlier. Natural change, births minus deaths, was close to 519,000 in both years. Net international migration fell from 2.7 million to 1.3 million, and the Census Bureau described the slowdown as largely due to a historic decline in net international migration. Background on immigration flows is available in our [US immigration statistics](#) and our data on [green card recipients by state](#).

For growth by group, the most recent complete published table on a consistent basis is the Vintage 2024 release of June 2025, which covers non-Hispanic race groups and the Hispanic population for the year to July 2024. In that year the Hispanic population grew by 1,943,997 people, or 2.9 percent, a larger gain than all other groups combined. The Asian population grew fastest in percentage terms, by 4.2 percent or 898,113 people. The non-Hispanic White population was the only group to decline, by 226,072 people or 0.1 percent.

Population Growth by Race and Hispanic Origin, July 2023 to July 2024 (%)Race groups are non-Hispanic and race alone; Hispanic residents of any race form their own group.

Data:

US Census Bureau, Vintage 2024 population estimates by characteristics, press release CB25-99, 26 June 2025.

Note:

Vintage 2024 used the earlier blended race base; the Vintage 2025 series revises these levels. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Asian residents grew fastest and White residents were the only group to shrink: plus 4.2 percent against minus 0.1 percent in the year to July 2024.

GROUP	JULY 2023	JULY 2024	CHANGE	CHANGE %
White alone, not Hispanic	195,659,296	195,433,224	-226,072	-0.1%
Hispanic or Latino	66,142,156	68,086,153	+1,943,997	+2.9%
Black alone, not Hispanic	42,514,641	42,951,595	+436,954	+1.0%
Asian alone, not Hispanic	21,182,731	22,080,844	+898,113	+4.2%
Two or More Races, not Hispanic	8,217,797	8,441,923	+224,126	+2.7%
AIAN alone, not Hispanic	2,432,832	2,442,428	+9,596	+0.4%
NHPI alone, not Hispanic	656,778	674,821	+18,043	+2.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2024 estimates (June 2025). These levels predate the Vintage 2025 base change and are not comparable with the 2025 figures above.

The components of change explain the pattern. The Census Bureau last broke them down by Hispanic origin in its June 2024 release, for the year to July 2023. The Hispanic population gained about 1.16 million people, of which roughly 722,000 came from births exceeding deaths and about one third from net international migration. The non-Hispanic population as a whole recorded 217,000 more deaths than births and grew only because net international migration added more than 700,000 people. Within it, the non-Hispanic White population had nearly 630,000 more deaths than births, which was the main reason it declined by 461,612.

GROUP	NATURAL CHANGE (BIRTHS MINUS DEATHS)	NET INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION	TOTAL CHANGE
Hispanic or Latino	about +722,000	about one third of the gain	+1.16 million (+1.8%)
Not Hispanic (all races)	about -217,000	more than +700,000	just under +0.5 million (+0.2%)
White alone, not Hispanic	nearly -630,000	not published separately	-461,612 (-0.2%)



Source: US Census Bureau, Vintage 2023 estimates, press release CB24-109, 27 June 2024. Values are as rounded in the release. The Vintage 2025 components table by race and Hispanic origin (NC-EST2025-COMPEN) could not be retrieved for this update.

In short, Hispanic growth rests mainly on births, because the Hispanic population is young, while non-Hispanic White numbers are held back by a growing excess of deaths over births. With net international migration halving in the latest year, the immigration-driven part of that picture is the one most likely to change in the next release. Recent border enforcement figures are tracked in our data on [US Border Patrol apprehensions and expulsions](#).

Age Structure

Age structure: why some groups are younger than others

Age is the link between the composition of the population and its growth. The Census Bureau puts the median age of the Hispanic population at 31.1 years in 2025, compared with 39.4 years for the nation as a whole. A younger group has more people in the childbearing years and fewer at the ages when most deaths occur, so it can grow through natural increase even without immigration. Detailed age breakdowns by sex for the whole population are in our separate report on the [population of the US by sex and age](#), which this page does not repeat.

Census projection work published in July 2024 shows the differences clearly for 2022. More than one in five non-Hispanic White residents (22 percent) were aged 65 or older, against 14 percent of non-Hispanic Asian, 13 percent of non-Hispanic Black, 8 percent of Hispanic and 6 percent of non-Hispanic multiracial residents. Working age shares, ages 15 to 64, ranged from 70 percent for non-Hispanic Asian residents to 57 percent for multiracial residents, a group in which children make up an unusually large share.

Working Age and Older Population Shares by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2022 (%) Share of each group aged 15 to 64 and 65 or older. Race groups are non-Hispanic.

Data:

US Census Bureau, By 2060, Less Than 60% of Non-Hispanic White Population and About 65% of Non-Hispanic Multiracial Population Will Be Working Age, 30 July 2024, based on the 2023 National Population Projections.

Note:

the remainder of each group is under 15. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

The oldest and youngest profiles sit side by side: 22 percent of non-Hispanic White residents were 65 or older in 2022, against 8 percent of Hispanic and 6 percent of multiracial residents.

The same source measures the old-age dependency ratio, the number of people aged 65 and over for every 100 people of working age. It is projected to rise for every group by 2060, but from very different starting points.

GROUP	2022	2060, MAIN SERIES	CHANGE
White alone, not Hispanic	34.9	51.8	+16.9
Asian alone, not Hispanic	20.3	35.4	+15.1
Black alone, not Hispanic	19.3	37.2	+17.9
Hispanic or Latino	12.3	28.9	+16.6
Two or More Races, not Hispanic	11.2	15.8	+4.6

Source: US Census Bureau, 2023 National Population Projections (America Counts, July 2024). Change is a BusinessStats calculation.

These gaps help explain the components of change shown above: a group with a third of its working age population already matched by people over 65 will see deaths rise steadily. The national picture, and how it compares with other ageing countries, is covered in our report on [the global aging population](#) and our data on the [global fertility rate](#). Sex ratios, which also differ by age, are covered in [US population by gender](#).

The Census Bureau also publishes 2025 age detail for each race group in its national characteristics tables. This page reports only the measures the Bureau summarised in its own releases, so median ages for groups other than the Hispanic population are not quoted here.

Group by Group

Group by group: the main figures for 2024 and 2025

Hispanic or Latino

The Hispanic population reached 70.1 million in July 2025, 20.5 percent of residents, with a median age of 31.1 years. Sixteen states had at least 1 million Hispanic residents in 2025: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Washington. Nevada was the addition compared with the 15 states listed

for 2024. The largest county gain was in Harris County, Texas, which added 50,093 Hispanic residents, or 2.2 percent, between July 2024 and July 2025.

White

About 247.1 million residents, 72.3 percent, reported White as their only race in 2025, and 76.8 percent reported White alone or in combination. Excluding Hispanic residents, the non-Hispanic White population was about 191.7 million, or 56.1 percent. It is the oldest of the major groups, with 22 percent aged 65 or older in 2022, and in recent years it has been the only group in which deaths exceed births.

Black or African American

Black alone residents made up 13.5 percent of the population in 2025, about 46.1 million people, and 15.4 percent, about 52.6 million, reported Black alone or in combination. In 2024 the Census Bureau counted 51,629,710 Black alone or in combination residents, with Texas the state and Cook County, Illinois, the county with the largest Black populations. The non-Hispanic Black alone population grew 1.0 percent in the year to July 2024.

Asian

Asian alone residents accounted for 6.9 percent of the population in 2025, about 23.6 million, and 8.4 percent reported Asian alone or in combination. The Bureau put the Asian alone or in combination population at 26.8 million in 2024. It was the fastest growing group in the year to July 2024, at 4.2 percent; its largest numeric gains were in California and Texas, and growth in Texas (6.9 percent) was much faster than in California (2.7 percent).

ORIGIN GROUP	POPULATION
Chinese, except Taiwanese	5.8 million
Asian Indian	5.6 million
Filipino	5.0 million
Vietnamese	2.4 million
Korean	2.2 million
Japanese	1.7 million



Source: US Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, as cited in the Census Bureau Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month release, May 2026.

American Indian and Alaska Native

The American Indian and Alaska Native alone population was 2.1 percent of residents in 2025, about 7.2 million people, and 4.1 percent reported this race alone or in combination. The 2025 estimate is almost twice the 3.7 million people counted as AIAN alone in the 2020 Census, and well above the 2.4 million non-Hispanic AIAN alone residents in Vintage 2024. The Census Bureau has not published a breakdown of that difference, but it is far larger than any plausible five year growth, which points to the switch to 2020 Census race data. The 2020 Census counted 9.7 million people who reported AIAN alone or in combination. Alaska (15.6 percent) and New Mexico (11.6 percent) have the highest AIAN alone shares among the states covered in our state table.

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander

NHPI alone residents made up 0.3 percent of the population in 2025 and 0.6 percent reported NHPI alone or in combination; the Bureau put the latter group at 1.8 million in 2024. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, the largest detailed groups were Native Hawaiian (728,718), Samoan (271,387) and Chamorro (167,504). In Hawaii, 10.9 percent of residents were NHPI alone in 2025.

Two or More Races

About 16.7 million residents, 4.9 percent, reported two or more races in the 2025 estimates. The share is highest in Hawaii (24.6 percent), Alaska (10.6 percent) and Nevada (7.8 percent). Under the census rules, which keep Some Other Race as a category, the multiracial population was 33.8 million in 2020.

State Patterns

Majority-minority states: where no group forms a majority

A state is usually described as majority-minority when non-Hispanic White residents make up less than half of its population. In the 2025 estimates that applied to nine states and the District of Columbia: Hawaii (21.5 percent non-Hispanic White), California (32.5), New Mexico (35.2), Texas (37.3), Nevada (42.3), Maryland (45.3), Georgia (47.9), New Jersey (49.6) and Florida (49.9), plus DC (37.6). In the 2020 Census the same was true of six states and DC, with Georgia at the 50 percent line. Part of the change reflects the new estimation base rather than four years of demographic change.

Non-Hispanic White Share in the Most Diverse States, July 2025 (%)States below or near the 50 percent line, ranked from lowest share; Vintage 2025.

Data:

US Census Bureau QuickFacts state pages, Vintage 2025 population estimates, accessed October 2026.

Note:

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino. Arizona and New York are shown as the nearest states above 50 percent; we also checked Mississippi, Louisiana, Illinois and Alaska, all above 54 percent. Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

Florida and New Jersey sit just under the line: 49.9 and 49.6 percent non-Hispanic White in 2025, with Arizona (51.2) and New York (51.5) just above it.

STATE	POPULATION	HISPANIC	BLACK ALONE	ASIAN ALONE	TWO OR MORE	NH WHITE
Hawaii	1,432,820	10.6%	2.0%	36.7%	24.6%	21.5%
California	39,355,309	41.2%	6.4%	17.5%	6.6%	32.5%
New Mexico	2,125,498	49.4%	2.9%	2.2%	4.5%	35.2%
Texas	31,709,821	40.9%	13.4%	6.7%	4.0%	37.3%
District of Columbia	693,645	12.9%	41.6%	5.8%	5.1%	37.6%
Nevada	3,282,188	31.2%	11.3%	10.6%	7.8%	42.3%
Maryland	6,265,347	13.8%	31.1%	7.6%	5.2%	45.3%
Georgia	11,302,748	12.1%	32.4%	5.4%	4.2%	47.9%
New Jersey	9,548,215	24.0%	15.8%	11.6%	3.8%	49.6%
Florida	23,462,518	29.2%	16.3%	3.5%	4.0%	49.9%
Arizona	7,623,818	32.5%	5.9%	4.5%	5.2%	51.2%
New York	20,002,427	21.0%	18.1%	10.9%	4.3%	51.5%
Mississippi	2,954,160	4.6%	36.8%	1.4%	3.0%	54.7%
Louisiana	4,618,189	8.5%	32.1%	2.1%	3.6%	54.7%
Illinois	12,719,141	19.9%	14.5%	7.0%	3.9%	56.7%



Alaska	737,270	8.2%	3.4%	6.5%	10.6%	56.8%
United States	341,784,857	20.5%	13.5%	6.9%	4.9%	56.1%

Source: US Census Bureau QuickFacts, Vintage 2025. Race columns are race alone and include Hispanic residents; NH White is White alone, not Hispanic or Latino.

The state table shows how different the mix can be. New Mexico is the state closest to a Hispanic majority, at 49.4 percent, followed by California (41.2 percent) and Texas (40.9 percent). The District of Columbia (41.6 percent) has the highest Black alone share, followed by Mississippi (36.8), Georgia (32.4), Louisiana (32.1) and Maryland (31.1). Hawaii is the only state where Asian alone is the largest race group, at 36.7 percent, and where about one in four residents reports two or more races. In Alaska, 15.6 percent of residents are American Indian and Alaska Native alone.

Note also that majority-minority status depends on the definition. Measured by race alone, which includes Hispanic residents, White residents are a majority in every one of these states except Hawaii (25.3 percent White alone) and the District of Columbia (46.2 percent). City and metro level patterns, which are often more pronounced than state averages, are covered in our reports on the [most populated US cities](#) and the [population of US metropolitan areas](#), and sex balance by state in our data on [males per 100 females by state](#).

Projections to 2060

Projections: the composition in 2060

The most recent national projections from the Census Bureau, released on 9 November 2023, start from a 2022 population that was 58.9 percent non-Hispanic White and 19.1 percent Hispanic. In the main series the non-Hispanic White share falls to 44.9 percent by 2060, the Hispanic share rises to 26.9 percent and the non-Hispanic Black share stays at about 13 percent. The total population peaks at about 370 million in 2080 and edges down to 366 million in 2100.

Projected Population Shares in 2060 under Four Immigration Scenarios (%)Non-Hispanic White and Hispanic shares of the US population, 2022 base and 2060 projections.

Data:

US Census Bureau, 2023 National Population Projections, press release CB23-189, 9 November 2023.

Note:



projections start from 2022 estimates that predate the Vintage 2025 race method, so their base shares are not directly comparable with the 2025 estimates. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Only with zero immigration would non-Hispanic White residents still be a majority in 2060, at 50.7 percent; in the main series the share is 44.9 percent.

The scenarios show how much depends on immigration. With high immigration the population keeps growing every year, to 435 million in 2100, and the non-Hispanic White share in 2060 is 42.7 percent. With low immigration the population peaks at about 346 million in 2043 and declines to 319 million by 2100. With zero immigration it would already have started to fall in 2024 and would reach 226 million in 2100. The year in which deaths begin to outnumber births for the nation as a whole ranges from 2033 with zero immigration to 2042 with high immigration, with 2038 in the main series.

Two caveats apply. First, the projections were built before the Vintage 2025 estimates moved to 2020 Census race data, and their 2022 base share of 58.9 percent non-Hispanic White sits well above the 56.1 percent in the 2025 estimates. Second, net international migration fell to 1.3 million in the year to July 2025, half the level of the previous year, so the scenario that best matches reality may change from year to year. The projections describe what follows from stated assumptions; they are not forecasts of a specific year in which a majority ends. Population growth in other countries is compared in our report on [population growth rate by country](#).

44.9%Non-Hispanic White share, 2060Main series, 2023 projections.26.9%Hispanic share, 2060Up from 19.1 percent in 2022.370MProjected population peakIn 2080, main series.2038First year of natural decreaseMain series; 2033 with zero immigration. Measuring Race Next

How race and ethnicity will be measured next

The rules behind these statistics are changing. On 28 March 2024 the Office of Management and Budget revised Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, the federal standard for race and ethnicity data. The revision replaces the two separate questions with one combined question, adds Middle Eastern or North African as a new category, and requires detailed categories by default. Federal agencies must submit action plans by 28 March 2027 and comply by 28 March 2029. Data collected under the new standard will place many respondents in different groups from the ones used in this report, so future series will need their own bridging notes.



Separately, on 10 September 2026 the Census Bureau published a proposed rule in the Federal Register (document 2026-18481) that would bar questions on race, ethnicity and sexual orientation from the decennial census short form and from any questionnaire used to enumerate the population. The proposal states that it does not restrict the American Community Survey or other surveys not used for enumeration, and that administrative records can fill information gaps. The comment period was extended to 2 November 2026, and the rule had not been finalised at the time of writing. If adopted, it would change the source of the benchmark race counts that the annual estimates have relied on since 2000.

Key Facts

The US population by race in eight numbers

341.8M US residents, 1 July 2025
Census Bureau, Vintage 2025
70.1M Hispanic or Latino residents
20.5 percent of the population
56.1% White alone, not Hispanic
About 191.7 million people
13.5% Black or African American alone
15.4 percent alone or in combination
6.9% Asian alone
Fastest growth in 2023 to 2024, 4.2 percent
4.1% AIAN alone or in combination
Twice the 2.1 percent race alone share
61.1% Diversity index, 2020 Census
Up from 54.9 percent in 2010
31.1 Median age of Hispanic residents
Against 39.4 for all residents, 2025. FAQ

Questions about the US population by race

According to the Census Bureau Vintage 2025 estimates, the US had 341.8 million residents on 1 July 2025. By race alone, 72.3 percent were White, 13.5 percent Black or African American, 6.9 percent Asian, 2.1 percent American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 4.9 percent reported two or more races. Separately, 20.5 percent were Hispanic or Latino.

The Census Bureau estimates 70.1 million Hispanic or Latino residents on 1 July 2025, or 20.5 percent of the population. Hispanic people can be of any race.

In 2025, 72.3 percent of residents reported White as their only race, including Hispanic residents. Excluding Hispanic residents, 56.1 percent, about 191.7 million people, were White alone and not Hispanic.

Black or African American alone residents made up 13.5 percent of the population in 2025, about 46.1 million people. Including people who reported Black together with another race, the share was 15.4 percent, about 52.6 million.



Asian alone residents were 6.9 percent of the population in 2025, about 23.6 million people, and 8.4 percent reported Asian alone or in combination. The Census Bureau put the Asian alone or in combination population at 26.8 million in 2024.

No. In federal statistics Hispanic or Latino origin is an ethnicity recorded in a separate question, and Hispanic people can be of any race. Race alone figures therefore include Hispanic residents unless they are labelled not Hispanic.

In the 2025 estimates, non-Hispanic White residents were less than half of the population in Hawaii, California, New Mexico, Texas, Nevada, Maryland, Georgia, New Jersey and Florida, and in the District of Columbia.

Vintage 2025 is the first Census Bureau estimates series to use 2020 Census race data, replacing a base that carried forward 2010 Census race information. The Bureau says different vintages are not comparable, so a change between older and newer releases is not the same as population change.

The 2023 Census projections put the non-Hispanic White share at 44.9 percent in 2060 in the main series and below half in every scenario except zero immigration, where it is 50.7 percent. The projections describe assumptions rather than a forecast of an exact year.

That is under review. A Census Bureau proposed rule published on 10 September 2026 would remove race and ethnicity questions from the decennial census short form while keeping them on the American Community Survey. The comment period runs to 2 November 2026 and the rule is not final.

Sources

[US Census Bureau, QuickFacts](#): United States and state pages, Vintage 2025 population estimates and race and Hispanic origin shares, accessed October 2026.

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[US Census Bureau](#): National Hispanic Heritage Month 2026, Hispanic population and median age, Vintage 2025.

[US Census Bureau](#): US population growth slows due to historic decline in net international migration, press release CB26-20, 27 January 2026.

[US Census Bureau](#): Annual updates to the data and methodology used to produce population estimates, January 2026.



[US Census Bureau](#): Vintage 2024 estimates by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin, press release CB25-99, 26 June 2025.

[US Census Bureau](#): Vintage 2023 estimates by characteristics and components of change, press release CB24-109, 27 June 2024.

[US Census Bureau](#): 2020 Census illuminates racial and ethnic composition of the country, 12 August 2021 (2010 and 2020 Census counts).

[US Census Bureau](#): Census 2000 Briefs and Summary File 1, race and Hispanic origin counts for 2000.

[US Census Bureau](#): Exploring the racial and ethnic diversity of various age groups, 2020 Census, September 2023.

[US Census Bureau](#): 2023 National Population Projections, press release CB23-189, 9 November 2023.

[US Census Bureau](#): working age and older population shares by race and Hispanic origin, 2023 projections, July 2024.

[US Census Bureau](#): Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2026 and [National Black History Month 2026](#) (2024 estimates and 2024 American Community Survey).

[Hawaii DBEDT State Data Center](#): Hawaii population characteristics 2025, Table 2 with national race alone or in combination shares from Census Bureau Vintage 2025.

[Office of Management and Budget](#): Revisions to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, Federal Register, 29 March 2024.

[US Census Bureau, Federal Register](#): proposed residence criteria and regulations for demographic questions on the decennial census, 10 September 2026.

Vintage 2025 estimates use 2020 Census race data for the first time and are not comparable with earlier vintages; growth by group and components of change come from the Vintage 2024 and Vintage 2023 releases and are labelled as such. Counts shown as about are BusinessStats calculations from published one decimal shares and the published total. The Vintage 2025 detail files on www2.census.gov (including NC-EST2025-COMP and NC-EST2025-ASR6H) could not be retrieved for this update, so group components and median ages for 2025 other than the Hispanic median are not reported. Figures from the previous version of this page that could not be traced to the Census Bureau, including income and spending estimates, have been removed.



STATISTICS REPORT

World population in 2026

Updated Jul 10, 2026 · businessstats.com/world-population

8.3B WORLD POPULATION	0.83% GROWTH RATE	68M ADDED PER YEAR
2.2 GLOBAL FERTILITY	58% URBAN	9.7B BY 2050

Overview



STATISTICS REPORT

Total population of China in 2026

Updated Jul 10, 2026 · businessstats.com/total-population-of-china

1.405B POPULATION END-2025	1.4126B PEAK (2021)	5.63‰ BIRTH RATE 2025
~1.0 FERTILITY RATE	23% AGED 60+ (323M)	68% URBAN

Overview

STATISTICS REPORT

Population of the Largest Metropolitan Areas in the United States - 2026 Rankings & Statistics

Updated Sep 4, 2026 · businessstats.com/population-of-metropolitan-areas-in-the-us

19.8M NEW YORK MSA - #1	387 US METRO AREAS TOTAL	86% AMERICANS IN METRO AREAS
+178K DALLAS-FW ANNUAL GAIN	0.6% AVG METRO GROWTH 2025	294M METRO AREA POPULATION

Overview



STATISTICS REPORT

Immigration in the United States in 2026

Updated Jul 23, 2026 · businessstats.com/immigration-united-states-statistics-facts

51.9M FOREIGN BORN 2026	53.3M RECORD PEAK (JAN 2025)	~15% SHARE OF POPULATION
321K NET MIGRATION 2026	19% OF THE LABOR FORCE	3.3M COURT BACKLOG CASES

Overview

STATISTICS REPORT

Male to female ratio in the United States 2026, sorted by state

 Updated May 2, 2026 · businessstats.com/us-population-males-per-100-females-by-state

101.0 NATIONAL RATIO — MALES PER 100 FEMALES	175.4M TOTAL MALES IN U.S. 2026	173.6M TOTAL FEMALES IN U.S. 2026
110.6 HIGHEST — ALASKA (MALES PER 100 FEMALES)	90.6 LOWEST — DC (MALES PER 100 FEMALES)	15 STATES WITH MALE MAJORITY

National Overview

U.S. Male to Female Ratio 2026 — 101.015 Males per 100 Females

The United States has undergone a quiet but significant demographic shift. For most of the 20th century, women outnumbered men in the American population. In 2026, that is no longer the case.

There are now **175.40 million males** and **173.64 million females** in the United States, giving a national sex ratio of **101.015 males per 100 females**, 1.76 million more men than women. The U.S. now ranks 175th globally in female-to-male ratio, and has the **7th largest male surplus in the world** in absolute terms.

The shift reflects several converging trends. Male life expectancy has improved more rapidly than female life expectancy in recent decades, narrowing the longevity gap that historically kept women in the majority. Immigration has brought disproportionately more working-age men. And improved occupational safety has reduced male workplace deaths.

Still, the balance is age-dependent: men dominate younger and middle-aged cohorts, while women increasingly outnumber men from age 60 onwards. The broader U.S. population context is in our [U.S. births and fertility analysis](#).

States with Highest Male to Female Ratio — 2026 U.S. States — Highest Male to Female Ratio 2026 (Males per 100 Females) 110.6Alaska — Oil, military, fishing industries Males per 100 females · [hover for detail](#) · national average = 101.0 Source: World Population Review · U.S. Census Bureau 2024 estimates

Ratio by State

Male to Female Ratio by State — Full 2026 Ranking (51 States + DC)

The table below shows the complete ranking of male to female ratio for all 50 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia, sorted from highest (most male) to lowest (most female). Click any column header to re-sort.

The national average of 101.0 is shown in the final row.

States with a ratio above 100 have more men than women; states below 100 have more women. The data reflects U.S. Census Bureau 2024 vintage population estimates as compiled by World Population Review. The U.S. immigration and population context is in our [global population analysis](#).

Male to Female Ratio by U.S. State — 2026 (Males per 100 Females) Click column to sort ↑

RANK	STATE	SEX RATIO (M PER 100 F)	GENDER BALANCE	KEY DRIVER
1	Alaska	110.6	+10.6% male	Oil/gas, military, fishing, construction
2	North Dakota	105.1	+5.1% male	Bakken oil fields, agriculture
3	Wyoming	104.5	+4.5% male	Mining, ranching, energy
4	South Dakota	103.1	+3.1% male	Agriculture, military (Ellsworth AFB)
5	Montana	102.7	+2.7% male	Ranching, mining, outdoor industries
5	Utah	102.7	+2.7% male	Young LDS families, tech industry
7	Colorado	102.6	+2.6% male	Military (5 bases), outdoor/tech economy
8	Nevada	101.5	+1.5% male	Construction, gaming, male immigration
9	Washington	101.4	+1.4% male	Tech industry, military (Joint Base Lewis)
10	Idaho	101.3	+1.3% male	Agriculture, construction, tech growth
11	Nebraska	101.0	+1.0% male	Agriculture, meatpacking industry
12	Hawaii	100.9	+0.9% male	Military (Pearl Harbor, Schofield)
13	Kansas	100.7	+0.7% male	Agriculture, aviation manufacturing
14	Iowa	100.6	+0.6% male	Agriculture, food processing
15	Minnesota	100.4	+0.4% male	Manufacturing, agriculture



16	Wisconsin	100.3	+0.3% male	Manufacturing, dairy farming
17	California	99.8	Slight female	Large diverse economy, urban population
17	West Virginia	99.8	Slight female	Population decline, male outmigration
19	Arizona	99.7	Slight female	Retirement migration, urban growth
19	New Hampshire	99.7	Slight female	Education, healthcare economy
21	Texas	99.6	Slight female	Large diverse population, urban centers
22	Oregon	99.4	Slight female	Educated workforce, services economy
23	Oklahoma	99.1	Slight female	Urban female population, higher mortality
24	New Mexico	98.8	Female	Military off-base, older demographics
25	Vermont	98.5	Female	Aging population, rural economy
26	Indiana	98.4	Female	Manufacturing decline, urban shift
27	Kentucky	98.2	Female	Higher male mortality, coal region decline
27	Michigan	98.2	Female	Auto industry decline, Detroit demographics
29	Illinois	97.7	Female	Chicago urban demographics
30	Virginia	97.6	Female	DC suburbs, professional workforce
31	Arkansas	97.5	Female	Higher male mortality, rural economy
32	Ohio	97.3	Female	Aging population, rust belt demographics
33	Maine	97.2	Female	Oldest median age in U.S., aging population
33	Missouri	97.2	Female	Aging, higher male mortality in rural areas
33	Pennsylvania	97.2	Female	Aging industrial state, Philadelphia demographics
36	New Jersey	96.9	Female	Urban, professional workforce
37	Florida	96.6	Female	Retirement migration (more female retirees)
38	Tennessee	96.4	Female	Nashville urban growth, higher male mortality
39	Connecticut	96.3	Female	Educated female workforce, Hartford



39	Rhode Island	96.3	Female	Urban, college towns, aging demographics
41	Louisiana	95.8	Female	High male incarceration rate, mortality
42	Massachusetts	95.6	Female	College towns, healthcare and education sector
42	North Carolina	95.6	Female	Urban growth, Research Triangle
44	New York	95.5	Female	NYC demographics, professional women workforce
45	Georgia	95.2	Female	Atlanta metro, higher male incarceration/mortality
46	Maryland	94.8	Female	DC suburbs, federal workforce, education sector
46	South Carolina	94.8	Female	Higher male mortality, urban female migration
48	Alabama	94.4	Female	High male mortality, incarceration rates
49	Mississippi	94.2	Female	Highest male mortality gap, rural poverty
50	Delaware	93.9	Female	Wilmington urban demographics, finance sector
—	DC	90.6	Most female	Government/nonprofit/professional workforce
US	United States	101.0	+1.0% male	National average — 1.76M more men than women

States with Most Men

States with Highest Male to Female Ratio — Why the West and North Lead

A clear geographic pattern emerges when mapping U.S. sex ratios by state: **Western and Northern states consistently show higher male ratios**, while Southeastern states and the Northeast show female majorities.

The top 10 states by male ratio are all in the West, Mountain, or Upper Midwest, Alaska, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Washington, and Idaho. This pattern is not coincidental. These states share a common economic thread: **extractive and industrial industries** that have historically employed disproportionately more men.

Alaska's ratio of **110.6** is the most extreme in the nation, nearly 11 more men per 100 women. The state's North Slope oil fields, commercial fishing fleet, military installations (JBER, Fort Wainwright, Eielson), and construction sector all skew heavily male.



North Dakota's **105.1** reflects the Bakken Formation oil boom that brought tens of thousands of male workers to Williston and Dickinson. Wyoming's **104.5** reflects its mining, ranching, and energy economy. Utah's **102.7** is unusual, it reflects both a young LDS population with more children (more boys at birth) and a strong tech sector that attracts male workers.

Colorado's military presence (5 major bases) and outdoor economy both drive its **102.6** ratio. U.S. military and defense context is in our [U.S. Armed Forces analysis](#).

States with Most Women

States with Lowest Male to Female Ratio — The South, Northeast, and DC

The District of Columbia's ratio of **90.6** is the most female-skewed jurisdiction in the nation, with nearly 10 fewer men per 100 women. DC's economy centers on federal government, nonprofits, universities, and professional services, all of which attract more women.

Among the 50 states, **Delaware (93.9), Mississippi (94.2), Alabama (94.4), South Carolina (94.8), Maryland (94.8), Georgia (95.2), New York (95.5), and Massachusetts (95.6)** all show strong female majorities. These states share different causes but converging outcomes: urban female workforce concentration, higher male mortality rates, higher male incarceration rates, and the absence of male-dominated extractive industries.

States with Lowest Male to Female Ratio — 2026 U.S. States with Lowest Male to Female Ratio 2026 — Most Female-Majority States (Males per 100 Females) Source: World Population Review · U.S. Census Bureau 2024 estimates

Southern states dominate the bottom of the ranking. Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina all rank in the bottom 12 nationally.

The pattern reflects a convergence of factors unique to the South: **some of the widest male-female life expectancy gaps in the country**, high male incarceration rates that reduce the civilian male population, and urbanization that draws women to cities like Atlanta, Charlotte, and Nashville for education and careers while men in rural areas face declining economic opportunities.

The U.S. economic inequality context is in our [U.S. millionaires analysis](#).

Ratio by Age Group



Male to Female Ratio by Age — Men Lead Until 60, Women Dominate After

The most dramatic story in U.S. gender demographics is not geographic, it is generational. **Men outnumber women in every age group from birth through approximately age 60.** The peak male dominance occurs in the 30-34 age group at **107.3 males per 100 females**. After age 60, the balance shifts permanently. By 65-69, women begin to outnumber men.

By 85-89, there are only **66 men per 100 women**. Among centenarians (100+), **women outnumber men 3 to 1**. This dramatic age-dependent reversal reflects the persistent gender gap in life expectancy, U.S. women live approximately 5-6 years longer than men on average.

Male to Female Ratio by Age Group — United States 2026 (Males per 100 Females) U.S. Sex Ratio by Age Group 2026 — Males per 100 Females at Each Life Stage 107.3Peak — Age 30-34 57.5Age 85+ (women dominate)

Source: StatisticsTimes US Sex Ratio 2026 · U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2024 · The World Data

- **At birth — 104.7:** Approximately 104.7 boys are born for every 100 girls — a biological constant. More boys are born, which offsets higher male mortality later in life.
- **Ages 0-18 — 104.8:** The male advantage persists through childhood. Boys outnumber girls across all youth age groups.
- **Ages 25-34 — 106-107:** The peak male ratio years. Men are less likely to have married and left the workforce-entry phase. Immigration also skews male in working-age groups.
- **Ages 45-59 — 99-100:** The crossover zone. Male mortality from accidents, heart disease, and occupational hazards gradually erodes the male surplus. By 45-49, the ratio is approximately 99.
- **Ages 60-64 — 94.6:** Women begin to outnumber men. The crossover is complete. Heart disease, which kills men at higher rates in middle age, has accumulated its toll.
- **Ages 85+ — 57.5:** Women dramatically outnumber men. For every 100 women aged 85+, there are only 57.5 men. Women aged 85+ outnumber men 2 to 1. Among centenarians, 3 to 1.

Why Ratios Differ



Why Male to Female Ratios Differ So Much by State — Industry, Military, Age, and Incarceration

The 20-point spread between Alaska (110.6) and DC (90.6) is driven by four primary factors that operate differently across states. **Industry structure** is the most powerful driver: states with dominant oil, gas, mining, agriculture, military, and construction industries attract disproportionately more male workers, while states with education, healthcare, government, and professional services economies attract more women. This alone explains most of the East-West divide in U.S. sex ratios.

Military concentration creates measurable local effects. States with large active duty military populations, Alaska, Hawaii, Colorado, North Dakota (missile wings), Kansas (Fort Riley), Virginia (Norfolk), show higher male ratios. However, the effect is moderated in some cases by the large female civilian workforce near military bases. **Incarceration** reduces civilian male populations in states with high imprisonment rates.

States like Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia have both high incarceration rates and low sex ratios, reducing the civilian male count relative to female. **Age structure** amplifies everything: states with older populations (Maine, Florida, Pennsylvania) have more female-skewed ratios because women live longer. The U.S. economic context behind these demographic patterns is in our [U.S. GDP analysis](#).

Average Male to Female Ratio by U.S. Region — 2026 Average Sex Ratio by U.S. Census Region 2026 (Males per 100 Females) WestLeads — Highest Male Ratio

Source: World Population Review · U.S. Census Bureau 2024 · BusinessStats Regional Averages

Key Statistics

U.S. Male to Female Ratio — Key Statistics and Facts 2026

101.0U.S. National Sex Ratio 2026101.015 males per 100 females — a slight male majority. 175.40 million males vs 173.64 million females = 1.76 million more men. The U.S. has the 7th largest male surplus globally, and ranks 175th in female-to-male ratio worldwide. Source: StatisticsTimes US Demographics 2026.

110.6Alaska — Highest Male Ratio in the U.S.110.6 males per 100 females — the highest of all 50 states.

Driven by oil and gas (North Slope), military installations (JBER, Fort Wainwright, Eielson AFB), commercial fishing, and construction. Source: World Population Review, U.S. Census Bureau 2024. 90.6DC — Lowest Male Ratio in the U.S.90.6 males per 100 females — nearly 10 more women per 100 men. Among the 50 states, Delaware (93.9) is lowest, followed by Mississippi (94.2) and Alabama (94.4). DC's female majority reflects its government, nonprofit, and professional services economy. Source: World Population Review,



U.S. Census Bureau 2024. 107.3

Peak Male Ratio — Age 30-34 The 30-34 age group has the highest male to female ratio of any age cohort in the U.S.: 107.3 males per 100 females. This reflects both the biological male advantage at birth and immigration patterns that bring more working-age men to the U.S. After age 60, women begin to outnumber men. Source: StatisticsTimes 2026.

15 States with Male Majority (Ratio over 100) 15 U.S. states have more men than women: Alaska, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Washington, Idaho, Nebraska, Hawaii, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin (16 including Wisconsin at 100.3). All 35 remaining states plus DC have more women than men. Source: World Population Review 2026.

57.5 Males per 100 Females — Age 85+ Among Americans aged 85 and older, there are only 57.5 males for every 100 females — meaning women outnumber men nearly 2 to 1 in the oldest age group. Among centenarians (100+), women outnumber men 3 to 1. This reflects the 5-6 year female life expectancy advantage in the U.S. Source: StatisticsTimes 2026, U.S. Census Bureau.

89.8 Unmarried Males per 100 Unmarried Females — U.S. The unmarried population shows a strikingly different ratio: only 89.8 unmarried men per 100 unmarried women nationally. However, at age 30-34, this flips: 120.8 unmarried men per 100 unmarried women — because men marry later (median age 30.1 vs 28.2 for women). Source: The Global Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2019-2023.

104.7 Boys Born per 100 Girls — U.S. Birth Ratio At birth, approximately 104.7 boys are born for every 100 girls — a biological constant observed worldwide. More boys are born than girls in every country. This male birth surplus is gradually eroded by higher male mortality from accidents, violence, heart disease, and occupational hazards across the lifespan. Source: CDC National Vital Statistics 2024, StatisticsTimes 2026.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions — Male to Female Ratio by U.S. State 2026

Alaska leads with 110.6 males per 100 females, the highest of any state. Driven by oil and gas (North Slope), military (JBER, Fort Wainwright), commercial fishing, and construction. Second: North Dakota (105.1, Bakken oil fields). Third: Wyoming (104.5, mining and ranching). Source: World Population Review, U.S. Census Bureau 2024.

The **District of Columbia (90.6)** has the lowest ratio. Among the 50 states: **Delaware (93.9)**, then Mississippi (94.2), Alabama (94.4), South Carolina (94.8) and Maryland (94.8). DC's female majority reflects its government, nonprofit, and professional services economy. Source: World Population Review 2026.



The U.S. national sex ratio is **101.015 males per 100 females** in 2026. Total: 175.40M males and 173.64M females, 1.76 million more men. The U.S. has the 7th largest male surplus globally. This is a reversal from most of the 20th century, when women outnumbered men. Source: StatisticsTimes US Demographics 2026.

The crossover occurs around **age 60-64**, where the ratio drops to approximately 94.6 males per 100 females. By 65-69, there are five fewer men per 100 women. By 85+, just 57.5 males per 100 females. Among centenarians, women outnumber men **3 to 1**. Men lead from birth (104.7) through their peak at age 30-34 (107.3). Source: StatisticsTimes 2026.

15-16 states have more men than women (ratio above 100): Alaska, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Washington, Idaho, Nebraska, Hawaii, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (100.3). All remaining 34-35 states plus DC have more women than men. Source: World Population Review 2026.

Western states dominate the top of the male ratio ranking because their economies center on **male-dominated industries**: oil and gas (Alaska, North Dakota), mining (Wyoming, Montana), agriculture and ranching (South Dakota, Montana), military (Alaska, Hawaii, Colorado), and construction (Nevada). These industries attract and employ disproportionately more male workers, shifting the residential population balance. Source: World Population Review, U.S. Census Bureau.

Southern states like Alabama (94.4), Mississippi (94.2), Louisiana (95.8), and Georgia (95.2) have female majorities due to: **higher male mortality rates** (widest gender life expectancy gaps in the U.S.), **high male incarceration rates**, urbanization drawing women to cities for education and careers, and the absence of male-dominated extractive industries. Source: World Population Review, DataPandas.org, U.S. Census Bureau.

The U.S. unmarried population shows only **89.8 unmarried men per 100 unmarried women**, single women significantly outnumber single men. However, at age 30-34, the ratio flips to **120.8 unmarried men per 100 women**, because men marry later (median age 30.1) than women (28.2). Source: The Global Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2019-2023.

Yes. **Incarceration reduces civilian male populations**, particularly in states with high imprisonment rates. States like Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia have both high incarceration rates and low male to female ratios. Incarcerated individuals are predominantly male. Their removal from community population counts reduces the civilian male ratio, especially in urban areas where they originally lived. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Prison Policy Initiative.



Women consistently outnumbered men in the U.S. for most of the 20th century. In 2026, the U.S. has **101.015 males per 100 females**, a male majority. The shift reflects: improved male life expectancy, reduced workplace deaths, immigration bringing more working-age men, and declining birth rates (which disproportionately reduce the youngest female cohorts). Source: StatisticsTimes 2026, The Global Statistics.

The **30-34 age group has the highest ratio at 107.3 males per 100 females** in 2026. This peak reflects the biological male birth surplus combined with immigration patterns that bring more working-age men. The male advantage persists through all age groups to approximately 59, then reverses. By 85+, only 57.5 men per 100 women. Source: StatisticsTimes US Sex Ratio 2026.

The U.S. ratio of **101.015 males per 100 females** places it 175th globally in female-to-male ratio. The U.S. has the 7th largest male surplus in absolute terms (1.76M). Countries with extreme male majorities include Qatar (267/100, male migrant workers), UAE, and Bahrain. Most Western European countries still show slight female majorities. Source: StatisticsTimes 2026.

The U.S. birth sex ratio is **104.7 boys per 100 girls**, a natural biological constant observed worldwide. This male birth surplus is necessary to maintain gender balance across the lifespan given higher male mortality. By the time these cohorts reach age 60, the male surplus has been eroded by differential mortality. Source: CDC National Vital Statistics 2024, StatisticsTimes 2026.

Sources

[World Population Review, Male to Female Ratio by State 2026 · All 50 states + DC · U.S. Census Bureau 2024 vintage estimates · Alaska 110.6, DC 90.6, national 98.1](#)

[StatisticsTimes, U.S. Demographics 2026 · 175.40M males, 173.64M females · Ratio: 101.015 · 7th largest male surplus globally · 175th in female-to-male ratio](#)

[StatisticsTimes, United States Sex Ratio 2026 · Age-group breakdown · 30-34: 107.306 peak · 65-69: female majority begins · 90-99: 2:1 women · Centenarians: 3:1 women](#)

[The Global Statistics, Women to Men Ratio in America 2025 · 174.50M males, 172.78M females · Unmarried ratio: 89.8M/100F · Age 30-34 unmarried: 120.8M/100F](#)

[DataPandas, Male to Female Ratio by State 2026 · Urban/rural analysis · Southern state explanations · Incarceration and mortality factors · U.S. Census Bureau primary data](#)



[The World Data, Population by Gender in U.S. 2025](#) · [Census Bureau Vintage 2024](#) · [Age-specific sex ratios](#)
· [Educational attainment by gender](#) · [Demographic trends analysis](#)

State-level sex ratio data from World Population Review reflects U.S. Census Bureau 2024 vintage population estimates. The national ratio (101.015) from StatisticsTimes may differ slightly from World Population Review's state aggregate (98.1) due to different Census Bureau datasets used — one uses 2024 vintage projections, the other uses ACS 2019-2023 estimates. All figures represent sex as classified by U.S. Census Bureau methodology. Not a political or social opinion piece.

STATISTICS REPORT

Immigrants Obtaining a Green Card in the U.S. by State — FY 2024–2026 Statistics

Updated Mar 15, 2026 · businessstats.com/green-card-recipients-by-state-us

~950K EST. FY2025	~16% CALIFORNIA	13% FLORIDA
11% NEW YORK	66% FAMILY-BASED	12.8M LPR POP.

Executive Summary

Where Do Green Cards Go? The Four-State Concentration That Defines US Legal Immigration

Every year, the United States grants lawful permanent resident (LPR) status — popularly known as a "green card" — to approximately 1 million immigrants. But the geographic distribution of these green cards is anything but uniform. US immigration is profoundly concentrated: just **four states — California, Florida, New York, and Texas** — absorb more than half of every single green card issued nationally, year after year, reflecting the gravitational pull of existing immigrant communities, major employment centres, and gateway international airports that have shaped American immigration geography for more than a century.

In **Fiscal Year 2024** (October 2023 – September 2024), approximately **1.15 million immigrants** obtained green cards in the United States, a modest decline of 1.7% from the FY2023 total of 1.17 million — itself the highest annual figure in a decade. **FY2025** has seen a much sharper reversal: USCIS completed **21% fewer cases** in Q3 FY2025 versus the same quarter the prior year, immigrant visa issuances fell **20%** in May 2025 versus May 2024, and the total FY2025 green card figure is estimated at approximately **900,000–950,000** — the lowest since FY2019. The net backlog of pending USCIS cases hit a **record 5.4 million** in Q3 FY2025, and average processing times rose **13% across all form types** in FY2025.

Projections for **FY2026** suggest further contraction to approximately **800,000–880,000** under the current enforcement environment. **California** led all states as the top destination for new LPRs, receiving approximately **175,000–182,000 green cards**, representing roughly 15–16% of the national total. **Florida**

ranked second with approximately 145,000–152,000 (about 13%), driven by its Cuban, Haitian, Venezuelan, and Caribbean immigrant communities. **New York** and **Texas** each accounted for approximately 11%, with the New York metro's Dominican, Chinese, Mexican, and Indian communities driving demand, and Texas's large Mexican-origin population and growing refugee resettlement programmes shaping its profile.

California, Florida, New York, and Texas collectively receive over 50% of all green cards issued in the United States each year. The concentration reflects decades of immigration history, established ethnic communities, employment opportunity, and gateway infrastructure. Source: DHS Office of Homeland Security Statistics, FY2023–FY2024.

The state-by-state distribution of green cards is more than a demographic curiosity — it has profound implications for labour markets, housing markets, public services, political representation, and the cultural fabric of American cities. The **type** of green card received also varies dramatically by state: California's technology sector drives a disproportionate share of employment-based EB-1 and EB-2 visa grants; Florida's Caribbean-origin population drives family-based immediate relative admissions; Texas's refugee resettlement infrastructure makes it the leading state for humanitarian LPR adjustments; and New Jersey's pharmaceutical and financial services sectors generate substantial EB-2 and EB-3 employment-based demand. Understanding this geography — which states win, which categories dominate, and why — is the central focus of this report. This data also closely intersects with broader immigration trends we cover in our comprehensive report on [immigration in the United States — statistics & facts 2026](#).

Annual Green Card Trend

Total US Green Cards Issued Annually — FY 2015 to FY 2024

ANNUAL LPR ADMISSIONS · FY2015–FY2024 Total Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Cards) Issued — United States Thousands of persons · All categories · DHS Office of Homeland Security Statistics
1,150KFY2024 Total DHS Published Data

FY2024 vs FY2020 (COVID low): +57% Sources: DHS Yearbook of Immigration Statistics FY2023 · USCIS FY2024 Annual Data · DHS OHSS Table 1

Top States Ranking

Top 10 States by Green Card Recipients — FY 2023/2024

The ranking of states by green card recipients has remained remarkably stable over time, reflecting the path-dependent nature of immigration geography. Immigrants follow established networks — family

members, community organisations, ethnic businesses, and religious institutions — that are anchored in specific cities and states. This "network effect" means that Mexican immigrants continue flowing to California, Texas, and Illinois; Dominican immigrants to New York; Cuban and Haitian immigrants to Florida; and Indian technology workers to California and New Jersey, in patterns that reinforce themselves across generations. **California** has been the #1 state for new LPRs every single year since 1988, and its lead — while narrowing slightly as Florida has grown — remains substantial.

Florida's rise to second place is one of the most significant shifts in US immigration geography over the past two decades. In 2000, California received approximately 217,000 green cards vs Florida's 102,000 — a 2:1 gap. By FY2023, Florida had closed to within 20% of California's total, driven by extraordinary growth in Cuban, Venezuelan, Colombian, Haitian, and Nicaraguan immigration. Miami has become the second-largest immigration gateway city in the United States, processing more Cuban, Haitian, and Caribbean applications than any other USCIS field office. Florida's position is further reinforced by its status as the top state for new naturalisations — 70% of citizens naturalized in FY2024 resided in 10 states, led by California, Florida, New York, and Texas in that order.

TOP 10 STATES · FY2023 (LATEST COMPLETE DHS DATA) Green Card Recipients by State — Top 10 States of Residence Estimated number of LPRs · FY2023 DHS Yearbook + USCIS FY2024 Sources: DHS Yearbook of Immigration Statistics FY2023 Table 4 · OHSS State Immigration Data

Full State Data Table

Green Card Recipients by US State — FY2023 Full Data (Click headers to sort)

STATE	LPRS (EST.)	% OF US TOTAL	FAMILY- BASED %	EMPLOYMENT- BASED %	HUMANITARIAN %	TOP NATIONALITY
California	~182,000	15.5%	56%	28%	10%	Mexico
Florida	~152,000	13.0%	76%	9%	11%	Cuba
New York	~130,000	11.1%	70%	16%	10%	Dominican Rep.
Texas	~128,000	10.9%	60%	14%	22%	Mexico
New Jersey	~65,000	5.5%	60%	27%	9%	India
Illinois	~45,000	3.8%	63%	18%	14%	Mexico
Massachusetts	~38,000	3.2%	55%	26%	14%	Brazil

Washington	~33,000	2.8%	52%	29%	14%	India
Virginia	~30,000	2.6%	48%	30%	17%	El Salvador
Pennsylvania	~26,000	2.2%	60%	20%	15%	India
Georgia	~24,000	2.0%	62%	17%	17%	Mexico
Maryland	~22,000	1.9%	55%	21%	19%	El Salvador
Michigan	~14,000	1.2%	57%	22%	16%	India
Arizona	~13,000	1.1%	68%	13%	14%	Mexico
Nevada	~12,000	1.0%	65%	16%	14%	Mexico
All Others	~184,000	15.7%	~60%	~18%	~17%	Varies

Admission Types by State

Green Card Types Vary Dramatically by State: Family, Employment & Humanitarian

One of the most important but underappreciated aspects of the state-level green card data is how dramatically the type of admission varies by geography. Nationally, **66% of green cards are family-based** — but this masks enormous state-level variation. **Florida** leads all major states in family-based concentration, with approximately **76% of its green cards** going to family-sponsored immigrants, driven by the unique structure of Cuban, Haitian, Venezuelan, Dominican, and Colombian migration chains that place extraordinary weight on family reunification petitions. The Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966 — which allows Cuban nationals who have been present in the US for at least one year to apply for permanent residency regardless of how they entered — provides a legal pathway that is counted within the broader LPR category and heavily concentrates Cuban LPR grants in Florida.

California and New Jersey stand out for their disproportionately high employment-based shares — approximately 28% and 27% respectively, versus 13% nationally. This reflects the concentration of technology companies (Apple, Google, Meta, Nvidia, Salesforce in California; Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Prudential, Goldman Sachs in New Jersey) that sponsor large numbers of H-1B workers who subsequently adjust to permanent residence through EB-1, EB-2, and EB-3 categories. **Washington State** (Seattle's Amazon, Microsoft, Boeing) and **Virginia** (DC metro's defence contractors, federal agencies, and IT

services firms) similarly show employment-based concentrations of approximately 29–30%. **Texas** is distinctive for having the nation's highest proportion of **humanitarian LPRs** — approximately 22% of its new green card recipients each year — reflecting its role as the primary destination for Afghan special immigrant visa holders and the resettlement of Central American, Congolese, and Burmese refugee populations. The relationship between economic strength, immigration, and investment flows is analysed in detail in our report on [global capital allocation and immigration-driven growth sectors](#).

Admission Category Breakdown — Top 6 States

FAMILY vs EMPLOYMENT vs HUMANITARIAN · BY STATE Employment-Based Green Card Share — Top States (% of state total) Higher % = more employment-based LPRs relative to state total · FY2023 Source: DHS Yearbook FY2023 — Type of Admission by State · USCIS Adjustment of Status Data

National Admission Category Breakdown

Green Cards by Admission Category — FY2024 National Total

LPR ADMISSION CATEGORIES · FY2024 1.15 Million Green Cards by Admission Class — FY2024 All admission categories · National total · USCIS FY2024 data

Source: USCIS I-485 Quarterly Reports FY2024 · DHS OHSS Yearbook FY2023

Top Nationalities by State

Dominant Nationalities: Mexico Leads 6 of the Top 10 States

The nationality composition of green card recipients varies sharply by state, reflecting decades of migration chain formation and the geography of immigrant community settlement. **Mexico** is the single largest source country nationally, and Mexican-born immigrants are the largest group receiving green cards in **six of the top ten states**: California, Texas, Illinois, Arizona, Nevada, and Georgia. This dominance reflects both the sheer scale of the Mexican-born population in the US (~10.7 million) and the depth of family petition queues built up over decades of sustained migration. The Dominican Republic is the largest source for New York, Cuba for Florida, India for New Jersey, Washington, Pennsylvania, and Michigan — and El Salvador for Virginia and Maryland.

The **country composition of family-based green cards** in FY2024 was topped by Mexico (161,705), the Dominican Republic (45,270), the Philippines (40,678), Cuba (33,539), India (29,725), Vietnam (27,193), China (26,487), El Salvador (24,701), Haiti (20,160), and Jamaica (17,985). These figures reflect both the

size of petitioner communities already in the US and the historical migration channels that feed sustained family reunification demand. For Vietnam and Haiti in particular, the data shows growing shares — a trend reflecting both improving consular processing capacity and the maturation of Vietnamese and Haitian diaspora communities into their peak petition-filing years.

161,705Mexico — Family-Based LPRs FY2024 45,270Dominican Republic FY2024 40,678Philippines FY2024 33,539Cuba FY2024 29,725India FY2024 27,193Vietnam FY2024 State Spotlight Florida: The Nation's Most Family-Dependent Green Card State — 76% Family-Based

Florida stands apart from every other large state in the striking dominance of family-based immigration. Approximately **76% of Florida's green card recipients** are family-sponsored, compared to 66% nationally. The Cuban Adjustment Act, combined with Florida's role as the primary destination for Cuban, Venezuelan, Haitian, Dominican, Colombian, and Nicaraguan immigrants, creates a self-reinforcing cycle: each generation of new LPRs eventually becomes a petitioner for the next. Miami's USCIS field office processes more family-based applications than almost any other in the country. Florida also leads the nation in naturalisations, with **Miami ranking as the #1 city for new US citizens** in FY2024 — further expanding the pool of US citizens eligible to petition for family members.

Top Metro Areas

Top Metro Areas: New York & LA Account for 20% of All US Green Cards

Green card recipients are concentrated not just by state but by metropolitan area to an even greater degree. The **top 10 metro areas** account for approximately **50% of all US green cards** issued annually — meaning half of America's entire annual LPR inflow goes to just ten urban clusters. The **New York–Newark–Jersey City** metropolitan area (spanning New York, New Jersey, and parts of Pennsylvania) is the single largest metro for green card recipients, accounting for approximately **14% of the US total** — an astonishing concentration given that the New York metro contains approximately 6% of the US population. The New York metro's dominance reflects the extraordinary depth of its Dominican, Chinese, Mexican, Indian, Jamaican, Trinidadian, Bangladeshi, and Korean immigrant communities, all of which maintain dense family petition queues.

The **Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim** metro ranks second, accounting for approximately **6.2% of all US green cards**, driven by its vast Mexican-origin community, substantial Chinese and Korean populations, Filipino nursing and healthcare workers, and a tech sector increasingly competing with San Francisco for H-1B workers who subsequently adjust status. **Miami–Fort Lauderdale–Pompano Beach** ranks third at

approximately 6.9%, reflecting the extraordinary concentration of Cuban, Colombian, Venezuelan, Dominican, Haitian, and Nicaraguan immigration. The Washington DC–Arlington–Alexandria metro (4th) and Houston–The Woodlands–Sugar Land (5th) round out the top five.

Top Metro Areas — Green Card Recipients (% of US Total)

TOP METRO AREAS · FY2023 Core Based Statistical Areas — Top 8 by Green Card Recipients Share of total US annual LPRs · DHS CBSA data FY2023 Source: DHS OHSS FY2023 Yearbook Table 5 — LPRs by Core Based Statistical Area

Approval & Denial Rates FY2024

FY2024 Green Card Approval Rates: 91% Employment-Based, 87% Family-Based

Understanding approval and denial rates is essential context for interpreting state-level green card volumes. **FY2025 has seen a notable shift downward** in approval rates compared to FY2024.

Employment-based I-140 petitions showed an approval rate of **85.8%** in the first half of FY2025 (Jan–Jun 2025), down from 89% in the equivalent FY2024 period. In FY2024 as a whole, **employment-based I-485** applications had a **91% approval rate**, with 119,028 approvals out of 132,513 completed adjudications, and 13,485 denials (9%). Denial causes for employment-based applications include inadmissibility findings (prior immigration violations, criminal records), failure to maintain lawful nonimmigrant status between H-1B and adjustment filing, insufficient supporting documentation, and issues with job classification or labour certification. **Family-based applications** had a similarly high approval rate of approximately **87%** in FY2024, with 412,475 approvals out of 459,971 total adjudications and 47,496 denials. Family-based denials commonly involve income eligibility failures by sponsors (petitioner income below the poverty guideline threshold), relationship verification problems, and inconsistencies in supporting documents.

91%Employment-Based Approval Rate FY2024 87%Family-Based Approval Rate FY2024

13,485Employment-Based Denials FY2024 47,496Family-Based Denials FY2024 500K+Family Cases Pending Each Quarter 7%Applicants with Legal Rep (N-400)

Processing Times

Processing Times FY2024: Family Green Cards Improved to 7.7 Months by Q4

One of the most watched metrics for prospective green card applicants and immigration attorneys is **processing time**. In FY2025, the trend **reversed sharply**: average processing times increased by **13% across all USCIS form types**, and the I-90 (green card renewal) processing time surged by a staggering **486%** during the fiscal year, per USCIS historic processing time data. The family-based I-485 backlog stood at **543,000+ pending cases** at end of FY2025, while the employment-based I-485 inventory remained at **172,000+**. Looking back, in FY2024, **family-based processing had improved steadily** throughout the year: average processing time was 10.1 months in Q2 FY2024, 8.8 months in Q3, and **7.7 months in Q4 (July–September 2024)** — the best quarterly figure since before the pandemic. This improvement reflects USCIS's deployment of additional staff, technology upgrades, and policy changes that expedited adjudication of simpler cases (primarily immediate relative petitions where bona fides are straightforward).

Employment-based processing told a more volatile story in FY2024. The annual average was 13.2 months, but this masked substantial quarterly variation — from a low of 10.7 months in January 2024 to a high of 25.3 months in September 2024. The September spike reflects the end-of-fiscal-year rush in which thousands of applications filed at the start of the fiscal year were adjudicated simultaneously, and some USCIS service centres faced significant backlogs of complex EB-2 National Interest Waiver and EB-1A extraordinary ability petitions. Importantly, these figures cover the adjustment of status pathway only — the separate wait for a visa number to become available (the "priority date" system) can add years or decades for nationals of India, China, Mexico, and the Philippines due to per-country caps, making the effective wait for permanent residence far longer than the I-485 processing time alone suggests. The economic implications of these multi-decade backlogs — in terms of talent retention and US competitiveness — are explored in our analysis of [US economic conditions and labour market pressures](#).

I-485 Average Processing Time — Family-Based (Months, FY2023–FY2025)

PROCESSING TIME TREND · FAMILY-BASED I-485 Average I-485 Processing Time — Family-Based Green Cards (Months) Quarterly average months from filing to decision · USCIS data Source: USCIS Quarterly I-485 Processing Time Reports FY2023–FY2024

Resident LPR Population

12.8 Million LPRs Living in the US — Over Half in Just Four States

Beyond the flow of new green cards each year, the **stock of lawful permanent residents** living in the United States provides crucial context for understanding state-level immigration dynamics. As of January 1, 2024, there were 12.8 million LPRs living in the United States, with over half residing in just four states: California, New York, Texas, and Florida. This represents a modest increase of 70,000 (0.6%) from the revised 2023 estimate of 12.73 million — a reversal of the decline observed from 2019 to 2023, which had been driven by pandemic-era disruption to new arrivals combined with continued naturalisations removing people from the LPR pool.

A plurality of the 12.8 million LPRs were born in Mexico, accounting for about a quarter of the total. As of January 2024, 8.7 million of those LPRs met the naturalization age and length of residency requirements — meaning they were potentially eligible to become US citizens, yet had not yet naturalised. California contains approximately a quarter of this eligible-to-naturalise population, followed by New York, Texas, and Florida. The gap between LPR population and naturalisation uptake is particularly large for Mexican-born LPRs, who naturalise at a rate of approximately 36% of those eligible — well below the 67% average for all foreign-born LPRs. Language barriers, cost (\$760 filing fee), and dual-citizenship restrictions under Mexican law (Mexico does allow dual citizenship, but the paperwork process deters some applicants) all contribute to this gap. The implications of this large eligible-but-unnaturalised population — which represents approximately 8.9 million potential new voters — are significant for US electoral politics, particularly in California, Texas, Florida, and New York.

FY2025 & 2026 Outlook

FY2025 & 2026 Green Card Outlook: Record Backlogs, Falling Approvals, Rising Processing Times

The data through FY2025 Q3 (April–June 2025) paints a markedly different picture from the FY2023–FY2024 period. **USCIS approved 21% fewer cases** in Q3 FY2025 compared to the same quarter the prior year, and total completions — across all form types — fell **16% year-over-year** in Q3, continuing a trend seen in Q2 (down 18% YoY). The family-based I-485 adjustment approval rate **fell to 84.4%** in Q2 FY2025, down from 87% for full-year FY2024. Employment-based I-140 petitions showed an approval rate of **85.8%** in H1 FY2025, down from 89% in the equivalent FY2024 period. Across all forms, processing times rose an average of **13%** in FY2025; the I-90 (green card renewal) application saw a **486% increase** in median processing time during the fiscal year.



The **USCIS backlog reached record levels** in FY2025. By end of Q2, the agency had **11.3 million total pending cases** across all form types. Of those, **5.4 million** were considered the "net backlog" — cases exceeding USCIS processing time goals. Family-based I-485 pending cases stood at **543,000+** at end of FY2025, while employment-based I-485 cases numbered **172,000+**. The EB pending inventory for all categories (including those awaiting visa number availability) remains at approximately **785,000 approved petitions** stuck in queue. On the consular side, **US consulates issued 20% fewer immigrant visas** in May 2025 versus May 2024, and **16% fewer nonimmigrant visas** — reflecting new vetting procedures including mandatory social media reviews, duplicative interview requirements, and resource constraints at overseas posts. Petition-based visa wait times at consulates rose an average of **137%** between January and November 2025.

FY2026 Projection Estimated 800,000–880,000 Green Cards in FY2026 — Lowest in 15 Years if Confirmed

Based on the FY2025 Q3 USCIS data, Niskanen Center January 2026 status update, and DOS consular processing trends, BusinessStats projects total US green card issuances of approximately **800,000–880,000 in FY2026** — potentially the lowest annual total since FY2012. Key drivers: continued USCIS staffing pressures (the agency reduced headcount under Fiscal Year 2025 budget constraints), the September 19, 2025 Presidential Proclamation imposing a **\$100,000 fee on applicable H-1B visas** (expected to reduce H-1B-to-LPR pipelines), rising consular wait times (up 95–188% across visa categories), and a structural reduction in humanitarian LPRs as refugee admissions fell to ~38,000 in FY2025. The **state-level distribution** is expected to remain broadly stable, with California, Florida, New York, and Texas continuing to absorb 50–52% of total annual LPRs.

21% Fewer USCIS Approvals Q3 FY2025 vs Q3 FY2024 84.4% Family I-485 Approval Rate Q2 FY2025
5.4M USCIS Net Backlog Q3 FY2025 (Record) 486% I-90 Processing Time Increase FY2025
–20% Immigrant Visas Issued May 2025 vs May 2024 137% Avg Consular Petition Wait Time Increase 2025

Annual Green Cards FY2015–FY2026* — Including FY2025 Estimate & FY2026 Projection

ANNUAL LPR ADMISSIONS · FY2015–FY2026* Total Green Cards Issued — FY2025 Estimate & FY2026 Projection Thousands · *FY2025 est. · **FY2026 proj. · DHS, USCIS, Niskanen Center ~840K FY2026 Projection DHS Published FY2025 Estimate FY2026 Projection

FY2024→FY2026*: –27% FY2025 estimate based on USCIS Q3 FY2025 data · Niskanen Center Jan 2026
· FY2026 projection: BusinessStats Research Desk

Frequently Asked Questions

Green Cards by State: Frequently Asked Questions

California consistently receives the most green cards of any US state — approximately

175,000–182,000 per year

(15–16% of the national total). It has ranked #1 every year since 1988. Florida ranks second (~152,000, 13%), followed by New York (~130,000, 11%) and Texas (~128,000, 11%). Together these four states receive over 50% of all US green cards annually.

Approximately

1.15 million green cards

were issued in FY2024 (October 2023 – September 2024), a slight decline of ~1.7% from FY2023's 1.17 million (the highest in a decade). Of these, 66% were family-based, 13% employment-based, 12% humanitarian, and 5% Diversity Visa. USCIS received 473,464 family-based I-485 applications and 129,814 employment-based applications in FY2024.

California typically receives approximately

15–17% of all US green cards

annually — the highest of any state. Its large existing immigrant population (10.5 million foreign-born), major employment sectors (tech, agriculture, healthcare), and gateway airports drive sustained high demand. Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim alone accounts for ~6% of all US green card recipients.

Florida's high green card volume (13% of national total) is driven by its

large Caribbean and Latin American immigrant communities

— particularly Cuban, Haitian, Venezuelan, Dominican, Colombian, and Nicaraguan populations. The Cuban Adjustment Act provides a unique LPR pathway for Cuban nationals, heavily concentrated in South Florida. Miami processes more family-based immigration applications than almost any other US city, and Florida leads the nation in annual naturalisations.

In FY2024,

family-based I-485 processing averaged 9 months

for the full year, improving from 10.1 months in Q2 to

7.7 months by Q4 2024

Employment-based processing averaged 13.2 months

, with wide variation (10.7–25.3 months by quarter). These are adjustment-of-status processing times only — nationals of India, China, Mexico, and the Philippines may wait decades for a visa number to become available due to per-country backlogs.

As of January 1, 2024,

12.8 million lawful permanent residents

live in the United States, per DHS OHSS estimates. Over half live in California, New York, Texas, and Florida. Approximately 8.7 million (68%) meet the age and residency requirements for naturalisation but have not yet applied. Mexico accounts for approximately 25% of the total LPR population.

Sources & References

Data Sources, References & Related Reports

Data Sources — Green Card Recipients by State FY2024 Primary

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— Table 4: Persons Obtaining LPR Status by State of Residence FY2014–2023. The definitive federal source for all state-level green card data.

ohss.dhs.gov/yearbook/2023 

Primary

USCIS — Immigration and Citizenship Data FY2024

— Quarterly I-485 adjustment of status data covering family-based and employment-based applications, approvals, denials, and processing times.

uscis.gov/immigration-citizenship-data 

Primary

DHS OHSS — Estimates of the Lawful Permanent Resident Population 2024

— Population stock estimates for LPRs and eligible-to-naturalise sub-population by state. November 2024.



ohss.dhs.gov/lpr-population-estimates

[Govt USCIS Naturalization Statistics FY2024](#) · [DHS LPR Annual Flow Report FY2023](#) (Ward, September 2024) · [DHS Supplemental Table 1 — LPR by State and Country of Birth FY2023](#) · [USCIS CBSA-Level Data FY2023 \(Table 5\)](#) [Additional Niskanen Center — Legal Immigration in Numbers: January 2026 Status Update](#) (Jan 14, 2026) · [Boundless — USCIS Q2 FY2025 Data Analysis](#) (Sep 2025) · [Docketwise — Green Card Statistics 2025](#) (Jul 15, 2025) · [Beyond Border — I-485 Processing Time USCIS Data](#) (Dec 2025) · [Statista — Green Card Recipients by State FY2024](#) [Related BusinessStats Reports](#)

[Immigration in the US — Statistics & Facts 2026](#)

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[Gold as an Investment — Statistics & Facts](#)

Last verified: March 2026 · External links open in a new tab · FY2025 est. based on USCIS Q3 data · FY2026 = projection

STATISTICS REPORT

Urbanization worldwide statistics & facts

A world of cities and towns. Only one in five people now lives in the countryside. Under the new UN method, 45 percent of humanity lives in cities and 36 percent in towns, and the number of cities has doubled since 1975. This report sets out the numbers.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

44.8% IN CITIES	35.6% IN TOWNS	19.6% IN RURAL AREAS
3.69B CITY DWELLERS	12,140 CITIES	33 MEGACITIES

OVERVIEW

Urbanization at a glance

About 45 percent of the world population, 3.7 billion people, lived in cities in 2025, according to the UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. Another 36 percent lived in towns and semi-dense areas, and only 20 percent in rural areas. In 1975, the three groups were roughly equal in size. The number of cities with at least 50,000 inhabitants has more than doubled over the same period, from 5,851 to 12,140, and the number of megacities with 10 million or more people has risen from 8 to 33.

The 2025 edition of the UN report uses a new, harmonised method, the Degree of Urbanisation, which classifies every square kilometre of the planet by population density rather than relying on national definitions of what counts as urban. This report explains the new figures, how urbanisation differs by region, the most urbanised countries, the growth and decline of cities and the outlook to 2050. For a ranking of the biggest cities, see our report on the [largest city in the world](#).

44.8% Live in cities World, 2025.	19.6% Live in rural areas Down from 30.8 percent in 1975.
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12,140

Cities

With 50,000 or more inhabitants, 2025.

33

Megacities

10 million or more inhabitants.

How the UN now defines cities, towns and rural areas

- Cities: contiguous areas with at least 1,500 inhabitants per square kilometre and at least 50,000 people in total.
- Towns and semi-dense areas: at least 300 inhabitants per square kilometre and at least 5,000 people.
- Rural areas: all remaining, thinly populated areas.
- Because the method ignores national definitions, many places that countries call rural are counted as towns, especially in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

SHIFT

From rural to urban since 1975

The balance between cities, towns and the countryside has shifted dramatically in half a century. In 1975, 31.1 percent of people lived in cities, 38.1 percent in towns and semi-dense areas and 30.8 percent in rural areas. By 2025, the share in cities had risen to 44.8 percent, while the rural share had fallen to 19.6 percent. According to the UN, cities overtook rural areas in the mid-1970s, and the city population overtook the population of towns in 1996.

World population by type of settlement, 1975, 2025 and 2050 (% of total)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

The countryside shrinks: The rural share of the world population has fallen from almost a third in 1975 to a fifth in 2025.

The UN projects that the share living in cities will rise only modestly to 48.3 percent by 2050, while the share in towns will edge down to 34.6 percent and the rural share to 17.1 percent. Cities and dense towns

together, which correspond more closely to most national definitions of urban areas, account for about 58 percent of the world population in 2025 and are projected to reach about 61 percent by 2050.

NUMBERS

How many people live in cities, towns and rural areas

In absolute terms, the number of city dwellers has almost tripled, from 1.27 billion in 1975 to 2.43 billion in 2000 and 3.69 billion in 2025. The UN projects 4.67 billion by 2050. Applying the UN shares to the world population, about 2.9 billion people live in towns and semi-dense areas and about 1.6 billion in rural areas in 2025.

World population by type of settlement, 1975, 2025 and 2050 (billions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

Rural numbers flatten: The rural population has grown only from 1.3 billion to 1.6 billion in 50 years and is projected to peak in the 2040s.

The world added about 1.2 billion city residents between 1975 and 2000 and about 1.3 billion between 2000 and 2025. The UN expects urban areas to absorb about two-thirds of global population growth between now and 2050, with most of the rest going to towns. The global rural population is projected to peak in the 2040s and then decline gradually. Overall population trends are covered in our [world population statistics](#).

REGIONS

Urbanisation by region

Northern Africa and Western Asia is the most city-based region, with 59.1 percent of its population living in cities in 2025, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean at 54.0 percent and Australia and New Zealand at 49.1 percent. Eastern and South-Eastern Asia stands at 47.3 percent, and Central and Southern Asia at 42.5 percent. Perhaps surprisingly, Europe and Northern America has one of the lower city shares, at 39.2 percent, because many people there live in suburbs and towns of moderate density.

Share of population living in cities by region, 1975, 2025 and 2050 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

Africa doubles: The share of people in sub-Saharan Africa living in cities has more than doubled from 18.4 percent in 1975 to 37.7 percent in 2025.

The fastest change has taken place in sub-Saharan Africa, where the city share rose from 18.4 percent in 1975 to 37.7 percent in 2025 and is projected to reach 42.5 percent by 2050, and in Northern Africa and Western Asia, which rose from 35.2 to 59.1 percent. The Pacific islands remain the least urbanised region, with only 13.7 percent of people in cities. In Latin America, the city share is projected to barely change by 2050, at 54.5 percent, because the region urbanised early.

REGION	1975	2025	2050
Sub-Saharan Africa	18.4%	37.7%	42.5%
Northern Africa and Western Asia	35.2%	59.1%	64.8%
Central and Southern Asia	30.1%	42.5%	47.9%
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	31.6%	47.3%	50.2%
Latin America and the Caribbean	37.6%	54.0%	54.5%
Oceania (excl. Australia and NZ)	4.4%	13.7%	19.1%
Australia and New Zealand	30.9%	49.1%	52.6%
Europe and Northern America	32.8%	39.2%	41.4%

COUNTRIES

The most urbanised countries

City-states and small, wealthy territories top the list of the most urbanised places. Singapore has 99.5 percent of its population living in a city in 2025, Macao 99.2 percent and Hong Kong 96.4 percent. Bahrain (93.6 percent) and Kuwait (89.0 percent) follow, ahead of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Qatar, Djibouti and Taiwan, all at about 78 percent or more.

Countries and areas with the highest share of population living in cities, 2025 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

Not only rich countries: Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Djibouti rank among the ten most city-based countries, because most of their people live in a few large cities.

The presence of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Djibouti in the top ten shows that urbanisation is not only a feature of rich economies. In these countries, much of the population lives in a few large cities, such as Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire in Congo, with thinly populated land beyond. In the United States, population is spread across many metropolitan areas, which are ranked in our report on [metropolitan areas in the US](#), with individual cities covered in [the largest US cities](#).

CITIES

How many cities, and how big

The world had 12,140 cities with at least 50,000 inhabitants in 2025, more than twice the 5,851 in 1975. The UN projects 15,446 by 2050. The great majority are small: 9,807 cities have between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants, and 1,822 have between 250,000 and one million. Only 511 cities have more than one million people, including 429 medium-sized cities of 1 to 5 million, 49 large cities of 5 to 10 million and 33 megacities.

Number of cities by population size, 2025

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

Mostly small: 96 percent of the world cities have fewer than 1 million inhabitants.

Megacities still hold a relatively small share of humanity. The 33 megacities house nearly 8 percent of the world population in 2025, up from under 3 percent in 1975, when there were only 8. Jakarta is the largest city in the world under the new method, with about 42 million people, ahead of Dhaka (37 million) and Tokyo (33 million). The UN expects 37 megacities by 2050.

Number of cities worldwide, 1975, 2025 and 2050

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/urbanization-statistics

Thousands of new cities: The number of cities is projected to grow by another 3,300 by 2050, many of them settlements that are towns today.

New cities matter for future growth. According to the UN, newly emerging cities accounted for 23 percent of city population growth between 2000 and 2025 and are projected to account for 28 percent between 2025 and 2050. These are places that cross the 50,000-person threshold as surrounding towns grow and merge.

GROWTH

Fast-growing and shrinking cities

City growth is highly uneven. About 400 cities grew by more than 4 percent a year between 2015 and 2025; about a third of them were in sub-Saharan Africa and about a quarter in Central and Southern Asia. More than 70 percent of these fast-growing places had fewer than 250,000 inhabitants. Only three of them, Luanda, Dar es Salaam and Kozhikode, had more than 5 million inhabitants.

At the same time, more than 3,000 cities lost population between 2015 and 2025. About four-fifths of them had fewer than 250,000 inhabitants, more than a third were in China and 17 percent in India. Shrinking cities reflect falling birth rates, ageing and migration to larger centres, trends explored in our reports on the [global fertility rate](#), the [global ageing population](#) and [population growth by country](#).

Cities in 2025: growth and decline

- About 400 cities grew by more than 4 percent a year between 2015 and 2025.
- More than 3,000 cities lost population over the same period.
- More than a third of shrinking cities were in China.
- More than 1 billion people live in informal settlements.
- Built-up area has expanded faster than population in almost all regions.

CHALLENGES

The challenges of urban growth

Rapid urbanisation brings opportunity and strain. According to the UN, more than 1 billion people live in informal settlements, often without secure tenure, clean water or sanitation. In almost all regions, built-up area has expanded faster than population, meaning cities are spreading outwards and becoming less dense, which raises the cost of infrastructure and transport. In richer countries, the main pressure is



housing affordability, as our report on the [US housing shortage](#) shows.

OUTLOOK

Urbanisation to 2050

The UN describes the era of rapid global growth in city populations as largely behind us, with a slowdown expected across cities, towns and rural areas. Still, cities are projected to add almost 1 billion people by 2050, mostly in Africa and Asia, and the number of cities is set to rise to more than 15,000. How those cities are planned, housed and connected will shape living standards for billions of people.

KEY FACTS

Urbanisation in numbers

Key Facts

- 44.8 percent of the world population lived in cities in 2025, 35.6 percent in towns and 19.6 percent in rural areas.
- The city population rose from 1.27 billion in 1975 to 3.69 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach 4.67 billion in 2050.
- There were 12,140 cities with at least 50,000 people in 2025, including 33 megacities.
- Northern Africa and Western Asia is the most city-based region at 59.1 percent.
- Singapore, Macao and Hong Kong are the most urbanised places, at more than 96 percent.
- More than 3,000 cities shrank between 2015 and 2025.
- The rural population is projected to peak in the 2040s.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What percentage of the world population lives in cities?

According to the UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025, 44.8 percent of the world population lived in cities in 2025. Including dense towns, which are closer to most national definitions of urban areas, the share is about 58 percent.

How many people live in rural areas?

About 19.6 percent of the world population, or roughly 1.6 billion people, lived in rural areas in 2025, down from 30.8 percent in 1975.

How many cities are there in the world?

The UN counts 12,140 cities with at least 50,000 inhabitants in 2025, up from 5,851 in 1975. It projects 15,446 by 2050.

How many megacities are there?

There were 33 megacities with 10 million or more inhabitants in 2025, up from 8 in 1975. The UN projects 37 by 2050.

Which country is the most urbanised?

Singapore is the most urbanised country, with 99.5 percent of its population living in a city in 2025, followed by Macao and Hong Kong.

Which region is the most urbanised?

Northern Africa and Western Asia has the highest share of people living in cities, at 59.1 percent in 2025, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean at 54.0 percent.

Why do UN urbanization figures differ from older estimates?

The 2025 UN report classifies areas by population density using the Degree of Urbanisation, instead of national definitions. Earlier UN estimates based on national definitions put the urban share at roughly 58 percent, similar to the share in cities and dense towns under the new method.



Will the world keep urbanizing?

Yes, but more slowly. The UN projects that 48.3 percent of people will live in cities by 2050, and that urban areas will absorb about two-thirds of population growth.

SOURCES

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Urbanization Prospects 2025: Summary of Results.

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - The World Cities in 2025: Data Booklet.

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Urbanization Prospects 2025: Frequently Asked Questions.

[United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024, medium variant.

STATISTICS REPORT

Life expectancy worldwide statistics & facts

Longer lives, unequal lives. Global life expectancy has risen from 46 years in 1950 to almost 74 years today, and women outlive men in every country. Yet a child born in Hong Kong or Japan can expect to live three decades longer than a child born in Nigeria or Chad. This report sets out the numbers.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

73.8 WORLD, YEARS	76.4 WOMEN, YEARS	71.2 MEN, YEARS
85.9 HIGHEST (HONG KONG)	55.0 LOWEST (NIGERIA)	81.7 PROJECTED 2100

OVERVIEW

Life expectancy worldwide at a glance

A baby born in 2026 can expect to live 73.8 years on average, according to the latest projections of the UN Population Division. That is 27 years more than in 1950, when global life expectancy at birth was 46.4 years. Women live longer than men almost everywhere: the global figure is 76.4 years for women and 71.2 years for men. Yet the gap between countries remains wide. Among countries and areas with at least one million people, life expectancy ranges from 85.9 years in Hong Kong and 85.1 years in Japan to 55.0 years in Nigeria and 55.6 years in Chad, a difference of more than 30 years.

This report looks at life expectancy across 236 countries and areas, how it has changed since 1950, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the gap between women and men and between rich and poor countries, and what the UN expects by 2100. It builds on the overview in our [world population statistics](#) and focuses on the detail behind the global average.

73.8 Years, world 2026 Life expectancy at birth, both sexes.	85.9 Years, Hong Kong Highest of countries with 1 million or more people.
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55.0

Years, Nigeria

Lowest of countries with 1 million or more people.

5.3

Years, female advantage

World, women 76.4 against men 71.2.

What life expectancy measures

- Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years a newborn would live if the death rates of a given year stayed the same throughout life.
- It is a summary of current mortality, not a forecast of how long any individual will live.
- A low figure is often driven by deaths in infancy and childhood, so adults in low-income countries can expect to live well beyond the average.
- Figures for 2024 onwards are UN medium-variant projections; estimates run to 2023.

TREND

From 46 to 74 years: the long rise

Global life expectancy has risen in almost every decade since 1950. It passed 60 years around 1980, 66 years in 2000 and 70 years in 2010. Most of the early gains came from falling infant and child mortality, as vaccines, antibiotics, clean water and better nutrition spread. The two visible setbacks in the series are the famine years around 1960, when China experienced a severe spike in deaths, and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021.

Life expectancy at birth by sex, world, 1950 to 2100 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

A gap that persists: Women have outlived men throughout, and the UN expects a female advantage of about 4 years even in 2100.

Women have outlived men throughout the period, and the gap has widened from 4.0 years in 1950 to 5.3 years in 2026. Men die younger at almost every age, partly because of higher rates of smoking, alcohol use, road deaths, violence and heart disease. The UN projects that the gap will narrow slowly to about 3.9 years by 2100, when life expectancy is expected to reach 79.8 years for men and 83.7 years for women.



Population totals by sex are covered in our report on the [world population by gender](#).

The pace of improvement has slowed. Global life expectancy rose by about 20 years between 1950 and 2000, but the UN expects a gain of only about 8 years between 2026 and 2100. Much of the easy progress against infectious disease has been made, and further gains depend increasingly on reducing deaths from chronic diseases in middle and old age.

PA NDEMIC

The COVID-19 setback and recovery

The pandemic caused the largest fall in global life expectancy in decades. According to the UN, it dropped from 72.6 years in 2019 to 71.9 years in 2020 and 70.9 years in 2021, a loss of 1.7 years in two years. It rebounded to 72.6 years in 2022 and 73.2 years in 2023, back above its pre-pandemic level. The World Health Organization, which uses slightly different methods, put global life expectancy at 73.3 years in 2023, close to the 73.4 years it recorded for 2019. Healthy life expectancy, the number of years lived in good health, reached 62.8 years in 2023 according to WHO, still 0.4 years below its 2019 level.

Countries with the largest fall in life expectancy, 2019 to 2021 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

Latin America hit hardest: Bolivia lost 6.4 years of life expectancy in two years, and seven of the ten largest falls were in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The losses were heaviest in Latin America, where several countries combined high infection rates with crowded housing and large informal workforces. Life expectancy fell by 6.4 years in Bolivia, 5.6 years in Paraguay, 4.8 years in Mexico and 4.7 years in Peru between 2019 and 2021. Outside the region, Lebanon, South Africa and Oman also recorded falls of 4 years or more. In the United States, the UN estimates a fall from 78.9 years in 2019 to 76.4 years in 2021, followed by a recovery to 79.3 years in 2023. Some countries, including Japan and China, saw little change. Our [COVID-19 pandemic statistics](#) cover reported and excess deaths in detail.

HIGHEST

Countries with the highest life expectancy

East Asian and western European countries dominate the top of the ranking. Among countries and areas with at least one million people, Hong Kong leads with 85.9 years in 2026, followed by Japan with 85.1 years, South Korea with 84.6 years, Switzerland with 84.4 years and Australia with 84.3 years. Italy, Singapore, Spain, Norway, Sweden and France all exceed 83.5 years. Including very small states, Monaco (86.7 years) and San Marino (86.0 years) rank above Hong Kong.

Countries with the highest life expectancy at birth, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

East Asia leads: Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea top the ranking, with women in Hong Kong and Japan expected to live beyond 88 years.

The leaders share a few common features: low rates of heart disease and obesity, universal health coverage, high incomes and, in the East Asian cases, diets low in red meat and sugar. Women in Hong Kong and Japan have a life expectancy of 88.5 and 88.2 years respectively, while men in Australia and Switzerland can expect to live about 82.5 years. South Korea is the most striking example of progress: its life expectancy has risen by more than 20 years since the 1970s. In total, 38 countries and areas with at least one million people have a life expectancy of 80 years or more, but together they hold less than 10 percent of the world population.

LOWEST

Countries with the lowest life expectancy

All of the countries with the lowest life expectancy are in sub-Saharan Africa. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has the lowest figure of any country with at least one million people, at 55.0 years, followed by Chad at 55.6 years, South Sudan at 58.0 years, the Central African Republic at 58.2 years and Lesotho at 58.6 years. Somalia, Mali, Guinea, Benin and Burkina Faso complete the bottom ten, all below 62 years.

Countries with the lowest life expectancy at birth, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

A 30-year gap: A newborn in Nigeria can expect to live about 31 years less than a newborn in Hong Kong.

High child and maternal mortality, infectious diseases such as malaria, HIV and tuberculosis, conflict and weak health systems explain most of the gap. In Nigeria, the female advantage is only 0.7 years, compared with a global average of 5.3 years, a sign of very high maternal mortality. Even so, the region has made large gains: life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa rose from 51.0 years in 2000 to 62.7 years in 2026. Child deaths, a major driver of the gap, are covered in our report on [child health and nutrition](#).

The spread between countries has narrowed over time. In 1950 the difference between the highest and lowest life expectancy among countries with at least one million people was 57 years, in part because of war and famine. By 2000 it had fallen to 36 years, and in 2026 it is about 31 years.

REGIONS

Life expectancy by world region

The regional picture shows both convergence and persistent gaps. Australia and New Zealand together have the highest regional life expectancy at 84.0 years in 2026, followed by Europe and Northern America at 79.7 years and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia at 77.7 years. Sub-Saharan Africa remains lowest at 62.7 years, about 11 years below the world average, while the Pacific islands of Oceania stand at 68.1 years.

Life expectancy at birth by world region, 2000, 2026 and 2050 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

Fastest catch-up in Africa: Sub-Saharan Africa gained 11.7 years between 2000 and 2026, more than any other region.

Regions starting from a lower level have gained the most. Between 2000 and 2026, life expectancy rose by 11.7 years in sub-Saharan Africa and 9.7 years in Central and Southern Asia, but by 5.3 years in Europe and Northern America and 4.5 years in Australia and New Zealand. The UN expects this catch-up to continue, with sub-Saharan Africa reaching 66.8 years by 2050.

REGION	2000	2026	2050
World	66.4	73.8	77.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	51.0	62.7	66.8
Northern Africa and Western Asia	68.3	74.5	78.2
Central and Southern Asia	62.8	72.5	77.0
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	71.7	77.7	81.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	70.8	76.2	80.1
Europe and Northern America	74.4	79.7	83.3
Australia and New Zealand	79.5	84.0	87.0

INCOME

Rich and poor countries

Income is one of the strongest predictors of how long people live. In 2026, life expectancy averages 81.9 years in high-income countries and 76.8 years in upper-middle-income countries, against 70.2 years in lower-middle-income and 65.5 years in low-income countries. The absolute gap between high-income and low-income countries has nonetheless shrunk dramatically, from 30.6 years in 1950 to 16.4 years in 2026.

Life expectancy at birth by country income group, 1950 to 2050 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

The gap halves: The difference between high-income and low-income countries fell from about 31 years in 1950 to about 16 years in 2026.

The fastest gains have come in low-income countries, where life expectancy more than doubled from 31.2 years in 1950 to 65.5 years in 2026. Health spending, vaccination campaigns and programmes against malaria and HIV have all played a part. Within high-income countries, chronic diseases and behavioural risks now drive most differences, as our report on [health risk factors in the US](#) shows for the United States.

GENDER GAP

Where women outlive men by the most

In every country and area covered by the UN, women are expected to outlive men in 2026. The size of the gap varies enormously. It is largest in Russia, where women can expect to live 79.5 years and men only 67.9 years, a difference of 11.6 years. Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus, Lithuania, Vietnam, Mongolia and Moldova all have gaps of 9 years or more.

Countries with the largest gap between female and male life expectancy, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

Russian men lose most: Men in Russia can expect to live 11.6 years less than women, mainly because of alcohol, smoking and cardiovascular disease.

The largest gaps are found in the former Soviet Union and central and eastern Europe, where high alcohol consumption, smoking and cardiovascular disease among men are long-standing problems. The smallest gaps are in parts of West Africa and the Gulf: in Togo and Nigeria, women outlive men by less than one year, and in Bahrain and Qatar by less than two years. In the Gulf states, a large population of mostly male migrant workers who are relatively young and healthy affects the figures.

POPULOUS

Life expectancy in the most populous countries

Because the global average is weighted by population, the largest countries shape it most. India, the most populous country, has a life expectancy of 72.7 years in 2026, just below the world average, while China stands at 79.0 years and the United States at 79.8 years. Among the twelve most populous countries, Japan leads with 85.1 years and Nigeria is lowest at 55.0 years.

Life expectancy at birth in the 12 most populous countries, 2026 (years)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/life-expectancy-by-country

China closes in on the US: Life expectancy in China, 79.0 years, is now less than one year below that of the United States.

The comparison between China and the United States is notable. In 1950 the UN estimates life expectancy at 43.8 years in China and 68.1 years in the United States. By 2026 the gap has narrowed to less than one year, partly because the United States has seen slower progress than other high-income countries since 2010. More on population trends in both countries is available in our reports on the [population of China](#) and the [US population](#).

OUTLOOK

Life expectancy to 2100

The UN projects that global life expectancy will reach 77.0 years by 2050 and 81.7 years by 2100. Every region is expected to improve, with the largest gains in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Rising life expectancy, together with falling birth rates, is the main reason the world population is getting older, a shift explored in our report on the [global ageing population](#). Longer lives also mean that deaths will increasingly occur at older ages and from chronic diseases, as our report on the [global death rate](#) shows.

There are risks to these projections. Pandemics, conflict, the obesity epidemic and antimicrobial resistance could slow progress, while new treatments for heart disease, cancer and dementia could speed it up. Life expectancy is closely linked to fertility and population growth, which are covered in our reports on the [global fertility rate](#) and [population growth by country](#).

KEY FACTS

Life expectancy in numbers

Key Facts

- Global life expectancy at birth is 73.8 years in 2026, up from 46.4 years in 1950.
- Women can expect to live 76.4 years and men 71.2 years, a gap of 5.3 years.
- Hong Kong (85.9 years) and Japan (85.1 years) lead countries with 1 million or more people.
- Nigeria (55.0 years) and Chad (55.6 years) have the lowest life expectancy.
- COVID-19 cut global life expectancy by 1.7 years between 2019 and 2021.
- WHO puts healthy life expectancy at 62.8 years in 2023.
- The UN projects global life expectancy of 77.0 years in 2050 and 81.7 years in 2100.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the average life expectancy in the world?

Global life expectancy at birth is 73.8 years in 2026, according to UN projections: 76.4 years for women and 71.2 years for men. The WHO estimate for 2023 is 73.3 years.

Which country has the highest life expectancy?

Among countries and areas with at least 1 million people, Hong Kong has the highest life expectancy at 85.9 years, followed by Japan at 85.1 years. Including small states, Monaco ranks first at 86.7 years.

Which country has the lowest life expectancy?

Nigeria has the lowest life expectancy of any country with at least 1 million people, at 55.0 years in 2026, followed by Chad at 55.6 years.

Why do women live longer than men?

Women outlive men in every country. Men have higher rates of smoking, alcohol use, accidents, violence and heart disease, and biological factors also play a role. The global gap is 5.3 years.

How much did COVID-19 reduce life expectancy?

Global life expectancy fell from 72.6 years in 2019 to 70.9 years in 2021, a loss of 1.7 years. It recovered to 73.2 years by 2023.

What is healthy life expectancy?

Healthy life expectancy is the number of years a person can expect to live in good health. WHO estimates it at 62.8 years globally in 2023, about 10 years less than total life expectancy.

What is the life expectancy in the United States?

The UN estimates life expectancy in the United States at 79.8 years in 2026. National statistics from the US use different methods and can show slightly different figures.

How long will people live in 2100?

The UN projects global life expectancy of 77.0 years in 2050 and 81.7 years in 2100, with women at 83.7 years and men at 79.8 years.



SOURCES

[United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024, medium variant.

[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results.

[World Health Organization](#) - New WHO estimates show changing global health landscape, October 2026.

[World Health Organization](#) - World health statistics 2026.

STATISTICS REPORT

Global fertility rate statistics & facts

The world is approaching a demographic tipping point. The average woman now has 2.23 children, close to the replacement level, and seven in ten people live in countries where fertility is already below it. Births peaked in 2012. This report sets out the numbers, from the highest fertility in the Sahel to the lowest in East Asia.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

2.23 CHILDREN PER WOMAN	132.5M BIRTHS IN 2026	363,000 BIRTHS A DAY
72% LIVE BELOW 2.1	5.84 HIGHEST (CHAD)	0.76 SOUTH KOREA

OVERVIEW

Global fertility at a glance

Women around the world now have an average of 2.23 children each, according to UN projections for 2026, less than half the level of 4.85 children in 1950. The world is close to the replacement level of about 2.1 children per woman, the level at which a population replaces itself over the long run without migration. Fertility has already fallen below that line in 135 of 236 countries and areas, home to 72 percent of the world population. At the same time, women in Chad, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo still have close to six children on average.

Around 132.5 million babies will be born in 2026, or roughly 363,000 a day. The annual number of births peaked at 146.1 million in 2012 and has been falling since. This report covers fertility rates by country and region, the number of births, teenage births, the reasons behind the decline and the outlook to 2100. It complements our [world population statistics](#) with a deeper look at fertility.

2.23 Children per woman World total fertility rate, 2026.	132.5 million Births in 2026 About 363,000 a day.
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135

Countries below 2.1

Out of 236 countries and areas.

0.76

South Korea

Lowest of countries with 1 million or more people.

Key terms

- Total fertility rate (TFR): the average number of children a woman would have if she experienced current age-specific birth rates throughout her childbearing years.
- Replacement level: about 2.1 children per woman in countries with low mortality; slightly higher where child mortality is high.
- Crude birth rate: births per 1,000 people in a year.
- Adolescent birth rate: births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19.

TREND

Seventy years of falling fertility

Fertility has fallen in every world region since the 1960s, but at very different times and speeds. Global fertility stayed close to five children per woman until about 1970, then dropped quickly to 3.3 in 1990 and 2.75 in 2000. The decline has slowed since, to 2.32 in 2020 and 2.23 in 2026. The dip visible around 1960 reflects the famine in China, when births collapsed for several years.

Total fertility rate by continent, 1950 to 2100 (children per woman)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Africa is the outlier: Africa still averages 3.9 children per woman in 2026, while every other continent is below replacement level.

Europe was the first continent to fall below replacement, in the 1970s, and its fertility rate has hovered around 1.4 to 1.6 children per woman for three decades. Northern America has been close to or below replacement since the 1970s and stands at 1.60 in 2026. The most dramatic declines have taken place in Asia and Latin America, where fertility fell from close to six children per woman in the 1960s to 1.87 and 1.77

respectively in 2026, below the European level of the 1980s. Africa remains the exception at 3.89 children per woman, although that too is down from 6.7 in 1970.

HIGHEST

Countries with the highest fertility rates

All of the countries with the highest fertility rates except Afghanistan are in sub-Saharan Africa. Among countries with at least one million people, Chad has the highest total fertility rate in 2026 at 5.84 children per woman, followed by Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo at 5.80, the Central African Republic at 5.69 and Niger at 5.64. Mali, Angola, Burundi, Afghanistan and Mozambique complete the top ten.

Countries with the highest total fertility rate, 2026 (children per woman)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Nearly six children: Women in Chad, Somalia and DR Congo have almost three times as many children as the world average.

These countries share high child mortality, low levels of female education, early marriage and limited access to contraception. Fertility is falling in most of them, but from a very high level. In Niger, which had the highest fertility in the world for many years, the UN estimates a fall from 7.8 children per woman in 2000 to 5.6 in 2026. The highest crude birth rates are also found here: the Central African Republic records 44.7 births per 1,000 people in 2026 and Chad 42.2, more than five times the rate in Japan.

LOWEST

Countries with the lowest fertility rates

At the other end of the scale, East Asia has the lowest fertility in the world. Hong Kong (0.75), South Korea (0.76) and Taiwan (0.86) are all below one child per woman in 2026, as are Puerto Rico (0.94) and Singapore (0.97). Ukraine and China are at about 1.0, and Chile, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Mauritius and Italy are all below 1.25. The lowest figure of all is in Macao at 0.70.

Countries with the lowest total fertility rate, 2026 (children per woman)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Below one child: In Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan, each generation is set to be less than half the size of the one before.

Fertility this low has never been recorded outside wartime or famine. At 0.76 children per woman, each new generation in South Korea is less than 40 percent the size of the previous one. The causes are widely debated, but they include high housing and education costs, long working hours, the difficulty of combining work and family for women, and later marriage. China has seen one of the fastest falls: fertility dropped from 1.67 children per woman in 2015 to about 1.0 in 2023, and China now records more deaths than births, a trend covered in our report on the [global death rate](#). Our report on the [population of China](#) covers this in detail.

Very low fertility is also spreading in Latin America and the Middle East. Chile (1.12) and Argentina (1.51) have seen sharp falls since 2015, and the United Arab Emirates is at 1.21. In 2026, 24 countries and areas have a total fertility rate below 1.3, a level demographers describe as lowest-low fertility.

COUNTRIES

Fertility in the largest countries

Among the most populous countries, fertility ranges from about one child per woman in China to 4.2 in Nigeria. India, which became the most populous country in 2023, has fallen below replacement for the first time, to 1.98 children per woman in 2023 and a projected 1.93 in 2026. Indonesia stands at 2.08, Brazil at 1.59 and the United States at 1.62. Pakistan, at 3.44, remains well above replacement and is one of the main contributors to future population growth.

Total fertility rate in selected large countries, 1950 and 2026 (children per woman)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

From six to one: China has gone from 5.8 children per woman in 1950 to about 1.0 today, and South Korea from 6.1 to 0.76.

In 1950, women in China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Korea all had five to seven children on average. Today, only Pakistan and Nigeria remain above three. In the United States, fertility has fallen from 2.03 in 2000 to 1.62, and births are covered in our report on [births in the US](#). In the United Kingdom, the UN puts fertility at 1.53 in 2026, compared with 2.22 in 1950; long-run figures are in our report on the [UK population](#).

BIRTHS

How many babies are born each year

Because the number of women of childbearing age has kept rising, the number of births has fallen much more slowly than the fertility rate. The UN estimates 91.8 million births in 1950, rising to 143.5 million in 1990 and a peak of 146.1 million in 2012. Since then, births have fallen to 132.1 million in 2023, and the UN projects broadly stable numbers of about 132 to 136 million a year until the 2040s, before a decline to 110 million by 2100.

Number of births worldwide, 1950 to 2100 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Past the peak: Annual births peaked at 146.1 million in 2012 and are projected to fall to 110 million by 2100.

Births are increasingly concentrated in a few places. India alone accounts for 23.0 million births in 2026, more than one in six worldwide, followed by China with 8.6 million, Nigeria with 7.7 million and Pakistan with 6.9 million. Africa accounts for 36 percent of all births in 2026, and the UN projects that share will rise to 42 percent by 2050, while Asia accounts for 49 percent today and Europe for less than 5 percent.

Countries with the most births, 2026 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

One in six babies: India records 23 million births a year, almost as many as China, Nigeria and Pakistan combined.

BELOW REPLACEMENT

How much of the world is below replacement

The share of humanity living in countries with fertility below 2.1 children per woman has risen rapidly. In 1990, 59 countries were below that level, home to 23 percent of the world population. By 2000 the figure was 89 countries and 46 percent, and by 2023 it was 129 countries and 67 percent. In 2026, 135 countries and areas with 72 percent of the world population are below replacement, and 67 countries with 28 percent of the population are below 1.5 children per woman.

Share of the world population living in countries with fertility below 2.1, 1990 to 2026 (%)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Seven in ten: 72 percent of people now live in a country where fertility is below replacement level, up from 23 percent in 1990.

Global fertility as a whole is now at a turning point. The UN medium variant projects that world fertility will reach 2.1 children per woman around 2050. Some researchers believe the world has already crossed the threshold: a working paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research in September 2026 argued that, as of 2026, humanity is likely below replacement fertility for the first time, because recent birth data in several large countries have come in below UN projections. Either way, the long-term direction is clear.

TEEN BIRTHS

Adolescent births

Births to teenage mothers have declined sharply. According to a BusinessStats calculation from UN age-specific fertility data, the global adolescent birth rate fell from about 75 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 in 1990 to about 38 in 2024, and is projected at 37 in 2026. That still means roughly 12 million births to girls aged 15 to 19 every year, not counting births to girls under 15.

Adolescent birth rate by region, 2000 and 2026 (births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-fertility-rate

Sub-Saharan Africa stands out: The teen birth rate there is 90 per 1,000, ten times the level in Europe and Northern America.

Sub-Saharan Africa has by far the highest adolescent birth rate, at about 90 births per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 19 in 2026, down from 129 in 2000. Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific islands follow at about 48. The steepest fall has taken place in Central and Southern Asia, where the rate has dropped from 106 to 23 since 2000, partly reflecting later marriage in India and Bangladesh. The highest rates are found in the Central African Republic, Mozambique and Equatorial Guinea, at about 150 per 1,000.

WHY

Why fertility is falling

Demographers point to a set of forces that tend to come with economic development: lower child mortality, so parents no longer need many births to ensure some children survive; more education and paid work for women; urbanisation, which makes children more expensive (see our [urbanization statistics](#)); and wider access to contraception. In high-income countries, the costs of housing, childcare and education, insecure jobs and later partnership are now the main factors.

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) surveyed adults in 14 countries representing 37 percent of the world population for its State of World Population 2025 report. It found that the main barrier was not a lack of desire for children: 39 percent of respondents cited financial limitations as the main reason for having fewer children than they wanted. Job insecurity and fear for the future, including climate change and war, were each cited by about one in five respondents, and one in four said they had been unable to have a child at the time they wanted.

What the UNFPA survey found (2025)

- 39 percent cited financial limitations as the main reason for having fewer children than wanted.
- About one in five cited job insecurity, and about one in five fear for the future.
- One in four felt unable to have a child at their preferred time.
- 13 percent of women and 8 percent of men cited an unequal share of domestic work.
- Survey covered 14 countries with 37 percent of the world population.



OUTLOOK

Fertility to 2100

The UN projects global fertility of 2.10 children per woman in 2050 and 1.84 in 2100. Africa is expected to approach replacement level only around 2090, while fertility in Europe and East Asia is projected to recover slightly from its current lows. Because there are still many young people in the world, the global population will keep growing for decades even with fertility at or below replacement, a pattern known as population momentum. Our reports on [population growth by country](#) and the [global ageing population](#) show how falling fertility reshapes populations, while the [life expectancy by country](#) report covers the other half of the demographic transition.

KEY FACTS

Global fertility in numbers

Key Facts

- The world total fertility rate is 2.23 children per woman in 2026, down from 4.85 in 1950.
- 135 of 236 countries and areas, with 72 percent of the world population, are below replacement level.
- Chad has the highest fertility at 5.84 children per woman; Hong Kong and South Korea the lowest at about 0.75.
- About 132.5 million babies are born in 2026; births peaked at 146.1 million in 2012.
- India accounts for 23 million births a year, more than one in six worldwide.
- The adolescent birth rate has halved since 1990 to about 37 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19.
- The UN projects world fertility of 2.10 in 2050 and 1.84 in 2100.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the global fertility rate?

The world total fertility rate is 2.23 children per woman in 2026, according to UN projections, down from 4.85 in 1950 and 2.75 in 2000.

Is the world below replacement fertility?

Not quite, according to the UN, which projects global fertility of 2.23 in 2026 and 2.10 around 2050. However, 72 percent of people already live in countries below 2.1, and an NBER working paper from September 2026 argues the world as a whole is likely already below replacement.

Which country has the highest fertility rate?

Chad has the highest fertility rate of countries with at least 1 million people, at 5.84 children per woman in 2026, followed by Somalia and DR Congo at 5.80.

Which country has the lowest fertility rate?

Among countries with at least 1 million people, Hong Kong (0.75) and South Korea (0.76) have the lowest fertility rates in 2026. Including smaller areas, Macao is lowest at 0.70.

How many babies are born each year?

About 132.5 million babies are born in 2026, or roughly 363,000 a day. Births peaked at 146.1 million in 2012.

Which country has the most births?

India has the most births, about 23 million in 2026, followed by China with 8.6 million, Nigeria with 7.7 million and Pakistan with 6.9 million.

Why are birth rates falling?

Falling child mortality, more education and work for women, urbanisation and access to contraception explain most of the long-term decline. In richer countries, costs and insecurity matter most: in a 2025 UNFPA survey, 39 percent cited financial limitations.



What will the fertility rate be in 2100?

The UN projects global fertility of 1.84 children per woman in 2100, with Africa close to 2.0 and most other regions between 1.6 and 1.8.

SOURCES

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[UN DESA Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results.

[United Nations Population Fund](#) - State of World Population 2025: The real fertility crisis.

[National Bureau of Economic Research](#) - Fernandez-Villaverde and Norrick, Terra Incognita: The Economics of a Shrinking World, Working Paper 35809, September 2026.



STATISTICS REPORT

Global deaths and death rates statistics & facts

A larger, older world means more deaths. About 63.6 million people die each year, and that number is set to rise by half by 2050 even as people live longer. In 56 countries, deaths already exceed births. This report sets out the numbers on mortality, causes of death and natural decrease.

Updated Oct 18, 2026 · businessstats.com/global-death-rate

63.6M DEATHS IN 2026	174,000 DEATHS A DAY	7.7 PER 1,000 PEOPLE
9.5M HEART DISEASE DEATHS	56 NATURAL DECREASE COUNTRIES	2084 DEATHS EXCEED BIRTHS

OVERVIEW

Global deaths at a glance

About 63.6 million people will die worldwide in 2026, according to UN projections, or roughly 174,000 every day. The global crude death rate, the number of deaths per 1,000 people, stands at 7.7, far below the 19.4 recorded in 1950. Yet the number of deaths is rising again, because the world population is larger and older. The UN expects annual deaths to pass 90 million by 2050 and, around 2084, to exceed the number of births for the first time in modern history.

Death rates differ widely between countries, but not always in the way one might expect. The highest crude death rates are in eastern Europe, where populations are old, while the lowest are in the Gulf states, where populations are young. This report covers the number of deaths, death rates by country and region, the leading causes of death, the impact of COVID-19, and the growing number of countries where deaths outnumber births. It complements our report on [life expectancy by country](#), which measures mortality independently of age structure.

63.6 million Deaths in 2026 About 174,000 a day.	7.7 Deaths per 1,000 people World crude death rate, 2026.
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15.3

Bulgaria

Highest crude death rate, countries with 1 million or more people.

56

Countries with more deaths than births

Home to 27 percent of the world population.

Crude death rate versus life expectancy

- The crude death rate counts deaths per 1,000 people in a year. It depends heavily on age structure, so countries with many older people have high rates even when health is good.
- Life expectancy and age-standardised death rates remove the effect of age structure and are better for comparing health.
- A rising number of deaths does not mean health is getting worse: it mostly reflects population growth and ageing.

TREND

The number of deaths since 1950

The number of deaths worldwide changed surprisingly little for decades. The UN estimates 48.5 million deaths in 1950 and 49.8 million in 1990, even as the world population doubled, because death rates fell sharply. The main exception was the famine in China around 1960, when global deaths spiked to about 54.6 million. Since 2000 the number has risen steadily, from 52.2 million to 58.4 million in 2019, as the large generations born after the Second World War reached older ages.

Number of deaths worldwide, 1950 to 2100 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

Doubling ahead: Annual deaths are projected to rise from 63.6 million in 2026 to 91.9 million in 2050 and 122.9 million in 2100.

The UN projects that annual deaths will reach 67.8 million in 2030, 80.0 million in 2040 and 91.9 million in 2050. By 2100 they are expected to exceed 120 million a year. This is not a sign of worsening health: life expectancy is projected to keep rising over the same period. It is the arithmetic of an ageing world, in

which a growing share of the population is in the oldest age groups, where death rates are highest.

PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 mortality shock

The COVID-19 pandemic produced the sharpest rise in deaths in decades. UN estimates show 58.4 million deaths in 2019, 63.5 million in 2020 and 69.7 million in 2021, before a fall to 62.3 million in 2022 and 61.7 million in 2023. Compared with 2019, that means about 5.2 million more deaths in 2020 and 11.4 million more in 2021. The global crude death rate rose from 7.5 to 8.8 per 1,000. The World Health Organization reports that COVID-19 was the leading cause of death worldwide in 2021 but fell to 14th place in 2023, with about 0.9 million deaths. Our report on [COVID-19 statistics](#) covers reported and excess deaths by country.

YEAR	DEATHS (MILLIONS)	CRUDE DEATH RATE (PER 1,000)
2019	58.4	7.5
2020	63.5	8.1
2021	69.7	8.8
2022	62.3	7.8
2023	61.7	7.6
2026 (projection)	63.6	7.7

CAUSES

Leading causes of death

Noncommunicable diseases now dominate global mortality. According to the WHO Global Health Estimates published in October 2026, about 61 million people died in 2023, and noncommunicable diseases accounted for 74 percent of all deaths, up from 58 percent in 2000. Ischaemic heart disease was the leading cause, with about 9.5 million deaths, followed by stroke with 6.8 million and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with 3.6 million.

Leading causes of death worldwide, 2023 (million deaths)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

Heart disease first: Ischaemic heart disease and stroke together caused 16.3 million deaths, more than a quarter of the total.

Lower respiratory infections caused 2.7 million deaths in 2023, back to their pre-pandemic level, and Alzheimer disease and other dementias 2.1 million, making dementia the fifth leading cause of death, up from 19th in 2000. Diabetes caused 2.0 million deaths and lung cancer 1.8 million. Hypertensive heart disease ranked eighth and kidney diseases ninth; deaths from kidney disease rose by 86 percent between 2000 and 2023. The ten leading causes together accounted for 33 million deaths, or 54 percent of the total.

The pattern differs sharply by income. In low-income countries, communicable diseases such as lower respiratory infections, malaria, tuberculosis and HIV still account for seven of the ten leading causes, although for the first time in 2023 they caused less than half of all deaths there. In high-income countries, nine of the top ten causes are noncommunicable. Among children, UN estimates show 4.9 million deaths under age five in 2024, including 2.3 million newborns, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 58 percent. Child mortality is covered in our report on [child health and nutrition](#).

Leading causes of death, 2023 (WHO)

- Ischaemic heart disease: 9.5 million deaths.
- Stroke: 6.8 million.
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: 3.6 million.
- Lower respiratory infections: 2.7 million.
- Alzheimer disease and other dementias: 2.1 million.
- Diabetes: 2.0 million.
- Trachea, bronchus and lung cancers: 1.8 million.

HIGHEST

Countries with the highest death rates

The highest crude death rates in the world are found in eastern and south-eastern Europe. Among countries with at least one million people, Bulgaria has the highest rate in 2026 at 15.3 deaths per 1,000 people, followed by Latvia (14.8), Serbia (14.3), Moldova and Lithuania (14.2) and Croatia (14.0). Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia all record 13 or more.

Countries with the highest crude death rate, 2026 (deaths per 1,000 people)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

Old and shrinking: Every country in the top twelve is in eastern or south-eastern Europe, where ageing combines with emigration and high male mortality.

These countries combine an old age structure, the result of decades of low fertility and large-scale emigration of young adults, with relatively high mortality among middle-aged men. Several of them, including Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Russia, also have some of the largest gaps between female and male life expectancy in the world. Their high crude death rates are therefore a mix of ageing and genuinely high mortality.

LOWEST

Countries with the lowest death rates

The lowest crude death rates are found in the Gulf states. In the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, there is about 1 death per 1,000 people in 2026, and Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are all between 1.8 and 2.3. Palestine, Jordan and Iraq follow, with rates between 2.9 and 4.2.

Countries with the lowest crude death rate, 2026 (deaths per 1,000 people)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

Young populations die less: In the UAE and Qatar, large numbers of young migrant workers keep the death rate at about 1 per 1,000.

These low rates mainly reflect very young populations. In the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, less than 2 percent of the population is aged 65 or over, because much of the population consists of working-age migrants. Low crude death rates are therefore not the same as the best health: Japan, which has one of the highest life expectancies in the world, records 12.8 deaths per 1,000 people, because nearly a third of its population is 65 or older.

REGIONS

Deaths by continent

Asia accounts for 34.9 million of the 63.6 million deaths projected for 2026, or 55 percent, roughly in line with its share of the world population. Africa records 11.9 million deaths, Europe 8.5 million, Latin America and the Caribbean 4.6 million and Northern America 3.5 million. Europe has the highest crude death rate of any continent at 11.4 per 1,000, against 7.5 in Africa and 6.8 in Latin America.

Crude death rate by continent, 2026 and 2050 (deaths per 1,000 people)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

Africa goes the other way: Death rates are projected to rise everywhere except Africa, whose young population keeps the rate falling.

Over the next quarter century, the UN expects death rates to rise in every continent except Africa. In Asia the rate is projected to climb from 7.2 to 9.9 per 1,000 by 2050 and in Latin America from 6.8 to 9.5, as their populations age quickly. Europe is expected to reach 13.5. In Africa, by contrast, the death rate is projected to edge down from 7.5 to 7.2, because its population will remain young even as it grows.

COUNTRIES

Countries with the most deaths

In absolute numbers, China records the most deaths, about 11.5 million in 2026, followed by India with 9.9 million and the United States with 3.1 million. Nigeria, Indonesia, Russia, Pakistan, Brazil, Japan and Germany complete the top ten. China records more deaths than India despite having a slightly smaller population, because its population is older. Population trends in China are covered in our report on the [population of China](#).

Countries with the most deaths, 2026 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

China leads: Older and only slightly smaller than India, China records 1.6 million more deaths a year.

NATURAL DECREASE

When deaths outnumber births

A growing number of countries record more deaths than births each year, a situation known as natural decrease. In 1990 there were only 7 such countries and areas. The number rose to 19 in 2000 and 39 in 2019, and the UN projects 56 in 2026. Together they are home to about 2.3 billion people, or 27 percent of the world population, mainly because China joined the group in 2021.

Countries with the largest natural decrease, 2026 (thousands)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

China loses 2.9 million a year: Deaths in China exceed births by about 2.9 million, more than three times the gap in Japan.

China has by far the largest natural decrease: about 11.5 million deaths against 8.6 million births in 2026, a gap of 2.9 million. Japan records about 817,000 more deaths than births, Russia 655,000, Germany 352,000 and Italy 290,000. In the United Kingdom, births and deaths are roughly in balance, and immigration drives population growth. In Germany, immigration offsets part of the natural decrease, while in Japan, Italy and China the population is shrinking. These dynamics are explored in our report on [population growth by country](#). Low birth numbers are the other half of the story, covered in our report on the [global fertility rate](#).

For the world as a whole, the UN medium variant projects that deaths will exceed births from 2084, the same period in which the global population is expected to peak at about 10.3 billion. In 2026, births still outnumber deaths by about 68.9 million, down from a peak of 93.7 million in 1990.

Births and deaths worldwide, 1950 to 2100 (millions)

Interactive chart online: businessstats.com/global-death-rate

The lines cross: Deaths are projected to overtake births around 2084, when the world population peaks.



OUTLOOK

The outlook for deaths

The number of deaths will be one of the defining demographic trends of the coming decades. Health systems will face more deaths from chronic disease, dementia and frailty, and many countries will see shrinking populations. At the same time, death rates at each age are projected to keep falling, so people will continue to live longer on average. The ageing of the population behind this trend is examined in our report on the [global ageing population](#), and the broader context in our [world population statistics](#).

KEY FACTS

Global deaths in numbers

Key Facts

- About 63.6 million people die worldwide in 2026, or 174,000 a day.
- The global crude death rate is 7.7 per 1,000, down from 19.4 in 1950.
- COVID-19 pushed deaths to 69.7 million in 2021, 11.4 million more than in 2019.
- Ischaemic heart disease caused 9.5 million deaths in 2023, the leading cause worldwide.
- Bulgaria has the highest crude death rate at 15.3 per 1,000; the UAE and Qatar the lowest at about 1.
- 56 countries record more deaths than births in 2026, led by China.
- Annual deaths are projected to reach 91.9 million in 2050 and exceed births from 2084.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many people die each year?

About 63.6 million people die worldwide in 2026, according to UN projections, or roughly 174,000 a day. WHO counted about 61 million deaths in 2023.

What is the global death rate?

The global crude death rate is 7.7 deaths per 1,000 people in 2026, down from 19.4 in 1950. It is projected to rise to 9.5 by 2050 as the population ages.

What is the leading cause of death in the world?

Ischaemic heart disease is the leading cause of death, with about 9.5 million deaths in 2023, followed by stroke with 6.8 million, according to WHO.

Which country has the highest death rate?

Among countries with at least 1 million people, Bulgaria has the highest crude death rate at 15.3 per 1,000 in 2026, followed by Latvia at 14.8.

Which country has the lowest death rate?

The United Arab Emirates and Qatar have the lowest crude death rates, at about 1 death per 1,000 people, because their populations are very young.

How many people died during COVID-19?

UN estimates show about 5.2 million more deaths in 2020 and 11.4 million more in 2021 than in 2019. Global deaths peaked at 69.7 million in 2021.

In which countries do deaths exceed births?

In 2026, 56 countries and areas record more deaths than births, including China, Japan, Russia, Germany and Italy. China has the largest gap at about 2.9 million.

When will deaths exceed births worldwide?

The UN medium variant projects that global deaths will exceed births from 2084, around the time the world population peaks at about 10.3 billion.



SOURCES

[United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division](#) - World Population Prospects 2024, medium variant.

[World Health Organization](#) - The top 10 causes of death, fact sheet, October 2026.

[World Health Organization](#) - New WHO estimates show changing global health landscape, October 2026.

[UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation](#) - Levels and trends in child mortality, report 2025.



STATISTICS REPORT

LGBTQI+ online dating worldwide statistics & facts

Updated Sep 26, 2026 · businessstats.com/lgbtqi-online-dating-worldwide

51% LGB ADULTS DATED ONLINE	28% STRAIGHT ADULTS	9% IDENTIFY AS LGBT+
15M GRINDR MONTHLY USERS	\$439.9M GRINDR 2025 REVENUE	65 STATES CRIMINALISING

Overview

Why online dating matters more for LGBTQI+ people

For lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people, online dating is not just one option among many. In most places, LGBTQI+ people are a small minority of the population, which makes it hard to meet potential partners through work, friends or chance encounters, and in many countries being open in public carries social or legal risk. Dating apps solved both problems at once: they make it easy to find other LGBTQI+ people nearby and allow a first contact to happen privately. That is why LGBTQI+ adults use dating apps at almost twice the rate of straight adults, and why same-sex couples are far more likely than opposite-sex couples to have met online.

The same technology also brings distinct risks. LGBTQI+ users report more harassment than straight users, dating apps have been used by police in several countries to identify and arrest gay and transgender people, and the sensitive nature of the data on these apps has led to record privacy fines. This report sets out the data on the size of the LGBTQI+ population, how LGBTQI+ people use online dating, the leading apps and their business performance, and the safety, privacy and legal issues that shape queer dating around the world.

Population



How many people identify as LGBT+?

Any picture of LGBTQI+ online dating starts with the size of the community. In a 26-country survey carried out by Ipsos in April and May 2025, an average of 9 percent of adults identified as LGBT+, meaning they described their sexual orientation as other than heterosexual or their gender identity as other than cisgender. The share varied widely, from 14 percent in Brazil to 5 percent in Colombia, South Korea and Poland.

Share of Adults Who Identify as LGBT+ by Country, 2025 (%) Adults describing themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, transgender, non-binary or another non-heterosexual or non-cisgender identity.

Data:

Ipsos LGBT+ Pride Report 2025, a 26-country Global Advisor survey of 19,028 adults, 25 April to 9 May 2025.

Note:

online samples in several countries are more urban and educated than the general population. Self-identification depends on how safe people feel answering. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

From 14 percent to 5 percent: Brazil had the highest share of adults identifying as LGBT+ in 2025, while Colombia, South Korea and Poland had the lowest.

Surveys like this measure self-identification, which depends on how comfortable people feel disclosing an identity. In countries where LGBTQI+ people face discrimination, the true share is likely to be understated, and in many of the countries where dating apps are most dangerous for LGBTQI+ users, no reliable survey data exists at all. The official 2021 census for England and Wales, the first to ask the question, found that 3.2 percent of people aged 16 and over, about 1.5 million, identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or another minority sexual orientation, a lower figure than most online surveys produce.

Generations

Younger generations drive the change

The single clearest pattern in the data is age. Across the 26 countries in the Ipsos survey, 14 percent of Gen Z adults identified as LGBT+, compared with 9 percent of millennials, 6 percent of Gen X and 5 percent



of baby boomers. Younger adults are both more likely to identify as LGBT+ and more likely to use dating apps, which is why the LGBTQI+ dating market is growing faster than the dating market as a whole.

Share of Adults Who Identify as LGBT+ by Generation, 26-Country Average, 2025 (%)Average across 26 countries surveyed by Ipsos.

Data:

Ipsos LGBT+ Pride Report 2025.

Note:

Gen Z born 1997 or later, millennials 1981 to 1996, Gen X 1965 to 1980, baby boomers 1946 to 1964.

Compiled by BusinessStats.Switch to the table for exact figures.

Almost three times as likely: Gen Z adults were nearly three times as likely as baby boomers to identify as LGBT+.

Bisexuality accounts for much of this generational shift. Younger adults are far more likely than older ones to describe themselves as bisexual or pansexual, and many dating apps have responded by adding more options for sexual orientation and gender identity. Tinder lets users choose from Man, Woman or Beyond Binary, with more options in some markets and a Not listed option, while Hinge and Bumble offer many more gender identities to choose from. For many younger users, the choice is no longer between a mainstream app and a gay app, but about which apps represent them best, just as they spread their time across many of the largest social networks.

United States

LGBTQ+ identification in the US has more than doubled

The United States has the longest-running measure of LGBTQ+ identity. Gallup found that 9.0 percent of US adults identified as LGBTQ+ in 2025, close to the record 9.3 percent of 2024 and more than double the 3.5 percent recorded when it first asked the question in 2012.

Share of US Adults Who Identify as LGBTQ+, 2012 to 2025 (%)Adults identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or another non-heterosexual identity.

Data:

Gallup, LGBTQ+ Identification Holds at 9% in U.S. (February 2026), based on telephone interviews with 13,454 US adults in 2025; earlier years from previous Gallup releases.



Note:

selected years shown. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

More than doubled: the share of US adults identifying as LGBTQ+ rose from 3.5 percent in 2012 to 9.0 percent in 2025.

The rise is almost entirely driven by younger adults. In 2025, 23 percent of US adults aged 18 to 29 identified as LGBTQ+, compared with 10.4 percent of those aged 30 to 49, 3.1 percent of those aged 50 to 64 and 2.3 percent of those aged 65 and over. For dating apps, that means nearly one in four young American adults is a potential user of LGBTQ+ dating features, a far larger market than a decade ago. For the wider demographic picture, see our data on [the US population by sex and age](#).

Identities

Bisexual people are the largest group

Within the LGBTQ+ population, bisexual people are by far the largest group. In the Gallup data for 2025, 5.3 percent of all US adults identified as bisexual, 1.6 percent as gay, 1.4 percent as lesbian and 1.1 percent as transgender, with another 0.5 percent choosing another identity. Some people choose more than one label, so these shares add up to more than the overall total.

US Adults by LGBTQ+ Identity, 2025 (% of all adults) Share of all US adults choosing each identity.

Data:

Gallup, 2025.

Note:

respondents could select more than one identity, so shares add up to more than the 9.0 percent total.

Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Bisexual people lead: 5.3 percent of US adults identified as bisexual in 2025, more than gay and lesbian adults combined.

This matters for dating. Bisexual people often use mainstream apps such as Tinder, Hinge and Bumble, where they can match with people of more than one gender, while gay men have historically concentrated on specialist apps such as Grindr. Lesbian and queer women, trans and non-binary users have fewer dedicated options, and several apps have been built specifically to serve them, from HER to Taimi and Lex.

Usage

LGB adults use online dating at almost twice the rate

The most detailed data on how LGBTQI+ people use dating apps comes from the Pew Research Center, which surveyed 6,034 US adults in July 2022. It found that 51 percent of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults had used a dating site or app, compared with 28 percent of straight adults. Among LGB adults, 13 percent were using one at the time of the survey, 11 percent had used one in the past year and 27 percent more than a year earlier.

Online Dating Use and Harassment: LGB vs Straight Adults in the US (%) Share of adults who have ever used online dating, and share of online daters who experienced each behaviour.

Data:

Pew Research Center, From Looking for Love to Swiping the Field: Online Dating in the U.S. (February 2023) and About half of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults have used online dating (June 2023), survey of 6,034 US adults, 5 to 17 July 2022.

Note:

harassment figures are among adults who have used online dating. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

More use, more abuse: LGB adults were far more likely than straight adults to have dated online, and far more likely to have received unwanted explicit messages.

Online dating is also far more important to how LGBTQI+ people form relationships. According to Pew, 24 percent of partnered LGB adults met their current spouse or partner on a dating site or app, rising to 37 percent of partnered LGB men, compared with about 10 percent of all partnered US adults. Research by sociologists Michael Rosenfeld, Reuben Thomas and Sonia Hausen, based on the How Couples Meet and Stay Together survey, found that about 60 percent of same-sex couples who met in 2017 had met online, compared with 39 percent of heterosexual couples. For same-sex couples, the internet has become the main way to meet a partner.

Overall experiences are positive. Among LGB adults who have dated online, 61 percent described their experience as positive, including 64 percent of LGB men and 56 percent of LGB women, a higher share than the 53 percent of all US online daters. But half of LGB online daters, 50 percent, said they had encountered someone they thought was trying to scam them, including 60 percent of men.



Harassment

Harassment on dating apps

Harassment is a much more common experience for LGB online daters than for straight users. In the Pew survey, 56 percent of LGB online daters had received sexually explicit messages or images they did not ask for, against 34 percent of straight users. Some 42 percent had been contacted again after saying they were not interested, against 28 percent, and 33 percent had been called an offensive name, against 22 percent. Overall, 64 percent of LGB users had experienced at least one of these behaviours, compared with 45 percent of straight users.

Transgender and non-binary users face particular problems, including being reported and banned by other users who object to their presence, and receiving abusive messages about their identity. GLAAD, which rates social platforms on LGBTQ safety each year, has repeatedly criticised the moderation of anti-trans content, and its surveys suggest that about one in two LGBTQ Americans has experienced harassment or bullying. Many dating apps have introduced features to reduce abuse, including photo verification, filters that blur unsolicited explicit images, and the option to hide a profile from users who are not a match. The wider context of online abuse is covered in our data on [the biggest social media platforms and daily social media usage](#).

Grindr

Grindr: the largest LGBTQ+ app

Grindr, launched in 2009, is the largest social networking and dating app for gay, bisexual, trans and queer people, and the only one that is a listed company, which means its figures are audited and public. It had an average of about 15 million monthly active users in 2025 in more than 190 countries and territories, and an average of about 1.3 million paying users. In 2024 its paying users averaged 1.1 million, with a payer conversion rate of 7.6 percent and average revenue per paying user of 22.53 dollars a month.

Grindr Annual Revenue, 2022 to 2026 (million USD) Full-year revenue, with the company guidance for 2026.

Data:

Grindr annual results for 2022 to 2025 and second quarter 2026 results (August 2026).

Note:



2026 is company guidance of about 540 million dollars, raised in August 2026, not an actual figure.

Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

More than doubling in three years: Grindr revenue grew from 195 million dollars in 2022 to 439.9 million in 2025, and the company expects about 540 million in 2026.

Grindr has grown quickly since it began trading on the New York Stock Exchange in November 2022. Revenue rose 34 percent in 2022, 33 percent in 2023 and 2024, and 28 percent in 2025, to 439.9 million dollars. It became solidly profitable in 2025, with net income of 94.8 million dollars and adjusted EBITDA of 195.6 million, a margin of 44.5 percent. In the second quarter of 2026 revenue grew 33 percent to 138.1 million dollars, and the company raised its full-year guidance to about 540 million. Most of its revenue comes from subscriptions such as Grindr XTRA and Grindr Unlimited; advertising brought in about 54 million dollars in 2024.

Grindr has also been at the center of a corporate battle. In October 2025, its two largest shareholders, Ray Zage and James Lu, who together own more than 60 percent of the shares, offered 18 dollars a share to take the company private. A special committee of independent directors ended talks in November 2025, citing uncertainty about how the deal would be financed. Grindr is now investing heavily in AI features, which its chief executive says will make it an AI-native company. For context on how apps make money, see our data on [the most popular App Store categories](#).

Other Apps

HER, Taimi, Hornet, Blued and the wider market

Beyond Grindr, the LGBTQI+ dating market is fragmented among many smaller apps, most of them private companies that publish few verified figures. HER, founded by Robyn Exton in London in 2013 as Dattch, is the best-known app for lesbian, bisexual and queer women and non-binary people; it was acquired by Match Group, the owner of Tinder and Hinge, in May 2025. Taimi, founded in 2017, says it has more than 25 million registered users across the LGBTQ+ spectrum. Hornet, popular with gay men in Europe, Latin America and Asia, says more than 100 million people have used its apps. Scruff and Romeo serve specific communities and regions.

15M Grindr monthly users Average, 2025 and 2026.
25M+ Taimi registered users Company figure, 2024.
100M+ Hornet users to date Company claim, all time.
49M Blued registered users 2020, last public figure.



In China, Blued, founded in 2012 by a former police officer, Ma Baoli, grew into the largest gay app in the world by registered users, reporting more than 49 million registered users and about 6 million monthly active users in 2020. Its parent company, BlueCity, left the Nasdaq in 2022 and is now controlled by Newborn Town. In November 2025, Chinese authorities ordered Blued and another gay app, Finka, removed from app stores in China, including the Apple App Store, although existing users could still use them. Grindr had already been removed from the Chinese App Store in 2022.

Mainstream apps also serve a large LGBTQI+ audience. Hinge surveyed more than 14,000 daters for its 2025 LGBTQIA+ dating report and found that 82 percent of LGBTQIA+ daters on the app were looking for a life partner, and that 45 percent had considered dating outside their usual gender preference. Company figures on user numbers are self-reported and measure different things, from registered accounts to monthly users, so they cannot be compared directly. For broader app market data, see our figures on [the leading Android apps by downloads](#) and [App Store apps by category](#).

The Law

Where dating while LGBTQI+ is still a crime

For millions of LGBTQI+ people, using a dating app carries legal risk. According to ILGA World, 65 UN member states still criminalised consensual same-sex sexual acts in 2026, and in 2025 that number increased for the first time in almost a decade, as Burkina Faso criminalised same-sex relations and Trinidad and Tobago reversed a court ruling that had decriminalised them. Seven states prescribe the death penalty, and in five more it is legally possible. At the other end, 37 UN member states, plus Taiwan, recognise same-sex marriage.

UN Member States by Legal Status of Same-Sex Relationships, 2026¹ 93 UN member states grouped by whether they criminalise same-sex acts or allow same-sex marriage.

Data:

ILGA World, laws affecting LGBTI people, Pride Month 2026 update.

Note:

neither means same-sex acts are legal but same-sex marriage is not recognised nationally; Taiwan, which recognises marriage equality, is not a UN member and is excluded. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

A third of the world: 65 of the 193 UN member states still criminalise consensual same-sex acts, almost twice as many as allow same-sex marriage.

These laws shape how dating apps work. In countries where being gay is illegal, apps may be blocked, may hide themselves on the phone behind a discreet icon, or may disable features such as distance display that could reveal a user location. Grindr, for example, has shown warnings to users in Egypt about police using fake accounts, and turns off the display of distance in countries where it is considered dangerous. Even where same-sex relations are legal, restrictions on freedom of expression affect how apps can advertise and operate: ILGA counts at least 63 states that limit expression related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Entrapment

Police entrapment through dating apps

The most serious risk is the use of dating apps by police and others to entrap LGBTQI+ people. In a 2023 report, Human Rights Watch documented how security forces in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia created fake profiles on Grindr and Facebook to arrange meetings with gay and transgender people and then arrest them. Based on interviews with 90 LGBT people and 30 experts, the report documented 45 cases of arbitrary arrest involving 40 people, 20 cases of online entrapment, 17 of online extortion and 26 of online harassment, including outing.

Digital Targeting of LGBT People in Five MENA Countries: Documented Cases Cases documented by Human Rights Watch in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

Data:

Human Rights Watch, All This Terror Because of a Photo: Digital Targeting and Its Offline Consequences for LGBT People in the Middle East and North Africa (February 2023).

Note:

the cases are those documented by researchers and represent a fraction of the total; categories overlap. Compiled by BusinessStats. Switch to the table for exact figures.

Arrests follow the app: Human Rights Watch documented 45 arbitrary arrests, 20 entrapment cases and 17 extortion cases linked to digital targeting in five countries.



Most of those prosecuted were acquitted on appeal, but the report described forced phone searches, coerced confessions and denial of legal representation during detention. Human Rights Watch called on platforms to invest in content moderation in Arabic, to carry out human rights due diligence, and to design features that reduce the risk of users being identified. Government access to platform data more broadly is tracked in our figures on [government data requests to Facebook](#) and [Facebook user data requests](#).

Privacy

Privacy: the most sensitive data in dating

Data on a dating app for LGBTQI+ people reveals sexual orientation by its very nature, and often location, health status and photos. That makes privacy failures especially serious. In December 2021, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority fined Grindr 65 million kroner, then one of the largest fines under the European General Data Protection Regulation, for sharing personal data with advertising partners without valid consent. The Oslo District Court upheld the fine in July 2024 and the Borgarting Court of Appeal did so again in October 2025, confirming that information that someone uses Grindr is special category data about their sex life and sexual orientation.

In September 2026, Grindr agreed to pay 26 million pounds to settle a group action brought in England by about 12,000 UK users, who alleged that between 2018 and 2020 the app shared their HIV status and other data with advertising partners. Grindr made no admission of liability and continues to dispute the claims. These cases have pushed LGBTQI+ apps to limit data sharing, give users more control over what they reveal, and adopt stronger security, but they show how much trust users place in these platforms.

Outlook

The future of LGBTQI+ online dating

LGBTQI+ online dating is growing on almost every measure. More people identify as LGBTQI+, especially among younger adults, and they are more likely than anyone else to meet partners online. Grindr is on track to earn more than half a billion dollars in 2026, Match Group has moved into queer women dating with HER, and mainstream apps now offer far more options for sexual orientation and gender identity than they did a decade ago.

At the same time, the environment is becoming more polarised. Legal protections are expanding in some countries and narrowing in others, app bans in China and entrapment in parts of the Middle East show how states can turn dating technology against users, and privacy cases have shown the cost of mishandling



sensitive data. The next phase will be shaped by AI, as apps use it to recommend matches, detect abuse and verify identities, and by the ability of platforms to protect users in the most hostile places. For more data on how people connect online, see our statistics on [social network users worldwide](#), [social media users by gender](#), [generative AI users](#), our [social media statistics and facts](#) and [smartphone vendor market share](#).

Key Facts

LGBTQI+ online dating in numbers

A few figures summarise the picture.

51%LGB adults who have dated onlineUS, vs 28 percent of straight adults.~60%Same-sex couples who met onlineUS couples who met in 2017.\$439.9MGrindr revenue2025, up 28 percent.65UN states criminalising same-sex actsILGA World, 2026.

Together they show a community for which online dating is both essential and, in too many places, dangerous.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

In the United States, 51 percent of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults have used a dating site or app, compared with 28 percent of straight adults, according to a Pew Research Center survey from 2022.

About 60 percent of US same-sex couples who met in 2017 met online, compared with 39 percent of heterosexual couples, according to Stanford-based research. Pew found 24 percent of partnered LGB adults met their current partner on a dating app or site.

Grindr, with an average of about 15 million monthly active users in more than 190 countries. It earned 439.9 million dollars of revenue in 2025 and expects about 540 million in 2026.

An average of 9 percent across 26 countries surveyed by Ipsos in 2025, ranging from 14 percent in Brazil to 5 percent in Poland, Colombia and South Korea. In the US, Gallup found 9.0 percent in 2025.

Yes. Pew found 56 percent of LGB online daters had received unwanted explicit messages or images, against 34 percent of straight users, and 64 percent had experienced at least one form of harassment, against 45 percent.



Yes. Human Rights Watch documented police using fake profiles on Grindr and Facebook to entrap LGBT people in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia, and 65 UN member states still criminalise same-sex acts.

HER, an app for lesbian, bisexual and queer women and non-binary people founded by Robyn Exton, was acquired by Match Group, owner of Tinder and Hinge, in May 2025.

Yes. Norway fined Grindr 65 million kroner in 2021 for sharing data with advertisers without valid consent, upheld on appeal in 2025. In 2026 Grindr agreed a 26 million pound UK settlement without admitting liability.

Gen Z. In the 2025 Ipsos survey, 14 percent of Gen Z adults identified as LGBT+, against 5 percent of baby boomers. In the US, Gallup found 23 percent of adults aged 18 to 29 identified as LGBTQ+.

Sources

[Ipsos](#) - LGBT+ Pride Report 2025, 26-country survey.

[Gallup](#) - LGBTQ+ identification in the U.S., 2025.

[Office for National Statistics](#) - sexual orientation, England and Wales: Census 2021.

[Pew Research Center](#) - online dating in the U.S., 2023.

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[Human Rights Watch](#) - digital targeting of LGBT people in the Middle East and North Africa, 2023.

[Datatilsynet](#) - Norwegian Data Protection Authority decision on Grindr.

Identity figures are self-reported survey results. App user numbers other than those of Grindr are company claims. Legal data refers to UN member states. All data compiled by BusinessStats.

STATISTICS REPORT

Age distribution of billionaires globally 2026

 Updated Jul 6, 2026 · businessstats.com/age-distribution-of-billionaires-globally

65 AVERAGE AGE	20 YOUNGEST	104 OLDEST
86% MEN	14% WOMEN	35 UNDER 30

Overview

Age distribution of billionaires globally in 2026, by gender and age

The average billionaire is 65 years old in 2026, with most aged between 50 and 80. About 10 percent are under 50, nearly half are between 50 and 70, and more than 40 percent are over 70, making the billionaire class notably older than the general population. The age profile of the world billionaires offers a revealing window into how great fortunes are built and inherited, showing a class that is markedly older than the general population, concentrated in the later decades of life when wealth has had time to accumulate. At an average of 65, the typical billionaire is well into the second half of life, and the age profile of the class, heavily weighted toward the fifties, sixties and seventies, reflects the long years it usually takes to reach the very top of global wealth. Age and gender are among the most revealing lenses through which to view the billionaire class, since they show not just who holds great wealth today but how that wealth is built, inherited and passed on, and how slowly the picture is changing over time.

Men make up about 86 percent of billionaires and women about 14 percent. The age picture builds on our [billionaires by region](#) and [billionaires around the world](#) coverage.

Billionaires by Age and Gender, 2026Older, and mostly men.

Data:

Age distribution of billionaires globally in 2026, by gender and age band, based on the Forbes World Billionaires list and Wealth-X data.

Note:

Figures are the 2026 snapshot; the gender split reflects the roughly 481 women among 3,428 billionaires. Switch views with the toolbar.

Older, and mostly men: billionaires cluster in the 50-to-80 age range, peaking in the sixties, and men outnumber women in every age band, most heavily in the middle years.

The youngest billionaire in the world is 20 and the oldest is 104, a span of more than 80 years, reflecting both the rise of young technology founders and the long lives of the great inheritors, themes our [top billionaire countries](#) and [leading billionaires](#) coverage explores.

A note on the data. The figures show the age distribution of billionaires globally in 2026, by gender and age band, based on the Forbes World Billionaires list and Wealth-X data. The gender split reflects the roughly 481 women among the 3,428 billionaires in the world. Because the age and gender of every billionaire is not always publicly known, some of the figures, particularly the finer breakdowns by industry and age band, are estimates based on the available data rather than exact counts. The age bands used here follow the common Wealth-X grouping, and the gender split is based on the roughly 481 women identified among the 3,428 billionaires on the 2026 Forbes list, so the finer breakdowns are best read as approximate.

The Table

Billionaires by Age Group

Billionaires by Age Band and Gender, 2026 Click any column to sort

AGE BAND	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Under 40	60	15	75
40-49	240	35	275
50-59	570	80	650
60-69	860	130	990
70-79	730	130	860
80-89	380	65	445
90 and over	107	26	133

The table shows the number of billionaires in each age band in 2026, split by gender. It shows the concentration in the 50-to-80 range and the small numbers at the very young and very old ends of the



scale. Reading down the table shows the classic shape of the billionaire age distribution, rising from a handful of very young billionaires to a peak in the sixties before tailing off among the oldest, with men outnumbering women in every band.

The Distribution

How Old Are the World's Billionaires?

Most billionaires are between 50 and 80 years old. About 29 percent are in their sixties, the largest single group, followed by about 25 percent in their seventies and 19 percent in their fifties. Only about 2 percent are under 40. The concentration of billionaires in the 50-to-80 age range reflects a simple truth about great wealth, that it usually takes decades to build, whether through the slow growth of a business or the gradual passing down of a family fortune across generations. With about 29 percent of billionaires in their sixties and another 25 percent in their seventies, well over half of all billionaires are aged between 60 and 80, the decades in which decades of wealth accumulation reach their peak. The shape of the age distribution, rising steadily to a peak in the sixties before tailing off, is remarkably stable from year to year, a reflection of the deep structural reasons why great wealth accumulates in the later decades of life.

The concentration in later life reflects the decades it usually takes to build a great fortune, whether through business or the passing down of family wealth, a pattern our [global stock markets by country](#) coverage frames.

Age Distribution of Billionaires, 2026 (%)Most are 50 to 80.

Data:

Age distribution of billionaires globally in 2026, by gender and age band, based on the Forbes World Billionaires list and Wealth-X data.

Note:

Figures are the 2026 snapshot; the gender split reflects the roughly 481 women among 3,428 billionaires.Switch views with the toolbar.

Most are 50 to 80: about 29 percent of billionaires are in their sixties, 25 percent in their seventies and 19 percent in their fifties, with only about 2 percent under 40.

At the extremes, a small but growing group of billionaires are under 40, many of them technology founders or young heirs, while about 4 percent are over 90, reflecting the long lives of some of the great fortunes of



the past. The small but growing group of billionaires under 40, set against the roughly 4 percent who are over 90, captures the two very different faces of great wealth, the young disruptor and the long-lived inheritor, at opposite ends of the age scale. Taken together, the age distribution confirms that great wealth is overwhelmingly a phenomenon of later life, concentrated among those who have had the decades needed to build or inherit a billion-dollar fortune. The steady thickening of the youngest age bands in recent years, even as the bulk of billionaires remain in later life, is one of the clearer signs that the traditional pattern of wealth creation is beginning, however slowly, to shift toward the young.

By Gender

The Gender Gap Among Billionaires

The billionaire class is overwhelmingly male. Men make up about 86 percent of billionaires and women about 14 percent, or roughly 481 of the 3,428 billionaires in the world, a share that has risen only slowly over the years. The overwhelming dominance of men among billionaires is one of the most persistent features of global wealth, a gap that has narrowed only slowly over the years despite the rising prominence of a number of very wealthy women. The roughly 481 women among the 3,428 billionaires, about 14 percent, marks a slow rise from previous years, but it leaves the billionaire class still overwhelmingly male, with nearly six men for every woman. The persistence of such a wide gender gap, even as the number of women billionaires slowly rises, is one of the starkest illustrations of how unequally the ownership of great wealth is distributed between men and women across the world.

Women billionaires tend to be slightly older on average than men, reflecting the fact that many inherited their fortunes from husbands or fathers, a pattern our [wealthiest women](#) coverage explores in depth.

Billionaires by Gender, 2026 (%)Overwhelmingly male.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates.Switch views with the toolbar.

Overwhelmingly male: men make up about 86 percent of billionaires and women about 14 percent, or roughly 481 of the 3,428 billionaires in the world.



The share of women is highest at the very young and very old ends of the age scale, reflecting young heiresses at one end and widows who inherited great fortunes at the other, with men most dominant in the middle-aged, self-made ranks. The way women are most represented at the youngest and oldest ages, and least in the middle, is one of the more revealing patterns in the data, pointing to the central role of inheritance rather than self-made wealth in most great female fortunes. Whether the gender balance among billionaires continues to shift will depend on the rise of self-made women, particularly in the middle-aged, business-building years where men remain most dominant.

Average Age

Is the Billionaire Class Getting Older?

The average billionaire is 65 years old in 2026, down slightly from 66 in 2025. The average age has drifted upward over the long term, as the billionaire class has aged, though the recent rise of young technology founders has slowed the trend. The average age of the billionaire class has become a closely watched measure of how wealth is changing, capturing the tension between the long-established fortunes of older generations and the rapid rise of a new wave of young technology founders. At 65 in 2026, down from 66 in 2025, the average billionaire age remains close to its highest level in decades, even after the recent influx of young technology founders trimmed it slightly from its recent peak.

The gradual aging of the billionaire class reflects both longer lives and the accumulation of wealth over time, though it has been partly offset by a wave of young technology billionaires, a shift our [Nasdaq stock market coverage](#) frames.

Average Billionaire Age Over TimeA slowly aging class.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates.Switch views with the toolbar.

A slowly aging class: the average billionaire age has drifted up over the long term to about 65 in 2026, dipping slightly from 66 as young billionaires joined.

The slight dip in the average age in 2026 reflects the record number of young billionaires added in the year, many of them founders of artificial-intelligence companies who reached ten-figure fortunes at a



remarkably young age. The tug-of-war between the aging of established fortunes and the rise of young founders will shape the average age of the billionaire class in the years ahead, with the balance depending on how many new young billionaires the technology boom creates. The average age of the billionaire class has become a kind of barometer of how wealth is changing, with each year testing whether the aging of established fortunes will continue to outweigh the arrival of a new generation of young founders.

The Youngest

Who Are the Youngest Billionaires?

The youngest billionaire in the world in 2026 is Amelie Voigt Trejes, a 20-year-old heir to the Brazilian industrial group WEG. She is followed by the German pharma heir Johannes von Baumbach, also 20, and the Italian eyewear heir Clemente Del Vecchio, 21. The emergence of a record number of billionaires under 30 is one of the most striking trends in recent wealth data, a sign of how technology, huge funding rounds and inheritance have combined to create great fortunes at ever younger ages. At just 20 years old, Amelie Voigt Trejes is more than 80 years younger than the oldest billionaire, the 104-year-old George Joseph, a span that captures the extraordinary range of ages among the world billionaires. The stories of the youngest billionaires, from the heirs of great industrial dynasties to the founders of artificial-intelligence startups, capture the two very different routes by which a handful of people reach ten-figure fortunes before the age of 30.

A record 35 billionaires are under 30 in 2026, worth about 92 billion dollars between them, of whom a record 12 are self-made, many in artificial intelligence, a wave our [crypto market](#) coverage frames.

The Youngest Billionaires, 2026 (USD bn)Heirs and founders.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates.Switch views with the toolbar.

Heirs and founders: the youngest billionaires, aged 20 to 22, range from the WEG heir Amelie Voigt Trejes to the self-made Mercor founders, worth from 1 to nearly 7 billion dollars.

The youngest self-made billionaire is Surya Midha, 22, a cofounder of the artificial-intelligence recruiting startup Mercor, showing how technology and large funding rounds have made it possible to build a billion-

dollar fortune at an unprecedented age. The record number of self-made billionaires under 30, most of them in artificial intelligence, is perhaps the clearest sign yet that the technology boom is creating a new generation of very young self-made billionaires alongside the traditional young heirs. Looking ahead, the number of very young billionaires may keep rising if the technology and artificial-intelligence boom continues, potentially reshaping the age profile of the billionaire class over time.

By Industry

Which Industries Have the Youngest Billionaires?

The age of billionaires varies sharply by industry. Technology billionaires are the youngest, at about 58 years old on average, while those in energy, real estate and manufacturing are the oldest, at close to 70, reflecting the industries in which they built their wealth. The sharp variation in the age of billionaires by industry offers one of the clearest illustrations of how the sources of great wealth are changing, with the fast-moving technology sector producing far younger fortunes than the traditional industries. At about 58 years old on average, technology billionaires are more than a decade younger than those in energy, at close to 70, a gap that reflects the very different speeds at which fortunes are built in the two industries.

The youth of technology billionaires reflects the speed at which technology companies can grow, allowing founders to reach great wealth quickly, while the older age in traditional industries reflects slower, longer paths to wealth, a contrast our [biggest companies by market value](#) coverage frames.

Average Billionaire Age by IndustryTech is youngest.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates.Switch views with the toolbar.

Tech is youngest: technology billionaires are about 58 years old on average, more than a decade younger than those in energy, real estate and manufacturing.

The pattern points to a broader shift, as the rise of technology and artificial intelligence creates fortunes faster than the mining, real estate and manufacturing industries that produced many of the older billionaires. The generational shift toward younger, technology-driven fortunes, and away from the older wealth of mining, real estate and manufacturing, is one of the defining trends in the changing composition



of the billionaire class. As artificial intelligence and other fast-moving technologies create fortunes at ever greater speed, the average age of billionaires in the technology sector may fall further still, widening the gap with the older, slower-moving traditional industries.

Under 30

The Rise of the Under-30 Billionaires

The number of billionaires under 30 has surged, from about 12 in 2022 to a record 35 in 2026. The rise reflects both a wave of inheritance, as fortunes pass to younger generations, and a growing number of self-made young founders in technology. The surge in the number of very young billionaires marks a genuine shift in the pattern of wealth creation, breaking with the long-standing rule that great fortunes are built slowly over the course of a working life. The near-tripling of the number of under-30 billionaires, from about 12 in 2022 to 35 in 2026, is one of the fastest-growing trends in the billionaire data, driven by a combination of inheritance and the artificial-intelligence boom.

The surge in young billionaires marks a notable shift, since historically most billionaires accumulated their wealth later in life, a change our [global financial markets](#) coverage frames.

Billionaires Under 30 Over TimeA record 35 in 2026.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates. Switch views with the toolbar.

A record 35 in 2026: the number of billionaires under 30 rose from about 12 in 2022 to a record 35 in 2026, a record 12 of them self-made.

While most of the under-30 billionaires still inherited their fortunes, the record 12 self-made members in 2026, many of them founders of artificial-intelligence companies, point to a growing role for young entrepreneurs at the very top of global wealth. The tension between the many young heirs and the growing number of young self-made founders among the under-30 billionaires captures the two forces driving the rise of very young wealth, inheritance and technological disruption. The record dozen self-made billionaires under 30 in 2026, most of them in artificial intelligence, may prove to be an early sign of a broader change, as new technologies lower the age at which it is possible to build a billion-dollar company.

Self-Made

Self-Made or Inherited, by Age

Whether billionaires are self-made or inherited varies with age. The very youngest are mostly heirs, since building a great fortune from scratch takes time, while the middle-aged are the most likely to be self-made, having had the years to build their businesses. The relationship between age and whether a billionaire is self-made or an heir reveals much about how fortunes are made, with inheritance dominant at the youngest ages and self-made wealth peaking in the middle years of life.

The high share of inheritance among the very young reflects the passing down of family fortunes, while the self-made peak in middle age reflects the decades it usually takes to build a business to billion-dollar scale, a pattern our [largest asset managers](#) coverage frames.

Self-Made Share by Age Band (%) Peaks in middle age.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates. Switch views with the toolbar.

Peaks in middle age: the self-made share is lowest among the very young, who are mostly heirs, rising to a peak among the middle-aged, who built their fortunes over decades.

Among the oldest billionaires, the self-made share falls again, reflecting an earlier era in which more fortunes were inherited, though the overall trend across the billionaire class has been toward a rising share of self-made wealth. The overall shift toward self-made wealth across the billionaire class, even as inheritance dominates at the youngest ages, reflects the growing role of entrepreneurship, especially in technology, in the creation of great fortunes.

Age and Wealth

Does Wealth Grow With Age?

Wealth tends to rise with age, up to a point. The average net worth of billionaires climbs from about 3.5 billion dollars for those under 40 to about 6.5 billion for those in their seventies, before easing among the very oldest. The tendency of billionaire wealth to rise with age, at least until the final decades, reflects the

power of compounding, as fortunes grow through decades of investment and reinvestment before being given away or passed on. The rise in average net worth from about 3.5 billion dollars for the youngest billionaires to about 6.5 billion for those in their seventies reflects the power of decades of compounding, before philanthropy and inheritance thin the fortunes of the very oldest.

The rise in wealth with age reflects the compounding of fortunes over time, as investments grow and businesses mature, a pattern our [financial markets in the US](#) coverage frames.

Average Net Worth by Age Band (USD bn) Wealth rises with age.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates. Switch views with the toolbar.

Wealth rises with age: average net worth climbs from about 3.5 billion dollars for billionaires under 40 to about 6.5 billion for those in their seventies, before easing.

The easing of average wealth among the very oldest billionaires reflects the giving away of fortunes to charity and the passing of wealth to heirs, which can reduce the net worth held directly by the oldest members of the billionaire class. The dip in average wealth among the very oldest billionaires, as fortunes are given away or passed on, is a reminder that great wealth is not always held to the end of life, but often dispersed through philanthropy and inheritance. Understanding how wealth rises and then eases with age is important for making sense of the billionaire class, since it reflects not just the building of fortunes but also their eventual dispersal through giving and inheritance.

Women by Age

Where Women Billionaires Are Most Common

The share of women among billionaires varies with age. Women make up about a fifth of billionaires under 40 and over 90, but only about 12 to 15 percent in the middle age bands, reflecting the different paths of young heiresses and older widows. The way the share of women among billionaires varies with age tells a subtle story about the different paths to great wealth for women, shaped by inheritance at the youngest and oldest ages and by the dominance of self-made men in between.

The higher share of women at the young and old ends reflects inheritance, with young heiresses at one end and widows who inherited great fortunes at the other, a pattern our [leading investment banks coverage](#) frames.

Women Share by Age Band (%) Highest at the extremes.

Data:

Derived from the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X age data, compiled by BusinessStats.

Note:

Age bands in years; some gender and industry figures are estimates. Switch views with the toolbar.

Highest at the extremes: women make up about a fifth of billionaires under 40 and over 90, but only 12 to 15 percent in the middle age bands.

The lower share of women in the middle age bands reflects the dominance of self-made men, who built their fortunes through business in the decades of their forties, fifties and sixties, when women remain a small minority. The persistence of the gender gap in the middle age bands, where self-made fortunes are most common, underlines how far women still have to go before they are building the largest fortunes from scratch in significant numbers. Closing the gender gap in the middle age bands, where self-made fortunes are built, will be the key to any lasting rise in the share of women among billionaires, since it is there that the great self-made fortunes are overwhelmingly male.

Key Facts

Billionaire Ages in Numbers

A few numbers capture the picture. The average billionaire is 65 years old, the youngest is 20 and the oldest 104, most are aged between 50 and 80, and men outnumber women nearly six to one. These figures together paint a detailed portrait of the billionaire class, older and overwhelmingly male, but slowly changing as young founders and a growing number of women begin to reshape the age and gender profile of global wealth. The picture that emerges is of a billionaire class shaped by the long timescales of wealth creation and inheritance, older and overwhelmingly male, yet showing the first signs of change as young founders and women slowly gain ground.

The figures matter because the age and gender of billionaires reveal how great fortunes are built and passed down, and how that is slowly changing, a shift our [euro to dollar exchange rate coverage](#) sets in the



global context.

65Average ageYears old. 20YoungestAmelie Voigt Trejes. 104OldestGeorge Joseph. 14%WomenOf
billionaires.

Together these figures show a billionaire class that is older and overwhelmingly male, but slowly changing, with a rising number of young technology founders and a slowly growing share of women.

Big Picture

Billionaire Age Distribution: The Big Picture

Taken together, the age and gender distribution of billionaires in 2026 maps how great fortunes are built and inherited, still concentrated among older men but slowly changing, a story our [gold as an investment coverage sets against other assets](#).

Whether the billionaire class grows younger and more balanced will depend on the rise of young founders and women, but for now it remains older and mostly male, alongside the markets in our [hedge fund assets](#) and [federal funds rate](#) overviews.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions: Billionaire Ages

About 65 years old, according to Forbes, down slightly from 66 in 2025. Most billionaires are aged between 50 and 80.

Amelie Voigt Trejes, a 20-year-old heir to the Brazilian industrial group WEG, is the youngest billionaire in the world in 2026.

George Joseph, an American insurance tycoon, who turned 104 in 2025, is the oldest billionaire in the world in 2026.

A record 35 in 2026, about 1 percent of the total, worth about 92 billion dollars between them, of whom a record 12 are self-made.

About 14 percent in 2026, or roughly 481 of the 3,428 billionaires in the world. The billionaire class remains overwhelmingly male.

Surya Midha, 22, a cofounder of the artificial-intelligence recruiting startup Mercor, is the youngest self-made billionaire in 2026.



Technology, whose billionaires are about 58 years old on average, the youngest of any industry, reflecting the speed at which tech firms grow.

About two-thirds of billionaires are self-made overall, but the very youngest are mostly heirs, while the middle-aged are the most likely to be self-made.

The average age has drifted upward over the long term, though it dipped slightly to 65 in 2026 as a record number of young billionaires joined the list.

From the Forbes World Billionaires list 2026 and Wealth-X data on the age and gender of billionaires, based on the 2026 snapshot.

Sources

Forbes World Billionaires list (2026 edition) - Source for the average age, youngest and oldest billionaires, and gender split.

Wealth-X and Altrata age data - Source for the age distribution by band and gender, compiled by BusinessStats.

[Forbes World Billionaires](#) - Publishes the annual data on billionaire age and gender.

Figures show the age distribution of billionaires globally in 2026, by gender and age band, from the Forbes World Billionaires list and Wealth-X data. The average billionaire is 65, the youngest 20 and the oldest 104. Most are aged between 50 and 80, men make up about 86 percent and women about 14 percent, and a record 35 billionaires are under 30. Some of the finer breakdowns by industry and age are estimates. This is data journalism, not investment advice.

STATISTICS REPORT

Estimated population of England and Wales in 2026, by religion

 Updated Sep 13, 2026 · businessstats.com/number-of-religious-people-in-england-and-wales-by-religion

~41% CHRISTIAN IN 2026 (ESTIMATE) - DOWN FROM 59% IN 2011	~41% NO RELIGION IN 2026 - NOW LEVEL WITH CHRISTIANITY	~7.5% MUSLIM IN 2026 - UP FROM 4.9% IN 2011
59.3% WERE CHRISTIAN IN 2011 - THE STARTING POINT	~61.5M ESTIMATED TOTAL POPULATION IN 2026	-18pp FALL IN CHRISTIAN SHARE SINCE 2011

Overview

Estimated population of England and Wales in 2011 and 2026, by religious faith

The religious make-up of England and Wales has changed more dramatically in the past decade and a half than at almost any comparable period in its long history. In 2011, nearly 60% of the population identified as Christian and only a quarter reported no religion, a balance that had held in broad terms for generations. By 2026, the estimated figures show Christianity falling to around 41%, now roughly level with the 41% who report no religion, while the Muslim share has climbed to about 7.5% to become the largest non-Christian faith. This represents the end of Christianity as the clear majority faith and the emergence of a genuinely diverse, largely secular society in which no single religious identity commands a majority. For a country with an established church and centuries of Christian heritage, this is a profound and historically significant shift. The wider continental picture is explored in our [religion in Europe analysis](#).

These estimates are projected from the two most recent censuses, in 2011 and 2021, which captured the pace of change with unusual clarity. The 2021 census made headlines around the world when it revealed that, for the first time in the history of the census, fewer than half the population described themselves as Christian, at 46.2%, down from 59.3% in 2011. The announcement, coming just weeks after Britain appointed its first Hindu prime minister, was widely seen as a landmark moment in the country's long secularisation. Projecting the same trend forward to 2026 suggests Christianity and "no religion" have now

converged at roughly equal shares, a remarkable milestone in a country with an established Christian church. The pace of actual churchgoing behind these affiliation figures is covered in our [Church of England attendance analysis](#), while the trend in belief itself is in our [belief in God in Great Britain analysis](#).

This article sets out the estimated population of England and Wales by religion in 2026 and compares it with 2011, examining the steep decline of Christianity, the rapid rise of those with no religion, the growth of Islam and other minority faiths, and the forces driving these changes. It also looks at the important caveats around census religion data, which measures affiliation rather than active belief or practice. The global context of faith is discussed in our [world religions analysis](#).

Main religious groups, 2026 Main Religious Groups in England and Wales, 2026 (% of Population) Christian ~41% and no religion ~41% are now level at the top, with Muslim ~7.5% the largest of the smaller groups.

Source: ONS, Statista 2026. 2026snapshot

~41% (2026)Christian - Down From 59.3% in 2011Christianity remains the largest single faith but has fallen from a clear majority to around 41%, now level with the non-religious. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. ~41%

(2026)No Religion - Up From 25.2% in 2011Those reporting no religion have risen from a quarter to around 41%, now level with Christianity as the joint-largest group. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. ~7.5%

(2026)Muslim - The Largest Non-Christian FaithThe Muslim share rose from 4.9% in 2011 to an estimated 7.5% in 2026, the fastest-growing major religion. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. ~61.5M (2026)Total

Estimated PopulationThe total population of England and Wales is estimated at around 61.5 million in 2026, up from 56.1M in 2011. Source: ONS 2026. Data Table

Population by Religion: 2011 vs 2026

Estimated Population of England and Wales by Religion, 2011 vs 2026 Click any column to sort

RELIGION	2011 (M)	2011 %	2026 (M)	2026 %	TREND
Christian	33.30M	59.3%	25.50M	41.5%	↓
No religion	14.10M	25.2%	25.50M	41.5%	↑
Muslim	2.70M	4.9%	4.60M	7.5%	↑
Hindu	0.82M	1.5%	1.15M	1.9%	↑
Sikh	0.42M	0.8%	0.58M	0.95%	↑
Buddhist	0.25M	0.4%	0.29M	0.47%	↑

Jewish	0.27M	0.5%	0.28M	0.45%	↓
Other	0.24M	0.4%	0.37M	0.6%	↑
Not stated	3.80M	6.9%	3.30M	5.4%	↓

The table sets the 2011 census actuals against the 2026 estimates for each religious group. The most striking rows are Christianity, falling from 33.3 million (59.3%) to an estimated 25.5 million (41.5%), and "no religion", rising from 14.1 million (25.2%) to around 25.5 million (41.5%), the two effectively swapping places in relative terms over the period. What was a near two-to-one Christian advantage in 2011 has become a dead heat by 2026. Islam shows strong growth from 2.7 million to an estimated 4.6 million, while the smaller faiths of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Judaism remain modest but mostly stable or slightly growing. These figures are projections from the census trend. The broader population picture is in our [UK population analysis](#).

2011 vs 2026

Comparing the Faiths: 2011 Against 2026

Affiliation compared, 2011 vs 2026 Religious Affiliation in England and Wales - 2011 vs 2026 (%) Christian falls 59% to 41%; no religion rises 25% to 41%; Muslim 4.9% to 7.5%. The two big groups converge.

Source: ONS, Statista 2026. 2011 v 2026shift

The comparison makes the scale of the shift impossible to miss. In 2011, Christianity towered over every other category at nearly 60%, with no religion a distant second at a quarter and all other faiths small by comparison. By 2026, that dominance has gone: Christianity and no religion sit side by side at around 41% each, having essentially traded relative positions over fifteen years. No other comparable Western country has seen its dominant historic faith decline quite so rapidly in census terms. The minority faiths, led by Islam, have grown but remain a much smaller part of the picture, meaning the headline story is overwhelmingly one of Christians becoming non-religious rather than converting to other faiths. The decline in actual attendance behind these numbers is in our [Church of England attendance by age analysis](#).

Christian Decline

The Steep Decline of Christianity

The defining feature of the data is the steep decline in the number and share of Christians. In 2011, some 33.3 million people, or 59.3% of the population, identified as Christian; by the 2021 census this had fallen to

27.5 million (46.2%), the first time in the history of the census that fewer than half the population described themselves as Christian. Projecting forward, the 2026 estimate puts Christians at around 25.5 million, or roughly 41% of the population, an extraordinary fall of some 18 percentage points in just fifteen years. Few major demographic indicators move that far that fast.

Christian share, 2011 to 2026 Christian Share of England and Wales (%) 2011: 59.3%. 2021: 46.2% (below half for the first time). 2026: ~41% (est.). A fall of about 18 points in 15 years. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. - 18pps since 2011

This decline does not mean millions of people abandoned active churchgoing, since most of those who ticked "Christian" in earlier censuses were never regular worshippers but rather identified culturally with the faith of their upbringing. Britain had already become a largely non-practising society long before the census numbers caught up, so what the figures really capture is the fading of nominal, cultural Christian identity rather than a sudden collapse in active faith.

What has changed is that this cultural Christian identity is no longer being passed down, with younger generations far more likely to tick "no religion" than their parents or grandparents. The chain of inherited religious identity that sustained nominal Christianity for centuries has broken within the space of a couple of generations. The fall is therefore as much about the weakening of inherited cultural identity as about any change in active belief, and it has been steepest among the young. The parallel decline in actual churchgoing by age is tracked in our [Church of England attendance by age analysis](#), and the wider gap between identity and practice in our [Church of England attendance by service analysis](#).

Rise of No Religion

The Rapid Rise of "No Religion"

The mirror image of Christianity's decline is the dramatic rise of those reporting no religion at all. In 2011, around 14.1 million people, or 25.2% of the population, said they had no religion; by 2021 this had surged to 22.2 million (37.2%), an increase of twelve percentage points in a single decade, one of the largest shifts ever recorded between two censuses. This pace of secularisation is striking by any international standard. The 2026 estimate puts the non-religious at around 41%, now level with Christianity as the joint-largest group, a position that would have seemed unimaginable a generation ago in a country with an established church and a monarch who is its supreme governor. The speed of the change has caught many observers by surprise, unfolding over just two census cycles.

No religion share, 2011 to 2026 "No Religion" Share of England and Wales (%) 2011: 25.2%. 2021: 37.2%. 2026: ~41% (est.). The non-religious have risen from a quarter to over four in ten. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. +16pps since 2011

The rise of the non-religious has been especially pronounced in Wales, where the "no religion" share reached 46.5% in 2021, even higher than the England and Wales average, overtaking Christianity there outright to become the single largest category. Wales has long had a distinctive religious history, and it has secularised even faster than England in recent decades. This growth is driven overwhelmingly by generational change, as each new cohort of young people is markedly less religious than the one before, and by the declining transmission of religious identity from parents to children. Unlike the rise in some minority faiths, which is partly fuelled by immigration, the growth of "no religion" reflects a genuine secularisation of the native-born population. The wider European pattern of secularisation is in our [religion in Europe](#) analysis, and the collapse in stated belief itself in our [belief in God in Great Britain](#) analysis.

Muslim Growth

The Growth of the Muslim Population

The most significant growth among the active faiths has been in the Muslim population, which has risen steadily to become the largest non-Christian religion in England and Wales. In 2011, around 2.7 million people, or 4.9% of the population, were Muslim; by 2021 this had grown to 3.9 million (6.5%), an increase of 44% in a decade. The 2026 estimate puts the Muslim population at around 4.6 million, or roughly 7.5% of the total, continuing the strong upward trend driven by immigration and a relatively young age profile. Of all the religious groups, Islam has shown the most consistent and substantial growth in absolute numbers over the period.

Muslim population, 2011 to 2026 Muslim Population of England and Wales (Millions) 2011: 2.7M (4.9%). 2021: 3.9M (6.5%). 2026: ~4.6M (~7.5%, est.). The largest and fastest-growing non-Christian faith. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. +44% 2011-2021

The Muslim population accounted for around a third of the overall population growth of England and Wales between 2011 and 2021, reflecting both immigration and a younger age structure with higher birth rates than the population as a whole. This combination of inward migration and a youthful demographic profile means the Muslim share is likely to keep rising in the coming decades, even as the overall society becomes more secular. The two trends of secularisation and growing Muslim numbers are not in tension, since they affect largely different parts of the population.

Muslims remain concentrated in particular areas, with the largest communities in cities such as Birmingham, Bradford, and several London boroughs, and London remains by far the most religiously diverse region of the country, with over a quarter of its residents reporting a religion other than Christianity. Despite this growth, it is important to keep the scale in perspective: even at 7.5%, the Muslim population is a small fraction of the total, far smaller than either the Christian or non-religious groups which each stand at around 41%. The headline transformation of British religion is overwhelmingly about secularisation rather than the growth of minority faiths. This makes England and Wales, and London especially, one of the most religiously diverse societies in Europe.

Other Faiths

Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists

Beyond Christianity, Islam, and the non-religious, England and Wales is home to several smaller but well-established faith communities. Hindus form the next largest group after Muslims, rising from around 818,000 (1.5%) in 2011 to about 1.0 million (1.7%) in 2021 and an estimated 1.15 million by 2026. The Hindu community in Britain is well established, with deep roots in commerce, the professions, and public life, including the country's first Hindu prime minister. Sikhs numbered around 524,000 (0.9%) in 2021, up modestly from 423,000 in 2011, while the Jewish population has remained broadly stable at around 271,000 (0.5%), and Buddhists at around 273,000 (0.5%). These communities have changed little in relative terms, holding steady even as the larger groups have shifted dramatically.

Smaller faith communities, 2026 Smaller Faith Communities, 2026 Estimate (Millions) Hindu ~1.15M, Sikh ~0.58M, Buddhist ~0.29M, Jewish ~0.28M. Established but modest communities. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. 4 faithsminority

These minority faiths together make up a small but important part of England and Wales's religious diversity, each with deep historical roots and distinctive geographic concentrations. The Hindu and Sikh communities are strongly associated with South Asian heritage and are concentrated in parts of London, the Midlands, and other urban centres, while the Jewish community has long-established centres in north London and Manchester. Each of these communities has its own distinctive history, institutions, and patterns of settlement built up over many decades. Although individually small, together with the Muslim population they make England and Wales, and London in particular, one of the most religiously diverse societies in Europe, a diversity that has grown steadily over the past two decades. London alone is home to substantial communities of every major world faith, making it one of the most religiously plural cities on the

planet. The global picture of where the world's Muslims live is set out in our [largest Muslim populations by country](#) analysis.

2026 Breakdown

The Full 2026 Religious Breakdown

Full breakdown, 2026 England and Wales by Religion, 2026 (% Share) Christian ~41%, no religion ~41%, Muslim ~7.5%, not stated ~5.4%, Hindu ~1.9%, others smaller. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

2026breakdown

The full 2026 breakdown shows just how evenly Christianity and no religion now share the top of the table, together accounting for over 80% of the population between them. Islam sits a distant third at around 7.5%, followed by the "not stated" category at roughly 5.4%, and then the smaller faiths of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Judaism, each below 2% of the population. Together these minority faiths account for well under a fifth of the total, underlining that the dominant dynamic is the Christian-to-secular shift.

This shape, two roughly equal dominant groups with a long tail of smaller ones, is characteristic of a society in transition from a Christian majority to a secular plurality, with growing but still modest religious diversity alongside. It captures a country mid-way through a historic shift, no longer Christian by default but not yet settled into any new equilibrium. It is a profoundly different picture from the overwhelmingly Christian self-identification of just a few decades ago, when ticking "Christian" was the unthinking default for the great majority of the population. That default has now disappeared.

What Is Driving It

What Is Driving These Changes?

The transformation of religion in England and Wales is driven by several distinct but reinforcing forces. The single most important factor is generational change and secularisation: each successive generation is markedly less religious than the one before it, and as older, more Christian cohorts pass away they are replaced by younger, far more secular ones. This generational turnover, combined with the declining transmission of religious identity from parents to children, accounts for the bulk of both the Christian decline and the rise of the non-religious. Surveys consistently show that the youngest adults are by far the least likely to identify with any religion, so as they replace older generations the overall figures shift steadily towards secularism.

A second major factor, working alongside generational change, is immigration, which pushes in a different direction for different groups. Immigration from more religious parts of the world, particularly South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, has boosted the Muslim, Hindu, and other minority faith populations, partly offsetting the overall secularisation. At the same time, the religion question's voluntary nature and the way people interpret cultural versus active religious identity also shape the figures. The net effect is a country becoming simultaneously more secular, as cultural Christianity fades, and more religiously diverse, as immigration adds new faith communities, two trends unfolding at once.

Change in share by group Change in Share by Group, 2011 to 2026 (Percentage Points) Christian -18pp, no religion +16pp, Muslim +2.6pp, others small. Secularisation dominates, with diversification alongside.

Source: ONS, Statista 2026. 2 trends at once

These two trends, secularisation and diversification, are the key to understanding the data, and they explain why the country can be becoming both less Christian and more religiously varied at the same time. The decline of Christianity is overwhelmingly a story of cultural Christians becoming non-religious, while the growth of minority faiths is largely a story of immigration and younger age profiles among those communities. The two processes are largely independent of one another, which is why they can both be true at once without contradiction. Together they are reshaping England and Wales from a society with a clear Christian majority into one with two large, roughly equal blocs of Christians and non-believers, as well as a growing patchwork of minority faith communities. This is a fundamentally new kind of religious landscape, one without a dominant majority and with genuine plurality for the first time in the nation's history. The long global decline of organised faith is set out in our [world religions](#) analysis.

About the Data

Important Notes About the Data

It is essential to understand what the census religion data does and does not measure. The census question asks about religious affiliation or identity, not about belief in God or active religious practice, so a person who ticks "Christian" may never attend church or hold any active faith, while someone who believes in God might nonetheless tick "no religion". This means the census measures cultural and social identity more than genuine faith, and the figures should not be read as a direct measure of how religious the population truly is in terms of belief or worship. The gap between affiliation and practice in Britain is famously wide, with many who tick a religious box rarely if ever attending a service.



Affiliation vs belief vs practice Affiliation vs Belief vs Practice - Different Measures (%) Census "Christian" affiliation (~41%) is far higher than those who believe in God (~34%) or attend church monthly (~12%). The measures differ greatly. Source: ONS, YouGov 2026. 3 measures differ

A further important point is that the religion question is voluntary, and around 6% of people choose not to answer it, which is why "not stated" forms a meaningful category in its own right. This voluntary nature means response patterns can shift over time independently of any real change in belief, adding a further layer of caution to any interpretation. People may answer differently in different years for reasons unconnected to their actual faith, so even the direction of small changes should be read carefully.

The 2026 figures are also estimates, projected from the 2011 and 2021 census points rather than measured directly, so they should be treated as indicative of the trend rather than precise counts of any given year. The true 2026 figures could differ somewhat, though the overall direction is not in doubt. The next census, due in 2031, will provide the next firm data point and allow these projections to be tested against reality. Until then, the 2026 estimates represent the best available reading of where the trend has reached. For all these reasons, the figures are best understood as capturing the broad direction and scale of religious change rather than exact percentages, though the overall story of secularisation and diversification is beyond doubt. The trend is consistent across every available data source and survey, even where the precise numbers differ. The belief-versus-affiliation gap is covered in our belief in God in Great Britain analysis, referenced earlier.

Key Statistics

Religion in England and Wales – Key Statistics

The three largest groups The Big Three Groups, 2011 vs 2026 (%) Christian 59% to 41%, no religion 25% to 41%, Muslim 4.9% to 7.5%. The headline story in one chart. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. big 3groups

~41% (2026) Christian - Down From 59.3% in 2011 Christianity remains the largest faith but has fallen to around 41%, level with the non-religious. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. ~41% (2026) No Religion - Up From 25.2% in 2011 The non-religious have risen to around 41%, now joint-largest with Christianity. Source: ONS, Statista 2026. ~7.5% (2026) Muslim - Largest Non-Christian Faith The Muslim share rose from 4.9% (2011) to an estimated 7.5% (2026). Source: ONS, Statista 2026. 2021 The Year Christians Fell Below Half The 2021 census was the first to record fewer than half (46.2%) identifying as Christian. Source: ONS 2026. FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions – Religion in England and Wales

Christianity, at an estimated 41%, though it is now roughly level with the 41% who report no religion.

Christianity fell from 59% in 2011, ending its run as a clear majority. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

Dramatically. Christianity fell from 59.3% to an estimated 41%, "no religion" rose from 25.2% to around 41%, and the Muslim share grew from 4.9% to about 7.5%. The change reflects rapid secularisation and diversification. Source: ONS 2026.

An estimated 7.5%, up from 6.5% in 2021 and 4.9% in 2011. Islam remains the largest non-Christian faith, with around 4.6 million people. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

An estimated 41% in 2026, up from 37.2% in 2021 and 25.2% in 2011 – now roughly level with Christianity as the joint-largest group. In Wales the figure is even higher. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

At the 2021 census. For the first time, fewer than half (46.2%) described themselves as Christian, down from 59.3% in 2011. Christianity remains the largest single group but is no longer a majority. Source: ONS 2026.

Affiliation, not belief. The voluntary census question asks which religion people identify with, not whether they believe in God or attend services. So census "Christian" figures are much higher than the share who actually believe or practise. Source: ONS 2026.

Generational change. Each younger generation is far less religious than the last, and cultural Christian identity is no longer passed down to children. As older Christian cohorts pass away, the non-religious share grows steadily. Source: ONS 2026.

Islam, if "no religion" is excluded. Among actual faiths, Islam is the largest non-Christian religion at around 7.5%, followed by Hinduism (~1.9%), Sikhism, Buddhism, and Judaism, all below 2%. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

No, they are estimates. The figures are projected from the 2011 and 2021 censuses. The next actual census is due in 2031. The 2026 numbers indicate the trend rather than precise counts. Source: ONS, Statista 2026.

Less religious. In Wales, "no religion" reached 46.5% in 2021, higher than the England and Wales average, while Christianity fell to 43.6%. Wales has secularised faster than England overall. Source: ONS 2026.

Sources



[ONS - Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021](#) - Primary source for the 2011 and 2021 census figures: Christian 59.3% to 46.2%, no religion 25.2% to 37.2%, Muslim 4.9% to 6.5%, and the regional breakdowns. Released November 2022.

[Muslim News UK - Census 2021 Religion Data](#) - Source for the Muslim population figures (3.87 million, 6.5%, up 44% since 2011) and the 33% share of population growth. Published 2022.

[Key Census Statistics on Religion \(PA\)](#) - Source for the detailed faith breakdown: Hindu 1.7%, Sikh 0.9%, Jewish 0.5%, Buddhist, and the regional diversity figures. Published 2022.

[Census 2021 Religion Analysis](#) - Source for the percentage-point changes and the context around what the census religion question does and does not measure. Accessed 2026.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census of England and Wales, with 2011 and 2021 as actual census years and 2026 as estimates projected from the trend. 2011: Christian 59.3%, no religion 25.2%, Muslim 4.9%. 2021: Christian 46.2%, no religion 37.2%, Muslim 6.5%. The census religion question is voluntary and measures affiliation, not belief or practice. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding and "not stated". Not investment advice.

STATISTICS REPORT

Countries with the highest share of married girls 2026

Updated May 12, 2026 · businessstats.com/countries-with-the-highest-child-marriage-rate

76% NIGER — WORLD'S HIGHEST RATE	12M GIRLS MARRIED PER YEAR	650M WOMEN WHO WERE CHILD BRIDES
40K CHILD MARRIAGES PER DAY	21% GLOBAL CHILD MARRIAGE RATE	-15% GLOBAL DECLINE SINCE 2010

Country Rankings

Countries with the Highest Child Marriage Rate as of 2026

Child marriage — defined as a formal marriage or informal union where at least one party is under 18 years of age — remains one of the most pervasive human rights violations in the world. The data below ranks countries by the percentage of women aged 20–24 who were first married or in union before age 18, the standard UNICEF measurement methodology. **Niger leads the world at approximately 76%**, meaning 3 in 4 girls in Niger are married as children. The concentration in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia reflects deep structural links between child marriage, poverty, and girls' limited access to education. The global economic context is analyzed in our [global GDP analysis](#).

Top 20 Countries — Child Marriage Rate Countries with Highest Share of Married Girls — % Married Before Age 18 (2024/25) UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024 · UNFPA · World Bank · BusinessStats Research · April 2026 76%Niger — Highest 52%CAR / Chad / Mali 51%Bangladesh 46%Guinea / Mozambique 21%Global Average 1%Lowest Rates (Europe)

[Full Data Table](#)

Child Marriage Rate by Country — Sortable Full Data Table 2026

The table below covers 40 countries with significant child marriage rates. Click any column to sort. Sorting by **Under-15 rate** reveals the countries where very young girls — below the age of 15 — are married, the

most extreme form of child marriage. Sorting by **Trend** shows where progress is being made and where rates are worsening. The link between child marriage and national income levels is clear: every country in the top 20 ranks among the world's poorest nations on the [global GDP per capita rankings](#).

Child Marriage Rate by Country — UNICEF Data 2024/25 Click column to sort 

RANK	COUNTRY	REGION	% MARRIED <18	% MARRIED <15	TREND	HDI RANK
1	Niger	West Africa	76%	28%	Slow decline	189th
2	Central African Republic	Central Africa	52%	29%	Stagnant	188th
3	Chad	Central Africa	52%	30%	Slow decline	190th
4	Mali	West Africa	52%	17%	Slow decline	186th
5	Bangladesh	South Asia	51%	15%	Declining	129th
6	Guinea	West Africa	46%	19%	Stagnant	182nd
7	Mozambique	Southern Africa	46%	14%	Slow decline	185th
8	Burkina Faso	West Africa	52%	10%	Declining	184th
9	South Sudan	East Africa	45%	9%	Stagnant	191st
10	Sierra Leone	West Africa	42%	13%	Declining	181st
11	Ethiopia	East Africa	40%	14%	Declining	175th
12	Somalia	East Africa	45%	8%	Stagnant	N/A
13	Nepal	South Asia	40%	9%	Declining	143rd
14	Sudan	North Africa	38%	9%	Worsening	172nd
15	Malawi	Southern Africa	42%	9%	Declining	174th
16	Madagascar	Southern Africa	41%	12%	Slow decline	173rd
17	Nigeria	West Africa	43%	16%	Declining	163rd
18	Zambia	Southern Africa	29%	5%	Declining	154th
19	Mauritania	West Africa	36%	14%	Slow decline	164th
20	Tanzania	East Africa	31%	5%	Declining	162nd

21	Liberia	West Africa	36%	10%	Declining	177th
22	Uganda	East Africa	34%	5%	Declining	166th
23	Angola	Southern Africa	30%	6%	Declining	148th
24	India	South Asia	23%	5%	Strong decline	134th
25	Pakistan	South Asia	21%	3%	Slow decline	164th
26	Honduras	Latin America	22%	6%	Slow decline	132nd
27	Nicaragua	Latin America	35%	10%	Slow decline	126th
28	Dominican Republic	Caribbean	36%	12%	Slow decline	94th
29	Bangladesh	South Asia	51%	15%	Declining	129th
30	Kenya	East Africa	18%	4%	Strong decline	152nd

Countries with Highest Child Marriage Rate 2026 (BusinessStats Research · UNICEF): Niger #1 (76%) · CAR/Chad/Mali (~52%) · Bangladesh (51%) · Guinea/Mozambique (~46%) · South Sudan (45%) · Nigeria (43%) · Global rate 21% · 12M girls/year · 650M women alive today were child brides. Source: UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024 · UNFPA · April 2026.

By Region

Child Marriage by World Region — Where It Is Most and Least Common

Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest child marriage rates by percentage, with the West African Sahel region recording the most extreme figures. However, **South Asia** — primarily India and Bangladesh — accounts for the largest absolute number of child brides due to the region's massive population. India alone is estimated to account for approximately **one-third of all child brides worldwide** despite having a national rate of "only" 23%. The contrast illustrates a critical distinction in global child marriage data: rate versus absolute burden. Countries with the highest economic development consistently show the lowest rates, as tracked in our [GDP and human development analysis](#) and [financial markets report](#).

Child Marriage — Global Distribution by Region Share of World's Child Brides by Region — 2024 (Total: ~650M Women) UNICEF · UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage · BusinessStats Research · April 2026

Child Marriage Rate by Region Child Marriage Rate by World Region — % of Women Aged 20–24 Married Before 18 UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024 · BusinessStats Research · April 2026

Causes & Drivers

Why Does Child Marriage Happen? Key Drivers and Root Causes

Child marriage is not caused by a single factor but by an intersecting web of poverty, gender inequality, cultural norms, insecurity, and limited access to education. Understanding the drivers is essential for designing effective interventions. The economic dimensions of child marriage connect to the wealth and poverty patterns documented in our [wealth inequality analysis](#) and [global development data](#).

- **Poverty:** Girls from the poorest households are 2× as likely to marry early as those from the wealthiest. Families may view marriage as reducing household expenses or receiving a bride price.
- **Gender inequality:** Societies that value girls primarily as wives and mothers create structural pressure for early marriage. Limited female autonomy, property rights, and economic independence reinforce the cycle.
- **Limited girls' education:** Only 17% of girls in Niger complete secondary school. Each additional year of secondary education reduces early marriage probability by 5–10%. Schools provide safe spaces and delay marriage.
- **Cultural and social norms:** In many communities, early marriage is seen as protecting family honor, avoiding premarital sex, or securing social alliances. Community-wide norms can make individual families feel unable to deviate.
- **Insecurity and conflict:** Armed conflict and humanitarian crises dramatically increase child marriage risk. Families in conflict zones see marriage as protection for daughters from rape or abduction. COVID-19 increased risk through school closures.
- **Weak legal frameworks:** Many countries have minimum marriage ages with broad exceptions for parental or judicial consent, or have customary law that overrides statutory law in practice.
- **High fertility pressure:** In contexts with high desired family size and limited contraception, early marriage leads to early and frequent childbirth, sustaining cycles of poverty and low human capital.

Key Data Point COVID-19 Reversed Progress: Up to 10 Million Additional Child Marriages

The COVID-19 pandemic threatened to undo years of hard-won progress against child marriage. UNICEF estimated that school closures affecting **1.6 billion students** at peak, combined with economic hardship

and disruption of social services, could result in up to **10 million additional child marriages** over the following decade beyond pre-pandemic projections. School closures removed one of the most effective protective factors for girls. Economic shocks pushed more families into the poverty that drives child marriage decisions. The pandemic's impact on human development and economic inequality is documented in our [global economic analysis](#). Progress has resumed since 2022, but the pandemic-era setback highlights the fragility of gains in high-burden countries.

Consequences

Consequences of Child Marriage — Health, Education, and Economic Impact

Child marriage has severe, well-documented, and often irreversible consequences for girls, their children, their families, and their national economies. The World Bank estimates that child marriage costs economies between **1.7% and 9% of GDP annually** in lost earnings and productivity. Globally, the lifetime earnings losses from child marriage total approximately **\$500 billion per year**. The economic case for ending child marriage is compelling: every **\$1 invested** in girls' education and empowerment generates approximately **\$7 in economic benefit** (World Bank). The broader global economic patterns are tracked in our [retail and economic growth analysis](#).

Health Consequences — Key Statistics Child Marriage Health Impact — Key Statistics (Girls Married Under 18 vs Over 18) WHO · UNICEF · World Bank · Lancet Global Health · BusinessStats Research · April 2026

- **Maternal mortality:** Girls under 15 are 5× more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s. Pregnancy complications are the leading cause of death among girls aged 15–19 globally.
- **Obstetric fistula:** A devastating childbirth injury causing chronic incontinence — almost entirely preventable with proper care — occurs overwhelmingly in girls who give birth before their bodies are fully developed.
- **Infant mortality:** Children born to mothers under 18 have a 60% higher risk of dying in infancy than children born to mothers aged 19–23.
- **Domestic violence:** Married girls face significantly higher rates of intimate partner violence than women who marry as adults. The power imbalance is structural, not incidental.
- **Education loss:** Girls who marry early almost always drop out of school, with lasting impacts on their earning capacity, autonomy, and their children's educational outcomes.

- **Mental health:** Rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD are significantly elevated among women who were married as children — with effects that persist throughout their lifetimes.

Global Progress

Global Progress in Reducing Child Marriage — Trends and Forecasts

The global child marriage rate has declined from approximately **25% in 2010 to approximately 21% in 2024/25** — the largest single-decade reduction in recorded history. South Asia has led the world in progress: India reduced its rate from approximately **47% to 23%** — the largest absolute reduction in any country in history. Despite this progress, the global total of child brides has not fallen proportionally because population growth in high-burden Sub-Saharan African countries means more girls are at risk each year. At the current pace of change, the UN Sustainable Development Goal of ending child marriage by 2030 will **not be achieved**. The progress data connects to broader human development trends tracked in our [social and demographic statistics](#) and [digital education data](#).

Global Trend 2000–2025 Global Child Marriage Rate — % of Women 20–24 Married Before 18 (2000–2025)
UNICEF Child Marriage Database · World Bank · BusinessStats Research · April 2026 21%2024/25 Global Rate

Source: UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024 · World Bank Gender Data Portal · BusinessStats Research · April 2026

- **Global rate 2024/25:** ~21% of women 20–24 were married before 18 (UNICEF) — down from ~25% in 2010
- **India — biggest single reduction:** From ~47% (2005–06) to ~23% (2021) — lifting ~25M girls out of child marriage in 15 years
- **Bangladesh:** From ~68% (2000) to ~51% (2024) — still very high but measurable progress
- **Ethiopia:** From ~49% to ~40% — significant absolute decline
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Rates declining slowly but absolute numbers rising due to population growth
- **SDG target:** End child marriage by 2030 (SDG 5.3) — will not be met at current pace
- **Forecast 2030:** Without accelerated action, ~150M additional girls will marry as children between 2025 and 2030

What Works Proven Interventions: Education, Cash Transfers, and Community Programs



Research has identified several interventions that measurably reduce child marriage rates. **Keeping girls in school** is the single most effective intervention — each year of secondary education reduces marriage probability by 5–10%. **Conditional cash transfer programs** that pay families to keep daughters enrolled have demonstrated success in Bangladesh (Kishori Abhijan), India (Apni Beti Apna Dhan), and Ethiopia. **Community-based behavior change programs** engaging men, boys, religious leaders, and community elders are essential since legal change alone does not shift norms. **Economic empowerment** of women and girls reduces the economic drivers of child marriage. The UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage is funded at approximately **\$1.5 billion for 2020–2030** and operates in 12 high-burden countries. The challenge is scaling proven interventions to reach the tens of millions of at-risk girls — a governance and funding challenge linked to broader development financing tracked in our [global economic analysis](#).

Global Child Marriage Progress 2026 (BusinessStats Research · UNICEF): Rate declined from 25% (2010) to 21% (2024) · India: 47% to 23% (world's largest reduction, ~25M girls lifted) · Bangladesh: 68% to 51% · COVID-19 risk: up to 10M additional marriages projected · SDG 2030 target will not be met at current pace · 150M more girls at risk by 2030 without accelerated action. Source: UNICEF · UNFPA · April 2026.

Key Statistics

Child Marriage — Key Statistics & Facts 2026

76% Niger — World's Highest Child Marriage Rate 3 in 4 girls in Niger marry before age 18. 28% marry before 15. Niger consistently ranks last or near-last on the Human Development Index. Legal minimum marriage age: 15 (girls), 18 (boys) — though customary marriages often occur much younger. Only ~17% of Niger's girls complete secondary school. **12M Girls Married as Children Per Year** 12 million girls married before 18 every year — ~40,000 per day, ~28 per minute. Without accelerated action, 150 million additional girls will marry as children by 2030. Boys affected too: ~115 million men alive today were married before 18, though at much lower rates. **650M Women Alive Today Who Were Married as Children** 650 million women alive today were married before 18 (UNICEF 2024). Approximately 1 in 5 women worldwide. Of these, approximately 250 million were married before age 15. South Asia accounts for ~45% of this total; Sub-Saharan Africa ~35%. **21% Global Child Marriage Rate 2024/25** Down from ~25% in 2010 — a 15% relative reduction. UNICEF measures as % of women aged 20–24 who were first married/in union before age 18. Global rate would be higher if boys included. Rate declining in most regions but absolute numbers rising in Sub-Saharan Africa due to population growth. **5× Higher Maternal Mortality Risk (Girls Under 15)** Girls under 15 are 5× more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s (WHO). Pregnancy complications are the

leading cause of death among girls 15–19 globally. Obstetric fistula — a devastating preventable injury — occurs overwhelmingly in adolescent girls. \$500B Annual Economic Cost of Child Marriage World Bank estimates \$500B in annual global lifetime earnings losses from child marriage. Countries pay 1.7–9% of GDP per year. Every \$1 invested in girls' education and empowerment returns approximately \$7 in economic benefit. Child marriage is both a cause and consequence of poverty. –47% → 23% India — World's Largest Absolute Progress India reduced child marriage from ~47% (2005–06) to ~23% (2021) — the largest absolute reduction in any country in history, lifting ~25 million girls out of child marriage. Driven by girls' education expansion, conditional cash transfers, and community programs. India still accounts for ~1/3 of all child brides globally. 30% CAR/Chad — Girls Married Before Age 15 In the Central African Republic and Chad, approximately 29–30% of girls are married before their 15th birthday — among the world's highest rates of marriage of very young girls. This represents the most extreme form of child marriage, with the most severe health and developmental consequences. 45% South Asia's Share of Global Child Brides Despite having lower rates than Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia accounts for ~45% of all child brides globally due to its massive population. India alone (~1.4B people) accounts for ~1/3 of the global total. Bangladesh (51%), Nepal (40%), Pakistan (21%) remain significant contributors. 5–10% Marriage Risk Reduction per Year of School Each additional year of secondary education reduces a girl's probability of marrying early by approximately 5–10% (World Bank). Education is the single most effective intervention. Girls not in school are the most vulnerable. Only 17% of Niger's girls complete secondary school — lowest in the world. 60% Higher Infant Mortality for Children of Child Brides Children born to mothers under 18 face a 60% higher risk of dying in infancy compared to children of mothers aged 19–23 (UNICEF). They also face higher rates of low birth weight, stunting, wasting, and lower vaccination coverage. The intergenerational consequences perpetuate cycles of poverty and poor health. 2030 SDG Target — Will Not Be Met at Current Pace UN SDG 5.3 targets ending child marriage by 2030. At current rates of progress, this goal will not be met. UNICEF projects that without accelerated action, 150M additional girls will marry as children between 2025 and 2030. Current pace would not eliminate child marriage globally until 2100.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions — Child Marriage Statistics 2026

Niger has the world's highest child marriage rate, with approximately **76% of girls married before their 18th birthday** (UNICEF 2024). Niger is followed by the Central African Republic (~52%), Chad (~52%), Mali (~52%), Bangladesh (~51%), Guinea (~46%), Mozambique (~46%), and Burkina Faso (~52%). The Sahel region of West Africa — Niger, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso — records the world's most extreme

concentrations of child marriage. Niger also has a very high rate of marriage before age 15 (approximately 28% of girls).

Approximately **12 million girls are married before age 18 every year** — roughly **40,000 per day**, or about 28 every minute. According to UNICEF, approximately **650 million women alive today** were married as children. Child marriage also affects boys — approximately 115 million men alive today were married before age 18 — though at much lower rates and with less severe consequences. Without accelerated progress, an estimated **150 million additional girls** will marry as children by 2030.

The global child marriage rate stands at approximately **21% of women aged 20–24** who were first married or in union before age 18 (UNICEF 2024). This represents a decline from approximately 25% in 2010 — a relative decline of about 15% over 15 years. Progress has been uneven: South Asia has seen the largest absolute decline, while Sub-Saharan Africa's share of global child marriages is increasing due to rapid population growth. At the current pace, the SDG 5.3 target of ending child marriage by 2030 will not be achieved.

Niger's ~76% child marriage rate reflects multiple intersecting factors: **extreme poverty** (Niger consistently ranks last on the Human Development Index); **deeply entrenched cultural norms** that view early marriage as protective and honorable; **very low girls' education** (only ~17% complete secondary school, lowest globally); **food insecurity** that leads families to see daughters' marriage as economic relief; **high fertility rates** (Niger has the world's highest total fertility rate at ~7 children per woman); and **weak enforcement** of the legal minimum marriage age (15 for girls, 18 for boys). Customary marriages routinely occur below even the legal minimum.

Child marriage has severe and well-documented consequences: Girls under 15 are **5x more likely to die in childbirth** than women in their 20s; children born to child brides face **60% higher infant mortality**; married girls almost universally **drop out of school**, with permanent impacts on earnings and autonomy; rates of **domestic violence** are significantly higher; and mental health consequences including depression, anxiety, and PTSD are widespread. Economically, child marriage costs countries **1.7–9% of GDP annually** in lost productivity, with global lifetime earnings losses of approximately \$500 billion per year (World Bank).

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest child marriage rates — West and Central Africa recording the most extreme figures. However, **South Asia** — particularly India and Bangladesh — has the largest absolute number of child brides due to massive populations. India alone accounts for approximately **one-third of all child brides worldwide** despite a national rate of 23%. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for approximately 35% of the global total. South Asia ~45%. The Sahel region (Niger, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso) has the

world's most extreme rates at 52–76%.

Yes — the global child marriage rate declined from approximately **25% in 2010 to approximately 21% in 2024/25**, the largest single-decade reduction in history. South Asia led progress: India's rate fell from ~47% to ~23%, Bangladesh from ~68% to ~51%. However, COVID-19 reversed some gains — an estimated **10 million additional child marriages** may have occurred due to school closures and economic hardship. In Sub-Saharan Africa, while rates are declining slowly, absolute numbers continue to rise due to rapid population growth. At current pace, the **SDG 2030 target will not be met**.

Child marriage has a **devastating economic impact**. The World Bank estimates it costs countries **1.7–9% of GDP annually**. Globally, lifetime earnings losses total approximately **\$500 billion per year**. Countries with the highest child marriage rates also rank among the world's poorest — child marriage is both a cause and consequence of poverty. Every **\$1 invested** in girls' education and empowerment generates approximately **\$7 in economic benefit**. Ending child marriage would add approximately 1.5% to affected countries' annual GDP growth rates.

Education and child marriage have an inverse relationship — girls in school are less likely to marry early, and girls who marry early almost always leave school. Each additional year of secondary education reduces early marriage probability by approximately **5–10%**. Only **17% of Niger's girls** complete secondary school — the world's lowest. In contrast, countries with near-universal secondary education for girls (Rwanda, Kenya) have seen dramatic child marriage declines. Schools provide safe spaces, delay marriage, and expand girls' life choices. Girls' education is the single most effective intervention against child marriage.

Legal minimum marriage ages in high-burden countries: **Niger**: 15 (girls), 18 (boys) — customary marriages often occur below the legal minimum; **Chad**: 15 (girls), no statutory minimum for boys; **CAR**: 18 (both) — widely unenforced; **Mali**: 16 (girls), 18 (boys); **Bangladesh**: 18 (girls), 21 (boys) — but a 2017 special provision allows exceptions with no lower limit; **Nigeria**: Varies by state — 18 in southern states, no minimum in northern states under customary/religious law. Many countries have a minimum age but allow exceptions that effectively nullify the protection.

Child marriage has profound health consequences: Girls under 15 face a **5x higher risk of dying in childbirth** than women in their 20s; pregnancy complications are the leading cause of death among girls 15–19 globally; **obstetric fistula** — a devastating preventable injury — occurs overwhelmingly among girls who give birth before their bodies are mature; children born to child brides have **60% higher infant mortality**; married girls face significantly higher rates of **HIV/AIDS** (less power to negotiate safe sex); and mental health impacts including depression, anxiety, and PTSD are widespread.

Countries with the greatest progress since 2000: **India** — rate fell from ~47% to ~23% (largest absolute reduction in history, ~25 million girls); **Ethiopia** — from ~49% to ~40%; **Bangladesh** — from ~68% to ~51%; **Rwanda** — from ~31% to ~19%; **Kenya** — from ~24% to ~18%. Common factors: girls' education expansion, conditional cash transfer programs linking school attendance to payments, community-based behavior change, legal reform with enforcement, and economic development. Ethiopia's Amhara region remains an outlier despite national progress.

Poverty and child marriage reinforce each other in a vicious cycle. Girls from the **poorest households are 2x as likely** to marry early as girls from the wealthiest. Globally, the child marriage rate among girls from the poorest quintile is approximately **40%**, compared to approximately **10%** among the wealthiest quintile. Families in extreme poverty may see daughters' marriages as reducing household costs or receiving bride payments. Child marriage then perpetuates poverty by ending girls' education and limiting their economic participation — ensuring the next generation faces the same pressures.

Key global initiatives: the **UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage** operates in 12 high-burden countries with a \$1.5B budget (2020–2030); the **UN SDG 5.3** explicitly targets ending child marriage by 2030; the **African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage** operates across 55 AU member states; **conditional cash transfer programs** in Bangladesh, India, and Ethiopia have demonstrated measurable effectiveness; and **community-based programs** engaging men, boys, religious leaders, and elders are changing norms at the local level. The critical challenge is scaling effective interventions to reach tens of millions of at-risk girls.

South Asia has seen the world's most dramatic child marriage progress. Current rates (% married before 18): **Bangladesh ~51%, Nepal ~40%, India ~23%, Pakistan ~21%, Sri Lanka ~10%**. India's reduction from approximately 47% (2005–06) to approximately 23% (2021) is the **single largest absolute reduction in any country in history**, lifting approximately 25 million girls out of child marriage. Despite progress, South Asia still accounts for approximately **45% of all child brides globally** due to its massive population. Bangladesh, with a 51% rate, remains one of the world's highest even after significant progress from ~68% in 2000.

Data Sources & References

Primary: [UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024 — Country-level data on % of women 20–24 married before 18 and before 15](#)

Primary: [UNFPA — Child Marriage Data & Global Programme to End Child Marriage 2020–2030](#)



Supporting: [World Bank — Economic Costs of Child Marriage: Global Synthesis Report · GDP impact, earnings losses, ROI of interventions](#)

Supporting: [Girls Not Brides — Global Partnership · Country profiles, intervention data, SDG tracking](#)

Child marriage rates from UNICEF Child Marriage Database 2024, measured as the percentage of women aged 20–24 who were first married or in union before age 18. Country rankings reflect the most recently available survey data (DHS, MICS, national surveys) as compiled by UNICEF. Some country data may be from surveys conducted 2019–2023 due to data availability constraints. Global figures (12M/year, 650M women) from UNICEF 2024. Economic impact data from World Bank 2023 analysis. Progress trend data from UNICEF and World Bank Gender Data Portal. All 2025–2026 figures represent BusinessStats Research estimates based on trend extrapolation where 2025 official data is not yet available.



STATISTICS REPORT

The largest city in the world in 2026

Updated Aug 23, 2026 · businessstats.com/largest-city-in-the-world

42M JAKARTA (#1 METRO)	37M DHAKA (#2)	33M TOKYO (WAS #1)
35 MEGACITIES WORLDWIDE	9 of 10 TOP CITIES IN ASIA	57% WORLD NOW URBAN

Overview

What Is the Largest City in the World?

Jakarta, Indonesia is the largest city in the world in 2026, with a metropolitan population of about 42 million people, according to the UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. In a landmark shift, Jakarta overtook Tokyo, which had reigned as the world most populous city since the 1960s but has now slipped to roughly 33 million as Japan population ages and declines. Dhaka in Bangladesh sits second at about 37 million, and the rest of the top five, Tokyo, Delhi and Shanghai, are all clustered around 30 million.

That headline answer comes with a crucial caveat, because the largest city in the world is not one question but three. This sits within the broader story of our [world population statistics](#), where more than half of humanity, some 57 percent, now lives in cities, a share that has nearly doubled since 1950. City rankings depend entirely on where the boundary is drawn: by legal city limits the biggest is Chongqing in China, by metropolitan area it is Jakarta, and by the broadest urban-area method used by Britannica it is Guangzhou at 73.6 million. Each is correct; each answers a different question.

This matters more than it might seem, because the gap between the measures is enormous. Guangzhou 73.6 million by the broadest method is almost seven times its own city-proper figure, and the difference between Jakarta and Tokyo, the top two by metro population, is smaller than the swing you get from simply switching definitions on a single city. Anyone quoting a largest-city figure without saying which measure they mean is, in effect, comparing numbers that were never meant to sit side by side.

What is not in dispute is the shape of the list. **Nine of the ten largest cities are in Asia**, the only exception being Cairo, and the world now holds about 35 megacities, metropolitan areas above 10 million people, up

from just two in 1950. The fastest growth has moved decisively toward South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, so the ranking that looks overwhelmingly Asian today will look increasingly African and South Asian by mid-century, a shift our [global travel data](#) already hint at.

Top 10 Largest Cities by Metro Population, 2026 (millions) Jakarta leads; nine of ten are Asian.

Data:

Metropolitan area population in millions, UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025.

Note:

Figures use the UN harmonised urban-area method adopted in 2025. Switch views with the toolbar.

Jakarta leads; nine of ten are Asian: by UN metropolitan population, Jakarta (42M) is the largest city in the world in 2026, ahead of Dhaka and Tokyo, with Cairo the only non-Asian city in the top ten.

Full Rankings

Top 20 Largest Cities in the World, 2026

Before the table, one reminder: these are UN metropolitan figures, so a city such as Chongqing that dominates any area-based or city-limits ranking appears lower here, while sprawling agglomerations rise. Read the list as one consistent lens on city size, not the only possible one.

The table ranks the 20 largest cities by UN metropolitan population, with annual growth alongside. The growth column tells the story of the next few decades: Lagos (3.7 percent), Karachi (3.4 percent) and Dhaka (2.9 percent) are surging, while Tokyo, Seoul and Osaka are actually shrinking. Note how tightly the middle of the table bunches, with roughly ten cities separated by less than three million people, so small changes in method or year can reshuffle the order considerably. India places three cities in the top twenty, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai, and China four, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing and Chongqing, underlining how the two demographic giants dominate the modern urban map.

Top 20 Largest Cities by Metro Population, 2026 Click any column to sort

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY	METRO POPULATION	ANNUAL GROWTH
1	Jakarta	Indonesia	42.0M	4.1%
2	Dhaka	Bangladesh	37.0M	2.9%
3	Tokyo	Japan	33.0M	-0.2%

4	Delhi	India	30.2M	2.5%
5	Shanghai	China	29.6M	1.9%
6	Guangzhou	China	27.6M	3.3%
7	Manila	Philippines	24.7M	2.1%
8	Cairo	Egypt	24.5M	2.0%
9	Kolkata	India	22.5M	1.0%
10	Seoul	South Korea	22.5M	-0.1%
11	Mumbai	India	22.1M	1.6%
12	Mexico City	Mexico	22.0M	0.7%
13	Beijing	China	22.0M	1.5%
14	São Paulo	Brazil	22.6M	0.8%
15	New York	United States	21.5M	0.2%
16	Karachi	Pakistan	18.9M	3.4%
17	Osaka	Japan	18.9M	-0.3%
18	Chongqing	China	18.0M	2.0%
19	Lagos	Nigeria	16.6M	3.7%
20	Istanbul	Turkey	16.2M	1.3%

Top 10 Cities

What Are the Top 10 Largest Cities in the World?

The ten largest cities in the world by metropolitan population in 2026 are **Jakarta (42M)**, **Dhaka (37M)**, **Tokyo (33M)**, **Delhi (30.2M)**, **Shanghai (29.6M)**, **Guangzhou (27.6M)**, **Manila (24.7M)**, **Cairo (24.5M)**, **Kolkata (22.5M)** and **Seoul (22.5M)**. Together they house more than 290 million people, roughly the population of the United States packed into ten urban regions, and all but Cairo sit in Asia.

The scale is hard to grasp. Jakarta 42 million residents outnumber the entire population of countries such as Canada, Poland or Argentina, all packed into a single continuous urban region. To put 42 million in



perspective, that is more people than live in all but about thirty of the world countries. If the ten largest cities were combined into a single country, it would rank among the four most populous on Earth, behind only India, China and perhaps the United States, and it would generate a strikingly large share of global economic output despite occupying a tiny fraction of the planet surface.

The list has changed dramatically in a single year. Under the UN previous method, Tokyo led and Jakarta ranked in the thirties; the 2025 revision, which harmonised how urban areas are measured across countries, vaulted Jakarta and Dhaka to the top and pushed several long-standing leaders down. Delhi and Shanghai remain giants, and India now places three cities, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai, in the top eleven, a reflection of the demographic weight set out in our [world population data](#).

It is worth stressing how recent this reshuffle is. As late as 2024, most standard lists still put Tokyo first, Delhi second and Shanghai third, with Jakarta ranked in the thirties. The UN 2025 revision did not describe a sudden migration of tens of millions of people; it changed the ruler, harmonising how the boundary of a continuous urban area is drawn across countries. The lesson for anyone using these rankings is that a jump of twenty places can reflect methodology as much as reality.

The Same Cities, Three Definitions (millions)The answer depends on where you draw the line.

Data:

City-proper, metropolitan and broad urban-area population estimates, 2026, UN, national census bureaus and Britannica.Switch views with the toolbar.

The answer depends on where you draw the line: Guangzhou tops the broad urban-area measure at 73.6M, Jakarta leads by metro area at 42M, and by strict city limits Chongqing and Shanghai rank highest.

Three Definitions

Why Do Sources Disagree on the Largest City?

Ask what the largest city in the world is and you can get three confident, contradictory answers, because a city can be measured three ways. **City proper** uses the legal administrative boundary, which is useful for governance but useless for comparison, since where the line falls is a political choice; by this measure Chongqing, whose municipality is the size of Austria, leads with over 30 million. **Metropolitan area**, or urban agglomeration, adds the surrounding suburbs and satellite towns into one continuous built-up region, the standard the UN uses, and by this measure Jakarta leads at 42 million.



The third method, the **broad urban area**, stretches further still to include adjacent cities that form one connected settlement. Britannica uses this approach, and it produces the eye-catching figure of 73.6 million for Guangzhou, which absorbs Shenzhen, Dongguan, Foshan and several other cities of the Pearl River Delta. None of these numbers is wrong; they simply answer different questions, which is why any honest ranking has to say which measure it uses. The confusion is worst in Asia, precisely because that is where the world true urban giants are concentrated.

A fourth complication sits underneath all three: the date and the source. Population estimates for cities in fast-growing countries are often several years out of date and carry wide margins of error, since a metro area gaining a million people a year can be measured very differently depending on when the count was taken. Two reputable sources using the same definition can still differ by a few million simply because one used a 2024 base and the other a 2026 projection.

Why Jakarta

How Did Jakarta Become the Largest City?

Jakarta rise to the top reflects both real growth and a change in measurement. The **Jabodetabek region**, which bundles Jakarta with Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi, has swelled to about 42 million people as Indonesia has urbanised rapidly, and the UN 2025 method captured that continuous sprawl more fully than before. Indonesia is the world fourth most populous country, and its capital region concentrates a large share of national economic activity, drawing millions from across the archipelago.

The crown is a mixed blessing. Jakarta is **sinking by 10 to 25 centimetres a year** in places, the fastest-subsiding major city on Earth, as groundwater extraction empties the aquifers beneath it, and large areas already flood routinely. The problem is so severe that Indonesia is spending roughly \$33 billion to build an entirely new capital, Nusantara, on the island of Borneo. Whether that relocation eventually pulls people and government functions out of Jakarta is one of the biggest open questions in global urban geography.

Jakarta also illustrates how the largest cities increasingly grow by merging with their neighbours rather than by their old cores expanding. Jabodetabek is really five cities fused into one continuous built-up mass, and the same pattern holds for Guangzhou in the Pearl River Delta and Tokyo across its prefectures. The megacity of the future is less a single dot on a map than a sprawling network of once-separate towns that have run together, which is exactly why the definition of a city boundary has become so contested.

Where the 35 Megacities Are, 2026 (share by region)Asia holds more than half.



Data:

Share of the world 35 megacities by region, 2026, UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. Switch views with the toolbar.

Asia holds more than half: of the world roughly 35 megacities in 2026, more than half are in Asia, with the rest split across Latin America, Africa, Europe and North America.

Tokyo's Decline

Why Is Tokyo No Longer the Largest City?

Tokyo loss of the top spot is the headline demographic story of the decade. The Greater Tokyo Area, long the undisputed largest on Earth at close to 38 million, has begun to **shrink as Japan population falls**, and the UN now estimates it at around 33 million under the harmonised method. Japan has one of the world oldest populations and lowest birth rates, and even internal migration into Tokyo can no longer offset the national decline, a dynamic that mirrors the ageing seen in our [China population data](#).

Tokyo remains extraordinary despite the slippage. It is still among the three or four largest metros in the world, it runs the busiest railway network on the planet, and its metropolitan economy, at roughly \$1.9 trillion, is larger than the GDP of all but a handful of countries, as our [largest economies in the world](#) ranking shows. Its decline is gentle and orderly rather than a collapse, but the direction is clear, and the UN expects Tokyo to keep sliding down the table through 2050.

Tokyo is the clearest example of a broader phenomenon: the shrinking megacity. For the whole of the twentieth century, the largest cities only ever grew, so the idea of a megacity losing population is genuinely new. It is now visible across East Asia and parts of Europe, in Seoul, Osaka, and soon several Chinese cities, as birth rates fall below replacement and populations age. The next few decades will be the first in modern history in which some of the world biggest cities are quietly getting smaller.

Tokyo Metro Population, 2000 to 2035 (millions) A rare shrinking megacity.

Data:

Tokyo metropolitan area population in millions, UN.

Note:

Figures from 2026 are projections; Tokyo peaked around 2015. Switch views with the toolbar.

A rare shrinking megacity: the Greater Tokyo Area peaked around 2015 near 38 million and is now slowly declining, an unusual trajectory among the world largest cities, almost all of which are still growing.

Largest by Area

What Is the Largest City in the World by Area?

Switch from people to land and the ranking scrambles completely. By administrative area, **Chongqing in China is the largest city in the world, its municipality covering about 82,400 square kilometres**, larger than Austria or Ireland, though much of that territory is rural and mountainous rather than built up. Chinese municipalities are effectively province-sized units, which is why they dominate any area-based list while ranking lower by continuous urban population.

By built-up urban footprint, the picture is different again: sprawling, low-density metros such as New York, Tokyo and Atlanta cover enormous areas relative to their populations, while dense cities such as Dhaka and Mumbai pack far more people into far less space. This is why **city area and city population almost never line up**, and why comparing the two reveals how differently cities grow, from the vertical density of Asian megacities to the horizontal sprawl of American ones, a contrast our [largest US metro areas data](#) brings out.

The distinction between area and population has real consequences for how a city works. A dense city such as Dhaka or Mumbai can move millions on foot, bicycle and transit within a small footprint, but strains housing and sanitation; a sprawling one such as Los Angeles or Atlanta gives residents space but locks in car dependence and long commutes. So the largest city by area and the largest by population are not just different trivia answers, they describe two fundamentally different models of urban life.

Top 20 Largest Cities by Metro Population, 2026 (millions)A long Asian league table.

Data:

Metropolitan area population in millions, UN and national statistics offices, 2026 estimates.Switch views with the toolbar.

A long Asian league table: beyond the top ten, cities such as Mumbai, Beijing, Karachi, Lagos and Istanbul all exceed 16 million, and the great majority of the top 20 are in Asia.

Only three cities in the top 20 sit outside Asia: Mexico City, Sao Paulo and New York, plus Cairo and Lagos in Africa and Istanbul straddling two continents. Europe, once home to the world largest cities in the industrial age, no longer places a single entry in the top 20, a striking reversal of the geography of a

century ago when London and Paris led the world.

Rise of Megacities

How Fast Are Megacities Growing?

The rise of the megacity is one of the defining trends of the modern era. In **1950 there were just two**, New York and Tokyo; by 2026 there are about 35, and the UN projects roughly 37 by 2050. A megacity is any metropolitan area above 10 million people, and their spread tracks the broader move of humanity into cities, which our [world population statistics](#) place at the heart of this century demographic change.

Crucially, the growth has moved. The megacities added in the coming decades will overwhelmingly be in **South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa**, where cities such as Dhaka, Karachi, Lagos, Kinshasa and Dar es Salaam are expanding 3 to 5 percent a year, while East Asian and European megacities stagnate or shrink. This reshaping of the urban map carries enormous consequences for infrastructure, housing, migration and commerce, themes that run through our [migration statistics](#) and [retail e-commerce data](#).

Number of Megacities Worldwide, 1950 to 2050 From 2 to nearly 40.

Data:

Number of metropolitan areas above 10 million people by year, UN.

Note:

Figures from 2030 are UN projections. Switch views with the toolbar.

From 2 to nearly 40: the number of megacities has grown from just two in 1950 to about 35 in 2026, and the UN projects around 37 by 2050, with almost all new additions in Asia and Africa.

Where They Are

Which Region Has the Most Large Cities?

Asia dominates completely. It is home to more than half of the world megacities and nine of its ten largest cities, spanning East Asia (Tokyo, Shanghai, Seoul), South Asia (Delhi, Dhaka, Mumbai, Karachi) and Southeast Asia (Jakarta, Manila). This concentration reflects the sheer weight of population in China, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and the speed at which their populations have moved from countryside to city over the past half century.



The other regions trail well behind. Latin America has six megacities, led by São Paulo and Mexico City; Africa has a fast-growing handful led by Cairo and Lagos; Europe has just Moscow, Paris and London near the threshold; and North America has New York, Mexico City and Los Angeles. The economic pull of these hubs, and the visitors they draw, is captured in our [most visited countries](#) and [most visited cities](#) rankings.

Fastest-Growing Large Cities, 2026 (annual %)

Africa and South Asia set the pace.

Data:

Annual metropolitan population growth rate in percent, 2026, UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. Switch views with the toolbar.

Africa and South Asia set the pace: Lagos, Karachi and Dhaka are growing around 3 to 4 percent a year, while Tokyo, Seoul and Osaka are shrinking, a reversal that will reshape the ranking by 2050.

City Economies

Which Cities Have the Largest Economies?

The largest cities by population are not always the largest by economic output. **Tokyo has the biggest metropolitan economy in the world at roughly \$1.9 trillion**, followed by New York at about \$1.8 trillion, then Los Angeles, Shanghai and London. The world top 300 metro economies generate around 60 percent of global GDP while housing only about 20 percent of its people, a concentration of wealth and productivity that our [GDP per capita by country](#) data helps explain.

The gap between demographic size and economic size is striking. Jakarta and Dhaka lead the population table but rank far lower by GDP, while New York and London punch far above their population weight, because output per person in wealthy cities is many times higher than in fast-growing ones. The companies headquartered in these hubs shape the global economy, as explored in our [most valuable companies in the world](#), and the divide between populous cities and productive ones is one of the central features of the modern urban world.

Largest City Economies by GDP, 2026 (\$ trillion)

Tokyo and New York lead output.

Data:

Metropolitan GDP in current US dollars, 2026, OECD and Brookings Global Metro Monitor estimates. Switch views with the toolbar.

Tokyo and New York lead output: despite ranking lower by population, Tokyo (\$1.9T) and New York (\$1.8T) have the largest metropolitan economies, far ahead of the fast-growing megacities of South Asia.

Cities of 2050

What Will Be the Largest City in 2050?

The map of 2050 will look very different. The UN projects that **Dhaka could become the largest city in the world by around 2050 with more than 50 million people**, overtaking Jakarta, while Lagos in Nigeria may approach 40 million and Kinshasa, Karachi and Delhi all push higher. Almost every city expected to rise is in South Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa, while Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and the European capitals are forecast to decline or stall.

This shift carries profound consequences. The cities growing fastest are often those with the weakest infrastructure, so the coming decades will test whether Dhaka, Lagos and Kinshasa can house, employ and move tens of millions of new residents. Urbanisation is projected to reach nearly 70 percent of humanity by 2050, up from 57 percent today, meaning almost all future population growth will be urban, and the question of the largest city in the world will increasingly be answered in Africa rather than Asia.

For businesses, investors and policymakers, that shift is not abstract. The fastest-growing consumer markets, labour forces and infrastructure needs of the next generation will be concentrated in exactly these rising megacities, from Lagos and Kinshasa to Dhaka and Karachi. Where the largest cities are, and how fast they grow, shapes everything from supply chains to migration to climate risk, which is why the ranking is worth watching well beyond its value as a piece of trivia.

Share of World Population Living in Cities, 1950 to 2050 (%)Past half and still climbing.

Data:

Share of world population living in urban areas, UN World Urbanization Prospects.

Note:

Figures from 2030 are projections.Switch views with the toolbar.

Past half and still climbing: the share of humanity living in cities passed 50 percent around 2008 and is projected to approach 70 percent by 2050, driving the growth of the world largest cities.

Projected Largest Cities in 2050 (millions)Dhaka and Lagos rise to the top.

Data:



Projected metropolitan population in millions for 2050, UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. Switch views with the toolbar.

Dhaka and Lagos rise to the top: by 2050 the UN projects Dhaka to lead at over 50 million, with Lagos, Kinshasa and Delhi climbing, shifting the urban centre of gravity toward Africa and South Asia.

Key Facts

The Largest Cities in Numbers

A few numbers capture global urban geography in 2026. Jakarta is the largest city in the world at about 42 million by UN metro population, ahead of Dhaka at 37 million, after overtaking Tokyo. Nine of the ten largest cities are in Asia, the world holds around 35 megacities, and 57 percent of humanity now lives in cities. Taken together, these figures describe a planet that is not only more urban than ever but whose urban centre of gravity is shifting fast, away from a shrinking East Asia and toward a surging South Asia and Africa.

42M Jakarta Largest metro. 35M megacities 2 in 1950. 73.6M Guangzhou Broad urban area. 57% World Urban 68% by 2050.

Together these figures show that the largest city in the world is a moving target, redrawn by both real growth and the way we choose to measure it. Jakarta wears the crown today; by the definition you pick it could be Guangzhou or Chongqing, and by the time today young children are adults it may well be Dhaka in Bangladesh. The only safe conclusion is the one every serious demographer reaches: name your definition, cite your source, and treat any single crown as provisional rather than permanent.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions: Largest Cities

By metropolitan population, Jakarta, Indonesia, at about 42 million people, according to the UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025. It overtook Tokyo, which had led since the 1960s. The answer changes with the definition: Guangzhou leads by broad urban area and Chongqing by city limits.

By UN metro population in 2026: Jakarta (42M), Dhaka (37M), Tokyo (33M), Delhi (30M), Shanghai (30M), Guangzhou (28M), Manila (25M), Cairo (25M), Kolkata (23M) and Seoul (23M). Nine of the ten are in Asia.

No. Tokyo led from the 1960s until 2025, when the UN adopted a new method that put Jakarta first at about 42 million and Tokyo around 33 million. Tokyo is still one of the largest metro areas on Earth, but its



population is slowly shrinking.

Because a city can be measured three ways. City proper uses legal boundaries, so Chongqing leads. Metro or urban agglomeration adds suburbs, so Jakarta leads. Broad urban-area methods like Britannica's put Guangzhou first at 73.6 million. Each answers a different question.

Chongqing, China, whose municipality covers about 82,400 square kilometres, larger than Austria, though much of it is rural. By built-up urban area, sprawling metros such as New York and Tokyo rank among the largest. City-proper area and population rarely align.

A metropolitan area with more than 10 million residents. The world had just 2 in 1950, New York and Tokyo, and has about 33 to 35 in 2026, more than half of them in Asia. The number is projected to reach around 37 by 2050.

Among big cities, Dhaka and Lagos are growing fastest, near 3 percent a year, while African cities such as Luanda grow even faster from a smaller base. By contrast, Tokyo, Seoul and most European and East Asian cities are stagnating or shrinking.

The UN projects Dhaka, Bangladesh, could lead by around 2050 with over 50 million people, while Lagos, Nigeria, may approach 40 million. Growth is shifting decisively toward South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa as East Asian megacities decline.

Related Reports

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Sources

UN World Urbanization Prospects 2025 - Metropolitan population figures using the harmonised urban-area method introduced in 2025, the primary source for the rankings here.

Britannica, national census bureaus, OECD and Brookings Global Metro Monitor - City-proper populations, urban-area estimates and metro GDP, compiled by BusinessStats.

[UN World Urbanization Prospects](#) and [Britannica largest cities](#) - Official and reference estimates.

City population depends heavily on definition. This report uses UN metropolitan (urban agglomeration) population as the headline measure. City-proper figures (legal boundaries) and broad urban-area figures, such as Britannica's 73.6 million for Guangzhou, can differ by tens of millions for the same place. The UN adopted a new harmonised method in its 2025 report, which is why some 2026 rankings differ sharply from earlier years. Figures are 2026 estimates, not census-day counts. This is data journalism.

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