
Fact Sheet

The Growing Hispanic Population in Louisiana: New Evidence from the July 1, 2008 Population Estimates by Race and Ethnicity

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On May 14, 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau released the July 1, 2008 race-specific population estimates for Louisiana Parishes. Race-specific population data provide insight into the changing racial and ethnic diversity in Louisiana Parishes and Metropolitan Areas between 2007 and 2008. For the population as a whole, the state grew by .86%. However, the rates of growth for specific race and ethnicity groups vary substantially. The largest deviation from the state growth rate occurs among the Hispanic population which grew by 4.83%, while the non-Hispanic white population grew by only .14% and the non-Hispanic black population grew at 1.64%. The rate of population growth among Hispanics is 5.6 times that of the overall state rate of population growth. In addition, the growth rate among Louisiana's Hispanic population is larger the national growth rate for the Hispanic population of 3.2%. We further examine the variation in this trend by metropolitan areas and individual parishes.

For metropolitan areas, all regions with the exceptions of New Orleans and Alexandria experienced an increase in the rate of Hispanic population growth between the 2006-2007 and the 2007-2008 time periods (see Table 1). A number of noteworthy trends emerge:

- The Lake Charles MSA experienced the largest rate of growth among all metropolitan regions and increased from 6.2 (2006-2007) to 7.7% (2007-2008).
- The largest slowdown in the rate of growth among Hispanics occurred in the New Orleans MSA. The change in the rate for New Orleans is expected given the slowdown in overall population growth (from 11.8% in 2006-2007 to 2.2% in 2007-2008).
- Rates of growth decline relative to the distance between Louisiana metro areas and large Texas metropolitan areas.

Table 1: Percent Growth in Hispanic Population for LA Metropolitan Areas

	2007-2008	2006-2007
Alexandria	3.8	4.7
Baton Rouge	6.5	5.6
Houma-Bayou Cane-Thibodaux	6.1	5.4
Lafayette	6.7	5.4
Lake Charles	7.7	6.2
Monroe	2.3	1.9
New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner	5.1	14.1
Shreveport-Bossier City	5.0	3.9

Source: Analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2008 Population Estimates Data by Age, Race, and Sex.

For Louisiana Parishes, those experiencing the highest growth rate in Hispanic population are located primarily in South Louisiana. Table 2 reports the Top 20 parishes with the fastest growing Hispanic population between 2007 and 2008. A key trend in these data is that Hispanic population is not always correlated with total parish population growth. For example, Franklin and Plaquemines Parishes are experiencing population decline. However, the rate of growth in the Hispanic population remains quite large relative to other Louisiana Parishes. This may occur for two reasons: 1) immigration to fill labor demands created by out-migration or 2) natural increase among current Hispanic residents. It is difficult to identify how these two issues may be fueling high growth rates in the past year because race specific population estimates do not provide components of population change (births, deaths, net migration). We should have a better understanding of this issue as American Community Survey data are released for smaller localities.

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Table 2. Top 20 Parishes for Percent Hispanic Population Growth

	Metropolitan Area	Hispanic Growth	Total Growth
Livingston Parish	Baton Rouge, LA	14.3829	3.2515
St. Bernard Parish	New Orleans -Metairie -Kenner, LA	12.5804	12.8084
Plaquemines Parish	New Orleans -Metairie -Kenner, LA	10.1106	-1.4863
Orleans Parish	New Orleans -Metairie -Kenner, LA	9.4594	8.2398
St. Landry Parish	N/A	8.6629	0.8844
Grant Parish	Alexandria, LA	8.4615	1.0574
Franklin Parish	N/A	8.2902	-0.2742
Lafourche Parish	Houma - Bayou Cane -Thibodaux, LA	7.8093	-0.1424
Calcasieu Parish	Lake Charles, LA	7.8091	0.6218
Lafayette Parish	Lafayette, LA	6.7860	1.1371
East Feliciana Parish	Baton Rouge, LA	6.5990	0.2257
Bossier Parish	Shreveport - Bossier City, LA	6.1319	1.3830
St. Tammany Parish	New Orleans -Metairie -Kenner, LA	6.0431	0.9692
St. Martin Parish	Lafayette, LA	5.9900	0.9162
Iberia Parish	N/A	5.9852	0.2055
East Baton Rouge Parish	Baton Rouge, LA	5.9470	-0.3615
Ascension Parish	Baton Rouge, LA	5.8331	2.7248
Beauregard Parish	N/A	5.7955	0.5895
Cameron Parish	Lake Charles, LA	5.4795	-2.3080
Jackson Parish	N/A	5.1613	0.5893

Source: Analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2008 Population Estimates Data by Age, Race, and Sex.