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ABSTRACT

A study of educational attainment of adults (25 years old and over) in the United States (by ethnic origin) shows a wide range among the ethnic groups. The following is a breakdown of the main national lineage of the 106.3 million respondents: German, 12.8 million; English, 12.0 million; Irish, 8.6 million; Italian, 4.7 million; Polish, 2.8 million; Mexican, 1.9 million; and Russian 1.6 million. In general, most groups were similar to the national average in terms of number of years of schooling. Among all adults in the United States in November 1969, some 55% had completed at least 4 years of high school. However, the proportion of high school graduates among persons of Russian origin was about 69%. The proportion of high school graduates among persons of Mexican origin was considerably lower--about 24% had completed 4 years of high school or more. Among all adults, 21% had completed 1 or more years of college; among those of Russian origin, about 35% had this much education; and among persons of Mexican origin, 6% had completed some years of college. Additionally, about 11% of all adults in the United States had completed 4 or more years of college, as compared with 23% of those of Russian origin and 2% of those of Mexican origin. (LS)





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Ethnic Origin and Educational Attainment November 1969

A study of the educational attainment level of adults (25 years old and over) in the United States by ethnic origin shows a wide range among the ethnic groups in the percent who had completed high school, some college, or 4 years or more of college. These findings are based on the November 1969 Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census. The educational data presented in this report relate to the number of school years completed by the population and do not provide information on the quality of the education received. The information on ethnic origin was based on questions which permitted the respondent to identify his main national lineage.

The major ethnic origin groups with which the 106.3 million persons 25 years old and over identified themselves were: German, 12.8 million; English, 12.0 million; Irish, 8.6 million; Italian, 4.7 million; Polish, 2.8 million; Mexican, 1.9 million; and Russian 1.6 million.¹ Since very few persons have migrated to this country from Russia since 1930, when two-thirds of the Russian-born Americans reported that they had spoken Yiddish in their childhood, it is likely that most persons of Russian origin had a Jewish cultural heritage.

In general, most of the major ethnic origin groups, with the exception of the Russian and Mexican groups, were similar to the national average in the proportion who had completed high school, some college, or 4 years or more of college,

¹More persons reported their ethnic origin as "other" than reported any one specific origin category.

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Table A. TOTAL POPULATION AND YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY THE POPULATION 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY ETHNIC ORIGIN: NOVEMBER 1969

3 /			Person	s 25 years	old and ov	er			
			Percent distribution by years of school completed						
Ethnic origin	Total population	Number		Less than	4 years of high school or more				
	Å	Number	Total	4 years of high		Some co	llege		
				school	Total	Total	4 years or more		
Total	198,214	106,284	100.0	44,8	55.2	21.3	11.0		
English	19,060	11,999	100.0	39.8	60.2	26.6	14.4		
German	19,961	12,825	100.0	42.4	57.6	20.4	10.5		
Irish	13,282	8,630	100.0	44.7	55.3	20.0	10.2		
Italian	7,239	4,683	100.0	54.3	45.7	13.7	7.0		
Polish	4,021	2,769	100.0	49.1	50.9	15.8	8.8		
Russian Spanish:	2,152	1,584	100.0	30.9	69.1	35.4	22.9		
Central or South American	556	273	100.0	46.2	53.8	24.5	11.2		
Cuban	565	320	100.0	47.8	52.2	24.7	12.7		
Mexican	5,073	1,909	100.0	75.6	24.4	6.4	1.6		
Puerto Rican	1,454	549	100.0	77.8	22.0	5.6	2.4		
Other Spanish	1,582	766	100.0	47.7	52.2	19.8	8.7		
A11 other	105,633	49,286	100.0	43.2	56.8	22.9	11.6		
Not reported	17,635	10,692	100.0	50.1	50.0	16.6	8.4		

(Numbers in thousands. Civilian noninstitutional population)

Includes persons who reported that they did not know their ethnic origin.

This report was prepared by Charles E. Johnson, Jr., Chicf, Education and Social Stratification Branch, Population Division, Bureau of the Census.

Among all adults (25 years old and over) in the United States in November 1969, 55 percent had completed at least 4 years of high school. However, the proportion of high school graduates among persons of Russian origin was considerably higher -about 69 percent of these persons of Russian origin were high school graduates. The proportion of high school graduates among persons of Mexican origin was considerably lower--about 24 percent of the persons of Mexicanorigin had completed 4 years of high school or more. Among all adults, 21 percent had completed 1 or more years of college, but among those of Russian origin about 35 percent had completed this much education and among persons of Mexican origin 6 percent had completed some years of college. The proportion of adults of Russian origin and those of Mexican origin who had completed 4 or more years of college also contrasted with the national average. About 11 percent of all the adults in the United States in 1969 had completed 4 or more years of college as compared with 23 percent of those of Russian origin and 2 percent of those of Mexican origin.

Young adults (25 to 34 years old) were more likely to be high school graduates than were the older adults (35 years old and over). About 73 percent of the young adults had completed 4 years of high school or more as compared with 50 percent of the older adults. Furthermore, 30 percent of the young adults had completed some college, including 15 percent who had completed 4 or more years of college, as compared with 19 percent of the older adults who had completed some college and 10 percent who had completed 4 or more years of college.

Table B. PERCENT OF THE POPULATION 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER WHO HAD COMPLETED A GIVEN LEVEL OF SCHOOL, BY SELECTED ETHNIC ORIGIN GROUPS AND AGE: NOVEMBER 1969

			4 years of high school or more					
Age and ethnic origin	Total	Less than 4 years		Some college				
		of high school	Total	Total	4 years or more			
25 TO 34 YEARS OLD								
Total ¹	100.0	26.6	73.4	29.9	15.2			
English German Mexican Russian	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	24.4 20.5 59.6 4.8	75.7 79.5 40.4 95.2	34.5 32.1 8.1 70.3	17.6 17.5 1.8 52.6			
35 YEARS OLD AND OVER								
Total ²	100.0	50.1	49.9	18.9	9.8			
EnglishGerman	100.0 100.0 100.0	43.5 48.7 82.4	56.5 51.3 17.6	24.8 17.1 5.7	13.6 8.5 1.6			

(Civilian noninstitutional population)

¹Includes all persons 25 to 34 years old.

²Includes all persons 35 years old and over.

Among persons of Russian origin, 95 percent of those 25 to 34 years old were at least high school graduates as compared with 65 percent of those 35 years old and over. Moreover, among young adults of Russian origin, 70 percent had completed some college, including 53 percent who had completed 4 or more years of college, as compared with 30 percent of the older adults of Russian origin who had completed some college and 18 percent who had completed 4 or more years of college. Among persons of Mexican origin, 40 percent of those 25 to 34 years old were at least high school graduates as compared with 18 percent of those 35 years old and over.

RELATED REPORTS

Data on educational attainment for persons 14 years old and over in March 1959, 1962, 1964, 1965 and 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970 were published in <u>Current Population Reports</u>, Series P-20, Nos. 99, 121, 138, 158, 169, 182, 194, and



207, respectively. Further information on educa-tional attainment is presented in "Educational Change in a Generation: March 1962," Series P-20, No. 132. Data on men who are college graduates are presented in the report "Characteristics of Men With College Degrees: 1967," Series P-20, No. 201, In addition, educational attainment as determined in the Current Population Survey is related to labor force characteristics in publications of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as in "Educational Attainment of Workers, March 1969, 1970," published in the October 1970 is sue of Monthly Labor Review. Statistics on educational attainment are also available in several reports of the 1960 Census of Population, the most relevant of which is PC(2)-5B, Educational Attainment. Volume 1, Characteristics of the Population, chapter C, "General Social and Economic Characteristics," and chapter D, "Detailed Characteristics," also include statistics on educational attainment. Report PC(2)-1C, Nonwhite Population by Race, includes educational data for selected races.

Apart from the different dates at which the statistics were collected, the education data from the November 1969 Current Population Survey may differ from those from the 1960 census and from projections based on the census for the following reasons: (1) Members of the Armed Forces and inmates of institutions are excluded from the survey. All members of the Armed Forces in the United States and inmates of institutions are included in the census data. (2) Statistics from both the census and CPS are subject to sampling and response errors. There are differences in coverage, enumeration techniques (self-enumeration versus direct enumeration), and the methods of allocating nonresponses.

The Content Evaluation Study of the 1960 census is a major source of information about the accuracy of census data on educational attainment. A comparison by detailed categories of years of school reported for each level suggests a net overreporting on years of school completed for

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about 6 percent of the population 25 years old and over.² A comparison of CPS with 1960 census figures shows that the CPS figures include more persons with 12 years or more of school completed and fewer with less than 12 years. If the Content Evaluation Study is taken as a standard, the 1960 census figures on educational attainment show a slight upward bias. The CPS figures are still higher than the census figures and may, therefore, be more biased in the direction of high educational attainment.

Because of the differences mentioned above, care should be exercised in comparing the data for November 1969 with those from the 1960 census.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

<u>Population coverage</u>. The figures in this report for November 1969 are sample survey data and relate to the civilian noninstitutional population of the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Age. The age classification is based on the age of the person at his last birthday.

Origin or descent. The information in this report on ethnic origin or descent was obtained from responses to the following direct questions:

37. Is . . .'s origin or descent_____?

- 0 Mexican
- 0 Puerto Rican
- 0 Cuban
- 0 Central or South American
- 0 Other Spanish
- 0 None of these (Ask 38)

38. What is . . .'s origin or descent?

0	German	0	English
0	Irish	0	Negro
0	Italian	0	American Indian
0	Polish	0	Other (Specify)
0	Russian	0	Don't know

Responses to these questions generally refer to the respondent's perceived national or ethnic lineage and do not necessarily indicate the country of birth of himself or his parents. Persons who reported their ethnic origin as Negro, American Indian, or other are classified in this report as "all other."

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Years of school completed. Data on years of " school completed in this report were derived from " the combination of answers to two questions: (a) "What is the highest grade of school he has ever attended?" and (b) "Did he finish this grade?"

The questions on educational attainment apply only to progress in "regular" schools. Such schools include graded public, private, and parochial elementary and high schools (both junior and school high), colleges, universities, and professional schools, whether day schools or night schools. Thus, regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward an elementary school certificate or high school diploma, or a college, university, or professional school degree. Schooling in other than regular schools was courted only if the credits obtained were regarded as transferable to a school in the regular school system.

The median years of school completed is defined as the value which divides the population into two equal parts--one-half having completed more schooling and one-half having completed less schooling than the median. This median was computed after the statistics on years of school completed had been converted to a continuous series of numbers (e.g., completion of the first year of high school was treated as completion of the 9th year and the completion of the first year of college as completion of the 13th year). The persons completing a given school year were assumed to be distributed evenly within the interval from .0 to .9 of the year (for example, persons completing the 12th year were assumed to be distributed evenly between 12,0 and 12,9). Because of the inexact assumption as to the distribution within an interval, this median is more appropriately used for comparing groups and the same group at different dates than as an absolute measure of educational attainment.

Assignment of educational attainment for those not reporting. When information on either the highest grade attended or completion of the grade was not reported in the 1969 survey, entries for the items were assigned using an edit in the computer. The general procedure was to assign an entry for a person that was consistent with entries for other persons with similar characteristics. The specific technique used in the November 1969 survey was as follows:

1. The computer stored reported data on highest grade attended by race (white and all other) and age, and on completion of the grade by age and highest grade attended, for persons 14 years old and over in the population.

2. Each stored value was retained in the computer only until a succeeding person having the same characteristics (e.g., same race and age, in

²Evaluation and Research Program of the U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing, 1960: Accuracy of Data Population Characteristics as Measured by Reinterviews, Series ER 60, No. 4, table 12.

Ŷ.

the case of assignments for highest grade attended) and having the item reported, was processed through the computer. Then the reported data for the succeeding person were stored in place of the one previously stored.

3. When one or both of the education items for a person 14 years old and over was not reported, the entry assigned to this person was that stored for the last person who had the same characteristics.

<u>Rounding of estimates</u>. Individual figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals, which are independently rounded. Percentages are based on the rounded absolute numbers.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

Source of data. The estimates are based on data obtained in November of 1969 in the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census. The sample is spread over 449 areas comprising 863 counties and independent cities with coverage in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Approximately 50,000 occupied housing units are eligible for interview each month. Of this number, 2,250 occupied units, on the average, are visited but interviews are not obtained because the occupants are not found at home after repeated calls or are unavailable for some other reason. In addition to the 50,000, there are also about 8.500 sample units in an average month which are visited but are found to be vacant or otherwise not to be interviewed.

The estimating procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of the weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, race, and sex. These independent estimates were based on statistics from the 1960 Census of Population; statistics of births, deaths, immigration, and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces.

Reliability of the estimates. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat

from the figures that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same schedules. instructions. and enumerators. As in any survey work, the results are subject to errors of response and of reporting as well as being subject to sampling variability.

The standard error is primarily a measure of sampling variability, that is, of the variations that occur by chance because a sample rather than the whole of the population is surveyed. As calculated for this report, the standard error also partially measures the effect of response and enumeration errors but does not measure any systematic blases in the data. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the sample would differ from a complete census figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the standard error.

The figures presented in tables C and D are approximations to the standard errors of various estimates shown in this report. In order to derive standard errors that would be applicable to a wide variety of items and could be prepared at a moderate cost, a number of approximations were required. As a result, the tables of standard errors provide an indication of the order of magnitude of the standard errors rather than the precise standard error for any specific item. Table C contains the standard errors of estimated numbers.

Table C. S	TANDARD	ERRORS	OF	ESTIMATED	NUMBERS
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(68 chances out of 100)

Size of	Standard	Size of	Standard
estimate	error	estimate	error
10,000 25,000 50,000 100,000 250,000 500,000 1,000,000	5,590 8,700 12,300 17,400 27,500 38,900 55,000	2,500,000 5,000,000 10,000,000 25,000,000 50,000,000 100,000,000	86,400 121,300 169,000 253,000 323,000 337,000

Table D. STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATED PERCENTAGES

(68 chances out of 100)

Estimated	Base of percentage (thousands)										
percentage	100	250	500	1,000	2,500	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000	100,000	200,000
2 or 98	2.4	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.05
5 or 95 10 or 90	3.8 5.2	2.4 3.3	1.7 2.3	$\begin{array}{c} 1.2\\ \cdot 1.7\end{array}$	0.8 1.0	0.5 0.7	0.4	0,2 0,3	0.2	0.1	0.1
25 or 75 35 or 65	7.5 8.3	4.8 5.3	3.4 3.7	2.4 2.6	1.5 1.7	1.1 1.2	0.8 0.8	0.5 0.5	0.3 0.4	0.2 0.3	0.2 0.3
50	8.7	5.5	3.9	2.8	1.7	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.3

The reliability of an estimated percentage, computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the percentage and the size of the total upon which the percentage is based. Estimated percentages are relatively more reliable than the corresponding estimates of the numerators of the percentages, particularly if the percentages are 50 percent or more. Table D contains the standard errors of estimated percentages.

<u>Illustration of the use of table of standard</u> errors. The detailed table of this report shows that in 1969 there were 1,584,000 persons 25 years old and over of Russian origin. Table C shows the standard error on an estimate of this size to be approximately 67,000. The chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimate would have been > a figure differing from a complete census by less 1/2 than 67,000. The chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would have been a figure differing from a complete census by less than 134,000 (twice the standard error).

Of these 1.584,000 persons, 1,095,000 or 69.1 percent finished at least 4 years of high 'school. Table D shows the standard error of 69.1 percent on a base of 1.584,000 to be approximately 2.2 percent. Consequently, chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimate would be within 2.2 percentage points of a complete census figure, and chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would be within 4.4 percentage points of a census figure; i.e., this 95 percent confidence interval would be from 64.7 to 73.5 percent.

YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY PERSONS 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY AGE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN: NOVEMBER 1969

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		Years of school completed							
Age and ethnic origin	Total	Elementar	y school	ligh	school	Co 1	lege	Median years of	
		less than 3 years	8 Years	1 to 3 years	4 years	1 to 3 years	4 years or more	completed	
Total, 25 years old and over	106,284	14,694	14,244	18,685	35,984	10,970	11,707	12.2	
English	11,999	1,258	1,437	2,086	4.024	1.468	1.726	12.3	
German	12,825	1,103	2,308	2,030	4,766	1,270	1,349	12.2	
Irish	8,630	1,036	1,193	1,625	3,046	853	877	12.2	
Italian	4,683	938	701	904	1,498	313	329	11.3	
Russian	2,769 1,584	426 150	445 168	489 172	971 534	193 198	245 363	12.0 12.6	
Central or South American	273	48	34	44	80	36	31	12 1	
Cuban	320	59	59	35	88	38	41	12.1	
Mexican	1,909	868	250	326	344	91	31	8.3	
Puerto Rican	549	248	72	107	90	18	13	8.4	
Other Spanish	766	123	79	163	248	86	66	12.1	
Not reported ¹	49,286 10,692	6,6 24 1,814	5,908 1,589	8,756 1,949	16 ,736 3,560	5,527 879	5,735 902	12.2 12.0	
25 to 34 years old	23,881	1,064	1,150	4,151	10,387	3,511	3,621	12.5	
English	2,301	100	105	357	948	388	405	12.6	
German	2,848	46	117	421	1,351	416	498	12.6	
Irish	1,670	44	61	314	754	266	232	12.6	
Italian	902	-18	30	147	455	115	107	12.5	
Polish	503	7	15	53	271	76	82	12.7	
Spanish: Courtel or South American	209	1	1	8	52	37	110	16+	
Cuban	109	12	13	13	20	19	10	12.4	
Mexican.	565	131	68	138	182	36	10	12.4	
Puerto Rican	214	63	19	69	45	9	10	10.8	
Other Spanish	226	16	8	50	92	38	21	12.4	
All other	11,625	419	512	2,036	5,031	1.810	1.817	12.6	
Not reported ¹	2,585	161	186	524	1,127	283	304	12.4	
35 years old and over	82,100	13,630	¹ 13,094	14,534	25,597	7,459	8,086	12.0	
Log11sh	9,698	1,159	1,332	1,729	3,077	1,080	1,321	12.2	
Lerman	9,977	1,057	2,191	1,609	3,414	854	851	12.0	
Trada	0,960	992	1,132	1,311	2,292	587	646	12.0	
Bolish	3,780	890	671	4767	1,043	108	222	10.3	
Russian	1 375	420	430	430	700	117	163	10.9	
Spanish: Contral or South American.	1,575	37	190	29	402	101	253	12.4	
Cuban	211	-17	46	22	52	19	26	10.7	
Mexican	1,343	737	152	187	161	55	20	1 10.7	
Puerto Richn	335	179	54	39	45	9	30	7.4	
Other Spanish	540	107	71	113	156	48	45	11.4	
All other	37,661	6,205	5,396	6,720	11,705	3,717	3,918	12.0	
Not reported ¹	в,106	1,653	1,404	1,424	2,433	596	598	11.1	
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION					Ì				
Total, 25 years old and over	100,0	13.8	13.4	17.6	33.9	10.3	11.0	(X)	
English	100.0	10.5	12.0	17.4	33.5	12,2	14.4	(X)	
German	100.0	8.6	18.0	15.8	37.2	9.9	10.5	(x)	
1 F 1 SD	100.0	12.0	13.8	18.8	35.3	9.9	10,2	(X)	
Bolteb	100.0	20.0	15.0	19.3	32.0	6.7	7.0	(x)	
Russian	100.0	15.4	16,1	17.7	35,1	7.0	8.8	(X)	
Spanish	100.0	9.4	10.6	10.9	33,7	12,5	22.9	(X)	
Ceptral or South American	100.0	17 6	10.0	10.0	20.4			1	
Quban.	100.0	18 4	18.6	10.2	27.1	13.3	11.2	X	
Mexican	100.0	45.5	13.1	17.1	18 0	11.8	12.7	- K	
Puerto Rican	100.0	45.1	13.2	19.6	16.4	3.1	2.4	[
Other Spanish	100.0	16.1	10.3	21.3	32.4	11.2	8.7		
All other	100.0	13,4	12.0	17.8	34.0	11.2	11.6		
Not reported ¹	100.0	17.0	14.9	18.2	72 2	8.2	8.0	1. 1.	

(Numbers in thousands. Civilian noninstitutional nonulation)

Includes persons who reported that they did not know their ethnic origin.

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YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY PERSONS 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY AGE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN: NOVEMBER 1969 Continued

Age and ethnic origin	Total	Years of school completed						
		Elementary school		High school		College		years of
		tiess than 8 years	8 years	l to 3 years	-1 yuars	l to 3 years	4 years or more	.completed
PERCENT DISTRIBUTIONContinued							,	
25 to 34 years old	100.0	4.5	4.8	17.4	43.5	14.7	15.2	(x)
English	100 .0	4.3	4.6	15.5	41.2	16.9	17.6	(x)
German	100.0	1.6	4.1	1.1.8	47.4	14.6	17.5	
Irish	100.0	2.6	3.7	18.8	45.1	15.9	13.9	1 100
Italian	100.0	5.3	3.3	16.3	50.4	12.7	11.9	(X)
Polish	100.0	1.4	3.0	10.5	53.9	15.1	16.3) (X)
RussianSpanish:	100.0	0.5	0.5	3.8	24.9	17.7	52.6	(X)
Contral or South American	100.0	8,8	12.0	16.8	35.2	15.2	12.8	(x)
Cuban	100.0	11.0	12.8	11.9	33.0	17.4	13.8	(x)
Mexican	100.0	23.2	12.0	24.4	32.2	. 6.4	1.8	'. (x)
Puerto can	100.0	31.8	8.9	32.2	21.0	4,2	1.9	(x)
Other S anish	100.0	7.1	3.5	22.1	40.7	16.8	9.3	(x)
All other	100.0	3.6	4.4	17.5	43.3	15.6	15.6	(x)
Not reported ¹	100.0	6.2	7.2	20.3	43.6	10.9	11.8	(X)
No. and the second s							1	
35 years old and over	100.0	16.5	15.9	17.6	31.1	9.1	9.8	(<u>x</u>)
English	100.0	12.0	13.7	17.8	31.7	11.1	13.6	(x)
German	100.0	10.6	22.0	16.1	34.2	8.6	8.5	(x)
Irish	100.0	14.3	16.3	18.8	32.9	8.4	9.3	j (x)
Italian	100.0	23.5	17.8	20,0	27.6	5.2	5.9	(x)
Polish	100.0	18.5	19,0	19,2	30.9	5.2	7.2	j (x)
Russian	100,0	10.8	12.1	11.9	35.1	11.7	18.4	(x)
Central or South American	100.0	25.2	12.2	15.6	25.2	11.6	10.2	(x)
Cuban	100.0	22.3	21.8	10.4	24.6	9.0	12.3) (x
Mexican	100.0	54.9	13.6	13.9	12.0	4.1	1.6	íx.
Puerto Bican	100.0	53.4	16.1	11.6	13.4	2.7	3.0	
Other Spanish	100.0	19.8	13.1	20.9	28.9	8.9	8.3	1 22
All other	100.0	16.5	14.3	17.8	31.4	9.9	10.4	
Not reported ¹	100.0	20.4	17.3	17.6	30.0	7.4	7.4	(x)

(Numbers in thousands. Civilian noninstitutional population)

Includes persons who reported that they did not know their ethnic origin.