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The new Brookings report, **embargoed until 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, April 6th**, is available at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/0406_census_diversity_frey.aspx

YOUNG AMERICANS BECOMING MORE DIVERSE AND MORE SEGREGATED

“New minorities,” particularly Hispanics, drive the growth in nation’s young population, signaling major generational and cultural changes ahead

WASHINGTON, DC—America’s young population is growing more diverse and more segregated, according to a new analysis by the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program. These population shifts indicate a generational and cultural divide that will drive significant changes in the country.

“We are in the midst of an historic transformation that is happening most profoundly in our metros,” said William Frey, a Brookings Senior Fellow and author of the new report. “This is going to create major challenges, but it also means we have a clear demographic advantage over competitor nations, if our leaders are wise enough to capitalize on it.”

Frey noted that 2010 Census data show this transformation is happening more quickly than experts had previously assumed.

The report’s findings include:

- **New minorities—Hispanics, Asians, and groups other than whites, blacks, and American Indians—account for all the growth among the nation’s child population.** From 2000 to 2010, the population of white children nationwide declined by 4.3 million, while the population of Hispanic and Asian children grew by 5.5 million.
- **Segregation levels for African-American and Hispanic children are higher than for their adult counterparts, despite a general reduction in segregation over the last 10 years.** The average African-American or Hispanic child lives in a neighborhood where whites make up 10 percent less of the population than in the neighborhood of the average African-American or Hispanic adult.

- **In almost half of states and nearly one-third of large metro areas, child populations declined in the 2000s.** White child populations dropped in 46 states and 86 of the 100 largest metro areas, but gains of new minority children forestalled more widespread overall declines in youth.
- **In areas of the country gaining children, Hispanics accounted for most of that growth.** Fully 95 percent of Texas’s child population growth occurred among Hispanics. Los Angeles was the only major metropolitan area to witness a decline in Hispanic children from 2000 to 2010.
- **Ten states and 35 large metro areas now have minority white child populations.** Child populations in the Atlanta, Orlando, and Phoenix metro areas flipped to “majority minority” by 2010.

If diversity is a potential strength, segregation is a potential hazard, Frey said. The emergence of “racial generation gaps” between the country’s older, largely white, population and its younger, more diverse citizens could create sharp divisions over public policy, such as spending on schools and affordable housing versus Social Security and Medicare.

The Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings *provides decision- makers with cutting-edge research and policy ideas for improving the health and prosperity of metropolitan areas, including their component cities, suburbs, and rural areas. To learn more, please visit: www.brookings.edu/metro.*

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