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## Millennials are the most diverse generation in U.S. history, now 44 percent minority, says new Brookings report

Washington, D.C. — A new report from the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program reveals the millennial generation, now 44 percent minority and America’s largest generation at 75 million strong, is set to serve as a social, economic, and political bridge to future (and increasingly racially diverse) generations.

The report, “[The millennial generation: A demographic bridge to America’s diverse future](#),” provides an in-depth examination of the demographic makeup of millennials for the nation, the largest 100 metropolitan areas, and all 50 states. Comprising nearly a quarter of the total U.S. population, 30 percent of the voting age population, and two-fifths of the working age population, the report underscores the impact millennials will have as America prepares for its first non-white majority generation, which will succeed them.

William H. Frey, senior fellow at Brookings and the report’s author, said, “Millennials are already making an indelible impact on the nation, as the most diverse – and now largest – adult generation. As the bridge between a whiter, older America and the multi-hued country we are becoming, millennials will pave the way for the generations behind them as workers, consumers, and leaders in business and government in their acceptance by and participation in tomorrow’s more racially diverse nation.”

The report explores a cultural generation gap between older, predominantly white generations and the very diverse generations succeeding millennials. In 2015, this gap revealed a 68.4 percent white population share for those over the age of 35 (pre-millennials) and a distinctly lower 51.5 percent white population share for those under the age of 18 (post-millennials). Both demographics are projected to continue to lose white population shares, down to 64.8 percent and 46 percent respectively by 2035.

### Key findings of the report:

- **Regional variation:** Racial and ethnic minorities make up more than half of the millennial population in 10 states, including California, Texas, Arizona, Florida, and New Jersey—and in another 10 states, including New York, Illinois, and North and South Carolina, minorities comprise more than 40 percent of millennial residents.
- **Race/ethnicity breakdown by geography:**
  - **White:** The largest white millennial settlements are in the biggest metropolitan areas—New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles—as well as Philadelphia, Boston, Dallas, and Washington, D.C. Eighteen of the 100 largest metro areas have millennial populations that are less than 60 percent white, including Seattle, Charlotte, Tampa, and Philadelphia. Additionally, 30 metros are “minority white,” including Miami, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta and Chicago.

- **Black:** In general, black millennials settle more often in Southern areas (including Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, and Miami, as well as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.). In Atlanta, Charlotte, and Detroit, blacks are the largest minority group among millennials.
  - **Hispanic:** The share of Hispanics within the millennial generation (20.8 percent) is more than double the share of Hispanic Americans (9.1 percent) over the age of 55 as of 2015. New York and Los Angeles are major settlement areas for Hispanic millennials. In general, Hispanic millennials settle more often in Southern areas—Houston, Miami, and Dallas—along with Riverside, Calif., and Chicago.
  - **Asian:** New York and Los Angeles are major settlement areas for Asian millennials. In general, Asian millennials settle more often in the West, including in San Francisco, San Jose, and Seattle, along with Chicago and Washington, D.C.
- **Postsecondary education:** Notably, attainment has risen for all racial and ethnic young adult groups, which, for their generation more than others, is tied to higher future earnings and well-being. There remain sharp disparities in education attainment across groups, with Hispanic and black millennials falling behind their Asian and white counterparts.
  - **Homeownership:** All racial groups registered recent housing-bust-related declines in homeownership. This was especially the case for blacks who, along with many Hispanics, bore the brunt of fewer lower-cost, subprime loans amid a deficit of resources.
  - **Poverty:** Millennials were more likely to be in poverty than most baby boomers and Gen Xers at similar ages. It has been estimated that the loss of wealth resulting from the foreclosure crisis between 2007 and 2009 disproportionately affected black and Hispanic families, making them less able to provide support for their own and their children’s education and home purchases.
  - **Marital status:** While millennials in each racial and ethnic group are slower than earlier generations to get married, blacks continue to exhibit the lowest share of persons who are currently married—halving their share, at ages 25-34, from 47 percent in 1980 to 23 percent. The median age of marriage was lowest during the 1950s—at age 20 for women and 22 for men. By 2015, these rose to ages 27 and 29, respectively.

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