

Ethnic minorities in USA

Social and Economic Issues

There are _____ main ethnic minority groups in the United States:

- African _____
- H_____s
- N_____ A_____s
- _____ and Pacific islanders

African Americans

The distribution of African Americans in the US was traditionally concentrated in the _____ states. However, for a number of years in the latter part of the 20th century, large African American populations have developed in _____ cities such as C_____o and _____. The capital, _____, also has a particularly large African American community. In recent years many African Americans have returned to the southern states in a process known as **rev_____ migration**. This has been due to increasing unemployment in traditional industries in the north such as s____l and c__ man_____ing and also to economic regen_____ in the south.

Around 60% of African Americans live in i_____-c____ g_____. However, more recently, financially successful African Americans have started to buy properties in up-m_____ 'gilded ghettos'.

Hispanics

Spanish speaking immigrants are the most numerous and rapidly i_____ non-white group in the US. They include many i_____ i_____s who are easily exploited as they do not have the same r_____ as US c_____s.

Hispanics are mainly concentrated in the _____ and s____ w_____ states, due to their proximity to C_____ A_____. The C____n community is heavily concentrated in F____a, especially in M____i, as this is where most first _____ in the US.

93% of the Hispanic population in the United States live in u_____ areas though some find a_____l work on farms in states like C_____a.

Native Americans

The original Americans are now a tiny _____ within their own country. Small numbers of Native Americans have moved into cities such as New York to escape the limited opportunities in their t_____ homelands. However many live in, or near, r_____tions in the western states of O____a, A____a, California and Alaska.

Asians and Pacific Islanders

The main factors that attract most Asians to the US are refuge from persecution at home and an opportunity to succeed economically. Nearly half of Asians and Pacific Islanders live in California, the nearest entry point in the US. California has a wide range of opportunities.

Some groups such as the Chinese and Koreans concentrate in the major cities. They have been successful in providing retail services and supplies. Japanese Americans have been the most economically successful group in the US and have the highest average incomes in the country. Many other Asians have also succeeded. For example, there are many middle class Asians from the Indian sub-continent working in the medical profession.

Political progress

The US prides itself on being a democracy in which every citizen is equal. This is enshrined in the US Constitution: *all men are created equal with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*.

However, not all groups within the USA are equal in politics. All ethnic minorities are less likely to be involved in politics whether as voters, campaigners or as candidates, than white Americans.

In the USA you need to actively register before you can vote. As a result voter turnout is lower than in the UK. Over 60% of African Americans are registered compared to barely 40% of Hispanic Americans. African Americans used to be discouraged from voting by white extremists in the South. Laws passed in the 1960s changed this. Nowadays more Hispanics and African Americans turn out to vote. However, many African Americans still feel politics is irrelevant to their lives. Political participation tends to be higher in areas where African American candidates have a chance of winning - this has happened in a number of cities with large African American communities such as Washington DC where 60% of the population is African American; current and previous mayors have been African Americans. However, some cities where African Americans are in a minority eg Columbus, Ohio have also recently elected African American mayors.

Barack Obama

In 2008, Barack Obama was elected President of the United States. Until then, African Americans had made little impact at national political level. There had never been an African American President or Vice President, while the official Democratic and Republican candidates for these offices had always been white.

Preceding the Obama Administration, George W Bush gave the Cabinet posts of Secretary of State to Condoleezza Rice and National Security Advisor to Condoleezza Rice, both African Americans.

Approximately 9000 African Americans and 5000 Hispanics have been _____ to official positions in the USA, mainly in Southern and Western states at local/city levels. Ray Nagin is the Mayor of the City of N____ O_____. This African American politician became well known across America following _____ Katrina in 2005.

Several p_____ g_____ have tried to involve minorities in politics, for example, through voter r_____n campaigns. Hispanics have been elected in areas such as F_____ and California. The mayor of Los Angeles is Antonio Villaraigosa, a Hispanic. In contrast to their economic success few _____ have made political progress in the USA.

Native Americans have also made some political impact though p_____ g_____. They have campaigned over issues such as the return of traditional t_____ l_____s and a share in p_____s where these areas have been exploited by mining companies. In 1992 Ben Nighthorse Campbell became the first Native American to be elected to the S_____ (he served from 1992-2005).

The social and economic position of minorities

It is important not to _____e minorities. On average, many minorities do less well socially and economically than white Americans. _____, there are considerable differences between and within all the minorities. At one time, the only prominent African Americans were sports stars, m_____ or entertainers. More recently, there has been a rise in the number of successful African Americans - and other minorities - in p_____l jobs. Notable examples of successful non-white Americans in all areas of public life today include Eva Longoria, Tiger Woods, O_____ W_____, Condoleezza _____ and Barack Obama.

The key factors in the social and economic position of ethnic minorities in the US are:

- F_____s
- E_____
- H_____
- H_____
- Em_____ and w_____
- C_____ and the L_____

Families

Family life is very much part of the traditional image of life in the US. As in other western countries, family breakdown, divorce and illegitimacy have i_____. However, among the A_____ American population in the USA, there has been a greater breakdown of family structure; over 70% of children are born into _____ parent families.

As the single parent is usually the mother, children grow up without an _____ male as a _____ model. This can be particularly serious for _____ who tend to follow older _____ in their neighbourhood, often getting involved in anti-_____ behaviour which leads to _____ by the police and _____ out of school.

Education

The proportion of African Americans who _____ out of school is very _____. The record for completing high school within the Hispanic population is w_____ still, and relatively few go on to achieve a u_____ d_____. A lack of _____ tions leads to poorer ___ opportunities.

Housing

The houses in g_____ where poorer ethnic groups live are usually of ___w quality, with few basic a_____. These ghettos are often still effectively s_____d from the white majority. Partly due to p_____ and partly to c_____l factors, immigrants tend to settle together in low cost areas which become noticeably different. For example, in many parts of Los Angeles the language of the streets is _____.

A far lower p_____ of African Americans and Hispanics can afford to own their _____ homes and may find it hard to get m_____s.

Health

Unlike the UK, in the US there is no effective n_____ health service. This means that only a proportion of healthcare is covered for those on welfare. Nearly a third of ethnic minority families in the US do not have _____ which results in more health problems than in other groups in society. Life _____ is _____r and i_____ m_____ higher than average. _____ immigrants cannot claim _____fare _____fits and are easily _____ted by unscrupulous e_____s.

Employment and welfare

African Americans and Hispanics are less likely than w_____s or _____ to hold p_____ or m_____l positions. Statistically they are more likely to be u_____d or in poorly p_____ un_____d work. This means that a high proportion of minorities are likely to rely on welfare or state benefits, or earn low _____es.

In the US, individuals expect to provide for their families through savings and insurance. Welfare provision exists but it varies from c_____ to c_____ and s_____ to s_____ as only some benefits are provided by the _____ Government in Washington.

The effects of welfare are controversial. Recent years have seen an increase in concern that welfare creates a 'dependency culture' which discourages individuals from looking for _____ and taking _____y for themselves. Some African Americans and Hispanic community le_____ers agree with this diagnosis.

Crime and law

Although African Americans make up only 12% of the US population, more than half of all convicted c_____s and _____s of crime are African Americans. There is particular concern about v_____ crime in African American c_____, often linked to g_____ and _____d_____. The easy availability of _____ means that disputes and crimes are more likely to lead to f_____ than in the UK. Gang v_____ linked to control of certain

neighbourhoods and the drug trade often involves fighting within neighbourhood communities or between them; for example between Hispanics and African Americans in parts of Los Angeles.

Police forces throughout the US have tried to recruit from within ethnic minorities but there is still evidence of racism among some white police officers. One notorious example was when, in 1991, members of the Los Angeles Police Department were filmed beating Rodney King. This led to widespread rioting in which people died and massive damage was done to property and businesses.

Affirmative action and positive discrimination

'Affirmative action' aims to improve the educational and employment opportunities of members of ethnic minority groups. Government legislation requires employers and officials to aim for racial equality by providing workplaces. These procedures are designed to give members of ethnic minority groups an equal chance of success and to make up for past discrimination when unfair laws prevented ethnic minorities from attending university or getting jobs.

Many employers tried to achieve a racial balance by imposing quotas. This is when the workforce of a company must employ a specific number of workers from ethnic minority groups. The same quota system would be used to decide which students would be accepted into university. This led to controversy when less well qualified non-white candidates were given places due to their background. The 1991 Civil Rights Act banned quotas as discriminating!

Supporters believe Affirmative Action is still needed to make sure all people have the same access to jobs and other opportunities. But there has been a backlash against Affirmative Action mainly from whites who feel they have lost out on jobs or university places to non-whites with poorer qualifications.