



**AS IT IS**

## Majority of US Population Now Under Age 40

August 13, 2020

A new study shows that Americans under the age of 40 now make up a majority of the U.S. population.

The finding came from an examination of detailed age data released by the U.S. Census Bureau. The examination was carried out by the Brookings Institution, a Washington D.C. policy and research center.

The Brookings study found that people under age 40 made up 50.7 percent of the U.S. population as of July 2019. The percentage represented 166 million people. Older age groups numbered 162 million people.

Many of the older people are considered “baby boomers” - people born in the years following World War II. They have long been an important group in America because of their large numbers.

Many of the people under age 40 are in a group known as “millennials.” Members of the millennial group were born between 1981 and 1996.

People in another group, the so-called “Generation Z,” were born after 1996.

A generation is a group of people born and living during the same time.

William Frey is a senior fellow at Brookings’ Metropolitan Policy Program. “To many Americans - especially baby boomers themselves - this news may come as a shock,” he wrote in a report about the study.

Frey added that for many baby boomers, the term “millennial” has a negative meaning. But now, he explained, “the millennial generation is **poised** to take over influential roles in business and government.”

Those under age 40 are more **diverse** in terms of race and ethnicity, with almost half saying they are part of a minority group.

Past public opinion studies have shown that younger generations differed from older generations on major political issues such as immigration, criminal justice and the environment.

Frey wrote that the coronavirus health crisis and recent racial justice protests are likely to cause the younger groups to **promote** a number of progressive causes. Progressive refers to using or being interested in new or modern ideas, especially in politics and education.

I'm John Russell.

*Mike Schneider reported on this story for the Associated Press. John Russell adapted it for Learning English. Bryan Lynn was the editor.*

---

## Words in This Story

**poised**– *adj.* ready or prepared for something

**diverse** – *adj.* made up of people or things that are different from each other

**promote** – *v.* to help something happen, develop, or increase; to make people aware of something, such as a new product through advertising; to make something more popular, well-known, etc.