



New documents on political and social issues

March 2011

CONGRESS

MEMBERSHIP OF THE 112TH CONGRESS: A PROFILE

Congressional Research Service, March 1st, 2011

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/158472.pdf>

This report presents a profile of the membership of the 112th Congress (2011-2012). Statistical information is included on selected characteristics of Members, including data on party affiliation, average age, occupation, education, length of congressional service, religious affiliation, gender, ethnicity, foreign births, and military service.

DIVERSITY

HISPANICS ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN HALF OF NATION'S GROWTH IN PAST DECADE

Pew Hispanic Center, March 25, 2011

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1940/hispanic-united-states-population-growth-2010-census?src=prc-latest&proj=peoplepress>

The 2010 Census counted 50.5 million Hispanics in the United States. Hispanics now account for 16.3% of the total U.S. population. The nation's Latino population, which was 35.3 million in 2000, grew 43% over the decade. The Hispanic population also accounted for most of the nation's growth (56%) from 2000 to 2010.

OVERVIEW OF RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN: 2010

U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 2011

<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>

This report looks at the nation's changing racial and ethnic diversity. It is part of a series that analyzes population and housing data collected from the 2010 Census, and it provides a snapshot of race and Hispanic origin in the United States. Racial and ethnic population group distributions and growth at the national level and at lower levels of geography are presented.

A PIVOTAL DECADE FOR AMERICA'S WHITE AND MINORITY POPULATIONS

Brookings Institution, March 25, 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0325_census_demographics_frey.aspx

The first nationwide picture on race and ethnicity from the 2010 Census is now complete, and shows the United States at a demographic pivot point between its racial past and multi-ethnic future.

Some results, admittedly, are not too surprising. Certainly most people knew that the U.S. was experiencing a large growth of “new minority” populations, Hispanics and Asians. Over the decade, Hispanic population hit the 50 million mark, and Asians led all groups in population growth.

EDUCATION

FIXING NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

The White House, March 14, 2011

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/14/president-obama-calls-congress-fix-no-child-left-behind-start-next-school>

In a speech at Kenmore Middle School, President Obama urged Congress to fix *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* before the start of the next school year. The President articulated key priorities for reforming NCLB to win the future and prepare students to out-educate and out-compete the world in the 21st century economy

OPPORTUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION: TWO PROPOSALS

Brookings Institution, March 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/03_education_opportunity_whitehurst/03_education_opportunity_whitehurst.pdf

The Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings has recently developed proposals to ensure that federal investments in education have impact. These proposals present the dual advantage of low costs of implementation at the federal level coupled with the promise of considerable leverage at the state and local level. Two of those proposals are presented in this brief: increasing digital and virtual education and expanding consumer information on higher education.

PROJECTIONS OF EDUCATION STATISTICS TO 2019

National Center of Education Statistics, March 9, 2011

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011017.pdf>

This publication provides projections for key education statistics. It includes statistics on enrollment, graduates, teachers, and expenditures in elementary and secondary schools, and enrollment and earned degrees.

For the Nation, the tables, figures, and text contain data on enrollment, teachers, graduates, and expenditures for the past 14 years and projections to the year 2019.

HEALTH CARE

MAKING MEDICARE, MEDICAID AND SOCIAL SECURITY SUSTAINABLE FOR THE LONG RUN

Brookings Institution, March 17, 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2011/0317_house_budget_rivlin.aspx

Alice Rivlin testified on issues of health and retirement security before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Budget. Rivlin focused on key reforms pertaining to Medicare, Medicaid, the Employer Provided Health Care Insurance Exclusion, and Social Security. Rivlin discussed how to keep these entitlements affordable while improving their fiscal sustainability for the long run as the population ages and health care becomes increasingly expensive.

IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRATION REFORM AND U.S. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Council on Foreign Relations, March 14, 2011

<http://www.cfr.org/immigration/immigration-reform-us-economic-performance/p24358>

As the United States struggles to rebound from the economic downturn and policymakers try to figure out how to improve U.S. global competitiveness, the question of immigration reform has become more urgent. Approximately eleven million unauthorized immigrants are estimated to be currently living and working in the United States. But as unemployment hovers near 9 percent nationally, many Americans are concerned that these immigrants are taking away jobs and resources.

MIDDLE EASTERN AND NORTH AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Migration Policy Institute, March 2011

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=830>

By 2009, there were about 830,000 immigrants in the United States from the Middle East and North Africa. Accounting for just 2.2 percent of all immigrants in the United States, immigrants from the region have received growing attention in the post-9/11 era, particularly with US military action in the Middle East and the recent string of uprisings and political unrest in North Africa that have displaced thousands of refugees.

OVERVIEW OF IMMIGRATION ISSUES IN THE 112TH CONGRESS

Congressional Research Service, March 21, 2011

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/159345.pdf>

Of the 38 million foreign-born residents in the United States, approximately 16.4 million are naturalized citizens. The remaining 21.6 million foreign-born residents are noncitizens. According to the latest estimates by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), about 10.8 million unauthorized aliens were living in the United States in January 2010, down from a peak of 11.8 million in January 2007. Some observers and policy experts maintain that the presence of millions of unauthorized residents is evidence of inadequacies in the legal immigration system as well as failures of immigration control policies and practices.

RE-ENVISIONING SECURITY AND THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Migration Policy Institute, February 2011

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=829>

The rapid build-up of security-focused immigration policies over the past decade has led some experts to question whether the recent wave of security measures adequately reflects the historical purpose of US immigration policy — to promote legal migration to advance economic competitiveness, family unity, and humanitarian principles.

U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY ON TEMPORARY ADMISSIONS

Congressional Research Service, February 28, 2011

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/158526.pdf>

U.S. law provides for the temporary admission of various categories of foreign nationals, who are known as nonimmigrants. Nonimmigrants are admitted for a designated period of time and a specific purpose. They include a wide range of visitors, including tourists, foreign students, diplomats, and temporary workers.

LABOR

FILLING LABOR SHORTAGES THROUGH IMMIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW OF SHORTAGE LISTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Migration Policy Institute, February 2011

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=828>

Some skills and abilities are in short supply, even in times of recession, and sometimes vacancies in certain sectors are particularly hard to fill.

Since immigration brings new workers to the economy who might fill these gaps, immigration policy represents a logical part of any strategy that addresses recruiting difficulties.

MEDIA

THE STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA 2010

Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, March 2011

<http://stateofthemedias.org/>

This year's study contains a series of special reports: a survey on how people use mobile technology to get local news; a report comparing the U.S. newspaper industry with the rest of the world's and two reports on community news websites.

WHERE TODAY'S YOUTH ACTUALLY GET THEIR NEWS

Brookings Institution, February 25, 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0225_young_leaders_singer.aspx

Brookings asked a pool of over 1,000 young American leaders from around the country to rank the primary source from which they get their news on current events.

Their responses point to a more discerning group of news consumers than perhaps is popularly perceived. Despite the array of new technologies that enable the near instantaneous sharing of information across previously unimagined distances and from

any number of connected sources, these young leaders still look to traditional news organizations as their sources for what is going on in the world.

RELIGION

CONTINUING DIVIDE IN VIEWS OF ISLAM AND VIOLENCE

Pew Research Center on People and the Press, March 9, 2011

<http://people-press.org/report/714/>

The public remains divided over whether Islam is more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers. Currently, 40% say the Islamic religion is more likely than others to encourage violence while 42% say it is not.

ON THE PETER KING HEARING AND ISLAMISM IN AMERICA

Brookings Institution, March 10, 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0310_muslims_skerry.aspx

At a time when Americans, including some Muslims, are in combat overseas against Muslim adversaries, Muslim Americans cannot afford to consider themselves as a community apart. If they are to realize full citizenship, it is not enough for Muslims here simply to assert their rights but also to address questions whose continued neglect fuels understandable anxieties about Islam among their fellow citizens.

WOMEN

THE EVER-CHANGING WOMAN'S NATION

Center for American Progress, March 8, 2011

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/03/ever_changing_womens_nation.html

March 8, 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, a worldwide celebration of the social, political, and economic advances made by women in the face of violence, oppression, and hardship. This occasion, however, also compels everyone to reflect upon the difficulties that women continue to face around the world—as well as in the United States.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: CELEBRATING QUALITY AND EQUALITY

Brookings Institution, March 7, 2011

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0307_womens_day_winthrop_greubel.aspx

March 8th marks the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. This year's theme centers on equal access to education, training and science and technology. Access to a quality education that prepares girls and young women to enter the labor market with critical skills and valuable knowledge is essential – it is also a luxury.

WOMEN IN AMERICA: INDICATORS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

The White House, March 2011

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf

The report, which is the first of its kind in nearly 50 years, addresses women's present role in family life, education, employment, health, and crime in American society. It also challenges policymakers, researchers, and advocates to do more to further the collection of gender-specific data in the future.

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS: 1917-2011

Congressional Research Service, February 24, 2011

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/158520.pdf>

A total of 274 women have served in Congress, 174 Democrats and 100 Republicans. Of these women, 235 (149 Democrats, 86 Republicans) have served only in the House of Representatives; 31 (19 Democrats, 12 Republicans) have served only in the Senate; and 8 (6 Democrats, 2 Republicans) have served in both houses.

Ninety-one women currently serve in the 112th Congress: 74 in the House (50 Democrats and 24 Republicans) and 17 in the Senate (12 Democrats and 5 Republicans). Ninety-two women were initially sworn in to the 112th Congress, but one Democratic House Member has since resigned. This number (92) is lower than the record number of 95 women who were initially elected to the 111th Congress.

All previous web alerts can be found at:

<http://france.usembassy.gov/web-alert.html>