Characteristics of Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups in the United States: 2008–2012

American Community Survey Reports

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INTRODUCTION

The population reporting Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry in the United States is relatively small yet rapidly growing (Table 1).[1] For example, in 2000, there were 737,000 people with Jamaican ancestry compared with about 1 million estimated in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey (ACS). The population reporting Ethiopian ancestry more than doubled in size from 87,000 in 2000 to an estimated 195,000 based on the 2008–2012 ACS. Moreover, they are not all foreign born. The 2008–2012 ACS estimated that almost three-quarters of the population reporting Ethiopian ancestry (72 percent) was foreign born, but that was highest among all the selected ancestry groups (Figure 7). The proportion that was foreign born among the population reporting Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry was lower (about 60 percent). Although the growth of these populations is beginning to attract the attention of researchers, studies of these ancestry groups, which include immigrants and their descendants,

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[1] Note that these are the largest sub-Saharan African and Caribbean ancestry groups with estimated total populations of at least 150,000 at the national level in the 2008–2012 ACS 5-year estimates. Spanish-speaking Caribbean ancestry groups were not included.

How Ancestry Is Determined

The American Community Survey includes an ancestry question that asks each individual his or her "ancestry or ethnic origin." From the responses collected, the U.S. Census Bureau considers anyone who reported being Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian (including, Trinidadian or Tobagonian responses) to be of each respective ancestry group.

The Census Bureau defines ancestry as the ethnic origin, descent, roots, heritage, or place of birth of the person or of the person's ancestors. Ancestry is a broad concept. The ancestry question is not intended to measure the degree of attachment to a particular group, but simply to establish the ethnic group(s) with which the respondent self-identifies.

Largest Sub-Saharan African or Caribbean Ancestry Group

The report focuses on the population reporting Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry groups in the United States. These selected sub-Saharan African and Caribbean ancestry groups each had 150,000 or more total population in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey. The report does not include Spanish-speaking Caribbean ancestry groups.

Table 1.

The Population Reporting Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry: 1980 to 2008–2012

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Population group[1]	Census			ACS	Change 1980 to 2008–2012	
	1980	1990	2000	2008–2012	Number	Percent
Total U.S. population	226,546	248,710	281,422	309,139	82,593	36
Ethiopian	8	35	87	195	187	2,453
Nigerian	48	92	165	263	215	449
Haitian	90	290	548	868	777	862
Jamaican	253	435	737	998	744	294
Trinidadian and Tobagonian.	44	76	165	196	153	348

[1] Selected sub-Saharan African and Caribbean ancestry groups of 150,000 or more total population in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, and 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

are still relatively rare.[2, 3, 4, 5] See text box on previous page for the Census Bureau's definition of ancestry and notes on the selected groups.

IMMIGRATION PATTERNS AND TRENDS

Ethiopians began to come to the United States for technical training and further education, from a handful in the 1920s to thousands by the 1970s.[6] Usually these individuals returned to Ethiopia after completion of their education.

The 1974 revolution in Ethiopia made it difficult for many of the Ethiopian students, business leaders, government officials, and other temporary visitors who were already in the United States to return to their country of origin. They became the first wave of Ethiopian immigrants. The next wave included those who came starting in the 1980s as refugees, as well as victims of famine and drought. They also came because of the efforts of international and U.S. organizations such as the Lutheran Church, which had a relationship with Ethiopians that dated back to the late 19th century. These post-1970s migrants had a more diverse socioeconomic background compared with the first wave, many of whom shared more of a privileged past.[7, 8]

Nigerian migration to the United States began in the 1920s, as with Ethiopians, beginning with a handful that came to attend American universities and eventually returned home. In subsequent decades, Nigerians became

more exposed to the United States through the Peace Corps, oil trade, and college recruitment. American higher education grew more popular in comparison to the British and other European models to which Nigerians had been accustomed due to their prior experience of British rule.[9] Most students came to acquire an education and eventually returned home. This pattern changed during the Nigerian civil war (1967 to 1970). Many Nigerians in the United States chose not to return to their country. They and others who left the country formed the first wave of Nigerian immigrants.[10]

During the oil boom years of the 1970s, the Nigerian government sponsored thousands of students for undergraduate and advanced studies in the United States. Other students came with the financial support of their family or community, all indicative of the economic prosperity of the country and the high premium placed on education during this period. The subsequent economic

[2] Angela B. Buchanan, Nora G. Albert, and Daniel Beaulieu, "The Population With Haitian Ancestry in the United States: 2009," *American Community Survey Briefs*, ACSBR/09-18, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2014.

[3] Christine P. Gambino, Edward N. Trevelyan, and John Thomas Fitzwater, "The Foreign-Born Population From Africa: 2008–2012," *American Community Survey Briefs*, ACSBR/12-16, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2014.

[4] Migration Policy Institute, *Select Diaspora Populations in the United States-Ethiopian; Haitian; Nigerian*, Washington, DC, 2014, accessed August 26, 2014, <http://migrationpolicy.org/research/select-diaspora-populations-united-states>.

[5] Randy Capps, Kristen McCabe, and Michael Fix, *Diverse Streams: Black African Migration to the United States*, Migration Policy Institute, Washington, DC, 2012.

[6] Solomon Addis Getahun, *The History of Ethiopian Immigrants and Refugees in America, 1900–2000: Patterns of Migration, Survival, and Adjustment*, LBF Scholarly Publishing, New York, 2007.

[7] Kebede Haile, *The Ethiopian Experience in America*, AllWrite, Atlanta, 2008.
[8] See footnote 6.

[9] Kalu Ogbaa, *The Nigerian Americans*, Greenwood, Westport, 2003.
[10] Ezekiel Umo Ette, *Nigerian Immigrants in the United States*, Lexington, New York, 2012.

downturn in Nigeria resulted in many Nigerian students being unable to leave the United States. These students as well other Nigerians who could afford to leave the country formed the next wave of immigrants to the United States.[11, 12] Although there had been successive waves of migration by people of Haitian ancestry to the United States during the Haitian revolution (1791 to 1804) and the American occupation of Haiti (1915 to 1934), the majority arrived beginning around 1957—when migration to the United States was encouraged, following political and economic change in Haiti. Prior to that time, emigration flows from Haiti were primarily to France, former French colonies in Africa, and the French-speaking parts of Canada. An additional wave of Haitian migrants came to the United States around 1964. The 1965 Immigration Act allowed them to bring close relatives in the late 1960s and 1970s. Many Haitians migrated to the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to political and economic conditions in Haiti.[13, 14, 15]

The initial migratory flows for people with Jamaican and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries were to other territories in the Caribbean such as Guyana, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic, as well as to Central America, Panama, and Britain.[16, 17] The first wave of Jamaicans and Trinidadians and Tobagonians arrived in the United States between 1900 and the early 1920s. The United States allowed unlimited immigration from the Western Hemisphere during this period.[18]

Following a series of restrictive immigration laws, there was a second smaller immigration wave of Jamaicans and Trinidadians and Tobagonians between the mid-1920s and 1965. In spite of restrictive immigration policies, Jamaicans and Trinidadians and Tobagonians were still able to enter the United States as British colonial subjects. However, following World War II, new immigration laws prohibited colonial subjects from using home country quotas. The implementation of the 1965 Immigration Act produced a large third wave of immigrants from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as other parts of the Caribbean.[19, 20, 21] These immigrants, particularly from Jamaica, tended to be skilled workers who looked abroad for expanded opportunities.[22]

This report uses 2008–2012 5-year ACS estimates to present and compare selected geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics of these groups in the United States, including size and geographic distribution, age and sex composition, marital status, household size and type, nativity status, year of entry, citizenship, English-speaking ability, educational attainment, labor force participation, occupation, income, poverty, and homeownership.

POPULATION SIZE AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Nation

About 2.5 million people reported Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, or Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry in the 2008–2012 ACS, or around 0.8 percent of the total U.S. population (Table 1). The population in these selected ancestry groups increased by about 2.1 million between 1980 and 2008–2012, or about 469 percent. The geographic distribution of these groups varied considerably, owing to the distinct migration and settlement history of each group.

The population with Jamaican ancestry was the largest of the five selected groups, although

[11] See footnote 9.
[12] See footnote 10.
[13] Alex Stepick, *Pride Against Prejudice*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1998.
[14] Flore Zéphir, *Haitian Immigrants in Black America*, Bergin & Garvey, Westport, 1996.
[15] Rose-Marie Cassagnol Chierici, *Demele: "Making It:" Migration and Adaptation Among Haitian Boat People in the United States*, AMS, New York, 1991.

[16] Violet Showers Johnson, *The Other Black Bostonians*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2006.
[17] Suzanne Model, *West Indian Immigrants: A Black Success Story?*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2008.
[18] Mary C. Waters, *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1999.
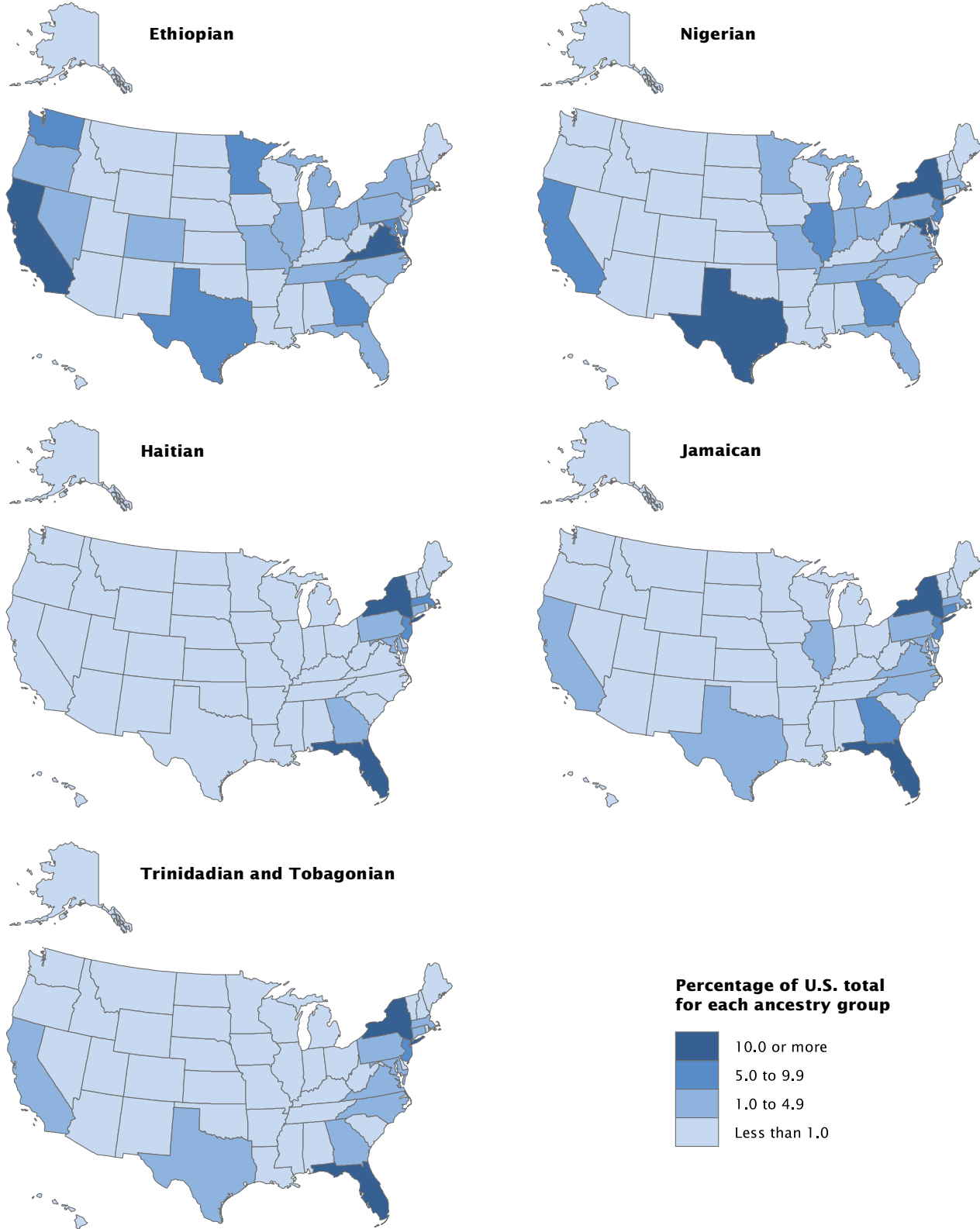[19] See footnote 16.
[20] See footnote 17.
[21] See footnote 18.

[22] Douglas S. Massey, Margarita Mooney, Kimberly C. Torres, and Camille Z. Charles, "Black Immigrants and Black Natives Attending Selective Colleges and Universities in the United States," *American Journal of Education*, 113, (February): 243–271, 2007.

Figure 1.
Percentage Distribution of the U.S. Population of Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian Ancestry by State: 2008–2012
(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

Ethiopian

Nigerian

Haitian

Jamaican

Trinidadian and Tobagonian

Percentage of U.S. total
for each ancestry group

- 10.0 or more
- 5.0 to 9.9
- 1.0 to 4.9
- Less than 1.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

U.S. Census Bureau

it was the slowest growing, adding about 744,000 people between 1980 and 2008–2012, an increase of about 294 percent. The population of Haitian ancestry had the largest numeric change over the same period, with an increase of about 777,000 (862 percent). The population of Ethiopian ancestry was the smallest of the selected ancestry groups, but was also the fastest growing from 1980 to 2008–2012, growing by around 2,400 percent.

State

The population with Haitian ancestry was the most geographically concentrated of the five selected groups in 2008–2012 (Figure 1), with heavy concentrations in the states of Florida (47 percent of the total U.S. Haitian population) and New York (22 percent of the U.S. total). Florida has a climate similar to Haiti's, and Miami is the closest major U.S. city to Haiti. New York is a global city and has historically drawn many immigrants.[23] There were lesser concentrations of people reporting Haitian ancestry in Massachusetts (8 percent), New Jersey (7 percent), and Georgia (3 percent).

The Jamaican and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry groups followed a similar pattern, with high concentrations in Florida (26 percent of the U.S. Jamaican population, and 15 percent of the U.S. Trinidadian and Tobagonian

population) and New York (31 percent of the Jamaican population and 46 percent of the Trinidadian and Tobagonian population). Noticeable concentrations (greater than 1 percent) of these two groups were also found in Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, and California (Figure 1).

New York was an especially popular destination for Caribbean immigration because of already established migration by earlier immigrants during the first few decades of the twentieth century. These earlier immigrants chose New York because of the jobs available during and after World War I, and by the existence of a thriving Black community, especially in Harlem. New York's service economy also meant that there were relatively many jobs available.[24]

The Ethiopian and Nigerian ancestry groups were more geographically dispersed than the other three ancestry groups, with relatively high percentages living in the Midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri. California (13 percent) had the largest percentage of the population with Ethiopian ancestry, while Texas (17 percent) had the largest percentage of Nigerian ancestry population. The geographic distribution of the Ethiopian ancestry group was chiefly a result of refugee resettlement efforts by government and nongovernmental organizations, as well as later

internal migration for family reunification and job opportunities. For the Nigerian ancestry group, favorable educational, economic, and climatic conditions, especially in Texas, were salient factors.[25, 26, 27]
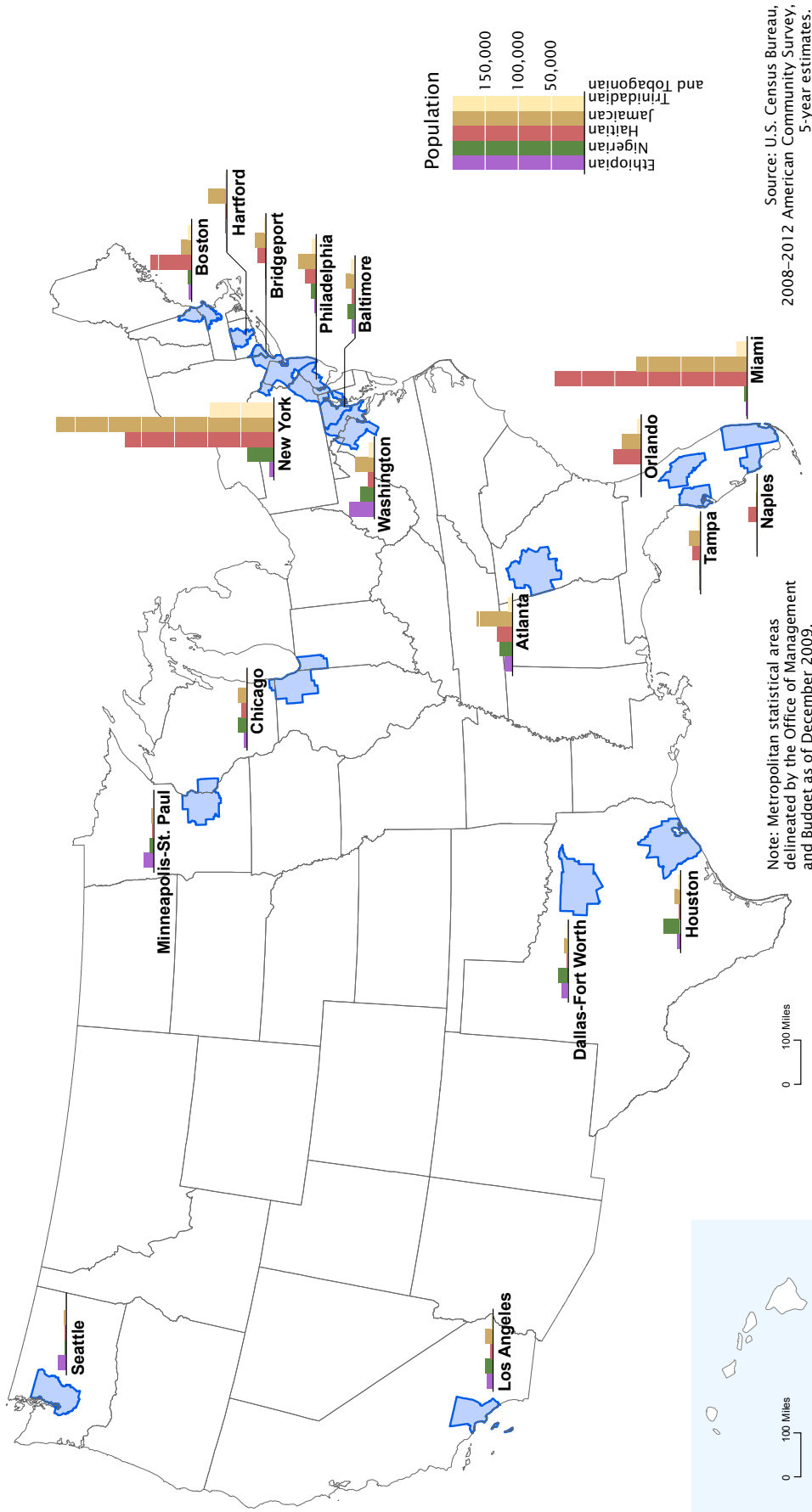
Metropolitan Statistical Area

As shown in Figure 2, there were 18 metropolitan statistical areas (metro areas) with at least 10,000 population in one or more of the selected ancestry groups based on the 2008–2012 ACS. While some metro areas (e.g., New York and Atlanta) had sizeable populations in three or four of the selected groups, others (e.g., Minneapolis and Seattle) had only one group with 10,000 or more population. Among the largest concentrations of the selected ancestry groups were the population of Jamaican ancestry in the New York metro area (330,944) and the population of Haitian ancestry in the Miami metro area (291,963). The New York metro area also had a large population of Haitian ancestry (226,294); the Miami metro area also had a large Jamaican population (167,208). None of the other selected ancestry groups had a population of 100,000 or more in any metro areas. Among the selected metro areas, the largest population of Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry was in New York (97,270), as

[23] See footnote 13.

[24] See footnote 18.

[25] See footnote 6.
[26] See footnote 10.
[27] John A. Arthur, *Invisible Sojourners: African Immigrant Diaspora in the United States*, Praeger Publishers, 2000, 45–47.

Figure 2.

Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups by Metropolitan Statistical Area: 2008–2012

(Data are shown for the 18 metropolitan statistical areas that have at least 10,000 population in any one of the selected ancestry groups. Metropolitan statistical area titles are abbreviated. For full titles of metropolitan statistical areas, see *www.census.gov/population/metro.* Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Population

150,000
100,000
50,000

Ethiopian
Nigerian
Haitian
Jamaican
Trinidadian and Tobagonian

Seattle
Los Angeles
Minneapolis-St. Paul
Chicago
Dallas-Fort Worth
Houston
Atlanta
Tampa
Naples
Orlando
Miami
Washington
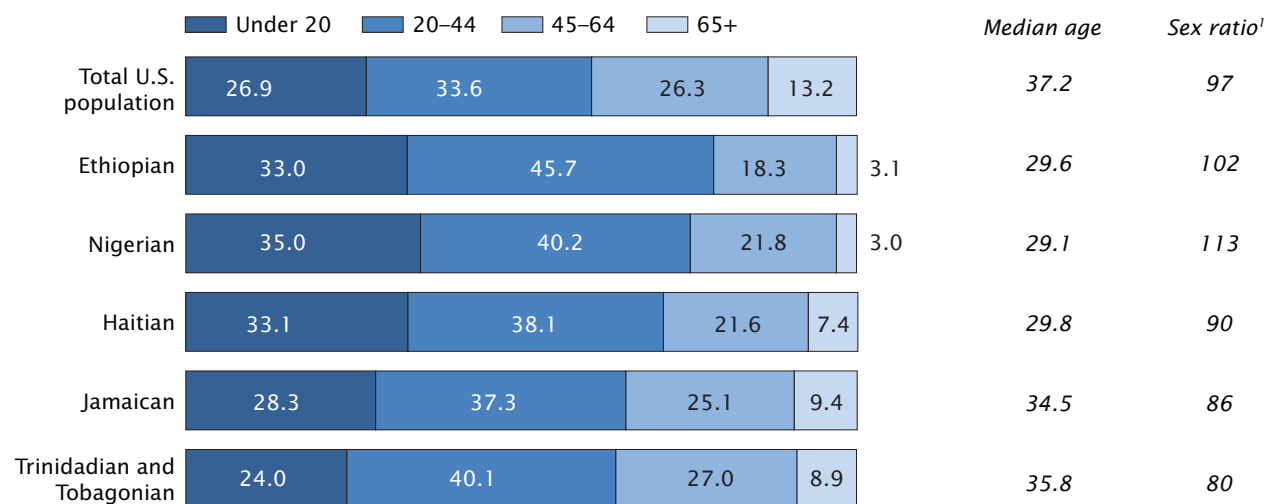Baltimore
Philadelphia
Bridgeport
Hartford
Boston
New York

Note: Metropolitan statistical areas delineated by the Office of Management and Budget as of December 2009.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 3.
Age and Sex Composition: 2008–2012
(Percent distribution. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

	Under 20	20–44	45–64	65+	Median age	Sex ratio[1]
Total U.S. population	26.9	33.6	26.3	13.2	*37.2*	*97*
Ethiopian	33.0	45.7	18.3	3.1	*29.6*	*102*
Nigerian	35.0	40.2	21.8	3.0	*29.1*	*113*
Haitian	33.1	38.1	21.6	7.4	*29.8*	*90*
Jamaican	28.3	37.3	25.1	9.4	*34.5*	*86*
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	24.0	40.1	27.0	8.9	*35.8*	*80*

[1] The sex ratio is the ratio of males to females in a population.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

was the largest population of Nigerian ancestry (40,549). The largest population of Ethiopian ancestry was in the Washington metro area (37,924).[28]

[28] Note that the margin of error for the estimated populations of Jamaican, Haitian, Trinidadian and Tobagonian, and Nigerian ancestries in the New York metro area was ± 6,983, ± 6,832, ± 3,491, and ± 2,483, respectively. It was ± 8,034 and ± 5,628, respectively for Haitian and Jamaican ancestry populations in the Miami metro area. It was ± 2,493 for the estimated population of Ethiopian ancestry in the Washington metro area. The margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age and Sex Composition

The median age (half of the population is older than the median age and half of the population is younger) of the U.S. population was 37 years in the 2008–2012 ACS (Figure 3). The corresponding median ages among the selected ancestry groups were lower, since young adults are the ones most likely to migrate, and ranged from a low of about 30 years for Ethiopian, Nigerian, and Haitian to a high of 36 years for those reporting Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry.

The populations reporting Ethiopian, Haitian, and Nigerian ancestries especially had a young age structure compared with the nation. Almost one-half of people with Ethiopian ancestry (46 percent) were aged 20 to 44 years compared with one-third (34 percent) for the general population. Nationwide there were three times as many people aged 65 and older (13 percent) as those reporting Ethiopian and Nigerian (3 percent each) ancestries.

The sex ratio is a measure of sex composition, and is defined as the number of males per 100 females.[29] A sex ratio of exactly 100 would indicate an equal number of males and females, with a sex ratio

[29] Barry Edmonston and Margaret Michalowski, "International Migration," In *The Methods And Materials Of Demography*, ed. Jacob S. Siegel and David A. Swanson, Elsevier, New York, 2004, 455–492.

over 100 indicating a greater number of males. People of Nigerian ancestry (who traditionally tend to provide more resources including an education at home or abroad to the male child) had the highest sex ratio (113), while with a sex ratio of 80, there were relatively more females than males among the population reporting Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry. Especially during the third West Indian immigration wave (between 1968 and 1976) to the United States, it was easier for those who did not qualify for the top preference of family reunification to obtain labor certification and immigrate if they were nurses or domestic servants, two occupations dominated by women.[30, 31, 32]

Marital Status

Figure 4 presents the incidence of marriage, separation, divorce, and widowhood among males for the selected ancestry groups compared with the general population. Because of a relatively younger age structure, at least 39 percent of males among the selected ancestry groups were never married compared with 35 percent of males nationwide. Of those males who were married, the highest proportion was among those with Nigerian ancestry as well as the general population (51 percent). Men

[30] See footnote 10.
[31] See footnote 17.
[32] See footnote 18.

among all the selected ancestry groups (3 percent) were more likely to be separated from their spouses than those in the general population (2 percent). On the other hand, they were less likely to be divorced compared with males in the general population (10 percent). There were more widowers nationwide than among the selected ancestry groups (3 percent for the total population compared with 1 percent for Ethiopian and Nigerian and 2 percent for Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries).

There were also higher proportions of females who were never married among the selected groups compared with the general population (Figure 5). Nationwide, the percentage of never-married females was 29 percent but was as high as 44 percent for the Haitian population. All women in the United States and those who reported a Nigerian ancestry (47 percent each), as well as women of Ethiopian ancestry (45 percent), were more likely to be married compared to those of Trinidadian and Tobagonian (37 percent), Haitian (35 percent), and Jamaican (33 percent) ancestries. The proportion of married women of Ethiopian ancestry was not significantly different from Nigerian women.

Women nationwide were least likely to be separated (3 percent), while women who reported a Nigerian ancestry were least

likely to be divorced (7 percent). Women in the selected ancestry groups were less likely to be widowed than all women in the United States.

Average Household Size and Household Composition

Figure 6 shows that in 2008–2012, the average household size, which is determined by dividing the total household population by the total number of households in the United States, was 2.6 people per household. This was also the average household size for the population reporting Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry, which had the smallest household size among the selected ancestry groups. Haitian ancestry group average household size was the largest at 3.5 people per household. A household ancestry classification is based on the ancestry of the householder. A householder is an individual, at least 15 years old, in whose name the housing unit is rented or owned.

Almost one-half of all households in the United States and among people of Nigerian ancestry were composed of married-couple households compared with 35 percent of all households for people reporting a Jamaican ancestry, the lowest of all the groups. The population reporting a Haitian ancestry had the highest percentage of male
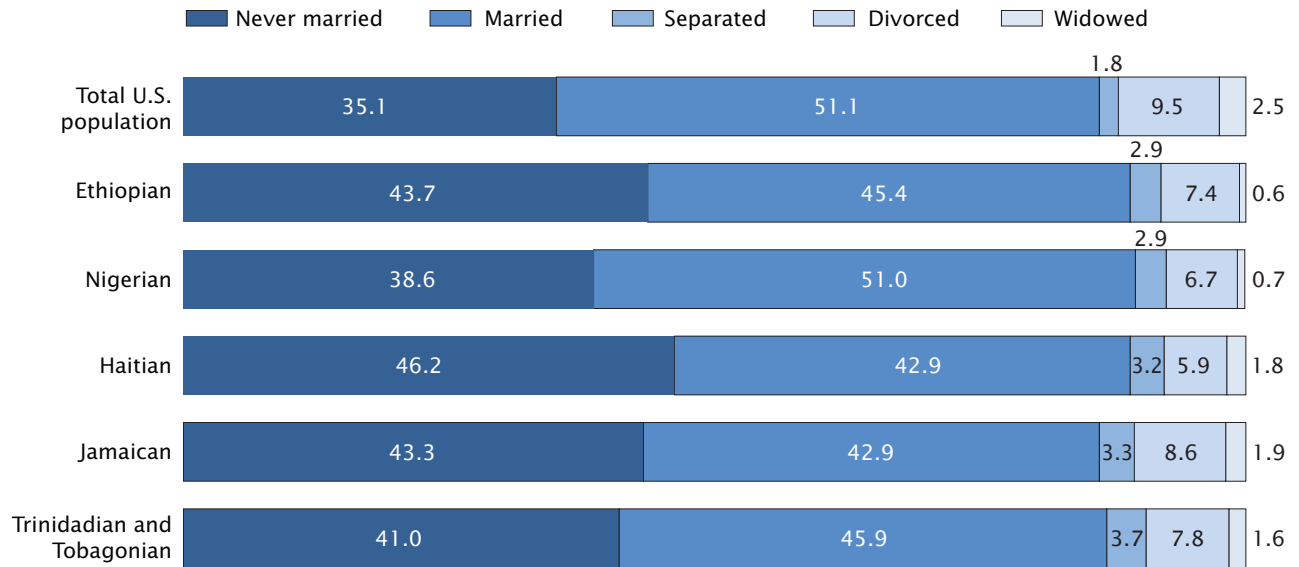
Figure 4.
Male Marital Status: 2008–2012
(Percent distribution of the male population 15 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Legend: ■ Never married ■ Married ■ Separated ■ Divorced □ Widowed

	Never married	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed
Total U.S. population	35.1	51.1	1.8	9.5	2.5
Ethiopian	43.7	45.4	2.9	7.4	0.6
Nigerian	38.6	51.0	2.9	6.7	0.7
Haitian	46.2	42.9	3.2	5.9	1.8
Jamaican	43.3	42.9	3.3	8.6	1.9
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	41.0	45.9	3.7	7.8	1.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.
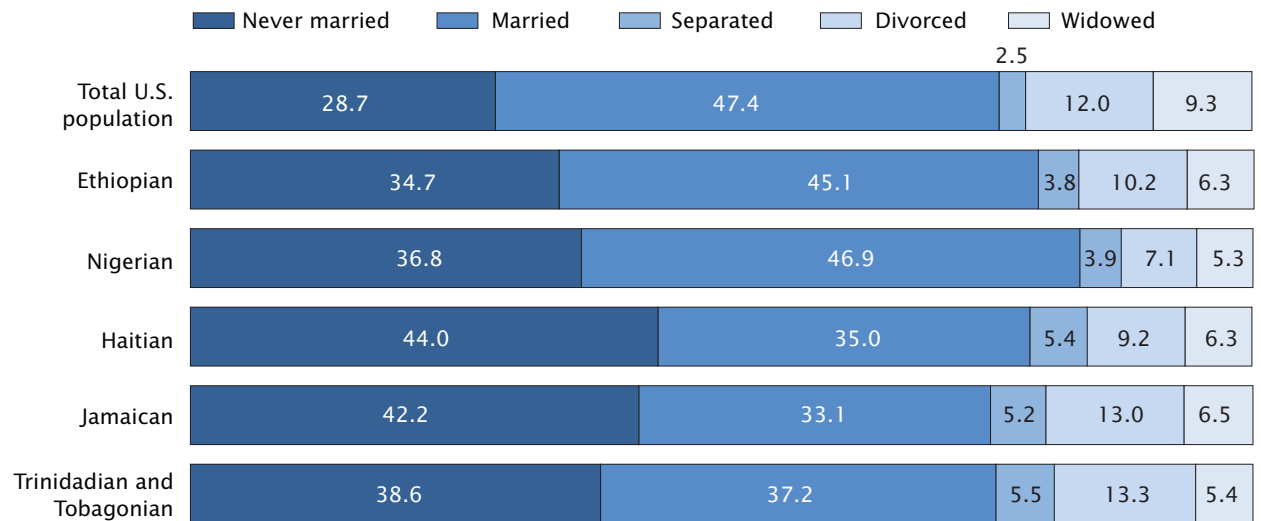
Figure 5.
Female Marital Status: 2008–2012
(Percent distribution of the female population 15 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Legend: ■ Never married ■ Married ■ Separated ■ Divorced □ Widowed

	Never married	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed
Total U.S. population	28.7	47.4	2.5	12.0	9.3
Ethiopian	34.7	45.1	3.8	10.2	6.3
Nigerian	36.8	46.9	3.9	7.1	5.3
Haitian	44.0	35.0	5.4	9.2	6.3
Jamaican	42.2	33.1	5.2	13.0	6.5
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	38.6	37.2	5.5	13.3	5.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

householder, no wife present households (9 percent) and households composed of a female householder, no husband present (28 percent), but the lowest proportion of nonfamily households (20 percent).

Foreign Born, Period of Entry, and Naturalized Citizens

The 2008–2012 ACS estimated the proportion of the foreign-born population in the United States to be 13 percent (Figure 7). By comparison, almost three-quarters of the population reporting Ethiopian ancestry (72 percent) were foreign born, the highest among the selected ancestry groups. Approximately

6 out of every 10 people among the other groups were foreign born, including Trinidadian and Tobagonian, Nigerian, Jamaican, and Haitian ancestries.
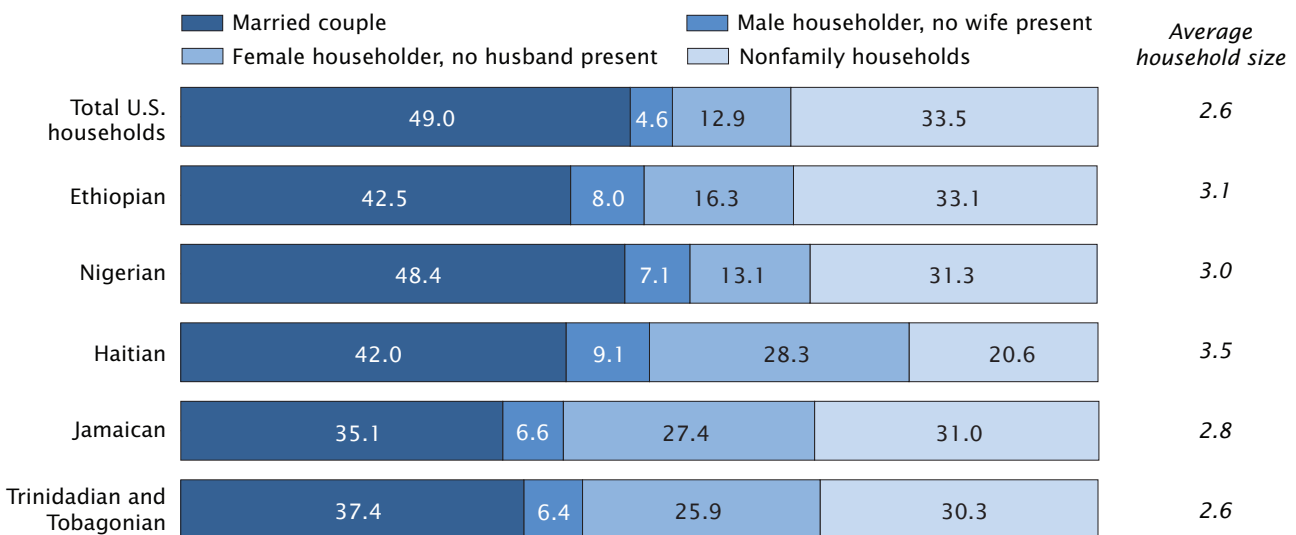
The period of entry to the United States mirrors each group's migration experience. Figure 8 shows that the overwhelming majority of all foreign born, as well as those among the selected ancestry groups, arrived before 2010 (at least 9 out of 10). At the same time, a significantly higher percentage of the foreign-born reporting Trinidadian and Tobagonian (99 percent), Jamaican (98 percent), and Haitian (96 percent) ancestries, the earliest immigrants among

the selected groups, entered the country before 2010, while about 95 percent and 94 percent of those with Nigerian and Ethiopian ancestry, respectively, arrived during the same period.

Of all foreign born in the nation, 44 percent were naturalized citizens (Figure 9). The foreign born of Jamaican ancestry were most likely to be naturalized among the selected ancestry groups, followed by Trinidadian and Tobagonian, and Nigerian ancestries. The proportion of naturalized foreign born was lower for those with Ethiopian and Haitian ancestries.

Figure 6.
Household Type: 2008–2012
(Percent distribution. Households are classified by ancestry of the householder. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
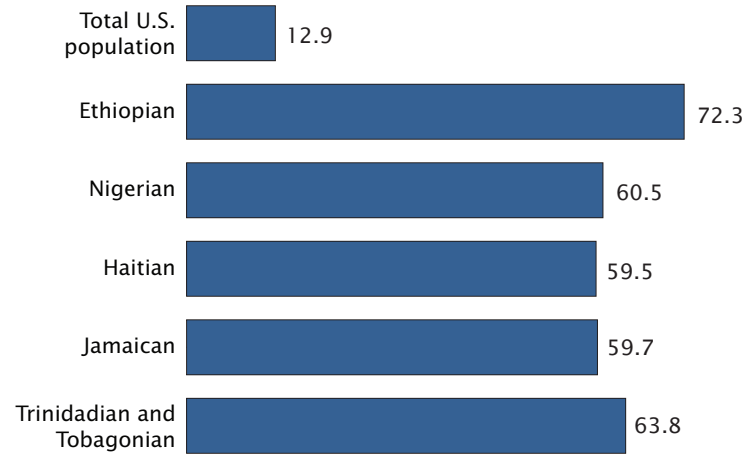
	Married couple	Male householder, no wife present	Female householder, no husband present	Nonfamily households	*Average household size*
Total U.S. households	49.0	4.6	12.9	33.5	*2.6*
Ethiopian	42.5	8.0	16.3	33.1	*3.1*
Nigerian	48.4	7.1	13.1	31.3	*3.0*
Haitian	42.0	9.1	28.3	20.6	*3.5*
Jamaican	35.1	6.6	27.4	31.0	*2.8*
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	37.4	6.4	25.9	30.3	*2.6*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English

Figure 10 shows that nation-wide most people, aged 5 and older, spoke only English at home (80 percent). As Anglophone or English-speaking Caribbean people, those with Trinidadian and Tobagonian (96 percent) and Jamaican (93 percent) ancestries were the most likely to speak only English at home. Even though English is the official language of Nigeria, less than half of people reporting Nigerian ancestry spoke only English at home (43 percent), as many also spoke their ethnic languages such as Efik, Igbo, Ijaw, Hausa, and Yoruba. Only about 19 percent of the
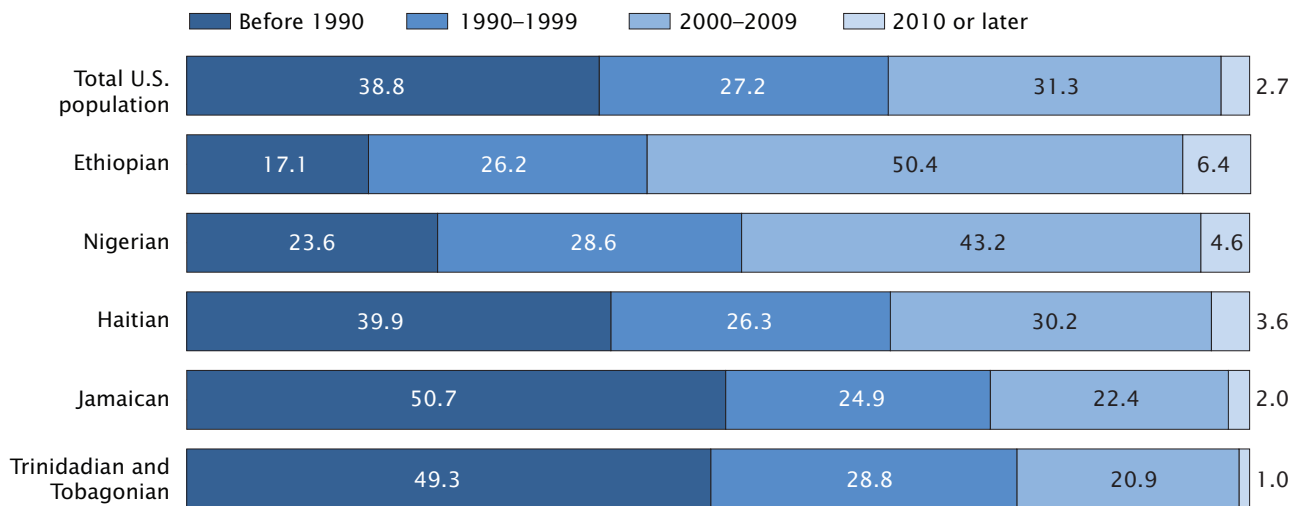
Figure 7.
Percent Foreign Born: 2008–2012
(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

	Percent
Total U.S. population	12.9
Ethiopian	72.3
Nigerian	60.5
Haitian	59.5
Jamaican	59.7
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	63.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 8.
Period of Entry: 2008–2012
(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

	Before 1990	1990–1999	2000–2009	2010 or later
Total U.S. population	38.8	27.2	31.3	2.7
Ethiopian	17.1	26.2	50.4	6.4
Nigerian	23.6	28.6	43.2	4.6
Haitian	39.9	26.3	30.2	3.6
Jamaican	50.7	24.9	22.4	2.0
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	49.3	28.8	20.9	1.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Ethiopian and Haitian ancestry groups spoke only English at home. Creole and French are the two official languages in Haiti. In Ethiopia, Amharic is the official national language, while many other languages such as Oromo, Somali, and Tigrinya are spoken at the state and local levels. Thus, far more people of Haitian (38 percent) and Ethiopian (35 percent) ancestry who spoke a language other than English at home reported speaking English less than "very well" compared with those with Nigerian (9 percent), Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian (about 1 percent) ancestries.[33, 34, 35, 36]

English-speaking ability varied by place of birth particularly among the population reporting Ethiopian, Nigerian, and Haitian ancestries (Figures 11 and 12). The majority of native-born people (i.e., born in the United States) with Nigerian ancestry (77 percent) and Ethiopian ancestry (58 percent) spoke only English at home. By comparison, less than one-half of the native-born with Haitian ancestry spoke only English at home (41 percent). About twice as

[33] Jeanne Batalova and Michael Fix, "A Profile of Limited English Proficient Adult Immigrants," *Peabody Journal of Education*, 2010, 85(4): 511–534

[34] Sherrie A. Kossoudji, "English Language Ability and the Labor Market Opportunities of Hispanic and East Asian Immigrant Men," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 1988, 6(2): 205–228.
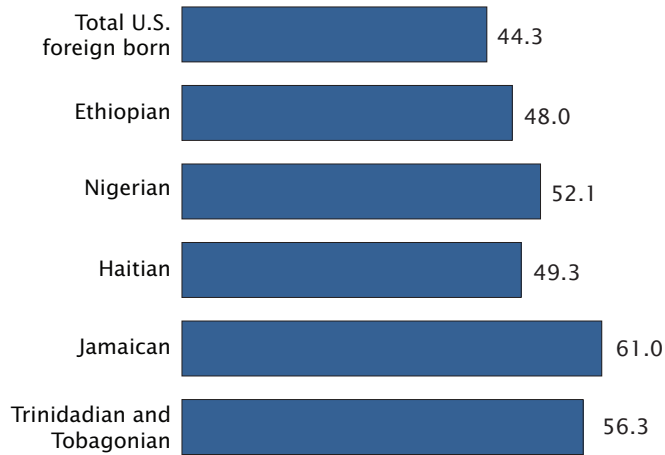
[35] Christine P. Gambino, Yesenia D. Acosta, and Elizabeth M. Grieco, "English-Speaking Ability of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2012," *American Community Survey Reports*, ACS-26, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2014.

[36] Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook 2013–14, Washington, DC, 2013. Accessed September 3, 2014, <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/policy_updates/16-STATE-103720-DV-IV-2018.pdf>.

Figure 9.
Percent Naturalized: 2008–2012
(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
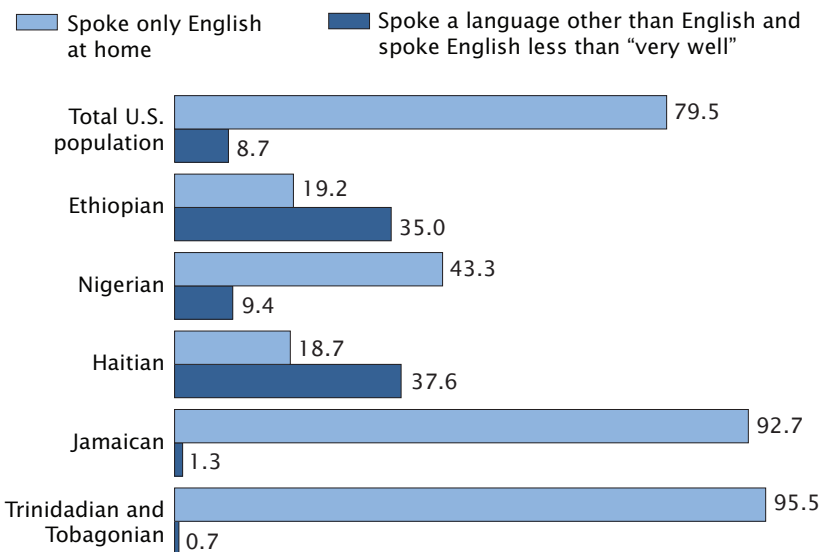
Total U.S. foreign born	44.3
Ethiopian	48.0
Nigerian	52.1
Haitian	49.3
Jamaican	61.0
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	56.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 10.
Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English: 2008–2012
(Percentage of population 5 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Spoke only English at home
Spoke a language other than English and spoke English less than "very well"

	Spoke only English at home	Spoke a language other than English and spoke English less than "very well"
Total U.S. population	79.5	8.7
Ethiopian	19.2	35.0
Nigerian	43.3	9.4
Haitian	18.7	37.6
Jamaican	92.7	1.3
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	95.5	0.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

many of the total foreign-born population (17 percent) spoke only English at home compared with the foreign-born reporting Ethiopian ancestry (9 percent) and Haitian ancestry (6 percent). About one-quarter of the foreign-born population with Nigerian ancestry spoke only English at home.
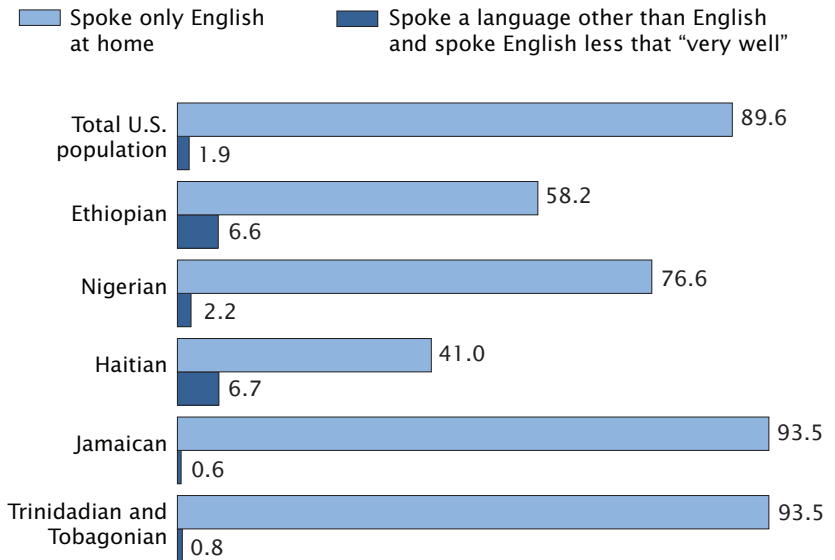
Educational Attainment

Figure 13 shows that the proportion of the United States population 25 years and older that had a bachelor's degree or higher was 29 percent. Since acquiring a college or other advanced degree was a major factor for many people of Nigerian ancestry coming to the United States, it is not surprising that twice as many (61 percent) had a bachelor's degree or higher compared to all people and the other selected ancestry groups. The proportion of people who reported Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestry and had a bachelor's degree or higher was consistent with those who reported Ethiopian and Jamaican ancestries. The educational level for every other selected ancestry group was higher than for those who reported Haitian ancestry.

Labor Force Participation and Occupation

Nationally, about two-thirds of the population 16 years and older was in the labor force (Figure 14). People who reported Nigerian and Ethiopian (76 percent each) ancestries had the highest

Figure 11.
Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English, Native: 2008–2012
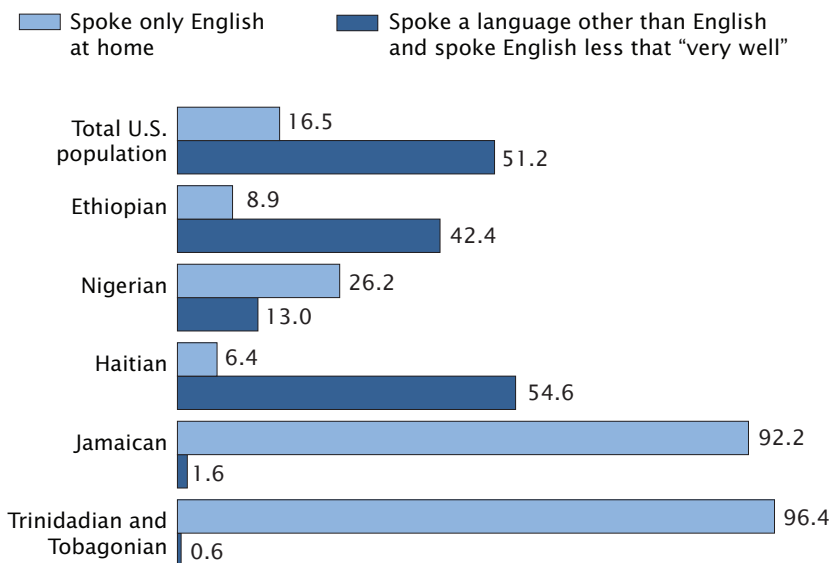(Percentage of population 5 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Spoke only English at home | Spoke a language other than English and spoke English less that "very well"

	Spoke only English at home	Spoke a language other than English
Total U.S. population	89.6	1.9
Ethiopian	58.2	6.6
Nigerian	76.6	2.2
Haitian	41.0	6.7
Jamaican	93.5	0.6
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	93.5	0.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 12.
Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English, Foreign-Born: 2008–2012
(Percentage of population 5 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Spoke only English at home | Spoke a language other than English and spoke English less that "very well"

	Spoke only English at home	Spoke a language other than English
Total U.S. population	16.5	51.2
Ethiopian	8.9	42.4
Nigerian	26.2	13.0
Haitian	6.4	54.6
Jamaican	92.2	1.6
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	96.4	0.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

participation rates among all the selected ancestry groups. At least 71 percent of people aged 16 and older with Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries participated in the labor force.

Figure 15 shows that 36 percent of the civilian employed population aged 16 and older in the United States worked in management, business, science, and arts occupations, but as the most educated group, people with Nigerian ancestry had the greatest share of this type of occupation (52 percent). People reporting Haitian ancestry had the highest proportion employed in service occupations (38 percent), while the highest proportion engaged in production, transportation, and material moving occupations were Ethiopian ancestry workers (22 percent).

Median Earnings

Figure 16 shows the proportions of the U.S. population and the selected ancestry groups by median earnings and sex. In general, male ($50,922) and female ($44,894) workers, 16 years and older reporting Nigerian ancestry had higher median earnings in the past 12 months compared with the total U.S. population—males and females ($48,629 for all males and $37,842 for all females)—and their counterparts among the other selected groups. On the other hand,

Figure 13.
Bachelor's Degree or Higher Educational Attainment: 2008–2012
(Percentage of population 25 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
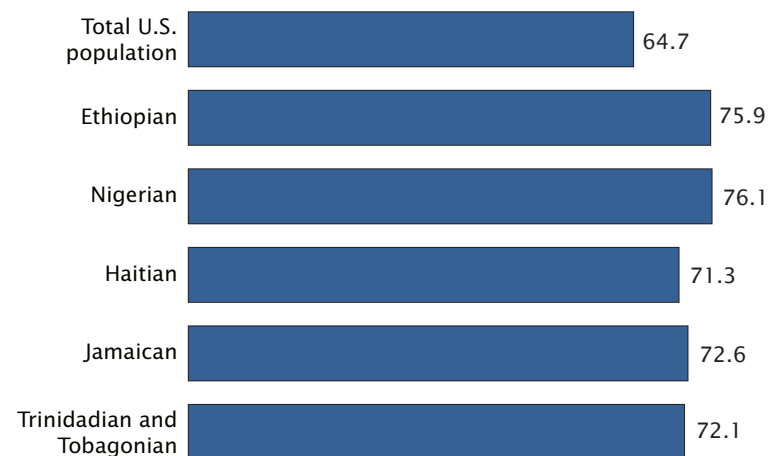
Group	Percentage
Total U.S. population	28.5
Ethiopian	27.0
Nigerian	61.4
Haitian	19.2
Jamaican	24.8
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	25.7
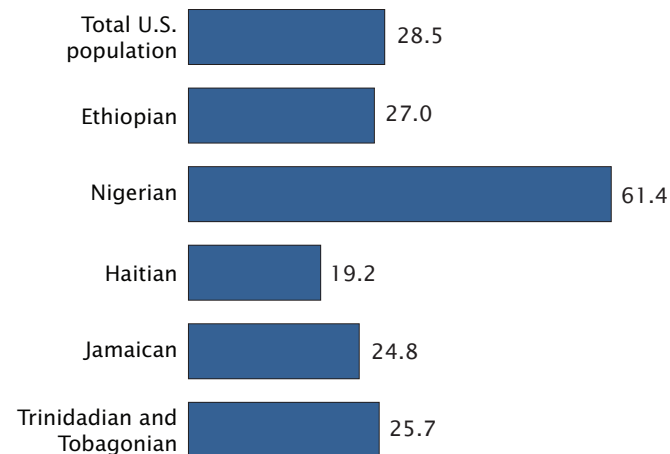
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 14.
Labor Force Participation: 2008–2012
(Percentage of population 16 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Group	Percentage
Total U.S. population	64.7
Ethiopian	75.9
Nigerian	76.1
Haitian	71.3
Jamaican	72.6
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	72.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

men and women with Haitian ancestry, and men and women reporting Ethiopian ancestry had the lowest median earnings.

Poverty Rate

In Figure 17, the proportion of the nation living below the poverty level was 15 percent, similar to the shares of people reporting Jamaican and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries. The population with

Nigerian ancestry (13 percent) had the lowest poverty rate, while those reporting Haitian ancestry (21 percent) had the highest poverty rate, followed by 20 percent for people with Ethiopian ancestry.

Figure 15.
Occupation: 2008–2012
(Percent distribution of the civilian-employed population 16 years and over. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
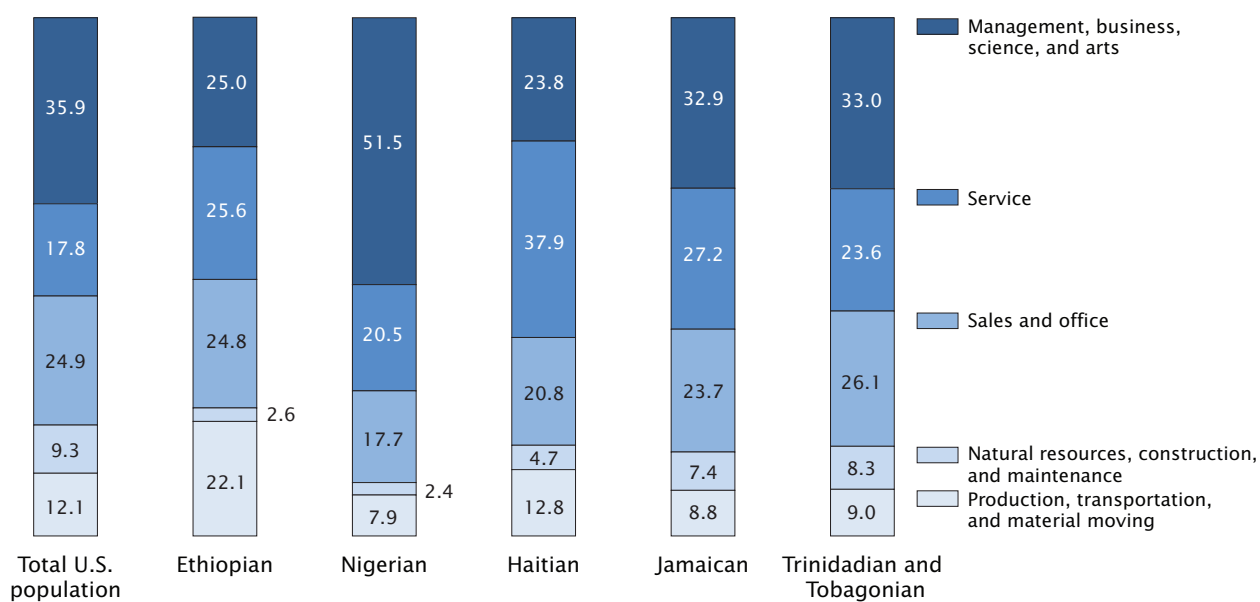
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Homeownership Rate

The homeownership rate is the percentage of all occupied housing units that are owner-occupied. The homeownership rate for the country was about 66 percent, which was above the rate for all the selected ancestry groups (Figure 18). The rate for the population reporting Ethiopian ancestry was the lowest (35 percent), while it was highest for those with Jamaican ancestry (54 percent).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report presents a portrait of the population reporting Ethiopian, Nigerian, Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries in the United States based on 2008–2012 5-year ACS estimates. Each of the selected ancestry groups carved a distinctive path to immigrate to the United States. Also each group had economic and political ties to the United States prior to arrival. They represent different categories of international migrants including temporary migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and immigrants with work permits. They also reflect a number of factors including United States immigration policies and the strength of the labor market within the historical period of arrival, economic and sociocultural globalization

Figure 16.
Median Earnings by Sex: 2008–2012
(Earnings in the past 12 months for employed, full-time, year-round male and female workers 16 years and over. In 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
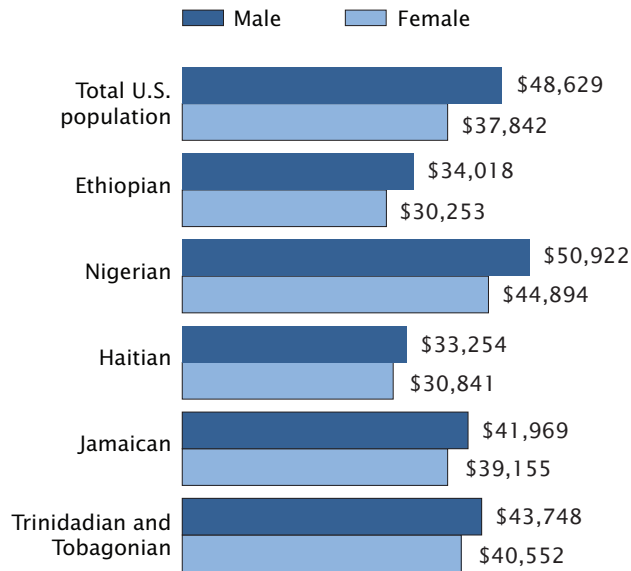
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 17.
Poverty Rate: 2008–2012
(Percentage of people in poverty in the past 12 months. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)
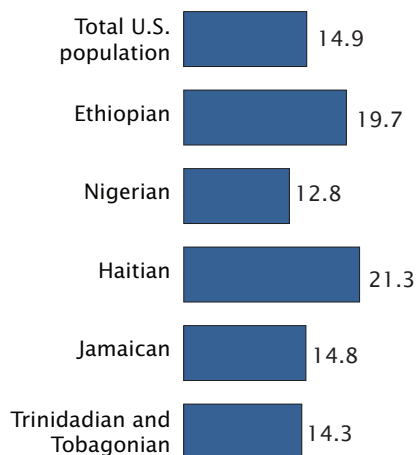
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

and integration, and political instability around the world.[37, 38, 39, 40, 41]

The report compares selected geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics of these groups in the United States. The population with Jamaican ancestry was the largest of the five selected groups and the slowest growing, while the Ethiopian ancestry group was the smallest but fastest growing. The geographic distribution of these ancestry groups varies considerably with those of Haitian, Jamaican, and Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries most concentrated in Florida and New York. The Ethiopian and Nigerian ancestry groups, on the other hand, are more widely dispersed across the United States.

Since young adults are the ones most likely to migrate, the populations reporting Ethiopian and Nigerian ancestries were relatively younger

Figure 18.
Homeownership Rate: 2008–2012
(Percentage of occupied housing units. Households are classified by ancestry of the householder. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

U.S. occupied housing units	65.5
Ethiopian	35.2
Nigerian	47.5
Haitian	45.0
Jamaican	53.7
Trinidadian and Tobagonian	47.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

[37] Note that natives of Haiti, Jamaica, and Nigeria are no longer eligible to participate in the diversity immigration visa program as of 2013, because each country has sent more than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the previous 5 years. See <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/policy_updates/16-STATE-103720-DV-IV-2018.pdf>, as accessed February 1, 2017.

[38] Philip Martin, "The Global Challenge of Managing Migration," *Population Bulletin*, 2013, 68(2): 2–16.

[39] Douglas S. Massey, Joaquín Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J. Edward Taylor, "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal," *Population and Development Review*, 1993, 19(3); 431–466.
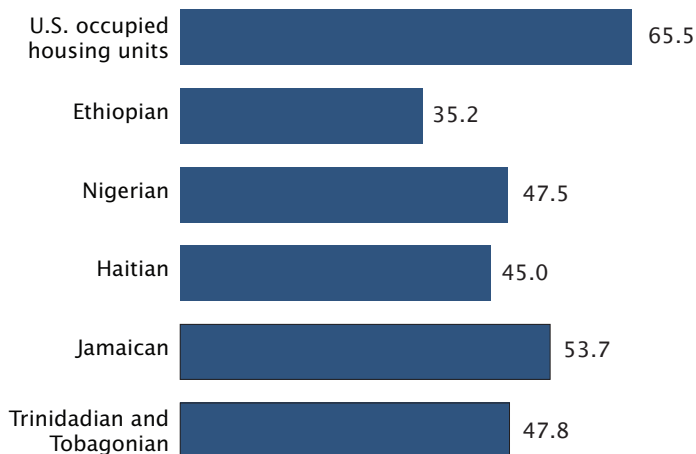
[40] Stephen Castles, "Understanding Global Migration: A Social Transformative Perspective," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 2010, 36(10); 1565–1586.

[41] Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Guilford, New York, 2009.

and had a higher sex ratio than the U.S. population. A younger age structure also means that higher proportions of males and females among the selected ancestry groups have never married, and lower proportions were widowed compared with the general population. The Haitian ancestry group had the largest average household size, while there was the same share of married-couple households among people of Nigerian ancestry as among all households in the United States.

There were at least four times the proportion foreign-born individuals among the selected ancestry groups as in the general population. The majority of people of Jamaican and

Trinidadian and Tobagonian ancestries spoke only English at home, while one-fifth of the Ethiopian and Haitian ancestry groups spoke only English at home. However, these proportions rose to more than one-half and more than one-third among native-born individuals of Ethiopian and Haitian ancestries, respectively.

People of Nigerian ancestry outpaced all the other selected groups and the total U.S. population in educational attainment. People who reported Nigerian and Ethiopian ancestries had the highest labor force participation rates among all the ancestry groups. In addition, people with Nigerian ancestry had the greatest share of management, business,

science, and arts occupations, the highest median income, and the lowest poverty rate compared with all the other selected groups and the general population. However, those with Jamaican ancestry had the highest homeownership rate of all the selected ancestry groups.

The American Community Survey is the only source of small-area estimates for social and demographic characteristics. It gives communities the current information they need to plan investments and services. Retailers, homebuilders, and town and city planners are among the many private- and public-sector individuals who count on these annual results. Information from this report will help in documenting part of the growing diversity of the ethnic groups that have come to the United States throughout its history.

Source and Accuracy

The data presented in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed from January 2008 through December 2012. The estimates based on this sample describe the average values of person, household, and housing unit characteristics over this period of collection. Sampling error is the uncertainty between an estimate based on a sample and the corresponding value that would be obtained if the estimate were based on the entire population (as from a census). Measures of sampling error are provided in the form of margins of error for key estimates included in this report. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent level, unless otherwise noted. In addition to sampling error, nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the operations used to collect and process survey data such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires. For more information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the ACS Multiyear Accuracy of the Data document located at<www.census.gov /acs/www/Downloads /ata_documentation /Accuracy/multiyearACS AccuracyofData2012.pdf>.

What is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data for congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3.5 million addresses across the United States and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing homes and prisons). The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation. Single-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates from the ACS are all "period" estimates that represent data collected within particular intervals of time—12 months, 36 months, and 60 months, respectively. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit <www.census.gov/acs/www>.

For More Information

For more information on these selected ancestry groups and other ancestry groups in the United States, visit the Census Bureau's Internet site at <www.census.gov/population /ancestry/>. The most recent data on ancestry can be found on American FactFinder located at <factfinder2.census.gov/>.

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Appendix Table 1.
Margin of Error for the Population Reporting Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry: 1980 to 2008–2012

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www2.census.gov/prod2 /decennial/documents* and *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Population group[1]	Census			ACS
	1980	1990	2000	2008–2012
Total U.S. population	0	0	0	0
Ethiopian	611	1,167	1,626	5,571
Nigerian.	1,529	1,893	2,238	6,512
Haitian	2,099	3,363	4,081	15,802
Jamaican	3,515	4,121	4,729	12,904
Trinidadian and Tobagonian.	1,463	1,727	2,239	5,118

[1] Selected sub-Saharan African and Caribbean ancestry groups of 150,000 or more total population in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey.

Note: Data are based on samples and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error is in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, and 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.