

Multiracial/Ethnic Households in the Region

More than a quarter of a million households in the region are comprised of people from different racial or ethnic groups. Multiracial/ethnic households make up 16% of the region's total, but they are not represented in the Census Bureau's most common products. The standard tables about households produced by the Census Bureau with race/ethnicity detail often relies on the race/ethnicity of just one person, the "householder," which could be any adult within a household.

Why is it worth looking at how multiracial/ethnic households compare to other racial/ethnic groups?

First, we believe that representation matters. Nearly 270,000 households in our region are made up of members who self-identify as different races or ethnicities from each other, but that is often not reflected in data reported. The number of these households has been increasing and it is important to not miss this diverse second-largest group in our region. Second, teasing out the multiracial/ethnic households helps us more accurately see the unique barriers and disparities households experience, which can equip us with the information we need to close these gaps.

Many key data characteristics published by the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and PSRC's own Household Travel Survey—such as income, vehicle ownership and housing costs—are available only at the household level.

What is a household?

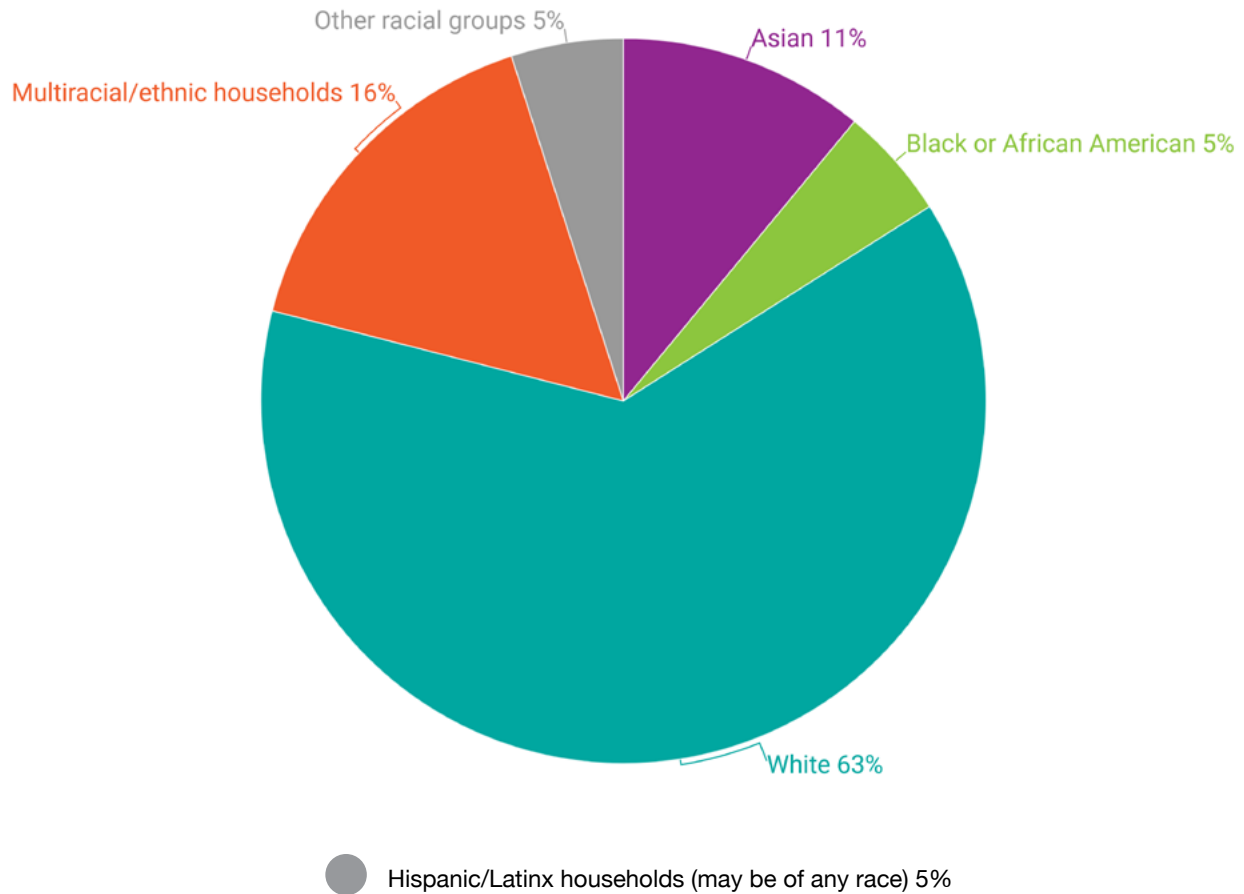
A household can be any number of people living together, whether that's a family or roommates or one person living alone. When considering multiracial/ethnic households with members who self-identify as different races or ethnicities from each other, they include, by definition, two or more people. Households for other racial/ethnic groups, on the other hand, may have only one person.

What is a householder?

The Census Bureau defines the householder as "the person (or one of the people) in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented (maintained) or, if there is no such person, any adult member, excluding roomers, boarders, or paid employees." (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html#householder>)

If the race/ethnicity of all household members is considered rather than just the householder, the three largest household groups in the region are white, multiracial/ethnic and Asian.

Households by Racial Group, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year PUMS (based on racial/ethnic composition of all household members)

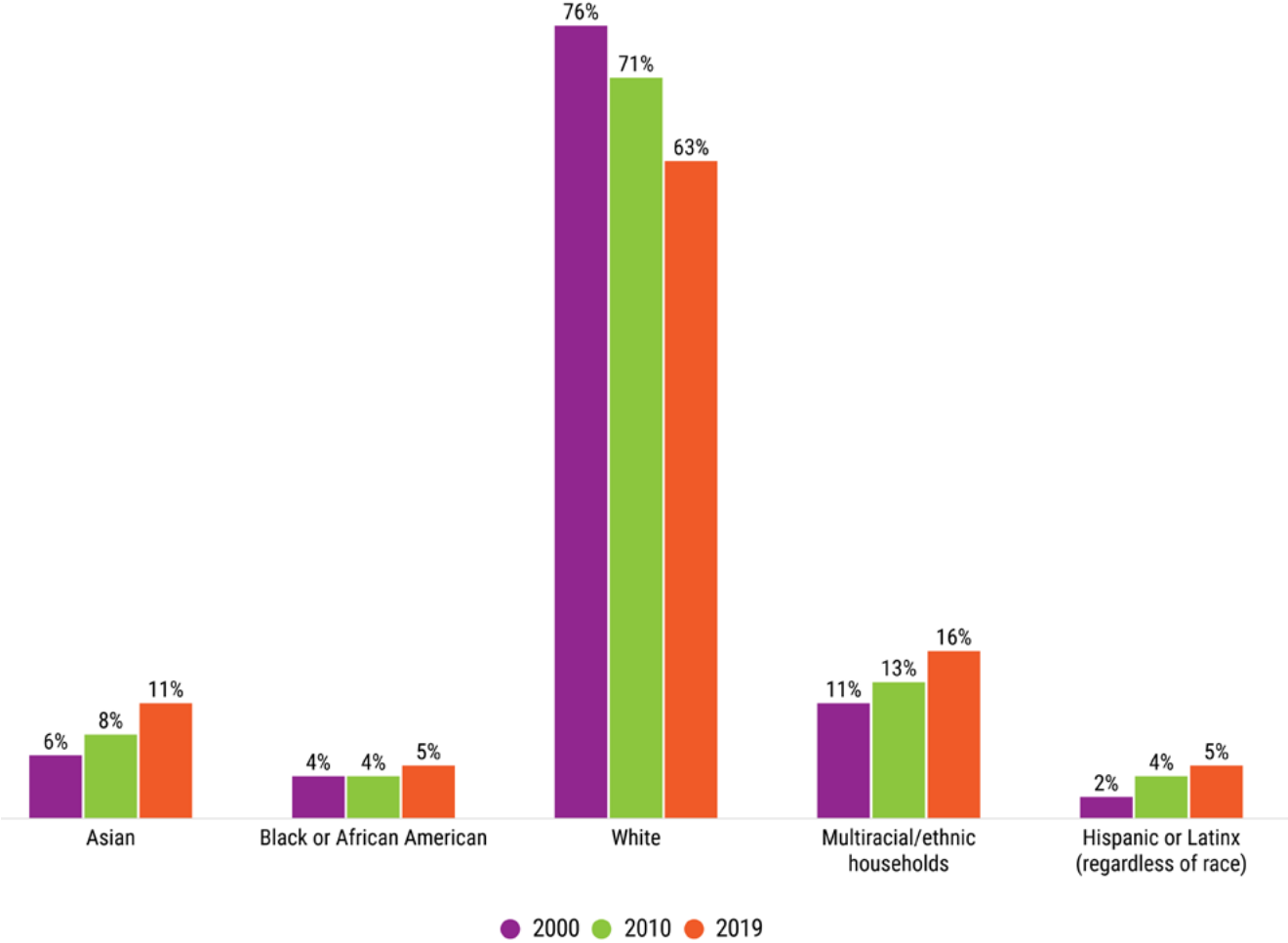
There were approximately 144,000 multiracial/ethnic households in 2000—about 11% of all the region’s households. This increased to about 190,000 (13%) in 2010 and reached 267,000 (16%) in 2019.

The growth rate for this group is faster than for the region’s households overall. In the last decade, the growth rate of multiracial/ethnic households has been greater than the growth for white, Hispanic or Latinx, or Black or African American households. Of the groups with the largest number of households, only Asian households grew more during the 2010s.

If the race/ethnicity of all household members is considered, rather than just the householder, the three largest groups are white, multiracial/ethnic and Asian households.



Region’s Largest Racial/Ethnic Household Groups, 2000, 2010 and 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year PUMS

	2000		2010		2019	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
Total Households	1,281,000	100%	1,453,000	100%	1,649,000	100%
Racial groups (regardless of ethnicity)						
American Indian and Alaskan Native	6,000	0.4%	8,000	0.5%	7,000	0.4%
Asian	72,000	6%	113,000	8%	179,000	11%
Black or African American	47,000	4%	60,000	4%	75,000	5%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	3,000	0.2%	6,000	0.4%	5,000	0.3%
White	976,000	76%	1,032,000	71%	1,047,000	63%
Other race	14,000	1%	18,000	1%	35,000	2%
Two or more races	19,000	1%	26,000	2%	35,000	2%
Sub-total	1,137,000	89%	1,263,000	87%	1,382,000	84%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	144,000	11%	190,000	13%	267,000	16%
Sub-total	1,281,000	100%	1,453,000	100%	1,649,000	100%
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	26,000	2%	60,000	4%	77,000	5%

* "Multiracial/ethnic" defined as households with members of different racial groups or ethnicity

** For PUMS, "Hispanic or Latinx" defined as households with all members identifying as Hispanic or Latinx

The American Community Survey was created after 2000. The closest comparable data source is the Decennial Census.



PSRC also analyzed how median incomes have changed across racial/ethnic groups over the last decade.

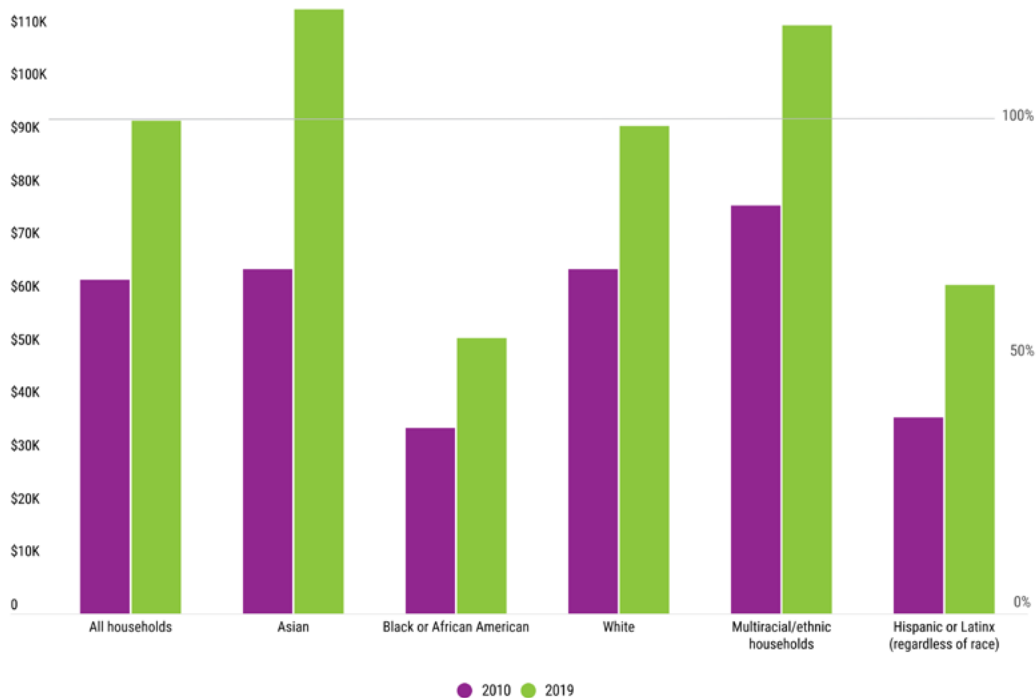
Compared to 2010, the growth in median income for multiracial/ethnic households and Black households is similar to the growth rate for all households. The biggest growth rates were experienced by Asian and Hispanic or Latinx households. The median incomes for Black and Hispanic or Latinx households remain well below the median for all households.

When the race/ethnicity of all household members is considered, the median income of households with only Black or African American members is even lower than it is in commonly used ACS data for households with a Black householder. For households with only Black members, it's 56% of the region's median income; for households with a Black householder, it's 60%.

The same is true for Hispanic or Latinx households. The median income of households with only Hispanic or Latinx people is 67% of the median for all households, whereas the median income of households with a Hispanic or Latinx householder is 80%. Here we see how failing to account for multiracial/ethnic households in our region, and the race/ethnicity of all household members, can mask the severity of these disparities.

It is important to note that the multiracial/ethnic households, by definition, have two or more people, while all other groups include single-person households, which are likely to have lower household incomes.

Household Median Income Relative to Overall Median Income, 2010 vs 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year PUMS

	2010		2019	
	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)
All Households	\$63,000	100%	\$93,000	100%
Asian	\$65,000	103%	\$114,000	123%
Black or African American	\$35,000	56%	\$52,000	56%
White	\$65,000	103%	\$92,000	99%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	\$77,000	122%	\$111,000	119%
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	\$37,000	59%	\$62,000	67%

* "Multiracial/ethnic" defined as households with members of different racial groups or ethnicity

** For PUMS, "Hispanic or Latinx" defined as households with all members identifying as Hispanic or Latinx

Understanding household composition helps us see a complete picture of the economic and social well-being of people around the region. Households make many decisions together that shape the landscape of our region: where to live, how many cars to own, and even where household members will go to work and school.

Visit www.psrc.org/equity to learn more about how we're incorporating racial equity in our work and addressing the needs of marginalized communities in our region.

APPENDIX - Researching the data

Because the Census Bureau only considers the race of the "householder" (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html#householder>) when reporting household-level data by race/ethnicity, it can be difficult to know the prevalence of households where members self-identify as different races or ethnicities from each other.

PSRC used the Census Bureau's Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files, which enabled us to create custom tables not otherwise available through pre-tabulated American Community Survey (ACS) data. (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html>)

Below, we compare standard data from the ACS, which defines the race/ethnicity of a household by how the householder self-identifies, with custom tables created from the PUMS data, in which we define the race/ethnicity of a household based on the composition of all members.



According to pre-tabulated ACS data, the racial/ethnic groups with the three largest numbers in the region today are white, Asian, and Hispanic or Latinx households. In 2000, the three largest were white, Asian, and Black households.

Using PUMS data, we were able to identify that 16% of the region’s households are made up of people who self-identify as different races or ethnicities—nearly 270,000 households. This large group is not visible in the pre-tabulated ACS data.

Household Race/Ethnicity for the Four-County Region

King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties

2019	1-Year-ACS		1-Year-PUMS	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
Total Households	1,649,000	100%	1,649,000	100%
Racial groups (regardless of ethnicity)				
American Indian Alaska Native	14,000	0.8%	7,000	0.4%
Asian	212,000	13%	179,000	11%
Black or African American	91,000	6%	75,000	5%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	9,000	0.6%	5,000	0.3%
White	1,203,000	73%	1,047,000	63%
Other race	45,000	3%	35,000	2%
Two or more races	75,000	5%	35,000	2%
Sub-total	1,649,000	100%	1,382,000	84%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	–	–	267,000	16%
Total	1,649,000	100%	1,649,000	100%
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	118,000	7%	77,000	5%

Household Race/Ethnicity for the Four-County Region

King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties

2010	1-Year-ACS (based on race/ethnicity of householder only)		1-Year-PUMS (based on race/ethnicity of householder only)	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
Total Households	1,453,000	100%	1,453,000	100%
Racial groups (regarless of ethnicity)				
American Indian Alaska Native	12,000	0.9%	8,000	0.5%
Asian	134,000	9%	113,000	8%
Black or African American	76,000	5%	60,000	4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	8,000	0.5%	6,000	0.4%
White	1,150,000	79%	1,032,000	71%
Other race	24,000	2%	18,000	1%
Two or more races	49,000	3%	26,000	2%
Sub-total	1,453,000	100%	1,263,000	87%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	–	–	190,000	13%
Total	1,453,000	100%	1,453,000	100%
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	86,000	6%	60,000	4%



Household Race/Ethnicity for the Four-County Region

King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties

2000	Decennial Census*** (based on race/ethnicity of householder only)		PUMS (based on racial/ethnic composition)	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
Total Households	1,283,000	100%	1,281,000	100%
Racial groups (regardless of ethnicity)				
American Indian Alaska Native	13,000	1.0%	6,000	0.4%
Asian	85,000	7%	72,000	6%
Black or African American	60,000	5%	47,000	4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	5,000	0.4%	3,000	0.2%
White	1,066,000	83%	976,000	76%
Other race	20,000	2%	14,000	1%
Two or more races	34,000	3%	19,000	1%
Sub-total	1,283,000	100%	1,137,000	89%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	–	–	144,000	11%
Total	1,283,000	100%	1,281,000	100%
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	47,000	4%	26,000	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2019 PUMS 1-Year, American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates, 2000 Census

* "Multiracial/ethnic" defined as households with members of different racial groups or ethnicities.

** For PUMS, "Hispanic or Latinx" defined as households with all members identifying as Hispanic or Latinx.

*** The American Community Survey was created after 2000. The closest comparable data source is the Decennial Census.

To explore median income, we also used PUMS data. Below, the ACS pre-tabulated data and the PUMS custom tables compare median incomes of different racial/ethnic categories of households.

Commonly cited ACS data says that the median income of Black households in 2019 is 60% of the median for all households. That number is 80% for Hispanic or Latinx households.

When the multiracial/ethnic group is included and all household members are considered, the PUMS data reveals that the median income of Black households is even lower, at 56% of the median for all households. That number is dramatically lower (67% compared to 80%) for Hispanic or Latinx households.

Household Median Income for King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties

Data not available for Kitsap County

2019	1-Year-ACS (based on race/ethnicity of householder only)		1-Year-PUMS (based on racial/ethnicity of all household members)		Difference in Income Gap Compared to ACS
	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)	
Total Households	\$94,000	100%	\$93,000	100%	-
Asian	\$117,000	124%	\$114,000	123%	-2%
Black or African American	\$56,000	60%	\$52,000	56%	-4%
White	\$96,000	102%	\$92,000	99%	-3%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	-	-	\$111,000	119%	-
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	\$75,000	80%	\$62,000	67%	-13%

2010	1-Year-ACS (based on race/ethnicity of householder only)		1-Year-PUMS (based on racial/ethnicity of all household members)		Difference in Income Gap Compared to ACS
	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)	Median Income	Income Gap (% difference compared to all households)	
Total Households	\$63,000	100%	\$63,000	100%	-
Asian	\$72,000	114%	\$65,000	103%	-11%
Black or African American	\$41,000	65%	\$35,000	56%	-10%
White	\$66,000	105%	\$65,000	103%	-2%
Multiracial/ethnic households*	-	-	\$77,000	122%	-
Hispanic or Latinx (regardless of race)**	\$45,000	71%	\$37,000	59%	-13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2019 PUMS 1-Year, American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates.

Note: 2000 is not included because there is no entity in the 200 census corresponding to the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue three county metro area.

* "Multiracial/ethnic" defined as households with members of different racial groups or ethnicities.

** For PUMS, "Hispanic or Latinx" is defined as households with all members identifying as Hispanic or Latinx.