



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration



# Traffic Safety Facts

## 2021 Data

DOT HS 813 572

February 2025 (Revised)

## Race and Ethnicity

In this fact sheet for 2021 the information is presented as follows.

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This fact sheet reports data on traffic fatalities by race and ethnicity, which might help develop countermeasures for those at risk. The term “race-ethnicity” is used to refer to the combined classification of race and ethnicity data. It also uses race-ethnicity categories based on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 1997 Guidelines on Race and Ethnicity Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting (Revisions to Standards, 1997).

The following terms are used throughout this fact sheet.

- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN)
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (NHPI)
- White

Under the 1997 OMB race and ethnicity reporting standards, ethnicity is a distinct concept from race. Therefore, people of “Hispanic or Latino” ethnicity may be of any race. (OMB updated the guidelines on March 29, 2024. For more information, see Revisions to OMB’s Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, 2024.)

Total values presented in this fact sheet include reported race and ethnicity attributes such as “other,” two or more races (multiracial), or with unknown values. However, these categories are not always shown as separate line items in tables and figures. While this reporting methodology is one way of complying with the OMB guidelines, there are other ways.

**See the Appendix for additional information on the race-ethnicity categories used and limitations to the race-ethnicity data.**

### Key Findings

- Of the 43,230 traffic fatalities in 2021, White people accounted for 50 percent while Black or African American people accounted for 17 percent and Hispanic or Latino people accounted for 16 percent.
- In 2021 the U.S. population was 59 percent for White people, 19 percent for Hispanic or Latino people, and 13 percent for Black or African American people.

- In 2021 AIAN people had the highest traffic fatality rate at 28.51 per 100,000 population, followed by Black or African American (17.53) and Hispanic or Latino people (11.32).
- From 2017 to 2021 the traffic fatality rate per 100,000 population increased for Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American people, and decreased for AIAN, Asian, NHPI, and White people.
- White people accounted for 60 percent of motorcyclist fatalities in traffic crashes in 2021 as compared to Hispanic or Latino (13%) and Black or African American (12%) people.
- White people accounted for 40 percent of pedestrian fatalities in traffic crashes in 2021 as compared to Black or African American (21%) and Hispanic or Latino (19%) people.
- Based on known restraint use, 65 percent of AIAN passenger vehicle occupants killed in traffic crashes were unrestrained in 2021.
- AIAN people had the highest proportion of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in traffic crashes at 43 percent for 2021.
- In 2021 Hispanic or Latino and AIAN people had the highest proportion of speeding-related traffic fatalities at 33 percent each.
- AIAN people had a higher proportion of traffic fatalities in rural areas than urban areas in 2021.

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS.

Due to a vehicle classification change, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. Refer to the end of this publication for more information on Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC).

A motor vehicle traffic crash is defined as an incident that involved one or more motor vehicles in-transport that originated on or had a harmful event (injury or damage) on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property not regularly used by the public for transport, including some parts of parking lots and driveways, are excluded. The terms “motor vehicle traffic crash” and “traffic crash” are used interchangeably in this document.

## Overview

It is important to evaluate traffic fatalities by demographics like age, sex, race, and ethnicity. This evaluation of traffic fatality data might help develop countermeasures that will reach those most at risk of death and injury in traffic crashes.

NHTSA’s FARS obtains Race and Hispanic Origin data from official death certificates. Due to delayed availability of death certificates in some States, any analysis with race and ethnicity data will use the most recent Final File which has more complete race and ethnicity data compared to the Annual Report File (ARF). This fact sheet uses FARS 2017 to 2021 Final Files. In 2019, FARS revised the coding for race to allow for the coding of more than one race per person, allowing for more accurate data for multiracial people going forward. Traffic fatalities have increased by 15 percent from 37,473 in 2017 to 43,230 in 2021, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Race-Ethnicity, 2017–2021**

Year	Race-Ethnicity																		Total
	Hispanic or Latino		AIAN		Asian		Black or African American		NHPI		White		Multiracial		All Others*		Unknown		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
2017	5,519	15%	717	2%	533	1%	5,554	15%	49	0%	22,913	61%	82	0%	1,017	3%	1,089	3%	37,473
2018	5,654	15%	604	2%	561	2%	5,611	15%	78	0%	21,957	60%	76	0%	1,032	3%	1,262	3%	36,835
2019	6,552	18%	541	1%	463	1%	5,308	15%	18	0%	20,020	55%	141	0%	1,519	4%	1,793	5%	36,355
2020	6,817	17%	557	1%	404	1%	6,471	17%	15	0%	19,697	50%	185	0%	3,022	8%	1,839	5%	39,007
2021	7,088	16%	688	2%	502	1%	7,339	17%	40	0%	21,661	50%	208	0%	3,589	8%	2,115	5%	43,230

Source: FARS 2017–2021 Final File

Notes: In 2019 FARS began coding all races reported for each fatality. Prior year data captured only one race for a fatality and if more than one race was listed, the first race listed was coded. The 2019 and later race data accounts for all people reported as multiracial.

\*All Others increased for 2020 and 2021 due to an increase in White, Unknown ethnicity and Black or African American, Unknown ethnicity. See FARS Analytical Data Classification in the Appendix for more details on race-ethnicity categories.

Of the 43,230 traffic fatalities in 2021, White people accounted for 50 percent while Black or African American people accounted for 17 percent and Hispanic or Latino people accounted for 16 percent. In 2021 the U.S. population was 59 percent for White people, 19 percent for Hispanic or Latino people, and 13 percent for Black or African American people.

From 2017 to 2021:

- Hispanic or Latino: 28-percent increase from 5,519 to 7,088
- AIAN: 4-percent decrease from 717 to 688
- Asian: 6-percent decrease from 533 to 502
- Black or African American: 32-percent increase from 5,554 to 7,339
- NHPI: 18-percent decrease from 49 to 40
- White: 5-percent decrease from 22,913 to 21,661

For the remainder of this report, other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown) are not shown as line items.

The U.S. population grew by 2 percent from 2017 to 2021. During this time the White population decreased by 0.5 percent from 2017 to 2021, while the populations of the other race-ethnicity groups increased, as shown in Table 2: Asian (8%), Hispanic or Latino (7%), NHPI (7%), Black or African American (3%), and AIAN (0.6%).

**Table 2. Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, Population, and Fatality Rates, by Race-Ethnicity, 2017 and 2021**

Race-Ethnicity	2017					2021				
	Fatalities		Population		Fatality Rate per 100,000	Fatalities		Population		Fatality Rate per 100,000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Population	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Population
Hispanic or Latino	5,519	15%	58,402,829	18%	9.45	7,088	16%	62,625,172	19%	11.32
AIAN	717	2%	2,398,059	1%	29.90	688	2%	2,412,991	1%	28.51
Asian	533	1%	18,347,679	6%	2.90	502	1%	19,811,597	6%	2.53
Black or African American	5,554	15%	40,588,705	12%	13.68	7,339	17%	41,859,278	13%	17.53
NHPI	49	0%	582,340	0%	8.41	40	0%	624,677	0%	6.40
White	22,913	61%	197,798,321	61%	11.58	21,661	50%	196,894,384	59%	11.00
<b>Total*</b>	<b>37,473</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>325,122,128</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11.53</b>	<b>43,230</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>332,031,554</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13.02</b>

Sources: FARS 2017 and 2021 Final File; Population – Census Bureau

\*Includes other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown).

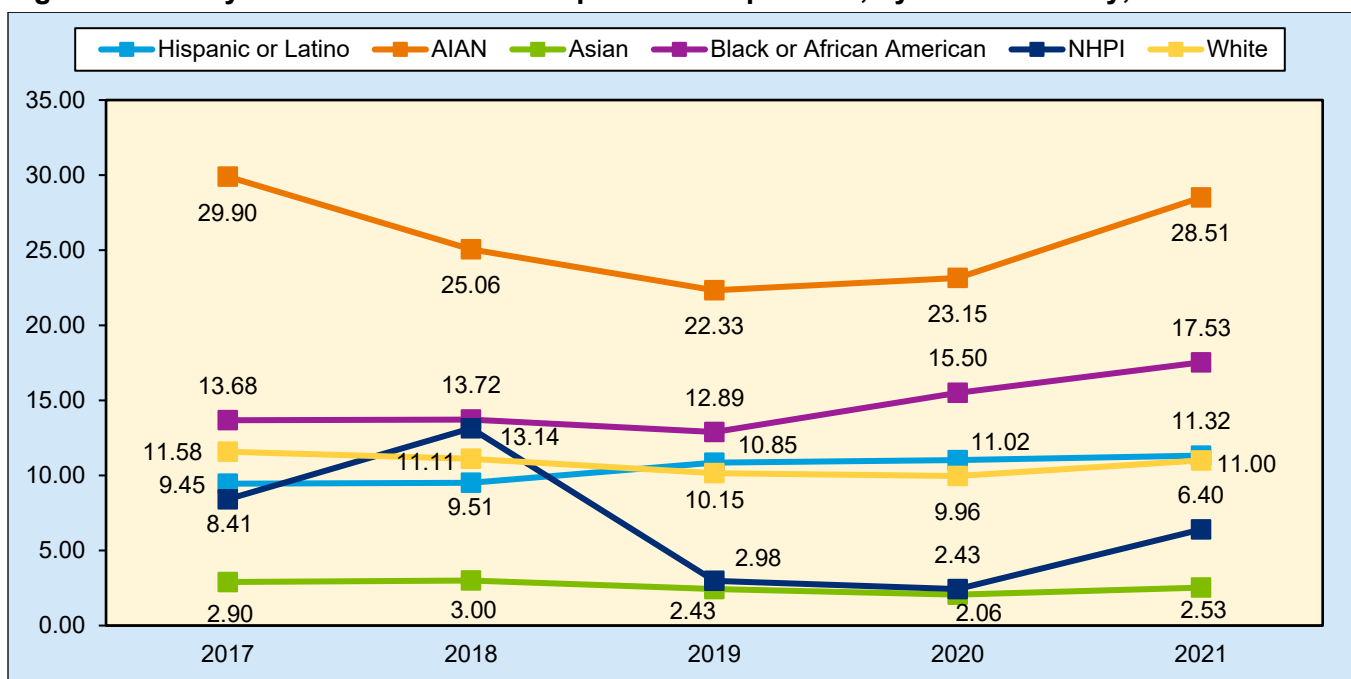
Notes: In 2019 FARS began coding all races reported for each fatality. Prior year data captured only one race for a fatality and if more than one race was listed, the first race listed was coded. The 2019 and later race data accounts for all people reported as multiracial.

Figure 1 displays fatality rates per 100,000 population for the six race-ethnicity groups from 2017 to 2021. AIAN people had the highest fatality rate at 28.51 per 100,000 population, while Asian people had the lowest fatality rate at 2.53 per 100,000 population in 2021. Overall, the fatality rate increased for Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American people and decreased for other race-ethnicity groups from 2017 to 2021.

From 2017 to 2021:

- Hispanic or Latino: 20-percent increase from 9.45 to 11.32
- AIAN: 5-percent decrease from 29.90 to 28.51
- Asian: 13-percent decrease from 2.90 to 2.53
- Black or African American: 28-percent increase from 13.68 to 17.53
- NHPI: 24-percent decrease from 8.41 to 6.40
- White: 5-percent decrease from 11.58 to 11.00

**Figure 1. Fatality Rate in Traffic Crashes per 100K Population, by Race-Ethnicity, 2017–2021**



Sources: FARS 2017–2021 Final File; Population – Census Bureau

Notes: Excludes other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown). In 2019 FARS began coding all races reported for each fatality. Prior year data captured only one race for a fatality and if more than one race was listed, the first race listed was coded. The 2019 and later race data accounts for all people reported as multiracial.

## Occupants and Nonoccupants

In 2021 there were 26,465 occupants of passenger vehicles (passenger cars and light trucks) killed in traffic crashes. White people accounted for 50 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2021, while Hispanic or Latino people and Black or African American people accounted for 17 percent each.

Table 3 shows occupant and nonoccupant traffic fatalities for each race-ethnicity group in 2021. Overall, 66 percent of the total traffic fatalities were motor vehicle occupants, 20 percent were nonoccupants, and 14 percent were motorcyclists.

Motorcyclist is a general term referring to either the rider or passenger of a motorcycle. In 2021 there were 6,143 motorcyclists killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. White people accounted for 60 percent of motorcyclist fatalities in traffic crashes in 2021 as compared to Hispanic or Latino (13%) and Black or African American (12%) people.

White people accounted for 40 percent of pedestrian fatalities in traffic crashes in 2021 as compared to Black or African American (21%) and Hispanic or Latino (19%) people. White people accounted for 51 percent of pedalcyclist fatalities in traffic crashes in 2021 as compared to Hispanic or Latino (18%) and Black or African American (14%) people.

**Table 3. Occupant and Nonoccupant Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Race-Ethnicity, 2021**

Description	Race-Ethnicity												Total*	
	Hispanic or Latino		AIAN		Asian		Black or African American		NHPI		White			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,088</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>7,339</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>21,661</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>43,230</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Occupants</b>														
Passenger Vehicles	4,387	17%	442	2%	257	1%	4,597	17%	20	0%	13,322	50%	26,465	100%
Passenger Cars	2,385	18%	207	2%	147	1%	3,050	22%	9	0%	6,153	45%	13,618	100%
Light Trucks**	2,002	16%	235	2%	110	1%	1,547	12%	11	0%	7,169	56%	12,847	100%
–Pickups	766	16%	82	2%	22	0%	348	7%	1	0%	2,868	60%	4,770	100%
–SUVs	1,072	15%	137	2%	71	1%	1,066	15%	10	0%	3,698	53%	6,990	100%
–Vans	162	15%	16	1%	17	2%	133	12%	0	0%	602	56%	1,084	100%
Large Trucks	164	16%	6	1%	22	2%	141	14%	3	0%	499	49%	1,011	100%
Buses	3	20%	0	0%	0	0%	6	40%	0	0%	4	27%	15	100%
Other/Unknown	104	12%	24	3%	2	0%	86	10%	1	0%	516	61%	848	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,658</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4,830</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>14,341</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>28,339</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Motorcyclists</b>														
Motorcyclists	781	13%	53	1%	47	1%	751	12%	6	0%	3,676	60%	6,143	100%
<b>Nonoccupants</b>														
Pedestrians	1,416	19%	146	2%	151	2%	1,571	21%	9	0%	3,008	40%	7,470	100%
Pedalcyclists	179	18%	14	1%	17	2%	133	14%	1	0%	498	51%	976	100%
Other/Unknown	54	18%	3	1%	6	2%	54	18%	0	0%	138	46%	302	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,649</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1,758</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3,644</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>8,748</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: FARS 2021 Final File

\*Includes other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown).

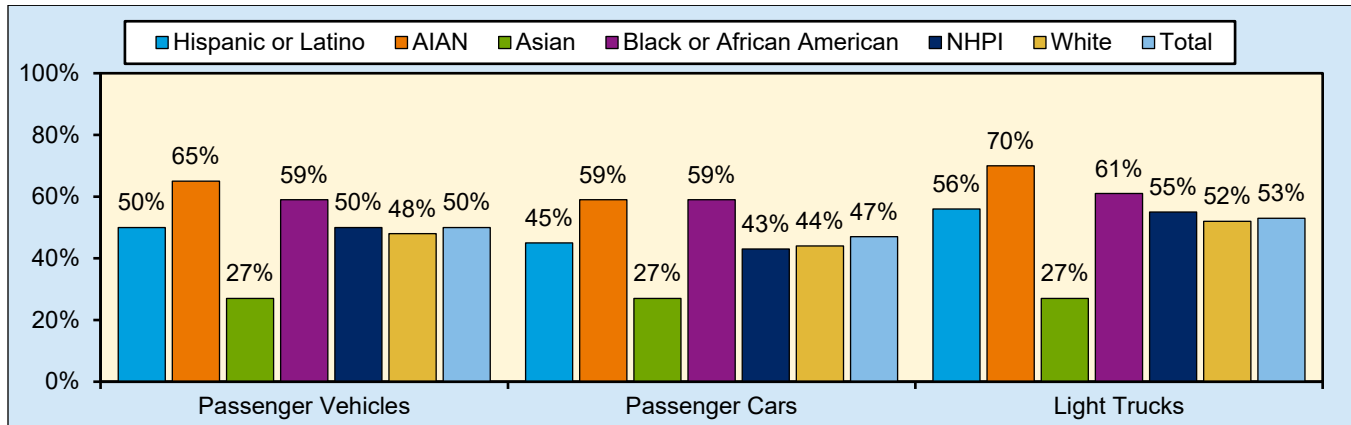
\*\*Includes other/unknown light-truck vehicle types.

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to individual rounding.

## Restraint Use

Fifty percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2021 were unrestrained at the time of the traffic crashes (based on known restraint use), as shown in Figure 2. AIAN people showed the highest percentage of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupants killed (65%) followed by Black or African American people (59%) in 2021.

Research has shown that lap/shoulder belts, when used, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat occupants (5 and older) of passenger cars by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50 percent. For light-truck occupants, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 60 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 65 percent (Kahane, 2000).

**Figure 2. Percentages of Unrestrained\* Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Vehicle Type and Race-Ethnicity, 2021**

Source: FARS 2021 Final File

\*Based on known restraint use

## Alcohol

For the purposes of this fact sheet, drivers are considered to be alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) are .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Thus, any fatal traffic crash involving a driver with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher is considered to be an alcohol-impaired-driving crash, and fatalities occurring in those crashes are considered to be alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities.

In 2021 there were 13,617 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, which accounted for 31 percent of all traffic fatalities. In 2017 there were 10,880 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, which accounted for 29 percent of all traffic fatalities. Overall, AIAN people had the highest proportion of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in 2017 at 39 percent and in 2021 at 43 percent, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Fatalities and Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Race-Ethnicity, 2017 and 2021**

Race-Ethnicity	2017			2021		
	Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)		Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	5,519	1,929	35%	7,088	2,634	37%
AIAN	717	283	39%	688	298	43%
Asian	533	101	19%	502	139	28%
Black or African American	5,554	1,772	32%	7,339	2,476	34%
NHPI	49	15	30%	40	16	40%
White	22,913	6,161	27%	21,661	6,005	28%
<b>Total*</b>	<b>37,473</b>	<b>10,880</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>43,230</b>	<b>13,617</b>	<b>31%</b>

Source: FARS 2017 and 2021 Final File

\*Includes other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown).

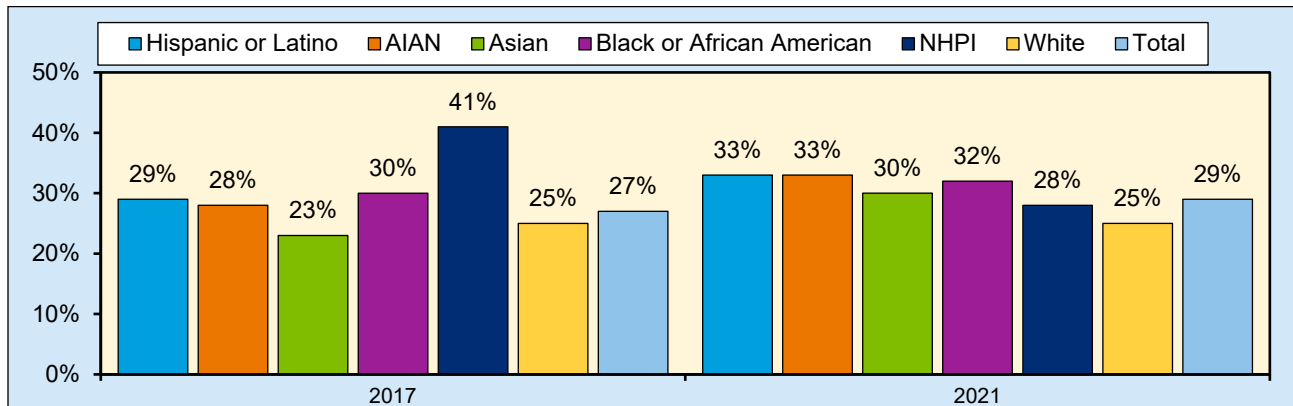
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

## Speeding

NHTSA considers a traffic crash to be speeding-related if any driver in the crash was charged with a speeding-related offense or if a police officer indicated that racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was a contributing factor in the crash.

In 2021 speeding was involved in 29 percent (12,498) of traffic fatalities. That proportion is similar to that of the speeding involvement for Asian people (30%), but not for other race-ethnicity groups. Thirty-three percent of Hispanic or Latino and AIAN traffic fatalities were speeding-related, followed by 32 percent for Black or African American traffic fatalities in 2021, as shown in Figure 3. Most race-ethnicity groups showed an increase in the proportion of speeding-related traffic fatalities between 2017 and 2021, except for NHPI and White people.

**Figure 3. Percentages of Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities, by Race-Ethnicity, 2017 and 2021**



Source: FARS 2017 and 2021 Final File

## Rural/Urban Classification

Table 5 displays traffic fatalities by rural/urban classification and race-ethnicity for 2021. In 2017 AIAN and White people had more traffic fatalities in rural areas than urban areas. AIAN people had more traffic fatalities in rural areas, and the remaining race-ethnicity groups had higher traffic fatalities in urban areas in 2021.

**Table 5. Traffic Fatalities, by Rural/Urban Classification and Race-Ethnicity, 2017 and 2021**

Race-Ethnicity	2017						2021					
	Rural		Urban		Total*		Rural		Urban		Total*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	1,792	32%	3,706	67%	5,519	100%	2,127	30%	4,942	70%	7,088	100%
AIAN	475	66%	233	32%	717	100%	432	63%	250	36%	688	100%
Asian	139	26%	393	74%	533	100%	119	24%	380	76%	502	100%
Black or African American	1,756	32%	3,784	68%	5,554	100%	1,877	26%	5,447	74%	7,339	100%
NHPI	18	37%	31	63%	49	100%	11	28%	29	73%	40	100%
White	12,219	53%	10,652	46%	22,913	100%	10,425	48%	11,155	51%	21,661	100%
<b>Total**</b>	<b>17,405</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>19,976</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>37,473</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,339</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>25,749</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>43,230</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: FARS 2017 and 2021 Final File

\*Includes unknown rural/urban classification.

\*\*Includes other race-ethnicity groups (i.e., multiracial, all others, and unknown).

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to individual rounding.

## Additional Resource

State-level race-ethnicity data is available at NHTSA's State Traffic Safety Information website at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.

## Appendix

### *FARS File Versions*

In a given crash year, FARS releases two versions of annual files. The first file, known as the Annual Report File (ARF), is released following the crash year. The ARF is replaced about a year later with a "Final" File, which contains additional cases or updates to cases that had become available after the ARF was released. Although most updates are minor, Race and Hispanic Origin data are prone to numerous updates since there is a time lag in receiving death certificate information in FARS between the ARF and Final File. Therefore, for any document with Race and Hispanic Origin data, the most current Final File will be used. The availability of this information differs from State to State resulting in large numbers of unknowns. This needs to be taken into consideration when comparing race and ethnicity data at the State level.

### *OMB Guidelines on Race and Ethnicity Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting*

In 1997 the OMB issued revised guidelines on Race and Ethnicity Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting. This classification provides a minimum standard for maintaining, collecting, and presenting data on race and ethnicity for all Federal reporting purposes. The categories in this classification are social-political constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature. They are not to be used as determinants of eligibility for participation in any Federal program. The standards have been developed to provide a common language for uniformity and comparability in the collection and use of data on race and ethnicity by Federal agencies.

The standards have five categories for data on race: AIAN, Asian, Black or African American, NHPI, and White. There are two categories for data on ethnicity: "Hispanic or Latino," and "Not Hispanic or Latino." Note that the 1997 OMB race and ethnicity reporting standards maintain that ethnicity is a separate and distinct concept from race. Therefore, people who are of "Hispanic or Latino" ethnicity may be of any race.

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as follows.

- **AIAN.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American.** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic or Latino.** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **NHPI.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **White.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

In 2022 the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards convened to review and develop updated recommendations to the 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). For more information visit <https://spd15revision.gov/>.

On March 29, 2024, OMB published revisions to SPD 15. This update includes new recommendations and updates to definitions, terminology, and guidance to Federal agencies. Revisions include:



- Using one combined question for race and ethnicity, and encouraging respondents to select as many options as apply to how they identify.
- Adding Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) as a new minimum category, separate and distinct from the White category. The new set of minimum race and/or ethnicity categories are:
  - AIAN
  - Asian
  - Black or African American
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - MENA
  - NHPI
  - White
- Requiring the collection of additional detail beyond the minimum required race and ethnicity categories for most situations, to ensure further disaggregation in the collection, tabulation, and presentation of data when useful and appropriate.

### *FARS Analytical Data Classification*

FARS collects two data elements that contribute to the data definitions for race and ethnicity. They are Hispanic Origin (*HISPANIC*) and Race (*RACE*). Data collection for Race and Hispanic Origin can be challenging from year-to-year, especially for some States, resulting in high proportions of unknown data.

The following describes each race and ethnicity category (terms) used in this fact sheet based on Hispanic Origin and Race data collected in FARS, while adhering to the 1997 OMB data reporting guidelines:

- **Hispanic or Latino:** Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, European Spanish, or Other Hispanic Origin
- **White:** White, Non-Hispanic
- **Black or African American:** Black or African American, Non-Hispanic
- **AIAN:** American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic
- **Asian:** Asian, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic
- **NHPI:** Native Hawaiian (includes part Hawaiian) or Other Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic
- **Multiracial:** When the death certificate indicates more than one race without specifying the individual races, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic. Due to coding improvements, 2019 and later data includes individuals where more than one race was specified, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic.
- **All Others:** Includes White, Unknown if Hispanic; Black or African American, Unknown if Hispanic; Non-Hispanic, Unknown Race; and all Other Races, Non-Hispanic or Unknown if Hispanic
- **Unknown:** Unknown which of the above

FARS will make future adjustments to adhere to the 2024 revisions to OMB's data reporting guidelines.

### *Limitations*

Traffic fatality rates combine self-reported race-ethnicity (Census Bureau population data) with race-ethnicity identified by others (death certificates in FARS). The answer to race and ethnicity questions for one person could vary depending on the data source.

FARS contains unknown race-ethnicity values. However, the Census population counts have no unknown race-ethnicity. The impact of these unknowns may incorrectly estimate the traffic fatality rates per population for each race-ethnicity group. The unknowns may impact some groups more than others.

Race-ethnicity reporting varies widely by State and year. If a State tends to account for a substantial share of the fatalities from a particular race-ethnicity group, then a high number of unknowns for a given year in the State might substantially impact the fatality rate for that race-ethnicity group.

Until data year 2019, FARS reported the first race listed when the death certificate listed multiracial; this categorization could misrepresent some or all race-ethnicity groups. We can't reliably estimate the impact of traffic fatalities on multiracial people. Starting in 2019 FARS collects all races reported on the death certificate, vastly improving the ability to analyze the effect of traffic crashes on multiracial people.

## References

Kahane, C. J. (2000, December). *Fatality reduction by safety belts for front-seat occupants of cars and light trucks* (Report No. DOT HS 809 199). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/809199>

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## Fatality Analysis Reporting System

FARS contains data on every fatal motor vehicle traffic crash within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a traffic crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a trafficway customarily open to the public and must result in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized the following year to the final version known as the Final File. The additional time between the ARF and the Final File provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in the final counts. More information on FARS can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system](http://www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system).

## Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) Vehicle Classification

Historically, vehicle type classifications (e.g., passenger cars, light trucks, large trucks, motorcycles, buses) from FARS used for analysis and data reporting were based on analyst-coded vehicle body type. NHTSA did not have manufacturer authoritative data to assist in vehicle body type coding. NCSA has developed a Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) dataset that is being used to decode VINs (Vehicle Identification Numbers) and extract vehicle information. Details of vehicles (make, model, body class, etc.) involved in crashes are obtained from vPIC via VIN-linkage. The VIN-derived information from vPIC uses the manufacturer's classification of body class, which allows for more accurate vehicle type analysis.

The vPIC-based analysis data are available beginning with 2020 FARS data file. Vehicle-related analysis for 2020 and later years are based on vPIC vehicle classification. As a result, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. More information on vPIC can be found at <https://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/>.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2025, February, Revised). *Race and ethnicity: 2021 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 572). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

### For More Information:

Motor vehicle traffic crash data are available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NSA-230. NCSA can be contacted at [NCSARequests@dot.gov](mailto:NCSARequests@dot.gov) or 800-934-8517. NCSA programs can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/data](http://www.nhtsa.gov/data). To report a motor vehicle safety-related problem or to inquire about safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or [www.nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem](http://www.nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem).

The following data tools and resources can be found at <https://cdan.dot.gov/>.

- Fatal Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data Visualizations
- Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Databook
- Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST)
- State Traffic Safety Information (STSI)
- Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report Tables
- FARS Data Tables (FARS Encyclopedia)
- Crash Viewer
- Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC)
- FARS, NASS GES, CRSS, NASS Crashworthiness Data System (CDS), and Crash Investigation Sampling System (CISS) data can be downloaded for further analysis.

Other fact sheets available from NCSA:

- Alcohol-Impaired Driving
- Bicyclists and Other Cyclists
- Children
- Large Trucks
- Motorcycles
- Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles
- Older Population
- Passenger Vehicles
- Pedestrians
- Rural/Urban Traffic Fatalities
- School-Transportation-Related Traffic Crashes
- Speeding
- State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates
- State Traffic Data
- Summary of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes
- Young Drivers

Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data*. The fact sheets and Traffic Safety Facts annual report can be found at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/>.



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