

Orleans Parish, Louisiana Census Statistics — 1950

17th Census · Enumeration Date: April 1, 1950

PART I — TOTAL POPULATION

Metric	Value
Census Year	1950
Census Number	17th Census
Enumeration Date	April 1, 1950
Total Population	570,445
Decadal Change	+75,908
Decadal % Change	+15.3%
U.S. City Rank	~16th

Note: Strong postwar growth driven by returning veterans, the G.I. Bill housing boom, and expansion of the Port of New Orleans as a major petroleum and shipping hub. Largest single-decade total gain in absolute terms since the 1930 census. City remained the largest in the South. The 1950 census was the last in the study period using the 'Negro' racial designation. Records released by the National Archives on April 1, 2022, under the 72-year rule.

PART II — RACIAL & STATUS COMPOSITION

Category	Count	% of Total
White	394,215	69.1%
Negro	175,922	30.8%
Other / Unclassified	308	0.1%

Note: Per 17th Census, Vol. II, Part 18 — Louisiana (1952). 'Negro' category used in original. Black population reached its highest proportion of total since 1840, reflecting continued Great Migration-era growth and relatively slower White population increase. 'Other' category (308) includes Chinese, Japanese, and other small groups. White percentage continued its decade-long decline from 71.7% (1930) through 69.7% (1940) to 69.1% (1950).

PART III — FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

Metric	Value
Total Foreign-Born	~8,000 (est.)
% of Total Population	~1.4%
Largest Foreign-Born Groups	Italy, Germany

Note: Estimated from 17th Census Vol. IV Special Reports (Nativity and Parentage) and NHGIS county-level tabulations. Foreign-born proportion reached its lowest point in the study period, continuing the steep post-1924 decline. Italian and German communities were now predominantly 2nd- and 3rd-generation; few members of these communities remained foreign-born by 1950. The 72-year rule restricted individual-level access until April 2022, but summary compendium data was available from the published census volumes.

Sources: Forstall, R.L. (ed.), Population of the States and Counties of the United States: 1790-1990 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1996); U.S. Census Bureau, Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States, Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 18 (Louisiana) (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1952); IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota.

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