The Census Bureau estimates that the U.S. population now stands at 265 million—roughly 66 times larger than in 1790, when the first census was taken. This total implies a density of 70 individuals per square land mile. Approximately 83% of the population is white, nearly 13% is black, and about 9% is of Latino background. Women constitute slightly more than half of the total.

Over the last 30 years, the population has expanded at a rate of about 1% annually. Most of the upturn stems from natural growth, but there has also been a steady rise in immigration. On average, 332,000 individuals immigrated each year in the 1960s, whereas 1.2 million arrived yearly between 1991 and 1993. Approximately 42% of recent immigrants are from North America (notably Mexico and the Caribbean), while 35% come from Asia.

The median age of Americans is currently 34 years, but the population is growing older. In 1990, almost 43% of Americans were of prime working age (25 to 54 years), 13% were over 64, and 25% were under 18. Census projections show that by 2025, the proportion in their prime working years will fall to 37%, while those of retirement age will rise to 18%.

The population center of the U.S. continues its southwesterly drift. Over the past 10 years, Nevada, Arizona, Washington, Florida, and Georgia have been the fastest-growing states.