

Latinos about to be Calif.'s largest racial-ethnic group

By Mark Hugo Lopez, Pew Research Center

According to Gov. Jerry Brown's new state budget, Latinos are projected to become the largest single racial-ethnic group in the state by March, making up 39 percent of the state's population. That will make California only the second state, behind New Mexico, where whites are not the majority and Latinos are the plurality, meaning they are not more than half but they comprise the largest percentage of any group.

California's demographers also project that in mid-2014, the state's residents will be 38.8 percent white non-Hispanic, 13 percent Asian American or Pacific Islander, 5.8 percent black non-Hispanic, and less than 1 percent Native American.

But the state's demographics in 2014 are very different from what they had been. In 2000, California's 33.9 million residents were 46.6 percent white non-Hispanic, 32.3 percent Latino, 11.1 percent Asian American or Pacific Islander, 6.4 percent black non-Hispanic and about 1 percent Native American. In 1990, white non-Hispanics made up more than half (57.4 percent) of the state's then 29.7 million residents, while 25.4 percent of Californians were Latino, 9.2 percent were Asian American or Pacific Islander, 7.1 percent were black non-Hispanic and about 1 percent were Native American.

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