

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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**Facts** for  
Features

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## Irish-American Heritage Month (March) and St. Patrick's Day (March 17) 2008

Originally a religious holiday to honor St. Patrick, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into a celebration for all things Irish. The world's first St. Patrick's Day parade occurred on March 17, 1762, in New York City, featuring Irish soldiers serving in the English military. President Truman attended the parade in 1948, a proud moment for the many Irish whose ancestors had to fight stereotypes and prejudice to find acceptance in America. Congress proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1995, and the president issues a proclamation each year.

### Population Distribution

#### **36 million**

Number of U.S. residents who claim Irish ancestry. This number is almost nine times the population of Ireland itself (slightly more than 4 million). Irish is the nation's second most frequently reported ancestry, trailing only German.

Sources: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>> and International Data Base <<http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/population/current/popmig.pdf>>

#### **24%**

Percent of Massachusetts residents who are of Irish ancestry. This compares with a corresponding rate of 12 percent for the nation as a whole.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

### Irish-Americans Today

#### **31%**

Percentage of people of Irish ancestry, 25 or older, who had a bachelor's degree or more education. In addition, 91 percent of Irish-Americans in this age group had at least a high school diploma. For the nation as a whole, the corresponding rates were 27 percent and 84 percent.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

**\$54,531**

Median income for households headed by an Irish-American, higher than the \$48,451 for all households. In addition, 9 percent of people of Irish ancestry were in poverty, lower than the rate of 13 percent for all Americans.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

**38%**

Percentage of employed civilian Irish-Americans 16 or older who work in management, professional and related occupations. Additionally, 28 percent work in sales and office occupations; 15 percent in service occupations; 10 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations; and 9 percent in construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

**72%**

Percentage of householders of Irish ancestry who own the home in which they live, with the remainder renting. For the nation as a whole, the homeownership rate was 67 percent.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

**Trade With the “Old Sod”****\$22.9 billion**

The value of U.S. imports from Ireland for January to September 2007. Meanwhile, the United States exported \$6.6 billion worth of goods to Ireland.

Source: Foreign Trade Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>>

**Places to Spend the Day****4**

Number of places in the United States named Shamrock, the floral emblem of Ireland. Mount Gay-Shamrock, W.Va., and Shamrock, Texas, were the most populous, with 2,623 and 1,855 residents, respectively. Shamrock Lakes, Ind., had 159 residents and Shamrock, Okla., 124. (Statistic for Mount Gay-Shamrock is from Census 2000; the other statistics are 2006 estimates.)

Sources: American FactFinder <<http://factfinder.census.gov>> and population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/010315.html>>

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Number of places in the United States that share the name of Ireland’s capital, Dublin. Since Census 2000, Dublin, Calif., has surpassed Dublin, Ohio, as the most populous of these places (41,840 compared with 36,565, respectively, as of July 1, 2006).

If you're still not into the spirit of St. Paddy's Day, then you might consider paying a visit to Emerald Isle, N.C., with 3,716 residents.

Sources: American FactFinder <<http://factfinder.census.gov>> and population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/010315.html>>

## The Celebration

### 42.1 billion and 2.6 billion

U.S. beef and cabbage production, respectively, in pounds, in 2006. Corned beef and cabbage is a traditional St. Patrick's Day dish. The corned beef that celebrants dine on may very well have originated in Texas, which produced 6.8 billion pounds worth of beef, while the cabbage most likely came from California, which produced 607 million pounds worth, or New York (462 million pounds).

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service  
<<http://www.nass.usda.gov/index.asp>>

### \$42 million

Value of potted florist chrysanthemum sales at wholesale in 2006 for operations with \$100,000 or more sales. Lime green chrysanthemums are often requested for St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service  
<<http://www.nass.usda.gov/index.asp>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day (Sept. 1)
Super Bowl XLII (Feb. 3)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 7)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week (Sept. 21-27)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 27)
Mother's Day (May 11)	The Holiday Season (December)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day (June 15)	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <[pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)>.