

Headline English

2010, week 48 *Learn English through reading on current world affairs*

1 **The funny thing about American demographics**

2 original at:

3 <http://www.economist.com/node/17525707>

4 America's elderly may be growing in number but, to the envy of other
5 developed countries, America also has a burgeoning young population.

6 The interesting thing is that America's young and old are differentiated not
7 just by region but by race. Hispanic immigrants in particular are helping to
8 swell the ranks of the young. The decade saw America's foreign-born
9 population grow by 24%, or about 7.4m. In 2009 Hispanics comprised
10 21% of those younger than 25; those 65 and older were 80% white and
11 only 7% Hispanic.

12 This divide — sometimes called the "cultural generation gap"— is very
13 much wider in some states and cities. In Arizona, for example, 83% of the
14 elderly are white and 42% of those under 25 are Hispanic. This can lead
15 to divergent priorities, such as the reluctance of the old to pay for
16 education, or even a political eruption. This year Arizona's anti-
17 immigration law sparked protests far beyond the state's borders.

18 Such conflict may well be replicated. Immigrants are increasingly settling
19 in areas unused to outsiders. What is more, their numbers are growing. In
20 the long term, these immigrants or their children may become local
21 economic stars. In the short term, tension is mounting.

Questions

- 1) What is the difference between America and other developed nations in terms of demographics?
- 2) Why is the difference between American old and young also a difference of race?
- 3) Paraphrase "to swell the ranks of the young" (line 8).
- 4) Is the width of the "cultural generation gap" roughly the same across the USA?
- 5) What may be the consequences of the "cultural generation gap"?
- 6) What is the outlook for the future with respect to "cultural generation gap"? Is it disappearing or increasing?
- 7) Why do you think birth rates in developed countries (including the Czech Republic) have been, with the exemption of America, declining?
- 8) Do you think that declining birth rates are a problem?

Vocabulary

to the envy of (line 4) – admired by, wanted by

reluctance (line 15) – unwillingness, disinclination

spark protests (line 17) – cause people to protest, lead to protest

unused (line 19) – not accustomed or used to something

You can find additional explanation and more examples to help you understand and use English words and phrases at <http://dictionary.reference.com>, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/> or <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>

Přejeme Vám mnoho studijních úspěchů.

Tým jazykové skupiny Spěváček:

