

**The Foreign-born in California:
Place of Origin, Region of Residence, Race, Time of Entry, and Citizenship Status**

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Executive Summary

Twenty-six percent of California's residents were born outside of the U.S., more than double the national proportion (11 percent). In order to better understand who makes up this group, this report summarizes demographic information collected on the long form survey of the 2000 Census regarding place of origin, region of residence within the state, race, time of entry to the U.S., and citizenship status of the foreign-born population in the state. It also examines county and regional distributions of foreign-born people in the state. In addition, statistics about place of birth (within the U.S.) for the native-born population living in California are presented.

One in four people living in California is foreign-born. Over half of this population, 52.5 percent, is from Mexico and Central America; the second most common area of origin is Asia, accounting for 32.9 percent of the foreign-born in the state.

Regionally, over a third of the population in Los Angeles, 36.2 percent, is foreign-born, as is 27.4 percent of the San Francisco Bay Area. At the other end of the spectrum, the Eastern Mountain and Northern regions of the state have the smallest percentages of foreign-born people residing in them, 4.2 and roughly 7.9 percent, respectively.

In California, 67.2 percent of Asians are foreign-born, followed by 47.4 percent of people identified as Some Other Race and 43.9 percent of Latinos; smaller percentages of Blacks (5.0 percent), Whites (7.7 percent), and American Indians (15.0 percent) fall into this category. People identified as Pacific Islander or Two or More races have foreign-born percentages similar to the state average of 26.2 percent.

Of the foreign-born population in California, 39.3 percent have been naturalized. More recent arrivals are less likely to have gone through this process. Also, foreign-born Whites and Asians are the most likely to have attained citizenship, at 55.6 and 55.3 percent, respectively; in the middle are Pacific Islanders, Blacks, and people identified with Two or More Races; and, at the low end are people who identified as American Indian, Latino, and Some Other Race.

The native-born population makes up 74 percent of the state. Of those living in California who were born in the U.S., 68.1 percent were born in the state, 5.7 percent in other Western states, 10 percent in the Midwest, 8.3 percent in the South, and 6.4 percent in the Northeast. There are variations across race: over 90 percent of people identified as Some Other Race or Latino were born in the West; while these percentages are smallest for Blacks and Whites. Compared with other race groups, a relatively large proportion of Blacks were born in the South, roughly one in four; and Whites had the largest percentages from the Midwest (15.0 percent) and Northeast (9.7 percent). Also noteworthy, 22.3 percent of Pacific Islanders who are native citizens of the U.S. were born outside of the country; this statistic includes people who were born in 'U.S. island areas'—i.e., U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa (formerly called 'outlying areas').

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