

The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2022

American Community Survey Briefs

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INTRODUCTION

The foreign-born population in the United States has grown considerably over the past 50 years in both size and share of the U.S. population.¹ In 1970, it numbered 9.6 million (4.7 percent) of the total U.S. population (Figure 1). By 2022, it was estimated to be 46.2 million (13.9 percent) of the total U.S. population.

This report provides an overview of the foreign-born population residing in the United States, highlighting select demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Comparing American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2010 and 2022, it provides insights into the changing composition of the foreign-born population over the course of a decade.

SIZE AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

In 2022, nearly a quarter of the U.S. foreign-born population lived in California. Of the 46.2 million foreign-born in the United States, 10.4 million lived in California. Another 5.2 million resided in Texas, followed by 4.8 million in Florida and 4.5 million in New York (Table 1). Of these states, California had the largest number of foreign-born individuals in both 2010 and 2022. Meanwhile, New York's foreign-born population dropped from second- to fourth-largest in the country. In both 2010 and 2022, less than half of the foreign-born in the United States lived outside these four states.

¹ The U.S. Census Bureau reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. The Data Management System (DMS) number is P-7533841 and Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number is CBDRB-FY24-0089. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level, unless otherwise noted.

ABOUT THE DATA

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an annual, nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely social, economic, housing, and demographic data for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities. It has an annual sample size of about 3.5 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing facilities and prisons). In 2010, the ACS had a sample of about 2.9 million addresses. Beginning in 2006, ACS data were released annually for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. For information on the ACS, visit <www.census.gov/acs>.

Data in this report are for the 50 states and District of Columbia and come from the 2010 and 2022 ACS, 1-year estimates, as well as the 1850–2000 Censuses.

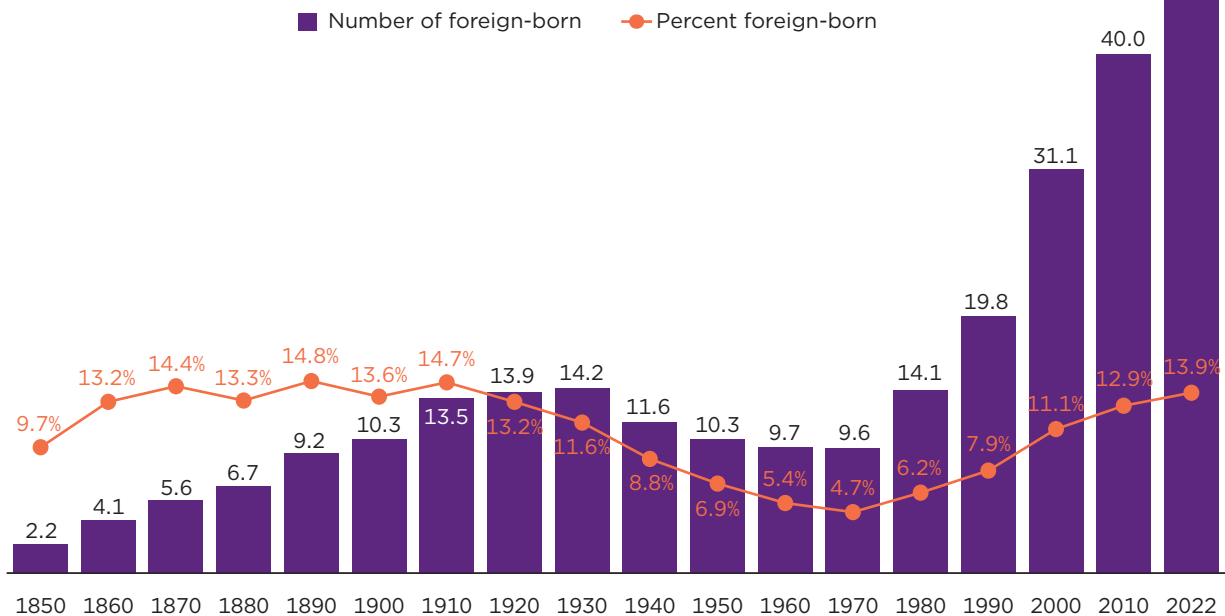
In all tables and figures of this report except Figure 1, estimates of the foreign-born population exclude those born at sea.

In California, New Jersey, New York, and Florida, foreign-born individuals constituted more than 20 percent of the state's population. Most of the states with the highest foreign-born shares of their populations were more populous states such as these four. However, even some smaller states like Nevada and Hawaii had foreign-born shares that were

Figure 1.

Number and Percentage of Foreign-Born in the United States: 1850–2022

(Numbers in millions)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1850–2000 Censuses and 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

between 15.0 percent and 19.9 percent (Figure 2).

The majority of states had a small percentage of foreign-born people. In 34 states, including those in northern New England, the northern Great Plains, and parts of Appalachia and the South, the foreign-born comprised 10 percent or less, and in some cases 5 percent or less, of the state’s population (Figure 2). In the Midwest, only Illinois had more than 10 percent foreign-born. West Virginia had the smallest percentage of foreign-born in 2022, at 1.8 percent of its population.

The foreign-born populations in almost all states were larger in 2022 than in 2010. In Delaware, North Dakota, South Dakota, and West Virginia, the foreign-born populations grew by 40 percent or more (Figure 3). Forty-two states and the District of Columbia experienced percentage increases of 10

DEFINING NATIVITY STATUS: WHO IS FOREIGN-BORN?

Nativity status refers to whether a person is native- or foreign-born. The native-born population comprises anyone who is a U.S. citizen at birth, including people born in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Marianas, or abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents.¹ Foreign-born are people who were not U.S. citizens at birth, including naturalized U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents (immigrants), temporary migrants (such as foreign students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees and asylees), and unauthorized migrants.

¹ Prior to the 2018 American Community Survey, individuals reporting birth in American Samoa were also counted among the native-born population. For an explanation of how and why this changed, refer to the “User Note” available at www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/user-notes/2019-01.html.

percent or more. Overall, the U.S. foreign-born population increased by 15.6 percent.

Growth of the foreign-born population varied widely among the largest states. Looking at the four states with the largest numbers of foreign-born in 2010, only two (Florida and Texas) experienced

large growth from 2010 to 2022, with their foreign-born populations increasing by at least 20 percent. In contrast, the foreign-born populations in New York and California increased by less than 10 percent. Many of the largest percentage changes happened in northern states of the West and Midwest.

Table 1.

Foreign-Born Population as a Percentage of Total State Population: 2010 and 2022

(Numbers in thousands. States sorted by 2022 percent estimate)

State of residence	2022				2010			
	Number		Percent		Number		Percent	
	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹
Total	46,180	150	13.9	Z	39,960	115	12.9	Z
California	10,430	57	26.7	0.1	10,150	60	27.2	0.2
New Jersey	2,181	26	23.5	0.3	1,845	19	21.0	0.2
New York	4,460	39	22.7	0.2	4,298	33	22.2	0.2
Florida	4,817	42	21.7	0.2	3,658	37	19.4	0.2
Nevada	601	14	18.9	0.4	508	10	18.8	0.4
Massachusetts	1,260	21	18.0	0.3	984	18	15.0	0.3
Texas	5,169	60	17.2	0.2	4,142	39	16.4	0.2
Hawaii	247	11	17.1	0.8	248	13	18.2	1.0
Maryland	1,030	21	16.7	0.3	804	15	13.9	0.3
Connecticut	568	15	15.7	0.4	487	14	13.6	0.4
Washington	1,188	19	15.3	0.2	886	14	13.1	0.2
District of Columbia	100	8	14.9	1.1	82	4	13.5	0.7
Rhode Island	158	8	14.4	0.7	134	6	12.8	0.5
Illinois	1,810	23	14.4	0.2	1,760	22	13.7	0.2
Arizona	963	21	13.1	0.3	857	18	13.4	0.3
Virginia	1,105	19	12.7	0.2	911	16	11.4	0.2
Georgia	1,168	24	10.7	0.2	943	15	9.7	0.2
Delaware	101	6	9.9	0.6	72	4	8.0	0.4
Oregon	421	11	9.9	0.3	376	10	9.8	0.3
Colorado	558	16	9.5	0.3	497	14	9.8	0.3
New Mexico	197	10	9.3	0.5	205	10	9.9	0.5
Minnesota	499	13	8.7	0.2	378	9	7.1	0.2
Utah	292	10	8.6	0.3	223	8	8.0	0.3
North Carolina	917	19	8.6	0.2	719	14	7.5	0.2
Pennsylvania	978	21	7.5	0.2	739	15	5.8	0.1
Alaska	55	4	7.5	0.6	49	4	6.9	0.5
Nebraska	143	8	7.2	0.4	112	6	6.1	0.3
Kansas	208	9	7.1	0.3	187	8	6.5	0.3
Michigan	695	17	6.9	0.2	588	13	6.0	0.1
New Hampshire	87	5	6.2	0.4	70	5	5.3	0.3
Indiana	415	14	6.1	0.2	301	10	4.6	0.1
Oklahoma	243	6	6.0	0.2	206	7	5.5	0.2
Idaho	116	7	6.0	0.4	87	5	5.5	0.3
Iowa	191	8	6.0	0.2	139	7	4.6	0.2
Tennessee	392	15	5.6	0.2	289	10	4.5	0.2
South Carolina	273	10	5.2	0.2	218	7	4.7	0.2
Arkansas	156	8	5.1	0.3	132	6	4.5	0.2
Wisconsin	295	9	5.0	0.2	255	8	4.5	0.1
Ohio	586	13	5.0	0.1	470	11	4.1	0.1
North Dakota	38	4	4.9	0.5	17	2	2.5	0.3
Vermont	27	3	4.2	0.5	28	2	4.4	0.4
Louisiana	193	8	4.2	0.2	173	7	3.8	0.1
Missouri	253	9	4.1	0.1	233	9	3.9	0.2
Maine	56	4	4.1	0.3	46	3	3.4	0.2
Kentucky	181	7	4.0	0.2	141	7	3.2	0.2
Alabama	191	10	3.8	0.2	169	7	3.5	0.1
South Dakota	32	3	3.5	0.4	22	3	2.7	0.3
Wyoming	18	2	3.1	0.4	16	2	2.8	0.4
Montana	26	3	2.3	0.3	20	3	2.0	0.3
Mississippi	65	5	2.2	0.2	61	4	2.1	0.2
West Virginia	32	3	1.8	0.2	23	3	1.2	0.1

Z Represents or rounds to zero.

¹ Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimates, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

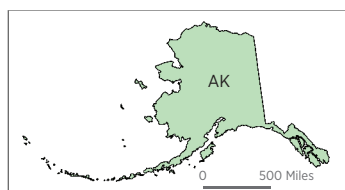
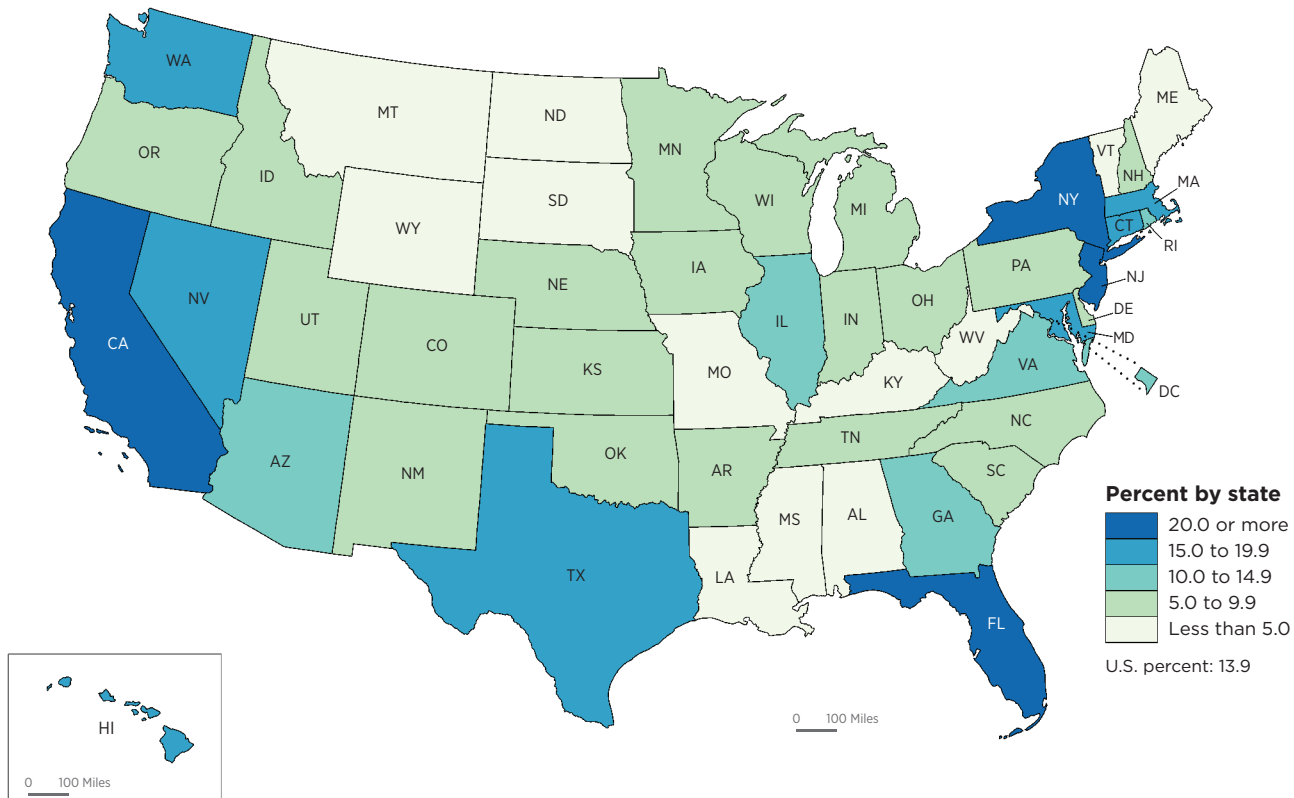


Figure 2.
Foreign-Born Population as a Percentage of Total State Population: 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Most states saw an increase in their foreign-born share between 2010 and 2022. Thirty-six states and the District of Columbia saw statistically significant increases in their foreign-born shares of the total population. Massachusetts, Maryland, and New Jersey had among the largest increases. Only California had a smaller foreign-born percentage in 2022 than in 2010 (Table 1).²

² The remaining 13 states had changes that were not statistically significant.

PLACE OF BIRTH

Half of the nation's foreign-born were from Latin America.³ In both 2010 and 2022, Latin America was the most prevalent region of origin (Table 2). However, the composition of its migrants shifted over the course of the decade. By 2022, the number of foreign-born from South America and Other

³ The term "Latin America and the Caribbean" includes countries in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. The places of birth within this region can be found in the American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey 2022 Code List available at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>. Throughout the remainder of this report, the term "Latin America" refers to all these areas. "Other Central America" includes all Central American countries except Mexico.

Central America increased by 2.1 million, while the count of those born in Mexico decreased by about 1.0 million.

The shares of foreign-born from Asia and Africa increased between 2010 and 2022. The Asian-born population rose from 28.2 percent to 31.1 percent of the foreign-born population, while the African-born share grew from 4.0 percent to 6.0 percent (Table 2).⁴ With the exception of Oceania,

⁴ In this report, "African-born" and "foreign-born from Africa" both refer to foreign-born individuals born in Africa. Similarly, "foreign-born population from Africa" and "African-born population" are used interchangeably. The same nomenclature is used to refer to foreign-born from other regions.

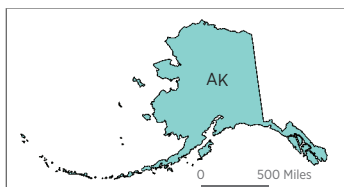
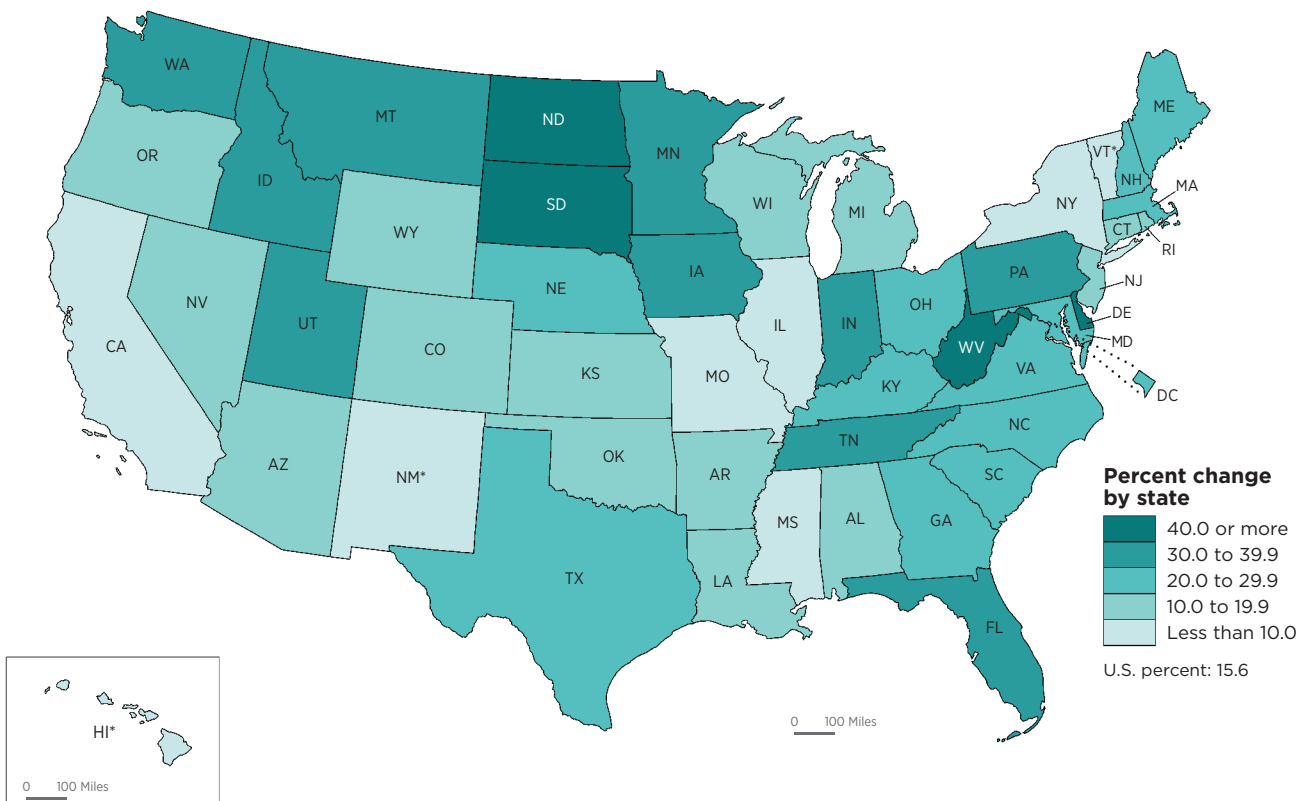


Figure 3.
Percent Change in Foreign-Born Population: 2010 to 2022



* Percent change estimate is negative but not statistically different from zero.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

all other regions saw a decline in their shares of the foreign-born population.

MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Nearly one-third of the country's foreign-born came to the United States in 2010 or later. Among African-born, 48.2 percent entered the United States during this period, more than any other region of birth group (Figure 4). Northern American- and European-born generally arrived before other foreign-born groups, with 37.1

percent and 36.0 percent entering the country before 1990.⁵

The majority of Latin American-born individuals entered the United States before 2010. More than 70 percent of foreign-born from Latin America reported entering the country during this period. Only 18.4 percent of the Mexican-born population, or 2.0 million people, entered after 2009. The foreign-born populations from

⁵ The percentage of Northern American-born that entered the United States before 1990 is not significantly different from the percentage of European-born that entered during the same period.

South America, Other Central America, and the Caribbean arrived more recently—40.1 percent, 38.2 percent, and 33.6 percent entered the country in 2010 or later, respectively.

Over one-half of the foreign-born population was naturalized. European- and Asian-born were the most likely to be U.S. citizens, with naturalization rates of 67.4 percent and 62.8 percent, respectively (Figure 5). Naturalization rates were lowest among the foreign-born from Oceania and Latin America.

Table 2.

Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: 2010 and 2022

(Numbers in thousands)

Region of birth	2022				2010			
	Number		Percent		Number		Percent	
	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹	Estimate	Margin of error (±) ¹
Total	46,180	150	100.0	X	39,960	115	100.0	X
Africa	2,753	47	6.0	0.1	1,607	33	4.0	0.1
Asia	14,350	61	31.1	0.1	11,280	47	28.2	0.1
Europe	4,729	53	10.2	0.1	4,817	44	12.1	0.1
Northern America	829	19	1.8	Z	807	16	2.0	Z
Oceania	289	13	0.6	Z	217	10	0.5	Z
Latin America and the Caribbean ..	23,230	117	50.3	0.2	21,220	90	53.1	0.1
Mexico	10,680	80	23.1	0.1	11,710	83	29.3	0.2
Other Central America	3,957	57	8.6	0.1	3,053	46	7.6	0.1
South America	3,971	56	8.6	0.1	2,730	42	6.8	0.1
Caribbean	4,627	55	10.0	0.1	3,731	42	9.3	0.1

X Not applicable.

Z Represents or rounds to zero.

¹ Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimates, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

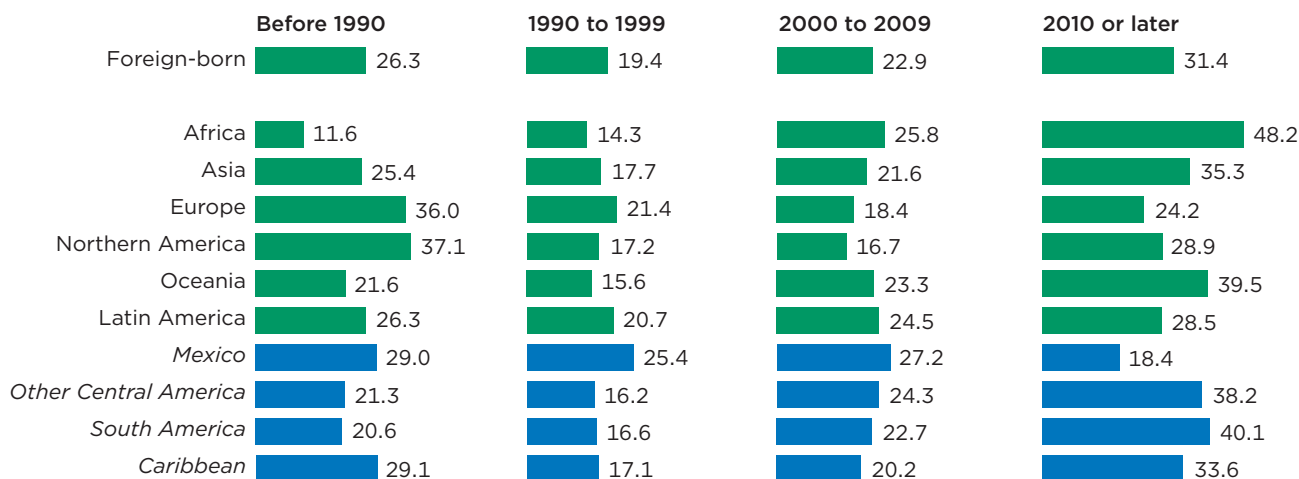
Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Figure 4.

Period of Entry Among the Foreign-Born Population: 2022

(Percent distribution)



Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and Caribbean, marked in blue throughout this report, are geographies nested within Latin America.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Naturalization rates rose among all regions of birth. Naturalization rates increased the most among the African-born population, from 46.1 percent in 2010 to 61.0 percent in 2022. Latin America had the second-highest gain, from 32.1 percent to 43.4 percent. Oceania

had one of the smallest changes between 2010 and 2022, increasing by 3.6 percentage points.

Within Latin America, the naturalization rate grew the most among Mexican-born. In 2022, 35.2 percent of Mexican-born were naturalized compared to 22.9

percent in 2010. Meanwhile, the naturalization rate among foreign-born from Other Central America increased from 29.6 percent in 2010 to 34.2 percent in 2022.

AGE

Compared to foreign-born from other world regions, African-born tended to be the youngest. Foreign-born individuals had a median age of 46.7 years, compared to 36.9 years among native-born individuals (Figure 6). Looking at region of birth, the African-born population had the lowest median age while those born in Northern America had the highest. Among those born in Latin America, the Caribbean-born had the highest median age and the Other Central American-born had the lowest.

The foreign-born population became older. Compared to 2010, the median age among foreign-born increased by over 5 years. The median age of the native-born population also rose, but by just 1 year. All region of birth groups had higher median ages than they did in 2010.

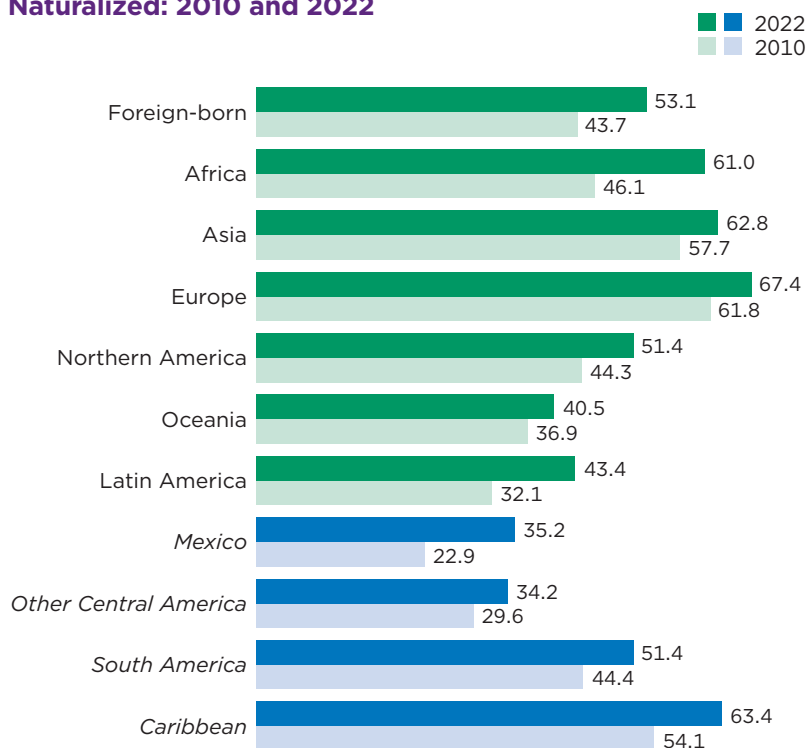
The share of the foreign-born population that was under age 18 decreased for nearly all regions of birth.⁶ Within the region of Latin America, the share of Other Central American-born under age 18 rose from 6.0 to 10.3 percent. Overall, children made up a smaller share of the foreign-born population, 5.7 percent in 2022 compared to 7.1 percent in 2010.

Most of the foreign-born population was of working age in 2022 but made up a smaller share than in 2010.⁷ The foreign-born population that was between the ages of 18 and 64 decreased from 80.5 percent in 2010 to 76.6 percent in 2022. By contrast, this percentage remained relatively stable among the native-born,

⁶ The shares went down for all regions except Oceania. The decrease for Oceania was not statistically significant.

⁷ The term “working age” refers to ages 18 to 64.

Figure 5.
Percentage of the Foreign-Born Population That Is Naturalized: 2010 and 2022



Note: Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and Caribbean, marked in blue throughout this report, are geographies nested within Latin America.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

dipping slightly from 60.4 percent to 58.4 percent. Foreign-born from Mexico and Africa had the largest percentages of people who were of working age, 84.0 percent and 81.1 percent, respectively.

The share of the population 65 years and older grew the most among the Asian-born. The proportion 65 years and older increased for all regions of birth, particularly among the Asian-born (12.7 percent to 19.5 percent) and Latin American-born (8.6 percent to 14.5 percent).

EDUCATION

More foreign-born individuals completed at least high school than before. The percentage of the foreign-born population

25 years and older that completed high school or higher increased from 68.3 percent in 2010 to 75.1 percent in 2022 (Figure 7).⁸ In comparison, 92.8 percent of the native-born population completed at least high school in 2022, up from 89.0 percent in 2010. Additionally, the percentage of bachelor's degree or higher attainment increased by over 7.0 percentage points among both the native- and foreign-born.

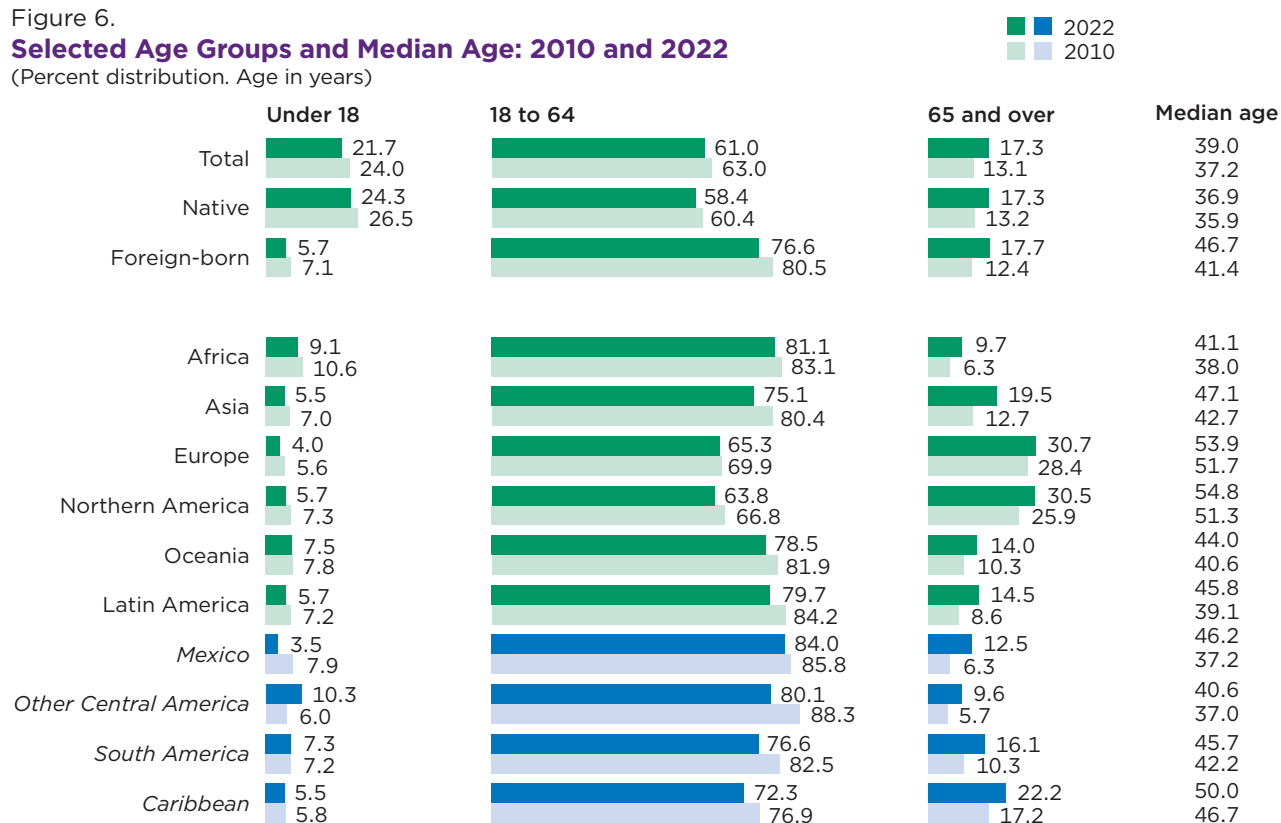
A large gap in high school or higher completion rates remained across region of birth groups. Latin American-born had among the lowest rates of completion of high school or higher in both

⁸ The completion of high school includes a high school diploma or equivalent.

Figure 6.

Selected Age Groups and Median Age: 2010 and 2022

(Percent distribution. Age in years)



Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and Caribbean, marked in blue throughout this report, are geographies nested within Latin America.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

2010 and 2022, compared to other region of birth groups. In comparison, Northern American-born had the highest high school or higher completion rates at 94.3 percent in 2022, an increase from 90.0 percent in 2010.

More people obtained at least a bachelor's degree in nearly all regions of birth. Between 2010 and 2022, the proportion of the foreign-born that held a bachelor's degree or higher rose among all region of birth groups except Oceania.⁹ The foreign-born from Asia continued to have the highest proportion with a bachelor's degree or higher at 55.4 percent. The percentage with a bachelor's

⁹ For Oceania, the change in estimate from 2010 to 2022 was not statistically significant.

degree or higher increased the most among European-born and Northern American-born, from 36.4 percent in 2010 to 47.3 percent in 2022 for the former and from 42.5 percent in 2010 to 52.0 percent in 2022 for the latter.¹⁰

EMPLOYMENT

Labor force participation was higher for foreign-born than natives. About 66.9 percent of the foreign-born population 16 years of age and older was in the labor force, compared to 62.9 percent of the corresponding native population (Figure 8). Labor force participation was higher

¹⁰ The change in the percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher among European-born is not significantly different from the change in the percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher among Northern American-born.

among foreign-born males at 76.8 percent, compared to native-born males at 66.8 percent. The labor force participation rate of native-born females was 59.0 percent, 1.6 percentage points larger than that of foreign-born females. Females constituted 47.6 percent of the native-born labor force, compared to 44.0 percent of the foreign-born labor force.

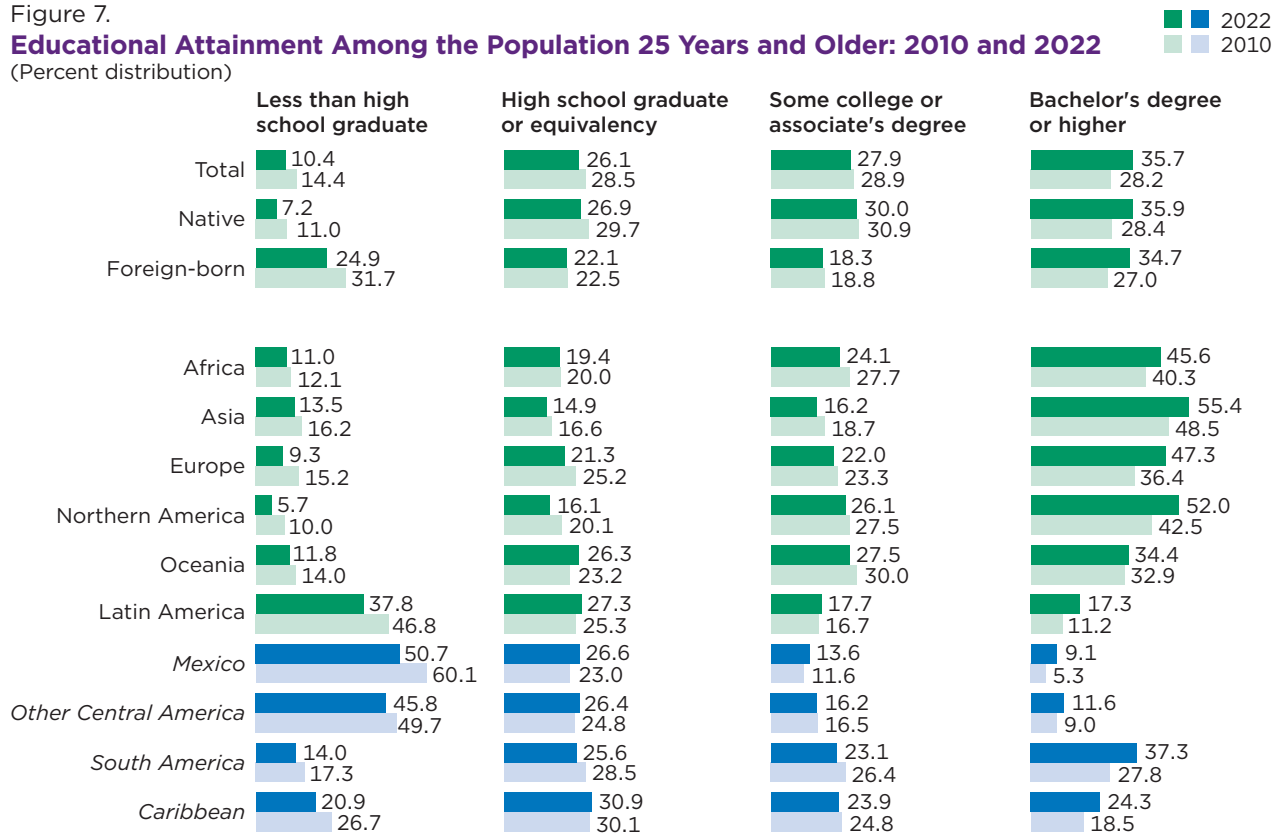
African-born had the highest labor force participation rate at 76.1 percent. Foreign-born from Latin America and Oceania had rates of 68.7 percent and 67.3 percent, respectively.¹¹ Among foreign-born males, those from Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America had labor force participation rates over

¹¹ The estimates for Latin America and Oceania were not statistically different.

Figure 7.

Educational Attainment Among the Population 25 Years and Older: 2010 and 2022

(Percent distribution)



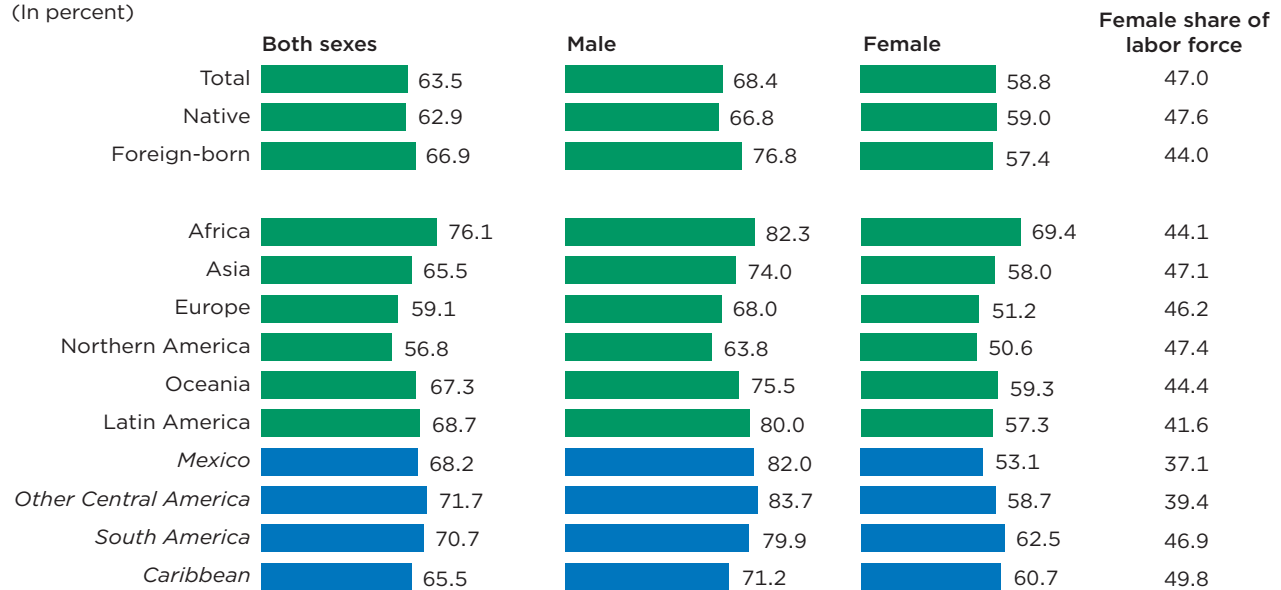
Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and Caribbean, marked in blue throughout this report, are geographies nested within Latin America.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Figure 8.

Labor Force Participation Among the Population 16 Years and Older: 2022

(In percent)



Note: Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and Caribbean, marked in blue throughout this report, are geographies nested within Latin America.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

70 percent. For all regions of birth, 50 percent or more of females participated in the labor force, with Africa leading the way with 69.4 percent of females working or looking for employment.

As the U.S. population continues to grow and change, the migration patterns and demographic characteristics of foreign-born are also shifting. Between 2010 and 2022, some of the most notable shifts were for place of birth, naturalization rates, and educational attainment. The foreign-born population had more people coming from Asia and Africa, higher naturalization rates, and higher levels of educational attainment among nearly all regions of birth.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY

The data presented in this report are based on the ACS samples interviewed in 2010 and 2022. The estimates based on these samples approximate the actual values and represent the entire household and group quarters population. Sampling error is the difference between an estimate based in a sample and the corresponding value that would be obtained if the estimate were based on the entire population (as from a census). Measures of the sampling errors are provided in the form of margins of error for estimates included in this report. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing, and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent level

unless otherwise noted. In addition to sampling error, nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the operations used to collect and process survey data such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires. For more information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, refer to the “2010 ACS Accuracy of the Data” document at <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2010.pdf> and the “2022 ACS Accuracy of the Data” document at <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2022.pdf>.